



The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 112 June 2025

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Red State Laws, Blue City Responses	1
May 2025 Flutterings	2
Flags in China: Field Report #2	4
Roundup	10
The Flag Quiz	11
Portland Flag Miscellany	12
Next Meeting	12

Red State Laws, Blue City Responses

By Ted Kaye

In early May the city governments of Boise, Idaho, and Salt Lake City, Utah, responded in an innovative way to new state laws against “cause-related” flags.

Earlier this year, the Republican-controlled legislatures in Utah and Idaho banned flying pride flags and other “unofficial flags” on government property. The laws allow flying only “exempt” flags—such as national, state, city, tribal, military, and school flags.

In both states’ capital cities, defiant Democrat-controlled city councils and mayors devised an interesting workaround—creating new “official” city flags, which would therefore be “exempt”.

Salt Lake City, which had adopted a new flag in 2020 (a horizontal bi-bar of light blue over white, with the state flower, a sego lily, in the upper hoist), used that flower as a remixable design element (to quote Roman Mars) to create variants of the pride, transgender, and Juneteenth flags.



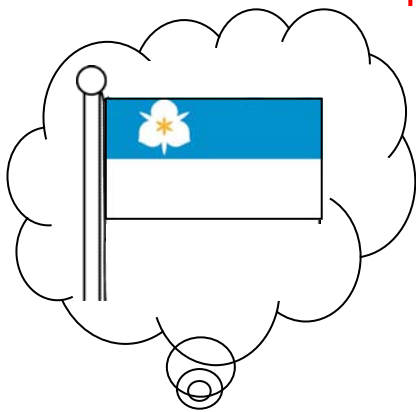
Salt Lake City Hall flies four “official” city flags in front (plus the flags of the city and state on each side) on May 7, 2025.

(AP Photo/Melissa Majchrzak)

Boise, which in April abandoned a city flag redesign effort, declared the city, “Progress Pride”, and organ donor flags official city flags.

This evolving story, a chapter in culture wars in the U.S. exacerbated by tumult at the federal level, shows the importance of flags—not just as signaling devices, but as markers of social identity and signifiers of political and cause allegiance.

I often say that flag-adoption is 10% design and 90% politics and public relations. In this current and ongoing controversy, I’ll adjust the percentages to 1% and 99%. We vexillologists have much to observe and study these days.



*My sincere intent is not to provoke
or cause division.*

—Salt Lake City Mayor
Erin Mendenhall

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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 2025 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our May meeting, hosted by Mike Funke at his home in Portland and streamed via Zoom, 12 members (including three new participants) enjoyed three hours of flags and video conversation.

As host, Mike moderated the session, with the PFA flag flying from the pole in his front yard; he described his daily flag display, with explanatory writeups posted in a sidewalk kiosk.

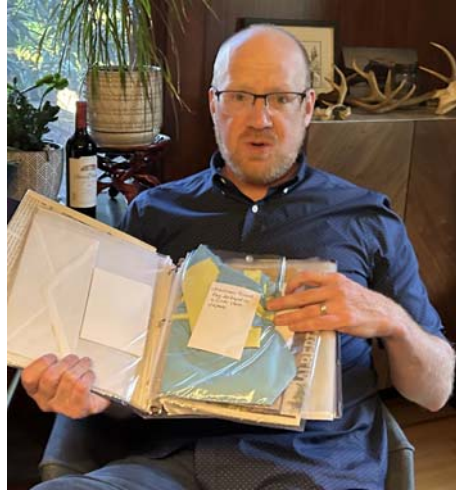
Mark Liberman delivered an insightful presentation on the Red Cross flag and its many peers: Crescent, Diamond, and even Rhinoceros.

Ted Kaye shared the flags of NAVA 59 (Seattle) and NAVA 13 (Salem), as well as the NAVA presidential flag; he passed around recent flag-book acquisitions.

John Niggley told of the St. Paul, Minnesota's new limited-edition library card featuring the iconic laser-eyed loon from the joke submission for a state flag in 2023.

