



Name _____

Father's Day History

Read about how Father's Day as we know it came about and answer the questions that follow.

Father's Day as we know it, is not even a hundred years old. We can give thanks for this national holiday to Ms. Sonora Louise Smart Dodd of Washington State. Because of her hard work and struggle we have a day set aside just for Dad, just as we do for Mom.

The idea of Father's Day popped into Sonora's mind when she happened to listen to a Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Sonora felt that if there is a day to honor mothers, then why not for fathers? Sonora felt strongly about this because of the affection she received from her own father, Mr. William Jackson Smart who was a Civil War veteran. Sonora's mother died during childbirth when she was just 16. Mr. Smart raised Sonora as a newborn and five older children with love and care.

Just like Anna Jarvis-the woman that started Mother's Day- Sonora Dodd began a rigorous campaign to celebrate Father's Day in the US. The Spokane Ministerial Association and the local Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) supported Sonora's cause. As a result, Spokane celebrated its first Father's Day on June 19, 1910. Though there was initial hesitation, the idea gained gradual popularity all over the US and Father's Day came to be celebrated in cities across the country.

Looking at the heightened popularity of Father's Day in the US, President Woodrow Wilson approved of this idea in 1916. President Calvin Coolidge also supported the idea of a national Father's Day in 1924 in order to, "establish more intimate relations between fathers and their children and to impress upon fathers the full measure of their obligations". After a struggle of over four decades (that's 40 years), President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day in 1966. Then in 1972, President Richard Nixon established this day officially as a permanent national holiday. Sonora Smart Dodd was honored for her contribution for this national holiday at the World's Fair in Spokane in 1974.

Questions

1. In what year did Father's Day officially become a national holiday? _____
2. Who started the campaign to have Father's Day? _____
3. Which President made Father's Day official on the national calendar? _____
4. Name three Presidents that supported the idea of Father's Day? _____

5. When is Father's Day? _____