

# 1958 in the United States

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Events from the year **1958 in the United States**.

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## Incumbents

### Federal Government

- President: Dwight D. Eisenhower (R-Kansas/New York)
- Vice President: Richard Nixon (R-California)
- Chief Justice: Earl Warren (California)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Sam Rayburn (D-Texas)
- Senate Majority Leader: Lyndon B. Johnson (D-Texas)
- Congress: 85th

## Governors and Lieutenant Governors

### Governors

- Governor of Alabama: Jim Folsom (Democratic)
- Governor of Arizona: Ernest McFarland (Democratic)
- Governor of Arkansas: Orval Faubus (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Goodwin Knight (Republican)
- Governor of Colorado: Stephen L. R. McNichols (Democratic)
- Governor of Connecticut: Abraham A. Ribicoff (Democratic)
- Governor of Delaware: J. Caleb Boggs (Republican)
- Governor of Florida: LeRoy Collins (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: Marvin Griffin (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: Robert E. Smylie (Republican)
- Governor of Illinois: William G. Stratton (Democratic)
- Governor of Indiana: Harold W. Handley (Republican)
- Governor of Iowa: Herschel C. Loveless (Democratic)
- Governor of Kansas: George Docking (Democratic)
- Governor of Kentucky: Happy Chandler (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Earl K. Long (Democratic)
- Governor of Maine: Edmund Muskie (Democratic)
- Governor of Maryland: Theodore R. McKeldin (Republican)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Foster Furcolo (Democratic)
- Governor of Michigan: G. Mennen Williams (Democratic)
- Governor of Minnesota: Orville L. Freeman (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: James P. Coleman (Democratic)
- Governor of Missouri: James T. Blair, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: J. Hugo Aronson (Republican)
- Governor of Nebraska: Victor E. Anderson (Republican)
- Governor of Nevada: Charles H. Russell (Republican)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Lane Dwinell (Republican)
- Governor of New Jersey: Robert B. Meyner (Democratic)
- Governor of New Mexico: Edwin L. Mechem (Republican)
- Governor of New York: W. Averell Harriman (Democratic) (until end of December 31)
- Governor of North Carolina: Luther H. Hodges (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: John E. Davis (Republican)
- Governor of Ohio: C. William O'Neill (Republican)
- Governor of Oklahoma: Raymond D. Gary (Democratic)
- Governor of Oregon: Robert D. Holmes (Democratic)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: George M. Leader (Democratic)
- Governor of Rhode Island: Dennis J. Roberts (Democratic)
- Governor of South Carolina: George Bell Timmerman, Jr. (Democratic)
- Governor of South Dakota: Joe Foss (Republican)
- Governor of Tennessee: Frank G. Clement (Democratic)
- Governor of Texas: Price Daniel (Democratic)
- Governor of Utah: George Dewey Clyde (Republican)
- Governor of Vermont: Joseph B. Johnson (Republican)
- Governor of Virginia: Thomas Bahnon Stanley (Democratic) (until January 11), James Lindsay Almond, Jr. (Democratic) (starting January 11)
- Governor of Washington: Albert D. Rosellini (Democratic)
- Governor of West Virginia: Cecil H. Underwood (Republican)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Vernon W. Thomson (Republican)
- Governor of Wyoming: Milward L. Simpson (Republican)

### Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: William G. Hardwick (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Nathan Green Gordon (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Harold J. Powers (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: Frank L. Hays (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Charles W. Jewett (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: David P. Buckson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: S. Ernest Vandiver (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: J. Berkeley Larsen (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: John William Chapman (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Crawford F. Parker (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: William H. Nicholas (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Joseph W. Henkle, Sr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Harry Lee Waterfield (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Lether Frazar (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Robert F. Murphy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: Philip A. Hart (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Karl Rolvaag (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Carroll Gartin (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: Edward V. Long (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Paul Cannon (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Dwight W. Burney (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Rex Bell (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: vacant
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: George DeLuca (Democratic) (until end of December 31)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: Luther E. Barnhardt (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Francis Clyde Duffy (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: Paul M. Herbert (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: Cowboy Pink Williams (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Roy E. Furman (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: Armand H. Cote (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: Ernest Hollings (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: L. Roy Houck (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: Jared Maddux (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: Ben Ramsey (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: Robert T. Stafford (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: Allie Edward Stokes Stephens (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: John Cherberg (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Warren P. Knowles (Republican)

