

# 2026 Corn Palace Murals

## 250 Years of America “Semi-quincentennial”

On July 4, 2026, our nation will commemorate and celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The journey toward this historic milestone is an opportunity to pause and reflect on our nation’s past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look ahead toward the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond.

The 2026 Murals on the World’s Only Corn Palace will commemorate and honor just a few of the events and people who have gotten us this far.

Designed by the Dakota Wesleyan University Digital Marketing Students and the Corn Palace Entertainment Board we pay tribute to how far we’ve come together. Enjoy the murals and please join us in person or virtually to watch the Corn Palace transform.

### The Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution

The Declaration of Independence, formally The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America in the original printing, is the founding document of the United States. It was adopted unanimously by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The Declaration explains why the Thirteen Colonies regarded themselves as independent sovereign states no longer subject to British colonial rule, and has become one of the most circulated, reprinted, and influential documents in history.

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, ensure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

Beginning with the words “We the People,” the U.S. Constitution is composed of the Preamble, seven articles, and 27 amendments. The first 10 amendments are known as the Bill of Rights.



## The Liberty Bell

The Liberty Bell, previously called the State House Bell or Old State House Bell, is an iconic symbol of American independence located in Philadelphia. Originally placed in the steeple of Pennsylvania State House, now known as Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell today is located across the street from Independence Hall in the Liberty Bell Center in Independence National Historical Park.

The bell was commissioned in 1752 by the Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly from the London-based firm Lester and Pack, later renamed the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, and was cast with the lettering "Proclaim LIBERTY Throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants Thereof". The bell first cracked when rung after its arrival in Philadelphia, and was twice recast by local workmen John Pass and John Stow, whose surnames appear on the bell. In its early years, the bell was used to summon lawmakers to legislative sessions and to alert citizens to public meetings and proclamations. It is likely that the Liberty Bell was among the bells in Philadelphia to ring on July 8, 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was first read to the public.



## Rosie the Riveter and Uncle Sam Posters

Rosie the Riveter is a cultural icon in the United States who represents the women who worked in factories and shipyards during World War II, many of whom produced munitions and war supplies. These women sometimes took entirely new jobs replacing the male workers who joined the military. She is widely recognized in the women's empowerment movement. The idea of Rosie the Riveter originated in a song written in 1942 by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb. Images of women workers were widespread in the media in formats such as government posters, and commercial advertising was heavily used by the government to encourage women to volunteer for wartime service in factories. Rosie the Riveter became the subject of a Hollywood film in 1944.

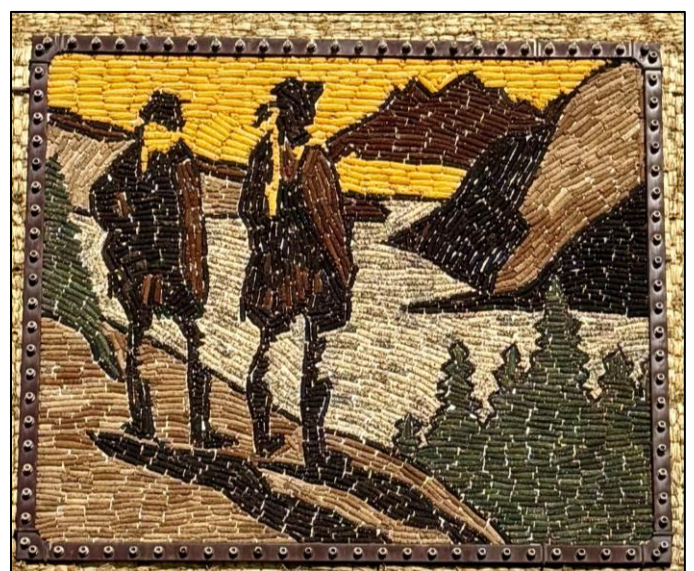
Uncle Sam (with the same initials as United States) is a common national personification of the United States, depicting the federal government or the country as a whole. Since the early 19th century, Uncle Sam has been a popular symbol of the U.S. government in American culture and a manifestation of patriotic emotion. Uncle Sam has also developed

notoriety for his appearance in military propaganda, made popular in 1917 World War I recruiting poster.



