



Celebrating August

Happiness Happens Month

Cataract Awareness Month

Mustard Day

August 1

Psychic Week

August 3-7

Perseid Meteor Showers

August 8-14

Vinyl Record Day

August 12

Hawaii Admission Day

50th Anniversary

August 21

Little League World Series

August 21-30

Be an Angel Day

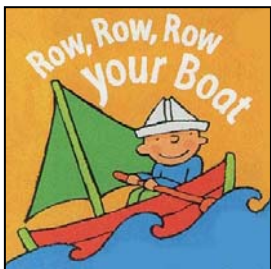
August 22

Ramadan:

Islamic Month of Fasting

August 22 – September 20

Singing in Circles



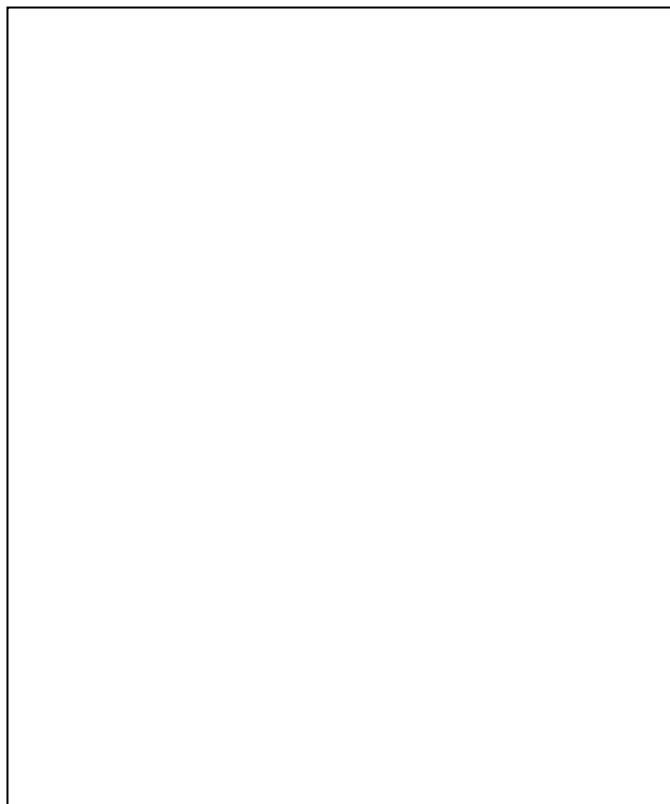
August 1 is Rounds Re-sounding Day, so gather your friends and raise your voices in this repetitive singing tradition. In rounds, two or more voices sing the same melody, but begin at different times. As the song continues, each new voice joins the rest in beautiful harmony. The most famous round may be the modern-day children's tune "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," but this musical form began more than 700 years ago.

Rounds gained popularity in England in the 17th century when gentlemen would gather in clubs and sing these songs as they drank and discussed the business of the day. The more the men drank, the bawdier the songs became, and the louder they sang. The oldest song round is "Sumer Is Icumen In," or, when translated into modern English, "Summer Is A-Coming In." It dates from the year 1260 and was composed for six voices. Here are the modern lyrics:

Summer is a-coming in, loudly sing, Cuckoo!
The seed grows and the meadow blooms
And the wood springs anew,
Sing, Cuckoo!
The ewe bleats after the lamb
The cow lows after the calf.
The bullock stirs, the buck-goat turns,
Merrily sing, Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo, well you sing, cuckoo;
Don't you ever stop now,
Sing Cuckoo. Sing Cuckoo now!

This is a song celebrating the return of spring after the long, dark winter. Far simpler rounds from olden times are still sung today. "Three Blind Mice" first appeared in England in 1609. The French round "Frère Jacques" was first published in Paris in 1869.

As in olden days, these unique songs, when sung on August 1, will bring people together in friendship and revelry. As the Mother Goose Society explains, "As rounds re-sound and resound, all the world's joined in a circle of harmony."



