



# The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

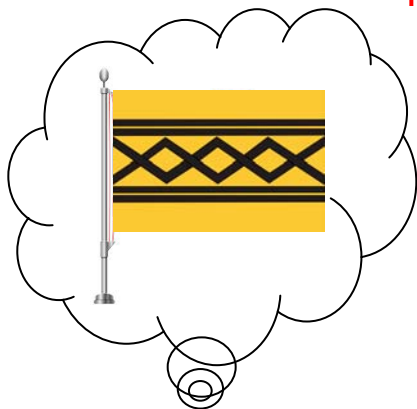
“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 84 October 2020

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[www.portlandflag.org](http://www.portlandflag.org)



***Symbols are important to a nation and it is dangerous if they become irrelevant.***

**—Tom Watson, Labour MP for West Bromwich East**

## Proportions in a Flag Recipe

By David Ferriday

Proportions play a very significant part in two different kinds of books: cookbooks and flag books.

In cookbooks, the ingredients of a recipe are spelled out in exacting quantities. In flag books, the basic proportions of a flag—hoist to length—are identified. 2:3 and 3:5 are the most common, 1:2 is second, then it's anyone's guess.

Many U.S. state flag proportions are unspecified. Those of the Oregon flag are among the most unusual anywhere: not 500:832, not 500:834, but 500:833! Who is measuring that?

While national flag proportions vary widely, the flags' dimensions are often altered for a uniform display when flown together (such as at the United Nations or at the Olympics). State flags flown in a



Avenue of Flags with Mount Rushmore in the background.

group, such as at Mount Rushmore or at our capitol in Salem, similarly conform (usually 3:5 or 4:6).

The state of Mississippi recently retired its flag, which bore a Confederate Battle Flag. The commission to propose a new flag has made a selection from among 3,000 designs offered (see p. 6).

I submitted my “recipe” for consideration, and hope it will be the tastiest possible. Did anyone else cook something up?



If you wish to compliment the editor, or to contribute in the future, contact Ted Kaye at 503-223-4660 or [editor@portlandflag.org](mailto:editor@portlandflag.org). If you wish to complain, call your mother.

## September 2020 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our September meeting, held on the Zoom virtual platform because of the COVID-19 shutdown, 16 PFA members and out-of-town guests enjoyed three hours of flags and video conversation.

During introductions we gladly welcomed Roman Hauksson-Neill and Alden Jencks as new members, as well as distance guests Phil Allen (Berkeley, Calif.), Al Cavalari (New Windsor, N.Y.), and Ralph Bartlett (Melbourne, Vic., Australia).

William Gifford, who with Joyce would have hosted the meeting in person, moderated the meeting.

Roman Hauksson-Neill came prepared, and waved the Icelandic flag, as his father hails from Iceland.



**William Gifford effortlessly moderates the Zoom session.**



**Roman Hauksson-Neill honors his father's homeland, Iceland.**



**Max Liberman celebrates Gibraltar's national day, relating how the current flag has no Union Jack in the canton, instead reflecting the 1502 arms.**



**Ralph Bartlett shows the "stars of the match"—Heineken beer bottles using flags to honor the countries in the 2019 Rugby World Cup.**

