

Good nutrition at school is an investment in our children’s futures. During National School Lunch Week, we thank the food program administrators, educators, parents, and communities who provide for our Nation’s sons and daughters, and we recommit to ensuring all our children have the healthy food they need to grow and succeed.

The Congress, by joint resolution of October 9, 1962 (Public Law 87–780), as amended, has designated the week beginning on the second Sunday in October each year as “National School Lunch Week,” and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of October 9 through October 15, 2011, as National School Lunch Week. I call upon all Americans to join the dedicated individuals who administer the National School Lunch Program in appropriate activities that support the health and well-being of our Nation’s children.

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

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8734 of October 7, 2011**

**Leif Erikson Day, 2011**

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

The first Europeans known to set foot on North America took to the ocean more than a millennium ago, facing fierce waters and an uncertain course. Led by Leif Erikson—son of Iceland and grandson of Norway—these intrepid Scandinavians sailed fearlessly into the unknown, driven by the promise of adventure and dreams of new discoveries. When they landed in modern day Canada, they founded the settlement of Vinland and established a legacy of exploration and exchange that is fundamental to our courageous spirit.

Evoking the bravery and determination that characterized Erikson and his crew of pioneers, a group of Norwegians completed their own journey on October 9, 1825. Crammed into an undersized sloop named *Restauration*, these brave travelers sought new opportunities and embraced the same commitment to exploration that had driven their predecessors centuries earlier. On Leif Erikson Day, we commemorate these historic voyages and celebrate the many ways Nordic-American culture has enriched our Nation.

The triumphs of Erikson and those who followed inspire us to continue reaching for new horizons. Whether developing new technologies, pushing the boundaries of medicine, or driving ever further into the vastness of space, we do so confidently, knowing that icons like Leif Erikson were able to overcome incredible odds and drive the world forward. Today, let us celebrate his life and legacy with the bold pursuit of America’s next great innovation.

To honor Leif Erikson and celebrate our Nordic-American heritage, the Congress, by joint resolution (Public Law 88–566) approved on September 2, 1964, has authorized the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as “Leif Erikson Day.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 2011, 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 seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

#### **Proclamation 8735 of October 7, 2011**

### **Columbus Day, 2011**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

On October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus and his crewmembers sighted land after an ambitious voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. The ideals that guided them to this land—courage, determination, and a thirst for discovery—have inspired countless Americans and led to some of our Nation’s proudest accomplishments. Today, we renew our commitment to fostering the same spirit of innovation and exploration that will help future generations reach new horizons.

Ten weeks before his arrival in the Americas, Columbus and his crewmembers set sail from Spain in search of a westward route to Asia. Though their journey was daring, it did not yield the trade route they sought. Instead, it illuminated a continent then unknown to Europe, and established an unbreakable bond between two distant lands.

These explorers, and countless others that followed them, encountered indigenous peoples that had lived in the Western hemisphere for tens of thousands of years. On this day, we also remember the tragic hardships these communities endured. We honor their countless and ongoing contributions to our Nation, and we recommit to strengthening the tribal communities that continue to enrich the fabric of American life.

Columbus returned to the Americas three more times after his first historic voyage, and his journey has been followed by millions of immigrants, including our Nation’s earliest settlers and Founders. Born in Genoa, Italy, Christopher Columbus was the first in a proud tradition of Italians to cross the Atlantic to our shores. Today, we recognize their indelible influence on our country and celebrate the remarkable ways Italian-Americans have shaped the American experience.

The excitement Christopher Columbus and his crewmembers experienced that October morning is felt every day by today’s pioneers: entrepreneurs