

## Editor's notes:

September 2005, Volume 21-1

*Up from the meadows  
rich with corn,  
Clear in the cool  
September morn.*

-- John Greenleaf Whittier

September is named after the Latin word "septem," meaning "seven." September was the seventh month until 700 B.C.E. when Roman king Numa Pompilius switched from a 304-day calendar to a 365-day calendar.

Even though many parents everywhere are looking forward to children returning to school, here are a few other dates of interest this month:

**Two Provinces Join Canada, September 1** -- In 1905, the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan joined the Canadian Confederation after the purchase of an area known as Rupert's Land. Alberta is named after the fourth daughter of Queen Victoria; Saskatchewan is derived from Cree for "swift flowing river."

**Labour Day, September 5** -- This holiday honours working people throughout North America.

**Grandparents Day, September 10** -- Annually, the first Sunday after Labour Day is set aside to pay tributes to grandparents. The observance gives children an opportunity to know the strength, wisdom and guidance that older people have to offer.

**September 11** -- Private and public organizations will host memorial services to remember the 3,000 people killed in the attacks on the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon, as well as those who died in the fourth hijacked plane. This event has been called "Attack on America," though people of more than 80 nationalities were among the victims.

**First Day of Autumn, September 22** -- In the northern hemisphere, autumn begins on this day at 2:00 PM, EDT. The day's length --12 hours and 8 minutes -- is nearly identical everywhere on Earth except near the North and South poles.

## Seven Dangerous Words

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ignore	it	maybe	it	will	go	away

## Words of Wisdom

If you are looking for some special words to say to young people who are returning to school, you can't go wrong with Will Rogers. Here are a few of his gems:

- "Never miss a good chance to shut up."
- "If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging."
- "The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back in your pocket."
- "Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment."

## Pop(ular Culture) Quiz

Test your screen smarts! Which came first -- the television show or the movie?

1. M\*A\*S\*H
2. Star Trek
3. The Fugitive
4. Batman
5. The Avengers
6. Buffy the Vampire Slayer
7. Lassie
8. The Addams Family
9. The Odd Couple
10. Charlie's Angels

**Answers:** 1, 6, 7, and 9 were movies first; 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 10 originally debuted on TV.

## Contronyms

Sometimes a word can mean its own opposite! For example:

**dust:** to add fine particles (dust with powdered sugar) or to remove them (dust the table)

**left:** remaining (five cookies left) or departed from (he left the room)

**transparent:** invisible (the glass wall was transparent) or obvious (his motives were transparent)

**buckle:** fasten (buckle that seat belt) or fall apart (the pavement buckled)

**custom:** usual (her custom was to walk) or special (custom-built)

**snap:** break into pieces (the plastic snapped) or pull together (snap your jacket fasteners)

## Did you know . . . ?

♦ . . . that Easter Island, located in the South Pacific, is home to the famous “moai,” the native term for the nearly 900 monolithic statues that dot the island? They were carved out of soft volcanic rock between 1400 and 1600 AD.

Archaeologists speculate that they represent dead chiefs or ancestors and had spiritual significance. Interestingly, the statues face inland as opposed to the sea, perhaps symbolizing a watchful presence over the people. Only a third of the statues are in their final ceremonial locations. Nearly half are still in the quarry where they were carved; the rest are found in transit.

Different theories explain how the prehistoric natives moved the moai, with some believing that they were rolled on oiled palm logs and others holding that 70-man teams attached ropes to the statues and, through tugging and pulling, “walked” them to their final destinations. The average height is 13 feet tall; the average weight is 14 tons. The largest statue is nearly 72 feet high and weighs 145 tons.

♦ . . . the benefits of jumping rope? Do you want an easy, inexpensive way to improve your cardiovascular system, agility, coordination, and strength? Try jumping rope. All you need is a good pair of aerobic shoes and a jump rope. Look for a rope with enough weight to create an arc when you jump, and one that is long enough so that when you stand on the centre of the rope, the ends reach your armpits.

Be sure to keep your knees slightly bent and land on the balls of your feet -- not on the heels. Keep your eyes straight ahead and try not to move your arms too much. Fitness experts suggest beginning by jumping for 30 seconds and then jogging in place for 30 seconds and try to work up to 15 minutes of continuously jumping rope.

♦ . . . that the refrigerator is the result of decades of tinkering and invention in the latter part of the 19th century. The concept grew out of dissatisfaction with earlier “ice boxes,” wooden boxes lined with such materials as cork, sawdust, or seaweed. Of course, ice had to be added often and the melted water that collected in a drip pan had to be emptied.

Many inventors worked to create artificial refrigeration, exploiting the fact that evaporation of a liquid absorbs heat. London scientist Michael Faraday liquefied ammonia, which evaporates at a very low temperature, to cause cooling. In the mid-1800s, Ferdinand Carre of France invented a system in which ammonia was circulated by a compressor around the container to be kept cold. The first commercial use of refrigerators was for freezing and storing fish and in the brewing, dairy, and meat packing industries.

Railroad cars and grocery stores also used refrigeration. The first home refrigerator was patented in 1899. In 1915, the first “Guardian” home refrigerator was introduced. Guardian later became Frigidaire.

♦ . . . that common units of measurement were originally based on body parts? An inch was the width of a workingman’s thumb; a foot, the length of a man’s foot; and a yard, the length of a man’s belt. Later, in the 12th century, the English King Henry I decreed that a yard was the distance from the tip of his nose to the thumb of his extended arm.

♦ . . . that Helix Courier is 37 years old this month, on September 4, to be exact? Happy birthday to us, and many thanks to all of you, our friends and customers, who have made everything possible. We plan to be around for a long time to come and wish the same success for everyone who has used our services since 1968.

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