

## Grandparents Day History

In the United States, Russell Capper (age 9 in 1969) sent a letter to President Nixon suggesting a special day be set aside as Grandparents Day. On June 12, 1969, he received a letter back from Rose Mary Woods (Personal Secretary to the President) reading, "Dear Russell, Thank you for your letter to President Nixon. Your suggestion regarding a Grandparent's Day is appreciated, but the President ordinarily issues proclamations designating periods for special observance only when a Congressional resolution authorizes him to do so. With best wishes, Sincerely, Rose Mary Woods Personal Secretary to the President".

Since the aforementioned letter, Marian McQuade was recognized nationally by the United States Senate – in particular by Senators Jennings Randolph and Robert Byrd – and by President Jimmy Carter, as the founder of National Grandparents Day. McQuade made it her goal to educate the youth in the community about the important contributions seniors have made throughout history. She also urged the youth to "adopt" a grandparent, not just for one day a year, but rather for a lifetime. Co-founder Cynthia Bennett, who worked for Marian's husband, contributed by writing letters of verification.

In 1973, Senator Jennings Randolph introduced a resolution to the senate to make Grandparents Day a national holiday. West Virginia's Governor Arch Moore had proclaimed an annual Grandparents Day for the state, at the urging of Marian McQuade. When Senator Randolph's resolution in the U.S. Senate died in committee, Marian McQuade organized supporters and began contacting governors, senators, and congressmen in all fifty states. She urged each state to proclaim their own Grandparents Day. Within three years, she had received Grandparents Day proclamations from forty-three states. She sent copies of the proclamations to Senator Randolph.

In February 1977, Senator Randolph, with the concurrence of many other senators, introduced a joint resolution to the senate requesting the president to "issue annually a proclamation designating the first Sunday of September after Labor Day of each year as 'National Grandparents Day'." Congress passed the legislation proclaiming the first Sunday after Labor Day as National Grandparents Day and, on August 3, 1978, then-President Jimmy Carter signed the



proclamation. The statute cites the day's purpose: "...to honor grandparents, to give grandparents an opportunity to show love for their children's children, and to help children become aware of strength, information, and guidance older people can offer".

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grandparents%27\\_Day#History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grandparents%27_Day#History)