

JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth - also known as African American Freedom Day, Emancipation Day, Freedom Day and Juneteenth Independence Day - is celebrated in honor of one of the final acts of emancipation of slaves in the United States.

The origins of Juneteenth are traced back to the day - June 19, 1865 - when Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, arrived in Galveston, TX, with the news that the Civil War had ended and slaves were now free. Juneteenth comes from the combination of June and 19th.

Though the Emancipation Proclamation was signed by President Lincoln on January 1, 1863, that granted freedom to slaves in Confederate states, because it was during the Civil War, the Confederate States ignored the proclamation. And it wasn't until the end of that war that President Lincoln's Executive Order was enforced in the South.

Considered to be the oldest known celebration commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, it was celebrated sporadically until the civil rights movement in the 1950's and 1960's when it was revived in communities across the U.S. It is currently recognized as a state or ceremonial holiday in 47 states and the District of Columbia.

Juneteenth is a celebratory time, with family reunions, church picnics and special services that feature traditional African American music and hymns. And lots of great food is always at the center of family and community celebrations!

Some links to currently scheduled local events:

[Juneteenth 2021 - Omaha](#)

[Omaha Freedom Festival / Juneteenth Celebration - omahablues.com](#)

Link for historical information on Juneteenth:

[Britannica.com - History of Juneteenth](#)