

VFW Partners with Smithsonian for a Nationwide Singing of the National Anthem to Celebrate Star-Spangled Banner Bicentennial

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Americans will “Raise it Up!” on Flag Day, June 14, and come together to participate in potentially the largest unified event in American history, turning the national anthem into “the song that was heard around the world.” The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is proud to be a national partner and encourage our members to participate in “Raise it Up! Anthem for America,” a global celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Star-Spangled Banner and the lyrics penned in 1814 by Francis Scott Key after the victorious Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812. Led by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History from the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the vision is for Americans across the country and around the world to stop at the same time at 4 p.m. EDT and sing the national anthem. The Smithsonian will host a sing-a-long event in Washington, D.C., on its National Mall terrace, which will culminate in a “moment of national unity” at 4 p.m. EDT when Americans across the country will stop to sing their anthem. More information about the nation-wide event is available at www.anthemforamerica.si.edu.

The National Museum of American History is home to the Star-Spangled Banner, the flag that inspired the national anthem. Made in the summer of 1813 by Mary Pickersgill (1776—1857), a professional flagmaker, the flag was originally 30 feet by 42 feet with 15 red-and-white wool stripes and 15 cotton stars on the blue canton. After the war, the flag was privately owned for many years until Eben Appleton lent it to the Smithsonian Institution in 1907 and converted the loan to a gift in 1912. Beginning in 1998, the Star-Spangled Banner underwent extensive conservation treatment. It is now on display in a custom-built environmentally controlled chamber at the museum.

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