

My Day

2026

Eleanor Roosevelt



My Day

2026



Sculptor, Penelope Jencks

"It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan."

Created by



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nationalwomensfoundation.org



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ervk.org

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DC COMMISSION ON
THE ARTS & HUMANITIES



My Day

2026

INTRODUCTION

My Day 2026 celebrates Eleanor Roosevelt and the powerful community of women who shaped her world and ours. As First Lady, journalist, activist, and diplomat, she rose to meet the defining challenges of her time, from the Great Depression to World War II, fighting for civil rights, democracy, and justice.

But her story is not hers alone. This planner honors the legacy of women like Mary McLeod Bethune, Amelia Earhart, Dorothy Height, Frances Perkins, and so many other pioneers. She championed women in federal service and believed deeply in women's leadership, collective action, and the power of art and media to illuminate the truth. She also encouraged photographers like Dorothea Lange and Gordon Parks to reveal the reality of poverty and resilience across America.

My Day 2026 is both a tribute and a tool for reflection, inspiration, and action. In a time when so many of our rights remain under threat, may this planner help you set goals, stay grounded, and continue the work that Eleanor Roosevelt and her allies began.

Let it be your daily companion and as she reminded us, "The future is literally in our hands to mold as we like. But we cannot wait until tomorrow. Tomorrow is now."

With hope and gratitude,

Pamela R. Johnson
President
National Women's Foundation

Anna Fierst
Chair
Board of Directors
Eleanor Roosevelt Center
at Val-Kill

2026

JANUARY

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2027

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JANUARY 2026

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"A year of important happenings, both sad and glad, lies behind us, but the year ahead is an unwritten page and much that will be written on it depends on the way our hearts feel, our minds understand and our hands work for the good of the world as a whole." My Day, January 1, 1946

FROM PRIVILEGE TO PURPOSE

Eleanor Roosevelt's Awakening to Justice

Born in 1884 into a life of privilege and social expectation, Eleanor Roosevelt (1) might have followed the narrow path laid out for women of her class. But she would go far beyond the expectations of her famous name. Eleanor Roosevelt became one of the most influential advocates for justice in the 20th century.

Her transformation was shaped by loss, war, and a growing awareness of inequality and injustice. Orphaned by age ten, the young Eleanor was sent to boarding school in England, where headmistress Marie Souvestre (2) encouraged independent thought and moral courage. That early influence set the stage for a life guided by purpose.

In 1905, Eleanor Roosevelt married Franklin D. Roosevelt, her fifth cousin once removed. Her uncle, President Theodore Roosevelt, famously walked her down the aisle. All three were well known to their friends and the public by their initials: TR, FDR, and ER.

ER and FDR had six children (3), five sons and a daughter, and built a household shaped by family expectations and political ambition. As FDR advanced from New York State Senator to Assistant Secretary of the Navy during World War I, when they lived in DuPont Circle. She managed the demands of motherhood while quietly gaining political insight (4).

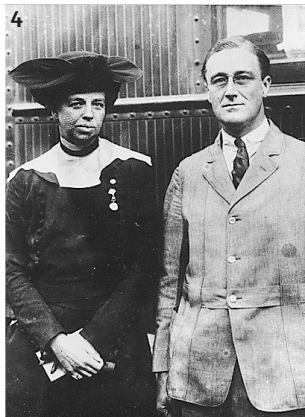
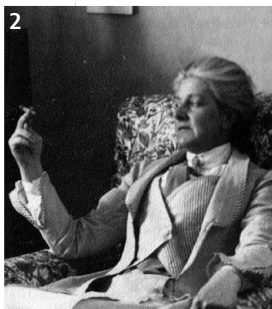
FDR's battle with polio in 1921 was a turning point for them both. While he focused on recovery, ER emerged as a voice for reform. She taught, joined civic organizations, and built alliances with an increasingly diverse group of women labor leaders, educators, and political activists. FDR became Governor of New York in 1928 and was inaugurated in 1933 for the first of his four terms as President (5).

Eleanor Roosevelt refused to play a purely ceremonial role as First Lady (6). She held women-only press conferences, traveled widely in the US and abroad, and wrote a daily column, *My Day*. By the 1930s and through World War II, she became a global symbol of democratic engagement. Her First Lady platform became a springboard for lifelong work (7). She chose purpose over privilege and in doing so redefined what public service could mean for women and for the world.

My Day 2026

FROM PRIVILEGE TO PURPOSE

Eleanor Roosevelt's Awakening to Justice



Monday
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Thursday
1 New Year's Day

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My Day 2026

JANUARY

Eleanor Roosevelt launched *My Day* on January 1, 1936. She wrote this groundbreaking syndicated column six days a week until 1962, producing nearly 6,000 entries on politics, social justice, and daily life. Appearing in some 90 newspapers, it became one of the most influential platforms ever used by a First Lady. Her assistant, Malvina “Tommy” Thompson, handled production and distribution of the columns. All are available online at the George Washington University archive, <https://erpapers.columbian.gwu.edu/my-day>



JANUARY

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"Person after person has said to me in these last few days that this new world we face terrifies them... The time now calls for . . . mankind as a whole to rise to great heights. We must have faith or we die."

My Day, August 10, 1945

★ JANUARY 2026

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My Day 2026

JANUARY

Enrolled at Allenswood Academy, near London, Eleanor Roosevelt found the intellectual freedom and encouragement she had lacked in her early life. Among a diverse group of girls and under the mentorship of headmistress Marie Souvestre, she gained the confidence, independence, and moral clarity that would define her public life. She was challenged to think critically about injustice, responsibility, and the world beyond her privileged upbringing. This experience awakened a lifelong commitment to social reform and helped shape Eleanor's voice as an advocate for human rights, peace, and global understanding.



JANUARY

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"Whatever I have become had its seeds in those three years of contact with a liberal mind and strong personality."

This Is My Story, 1937

★ JANUARY 2026

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My Day 2026

JANUARY

Born on January 15, 1929, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lit a path toward justice with courage and grace. In 1965, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., founded January 15 in 1908, awarded him their Anna Eleanor Roosevelt Medallion. Roosevelt, AKA's first white honorary member wrote that the student movement and King's call for "nonviolent protest in the face of injustice" gave her hope for America's future. On MLK Day, we honor the words of Dr. King on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial where Marian Anderson sang 24 years earlier.



JANUARY

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*"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up
and live out the true meaning of its creed..."*

Martin Luther King Jr., *I Have a Dream Speech*. August 28, 1963

★ JANUARY 2026

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19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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My Day 2026

JANUARY

Before her marriage in 1905, Eleanor Roosevelt taught immigrant girls at the Rivington Street Settlement House on New York's Lower East Side. The experience opened her eyes to poverty and injustice, fueling her lifelong commitment to reform. While courting her, Franklin Roosevelt accepted her invitation to visit Rivington. He later recalled that she showed him a side of New York he had never seen and credited her activism with awakening his social conscience and inspiring the shared vision and New Deal that would shape their lives and legacies.



JANUARY

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*"Somehow we must be able to show people that
democracy is not about words, but action."
India and the Awakening East, 1953*



★ JANUARY 2026 ★ FEBRUARY 2026

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My Day 2026

JANUARY



In 1941, Eleanor Roosevelt took a highly publicized flight with Charles "Chief" Anderson, the first Black flight instructor at Tuskegee Institute. At a time when rigid segregation barred Black Americans from equal opportunity, it was extraordinary for a white woman, and especially the First Lady of the United States, to fly with a Black pilot. Roosevelt's bold gesture helped spotlight the skill of Tuskegee's airmen and bolstered support for integrating African-Americans into the U.S. military.



JANUARY

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"Well, you can fly all right!"
Compliment given to Chief Anderson by
Eleanor Roosevelt after landing.

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"Tolerance ought only to be the preliminary step which allows us to get to know other people and which prevents us from setting up bars..." My Day, November 23, 1943

CHAMPION of CIVIL RIGHTS

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Struggle for Racial Justice

By the 1930s, Eleanor Roosevelt’s commitment to racial equality had become one of her core values. She believed the government had a moral duty to ensure justice, even when her views were seen as radical. She used both symbolic acts and behind-the-scenes influence to challenge segregation and support Black voices.

