

# West Side Informer

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## National Inventors Month

In 2011, Senators Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) announced a Senate Resolution officially designating May as National Inventors Month, changing from its traditional August celebration to better align with the academic calendar.

There have been inventions practically since the beginning of time. Here is a listing of just a few:

2,600,000 B.C.E. – Stone tools

3500 B.C.E. – Wheel and axle

2500 B.C.E. – Glass

1000 B.C.E. – Abacus, Sandwich

300 B.C.E. – Saddle and stirrup

1450 – Printing press with movable type

1793 – Cotton gin

1821 – Electric motor

1857 – Military camouflage

1871 – Stock ticker

1891 – Wireless communication

1900-1950 – Assembly line, Television, Microwave oven, Credit card & TV remote

1951-1999 – Industrial robot, Video game console, Cellular mobile phone, E-mail, Personal computer, Reusable spacecraft, MP3 compression, Smartphone

2000s – Satellite radio, Blu-ray, iPhone

To find more, check out the WCL Patent & Trademark Resource Center's resources at <http://wcl.library.tamu.edu/patent-trademark.html>. We are always happy to help.

Challoner, J. (Ed.). (2009). *1001 inventions that changed the world*. London, England: Quintessence.

Senate makes May National Inventors Month; Inventors Digest Magazine, Edition Nation lead push to support U.S. innovation with month-long celebration of inventors and their inventions. (2011, May). PR Newswire. Retrieved from the Factiva database.

## US Patent No 1

In the late eighteenth century there were many iron rails across Europe that were used by wagons drawn by horses. The first high-pressure steam locomotive was built to run on these rails by Richard Trevithick and by 1804 he had demonstrated that his steam engine could pull passengers and cargo.

The first patent issued in the US was issued on July 13, 1836 to John Ruggles for an improvement to the traction of the wheels to prevent them from sliding on the rails. But patents relating to the railroad go back further than US Patent No. 1; James Watt holds British patent no. 913 from 1769 for his invention of a low pressure steam engine. Trevithick's steam engine design did not need the separate condenser or the large space that Watt's design did, allowing the construction of a smaller, lighter, engine that did not infringe on Watt's patents or require that he be paid royalties.



Ruggles, J. (1836) *U.S. Patent No. 1*. Washington, DC: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Watt, J. (1769) *UK Patent No. 913*. London: Intellectual Property Office.

Challoner, J. (Ed.). (2009). *1001 inventions that changed the world*. London, England: Quintessence.



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