

sworn in on January 12, 2009, as the fifty-fifth governor of Missouri.

Nixon's achievements as governor include investments in education, job creation, and the passage of the Missouri Manufacturing Jobs Act, which gave auto manufacturers incentives to stay in the state. He also showed leadership in his handling of natural disasters, such as a catastrophic tornado that struck the city of Joplin on May 22, 2011.

On November 6, 2012, Nixon was reelected to a second term, defeating Republican challenger Dave Spence with 54.7 percent of the vote.

IMPACT

Having gained recognition as a politician who united people and breached partisan divides, Nixon stated that if Hillary Clinton did not run for president in 2016, he might consider doing so. However, his chances of positioning himself as a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the presidential election were shot down in 2014 following his handling of the violent protests that followed a police shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014. Many people were critical of Nixon's lack of decisiveness during the crisis and felt he had demonstrated a lack of leadership needed for higher office. In 2017, Nixon joined Dowd Bennett law firm of St. Louis, where he is presently involved in the training of junior litigators and chiefly engages in pro bono work.

PERSONAL LIFE

Jay Nixon and his wife, Georganne Wheeler Nixon, have two adult sons, Jeremiah and Willson.

SUGGESTED READING

"About the Governot." *Office of Missouri Governor Jay Nixon*. Office of Missouri Governor, n.d. 4 Nov. 2015, wayback.archive-it.org/8248/20170106000457/https://www.governor.mo.gov/. Accessed 20 Aug. 2021.

Glueck, Katie. "Jay Nixon Won't Rule Out 2016 Run." *Politico*, 21 Feb. 2014, www.politico.com/story/2014/02/jay-nixon-2016-103780. Accessed 20 Aug. 2021.

Lieb, David A. "Mo. Gov. Candidate Stresses Political Background." *USA Today*, 23 Sept. 2008.

—. "UPDATE: Nixon Sworn In, Calls for Cooperation in Inaugural Speech." *Missourian*, 14 Jan. 2013, www.columbiamissourian.com/news/state_news/update-nixon-sworn-in-calls-for-cooperation-in-inaugural-speech/article_0b27584d-0eed-5512-b10c-4a4526acc813.html. Accessed 20 Aug. 2021.

Smith, Mitch. "Missouri Governor Jay Nixon's Legacy Firmly Linked to Ferguson." *The New*

York Times, 23 Sept. 2015, www.nytimes.com/2015/09/24/us/missouri-governor-jay-nixons-legacy-firmly-linked-to-ferguson.html.

Yokley, Eli. "Why Jay Nixon Missed His Moment." *Politico*, 21 Aug. 2014, www.politico.com/magazine/story/2014/08/why-jay-nixon-missed-his-moment-110248/. Accessed 20 Aug. 2021.

—Barb Lightner

George Noory

Born: June 4, 1950

Occupation: Radio broadcaster

In 2003, George Noory began hosting the national radio show *Coast to Coast AM*, which is syndicated on more than 640 stations across the United States and heard by some three million listeners each week. The show, which airs from 1 A.M. to 5 A.M. Eastern time, is consistently the highest rated in that time slot and draws a passionate audience of insomniacs, shift workers, and others who stay awake simply to listen to Noory's calm voice and open-minded take on topics like alien abduction, September 11 conspiracy theories, and telepathy.

The show, Timothy Lavin wrote for the *Atlantic* (Jan./Feb. 2010), "is more than a curiosity: it has propelled overnight radio from commercial obscurity into radiant profitability, and has helped set a tone that, both thematically and rhetorically, now pervades American media. In the process, it has become perhaps the most complete chronicle of our strange national anxieties ever agglomerated." While *Coast to Coast AM* often comes under fire from those who feel it promotes pseudoscience and a skewed view of the world, Noory defends himself and his listeners. "We're a seeker of answers to mysteries on this planet and the universe," he asserted to David Ferrell for the *Los Angeles Times* (21 Feb. 2010). "We may not find the answers. We may not find Bigfoot. We may not find a chupacabra. We may not find out who was responsible for killing JFK, but we're going to keep looking, asking, probing. And one day—you know what—we may get some of those answers."

