

professional. By being proactive and seeking out information, Americans can do their part to prevent or reduce vision loss.

To remind Americans about the importance of safeguarding their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 138), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as “Save Your Vision Week.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 1 through March 7, 2009, as Save Your Vision Week. During this time, I invite eye care professionals, teachers, members of the media, and all organizations dedicated to preserving eyesight to join in activities that will raise awareness of vision diseases and disorders.

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

BARACK OBAMA

#### **Proclamation 8349 of February 27, 2009**

#### **Read Across America Day, 2009**

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

Read Across America Day provides an opportunity to support efforts to excite children about reading and to educate families about the importance of literacy. I encourage families and all citizens to celebrate the joy and emphasize the importance of reading.

Every American child deserves the opportunity to solve the puzzles of mystery novels, to discover the beauty of poetry, to imagine the fantastical worlds of science fiction, and to explore their own world through books about nature and foreign lands. Reading provides unending enjoyment and helps unlock a child’s creative potential. We must make literacy the birthright of every American.

Every child also deserves the tools they will need for success. Students must read well to meet high standards in the classroom. Understanding science, mathematics, and the arts requires the ability to read proficiently. Beyond the schoolyard, our youth must be prepared to meet the demands of the global economy. New technologies and steep competition abroad require our Nation to focus on children’s reading skills as a building block for future personal achievements.

Families must play an active role in this effort. On Read Across America Day, parents are encouraged to read to their children for at least 30 minutes. I also encourage parents to recognize the critical importance of literacy for their children’s future and to develop habits at home that encourage reading, such as reading to their children every night or providing incentives for them to read on their own.

On Read Across America Day, we partner with the National Education Association and mark the birthday of Theodor Geisel, whose beloved Dr. Seuss books still inspire children throughout the world to read.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, 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 March 2, 2009, as Read Across America Day. I call upon children, families, educators, librarians, public officials, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

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

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8350 of March 2, 2009**

**Irish-American Heritage Month, 2009**

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

Even before the birth of our Nation, the sons and daughters of Erin departed their homes in search of liberty and a more hopeful future. As these early pioneers left familiar lands, they carried with them the rich traditions of home. This March we honor their journey and their lasting contributions to the history and culture of the United States.

Following the colonial migrations, the United States enjoyed the greatest influx of Irish during the 1840s as Ireland suffered the Great Famine. Hungry but hopeful, poor but perseverant, Irish-Americans seized the opportunity to work hard, enjoy success, and pursue the American Dream.

Many took on the difficult work of constructing America's infrastructure. Others assumed positions of leadership. Among those leaders were signers of the Declaration of Independence and Presidents of the United States. Still others enjoyed great success and influence in the arts and literature. From social activists to business leaders, athletes to clergy, and first responders to soldiers, distinguished Irish-Americans have made indelible contributions to our national identity.

Today, tens of millions of Irish-Americans can look back with pride on the legacy of their forebears. Irish-Americans are integral to the rich fabric of the United States, and we are grateful for their service and contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, 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 March 2009 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities.