



# American Corner

## Universidad de Tarapacá

November 2006 Vol. 7

## Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is the fourth Thursday in November, but many Americans take a day of vacation on the following Friday to make a four-day weekend, during which they may travel long distances to visit family and friends. The holiday dates back to 1621, the year after the Puritans arrived in Massachusetts, determined to practice their dissenting religion without interference.

After a rough winter, in which about half of them died, they turned for help to neighboring Indians, who taught them how to plant corn and other crops. The next fall's bountiful harvest inspired the Pilgrims to give thanks by holding a feast. The Thanksgiving feast became a national tradition -- not only because so many other Americans have found prosperity but also because the Pilgrims' sacrifices for their freedom still captivate the imagination. To this day, Thanksgiving dinner almost always includes some of the foods served at the first feast: roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, pumpkin pie. Before the meal begins, families or friends usually pause to give thanks for their blessings, including the joy of being united for the occasion.



### Turkey and More!

The centerpiece of contemporary Thanksgiving in the United States is a large meal, starring a large roasted turkey. All of the traditional dishes of Thanksgiving Dinner are made from foods native to North America, since the Pilgrims received these foods from the Indians. Here is some more information on Thanksgiving Day food.

**Turkey:** Because turkey is the most common main dish of a Thanksgiving dinner, Thanksgiving is sometimes colloquially called *Turkey Day* (USA). The USDA estimated that 269 million turkeys were raised in the country in 2003, about one-sixth of which were destined for a Thanksgiving dinner plate.

Most Thanksgiving turkeys are stuffed with bread crumbs and roasted. Sage is the traditional herb added to the stuffing (also called dressing), along with chopped celery and

onions. Turducken, a turkey stuffed with a duck stuffed with a chicken, is becoming more popular, from its Cajun base in Louisiana. Deep-fried turkey is rising in popularity as well, requiring special fryers to hold the large bird, and reportedly leading to fires and bad burns for those who aren't careful. In more recent years it is also true that as the wild population of turkeys has rebounded in most of the U.S., some will also hunt and dress their turkey in the woods and then freeze it until it is time to eat.

The use of the turkey in the USA for Thanksgiving relates back to Lincoln's nationalization of the holiday in 1863. Since a turkey could feed more than a chicken, those were sent to the troops instead as a more cost effective feast.

**Side Dishes:** Many other foods are served alongside the main dish—so many that, because

of the amount of food, the Thanksgiving meal is sometimes served midday or early afternoon to make time for all the eating, and preparation may begin at the crack of dawn or days before.

Traditional Thanksgiving foods are sometimes specific to the day, and although some of the foods might be seen at any semi-formal meal in the United States, the meal often has something of a ritual or traditional quality. Many Americans would say it's "incomplete" without cranberry sauce, stuffing, and gravy. Other commonly served dishes include sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, corn on the cob, green beans or green bean casserole, peas and carrots, bread rolls, and a Waldorf salad. For dessert, various pies are often served, particularly pumpkin pie, apple pie and sweet potato pie, and pecan pie, the latter two are particularly American.

There are also regional differences as to the "stuffing" (or "dressing") traditionally served with the turkey. Southerners generally make theirs from cornbread, while in other parts of the country white bread is the base. One or several of the following may be added: oysters, apples, chestnuts, raisins, celery and/or other vegetables, sausage or the turkey's giblets. The traditional Canadian version has bread cubes, sage, onion and celery. Rice is sometimes used instead of bread in Canada.

