JUNETEENTH
FREEDOM DAY

WHAT IS JUNETEENTH?

While the Emancipation Proclamation was signed in 1863, not everyone was freed until 1865 when some 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas. The army announced that the more than 250,000 enslaved black people in the state, were free by executive decree. This day came to be known as "Juneteenth," by the newly freed people in Texas.

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JUNETEENTH EVENTS

- **Omaha Juneteenth Festival and Parade**
- **Lincoln Juneteenth Events**

WATCH ME

The first Juneteenth celebration took place in 1866 in Texas with community gatherings, including sporting events, cookouts, prayers, dances, parades, and the singing of spirituals like "Many Thousands Gone" and "Go Down Moses." Some events even featured fireworks, which involved filling trees with gunpowder and setting them on fire.

At the core of the celebrations was a desire to record group gains since emancipation, "an occasion for gathering lost family members, measuring progress against freedom and inculcating rising generations with the values of self-improvement and racial uplift," Gates wrote.

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