



# The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 115 December 2025

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## Vancouver's Success

By Ted Kaye

Our neighbor to the north did it right!

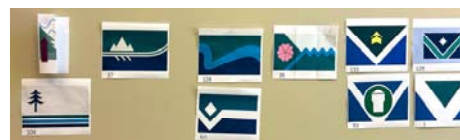
I'm biased, of course, as Vancouver city staff asked for and followed my advice in structuring and pursuing the flag adoption process. But by any measure, the results speak for themselves (see p. 4).

Having the mayor's full support, along with the city council's, meant that the city could conduct a public competition, with a well-trained selection committee and a sound public-relations effort, and have confidence that the resulting flag would see adoption. And it did.

Vancouver now has a flag to rival Portland's. I'm looking forward to the day—likely soon—that its design appears as a tattoo!



Committee members examine submissions in the second round.

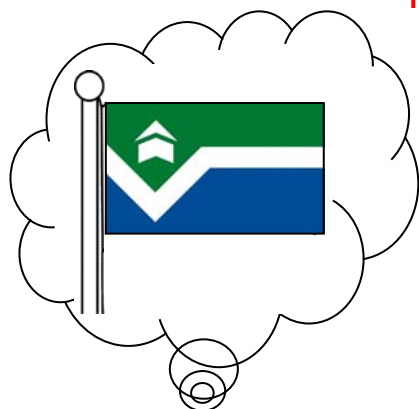


Third-round choices, ready for combining and polishing.

We meet in odd-numbered months, usually the second Thursday at 7PM. Please mark your 2026 calendars for PFA meetings at the following dates/locations:

- 1/8/26 Joyce & William Gifford
- 3/12/26 Jessie Spillers
- 5/14/26 Ted Kaye
- 7/9/26 TBD
- 9/12/26 SAT, 1PM Graham Houser
- 11/12/26 TBD

Thank you to our generous hosts for their hospitality to the PFA!



*Ideally...Vancouver's...banner will be indelible and memorable.*

— The Columbian (newspaper)



[portlandflag.org](http://portlandflag.org) | [facebook.com/portlandflag](https://facebook.com/portlandflag) | [instagram.com/portlandflag](https://instagram.com/portlandflag)

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.

## November 2025 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our November meeting, hosted by Jessie Spillers at the Legends and streamed via Zoom, 7 PFA members and friends enjoyed three+ hours of flags and video conversation. Jessie had graciously agreed to host after the unexpected death of Larry Snyder; the change in venue likely affected attendance.

As our ever-gracious host, Jessie led the session and unfurled the PFA flag.

Ted Kaye solicited feedback from those who had attended NAVA 59 in Seattle the past month—not surprisingly, the PFA had a strong contingent (10 members) and we agreed on the meeting’s high quality and value.



Graham Houser pulls up an AAC panel with national flags.



Jessie Spillers holds the PFA flag.



Ted Kaye challenges the members’ memory with the flag of NAVA 51.

Graham Houser, who teaches special-needs teens, showed an app that supports AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication—tools and methods to communicate without speech), showing a panel full of flags.

Ralph Bartlett, joining from a suburb of Melbourne in Victoria, Australia, gave a brief report on the 150’-tall flagpole that had stood for 40 years at the Haymarket Roundabout, installed for the 150th anniversary of the state in 1985.



Ralph Bartlett explains the huge flag pole erected for Victoria’s 150th anniversary, which flew a 24’ x 48’ state flag for a few months then a national flag until 2024; the then-unsafe pole was taken down in 2025.

John Niggley’s son had just returned from visiting family in Sweden, bringing a large national flag (3 meters long, sized for a 12-meter pole); it joins several other Swedish flags in John’s collection.



John Niggley shows his new Swedish flag, helped by Max Liberman.

Max Liberman reported on a NAVA 59 discussion which proposed supporting the initiative of the NAVA Flag Design Committee to develop a “toolkit” for flag-adoption efforts, then unfurled his personal flag as a tribute to Larry Snyder (who had helped with its heraldry) and interpreted the multiple symbols on it, some cleverly canting on his surname (*liber* and *libra*).

Alden Jencks, zooming in from Washington, D.C., recounted his impressions of the two new large flag poles at the White House, saying they “are out of scale”,



Alden Jencks reports from D.C.