## Events

### January–March

- January 8 – 14-year-old Bobby Fischer wins the United States Chess Championship.
- January 13 – In *One, Inc. v. Olesen*, the Supreme Court affirms that homosexual writing is not *per se* obscene.
- January 18 – Battle of Hayes Pond: Armed Lumbee Indians confront Klansmen in Maxton, North Carolina.
- January 28 – Hall of Fame baseball player Roy Campanella is involved in an automobile accident that ends his career and leaves him paralyzed.
- January 31 – The first successful American satellite, Explorer 1, is launched into orbit.
- February 5 – The Tybee Bomb, a 7,600 pound (3,500 kg) Mark 15 hydrogen bomb, is lost in the waters off Savannah, Georgia.
- February 11 – Ruth Carol Taylor is the first African American woman hired as a flight attendant. Hired by Mohawk Airlines, her career lasts only six months, due to another discriminatory barrier—the airline's ban on married flight attendants.
- February 20 – A test rocket explodes at Cape Canaveral.



January 31:  
Explorer 1, the first  
American satellite

- February 28 – Prestonsburg, Kentucky bus disaster: One of the worst school bus accidents in U.S. history occurs at Prestonsburg, Kentucky; 27 are killed.
- March 8 – The USS *Wisconsin* is decommissioned, leaving the United States Navy without an active battleship for the first time since 1896 (it is recommissioned October 22, 1988).
- March 11 – 1958 Mars Bluff B-47 nuclear weapon loss incident: A U.S. B-47 bomber accidentally drops an atom bomb on Mars Bluff, South Carolina. Its conventional explosives destroy a house and injure several people, but no nuclear fission occurs.
- March 17 – The United States launches the Vanguard 1 satellite.
- March 19 – Monarch Underwear Company fire in New York.
- March 24 – The U.S. Army inducts Elvis Presley, transforming The King Of Rock & Roll into U.S. private #53310761.
- March 26
  - The United States Army launches Explorer 3.
  - The 30th Academy Awards ceremony took place; *The Bridge on the River Kwai* wins 7 Academy Awards, including Academy Award for Best Picture.

## April–June

- April – Unemployment in Detroit reaches 20%, marking the height of the Recession of 1958 in the United States.
- April 15 – The San Francisco Giants beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 8–0 at San Francisco's Seals Stadium, in the first Major League Baseball regular-season game ever played in California.
- April 21 – A United Airlines DC-7 and U.S. Air Force F-100 Super Sabre fighter jet collide near Las Vegas, Nevada, killing all 49 aboard the two aircraft.
- May 9 – Actor-singer Paul Robeson, whose passport has been reinstated, sings in a sold-out one-man recital at Carnegie Hall. The recital is such a success that Robeson gives another one at Carnegie Hall a few days later. But after these two concerts, Robeson is seldom seen in public in the United States again. His Carnegie Hall concerts are later released on records and on CD.
- May 12 – A formal North American Aerospace Defense Command agreement is signed between the United States and Canada.
- May 13 – During a visit to Caracas, Venezuela, Vice President Richard M. Nixon's car is attacked by anti-American demonstrators.
- May 20 – A Capital Airlines airliner and Air National Guard jet collide near Brunswick, Maryland, killing 12.[1] (<http://aviation-safety.net/database/record.php?id=19580520-1>)
- May 23 – Explorer 1 ceases transmission.
- May 30 – The bodies of unidentified soldiers killed in action during World War II and the Korean War are buried at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.
- June 2 – In San Simeon, California, Hearst Castle opens to the public for guided tours.
- June 17 – The US slams the execution of Imre Nagy as a "shocking act of cruelty".

