

Outdoor recreation is an ideal way to exercise and enjoy memorable experiences with family and friends, and all across our country are scenic places that sports and nature enthusiasts can explore and help keep beautiful. During Great Outdoors Month and throughout the year, I encourage Americans to go camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, bird watching, boating, or to participate in other outdoor activities that are part of a healthy lifestyle.

The true strength of our Nation lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens, and I urge all Americans not only to visit our parks and recreation areas, but also to volunteer their time and talents to help maintain the beauty of our environment. Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility, it is a public value; and citizens who lend a hand to local parks and public lands are vital to the preservation of our Nation's many special places. Americans can take pride in the remarkable progress we continue to make in conserving our environment and natural resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2004 as Great Outdoors Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to participate in safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7796 of June 12, 2004

Flag Day and National Flag Week, 2004

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For more than 200 years, the American flag has served as a symbol of our country's enduring freedom and unity. Old Glory has welcomed generations of immigrants to America's shores and is displayed proudly on homes, at schools, and over businesses across our country. During times of war, our flag has rallied our citizens to defend the blessings of liberty at home and abroad. It has accompanied our troops into battle and been given to grieving families at the grave sites of fallen heroes. Today, as our brave men and women in uniform fight terrorism and advance freedom, the flag inspires patriotism and pride across our Nation and around the world.

Each year on June 14, we honor the American flag and recall the adoption of our first official national flag by the Continental Congress in 1777. The first Flag Day observances began quietly in the 19th century as State and local celebrations recognizing the anniversary of the Stars and Stripes. Inspired by these patriotic gatherings, President Woodrow Wilson established the first national observance by proclamation in 1916. To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by joint

resolution approved August 3, 1949, as amended (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as “Flag Day”; and requested that the President issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and for the display of the Flag of the United States on all Federal Government buildings. The Congress also requested, by joint resolution approved June 9, 1966, as amended (80 Stat. 194), that the President issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as “National Flag Week”; and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim June 14, 2004, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 13, 2004, as National Flag Week. I direct the appropriate officials to display the flag on all Federal Government buildings during that week, and I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day and National Flag Week by flying the Stars and Stripes from their homes and other suitable places. I also call upon the people of the United States to observe with pride and all due ceremony those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, also set aside by the Congress (89 Stat. 211), as a time to honor America, to celebrate our heritage in public gatherings and activities, and to publicly recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7797 of June 19, 2004

Father’s Day, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

A special bond exists between a father and his children. On Father’s Day, we recognize the important role fathers play in the American family, and we honor them for their strength, love, and commitment.

After listening to a church service on Mother’s Day 1909, Sonora Dodd proposed a day to honor fathers. She was inspired by the courage and sacrifice of her own father, a Civil War veteran, who reared six children by himself after his wife’s death. As others began to celebrate it, the idea for Father’s Day spread across America. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson officially proclaimed Father’s Day as a national observance.

Fathers have a duty to love their children with all their hearts and prepare them to be independent, compassionate, and responsible citizens. A father’s words and actions are critical in shaping the character of his children. A father’s love helps teach them right from wrong, explains to them the consequences of bad decisions, and strengthens them with encouragement.