
A flag-raising, procession of new troops, flag-retirement ceremony, and more, will mark the anniversaries in a month-long series of events in the Philadelphia area.

Philadelphia, PA (June 10, 2013) – It’s two birthday celebrations wrapped into one. With great pomp, pageantry and patriotism, the anniversaries of both the U.S. Flag (236 years) and the U.S. Army (238 years) are being celebrated this month through “Philadelphia’s Flag Day & Army Birthday: Stars & Stripes Spectacular” – a series of “flagtastic” free events and presentations in the Philadelphia area.

From Independence National Historical Park to Valley Forge, Philadelphia is rolling out the red, white and blue carpet in June. The first event kicked off earlier this week, with Flag Fest at The Betsy Ross House, on Sunday, June 9. The pageantry will continue on Thursday and Friday, with activities highlighting the joint birthday of the U.S. Army and the American flag. The finale in this event series will be held Saturday, June 22.

Philadelphia’s Flag Day & U.S. Army Birthday Spectacular is a historic “multi-birthday” celebration in the birthplace of the U.S. Army, the Pennsylvania National Guard, the American Flag and the nation. The Army will celebrate its anniversary through observances and activities worldwide, with a focus on June 14th. In Philadelphia, the Army will mark its birthday with an Army Professional Panel presentation, a parade on Independence Mall, displays of tactical vehicles, a swearing in for Future Soldiers and cutting a birthday cake.

The events featuring the Army will begin on Thursday, June 13th, with a reflection on the Army as a profession. The William Penn Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army will sponsor an Army senior leader panel discussion on the concept of stewardship and the challenges facing Army leaders today.

Friday, June 14th is packed with fun-filled, educational and patriotic events observing the anniversaries of the United States flag and U.S. Army – beginning at 8:30 a.m. in Independence National Historical Park, America’s most historic square mile.

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The following fun and educational activities are scheduled all month long (June 13-15 and June 22) throughout the Greater Philadelphia area:

**Thursday, June 13th:**
Comisky Conference Center, One Logan Square, 18th St. & Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (Museum District), 3:30 p.m.

These senior Army leaders, representing all components, will discuss their roles in stewardship of the profession, highlighting the concepts of professional competence, character, and commitment. In their leadership positions, they work to reinforce the bedrock of trust with the American People by providing military expertise, serving honorably, demonstrating a winning spirit and stewarding the profession. Come hear their stories and thoughts as they consider tough questions facing today’s Army.

Admission is free, but reservations are required. Contact Jim Donahue, President of the William Penn Chapter of AUSA, at jadonahue@rcn.com.

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**Friday, June 14th:**
National Constitution Center (NCC), 525 Arch St., (Historic District) 8:30 a.m.
Organizers will launch the festivities in true red, white and blue fashion when more than 100 new U.S. Army recruits assemble on the lawn of the National Constitution Center at 8:30 a.m. The Future Soldiers will join active military units, National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve units, and historical military reenactors for a 50-star American flag-raising ceremony at 9 a.m. The flag will be raised by the U.S. Army Junior ROTC of Frankford High School, which will be observed by historical and modern Army units.

Junior ROTC drill teams will then present a demonstration, joined by the 3rd U.S. Colored Troops Battalion reenactors. Philadelphia is honored to have one of the Army’s most senior noncommissioned officers, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, serve as reviewer of these demonstrations. The Command Sergeant Major will share a few words with the veterans, the new recruits, and the members of the Junior ROTC program.

The important civic holiday also falls on the same day the Center unveils the must-see summer exhibition, **The 1968 Exhibit**. The exhibit will open with a special ribbon cutting ceremony in the Center’s main lobby at 9:30 a.m., attended by Army Veterans who served during the Vietnam War, and featuring a special ‘60s-inspired musical performance.

Throughout the day, the Center will feature activities promoting Old Glory for the whole family including Flag Day (and ‘60s!)-inspired arts and crafts; flag etiquette workshops; and special tours of the Center’s main exhibition exploring the history of the United States Army from its founding through the tumultuous years of the Vietnam War, to current operations.

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Visitors to the Center also can stop by and see radio broadcaster John DeBella of WMGK, who will broadcast his 7th Annual Veterans' Radiothon live from outside the center, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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Independence Hall, 5th and Chestnut Sts., (Historic District), 9:50 a.m.
A procession including Philadelphia’s Mounted Police Unit and the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry will travel south from the National Constitution Center beginning at 9:50 a.m., through Independence National Historical Park, crossing over Arch Street, and through Independence Mall, to Independence Hall.

Then, it’s three cheers for the red, white and blue at Independence Hall. A 13-star, Betsy Ross-style flag will be unfurled outside Independence Hall at 10:20 a.m. This event is steeped in tradition and historical significance. The flag was specially commissioned by the Philadelphia Flag Day Association to fly exclusively on Flag Day. Cynthia MacLeod, Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park, will present a reading of the original Flag Act – passed by the Continental Congress to create the U.S. Flag on June 14, 1777.

The historic resolution by the Continental Congress that established the United States Army on June 14, 1775 in Independence Hall, will be read by James A. Donahue, retired Department of the Army civilian professional and President of the William Penn Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army, and a City of Philadelphia Proclamation commemorating the 238th Birthday of the United States Army in Philadelphia will be presented.

