

TEA BUDS; JULY

## AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY

Sept. 3, 1986, the US House of Representatives presented a joint resolution naming the rose the national floral emblem of the United States.

The measure was signed by President Ronald Reagan and on Nov. 20, 1986, the rose officially became America's floral symbol. (This is a proclamation, not a law)

"More than any other flower, we hold the rose dear as the symbol of life, love, and devotion, of beauty and eternity. Americans who would speak the language of the heart, do so with a rose." R. Reagan

George Washington was a breeder of roses and one of the most enduring is named after his mother, the Mary Washington Rose. The White House also has a large rose garden. In 1902, First Lady Edith Roosevelt insisted on a "proper colonial garden" with flowers. Before that time it was a groomed lawn with trees. In 1913 First Lady Ellen Wilson began planting roses in the garden and the Rose Garden was born! President Kennedy had the gardens redesigned in 1961 to become more defined with border flowers and hedges.

We learn in history that our country is named for explorer Americo Vespucci. In Latin languages, names ending in the "o" are masculine and those ending in "a" are feminine. Checking the world over, continents names are traditionally feminine.

Therefore we are America, not AmericO.

## THE BALD EAGLE

The bald eagle was proposed as a symbol of America as early as 1782 when drawings of the birds were presented to congress. It was officially adopted as our national bird in 1787, because of its association with authority and power (Roman Senate).

President Kennedy said, "The founding fathers made an appropriate choice when they selected the Bald Eagle as the emblem of the nation. The fierce beauty and proud independence of this great bird aptly symbolize the strength and freedom of America."

Designing the Great Seal of America was no easy task. Three brilliant men were first assigned the task in 1776; Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams. They failed. A second committee was assigned the task in 1780. They also failed as did the third committee in 1782. Finally the job was given to Charles Thomson, an orphan, who submitted his idea to congress and it was immediately accepted!

The initial drawing of the eagle looked a lot like a turkey. Franklin, seeing the depiction, wrote a letter stating that the turkey would indeed be a better choice. Mr. Franklin's ideas of the Great Seal, however, included a rattle snake, Moses leading his people out of Egypt, and a sphinx. Also, he wrote his letter, not to congress, but to his daughter. On June 20, 1782, the Bald Eagle became our national symbol.

The national tree of America is the OAK TREE

The official recognition of the oak as America's National Tree reflected a vote hosted by the National Arbor Day Foundation on its website.



The U.S. is blessed with a wealth of tree species, more than twice as many as all of Europe, and trees have played a key role in our history. The oak has long been an enduring and mighty tree, truly a part of our national heritage.

This was reflected in a 4 month long open voting process. In the end, the oak finished a clear victor with 101,000 votes from across America. The runner-up, the Redwood, had 81,000 votes. Other trees in the top five were the Dogwood, the Line, and the Maple.

There are more than 60 species of Oak growing in the U.S., making oaks America's most wide spread hardwood, prized for its strength, its beauty, and its lumber.

#### TABLE DECORATIONS;

I use a solid color table cloth, either red, white, or blue. I use contrasting napkins and paper plates. Baskets of red, white, and blue petunias are very popular this time of year and also inexpensive. Also there are some very cheap tinsel sticks at the Dollar Store that I stick in the basket to liven it up.

Small flags make great decorations when placed in a circle around the basket of flowers. Stands for the flags can be easily made using a 1x2 board cut into 2 inch lengths with a hole drilled in the center of each piece.

## MENU;

Triangles of watermelon on popsicle sticks or, watermelon chunks served in a bowl

Red, white, and blue layered jell-o or if you can't make the white jell-o simply use red and blue jell-o with cool whip

Red berries, blue berries, and cool whip in a clear dessert dish

Angel food cake with berries and cool whip

Sweetened Raspberry tea; cold

Any red tea, hot (Madagascar Vanilla Red is very good)