

## Juneteenth | A new holiday

## Declaration of holiday sparks scramble in states

BY JULIE CARR SMYTH

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Congress and President Joe Biden acted with unusual swiftness last week in approving Juneteenth as a national holiday. That shifted the battle to the states, where the holiday faces a far less enthusiastic response.

Nearly all states recognize Juneteenth in some fashion, at least on paper. But most have been slow to move beyond proclamations issued by governors or resolutions passed by lawmakers. So far, at least 10 states have designated it in law as an official paid state holiday — Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and Washington. All but Texas, where the events of the original Juneteenth took place, acted after the killing of George Floyd last year.

This year alone, legislation to make Juneteenth a paid state holiday died in Florida and South Dakota and stalled in Ohio, all states controlled by Republicans. But even in Maryland, where Democrats control the Legislature, a Juneteenth bill passed one chamber only to die in the other.

The effort recalls the drawn-out battles over recognizing Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the last time the federal government designated a new holiday. That legislation, finally passed in 1983, scheduled the holiday to begin three years later. It set off bitter debates in the states over whether to enact their own holidays.

Only a handful of states headed into Thursday's signing of the federal Juneteenth law with the paid holiday on the books to be celebrated in 2021. The governors of Washington, Illinois, Louisiana and Maine, by contrast, all signed more recent laws that were set to kick in for 2022, when June 19 falls on a Sunday.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards closed state offices for a half-day Friday, only a few days after he signed Juneteenth legislation, and Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker was among governors who changed their states' start dates to 2021.

In another twist, many states have laws that automatically recognize all federal holidays — even those not named in state statute.

Such was the case in Ohio, where Republican Gov. Mike DeWine issued a Juneteenth statement late Thursday and closed state offices in the manner of a hastily called school snow day. West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice also declared Juneteenth a state holiday at a last-minute virtual press conference. The governors of Connecticut and Florida issued their Juneteenth proclamations Friday.

Ohio state Sen. Hearcel Craig, a Columbus Democrat who is Black, said codifying Juneteenth in state law remains essential. He is sponsoring a bill that passed the Ohio Senate unanimously last session, but time ran out for consideration in the House. Republicans control both of Ohio's legislative chambers.

Georgia law caps the number of state holidays at 12, meaning Juneteenth could be added only if another holiday were dropped. In other states, including Oregon, whether Juneteenth becomes a paid holiday will depend on union negotiations.

In Mississippi, Democratic state Rep. Bryant Clark has filed bills to make Juneteenth a state holiday for about 15 years. All have stalled.

Clark said Friday that he will keep trying. He noted that Mississippi legislators took four years to create a state holiday honoring King after the federal holiday was established. In 1987, Mississippi legislators revised a holiday named for Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee that had been in place for decades, creating a joint holiday honoring both Lee and King.

Two other Mississippi lawmakers said Friday that they plan to file a bill to eliminate Confederate Memorial Day as a state holiday and replace it



Ebony Cox; Jake May/Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel via AP

▲ Little Miss Juneteenth is seen during the Juneteenth Day Parade and Celebration on Saturday in Milwaukee.

◀ Flint, Michigan, native Claessa Shields, a world champion boxer and mixed martial artist fighter, celebrates as she walks down Saginaw Street, leading a Juneteenth parade Saturday in downtown Flint.

with Juneteenth.

"Sometimes progress is extremely slow," said Clark, a member of the Legislative Black Caucus. Several communities in Mississippi already hold Juneteenth celebrations. One is the capital city of Jackson, where the population is more than 80% Black.

Minnesota has recognized the third Saturday in June as Juneteenth since 1996, but the statute only obligates the governor to issue a proclamation each year honoring the observance. That's a common situation in the U.S., where the holiday is sometimes called Emancipation Day.

Calls by Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, a Democrat, to make it an official state holiday have failed to gain traction so far in the Legislature, the only one in the nation where Democrats control one chamber and Republicans control the other.

