



The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 117 April 2026

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Hillsboro's New Flag

By Ted Kaye

Portland's neighbor to the west has adopted a flag, anticipating its 150th anniversary celebration in 2026. City leaders enlisted participants in the 2025 Civic Leadership Academy (a 6-week leadership training program in city government and community leadership) for the flag initiative.



Hillsboro, Oregon

The winning design (above) received 70% of the 4,200 votes.

The new flag's field incorporates four rectangular panels of light and dark green evoking an aerial view of Hillsboro's farming heritage. A marigold circle represents the city's historical richness and unity. A blue disk creates a unifying visual presence. The central trillium flower in white, with a yellow center and green leaves, acknowledges the plant's historical significance in the region and honors indigenous communities.

The Hillsboro City Council adopted the flag design on January 6, 2026; it debuted at the "State of the City" event on February 19.

Congratulations to all involved in the design and adoption effort!

With such a short timeframe, they worked quickly. In August, the city invited residents to share their stories, values, and ideas through an online questionnaire; 77 responded. A CLA representative consulted me on process and design concepts.

The 12 CLA members then studied the flag design principles in "Good" Flag, "Bad" Flag, interviewed 100+ representatives from key stakeholder groups, and reviewed questionnaire responses.

With guidance from city graphic designer Jenny Granillo Martinez Beltrán, the CLA team developed three flag concepts which the city presented to the public for a vote.



Never invest in a country that has green in its flag.

—Henry Keswick, former proprietor of *The Spectator*

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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.

March 2026 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our March meeting, hosted Jessie Spillers at his residence, Legends, and streamed via Zoom, 13 PFA members and friends enjoyed three hours of flags and video conversation.

We have now fully embraced hybrid meetings: March 2020 was our last in-person-only meeting as the COVID-19 pandemic hit. We shifted to Zoom-only meetings for a year. As we resumed meeting in person in July 2021, we retained the Zoom participation as well, and have continued that model to this day.

As host, Jessie moderated the session, and gave a presentation on the flag of Iran and the meaning of its design elements, as it is much in the news these days.

Jackson Wakefield (attending with his father, Curt) brought interesting flags, including a framed silk 48-star U.S. flag bought on eBay and a special Goose Hollow flag used for a pub-crawl scavenger hunt.



Jackson Wakefield shows his Goose Hollow flag, a gift from Kells Irish Pub.

William Gifford, joining from Oregon City, held up the latest patch in the smALLFLAGS collection: Rapa Nui (Easter Island), a territory of Chile.

Joyce Gifford chimed in with a report on the process under way to update the flag of Oregon City, citing a current *Trail Times* article quoting Ted Kaye extensively.



Jessie Spillers explains the current national flag of Iran.



William Gifford shows a mini-patch of the flag of Rapa Nui.



Joyce Gifford reports on Oregon City's flag design effort.



Alex Zimmerman shows a flag of the University of Alberta.

Alex Zimmerman, joining from Vancouver, Washington, showed gems he'd recently acquired at a flag store in Edmonton: a (possibly one-off) University of Alberta flag and the flag of the government of the Otemisiwak Métis Nation in Alberta.

Alden Jencks gave Australian and Scottish royal flags to Jackson and delivered an interesting talk on German flag use over time, focusing on the Olympics in 1936 and 1972.

David Koski attended in person (unusually, as he usually is working Thursdays, but he took the week off to celebrate his birthday) and led a robust discussion of the use of AI in flag design, proposing an algorithmic approach.



Alden Jencks talks about flag use and terminology in Germany (see examples in background) through the lens of the 1936 and 1972 Olympics.

Star Pesetsky described her effort to document flag display at Lincoln High School, having learned that when it became an IB (international baccalaureate) school, national flags were distributed to class rooms, perhaps randomly.

Ralph Bartlett, joining from a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria, reported on the March 2026 celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy see p. 5), one of many celebrations this year.



David Koski, in person, explores AI in flag design.



Star Pesetsky describes flags at Lincoln High School.



Ralph Bartlett presents on the 125th anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy.

Continued on next page



Ted Kaye unfurls the “Flag of Honor” a memorial to the victims of the 9/11 attacks in 2001, with their names forming the stripes in red and blue text. He received it at a recent talk at by the director of the Troutdale Historical Society.

Ted Kaye brought a number of newly acquired flag books for attendees to look through, and his most recent flag, a 9/11 memorial flag given out at a recent lecture in Troutdale on the U.S. flag.



