



The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 88 June 2021

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www.portlandflag.org

Flags as Branding

By Ted Kaye

Our colleague Michael Green recently gave a TEDx Talk at USU in Logan, Utah, on “Designing for pride—identity, flags, & sports”.

I found it compelling for several reasons. Some items stood out.

He quotes Wally Olins, a brand theorist, saying “People want to belong. They want to belong and they want to display the symbols of belonging.” Olins discussed this point in “Branding the Nation—the historical context” in *The Journal of Brand Management*, April, 2002, noting that while “the concept of the nation as a brand seems to excite visceral animosity in some people”, the real objection is to the word “brand”, rather than the concept. Olins helps us understand the importance of *flags* as symbols of belonging.

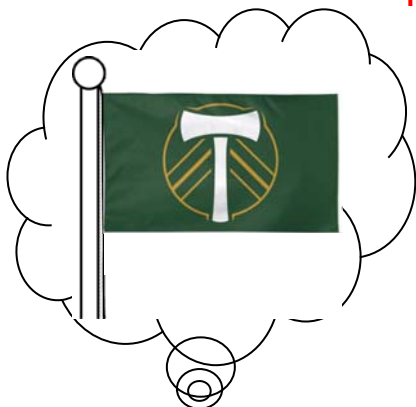
Green advances that idea through his concept of “the pride funnel”, where people identify with tribes and sub-tribes, e.g.:

NATION → STATE → CITY → TEAM

As a sports marketing professional at Texas A&M, he points out how great flag design at the city or state level has begun to infiltrate the logos and uniforms of sports teams (see below), building on the emotional attachment that residents have for those flags.

Green also discusses how poorly-designed flags tend not to be used, and that void can be filled by flags from different levels. For example, an unpopular city or state flag might be supplanted by the symbols of the sports team representing that city or state.

I recommend the talk to readers:
https://youtu.be/VBMAiot_KM4



It is the flag...just as much of the man who was naturalized yesterday as of the man whose people have been here many generations.

— Henry Cabot Lodge



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

May 2021 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our May meeting, held again on Zoom because of the COVID-19 shutdown, 16 PFA members and out-of-town (and -country!) guests enjoyed three hours of flags and video conversation. Ted Kaye moderated the meeting with the PFA flag standing behind him.

We welcomed Keith Getchell as a new member, as well as distance guests Ralph Bartlett (Melbourne, Vic., Australia), and Al Cavallari (New Windsor, N.Y.).

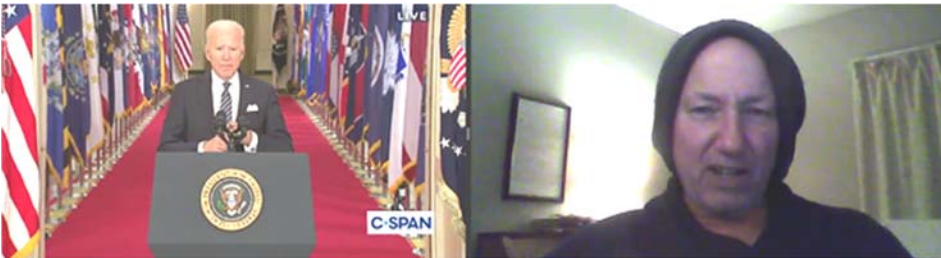
Graham Houser announced his new collecting focus: flags with insects on them (he keeps bees), and shared some recent additions to his collection. His father, Jerry, described his own flag-flying on a pole opposite Graham's house (see *VT* #87).



Ted Kaye unfurls an original Kirgiz SSR flag from the John Wild collection.

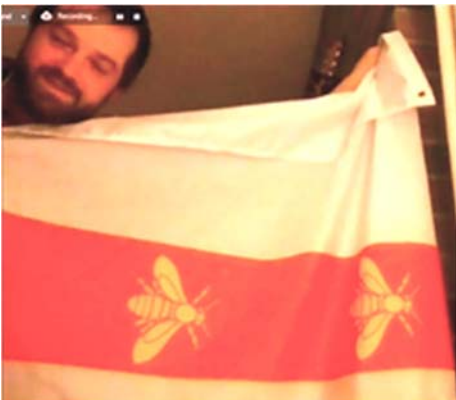
Ted Kaye reported on the processing of the John Wild collection, thanking the PFA members who have helped with the inventory and unfurling several of the flags for identification.

