

OUR HISTORY, OUR FOOD

JUNETEENTH

ONLINE COOKING DEMONSTRATION

SATURDAY JUNE 20

11AM KITCHEN
CHEMIST
PRESENTATION

FAMILY
DINNER 6PM

The Menu:

Red Rice with Onions & Peppers
Spicy Coconut Sheet Pan Chicken
Lemon & Olive Oil Snap Peas
Strawberry Shortcake

PRESENTED BY



MY PROCESS INC
GO..YIELD..FLOW



DR. RODERQUITA
MOORE



CHEF MONICA
O'CONNELL

PASTURE AND PLENTY



KUJICHAGULIA MADISON CENTER
FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

KITCHEN CHEMIST

JUNETEENTH

KITCHEN CHEMISTRY KITS

If you signed up for Kitchen Chemistry and live in the Madison area, kits will be delivered to you on Friday between 11:30-3:30pm. If you live outside of the delivery area, please plan to have the following available, so that you can take part in the experiments!

DIY LAVA LAMPS

- 1 (16oz) plastic cup
- 1 cup cooking oil
- 1 (4-pack) food color
- 1 cup water
- 1 (two tablet pack) alka-seltzer
- 1 (16.9oz) water bottle

IT'S A GAS!

- 1 (9oz) plastic cups
- 1 cup White Vinegar
- 1 cup Baking soda
- 1 cup of baking soda
- 2 Gloves

CANDY RAINBOW

- 1 Small plastic plate or small saucer
- Warm water
- 1 bag Skittles or M&M's

CHROMATOGRAPHY COLOR TRANSFER

- 2 paper napkins
- 5 (9oz) plastic cups
- 1 (4/pack) food coloring

STRING MAGIC

- 16-inches yarn
- 1 cup or measuring cup
- 1 (16oz) plastic cup

TOPIC: KITCHEN CHEMISTS

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://kujimcsd-org.zoom.us/j/89833820414?pwd=bFRhRFZ3KzN3OTYwVXN4NHNNUTMxdz09>

Password: Juneteenth

FAMILY DINNER

JUNETEENTH

CELEBRATION MENU

*Prepared for Kujichagulia Madison by Scholar and Chef Monica O'Connell
Meal Kit and Class Experience Presented by Pasture and Plenty*

RED RICE WITH ONIONS & PEPPERS
SPICY COCONUT SHEET PAN CHICKEN
LEMON & OLIVE OIL SNAP PEAS
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

You will find all the ingredients you need to make the meal in your meal kit. Please refrigerate the chicken, cream, snap peas, strawberries and bell pepper, until it is time to cook on Saturday! For the best whipped cream, place a metal mixing bowl in the freezer a few hours before dinner.

Join us at 6pm. Find the link to the Zoom meeting in your email, or posted on the Kujichagulia Madison events page.

FOOD TASTES BETTER WHEN WE SHARE IN THE WORK

Cooking together takes teamwork. We encourage you to read the recipes together before class. And, with each recipe, we have prepared some tasks for each recipe here, good for all ages, to get everyone involved in helping to get dinner on the table tonight!

Chef Monica has included a few resources about the history of Juneteenth, foods for celebration and resilience. They are in the packet, after the recipes. We encourage you to read these before dinner, if you have time!

While we cook, we will talk about Mise en place (putting everything in its place), "Vibration Cooking" (Verta Mae Grosvenor): values of improvisation, practicality, self-expression, adaptation (resilience). Wash hands and clean as you go.

Use the Timer!

FOODS OF JUNETEENTH

RESILIENCE & CELEBRATION

Juneteenth celebrations, first in Texas, then across the U.S., Caribbean, and elsewhere feature celebratory foods like **fried chicken and fish, red links, red velvet cake, watermelon, and red drinks**. The red foods symbolize perseverance and resilience, but many of the others also trace our history and culture back to traditions and practices held across Africa.

Black Africans from “the rice crucible” which included Gambia and Senegal, were some of the earliest transported by the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the U.S. They brought deep knowledge of rice cultivation and memories of a rice-based cuisine that can still be evidence in Gullah cultures, Southern coastal “low country, and across the U.S. Jambalaya, **Hoppin’ John** (black eyed peas and rice), and Charleston **red rice** are all U.S. dishes with strong links to West Africa.