## July–September

- July – The plastic hula hoop is first marketed.
- July 7 – President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs the Alaska Statehood Act into United States law.
- July 9 – 1958 Lituya Bay megatsunami: A 7.8 Mw strike-slip earthquake in Southeast Alaska causes a landslide that produces a megatsunami. The runup from the waves reached 525 m (1,722 ft) on the rim of Lituya Bay.

- July 15 – During the 1958 Lebanon crisis, 5,000 United States Marines land in the capital Beirut in order to protect the pro-Western government there.
- July 29 – The U.S. Congress formally creates the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
- August 3 – The nuclear powered submarine USS *Nautilus* becomes the first vessel to cross the North Pole under water.
- August 17 – The first Thor-Able rocket is launched, carrying Pioneer 0, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station Launch Complex 17. The launch fails due to a first stage malfunction.
- August 18 – Vladimir Nabokov's controversial novel *Lolita* is published in the United States.
- August 23 – President Dwight D. Eisenhower of the USA signs the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, transferring all authority over aviation in the USA to the newly created Federal Aviation Agency (FAA, later renamed Federal Aviation Administration).
- August 27 – Operation Argus: The United States begins nuclear tests over the South Atlantic.



## October–December

- October 1 – NASA starts operations and replaces the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.
- October 11 – Pioneer 1, the second and most successful of the three-project Able space probes, becomes the first spacecraft launched by the newly formed NASA.
- November 23 – *Have Gun, Will Travel* debuts on American radio.
- December 1 – Our Lady of the Angels School fire: At least 90 students and 3 nuns are killed in a fire at Our Lady of the Angels School in Chicago.
- December 6 – A third Thor-Able rocket launch, carrying the Pioneer 2 probe, is unsuccessful due to a third-stage ignition failure.
- December 9 – The right-wing John Birch Society is founded in the U.S. by Robert W. Welch, Jr., a retired candy manufacturer.
- December 19 – A message from President Dwight D. Eisenhower is broadcast from SCORE, the world's first communications satellite, launched by the U.S. the previous day.
- December 25 – Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker* (the George Balanchine version) is shown on prime-time television in color for the first time, as an episode of the CBS anthology series *Playhouse 90*.
- December 28 – 1958 NFL Championship Game: The Baltimore Colts beat the New York Giants 23–17 in overtime to win the NFL Championship.

## Undated

- Based on birth rates (per 1,000 population), the post-war baby boom ends in the United States as an 11-year decline in the birth rate begins (the longest on record in that country).
- Illinois observes the centennial of the Lincoln-Douglas Debates.
- USA, USSR and Great Britain agree to stop testing atomic bombs for 3 years.
- Robert Frank publishes his photographic essay *The Americans* (in Paris)

## Ongoing

- Cold War (1945–1991)

- Space Race (1957–1975)

## Births

- January 1 – Grandmaster Flash, born Joseph Saddler, African American hip-hop/rap DJ
- January 4
  - Andy Borowitz, comedian and author
  - Jim Powers, wrestler
- January 26
  - Anita Baker, African American soul and R&B singer
  - Ellen DeGeneres, screen actress and comedian
- February 16 – Ice-T, born Tracy Marrow, rapper
- February 17 – Alan Wiggins, baseball player (died 1991)
- February 26
  - Susan J. Helms, astronaut
  - Tim Kaine, U.S. Senator from Virginia from 2013
- March 10 – Sharon Stone, film actress
- March 20 – Holly Hunter, film actress
- March 25 – John Ensign, U.S. Senator from Nevada from 2001 to 2011
- April 3 – Alec Baldwin, actor, producer and comedian
- April 21 – Andie MacDowell, screen actress
- April 29 – Michelle Pfeiffer, film actress
- May 4 – Keith Haring, mural artist and social activist (died 1990)
- May 8 – Lovie Smith, American football player and coach
- May 10 – Rick Santorum, U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania from 1995 to 2007
- May 29 – Annette Bening, actress
- June 7 – Prince, born Prince Rogers Nelson, African American rock musician (died 2016)
- June 10 – James F. Conant, philosopher
- June 22 – Bruce Campbell, cult film and voice actor
- July 2 – Thomas Bickerton, Methodist bishop
- July 5 – Bill Watterson, cartoonist and the author of the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes
- July 8 – Kevin Bacon, screen actor
- July 20 – Billy Mays, salesman (died 2009)
- August 16
  - Angela Bassett, African American screen actress and film director
  - Madonna, born Madonna Louise Ciccone, pop singer and performer
- August 17 – Belinda Carlisle, pop rock singer
- August 19 – Rick Snyder, 48th Governor of Michigan
- August 20 – Michael Silka, spree killer (killed 1984)
- August 24 – Steve Guttenberg, actor

