



## SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMER TIME!

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**S**ummer is arriving and we have a lot to celebrate in the month of June. I know the pandemic limited our family gatherings, but even happier days are here again! In our last article we celebrated International Women's Day. It was an important time to appreciate the advancements that were made and are continuing to be made by women. But today, we have more reasons to celebrate and honor our family.

We have two important events to celebrate in June:

**Father's Day and Juneteenth.** Both occur this year on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Both have great significance in our lives and deserve to be celebrated. To the men, you are awesome! **To the Dads, brothers, husbands, mail handlers, Union reps, and all the other roles you hold, HAPPY FATHERS DAY!!** You guys deserve recognition for your contributions. You are so vital to the family and we appreciate all that you do. For me, especially getting rid of the spiders and bugs that come into the house. Managing the television schedule for the family by commandeering the remote. Being the sports commentator of every sporting event. You are appreciated! Your humor is the best. No one could entertain us like you do. The list goes on and on. And because it's barbecue season, your culinary skills are greatly appreciated too. Again, we celebrate ALL of the men. Enjoy, relax, and keep being you!

**Juneteenth, the shortened name for June Nineteenth, honors the end of slavery in the United States and is considered the longest running African American holiday.** On June 17, 2021, Juneteenth officially became a federal holiday. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that slaves living in Confederate states shall be free. It was more than two years before the

news reached African Americans living in Texas. The news was delivered in Galveston, TX by soldiers on June 19, 1865. After hearing this great news, the ex-slaves began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, song, and dance.

In honor of this very important date, a flag was designed in remembrance of Juneteenth. The first flag was created in 1997 by Ben Haith, the founder of the National Juneteenth Celebration. It has been redesigned by various artists. The colors of red, white, and blue were deliberately chosen by Haith to demonstrate

that even throughout slavery, African Americans were always American. The red on the flag also represents the blood shed on the journey to freedom.

- The curved surface on the flag represents a new horizon and possibility for African Americans.
- The star on the flag demonstrates Black people are free in all fifty states and is a nod to Texas, "The Lone Star State."
- The star is surrounded by a burst, which represents new opportunities ahead for African Americans.
- The date of June 19, 1865 was added in 2007 so that no one would ever forget what the flag stood for.

Both of these occasions are times to remember and to honor throughout our nation. Not only as times for food and fun, but as a time for honor and recognition of our fellow Brothers and Sisters. And as I usually try to, I end with a few words from Stevie Wonder, an artist who is blind, but has been able to see the necessity for love throughout the world. ***"Love's in need of love today. Don't delay, send yours in right away. Hate's going round, breaking many hearts. Stop it please, before it's gone to far."***

