

## MEMORIAL DAY

Memorial Day is a [United States federal holiday](#) that is observed on the last Monday of May. It was formerly known as Decoration Day. This holiday commemorates U.S. men and women who have died in [military service](#) to their country. It began first to honor [Union](#) soldiers who died during the [American Civil War](#). After [World War I](#), it expanded to include those who died in any war or military action.



Traditional observance:

Many people observe this holiday by visiting [cemeteries](#) and [memorials](#). Another tradition is to fly the [U.S. flag](#) at [half-staff](#) from dawn until noon local time. Volunteers place a [U.S. flag](#) upon each gravesite located in a [National Cemetery](#). Some Americans use Memorial Day to also honor any family members who have died, not just servicemen.

History:

Following the end of the [Civil War](#), many communities set aside a day to mark the end of the war or as a memorial to those who had died. These observances eventually coalesced around Decoration Day, honoring the Union dead, and the several [Confederate](#) Memorial Days.

In 1865, according to Professor [David Blight](#) of the [Yale University](#) History Department, the first Memorial Day was observed by liberated slaves at the historic race track in Charleston, SC. The site was a former Confederate prison camp as well as a mass grave for Union soldiers who had died while captive. A parade with thousands of freed blacks and Union soldiers was followed by patriotic singing and a picnic.

General John A. Logan had been impressed by the way the South honored their dead with a special day and decided the Union needed a similar day. Reportedly, Logan said that it was most fitting; that the ancients, especially the [Greeks](#), had honored their dead, particularly their heroes, by chaplets of [laurel](#) & flowers, and that he intended to issue an order designating a day for decorating the grave of every soldier in the land.

On [May 5, 1868](#), in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the [Grand Army of the Republic](#), a veterans' organization, Logan issued a proclamation that "Decoration Day" be observed nationwide. It was observed for the first time on [May 30](#) of the same year; the date was chosen because it was not the anniversary of a battle. The [tombs](#) of fallen Union soldiers were decorated in remembrance of this day.

Many of the states of the [U.S. South](#) refused to celebrate Decoration Day, due to lingering hostility towards the [Union Army](#) and also because there were very few veterans of the Union Army who lived in the South. Many Southern States did not recognize Memorial Day until after [World War I](#) since many veterans of World War I were from the south, although they continued to have a separate [Confederate Memorial Day](#), with the date varying from state to state. A notable exception was [Columbus, Mississippi](#), which in its 1866 Decoration Day commemorated both the Union and Confederate casualties buried in its cemetery.

The alternative name of "Memorial Day" was first used in 1882, but did not become more common until after [World War II](#), and was not declared the official name by Federal law until 1967.

*Information courtesy of Wikipedia.com*

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## CONSULAR REPORT OF BIRTH ABROAD

Children born abroad to U.S. citizen parents may have a claim to U.S. citizenship. If the parent(s) meets the transmission requirements, a child's birth may be reported at this consulate and a Consular Report of Birth, U.S. passport, and Social Security number may be obtained for him or her. We strongly recommend that U.S. citizen parents report births as soon as possible for the purpose of establishing an official record of the child's claim to U.S. citizenship at birth. It is not possible to report the birth of a child over the age of 18. **Even if your child holds the nationality of a country other than the U.S., if your child has a claim to citizenship he or she must be in possession of a valid U.S. passport to enter and exit the United States.**

The following information will assist you in determining whether or not your child is a U.S. citizen and will provide outline the steps that you are required to take to register the birth and obtain his or her passport:

### Transmission requirements for U.S. citizenship

Children born abroad to U.S. citizen parents may have a claim to U.S. citizenship. The following is a brief description of the various circumstances under which a child born abroad acquires U.S. citizenship.

**Child born in wedlock to two U.S. citizens:** A child born outside of the United States or its outlying possessions to two U.S. citizen parents is entitled to citizenship, provided one of the parents had, prior to the birth of the child, been resident in the United States or one of its outlying possessions. (No specific period of time is required to establish residence.)

