

USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network (located at www.usafreedomcorps.gov).

My Administration is fighting domestic violence and strengthening services for victims and their dependents by supporting local and private efforts and securing historic levels of funding for the Violence Against Women programs at the Department of Justice. In fiscal year 2002, we spent \$390 million to prevent domestic violence and help victims, which represented an approximately \$100 million increase in funding. Since then, we have continued to provide a similar level of funding, and cities and towns across America are using this money to strengthen their responses to the victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The Federal commitment to domestic violence has made it possible for women to seek relief from abuse and reclaim their dignity and their lives. Moreover, Federal prosecutions in cases involving violence against women increased by 35 percent in 2002.

Today is the first day of issue for the U.S. Postal Service Stop Family Violence postage stamp, which will raise money to support the national fight against domestic violence. On behalf of families and communities across America, I call on all citizens to help raise public awareness about how to prevent, recognize, and stop domestic violence. I applaud the commitment of all those who are helping to improve the lives of domestic violence survivors and their families. Working together, we can continue to find better solutions to this national problem.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 2003 as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. I urge all Americans to help victims of domestic violence and to work together to address this tragic problem.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7718 of October 9, 2003

Leif Erikson Day, 2003

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Traveling across the Atlantic as the first Nordic to lead an expedition to North America, Leif Erikson showed great courage in the face of danger. His actions marked the beginning of a longstanding exchange of people, ideas, and innovations between North America and the Nordic nations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. As the United States celebrates Leif Erikson Day, we honor his historic voyage and give thanks for the many contributions of Nordic Americans to our Nation, and of our Nordic allies.

Since Leif Erikson's voyage, millions of immigrants from the Nordic countries have come to America. As teachers, lawyers, judges, doctors, authors, athletes, artists, scientists, and business people, and in many other occupations, Nordic Americans have contributed to America's cultural, political, and economic strength. America has also benefited from the diplomatic relationships we have long enjoyed with the Nordic nations.

To honor Leif Erikson, Nordic-American heritage, and America's continued relationship with Nordic countries, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88-566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2003, as Leif Erikson Day. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to honor our rich Nordic-American heritage.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7719 of October 10, 2003

National School Lunch Week, 2003

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Over the last 57 years, the National School Lunch Program has provided more than 187 billion meals to young people across our country. During National School Lunch Week, we recognize the importance that good nutrition plays in the health of our children and in the development of good eating habits and healthy lifestyles.

By helping our children make healthy choices not only about food but also about their overall well-being, we can reduce the rates of childhood obesity and diabetes and help prevent heart disease, stroke, and other diseases later in life. Nutritious meals can also improve students' concentration and help them succeed in school.

As part of the National School Lunch Program, the Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition advises school food service professionals on how to prepare healthy meals for children. Team Nutrition also provides nutrition programs for children, families, and communities to illustrate the link between diet and health. Today, more than 99,000 schools and childcare centers are educating young people about good eating habits. They are also helping to feed our Nation's needy children through the National School Lunch Program. For many students, low-cost or free school meals are sometimes the only nutritious food they eat. Over the years, the dedication of school officials, food service professionals, parents, and community leaders has helped to expand