



BIG FLAT NEWS



July 2023

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THE STORY BEHIND THE FOURTH OF JULY

The Declaration of Independence

We celebrate American Independence Day on the Fourth of July every year. We think of July 4, 1776, as a day that represents the Declaration of Independence, and the birth of the United States of America as an independent nation.

But July 4, 1776, wasn't the day the Continental Congress decided to declare independence (it did that on July 2, 1776).

It wasn't the day we started the American Revolution either (that had happened back in April 1775).

And it wasn't the day Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence (that was in June 1776). Or the date on which the Declaration was delivered to Great Britain (that didn't happen until November 1776). Or the date it was signed (that was August 2, 1776).

So what did happen on July 4, 1776?

The Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Members were working on it for a couple of days after the draft was submitted on July 2 and finally agreed on all the edits and changes.

July 4, 1776, became the date that was included on the Declaration of Independence, and the fancy handwritten copy that was signed in August (the copy now displayed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.) It's also the date that was printed on the Dunlap Broadside, the original printed copies of the Declaration that were circulated throughout the new nation. So, when people thought of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, was the date they remembered.

In contrast, we celebrate Constitution Day on September 17 of each year, the anniversary of the date the Constitution was signed, not the anniversary of the date it was approved. If we'd followed this same approach for the Declaration of Independence, we'd be celebrating Independence Day on August 2 of each year.

How did it become a national holiday?

For the first 15 or 20 years after the Declaration was writ-



ten, people didn't celebrate it much on any date. It was too new, and too much else was happening in the young nation. By the 1790s, a time of bitter partisan conflicts, the Declaration had become controversial. One party, the Democratic-Republicans, admired Jefferson and the Declaration. But the other party, the Federalists, thought the Declaration was too French and too anti-British, which went against their policies.

By 1817, John Adams complained in a letter that America seemed uninterested in its past. But that would soon change.

After the War of 1812, the Federalist party began to come apart, and the new parties of the 1820s and 1830s all considered themselves inheritors of Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans. Printed copies of the Declaration began to circulate again, all with the date July 4, 1776, listed at the top. The deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on July 4, 1826, may even have helped to promote the idea of July 4 as an important date to be celebrated.

Celebrations of the Fourth of July became more common as the years went on and, in 1870, almost 100 years after the Declaration was written, Congress first declared July 4 to be a national holiday as part of a bill to officially recognize several holidays, including Christmas. Further legislation about national holidays, including July 4, was passed in 1939 and 1941. RM

Source: www.constitutionfacts.com/us-declaration-of-independence/fourth-of-july

TREATING WATER

HydroGeoLogic is hard at work cleaning contaminated runoff from old mines

HYDROGEOLOGIC, Inc. (HGL) is operating at full bore, treating water from the spring runoff.

The Zortman/Landusky gold mines were in operation until 1997. In 1999, Spectrum Engineering began water treatment on site and it oversaw the contractor doing the reclamation.

Approximately seven years ago, Spectrum became a subsidiary under HydroGeoLogic, Inc. based out of Reston, Virginia. In 2022, HGL absorbed Spectrum and is now solely operating the onsite maintenance (reclamation, roads, etc.) and water treatment.

When talking with Mike Flatt, site manager, he said that 98 percent of their job is water treatment.

HydroGeoLogic, Inc. has a contract with the state of Montana for water treatment meeting the standards of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). HGL employs eight full time employees from around the area. There are four water treatment plants. The Zortman plant runs intermittently, depending on the amount of runoff, and the three Landusky plants run 24/7.

A good portion of the water being treated is from historic mining, along with modern-day mining. In the early days of mining, when digging, the top layer was oxidized ore and further down it was sulfide material, which is not exposed to air or water. As it

BUSINESS in FOCUS

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oxidizes, it produces acidic water from runoff, and the acidic water then picks up metals.

In a nutshell, HGL is collecting water from drainages below old mine facilities, treating it to DEQ standards and releasing clean water.

There are two water-treatment processes being used at the site. The first one is a bio-treatment system, which are engineered microorganisms designed to break down nitrates and selenium. Reactors hold activated carbon the microorganisms attach to and eat up these elements as water is run through.

The second is a high-density sludge treatment and, in this process, water is pumped to a central pond near the plant. Hydrated lime is mixed with the water to make a high pH slurry, then added to the incoming low pH water. Raising the pH level of the incom-



ABOVE: HydroGeoLogic Site Manager Mike Flatt stands in the electrical room. **BELOW:** A pretreatment pond at a high-density sludge treatment site. | **PHOTOS BY SHAWNA MYERS**

ing water forces the heavy metals to precipitate out and settle. Heavy metals sink to the bottom of the clarifier to form a sludge, and the clear water off the top is discharged back to the drainage.

Both systems are closely monitored by means of high-tech computers, equipment and constant testing.

With the large amount of runoff and rain this spring, Flatt said things are quite a bit busier than the past two years, which were impacted by the drought.

If you would like to learn more about HGL, please refer to its website, www.hgl.com. RM



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76TH ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 14, 2023

MALTA HIGH SCHOOL
AUDITORIUM

**REGISTRATION: 9 A.M.
MEETING: 10 A.M.**

HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY



CLOSURE

Big Flat Electric
Cooperative's office will be
closed Tuesday, July 4.



JULY 1962: BFEC NEWSLETTER CLIPPINGS**Remodeling Tips for Bathroom**

Bathroom remodeling provides an opportunity to include safety features, storage spaces and equipment designed to encourage youngsters in good grooming. These tips from the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service were developed originally for a farm-house.

INSTALL A CABINET WITH MIRROR FOR THE CHILDREN—Place it beside the lavatory with its center two and one-half or three feet from the floor. This will give the children a place to keep their own toilet articles. Later, when the youngsters are grown, you can use the cabinet to store shoe polish, brushes and other supplies.

INSTALL CABINETS UNDER THE SINK — Put a drawer at the bottom and add a hinged cover. The drawer makes a handy stepup for the children. The board which forms the toeplate provides the necessary support.

PUT IN A FLOOR TO CEILING CABINET at the end of the tub — or wherever else you can find space. Plan shelves at least 18 inches deep. Make them adjustable to get the best use of storage space.

HAVE PLENTY OF TOWEL RODS — Allow 21 inches of rod space for each person. If you're short of space, install rods on the bathroom door. Or, if there is no shower, you can put them over the tub.

GRAB BARS BY THE TUB OR SHOWER — help prevent falls. Make sure bars are firmly anchored. For a shower, place a vertical bar about 18 inches from the shower end of the tub. The center of a horizontal bar for tub-users should be placed about a third of the length of the tub from the faucets.

HOOKS FOR ATTACHING CLOTHES LINE — can be placed at each end of the tub.

Thermoelectric Refrigerator, Air Conditioner Due on Market by Fall

Expected on the market late this summer or early fall are a thermo-electric refrigerator and air conditioner.

The new units, introduced last month by Norge and York divisions of Borg-Warner, have no moving parts, operate in complete silence and require no servicing.

The 2 cu. ft. refrigerator will sell for \$500 to \$600, and the air conditioner is expected to sell for three to five times the price of conventional units.

"I predict we will one day see the end of the conventional type refrigerator as we all have known it," said Judson S. Sayre, chairman and president of Norge.

"Just imagine," Sayre said, "no moving parts to cool, compact space-saving size, complete, utter silence and absolutely no service requirements."

The higher prices of the thermo-electric units were comparable to the introduction of TV. The first TV sets sold for \$1,000; three years later they were down to \$395.

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