



# Salute to the American Flag

**An educational tribute to the American Flag**

**The Mendota Reporter**  
**Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

## RESPECT FOR THE FLAG

The Flag Code was adopted to protect our nation’s symbol of freedom and accomplishment of those who have served. If you are unfamiliar with the rules of the banner, it’s possible to be unintentionally disrespectful.

Learn the basics from Chapter 4 U.S.C 8, to understand how to honor the flag, per the Government Publishing Office.

- The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.

- The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water or merchandise.

- The flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.

- The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding or drapery.

- The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled or damaged in any way.

- The flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.

- The flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it any mark, insignia, word, figure, design, picture or any drawing of any nature.

- The flag should never



be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying or delivering anything.

- The flag should never be used for advertising

purposes in any manner whatsoever. It should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions or handkerchiefs and the like.

- No part of the flag should ever be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a patch may be affixed to the uni-

form of military personnel, firemen, policemen and members of patriotic organizations.

- The flag, when it is

in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.



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## Mendota's 4th of July Celebration!

Saturday, June 24 • Lake Mendota Park  
Gates open at 6 p.m.

Food vendors - Mendota Lions Club, Taco Guzman, Salinas Mexican Food and Flo's on Pulaski

## 9:30 p.m. - Fireworks Display



Mendota Area  
Chamber of Commerce

Rain Date is July 8



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# FLYING THE FLAG AT NIGHT

According to the United States Flag Code, American flags should be flown from sunrise to sunset.

Lowering the banner at night is considered another way to show our utmost respect to the symbol and those who served. However, with enough illumination, it is perfectly acceptable to represent your patriotism throughout the night.

The flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if well-lit during the hours of darkness. The Congressional Research Service reports that the dignity accorded to the banner is preserved by lighting that prevents its being enveloped in darkness.

If you feel your flag should wave during nighttime hours, it's important to have a sufficient light source to display its recognizable stars and stripes. Here are some ideas to consider when creating a patriotic display.

**Create a Light Source**  
If you're flagpole is

not around an electrical source, you have a few different options to provide light. Remember your budget when you decide which avenue is the best for your yard.

- **Extension cord:** One way to achieve a beam of light is investing in a light bulb rated for outdoor use. Check your local hardware store for a spike-mounted beam so you can easily transport it out of your way during daytime hours. You also could choose a heavy-duty extension cord designed to handle the electricity required for extended periods of time.

- **Outdoor outlet:** If you would rather have a permanent light fixture in your yard to display Old Glory, assistance from a licensed electrician is a must. They can tap into your home's current electrical source and install an approved outdoor outlet.

- **Solar lights:** Modern

solar power is incredibly efficient as a light source; just be sure it has the power and durability to maintain its shine overnight.

### All-Weather Flag

If you intend to wave your flag 24 hours, it's crucial to have a banner that can withstand the extended use and inclement-outdoor elements. According to the U.S. Flag Code, "The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed." An all-weather flag provides you with a banner that is made of high-quality materials while being able to flow in the breeze.

During your search, look for flags made from a nylon material for extra-long use or heavyweight cotton to maintain a traditional appearance while boosting durability.



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## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

In classrooms across the country, millions of students partake in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Unfortunately, many have merely memorized the words without understanding the significance it has to their country and freedom. If you are a parent or mentor, it's important to educate our youth about its significance.

### A Brief History

The Pledge of Allegiance gained its first major publicity through an official program called the National Public Schools Celebration of Columbus Day. It was September 8, 1892 when the prose was printed in the Youth's Companion leaflet and distributed to schools throughout the country.

While it has seen a few revisions since its original form was penned by Francis Bellamy, it became a staple in classrooms while remaining unrecognized by Congress. According to the American Legion, it wasn't until 1942, when the Pledge was officially included in the United States Flag Code and 1945 when the official name of the Pledge of Allegiance was adopted.

### Its Importance

When discussing the Pledge of Allegiance with younger children, explain that it is an opportunity to display their loyalty as a citizen to our country. It should be considered an act of unity for students to stand together and pay their respect to America's banner.