John Cartledge (obscured) shows the flag of Moldova, used in recent celebrations in the U.K.

Chris Maddish joined briefly from Pennsylvania, but had to leave due to time zone pressure.

John Cartledge, unfazed by the 4:00 AM U.K. time, joined from the London area to meet the PFA members he’d read about for so long, and described events celebrating the local Romanian community with hand-waver flags of Romania and Moldova.

Our next meeting will be hosted by Ted Kaye (see p. 12). We expect again to welcome our local members as well as far-flung friends.



The Australian Navy's 125th Anniversary

By Ralph G. C. Bartlett

Together with the Commonwealth of Australia, the country's navy is also now 125 years old. It was established on 1 March 1901 as the "Commonwealth Naval Forces", when control of each of Australia's six colonial/state navies was transferred to the commonwealth government. The service became known as the "Royal Australian Navy" on 10 July 1911. Until 1911 it likely flew the Australian Blue Ensign.

From 10 July 1911 to 1 March 1967 the RAN flew the British Navy's White Ensign, then adopted its own official ensign, reversing the blue and white of the national flag.



The RAN Ensign's design is based on the Australian national flag, and formally introduced on 1 March 1967, directly due to Australia's participation in the Vietnam War.

Photo: Master Sergeant David N. Craft



British Royal Navy Ensign 1801–now;
Royal Australian Navy Ensign 1911–67.

Photo: Dear Old Blighty



RAN Ensign since 1 March 1967.

Photo: Australian War Memorial



The RAN badge
(with a Tudor crown for Charles III).



RAN's Queen's Colour
January 1968–September 2022.

Photo: John C. Vaughan, OAM

U.S. Flag Art

A recent exhibition at Portland's Blackfish Gallery (an artist-owned co-op at 938 NW Everett) showed some artworks using the U.S. flag.



Star Mangled Banter
Dede Lucia



Flag of the Administration
Robert Shepard
[calcium and gunpowder on paper]



I Never Said That
Aaron Johansen
[text: "In the administration of
darkness loyalty trumps everything."]

Minnesota's New Flag Confronts ICE

By Alden Jencks

In his now-classic 2015 TED Talk, Roman Mars waxes rhapsodic about the importance of a well-designed flag. The flag, he asserts, should be visually striking, unambiguous in its symbolism, and aesthetically pleasing. Such a flag wins over the city, state, or nation that it represents and becomes a rallying point in times of joy and sadness as well as in times of distress.

Over the course of the last year, the good people of the state of Minnesota redesigned their state flag. And, in recent weeks, the same good people have experienced the *Sturm und Drang* of brutal ICE raids.

Well, in this state of affairs, I ask myself the naïve yet obvious question: “Have the people of Minnesota, in this time of crisis, indeed rallied around their new flag? Has the flag, in the spirit of Roman Mars, made a difference?”

Any answer to my question must, of course, remain tentative and open-ended. But at least a methodology in the pursuit of an answer seems obvious—one has but to peruse photographs of mass rallies (of which thousands exist) and note flag sightings.

As I have done this, I can witness to the fact that, yes, indeed, there have been lots of flags out there. And, I am happy to affirm that



Demonstrators fly the Minnesota flag.

the new Minnesota flag does truly “stand out in a crowd.”

Tentative conclusions? From what I have found, the new flag seems to have been embraced by its people and the future of the new and now battle-tested flag looks bright.



The Minnesota flag waves high.



Demonstrations against ICE in Minnesota in late January 2026.

