

Delaware City-Polktown Juneteenth Observance

First day of events ~**Shove Off Day**~ May 24, 2025



On May 25, 1865, United States Colored Troops “shoved off” from City Point, Virginia sailing south to the Gulf of Mexico on a mission to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863. On June 19, 1865 the USCT bivouacked in Galveston and posted General Order No. 3 around the city reminding the people of Texas that “all slaves are free.” Shove Off Day, as a precursor to Juneteenth, honors the vision, courage, and commitment of all journeys for freedom.



Here is how we will observe the day:

10 am At the Delaware City Library

Welcome by Delaware City Public Library Director Loree Elton

Black National Anthem performed by Charonda Johnson

Greetings from Delaware City Mayor Paul Johnson,

County Councilman Kevin Caneco, Rep. Melissa Minor-Brown

“Shove Off for Freedom” At first, they were not allowed to fight. Then they were, and more than 180,000 signed up. Kathy Trusty— historian, children’s book author, and Delaware Humanities speaker — presents the role of African Americans, free and enslaved, in the Civil War. She puts a face to soldiers who fought valiantly for freedom.



Kathy Trusty, Historian



1pm At the Fort Delaware State Park*

1 pm Pizza lunch at the Pavillion for morning attendees made possible by La Matesina’s Pizza and Pasta and Anonymous Donors

3 pm Children’s games and activities typical of the Civil War Era led by Fort Delaware Staff

*\$7 discounted tickets available for those attending morning program will be available at ticket office beginning at noon. Must board 12:30 ferry.

Juneteenth Observance Sponsors: City of Delaware City, Delaware City Fire Department, Delaware City Library, Delaware City Police Department, Delaware City Refining Company, Fort Delaware State Park, Friends of the African Union Church Cemetery, Main Street Delaware City, Mount Salem U.A.M.E. Church, Underground Railroad Coalition of Delaware

For donors and event updates please visit <https://juneteenth-delcity.org/>

upd May 6