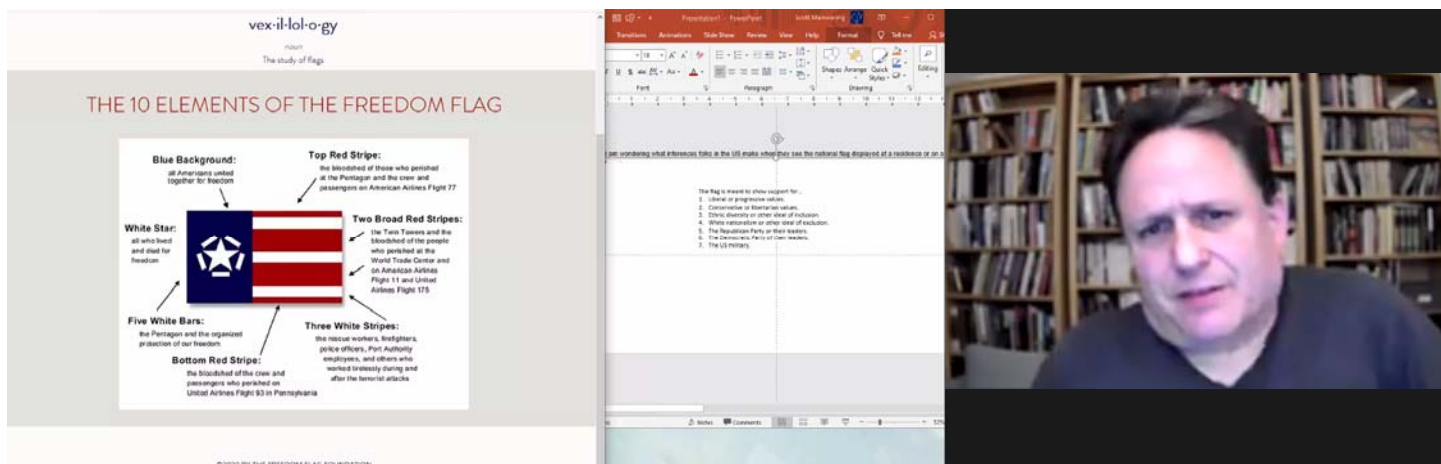
Max Liberman celebrated the exact day of Gibraltar's national day (September 10) with a short presentation on the colony's flags, from the current design back through various colonial flags to the original 1502 arms, which he offered to translate some day.

Ralph Bartlett, secretary of the Flag Society of Australia and wearing a Portland flag pin, displayed a special set of (empty) beer bottles bearing flag images, produced by Heineken for the rugby world cup, then commented on Mississippi's flag effort and showed the new flag of Fire Rescue Victoria (see p. 10).

Kate Cushman unfurled a large Republic of Ireland flag that had covered her grandfather's casket, and asked if we knew of any Irish traditions equivalent to the American practice of "fold into a triangle and display in a glass-front box"—we referred her to Rachel Phelan.



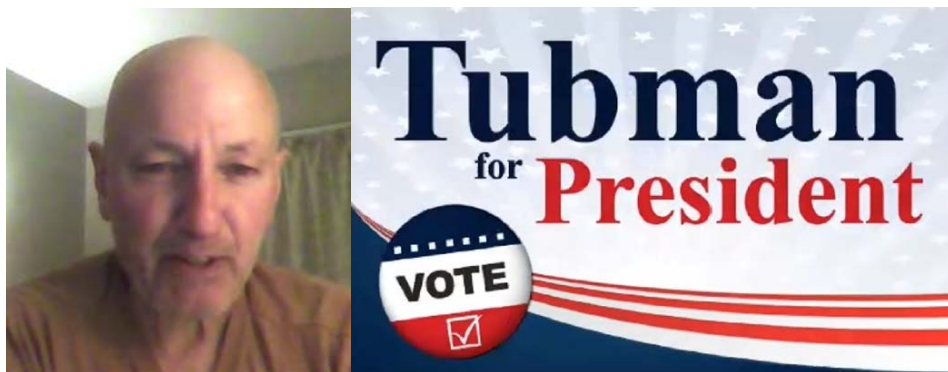
**Kate Cushman folds her grandfather's burial flag, the green-white-orange.**



Scott Mainwaring explains a 9/11 flag after discussing inferences from U.S. flag display.

Scott Mainwaring shared the results of a survey he'd conducted on Facebook regarding the perceived meaning of U.S. flag display in current times, and showed the 9/11 "Freedom Flag" promoted by a new NAVA member.