One of Roosevelt’s most consequential alliances was with educator and activist Mary McLeod Bethune (1). With ER’s strong backing, Bethune was appointed to the National Youth Administration in 1935 and later to lead its Division of Negro Affairs, making her the highest-ranking Black woman in federal government. Bethune also led the “Black Cabinet,” a group of African-American advisors to the Roosevelt administration (2) and collaborated with ER to expand educational and job opportunities for Black youth nationwide.

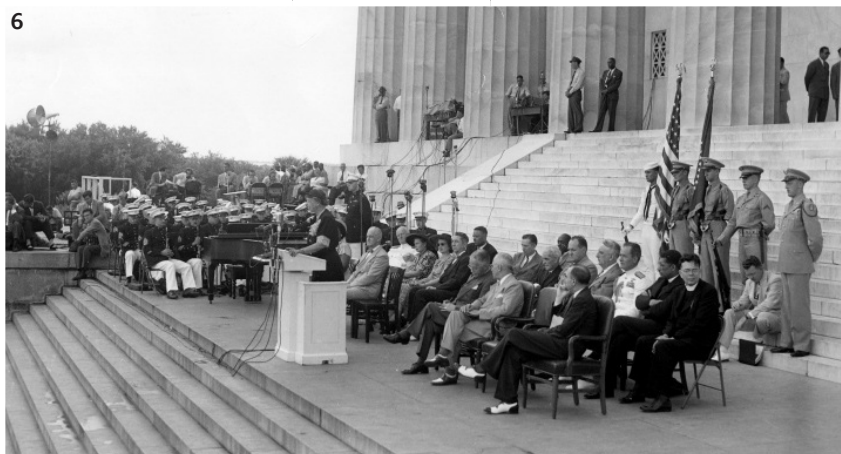
In 1939, after the Daughters of the American Revolution barred the African-American contralto Marian Anderson from performing at Constitution Hall, Roosevelt resigned from the DAR in protest. She then quietly urged Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes to intervene. As a result, on Easter Sunday 1939, Anderson sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for an integrated crowd of 75,000 (3, 4, 5). ER later invited Anderson to perform at the White House for the visiting King and Queen of England.

ER called racism a “*disease of the soul*.” She joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League, pressed for anti-lynching legislation, and worked with Bethune and others to ensure New Deal programs served Black communities. She later served on the NAACP board and addressed its annual meeting, standing once again on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1946 (6). Though she never claimed to lead the civil rights movement, Eleanor Roosevelt became one of its most steadfast allies. She used her platform to insist that democracy must mean not only equal rights, but dignity and opportunity for all.

My Day 2026

CHAMPION of CIVIL RIGHTS

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Struggle for Racial Justice





★ FEBRUARY 2026 Black History Month

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My Day 2026

FEBRUARY



Leaders of the NAACP, America’s leading civil rights group since its founding in 1909, review its 1947 plan for the fight for racial justice. Eleanor Roosevelt, who joined the board in 1945, is seen here going over the program with Dr. James McClendon, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins, while a young Thurgood Marshall looks on. Roosevelt used her voice and influence to support anti-lynching laws, challenge segregation, and lift up Black leaders during a turning point in the civil rights movement.



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"I am deeply troubled about the whole situation as it seems to be a terrible thing to stand by and let it continue and feel that one cannot speak out."

Letter to NAACP leader, Walter White, March 19, 1936

★ FEBRUARY 2026

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My Day 2026

FEBRUARY

In the 1930s, anti-lynching activists marched outside the White House, demanding federal action. Decades earlier, Ida B. Wells had exposed the horror. Eleanor Roosevelt joined the fight. Lobbying both FDR and Congress, she wrote: *"If the conscience of America is not aroused by these facts, we are a people with hearts of stone."* Yet no federal law passed until March 2022, when the Emmett Till Anti-lynching Act was finally signed. Images of those early protests remain a powerful reminder of justice too long denied.



FEBRUARY

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"We cannot afford to let any group of our citizens feel that there are no safeguards for them, that the law is not equal for all."

My Day, March 20, 1936

★ FEBRUARY 2026

Monday
16 Presidents' Day

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17 Ramadan begins

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Sunday
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My Day 2026

FEBRUARY

Eleanor Roosevelt was closely connected to five U.S. presidents. She was the niece of Theodore Roosevelt (left) and First Lady of Franklin D. Roosevelt, her fifth cousin (right). After FDR's death, she worked closely with President Truman, who appointed her to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations. Later, President Kennedy named her chair of the first Commission on the Status of Women. Although ER and Dwight D. Eisenhower maintained mutual respect, she championed civil rights, social reform, and the UN, while he prioritized military strength, fiscal caution, and measured responses to domestic tensions.



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"I have known and worked with many Presidents, each with his own personality and way of doing things. You learn to respect the office and to understand that the man in it bears a heavy burden."
The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1961

★ FEBRUARY 2026 ★ MARCH 2026

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My Day 2026

FEBRUARY

Dorothy I. Height stands at the intersection of Black and women’s history. She first met Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary McLeod Bethune in 1937 at the Harlem YWCA. Height led the National Council of Negro Women from 1957 to 1998, served as national president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. from 1947 to 1956, and helped plan the 1963 March on Washington. In 1960, as NCNW president, she presented Eleanor Roosevelt with the Mary McLeod Bethune Human Rights Award honoring their shared commitment to civil rights and justice.



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"She had the courage to take unpopular stands. She did not just sympathize; she acted. She used her position to open doors for others."
Dorothy I. Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates*, 2003

MARCH 2026

Women's History Month

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"I hope the women of the United States will awaken to the full sense of the influence which they can wield if they accept the responsibility which all power implies."
My Day, December 10, 1942

ALLIES in ACTION

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Women Who Changed Her

When Eleanor Roosevelt was born in 1884, American women couldn't vote. She wasn't actively engaged with the suffrage movement as a young woman, although she cast her first vote in 1920 (1) and joined the League of Women Voters (2). Over time, she became one of the most visible and effective advocates for women's rights in U.S. history. Her evolution was shaped by the women around her: thinkers, educators, laborers, activists, and friends who expanded her vision of what justice meant.

One of the turning points came with the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911 (3). Locked doors and unsafe conditions trapped factory workers inside a burning building in New York City. The tragedy killed 146 workers, mostly young immigrant women, and galvanized a generation of reformers. Frances Perkins, who witnessed the fire and later became the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet, called it *"the day the New Deal was born."* Labor organizer Rose Schneiderman (4), a former garment worker herself, gave a powerful speech demanding not sympathy, but change. A leader in the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL, 5), she fought for union rights, fire safety, and labor laws to protect working women. Both women deeply influence ER's thinking in the years ahead.

After World War I, ER began working with women from all backgrounds and walks of life in organizations such as the WTUL, the Red Cross, and the Woman's National Democratic Club. She traveled the country meeting working-class women, teachers, labor leaders, and Black clubwomen. These relationships grounded her feminism in real-world struggles such as equal pay, childcare, health care, education, and voting rights.

As First Lady, ER held women-only press conferences, helping to create jobs for female journalists. She championed women in the New Deal, including Secretary Perkins and Molly Dewson, who helped women gain influence in the Democratic Party and in government. ER invited women's groups to the White House and insisted they have a seat at every table where decisions were made. She also stood with African American women leaders notably Mary McLeod Bethune, Dorothy Height, Pauli Murray, and, later, Rosa Parks. She was an honorary member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. (7) and spoke out against discrimination in the women's movement itself.

My Day 2026

ALLIES in ACTION

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Women Who Changed Her





★ MARCH 2026 Women's History Month

Monday
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4 Inauguration of FDR

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Sunday
8 International Women's Day

My Day 2026

MARCH



At the United Nations in 1947–1948, Indian delegate Hansa Mehta worked with Eleanor Roosevelt on the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Mehta successfully advocated changing the phrase “*All men are born free and equal*” to “*All human beings are born free and equal*.” With Roosevelt chairing the drafting committee, their collaboration helped enshrine the equality and dignity of women at the heart of international human rights.



MARCH

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“*All human beings are born free and equal.*”
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

★ MARCH 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
10 Harriet Tubman Day

Wednesday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

MARCH

Lillian Wald, public health pioneer and founder of the Henry Street Settlement, was known for fearless service to those most in need. On New York’s Lower East Side, Henry Street visiting nurses sometimes climbed rooftops and fire escapes to reach patients with no other access to care. Wald’s work helped establish public health nursing in the United States and inspired generations of reformers, including Eleanor Roosevelt, who admired her hands-on approach to community health and human dignity.



