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## From the President's Quill

Because this month honors George Washington's birthday I thought it would be appropriate to explain why our 1st President's birthday is also known as President's Day. I hope you enjoy this history lesson. Happy President's Day. I hope to see you at Saloon Night.

*Diana C. CordovaElliott*

### FINDING THE STORY IN HISTORY

#### President's Day

The original version of the holiday was in commemoration of George Washington's birthday in 1796 (the last full year of his presidency). Washington, according to the calendar that has been used since at least the mid-18th century, was born on February 22, 1732. According to the old style calendar in use back then, however, he was born on February 11. At least in 1796, many Americans celebrated his birthday on the 22nd while others marked the occasion on the 11th instead.

By the early 19th century, Washington's Birthday had taken firm root in the American experience as a bona fide national holiday. Its traditions included Birthnight Balls in various regions, speeches and receptions given by prominent public figures, and a lot of revelry in taverns throughout the land. Then along came Abraham Lincoln, another revered president and fellow February baby (born on the 12th of the month). The first formal observance of his birthday took place in 1865, the year after his assassination, when both houses of Congress gathered for a memorial address. While Lincoln's Birthday did not become a federal holiday like George Washington's, it did become a legal holiday in several states.

In 1968, legislation (HR 15951) was enacted that affected several federal holidays. One of these was Washington's Birthday, the observation of which was shifted to the third Monday in February each year whether or not it fell on the 22nd. This act, which took effect in 1971, was designed to simplify the yearly calendar of holidays and give federal employees some standard three-day weekends in the process.

Apparently, while the holiday in February is still officially known as Washington's Birthday it has become popularly known as "President's Day." This has made the third Monday in February a day for honoring both Washington and Lincoln, as well as all the other men who have served as president.

### Calendar of Events 2005

#### 2nd Annual Saloon Night Benefit

Deal yourself into the best game in town on **Saturday March 5, 2005** at Two Rivers Cafe, 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Step up to the chuck wagon buffet and wet your whistle at the cash bar. Try your luck at Black Jack, Texas Holdem, Roulette and Craps. Grand prize drawings for: 2 one day Aspen Ski lift tickets, 2 half day Blue Sky rafting trips and one cook's pot with recipes, fixings, restaurant certificate, etc. and other prize drawings as well as a silent auction, (cash or check only).

BRHS Members: **\$40.00**/General Public: **\$50.00**

Tickets On Sale Now at: Community Banks of Basalt and Aspen, Bank Of Colorado, Two Rivers Cafe, and the Town of Basalt . You can also call 927-4693 for tickets or see Nancy Maurin or Janice Duroux.

**Flag Day Fund raiser** - Lion's Park, Tuesday June 14, from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.. Chicken dinner with all the fixings, hand cranked ice cream and homemade pie.(\$5.00 per person). Narrated downtown historical walking tour and Fairview Cemetery tour.

**BRHS 4th of July Picnic** - Arbaney Park, Monday from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.. Hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and lemonade. Bring a side dish or dessert to share. Horseshoes and kids games. Free and open to the public.

### PUEBLO BRIDGE

Constructed in 1884 the original wooden bridge served the tent town of Frying Pan Junction. It was rebuilt some years later and was then named the Stockman bridge after Mr. Stockman a rancher and county commissioner. In the fall of 1908 Eagle County constructed a cement bridge, to replace the original bridge, at Cottonwood Lane and Midland Avenue. It was referred to as the Pueblo Bridge, however records do not indicate why it was named so.

This was the main vehicle crossing bridge to Aspen until 1937. In 1938 the Colorado State Highway Department replaced the railroad bridge at the Roaring Fork and Frying Pan Rivers with a vehicle bridge which now provided two thoroughfares to Aspen. This bridge was repaired in 1989 adding a pedestrian sidewalk for the school children.