Bill Valenti, a new member, presented the concept of the "Companion Flag", originated by Scott Wyatt and newly-revived; it places a horizontal stripe at the top of an otherwise white flag, in a color from a national flag, to fly below as a gesture of commonality.

Amanda Vogelbaum, a new member, described her adventure with a trove of thrift-store-sourced obsolete sports-themed flags.



Mike Funke explains his flag-display description system.



Max Liberman gives a history of the flag of the Red Cross and its many derivatives.



Ted Kaye explains NAVA's presidential flag.



John Niggley shows a loon-y image.



Bill Valenti pitches the concept of a "Companion Flag" with examples.



Amanda Vogelbaum enjoys the chat.



Graham Houser leads a “guess that flag” session.

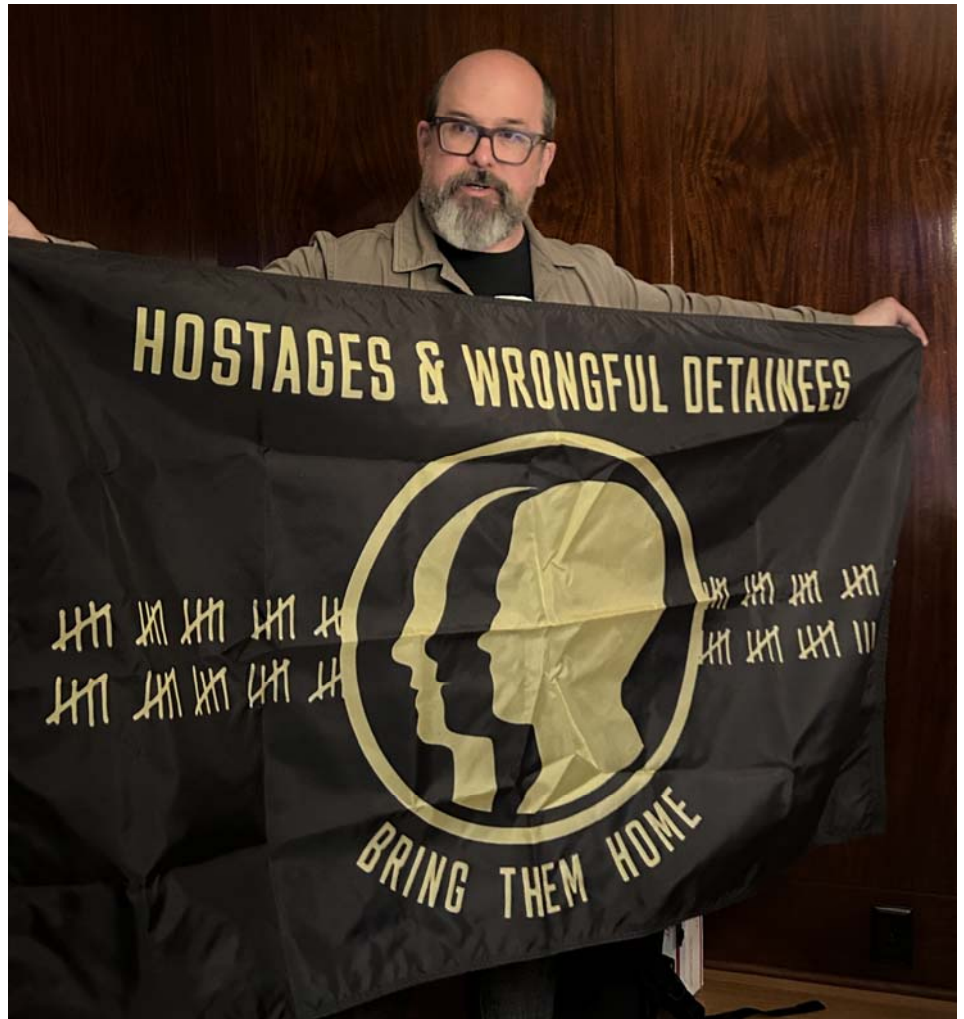
Graham Houser showed some 4”x6” flags destined for schools, from a recent donation to NAVA, and received entertaining help in identifying them.