MARCH

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"I hope the women of the United States will awaken to the full sense of the influence which they can wield if they accept the responsibility which all power implies."

My Day, December 10, 1942

★ MARCH 2026

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My Day 2026

MARCH

Eleanor Roosevelt deeply admired Jane Addams, founder of Hull House in Chicago and a pioneer in social work and peace activism. In the 1920s, Roosevelt visited Hull House to learn from its model of community-based care, education, and reform. Addams’s leadership helped shape Roosevelt’s own public service. This photo, showing Addams with young visitors to Hull House in 1935, captures the spirit of democratic engagement that inspired them both.



MARCH

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*"She taught me that citizenship demanded active participation,
not passive or quiet support."*

On Jane Addams, *My Day*, September 6, 1939

★ MARCH 2026

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My Day 2026

MARCH

On March 25, 1911, a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York killed 146 workers, mostly immigrant women, trapped behind locked doors. The tragedy shocked the nation. Frances Perkins, who witnessed the fire, called it *"the day the New Deal began."* Following the fire, labor leader Rose Schneiderman and fellow mourners demanded justice: *"We have tried you good people... and you have failed us."* Their efforts mobilized a generation of reformers to fight for workers' rights, safety laws, and fair labor standards.



MARCH

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(Labor Leader Walter Reuther) *"said many things about the world situation which we need to remember. First and foremost was that democracy has to prove itself, and that each individual, and not the government, is responsible for that proof."*

My Day, December 19, 1949

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"I often wonder how we can make the more fortunate in our country fully aware of the fact that the problem of the unemployed is not a mechanical one. It is a problem alive and throbbing with human pain." My Day, April 29, 1936

EYES ON AMERICA

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Faces of the Great Depression

As the Great Depression gripped the United States in the 1930s, Eleanor Roosevelt became one of the nation’s most powerful witnesses. She didn’t rely on secondhand reports, she toured migrant camps, walked through coal towns and tenements, and rode coal cars into coal mines (1) to see the human cost of economic collapse firsthand.

She understood the transformative power of photography. ER championed government-sponsored documentary work that illuminated unseen suffering. She admired photographer Dorothea Lange, whose Migrant Mother (2) and other images (4, 5) became enduring portraits of resilience amid ruin. She praised Gordon Parks, who brought racial and economic injustice into sharp relief through his lens (3). And she supported Margaret Bourke-White (6) and Marion Post Wolcott (7), whose haunting images of bread lines and Dust Bowl families exposed the hard edges of American life.

ER amplified these images through her syndicated *My Day* column, connecting what people saw with what they felt. *"Pictures can tell the story better than I ever could in words,"* she wrote in 1936. *"I only wish I could take every person in this country to see what I’ve seen."*

Alongside these images and words, she became the moral conscience of the New Deal. She advocated fiercely for school lunch programs, affordable housing, and jobs for women and youth, especially through her work with the National Youth Administration. *"I had seen people living in almost unbelievable conditions,"* she wrote in 1933. *"We cannot be satisfied until the poorest of our citizens have the necessities for daily living."*

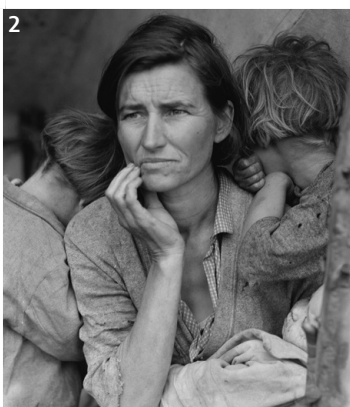
Her commitment was not rhetorical. In 1935, she boarded a coal car and rode two miles into a West Virginia mine—unescorted and wearing a miner’s lamp—to speak with workers face to face. The image of the First Lady underground became a powerful symbol of solidarity.

Through her travels, her writing, and her support for those who captured America’s struggles on film, Eleanor Roosevelt didn’t rely on secondhand reports. She travelled thousands of miles, touring migrant camps, and walking through coal towns and tenements.

My Day 2026

EYES ON AMERICA

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Faces of the Great Depression



★ MARCH 2026 ★ APRIL 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
31

Wednesday
1 Passover begins at sundown

Thursday
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Friday
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Saturday
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Sunday
5 Easter

My Day 2026

APRIL

The 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire transformed Frances Perkins, who witnessed the tragedy, into a fierce advocate for workers’ rights. With Eleanor Roosevelt’s support, she became the first woman to serve in the U.S. Cabinet as FDR’s Secretary of Labor. A chief architect of the New Deal, Perkins helped establish Social Security, unemployment insurance, and labor protections. Eleanor Roosevelt championed her work and expanded its reach, forging a powerful partnership that placed women’s leadership at the heart of American reform.



APRIL

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A woman will always have to be better than a man in any job she undertakes. There is no woman in the Cabinet today, but there will be again in the future. When there is, I hope she will get more support from the women of her own political party than has been the case in the past."

My Day, November 29, 1945

★ APRIL 2026

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My Day 2026

APRIL

In 1936, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited Des Moines, Iowa, to observe Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects firsthand. Committed to the New Deal’s promise of dignity through work, she championed WPA and other programs that provided jobs, training, and hope to Americans during the Great Depression. Her visit underscored her belief that the government has a duty to support its people with opportunity, not charity.



APRIL

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"Even to dream, one must have a basis of economic security and the dream is worth nothing if it cannot provide that."

My Day, January 6, 1941

★ APRIL 2026

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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

APRIL

Eleanor Roosevelt championed Arthurdale, West Virginia, as a model of social reform. The first New Deal Homestead and Resettlement community, Arthurdale, was created in 1933 for displaced coal-mining families. With her backing, residents received housing, schools, and support from programs like the National Youth Administration (NYA). Young people trained in trades such as welding, carpentry, and farming to build self-sufficient futures. Under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration more than 100 such communities were created.



APRIL

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"What we were trying to do at Arthurdale was to give people not only homes but a chance to become self-supporting citizens with a fuller life."

This I Remember, 1949

★ APRIL 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
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Wednesday
22 Earth Day

Thursday
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Friday
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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

APRIL

Pilot Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt shared a passion for adventure and breaking barriers. On April 20, 1933, after a White House dinner, the two friends slipped away to take a spontaneous night flight from Washington, D.C. to Baltimore aboard an Eastern Air Transport plane. Their flight symbolized the fearless spirit of women charting new paths in aviation, politics, and public life. Although Roosevelt never earned her pilot's license, she later received honorary membership in the Ninety-Nines, an organization of women pilots founded by Earhart.



APRIL

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*"We cannot keep our feet always on the ground if
we are to reach for the stars."
My Day, June 28, 1939*

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"Real prosperity can come about only when everybody prospers." My Day, March 19, 1936

DEMOCRACY in ACTION

Eleanor Roosevelt and the New Deal

The New Deal wasn't just a set of programs, but a fundamental shift in how Americans saw the role of government, here illustrated by posters that served as mass communications in an era before television and the Internet. Led by President Roosevelt, the New Deal reshaped public expectations, and Eleanor Roosevelt helped shape that shift. Though she held no official office, she became one of the most influential figures behind efforts to ensure relief reached those who needed it most.

From 1933 to 1945, ER traveled extensively, visiting coal towns, farms, city slums, and Native American reservations. She reported what she saw directly to the President and to the public through her *My Day* column, insisting that the New Deal must include not only economic recovery but also social justice.

ER championed the National Youth Administration (NYA), one of the few programs focused on young people, which provided jobs, training, and school support to more than four million youth. With her backing, Mary McLeod Bethune was appointed director of the NYA's Division of Negro Affairs (the first Black woman to head a federal agency). ER also ensured that girls and young women were included, challenging traditional assumptions that only boys needed work.

She worked closely with Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor and the first woman in the U.S. Cabinet, to support labor protections, Social Security, and fair wages. She encouraged Molly Dewson and other Democratic women to press for female representation in government.