Max Liberman describes his personal flag, with a book for learning and scales for justice (in Latin *liber* and *libra*, both plays on his surname), and five discs, as that is his favorite number.

“ruin the symmetry of the building and grounds”, “detract from the iconic pole atop the building”, and “may pose a danger to helicopters”; he then described observing the broad use of the Washington, D.C. flag (including with text added and sometimes with colors reversed) at the No Kings parade and beyond.

Our next meeting, at 7 PM, Thursday, January 8, 2026, will be hosted by Joyce & William Gifford at the “Big Pink Church” in Oregon City. Ted will deliver the PFA flag. We expect again to welcome our local members as well as far-flung friends.

## A New Flag for Vancouver, Washington

By Ted Kaye

Vancouver, Washington, has upstaged its British Columbia name-twin with a great new flag.

Portland's neighbor to the north (across the Columbia River), the 4th-largest city in Washington state, calls itself "America's Vancouver". It replaced its 1993 flag last month.

The flag-adoption effort, driven by Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle, received strong staff support from Laura Shepard, the city's director of communications, and her team. They invited me to provide process advice, brief and guide the Flag Selection Committee, record two podcasts, and bring in NAVA members to help develop and polish finalist designs.

The city council unanimously voted to adopt the new flag after the community-led committee presented its recommendation on 10 November. The formal flag-raising was 28 November (Alex Zimmerman and I attended).

"This flag is the result of thoughtful collaboration and creative input from across our



Vancouver's old flag, adopted in 1993.



Vancouver's new flag, adopted in 2025.

community", said Rose Mendoza, chair of the Flag Selection Committee. "Every element in the design reflects something meaningful about Vancouver, and it is a symbol we can all be proud of now and into the future."

"Our new flag is a powerful reflection of who we are as a city", said the mayor (who served on the committee). "It represents our natural surroundings, the iconic places that define Vancouver, and the creativity that makes our community special. This flag truly tells the story of a community on the rise."

\* \* \* \*

### Field of green

Green symbolizes Vancouver's natural environment, forests, parks, and commitment to sustainability.

### Emblem

The emblem draws inspiration from iconic Vancouver landmarks (Fort, Bell Tower, Grant Street Pier), it is a nod to the past and a symbol of forward progress.

### White chevron

The white chevron is a strong V for Vancouver, a connection between the land and the water, and a path forward.

### Field of blue

Blue represents the Columbia River and the community's deep connection to the river that has shaped its culture, economy, and sense of place.

### The new flag's meaning.

In its excellent explanatory webpage, the city featured questions and answers, anticipating public inquiries and providing detailed responses.

### Wasn't there already a flag?

Yes, the city's previous flag was created in 1993. It was designed internally with limited public engagement and has remained the



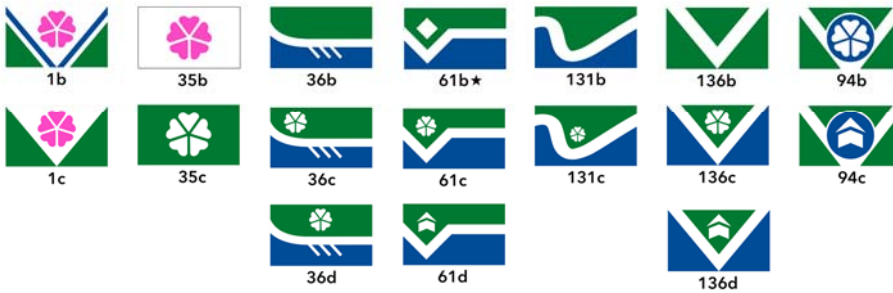
The 138 flag design submissions, posted in the windows of Vancouver's city hall.



Ted Kaye guides the committee and staff in a half-day session which narrowed the field to a few semi-finalist designs.

### Vancouver, Washington flags

Top recommended variants



★ Variant with most votes during Flag Design Forum

The top variants, coordinated by Brian Cham and NAVA's Flag Design Forum.



The six finalist designs.



L to R: Flag Selection Committee Vice Chair Hèctor Alejandro Varela-Betancourt, Chair Rose Mendoza, and flag designers Brooke Nugent and Nathan Hunter.

basic flag design principles. In early 2025, the city announced a design competition to create a new city flag that would represent the community's shared values and better represent Vancouver.