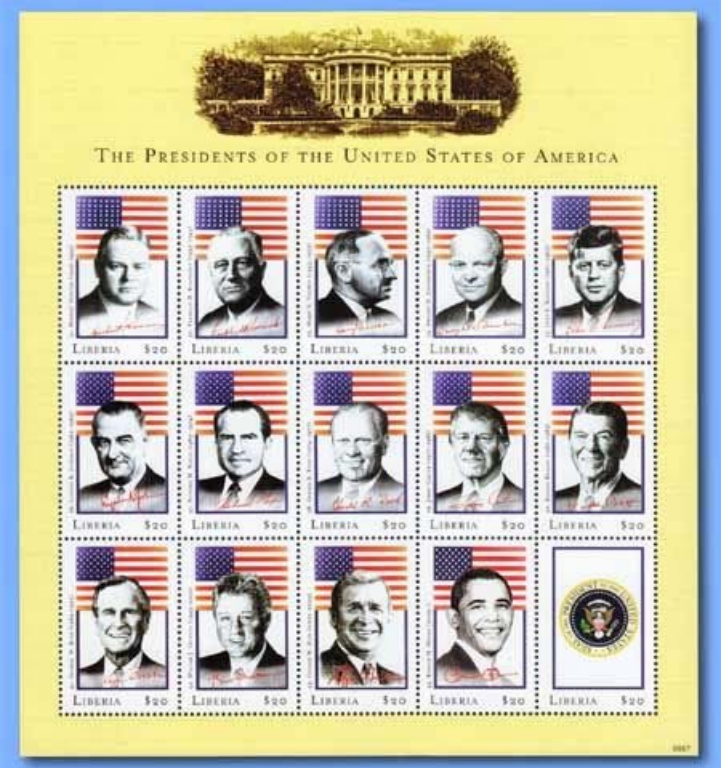
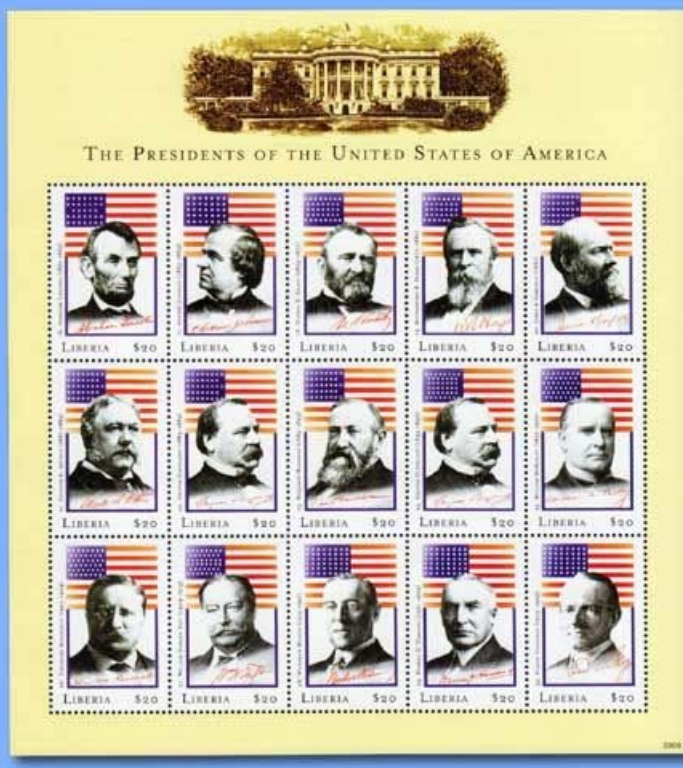
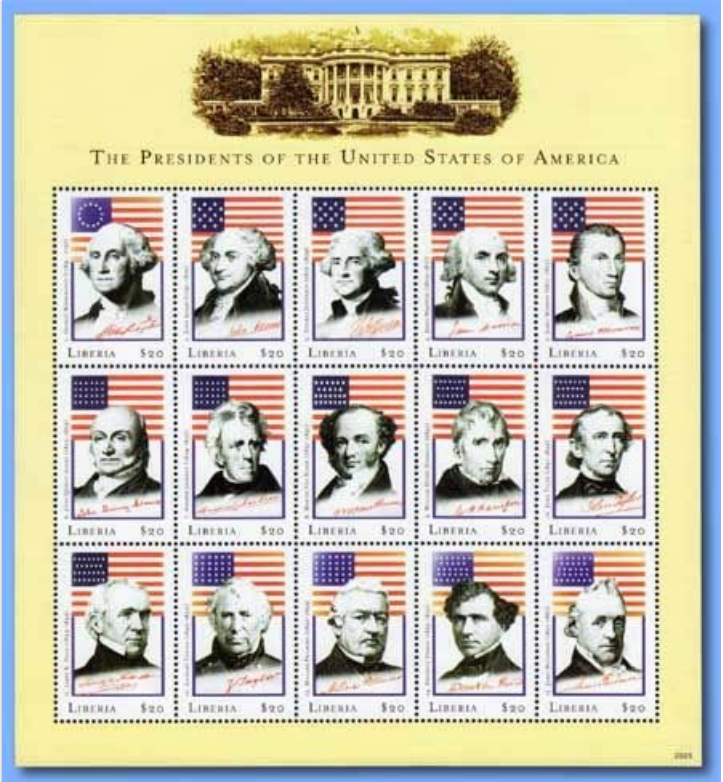
Liberian Stamps Featured U.S. Flags

Every U.S. President from George Washington to Barack Obama - Save \$3.00 - Set of 45

Every American will be proud to own this remarkable mint collection from Liberia. This attractive and informative set includes three mint sheets of 15 stamps, featuring the official portraits of the first 44 U.S. Presidents, each accompanied by their signature and the Presidential Seal.

