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(Please email or call for photos, videos, advance interviews, etc.)

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**For Immediate Release:**

**H-E-B presents Texas-size celebration to mark 182nd anniversary of Texas Independence**

**(Detailed Schedule of Events Offered Below)**

“Texas Independence Day Celebration”—presented by H-E-B—is an annual two-day living history celebration from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, 2018 on the 293-acre [Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/). The site—and this celebration—commemorate when 59 delegates bravely met in 1836 to make a formal declaration of independence from Mexico and form a nation.

There is no better place to celebrate Texas independence than on the very spot “Where Texas Became Texas.”

The admission-free “Texas Independence Day Celebration” (TIDC) features two stages of non-stop live music and entertainment for the whole family; Texian Village of arts and crafts; variety of food vendors and historical reenactments.

Admission fees are waived for the site’s attractions ([Independence Hall](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/about/independence-hall/); [Star of the Republic Museum](http://www.starmuseum.org/) and [Barrington Living History Farm](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/about/barrington-living-history-farm/)) for that weekend celebration. Admission to the grounds, on-site shuttles and parking are also free during TIDC.

The Star of the Republic Museum’s new exhibit titled “So Others Could Follow: Four Centuries of Maps That Define Texas” will illustrate through maps the evolution of Texas over four centuries, both topographically and politically, under seven flags. It will open TIDC weekend on March 3 and run through February 15, 2019.

**Activities at Washington on the Brazos for Saturday, March 3rd**

* **Texas Army Camp, behind Star of Republic Museum (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.):** Historical reenactors from [The Texas Army](http://www.texasarmy.org/)—the “Official State of Texas 1836 Ceremonial and Reenactment Group”—will set up a bonafide 1836 Texas Army camp on the park grounds, where visitors can wander freely to learn how the soldiers and their families lived then, and witness musket and cannon firings.
* **Kids History Zone on the Childress Courtyard (near Visitor Center) (10 am. to 5 p.m.)**: The Kids History Zone will allow children to dress up in historical costumes; sign a large scale copy of the TX Declaration of Independence; and take photos near that declaration.
* **Red Chanuska Dancers at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (10 a.m.):** Native American dancers
* **Wreath laying and music by North Harris County Dulcimers at Independence Hall (10 a.m.):** Students will lay a wreath at The Children’s Monument—the oldest monument in the park,next to Independence Hall, to kick off the weekend. The monument is the first permanent marker (1899/1900) of the events that took place on this spot, and because it was largely due to the efforts of school children.
* **Professor Gerard, The Texian Magician, at the “Independence” Stage Tent (10:15 a.m. and 3 p.m.):** “Direct from the theaters of Galveston, Professor Gerard, the Texan Magician and Emperor of Wizards, presents Artistic Deception, Dexterity of Hand, and Curious Entertainments--surpassing anything of the kind that has hitherto been seen or attempted anywhere in the Americas.  Professor Gerard exhibits astonishing performances in the art of legerdemain that promise to deceive the eye of the nicest observer, and appear in a manner supernatural.”
* **Pace & Barber at the “Independence” Stage Tent (11 a.m.):** Brandi Pace is a singer, songwriter and instrumentalist; Dean Barber plays the banjo.
* **Birth of the Republic Play at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (11 a.m. and 4 p.m.): ‘**The Birth of a Republic’ is a dramatic recreation of events relating to the Convention of 1836 in Washington which adopted a Declaration of Independence from Mexico; adopted a Texas Constitution; and created Texas’ first representative government.
* **Tours of Independence Hall (11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m.):** Historical interpreters relay the stories from the Convention of 1836.
* **Black Powder, Firearms and Cannon Demonstrations, field behind Star of Republic Museum (11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.)**
* **Silver Creek Band at the “Independence” Stage Tent (3:30 p.m.)**

**“Dr.** **Balthasar’s Medicine Show” at the “Independence” Stage Tent (12 p.m. and 4 p.m.):** Interpretive Education Specialist Mike Follin will play Dr. Balthasar, a 19th century frontier patent medicine salesman to help audiences to understand this part of history and early day health care. Follin uses the rapid-fire patter and entertaining techniques that attracted early American country folk to attend a sales talk and purchase mostly useless tonics.

