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

February 2014

For Immediate Release:

Celebrate Texas Independence Day

on the very spot Where Texas Became Texas

Experience Texas of the 1830s at two-day event

WHAT: All Texans (natural born, and those that got here as soon as they could) are invited to a Texas-sized 178th birthday celebration on the very spot “where Texas became Texas” in 1836 when 59 delegates bravely met to make a formal declaration of independence from Mexico.

“**Texas Independence Day Celebration**” is a two-day celebration from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 1 and Sunday, March 2, 2014 on the expansive 293-acre park grounds of the [Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](#) between Brenham and Navasota. The birthday celebration features live music, food, traditional crafts, living history presentations, firing demonstrations, historical encampments and commemorative programs—all with no park entrance or parking fees.

Guests will step back into history to experience life in Texas in 1836 by visiting with reenactors and witnessing firing demonstrations in the Texas Army camps as well as a virtual townsite tour. Attendees can walk the same trail as Texas’ forefathers and pioneer families, and witness cooking, weaving and period craft demonstrations.

A Texas State Park, the site’s three attractions ([Independence Hall](#), [Star of the Republic Museum](#), and [Barrington Living History Farm](#)) will feature special activities during the March celebration. The admission fees for the Museum and Farm will be waived during the celebration weekend. The Hall is always open free of charge; however, there is a modest fee for a guided program at the Hall.

Complete list of activities for Saturday, March 1:

- **Texas Independence Day Commemorative Program (10 a.m. & 4 p.m.):** a commemorative program celebrating Texas’ declaration of independence at the recreated Independence Hall. Listen as the Declaration is read on the site where it was adopted 178 years ago and honor the 59 delegates who

signed it as their names are called. Hear the crack of rifles and the thunder of muskets and cannons as they fire a salute to birth of the Republic of Texas!

- **Reenactor's camp near museum and Washington Inn (ongoing from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.):** Visitors are encouraged to wander about camp and strike up a conversation with one of the many reenactors recreating soldiers fighting for Texas' independence. Watch as buckskin clad Texian soldiers cook their meals, prepare for the battles they know are just around the corner or join in as they tell a tall tale or two.
- **Firing demonstrations, small arms and artillery at Washington Inn (12 p.m. & 2 p.m. – approximately 20 minutes each):** Visitors will learn how black powder small arms and artillery are loaded, fired and maintained through interpretive programming. Watch from a safe distance and hear the crack of rifle fire and musketry and feel the rumble of artillery just as Texian soldiers would have during the war for independence.
- **The Washington Emporium & Visitors Center (9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.):** The Gift Shop at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site will be hosting a Book Signing during the Texas Independence Day Celebration. There will also be a book sale on selected titles throughout the weekend. The following authors will be available to sign and to discuss their book(s) between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.:
 - Brenda Blair – Because of the Camels
 - Garlyn Wilburn – Father Forgive Them, The Rachel Plummer Story; The Donkey Boy; and Desiree's Quest For Freedom
 - Dean Kirkpatrick – The Alamo Story and Battleground Tour
- **Craft vendors, demonstrators, and musicians (ongoing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.):** Stroll through the park and enjoy the many craftsmen demonstrating skills and crafts of the period. Enjoy music from one of the many bands offering up the finest in period appropriate music as well as modern favorites at various locations and times throughout the weekend.
- **Historic craft demonstrators at the Museum and Barrington Farm (ongoing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.):** Stop by the Discovery Room and Barrington Farm to see demonstrations of 19th century crafts including knitting, tatting, lace making, quilting, blacksmithing and chair caning.
- **Descendants of Signers rendezvous (ongoing 11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.):** Descendants of Signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence Luncheon at Conference Center.
- **New Museum exhibit (ongoing 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.):** The Star of the Republic Museum will open a new exhibit on March 1, entitled "Weather Wisdom: Forecasting in the 19th Century." It explores the transitional period of the 19th century when scientific instruments were used to measure wind velocity, atmospheric pressure, temperature and humidity. Weather data was used to prepare forecasts that were distributed by telegraph. The exhibit runs through February 15, 2015.
- **Independence Hall Tours (11 a.m., 1, 2, 3, p.m. approximately 30-45 minutes each):** Visitors will have a chance to tour the site where Independence Hall stood 178 years ago and hear the story of those courageous men and that important seventeen day convention. Visitors should meet just inside the back entrance of the Visitors Center approximately five to ten minutes prior to the scheduled tour time.

- **Texas Heroes Living History (Gen. Sam Houston) at the Museum Theater (11 a.m.)**
- **North Harris County Dulcimer Band at the Amphitheater (11 a.m.)**
- **Runaway Scrape String Band at the Amphitheater (1 p.m.)**
- **Celtaire String Band at the Amphitheater (2 p.m.)**
- **Texas Heroes Living History (Col. James Bowie) at the Museum Theater (1:30 p.m.)**
- **Texas Heroes Living History (Gen. Sam Houston) at the Museum Theater (3:30 p.m.)**

Complete list of activities for Sunday, March 2:

- **Texas Independence Day Commemorative Program (10 a.m.):** a commemorative program celebrating Texas' declaration of independence at the recreated Independence Hall. Listen as the Declaration is read on the site where it was adopted 178 years ago and honor the 59 delegates who signed it as their names are called. Hear the crack of rifles and the thunder of muskets and cannons as they fire a salute to birth of the Republic of Texas!
- **Reenactor's camp near museum and Washington Inn (ongoing from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.):** Visitors are encouraged to wander about camp and strike up a conversation with one of the many reenactors recreating soldiers fighting for Texas' independence. Watch as buckskin clad Texian soldiers cook their meals, prepare for the battles they know are just around the corner or join in as they tell a tall tale or two.
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- **Texas Heroes Living History (Col. James Bowie) at the Museum Theater (11 a.m.)**
- **North Harris County Dulcimer Band at the Amphitheater (11 a.m.)**
- **Homestead Strings at the Amphitheater (12 p.m.)**
- **Brian Burns at the Amphitheater (1:30 p.m.)**
- **Texas Independence Day Program at the amphitheater:**
 - 2 p.m. - Blackpowder Salute/Flag program/Pledge & reading of Texas Declaration of Independence
 - 2:05 p.m. - Opening Remarks by John Fultz
 - 2:10 p.m. - Remarks by State Representative Lois Kolkhorst
 - 2:30 p.m. - Cake Cutting
 - 2:45 p.m. - Brian Burns concert
- **Texas Heroes Living History (Gen. Sam Houston) at the Museum Theater (3:30 p.m.)**

This event is made possible by ExxonMobil, Bluebonnet Electric Co-op, The Arts Council of the Brazos Valley, The City of Brenham, The City of Navasota, Blinn College, KTEX 106 Sounds Like Texas, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Washington on the Brazos State Park Association.

More detailed information on the festivities planned for March 1 and 2 will be continually updated at www.birthplaceoftexas.com; the public can also call (936) 878-2214 or email Scott.Mcmahon@tpwd.texas.gov for more information. For lodging information, please contact the Brenham Visitor Center at

www.visitbrenhamtexas.com/ or 1-888-BRENHAM, or the City of Navasota at 936-825-7055 or www.navasotatx.gov.

[Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site](#), located at [23400 Park Road 12](#) in Washington, Texas, off State Hwy. 105 on FM 1155 (between Brenham and Navasota—approximately one hour northwest of Houston).