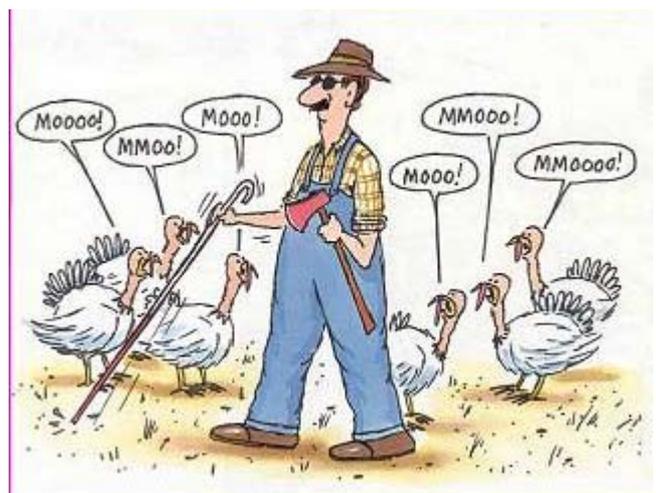
Other dishes reflect the region or cultural background of those who have come together for the meal. For example, many African Americans and Southerners serve baked macaroni and cheese and collard greens, while Italian-Americans often have lasagna on the table and Ashkenazi Jews may serve noodle kugel, a sweet pudding. It is not unheard of for Mexican Americans to serve their turkey with mole and roasted corn, and Irish-Americans have been known sometimes to substitute the turkey with prime rib of beef. Those of the

vegetarian or vegan persuasion have been known to come up with alternative entree centerpieces such as a large vegetable pie or a stuffed and baked pumpkin.

While the turkey stemmed in the USA from Civil War time cost effectiveness, side dishes came soon after. The sweet potato was added to the "Traditional dinner" to let Southerners feel welcome into the activity, while the same goes with cranberry sauce and the alienated Northeasterners.

**Drinks:** The variety of beverages served at Thanksgiving can vary just as much as the side dishes, often depending on who is present at the table and how many. Apple cider is often present (in the U.S. this drink is most often non-alcoholic), served either hot or cold, as is domestic wine, and cocktails occasionally may be served before the main meal is ready so people can relax and socialize. For children, soft drinks and grape juice are often favored at the table as it is generally frowned on for the very young to consume any alcohol. Coffee is often served with dessert.

## Thanksgiving Humor



## John F. Kennedy

"Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."



On November 22, 1963, when he was hardly past his first thousand days in office, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was killed by an assassin's bullets as his motorcade drove through Dallas, Texas. Kennedy was the youngest man elected President; he was the youngest to die.

Of Irish descent, he was born in Brookline, Massachusetts, on May 29, 1917. Graduating from Harvard in 1940, he entered the Navy. In 1943, when his PT boat was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer, Kennedy, despite grave injuries, led the survivors through perilous waters to safety.

Back from the war, he became a Democratic Congressman from the Boston area, advancing in 1953 to the Senate. He married Jacqueline Bouvier on September 12, 1953. In 1955, while recuperating from a back operation, he wrote *Profiles in Courage*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in history.

In 1956 Kennedy almost gained the Democratic nomination for Vice President, and four years later was a first-ballot nominee for President.

Millions watched his television debates with the Republican candidate, Richard M. Nixon. Winning by a narrow margin in the popular vote, Kennedy became the first Roman Catholic President.

His Inaugural Address offered the memorable injunction: "Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country." As President, he set out to redeem his campaign pledge to get America moving again. His economic programs launched the country on its longest sustained expansion since World War II; before his death, he laid plans for a massive assault on persisting pockets of privation and poverty.

Responding to ever more urgent demands, he took vigorous action in the cause of equal rights, calling for new civil rights legislation. His vision of America extended to the quality of the national culture and the central role of the arts in a vital society.

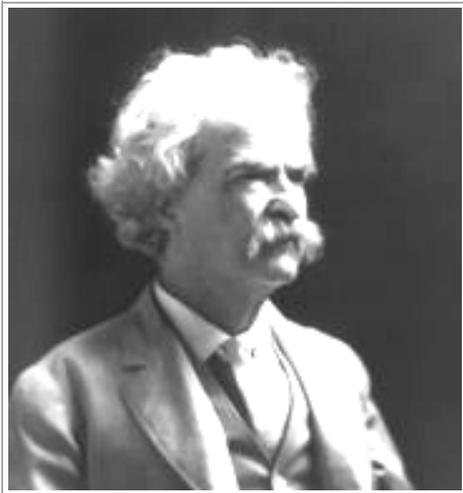
He wished America to resume its old mission as the first nation dedicated to the revolution of human rights. With the Alliance for Progress and the Peace Corps, he brought American idealism to the aid of developing nations. But the hard reality of the Communist challenge remained.