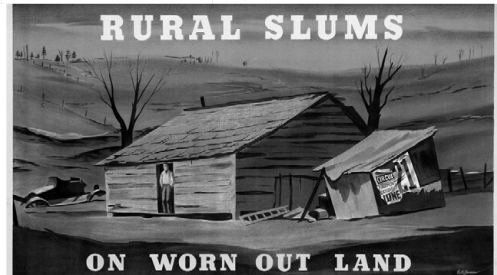
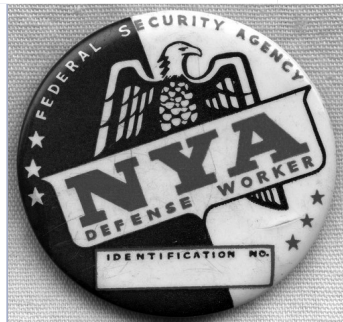
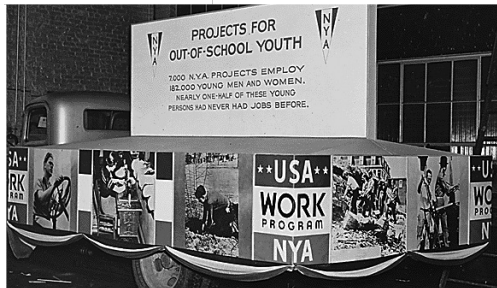
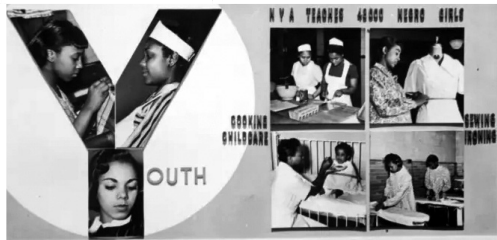
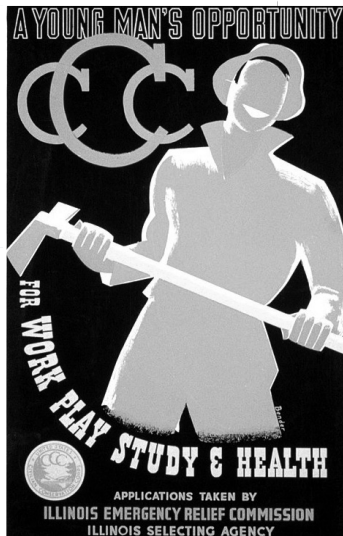
Although some New Deal programs excluded women or enforced segregation, Eleanor spoke out. She urged Roosevelt to support anti-lynching legislation, protested racial discrimination in federal hiring, promoted slum clearance in Detroit, and defended the rights of women to participate in public works programs. She believed government had a duty to serve not just the majority, but those too often left out.

Through tireless travel, advocacy, and alliances with diverse women leaders, Eleanor Roosevelt widened the New Deal's impact and expanded the nation's understanding of who deserved a seat at the table.

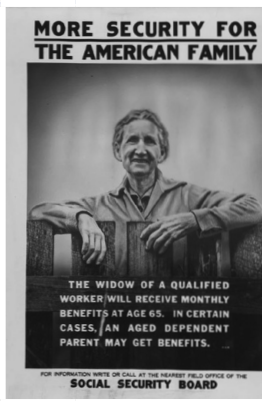
My Day 2026

DEMOCRACY in ACTION

Eleanor Roosevelt and the New Deal



RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION
is offering new opportunities to farmers





★ APRIL 2026 ★ MAY 2026 Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Monday
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Tuesday
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My Day 2026

MAY



In this iconic photo, Eleanor Roosevelt learns to shoot a pistol under the watchful eye of a Secret Service agent. Though she often resisted the trappings of security, the Secret Service insisted she carry a firearm during travel, especially on solo trips. The image captures her trademark mix of courage, practicality, and defiance of expectations.



MAY

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"If the necessity arose, I do know how to use a pistol."
My Day, March 13, 1937

★ MAY 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
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Wednesday
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Thursday
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Friday
8 Victory in Europe Day

Saturday
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Sunday
10 Mother's Day

My Day 2026

MAY

On April 23, 1943, Eleanor Roosevelt visited the Gila River Relocation Center at Rivers, Arizona, with WRA director Dillon S. Myer. Troubled by mass removal under Executive Order 9066, she urged Americans to judge Japanese-Americans as individuals and pressed to close the camps "as soon as possible." In her columns and interviews, she highlighted their loyalty and service and called the policy a mistake to be undone.



MAY

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"To undo a mistake is always harder than not to create one... but we have no choice but to try to correct our past mistakes."

Colliers Magazine, October 10, 1943

★ MAY 2026

Monday
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Thursday
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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

MAY

Flint River Farms in Macon County, Georgia, was one of some thirteen Black New Deal resettlement communities. Established in 1937, the Resettlement Administration settled 106 local African American families on lease-purchase farms to build land ownership and self-sufficiency. Projects like Flint River Farms offered rare federal support for Black families seeking lasting opportunity.



MAY

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*"Human resources are the most valuable assets the world has."
Tomorrow is Now, 1963*

★ MAY 2026

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My Day 2026

MAY

Mary McLeod Bethune, educator and founder of the National Council of Negro Women, championed civil rights at home and abroad. As director of Negro Affairs for the National Youth Administration (1936-44), she became the first Black woman to head a federal agency and the highest-ranking Black women in the U.S. government. Bethune worked closely with Eleanor Roosevelt to expand opportunities for Black youth and argued that lasting peace requires racial justice.



MAY						
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*"A great American has passed from us. We are poorer for her loss,
but we are richer for having known her."
My Day, May 20, 1955*

★ MAY 2026

Monday
25 Memorial Day

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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

MAY

During their 1939 U.S. visit, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth became the first reigning British monarchs to set foot on American soil. The Roosevelts welcomed them to Hyde Park, where they were joined by FDR's mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt (seated in the middle). ER also hosted an informal hot dog picnic at nearby Val-Kill. Later they were invited to the White House for a remarkable State Dinner and for an after-dinner concert by Marian Anderson who had performed at the Lincoln Memorial only two months earlier.



MAY

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"I have never seen the State Dining Room at the White House or the table look lovelier than they did last night... Her Majesty looked the part of the fairy queen which most children dream about."

My Day, June 10, 1939

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"It is a good thing to have women's minds brought to bear on questions of public importance, for they will sometimes see things which men overlook."
Remarks to the Women's National Press Club,
February 26, 1938

VOICE and VISIBILITY

Eleanor Roosevelt, Journalism, and the Women Who Told the Story

In an age before social media, 24-hour news, and TV, Eleanor Roosevelt mastered the art of public communication and transformed how political leaders engaged with the people. She not only wrote, spoke, and appeared on air nearly every day, she also used her influence to open doors for women in journalism, many of whom had been excluded from the press corps.

Beginning in 1935, Roosevelt launched her daily syndicated newspaper column, *My Day* (1). It ran six days a week for nearly 30 years. She used it to discuss civil rights, youth programs, foreign policy, and the everyday concerns of ordinary Americans. Unlike most political commentary, *My Day* was personal and accessible. Roosevelt typed (4) or dictated every entry herself.

She also became a pioneering radio and television figure, delivering more than 300 radio addresses during the Depression and World War II, and later appearing regularly on programs like *Meet the Press* (2, 3). She saw radio and TV not as performances, but as civic tools, as ways to inform and mobilize the public.

Crucially, Roosevelt used her position to elevate women reporters. She held women-only press conferences at the White House (5), which encouraged newspapers to hire female journalists if they wanted access. Among those she helped were Ann Cottrell Free, who covered the White House for the *New York Herald Tribune*, and Lorena "Hick" Hickok, her close confidante and former *Associated Press* reporter.

Roosevelt also made space for stories that reflected women's perspectives. She encouraged journalists to cover working women, African American communities, and social issues long ignored by male editors. Through her words and actions, she helped define public voice as a form of public power especially for women.

Whether writing about a new school, a strike, or a looming war, Eleanor Roosevelt used journalism to document a changing nation and to urge it forward.

My Day 2026

VOICE and VISIBILITY

Eleanor Roosevelt, Journalism, and the Women Who Told the Story

1



ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

My Day

© 1941 United Syndicate Inc.

Hope for Democracy Rests with U.S.

people are gradually being readjusted to the new world order.

As citizens, if we hear anything inspiring, will report it to the proper authorities. But the great mass of our people, stemming from these various national ties, must not feel that they have not duty rested to be Americans.

This is, perhaps, the greatest test this country has ever met. Perhaps it is the test which is going to show whether the United States can furnish a pattern for the rest of the world for the future. Our citizens come from all the nations of the world. Some of us have said from time to time, that we were the only proof that different nationalities could live together in peace and understanding, each bringing his own contribution, different though it may be, to the final unity which is the United States.