Al Cavallari analyzed White House flag displays, exploring how East Room flags have multiplied under the current president—most recently with state flags in the corridor complementing flags flanking the podium (see p. 10).



Al Cavallari, New York, explores the expanding flag use in the White House.

Michael Orelove delivered a short talk on the six-pointed-star flags of his life, focusing on the stars on the flags of Israel and Chicago and noting that the original Chicago flag's two stars were offset to the hoist (an update to *ACF*?...).



Graham Houser exhibits a recent addition to his "insect flags" collection.



Chicago native Michael Orelove shows what its 5-star city flag would look like.



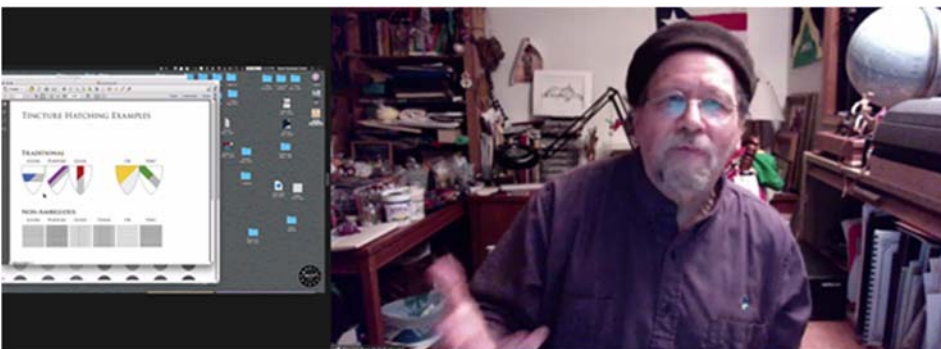
Ralph Bartlett chimes in from Victoria, Australia, with information on the flags of another Portland.

Ralph Bartlett had generously prepared for the meeting by traveling to the city of Portland, Victoria, Australia, and presented several flag-related items associated with the city (see p. 5).

Alden Jencks sought information on the use of Hapsburg double-headed eagles in the Anglo-Saxon world. Have such eagles played any role at all in heraldry and flag design in Britain or the U.S.?



Alden Jencks poses a question, backed by the flag of Dominica.



David Koski begins his interesting proposal for a new system of heraldic hatching.



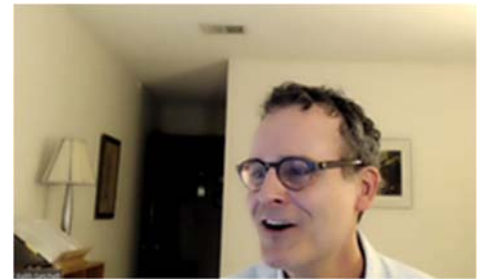
Keith Getschell offers up a possible alternative to the current Oregon state flag, in hopes of spurring a flag-change effort.

Keith Getchell recounted his effort to initiate a program to replace the Oregon state flag, and shared a design he'd developed as an example alternative.

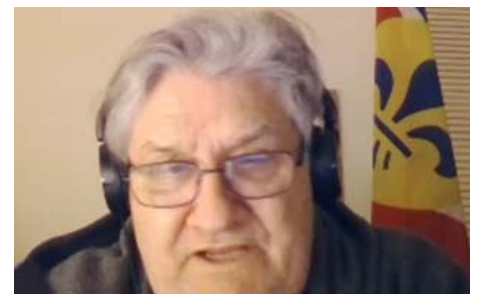
Scott Mainwaring led a lively discussion about the ethics of flag design, in particular how the ethical principle of “nothing about us without us” could apply (he moderates NAVA’s flag design group on Facebook).

Patrick Genna commented on Scott’s design ethics discussion, reflecting his own experience as an art teacher.

David Koski unveiled his proposed system for heraldic hatching (see pp. 6–7) that would function unambiguously despite the object’s orientation, which Alex Zimmerman noted would be helpful for the vision-impaired.



Scott Mainwaring makes a point regarding the “ethics of flag design”.



Patrick Genna comments with his hometown St. Louis flag as a backdrop.



Joyce and William Gifford show their new Conch Republic micro-patch.

Joyce and William Gifford shared their latest micro-patches, including Sardinia and the Conch Republic (Key West, Florida).

Continued on next page

Larry Snyder showed a GI-souvenir rising-sun-with-rays Japanese soldier's flag, brought home by his brother-in-law during WWII. He then shared actual flags he'd flown when sailing in Dutch waters, including wimpels and a punt.

