

Semiquincentennial News



TEXAS
AMERICA
250

Greetings

It's here! After months of preparation, the 250th anniversary has arrived. Thank you for participating and honoring the past. Read on for highlights, resources, and celebrations happening across Texas as we mark America's Semiquincentennial.



Get Involved

★ America's Block Party –

Looking for a bigger party? In addition to local America's Block Parties in neighborhoods all across the nation, America250 will be celebrating at concerts, festivals, and other major events this Independence Day. Join us for one of these milestone events!

The [America's Block Party app](#) is your guide to discovering local events, planning celebrations, and participating in Giving 4th, a new national tradition encouraging Americans to turn July 4 into a day of generosity. With the app, you can:

- Find local July 4th celebrations, concerts, fireworks, and parades
- Discover volunteer opportunities and charitable initiatives nearby
- Access livestreams and updates from America250 events nationwide
- Host your own block party and invite your community to celebrate
- Participate in Giving 4th and support causes making a difference
- America's Test Kitchen's companion magazine featuring America's Potluck recipes is on stands now. Recipes will be in their member newsletters beginning June 12 and in social posts the week of June 28.

★ Giving 4th –

As we approach America's 250th anniversary, we have a rare chance to shape the future. Imagine Independence Day becoming a national moment of generosity — a day when Americans unite not only in celebration, but in service and support.

America250 has launched Giving 4th, a historic initiative aiming to permanently transform Independence Day into a new national tradition of generosity and shared community impact through charitable giving. The America250 Giving 4th PSA Film is directed by Academy Award-winning filmmakers TJ Martin and Dan Lindsay. This film is a living portrait of American generosity captured through real, unfiltered moments across communities, causes, and decades.

★ America's Potluck - You're invited to America's Potluck! Bring your friends!

Led by [America250 Utah](#), America's Potluck is a nationwide community-driven initiative encouraging families, neighborhoods, and communities to gather for a shared meal on Sunday, July 5, 2026, in honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Sharing food is a powerful way to honor individual contributions and celebrate the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, bringing together people from all walks of life.

Get Involved

Civic Season 2026: Featured Events for America's 250th



National Constitution Center's [Civic Quest](#) –

Civic Quest is a hands-on, story driven activity box that lets families step into history. Together, participants solve mysteries, explore key moments from the American Revolution, and practice real civic skills. All while discovering how early Americans helped shape the nation we know today. Join us in this growing annual tradition. Access resources, connect with a national network, and be part of a movement redefining how we engage with history and each other [here](#).

[Civics Scribble](#) by Nebraska Public Media

[Civic Season](#) from Made by Us



[JustServe](#) –

JustServe is a global volunteerism movement that connects people with meaningful opportunities to serve and helps community organizations reach volunteers through a free, easy-to-use platform.

In mid-May, partners and volunteers gathered in Dallas to celebrate the 100th America250 food truck delivery, a major milestone in the nationwide America Gives initiative. This effort—led by America250, JustServe, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is delivering 250 truckloads of food to 250 food banks across all 50 states.

The May 14th delivery supported Catholic Charities food pantries and Soldiers' Angels, providing thousands of pounds of food to local families, veterans, and active-duty military. The event featured a patriotic program, a hands-on service project for veterans, and remarks from community partners. It was a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished when organizations and communities unite in service.

JustServe offers volunteer opportunities nationwide. Simply enter a ZIP code to find dozens of ways to serve. In Texas, opportunities range from driving and food distribution to interpretation, tree planting, and more.

As of May 13, 2026, Texas has submitted 7,239 volunteer hours to the national commission.

For volunteer projects, please visit <https://www.justserve.org/>.



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Upcoming Events

★ Levi Jordan & Varner-Hogg Plantations Virtual Book Club -

What to the Slave is the Fourth of July? by Frederick Douglass

This speech was given at a meeting of the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society on July 5, 1852, in hopes of celebrating the 4th of July. Instead, Douglass draws upon his own experiences as an escaped slave and exposes the hypocrisy of America's claim to Christian and democratic ideals despite its legacy of enslavement. [Virtual Event](#) | July 2 | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

★ Sail4th 250 - From July 3-8, the Port of New York and New Jersey will transform into a vibrant international stage as it welcoming a breathtaking fleet of majestic tall ships from more than 20 countries will fill the harbor, each one carrying its own story of tradition, adventure, and goodwill. Visitors can expect a week filled with ceremonial arrivals, open-ship tours, cultural exchanges, and waterfront festivities as the port once again opens its arms to the world.