David Ewald, a new member, recounted his role in designing the Hostages and Wrongful Detainees flag, then showed two examples (one machined-embroidered by John Niggle’s former employer, National Capital Flag!).

Ralph Bartlett, zooming in from Melbourne, gave a presentation on the use of the national flag in Australian political party logos.



Ralph Bartlett presents on national flag use in Australian political party logos.



David Ewald unfurls his design: the Hostages and Wrongful Detainees flag.

Phil Allen (in Berkeley, California) and Alden Jencks (currently in Mexico) listened in but had to leave the meeting early.

David Koski (remote but in Portland) ruminated on several of the topics covered in the presentations and conversations, noting his approach to flags through his art training.

Our next meeting, on Thursday, July 10, 2025, will be hosted by Ted Kaye at his Portland home.

Ted took the PFA flag home. We expect again to welcome our local members as well as far-flung friends.



Phil Allen and Alden Jencks join for part of the meeting.



David Koski reflects on the aesthetics of flag design.

Flags in China: Field Report – Part 2

By Ted Kaye

Before and after the 10-day International Congress of Vexillology in Beijing in August 2024, I had the opportunity to travel in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China, including Tibet. Such extensive travels provided me with a quick but broad exposure to exterior flag use in China.

While purely anecdotal, my observations may provide insights in to Chinese cultural norms and traditions regarding flags, especially the national flag.

In Part 1 (*VT* #111), I described flag use in mainland China and Tibet. This Part 2 deals with Hong Kong, Taiwan, and non-fabric and other depictions of flags.

In Hong Kong, the flag of this “special administrative region” flew widely, but **never** without the national flag flanking it, higher or in the position of honor.

At times it appeared in a 3-flag display including a commercial flag. Those flags were usually in very good condition.



The standard dual-flag display.



Flags over the Supreme Court.



Flags at the HongKong Squash Centre.



The 27th anniversary of the HKSAR.



Flags at the Tiantan Buddha.



Flags on the Hong Kong waterfront.



Three-flag displays: national, Hong Kong, commercial.



Flags at the Po Lin Monastery.

In Hong Kong's harbor, some of the fishing vessels flew the national flag as an ensign, many others flew "fish" flags and old-style triangular flags with writing. Sampans flew the national flag and sometimes banners with writing. One flag I couldn't identify (below): a blue-white-red vertical tribar with a flower-like (poppy) central symbol in red/orange and black (readers?).

The central badge of the Hong Kong flag also appeared above the entrance to the Supreme Court.

Near Sky Terrace 428, a viewpoint overlooking Hong Kong, a small pavilion predating the modern facility had the image of a small flag below the roofline. It seemed to have the combined initials **MR** on a horizontal tribar of light blue-white-red (readers, again?).



Fishing boats fly old-style flags from their bows.



"Fish flags" fly from many fishing boats in the harbor.



Unknown flag in the harbor.



National flags fly as ensigns.



A sampan with flag-like banners.



The Hong Kong seal at the Supreme Court in Statue Square.



Pavilion near Sky Terrace 428, with flag image below roofline.



Pavilion flag image (see left).

Continued on next page

The Hong Kong Museum of History was presenting a special exhibition on security, explaining how national intervention had brought order from chaos in 1919.

It showed national symbols in several ways: flags, seals, images of flags in photos and paintings.

One display showed “seven types of police warning flags under four main categories: 1) Warning flags used for public order events (two types): yellow and blue; 2) Warning flags used for defence and cordon lines (two types): orange and red;

3) Tactical warning flags (two types): black and dark orange; 4) Warning flags for offences to the National Security Law (one type): purple.” Actual rolled-up flags were exhibited.