It, out of the present chaos, there is ever to come a world where free people live together peacefully in Europe, Asia or in the Americas, we shall have to provide the pattern. It is not enough to rest people in an old and ancient pattern. People must be given the chance to see the possibilities of a new world and to work for it.

Perhaps, on this day, for the submission to prove that such a vision may be a practical possibility. If we can not meet the challenge of fairness to our citizens of all very nationality, of really behaving in the Bill of Rights and making it a reality for all loyal American citizens, regardless of race, creed or color; if we can not keep in check anti-Semitism, religious feelings, then we shall have removed from the world the great hope for the future on which all humanity must now rely.



★ JUNE 2026 PRIDE MONTH

Monday
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Tuesday
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Friday
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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

JUNE

A young child listens intently to an oversized radio which served as a lifeline for millions of American families during the Great Depression and World War II. President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “*Fireside Chats*” offered calm, clarity, and reassurance in turbulent times. Eleanor Roosevelt also became a radio pioneer, hosting regular broadcasts on news, youth issues, and civil rights. She believed radio could bring the government closer to the people. Together, the Roosevelts were key to transforming radio into a tool of democracy.



JUNE

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"Through the medium of radio the people hear directly from their leaders, and this has created a new relationship between the government and the people. It has made government more intimate and more real."

This I Remember, 1949

★ JUNE 2026

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Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

JUNE

In April 1942, children at San Francisco’s Weill Public School recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Some, of Japanese ancestry, soon faced incarceration in War Relocation Authority camps. Dorothea Lange, hired by the WRA to document the “evacuation,” often revealed its human cost. Eleanor Roosevelt quietly worked to defend Japanese-Americans’ rights, urging loyalty be judged by actions, not ancestry.



JUNE

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"Remember always that children have no political rights of their own, but they are citizens of tomorrow."

Address to the United Nations, 1946

★ JUNE 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
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Wednesday
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Thursday
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Friday
19 Juneteenth

Saturday
20

Sunday
21 Father's Day

My Day 2026

JUNE

On June 10, 1963, President Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law in the Oval Office, handing a commemorative pen to Dorothy Height, President of the National Council of Negro Women and member of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women. Height’s presence symbolized the Commission’s influence. Its 1963 report, *American Women*, called for equal pay among its key recommendations. This moment captured federal recognition of both the gender and racial dimensions in the ongoing fight for economic justice.



JUNE						
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"If women do the same work, I have always believed they should receive the same pay."
If You Ask Me, 1946

★ JUNE 2026

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Sunday
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My Day 2026

JUNE

Ann Cottrell Free interviews Eleanor Roosevelt who strengthened women’s footing in the press by holding women-only White House briefings, compelling editors to assign female reporters. Free, later a pathbreaker in political and environmental journalism, shared Roosevelt’s conviction that informed, independent reporting keeps democracy accountable.



JUNE

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"The more women reporters we have, the better the chances that women’s point of view will be considered."
My Day, October 30, 1939

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"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home... Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere." United Nations, March 27, 1958

VAL-KILL: A HOME for ALL PEOPLE

Eleanor Roosevelt's Refuge and Workshop for Democracy

Val-Kill is now a National Historic Site maintained by the National Park Service. It is preserved to reflect through furnishings and artifacts how it looked during ER's many years there (1). It stands as a monument to her belief that from humble places, a more just and peaceful world could emerge. It was the first residence she owned and within these walls, she entertained world leaders, community and civil rights organizers, refugees, students, and family members (2).

Originally built as a retreat with friends Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman in the 1920s (3), Val-Kill became a place where Roosevelt could step outside the formality of White House life and engage directly with the issues she cared about. It was also home to Val-Kill Industries, a New Deal experiment in cooperative labor that employed local artisans, including women and rural workers, to produce furniture and crafts (4).

After FDR's death in 1945, Roosevelt made Val-Kill her primary residence and turned it into a hub of hospitality, activism and international dialogue. Her informal weekend picnics and porch discussions were legendary. Val-Kill always embodied her belief that democracy begins in "small places, close to home." Girls Scouts, foreign exchange students, UN groups, young women and students (5) came here to share ideas, build confidence, and come away re-energized.

She also continued her advocacy work from Val-Kill, writing her daily column, preparing speeches, and hosting discussions on human rights issues. From the political world, leaders such as Adlai Stevenson, John F. Kennedy and Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas came to visit to seek her counsel, endorsement or both. From the international world, Premier Nikita Khrushchev, Prime Minister Nehru of India, and Ethiopian royalty paid their visits. From the peaceful and lovely retreat of Val-Kill, Roosevelt continued to push her agenda for a better world.

To this day, Val-Kill stands as a monument to Eleanor Roosevelt's belief that a more just and peaceful world can be built from humble places, by people of conscience and courage (6).

My Day 2026

VAL-KILL: A HOME for ALL

Eleanor Roosevelt's Refuge and Workshop for Democracy



★ JUNE 2026 ★ JULY 2026

Monday
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Tuesday
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Wednesday
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Thursday
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Friday
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Saturday
4 Independence Day

Sunday
5

My Day 2026

JULY

Marian Anderson receives the NAACP's Spingarn Medal from Eleanor Roosevelt in Richmond on July 2, 1939. Recognized for outstanding achievement, Anderson was already among the world's most celebrated singers. Her contralto was acclaimed across Europe and the Americas. That spring her Lincoln Memorial concert on April 9th, drew an unprecedented fully integrated audience of about 75,000 and a nationwide radio audience, turning musical excellence into a unifying national moment.



JULY

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"We must remember that we are not only celebrating a national holiday, but a step in the long struggle for freedom, justice and equality for all people."

My Day, July 4, 1940

★ JULY 2026

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My Day 2026

JULY

In July 1945, General Dwight D. Eisenhower joined Eleanor Roosevelt at President Franklin D. Roosevelt's gravesite in Hyde Park, New York, three months after the President's death. In her *My Day* column, she described the ceremony with both solemnity and humor, recalling how her grandchildren watched the police escort with excitement until the youngest, tired and impatient, loudly reminded her he was ready for lunch. The moment captured the blending of national mourning with the warmth of family life.



JULY

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"I respected him, even when I disagreed with him. We often saw things differently, but I knew he was acting from a sense of duty."
The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1961

★ JULY 2026

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My Day 2026

JULY

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt delivered a stirring address at the final session of the 1940 Democratic National Convention in Chicago Stadium on July 18, 1940. Speaking on behalf of the President, she urged delegates to rise above division and recognize that they were living in *"no ordinary time."* Her calm authority and moral appeal helped unify the party behind President Roosevelt's unprecedented third-term nomination. The moment marked an historical turning point in how First Ladies could influence public life and political discourse.



JULY

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"You must know that this is the time when all good men and women give every bit of service and strength to their country that they have to give."

Speech to Democratic National Convention, July 18, 1940

★ JULY 2026

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My Day 2026

JULY

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt hosts 10-year-old Shirley Temple, America's most beloved child star in 1938. Known for her charm and curls, Temple symbolized hope during the Great Depression. *"She is an exceedingly self-possessed young lady,"* Roosevelt wrote in *My Day*, admiring her poise. Temple later recalled, "She talked to me like a person, not a child star." Inspired by Roosevelt's example, Temple went on to serve as a U.S. diplomat and public figure.



JULY

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"Our children are our only hope for the future, but we are their only hope for their present and their future."

Tomorrow Is Now, 1963

AUGUST 2026

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"We are in a war and we need to fight it with all our ability and every weapon possible. Women pilots, in this particular case, are a weapon waiting to be used." My Day, September 1, 1942

WOMEN and WORK in WARTIME

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Fight for Opportunity

World War II transformed the American workforce, and Eleanor Roosevelt helped make sure women were part of it. She spotlighted war work first, from factory floors and shipyards to the iconic "We Can Do It!" poster (1, 2). As millions of men entered military service, she argued that women's employment was a matter of rights and recognition as well as necessity. Through "My Day," speeches, and site visits, she pressed for child care, equal pay, and safe conditions.

Roosevelt fought for inclusion and fairness in defense jobs. After A. Philip Randolph threatened a March on Washington to protest discrimination, her advocacy helped spur Executive Order 8802, which banned racial discrimination in federal employment and defense contracts and created the Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC). She urged agencies to support the FEPC's work and to judge workers by performance, not prejudice.

