

MARYLAND'S NICKNAMES

Maryland is known as both the Old Line State and the Free State.

OLD LINE STATE

According to some historians, Gen. George Washington bestowed the name "Old Line State" and thereby associated Maryland with its regular line troops, the Maryland Line, who served courageously in many Revolutionary War battles.

FREE STATE

The nickname "Free State" was created by Hamilton Owens, editor of the *Baltimore Sun*. In 1923, Georgia Congressman William D. Upshaw, a firm supporter of Prohibition, denounced Maryland as a traitor to the Union for refusing to pass a State enforcement act. Mr. Owens thereupon wrote a mock-serious editorial entitled "The Maryland Free State," arguing that Maryland should secede from the Union rather than prohibit the sale of liquor. The irony in the editorial was subtle, and Mr. Owens decided not to print it. However, he popularized the nickname in later editorials.

POET LAUREATE OF MARYLAND

- Maria B. Coker, 1959-1962
- Vincent Godfrey Burns, 1962-1979
- Lucille Clifton, 1979-1985
- Reed Whittemore, 1985-1988
- Linda Pastan, 1991—

In the 18th century, Ebenezer Cook, author of *The Sot-weed Factor: Or, A Voyage to Maryland* (1708), styled himself Poet Laureate. Maryland did not have an official poet, however, until 1959. In that year, the General Assembly authorized the

Governor to appoint a citizen of the State as Poet Laureate of Maryland (Chapter 178, Acts of 1959; Code State Government Article, sec. 13-306). Since 1979 the incumbent has been appointed to a three-year term.

STATE THEATERS

By Chapter 1003, Acts of 1978, Center Stage in Baltimore was designated the State Theater of Maryland. By the same act Olney Theatre in Montgomery County was designated as the State Summer Theater of Maryland (Code State Government Article, sec. 13-309).

LEGAL HOLIDAYS

- January 1 New Year's Day
- January 15 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday
- February 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- 3rd Monday in February . . Washington's Birthday
- March 25 Maryland Day
- Friday before Easter Good Friday
- May 30 Memorial Day
- July 4 Independence Day
- 1st Monday in September Labor Day
- September 12 Defenders' Day
- October 12 Columbus Day
- November 11 Veterans' Day
- 4th Thursday in November . . . Thanksgiving Day
- December 25 Christmas Day

Each statewide general election day

Each other day that the President of the United States or the Governor designates for general cessation of business.

If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the holiday shall be observed on the next Monday after that date.

* Unless the United States Congress designates another day for observance, in which case, the day designated by the United States Congress becomes the legal date.