“Achievements of China’s diplomacy.”



Pointing out the national seal.



Tai Chi in front of the national flag.



Police warning flags in seven colors.



Image depicting a dual flag raising.



The Hong Kong flag and seal.



Art commemorating a historic event.



The national flag and anthem.

In Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, the national flag flew broadly and appeared in murals, art, and signage.

At the National Revolutionary Martyrs' Shrine, dedicated to the war dead of the Republic of China (ROC), flags were ubiquitous and featured in historical tableaux, explanatory panels, and as artifacts (such as the flag of the Whampoa Military Academy, designed by instructor He Ying-qin in 1924).



Banner advertising a flag shop.



Contemporary art featuring the flag.



The flag over the Martyrs' Shrine.



Whampoa Military Academy flag.



"Uprisings for Founding of the ROC."



Historical tableaux featuring the Kuomintang flag at the Martyrs' Shrine.



Flags at the Martyrs' Shrine.



Debbie and Ted Kaye pose with the owner of a Taipei flag shop.



The Taiwanese flag towers over the Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport.



The flag in a mural along the river.

Continued on next page

In mainland China, other flags observed included national flags on uniforms and as décor, strings of flags (national & Russian, prayer), flags as artifacts (such as in the National Museum of China), and depictions of flags in art.

A highlight was seeing the first large-size national flag of China, fabricated in just three days for the declaration of the People's Republic on October 1, 1949, in Tiananmen Square.



Flags throughout a grocery store.



National flag shoulder patch.



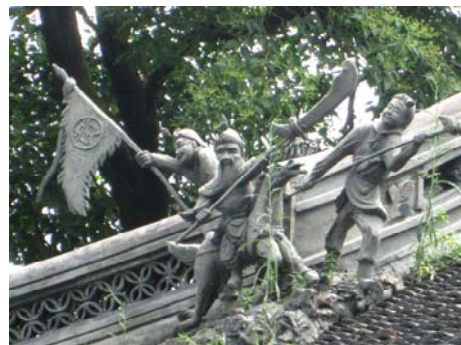
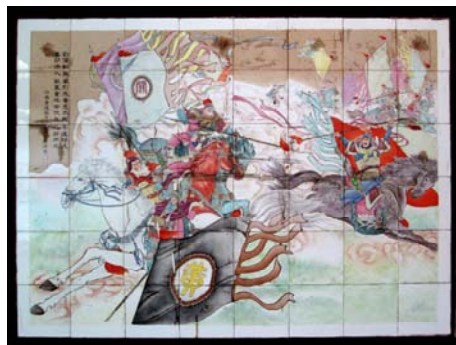
The National Museum of China holds the first national flag, flown October 1, 1949.



Flags in art at the National Museum.



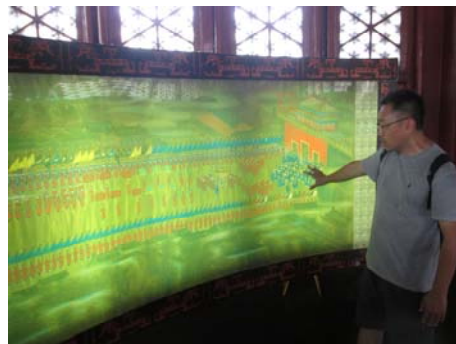
Historic scenes with flags, on tile in the White Emperor City, Yangtse River.



Flags in art in Fuxian Park, Shanghai.



Revolutionary flag scene in Shanghai.



Flag art in the Confucius Temple in Beijing.



I never saw a full-sized flag of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) except in a party office, but small ones adorned car dashboards and depictions of the flag appeared in public signage. A boxy version of the national flag sometimes was attached to street light poles.

End of report.



CCP and national flags on the dash.



The CCP flag in a Beijing neighborhood.



The CCP flag in a Shanghai office.



A CCP flag depiction in Lhasa.



Strings of prayer flags in Lhasa.



CCP flag promoting national security.



Flags on a sign at the Forbidden City.