★ Sharing the Spirit of America - *Reading the Declaration of Independence Across America, 'Together'*

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. Four days later, the first public reading was delivered by Colonel John Nixon in the State House Yard.

Today, although the United States spans thousands of miles and nine time zones, communities across the nation are invited to read the Declaration *together*. Beginning at 6 P.M. (EDT), Americans in all 50 states and 16 U.S. territories will join in a synchronized reading, creating a shared tribute across the nation's 9,500-miles.

July 8, 2026 | 5:00 p.m. CST | Bullock Museum | Austin, TX

July 8, 2026 | 5:00 p.m. CST | Museum of Western Art | Kerrville, TX

Organized by America250 Hawaii

★ America250 Food Donation & Service Project - July 8, 2026 | 11 a.m. | East Texas Food Bank

★ The Blessings of Liberty - Dr. Shaffer, Professor of History at West Texas A&M University, will visit Goodnight Ranch to reflect on America's 250th anniversary, exploring the nation's founding ideas and their significance today, with a special focus on their connection to the region.

July 11, 2026 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Charles and Mary Ann Goodnight Ranch State Historic Site

★ Music Through the Ages - The Richardson Community Band will give a concert highlighting musical traditions throughout the eras of our nation's history. July 19, 2026 | 3 p.m. | [Richardson City Hall](#)

★ Trivia Night at The Waystone - Join the Texas Historical Commission for a 1950s- and America 250-themed trivia night. July 30, 2026 | 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. | 2101 W Wadley Ave Suite 27, Midland, TX 79705

Upcoming Events

On the 4th!

Kyle's Independence Day Fireworks Show

Join the City of Kyle in celebrating the Fourth of July with the Independence Day Celebration Fireworks Show on Saturday, July 4 starting at sundown. The show will also be able to be seen from many locations throughout Kyle.

Lake Kyle Park | 700 Lehman Rd. Kyle, TX

★★★★★★

Celebrate America's 250th Birthday in Junction, Texas!

Celebrate our nation's 250-year legacy of freedom with a morning parade starting and ending at Main & 4th Street in Junction. In the evening, enjoy an America-sized fireworks show along the South Llano River in Schreiner Park at Dark Thirty.

E Main St | 10 a.m. | Junction, TX

★★★★★★

Texas Cook'Em: High Steaks in Edinburg

A full day of Fourth of July fun featuring food, music, cars, and competition. The day begins with the Firecracker 5K at 7:30 A.M. and festival grounds open at 4 P.M. The SCA cook-off runs all day with \$12,500 in prize money. Live music continues into the evening, and H-E-B's Sizzle and Stripes Firework Show lights up the sky at 10 P.M.

Grounds close at 11:30 P.M. *Texas Cook'Em is for everyone!*

Ebony Hills Golf Course | 7:30 a.m. | Edinburg, TX

★★★★★★

America250 Celebration and postgame fireworks with the Round Rock Express

Nothing says Independence Day like America's pastime 🇺🇸 Join the [#RRExpress](#) in celebrating America's 250th Birthday! Game-day entertainment includes the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard, postgame fireworks, American flag giveaways, a USA 250 photo op, and roaming patriotic performers such as jugglers and stilt walkers.

Round Rock Express vs Albuquerque Isotopes | 7:00 p.m. | Dell Diamond

★★★★★★

Star Spangled Skies

Celebrate America's 250th Birthday under the stars!

Our night sky is filled with tales of impossible challenges, incredible love stories, and inspirational redemption arches. In these myths and legends, our ancestors whispers words of wisdom across the generations from before America was born. Come listen, and maybe you'll hear them whispering too!

Canyon View Interp Area | 9:30pm - 11:00pm | Palo Pinto Mountains State Park

★★★★★★

Texas in 1776

Explore Texas's place in history 250 years ago, when this region was part of New Spain during the era of American independence. This program will discuss "Texas in 1776" and the connections between America's founding and the history of this region. Jourdan-Bachman Pioneer Farms | Austin, TX

★★★★★★

Freedom Fest

Join the National Medal of Honor Museum two-day Independence Day celebration featuring live music, special screenings, classic American food, fireworks viewing, and opportunities to connect with the stories and values that continue to unite and inspire us today.

