

# PROCLAMATION

## MISSOULA COUNTY AND THE CITY OF MISSOULA, MONTANA

**WHEREAS**, Missoula County acknowledges the lasting impacts of racism in the United States, fueled largely by the horrific institution of slavery; and

**WHEREAS**, news of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, and in particular the southwestern states, for more than two years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of Jan. 1, 1863, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War; and

**WHEREAS**, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and that the enslaved were free; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans who had been enslaved in the Southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as Juneteenth Independence Day, as the anniversary of their emancipation; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans from the Southwest and across the country continue the tradition of Juneteenth Independence Day as inspiration and encouragement for future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, for more than 150 years, Juneteenth Independence Day celebrations have been held to honor African-American freedom while encouraging self-development, respect and dignity for all people; and

**WHEREAS**, the strength of character, faith and resilience demonstrated by former enslaved Africans remains an example for all people of the United States, regardless of background, religion or race; and

**WHEREAS**, the character demonstrated by former enslaved Africans should inspire us in this country to give thanks for the freedom won by so many people in all nations and to strive for the goals of bringing freedom and democracy to people of other countries no matter what their race or religion; and

**WHEREAS**, although Juneteenth Independence Day is beginning to be recognized as a national and even global event, the history behind the celebration should not be forgotten; and

**WHEREAS**, Montana proudly joins 47 states and the District of Columbia in observing Juneteenth as a state or ceremonial holiday; and

**WHEREAS**, this Juneteenth, Missoula is honored to host the Quasiquicentennial celebrating the 125th anniversary of the U.S. Army's 25th Infantry Buffalo Soldiers' 1,900-mile cross-country ride from Fort Missoula to St. Louis, Missouri, to test the combat effectiveness of military bicycles.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** we, Missoula County and the City of Missoula, do hereby proclaim the 19th of June as

## JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

to commemorate African-American emancipation from slavery, to celebrate the freedom won by people in many countries and to rededicate ourselves to the cause of liberty.

**DATED THIS 9<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF JUNE, 2022**

CITY OF MISSOULA

*John Engen*

John Engen, Mayor

COUNTY OF MISSOULA

*Juanita Vero*

Juanita Vero, Chair

*Josh Slotnick*

Josh Slotnick, Commissioner

*David Strohmaier*

David Strohmaier, Commissioner