Also participating will be Maj. Gen. Randall Marchi, Deputy Adjutant General – Army, Pennsylvania National Guard, and Maj. Gen. William D. Razz Waff, Commander, 99th Regional Support Command, who will speak about the future of the Army and administer the Oath of Enlistment to the Future Soldiers (those enlisted, but not yet in training) from the Greater Philadelphia area at 10:40 a.m. To close, Mr. Donahue and Generals Marchi and Waff will observe the occasion by cutting the Army Birthday cake at 10:55 a.m.

Keep on truckin,’ as Independence Mall will be the host site throughout the day for displays of a variety of U.S. Army tactical vehicles such as a Stryker, the latest large armored vehicle resembling a tank; a M1114 command High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle “Humvee;” a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle truck with a tow-behind Howitzer; an Armored Security Vehicle; and an Army civil support team with command and response vehicles.

In addition, the public can watch historical re-enactors and presentations by the National Constitution Center, the National Park Service, the American Red Cross, Fort Mifflin on the Delaware, Historic Philadelphia, the U.S. Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

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The Betsy Ross House (The American Flag House & Betsy Ross Memorial), 239 Arch St., (Old City), noon
Flag Fest is back at the Betsy Ross House! Celebrate Old Glory all this week, featuring patriotic crafts for kids, George Washington meet and greets, and interactive drills with the Continental Army. On June 14th, the festivities move from Independence Mall to the Betsy Ross House, for Philadelphia’s Official Flag Day ceremony, hosted by the Philadelphia Flag Day Association (the nation’s oldest existing Flag Day association, founded in 1934). The

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ceremony will include a military band performance, the presentation of a City of Philadelphia Proclamation commemorating the 236th Birthday of the American Flag and a naturalization ceremony in which 13 individuals will become American citizens. The Flag Day Association will receive a donation of two historic flags from the Second World War. Both American National flags have 48 stars – one was made in France and the other was brought back from Czechoslovakia at the end of the war. Each has unique characteristics and an interesting story behind it.

On Saturday, June 15th, starting at 10, join a Betsy re-enactor and other history makers for a fun-filled Stars & Stripes Bag Lady Theatre, jugglers, and old-fashioned carnival games are just the tip of the iceberg!

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Macy’s Center City Grand Court, 1300 Market St., (Center City), 2 p.m.
Sing along as the Soldiers Chorus of the U.S. Army Field Band performs the Army Song, accompanied by Grand Court Organist Peter Richard Conte on the famous Wanamaker Organ! The renowned Soldiers Chorus will perform a medley that’s sure to enchant shoppers and other visitors.

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City Hall Courtyard, Market St., (Center City), 4 p.m.
The Philadelphia Flag Day Association will conduct an official “flag retirement ceremony,” marking the culmination of Philadelphia’s Flag Day & U.S. Army Birthday Spectacular. In commemoration of National Flag Day, a group of old flags will be retired, employing all of the prescribed honors and national protocols. The flags represent a cross section of our country; some of the flags have flown at schools and businesses, while others have been displayed at private homes. A history of the American flag will be the focus of the program, and the Soldiers Chorus of the U.S. Army Field Band will perform.

Michael Axelrod, Vice President of the Philadelphia Flag Day Association, will serve as master of ceremonies, and guest speakers will include City Councilman David Oh. The “stars-studded” program will feature the Presentation of Colors by the U.S. Army Philadelphia Metro Recruiting Company, commanded by Capt. David Jones; the Flag Retirement Ceremony; and a rendition of Taps. Following Philadelphia custom, the retired flags will be incinerated that day in the City Hall courtyard, and interred at the Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge, June 22.

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Saturday, June 15th:
Fort Mifflin on the Delaware, 1 Fort Mifflin Rd., 9:45 a.m.
Fort Mifflin will host a "grand opening" of expanded interpretive space including a new "Soldier Life" exhibit attended by "Soldiers" of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The Philadelphia Flag Day Association will assist with a flag raising, and then the Fort will open the new exhibit with brief remarks at 9:45 a.m.

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The Betsy Ross House (The American Flag House & Betsy Ross Memorial), 239 Arch St., (Old City), 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Join Betsy and other history makers for a fun-filled day of spectacular Stars & Stripes. Bag Lady Theatre, jugglers, and old-fashioned carnival games are just the tip of the iceberg!

News Contact:
Heather Kincade, The Betsy Ross House
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Clark Park, 43rd St and Baltimore Ave., (West Philadelphia), 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The public is invited to recognize veterans representing all services at an “All-Army Reunion” sponsored by the Philadelphia Veterans Comfort House. Try to “Sink the Navy” in the dunk tank, cheer on your team in the obstacle course, enjoy live music and famous Philadelphia food truck fare.

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Saturday, June 22nd:
Freedoms Foundation, 1601 Valley Forge Rd., (Chester County), 10 a.m.
Witness the burial of the retired flag ashes at the Medal of Honor Grove, followed at 11:30 a.m. by an educational presentation of the history of the American flag.

News Contacts:
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Outdoor events at the National Constitution Center, Independence Hall, the Betsy Ross House, City Hall, and in Valley Forge are free to the public, as is the performance at Macy’s. Family activities taking place at the National Constitution Center are free with admission; for further information: www.constitutioncenter.org. Tickets for the All-Army Reunion are available on-line at www.vetscomforthouse.org.

Logos are those of AUSA, the Philadelphia Flag Day Association or other organizations participating in this event. The United States Army neither states nor implies any endorsement, association or recommendation with regard to these organizations.

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