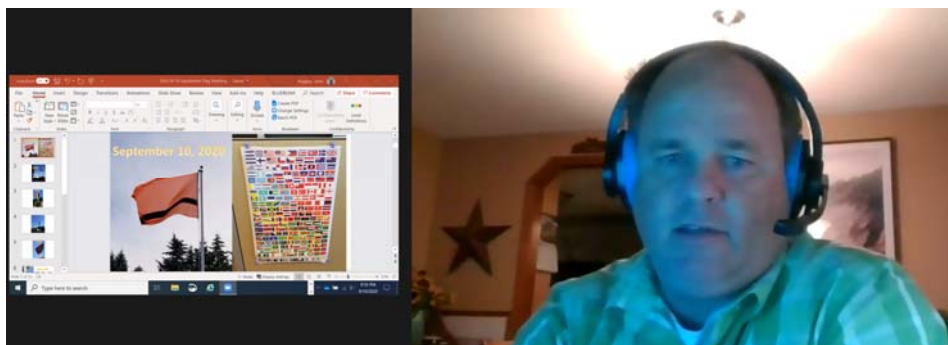
Al Cavallari, the "Flag Guy ®" from New York, showed history-based campaign flags he sells.



Al Cavallari's flag promotes a "gun-toting Republican" for the White House.

Alden Jencks, phoning in, related how when he observes the U.S. flag flown incorrectly and suggests corrections, he generally gets a positive response from homeowners and a negative response from truck drivers.

John Niggley described the most recent flags he'd sewn and flown (see p. 8), including the Refugee Nation flag.



John Niggley shows his home-sewn Refugee Nation flag.

William Gifford shared a photo of the pop singer Adele in a Jamaica flag bikini top and Bantu knots, sparking the "cultural appropriation" charge leveled against her.

Phil Allen showed parts of the 4"x6" flag collection decorating his Berkeley home.



Adele wears a Jamaica flag bikini top.



Phil Allen calls in from Berkeley.

*Continued on next page*

Joyce Gifford noted how Oregon’s governor, Kate Brown, appeared in a recent news conference before mismatched state flags, then shared photos of flags seen “in the field”.



Joyce Gifford catches Governor Kate Brown with mismatched Oregon flags.

Ted Kaye tested the participants with August’s quiz (see p. 11), and showed a recently-published book, *Civil War Flags of Tennessee*—it weighs in at 10 pounds. He then shared the most recent flags he’s flown from his outdoor-display clothesline (running from his house across N.W. Belgrave): Luxembourg, European Union, Liechtenstein, Uruguay (Patria Vieja), and 2012 QEII Jubilee.



Ted Kaye unfurls a flag of the European Union.

Michael Orelove, in honor of the upcoming “Talk Like a Pirate” Day, provided an overview of his collection of pirate flags, opining that they followed all the basic principles of good flag design.

David Koski expanded on his previous work on “slack flags” (those designed to “read” correctly when hanging limp from a pole) and shared his submission for a potential Mississippi state flag, with “in God We Trust” in Braille.



David Koski explains his “slack flags” concept, creating designs that “work” when hanging limp from a pole.



Michael Orelove talks like a pirate, surrounded by his pirate flag collection.



**Ken Dale recalls his letter to Dear Abby after 9/11/2001.**

Ken Dale commemorated the anniversary of the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks by sharing his 2002 letter to Dear Abby with urged care for tattered U.S. flags (see below).

Ted Kaye retained the Portland Flag Association flag, ready for action.

With luck, our next meeting will be hosted by Jessie Spiller on 12 November. Otherwise, we will meet virtually again!



## Ken Dale's Letter to Dear Abby

January 22, 2002

Dear Abby:

During the Cold War, I spent almost six years defending the flag of our country. While I am delighted to see it flying everywhere, folks—please use your head as well as your heart.

A flag flying from a car at high speed takes a beating. Please replace it before it turns into a rag. I have seen some so far gone that only half the flag remains. I even saw a pair of flags hanging horizontally from a car trunk. They looked like mud flaps.

