

# **Women's Equality Day**

August 26

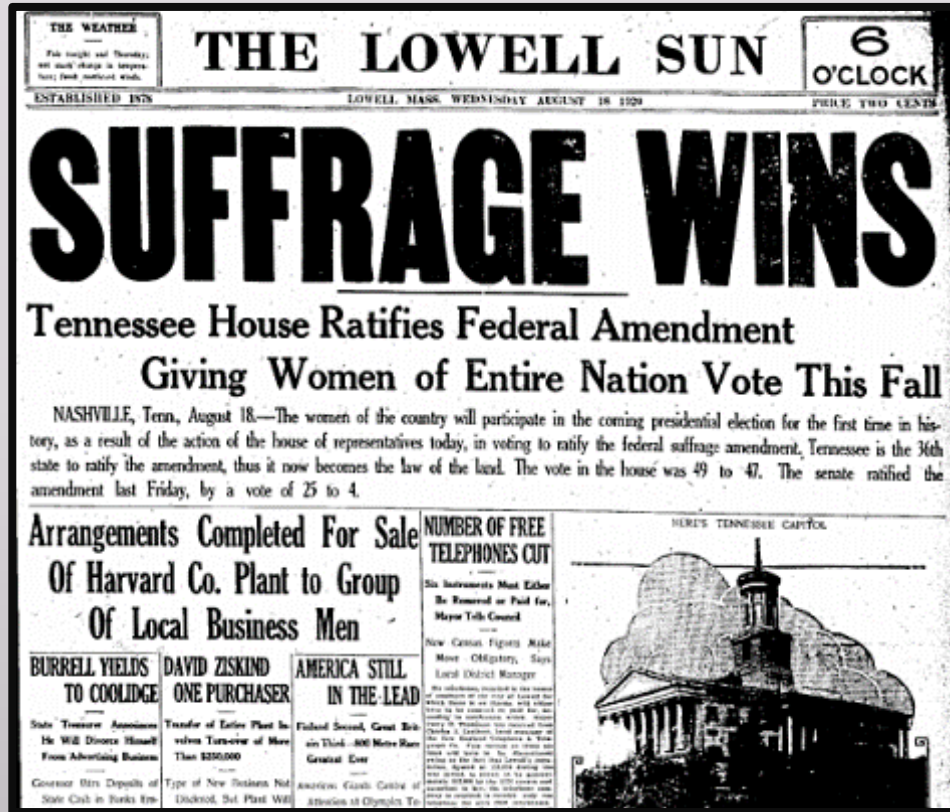
# Women's Equality Day

On Women's Equality Day, we honor the movement for universal suffrage that led to the 19th Amendment. We celebrate the progress of women over the years and renew our commitment to advancing gender equity.

Women in public service and government have long served this nation by working to clear barriers, enforce laws, implement new ideas, and change people's attitudes.



# Passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment



The amendment changed federal law and the face of the American electorate forever.

# Winning the Right to Vote

The determination to win the vote was an expansive and diverse effort. While the Alaska Territory granted Alaskan women full voting rights in 1913 – 7 years before the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, many women still did not have the right to vote after the amendment's ratification.

American Indian women fought for their right to vote until 1924, Chinese American women until 1943, and Japanese and other Asian American women until 1952.

A strong suffrage movement existed in many Black communities. However, the laws, particularly in the South, barred Black women from voting for decades after 1920. It wasn't until the passing of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 that these women obtained suffrage as well.

# Women's Equality Day Evolution

Women's Equality Day was originally designed to recognize the achievements of the women's suffrage movement within the U.S. Since then, it has expanded to reflect upon and honor the continual progress that has been made toward gender equality.

Over a hundred years later, women continue to open doors into areas where they were previously denied access or participation. Today, women leaders continue to strive for and inspire change for all. This presentation highlights the first all-female Super Bowl flyover team, nation's top female military leaders, and Captain Rhea McFarland.