#### What did the flag design committee do?

The city-council-appointed committee evaluated each of the 138 submissions based on the design brief and the principles of flag design outlined in *Good Flag, Bad Flag*.

To ensure a fair and impartial selection process, all entries were reviewed anonymously, without identifying information. As part of the evaluation, the committee consulted with members of the North American Vexillological Association to refine designs in alignment with established flag standards, including adjustments to color for visibility on a flagpole and considerations for accessibility. During the review, judges independently created two

city flag for 30+ years. As described in the 1993 Staff Report, the current flag design represents Vancouver's "emergence as a world-class city and its strength and natural beauty".

In 2025, the city sought to create a new flag that adhered to design best practices, was a recognizable symbol of Vancouver, and incorporated the community in its development.

#### Why did the city want a new flag?

Vancouver has grown and changed since its flag was created in 1993. The current flag is dated, not easily recognizable, and doesn't follow

*Continued on next page*

composite flags by combining elements from submissions they felt worked well together. The original creators whose designs inspired these composites were credited for their contributions.

### How were residents involved in the design of the flag?

Residents were involved throughout the process. The city council appointed a volunteer committee to select the flag from the 138 entries submitted. Once the committee selected the finalists, the city invited the public to provide feedback on them, and 1,438 responses were received. The committee used this feedback to help them make their decision regarding which flag to recommend to the city council.



The old flag comes down.

### How much did the project cost?

The total cost of this project was \$1,500. The city used \$1,000 for the prizes for the selected flag finalists and the cost of creating the finalists' flags to assist the committee in judging the flags.

### Why doesn't the flag include the city's logo?

The city's logo is used to represent the government agency. The city created this process to design a flag that represents the community and is used by the community.

\* \* \* \*

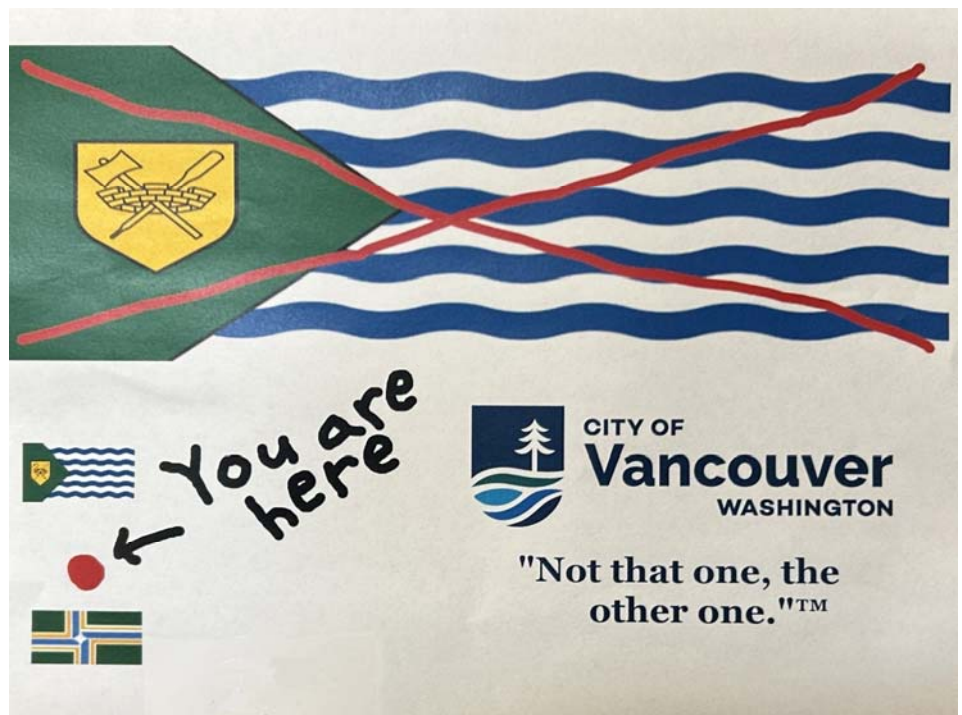
In my view, the city government participants—elected officials, staff, volunteers—did everything right. They created a solid process that negotiated the political challenges, dodged pitfalls, and brought the public along. They consulted (and listened to) the



One of the most original and interesting submissions...a Rasta-cat, perhaps?

experts, recruited Brian Cham to bring semi-finalists to the NAVA's Flag Design Forum and to help polish finalists, and took to heart my counsel that flag-adoption is 10% design and 90% politics and public relations.