As a unique historical touch, each President's term is paired with the evolving U.S. flag – from 13 to 50 stars – illustrating more than 220 years of American history in one complete set. Each sheet measures 6½ x 7 inches. (Liberia #2567-2569)

**Liberia Mint U.S. Presidents Collection - Regularly \$26.50
Online Special - Save \$3 - Only \$23.50**



An interesting item found by Phil Allen: A set of Liberian stamps issued in 2009 and bearing the evolving U.S. flag. kenmorestamp.com/topicals/politics/presidents/liberia-presidents-qs73.

Bad Bunny's *Monoestrellada*

By Alden Jencks

Halftime entertainment for this year's Super Bowl (Go Seahawks!) featured the singer Bad Bunny, who came crashing out of our TV screens and into our living-rooms in rapturous glorification of the language and culture of his native Puerto Rico.

In a show which can hardly be characterized by its subtlety, one detail might have escaped the notice of many of its 128 million viewers—to wit: Señor Bunny carried and brandished the pre-1952, pre-Commonwealth flag of Puerto Rico. That is to say, a banner featuring light, celestial blue surrounding the single white star, rather than the darker blue of the present flag, with its navy-blue echo of Old Glory.

Is Bad Bunny being a defiant *hombre malo* and rejecting Commonwealth status? Does he advocate independence? Is he rejecting Bugs Bunny and all the other forced trappings of “the American way of life”?

Bad Bunny's alternate flag seems to challenge his fellow islanders and all the rest of his fellow Americans to engage in some deep soul-searching. What should, after all, the political, cultural and linguistic status of Puerto Rico be?

Bad Bunny exhorts us all to work together in order to arrive at an equitable and, dare I say, true blue, solution.



Bad Bunny (Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio) waves the light-blue version of the flag of Puerto Rico during the halftime show at Super Bowl 60 in February 2026.



Bad Bunny marches with flags of all the nations of the Americas.

Astoria's Nordic Heritage Park

By Ted Kaye

Flag-lovers in visiting the Oregon coast, as I recently did, will enjoy the new Astoria Nordic Heritage Park. It not only flies actual flags, but its signage and iconography uses extensive flag imagery.

The park, on Marine Drive entering downtown Astoria, opened in 2022. It honors the significant contributions of immigrants from the Nordic countries to the city's history and development. They constituted 35% of Astoria's population in 1910. (I understand that "Scandinavian" comprises Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; "Nordic" adds Finland and Iceland and more).

An arch with images of five Nordic flags (in alpha order) is the icon of the park; it lights up at night.



The flags of U.S., Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden fly in Astoria.



Flag images illuminate the park's arch.



Local heritage groups, led by the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association, joined to drive the seven-year effort to raise \$1.5 million to fund the park.



An explanatory sign uses the iconic arch and a QR code for more info.



A stone pillar with a flag is one of many sponsorship opportunities.



A flag-bearing stela welcomes visitors with the Columbia River in view.

Roundup



The flag of Derafsh Kaviani from ancient Iran.
(Mystery solved by Brian Cham)



Minnesota flags fly in solidarity during “ICE-y” times.
(Photo by Dennis Fazio)



Last year Byron C. Loney came across this red ribbon above the U.S. flag. The landowner reported it was his way of honoring veterans who gave their blood defending the flag; he started flying the ribbon as a result of the recent budget cuts to the Veterans Administration.



Mozambique’s 50th Anniversary logo.
(Sent by John Moody)



An inverted flag (image) seen at a Tigard resistance event by David Koski.



An original Oklahoma state flag, spotted in the Territorial History Museum in Guthrie by Gary Flanders.



The flag of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which held a “spring session”, half-conference in Canberra in April 1966, flew outside Australia’s Parliament House in Canberra.
(2010 logo above, source: Ralph Kelly)



Tribal flags at the Flag Plaza in front of the Montana State House.
(courtesy of Jim Croft)

What's that Flag?

By John Cartledge

Identify these flags (using Google image search is cheating!), and determine the theme that connects them (hint: display).