Children should be encouraged to learn more about the meaning of the Pledge, rather than only recite the words. It is intended to inspire curiosity about the country's history and help build a stronger sense of patriotism.

### Proper Etiquette

Much like the National Anthem, there is a proper way to show your respect to the flag during the Pledge. Here are the steps, from the U.S. Flag Code.

- The pledge is to be recited by standing at attention;
- Face the flag and place the right hand over the heart;
- People in uniform must face the flag, remain silent and take the military salute; and
- Those not in uniform must remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand, place it on their left shoulder, in such a way that their right hand is over the heart.

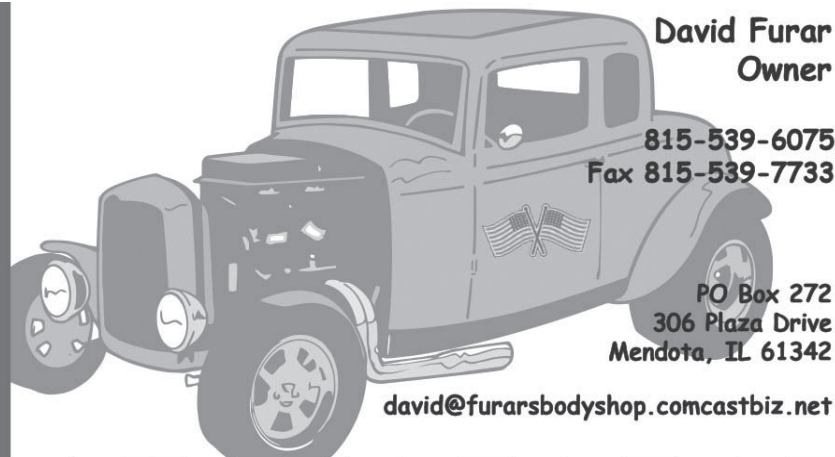


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## RESTORE AND REPAIR YOUR FLAG

Light damage or a dirty appearance doesn't always mean a flag should be retired.

In fact, the Flag Code encourages banners to be cleaned or mended when necessary. Before committing to a retirement ceremony, try to prolong a flag's duty with maintenance or repairs.

While it is disrespectful for a flag to touch the ground, it can happen during regular raising and lowering. It's important to eliminate the dirt or grime immediately to avoid a lasting stain.

If you are unsure on how to properly wash your American flag, don't hesitate to visit a local-dry cleaner. Most experts can analyze the current condition and decide a best course of action. It's important to follow their cleaning instructions, as improper techniques may cause irreversible damage to your banner.

Here are a couple of ways to prolong the life of your symbol of American tradition and heritage.

### At-Home Washing

For those who can clean a flag without the help of a professional service, special care

should be administered.

If possible, reach out to the manufacturer for specific cleaning instructions.

For most materials, it's easy to get great results by hand-washing your banner in cold water, with a mild detergent. Make sure to lay the flag flat while it dries and avoid hanging or folding it while wet. This will help its recognizable colors stay in place without bleeding into one another.

Once you have completed the cleaning, inspect it to ensure the filth has been removed and there are not issues like holes or frays.

Routine cleaning is important to maintain and examine the integrity of a flag as elements like dirt, salt and air pollutants can have a negative impact.

### Repair

If you notice small tears in the fabric of your banner, immediate repair it to limit the amount of damage. A small imperfection can be exposed during rippling winds or poor



weather conditions.

This correction is usually best left to the experts as frequent modifications can alter the appearance and size, leading it to a state where retirement is necessary.

Search for a flag-repair facility in your area or seek assistance from patriotic organizations to find a professional.

## PRESIDENTIAL FACTS

- George Washington was the only president to be elected unanimously. \*\*\*

- John Adams was the first president to live in the White House, then known as Executive Mansion. \*\*\*

- James Monroe's presidential inauguration in 1817 was the first to be held outdoors. His salary was \$25,000.

\*\*\*

- John Quincy Adams regularly swam nude in the Potomac River. He was the first president to be photographed. \*\*\*

- Andrew Jackson was the first president to have been a prisoner of war. He was also the only president who served in both the revolutionary war and War of 1812.