Bonjour Monsieur Pig



France enjoys its reputation as a fine and classy place, but there is one region of France that is not afraid to wallow with the pigs in the mud. This is Trie Sur Baise, one of the largest pig-producing regions in France, and for one day in August, these French country folk celebrate La Pourcailhade, or the Festival of the Pig.

"All things pig" take center-stage, and the French compete in a wide variety of amusements to honor the humble hog. Everyone arrives wearing a pig nose and curly tail, vying to win an award for best pig costume. There is a sausage-eating contest, and you can even place bets in the piglet races. The highlight of the day is the Pig Imitation Competition where people replicate the many different oinks and squeals made by pigs. From the squeals of birth, to the satisfied squeals of feeding, to the rapturous squeals of pig romance, the French show they are not afraid to pig out.

La Tomatina

Every year on the last Wednesday of August, the town of Buñol in the Valencia region of Spain becomes one giant high school cafeteria where tens of thousands of people engage in the biggest food fight known to mankind. The food that is flung is the red, juicy, squishy, and messy tomato. In fact, 90,000 pounds of tomatoes are thrown in just two hours of chaos and fun.



The origins of the festival of La Tomatina are vague. One theory is that it began in 1945, when people protested against the Spanish dictator General Francisco Franco by throwing tomatoes. Another legend is that two friends got into a raging argument during a meal and began throwing food. Their messy argument spilled into the street, involving other diners at other restaurants. The group then moved throughout the city, spreading to pedestrians and businessmen. The food-fighting crowd eventually stretched into the countryside and soon the entire region was throwing food.

La Tomatina lasts for a week, with music, parades, dancing, and fireworks, but the highlight is the food fight. At 10 AM, the excitement begins with a strange competition – a ham is placed at the top of a greased pole. The crowd of 50,000 works itself into a frenzy as it cheers on volunteers who climb the pole in attempts to retrieve the ham. All the while, fire hoses spray the crowd until everyone is soaking wet.

The food fight begins once the ham is retrieved. Trucks rumble through the crowd, hauling millions of tomatoes grown specifically to be thrown during La Tomatina. At the sound of a cannon, the madness begins and tomatoes are hurled until 1 PM, when the streets run red with rivers of tomato juice. Clean up is simple – fire trucks hose down the streets and the acid from the tomato juice leaves the ground miraculously clean. The massive crowds move to the Buñol River to bathe themselves before enjoying their dinners...dinners free, one hopes, of tomatoes.

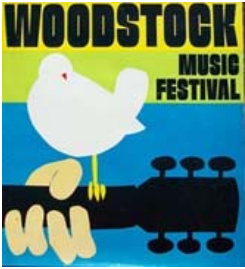
Music Out of Thin Air

From August 19-21, music lovers will take their love of guitar solos to bizarre new heights for the Air Guitar World Championships in Helsinki, Finland. Anybody can play the air guitar. All you have to do is turn on your favorite rock 'n' roll song, strum the invisible guitar in your hands, and free yourself to the magic and mystery of the music. However, not just anybody can compete at the Air Guitar World Championships.



The world's greatest Air Guitarists arrive in Helsinki from all over the world after having won their national titles. These masters of make-believe instrumentation exude qualities of originality, spirit, creativity, charisma, and shamelessness that are the core of an Air Guitar maestro. Amazingly, they prove that you can still be a rock star even if you possess zero musical talent.

Summer of Love



For many, August 15, 16, and 17 of 1969 will be remembered as the greatest days of music in the entire history of song. Over 500,000 people arrived at Yasgur's farm in upstate New York for Woodstock. They were called flower children and hippies, but they all came for one simple purpose – to hear the music.

Jimi Hendrix, the Grateful Dead, Arlo Guthrie, Joan Baez, Janis Joplin, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, The Band, Joe Cocker, Santana, The Who, Jefferson Airplane, Sly and the Family Stone...these are just a few of the thirty-two artists whose music transformed an entire generation. Today, you can drive to the site of the concert and see a monument dedicated to those three days of peace, love, and music. Many believe that Woodstock did not just change the history of rock and roll – it changed history, period.

