

Veterans Day

Armistice Day Becomes Veterans Day

[World War I](#) officially ended on June 28, 1919, with the signing of the [Treaty of Versailles](#). The actual fighting between the Allies and Germany, however, had ended seven months earlier with the [armistice](#), which went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. Armistice Day, as November 11 became known, officially became a holiday in the United States in 1926, and a national holiday 12 years later. On June 1, 1954, the name was changed to Veterans Day to honor all U.S. veterans.

In 1968, new legislation changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. It soon became apparent, however, that November 11 was a date of historic significance to many Americans. Therefore, in 1978 Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

Iwo Jima Memorial, Washington, D.C



Tomb of the Unknowns

Official, national ceremonies for Veterans Day center around the [Tomb of the Unknowns](#).

To honor these men, symbolic of all Americans who gave their lives in all wars, an Army honor guard, the 3d U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard), keeps day and night vigil.

At 11 a.m. on November 11, a combined color guard representing all military services executes "Present Arms" at the tomb. The nation's tribute to its war dead is symbolized by the laying of a presidential wreath and the playing of "[Taps](#)."



Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Va

Thanksgiving

In the United States, Thanksgiving or Thanksgiving Day is an annual one-day legal holiday to express gratitude for the things one has at the end of the harvest season. It is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. The period from Thanksgiving Day to New Year's Day is often collectively referred to as the "*holiday season*."

Thanksgiving is generally considered a secular holiday, and is not directly based in religious canon or dogma. Though the holiday's origins can be traced to harvest festivals that have been celebrated in many cultures since ancient times, the American holiday has religious undertones related to the deliverance of the English settlers after the brutal winter at Plymouth. Most people celebrate by gathering at home with family or friends for a holiday feast. A tradition also exists to share the fruits of the harvest with those who are less fortunate.



In the United States, certain kinds of food are traditionally served at Thanksgiving meals. First and foremost, turkey is usually the featured item on any Thanksgiving feast table (so much so that Thanksgiving is sometimes referred to as "Turkey Day"). Stuffing, mashed potatoes with gravy, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, corn (maize), other fall vegetables, and pumpkin pie are commonly associated with Thanksgiving dinner. All of these primary dishes are actually native to the Americas or were introduced as a new food source to the

Europeans when they arrived.

The tradition of giving thanks to God is continued today in various forms. Religious and spiritual organizations offer services and events on Thanksgiving themes the week-end before, the day of, or the week-end after Thanksgiving.

In celebrations at home, it is a holiday tradition in many families to begin the Thanksgiving dinner by saying grace. Found in diverse religious traditions, grace is a prayer before or after a meal to express appreciation to God, to ask for God's blessing, or in some philosophies, to express an altruistic wish or dedication. The grace may be led by the hostess or host, as has been traditional, or, in contemporary fashion, each person may contribute words of blessing or thanks. According to a 1998 Gallup poll, an estimated 64 percent of Americans say grace.

On Thanksgiving Day, families and friends usually gather for a large meal or dinner, the result being that the Thanksgiving holiday weekend is one of the busiest travel periods of the year. In the United States, Thanksgiving is a four-day or five-day weekend vacation in school and college calendars. Most business and government workers (78% in 2007) are also given both Thanksgiving and the day after as paid holidays. Thanksgiving Eve, on the Wednesday night before, has been one of the busiest nights of the year for bars and clubs, both in terms of sales and volume of patrons, as many students have returned to their hometowns from college.



Bouquet of Thanks

'Tis the season to express everything you are thankful for. This simple project makes a wonderful centerpiece that's not only colorful, but interactive as well! Have your kids make these leaf cards and as your guests arrive, ask them to write what they are thankful for inside. Just before dinner, have everyone choose a card from the bouquet and take turns reading them out loud.

What you'll need:

- Construction paper (yellow, red, brown, green, and orange)
 - Scissors
 - Black Sharpie marker
 - Dowels and/or craft sticks
 - White craft glue
- Basket of your choice (weaved baskets work well)
 - Floral foam
 - Spanish or American moss
 - Wide decorative ribbon
- Leaf pattern - [See printable PDF of leaves](#) (*Requires Acrobat*)

How to make it:

1. Cut out leaves from pattern sheet or make your own.
2. Fold construction paper in half evenly.
3. Lay leaf pattern so that the end of the leaf rests on the crease.
4. Trace around the leaf pattern and cut it out, you should end up with leaf-shaped cards.
5. Write the name of each of your guests on the front of the leaves.
6. After your guests have written what they are thankful for inside the card, glue a dowel or craft stick to the back of it and let it dry.
7. Tie a piece of decorative ribbon around the rim of a basket.
8. Place a chunk of floral foam inside the basket and cover with moss.
9. As the sticks dry, insert them through the moss and into the floral foam.

Tips:

- Our pattern has three different leaves to accommodate different age groups. There is a simple oval-shaped leaf for small children, an intricate leaf for older kids, and one that falls in between the two. Choose patterns based on your child's age and comfort level.
- Parents can prepare the basket ahead of time in a matter of minutes. This will allow the children to concentrate on cutting and gluing.
- You may want to hot glue the floral foam inside the bottom of the basket to keep it from moving around as people begin "plucking" the bouquet. You can also hot glue the moss onto the foam if you like.



International Education Week is an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide. This joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education is part of our efforts to promote programs that prepare Americans for a global environment and attract future leaders from abroad to study, learn, and exchange experiences in the United States.

Participation of all individuals and institutions interested in international education and exchange activities, including schools, colleges and universities, embassies, international organizations, businesses, associations, and community organizations is encouraged.

For further information visit the official web site: <http://iew.state.gov/> or visit the official IEW Facebook page.

American Corner Bitola will organize various presentations in honor of IEW. Fulbright scholars and professors as well as former US students will talk about different international education topics.