. July 4 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. | July 5 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

America250 Across Texas

Across the nation, communities are planning events that encourage celebration, reflection, and commemoration. The map below highlights just a selection of Texas regions already marking the Semiquincentennial, showcasing local efforts to honor America's 250 years of independence.

Visit the linked sites to see initiatives in your area. Please note: this is not an extensive list of all Texas events—only some we have identified so far.

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Amarillo](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Abilene](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Midland](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Odessa](#)

★ Celebrate
America250 in...
[El Paso](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Leander](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Fredericksburg](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Gatesville](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Laredo](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [South Texas](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Denton](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Dallas](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Texarkana](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Mineola](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [Longview](#)

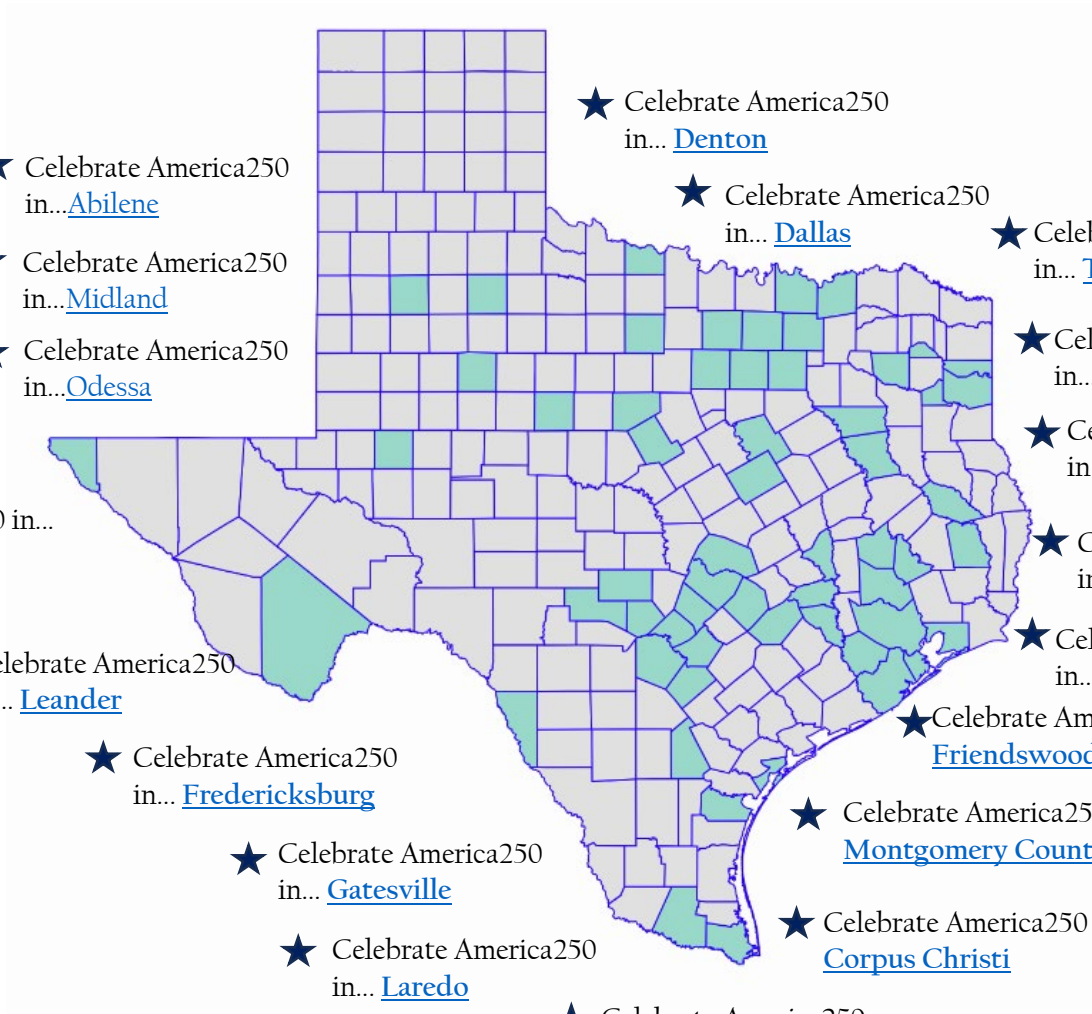
★ Celebrate America250
in... [Athens](#)

