

**CALENDAR GIRL**

With live performances, exhibits and special TV episodes, organizations across the U.S. have planned multiple ways for fans to celebrate their love of Lucy throughout her jubilee year.

**FEB. 9:** At The Heart Truth's Red Dress Collection fashion show (which streamed at [cbsnews.com](http://cbsnews.com)), stars honored the memory of Lucille Ball, a victim of heart disease, to help spread a message about women's heart health.



**FEB. 15:** *Let's Make a Deal* host Wayne Brady offered a special Lucy-themed DVD prize package, while asking contestants for their favorite *I Love Lucy* memories.

**Lucille Ball's hometown offers fans the chance to celebrate two milestone anniversaries**



WE  LOVING LUCY

**MAY 9:** *The Price Is Right* celebrated Lucy's 60th anniversary with a Lucy-themed prize showcase presented by Lucy and Ricky lookalikes.



**JULY 1–NOV. 30:** An exhibition of *Lucy* props and artifacts will be presented by The Hollywood (Calif.) Museum. Befittingly, the museum is housed in a landmark building formerly owned by Max Factor, who was credited for the makeup on *I Love Lucy*, and in whose salon Lucy first became a redhead. [thehollywoodmuseum.com](http://thehollywoodmuseum.com)

**AUG. 3–7:** The Lucille Ball Festival of Comedy in Jamestown, N.Y., will include a *Guinness Book* world record-setting parade of Lucy lookalikes; memorabilia auctions; Lucy-themed tours; a re-creation of the 1956 Jamestown world premiere of Ball and Arnaz's film *Forever, Darling*; and performances by comedians such as Joan Rivers and Paula Poundstone. [lucy-desi.com](http://lucy-desi.com)



**1951** had already been a productive year for Lucille Ball and her bandleader husband, Desi Arnaz: In July, Ball had given birth to the couple's first child, daughter Lucie, and that spring the two had conceived and starred in a pilot for a show that, when it would premiere in October on CBS, would forever change the face of television.

*I Love Lucy* literally invented a new form of situation comedy: filmed on a soundstage, in front of a live audience, but with multiple cameras to pick up all of its zany stars' brilliant bits of physical business. The inventiveness immediately paid off, and rocketed *I Love Lucy's* four talented headliners— Lucy, Desi, Vivian Vance and William Frawley—right to the top of the Nielsens.

Today, 60 years after the show's debut, *Lucy* remains in continuous syndication on local stations across the U.S. It plays four times a day on the Hallmark Channel, and in 2012 will return to cable's TV Land as well. But why, in today's high-def, full-color entertainment world, does this little black-and-white comedy continue to captivate us?

"*I Love Lucy* has always been a show about unconditional love, and I think people relate to that love as much as to the humor," Lucie Arnaz theorizes. "It's what I think the planet needs more than anything right now. 'Yes, you can screw up and get into trouble, but I love you anyway.' It's interesting that the title is 'I Love Lucy.' You can read that all kinds of different ways, like 'I don't care what you say about her, I love her.' There's something kind of powerful about that."

### THE MOUNT RUSHMORE OF LAUGHS

Ball's hometown of Jamestown, N.Y., once a major center for furniture manufacturing, has since suffered job losses and economic decline. But unlike any of its neighbors in America's "Rust Belt," Jamestown has been able to capitalize on its unique, redheaded resource.

For more than two decades, Jamestown's

Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Center has drawn tourists into town, celebrating the city's favorite daughter with events like look-alike contests and a chance to meet some of *Lucy's* remaining recurring cast members. This year, prompted by both *Lucy's*

60th anniversary and what would be Ball's 100th birthday, Jamestown is rolling out much more ambitious and ultimately enduring plans.

As the Lucy-Desi Center's new executive director, Journey Gunderson, explains, the plans actually hark back to the city's first celebration in 1989, when Ball had planned to attend a comedy festival created in her honor. Sadly,

the comic legend passed away just months before the first festival was held.

In subsequent years the event morphed into separate festivities in May and August. But as Gunderson explains, the new Lucille Ball Festival of Comedy (Aug. 3–7, see "Calendar Girl") will return

the celebration "to what Lucy wanted it

to be: a true, living, breathing tribute to comedy." Gunderson's colleague George Panebianco adds that the festival is just the first part of a multi-phase plan to spread Lucy's legacy. Eventually, the city plans to construct a world-class Museum of Comedy, patterned after Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The goal, Panebianco says, is to turn Jamestown into an international attraction, "The Mount Rushmore of Western New York."

Arnaz says she knows that her mother would be thrilled that rather than just commemorating her birthday each year, Jamestown now will be on the forefront of celebrating, preserving and discovering comedic performances. "She would be very happy to have something about comedy in general named after her," Arnaz explains. "Something that teaches and honors the skills, and makes sure that talent continues." — *Jim Colucci*

**AUG. 6:** Ball's 100th birthday



**SEPT. 20–21:** Celebrity impersonator Suzanne LaRusch brings her uncanny likeness of Lucy to the stage at the Frankenmuth (Mich.) Bavarian Inn. [suzannelarusch.com](http://suzannelarusch.com)



**OCT. 15:** On the 60th anniversary of the premiere of *I Love Lucy*, Lucie Arnaz, her brother Desi Arnaz IV and a 15-piece orchestra will perform *Babalu*, a celebration of the music of Desi Arnaz, at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Free. Tickets at [loc.gov/loc/events](http://loc.gov/loc/events).



**FALL 2011:** CBS will present *Lucy Live*, a stage version of classic *Lucy* episodes, touring cities across the United States.

**LUCY LOOT!** Find limited-edition *I Love Lucy* memorabilia on page 103. >