**Child born in wedlock to one U.S. citizen parent and one non-U.S. citizen parent on or after November 14, 1986:** A child born outside of the United States to one U.S. citizen parent and one non-U.S. citizen parent may be entitled to citizenship provided the U.S. citizen parent had been physically present in the United States or one of its outlying possessions for five years, at least two years of which were after s/he reached the age of fourteen. This period of physical presence must have taken place prior to the birth of the child.

**Child born in wedlock to one U.S. citizen parent and one non-U.S. citizen parent between December 24, 1952, and November 13, 1986:** A child born outside of the United States to one U.S. citizen parent and one non-U.S. citizen parent may be entitled to citizenship provided the U.S. citizen parent had, prior to the birth of the child, been physically present in the United States for a period of ten years, at least five years of which were after s/he reached the age of fourteen.

**Child born out of wedlock to a U.S. citizen mother:** A child born outside of the United States and out of wedlock to a U.S. citizen mother is entitled to U.S. citizenship provided the U.S. citizen mother had been physically present in the United States for a continuous period of at least one year at some time prior to the birth of her child. (NOTE: The U.S. citizen mother must have lived continuously for 1 year IN THE UNITED STATES OR ITS OUTLYING POSSESSIONS. Periods spent overseas with the U.S. government/military or as a government/military dependent, may NOT be computed as physical presence in the U.S.)

**Child born out of wedlock to a U.S. citizen father:** A child born outside of the United States to a U.S. citizen father who is not married to the non-U.S. citizen mother is entitled to

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## CONSULAR REPORT OF BIRTH ABROAD (CONTINUED)

citizenship provided the U.S. citizen father had been physically present in the United States for the period of time as specified in previous paragraphs for children born in wedlock to one U.S. citizen and one non-U.S. citizen parent, either before or after November 14, 1986; **and**

- a blood relationship between the applicant and the father is established by clear and convincing evidence; **and**
- the father signs a sworn statement agreeing to provide financial support for the child until s/he reaches the age of 18 years; **and**
- the father provides a written statement acknowledging paternity; **or**
- the child is legitimated under local law; **or**

paternity is established by a competent court before the child attains the age of 18 years.

**I believe that my child has claim to U.S. citizenship. What next?**

If you believe that your child has a claim to U.S. citizenship, it will be necessary for the U.S. citizen parent to appear in person at this office in order to execute an application for a "Consular Report of Birth Abroad" before a consular officer. At that time, a passport application may also be executed.

**What if I do not meet the requirements for transmission of citizenship to my child?**

It may be possible for your child to apply for expeditious naturalization or an immigrant visa.

**I am over the age of 18 and I believe I have a claim to U.S. citizenship. What next?**

If your parent(s) had the requisite physical presence in the United States required by U.S. citizenship law in effect at that time, you should e-mail us at [mumbaiacs@state.gov](mailto:mumbaiacs@state.gov), giving as many details of your situation as possible. We will then let you know if there are any grounds for you to pursue your citizenship claim further.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: AMERICAN CITIZENS ABROAD

Founded in Geneva in 1978, ACA produced two Presidential reports during the Carter administration that analyzed 60 issues facing Americans overseas. ACA continues to assist the US Government in developing cohesive national policies dealing with Americans abroad. ACA was instrumental in getting the laws changed concerning transmission of citizenship to children born or adopted abroad. It works with other groups and organizations to achieve common goals on many issues affecting Americans residing abroad, such as: fair taxation, Medicare, absentee voting and being counted in the next census.

ACA has members in over 90 countries and a system of Country Contacts spread over six continents. ACA's monthly electronic News Update and news flashes are available by free subscription or can be viewed on the website. Hits on the frequently updated ACA home page testify to its reaching an ever-growing audience of viewers. Every day, the ACA head office in Geneva handles requests for information on citizenship, taxes, and health insurance.

Nonpartisan and nonprofit, ACA continues to grow and serve its members worldwide. Visit their website at <http://www.aca.ch/index.htm> to find out more about the organization and how to join.

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## MAKE SURE YOUR VOTE COUNTS

Register to vote and request an absentee ballot. Learn more about your state's election laws and make sure you are educated about current issues and elections.

Visit [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)

## PROFILE: HEMISH AND TEJAS KAPADIA

Two American brothers have left their lives and jobs in the U.S. to start an American donut shop in Mumbai, with the hope of generating enough income to make a significant contribution to the community. They offer their thoughts on the choices they've made and the challenges they face.

