

The Space Race



On September 12, 1962, President John F. Kennedy was at Rice University in Houston, Texas, and his mission was clear: deliver a speech that would get the nation excited about sending a man to the moon. This speech stands as a seminal moment in the Space Race between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union struck first in the Space Race, launching the world’s first satellite, Sputnik 1, in October 1957. Then, in April 1961, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin became the first person in space. By the time Kennedy became president, the United States’ space efforts seemed woefully behind the Soviets. And after the Bay of Pigs disaster in April of 1961, America’s reputation as a world power was severely tarnished.

Kennedy needed a win, an achievement that would demonstrate American superiority over the Soviets. Could the Americans beat the Russians in launching a space station? Orbiting a man around the moon? Landing a man on the moon? NASA administrator James E. Webb identified landing a man on the moon as the most feasible—but also the most expensive—option.

In May of 1961, Kennedy asked Congress for billions in funding for a space program called Apollo that would land a man on the moon. Not everyone was impressed. Polls showed that 58 percent of Americans were opposed to the idea. But Kennedy moved forward, spending billions to build a new Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston, Texas.

In September 1962, Kennedy toured the new facility. He met astronaut John Glenn and reviewed models of the Apollo spacecraft. Then, before a crowd of 40,000 at Rice University, he delivered his speech, famously saying: “We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard.” The speech was a great success, and Kennedy finally had the public support he needed for his ambitious and history-making initiative.

September Birthdays

In astrology, those born from September 1–22 are Virgins of Virgo. Virgos, associated with the goddess of the earth, are rooted in the material world. They are considered practical, organized, and detail-oriented. Those born from September 23–30 balance the scales of Libra. Libras strive to find equilibrium and fight for equality and justice. They use their sharp minds to de-escalate conflicts and find peace.

- Keanu Reeves (actor) – September 2, 1964
- Beyonce (singer) – September 4, 1981
- Idris Elba (actor) – September 6, 1972
- Otis Redding (singer) – September 9, 1941
- Tyler Perry (filmmaker) – September 13, 1969
- Lauren Bacall (actress) – September 16, 1924
- Frankie Avalon (singer) – September 18, 1940
- Dorothy Vaughan (programmer) – September 20, 1910
- Mark Hamill (actor) – September 25, 1951
- Serena Williams (athlete) – September 26, 1981
- Gene Autry (cowboy) – September 29, 1907

Resident Birthdays!

Martin R. Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> 75 years!

Doug D. Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> 68 years!



Staff Birthdays!

- Jayzmarie V. 9/13
- Katherine P. 9/19
- Heidi B. 9/20
- Melinda M. 9/22
- Karen F. 9/25
- Natasha H. 9/28
- Briana P. 9/29

DevonHouse Herald

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Celebrating September

Classical Music Month

Sewing Month

World Alzheimer’s Month

Nutrition Week  
September 1–7

Victory Over Japan Day  
September 2

Labor Day (U.S.)  
September 4

International Day  
of Charity  
September 5

Grandparents Day  
September 10

Patriot Day (U.S.)  
September 11

Rosh Hashanah  
September 15–17

Yom Kippur  
September 24–25

World Tourism Day  
September 27

The Most Fashionable Month

The month of September brings a string of fashion weeks from the industry’s most influential designers in some of the world’s most fabulous cities. New York, London, and Milan all host runway shows debuting the hottest trends for 2024. This monthlong fashion celebration culminates in Paris, where top designers, celebrities, and fashionistas gather to show off their newest fashion creations. September just might be the most fashionable month of the entire year.

New York, London, Milan, and Paris are known as the “Big Four” fashion cities of the world. Typically, each city hosts its own nation’s designers. Donna Karan, Michael Kors, and Thom Browne call New York home; Burberry, JW Anderson, and Simone Rocha rock the runways of London; Italian greats Fendi, Gucci, and Prada strut in Milan; while French fashion houses Chanel, Givenchy, and Dior display their elegance in Paris. While there are plenty of fashion labels in Spain, Japan, Turkey, and elsewhere, fashion houses large and small flock to these four cities, where journalists and celebrities exert tremendous influence over which trends will dominate the next season.

The very first fashion shows were held in Paris. Nineteenth-century designer Charles Frederick Worth and his marketing team replaced fashion dolls with live women to parade new designs in public places like racetracks and beauty salons. During the first two decades of the 20th century, both designers and department stores began staging their own “fashion shows,” or fashion parades, to lure middle-class women into stores. It wasn’t until 1943, amid World War II, that New York held its first official fashion week, which it dubbed “Press Week.” With fashion industry moguls and media unable to fly to Paris, New York decided to hold its own fashion event. American designers could now give buyers alternatives to French fashion. Paris soon established its own regular couture shows in 1945. Our global devotion to fashion trends had finally begun.



## Living a Fantasy



For those unfamiliar with the literary works of J.R.R. Tolkien, the word *hobbit* and the celebration of Hobbit Day on September 22 might sound like utter nonsense. But for those well-versed in Tolkien's great works of high fantasy *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, this day is not just a celebration of the birthdays of the fictional characters Bilbo and Frodo Baggins but a day to honor all the contributions Tolkien has made to the fantasy genre.