She also championed women in uniform. She supported the Army's Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1942 and its transition to the Women's Army Corps in 1943 under Oveta Culp Hobby. She backed the Navy's WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), and in March 1943 she toured WAVES officer training at Smith College in Northampton with director Mildred H. McAfee Horton (5). By appearing in classrooms and on drill fields, she helped normalize women's technical and leadership roles.

Opportunity meant leadership and representation. Charity Adams, later Adams Earley, became the first Black woman commissioned in the WAAC and WAC and went on to command the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion in Europe. In December 1944, Harriet Ida Pickens and Frances Wills finished officer training at Smith College's Naval Reserve Midshipmen's School in Northampton and were commissioned as the first Black WAVES officers (3). Beyond the services, Roosevelt amplified the voices of labor leaders such as Maida Springer Kemp, who organized and trained garment workers and advocated for fair conditions at home and abroad (4).

For Roosevelt, work was more than production quotas. It was a path to dignity and democratic citizenship. By the war's end, she pointed to hundreds of thousands of women who kept supply lines moving, planes flying, codes secure, and hospitals functioning, and she argued that the equality they proved in war must endure in peace.

My Day 2026

WOMEN and WORK in WARTIME

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Fight for Opportunity



★ JULY 2026 ★ AUGUST 2026

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My Day 2026

AUGUST

During World War II, Eleanor Roosevelt advocated for federally funded childcare centers created under the Lanham Act to support the surge of women in war-related jobs. In Atlanta and in cities nationwide, these nurseries provided safe, nurturing care at modest cost (at about 50 cents a day) and served nearly 600,000 children at their peak. Roosevelt visited and promoted these programs, insisting that childcare was a national responsibility and should remain a permanent public service, not just a wartime measure.



AUGUST

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"The provision of day care for children is not a luxury. These children are future citizens, and if they are neglected in these early years it will hurt not only the children themselves, but the community as a whole."

My Day, September 8, 1945

★ AUGUST 2026

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My Day 2026

AUGUST

Eleanor Roosevelt was a leading voice in the fight against the polio virus that had paralyzed the President. She helped raise awareness and funding for care and research. Here, she visits a therapeutic treatment center in Albany, New York. As First Lady, she promoted public health and mental health care, frequently touring hospitals, clinics, and recovery programs to advocate for better services, especially for children, veterans, and the poor. Her visits were more than symbolic. She listened, learned, and pushed for compassionate, community-based care.



AUGUST

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"The fight against infantile paralysis is one which concerns us all. No one can know whose home will be struck, and the only way we can meet it is by uniting in a common effort."

My Day, January 18, 1944

★ AUGUST 2026

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14 Victory over Japan Day

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My Day 2026

AUGUST

Victory over Japan (V-J) Day, August 14, 1945, marked the end of the most destructive war in history. As crowds celebrated in the streets, Eleanor Roosevelt looked ahead and urged young people to take up the work of building a better world, convinced the future depended on their commitment to justice, cooperation, and human dignity. Just months later, she helped launch the United Nations, determined to make peace more than the mere absence of war.



AUGUST

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"The real job now is to win the peace. That will require as much courage and steadfastness and selflessness as winning the war."

Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day), May 8, 1945

★ AUGUST 2026

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My Day 2026

AUGUST

In 1940, Eleanor Roosevelt helped launch the March of Dimes' national radio campaign to fight childhood polio from the White House. Millions of children sent in dimes, helping fund patient care and research. With support from Congress and rising leaders such as the young Richard Nixon, the campaign backed Jonas Salk's 1955 vaccine and the historic "Polio Pioneers" field trials involving 1.8 million schoolchildren, followed by Albert Sabin's oral vaccine. By 1979, polio was eradicated in the United States.



AUGUST

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"We must join in an effort to use all knowledge for the good of all human beings. When we do that, we shall have nothing to fear."

On My Own, 1958

★ AUGUST 2026

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26 Women's Equality Day

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My Day 2026

AUGUST

Pauli Murray (right) first wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt in 1938, challenging racial discrimination in New Deal programs. Their exchange, tense at first, grew into a 20-year dialogue marked by honesty and mutual respect. Murray, a brilliant lawyer, activist, and later the first Black woman Episcopal priest, pushed Roosevelt to act more boldly on civil rights. Their friendship affected Roosevelt's views and elevated Murray's legacy whose legal arguments helped lay the groundwork for Brown v. Board of Education, Roe v. Wade, and the modern fight for race and gender equality.



AUGUST

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"There is a book just published which, I think, anyone interested in the problem of civil rights in this country will find stimulating and enlightening. It is written with a sensitive feeling for the past as well as the present."

Review of *Proud Shoes* by Pauli Murray, *My Day*, October 23, 1956

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"I have seen many a boy hospitalized because he went back for a buddy who was wounded. When you try to tell them of your admiration for their courage, they seem embarrassed. One boy said, "Shucks, you would do the same, wouldn't you?" All you can say is, "I hope so." My Day, September 16, 1943

WARTIME COURAGE

Eleanor Roosevelt and World War II

During World War II, Eleanor Roosevelt redefined what it meant to be First Lady in a time of global crisis. She became the face of compassion, sacrifice, and democratic resolve, not only supporting soldiers and families, but also travelling extensively to witness the war's impact and ensure that no one was forgotten.

She visited military hospitals, war plants, and refugee centers across the United States and abroad. In 1943, despite safety concerns, she made a grueling five-week trip to the South Pacific (1, 2), eating meals with soldiers (3, 4) visiting the sick and wounded (5, 6), inspecting Red Cross operations, and boosting morale (7). Her empathy was unforgettable. She sat at bedsides, held hands, and wrote letters home for those too injured to write themselves. And she visited the graves of the fallen soldiers who weren't going home (8).

Back in the U.S., Roosevelt was deeply involved in the American Red Cross, volunteer mobilization, and civil defense efforts. She toured internment camps holding Japanese Americans, met with African American soldiers facing discrimination, and advocated for equity in war programs. Her belief in democracy extended to everyone, even when it meant challenging government policies.

She highlighted the vital role of women on the home front, from mothers running households alone to women in factories, farms, and military service. In *My Day*, she shared stories of everyday sacrifice and called on Americans to uphold the ideals of freedom, even when it was hard. Roosevelt also worked to support families, pushing for fair rations, childcare programs, and support for war widows. She met regularly with laborers, teachers, and community groups to keep morale high and democracy strong.

Above all, Eleanor Roosevelt believed that the struggle against fascism abroad demanded honesty and justice at home. Her wartime leadership blended compassion with courage and helped ensure that the fight for democracy included all Americans.

My Day 2026

WARTIME COURAGE

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT AND WORLD WAR II



★ AUGUST 2026 ★ SEPTEMBER 2026

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My Day 2026

SEPTEMBER

In August 1960, John F. Kennedy visited Eleanor Roosevelt in Hyde Park, New York, to mark the 25th anniversary of the act creating Social Security and to seek her endorsement for his campaign for President. She had questioned his commitment to civil rights and whether he was progressive enough. Their candid conversation helped close the gap and within days she signaled support for him in *My Day* and agreed to assist his campaign.



SEPTEMBER

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"The torch has been passed to a new generation... unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this Nation has always been committed."
JFK Inaugural Speech, January 20, 1961



★ SEPTEMBER 2026

Monday
7 Labor Day

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11 Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown

Saturday
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Sunday
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My Day 2026

SEPTEMBER



During her September 9, 1935 visit to Detroit, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt met with a local child as part of the groundbreaking and dedication ceremony for the Brewster Homes, America’s first federally funded housing development for Black residents. Her warm presence and engagement with children and families symbolized her commitment to social equity and the New Deal’s mission to uplift underserved communities through dignified, government- supported housing initiatives.



SEPTEMBER

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"We older people must learn to listen to youth. Their ideas may at times be untried, but their sincerity and vision deserve our respect."
My Day, June 2, 1940



★ **SEPTEMBER 2026** National Hispanic Heritage Month

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20 Yom Kippur begins at sundown

My Day 2026

SEPTEMBER



At the 1945 San Francisco Conference to draft the UN Charter, just six of the 850 delegates were women, three from Latin America: Bertha Lutz of Brazil, Minerva Bernardino of the Dominican Republic, and Isabel Pinto de Vidal of Uruguay. These trailblazing diplomats pushed to ensure that the Charter affirmed equal rights for women, and men, thus embedding gender equality in the founding principles of the United Nations and laying groundwork for Eleanor Roosevelt's later work on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



SEPTEMBER

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"We must make certain that the rights of men and women are equally respected, and that every individual has an equal opportunity for education, for work, and for a decent standard of living."