Alex Zimmerman followed up with a presentation on vimpels (the Scandinavian spelling) used by Nordic countries (his mother lives in Sweden), with examples acquired there.

Max Liberman gave a talk on white ensigns, showing their use by various entities beyond navies. A discussion of the British Indian Ocean Territory flag debated whether it had white stripes on a blue field or blue stripes on a white field.

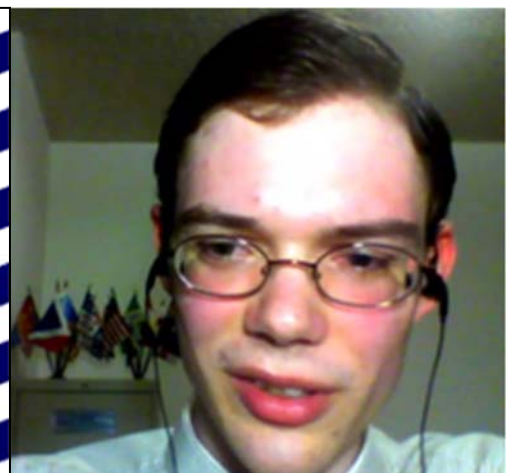
Our next meeting, on July 8, will be hosted in person, at the home of Ted Kaye, who has kept the PFA flag for a full year in anticipation! We expect to Zoom the meeting as well.



Alex Zimmerman points out the vimpel for the Swedish region of Norrland, among several in his collection from the countries and regions they represent.



Larry Snyder unrolls a Dutch wimpel, acquired and flown during his sailing days, noting that it flew atop the mast and doubled as a wind indicator (note lack of fringe at the inner top edge).



Max Liberman explores the world of white ensigns, with British Indian Ocean Territory as an example.

Stars on a Flag or Stars from a Flag?

by Michael Orelove

A fellow member of my Kiwanis Club (John Owen) called me and said that another member (Charlie Scott) had a flag item for me. John was not clear about exactly what it was. He said “military”, “flag”, and “star”.

I thought he was referring to a “service” flag that family members of those serving in the military can display. A service flag has a white field with a red border and a blue star for each family member serving in the armed forces of the United States during any period of war or hostilities. A gold star represents one who died during military operations; a silver star is for a wounded family member.

The flag item from Charlie was not a star on a service flag. It was a star from an old flag.

StarsForOurTroops.org is a non-profit organization that collects old U.S. flags and cuts out the stars to give to current members of the military and/or veterans as a “thank you” for their service.

The star comes in a 2½-inch square clear plastic folder with a “thank you” note inside.

The note reads: “I am part of our American Flag that has flown over the USA. I can no longer fly. The sun and winds caused me to become tattered and torn. Please carry me as a reminder that **You are not forgotten.**”



A U.S. flag star presented by StarsForOurTroops.org.

I am a veteran. I was drafted during the Vietnam war and the U.S. government sent me to where they thought I could do the most good for our country. They sent me to Oklahoma.

The star fits nicely in my wallet so it will be with me always.

Thank you, Charlie.



Michael Orelove, a Vietnam-War-era draftee, shows his U.S. flag star.

Portland, Victoria



Tea towel promoting the city of Portland in Victoria, Australia.

A sneak peek at a full-length article appearing in a future Vexilloid Tabloid...

Our Australian correspondent, Ralph Bartlett, recently made a special trip from his home in Melbourne, Victoria, to explore the vexillological and heraldic heritage of our name-twin city, Portland.

He brought back a trove of images and symbolism; his full report will present his findings in an upcoming issue.

We're very grateful to Ralph for his research conducted on our behalf.

