It's December! This month's diversity holidays and awareness days include:

**Universal Human Rights Month:**

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948 without a dissenting vote. The Declaration was implemented because of the Second World War and is the first global declaration of rights that every human being is inherently entitled. The Declaration consists of 30 articles that have enabled human rights progress, inspired international standards for human rights and laws around the world that have improved many lives.

For more information, please visit:

- Human Rights Action Center
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- UDHR-Wikipedia
- United Nations Human Rights
- Video: What are Human Rights?

**********

**Rosa Parks Day: Monday, 1**

Referred to as “the first lady of civil rights” and “the mother of the freedom movement” by the U.S. Congress, Rosa Parks was an African-American civil rights activist. She is most known for her refusal to give up her seat on a bus to a white passenger in 1955.

For more information, please visit:

- Rosa Parks Biography
- Rosa Parks-Wikipedia
- The Henry Ford Rosa Parks Bus
- History.com

**********
**St. Nicholas Day: Saturday, 6**

St. Nicholas Day is celebrated in honor of Saint Nicholas, a 4th-century saint and Greek bishop from what is now known as Turkey. He was known for secretly giving gifts. He is also a patron saint (a spiritual guardian) to many. Because of St. Nicholas’s kindness, he is a model for Santa Claus. Some countries participate in gift giving on this day instead of December 25th.

For more information, please visit:
- Saint Nicholas-Wikipedia
- St. Nicholas Center

**********

**National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day: Sunday, 7**

December 7th will mark the 72nd anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The Empire of Japan attacked the Philippines, Guam and the American naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on a Sunday morning. While the raid only lasted about an hour, more than 2,400 Americans were killed and more than 1,100 were wounded. The U.S. entered World War II the next day by declaring war on Japan.

For more information on Pearl Harbor and World War II, please visit:
- Pearl Harbor Day-Wikipedia
- Pearl Harbor Day Remembered
- Pearl Harbor Day Comemorative Committee
- Naval History & Heritage Command
- WWII-History.com
- WWII Memorial
- WWII-Wikipedia

The Pearl Harbor Memorial was formally dedicated in 1962 and sits atop the sunken Arizona battleship, crossing over its hull.

**********
Hanukkah (Chanukah, Chanukkah, Chanuka): Tuesday, 16 — Wednesday, 24

Hanukkah (Festival of Lights or Festival of Dedication) means rededication and is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple (Second Temple) in Jerusalem during the Maccabean Revolt of the second century BCE. After the Maccabees recaptured the Temple from the Syrian Greeks, cleaned and restored the Temple, they only found one day’s supply of oil. The small amount of oil, which was used for lighting the menorah (a ritual candelabra) daily, lasted for eight days.

Hanukkah is an eight-day celebration and is observed by lighting an eight-branched menorah or Hanukiah. One branch is lit each night at sundown in remembrance of the miracle. The typical menorah includes an extra branch called the Shamash and is located either above or below the rest. The purpose of the shamash is to provide available light for use because use of the menorah lights is forbidden. Hanukkah lights are not intended to light the house within but are to illuminate the house without so that anyone passing by can see it and be reminded of the holiday’s miracle.

Hanukkah celebrations may also include singing special songs, reciting prayers, eating foods fried in oil, playing the dreidel game (the dreidel is a four sided spinning top with Hebrew letters on each side that create an acronym for “A great miracle happened here”) and giving Hanukkah gelt (money).

For more information on Hanukkah, please visit:

- Chabad.org
- Hanukkah-History.com
- Hanukkah-Wikipedia
- Jewish Outreach Institute
- Judaism 101
- Tree of Life Congregation-Morgantown, WV
- WVU Hillel-Jewish Student Organization

 Luciadagen (Saint Lucia Day): Saturday, 13

St. Lucia Day is dedicated to Saint Lucy, Queen of Light, and is celebrated by people with Scandinavian heritage and often centered around church events. Cookies may be placed on a mantel and, in some traditions, the eldest girl will wear a white gown and a crown/wreath of candles/lights and offer coffee and sweets to family members. In Sweden, this holiday marks the beginning of the Christmas season.

For more information on St. Lucia Day, please visit:

- Christmas in Sweden
- St. Lucia Day-Wikipedia
- Scandinavia Travel-About.com

**********
Bill of Rights Day: Monday, 15

In 1791 (222 years ago), the first 10 amendments to the constitution were ratified and are now known as the Bill of Rights. James Madison first introduced the amendments to the 1st United States Congress as a series of legislative articles in 1789. The Bill of Rights guarantees several personal freedoms, limits the government’s power in judicial proceedings and gives some powers to the states and public. They are:

I. Freedom of Speech, Press, Religion and Petition
II. Right to keep and bear arms
III. Conditions for quarters of soldiers
IV. Right of search and seizure regulated
V. Provisions concerning prosecution
VI. Right to a speedy trial, witnesses, etc.
VII. Right to a trial by jury
VIII. Excessive bail, cruel punishment
IX. Rule of construction of Constitution
X. Rights of the States under Constitution

For more information on the Bill of Rights and Bill of Rights Day, please visit:

- [Bill of Rights-Wikipedia](#)
- [Bill of Rights Institute](#)

**********

Yule (Yuletide, Yule Time): Sunday, 21

While Yule has been absorbed and equated with Christmas, it is actually a religious celebration observed by Germanic peoples (Afrikaners, Alemannic Swiss, Austrians, Danish, Dutch, English, Faroese, Flemings, Frisians, Germans, Icelanders, Liechtensteiners, Luxembourgers, Norwegians, Scandinavians, Swedish and those who speak ancestral German dialect languages).

