

PURE SPECULATION

By Joan Black

So far as I can ascertain, there has never been any formal ceremony for the naming of our great nation. For example - nobody ever cracked a bottle of champagne on Cape Cod or Plymouth Rock or Tijuana or Ipa Nima or Rio de Janeiro, and said "May God bless thee & all who live here." There were never any fireworks or a drum roll or bugle call. Nobody ever proclaimed to a large crowd that henceforth their homeland would be known by the given name of an Italian turned Spaniard. Native inhabitants did not petition to have the Explorer immortalized even though so far as we know, they did not have a formal name for the Continent on which they lived. The decision to quit referring to that large lump of land off to the West by the somewhat innocuous, all embracing, vague title of 'The New World' was made, it seems, somewhere around 1507, between Amerigo Vespucci's 5th & 6th voyages, by an obscure cartographer named Martin Waldseemutter who drew a map consisting of a large square joined to an elongated triangle by a thin peninsula and arbitrarily wrote across it the name 'AMERICA' - which he said was the feminized version of Amerigo - and the reason he feminized it? Simply because Europe had been named after the FEMALE god Europa.

What we need is yet another Holiday – Hallmark can design cards, Nestles can package candy, florists can sell bouquets, Big Box Stores can hold sales, Dads everywhere can fire up the BBQ, cars can clog roads – all to be thankful for the fact that Senora Vespucci did not name her son Alphonso.

Just speculating!