Scholar Jessica Harris also notes that in the U.S. the weather did not permit the introduction of tropical species like ackee, the oil palm, kola, true African yams, but some of the plants that could survive—**okra, watermelon, black eyed peas, sesame, and sorghum** have remained emblematic of Africans and their descendants in the U.S.

The **sweet potato** became a popular substitute for the yam and is still frequently mislabeled as such.

It’s often served fried over parts of the South but **okra** is also the most famous ingredient in gumbo, a rich stew of meat, seafood, and vegetables served with rice. The word “gumbo” is derived from “ki ngombo”, the Bantu word for Okra.

The **black eyed pea** was introduced into the West Indies from Central Africa and then to the Carolinas. The pea was considered lucky and many families still consume it on New Year’s Day for good fortune.

Fried chicken has traditionally been so strongly associated with Black people that it has generated racial stereotypes. In *A Taste of Country Cooking*, chef Edna Lewis explains that fried chicken was in fact a food of celebration and seasonality for her community in Freetown Virginia. She writes: “...it was a very special dish. Frying chickens were produced only once a year in late spring through early summer.” The dish is delicious hot or cold, easy to transport for picnics and cookouts, and seasonally appropriate for Juneteenth celebrations then and now.

In many West African cultures, red is a symbol of strength, spirituality, and resilience. Culinary historian Adrian Miller has noted that red drinks at Juneteenth celebrations have links to the fruits of two native West African plants: the kola nut and **hibiscus**. The kola nut could be chewed or steeped for tea. The hibiscus flower also makes a deep red tea called bissap.

RED RICE WITH PEPPERS & ONION

Serves 4 - Takes about 40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil
1 yellow onion, peeled, trimmed, roughly chopped
1 red bell pepper, cored and chopped
2-4 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 (6 oz) can of tomato paste
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomato, with liquid
2 teaspoons paprika
2 teaspoons cayenne (or to taste)
Red pepper flakes, to taste (optional)
1 cup long grain white rice
1 3/4 cups water or chicken stock

TASKS TO SHARE

Prepare the veggies:
Rinse the bell pepper and coarsely chop
Trim, peel and coarsely chop onion
Peel and mince garlic cloves
Rinse rice in fine mesh sieve
until water clears
Open the cans

GET COOKING

1. Heat olive oil over medium high heat in a medium-sized pot with lid until shimmering.
2. Add onion and pepper to the hot pan, immediately season with salt. Stir occasionally and cook until vegetables begin to soften. Add garlic and continue to cook and stir until all is fragrant and soft. Add tomato paste, tomatoes, spices, and water/broth; stir to combine thoroughly. Bring to a boil or strong simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low.
3. Cover and cook on medium-low for 20 minutes. Remove from heat, and without removing the lid, leave the pot undisturbed until the chicken is finished cooking.

SPICY COCONUT SHEET PAN CHICKEN

Serves 4 - Takes about 1 hour

INGREDIENTS

4 chicken thighs and leg quarters
salt and pepper
1 can coconut milk, cream and water separated
1 tablespoon butter, very soft or melted
Spice mix:
 1 teaspoon paprika
 1 teaspoon cayenne
 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
 1/2 teaspoon dry ginger
 1/2 teaspoon seasoning salt (such as Lawry's)
1 lime, juiced
2/3 cup plain bread crumbs
Olive or vegetable oil, for drizzling

TASKS TO SHARE

Separate coconut cream & milk; measure
Juice lime
Soften butter
Prep the Chicken:
Coat in coconut mixture
Roll in bread crumbs

GET COOKING

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Carefully rinse chicken, pat dry with paper towel, place on a plate and season with salt and pepper.
3. In a large bowl, mix coconut cream (and enough coconut water/milk to equal about 1/3 cup), butter, spices, and lime juice. Add chicken and stir to thoroughly coat. Put half the bread crumbs in a shallow bowl or plate then coat half the chicken with crumbs. Place on a greased sheet pan, or a pan covered with parchment paper. Repeat with remaining crumbs and chicken.
4. Drizzle with olive or vegetable oil and bake until chicken is deep golden brown on the outside and no longer pink on the inside (to 165 degrees F on a meat thermometer, in the thickest part of the thigh), about 35-40 minutes.