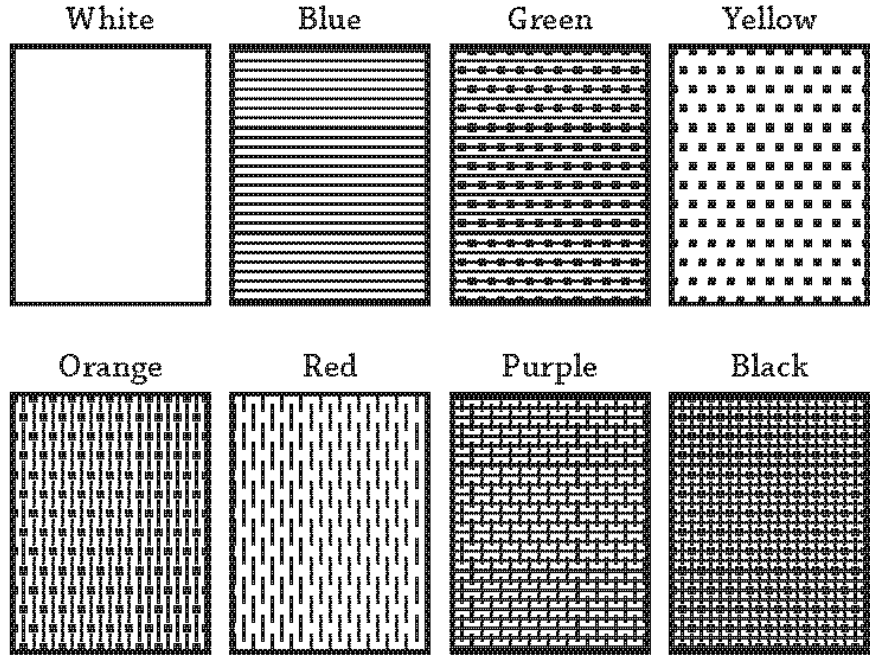
Perhaps we should explore similar scholarship into all the **Portlands** of the world. Who would like to take on such an interesting effort?

A System of Unambiguous Hatching

By David Koski

Years ago I was working on a project where I needed to represent different classes of game pieces. Color coding was an obvious option, but I wanted to have the flexibility of representing them in other ways as well.

I remembered from heraldry how the basic colors could be shown with hatching patterns when using color wasn't practical or affordable, such as in book printing, embossing, or metal or wood engraving. So I looked again at the various hatching patterns used in European heraldic traditions, and thought they might work for my purpose—except that some colors were indicated by the same pattern oriented in a different way, which could result in ambiguities in the way I would use them.



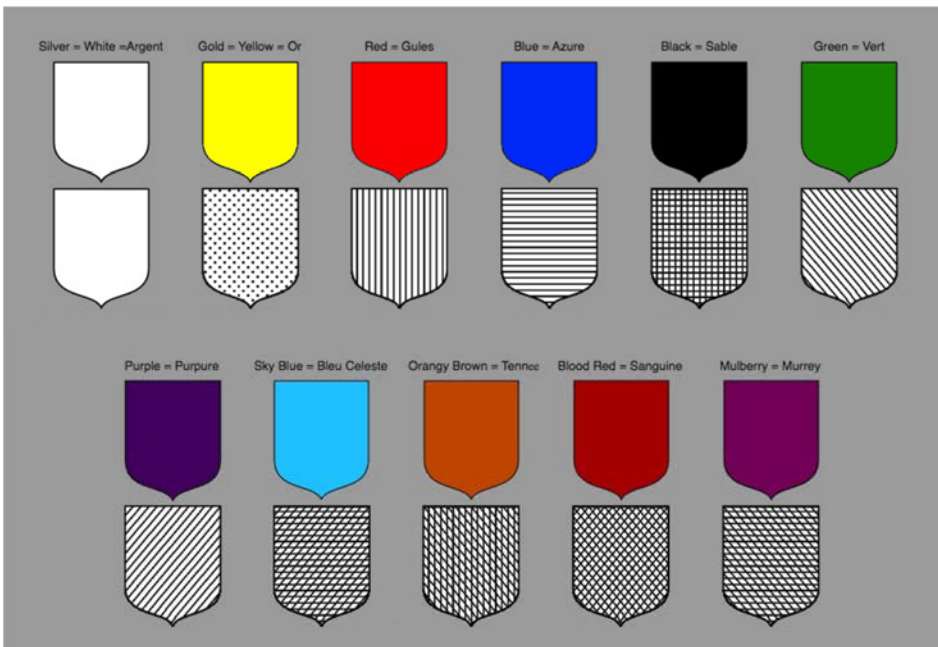
A proposed system of unambiguous hatching.

The basic colors that I wanted for my system were black, white, yellow, red, blue, green, purple, and orange. These correspond to most of the colors and metals used in the heraldic tincture system:

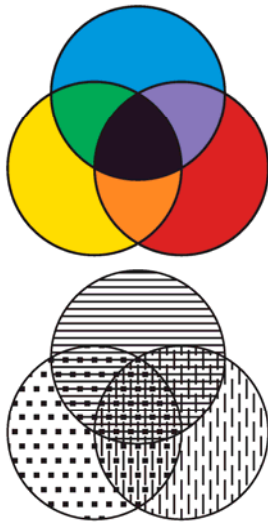
sable, argent, or, gules, azure, vert, purple, and tenne. The illustration at lower left shows a range of these colors, with the hatching pattern for each below the color it represents. One can get an idea of the ambiguities I mentioned by comparing these.