Shortly after his inauguration, Kennedy permitted a band of Cuban exiles, already armed and trained, to invade their homeland. The attempt to overthrow the regime of Fidel Castro was a failure. Soon thereafter, the Soviet Union renewed its campaign against West Berlin. Kennedy replied by reinforcing the Berlin garrison and increasing the Nation's military strength, including new efforts in outer space. Confronted by this reaction, Moscow, after the erection of the Berlin Wall, relaxed its pressure in central Europe.

Instead, the Russians now sought to install nuclear missiles in Cuba. When this was discovered by air reconnaissance in October 1962, Kennedy imposed a quarantine on all offensive weapons bound for Cuba. While the world trembled on the brink of nuclear war, the Russians backed down and agreed to take the missiles away. The American response to the Cuban crisis evidently persuaded Moscow of the futility of nuclear blackmail.

Kennedy now contended that both sides had a vital interest in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and slowing the arms race--a contention which led to the test ban treaty of 1963. The months after the Cuban crisis showed significant progress toward his goal of "a world of law and free choice, banishing the world of war and coercion." His administration thus saw the beginning of new hope for both the equal rights of Americans and the peace of the world.

## Samuel Clemens a.k.a. Mark Twain



Mark Twain was born in Florida, Missouri, on November 30, 1835, to John Marshall Clemens and Jane Lampton Clemens. When he was four, his family moved to Hannibal, a port town on the Mississippi River which later served as the inspiration for the fictional town of St. Petersburg in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Missouri had been admitted as a slave state in 1821 as part of the Missouri Compromise, and from an early age Twain was exposed to the institution of slavery, a theme which Twain was to later explore in his work.

Ironically enough, Twain was in fact colorblind, which fueled his witty banter in the social circles of the day. In 1847, when Twain was eleven, his father fell ill with pneumonia and died that March. As a teenager Twain worked as an apprentice printer; when he was sixteen,

he began writing humorous articles and newspaper sketches. When he was eighteen, he left Hannibal, working as a printer in New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Cincinnati. At the age of 22, Twain returned to Missouri and worked as a riverboat pilot and earned \$250 which was a "pricedly amount" back then, until trade was interrupted by the American Civil War in 1861.

Twain's greatest contribution to American literature is generally considered to be his novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. As Ernest Hemingway once said:

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. ...all American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since.

Also popular are *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* and the non-fiction book *Life on the Mississippi*. Beginning as a writer of light, humorous verse, Twain evolved into a grim, almost profane chronicler of the vanities, hypocrisies and murderous acts of mankind. At mid-career, with *Huckleberry Finn*, he combined rich humor, sturdy narrative, and social criticism in a way that is almost unrivaled in world literature. Twain was a master at rendering colloquial speech, and helped to create and popularize a



distinctive American literature built on American themes and language.

Twain is not only famous for his time tested writing. He is also remembered for his witty, thoughtful, and often humorous quotes and sayings. Here are some examples of his comments on his contemporary society.

### Quotes:

- "A habit cannot be thrown out the window, it must be coaxed down the stairs one step at a time" -Pudd' nhead Wilson's Calender
- "A man is never more truthful than when he acknowledges himself a liar" -Opie Read
- "Love your enemy; it'll scare the hell out of him" -Following the Equator
- "Classic. A book which people praise and don't read" - Pudd' nhead Wilson's Calender

- "Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society" -More Maxims of Mark
- "I have been complimented many times and they always embarrass me; I always feel that they have not said enough" -Speech, September 23, 1907
- "The lack of money is the root of all evil" - More Maxims of Mark
- "Rumors of my death have been greatly exaggerated" -Mark Twain, A Life
- "When angry, count to four. When very angry, swear" -Pudd' nhead Wilson's Calender
- "The human race, in its poverty, has unquestionably one really effective weapon—laughter" -The Mysterious Stranger

## Goings On in the American Corner

Over the past few months, the American Corner staff has been working hard to improve its programming schedule in an attempt to offer more to the public. We are proud to announce some of our most recent activities. Here is a brief description of what we are doing.

**Conversation Hour in English:** We now have two active sessions of English conversation practice where anyone can come and practice their conversation skills with the American Corner staff. Your level of English is not important. This is your chance to come and improve in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Conversation Hour in English meets on **Wednesday from 16:30 - 17:30** and on **Thursday from 11:20 - 12:20**.