SNAP PEAS WITH OIL & LEMON

Serves 4 - Takes about 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 # Snap peas, sorted and trimmed
2-3 Tablespoons olive oil, butter,
coconut or vegetable oil to coat
1 lemon, juiced and zested
Salt and pepper

TASKS TO SHARE

Once chicken is in oven, set water to boil
Rinse and trim peas
Hold a paring knife in one hand and a
pod in the other, with the inside curve
of the pod facing you. Cut off the top of
the pea and pull off the tough string
that runs along the length of the pod
Prep bowl of ice water for shocking peas

GET COOKING

1. Generously salt a large pot of water and bring to boil. Meanwhile, prepare a large bowl of ice water to shock the peas, locking in the color and to prevent over-cooking.
2. Add the trimmed snap peas to boiling water and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, 1-2 minutes.
3. Remove peas with a slotted spoon and submerge in ice water. Once cool, remove and pat dry.
4. Place cooled and dried snap peas in a medium bowl, toss with enough olive oil to coat. Stir in juice and zest. Season with salt and pepper.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Serves 4 - Takes about 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 quart Strawberries
1 pint heavy whipping cream, very cold
2 tablespoons Sugar
For Biscuits:
2 cups flour
3 tablespoons sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
¼ cup coconut oil, shortening or butter (solid)
¾ cups coconut milk or other milk
(remainder from chicken recipe)

TASKS TO SHARE

(Perhaps while you are waiting for the snap pea water to boil)
Rinse and hull strawberries. Trim around the leaves with the tip of a paring knife, cutting a cone shape into the center, just beneath the surface. Remove the greens and the hull.
Add sugar to macerate no more than an hour before you plan to eat dessert
Combine dry ingredients in mixing bowl for shortcake

GET BAKING

1. Rinse, hull and slice berries. Sprinkle with sugar to taste. Set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Prepare a baking sheet with parchment.
3. Combine flour, sugar, powder and salt together in a bowl.
4. Add coconut oil to dry ingredients; blend with a fork, pastry blender or fingers until only pea-sized clumps or smaller remain. Add coconut milk (if amount remaining did not measure ¾ cup, augment with any type of milk); stir until shaggy. Use hands to turn gently in the bowl until dry bits are just incorporated.
5. Roll out dough on lightly-floured surface to ½ inch thick and cut out rounds. OR, Drop roughly ½ cup sized portions of dough baking sheet. On prepared baking sheet.
Optional: Brush tops with melted butter and sprinkle lightly with cardamom and sugar.
6. Bake, in the preheated oven, until lightly golden, about 12 minutes.
7. While biscuits are baking, whip cream with hand or stand mixer on high.
Optional: When soft peaks form, add a tablespoon of powdered sugar. Whip to combine, but stop just before stiff peaks form.
8. Top fresh biscuits with strawberries and whipped cream to serve.

TEACHING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH

"WHEN PEACE COME"

TEACHING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JUNETEENTH

Author(s): Shennette Garrett-Scott, Rebecca Cummings Richardson and Venita Dillard-Allen

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It is sometimes hard to teach small but pivotal moments in American history. Survey classes mostly allow for covering the biggest events and the most well known people. Indeed, considering the jubilee as one of the most important events in history, the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is even more important that we understand the small historical moments that made it possible. As educators, we strive to impart the complexities and nuances of the past to our students. That desire is part of why we teach African American history: We understand that it is the quintessential American story. Juneteenth is one of those small but important moments in not only African American but also American history. It pushes students to ask questions beyond the historical facts; it encourages them to explore the lived reality of Americans of all races and ethnicities at critical moments in history. It helps them better appreciate the long desire and struggle for freedom acknowledged in the Civil Rights Act.