If you display a flag at your home, please keep it hanging free. If there has been a strong wind, unwind it. If it has caught on the shrubbery, please untangle it.

Finally, a request to the business world: If you use the flag in your ads, please don't alter it.

When people get old and gray, it's time to love and care for them. When flags get old and gray, it's time to replace them.

— Ken Dale, West Linn, Ore.



Dear Ken:

Thank you for a timely letter. I, too, have seen torn, faded, rain-drenched American flags flying from car windows, and tangled flags on homes and apartments. The U.S. Flag Code, adopted in 1923, describes the following rules for proper flag protocol:

(1) Always display the flag with the field of blue in the upper left-hand corner. To display it upside down is considered a distress signal.

(2) It should be carried aloft and free, never flat or horizontally.

(3) The flag should always be kept clean and safe; never let it become torn, soiled or damaged.

(4) The flag should be destroyed by burning in a dignified manner.

(5) Always treat the flag with respect. Never embroider it on household items or pieces of clothing.

People who are unable to dispose of the flag in the prescribed manner should contact their nearest American Legion or VFW post. Most of them have an annual ceremony in which old and worn flags are properly destroyed.

— Abby

## The Name of God on Flags

By Max Liberman

Mississippi has chosen the design which will be put to voters this November as a replacement for its former state flag.

As mandated by the state’s legislature, the new proposal includes the motto “In God We Trust”.

In my opinion, unfortunately, this infringes the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits any government endorsement of religion in the United States.\*

So if the new design is approved by voters, Mississippi may be trading a *divisive* old flag for an *illegal* new one.

But Mississippi isn’t the only U.S. state to mention God on its flag. Florida and Georgia both already have “In God We Trust” on theirs. And, hidden amid a mass of other text, South Dakota’s flag includes the motto “Under God the People Rule”.

Worldwide, six national flags carry the name of God. Four are in Arabic—all of these in countries where Islam is the official religion of the state—and two in Spanish. Iraq’s flag prominently features the *takbir* (“God is greatest” in Arabic).



Mississippi (proposed)



Florida



Georgia



South Dakota



Iraq

\* While U.S. courts have held that official use of “In God We Trust” does not amount to “establishment of religion” and does not violate the Constitution (*Aronow v. United States*; *Newdow v. Lefevre*), I respectfully disagree.

The central emblem on the Iranian flag is both a stylized tulip and the Arabic word *Allah* (“God”). The *takbir* also appears, written 22 times between the stripes, in reference to the date of the 1979 revolution (22 Bahman in the Iranian calendar).



Iran



The flag of Saudi Arabia contains the *shabada*, or Islamic declaration of faith (“There is no god but God; Muhammad is God’s messenger”).

God’s name appears twice on the Afghan flag, where the central emblem contains both the *shabada* and the *takbir* at the top. (Historically, Afghanistan changed its flag fifteen times in the 20th century. With a couple of short-lived exceptions, none of these flags contained the name of God until after the 1989–92 civil war.)

In the Dominican Republic, where Catholicism is the state religion, the emblem at the center of the flag includes the Spanish motto “God – Fatherland – Liberty”.

And the emblem on the flag of El Salvador bears a similar motto: “God – Union – Liberty”. Unlike the other countries mentioned here, El Salvador has no official religion, although over 80% of the population are Christians.

Of course there are many flags with other sorts of religious symbolism—*bodhi* leaves, crescents, crosses, Stars of David, temples, colors, etc.—but that’s a topic for another time!



Saudi Arabia



Afghanistan



Dominican Republic



El Salvador



### Home-Sewn Flags

By John Niggley

I sew flags for display on my home's flagpole. I prefer to fly 4'x6' flags (24 sq. ft.). For a 1:2 ratio I make them 3'x6'.

I finished making the flag of Belgium for Independence Day. The proportions are 13:15. I made it 55.25"x63.75", trying to get close to 24 sq. ft.

When I first flew the Maldives flag, the crescent moon appeared in the sky behind it, echoing the design.