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

George Ralph Noory was born on June 4, 1950, in Detroit, Michigan. His father, Gabriel, worked at the Ford Motor Company and was of Egyptian descent; his mother, Georgette, was Lebanese American. Noory and his two younger sisters, Gail and Glinda, were raised Roman Catholic. As a child, he was a fan of the newscasters of the day, including Edward R. Murrow and Walter

Jean-Paul Belmondo

Born: April 9, 1933, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France

Died: September 6, 2021, Paris, France

Occupation: French actor

Often compared to such iconoclastic American actors as James Dean and Humphrey Bogart, Jean-Paul Belmondo burst onto the scene with his portrayal of the antihero of the key French New Wave film *Breathless* (released in the United States in 1961).

Jean-Paul Charles Belmondo was born on April 9, 1933, in Neuilly-sur-Seine, a middle-class suburb of Paris, France. He is the son and namesake of a sculptor who moved the family to the Left Bank of Paris when Jean-Paul was an infant. His mother, Sarah (Rainaud-Richard), was an artist. An indifferent student, Belmondo failed in one school after another, and quit altogether in early adolescence. At 16 he began his much publicized, but short-lived venture into the boxing ring. (Publicity reports to the contrary, his craggy nose was not broken in the ring, but in a school brawl.)

Belmondo stopped boxing after 23 amateur bouts partly because he feared that an injury or disfigurement might impede his newfound ambition: to become an actor. In 1956, he graduated from the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique, and his first real break came with the role of László Kovács, a freewheeling Hungarian attached to a French family, and in particular to its daughter, in Claude Chabrol's *Les Tricheurs* (1958; *A Double Tour*, 1959). On the strength of that forceful portrayal, he was given his first starring role, in *A Bout de Souffle* (1960; *Breathless*, 1961), by auteur Jean-Luc Godard.

In *Breathless*, Belmondo portrayed an amoral small-time criminal named Michael who impulsively kills a policeman and tries to persuade his American love interest (Jean Seberg) to flee with him to Italy. Shot using a handheld camera and with a largely improvised script, the film was considered revolutionary in its verisimilitude and gritty appeal. Belmondo, forging a reputation as disaffected but charming, next starred in works by other New Wave directors, including playing a steelworker in Peter Brook's *Moderato Cantabile* (1960), a young cleric in Jean-Pierre Melville's *Léon Morin, Priest* (1961), and a Communist intellectual in Vittorio De Sica's *Two Women* (1960).

Wary of being stereotyped as an antihero, in 1964 he starred in the mainstream spy thriller *That Man from Rio*, performing his own stunts and disappointing fans of his more intellectually challenging work. That film marked a new phase of his career, and over the next several decades Belmondo gained a reputation for making

crowd-pleasing comedies, war movies, action pictures, and thrillers. In 1989, he garnered a best-actor César Award (the French equivalent of the Oscar), for playing a wealthy industrialist who fakes his own death in the comedy-adventure *Itinéraire d'un enfant gâté* (*Itinerary of a Spoiled Child*).

Belmondo suffered a stroke in 2001 that severely limited his ability to work. His final role came in 2009, with *Un homme et son chien* (*A Man and His Dog*), about an elderly man who finds himself homeless. He died on September 6, 2021, at his home in Paris. He was survived by his daughter, Florence, and son, Paul, the offspring of a youthful marriage to ballerina Elodie Constantin. He is also survived by a daughter, Stella, from his second marriage to the actress Nathalie Tardivel.

See *Current Biography* 1965

Abdelaziz Bouteflika

Born: March 2, 1937, Oujda, Morocco

Died: September 17, 2021, Zeralda, Algeria

Occupation: Former Algerian president

By the time Abdelaziz Bouteflika was ousted in 2019, he had served for two decades as Algeria's president, longer than any of his predecessors.

Information about Abdelaziz Bouteflika's early life is scant and often contradictory. According to some reputable sources, he was born on March 2, 1937, in Tlemcen, Oran district, Algeria, but others place his birth across the Moroccan border, in Oujda, then a French protectorate. At about age 20 he abandoned his formal education to enlist in Algeria's fight for independence from France.

Bouteflika became a personal assistant to the guerilla leader Houari Boumédiène, and after Algeria won its independence in 1962, he was named minister of youth and sports by Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria's first elected president. The following year he was appointed foreign minister. In 1965, Bouteflika participated in the Boumédiène-led bloodless coup that resulted in Ben Bella's ouster.