When Northern states in the new republic began emancipating enslaved people after the American Revolution, Blacks throughout the United States began celebrating Emancipation Day, usually on the first day of the year. However, Juneteenth is the only Emancipation Day celebration widely observed throughout the United States and parts of Africa, the Caribbean, and South America. Why is that so? To understand the significance of such a small moment, this article invites teachers and students to examine the roles of race, politics, region, and culture over time. Including Juneteenth in how we teach history contributes to the essential goals of helping students understand the world we live in now and why things change.

UNDERSTANDING JUNETEENTH: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"When peace come they read the 'Mancipation law to the cullud people. [The freed slaves] spent that night singin' and shoutin'. They wasn't slaves no more,"² said former slave Pierce Harper in 1937, recalling 1865 when slaves in Texas learned that the Civil War was over and they had been emancipated more than two years earlier.

The singing and shouting of emancipated slaves in Texas did not occur until months after the Civil War was over. In spite of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender in April 1865 at Appomattox Courthouse, the end of the Civil War did not immediately come to Texas. Slaveholders in Texas refused to acknowledge that the war was over and give up their slaves. Holding on to such a fantasy was not as hard as one might think. The Civil War had barely touched Texas compared to other Southern states. A Confederate blockade shielded it from much of the fighting and effectively isolated the state. In fact, many Southern slaveholders, especially those from Louisiana and Mississippi, took their slaves to Texas to hide them from the Union army. Hiding slaves in such a way was known as "refugeeing." Thus, by the end of the Civil War, tens of thousands of additional slaves were added to the more than 180,000 slaves already living in Texas.

Union Brigadier General Gordon Granger and 1,800 federal troops arrived off the coast of Galveston in mid-June 1865. Though many enslaved people had already learned that they were freed, on June 19 Granger made the news of freedom official. He stepped onto the balcony of Ashton Villa, the former headquarters of the Texas Confederate Army, and read General Orders No. 3. The order informed the slaves that the war was over and that they had been freed by the Emancipation Proclamation two and one-half years earlier. The reactions of the newly emancipated were mixed: some stood in quiet shock and disbelief, others shouted prayers to God, but most sang and danced right there in the streets.

June 19 became Afro-Texans' new "Emancipation Day" or "Jubilee Day." The first Jubilee Day celebrations took place in 1866. Former slaves celebrated with parties, food, and sporting events. They sang songs, especially spirituals like "Go Down, Moses" and "Many Thousands Gone." They even had fireworks, created by cutting holes in trees, filling them with gunpowder, and lighting the trees on fire. Many of these early celebrations took place in freedom colonies, or settlements of free Blacks. By 1870, nearly fifty freedom colonies were located near Comanche Crossing in Limestone County, and the largest and most popular Juneteenth celebrations occurred there. Blacks also celebrated in Texas cities. In 1872, Reverend Jack Yates, local Black churches, and community groups in Houston raised money to purchase ten acres of land for an "Emancipation Park" to hold Juneteenth celebrations. Blacks in other cities also purchased land to hold special Jubilee Day celebrations.

In the early 1890s, blacks began using "Juneteenth" to describe Jubilee Day. By the early 1900s, Juneteenth celebrations in Texas, southeast Oklahoma, southwest Arkansas, and parts of Louisiana rivaled Independence Day celebrations. To the casual observer, these celebrations seemed like jubilant, spiritual celebrations on one special day of the year. However, they were also civic celebrations that, according to historian Elizabeth Turner Hayes, "took on broader implications for citizenship." During the celebrations, Blacks discussed voting rights and encouraged attendees to participate in the political process. Freedom included the right to vote, which was slowly being taken away by the last decade of the nineteenth century and completely compromised by the first decade of the twentieth century.

Therefore, though it is a small important moment in the Civil War and Reconstruction, a focus on Juneteenth highlights how the Civil War affected different parts of the South in different ways. A close examination of General Orders No. 3 and the experiences of emancipated Blacks during Reconstruction highlight the gaps between the promise, meaning, and reality of freedom. Juneteenth celebrations belie the notion that Blacks did not take an active role in shaping the meaning of freedom, despite the serious challenges to their claims. Indeed, this unique celebration highlights the construction of citizenship: Blacks used Juneteenth celebrations to enact their citizenship rights in the realms of both formal and informal politics. They also asserted their economic rights by raising money within their own communities to purchase land and possess their own piece of the "American dream."