\*\*\*

President James Polk was baptized as a Methodist one week before his death. \*\*\*

- The White House's first library, bathtub and kitchen stove were installed while Millard Fillmore was president. After his term, he became the chancellor of the University of Buffalo. \*\*\*

- Abraham Lincoln was

the first president to die by assassination. The contents of his pockets on the night of his assassination weren't revealed until Feb. 12, 1976. They contained two pairs of spectacles, a chamois lens cleaner, an ivory and silver pocketknife, a large white Irish linen handkerchief

with "A. Lincoln" embroidered in red, a gold quartz watch fob without a watch, a new silk-lined leather wallet containing a pencil, a Confederate five dollar bill and news clippings. \*\*\*

- Of the five presidents who served in the Civil War,


Rutherford B. Hayes was the only one wounded in combat. \*\*\*

- Grover Cleveland answered the White House phone personally. The Baby Ruth candy bar was named after his baby daughter, Ruth. He was the only president married in the White House.


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## A Historical Look at the American Flag



**Elizabeth Griscom Ross**  
**"Betsy" Ross**  
**1752-1836**

This Betsy Ross Flag is well known and well-loved in America and around the world as the first American flag. Her descendants claimed she made (not designed) the first U.S. flag, using a circular arrangement of five-pointed stars. Evidence shows that a congressman, Francis Hopkinson, is the person responsible for its design.

**The First Official United States Flag**  
**June 14, 1777**

The 13-star flag became official as a result of the congressional action that took place on June 14, 1777. Evidence exists pointing to Congressman Francis Hopkinson to be responsible for its design. Each star and stripe represented a Colony of which there were thirteen, (in order of ratification: Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Maine, Virginia, New York, North Carolina), united nearly one year earlier by the Declaration of Independence. The only president to serve under this flag was George Washington (1789-1797).

**The Star Spangled Banner**  
**2nd Official U.S. Flag**  
**May 1, 1795**

The 15-star flag became official when Vermont and Kentucky were admitted into the union. The 15-star, 15-stripe flag was authorized by the Flag Act of Jan. 13, 1794, adding two stars and two stripes. This was the only official flag to have 15 stripes. The stars were slightly tilted. The five presidents who served under this flag were George Washington (1789-1797), John Adams (1797-1801), Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809), James

Madison (1809-1817) and James Monroe (1817-1825).

**20 Star Flag**  
**3rd Official U.S. Flag**  
**April 13, 1818**

Congress realized that adding another star and stripe for each new state was impractical. So they passed the Flag Act of 1818, which returned the flag design to 13 stripes. This 20-star flag became the official United States flag in April 13, 1818. The five stars were added for the admission of Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana and Mississippi. There was only one president to serve under this flag, James Monroe (1817-1825).

**21 Star Flag**  
**4th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1819**

One star was added for the admission of Illinois and lasted for one year. The only president to serve under this flag was James Monroe (1817-1825).

**23 Star Flag**  
**5th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1820**

The 23-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1820. Two stars were added for the admission of Alabama (the 22nd state on Dec. 14, 1819) and Maine (the 23rd state on March 15, 1820), and was to last for two years. The only president to serve under this flag was James Monroe (1817-1825).

**24 Star Flag**  
**6th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1822**

The 24-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1822. A star was added for the admission of Missouri (Aug. 10, 1821) and was to last for 14 years. The presidents who served under this flag included James Monroe (1817-1825), John Quincy Adams (1825-1829) and Andrew Jackson (1829-1837).

**25 Star Flag**  
**7th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1836**

The 25-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1836. A star was added for the admission of Arkansas (June 15, 1836) and was to last for just one year. The two presidents to serve under this flag were Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) and Martin Van Buren (1837-1841).

**26 Star Flag**  
**8th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1837**

The 26-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1837. A star was added for the admission of Michigan (Jan. 26, 1837) and was to last for eight years. The four presidents to serve under this flag were Martin Van Buren (1837-1841), William Henry Harrison (1841), John Tyler (1841-1845) and James Polk (1845-1849).