- August 25 – Tim Burton, film director
- August 28 – Colm Feore, American-Canadian actor
- August 29 – Michael Jackson, African American singer and pop icon (died 2009)
- September 6 – Jeff Foxworthy, comedian
- September 24 – Kevin Sorbo, film actor
- October 5 – Neil deGrasse Tyson, African American astrophysicist
- October 13 – Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senator from Washington from 2001
- October 16 – Tim Robbins, film actor and director
- October 20 – Viggo Mortensen, film actor and artist
- November 18 – Karen Pence, educator, teacher, painter, wife of Mike Pence, Second Lady of the United States Designate
- November 22 – Jamie Lee Curtis, screen actress and author
- December 1 – Charlene Tilton, screen actress
- December 25
  - Hanford Dixon, American football player
  - Rickey Henderson, African American baseball player
- December 28 – Twila Paris, Christian musician
- December 31 – Bebe Neuwirth, screen actress

## Deaths

- January 1
  - Archie Alexander, designer (born 1888)
  - Edward Weston, photographer (born 1886)
- January 6 – Lois Irene Marshall, wife of Thomas R. Marshall, Second Lady of the United States (born 1873)
- January 8 – Mary Colter, architect and designer (born 1869)
- January 11 – Edna Purviance, silent film actress (born 1895)
- January 13 – Jesse L. Lasky, film producer (born 1880)
- February 1 – Clinton Davisson, physicist, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1937 (born 1888)
- February 27 – Harry Cohn, film producer (born 1891)
- March 22 (in plane crash)
  - Mike Todd, film producer (born 1909)
  - Art Cohn, screenwriter (born 1909)
- March 28
  - W. C. Handy, African American blues composer (born 1873)
  - Chuck Klein, baseball player (born 1904)
- May 5 – James Branch Cabell, fantasy writer (born 1879)
- June 10 – Angelina Weld Grimké, African American lesbian journalist and poet (born 1880)
- July 9 – James H. Flatley, naval aviator and admiral (born 1906)
- July 26 – Eugene Millikin, U.S. Senator from Colorado from 1941 to 1957 (born 1891)
- August 14 or 15 – Big Bill Broonzy, African American blues singer-songwriter (born 1893)

- August 27 – Ernest Lawrence, nuclear physicist, winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1939 (born 1901)
- August 29 – Marjorie Flack, artist, illustrator and writer (born 1897)
- September 25 – John B. Watson, psychologist (born 1878)
- October 19 – Mary F. Hoyt, first woman appointed to the U.S. federal civil service, in 1883 (born 1858)
- October 29 – Zoë Akins, playwright, poet and author (born 1886)
- November 15
  - Samuel Hopkins Adams, writer (born 1871)
  - Tyrone Power, actor (born 1914)
- November 21:
  - Mel Ott, baseball player (born 1909)
  - Lion Feuchtwanger, German-American novelist and playwright (born 1884)
- December 29 – Doris Humphrey, dancer and choreographer (born 1895)

## See also

- List of American films of 1958

## External links

-  Media related to 1958 in the United States at Wikimedia Commons

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