THE MEANING OF JUNETEENTH OVER TIME

Juneteenth can also teach us a great deal about twentieth- and twenty-first-century society, politics, and culture. Examined within the context of various moments in U.S. history, Juneteenth celebrations reveal deeper meanings and significances in those moments—the otherwise hidden histories. For example, from the late 1910s to the mid-1930s, large-scale community wide Juneteenth celebrations actually became less frequent. To help students understand why celebrations that had once been important events that brought whole communities together became smaller and more private, consider the historical context of the early twentieth century and use Juneteenth to discuss the links between segregation, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and nativism. By World War I, segregation laws were firmly in place, and a tide of nativism engulfed the country. Many Whites and even some Blacks saw Juneteenth as un-American because it focused attention on a dark period in U.S. history. Ironically, Juneteenth was considered unpatriotic or disloyal to the United States, and there was a wave of deadly lynching and racial violence that occurred between 1919 and 1921.

A renaissance in Juneteenth celebrations occurred shortly before the United States entered World War II. The important catalyst for the revival of Juneteenth celebrations happened in Texas. Antonio Maceo Smith, an educator and a leading force in the newly reorganized Dallas Negro Chamber of Commerce, led efforts to create a major exhibit of Black achievement at the Texas Centennial Exposition in 1936. When State Fair organizers refused, Smith and other civic leaders in Texas and around the country secured a \$100,000 grant from the federal government. They used the money to build the Hall of Negro Life. Local white leaders protested the construction of the hall, but it was completed and dedicated on June 19, 1936. Over 46,000 Blacks streamed into the state fair grounds for the largest Juneteenth celebration ever held at that time. Although the hall was demolished soon after the fair closed, the 1936 Juneteenth celebration was the most important celebration of Black life in the state's history, and it revived the public celebration of Juneteenth.

Emboldened by their accomplishments during the Texas Centennial and rallied by WWII calls for a “Double V”—a victory abroad against fascism and a victory at home against racism— Juneteenth celebrations in the 1940s and 1950s highlighted appeals for equal rights. They also honored Black veterans who had served in the Spanish-American War and in World Wars I and II, as well as surviving former slaves. During the Civil Rights Movement from the mid-1950s to the late 1960s, many Blacks drew connections between their present-day movement and their ancestors' historical struggles for freedom and equal rights. In debate and reactions surrounding the Civil Rights Act, many made explicit connections between the act and fulfilling the freedom first guaranteed in the Emancipation Proclamation. President John F. Kennedy mentioned the proclamation in his speech calling for federal civil rights legislation. Lyndon B. Johnson's aide told him, “It's equivalent to signing an Emancipation Proclamation.” Explore historical newspapers such as the New York Times for contemporary responses and debate about the act and the proclamation. Consider how the “deferred” freedom celebrated during Juneteenth speaks to the struggle for equality and rights that continues even after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Activists in the 1960s also made connections to Juneteenth. Organizers of the 1968 Poor People's March held the Solidarity Day Rally on Juneteenth. Blacks attended from around the country, and, after they returned home, they revived or initiated Juneteenth celebrations in their hometowns around the country. As the Civil Rights Movement gave way to Black Power, celebrations in the 1970s focused on Black pride and cultural heritage. Houston was among the first Texas cities to rekindle large-scale celebrations, with a blues festival in 1973 at Hermann Park. By the late 1980s, California, Wisconsin, Illinois, Georgia, and Washington, D.C. had major Juneteenth celebrations, which included music, art, and expressions of African heritage.

Therefore, a good way to use Juneteenth to help students not see the past as static and unchanging is to nest it within its historical context. Linking Juneteenth to other struggles for freedom, such as those of immigrants or during the Civil Rights Movement, or focusing on its cultural expressions and meanings, demonstrates how freedom came to mean different things to different generations. Juneteenth also highlights the unchanging same. With regard to the riots, people continued to use violence to oppose Blacks' claims. Juneteenth celebrations from the 1930s to the 1970s forced Americans to deal with the gap between the promises of freedom and democracy and the realities of racism, discrimination, and segregation.

