

Communications

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Labor Day 2011
Enjoy YOUR Holiday

Yes, Monday is a federal holiday in the United States, but Labor Day is much more than that.

Q: When did Labor Day become a national holiday?

A: After the first Labor Day in New York City, celebrations began to spread to other states as workers fought to win workplace rights and better working conditions and wages at a time when they had little power. In 1893, New York City workers took an unpaid day off and marched around Union Square in support of a national Labor Day. The following year, 12,000 federal troops were called into Pullman, Ill., to break up a huge strike against the Pullman railway company and two workers were shot and killed by U.S. deputy marshals. In what most historians call an election year attempt to appease workers after the federal crackdown on the Pullman strike, shortly after the strike was broken, President Grover Cleveland signed legislation making the first Monday in September Labor Day and a federal holiday. Cleveland lost the election

Q: Who founded Labor Day?

A: That's a matter of dispute among historians. Some say Peter J. McGuire, general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and a co-founder of the American Federation of Labor, first suggested a day to honor workers. Others credit Matthew Maguire, a machinist who served as secretary of the Central Labor Union in New York.

Q: Is Labor Day just about unions?

A: No. The U.S. Department of Labor describes Labor Day this way: "It is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity and well-being of our country."

Q: What international holiday is Labor Day's closet relative?

A: May Day. In 1889, a workers' congress in Paris voted to support the U.S. labor movement's demand for an eight-hour workday. It chose May 1, 1890, as a day of demonstrations in favor of the eight-hour day. Afterward, May 1 became a holiday called Labor Day in many nations. It resembles the September holiday in the United States.

Who Are We Celebrating?

153.2 million

Number of people 16 and older in the nation's labor force in July 2011.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>>

Employee Benefits

84.7%

Percentage of full-time workers 18 to 64 covered by health insurance during all or part of 2009.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>>

26.2 million

Number of female workers 16 and older in management, professional and related occupations. Among male workers, 16 and older, 24.0 million were employed in management, professional and related occupations.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey, Table C24010

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

0.9%

Percentage change in employment in the United States between December 2009 and December 2010. Employment increased in 220 of the 326 largest counties (large counties are defined as having employment levels of 75,000 or more).

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/cewqtr_06302011.pdf>

5.2%

Percentage change in Elkhart County, Ind., between December 2009 and December 2010, the largest increase in employment among the 326 largest counties. New York County had the highest level increase of 37,500 jobs.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/cewqtr_06302011.pdf>

5.9 million

The number of people who work from home.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey, Table B08128

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

Working at Home

8%

Percent of total U.S. workforce that were home-based workers in 2005, an increase from 7 percent in 1999.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 Survey of Income and Program Participation,

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/employment_occupations/cb10-10.html>

8.1 million

Number who worked from home exclusively in 2005, an increase from 6.7 million in 1999.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 Survey of Income and Program Participation,

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/employment_occupations/cb10-10.html>

11+ hours

About 11 percent of those who worked at home for some or all of their workweek reported working 11 or more hours in a typical day in 2005. Only about 7 percent of workers who worked outside the home reported doing so.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 Survey of Income and Program Participation,
<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/employment_occupations/cb10-10.html>

Another Day, Another Dollar

\$47,127 and \$36,278

The 2009 real median earnings for male and female full-time, year-round workers, respectively.
Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009
<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>>

\$1,943

Average weekly wage in Santa Clara, Calif., for the fourth quarter of 2010, the highest among the nation's 326 largest counties.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/cewqtr_03292011.pdf>

Hot Jobs

53%

Projected percentage growth from 2008 to 2018 in the number of network systems and data communication analysts. Forecasters expect this occupation to grow at a faster rate than any other. Meanwhile, the occupation expected to add more positions over this period than any other is registered nurses (581,500).
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>>

Early, Lonely and Long — the Commute to Work

16.5 million

Number of commuters who leave for work between midnight and 5:59 a.m. They represent 12.4 percent of all commuters.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey, Table B08132
<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

76.1%

Percentage of workers who drive alone to work. Another 10.0 percent carpool and 5.0 percent take public transportation (excluding taxicabs).
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey Data Profiles, Selected Economic Characteristics <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

25.1 minutes

The average time it takes people in the nation to commute to work. New York and Maryland had the most time-consuming commutes, averaging 31.4 and 31.3 minutes. (They are not significantly different from each another.)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey, Table R0801
<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

3.2 million

Number of workers who face extreme commutes to work of 90 or more minutes each day.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey, Table B08012