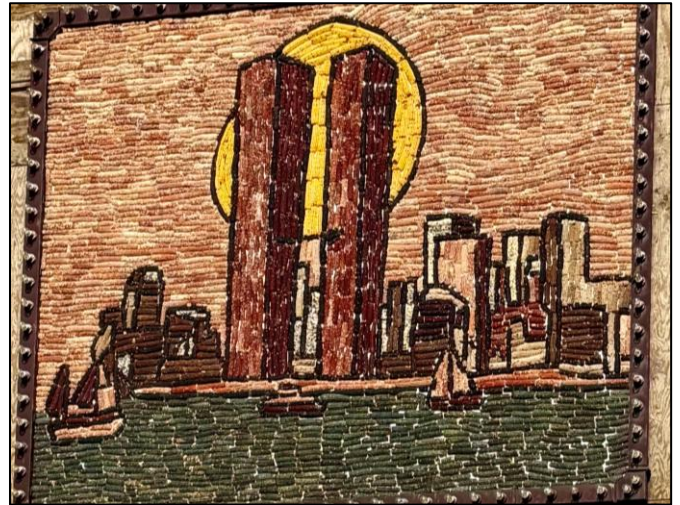
## Lewis and Clark Expedition

The Lewis and Clark Expedition, also known as the Corps of Discovery Expedition, was the United States expedition to cross the newly acquired western portion of the country after the Louisiana Purchase. The Corps of Discovery was a select group of U.S. Army and civilian volunteers under the command of Captain Meriwether Lewis and his close friend Second Lieutenant William Clark. Clark, along with 30 others, set out from Camp Dubois (Camp Wood), Illinois, on May 14, 1804, met Lewis and ten other members of the group in St. Charles, Missouri, then went up the Missouri River. The expedition crossed the Continental Divide of the Americas near the Lemhi Pass, eventually coming to the Columbia River, and the Pacific Ocean in 1805. The return voyage began on March 23, 1806, at Fort Clatsop, Oregon, ending six months later on September 23 of that year.



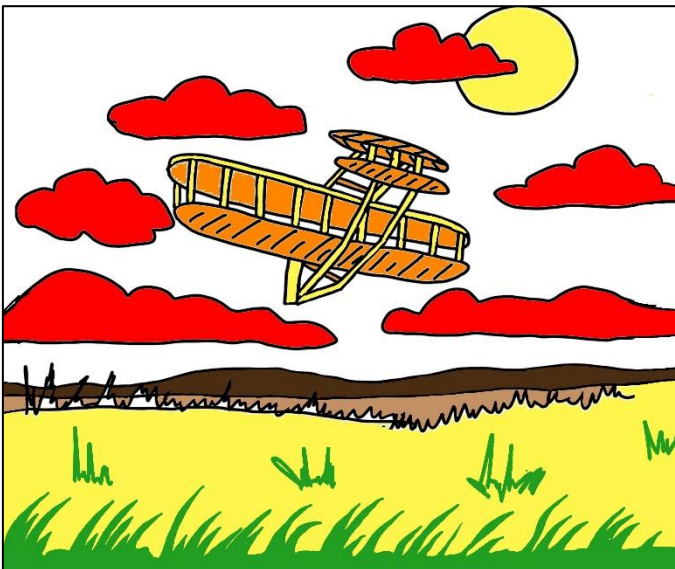
## The Twin Towers at World Trade Center

The World Trade Center, in Lower Manhattan, New York City, was destroyed after a series of terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, killing almost 3,000 people at the site. Two commercial airliners hijacked by al-Qaeda members were deliberately flown into the Twin Towers of the complex, engulfing the struck floors of the towers in large fires that eventually resulted in a total progressive collapse of both skyscrapers, at the time the fourth and fifth tallest buildings in the world. It was the deadliest and costliest building collapse in history. What was meant to weaken the spirits of Americans, instead ushered in a new era of patriotism and connectedness.



## Aviation

The birth of American aviation is marked by the Wright brothers' successful, powered flight on December 17, 1903, in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, using the Wright Flyer. Their work built on years of experimentation in Dayton, Ohio, and their eventual achievement of creating the first practical, controlled airplane in 1905 paved the way for the modern aviation industry today. Their pioneering spirits changed the way we travel forever.



