

1978 in the United States

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Events from the year **1978 in the United States**.

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Incumbents

Federal Government

- President: Jimmy Carter (D-Georgia)
- Vice President: Walter Mondale (D-Minnesota)
- Chief Justice: Warren E. Burger (Minnesota)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives: Tip O'Neill (D-Massachusetts)
- Senate Majority Leader: Robert Byrd (D-West Virginia)
- Congress: 95th

Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Governors

- Governor of Alabama: George Wallace (Democratic)
- Governor of Alaska: Jay Hammond (Republican)
- Governor of Arizona: Wesley Bolin (Democratic) (until March 4), Bruce Babbitt (Democratic) (starting March 4)
- Governor of Arkansas: David Pryor (Democratic)
- Governor of California: Jerry Brown (Democratic)
- Governor of Colorado: Richard Lamm (Democratic)
- Governor of Connecticut: Ella T. Grasso (Democratic)
- Governor of Delaware: Pierre S. du Pont, IV (Republican)
- Governor of Florida: Reubin Askew (Democratic)
- Governor of Georgia: George Busbee (Democratic)
- Governor of Hawaii: George Ariyoshi (Democratic)
- Governor of Idaho: John V. Evans (Democratic)
- Governor of Illinois: James R. Thompson (Republican)
- Governor of Indiana: Otis R. Bowen (Republican)
- Governor of Iowa: Robert D. Ray (Republican)
- Governor of Kansas: Robert F. Bennett (Republican)
- Governor of Kentucky: Julian M. Carroll (Democratic)
- Governor of Louisiana: Edwin W. Edwards (Democratic)
- Governor of Maine: James B. Longley (Independent)
- Governor of Maryland: Marvin Mandel (Democratic)
- Governor of Massachusetts: Michael Dukakis (Democratic)
- Governor of Michigan: William Milliken (Republican)
- Governor of Minnesota: Rudy Perpich (Democratic)
- Governor of Mississippi: Cliff Finch (Democratic)
- Governor of Missouri: Joseph P. Teasdale (Democratic)
- Governor of Montana: Thomas Lee Judge (Democratic)
- Governor of Nebraska: J. James Exon (Democratic)
- Governor of Nevada: Mike O'Callaghan (Democratic)
- Governor of New Hampshire: Meldrim Thomson, Jr. (Republican)
- Governor of New Jersey: Brendan Byrne (Democratic)
- Governor of New Mexico: Jerry Apodaca (Democratic)
- Governor of New York: Hugh Carey (Democratic)
- Governor of North Carolina: Jim Hunt (Democratic)
- Governor of North Dakota: Arthur A. Link (Democratic)
- Governor of Ohio: Jim Rhodes (Republican)
- Governor of Oklahoma: David L. Boren (Democratic)
- Governor of Oregon: Robert W. Straub (Democratic)
- Governor of Pennsylvania: Milton Shapp (Democratic)
- Governor of Rhode Island: J. Joseph Garrahy (Democratic)
- Governor of South Carolina: James B. Edwards (Republican)
- Governor of South Dakota: Richard F. Kneip (Democratic) (until July 24), Harvey L. Wollman (Democratic) (starting July 24)
- Governor of Tennessee: Ray Blanton (Democratic)
- Governor of Texas: Dolph Briscoe (Democratic)
- Governor of Utah: Scott M. Matheson (Democratic)
- Governor of Vermont: Richard A. Snelling (Republican)

- Governor of Virginia: Mills E. Godwin, Jr. (Republican) (until January 14), John N. Dalton (Republican) (starting January 14)
- Governor of Washington: Dixy Lee Ray (Democratic)
- Governor of West Virginia: Jay Rockefeller (Democratic)
- Governor of Wisconsin: Martin J. Schreiber (Democratic)
- Governor of Wyoming: Edgar J. Herschler (Democratic)

