

American MASTERS

thirteen
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450 West 33rd Street
New York, NY 10001-2605
thirteen.org

press information



PBS

AMERICAN MASTERS
is produced for PBS
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Timeline

AMERICAN MASTERS Good Ol' Charles Schulz

*When Charles Schulz was in kindergarten, his teacher at Mattocks School in St. Paul, Minnesota told him, "Some day, Charles, you are going to be an artist." Her predictions were fully realized, as is evident in **AMERICAN MASTERS Good Ol' Charles Schulz**, which premieres Monday, October 29 at 9 p.m. (ET) on PBS (check local listings). Below is a timeline of major events in the artist's life:*

1922

Charles Monroe Schulz is born November 26 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as the only child of Carl Schulz, a German immigrant and hard-working St. Paul barber, and Dena, a first-generation Norwegian-American. An uncle nicknames him "Sparky" after Spark Plug, a horse in the *Barney Google* comic strip.

1930s

Becomes interested in comics as a boy, especially *Popeye*, George Herriman's *Krazy Kat* and the characters created by Walt Disney.

1934

The Schulz family is given a black and white dog named Spike – the inspiration for Snoopy.

1937

First published drawing, a sketch of Spike, is included in the newspaper comics feature *Believe it or Not* by Robert Ripley.

1939

Enrolls in a correspondence cartoon course with Federal Schools (later known as Art Instruction Schools) during his senior year in high school.

1940

Graduates from high school. The drawings he contributes to the school yearbook are not included in the publication.

1943

Drafted into the Army at age 20. Soon after he is inducted, his mother dies from a longstanding illness. The cause of death, though believed for years to be colon cancer, was later revealed to be cervical cancer. Serves as a machine-gun squad leader in Germany, France and Austria. He later writes, "The Army taught me all I needed to know about loneliness."

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1945

Discharged from the Army and returns to St. Paul.

1946

Joins the evangelical Church of God, which promotes the universal brotherhood of Christians. In the following years he is “born again,” teaches Sunday school and takes part in a youth group with whom he would preach on the streets of St. Paul.

1947

Begins career as a cartoonist with the publication of his panel cartoon, *Li'l Folks*, in the local newspaper, the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

1948–1950

Sells 17 panel cartoons to *The Saturday Evening Post*.

1950

After several rejections, sells his *Li'l Folks* strip to United Feature Syndicate. They rename his strip *Peanuts*, a title he never liked. *Peanuts* debuts in seven newspapers on October 2. The syndicate pays Schulz \$90 for his first month of strips. Donna Wold, Schulz's red-haired first love, tells him she is going to marry someone else.

1951

Marries Joyce Halverson, mother (from a previous marriage) of one-year-old Meredith. After a brief move to Colorado Springs, Colorado, the young family returns to Minneapolis.

1952

The first Sunday *Peanuts* page published. The strip is then featured in more than 40 U.S. newspapers. The first book collection, *Peanuts*, is also published.

1955

Kodak becomes the first product sponsor for *Peanuts*, using the characters in a camera handbook. Wins his first Reuben Award from the National Cartoonists Society.

1956

Begins a single-panel feature called *Young Pillars* for the Church of God magazine *Youth*. The cartoon continues until 1965.

1958

Leaves Minnesota and moves with his wife and children to northern California. They purchase an 18-acre property on Coffee Lane in Sebastopol between neighboring apple orchards. Joyce begins a multi-year project building, landscaping and renovating “The Coffee Grounds.” *Peanuts* appears in 355 U.S. and 40 foreign newspapers. Hungerford Plastics creates the first plastic *Peanuts* figures, including Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Linus and Lucy. Yale University names Schulz Cartoonist of the Year.

1960

Hallmark creates the first *Peanuts* greeting cards. *Peanuts* art and animation used in a popular Ford Falcon advertising campaign.

1962

Determined Productions publishes *Happiness is a Warm Puppy*, which makes it to *The New York Times* best-seller list. *Peanuts* named Best Humor Strip of the Year by the National Cartoonists Society.

1964

Becomes the first cartoonist to be awarded a second Reubens by the National Cartoonists Society. Robert Short publishes the bestselling *Gospel According to Peanuts*, using the comic strip to illustrate Christian theology.

1965

Peanuts featured on cover of *Time* magazine. His first animated television special, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, wins a Peabody Award and an Emmy for outstanding children's programming. Determined Productions begins retailing *Peanuts* sweatshirts in bookstores, triggering a merchandising boom that includes plush Snoopy, lunch boxes, picture frames and much more.

1966

Schulz's father dies while visiting in California. A fire later destroys Schulz's Sebastopol studio.