**Jagoda Polish Dance Ensemble at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (12 p.m.):** The Jagoda Polish Folk Dance Ensemble is a part of the Polish American Foundation of Texas. The group is based in Plano, Texas and proudly represents Polish culture and costumes at festivals and ethnic presentations.

**Brenham Children’s Chorus at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (12:30 p.m.):** Singers ranging from 4th to 8th grades will perform a variety of musical genres such as classical, gospel, folk, contemporary and Broadway.

**North Harris County Dulcimers at the “Independence” Stage Tent (12:30 p.m.):** Started in 1985, they are “an ever growing group of music lovers that play just about any instrument that doesn‘t need to be ‘“plugged in.’”

**Mount Rose Missionary Baptist Church Men’s Chorus at the “Independence” Stage Tent (1 p.m.):** Men’s chorus from the oldest African American Baptist congregation in Brenham and one of the first in Washington County.

**Blinn College Brass Quintet at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (1 p.m.)**

**Stories with Sam Houston at Independence Hall (1 p.m. and 3 p.m.)**

**Stephen Lewis: Cowboy Poetry at the “Independence” Stage Tent (1:30 p.m.):** Stephen Lewis is an authentic cowboy, chuckwagon cooker and cowboy poet who keeps the old traditions alive.

**Texas State Federation of Square & Round Dancers at “Independence” Stage Tent (2 p.m.):** TSFSRD was organized in 1962 to encourage individual square and round dance groups in Texas to work together. Texas is one of over 30 states that recognize square dancing as America’s dance.

* **Cake Cutting and Texas A&M Singing Cadets at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (2 p.m.):** Slices from a Texas-sized 182nd birthday cake will be served to visitors by the Washington Historical Society Heritage Belles.
* **Texas A&M Singing Cadets at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (2:30 p.m.):** Called “The Voice of Aggieland,” this internationally renowned men’s choir will serenade visitors with moving songs. Formed on the A&M campus in 1893, the Singing Cadets are one of the oldest collegiate singing organizations in the world.
* **Musket Volley from Texas Army Camp (3:30 p.m.)**
* **Roll Call of the Declaration Signers with Musket Salute at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (3:30 p.m.)** “Roll Call” of the names of the Signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence, with descendants there to answer “HERE” for their ancestor when his name is called. **“Texas Our Texas”** sung by Texas A&M Singing Cadets.

**Activities at Washington on the Brazos for Sunday, March 4th**

* **Texas Army Camp, behind Star of Republic Museum (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.):** Historical reenactors from [The Texas Army](http://www.texasarmy.org/)—the Official “State of Texas 1836 Ceremonial and Reenactment Group”—will set up a bonafide 1836 Texas Army camp on the park grounds, where visitors can wander freely to learn how the soldiers and their families lived then, and witness musket and cannon firings.
* **Kids History Zone, near the Childress Courtyard (10 am. to 5 p.m.)**: The Kids History Zone will allow children to dress up in historical costumes; sign a large scale copy of the Declaration; and takes photos near the Declaration.
* **Texas Flag Raising Ceremony and Texas Pledge at the Childress Courtyard (10 a.m.):** The Texas flag will be ceremonially raised by Masonic members of the Lone Star Commandry, 114 Knights Templar of Texas from North Zulch, Texas.
* **Pace & Barber at the “Independence” Stage Tent (10 a.m. and 2 p.m.):** Brandi Pace is a singer, instrumentalist and songwriter, and Dean Barber plays the banjo.
* Wawel Polish Folk Dance **at “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.):**
* **Black Powder, Firearms and Cannon Demonstrations, field behind Star of Republic Museum (11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.)**

**“Dr.** **Balthasar’s Medicine Show” at the Amphitheater (11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.):** Interpretive Interpretive Education Specialist Mike Follin will play Dr. Balthasar, a 19th century frontier patent medicine salesman to help audiences to understand this part of history and early day health care. Follin uses the rapid-fire patter and entertaining techniques that attracted early American country folk to attend a sales talk and purchase mostly useless tonics.