Lieutenant Governors

- Lieutenant Governor of Alabama: Jere Beasley (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Alaska: Lowell Thomas, Jr. (Republican) (until December 4), Terry Miller (Republican) (starting December 4)
- Lieutenant Governor of Arkansas: Joe Purcell (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of California: Mervyn M. Dymally (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Colorado: George L. Brown (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Connecticut: Robert K. Killian (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Delaware: James D. McGinnis (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Florida: J.H. Williams (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Georgia: Zell Miller (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Hawaii: Nelson Doi (Democratic) (until December 2), Jean King (Democratic) (starting December 2)
- Lieutenant Governor of Idaho: William J. Murphy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Illinois: Dave O'Neal (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Indiana: Robert D. Orr (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Iowa: Arthur A. Neu (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kansas: Shelby Smith (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky: Thelma Stovall (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana: Jimmy Fitzmorris (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Maryland: Blair Lee III (political party unknown)
- Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts: Thomas P. O'Neill III (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Michigan: James Damman (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Minnesota: Alec G. Olson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi: Evelyn Gandy (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Missouri: William C. Phelps (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Montana: Ted Schwinden (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nebraska: Gerald T. Whelan (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Nevada: Robert E. Rose (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico: Robert E. Ferguson (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of New York: Mary Anne Krupsak (Democratic) (until end of December 31)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Carolina: James C. Green (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of North Dakota: Wayne G. Sanstead (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Ohio: Dick Celeste (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma: George Nigh (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Pennsylvania: Ernest P. Kline (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island: Thomas R. DiLuglio (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina: W. Brantley Harvey, Jr. (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota: Harvey L. Wollman (Democratic) (until July 23), vacant (starting July 23)
- Lieutenant Governor of Tennessee: John S. Wilder (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Texas: William P. Hobby, Jr. (Democratic)

- Lieutenant Governor of Utah: David Smith Monson (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Vermont: T. Garry Buckley (Republican)
- Lieutenant Governor of Virginia: John N. Dalton (Republican) (until January 14), Chuck Robb (Democratic) (starting January 14)
- Lieutenant Governor of Washington: John Cherberg (Democratic)
- Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin: Martin J. Schreiber (Democratic)

Events

January

- January 1 – The Copyright Act of 1976 takes effect, making sweeping changes to United States copyright law.
- January 6 – The Holy Crown of Hungary (also known as Stephen of Hungary Crown) is returned to Hungary from the United States, where it was held since World War II.
- January 14–15 – The body of former U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey lies in state in the Capitol Rotunda, following his death from cancer.
- January 19 – Federal Appeals Court Judge William H. Webster is appointed Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- January 25–27 – The Great Blizzard of 1978 strikes the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes, causing 51 deaths in Ohio.
- January 28 – Richard Chase, the "Vampire of Sacramento", is arrested.

February

- February 1 – Hollywood film director Roman Polanski flees to France to avoid sentencing after pleading guilty to unlawful sex with a minor.
- February 5–7 – The Northeastern United States blizzard of 1978 hits the New England region and the New York metropolitan area, killing about 100 and causing over US\$520 million in damage.
- February 8 – United States Senate proceedings are broadcast on radio for the first time.
- February 11 – Sixteen Unification Church couples wed in New York, New York.
- February 15 – Serial killer Ted Bundy is captured in Pensacola, Florida.
- February 16
 - The Hillside Strangler, a serial killer prowling Los Angeles, claims a 10th and final victim.
 - The first computer bulletin board system (*CBBS*) is created in Chicago.



February 5–7:
Northeastern
United States
blizzard of 1978

March

- March 3 – The *New York Post* publishes an article about David Rorvik's book *The Cloning of Man*, about a supposed cloning of a human being.
- March 6 – American porn publisher Larry Flynt is shot and paralyzed in Lawrenceville, Georgia.
- March 22 – Karl Wallenda of the Flying Wallendas dies after falling off a tight-rope between two hotels in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- March 28 – *Stump v. Sparkman* (435 U.S. 349): The Supreme Court of the United States hands down a 5–3 decision in a controversial case involving involuntary sterilization and judicial

immunity.

