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January 2018

**For Immediate Release (Calendar listing at end of release):**

**Sundown Social to feature Texas music legend Dale Watson**

***Texas-Sized Event Benefits Washington on the Brazos***

The [Washington on the Brazos State Park Association](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/about/park-association/) will celebrate 182 years of Texas—where the stars are big and bright—at its annual Sundown Social at 6 p.m., Saturday, April 21, 2018, at [Rockin’ Star Ranch](https://www.rockinstarbrenham.com/), Brenham, Texas.

Featured entertainment will be[Dale Watson](https://www.dalewatson.com/)—dubbed the silver pompadoured, Lone Star beer drinkin', honky-tonk baritone by the Austin Chronicle. “Seeing honky tonker Dale Watson live is much different than listening to his studio recordings. Sure, you still get great lyrics booming from Watson's distinctive voice, but the live shows have an energy and a playfulness that doesn't always come through on a studio cut. And Watson's live shows are always top-notch experiences.” ([Pittsburg City Paper](https://www.pghcitypaper.com/FFW/archives/2016/08/18/review-dale-watsons-new-live-at-big-t-roadhouse-is-more-than-a-collection-of-live-tunes-its-an-experience))

Featuring a gourmet steak dinner by a team of chuck wagon cookers led by Jimmy Detro, cocktails, Dale Watson concert and auctions filled with Texian treasures, all proceeds from this Texas-size party will benefit the Washington on the Brazos State Park Association and its educational programming and expansion of the 293-acre park encompassing [Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/).

“The Park Association is launching a renewal project in 2018 to greatly improve the experience for visitors with enhanced visuals, landscaping and signage that this venerable landmark deserves,” says Park Association President Cyndee Smith. “It is important for people to know that every dollar raised at the Sundown Social directly benefits Washington on the Brazos and that the money stays here: ‘Where Texas Became Texas.’” Washington on the Brazos is where 59 delegates bravely met in 1836 to formally declare independence from Mexico.

The gala will honor the Fultz Family of Navasota, longtime and ardent supporters of Washington on the Brazos and the Park Association. The Joe and Artie Fultz estate, led by John M. Fultz, deceased former President and Board Director of the Park Association, placed on permanent loan the iconic “The Reading of the Texas Declaration of Independence” painting to the Star of Republic Museum at Washington on the Brazos site in 1970s. The painting debuted at the 1936 Texas Centennial celebration in Dallas and hung at the San Jacinto Monument before coming to the Star of the Republic Museum. Many Fultz family members have served in support of the park: Joe King Fultz served as President of the Park Association from 2004-2007, and is presently on the advisory board. Those who have assisted each year with the Sundown Social include Joe King, Monica, Josh, Jon C., Yolanda, Kathy, Jeffrey and Sherry Fultz. In memory and recognition of John Fultz, often seen wearing his Silver Belly cowboy hat at park functions, the 2018 theme will be “Tip Your Hat at the Sundown Social.”

Tickets are limited; the event has sold out the last two years. Contact Ginger Moreland, Park Association Administrator, at 979-830-1824 or office@wheretexasbecametexas.org for tickets and sponsorship information. Deadline to RSVP is Friday, April 13, 2018. Overnight accommodations are available at the Sundown Social venue: [Rockin’ Star Ranch](https://rockinstarbrenham.com/).

Dedicated to supporting the site’s preservation projects, celebrations and educational opportunities, the Park Association has played an integral part in the creation, expansion or reconstruction of the Star of the Republic Museum. the Visitor Center and its displays, Independence Hall, and Barrington Living History Farm, home of Dr. Anson Jones. The Park Association funds the genealogical research which traces the lineage of the 59 signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence, and continually supports the Descendants of the Signers by assisting with planning, organization and outreach of this integral group. Additionally, the volunteer organization has purchased a mobile phone app; a new website for the complex; playground equipment; animals for the farm; bluebonnet and other wildflower seeds; and an important collection of historical papers and documents for the museum. Chartered in 1955, the Washington on the Brazos State Park Association is the oldest non-profit 501(c)(3) support group for the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. (TPWD).

[Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org) is found on the Brazos River at the original townsite of Washington, Texas, a major political and commercial center in early Texas. It is located at 23400 Park Road 12, Washington, TX, 77880—approximately halfway between Brenham and Navasota, off of State Hwy. 105. From Hwy. 105, follow either FM 912 or FM 1155 to Park Road 12. For additional information about this historic site, the Park Association or The Sundown Social, call 979-830-1824 or visit the site’s website at [www.wheretexasbecametexas.org](http://www.wheretexasbecametexas.org) and <https://www.facebook.com/washingtononthebrazos/>.

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