Flag strings near the Great Wall.



Boxy national-flag-like objects decorate street light poles in Shanghai and Lhasa.



Discarded flag in Tiananmen Square.

Roundup



On the first anniversary of the adoption of the new Minnesota flag, Brandon Hundt shares this image of a newly-made version of the retired flag which has been flying upside-down for six months. He notes that old flags “in the wild” are flown inverted half the time, while the new flag cannot be flown upside-down.



Jim Croft flies flags in solidarity with Canada in Ukraine in Vermont's winter.



A design for the United States as a circus (spotted on Instagram by Keryn Anchel).



A Cascadia flag waved in the 2025 Presidents Day demonstration in downtown Portland (Alden Jencks photo).



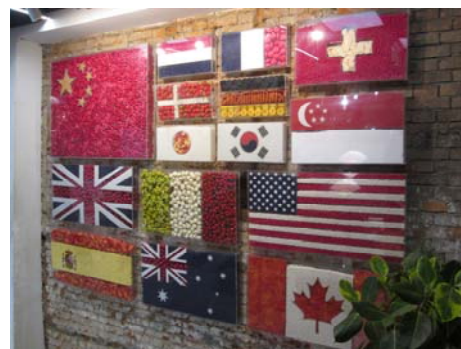
The Mexican state of Tamaulipas updated its flag in December 2024, replacing the 2011 version.

It updates imagery on the shield and adds the dates “1824–2024” (marking the state's 200th anniversary) and the state's name (image from John Moody).



For the past year the public library in St. Paul, Minnesota, has been offering a limited-edition library card featuring the iconic “laser loon”. The final day: May 31, 2025.

The design recalls a humorous entry in the Minnesota state flag competition, in turn echoing the famous “laser kiwi” from New Zealand's competition in 2014.



Food as flags—a display in Shanghai spotted in August 2024. It appears to use country-specific foodstuffs to compose each national flag.



As the 4th of July approaches, here's last year's commemoration (with a nod to the late Michael Orelove, a Pluto enthusiast).

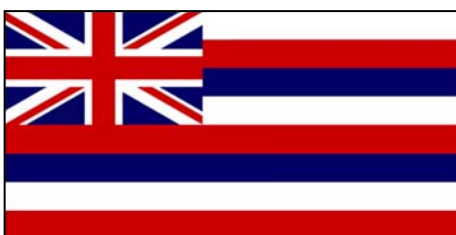
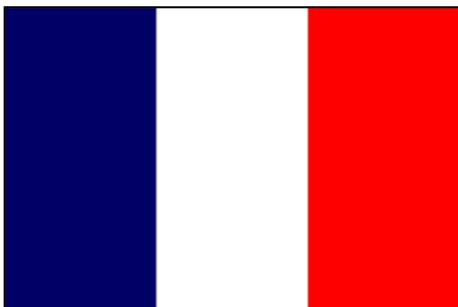


A V-E Day display at Ted Kaye's home: Flags of U.K., Netherlands, France, and U.S.A.

What's that Flag?

By Mike Thomas

Identify these flags, then consider the “simplest” or “most significant” change from no flag to the first, and from each one to the next. Based on all these changes, what unrelated flag is the conclusion?



What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

By John Cartledge

The animals are in seven different heraldic “attitudes”, viz.: *passant*, *rampant*, *couchant*, *sejant*, *courant*, *statant*, and *pascuant*.

Congratulations to solvers: Nikita Dudko and Mike Thomas.



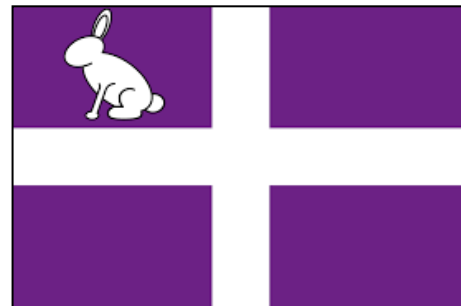
Passant (walking, with one forepaw aloft)—Wales.