April

- April 2 – The CBS soap opera *Dallas* is launched. It is set to be aired later this year in several countries, including the United Kingdom by the BBC.
- April 3 – The 50th Academy Awards are held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, California with *Annie Hall* winning Best Picture.
- April 7 – U.S. President Jimmy Carter decides to postpone production of the neutron bomb – a weapon which kills people with radiation but leaves buildings relatively intact.
- April 10 – Volkswagen becomes the second (after Rolls-Royce) non-American automobile manufacturer to open a plant in the United States, commencing production of the Rabbit, the North American version of the Volkswagen Golf, at the Volkswagen Westmoreland Assembly Plant near New Stanton, Pennsylvania with a unionized (UAW) workforce (the plant closed in 1988.)
- April 18 – The U.S. Senate votes 68–32 to turn the Panama Canal over to Panamanian control on December 31, 1999.
- April 25 – St. Paul, Minnesota becomes the 2nd U.S. city to repeal its gay rights ordinance after Anita Bryant's successful 1977 anti-gay campaign in Dade County, Florida.
- April 28 – WAC abolished; women integrated into regular Army.

May

- May 5 – Pete Rose of the Cincinnati Reds gets his 3,000th major league hit.
- May 20 – Mavis Hutchinson, 53, becomes the first woman to run across the U.S.; her trek took 69 days.
- May 25 – A bomb explodes in the security section of Northwestern University, wounding a security guard (the first Unabomber attack).
- May 26 – In Atlantic City, New Jersey, Resorts International, the first legal casino in the eastern United States, opens.
- May 28 – Indianapolis 500: Al Unser wins his third race, and the first for car owner Jim Hall.

June

- June 6 – California voters approve Proposition 13, which slashes property taxes nearly 60%.
- June 8 – The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints extends the priesthood and temple blessings to "all worthy males", ending a general policy of excluding 'Canaanites' from Priesthood ordination and temple ordinances (*see Blacks and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*).
- June 10 – Affirmed becomes only the 11th horse to ever win the Triple Crown by defeating Alydar in the 110th running of the Belmont Stakes.^[1]
- June 13 – The musical film *Grease* is released, starring 24-year-old New Jersey born actor John Travolta and 29-year-old British-Australian actress and singer Olivia Newton-John.^[2]
- June 28
 - The U.S. scientific satellite Seasat is launched.
 - *University of California Regents v. Bakke*: The Supreme Court of the United States bars quota systems in college admissions but affirms the constitutionality of programs which give advantages to minorities.
 - The rainbow flag of the LGBT movement flies for the first time (in its original form) at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade.

- June 30 – Spencer W. Kimball dedicates the Monument to Women Memorial Garden in Nauvoo, Illinois.^[3]

August

- August 2 – President Jimmy Carter declares an unprecedented state emergency and evacuation immediately following the revelation that Niagara Falls, New York neighborhood Love Canal was built on a toxic waste dump.
- August 17 – Double Eagle II becomes the first balloon to successfully cross the Atlantic Ocean, flying from Presque Isle, Maine, to Miserey, France.

September

- September 17 – Camp David Accords: Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat begin the peace process at Camp David, Maryland.
- September 25
 - PSA Flight 182, a Boeing 727, collides with a small private airplane and crashes in San Diego, California; 144 are killed.
 - Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Otello* makes its first appearance on Live from the Met, in a complete production of the opera starring Jon Vickers. This is the first complete television broadcast of the opera in the U.S. since the historic 1948 one.



September 17:
Camp David
Accords

October

- October 2 – The New York Yankees defeat the Boston Red Sox 5–4 at Fenway Park to clinch the AL East after being 14 games out of first place only two months earlier. The Yankees would eventually go on to defeat the Kansas City Royals and Los Angeles Dodgers and win the World Series.
- October 10 – U.S. President Jimmy Carter signs a bill that authorizes the minting of the Susan B. Anthony dollar.
- October 14 – United States President Jimmy Carter signs a bill into law which allows homebrewing of beer in the United States.
- October 17 – The New York Yankees clinch their 22nd World Series championship, defeating the Dodgers 7–2 in Los Angeles and winning the Series 4 games to 2.
- October 27 – President Jimmy Carter signs the Humphrey–Hawkins Full Employment Act, adjusting the government's economic goals to include full employment, growth in production, price stability, and balance of trade and budget.