**27 Star Flag**  
**9th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1845**

The 27-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1845. A star was added for the admission of Florida and was to last for only one year. The only president to serve under this flag was James Polk (1845-1849).

**28 Star Flag**  
**10th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1846**

The 28-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1846. A star was added for the admission of Texas (Dec. 29, 1845) and was to last only one year. The only president to serve under this flag was James Polk (1845-1849).

**29 Star Flag**  
**11th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1847**

The 29-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1847. A star was added for the admission of Iowa (Dec. 28, 1846) and was to last for only one year. The only president to serve under this flag was James Polk (1845-1849).

**30 Star Flag**  
**12th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1848**

The 30-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1848, and was added for the admission of Wisconsin (May 29, 1848). It was to last three years. The three presidents to serve under this flag were James Polk (1845-1849), Zachary Taylor (1849-1850) and Millard Fillmore (1850-1853).

**31 Star Flag**  
**13th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1851**

The 31-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1851. A star was added for the admission of California (Sept. 9, 1850) and was to last for seven years. The three presidents who served under this flag were Millard Fillmore (1850-1853), Franklin Pierce (1853-1857) and James Buchanan (1857-1861).

**32 Star Flag**  
**14th Official U.S. Flag**  
**July 4, 1858**

The 32-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1858. A star was added for the admission of Minnesota (May 11, 1858) and was to last for just one year. The only president to serve under this flag was James Buchanan (1857-1861).

## A Historical Look at the American Flag

### **33 Star Flag 15th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1859**

The 33-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1859. A star was added for the admission of Oregon (Feb. 14, 1859) and was to last for two years. The two presidents to serve under this flag were James Buchanan (1857-1861) and Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865).

### **34 Star Flag 16th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1861**

The 34-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1861. A star was added for the admission of Kansas (Jan. 29, 1861) and was to last for two years. The only president to serve under this flag was Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865).

### **35 Star Flag 17th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1863**

The 35-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1863. A star was added for the admission of West Virginia (June 20, 1863) and was to last for two years. The two presidents to serve under this flag were Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865) and Andrew Johnson (1865-1869).

### **36 Star Flag 18th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1865**

The 36-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1865. A star was added for the admission of Nevada (Oct. 31, 1864) and was to last for two years. The only president to serve under this flag was Andrew Johnson (1865-1869).

### **37 Star Flag 19th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1867**

The 37-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1867. A star was added for the admission of Nebraska (March 1, 1867) and was to last for 10 years. The three presidents who served under this flag were Andrew Johnson (1865-1869), Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) and Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881).

### **38 Star Flag 20th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1877**

The 38-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1877. A star was added for the admission of Colorado (Aug. 1, 1876) and was to last for 13 years. The five presidents to serve under this flag were Rutherford B. Hayes (1877-1881), James A. Garfield (1881), Chester A. Arthur (1881-1885), Grover Cleveland (1885-1889) and Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893).

### **43 Star Flag 21st Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1890**

The 43-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1890. Five stars were added for the admission of North Dakota (the 39th state on Nov. 2, 1889), South Dakota (the 40th state on Nov. 2, 1889), Montana (the 41st state on Nov. 8, 1889), Washington (the 42nd state on Nov. 11, 1889) and Idaho (the 43rd state on July 3, 1890) and was to last for just one year. The only president to serve under this flag was Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893).

### **44 Star Flag 22nd Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1891**

The 44-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1891. A star was added for the admission of Wyoming (July 10, 1890) and was to last for five years. The presidents to serve under this flag were Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) and Grover Cleveland (1893-1897).

### **45 Star Flag 23rd Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1896**

The 45-star flag became the official U.S. flag on July 4, 1896. A star was added for the admission of Utah on Jan. 4, 1896, and was to last for 12 years. The presidents to serve under this flag were Grover Cleveland (1893-1897), William McKinley (1897-1901) and Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909).

### **46 Star Flag 24th Official U.S. Flag July 4, 1908**

On July 4, 1908, the U.S. flag grew to 46 stars with the addition to the Union of Oklahoma (Nov. 16, 1907). Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) and William H. Taft (1909-1913) served as president under this flag, which was the official flag for four years.