I'm pleased for the residents of Vancouver that they finally have an effective flag design, and I look forward to seeing it wave broadly across the city.



All such contests draw a joke submission or two; here's a great one.

# FORMER AND CURRENT UNRECOGNISED STATES IN AFRICA

DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENCE SINCE 1920 THAT HAVE RECEIVED LIMITED OR NO INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION. NOT INCLUDING STATES THAT HAVE SINCE GAINED RECOGNITION.

**RIF REPUBLIC**  
1921—1926

Rebelling against Spanish colonial rule as well as the Moroccan sultan, the Rifians established a modern republic and sought international recognition. They were finally defeated by the Spanish Army's tanks, aircraft and chemical weapons. Calls for Rifian independence have resurged in 2013.

**EMIRATE OF CYRENAICA**  
1949—1951

Recognised by the UK only, Emir Sayyid Idris proclaimed his emirate a sovereign state in 1949. The UN, however, would only support an independent Libya incorporating all regions of the former colony, and in 1951 the Kingdom of Libya was formed.

**BIR TAWIL**  
2011, 2014, 2017

The only land outside Antarctica claimed by no nation, this patch of desert has been "claimed" as a sovereign state by several visiting individuals. None have gained any form of international recognition.

**SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**  
1976—

De facto controlling the easternmost slice of the country, the Polisario guerrillas have laid claim to all of Western Sahara and fought the Moroccan Army since 1976.

**REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND**  
1991—

Independent for five days in 1960 before joining with Somalia, Somaliland again declared independence in 1991 during the collapse of the Somali state. It remains a stable democracy with diplomatic missions in several Western nations, lobbying for international recognition.

**AZAWAD**  
2012

Founded by an alliance of Islamists and rebelling Touaregs, the sharia-run country fell to internal conflicts and disintegrated after three months of independence.

**REPUBLIC OF JUBALAND**  
1998—1999

During the Somali Civil War, warlord Mohammed Said Hersi Morgan declared Jubaland independent with himself as president. It was overrun 9 months later.

**REPUBLIC OF BIAFRA**  
1967—1970

Attempting to secede from Nigeria in 1967, the fledgling state was besieged for two and a half years. Upon surrendering, nearly two million people had starved to death. This was Africa's first televised famine and cemented the image of "starving African children" to many Westerners.

**REPUBLIC OF BENIN**  
19 SEPTEMBER 1967

Conquered by Biafran forces in the early stages of the Biafran war, this puppet state - not to be confused with the other Republic of Benin, founded in 1960 and still existing - was hurriedly declared while already on the retreat and overrun by Nigerian forces later the same day, arguably making it the world's shortest-lived state.

**REPUBLIC OF MARTYAZO**  
1972

Proclaimed by Hutu secessionists in May 1972, the state was overrun by Tutsi forces a week later. This led to the First Burundian Genocide, leaving 80,000-210,000 Hutus brutally killed.

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF AMBAZONIA**  
1984—

Through decades of tension between French- and English-speaking regions of Cameroon, the Republic of Ambazonia was formally declared in 1984, 2006 and 2017. It has remained mainly a legal battle, English-speaking lawyers and judges challenging the constitution, although unrest and deaths have occurred.

**REPUBLIC OF CABINDA**  
1975—1976

At Angola's independence in 1975, the three major liberation movements were invited to talks but not the fourth operating in the enclave of Cabinda. Subsequently Cabindan independence was declared. Suppressed by the Angolan Army in 1976, the movement fought a guerrilla war until 2006 and still operates a government in exile.

**STATE OF KATANGA**  
1960—1963

Supported by Belgian troops, the copper, gold and uranium rich province seceded from Congo upon independence in 1960. It surrendered after UN troops intervened on the Congolese side. Among the casualties were UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld, killed in a suspicious plane crash on his way to negotiate a cease-fire.

**REPUBLIC OF LOGONE**  
2015—

Proclaimed by Muslim rebels in the Central African Republic, political analysts see the declaration of independence as a bargaining chip in negotiations for autonomy rather than a full secessionist movement.