Under Boumédiène, Bouteflika remained foreign minister, helping shepherd Algeria as a founding member of the African Union. Although he seemed a likely successor to Boumédiène, his prospects dimmed in 1981, when he was accused of misappropriating millions of dollars and forced into exile. Upon his return in 1987, he remained in the background as the Algerian military battled with insurgents from the Islamic Salvation Front.

man, he entertained family and friends with his singing, concertina playing, and storytelling. At the same time, he was a harsh disciplinarian who regularly administered spankings, most often not as punishments but as warnings to his sons—a curious practice from which Lasorda derived his own disciplinary philosophy in managing, which he expressed to interviewers: “You anticipate mistakes; get your teaching done before they happen, rather than criticizing after the fact.”

Lasorda’s dream was to play in Yankee Stadium. By his own, oft-repeated account, he was only a third-string pitcher on the Norristown High School baseball team. Undaunted by that lowly status, he tried out successfully with the Philadelphia Phillies in his senior year (1944–45) and dropped out of high school before graduation to sign a minor-league contract with the team.

Drafted into the Dodger farm system at his own request, Lasorda pitched 7-7 with the Class A Greenville Spinners in 1949. The following year the Dodgers moved him up to their AAA farm club in Montreal, Canada. He became determined not only to devote himself to that organization, but to move up to its mother club, which was then in Brooklyn, New York. (It moved to Los Angeles in 1958.)

Lasorda pitched 13 innings for Brooklyn during the 1954 and 1955 seasons but was then cut to make room for up-and-comer Sandy Koufax. Sent back to the minors, he retired as a pitcher in 1960 and subsequently became a Dodgers scout, a farm system manager, and finally a coach.

Lasorda took over as manager of the Dodgers for the last four games of the 1976 season and remained in that post until 1996. During that time he managed the Dodgers to pennants in 1977, 1978, 1981, and 1988—and in 1981 and 1988 the team went on to become World Series champions. He had amassed a career record of 1,599 victories by the time of his retirement—as well as a larger-than-life reputation.

Lasorda, who was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1997 and coached the U.S. baseball team that won gold at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, was named a Dodgers vice president after he stepped down as manager, and he represented the team until his death, on January 7, 2021. (Upon his demise, Willy Mays took his place as the oldest living member of the Baseball Hall of Fame.) He was survived by his wife of more than six decades, Joan (“Jo”); a daughter, Laura; and a granddaughter. He was predeceased by his son, Thomas Jr., in 1991.

See *Current Biography* 1996

John le Carré

Born: October 19, 1931, Poole, Dorset, England

Died: December 12, 2020, Cornwall, England

Occupation: British novelist

John le Carré’s spy novels transcend the conventions of the genre, elevating his protagonists into the ranks of true literary figures.

David John Moore Cornwell, who began using the pen name John le Carré when his first book was published, was born on October 19, 1931, in Poole, Dorset, England, the son of Ronald Thomas Archibald Cornwell and the former Olive Moore Glassey. Although Ronald put forth the image of a wealthy and successful businessman, he was a fraud and conman, in and out of prison, and often on the run from creditors. Olive left the family when her son was five.

With Ronald trying to apply a veneer of respectability to the family, le Carré was sent to Sherborne, a prestigious boarding school he disliked so much he simply walked out one day. He then lived for a year with relatives in Switzerland and studied French and German at the University of Bern. (He would later study modern languages at Oxford, as well, graduating in 1956.) It was in Switzerland that he was recruited into Great Britain’s intelligence services, according to most sources, and while he taught briefly at Eton, he spent most of his early adulthood working as an agent for MI6, and its domestic counterpart, MI5.

Le Carré published his first book, *Call for the Dead*, in England, in 1961. (He took the pseudonym from a sign in a London storefront because it was not considered proper for Foreign Service officials to publish books under their own names.) The book featured George Smiley, a deceptively unassuming Foreign Service agent who later appeared in several more of le Carré’s books and became the iconic pop culture antithesis to the more swashbuckling (and unrealistic) James Bond.

His third book, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963), catapulted le Carré onto international bestseller lists and won him renown. Its protagonist, Alec Leamas, is a world-weary Cold War-era spy who must contend with the realization that intelligence services on both sides of the conflict engage in ethically murky practices—considered a radical theme in a world where Western forces were assumed to occupy the moral high ground.

In the wake of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*’s massive success, le Carré resigned from the Foreign Service and began writing full time. Among the enormously popular books he wrote over his half-century career are: *A Small Town in Germany* (1968), *Tinker Tailor Soldier*