★ Celebrate America250
in... [La Porte](#)

★ Celebrate America250 in...
[Friendswood](#)

★ Celebrate America250 in...
[Montgomery County](#)

★ Celebrate America250 in...
[Corpus Christi](#)



Ongoing Exhibits

★ **America's Time Capsule** - Created to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, America's Time Capsule will be buried at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia on July 4, 2026, to be reopened in 2276. The collection includes contributions from all three branches of the U.S. federal government, submissions from each of the 56 states and territories, and select items from America250 partners. With help from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, Texas contributed the following items:

- Texas State Seal Glass Chiseled Paperweight
- Flag and Seal for the Republic of Texas
- Texas Declaration of Independence

★ **Museum of the American Revolution** -

[The Declaration's Journey](#) | October 18, 2025 - January 3, 2027 | Philadelphia, PA | [Online exhibits](#)

★ **Making of the Nation: America at 250** - Explore an expansive online gallery dedicated to the history of America's founding, created by the National Archives and Google Arts and Culture.

★ **The American Experiment** - Through a special partnership with the National Archives and Records Administration and the Briscoe Center for American History, the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin is hosting a two-part America250 exhibition.

American Experiment: Pursuing Our Promise

Part 1: May 30 – July 9

Part 2: July 11 – August 2

American Experiment: Evidence of our Past

Part 1 | Texas Documents: August 15 - October 18

Part 2 | U.S. Documents: October 21 - January 10

★ **Texas America250** - As the country celebrates 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence, every state has a story to tell about its own contributions to the development of the nation. Texas America250 spotlights the moments and icons that showcase how Texans have shaped the American story. From cowboys to astronauts, from Beaumont to Big Bend, the country would not be what it has become without Texas. This exhibition is currently on display in the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building lobby in Austin, TX

★ **Moments That Made US** - Developed through a multi-state collaboration, Moments That Made Us is a ready-to-use exhibition featuring twenty-one adaptable panels that organizations can tailor to their own spaces and audiences. The exhibition explores the ideals at the heart of the Declaration of Independence by highlighting pivotal moments in U.S. history. This exhibition will be **available by request throughout 2026**, offering communities across Texas an accessible way to participate in the Semiquincentennial.

Resources



Flag Day – One Flag. Many Voices.

Flag Day is a new documentary about the largest Flag Day parade in the United States and Three Oaks, Michigan, the community that has kept that tradition alive for more than seventy years. [Watch the Trailer](#)

Filmed with verité intimacy, *Flag Day* follows eight intertwined lives across a single town, offering a ground-level portrait of patriotism, community, connection, ritual and identity.

This summer (and beyond), FREE screenings of *Flag Day* are being offered to communities across the country to mark America's 250th anniversary with community, connection and dialogue.

Organizations that host a screening will receive a discussion guide, promotional materials and a free Flag Day poster. Register at: <https://www.flagdayfilm.com/host-screening>



As part of our goal to promote scholarship and research that illuminates the history of the American West and Texas's role in the formation of the nation—we are proud to highlight collaborative work with Texas State University and Bexar County.

Texas State University – America250 Research Guide Developed by Margaret Vavesek, librarian at Texas State University, this research guide offers curated scholarly resources, readings, and tools related to America250 and Texas history. Explore the collection: <https://guides.library.txstate.edu/Texas250>

Bexar County – Spanish Texas & the American Revolution To honor the 250th anniversary of the United States, Bexar County created an exhibit and interactive Story Maps showcasing the contributions of Spanish Texas to the American Revolution. The county also hosted a Teacher Development Day and produced lesson plans to bring this untold history into classrooms. View the resources: <https://www.bexar.org/4046/Bexar-America250>



Route 66: The Main Street of America

The Main Street of America Roadshow is a rolling premiere bringing the film directly to the communities that define Route 66. Beginning in September 2026, the Roadshow will travel all eight Route 66 states, with more than 40 screening events from Chicago to Santa Monica.

Globe News Center for the Performing Arts | [September 25, 2026](#) | Amarillo, TX

Texas Theater | September 26, 2026 | Shamrock, TX



[National Museum and Center for Service](#)

Where We've Been

★ Flag Day at TSLAC Celebration | Austin, TX

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) marked Flag Day with a special celebration featuring one of the rarest items in its collection — a 28-star U.S. flag flown when Texas first joined the Union. The June 13 event brought history to life with exhibits, giveaways, and stories highlighting Texas' role in shaping the nation.