### **48 Star Flag 25th Official U.S. Flag**

### **July 4, 1912**

The U.S. flag grew to 48 stars on July 4, 1912, with the addition of New Mexico (Jan. 6, 1912) and Arizona (Feb. 14, 1912). Executive order of President Taft dated June 24, 1912, established the proportions of the flag and provided for arrangement of the stars in six horizontal rows of eight each, a single point of each star to be upward. This flag was official for 47 years, longer than any other flag, through two World Wars and the emergence of the United States of America as the leading nation of the world. Eight presidents served under this flag, from William H. Taft (1909-1913) to Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961).

### **49 Star Flag 26th Official U.S. Flag Jan. 3, 1959**

The first 49-star flag was made in the Army Quartermaster Depot in Philadelphia and was used in the White House ceremony when President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the proclamation admitting Alaska to the Union. The 49-star flag was official for only one year, until July 4, 1960, when Hawaii achieved its statehood and the 50-star flag was born. President Eisenhower was the only president to serve under this flag.

### **50 Star Flag 27th Official U.S. Flag Aug. 21, 1959**

Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated Aug. 21, 1959, provided for the arrangement of the stars in nine rows of stars staggered horizontally and 11 rows of stars staggered vertically. This is the current flag of the United States. Hawaii was admitted as the 50th state on Aug. 21, 1959. The 27th flag of the United States became the official flag on July 4, 1960. The presidents that have served under this flag are Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961), John F. Kennedy (1961-1963), Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969), Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974), Gerald R. Ford (1974-1977), Jimmy Carter (1977-1981), Ronald W. Reagan (1981-1989), George Bush (1989-1993), William J. Clinton (1993-2001), George W. Bush (2001-2009), Barack Obama (2009-2017), Donald Trump (2017-2021) and currently Joseph Biden.

## WHERE TO SEE HISTORICAL FLAGS

The American flag has a rich history. The stories behind some historical banners offer humbling perspectives of a growing nation. Fortunately, many of the most famous flags are still on display in facilities throughout the country.

Check out a few of the locations open to the public for citizens to pay their respects and witness the flags that hold a special place in history, in person.

### **Star-Spangled Banner National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.**

The flag considered the source of lyrics which would become our National Anthem is proudly on display in D.C. The Star-Spangled Banner was penned by Francis Scott



Key after being held captive during the War of 1812. Key was inspired by a lone United States flag flying over Fort McHenry after a failed invasion by the British.

The banner on display features 15 stars and is considered one of the most meaningful banners in the country's history.

### **9/11 Flag**

#### **9/11 Memorial and Museum, New York City, N.Y.**

September 11, 2001 will forever hold a heart-wrenching place in our nation's history. Terrorist attacks would claim the lives of thousands of citizens and first responders and destroy some of the most famous buildings in the world.

An iconic image from the destruction showed three firemen raising the American flag over the wreckage of the World Trade Center. Considered lost for many years, it was eventually recovered in 2016, when it was donated to the 9/11 Museum and Memorial, where it rests today.

### **13-Star Flag**

#### **Historical Society, New London, Ct.**

The Nathaniel Shaw Flag, which was named after its original owner, is one of the few remaining authentic 13-star flags flown during the American Revolution. While the banner has required restoration to appear presentable, it gives us a peek at the humble origins of our nation.



*Flag that flew on the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor.*

### **USS Arizona**

#### **Arizona State Capitol Museum**

The flag displayed over the USS Arizona when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, forcing us into World War II is showcased at the Arizona Capitol Museum in Phoenix. Artifacts retrieved from the sunken ship also are featured.



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# RETIRING A BATTERED FLAG

When you deem a flag too battered to be displayed honorably, retirement requires a respectful ceremony.

Laying this symbol of America to rest is a humbling experience and should be done with care. The Flag Code expresses that the preferred way of disposal is through a dignified manner, preferably burning.

Do you know how to tell when your banner is ready for a respectful retirement? Consider these factors to determine when and how to release Old Glory from its display.

