



THANKSGIVING FACTS

- **The Native American tribe who celebrated the very first Thanksgiving with the pilgrims was the Wampanoag. They did not continue the tradition, however, but only held that one meal.**
- **Turkey, pumpkin pie, and potatoes were not eaten on the first Thanksgiving. However, venison (deer meat), lobster, corn, and spinach, were likely on the menu.**
- **The first Thanksgiving proclamation was issued by President George Washington. This led to the first Thanksgiving Day celebrated under the United States Constitution, on November 26, 1789. He meant it to be a day to celebrate our new constitution and country, and to give thanks that they had been established.**
- **Several other presidents named days of thanksgiving, with the dates and months varying.**
- **Thanksgiving was made official by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, in response to the decisive Union victory at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November every year.**
- **President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1939, tried to change the date to the second-to-last Thursday in November, to ensure that the Christmas shopping season would not be shortened. However, for two years there was conflict about it, with some people celebrating on the last Thursday and some on the second-to-last. Finally, Congress passed a resolution in 1941 stating that Thanksgiving would be celebrated on the last Thursday of November. Now it is a federally established holiday that would take another act of Congress to change.**
- **President George H.W. Bush formalized the tradition of a presidential pardon for one turkey every Thanksgiving in 1989. Every year since the current president has pardoned a turkey during November.**

