

Father's Day and Juneteenth

Father's Day, in the United States, is generally credited to Ms. Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, whose father, a Civil War veteran, raised her and her five siblings after their mother died in childbirth. She is said to have had the idea in 1909 while listening to a sermon on Mother's Day, which at the time was becoming established as a holiday. Local religious leaders supported the idea, and the first Father's Day was celebrated on June 19, 1910, although it was originally largely a religious holiday, Father's Day has been commercialized with the sending of greeting cards and the giving of gifts.

Tomorrow is another June 19...Juneteenth, the federal holiday Juneteenth National Independence Day, which also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Black Independence Day. It commemorates the end of slavery in the United States.

In 1863, during the American Civil War, Pres. Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared more than three million slaves living in the Confederate states to be free. More than two years would pass, however, before the news reached African Americans living in Texas. It was not until Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, that the state's residents finally learned that slavery had been abolished. The former slaves immediately began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, song, and dance.

The following year, on June 19, 1866 the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas. The original observances included prayer meetings and the singing of spirituals, and celebrants wore new clothes as a way of representing their newfound freedom.