MEMORIALIZING JUNETEENTH

In 1979, Representative Al Edwards, a Democrat from Houston, introduced H.B. 1016 legislation to make Juneteenth a state holiday. A coalition of African American, Latina/o, and Anglo legislators supported the bill, making Juneteenth the first legal state emancipation holiday. The legislature signed the bill into law on June 7, 1979. Edwards then pushed for a Juneteenth memorial. A memorial was completed in 1999; however, due to controversies and fundraising difficulties, it was not until 2005 that part of the memorial was installed near Ashton Villa in Galveston, Texas. To understand the political and cultural ramifications of historical memory, it would be instructive to explore the efforts to form a multiracial coalition to honor Juneteenth and other holidays like Martin Luther King Jr. Day and controversies surrounding memorials, particularly their design. Today, people of all races, ethnicities, and nationalities in the United States, the Caribbean, and Africa celebrate Juneteenth. The fact that Juneteenth has endured as a national and international celebration for nearly one hundred and fifty years highlights it as one of those small but important moments in U.S. history. As we consider the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation and jubilee of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is also important to consider how Juneteenth complicates how we view key historical moments and our multifaceted past. As educators, we must strive to help students decide for themselves what the past means to them today.

The New York Times

HOT LINKS AND RED DRINKS: The Rich Food Tradition of Juneteenth

By Nicole Taylor, June 13, 2017

The holiday, which celebrates the abolition of slavery in the United States, is an occasion to gather and eat.

L. Kasimu Harris, a writer, artist and Louisiana native, recalled the booth his mother and father ran in Congo Square in New Orleans at a Juneteenth festival, where customers ordered crispy catfish from a handwritten poster board price list. “They sold grilled chicken and smoked sausage on pistolet,” Mr. Harris said, referring to the miniature French bread rolls, the sandwiches draped with onions and peppers.

His parents cooked at festivals all over the South, as far away as Atlanta. But those Juneteenth festivals on the cobblestones in the tree-lined square remain vivid, a family event. “I helped my parents out by taking the money and handing out paper napkins,” he said. “My sister would sometimes be the opening vocalist for a musical act. My father was always on the grill, and the line was always long.”

For over 150 years, African-Americans have gathered on June 19 — the day known as Juneteenth — to celebrate freedom. The holiday is rooted in Texas, signifying the day in 1865 when, more than two years after Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, a Union general who had made his way to Galveston delivered the news that slavery had been abolished. Texans who had been chattel erupted in triumph.

Many of the largest Juneteenth celebrations are still held in Texas: old-school parades with horses and souped-up cars; local bands playing; tender, fatty brisket on hand. But the day is observed widely all over the South, and in cities throughout the United States. Street fairs spring up, where R&B and gospel acts perform, and where you will find proud dandies like Mr. Harris forming lines for fried fish, spareribs or Fred Flintstone-style turkey legs. The Harlem Renaissance singer Gladys Bentley described the scene in her anthem “Juneteenth Jamboree”: “Dressed to kill from head to feet. Baskets full of food to eat. You can’t get this on your TV.”

Some families hold picnics or cookouts. Smoke clouds billow from drum grills, scalloped-edged paper plates are piled apart, and self-appointed Southern potato salad queens set out bowls covered with crinkled aluminum foil. Chargrilled oysters may turn up on the buffet table in Mississippi; meaty baked beans appear in Kansas; in the Carolinas, add heaps of vinegar-tinged pulled pork. For dessert, pies.

Red foods are customary for Juneteenth, the crimson a symbol of ingenuity and resilience in bondage. Watermelon, Texas Pete hot sauce and red velvet cake are abundant. A strawberry pie wouldn’t be out of place. Spicy hot links on the grill — most commonly made with coarsely ground beef, and artificially dyed red — are a Juneteenth staple, too, and “a distinctive African-American contribution to barbecue,” said Adrian Miller, a James Beard award-winning author and soul food expert.

Red drinks, like strawberry soda and Texas-made Big Red pop, generally rule the Juneteenth bar, and link present to past. “Two traditional drinks from West Africa that had a lot of social meaning are kola nut tea and bissap,” Mr. Miller said. (Bissap is more commonly known as hibiscus tea.) Both came to the Americas with the slave trade; red kola nuts and hibiscus pods colored the water in which they were steeped.