I finished Jamaica's flag for that country's Independence Day.



The home-sewn flags of Maldives, Jamaica, and Belgium.

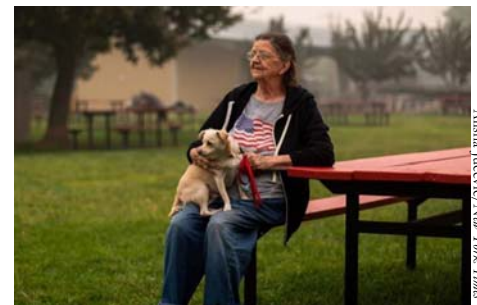
### Flags amid Fire



One of the many wildfires that ravaged the American West this summer destroyed a neighborhood in Talent, Oregon, leaving this U.S. flag as a witness.



Bearing up in Detroit, Oregon.



Refugee from Phoenix, Oregon.



## Flags from a 2000 Time Capsule

by Michael Orelove

For many years I have enjoyed creating time capsules, storing items relevant to my life and times, each to be opened 20 years later.

Recently Kathleen Forrest, my son Jonathon and his family, and I opened my time capsule from the year 2000.

We wore masks and kept appropriate social distance as we went through about 125 pounds of old stuff. The box held four flag-related items.

1. One flag-themed men's necktie.
2. One 10½ x 16 inch plastic American flag.

3. A Juneau newspaper article about the **Friends of the Flags** taking down all the state flags at the end of the summer tourist season. The article starts: "Fall brings many changes to Juneau—the tourists have all gone home, the leaves are turning colors, and the 50 state flags that have been flying above Egan Drive from the Juneau-Douglas Bridge to Marine Park have been taken down until next spring. The flags have been flying for 22 years, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Friends of the Flags, a nonprofit group that raises and cares for the flags." I was one of those "friends" when I lived in Juneau.

4. A worn 4' x 6' foot Illinois state flag. This was one of the state flags that flew in Juneau.

Since I was born in Chicago I put the old Illinois flag in the time capsule back in 2000. I will "retire" the flag at the next flag retirement event held by the Portland Flag Association.



Jonathon and Hannah Turlove move the 2000 time capsule.



Michael Orelove holds the plastic American flag.



Friends of the Flags in Juneau, Alaska, in 2000.



Michael Orelove tries on the U.S. flag-themed necktie.



Pam Turlove unfurls the Illinois state flag.

## Roundup



A U.S. flag hangs upside-down on N.W. Savier St. in June, apparently as a form of protest.



The “Flag of 2020” has been circulating widely as an internet meme. The COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread use of face masks to control transmission has provided an unforgettable symbol for the year. Thanks to the many readers who forwarded this image.



The new emblems of Fire Rescue Victoria, courtesy of Ralph Bartlett.



Michael Orelove displays the flag of the Portland Flag Association during a visit to New York City.

## What's that Flag?

By Tony Burton

Name these flags and identify the design theme connecting them.

Answers in the next issue...



## What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

By David Ferriday

These flags all have a diagonal stripe as a prominent graphic element.

Congrats to solvers Tony Burton, John Cartledge, Bruce Stewart, and Mike Thomas.



Sealand (micro nation)



Mqabba, Malta | Barotseland, Zambia



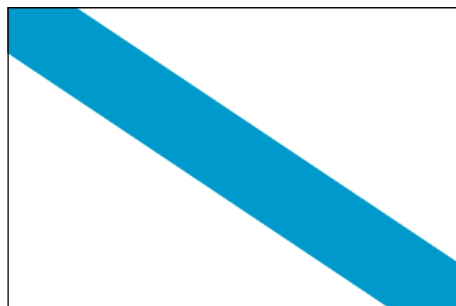
Uruguay (Patria Vieja)