How was I to go about making an unambiguous set of hatching patterns that I could use for my work? While I could pick any number of arbitrary black and white patterns that could be easily differentiated from one another, I wanted to keep it simple and build on the older tradition.

Taking a cue from the color mixing of primaries used by painters using a limited palette, I decided that simply by replacing the solid vertical lines used in the traditional hatching pattern for red with



Traditional heraldic hatching, translating colors into patterns of lines or dots to allow black-and-white representation.



Converting colors to hatching.

dashed lines, I could combine those with the solid horizontal hatching (blue) and/or the dotted hatching (yellow) to get green, purple, orange, and black—and that is what I did. The resulting set of hatching patterns (see the Venn diagrams above) illustrate the relation of the mixing of three primary colors to the mixing of three primary patterns.

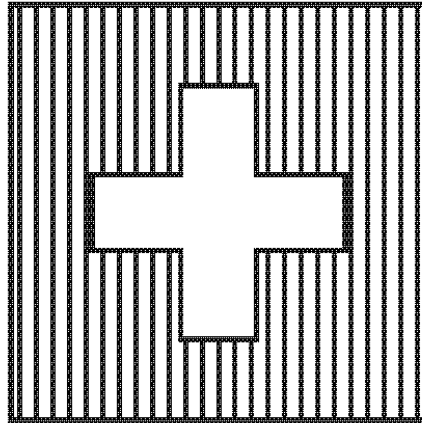
The result works well for the intended purpose, but I don't think it's any better for the purpose of illustrating coats of arms in heraldry books. It could be extended a bit by using thicker or thinner hatching lines to indicate darker or lighter colors.

Having brought this subject up in a flag discussion, I want to find some vexillological relevance for it. I have some ideas for possible uses:

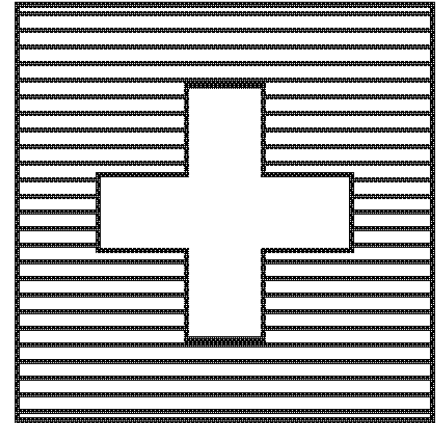
1. Some of us have seen flags where colors are indicated by their names in Braille for the sightless.

Ambiguous Hatching

*Correct orientation
Appears red*

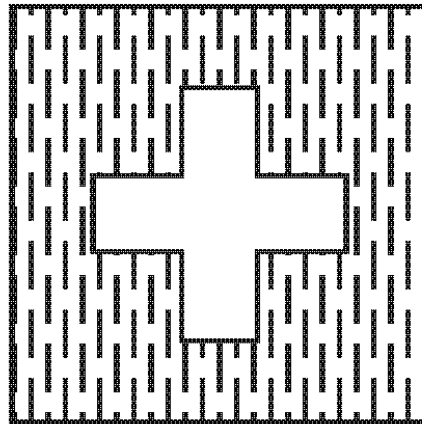


*Accidentally rotated 90 degrees
Appears blue*

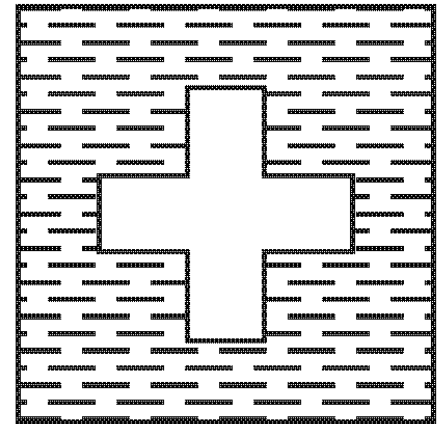


Unambiguous Hatching

*Correct orientation
Appears red*



*Accidentally rotated 90 degrees
Still appears red*



Ambiguous vs. unambiguous hatching.

Embossed hatching patterns could serve the same purpose, independent of language.