What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

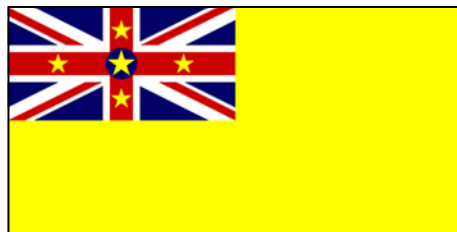
By John Cartledge

The first three flags are official; the others four are unofficial because the territories concerned have no permanent inhabitants and the flags probably have no physical existence. All are related to New Zealand.

Congratulations to the lone solver: Brian Cham (of course, he's a Kiwi).



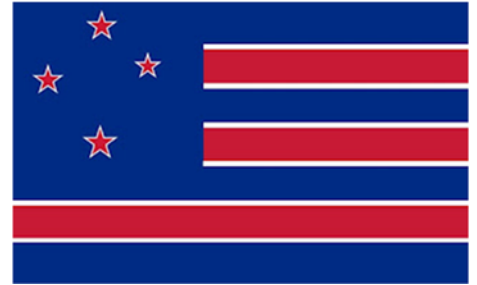
Cook Islands.



Niue.



Tokelau



Bounty Islands



Chatham Islands.



Ross Island Dependency.



Kermadec Islands



Portland Flag Miscellany



Who made this erroneous
Portland flag?

The header is attached to the FLY!!!
(City hall photo by Alden Jencks)



Portland Flag-themed hoodie
sweatshirt, \$45.

Yinzer Shop.

yinzershop.com/products/portland-oregon-flag



Portland pennant, \$28.

Handmade in Nepal, 9"x18" inches
100% felted wool, azo free dye.

lovethroughletterpress.com/products/portland



"Alternate Portland, Oregon Flag", by
The_Math_Hatter on r/vexillology.

A commenter noted that it is the flag
of South Uist, in Scotland's
Outer Hebrides.

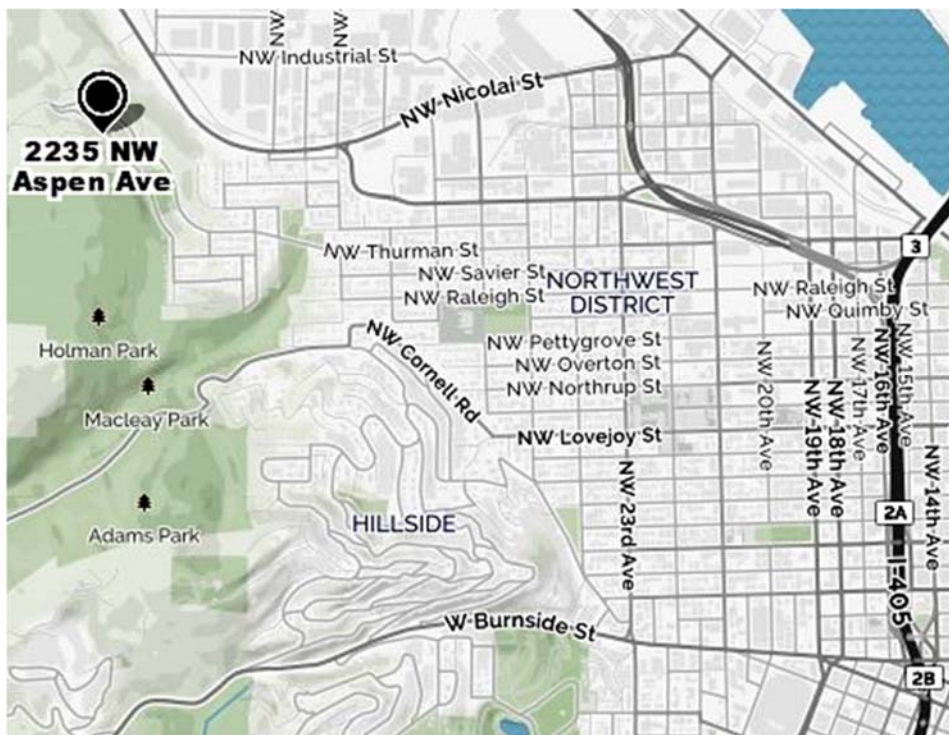
May Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland
Flag Association will be at 7 PM,
Thursday, May 14, at the home of
Ted Kaye: 2235 NW Aspen Ave.,
Portland. See 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 provo-
cative flag-related discussion.

Newcomers and friends from
around the world are welcome!



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