November

- November 7 – California voters defeat the Briggs Initiative that would have prohibited gay school teachers.
- November 18 – Mass murder/suicide of 909 Americans in Jonestown, Guyana under the direction of Jim Jones.
- November 19 – The first U.S. Take Back the Night march occurs in San Francisco.
- November 27 – In San Francisco, California, Mayor George Moscone and City Supervisor Harvey Milk are assassinated by former Supervisor Dan White.^[4]

December

- December 3 – The Southern Crescent passenger train derails at Shipman, Virginia, killing 6, injuring 60.^[5]
- December 4 – Dianne Feinstein succeeds the murdered George Moscone as San Francisco, California's first woman mayor (she serves until January 8, 1988).
- December 11 – Lufthansa heist: Six men rob a Lufthansa cargo facility in New York City's Kennedy airport.
- December 13 – The first Susan B. Anthony dollar enters circulation.
- December 15 – Cleveland, Ohio becomes the first major American city to go into default since the Great Depression, under Mayor Dennis Kucinich.
- December 22 – Chicago serial killer John Wayne Gacy, who is subsequently convicted of the murder of 33 young men, is arrested.

Ongoing

- Détente (c. 1969–1979)
- 1970s energy crisis (1973–1980)

Births

- January 9 – AJ McLean, pop singer-songwriter (Backstreet Boys)
- January 29
 - Rob Bironas, American football player (died 1988)
 - Brian Windhorst, basketball journalist
- February 7 – Ashton Kutcher, screen actor and venture capitalist
- February 17 – Jacob Wetterling, kidnapping victim
- March 1 – Jensen Ackles, screen actor
- March 6
 - Mike Jackson, Oklahoma politician
 - Sage Rosenfels, American football player
- March 12 – Claudio Sanchez, alternative rock musician and writer
- April 2 – John Gall, baseball player
- April 19 – James Franco, screen actor
- April 20 – Rebecca Makkai, novelist and short story writer
- May 1 – Nick Traina, singer-songwriter (Link 80) (d. 1997)
- May 9 – Aaron Harang, baseball player
- May 10 – Kenan Thompson, African American comic screen actor
- May 12 – Josh Phelps, baseball player
- May 15 – David Krumholtz, screen actor
- May 22 – Ginnifer Goodwin, actress
- June 2
 - Nikki Cox, screen actress and comedy writer
 - Justin Long, screen actor
- June 6 – Judith Barsi, actress and murder victim (killed 1988)
- June 7
 - Jesse Ball, poet, fiction writer and artist
 - Bill Hader, comic screen actor
- June 10 – Shane West, screen actor, punk rock musician and songwriter
- June 19 – Zoe Saldana, screen actress
- June 29 – Nicole Scherzinger, screen performer
- July 1 – Hillary Tuck, screen actress

- July 4
 - Becki Newton, screen actress
 - Tony Reali, sports personality
- July 6 – Tia and Tamera Mowry, African American actresses
- July 21 – Josh Hartnett, screen actor
- July 23 – Lauren Groff, fiction writer
- July 28 – Julian Peterson, American football player
- August 3 – Shanelle Workman, television actress
- August 4 – Kurt Busch, stock car racing driver
- August 18 – Andy Samberg, comic screen actor
- August 23 – Kobe Bryant, African American basketball player
- August 25 – Kel Mitchell, African American comic screen actor
- September 14 – Teddy Park, rapper (1TYM)
- September 23 – Anthony Mackie, African American actor
- October 5 – James Valentine, pop rock guitarist (Maroon 5)
- October 14 – Usher (Raymond IV), African American R&B singer-songwriter
- October 20 – Dionne Quan, voice actress
- October 26 – CM Punk (Phil Brooks), martial artist
- November 14
 - Bobby Allen, ice hockey player
 - Xavier Nady, baseball player and coach
 - Chris Shar, rock drummer
- November 15 – Floyd Womack, American football player
- November 24 – Katherine Heigl, screen actress
- December 7 – Shiri Appleby, screen actress
- December 8 – Ian Somerhalder, screen actor
- December 18 – Katie Holmes, screen actress
- December 22 – Danny Ahn, rapper (g.o.d)
- December 28 – John Legend (John Stephens), African American R&B singer-songwriter
- December 31 – Craig Wayne Boyd, country music singer

