January 2026 Trivia Answers

1. In which decade of the 20th century was the first telephone call interrupted by call waiting?

   Answer: The early 1970s. Shirley Ann Jackson (1946 -) used her expertise in theoretical physics in her research at AT&T Bell Labs to invent call waiting. Her research also led to the invention of caller ID, the fax machine, solar panels, and fiber optic cables. She was the first woman to receive a doctorate from MIT, and she served as head of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. *Time Magazine* described her as "perhaps the ultimate role model for women in science."

   Shirley Ann Jackson

   An amusing video about call waiting can be found at:
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EI72_mR0KU

2. What state's license plate includes the words "Wild, Wonderful?"

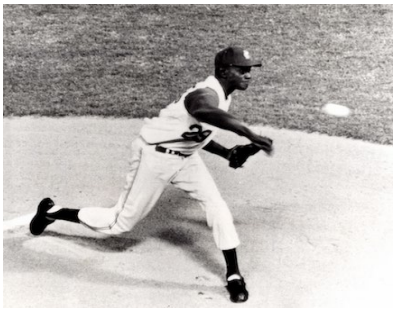
   Answer: West Virginia. According to the West Virginia and Regional History Center (WVRHC), the slogan was added to the state's welcome signs 50 years ago, in 1975. The following year, it became available on state license plates in celebration of the state's bicentennial. Fun fact: It has also been a *New York Times* crossword puzzle clue.

3. How much did the U.S. pay France for the Louisiana Purchase in 1803?
   Extra Credit: What would the value of the purchase be in 2025 dollars?
   Answer: $27,267,000 (including interest on the loans/mortgage). The area was about 828,000 square miles and doubled the size of the United States. It included most of the Mississippi River's drainage basin west of the river. *Britannica* describes the transaction as "the greatest land bargain in U.S. history" and calculated the cost to be less than three cents an acre!
   Extra credit answer: About $781,757,000

4. On September 25, 1965, what almost-60-year-old gave up just one hit in three innings pitched?
   Answer: Satchel Paige. He pitched three shut-out innings for the Kansas City Athletics in their home game with the Boston Red Sox. According to the Society for American Baseball History (SABR), it had been about 40 years since his major league debut and 12 years since his previous last pitch in the major league. The Athletics' attendance was at its lowest of the team's 11-year history, and they were in last place or close to it. The team owner decided to host a Satchel Paige Night to boost attendance, and he paid Paige "the princely sum of $3,500." The only hit off Paige was a double by Carl Yaztremski (go Sox!). Nine-thousand fans attended, and the owner's publicity stunt was a huge success.

   For the rest of the story, which is quite entertaining, see https://sabr.org/gamesproj/game/september-25-1965-satchel-paige-pitches-three-scoreless-innings-at-age-59/



Satchel Paige

5. One more baseball question: Which Major League Baseball team was the last to integrate racially when it signed Pumpsie Green (1933-2019) in 1959?
   Answer: Boston Red Sox. Elijah Jerry Pumpsie Green played with the Red Sox from 1959 -1962. Green hit a triple off the Green Monster in his first at bat in Fenway Park. He was traded to the Mets after the 1962 season.

6. What single has the longest duration (most minutes) in the history of the Top Ten?
   Answer: For almost 50 years, the answer was Don McLean's *American Pie* (8 minutes, 42 seconds), but in 2021, Taylor Swift's *All Too Well* (10 minutes, 13 seconds) took over first place. *American Pie* did not have a B-side, because both sides were needed to record the song. I'm not sure that newer formats are exactly the same as the singles of traditional vinyl recordings, but that's not my call to make. *Hey Jude* (1968) takes third place at 7 minutes and one second.