## **Bald Eagle and the American Flag**

The bald eagle is the national symbol of the United States. It was adopted as a national emblem in 1782. It has long been considered the "National Bird", though unofficially until an act of Congress in December 2024.

The founders of the United States were fond of comparing their new republic with the Roman Republic, in which eagle imagery (usually involving the golden eagle) was prominent. On June 20, 1782, the Continental Congress adopted the design for the Great Seal of the United States, depicting a bald eagle grasping 13 arrows and an olive branch with 13 leaves with its talons.

The bald eagle appears on most official seals of the U.S. government, including the presidential seal, the presidential flag, and in the logos of many U.S. federal agencies.

The national flag of the United States, often referred to as the American flag or the U.S. flag, consists of thirteen horizontal stripes, alternating red and white, with a blue rectangle in the canton bearing fifty small, white, five-pointed stars arranged in nine offset horizontal rows, where rows of six stars alternate with rows of five stars. The 50 stars on the flag represent the 50 U.S. states, and the 13 stripes represent the thirteen British colonies that won independence from Great Britain in the American Revolutionary War fought from April 19, 1775 until September 3, 1783.

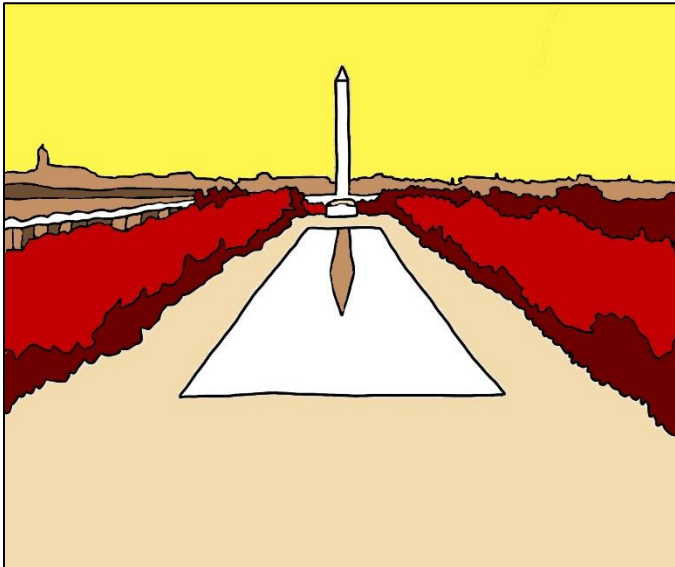


## **The National Mall**

The National Mall is a landscaped park near the downtown area of Washington, D.C., the capital city of the United States. It contains and borders a number of museums of the Smithsonian Institution, art galleries, cultural institutions, and memorials, sculptures, and statues. It is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) of the United States Department of the Interior as part of the National Mall and Memorial Parks unit of the National Park System.[4]

The core area of the National Mall extends between the United States Capitol grounds to the east and the Washington Monument to the west and is lined to the north and south by several museums and federal office buildings.

The National Mall's status as a vast, open expanse at the heart of the capital makes it an attractive site for protests and rallies of all types. One notable example was the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, a political rally during the Civil Rights Movement, at which Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his speech "I Have a Dream".



## **Oregon Trail**

The Oregon Trail was a 2,170-mile (3,490 km) east–west, large-wheeled wagon route and emigrant trail in North America that connected the Missouri River to valleys in Oregon Territory. The eastern part of the Oregon Trail crossed what is now the states of Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming. The western half crossed the current states of Idaho and Oregon.

The Oregon Trail and its many offshoots were used by about 400,000 settlers, farmers, miners, ranchers, and business owners and their families to get to the area known as Oregon and its surroundings, with traffic especially thick from 1846 to 1869. The eastern half of the trail was also used by travelers on the California Trail from 1843, the Mormon Trail from 1847, and the Bozeman Trail from 1863, before turning off to their separate destinations. Use of the trail declined after the first transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, making the trip west substantially faster, cheaper, and safer. Since the mid-20th century, modern highways, such

as Interstate 80 and Interstate 84, follow parts of the same course westward, and passing through towns originally established to serve those using the Oregon Trail.