Hawaii had been one of only three states left to not recognize the holiday at all. A bill marking Juneteenth was signed there Wednesday and in a second holdout state, North Dakota, in April. Neither created a paid state holiday, however.

South Dakota still does not officially recognize the holiday, but Gov. Kristi Noem has issued a proclamation celebrating it. The governor does not have the power to make it an official state holiday — that must be done through the Legislature. A bill to recognize it as a working holiday fell a handful of votes short of passing this year.

It was defeated by an unusual coalition of Democrats who felt the day should be recognized as a full-fledged holiday, rather than a working holiday, and conservative lawmakers who opposed recognizing the holiday at all.

Vaney Hariri, a Black business owner who organized a march after Floyd's death, said that vote showed the en-

trenched attitude of many lawmakers who "would turn down a day off rather than celebrate your freedom from pain and captivity."

In Tennessee, an attempt to designate Juneteenth as a state holiday stalled last year after some Republican lawmakers raised questions about the \$647,000 price tag. Others questioned why it was necessary when the state already recognizes Aug. 8 as Emancipation Day.

Arizona dragged its feet for years on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, until it became the only state that did not have some sort of holiday inspired by the slain civil rights leader.

That long delay cost Arizona a Super Bowl and millions of dollars in tourism revenue from canceled conventions and other events. It also inspired a boycott by singer Stevie Wonder and a protest song by Public Enemy called "By the Time I Get to Arizona."

Gov. Bruce Babbitt, a Dem-

ocrat, issued an executive order in 1986 declaring Martin Luther King Jr. Day a state holiday. Babbitt's Republican successor, Evan Mecham, rescinded the order a year later, saying Babbitt exceeded his authority.

Mecham's action led to years of divisive political maneuvering, including a ballot measure that ended in defeat for King holiday supporters, before Arizona voters ultimately approved the holiday in 1992.

Warren H. Stewart Sr., pastor of the Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix, helped lead a grassroots campaign to establish Arizona's King holiday. But he said he did not rejoice when Biden signed the Juneteenth law. He fears it will distract from legislation on vital issues such as voting rights and police reform.

"I see it as a distraction," Stewart said, "almost as a handout of some candy, but the meat of justice is still going to be denied."

## OBITUARY

## JAMES J. "JIM" MEYER

September 14, 1947 - May 13, 2021

Jim Meyer was born in Dubuque, Iowa to Joseph Meyer and Virginia McClain Meyer. He attended school in Dubuque and spoke fondly of his years at Wahlert High School. Jim was a jeweler most of his adult life and owned Shomeyer Jewelers in Bend prior to relocating to Missouri for a few years. He returned to Bend to enjoy his retirement.

He is survived by his sisters Marla Herb of Lacey, Washington and Susie Neal of Lakewood, Washington, along with nieces and nephews. He leaves good friends that he also considered to be part of his family.

A celebration of Jim's life will be planned at a future date. Any donations in remembrance of Jim should be made to the Humane Society of Central Oregon.

## OBITUARY

## PAULA BIGGS HAMMOND

January 20, 1944 - May 07, 2021



Paula Biggs Hammond, 77, of Bend Oregon, passed away peacefully on May 7, 2021. Paula is survived by her brother Richard Biggs and wife Twyla of Bend, her son Chris Hammond, of Baltimore, and daughter Lisa Fulkerson and husband Gary of Bend. She is also survived by her grandchildren Miles Fulkerson, Max Fulkerson,

Chance Fulkerson, Lily Hammond and Zoe Hammond. Paula was born in Oregon City, Oregon to Eunice and Paul Biggs on January 20, 1944. She graduated from Oregon City High School in 1962, received a BA in Education from the University of Oregon in 1965, and received her law degree at Lewis and Clark Law School in 1985. A loving presence in so many lives, Paula always offered a warm smile to those around her. She worked as an attorney at Standard Insurance Company in Portland. Later, she became a professor at Portland State University and various paralegal colleges. She enjoyed inspiring her students and finding different ways to engage with them. Paula had a love for traveling, photography, spiritual growth, and most especially, her friends and family.



