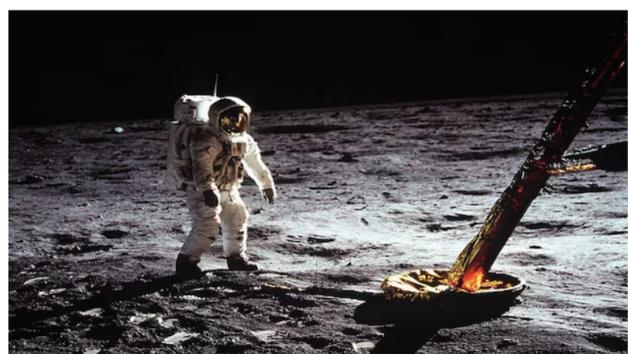
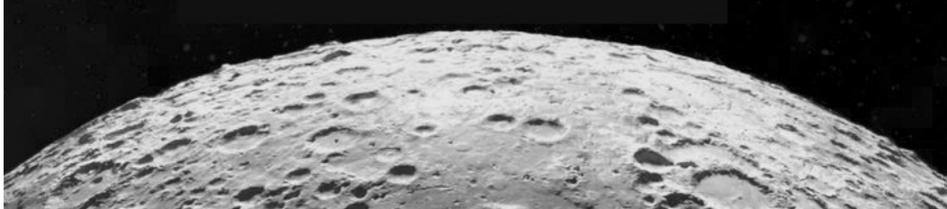


## National Moon Day July 20



Moon by Charles Fishman

4. A Man on the Moon: The Voyages of the Apollo Astronauts by Andrew Chaikin

5. Hidden Figures by Margo Lee Shetterly

Share your discoveries and stories using #NationalMoonDay on social media.

Educators and Families, visit the National Day Calendar Classroom for more ways to celebrate!

### NATIONAL MOON DAY HISTORY

In 1971, President Richard Nixon proclaimed National Moon Landing Day on July 20th to honor the anniversary of man's first moon landing. However, no continuing resolution followed.

Enter Richard Christmas. He took up the baton by launching a "Christmas Card" writing campaign. The Michigan native wrote to governors and members of Congress in all 50 states urging them to create National Moon Day. He achieved some success, too. By July of 1975, 12 states sponsored bills observing Moon Day.

Another modern-day supporter of National Moon Day is Astronomer James J. Mullaney. He knows a few things about the moon, too. As a former Curator of Exhibits and Astronomy at Pittsburgh's original Buhl Planetarium, Mullaney is on a mission. He says, "If there's a Columbus Day on the calendar, there certainly should be a Moon Day!" His goal is a federally

recognized holiday.

In 2019, President Donald Trump proclaimed July 20th as the 50th Anniversary Observation of the Apollo 11 Lunar Landing. However, no National Moon Day has been declared.

*Explore other out of this world celebrations:*

### July 20th Celebrated History

#### 1968

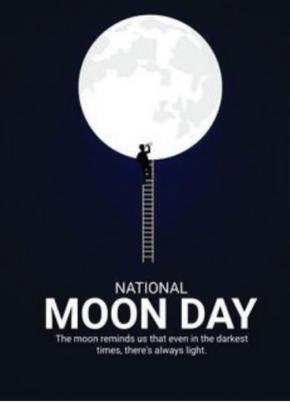
The opening ceremonies for the first Special Olympics began in Chicago at Soldier Field.

#### 1969

Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin become the first humans to land on the moon as part of the Apollo 11 mission.

#### 2021

Fifty-two years after the first moon landing, Wally Funk became the oldest person in space. Her original goal was to be the first woman in space, but during the space race, NASA required their astronauts to also have jet experience. At the time, very few women pilots were allowed to fly jet planes. But in 2021, during the race of the billionaires, Funk boarded Blue Origin's New Shepard as a private passenger with Jeff Bezos and other passengers for a trip in space - one she'd been waiting for a lifetime to take.



National Moon Day on July 20 commemorates the day man first walked on the moon in 1969. NASA reported the moon landing as being "...the single greatest technological achievement of all time."

On July 20, 1969, Apollo 11 carried the first humans to the moon. Six hours after landing on the moon, American Neil Armstrong stepped onto the lunar surface. He spent two and a half hours outside the spacecraft. Buzz Aldrin soon followed, stepping onto the lunar surface. After joining Armstrong, the two men collected 47.5 pounds of lunar material. Their specimens would make the journey back to Earth to be analyzed.

In the command module, a third astronaut waited. Pilot, Michael

Collins, remained alone in orbit until Armstrong and Aldrin returned.

Caught up in the thrill of the adventure, millions of Americans watched the mission from Earth. Televisions around the world tuned in to the live broadcasts. The astronauts had a worldwide audience. As a result, all witnessed as Armstrong stepped onto the moon's surface and described the event as "one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind."

