

# **Richfield Optimist Club ----- Rich-O-Gram**

*Serving Richfield Area youth since 1958*

**Next Meeting : Wednesday - June 19 2024**

**Meeting at Richfield Public Schools Boardroom 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM**

**401 West 70. Street Richfield, Minnesota**

***This week: NO MEETING - closed for holiday***

**We meet as usual on June 26, and the subject for the day will be the Woodlake Nature Center . Hope you can be there!**

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Last weeks meeting was our Board meeting.

We will NOT have a unit in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade this year. Too many gone that day.

We will continue to meet in the Board Room during the summer, but wiii Not get breakfast from the school kitchen. Coffee & Donuts on our own.

**NO MEETING ON WEDNESDAY JULY 3, 2024** - Enjoy the celebration !

DMM convention of our District Optimists will be on August 16 & 17, 2024 In St Cloud, MN Any member can attend.

The reason we are not meeting this Wednesday is because it is now a federal holiday and the school will be closed.

The day is known as JUNETEENTH

I have included a short explanation of the history of Juneteenth on page two of this Rich-O-Gram

# Juneteenth

**Also known as Black Independence Day and Emancipation Day.**

**An official United States holiday, commemorating the end of slavery in the United States.**

In 1863, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared more than three million enslaved people living in the Confederate states to be free. More than two years would pass, however, before the news reached the western states. In 1865, the Texas state's residents finally learned that slavery had been abolished. The formerly enslaved began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, song and dance. On June 19, 1865, federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to take control of the state and ensure that all enslaved peoples be freed. Confederate General Robert E Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House two months earlier in Virginia, but slavery had remained relatively unaffected in Texas until U.S. General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil and read **General Orders Number 3**.

Which said, **"The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor. The Freedmen are advised to remain at their present homes, and work for wages. They are informed that they will not be allowed to collect at military posts; and that they will not be supported in idleness either there or elsewhere."**

The following year, on June 19, the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas. The original observances included prayer meetings & the singing of spirituals, and the celebrants wore new clothes as a way of representing their newfound freedom. Within a few years, African Americans in other states were celebrating the the day as well, making it an annual tradition. Celebrations have continued across the United States into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and typically include prayer and religious services, speeches, educational events, family gatherings and picnics, and festivals with music, food, and dancing.

In 1980, Juneteenth became a state holiday in Texas, and a number of other states subsequently followed suit. **In 2021, Juneteenth was made a federal holiday.**

Some exceptions exist: Hawaii, North Dakota, & South Dakota do not recognize June 19 as a state holiday.