2. I can imagine occasional cases where inadvertent ambiguity could be avoided by using flag images with this kind of hatching. The illustration of the Swiss flag above shows an example.

3. Of course heraldry books have long used hatching to indicate colors in coats of arms; flag books might benefit from a similar

application. For example, the NAVA publication *American City Flags* is illustrated mostly with grayscale images of flags, with a color plate section in the middle. If someone could develop an automatic way to convert color flag images to black and white with unambiguous hatching patterns, it might be more economical to produce such a book without the color plates.

On the other hand, those color plates are so beautiful...

The Need for a Common State Flag Format

By Nate Szubin

U.S. state flags are embarrassing. Although there are a few gems, (Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, etc.) a vast majority of these flags are ugly and indistinguishable from one another. Out of 50 state flags, about 30 fly the infamous “seal on a bedsheet” design, of those, 23 are simply the state seal on a solid blue background (such as the flag of New York) making them overly complicated and nearly identical from a distance.

In addition, all but 12 of those have writing on them, an element expressly discouraged. These problems have been outlined by vexillologists before, but I would like to identify a different problem with these flags, and present a solution.

In Ted Kaye’s “*Good*” Flag, “*Bad*” Flag” he states that a good flag should “Avoid duplicating other flags, but use similarities to show connections”. Many of the U.S. State flags are either near-duplicates of each other; others are extremely different, showing no relation to each other.

My proposal is to have a common flag format for all states, while adding a unique state symbol to each flag. All of the United Kingdom’s overseas territories have the Union Jack in the canton, with a unique symbol or seal in the fly (such as the flag of the Cayman Islands).



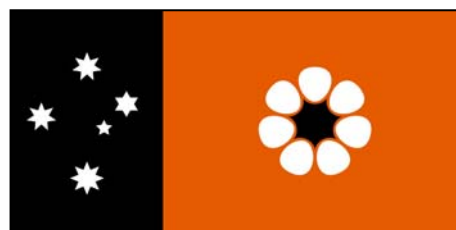
New York.

All Australian state/territory flags put Crux Australis at the hoist, with a unique emblem in the fly.

These flags show solidarity with one another, national pride, and civic pride. I believe that the U.S. state flags should adopt a similar format. I don’t think that the flags should follow the U.K. route of placing the countries flag in the canton (especially because the U.S. flag has a design in the canton which would make the flags look way too complicated), but rather follow a style similar to that of the Australian states/territories (like Northern Territory), where the flags take an element from the national flag and incorporate that into their design.



Cayman Islands.

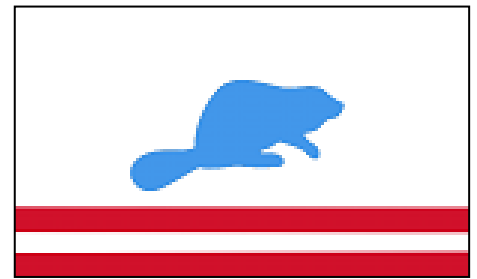


Northern Territory.

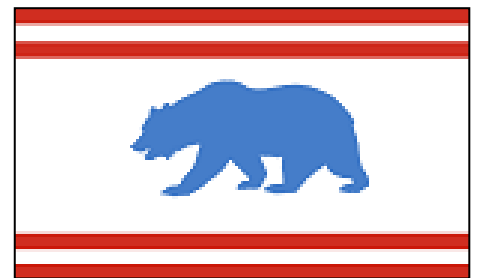
My proposal is to have a common design of 2–6 red stripes (yet to be decided) at the top or bottom of the flag, to recall the U.S. flag, with a state symbol in blue, in the center. Below are 3 variant designs for the common flag format, with symbols of California, Oregon, and Louisiana.

I welcome comments and additional proposals.
(neszubin@gmail.com)

Nate Szubin founded the Vexillology Club at Milton School in Washington, D.C. and recently joined NAVA.



Oregon (proposed).



California (proposed).



Louisiana (proposed).

Red Cross Flag Donation

By Michael Orelove

I have collected flags by writing to governments and organizations. In 2014 my request for a flag from the American Red Cross headquarters in Washington, D.C., returned a huge 8' x 12' specimen, with significant wear at the fly.

In an effort to get the huge flag to a good home, Ken Dale, blood donor extraordinaire, connected me with Marcea Vandermeer, Regional Market Manager, Pacific Northwest/Northern California of American Red Cross Blood Services.

