

NOW, THEREFORE I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 1987 as Polish American Heritage Month. I urge all Americans to join their fellow citizens of Polish descent in observance of this month.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5721 of October 5, 1987

Benign Essential Blepharospasm Awareness Week, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

A little-known but debilitating neuromuscular disease produces functional blindness in thousands of Americans. The disorder, benign essential blepharospasm, causes involuntary and usually uncontrollable spasms of the muscles around the eyes that force the eyelids shut. As the disease progresses, the spasms become almost continuous.

Approximately 30,000 Americans suffer from benign essential blepharospasm. Most of them first experience symptoms in their fifth or sixth decade, although younger people are also affected. In the early stages of the disease, when the patient experiences an occasional extra wink or blink, there is only a slight impact on the quality of life. But when the spasms are more frequent, the patient cannot perform simple tasks such as reading or cooking, and ordinary activities such as driving a car become dangerous.

Treatment with drugs or surgery can temporarily relieve the symptoms of benign essential blepharospasm, but as yet there is no cure. Scientists are attempting to find improved treatments and to learn more about the causes of this condition. Three biomedical research agencies—the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke, the National Eye Institute, and the National Institute of Mental Health—lead the Federal research attack. Support for research is also provided by the Benign Essential Blepharospasm Research Foundation, Inc., a voluntary agency known for its efforts to assist patients and their families.

To increase public awareness of benign essential blepharospasm, the Congress, by House Joint Resolution 224, has designated the week of October 18 through October 24, 1987, as "Benign Essential Blepharospasm Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 18, 1987, as Benign Essential Blepharospasm Awareness Week, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5722 of October 5, 1987

Leif Erikson Day, 1987

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation sets aside October 9 each year to honor Leif Erikson and to celebrate our country's Nordic heritage. Almost a thousand years ago this young Viking explorer set out from Norway to convert Greenlanders to Christianity. He eventually reached North America and brought back reports of places he called Helluland, Markland, and Vinland. The explorers, missionaries, settlers, and adventurers who followed him in later centuries shared his bold spirit. The memory of Leif Erikson continues to inspire all who would chart new territory for the good of mankind.

Many who settled in North America were Nordics. Like "Leif the Lucky" they displayed great determination and courage as they came to a new world. They and their descendants have truly contributed much to our national heritage; the strength of character and spirit of adventure they trace to their ancestors, including Leif Erikson, are traits Americans will always revere as quintessentially American.

In honor of Leif Erikson and our Nordic American heritage, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved on September 2, 1964 (78 Stat. 849, 36 U.S.C. 169c), has authorized the President to proclaim October 9 of each year as "Leif Erikson Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 9, 1987, as Leif Erikson Day, and I direct the appropriate government officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings on that day. I also invite the people of the United States to honor Leif Erikson and our Nordic American heritage by holding appropriate exercises and ceremonies in suitable places throughout our land.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN