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## Law Library Blog (June 2022): Legal Beagle's Blog Archive

Roger Williams University School of Law

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June 2022 Library Blogs

# ***Legal Beagle's Post***

June 10, 2022

## **Celebrating and Reflecting Upon Juneteenth**

June 10, 2022



[According to the New York Times](#), “On June 19, 1865, about two months after the Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Va., Gordon Granger, a Union general, arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved African-Americans of their freedom and that the Civil War had ended. General Granger’s announcement put into effect the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been issued more than two and a half years earlier on Jan. 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln.” This day, a mix of celebration and tragic delay, is now a holiday which memorializes the anniversary of the delayed announcement.

[Vox](#) further explains, “As much as Juneteenth represents freedom, it also represents how emancipation was tragically delayed for enslaved people in the deepest reaches of the Confederacy.” This day is now celebrated annually as a [federal holiday](#).

The holiday received its name by combining June and 19 which became the portmanteau Juneteenth. Juneteenth has been celebrated by African-Americans since the late 1800s and [“is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States.”](#)

According to the [Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture website](#), “Juneteenth marks our country’s second independence day.” This year there will be the [4th Annual Rhode Island Juneteenth celebration](#).

To commemorate Juneteenth 2021, officials in Bristol, RWU researchers, and students, [“were placing the first of two planned slavery markers in town at the Linden Place Museum, a mansion built in the 1800s by General George DeWolf, a prominent merchant and slave trader.”](#) Another medallion was placed at DeWolf Tavern. More information about these markers can be found at the website for the [Rhode Island Slave History Medallions](#) and in this [news story](#) about the medallion installation.

June 21, 2022

## Happy Fourth of July!

June 21, 2022



Fireworks! Parades! Sunburns!

We hope that you have a wonderful 4th of July. If you are staying in the vicinity of Roger Williams this summer, make sure to check out the events happening around Bristol. Bristol has hosted a celebration since 1785 and claims the title for America’s oldest Fourth of July

celebration... and we make sure to make it count. Celebrations kick off on Flag Day (June 14th) and conclude with the 2.5-mile parade on the 4th. In between there are concerts, a derby, a carnival, and a fireworks show on July 3rd.

Check out [Bristol's website](#) for more details.

But putting aside our picnic blankets for now, we should probably elaborate on this holiday's significance. Independence Day was [recognized as a federal holiday by Congress in 1870 \(16 Stat. 168\)](#), but it had already established itself amongst towns as a [popular secular celebration](#). It is believed that the parade aspect stems from community members, many of whom fought in the Revolutionary War, conducting "Patriotic Exercises."

On [July 4, 1776](#), the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence and separated from Great Britain to form an independent country. The portions of the declaration concerning the wrongdoings of Great Britain as well as the justification for the separation, are not as famous today as the preamble. Today the preamble (although not binding) embodies all that we think we should reflect as a country, and what we have to fight for when we fall short of our ideals.

We hope you have a relaxing summer, because soon [You'll Be Back](#).