



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort McHenry
National Monument &
Historic Shrine

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Fort McHenry News Release

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Francis Scott Key Goes Back to School at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine

Free Distance Learning Opportunity Brings the Bicentennial of the National Anthem to Classrooms across the Country

Baltimore – Students and teachers returning to the classroom this month are invited to join a live, once-in-a-lifetime distance learning webcast on Tuesday, September 9 as part of the 200th anniversary celebration of the Star-Spangled Banner. The free, one-hour program will be broadcast live from Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, site of the 1814 Battle of Baltimore that inspired Francis Scott Key to pen the words that became our National Anthem.

During the webcast, which starts at 12 p.m. EDT, rangers from the National Park Service and historians will discuss everything Star-Spangled Banner and answer student questions submitted during the 60-minute broadcast. Although the program is free, educators are required to register for the electronic field trip at www.starspangledbannerlivingflag.org; click on “Connect” to register. The broadcast will occur as more than 7,000 Maryland students at Fort McHenry will don red, white and blue to form the Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag, the largest ever created.

“The defense of Fort McHenry and the writing of the Star-Spangled Banner are defining moments in our nation’s history, when Americans rich and poor, black and white, male and female, free and enslaved banded together to defend their country’s young democracy,” said Tina Cappetta, superintendent of Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine. “We invite schools worldwide to join in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity which will connect them with two of our nation’s greatest symbols of freedom and democracy – the American flag and the National Anthem.”

Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley has declared Tuesday, September 9 to be Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag Day in Maryland and governors in several other states across the country have issued similar proclamations.

As a complement to the online program, the website provides educators information on how to create a living flag at their school, plus links to grade-appropriate educational materials for primary and secondary students. The website also includes a wealth of information, including background on the War of 1812, historic photos, and more from the Friends of Fort McHenry, National Park Service, the Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, and Maryland Public Television and Star-Spangled 200.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

The Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag distance learning program is a joint program of the National Park Service and the Friends of Fort McHenry. Support is provided by the American Flag Foundation, Baltimore City Department of Education Social Studies Division, Baltimore National Heritage Area, EarthCam, Idaho Education Network, Internet2, Living Classrooms Foundation, Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission, Polycom, Inc., and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail.

Fort McHenry's Star-Spangled Banner Living Flag is one of a weeklong series of events celebrating the 200th anniversary of our National Anthem. Star Spangled Spectacular, a free festival sponsored by [Star-Spangled 200, Inc.](#) and the [Maryland War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission](#) is hosting a variety of bicentennial activities at other venues throughout Baltimore, including, the Inner Harbor, Martin State Airport and Pier Six Pavilion. For additional information on these and other events, visit www.starspangled200.com

[NPS](#)

About Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine

During the Battle of Baltimore, September 13–14, 1814, the valiant defense of the star-shaped Fort McHenry against the might of the British navy inspired Francis Scott Key to write “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The 15 broad stripes and 15 bright stars still fly over the fort 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Most famous as the birthplace of our National Anthem, the fort was used continuously in a variety of ways through World War II. Follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/FtMcHenryNPS> and on Twitter, @FtMcHenryNPS.

About Friends of Fort McHenry

The Friends of Fort McHenry serves to support educational programming and living history activities, and the creation of interpretive exhibits and visitor facilities that engender the widest appreciation of the Fort and the enduring legacy of “The Star-Spangled Banner,” our National Anthem. The Friends achieve this mission through generous support from those who value our heritage and the impact that history can have upon our young people.