In many ways, Tolkien single-handedly created the genre of epic fantasy that is filled with magic, mages, wizards, elves, and orcs. Fantasy as a genre existed and even thrived before Tolkien, but this early fantasy consisted of formulaic fairy tales and fantastic medieval romance. Many of the stories predating Tolkien were meant for children and filled with whimsy, such as L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, and J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. Tolkien, while fighting as a British soldier in the trenches during World War I, began to formulate not just a novel but an entirely new world and mythology filled with its own gods, goddesses, races, and continents. Moreover, the conflicts found in these novels were not whimsical but were dark and foreboding.

Much of Tolkien's inspiration came from Norse mythology. He was profoundly influenced by the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, within which we can find templates for Tolkien's giants, elves, orcs, and dragons. As a linguist, Tolkien found many of the names for his fantastic creatures in Old English manuscripts like the *Codex Junius*. Tolkien was also a devout Roman Catholic. There is no denying the influence of Catholicism on his writings, from the creation of his fantastic universe harkening to Genesis, to the conflict of good and evil between God and Satan, to the fall of humankind reminiscent of the Garden of Eden. Whatever Tolkien's influences, what remains are novels that have profoundly influenced not just fantasy but pop culture all around the world.

## Begging the Question

Ask a Stupid Question Day on September 28 prompts us to wonder what happens if you ask a stupid question. Will you get a stupid answer? Or, as the other saying goes, is there really no such thing as a stupid question? This holiday was invented by teachers in the 1980s as a way to get children to be fearless when it comes to asking questions. The notion is that if students feel comfortable asking stupid questions, they will feel more confident asking questions in general.

Questions are the cornerstone of learning. This was understood by Socrates back in ancient Greece when he developed his own questioning methods. Over the millennia, questioning has allowed us to explore complex ideas, clarify meanings, provide evidence, explore consequences, and challenge assumptions. Without questions, there is no learning! So yes, ask questions even if they are stupid! Even if they reveal obvious truths, truths in the open are better than truths hidden.

## Hit Parade



If you had only one chance for greatness, would you really make it count? September 25, One-Hit Wonder Day, honors those artists who took their one chance and made a lasting musical impression on popular culture. In 1957, Dale Hawkins wrote the rockabilly hit "Suzy Q," a one-hit wonder that was remade into a hit by Creedence Clearwater Revival in 1968. In 1969, Norman Greenbaum was inspired to write a gospel song, so he penned "Spirit in the Sky" in 15 minutes. The ode to Jesus became a massive hit despite Greenbaum being Jewish. The single went gold, selling two million copies. It wasn't the first one-hit wonder to go gold. In 1966, "96 Tears" by ? [Question Mark] and the Mysterians hit No. 1 on the pop charts and went gold. Frontman Rudy "Question Mark" Martinez never questioned the song's mysterious popularity.

## Resident Spotlight: Dennis Warnken



Be sure to say *Hello* next time you see Dennis!

Dennis was born on July 20, 1957, in Northampton, PA. Growing up in Northampton, Dennis played #20 on his high school football team. "Dennis ran so fast, he was like a Jaguar," his wife, Lisa states, "Everyone called him *Jags!*" Lisa fondly remembers Dennis always being the life of the party. Dennis always strives to make others laugh and is a massive jokester.

Dennis spent his life working hard as a pipe fitter, eventually making his way into the Pipe Fitters Union before retiring in 2015. He has three children, many good friends, and is happily married to Lisa after being together for 25 years! Dennis spent many weekends flyfishing with his friend Jeff. He also loves hunting turkey and deer. He can't get through a day without listening to his favorite music, including the Grateful Dead, Beatles, The Mamas & The Papas, and *several* others.

Welcome to our community, Dennis & Family!

Each month, The DevonHouse Herald spotlights a resident of our community! This resident is interviewed by a member of the Recreation Team so we can get to know them and introduce them to residents and staff of DevonHouse!

## Staff Spotlight: Crystal Williams

Each month, The DevonHouse Herald



spotlights a staff member who has gone above and beyond! This staff member is selected by management to receive the Employee of the Month award!

The Employee of the Month for August was Crystal Williams. Crystal has worked here for over a year and has become beloved by the residents because of her can-do and caring attitude. We are grateful to have Crystal in our community.

Be sure to congratulate Crystal next time you see her!

## Project Stormfury



From 1962 to 1983, the United States government engaged in an ambitious scientific project known as Project Stormfury, the manipulation of hurricanes. Aircraft would fly into hurricanes and drop silver iodide, turning supercooled water inside the storm to ice, a process known as "seeding." This would, theoretically, disrupt the storm structure and cause the hurricane to weaken. Over the years, Project Stormfury identified hurricanes to target and attempted to seed them, often with inconclusive results. On September 30, 1971, an attempt was made to seed Hurricane Ginger as it lashed the North Carolina coast. It was not successful. Although "seeding" was never proven effective, invaluable hurricane research was conducted.