# All-female Super Bowl Flyover (1 of 2)

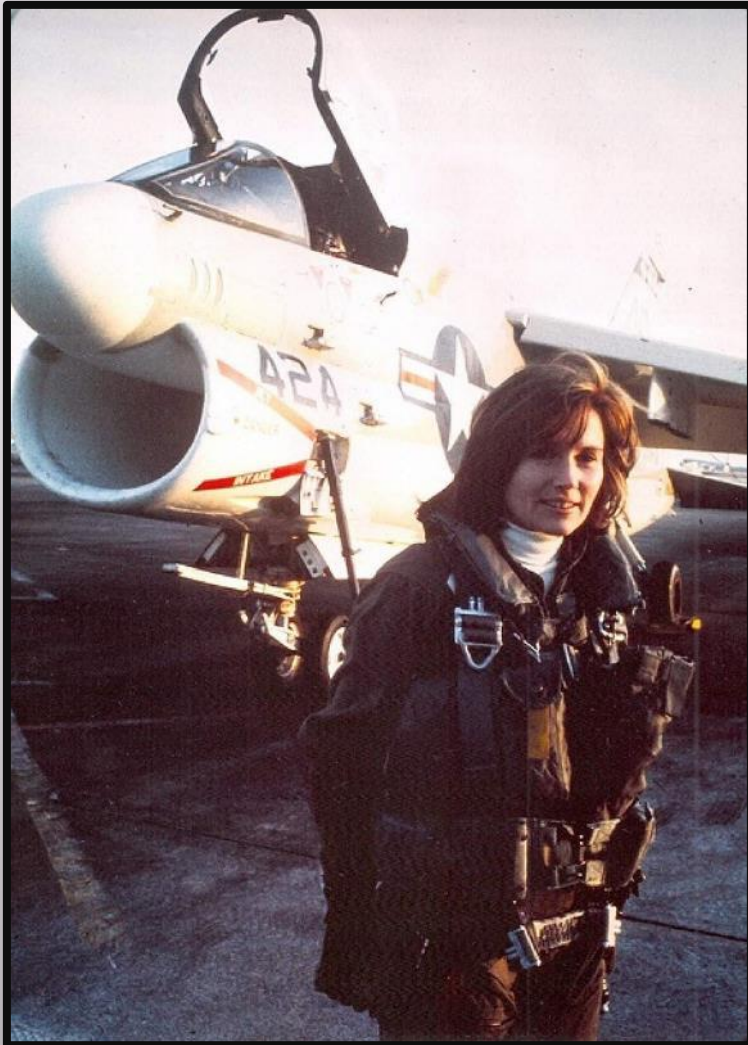
Female firsts still occur to this day. Seven women from the U.S. Navy recently made history when they conducted the first all-female pregame flyover at Super Bowl 2023.

The Navy flyover honored “50 years of women flying” for the maritime service branch, which began teaching women to fly in 1973.



The back row consists of naval lieutenants: Lyndsay Evans, Saree Moreno, and Kathryn Martinez. The front row consists of naval lieutenants: Margaret Dente, Arielle Ash, Caitie Perkowski, and Suzelle Thomas.

# All-female Super Bowl Flyover (2 of 2)



Perkowski said in an interview, *“The importance of honoring women like Captain Rosemary Mariner, the first Navy female jet pilot: The wisdom that she had to share was really amazing. To have the ability to represent people like her that came before us and made everything that we do possible is truly an honor.”*

# Top Female Leaders (1 of 2)



In 2023, the nation's top female military leaders met together in public for the first time to discuss how far the services have come, and still need to go, in their efforts to incorporate women.

The panel included Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan, Air Force Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, Army Gen. Laura Richardson, and Navy Adm. Lisa Franchetti.



# Top Female Leaders (2 of 2)

The leaders reflected on their personal careers, noting how they do not always enjoy the weight of being a “first,” and emphasized the need to recruit and retain talented women so the services can move beyond breaking glass ceilings.

*“In the 75 years since we’ve had the opportunity to serve, we certainly have come a long way,”* said Van Ovost, who has led U.S. Transportation Command since October 2021. *“Our progress has been accelerating, but we have a way to go still and we’re working on that.”*

# Captain Rhea McFarland (1 of 2)

In November 2022, Captain Rhea McFarland became the first Black female C-17 pilot to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross for her leadership in Afghanistan.

The Distinguished Flying Cross is the Air Force's highest honor awarded for acts of heroism or extraordinary achievement during aerial operations.

McFarland was on one of the last aircraft to depart Kabul, marking the final withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan. Her crew made three harrowing trips to the Afghan capital.

# Captain Rhea McFarland (2 of 2)

McFarland said after the ceremony, *“It’s hard to believe in 2022 you’re still crossing boundaries and breaking barriers. It really just makes me excited for the future and the role that diversity and inclusion plays in the Air Force.”*



# Conclusion

Today as we celebrate the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, we are reminded we all have the opportunity—and the responsibility—to create a society that gives both men and women an equal voice.



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