Yule was originally a midwinter festival. Celebrations range from 3 days to two months. Traditions such as the Yule log, Yule goat, Yule boar (Christmas ham) and Yule singing are still used during celebrations today.

For more information on Yule, please visit:

- [Yule](#)
- [The Winter Solstice-Yule Lore](#)

**********
Christmas: Thursday, 25

Christmas (Christ’s Mass) celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ and is celebrated by billions of people worldwide each year, some of whom are not Christian. It is uncertain if Jesus was born on December 25th or if the day was chosen to mark nine months after Christians believed Jesus was conceived. The 25th also marks the southern solstice. Eastern Christianity originally celebrated Christmas on January 6th and it is still celebrated on this day by the Armenian Apostolic Church and as a public holiday in Armenia.

While Christmas is celebrated worldwide, celebrations vary and tend to reflect the cultural and national traditions of each country. Christmas is not a formal holiday in Algeria, China (except Hong Kong and Macao), Iran, Japan, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Turkey. While most countries give gifts on December 25, some do so on St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6th) and others on the Epiphany (January 6th).

Popular Christmas celebrations and customs include sending cards, giving gifts, music and caroling, celebrations at church, nativity displays, Christmas displays, trees, lights, garlands, wreaths, mistletoe and holly. Christmas figures include Santa Claus, Father Christmas, Saint Nicholas and Christkind.

For more information on Christmas, please visit:

- Christmas, A brief history-CNN
- Christmas-Catholic Encyclopedia
- Christmas-History.com
- Christmas-Wikipedia
- The History of Christmas

Boxing Day: Friday, 26

Celebrated on the day after Christmas, Boxing Day is an international holiday with many names: Day of Goodwill—South Africa; St. Stephen’s Day/Day of the Wren—Ireland; Second Christmas Day—Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Scandinavia and Slovakia. Boxing Day is a federal public holiday in Canada and full-time workers receive time off with pay in Ontario.

It is unclear why the term “boxing” is used but there are several stories that relate to the tradition of churches setting out metal boxes to collect special offerings, employers giving servants, tradespeople and the needy gifts of money, other items and even leftover foods.
In many countries, Boxing Day and Cyber Boxing Day are days for shopping, similar to what the U.S. calls Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

For more information on Boxing Day, please visit:

- Boxing Day-Wikipedia
- Boxing Day-Time.com
- Boxing Day-Canada

**********

Kwanzaa: Friday, Dec. 26- Thursday, Jan. 1

In 1966, Maulana Karenga created Kwanzaa to give African Americans “an opportunity to celebrate themselves and history” by reconnecting with their African culture. Kwanzaa is a seven-day celebration honoring the seven principles of African heritage: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith.

The seven principles are conveyed by symbols such as a decorative map upon which other symbols are placed, corn and other crops, a kinara (candle holder) with seven candles, a communal cup for pouring libations (offering to a god or spirit in memory of those who have died), gifts, a seven principles poster and a black, red and green flag (these colors represent the Pan-Africanist ideology adopted on August 13, 1920 by the U.S. based Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League).

Kwanzaa has also spread to Canada where Black Canadians celebrate it in a similar way.

For more information on Kwanzaa, please visit:

- Kwanzaa-Wikipedia
- Pan-Africanism-Wikipedia
- Official Kwanzaa Website
- Kwanzaa-History.com
- Kwanzaa Celebration

**********
In the early morning of December 29, 1890, U.S. soldiers were sent into camp at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota where Lakota American Indians were being held and were ordered to disarm the men. When one Lakota refused to hand over a rifle he had purchased, a scuffle resulted and a shot was fired resulting in the U.S. 7th Cavalry Regiment firing indiscriminately on fellow soldiers, civilians and Lakota American Indians. In total, 90 were wounded (39 soldiers, 51 Lakota and civilians) and 315 were killed (25 soldiers, 90 Lakota warriors and 200 women and children).

The Lakota were being held because they continued to practice their religious “Ghost Dance” after U.S. officials banned the practice.

For more information on the Wounded Knee Massacre, please visit:
- Wounded Knee Museum
- Wounded Knee-U.S. History.org
- Wounded Knee Massacre-Wikipedia
- Wounded Knee Massacre-History.com
- Wounded Knee and the Ghost Dance

For more information on diversity and inclusion or to submit diversity and inclusion ideas, articles, and events, please visit Extension’s Social Justice website or contact me at Tonya.Michael@mail.wvu.edu / 304-293-8948 / 406 Knapp Hall, Morgantown WV 26506.