Rampant (standing on hind legs, with one paw raised)—Berlin, Germany.



Couchant (lying down, but with head erect)—Hertfordshire, U.K.



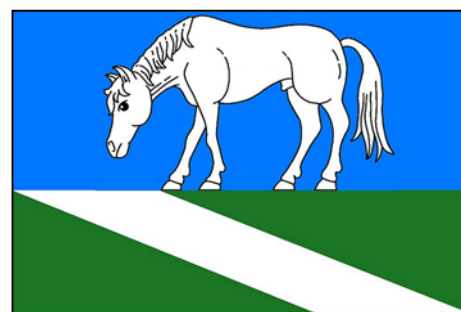
Sejant (sitting upright with front legs on ground)—McFluffle Bunny Empire.



Courant (running, with legs outstretched)—Leicestershire, U.K.



Statant (standing, with all four hooves on ground)—Falkland Islands.



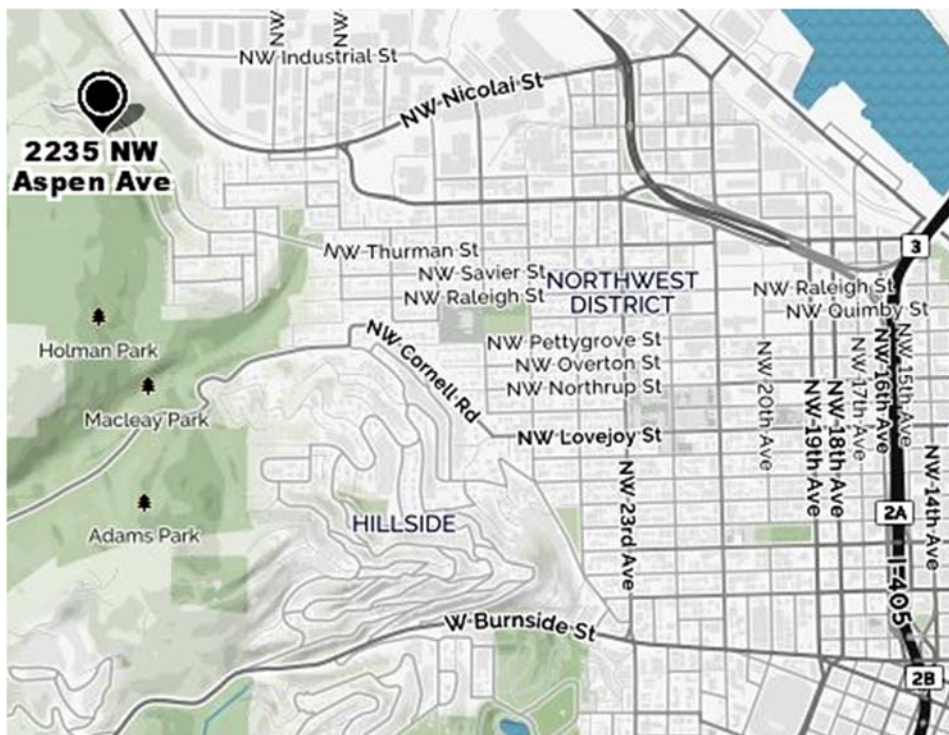
Pascuant (grazing, with all four hooves on ground)—Hranice, Czechia.



An aerial photograph of a large billboard on a city street. The billboard is dark with white text and a colorful graphic. The text reads "PORTLAND IS WHAT WE MAKE IT" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the text is a stylized flag with green, blue, and orange stripes. In the top left corner of the billboard is the Oregon Millers Party logo, which includes the text "OREGON MILLERS PARTY" and a circular emblem with a star. The billboard is situated on a street with other buildings and cars visible in the background.

SW Washington St. is at left and SW 10th Ave. is below. The image is oriented with west at the top.

Newcomers and friends from
around the world are welcome!



June 2025