Traditions are changing, though. Newer-wave celebrations have become more spiritual and intimate. Wanda Blake, who handles finances for small culinary businesses and nonprofit organizations in Oakland, Calif., participates in a Juneteenth Ritual of Remembrance there. It’s a day of meditation and multicultural prayer for which Ms. Blake creates an altar with symbolic foods: brightly hued produce, cornbread, black-eyed peas.

To Ms. Blake, the event is an ode to ancestors. “Juneteenth today is a collective thank-you to a people who made a way out of no way,” she said.

The New York Times

GOOGLE, NFL LATEST TO CALL FOR JUNETEENTH COMMEMORATIONS

By Reuters, June 12, 2020

Google and the National Football League have joined a growing list of U.S. private sector organizations choosing to commemorate June 19th, the date marking the emancipation of the last remaining slaves at the end of the U.S. Civil War.

NEW YORK — Google and the National Football League have joined a growing list of U.S. private sector organizations choosing to commemorate June 19th, the date marking the emancipation of the last remaining slaves at the end of the U.S. Civil War.

Google, a unit of Alphabet Inc, has instructed employees to cancel unnecessary meetings on “Juneteenth,” according to a staff memo seen by Reuters. Meanwhile, the NFL has decided to recognize the date as a league holiday and will close the league office. The date is celebrated as African Americans’ Independence Day, and this year marks the 155th anniversary of the end of slavery in the United States in 1865.

Google and the NFL are the latest high-profile names from the private sector to recognize Juneteenth amid a nationwide outcry over racism in the United States sparked by the death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died in police custody in Minneapolis. Others include Nike Inc, Vox Media, The New York Times and several tech-sector heavyweights such as Twitter Inc.

“We encourage all Googlers to use this day to create space for learning and reflection, so please don’t schedule any unnecessary meetings,” the Google memo said. “Now, more than ever, it’s important for us to find moments of connection as a community.”

Google confirmed the memo, sent late Thursday. The memo applies only to Google staff, not everyone in the wider Alphabet organization.

A spokesperson for the NFL confirmed that the company would recognize Juneteenth as a company holiday and that league offices would be closed.

Google told Reuters it recognized Juneteenth is an important day, but rather than making it a holiday it wanted to give workers the space to use the day mindfully, including if they choose by watching a conversation the company’s diversity team will host with musician Alicia Keys. The company said it expected it to be a quiet day, noting several meetings had come off calendars after the memo.

Google stopped short of making Juneteenth a full company holiday, unlike Silicon Valley peers Twitter, Lyft Inc, and Square Inc, which each announced the new policies this week.

Sources inside Google, who were not authorized to speak to the media, said all their meetings have been canceled and some employees who wanted the day off have been told they can use sick days rather than vacation days. Google last year drew criticism from users for not honoring Juneteenth with a “doodle,” or an altered version of the company’s homepage logo, after artist Davian Chester offered a suggestion that went viral on social media of black hands breaking apart handcuffs.

Chester said this week that he has not heard in recent days from Google, which commemorates many other holidays and anniversaries around the world with a special logo. “I believe they still aren’t going to do anything for Juneteenth but we will see,” Chester said. Google didn’t have immediate comment.

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell’s memo said he would like staff to “reflect on our past but, more importantly, consider how each one of us can continue to show up and band together to work toward a better future.”

Goodell said the historical event “weighs even more heavily today in the current climate.”

(Reporting by Arriana McLymore in Raleigh, North Carolina, Imani Moise in New York and Paresh Dave in Oakland, California; Editing by Daniel Wallis)

REFLECT

JUNETEENTH

A FEW QUESTIONS TO SHARE AND TALK ABOUT AT THE TABLE

How do you define resilience?

Share a time you or a family member has shown resilience recently.

What foods do you associate with celebration? Freedom? Blackness? Why?

Juneteenth was originally a Texas-based celebration.

What are some ways you think it might be important for everyone to celebrate it?

The article suggests that Juneteenth is important because it helps us understand the lived reality of Americans in general and Black American's struggle for freedom at different points in time.

What are some ways current events have affected the meaning of Juneteenth?