

## Sing The National Anthem At Noon On Sept. 11!

By Dale Wetzel, Public Information Specialist

The American Public Education Foundation and the American Legion are teaming up to sponsor a “Star-Spangled Banner Sing-A-Long” for school children across the country at noon Central time on Sept. 11, 2015.

Students will be asked to take a moment to sing the anthem wherever they are on that day -- at school, in class, at home.

The foundation’s website (<http://www.theapef.org/#!national-anthem-sing-a-long/c6qz>) will have educational materials to teach about the words, meaning and context of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The song was written by Francis Scott Key during the War of 1812, a war by the United States against Britain that lasted 2 ½ years. Key wrote the lyrics after witnessing the overnight British bombardment of Fort McHenry, an installation that guarded the Baltimore harbor, from Sept. 13 to Sept. 14, 1814.

Key was inspired when he saw the Stars and Stripes still flying above the fort after the night’s attack had quieted. The British defeat was a turning point in the War of 1812; it ended in December 1814 when the two sides signed a peace treaty.

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson ordered “The Star-Spangled Banner” played at military and naval occasions. In 1931, in part because of support from John Philip Sousa, a well-known composer and conductor of military and patriotic marches. Congress approved legislation to make the song the national anthem of the United States. President Herbert Hoover signed the bill on March 3, 1931.

Sources:

William Lichtenwanger, “The Music of ‘The Star-Spangled Banner,’ From Ludgate Hill to Capitol Hill,” The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress, July 1977.

Marc Ferris, “Star-Spangled Banner: The Unlikely Story of America’s National Anthem,” Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.

Margaret Sedeen, “Star-Spangled Banner, Our Nation and its Flag,” National Geographic Society, 1993.

Library of Congress Performing Arts Encyclopedia:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.natlib.ihas.200000017/default.html>

U.S. Army music history:

<http://www.music.army.mil/music/nationalanthem/>