### **The Right Time**

Before assuming your flag is due for a replacement, it's important to inspect it carefully. Many times, exposure to outdoor elements takes a toll on a flag's cleanliness and can make it appear too weathered to continue to serve. However, when its physical integrity is intact, a simple washing can bring it back to life.

When analyzing the integrity of your flag's material, look beyond easily cleaned obstructions. You will know it is beyond repairable when you notice prominent holes or frayed edges



that will alter its size and texture after mending.

### **Who is Authorized to Retire a Flag?**

The Flag Code doesn't restrict anyone from retiring a banner, so use your best judgment to choose someone who will take the responsibility seriously. Here are some ideas to consider if you plan to conduct a ceremony, from the Independence Hall Association.

- One flag should be used in the ceremony to represent all banners included in the retirement service. The remainder

of symbols should be collectively incinerated;

- The solemn service should be conducted outdoors, in conjunction with a campfire program;

- The ceremony should include two color guards, one representing the flag in use and another for the banner to be retired; and

- A leader of the service should call the group to attention, order a salute, lead the Pledge of Allegiance, order the flag retired and remain at the scene until the fire is safely extinguished and ashes are burned.

### **Other Options**

Of course, the preferred method of a dignified retirement is by burning. If the experience is out of your comfort zone, however, a good avenue to seek is your local Veterans of Foreign Wars club or American Legion. These knowledgeable experts can point you in the right direction of a flag-retirement service or host a ceremony to ensure it is done properly and respectfully.

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# FLYING THE FLAG AT HALF-STAFF



It has been a long tradition in our country to fly the American flag at half-staff during times of national mourning. This signifies a monumental loss has occurred in the country and citizens should reflect and honor the lives of who perished. There are certain steps you must take before properly displaying your flag at half-staff.

- Before finding its position in half-staff, a flag must be briefly hoisted to the peak of

its staff for an instant.

- After it has peaked, slowly lower the banner into the half-staff position.
- Before a flag is being taken down for the day, it must be once again raised to its peak before being lowered.

### Official Proclamation

While flying the flag at half-staff has been a symbol of grief for centuries, it wasn't until March 1, 1954, that a proclamation regard-

ing proper usage was issued. According to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, President Dwight Eisenhower decreed:

- The flag will fly at half-staff for 30 days at all federal buildings throughout the nation after the death of a president or former president.
- It will fly 10 days at half-staff after the death of the vice president, current or

retired chief of the Supreme Court or the speaker of the House of Representatives

- In the case of a death of a governor of a state, the flag will be flown half-staff at all federal facilities in their state from the day of death until interment.
- The president may order the flag to be flown at half-staff during tragic events of the death of foreign dignitaries or former officials.

