## The Rhythm of Spring

"It is spring again. The Earth is like a child that knows poems by heart." —Rainer Maria Rilke

#### **Dabble in Scrabble**

Have some F-U-N on April 13, National Scrabble Day. Fans of the popular board game often turn to "The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary," which was most recently updated in 2022 and now contains more than 100,000 words. Improve your Scrabble strategy by brushing up on two-letter words—they can often be placed to take advantage of double or triple score squares.

# Memorable Melody: 'Bette Davis Eyes'

This ode to one of Hollywood's most alluring leading ladies was first recorded in 1974 by Jackie DeShannon, who co-wrote the song with Donna Weiss. But fellow singer-songwriter Kim Carnes took the tune to the top of the charts in 1981 with her version, transforming the upbeat, bluesy number to a slower, synth-driven pop hit. Carnes' raspy voice was a match for the lyrics describing a glamorous, mesmerizing woman with eyes like the famous actress. The song was the biggest hit single of the year, spending several weeks at No. 1 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart and winning two Grammys. Thrilled with the song's success, Bette Davis wrote to Weiss, DeShannon and Carnes thanking them for making her "a part of modern times" and convincing her grandson that she had "finally made it"!

#### **Brainteaser**

Q: I have wings and I have a tail; across the sky is where I sail. Yet I have no eyes, ears or mouth, and I bob randomly from north to south. What am I?

A: A kite.

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## **Welcome to April**

The world is remembering its roots this month as spring starts turning everything green! No matter how fickle the weather may be, we always anticipate the new beginnings this freshest of months brings. Of course, April is full of other celebrations, like April Fools' Day (1st), Earth Day (22nd) and even National Velociraptor Awareness Day (18th). However you choose to have fun this month, we hope you enjoy the brightening days!

## **Penny for Your Thoughts**

You might have gotten more than you expected had someone said this phrase to you in 1787! That's when the U.S. Congress of the Confederation—which governed the emerging United States following the Revolutionary War—authorized its first penny: the Fugio cent. In addition to its monetary value, the copper coin also boasted some advice. "Mind Your Business," a proverb popularized by Benjamin Franklin, was engraved on the front, while the patriotic motto "We Are One" appeared on the back.





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## Groovy, Baby!

Rock some flares with flair! April 5 is Bell Bottoms Day.

# See a Solar Eclipse

On April 8, millions of people in the U.S. will have the chance to witness the spectacle of a total solar eclipse, when the moon will pass in front of the sun and darken the sky. This astronomical event will span across the continent from Mexico to northeastern Canada. In the path of totality, the darkness will last up to 4 1/2 minutes, nearly twice as long as the total solar eclipse in 2017. Even those outside the main path can experience a partial eclipse, where the moon will partially block the sun. Remember, you should never look directly at the sun during an eclipse event. Be sure to wear solar viewing glasses, use approved solar filters on cameras and binoculars, or view the eclipse indirectly with a pinhole camera.

"Tomorrow morning, when the sun shines through your window, choose to make it a happy day."
—Lynda Resnick



# Popular Pages: 'A Tree Grows in Brooklyn'

Much of the growing up in this 1943 novel isn't done by the tree in the title, but by the smart and sensitive young girl at the heart of the story. Francie Nolan lives with her family in a poor Brooklyn, N.Y., neighborhood in the early 1900s. Though times are tough, Francie's hardworking mother is determined that her children will get an education. The lessons Francie learns about family, love and loss resonated with readers, particularly World War II soldiers, who were given a paperback Armed Services Edition of the book. Thousands of GIs wrote fan letters to author Betty Smith, thanking her for providing comfort with her inspiring tale.

## **Natural Bridges National Monument**

They have been around for millennia, but the natural bridges of southeast Utah didn't become a national monument until April 16, 1908. The three bridges that make up the monument have gone through a number of name changes. Originally dubbed President, Senator and Congressman by Cass Hite, the prospector who introduced these natural wonders to the wider American public in 1883, the bridges were later renamed Augusta, Caroline and Edwin. The bridges were renamed again in 1909 when the park was expanded to include nearby Native American structures. The large stone formations now bear the Hopi names Sipapu ("the place of emergence"), Kachina (a reference to carved symbols that resemble Puebloan spirits) and Owachomo ("rock mound").

#### Mandala Meditation

From a Sanskrit word meaning "circle," a mandala is a popular tool used in meditation, often representing wholeness. You may have seen a mandala without realizing what it was. Simply stated, it is a circular shape filled with repeating geometric patterns. Creating your own mandala—by drawing at least three concentric circles, then filling in the spaces between the circles with various shapes—can be therapeutic and relaxing. Coloring or painting pre-drawn mandalas has the same effect.



## The Dish on Dandelions

Some see dandelions as unwelcome weeds, but this plant with its familiar bright yellow flower has many culinary uses. Its head, root and leaves are used in teas, soups, salads and jelly.

# April Is National Poetry Month

Whether you believe that poetry is merely "the best words in the best order" (Samuel Taylor Coleridge) or "language at its most distilled and most powerful" (Rita Dove), April is the month to celebrate this lyrical form of expression. Brush up on these interesting poetry facts to impress your friends with!

- The longest poem in the world—the Indian epic poem "The Mahabharata"—is around 1.8 million words long!
- "The Epic of Gilgamesh," from ancient Sumer, is one of the oldest surviving epic poems. Gilgamesh's adventures were written on stone tablets sometime in the second millennium B.C.
- One of the shortest poems ever written is by George MacDonald. At a brief two words, the poem is shorter than its title ("The Shortest and Sweetest of Songs")! Another contender is "Lines on the Antiquity of Microbes" by Strickland Gillilan, more commonly known as "Fleas." The Guinness Book of Records, though, recognizes Aram Saroyan as the winner, with his four-legged "m."