Unquestionably, putting men on the moon became a tangible

achievement in the space race. It placed the United States in a role to go forth and explore into the deeper reaches of the universe, too. In the months and decades that followed, NASA and the Soviets stepped up their missions.

The day doesn't just celebrate the landmark mission. It also celebrates future missions. Private expeditions are taking humans further into space. Armstrong's "one small step for man" inspired imaginations and sparked innovation, too, for generations to come. Even future moon missions are planned including manned landings.

### HOW TO OBSERVE NATIONAL MOON DAY

National Moon Day opens up a lot of opportunities to explore and reminisce! Did you watch the first moon landing in 1969? How about the ones that followed? Share your memories of the moon landing. Set up your telescope and explore the moon's surface. You can even explore the surface with a telephoto lens. As you rediscover the moon, start a discussion about space exploration. How does it impact our world today? Study the plans for future moon landings, too. What are your thoughts on more moon exploration?

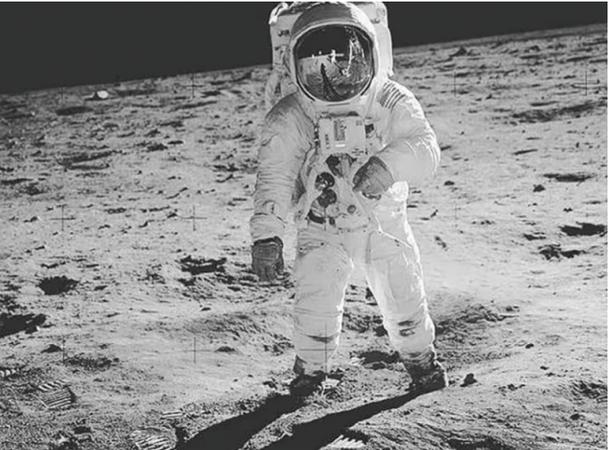
While you're celebrating, discov-

er the people behind the moon landing. Share their stories and celebrate their achievements, too. You can also celebrate the day by reading books or watching documentaries about the Apollo 11 mission or those leading up to it:

1. In the Shadow of the Moon (2007) directed by David Sington

2. First to the Moon: The Journey of Apollo 8 (2018) directed by Paul J. Hildebrandt

3. One Giant Leap: The Impossible Mission That Flew Us to the



# Karkidaka Vavu Bali

July 24



### What is Karkidaka Vavu 2025?

During Karkidaka Vavu 2025, the funeral rituals for the grandparents, parents, siblings, children, and relatives are performed in 'Karutavavu' (new moon) in the Karkidaka month (the last month of Malayalam Calendar).

The 'Shraddham' rituals have to be performed on the river bank or the seashore. Normally the rites performed for the souls of the deceased are called 'Bali' and the new moon day or 'Amavasi' is called 'Vavu'; therefore the term 'Vavu Bali'.

Another rite, the 'Bali' is also offered on the 'Nakshatra' or the star on which the person has died. But it is strongly felt that Bali made on Karutavavu, which comes in the month of Karkidaka in the Malayalam calendar, is much more effective to calm the souls of the deceased.

Karkidaka Vavu Bali also holds a similar position to what 'Mahalaya Shraddh Paksha' or 'Pitru Paksha Shraddh' customs are in the majority of the states of India.

### Tradition and Rituals

During Karkidaka Vavu, on the banks of the river and the temple premises, thousands of devotees perform the Bali Tharpanam for their ancestors.

Sacrifice rituals are conducted in a few of the holy rivers of Kerala, temples, and a few other seashores.

On this day, the devotees wake up early to complete their bath and other rituals to



reach the 'Bali Tharpanam' places.

Most of the large temples such as 'Shangumugham Temple', 'Parausurama Temple, Thiruvallom' and 'Varkala Papanasam Beach', etc., are full on this day and the state authorities make necessary arrangements for conducting rituals harmoniously.

The person performing the 'Bali' fasts consumes only one rice-based meal on this day.

O t h e r

'Vavu ada', special steamed rice, is prepared. Karkidaka Vavu is performed by a known priest or any aged person in the locality.

The 'Bali' ritual requires some of the accoutrements such as Durva (grass), sesame seeds, and rings made of grass, rice, banana leaves, and water.

You can get experienced and skilled Pandits in Kerala for the Karkidaka Vavu ritual from 99Pandit. The Pandit will help you conduct the ritual.

Men, women, and children participate in the ceremony, with men typically wearing only a dhoti. The ritual culminates with the offerings being immersed in the waters of the sea or river. The belief is that by performing these rites, one can ensure peace and liberation for their ancestors.

