



# PROCLAMATION



**BASTROPTX**  
Heart of the Lost Pines / Est. 1832

**WHEREAS**, The origins of Black History Month can be traced to the scholar Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who created the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in 1915, because African-Americans have played a central role in our nation's history, but for too long, historians ignored or glossed over their contributions and the injustices they have suffered; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1926, Dr. Woodson also known as "Father of Black History" conceived a yearly celebration to help rectify the omission of African-Americans from history books, and was made official by Presidential designation in 1976; and

**WHEREAS**, Today, the observance of Black History Month throughout the United States stands as testament to the success of Woodson's project and an example of how we can work together to make the teaching of history more honest; and

**WHEREAS**, the theme of 2024 Black History Month is "**African Americans and the Arts**"; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans have served in all of America's wars, from the American Revolution to present day. For example, during World War II, more than 2.5 million black men registered for the draft and experienced discrimination and segregation, yet served in every branch of the armed forces: 167,000 served in the Navy with the first thirteen African-American naval officers commissioned in 1944; 17,000 served in the Marine Corps with the first African American commissioned in 1945; 5,000 served in the Coast Guard with the first African-American commissioned in 1943; and 909,000 served in the Army; and

**WHEREAS**, More than 12,000 black men who served in the segregated [92nd Division](#) received citations or were decorated for "extraordinary heroism" on the battlefield. Perhaps more famously, the [Tuskegee Airmen](#) also became legendary for their heroic feats, and in total received a Distinguished Unit Citation, several silver stars, 150 distinguished flying crosses, fourteen bronze stars, and 744 air medals; and

**WHEREAS**, World War II was a watershed for race relations within the Armed Forces, and it marked the beginning of the end for racial separation within Military units. In 1948 with the demand for civil rights mounting, President Harry S. Truman ordered desegregation of the Armed Services and equality of treatment and opportunity without regard to race, color, religion or national origin; and

**WHEREAS**, reform was slow and it was not until 1953 that segregation officially ended when the Secretary of Defense announced that the last all-black unit has been abolished; and

**WHEREAS**, forty years after military segregation ended, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the highest military position in the Department of Defense, oversaw Operational Desert Storm in Iraq. He was an African-American named Colin L. Powell; and

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Lyle Nelson, Mayor of the City of Bastrop, do hereby recognize the month of February 2024 as:

### **Black History Month**

And, along with the members of City Council, encourage all residents, business owners, schools, churches, and visitors to join the City of Bastrop in celebrating Black History Month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the City of Bastrop, Texas to be affixed this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2024.

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Lyle Nelson, Mayor