**SOUTH KASAI**  
1960—1962

South Kasai seceded from Congo during its collapse into civil war immediately after independence in 1960. It rejoined after a coup d'état two years later.

**RHODESIA**  
1965—1979

In 1965 the colonial administration of British Southern Rhodesia, fearing a Black majority rule, preemptively declared independence from the UK and in 1970 declared itself a republic. After a 15-year war, the country was internationally recognised as Zimbabwe, led by Prime Minister Robert Mugabe.

**REPUBLIC OF TRANSKEI**  
1976—1994

As early as 1913, the British colonial administration in South Africa had established "reserves" for its Native inhabitants. During the Apartheid regime, ten such Bantustans were established as segregated Black "homelands" with varying degrees of autonomy.

**REPUBLIC OF BOPHUTHATSWANA**  
1977—1994

Four of them, the so-called TBVC-states, were granted full independence. This stripped its inhabitants - often relocated from or working and living in other parts of South Africa - of their South African citizenship and justified the regime's negligence of utilities and health care in the regions. Unlike in South Africa, gambling and striptease was legalised in the Bantustans, bringing some revenue.

**REPUBLIC OF VENDA**  
1979—1994

None of the nominally independent Bantustans were internationally recognised by any other country than South Africa. They were all dissolved when Apartheid ended in 1994.

**REPUBLIC OF CISKEI**  
1981—1994

Disaffected with the Comorian government, the island of Anjouan seceded in 1997. It rejoined in 2002 after being granted autonomy, only to secede again right before the elected president's five-year term ended. He was ousted by the Comorian Army. The neighbouring island of Mohéli also seceded in 1997, but undramatically rejoined the Comoros in 1998.

“The consequences of colonialism continue to shape Africa’s political landscape, leaving behind a legacy of unrecognized states and contested sovereignties. This post examines declarations of independence in Africa since 1920 that received limited or no international recognition, excluding those that have since gained full statehood.”

[vividmaps.com/former-current-unrecognised-states-africa](http://vividmaps.com/former-current-unrecognised-states-africa)

## White Pass Flags

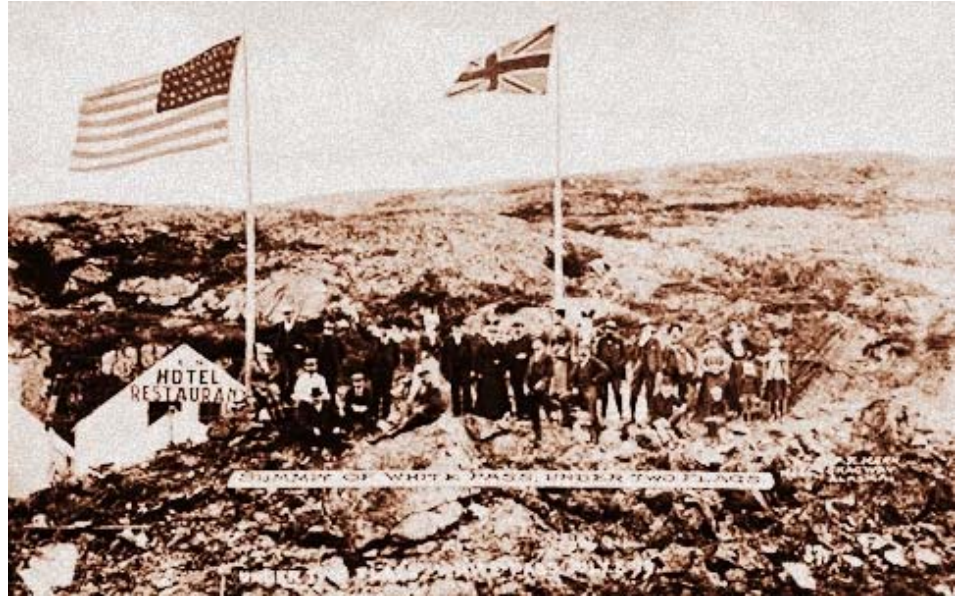
By Ted Kaye

The White Pass trail was one of the two main passes used by prospectors during the Klondike Gold Rush (the other was the Chilkoot).

Built 1898–1900, the narrow-gauge White Pass & Yukon Route railway line ran 107 miles from Skagway, Alaska, through White Pass (on the border between the U.S. and Canada) to Whitehorse, Yukon.