Deaths

- January 3 – Jack Oakie, actor (born 1903)
- January 13 – Hubert H. Humphrey, 38th Vice President of the United States from 1965 to 1969 (born 1911)
- January 14 – Kurt Gödel, mathematician (born 1906 in Austria-Hungary)
- January 20 – Gilbert Highet, classicist, academic, writer, intellectual, critic and literary historian (born 1906 in Scotland)
- February 16 – Edward Lindberg, Olympic track athlete (born 1886)
- February 18 – Maggie McNamara, actress (born 1928)
- February 22
 - Phyllis McGinley, children's story writer and poet (born 1905)
 - C. Paul Jennewein, sculptor (born 1890 in Germany)
 - Dennie Moore, actress (born 1902)
- March 13 – John Cazale, film actor (born 1935)
- March 18
 - Leigh Brackett, science fiction author (born 1915)
 - Peggy Wood, actress (b. 1892)
- March 19 – Faith Baldwin, romantic novelist and poet (born 1893)

- March 22
 - Karl Wallenda, circus performer (born 1905)
 - John Hall Wheelock, poet (born 1886)
- April 16 – Lucius D. Clay, military governor of Germany from 1947 to 1949 (born 1897)
- April 21 – Thomas Wyatt Turner, civil rights activist, biologist and educator; first African American to receive a doctorate from Cornell (born 1877)
- May 6 – Ethelda Bleibtrey, Olympic swimmer (born 1902)
- May 12 – Louis Zukofsky, modernist poet (born 1904)
- May 22
 - Joe Colombo, gangster (born 1914)
 - Aubrey Fitch, admiral (born 1883)
- June 3 – Frank Stanford, poet, suicide (born 1948)
- June 18 – Walter C. Alvarez, physician and writer (born 1884)
- July 18 – Claude P. Dettloff, photographer (born 1899)
- August 14 – Joe Venuti, jazz violinist (born 1903)
- August 21 – Charles Eames, architect and designer (born 1907)
- August 24 – Louis Prima, swing singer and bandleader (born 1910)
- August 26 – Charles Boyer, film actor (born 1899 in France)
- August 27 – Gordon Matta-Clark, artist, cancer (born 1943)
- August 28 – Bruce Catton, Civil War historian, Pulitzer Prize winner in 1954 (born 1899)
- August 3] – Lee Garmes, cinematographer (born 1899)
- September 23 – Lyman Bostock, baseball player, killed (born 1950)
- September 24 – Ruth Etting, "torch" singer (born 1897)
- September 30 – Edgar Bergen, actor and ventriloquist (born 1903)
- October 8 – Bertha Cody, Native American archaeologist (born 1907)
- October 10 – Ralph Metcalfe, sprinter and U.S. Congressman (born 1910)
- October 12 – Nancy Spungen, groupie and girlfriend of Sid Vicious, killed (born 1958)
- October 16 – Dan Dailey, actor (born 1915)
- October 19 – Gig Young, actor (born 1913)
- November 8 – Norman Rockwell, painter and illustrator (born 1894)
- November 15 – Margaret Mead, cultural anthropologist (born 1901)
- November 25 – Elaine Esposito, coma victim (born 1934)
- November 27 – Harvey Milk, politician and gay activist, killed (born 1930)
- December 28 – Harry Winston, diamond dealer (born 1896)


See also

- 1978 in American television
- List of American films of 1978

References

1. [1] (<http://www.belmontstakes.com/history/affirmed.aspx>)
2. [2] (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0077631/releaseinfo>)
3. Brigham, Janet (September 1978). "Nauvoo Monument to Women". *Ensign*. Retrieved 2016-12-19.
4. James Stuart Olson, ed. (1999). "Chronology". *Historical Dictionary of the 1970s*. Greenwood Publishing Group. ISBN 978-0-313-30543-6.
5. "Investigators probe fatal train wreck". *Anchorage Daily News*. 1978-12-05.

External links

-  Media related to 1978 in the United States at Wikimedia Commons

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