

Birthday

02-17-2014 by Harry Zirkelbach

There have been 44 Presidents of these United States. All sought this role. There is nothing to indicate they did not perform to the best of their intent, hope, ability.

Windsor Garden residents who raised the American and Colorado flags outside the entrance to their home this morning, honored the Office of President, knew a few Presidents, probably never met any. Honored today is the allegiance all Presidents had to the country they strove maintain, improve.

In 1879 Congress adopted George Washington's birthday as a Federal holiday. On January 1, 1971 that date was moved to the third Monday of February, and renamed Presidents Day. Since that day falls yearly between 17 and 21 February, it will never fall on Washington's birthday.

Today is forever 17 February 2014; no President was born this date. It happens that two Presidents were February babies, George Washington (2/22) the first, then Abraham Lincoln (2/12), the 16th. Lincoln's birthday was never recognized by Federal Law as a national holiday. And in the 1971 re-dedication, this holiday was designated Presidents' Day; by law, the date now recognizes the Presidency, not any individual.

So, formally, no singing Happy Birthday to any President on Presidents' day.

Which many must consider regrettable, considering that for years Americans have spent time rating the effectiveness of 44 men hailed as "Mr. President".

And time has not eroded the reputation of these two February births. Historians sometimes switch first and second pedestal position, between George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Washington, "The Father of our Country". Lincoln, "Preserver of our Union". Both heroic in every trying situation.

So today as we go about the remembrance of President's Day, let the Office be celebrated while enjoying the National Holiday. At the same time we remember the 44 giants who have sat that office, our care ever in their hands.

These 44 Presidents were elected from 18 States. Remembering their birth state, this number increases to 21. And the first 30 Presidents all represented states

east of the Mississippi River; for the next 14, only six represented states east of the Mississippi.

When asked, Americans will mention their favorite President, perhaps someone of recent vintage, for the faces of Thomas Jefferson and Teddy Roosevelt share the South Dakota Mount Rushmore rock with Lincoln and Washington.

A Postscript.

While we celebrate no President's birth today, there are an estimated 858,000 Americans celebrating their birth today.

Today I welcome and celebrate the 33,211th day of my life, and 92nd birthday.