TSLAC staff shared the significance of the flag, noting that even after Texas joined the United States, pride in the Lone Star identity remained strong. The 28-star flag symbolized Texas' transition from an independent republic to part of a growing nation. The historic flag — **one of the largest and rarest in the State Archives** — was on display from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and served as the centerpiece of the celebration. The event drew strong public interest and offered a meaningful reminder of Texas' unique place in American history. The special flag will also be on view **July 3, 2026**.

★ ATxH 2026 Annual Conference | Fort Worth, TX

The Alliance for Texas History (ATxH) was founded in March 2024 to focus on the future of Texas's past by using historical analysis, dialogue, and perspective. The Alliance brings together a diverse network of academic and avocational historians, local organizations and institutions, educators, public historians, archivists, librarians, and members of the public who share an interest in preserving and interpreting our nation's story.

In May, the Chair had the opportunity to lead a Texas America250 panel featuring four archivists from across the state, each highlighting collections and documents that illuminate the story of America's independence. Participating institutions included the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, the University of North Texas, Texas Christian University, and the Texas General Land Office.

Participation in this event helped raise awareness of TXAM250 initiatives and provided a valuable opportunity to connect with historians, archivists, and partners from across the state.



TXAM250 Commission Member Spotlight



[Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) -

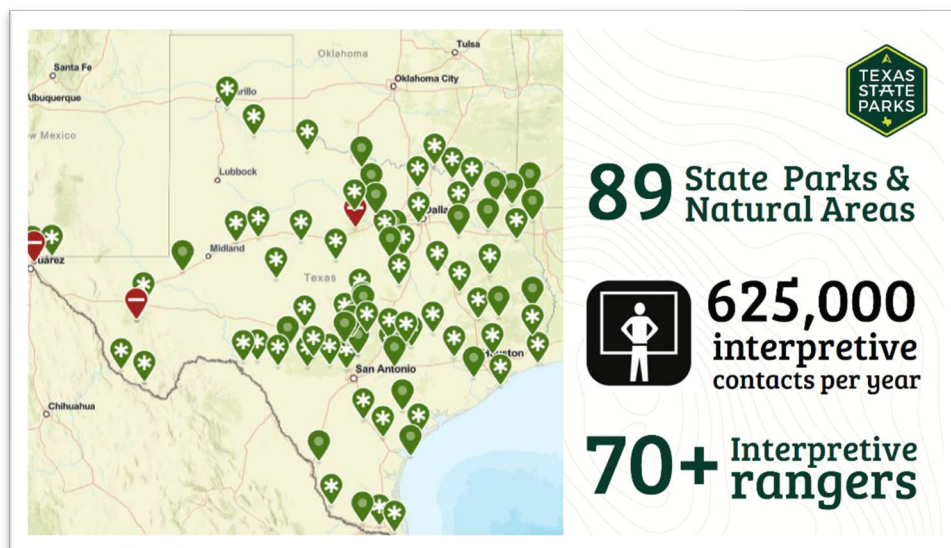
Since 1923, Texas State Parks has been dedicated to protecting the best of Texas's vast natural and cultural beauty. What began as a vision for a series of roadside stops for highway travelers has grown into a statewide network of parks, historic sites, and natural areas that welcome millions of visitors each year.

For 250 years, Americans have gathered outdoors to share food, friendship, and the beauty of the land. In that same spirit, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department—serving on the Texas America 250 Commission—is helping advance the Semiquincentennial statewide. TPWD is celebrating America's 250th anniversary with [programs and events](#) across Texas State Parks through December 2026, inviting visitors to explore, learn, and connect with the landscapes and stories that shaped Texas and the nation.

A few key programs include:

- Constitution to Nature – exploring natural materials used to make founding documents, such as oak gall ink.
- If Trees Could Talk – highlighting park stories set around 1776
- Battle of the Birds – a program contrasting the bald eagle and turkey, addressing the myth that Benjamin Franklin preferred the turkey as the national bird
- Patriotic Bike Parade – reaction focused community engagement
- Ask a Historian/Archeologist – sessions will be related America250 themes

And a very special thank you to TPWD for providing the wonderful Texas nature photos featured in this newsletter!