Republic of Congo



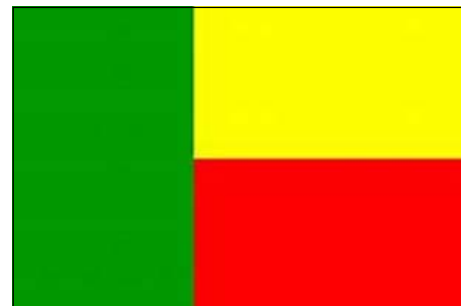
Tanzania



Galicia, Spain



Trinidad & Tobago



# Portland Flag Miscellany



An apparel and headwear maker found by John Niggley features items sporting flags, including Portland's. <https://civilstandard.com/collections/hats>



The U.S. edition of *The Guardian* of July 31 featured protesters in downtown Portland with real and makeshift flags, including one of Portland.

In July, mobile billboards themed on the Portland flag and designed by Relish Creative took to the streets of Portland and Washington, D.C. to call on Homeland Security to leave Portland.



Oregon Gov. Kate Brown wears a mask that looks like the State of Oregon flag. Courtesy of Kate Brown

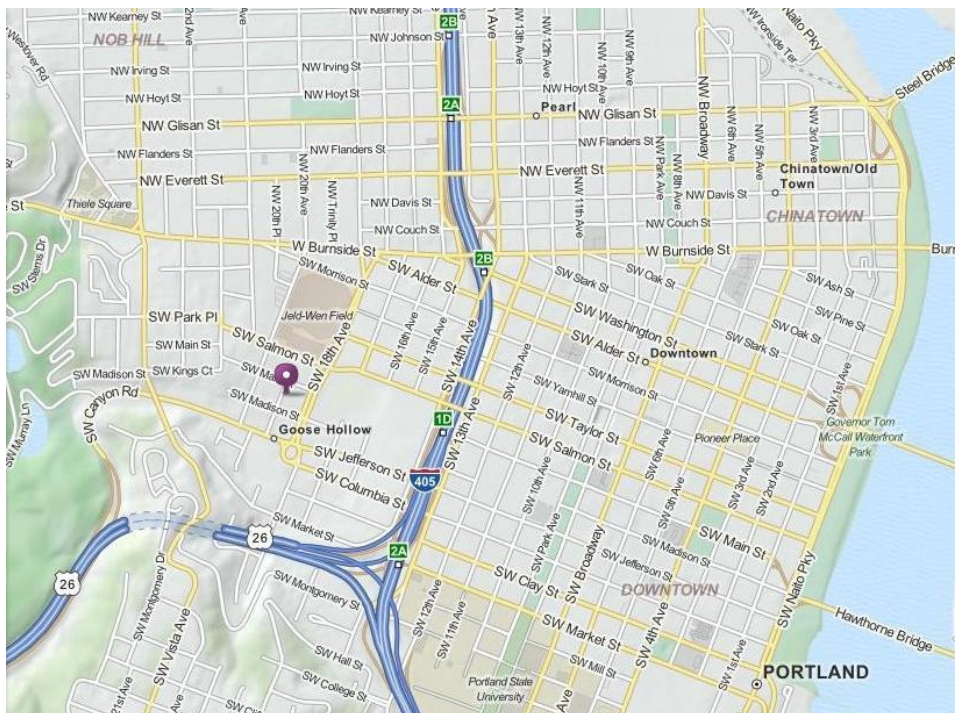
*The Oregonian*, 8/19/20

## November Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 p.m., Thursday, November 12, 2020.

If by some miracle we can meet in person, it will be hosted at the home of Jessie Spillers (Legends), **1132 S.W. 19th Ave., Portland, OR 97205**. See map at right. Otherwise, watch for a Zoom invitation.

We look forward to seeing those of you who have missed recent meetings and engaging in provocative flag-related discussion. Newcomers are welcome!



The *Vexilloid Tabloid*, founded in 1999 by the late John Hood, is published bi-monthly by and for the Portland Flag Association—Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. Find back issues at [www.portlandflag.org](http://www.portlandflag.org).