Among the sites Marcea oversees is the Blood Donation Center on N. Vancouver in Portland. She expressed enthusiasm for the flag, and in April Ken and I delivered it to her there amid COVID-19 precautions. The Center plans to hang it in its atrium.



A smaller Red Cross flag flies at half-staff alongside the national flag at the Blood Donation Center on 8 April 2021.

Instead of donating blood at the center, I donated a flag! Though my blood type is O Negative, this was A Positive experience.



Michael Orelove and Ken Dale present Red Cross executive Marcea Vandermeer with a veteran 8' x 12' flag sent to Michael in 2014 by the American Red Cross from its headquarters in Washington, D.C., as helpers Hold it up in the atrium of the Blood Donation Center on N. Vancouver.

Côte D'Ivoire in PDX

By Alden Jencks

As a member of the Portland Peace Corps Association, I enjoy the yearly ritual of marching in Portland's Grand Floral Parade. We Peace Corps veterans all proudly "troop the colors" of our adopted countries.

I served in Côte D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) in the 1960s and I am always honored to unfurl the Ivorian flag.



The Portland Peace Corps Association readies flags for the parade.



Alden Jencks carries the flag of his Peace Corps country, Côte D'Ivoire, in the Portland Rose Festival's Grand Floral Parade.

Evolving White House Flag Displays

By Al Cavalari

The White House held a special fascination for me as a little kid. I am a presidential history buff and a fan of presidential addresses from the White House. I enjoy them as an event from our national family home that the whole nation tunes into at the same time.

Recently, I was taken aback when I saw the impressive display of 50 state flags in the corridor leading to the East Room. I didn't recall ever seeing such a flag display there and tried to find other examples of it. I spent hours on image searches, but found none.

Some presidential addresses take place in the Oval Office or the Rose Garden. Others take place at a podium in the East Room. When they do, the president enters through the corridor where I saw Pres. Biden's flag display. I was able to find images of some other presidents in that hallway going back to Pres. Reagan, but none had anything like Pres. Biden's avenue of flags. Only one image of Pres. George W. Bush, hosting the Canadian prime minister, Steve Harper, showed multiple flags.

Is President Biden our "flaggiest" president? Maybe he had nothing to do with the use of these flags to make a powerful statement of *E Pluribus Unum* in an effort to remind us how we need to stick together in a spirit of mutual aid that has served us before we even became a nation.

June 2021



The corridor to the East Room of the White House, lined with state flags.

But someone in his White House used the occasion to tap into the powerful ability of flags to make a silent though powerful statement without the use of words.

I will be keeping a close eye on that hallway for other flag displays in the future and will report back in these pages. Don't worry, your vexi-sleuth has it covered!



Pres. Obama before an empty corridor.



Pres. Bush passes a lone U.S. flag.



Pres. Biden before a multitude of flags.



Pres. Trump before an empty corridor.



Pres. Reagan before an empty corridor.

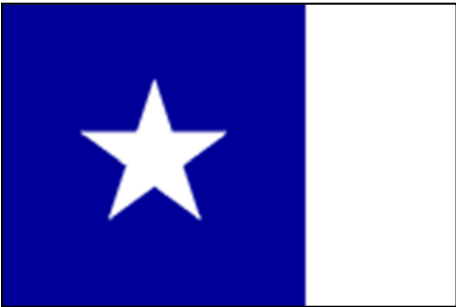


PM Harper & Pres. Bush & many flags.

What's that Flag?

By Mike Thomas

Name the national flags from these COMPONENTS and identify the theme connecting them (beyond stars). Answers in the next issue...

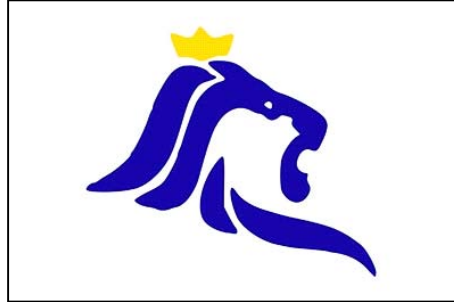


What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

By John Cartledge

These are the flags of capital cities which share their names with their countries.

Congrats to solvers Mike & Viviane Thomas.