The Advisory Panel consists of participants representing historically-minded and community-centric organizations from across Texas who have committed to collaborating and amplifying 250th efforts on the local, state, and national levels.

Texas Leads the Way



The Texas America250 Commission is proud to celebrate twenty-six from Texas who are among the 250 awardees in the 2026 America's Field Trip contest sponsored by America250.

This year, more 10,000 students in grades 3–12 from all 50 states, five U.S. territories, and Washington, D.C., submitted original writing and artwork in response to the question, “What does America mean to you?” Entries were judged by a panel of current and former educators, and these TX students earned recognition for their creativity, civic spirit, and unique perspectives.

As first-place awardees thirteen Texas students will participate in an once-in-a-lifetime field trip experience this summer, visiting some of America's most iconic historic and cultural landmarks in honor of our nation's important milestone. As second-place awardees thirteen Texas students will earn a cash award in recognition of their outstanding work.

Please join us in congratulating them on this remarkable achievement! For the full list of 2026 America's Field Trip awardees and a selection of winning submissions, visit america250.org/fieldtrip/awardees.

We also extend our congratulations to the winners of America's Startup, a national collegiate innovation competition recognizing emerging entrepreneurs. Winning teams will receive \$25,000 in non-dilutive funding, along with mentorship from leading founders and investors, national exposure to potential backers, and ongoing support through the America250 network.

Among this year's winning teams is a Texas-based group, Kairos Health, founded by Sanjana K. and Adhira T. of Rice University. Their innovation uses AI to automate patient intake, reducing administrative burdens in independent healthcare clinics and helping transform patient demand into completed care.

We are proud to recognize these students for their innovation, entrepreneurship, and commitment to improving healthcare systems, and we congratulate all of this year's participating teams on their achievements.

Margaret Koch, Presiding Chair, Texas America250 Commission



A Proud Moment for Texas



We're thrilled to share an entry from a Texas student who won America's Field Trip.

I have seen America at its best—not in textbooks, but in my own community. Our area has had its fair share of hurricanes and fires. After one of the worst storms I can remember, neighbors I barely knew showed up on our street with chainsaws, food, and whatever help they could spare. Nobody asked who voted for whom. They just showed up. That moment taught me more about what America actually means than anything I have ever read.

America at 250 years is a story of everyday people making a country extraordinary—communities rebounding from hardship, a culture rich in diversity, and strangers choosing to help. From local volunteer projects to disaster recovery, I have watched people from every background set aside their differences to help one another. Mentors push students toward dreams they couldn't yet see for themselves. A neighbor who checks on an elderly couple down the block without being asked. These acts go unnoticed most of the time. But they are what holds this country together. Ordinary people. An extraordinary nation.

One of America's real strengths is that we are allowed to disagree. Loudly, if we need to. Conversations get heated—around kitchen tables, in town halls, on front porches—but that friction pushes us to think harder and listen better. The Declaration of Independence calls its truth “self-evident,” not guaranteed. That word choice matters. It means the work of seeing those truths clearly, and keeping them, falls to us. Democracy doesn't survive on its own. It survives because people keep showing up for it, even when they disagree—especially then. Progress is built on open dialogue, not comfortable silence.

Our diversity is not a problem to manage—it is the story. The table at any American gathering is covered with foods from a dozen different heritages. Neighborhoods hold onto languages and traditions that came from every corner of the world and became something new here. Shared experiences—the joyful ones, the catastrophic ones, and everything in between—remind us that unity never required everyone to be the same. The Constitution's framers knew this. They didn't promise a perfect union. They promised a framework for pursuing one, generation by generation. That pursuit belongs to all of us.

At 250 years, America is a nation built on kindness, honest debate, and the stubborn belief that we can build something better together. To me, America lives in those quiet acts of kindness—the chainsaw at dawn, the mentor who stays late, the hand extended across a divide. It lives in the arguments that challenge us to be better. It is a living, imperfect, stubbornly hopeful project, and it only works when every person decides to show up for it.

The America of the next 250 years will be shaped by every conversation we choose to have, every action we take, and our willingness to stand together, even when it is hard. The work is never finished. It is only continued by us, right now, wherever we are.

Writing by Aryn V.

11th Grade | Stinton, Texas

Texas America250

**To share news, ask questions, request logo licensing information,
or to receive a shareable slide deck about the commission, email
us at contactTXAM250@thestoryoftexas.com**