



City of Riverside Series (Father's Day Edition):

The Founding Fathers of Riverside

HISTORY

Just as the United States has founding fathers, so does the city of Riverside. There are many important people who contributed to the establishment and growing of Riverside, but there are three people who have been essential to the history of Riverside.

John W. North

John W. North and the Southern California Colony Association are known as the founders of the city of Riverside, which was founded in 1870. John was born in New York in 1815 and moved to Minnesota in 1849. As a career, he was a judge and was regularly involved in politics and even got to work with President Abraham Lincoln. John is also known for founding the city of Northfield in Minnesota.¹ When he came to the land that would become Riverside, he saw that the Santa Ana River was close by and decided to name the town River-side, because it is located near the river. John W. North is known as the founder of Riverside and a high school in the city is named for him.

¹ Russell McDonald. "John Wesley North." Online Nevada Encyclopedia. <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/john-wesley-north> (accessed June 17, 2020).



Matthew Gage

Matthew Gage was a jeweler and settler from Canada who came to Riverside around 1885. He wanted to gain ownership of 640 acres of land in the city, but in order to do that, he had to bring water to the land first. Matthew set out to build a canal, an above ground water transport system, which took him four years to build. The canal was almost 20 miles long, and the water came from the Santa Ana River. The canal brought water to the people of Riverside and doubled the growth of the citrus industry. The canal is now called the Gage Canal and still supplies water to local citrus groves and ranches in Riverside today. Matthew Gage brought water and growth to the city of Riverside.

Frank Miller

Frank Miller came to Riverside in 1874 when he was 17 years old. His father owned a boarding house, a place people could spend the night like a hotel, called the Glenwood Tavern. Over 50 years, Frank expanded and built the tavern into a large hotel called the Mission Inn. Frank would travel around the world and bring art and artifacts home to put in the Mission Inn. The first area of the Mission Inn opened in 1903 and brought many people to the city of Riverside for vacation and tourism. Frank Miller created one of the most important buildings in Riverside and brought business and people to the new city.



ACTIVITY

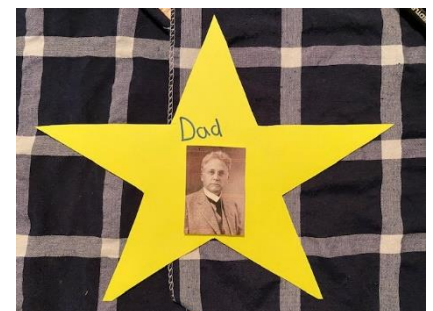
Even the city of Riverside has founding fathers who play important roles in history and are “stars” of the city. Since Father’s Day just passed, we invite you to honor your father, or an important man in your life. If Riverside had a Walk of Fame, like Hollywood does, John W. North, Matthew Gage, and Frank Miller would certainly have their own stars. In this activity, create a Walk of Fame star for your father to show him that he is a star in your life and important to your family history.

Materials:

- Construction Paper or Cereal Box
- Paint/Markers/Colored Pencils
- Glue
- Picture of your dad/ important male figure

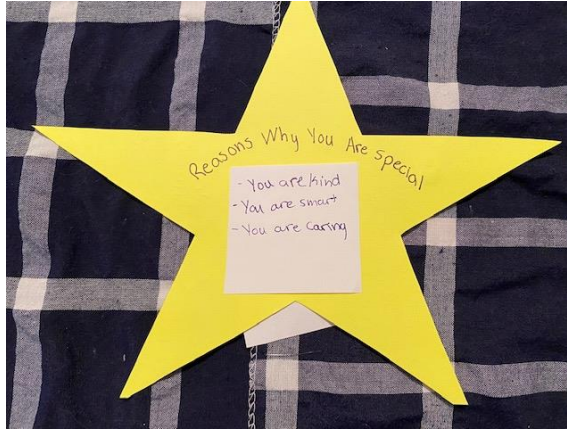
Directions:

1. Trace a large star on construction paper or cereal box.
2. Cut out the star.
3. Decorate the star with things your dad likes and write his name or the word “dad”.
4. Find a picture of your dad and paste it to the star.





5. On the other side of the star, write some things that makes your dad special.





Content Resources

If you are interested in learning more about the history of Riverside and its' Founding Fathers, check out the sources below.

Minnesota Legislative Reference Library. *North, John Wesley.*

[Website] <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/legdb/fulldetail?ID=14203>

McDonald, Russell. "John Wesley North." Online Nevada Encyclopedia. [Website]

<http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/john-wesley-north>

California State Parks. Irrigation – The Gage Canal.

[Website] https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=22584

The Mission Inn Hotel & Spa – History and Beauty Around Every Corner: The Cornerstone of Downtown Riverside. [Website]

<https://www.missioninn.com/about-en.html>