



River Oaks News

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From the White House Historical Association

A History of White House Presidential Turkey Pardons

Beginning with George Washington, many presidents declared their own days of thanksgiving before Abraham Lincoln made it an official holiday in 1863 and Franklin D. Roosevelt signed legislation in 1941 designating the fourth Thursday in November as the federal Thanksgiving Day holiday.

Reports of turkeys as gifts to American presidents can be traced back to the 1870s.

Turkey presentations at the White House became national news in the 1920s with accounts of turkeys taking exciting cross-country trips to the White House and arriving dressed for the occasion in goggles and sweaters, inside their decorated coops.

John F. Kennedy was the first to unofficially pardon a turkey

by telling attendees at the presentation, "Let's keep him going."

Patricia Nixon sent gifted turkeys to Oxon Hill Children's Farm, while Rosalynn Carter sent some to a Evans Farm Inn to live in a miniature zoo.

In 1989, the formalities of pardoning a turkey became a White House Thanksgiving tradition when George H.W. Bush remarked, "Let me assure you, and this fine tom turkey, that he will not end up on anyone's dinner table, not this guy -- he's granted a Presidential pardon as of right now -- and allow him to live out his days on a children's farm not far from here."

Since then, each year the president has pardoned a turkey or two in an official ceremony.

from Founders Online, National Archives and Records Administration

Thanksgiving Proclamation

New York, 3 October 1789

By the President of the United States of America, a
Proclamation.

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor - and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness."

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be - That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks - for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation - for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war - for the great degree of tranquillity, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed - for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been (continued on page 2)

Happy Thanksgiving!

May you & your family be blessed with prosperity, good health and happiness!

~ from the staff of the *River Oaks News* ~

Bo Underwood, Publisher

Emily Moxley, Editor

Vee Horn, Denise Honeycutt and John Loven

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Thanksgiving Proclamation (continued from page 1)

enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted - for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions - to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually - to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed - to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with

good government, peace, and concord - To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and us - and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New-York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

George Washington

**Happy
Thanksgiving**



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Publisher: Boyden Underwood, publisher@suburban-newspapers.com

Editor: Emily Moxley, suburbannews@sbcglobal.net

Classifieds: Vee Horn, ca.suburbannews@sbcglobal.net

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From the Sports Desk with John Loven

CHS Girls Basketball Rolls Past Diamond Hill

The Castleberry girls basketball team defeated Diamond Hill 50-33 on Tuesday, Nov. 16. It was a home game for the Lady Lions as the girls garnered their fourth victory of the young season.

Castleberry never trailed in this game and took a narrow lead (16-13) after the first quarter. The game was somewhat close for most of the contest, however, CHS eventually wore down the Lady Eagles. They outscored Diamond Hill every quarter and pulled away in the final quarter to win easily.

Katelyn Smith (#24) helped give CHS the early lead in the opening quarter. She scored 6 points in the quarter and dominated the boards. Castleberry's scoring was nice and spread out across the team as no less than six Lady Lions scored in the 1st quarter.

Castleberry continued to out-rebound Diamond Hill in the second quarter. Anna Medina (#34) dominated the play in the 2nd quarter for the Lady Lions. She was everywhere, rebounding, blocking shots, and leading fast breaks. She led the team with 5 points in the quarter to help give the Lady Lions a 29-21 halftime lead.

It was exciting to see the hustle by this year's team. They were moving well defensively, blocking shots and diving for loose balls. The third quarter was very slow for both teams as points were hard to come by. Castleberry only scored 7 points in the quarter, but they held Diamond Hill to just four. This resulted in the Lady Lions being able to stretch their lead a little further to 36-25 as they entered the final quarter.

Castleberry was able to put the game away in the fourth quarter. They scored the first two buckets of the quarter to push the lead to 40-25. Diamond Hill never threatened after this point and Castleberry coasted home to the 17-point victory, 50-33.

The Lady Lions had a very balanced attack for the night. They were led in scoring by the powerful duo of Anna Medina (#34) with 13 points and Katelyn Smith

(#24) with 12 points. They were followed by teammates Natalie Diaz (#2) with 7 points, Jackie Ortiz (#10) with 6 points, Emily Alba (#11) with 5 points, Daniela Benitez (#33) also with 5 points, and Anahi Silva with 2 points.