Speech to UN General Assembly, January 12, 1946

★ SEPTEMBER 2026

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My Day 2026

SEPTEMBER

In 1934, Eleanor Roosevelt traveled to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands with journalist Lorena Hickok, her long-term trusted companion with whom she shared a deep personal bond. They assessed the impact of the Great Depression and Roosevelt later published her impressions in *Woman's Home Companion*, highlighting Puerto Rican culture and women's essential role in the island's economy. Moved by the poverty she witnessed, Roosevelt urged greater U.S. responsibility. A decade later, in 1944, she returned to the Caribbean on a morale-boosting tour to visit U.S. troops, hospitals, and Red Cross workers.



SEPTEMBER

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"The problem of poverty here is not one which can be solved by relief alone; it must be met by giving people the means to earn a living and by improving their standards of health and education."

My Day, March 8, 1934

OCTOBER 2026

Native American Heritage Month

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"If democracy is to be strong, its citizens must be educated. We cannot be content with a system that leaves any child without the opportunity to develop his or her abilities to the fullest."

Speech to the American Association of School Administrators, February 25, 1939

BUILDING the FUTURE

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Power of Youth and Education

From Eleanor Roosevelt's early work as a teacher to her role as a global leader, she championed education as the foundation of civic life and human dignity. As a young woman, Roosevelt taught immigrant girls at the Rivington Street Settlement House in New York. The experience opened her eyes to poverty and inequality and shaped her lifelong commitment to social reform. She later helped run and taught at the Todhunter School for Girls in New York, where she promoted critical thinking and public service (1, 2).

During the Great Depression, the National Youth Administration (NYA) reached more than 4.5 million students between 1935 and 1943. Thanks to Mary McLeod Bethune with ER's support, the NYA became one of the most inclusive New Deal programs, providing education, training, and jobs to over 1 million young women and more than 300,000 African American youth (3, 4, 5). Roosevelt promoted vocational programs for girls (4) and pushed for equal access across racial and regional lines (5). She also supported broader efforts to improve education for Native American and immigrant communities, emphasizing inclusion and cultural respect.

Roosevelt's commitment to educational opportunity took her to classrooms and campuses nationwide. She served as a trustee of Brandeis University (6), Bethune-Cookman College (7), the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (8), and Howard University, among others. She met with students, faculty, and administrators at rural schools, urban community centers, and women's colleges, reinforcing the link between education, equality, and democratic participation.

At the White House, Roosevelt invited student groups from across the country to meet leaders, discuss public policy, and witness democracy in action. At Val-Kill, she welcomed educators and diplomats (9), and young people (10) for conversations about justice and peace. After World War II, she expanded her educational advocacy globally as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations, helping organize youth forums and promoting exchange programs across continents. To Roosevelt, education was not just about books. It was about opportunity, participation, and values. She believed that nurturing the next generation was essential to building a more just and peaceful world.

My Day 2026

BUILDING the FUTURE

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Power of Youth and Education





★ SEPTEMBER 2026 ★ OCTOBER 2026

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My Day 2026

OCTOBER



Edith S. Sampson, Chicago lawyer and civil-rights advocate, meets with Eleanor Roosevelt during the Fifth UN General Assembly in New York in 1950. Appointed as an alternate U.S. delegate by President Truman, Sampson became the first Black American to represent the United States at the UN. She served on the Third Committee with Roosevelt.



OCTOBER

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*"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it.
And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it."*

National Conference on the United Nations, November 11, 1951

★ OCTOBER 2026

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11 Eleanor Roosevelt's Birthday

My Day 2026

OCTOBER

Established by President John F. Kennedy on December 14, 1961, the President's Commission on the Status of Women examined discrimination against women and recommended actions to advance equality. Eleanor Roosevelt served as chair until her death in 1962, bringing her lifelong commitment to social justice to the role. On October 11, 1963, Esther Peterson and other Commission members presented their groundbreaking report to President Kennedy, highlighting persistent inequalities and calling for policy reforms in employment, education, and legal status.



OCTOBER

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"We want to make sure that the available talent which we have in this country of trained women is being used effectively. I think we want to make sure that some recognition is given to the special problems women have as the mother and the housewife, and at the same time their desires to participate usefully in public and private life."

Interview with President Kennedy, June 1962



★ OCTOBER 2026

Monday

12 Indigenous Peoples' Day

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My Day 2026

OCTOBER



Indigenous Peoples’ Day, observed the second Monday in October, honors Native nations. In 1943 at Camden, Maine, Penobscot Nation members held a welcoming ceremony for Eleanor Roosevelt and gave her the name Ow-Du-Sees-Ul (“Princess of Many Trails”). She wrote that they “took me into their tribe” and sang for her “safety on far trails.” Throughout her public life, she backed treaty rights, education, health care, and fair labor protections for Indigenous peoples.



OCTOBER

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"To many people the problem of our own American Indians may seem very small, but it is really a concern of every citizen. For these were the first owners of the country in which we now live..."
My Day, January 23, 1959

★ OCTOBER 2026

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My Day 2026

OCTOBER

Eleanor Roosevelt arrives at Howard University's Faculty Club, circa 1936. More than a visitor, she served on Howard's Board of Trustees (1947–1954), worked with President Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, met with students and faculty, participated in classes, and often wrote about Howard in *My Day*, including speeches and board meetings. Howard awarded her an honorary D.H.L. in 1962, acknowledging a long partnership.



OCTOBER

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"Education is a tool for social change."
My Day, June 17, 1958



★ OCTOBER 2026 ★ NOVEMBER 2026

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My Day 2026

OCTOBER



Eleanor Roosevelt and Hopi painter Fred Kabotie at the 1941 Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Indian Art of the United States*. The groundbreaking show, co-curated by René d'Hamoncourt and Frederic H. Douglas, celebrated Indigenous creativity across centuries. Roosevelt's presence signaled national recognition of Native artists and cultures, long marginalized by mainstream institutions. Kabotie, a renowned painter and cultural ambassador, represented a new generation reclaiming Native stories through art. The exhibition helped reshape public understanding of Indigenous contributions to American identity.



OCTOBER

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"Now the Indians in our midst were the original owners of our country, and it seems ironic to me to practice discrimination against them."

My Day, October 3, 1960

NOVEMBER 2026

Native American Heritage Month

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"The battle for the individual rights of women is one of long standing and none of us should countenance anything which undermines it."
My Day, 1946

WOMEN WITHOUT BORDERS

Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Global Sisterhood

During World War II, Eleanor Roosevelt became not just an American leader, but a global one. She traveled to the United Kingdom, the Pacific Theater of War and Latin America, meeting with women war workers, students, laborers, and heads of state and Clementine Churchill, the wife of the Prime Minister (1, 2, 3 & 4).

After WW II and as a U.S. delegate to the newly formed United Nations, Roosevelt met with women from dozens of countries to draft a new moral foundation for peace. She insisted that women be represented at every level of international decision-making. She worked alongside leaders such as Hansa Mehta of India, Minerva Bernardino of the Dominican Republic, and Bodil Begtrup of Denmark to ensure that women's rights were fully included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Roosevelt also traveled as a citizen-diplomat, representing not just U.S. policy but American ideals of democracy, equality, and education. In 1953 she toured Japan, meeting students and women's organizations to encourage democratic participation (5, 6, 7). Her itinerary included Hiroshima, where she visited the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission and wrote in *My Day*, "To arrive in Hiroshima is an emotional experience," underscoring her emphasis on peace and democratic participation.

She also traveled to Israel, India, Tunisia, and Guatemala, often bypassing elites to speak directly with women in villages, schools, and cooperatives, even trying her hand at spinning (9). She maintained strong ties with international women's groups, including the International Council of Women, Pan-Pacific Women's Association, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. At home, she welcomed visiting delegations of women leaders from across the globe to Hyde Park (8). She supported women like Bertha Lutz of Brazil (p. 97), who helped advance women's voting rights, and championed postwar exchanges that brought African, Asian, Caribbean, and Middle Eastern women to the U.S. for training in various professions.

To Roosevelt, international cooperation had to include women, not as symbols, but as equal partners in shaping a peaceful, more equitable world. To give women greater power around the world was not only smart diplomacy, it was also the only path to lasting peace.