1967

The stage musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* opens off Broadway and goes on to become one of the most-produced musicals of all time. California Governor Ronald Reagan greets the cartoonist at the State Capitol in observance of the legislature-proclaimed Charles Schulz Day on May 24.

1969

The Redwood Empire Ice Arena opens in Santa Rosa, California, designed by Joyce Schulz and built by the Schulz's to replace a nearby arena that had been condemned. The grand opening stars the 1968 Olympic Gold Medalist Peggy Fleming and the Vince Guaraldi trio. Schulz's daughter Amy becomes a professional ice skater. Charlie Brown and Snoopy accompany astronauts on Apollo X.

1972

Charles and Joyce Schulz divorce.

1973

Marries Jean Forsyth Clyde. Receives Emmy Award for writing his 10th television special, *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*.

1974

Presides as the Grand Marshal of the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California.

1975

Peanuts celebrates 25 years. It's carried in approximately 1,480 U.S. and 175 foreign newspapers with 90,000,000 readers. The television special *You're a Good Sport, Charlie Brown* wins an Emmy.

1977

Expresses his growing doubts about organized religion to an interviewer for the BBC series

Everyman. Donates a building to the Church of God's Anderson University, in honor of Marvin Forbes, the pastor who brought him to Jesus. Later publishes several strips about fear-mongering preachers and refers to himself in an interview as a secular humanist.

1978

The International Pavilion of Humor in Montreal names Schulz Cartoonist of the Year.

1979

Lee Mendelson and Schulz publish *Happy Birthday, Charlie Brown*. In a contract renewal with United Features Syndicate, secures approval over all licensed items, and ensures that no one else will be able to draw *Peanuts* after he retires or dies.

1980

R. Smith Kiliper and Schulz publish *Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and Me*. Television special *Life Is a Circus, Charlie Brown* receives an Emmy.

1981

Has heart bypass surgery and hand is shaky thereafter.

1983

Snoopy's Gallery & Gift Shop opens in Santa Rosa, California. Television special *What Have We Learned, Charlie Brown?* wins a Peabody Award. Camp Snoopy opens at Knott's Berry Farm in California.

1984

Peanuts qualifies for a place in the Guinness Book of World Records after being sold to the 2,000th newspaper.

1985

You Don't Look 35, Charlie Brown published. The Oakland Museum of California opens the anniversary exhibit, *The Graphic Art of Charles Schulz*.

1986

Inducted into Cartoonist Hall of Fame by the Museum of Cartoon Art (now The National Cartoon Museum).

1989

Rheta Grimsley Johnson publishes the biography *Good Grief: The Story of Charles M. Schulz* in cooperation with Schulz.

1990

The French government names Schulz Commander of Arts and Letters, and the Snoopy in Fashion exhibit opens at the Louvre. "This Is Your Childhood, Charlie Brown – Children in American Culture" exhibit opens at The National Museum of History in Washington, D.C.

1992

"Snoopy, The Masterpiece" exhibit opens at the Montreal Museum of Fine Art. Awarded the Order of Merit from the Italian Minister of Culture.

1995

The 45th anniversary of *Peanuts* marked by exhibit “Around the Moon and Home Again: A Tribute to the Art of Charles M. Schulz” at the Space Center in Houston.

1996

Gets his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

1997

Schulz and wife Jeannie announce they will give \$1 million toward the construction of a D-Day memorial to be placed in Virginia. World premiere of “Peanuts Gallery” by composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich held at Carnegie Hall.

1999

Publishes *Peanuts: A Golden Celebration*. *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* opens in a new production on Broadway. *Peanuts* appears in more than 2,600 newspapers worldwide, and more than 20,000 products developed to date. Announces his retirement on December 14 due to health problems.

2000

Bids a fond farewell to all his readers in the final daily *Peanuts* newspaper strip on January 3. California lawmakers declare February 13 as Charles M. Schulz Day to coincide with the final *Peanuts* Sunday strip. Dies at age 77 on February 12 in his home in Santa Rosa of complications from colon cancer. The final Sunday *Peanuts* strip appears in newspapers around the world. Posthumously awarded Milton Caniff Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Cartoonists Society.

2001

U.S. Postal Service *Peanuts* stamp issued at Charles Schulz's Redwood Empire Ice Arena in Santa Rosa, California. Posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal by the United States Congress. Ground breaking on the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center in Santa Rosa, across the street from the Redwood Empire Ice Arena (Snoopy's Home Ice).

2002

Grand opening of the Schulz Museum.

Source: Charles M. Schulz Museum and Lumiere Productions.

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Press Contacts:

Donna Williams

Thirteen/WNET New York
212.560.8030
williamsd@thirteen.org

Caroline Oman

Thirteen/WNET New York
212.560.3057
oman@thirteen.org

Debra Falk

Thirteen/WNET New York
212.560.3013
falk@thirteen.org