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PHILADELPHIA'S STRIPES AND STARS FESTIVAL COMMEMORATES JOINT BIRTHDAYS OF THE U.S. FLAG AND ARMY

Daylong festival to take place on Tuesday, June 14, 2016 in Philadelphia's Historic District

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National Constitution Center's All New Sidney Kimmel Theater Reopens Freedom Rising

Philadelphia, PA (June 8, 2016) – From star-spangled banners to five-star generals, Philadelphia celebrates the shared birthday of two of our country's greatest institutions—the American flag and the U.S. Army. This year's **Stripes and Stars Festival** will take place on **Tuesday, June 14, 2016** at locations throughout Independence National Historical Park and Historic Philadelphia, including Independence Hall, Betsy Ross House, and the National Constitution Center, which will feature $5 admission, courtesy of Macy's. Events include the grand reopening of *Freedom Rising* in the all new Sidney Kimmel Theater, flag raising ceremonies, a patriotic parade led by the U.S. Army Colonial Fife and Drum Corps, displays and demonstrations of U.S. Army equipment, giant flag folding demonstrations, and a moving naturalization ceremony.

Special Events

Sidney Kimmel Theater Presents Freedom Rising

National Constitution Center, 525 Arch Street, every half hour beginning at 9:30 a.m.
The National Constitution Center's Sidney Kimmel Theater, presenting Philadelphia's longest running show, *Freedom Rising*, will reopen after a six month long, $2 million renovation. Performances begin at 9:30 a.m. and run every half hour until 4 p.m.

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13-Star Flag Raising
Betsy Ross House, 239 Arch Street, 10 a.m.
To kick off the day's events, the 13-star flag raising in the Betsy Ross House courtyard will also include a reading of a mayoral proclamation recognizing the Betsy Ross House as the site of the City of Philadelphia's official Flag Day celebration.

50-Star Flag Raising and Grand Parade
National Constitution Center Front Lawn, 525 Arch Street, 10:30 a.m.
Following a moving 50-star flag raising ceremony, troops—past and present—will join a patriotic parade to Independence Hall.

Stripes and Stars Festival Opening Ceremony
Independence Hall, 520 Chestnut Street, 11 a.m.
Independence National Historical Park Superintendent Cynthia MacLeod will read the original act that established the flag of the United States, followed by a reading of the Continental Congress' resolution establishing the U.S. Army, remarks by military dignitaries, including Sergeant Major of the Army Daniel A. Dailey and Under Secretary of the Army Patrick J. Murphy, a special enlistment ceremony, and the cutting of the Army birthday cake. The event will be hosted by the William Penn Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army. NBC 10 News' Vai Sikahema will emcee the event.

Team Fastrax Professional Skydiving Team
Independence Mall, 12 p.m.
Visitors on Independence Mall will have the opportunity to witness a spectacular display by the Team Fastrax Professional Skydiving Team.

Naturalization Ceremony
Betsy Ross House, 1 p.m.
As part of its 74th annual Flag Day festivities, the Philadelphia Flag Day Association will welcome thirteen new citizens who will be taking the Oath of Allegiance in a patriotic ceremony at the Betsy Ross House. All are welcome to join them in their first Pledge of Allegiance as new American citizens.

U.S. Army Fife and Drum Performances
Independence Visitors Center, 12:45 p.m.; National Constitution Center, 1:45 p.m.; and Independence Hall, 2:45 p.m.
In celebration of the Army's 241st birthday, the festival will also feature appearances by the Army's elite ceremonial units, including the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) Fife and Drum Corps, the Commander-in-Chief's Guard, and the Continental Color Guard.

Giant Flag Folding
National Constitution Center, 2 p.m. and Independence Hall, 3 p.m.
The day concludes as festival visitors help fold a giant American flag.

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All Day Events

Stripes and Stars Community Fair
Independence National Historical Park, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Admission: FREE
Throughout the day, families can stop by the Stripes and Stars Community Fair on Independence Mall, where veterans organizations and museums will have special displays and activities. Military vehicles and other equipment will be on display.

Macy's Family Day
National Constitution Center, 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Admission: $5 courtesy of Macy's
Enjoy arts and craft activities, lawn games, educational programs on the history of the flag, and tons of patriotic fun.

Christ Church Burial Ground
Christ Church Burial Ground, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Admission: $2 for Adults, $1 for Children
Visitors can explore this historical burial ground, enjoy a meet-and-greet with Benjamin Franklin from noon to 3 p.m., and take part in special history hunts throughout the day. Guided tours of the burial ground will be available for an additional fee.

Most Stripes and Stars Festival programs are free to attend. The National Constitution Center is offering discounted $5 museum admission on June 14, courtesy of Macy's, as part of a series of Macy's Family Days. Admission to Betsy Ross House also is $5.

For a full schedule of events, visit constitutioncenter.org/stripesandstars.

Featured Stripes and Stars partner organizations include: the National Constitution Center, Independence National Historical Park, the Betsy Ross House, Philadelphia Flag Day Association, the United States Army, the Association of the United States Army: William Penn Chapter, and Historic Philadelphia, Inc.

