

The Virgin Islands Consortium

DLCA Honors National Tape Measure Day with Educational Initiatives and Radio Broadcast

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DLCA celebrates National Tape Measure Day with Interchanges Boys & Girls Club on Thursday, July 13, 2023. By. DLCA

The V.I. Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs Weights and Measures Unit is celebrating National Tape Measure Day on Friday, July 14, with a host of educational activities and a live radio broadcast.

The day will be observed with an educational tour, featuring stops at St. Croix Christian Academy and Inner Changes for Girls and Boys Council, Inc. The festivities will conclude with a live broadcast on Friday morning on WJKC Isle 95 FM.

The tape measure, a critical tool in various professions, owes its modern design to Alvin J. Fellows of New Haven, Connecticut. Fellows was granted a patent for "Improvements in Tape Measures" on July 14, 1868, marking the birth of the retractable tape measure era. This invention brought significant changes to the construction, electrical, tailoring industries, and many other trades and crafts.

Before Fellows' innovation, Englishman James Chesterman had designed a steel measuring tape. However, its size, cost, and bulky design made it a less practical choice for craftsmen. Priced at \$17 in 1853, equivalent to \$300 in today's U.S. dollars, it did not fit comfortably in a pocket or toolbox. Fellows' patent introduced a more convenient and affordable tool that became a staple in toolboxes worldwide.

The DLCA invites everyone to celebrate National Tape Measure Day by purchasing a tape measure or gifting one to a friend or family member. The humble tape measure has simplified life, sparked creativity, and has become an essential tool in many professions. For updates on the day's events, follow the DLCA on Facebook @dlcausvi.