

Solution to Ulysses

By Drew Besse

Each of the dates is the birthday of a US President. Furthermore, the first names are all the first names of presidents (just like the puzzle title!), and their corresponding last names have the same length and share exactly one common letter with the president's last name.

The date and name pairs do not match up properly (Jimmy Carter was born on October 1st, but Jimmy Bernal has May 29th), but they can be used to give an ordering – John Kennedy was born May 29th, so John Lambert goes right after Jimmy Bernal.

This will give you a cycle. Reading off the letter that remained the same in the last names gives RNONAUGUSTTENTH-PRESBO. The exact string depends on where you start, but regardless you can permute the cycle until it makes proper English and read off PRESBORNONAUGUSTTENTH or PRES BORN ON AUGUST TENTH.

The only US president whose birthday is August 10th is Herbert Hoover, so **HERBERT HOOVER** or **HOOVER** is the answer to the puzzle.

Properly ordered list with letters extracted:

P October 1st: Franklin Powell (Pierce Powell)
R May 29th: Jimmy Bernal (caRter beRnal)
E February 22nd: John Lambert (kennEdy lambEr)
S April 23rd: George Castellano (waShington caStellano)
B July 4th: James Bartlett (Buchanan Bartlett)
O April 13th: Calvin Holloway (cOolidge hOlloway)
R January 29th: Thomas McWhorter (jeffeRson mcwhoRter)
N March 16th: William Browning (mckiNley browNing)
A October 5th: James Ratliff (mAdison rAtliff)
U February 6th: Chester Ledoux (arthur ledouX)
G May 8th: Ronald Wright (reaGan wriGht)
U June 12th: Harry Church (trUman chUrch)
S September 15th: George Fisk (buSh fiSk)
T March 29th: William Tuck (Tuck Taft)
T November 19th: John Tracy (Tracy Tyler)
E February 12th: James Stephens (stephEns garfiEld)
N November 24th: Abraham Conoway (lincoln, conoway)
T October 14th: Zachary Torres (Taylor Torres)
H November 23rd: Dwight Whitehurst (EisenHower whiteHurst)