The Lady Lions (4-3) next home game will be on Tuesday, Nov. 30 and will take on Alvarado at 7:30 p.m. Come out and roar them on to victory.

Go Lady Lions!

From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

On This Day - Nov. 25

• **1487** – Elizabeth of York is crowned Queen of England.

• **1755** – King Ferdinand VI of Spain grants royal protection to the Beaterio de la Compañia de Jesus, now known as the Congregation of the Religious of the Virgin Mary.

• **1783** – American Revolutionary War: The last British troops leave New York City three months after the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

• **1863** – American Civil War - Battle of Missionary Ridge: At Missionary Ridge in Tennessee, Union forces led by General Ulysses S. Grant break the Siege of Chattanooga by routing Confederate troops under General Braxton Bragg.

• **1915** – Albert Einstein presents the field equations of general relativity to the Prussian Academy of Sciences.

• **1950** – The Great Appalachian Storm of 1950 impacts 22 American states, killing 353 people, injuring over 160, and causing US\$66.7 million in damages (1950 dollars).

• **1963** – President John F. Kennedy is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

• **1992** – The Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia votes to split the country into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, with effect from Jan. 1, 1993.

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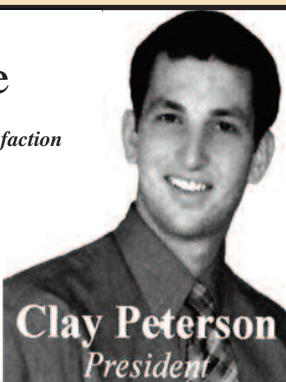
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Texas History Minute

Youngest U.S. Serviceman to Serve and Fight During World War II *by Dr. Ken Bridges*



During World War II, the United States was encouraging every able-bodied man to enlist. However, swept up in the patriotism of the time and seeing the dangers the nation faced, many boys under 18 also enlisted, often without the military ever realizing. The youngest of these enlistees was a 12-year-old Texas boy named Calvin Graham, who was decorated for bravery and for injuries at Guadalcanal.

Calvin Leon Graham was born on April 3, 1930, in Canton, east of Dallas. He was one of seven children into a troubled family that faced many hardships. His father died when he was still very young, and his mother remarried to a man Graham later described as very abusive. The family moved to Crockett, north of Houston, where Graham began attending the local schools.

At the age of 11, he ran away from home with an older brother – moving to a rented room across town. Being quite

resourceful, he managed to find work selling newspapers and working as a messenger while out of school. In August 1942, now 12, he enlisted in the navy. He told his mother he was going to live with distant relatives but instead had his grandmother lie about his age so he could enlist.

He showed up at his induction in Houston wearing his brother's suit and disguising his voice. In a story he recounted years later, Graham claimed he stood in line with a number of young boys he knew for certain were only 14 to 15. As part of the induction process, all recruits had to be examined by physicians and dentists to check their overall health.

Young men grow and physically mature at vastly different rates, making it possible to appear older or younger than their actual age. With dentistry, rates of maturity tend to be much more uniform, making it easier to determine chronological age from examining teeth. A navy dentist immediately saw that Graham could not be much older than 12, but Graham insisted he was 18 and pointed out that several minors had just been examined without questions as to their ages. So the 12-year-old boy talked a navy dentist into letting him enlist.

After his basic training, he was assigned as a gunner on the battleship USS South Dakota. In November 1942, the ship was sent into the bitter Guadalcanal campaign. In one fierce battle, the South Dakota found itself in a fight with eight Japanese destroyers. It sank (continued on page 5)



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Texas History Minute (continued from page 4)

three while suffering critical damage. Many sailors were killed or mangled until 1951 when his back was seriously injured in an accident on the South Dakota, and Graham spent most of the night trying to tend to as many of his wounded crewmates as possible even though he had minor injuries himself. For his valor, he was awarded the Bronze Star, and the entire crew was cited for their courage under fire. Graham also received the Purple Heart for his injuries. The South Dakota then limped back to port in December.