Luxembourg, Luxembourg



Andorra La Vella, Andorra



Guatemala City, Guatemala



Tunis, Tunisia



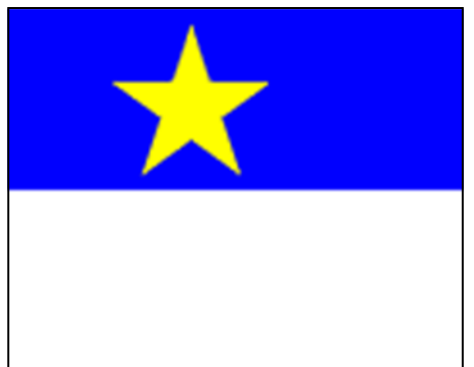
Kuwait City, Kuwait



San Salvador, El Salvador



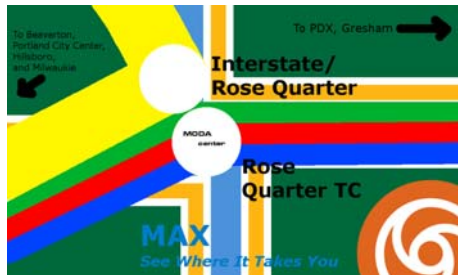
Panama City, Panama



Portland Flag Miscellany



T-shirt with Portland flag and Mount Hood Run emblem.



“Flag of part of Portland, Oregon's light rail system but designed by a 13-year-old with no idea how to design anything.”

https://www.reddit.com/r/vexillologycirclejerk/comments/6dm05p/flag_of_part_of_portland_oregons_light_rail/



The National Women's Soccer League's Challenge Cup began April 9 with Portland Thorns FC playing their first game against Kansas City at Providence Park in Portland.

In celebration of the 2021 soccer season, the 107 Independent Supporters' Trust created a limited edition scarf in celebration of the Oregon Historical Society exhibit, “We Are the Rose City! A History of Soccer in Portland”.

(While the Portland flag on the right appears upside-down, the orientation allows both hoists to remain at the top when the scarf is worn.)



Portland Flag in the style of Seychelles.

https://www.reddit.com/r/vexillology/comments/b78lhi/portland_flag_in_the_style_of_seychelles/

July Meeting

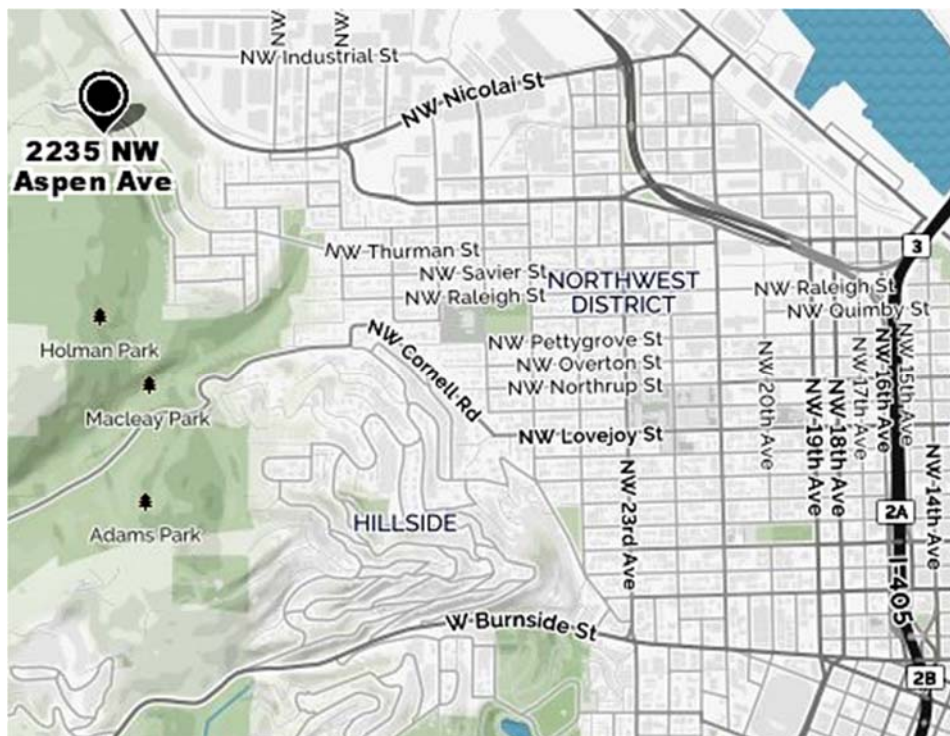
The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 PM, Thursday, July 8, 2021, at the home of **Ted Kaye: 2235 NW Aspen Ave., Portland, OR 97210.**

See the map at right.

Those who cannot attend in person should 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 and friends from around the world 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.