* **Tours of Independence Hall (11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.):** Historical interpreters relay the stories from the Convention of 1836.
* **Birth of a Republic Play at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (11 a.m. and 3 p.m.):** The Birth of a Republic is a dramatic recreation of events relating to the Convention of 1836 in Washington which adopted a Declaration of Independence from Mexico; adopted a Texas Constitution; and created for Texas its first representative government.
* **Mariachi Alma De Tejas at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (12 p.m. and 2 p.m.)**
* **Celtaire String Band at the “Independence” Stage Tent (12 p.m. and 3 p.m.):** Performance of Americana-Folk-Texas-Celtic-Historical music from 1700-1900, dressed in the appropriate period attire.  Their variety of acoustic instruments are fiddle, penny whistle, bodhran, guitar, mandolin, vocals, the “bass-box,” tambourine, spoons and limberjack.
* **Mixteco Ballet Folklorico at the “Stars over Texas” Amphitheater (12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.):** Preserve Mexican customs, traditions and culture through the art of music and dance.

**Stories with Sam Houston at Independence Hall (1 p.m. and 3 p.m.)**

* **Professor Gerard, The Texian Magician at the “Independence” Stage Tent (1 p.m. and 4 p.m.):** “Direct from the theaters of Galveston, Professor Gerard, the Texan Magician and Emperor of Wizards, presents Artistic Deception, Dexterity of Hand, and Curious Entertainments--surpassing anything of the kind that has hitherto been seen or attempted anywhere in the Americas.  Professor Gerard exhibits astonishing performances in the art of legerdemain that promise to deceive the eye of the nicest observer, and appear in a manner supernatural.”

Hotels that will provide discount pricing for TIDC weekend include Holiday Inn Express & Suites, 2685 Schulte Blvd., Brenham, TX 77833, 979-830-5331; Best Western Inn of Brenham, 1503 Hwy. 290 E., Brenham, TX 77833, 979-251-7791; and Best Western Navasota, 8965 Hwy. 6, Navasota, TX 77868, 936-870-4100.

“Texas Independence Day Celebration” is presented by H-E-B and coordinated by the Washington on the Brazos State Park Association, with the assistance of [Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept](https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/washington-on-the-brazos) (TPWD) and The Texas Army reenactors. Other sponsors include Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Navasota, Arts Council of the Brazos Valley, Houston First, Spirit of Texas Bank, The Bank and Trust-Bryan/College Station, George and Anne Butler Foundation, Del Sol Food Co., Inc./Briannas, Bluebonnet Electric Co-op, Brenham National Bank, Visit Houston, Insite Brazos Magazine, Holiday Inn Express & Suites-Brenham, Best Western Inn Brenham, Best Western Navasota, Blinn College, and KTEX 106 Sounds Like Texas.

Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site is halfway between Houston and Austin at 23400 Park Road 12, Washington, TX, 77880. Contact 936-878-2214 or [jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:jon.failor@tpwd.texas.gov) for more information. Updates on the TIDC schedule can be found at [www.wheretexasbecametexas.org](http://www.wheretexasbecametexas.org) and [www.facebook.com/washingtononthebrazos/](http://www.facebook.com/washingtononthebrazos/).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site—a TPWD-run state park—has many onsite amenities open daily, as well as an incredible schedule of events and programs. On-site attractions include Independence Hall; the Star of the Republic Museum (administered by Blinn College) and Barrington Living History Farm. The site’s Visitor Center features interactive exhibits which present a timeline of the Texas Revolution and houses the spacious Washington Emporium Gift Shop. Entrance to the park grounds, Visitor Center and parking is always free. The [Fanthorp Inn State Historic Site](http://wheretexasbecametexas.org/about/fanthorp-inn/)—open only on weekends--is an authentically preserved example of a 19th century stagecoach inn, located in Anderson, TX.

This expansive park on the Brazos River provides a beautiful setting for picnicking, sightseeing, bird watching and four geocaching sites—two each from TPWD and the Brenham/Washington County Chamber. A Conference Center for meetings, weddings and reunions and the Education Center with two classroom-style spaces can be rented. An outdoor amphitheater and two open-air pavilions are also available for rent. Washington on the Brazos State Park Association memberships for individuals, families and businesses include free admission to the site’s attractions for a year, and—for some levels—private parties during the park’s special celebrations.

Washington on the Brazos is located on the Brazos River at the original townsite of Washington, Texas. 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.

Contact [office@wheretexasbecametexas.org](mailto:office@wheretexasbecametexas.org) or (936) 878-2214 for more information; updates on all WOB festivities, including TIDC, are continually posted at [www.wheretexasbecametexas.org](http://www.wheretexasbecametexas.org).