While the ship underwent repairs, he learned his grandmother had died. Distraught, he raced back to Texas, missing the funeral by one day. His mother learned by this point he had lied about his age and joined the navy. His problems only grew worse. Since he left his post without permission, the navy had him arrested and imprisoned him for three months for desertion, refusing to give him access to his family or an attorney. Since the navy believed what he initially said about his age, he could not get anyone to believe otherwise. Eventually, his mother and sister managed to get him released after threatening the navy with a publicity campaign.

The navy threw him out of the service, voiding his enlistment and stripping him of his medals and benefits. From the military's perspective, it could not have a child serving in combat. The law prohibited it, and the military could not be seen to be encouraging children to lie about their ages and enlist. He was released two days before his thirteenth birthday, now the youngest veteran of the war but with few prospects ahead of him.

His story was made into a popular made-for-TV movie in 1988, *Too Young the Hero*, starring Ricky Schroeder. However, even with the new acclaim he received from across the country, he was again denied his full due. Writers and agents took huge shares of the money he received for the rights to his story. In the end, he only received \$15,000.

International laws since the 1970s protect children from being forced into combat, though the practice does continue in isolated, war-torn nations. When it is discovered, it is prosecuted as a war crime. Graham's case was never one of malice but a story of a patriotic young boy looking for a better life away from a troubled home and seeing his country in need in a time of war.

Graham continued to have problems with his health in his later life. In November 1992, he died of heart failure at the age of 62 at a Fort Worth hospital. Afterward, the federal government finally returned his Purple Heart, presenting it to his widow in 1994.

One organization, the Veterans of Underage Military Service, founded in 1991, claims dozens of members who were between 13 and 16 who served in the military during World War II. The situation was not at all unique to the United States. The Axis Powers were notorious for using children in combat.

At the height of World War II, the Soviet Union drafted boys as young as 16. Even the British organized a home guard unit that included young boys aged 16 and 17.

Graham's story initially received some attention but faded from public view. He returned to Crockett with his family and attempted to return to school, but his view of the world had changed.

After having spent months dodging Japanese patrols, seeing men die, and literally holding the lives of his bloodied shipmates in his hands, eighth grade did not have much of an appeal. He dropped out of school and married in 1944, a union that produced one child before the couple divorced.

In 1948, Graham joined the Marines – legally. He served hon-



Fort Worth Veterans Day Parade

The City of Fort Worth held a Veterans Day Parade on Thursday, Nov. 11. Hundreds of spectators lined up on Forest Park Blvd. to wait with anticipation and excitement.

Fort Worth dignitaries, retired and active service men and women, several JROTC from various schools in our community and surrounding areas, horses and floats were enjoyed by everyone in attendance. It was a gorgeous and colorful day to remember all branches of the service.

Veterans Day is a federal holiday observed annually to honor military veterans of the armed forces. The holiday coincides with other holidays including Armistice Day (original name for Veterans Day) and Remembrance Day that is celebrated in other countries that mark the anniversary of the end of WW1.

Hostilities of WW1 formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. This holiday was renamed in 1954 to Veterans Day.

There's a difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Veterans Day celebrates service of all military veterans, while Memorial Day honors those who had died while in military service. Another holiday includes Armed Forces Day that honors those currently serving in the military.

Also, Women Veterans Day is noticed by a growing number of states that specifically honor women who have served in the armed forces as well.

To us, the reflection of Armistice Day is filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in our country's service, with gratitude for the victories, both because it has freed us and because of the opportunity given to America to show sympathy with peace and justice in the council of all nations.



The colors began the parade with the flags of military branches.



VFW Post 10429 members riding in the parade are: (l-r) Karen Toomer, Joanne Avanti, Alda Ollactillium and Judy McKinney.



The Special Forces Association came to support the occasion.

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Three Day Weekend Forecast



Friday, Nov. 26:

AM - Mostly sunny; high near 57. N/NW wind 5-10mph becoming S in the afternoon.
PM - Partly cloudy; low around 41. S/SW wind 5-10mph.



Saturday, Nov. 27:

AM - Mostly sunny; high near 66. SW wind 5-10mph.
PM - A 20% chance of showers. Partly cloudy; low around 45.



Sunday, Nov. 28:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 65.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 42.

Extended Forecast Click Here