**Fun and Games with English:** As many of you know, there is a place in the UTA main library called the "Rincón Infantil." The American Corner assistants (Graciela Rodriguez and Loreley Parra), along with a group of gracious volunteers (Paola Becker, Liza Villar, Jeanet Huaraya, Johanna Monroy, and Claudia Hott) have begun to meet daily with the children to play games and sing songs in English. Not only is this fun for the children, it also is a very early introduction to the world of English, which could serve them for the rest of their lives.

**Reforzar Inglés para Funcionarios de la Biblioteca:** We have seen here at the UTA that the campus has been welcoming more and more international visitors, especially from North America and Europe. This means more international visitors to the Main Library, as well. In order to be more accommodating, the American Corner is providing sessions for library workers to practice and improve their basic conversational English. That way, we will hopefully be able to better help that international academic who might be coming this way. The sessions meet once a week.

**Coming Soon!!:** English language documentaries in the American Corner. Please stay tuned for announcements.

## This Month in U.S. History

**November 1, 1848** - The first medical school for women opened in Boston. The Boston Female Medical School was founded by Samuel Gregory with just twelve students. In 1874, the school merged with the Boston University School of Medicine, becoming one of the first co-ed medical schools.

**November 2, 1947** - The first and only flight of Howard Hughes' "Spruce Goose" flying boat occurred in Long Beach Harbor, California. It flew about a mile at an altitude of 70 feet. Costing \$25 million, the 200 ton plywood eight-engine Hercules was the world's largest airplane, designed, built and flown by Hughes.

**November 2, 1734** - American frontiersman Daniel Boone (1734-1820) was born in Berks County, near Reading, Pennsylvania.

**November 4, 1979** - About 500 young Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran and took 90 hostages, including 52 Americans that they held captive for 444 days.

**November 6, 1860** - Abraham Lincoln was elected as the 16th U.S. President and the first Republican.

**November 7, 1944** - President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to an unprecedented fourth term, defeating Thomas E. Dewey. Roosevelt died less than a year later on April 12, 1945.

**November 8, 1656** - Astronomer and mathematician Edmund Halley (1656-1742) was born in London. He sighted the great comet of 1682 (now named Halley's Comet) and foretold its reappearance in 1758. Halley's Comet appears once each generation with the average

time between appearances being 76 years. It is expected to be visible again in 2061.

**November 8, 1990** - *Gone With the Wind* author Margaret Mitchell was born in Atlanta, Georgia. Her romantic novel about the U.S. Civil War sold over 10 million copies and was translated into 30 languages.

**November 11, 1938** - Irving Berlin's *God Bless America* was first performed.

**November 12, 1929** - Grace Kelly (1929-1982) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was an award winning actress who left Hollywood in 1956 to marry Prince Rainier, becoming Princess Grace of Monaco. She died of injuries from an automobile accident, September 12, 1982.

**November 13, 1942** - The five Sullivan Brothers from Waterloo, Iowa, were lost in the sinking of the cruiser *USS Juneau* by a Japanese torpedo off Guadalcanal during World War II in the Pacific. Following their deaths, the U.S. Navy changed regulations to prohibit close relatives from serving on the same ship.

**November 13, 1956** - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial segregation on public buses was unconstitutional.

**November 14, 1765** - Steamboat developer Robert Fulton (1765-1815) was born in rural Pennsylvania.

**November 15, 1969** - The largest antiwar rally in U.S. History occurred as 250,000 persons gathered in Washington, DC, to protest the Vietnam War.

**November 15, 1869** - American artist Georgia O'Keeffe (1869-1986) was born in Sun Prairie,



Wisconsin. She painted desert landscapes and flower studies and was the subject of more than 500 photographs taken by her husband, photographer Alfred Stieglitz.

**November 17, 1800** - The U.S. Congress met for the first time in the new capital at Washington, DC. President John Adams then became the first occupant of the Executive Mansion, later renamed the White House.

**November 18, 1883** - A Connecticut school teacher, Charles F. Dowd, proposed a uniform time zone plan for the U.S. consisting of four zones.

