

July Newsletter

2008

Quote for the month: *Ten thousand fools proclaim themselves into obscurity, while one wise man forgets himself into immortality.*
Martin Luther King, Jr.



Independence Day!

Though the Fourth of July is [iconic](#) to Americans, some claim the date itself is somewhat arbitrary. [New Englanders](#) had been fighting Britain since April [1775](#). The first motion in the [Continental Congress](#) for independence was made on [June 4, 1776](#). After hard debate, the Congress voted unanimously, but secretly, for independence from Great Britain on [July 2](#) (the [Lee Resolution](#)) and appointed [Thomas Jefferson](#) to write a draft. The Congress reworked the draft until a little after eleven o'clock, July 4, when twelve [colonies](#) voted for adoption ([New York](#) abstained from both votes) and released a copy to the printers signed only by [John Hancock](#), President of the Congress, and Secretary [Charles Thomson](#). [Philadelphia](#) celebrated the Declaration with public readings and bonfires on [July 8](#). Not until [August 2](#) would a fair printing be signed by the members of the Congress, but even that was kept secret to protect the members from possible British reprisals.

[John Adams](#), credited by Thomas Jefferson as the unofficial, tireless [whip](#) of the independence-minded, wrote to his wife [Abigail](#) on [July 3, 1776](#):

The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to [God](#) Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.

Adams was off by two days, however. Certainly, the vote on July 2 was the decisive act. But July 4 is the date that Jefferson's stirring prose, as edited by the Congress, was officially adopted and was the first day Philadelphians heard any concrete news of independence from the Continental Congress, as opposed to rumors in the street about secret votes.

Observance

- In 1777, thirteen [guns](#) were fired, once at morning and again as evening fell, on July 4 in [Bristol, Rhode Island](#). Philadelphia celebrated the first anniversary in a manner a modern American would find quite familiar: an official dinner for the Continental Congress, toasts, 13-gun salutes, speeches, prayers, music, parades, troop reviews and fireworks. Ships were decked with red, white and blue bunting.
- In 1778, General [George Washington](#) marked the Fourth of July with a double ration of [rum](#) for his soldiers and an artillery salute. Across the [Atlantic Ocean](#), [ambassadors](#) John Adams and [Benjamin Franklin](#) held a dinner for their fellow Americans in [Paris, France](#).
- In 1779, July 4 fell on a Sunday. The holiday was celebrated on Monday, [July 5](#).
- In 1781, [Massachusetts](#) was the first [legislature](#) to recognize the Fourth of July.
- In 1783, Moravians in [Salem, North Carolina](#), held the first celebration of the Fourth of July in the country with a challenging music program assembled by Johann Friedrich Peter. This work was titled "The Psalm of Joy."
- In 1791 was the first recorded use of the name "Independence Day."
- In 1870, the [U.S. Congress](#) made Independence Day an unpaid holiday for federal employees.^[1]
- In 1941, Congress changed Independence Day to a paid federal holiday. The residents of [Vicksburg, Mississippi](#), celebrated the Fourth of July for the first time since July 4, [1863](#), when the [Siege of Vicksburg](#) ended with a Union victory during the [American Civil War](#).



GAP recently held its summer BAR B Q, it was enjoyed by all who attended.





Birthday wishes!!!

Melany 7-12-03

Anthony 7-4-04

Mykel 7-11-05

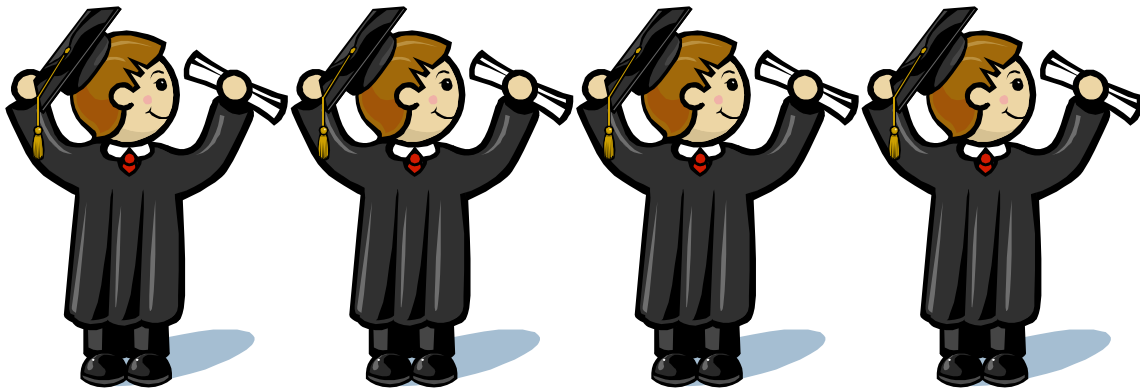
Jaylen 7-20-05



Nafiad 7-16-05

Mariama 7-24-06

Jrison 7-20-07



We are little gapers in all sizes big and small
We are little gapers learning growing great and tall
We are little gapers needing your helping hand
So come along with us and help us to be just the
Very best we can!

Congratulations to all GAP graduates!

Melany
Stephanie
Ana Isabel
Zakia
Yonas
Annabel
Marlenis
Jayla
Jayrah