Hemish says: "Life begins in that blink, that second, when the day turns to night, and the night turns to day, and the clock slowly turns to midnight.

We all have that figurative moment, that awakening. For me it was the concept of the American Donut Shoppe. I can honestly say everything in the past has its place in the future. The Masters in Finance, The Masters in Computer Science, A CPA, and the culmination of experience in different areas; programming, systems architecture, mergers and acquisitions, project management, heading a CPA firm. all leads to one thing -- the American Donut Shoppe.

The American Donut Shoppe, a venture set out by two brothers, to provide the best tasting donut, is a culmination of dreams, a beginning of life. The American Donut Shoppe strives to improve that life by serving quality, with a solid future of assisting those in need, improving the lives of others."

His brother, Tejas, adds: "Forrest Gump once said that life is like a box of chocolates. However, my journey has equated life to more like a box of donuts. I somehow never expected to run a donut shop in India while attending law school in Washington, DC. Yet, after only seven months in India, I still cannot express any regret in my decision to put my law practice on hiatus and jump off a cliff rife with adventure.

From importing an automated donut machine to figuring out how to import products from across the world, I never imaged running a donut shop would entail such global requirements. The local wheat varies too much in quality, so we import the wheat to ensure. The best tasting chocolate comes from Singapore, and I never scrimp on good chocolate. And you cannot even find a blueberry in India. You can find strange small edibles that are blue over here, but I would not dare to call them blueberries. I would not even call them berries. Therefore, as a matter of consistency and quality, nearly eighty percent of our raw ingredients come from across the world -- all to a shop in Vile Parle West. To date, I cannot express the system utilized to find these vendors, because I do not think we actually had a system. Nonetheless, things somehow fell into place at the last moment right before opening the shop. The setup was stressful and strenuous in unexpected ways -- to having my sneakers stolen after speaking to a vendor to cramming onto the local trains during rush hour, which is apparently every hour. But it all worked out, and here we are running the American Donut Shoppe in India. The American Donut Shoppe has been running about three months now. The future for the business looks promising and I expect my ties to India will grow as an ultimate result. And for now, I remain anchored in Mumbai. But I cannot help but wonder whether is it too much to ask for an occasional harbor in Goa?"

If you get hungry for an American Donut, visit the shop at T-4, Prime Mall, Irla Road, Vile Parle (W), Mumbai, 400 056. The phone number is 022-2625-5622.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How can I get a replacement copy of my child's original U.S. birth certificate?

A: You need to inquire with the city, county, or state that originally issued the birth certificate. Most local and state governments allow you to request a replacement birth certificate online. You can find out more by using an internet search engine to look for the state of birth and the phrase "vital records."

## AMERICAN Accent IS SEEKING READER INPUT

We hope that through this newsletter, Americans can stay in better contact with the U.S. Consulate and the rest of the American community throughout India. In our effort to improve this newsletter and make it more useful to our American community in India, the **AMERICAN Accent** staff is seeking your submissions of:

**Letters to the Editor:** In order to more adequately address the concerns that members of the American community have, we would like to start a "Letters to the Editor" section of the newsletter. All Americans who have questions or concerns that they think could also benefit the American community as a whole are encouraged to submit letters. The **AMERICAN Accent** staff will try to print and respond to those letters that deal with issues affecting the entire American community.

**Organizational Profiles:** We would like to make it a normal practice of highlighting charity and non-profit organizations through which Americans are working to assist India. We invite organizations to submit a short (150-300 word) description of their group to the newsletter. If and when possible, in each future edition, we will highlight a different group.