As the first leg was completed, photographer P. E. Kern captured the two national flags—the Stars and Stripes for the U.S. and the Union Jack for Canada.

The railroad became a vital transportation link for gold seekers and after many vicissitudes, it now operates as a tourist passenger line, taking cruise ship passengers the



“Under Two Flags, White Pass, July 5, 1899”.  
[wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM81310](http://wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM81310)

20 miles from Skagway up to White Pass. The train passes “a breathtaking panorama of mountains, glaciers, gorges, waterfalls, tunnels, trestles, and historic sites.”

At White Pass, an array of national/state/provincial/territorial flags now flies prominently, serving as one of the most-photographed sites on the route, 125+ years after flags first flew there.

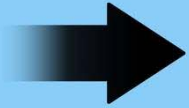


Flags at the border at White Pass draw the attention of White Pass & Yukon Route passengers:  
 U.S., Alaska, British Columbia, Yukon, Canada. [explorenorthblog.com/hiking-canada-usa-border-in-the-white-pass](http://explorenorthblog.com/hiking-canada-usa-border-in-the-white-pass)

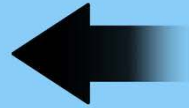
# FUSION OF FLAGS



Romania



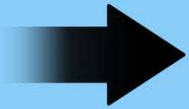
Seychelles



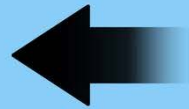
Hungary



Poland



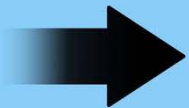
Greenland



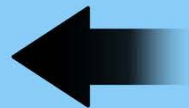
Japan



Costa Rica



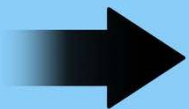
Cabo Verde



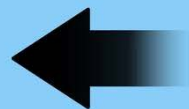
European Union



Indonesia



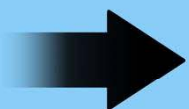
Singapore



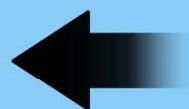
Türkiye



Greece



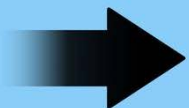
Uruguay



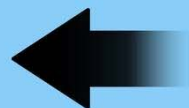
Argentina



Denmark



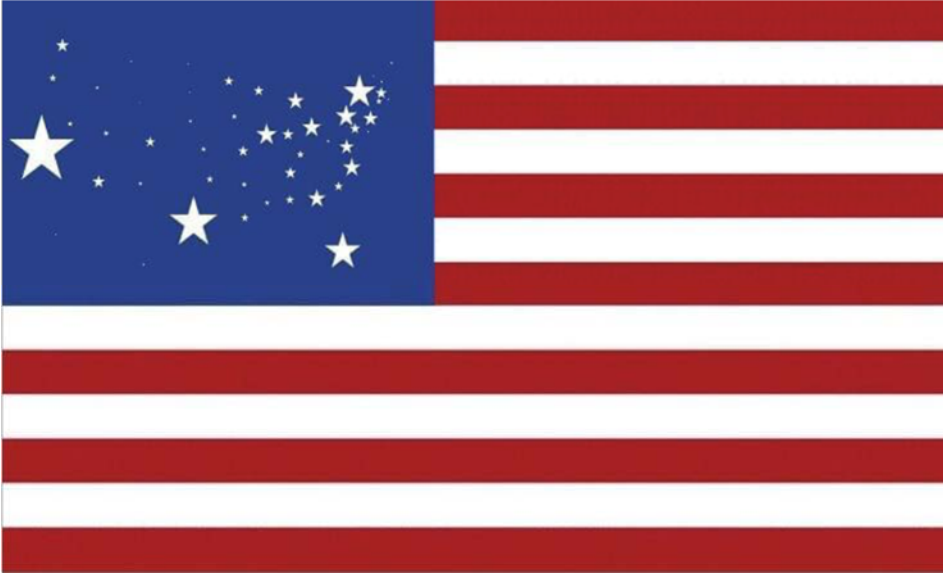
Norway



Finland



## Roundup



United States flag with each star scaled to its state's population and geographical position. (Posted to Facebook by Amazing Maps, sent by Cris Hood-Rosales)

"Greetings from ANATNOM!", writes Jim Croft, who led an attempt to change the flag there in the late 1970s.