Additional partners include the City of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania National Guard, Christ Church, Spirit of Liberty Foundation, Daughters of the American Revolution (Flag House Chapter), and Sons of the American Revolution (Philadelphia Continental Chapter).

Origins of U.S. Flag and U.S. Army Commemorations
Flag Day commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States, which happened on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation calling for an official national Flag Day observance. Then in 1949, President Harry S. Truman signed an Act of Congress designating the 14th day of June every year as National Flag Day. The United States Army also celebrates its birthday on this date; Congress authorized "the American Continental Army" on June 14, 1775.

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About the National Constitution Center

The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia inspires active citizenship as the only place where people across America and around the world can come together to learn about, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution. A private, nonprofit organization, the Center serves as America's leading platform for constitutional education and debate, fulfilling its Congressional charter "to disseminate information about the U.S. Constitution on a non-partisan basis." As the **Museum of We the People**, the Center brings the Constitution to life for visitors of all ages through interactive programs and exhibits. As **America's Town Hall**, the Center brings the leading conservative and liberal thought leaders together to debate the Constitution on all media platforms. As a center for **Civic Education**, the Center delivers the best educational programs and online resources that inspire, excite, and engage citizens about the U.S. Constitution. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

About Independence National Historical Park

A unit of the National Park Service, Independence National Historical Park was created by an Act of Congress on June 28, 1948. Accredited by the American Association of Museums, Independence NHP covers almost 54 acres in Philadelphia's Old City, and includes Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall, Franklin Court, and other historic buildings associated with the founding of the United States. The park is open from 9 a.m. daily with the exception of Christmas day. A visit to Independence National Historical Park should start at the Independence Visitor Center, located at 6th and Market Streets. Here, visitors can pick up a park brochure, park map, and the free, timed tickets required for Independence Hall. For more information, visit the park's website, http://www.nps.gov/inde or follow us at twitter.com/independencenhp.

About the Betsy Ross House and Historic Philadelphia, Inc.

The Betsy Ross House is open 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily. Admission is $5 for adults; $4 for children/students/seniors/active military. Currently at the Betsy Ross House Meet Phillis the Laundress. Phillis is a free African American woman who was born into slavery in Philadelphia. After she received her freedom at the age of 21 Phillis lived in a growing and active community of free blacks in 18th century Philadelphia. Though her work was hard, as a free and educated women, she enjoyed a degree of independence that many were looking for in 18th century Philadelphia. Meet Phillis, Fridays – Sundays; noon – 5 p.m.

The ninth annual Stars & Stripes Saturday at the Betsy Ross House will be held Saturday, June 11, 2016, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. The event features daylong family entertainment, including a mini carnival in the Betsy Ross House courtyard with carnival games, juggling and circus acts, and a Punch and Judy Puppet show. $5 admission includes House tours.

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The Betsy Ross House is managed by Historic Philadelphia, Inc. HPI enhances the visitor experience and helps strengthen Philadelphia's tourism industry through interpretation and interaction, making our nation's history relevant and real. Historic Philadelphia, Inc.'s other programs include the *Liberty 360 3D Show* in the PECO Theater, Once Upon A Nation storytelling, living history tours and Franklin Square. For more information, call 215-629-4026 or visit www.historicphiladelphia.org.

About the Philadelphia Flag Day Association

The Philadelphia Flag Day Association (PFDA) was founded in 1934 as a patriotic nonprofit to promote the celebration of Flag Day and respect for the United States Flag – remaining the nation's oldest continually operating organization commemorating Flag Day. Over its 82-year history, PFDA has stayed true to its mission, but expanded its reach to invite the Betsy Ross House, Independence National Historic Park, and, more recently, the National Constitution Center and City of Philadelphia to celebrate both Flag Day and the Birth of the US Army.

PFDA funds and produces a number of educational outreach programs about the Nation's Flag and cosponsors, with the City's Fire Department, Philadelphia's official 9/11 commemoration. In 2007, PFDA established its ***Collection* of *Historic American Flags and Banners,*** a growing assemblage of almost 200 historic American flags, banners, and related items – portions of which have been displayed throughout the region. PFDA's additional flag collections include those of 9/11 and a Support Our Troops collection with flags/banners from the 1st and 2nd Gulf Wars, War in Afghanistan, and pieces expressing general support for the United States Military.

About the Association of the United States Army, William Penn Chapter

Since 1950, the Association of the United States Army has worked to support all aspects of national security while advancing the interests of America's Army and all the men and women who serve.

AUSA is a private, nonprofit, professional, and educational organization that supports America's Army – Active, National Guard, Reserve, Civilians, Retirees, Government Civilians, Wounded Warriors, Veterans, and family members. AUSA provides numerous educational and professional development opportunities at a variety of events, on both the local and national levels.

The William Penn Chapter of AUSA serves the Greater Philadelphia region and is a founding co-sponsor of the Stripes and Stars Festival, celebrating the Army's Birthday and Flag Day.

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