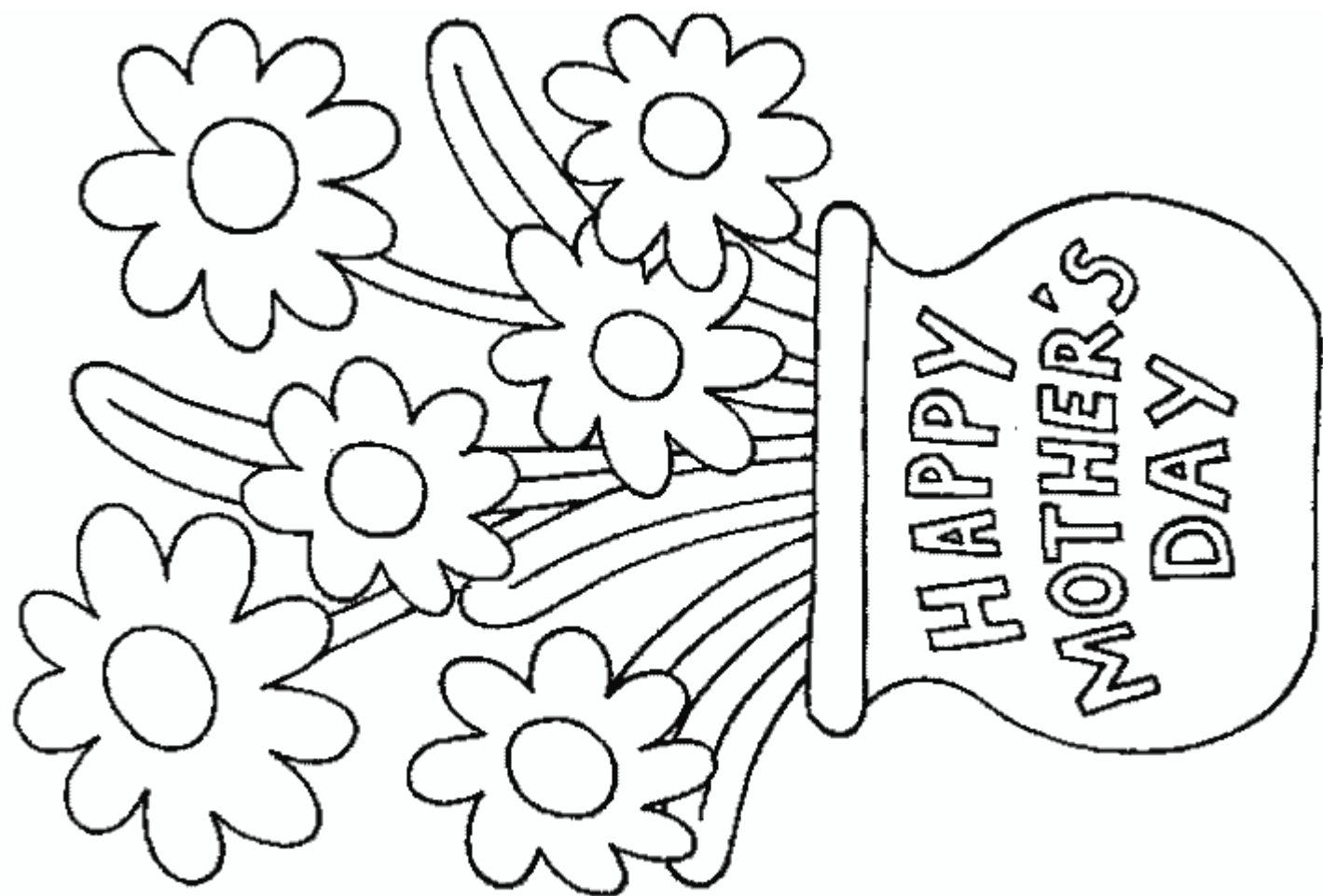
**Other Articles:** If you have another topic that you believe would be of interest to the American community, feel free to submit your ideas to the **AMERICAN Accent** staff. Articles should be between 150 to 300 words in length.

## ACS OFFICE HOURS

Our office is open to American citizens for routine services from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on all weekdays except for official holidays. (The next official holiday is May 28 for Memorial Day.) Please see our website for a complete list of official holidays.

If visiting during office hours, you do not require an appointment unless you are applying for a Consular Report of Birth or to wish to formally renounce U.S. citizenship. Please remember that the Consulate's number one priority is to provide service to American citizens. If you need emergency assistance outside of regular business hours, please see the left panel of the newsletter for contact information.

If you believe you have missed a recent "warden message" sent to American citizens in India, please visit [http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/warden\\_information.html](http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/warden_information.html) to see all recent warden messages issued by the U.S. Consulate in Mumbai.



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