**November 19, 1863** - President Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address during ceremonies dedicating 17 acres of the Gettysburg Battlefield as a national cemetery. Famed orator Edward Everett of Massachusetts preceded Lincoln and spoke for two hours. Lincoln then delivered his address in under two minutes. Although many in attendance were at first unimpressed, Lincoln's words have come to symbolize the definition of democracy itself.

**November 19, 1998** - The U.S. House of Representatives began an impeachment inquiry of President Bill Clinton, only the third presidential impeachment inquiry in U.S. History - the other two being of President Andrew Johnson in 1868 and President Richard Nixon in 1974.

**November 21, 1925** - Robert F. Kennedy (1925-1968) was born in Brookline, Mass. He was the younger brother of President John F. Kennedy and served as his attorney general. Following the assassination of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy became a U.S. Senator from New York. In 1968, he sought the Democratic nomination for president and appeared headed for victory, but was shot and killed by an assassin in Los Angeles, just after winning the California primary.

**November 22, 1718** - Blackbeard the pirate (Edward Teach) was killed off the coast of

North Carolina after a long and prosperous career.

**November 23, 1859** - Wild West outlaw Billy the Kid (1859-1881) was born in New York City (probably as Henry McCarty, better known as William H. Bonney). He was a ruthless killer who escaped from jail and a sentence of hanging at age 21. He was recaptured at Stinking Springs, New Mexico, but escaped again. At Fort Sumner, on the night of July 14, 1881, he reportedly asked, "Who's there?" only to be shot twice through the heart by Sheriff Pat Garrett.

**November 24, 1859** - Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was first published, theorizing that all the living creatures descended from a common ancestor.

**November 24, 1874** - Joseph Glidden patented his invention of barbed wire.

**November 25, 1835** American financier Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was born in Dunfermline, Scotland. He emigrated to America, made his fortune in steel, then became a major philanthropist. Among his gifts: over 2,500 libraries, Carnegie Hall, Carnegie Foundation, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He once wrote, "The man who dies rich dies disgraced."

**November 26, 1832** - The first horse-drawn streetcar carried passengers in New York City along Fourth Avenue between Prince Street and 14th Street.

**November 26, 1832** - American physician and women's rights leader, Mary Edwards Walker (1832-1919) was born in Oswego, New York. She was the first female surgeon in U.S. Army, serving during the Civil War. She was captured and spent four months in a Confederate prison. In 1865, she became the first and only woman ever to receive the Medal of Honor.

## Book of the Month

Mi Vida

By Bill Clinton

"[Éste libro] es un retrato cándido de un líder global quien decidió desde muy joven dedicar su vida, sus dotes intelectuales y políticas y su extraordinaria capacidad para el trabajo al bien público. Esta obra supone el relato más completo y detallado jamás escrito por un presidente, y demuestra el impacto positivo que su obra y sus ideales tuvieron en la escena norteamericana y mundial.

Describe la vida de una gran figura nacional e internacional, revelada con todas su talento y todas sus contradicciones. Repleto de momentos e intuiciones fascinantes, el libro está escrito en un estilo directo y abierto, en la voz completamente reconocible del Presidente Clinton".

**Reforzar Inglés w/ Funcionarios de la Biblioteca**  
- Friday (11:00 - 12:00) in the Sala de Conferencias

## American Corner Hours

Monday through Friday

10:00 - 13:00

and

15:00 - 18:00

**Contact US!!**

Email: [americancorner@uta.cl](mailto:americancorner@uta.cl)

Telephone: 205929

Or Come See Us on the Second of El Anexo del Biblioteca, Campus Saucache.

## Important Dates to Remember

**November** - Native American Heritage Month

**November 1** - All Saints Day

**November 11** - Veterans Day

**November 23** - Thanksgiving Day

**November 25** - Internal Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

## Current American Corner Activities

**Conversation Hour** - Wednesday (16:30 - 17:30) & Thursday (11:20 - 12:20) in the American Corner.

**Fun & Games in English** - Monday to Friday (10:00-10:30 & 16:30-17:00) in the Rincón Infantil.

## Sources

Thanksgiving

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John F. Kennedy

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Mark Twain

- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark\\_Twain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Twain)

This Month in U.S. History

- [www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/index.html](http://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/index.html)