Some of the flags representing nations that have contracted with the Canadian Mint in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Canada geese resting on the grass may be about to head off to some of those countries! (Sent by Tom Grauman)



Flag of the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force, carried to the Philippines in WWII, displayed in a Mexico City museum. (Sent by Sig Unander)

Flag of the United States and France, displayed at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. (Sent by Phil Allen, who notes the slight differences in proportions and colors.)



### FLAG JOKE

How is a flag like Santa Claus?

They both hang out at the pole...

**PLEASE SEND US YOUR JOKES!**

## What's that Flag?

By John Cartledge

Identify these flags, and determine the theme that connects them.



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

By Nikita Dudko | Никита Дудко

These Latin American sub-national flags all bear maps.

Congratulations to the solver: John Cartledge.



San Luis Talpa, La Paz, El Salvador.



Amazonas, Venezuela.



Chiquimula Department, Guatemala.



Anzoátegui, Venezuela.



Culebra, Puerto Rico.



Delta Amacuro, Venezuela.



Izabal Department, Guatemala.



## Portland Flag Miscellany



Portland Beer Cap Poster, by iCanvas. Available in canvas, fine art paper, acrylic, and metal (prices vary). [icanvas.com/canvas-print/portland-beer-cap-flag-bpp280#1PC6-40x26](https://icanvas.com/canvas-print/portland-beer-cap-flag-bpp280#1PC6-40x26)



Poster for the 2023 Grand Prix of Portland, by Modern Racing Prints. \$69. [modernracingprints.com/products/2023-grand-prix-of-portland](https://modernracingprints.com/products/2023-grand-prix-of-portland)



Portland Heart Print, by Benton Park Prints \$10.00 [bentonparkprints.com/listing/241237616/portland-portland-heart-portland-oregon](https://bentonparkprints.com/listing/241237616/portland-portland-heart-portland-oregon)

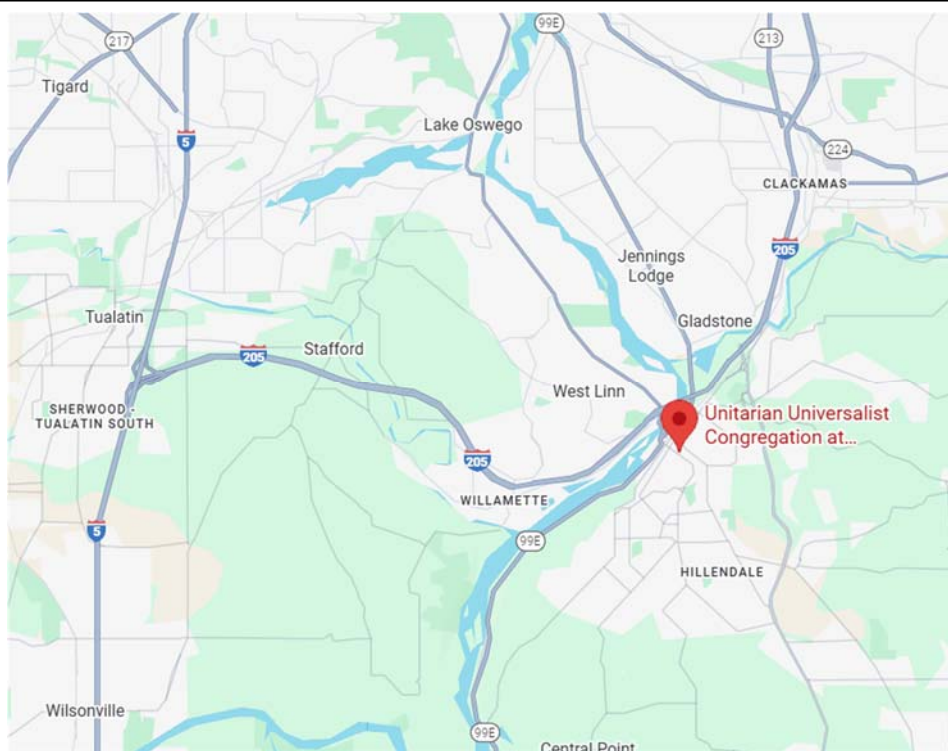
## January Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 PM, Thursday, January 8, hosted by Joyce & William Gifford at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at 710 6th St, Oregon City.

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 [portlandflag.org](https://portlandflag.org).