My Day 2026

WOMEN WITHOUT BORDERS

Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Global Sisterhood





★ NOVEMBER 2026 Native American Heritage Month

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3 Election Day

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Saturday
7 Eleanor Roosevelt's Death

Sunday
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My Day 2026

NOVEMBER



At Hyde Park, New York, on November 10, 1962, four U.S. presidents, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Harry S. Truman, gathered for Eleanor Roosevelt's funeral in the Rose Garden at the Roosevelt estate. Their presence signaled a rare, cross-partisan tribute to a First Lady whose global advocacy for human rights and democratic citizenship profoundly reshaped American and global affairs. Often called the "First Lady of the World," her legacy continues to inspire leaders worldwide.



NOVEMBER

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*"She would rather light candles than curse the darkness and
her glow has warmed the world."*
Ambassador Adlai Stevenson, UN Memorial for Eleanor Roosevelt,
November 9, 1962

★ NOVEMBER 2026

Monday
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11 Veterans Day

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My Day 2026

NOVEMBER

Eleanor Roosevelt used her pen like a public service: *My Day* ran six days a week for 26 years (later three days), reaching readers nationwide—what some even call the world’s first blog. Alongside the column came 27 books, hundreds of articles, and broadcast series that amplified her human rights message from the New Deal to the UN. See Allida Black’s *Courage in a Dangerous World* and for further information, see George Washington University’s Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project.



NOVEMBER

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"In political life I have never felt that anything really mattered but the satisfaction of knowing that you stood for the things in which you believed, and had done the best you could."

My Day, November 8, 1944

★ NOVEMBER 2026

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My Day 2026

NOVEMBER

In 1952, Eleanor Roosevelt traveled to Israel, where she met Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, visited the Negev Desert, and toured immigrant camps and youth villages. She met with women leaders and praised Israel's efforts to build a democratic society amid postwar challenges. A lifelong advocate for refugees, Roosevelt saw hope in Israel's spirit of renewal. Her visit reflected her deep commitment to human rights and postwar recovery.



NOVEMBER

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"There is a sense of building and courage here that lifts the heart."
ER commenting on her first visit to Israel, 1952

★ NOVEMBER 2026

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26 Thanksgiving

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My Day 2026

NOVEMBER

Eleanor Roosevelt championed religious liberty throughout her life. She worked with Catholic leaders on civil rights; spoke in synagogues and pressed for Jewish refugees' admission during and after the Holocaust; met with Muslim communities and leaders in Pakistan, Syria and beyond; and defended Jehovah's Witnesses when they were persecuted for their beliefs. Through her columns, speeches, and public advocacy, she insisted that democracy depended on protecting freedom of conscience for all faiths.



NOVEMBER

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*"What is really important is not what religion or race we belong to,
but how we live our lives."
My Day, June 19, 1943*

DECEMBER 2026

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"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. . . . Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination."
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

HUMAN RIGHTS for ALL
Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations

Eleanor Roosevelt crowned her life’s work on the world stage by guiding the birth of one of the most important moral documents in modern history: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). After World War II, she was appointed by President Truman as a delegate to the newly formed United Nations, where she chaired the Commission on Human Rights and helped define a global standard of dignity, freedom, and justice (1).

In 1947, she addressed the UN General Assembly, urging nations to move beyond war and build a peace grounded in human rights. As chair of the drafting committee, Roosevelt worked with leaders from around the world including René Cassin of France, Charles Malik of Lebanon, Peng Chun Chang of China, and women such as Hansa Mehta of India, who pressed for inclusive language (2).

Despite Cold War tensions and deep ideological divides, Roosevelt remained patient and determined. She insisted the declaration protect civil, political, social, and economic rights, and fought for clear language affirming equality regardless of race, sex, religion, or national origin. Her belief in human dignity was unwavering.

On December 10, 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by a vote of 48 nations in favor, none against, and 8 abstentions (3). Roosevelt hailed it as *"the international Magna Carta for all men everywhere."* Today, it holds the Guinness World Record as the most translated document in the world, with versions in more than 500 languages.

Even after her term ended, Roosevelt continued to lecture, write, and meet with students and diplomats to promote human rights education. She closed her remarkable life not only as First Lady of the United States, but as "First Citizen of the World (4)," helping to give voice to the hopes of millions and shaping the foundation for international justice.

My Day 2026

HUMAN RIGHTS for ALL

Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations





★ NOVEMBER 2026 ★ DECEMBER 2026

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4 Hanukkah begins

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Sunday
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My Day 2026

DECEMBER



On December 7, 1941, Japan launched a surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, killing over 2,400 Americans and drawing the United States into World War II. That same night, Eleanor Roosevelt became the first public official to address the nation. On her regular Sunday radio broadcast, she offered calm and courage and urged Americans to stay strong on the home front, support one another, and *"keep democracy alive at home."*



DECEMBER

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"Whatever is asked of us I am sure we can accomplish it. We are the free and unconquerable people of the United States of America."

My Day, December 7, 1941

★ DECEMBER 2026

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10 Human Rights Day

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My Day 2026

DECEMBER

In honor of December 10, Human Rights Day, we remember Eleanor Roosevelt's leadership in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 with 48 nations in favor and none opposed. The Declaration has been translated into over 500 languages, making it the world's most translated document.



DECEMBER

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"...the declaration will set a standard for human rights and freedoms, and if these standards are recognized as good I believe peoples throughout the world, who feel they are not being treated fairly, will gain a knowledge of the declaration."
My Day, December 10, 1948

★ DECEMBER 2026

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My Day 2026

DECEMBER

On December 14, 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10980 establishing the President's Commission on the Status of Women. Chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt until her death in 1962, the Commission brought together leaders from Congress, the executive branch, and private organizations to examine discrimination against women in employment, education, and law. Its final report, *American Women*, presented October 11, 1963, urged *pay equity* and further actions to address gender inequality.



DECEMBER

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*"There is a great consciousness of feminism only when
there are many wrongs to be righted."*

White House Press Conference, December 17, 1944

★ DECEMBER 2026

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25 Christmas Day

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26 Kwanzaa begins

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My Day 2026

DECEMBER

The Roosevelts' holidays often filled the White House with family, children and laughter. In January 1945, FDR asked that all thirteen grandchildren gather for the inauguration; Eleanor noted in *My Day* that even two-year-old Nina came to the East Room religious service, which "more nearly met the needs of the day than anything else." Less than three months later, FDR was gone.



DECEMBER						
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"I think this old house likes the sound of children's voices. It is certainly an ideal place for children of every age to play in . . . Everyone in the house is a friend, within twenty-four hours after their arrival."

My Day, December 23, 1939



★ DECEMBER 2026 ★ JANUARY 2027

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Thursday
31 New Year's Eve

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My Day 2026

DECEMBER



Painted in Warsaw in 1946 by Bernard Frydrysiak, after a 1944 press photo, this portrait captures Eleanor Roosevelt as she stepped onto the world stage after FDR’s death. From settlement houses to a seat at the United Nations, she pressed for human rights, relief for refugees, and wider doors for women. In the years ahead she helped shape the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and earned a new title: the “First Lady of the World.”



DECEMBER

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"It is an indisputable fact that democracy cannot survive where force and not law is the ultimate court of appeal."

Keepers of Democracy, Virginia Quarterly Review, Winter 1939



NOTES











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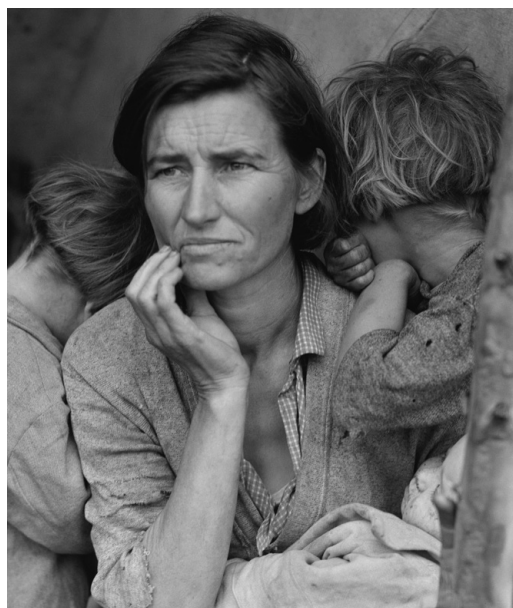
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