Ebony Cox; Jake May/Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel via AP

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◀ Flint, Michigan, native Claessa Shields, a world champion boxer and mixed martial artist fighter, celebrates as she walks down Saginaw Street, leading a Juneteenth parade Saturday in downtown Flint.

## DEATH NOTICES

**James Douglas Arney**  
of Redmond, OR  
Dec 9, 1941 - June 14, 2021

**Arrangements:**  
Autumn Funerals of Redmond is honored to serve the family. 541-504-9485  
Memories and condolences may be expressed to the family on our website at [www.autumnfunerals.net](http://www.autumnfunerals.net)

**Services:**  
A Celebration of Life will take place at the Juniper Golf Course Club House, 1938 SW Elkhorn Ave., Redmond, OR., on Saturday, July 10, 2021 from 1 PM to 4 PM.  
**Contributions may be made to:**  
Forest Biometrics Research Institute, 4033 SW Canyon Rd., Portland, OR 97221.

**Donald William Jocelyn**  
of Redmond, OR  
Jan 8, 1938 - May 30, 2021

**Arrangements:**  
Prineville Funeral Home  
[www.prinevillefuneralhome.com](http://www.prinevillefuneralhome.com)  
**Services:**  
June 26, 2021 11am Madras Church of Christ 412 SW 1st Street, Madras

**Anna J Wingfield**  
of La Pine, OR  
Nov 17, 1933 - June 8, 2021

**Arrangements:**  
Baird Memorial Chapel of La Pine is honored to serve the Wingfield family. Please visit our website, [www.bairdfh.com](http://www.bairdfh.com), to share condolences and sign the online guestbook.

**Beverly Jean Dick**  
of La Pine, OR  
May 16, 1942 - June 13, 2021

**Arrangements:**  
Baird Memorial Chapel of La Pine is honored to serve the Dick family. Please visit our website, [www.bairdfh.com](http://www.bairdfh.com), to share condolences and sign the online guestbook.

**Bryon Jeffrey Cranston**  
of Sunriver, OR  
March 5, 1989 - June 13, 2021

**Arrangements:**  
Baird Memorial Chapel of La Pine is honored to serve the Cranston family. Please visit our website, [www.bairdfh.com](http://www.bairdfh.com), to share condolences and sign the online guestbook.

## OBITUARY DEADLINE

Call to ask about our deadlines.  
Monday - Friday, 10am - 3pm.  
No death notices or obituaries are published Mondays.  
When submitting, please include your name, address and contact number.  
Phone: 541-385-5809  
Fax: 541-598-3150  
Email: [obits@bendbulletin.com](mailto:obits@bendbulletin.com)

## OBITUARY

## Susanne Wesley Gordon

1935 - 2021



Susanne (Sue) Wesley Gordon, 84, passed peacefully in her sleep on May 16, 2021 at her home in Portland, Oregon.

Sue was born in Hutchinson, Kansas in 1937 to parents Heide and Ralph Wesley. She attended the University of Kansas where she met the love of her life and future husband, Jack. Sue and Jack resided in Denver, Colorado for many years before retiring to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. They eventually moved to Bend, Oregon where they resided until Jack's passing in 2017.

Sue was a warm and caring wife, mother, mother-in-law, sister, cousin and grandmother. Sue often spoke of the many great adventures she had over the years, from sailing and fishing to tennis and golf trips. Sue had a positive impact on everyone she met and will be greatly missed by all of her friends and family.

Sue is preceded in death by her parents and her husband of 58 years, Jack. She is survived by her brother, Clark Wesley of Hutchinson, Kansas, her children John Gordon of Portland, Oregon, and Tom Gordon of Dallas, Texas, her grandchildren, Jack and Scott and her dog, Jesse.

Plans are in progress for a Celebration of Life to be held in Hutchinson, Kansas in late summer or early fall. If you would like more information, please contact [jwgPDX@gmail.com](mailto:jwgPDX@gmail.com)

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to be made to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation [www.bcrf.org](http://www.bcrf.org).