



Freedom's Feast PRESIDENTS' DAY

On-line resources to get the most out of your AMERICAN holiday celebrations.

PRESIDENTS' DAY

We the People - Take Action

A Freedom's Feast Guide to Raising Politically Active Citizens

Presidents' Day is a great day to celebrate our First Amendment freedoms, and focus on civic engagement and activism. [The First Amendment](#) gives us the right to say what we think and protects that right. We are not powerless. We are not alone. We ARE the people. We can speak, write, publish, assemble, and protest. We do not have a king, we have a President. We elect our representatives who answer to us for their actions. Together with our fellow citizens we are responsible for our country.

To make a *change*, we have to know our rights, get informed, and get involved.

1. Identify Your Cause. Know Your Rights.

Our Constitution gives ordinary citizens the power to do extraordinary things. Is there a cause or issue that you are passionate about or that you believe is challenging our First Amendment, (or other amendment), freedoms? Do your research. Study the law, code, or issue in question. Review the [Constitution](#) and [Bill of Rights](#).

2. Get Informed.

Learn as much as you can about the cause or issue you care about. Are you concerned about health care reform? Global warming? Creating new jobs? Affordable college education? Improving local school or neighborhood security? Study all sides of the issue. It's rare that we can get everything that we want. We may have to compromise. That's what the framers who wrote our Constitution realized! Often compromises can take us a step closer to the place we want to be.

Partner with others. Join citizen's groups or organizations that work in your area of interest. Sign up for newsletters and learn about their political efforts. If you can't find a group that shares your concerns, start your own. Begin with friends and family. Know what you want to accomplish. Clarify your message and goals. Find ways (consider social media), to share your message with others.

3. Get Involved.

Find and contact your local congressional representative. You might be surprised to learn what services your congressional representatives provide! Visit the [House of Representatives site](#) or the official [United States Senate site](#) to find and contact your senator, to see the hearing schedule, track legislation, and learn more about how the House of Representatives and the Senate work. **You can write, e-mail, or phone [the President](#).** Find an elected official or representative at the state or local level by using your Internet browser. Keep a copy of any correspondence you send. Learn more about the [Supreme Court](#) and what is on the docket for the coming year. Follow the federal budget. See how our tax dollars are used.



activism: noun \ 'ak-ti-, vi-zəm \

a: a practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue.

b: ACTION; CAMPAIGN; EFFECT CHANGE

Government Resources

The White House offers a great primer on government, packed with facts and content/ The government printing office site follows the current work of our three branches of government and lists past records. Visit the House of Representatives site to see the hearing schedule, track legislation, follow roll call votes, and learn about how the House works. Go to the official U.S. Senate page to find and contact your senator, or the Supreme Court site to see what's on the docket for the coming year. Review explanations of landmark Supreme Court decisions since 1803.

www.whitehouse.gov/kids

www.gpo.gov/fdsys

www.house.gov

www.senate.gov

www.supremecourtus.gov

www.landmarkcases.org



www.CHANGE.org

Start a Petition. Mobilize Support. Win Change.

Change.org, launched in 2007, is a site designed to promote, engender, and enable social change via the use of online petitions. Start your own petition to gain support for your cause and effect change. Advocate for the things that you believe in. Need more inspiration? Read about Mr. Well's 4th grade class at the Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts--learn how this remarkable group of 9-year olds took on a major corporation, Universal Studios, and convinced them to do the right thing.



Please visit us again for Memorial Day at www.freedomfeast.us/memorial-day and visit us on [Facebook](#) to share your experiences.

*Photo Image Credits: Tinkers (*Band of Rights*), Weisman (*C-Span*), Ryan White (*Human Resources and Services Administration*), Claudette Colvin (*The Montgomery Advertiser*), Mr. Well's 4th Grade Class (*Change.Org*), Barbara Johns (*Core Online*). Activism definition provided by Merriam-Webster Dictionary.