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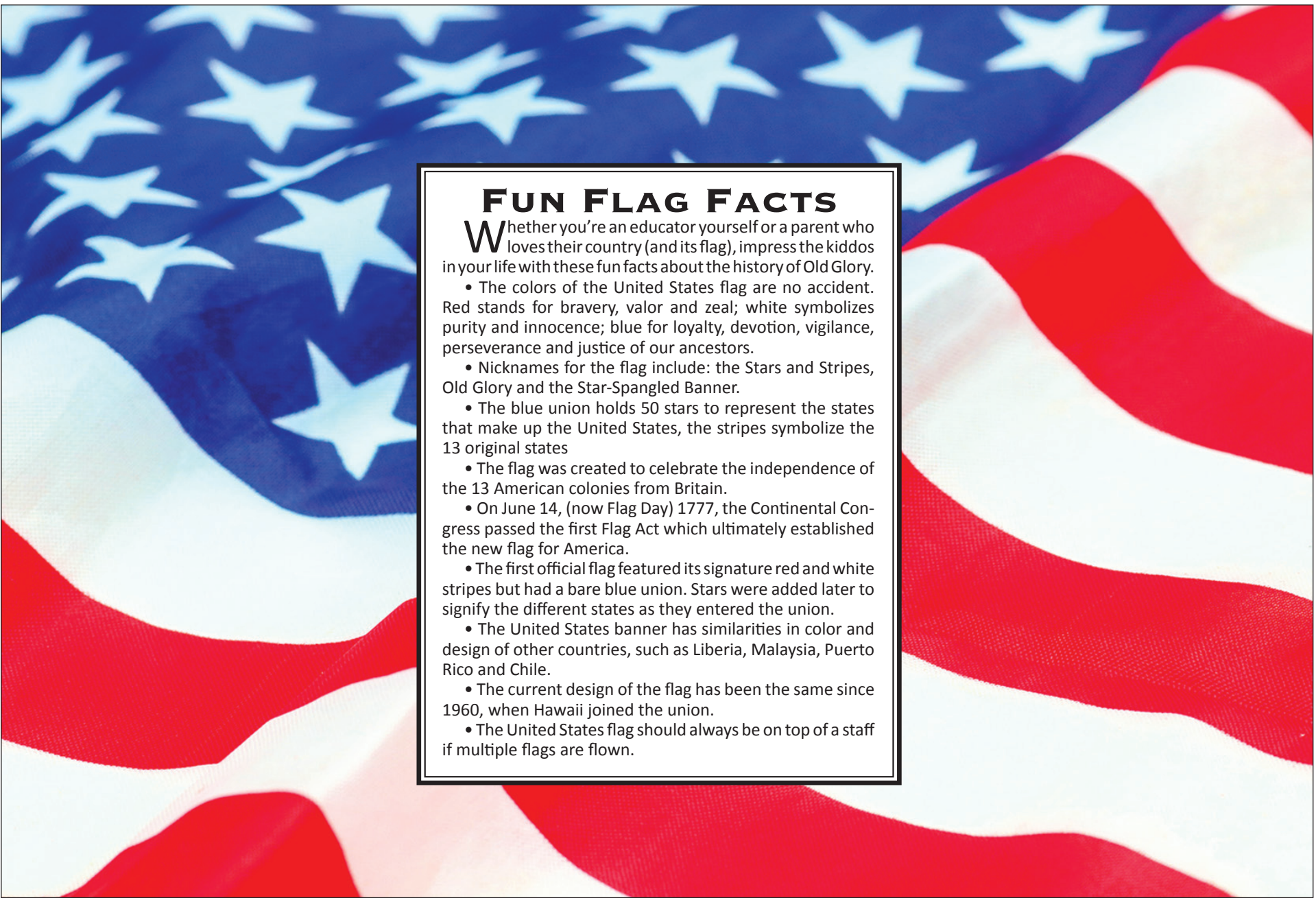
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### FUN FLAG FACTS

Whether you're an educator yourself or a parent who loves their country (and its flag), impress the kiddos in your life with these fun facts about the history of Old Glory.

- The colors of the United States flag are no accident. Red stands for bravery, valor and zeal; white symbolizes purity and innocence; blue for loyalty, devotion, vigilance, perseverance and justice of our ancestors.
- Nicknames for the flag include: the Stars and Stripes, Old Glory and the Star-Spangled Banner.
- The blue union holds 50 stars to represent the states that make up the United States, the stripes symbolize the 13 original states
- The flag was created to celebrate the independence of the 13 American colonies from Britain.
- On June 14, (now Flag Day) 1777, the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act which ultimately established the new flag for America.
- The first official flag featured its signature red and white stripes but had a bare blue union. Stars were added later to signify the different states as they entered the union.
- The United States banner has similarities in color and design of other countries, such as Liberia, Malaysia, Puerto Rico and Chile.
- The current design of the flag has been the same since 1960, when Hawaii joined the union.
- The United States flag should always be on top of a staff if multiple flags are flown.

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**Flag Day is  
June 14!**

# CELEBRATING FLAG DAY

“The flag of the United States be 13 alternate stripes red and white, that the Union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation.” This resolution by John Adams was adopted by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777, placing our nation’s banner in the spotlight as a respected symbol.

As new states gained independence and entered the United States, the number of stars and stripes increased. However, in 1818, Congress enacted a law to restore the original 13 stripes and only include additional stars to symbolize incoming states. A century after enacting the Flag Resolution, the first Flag Day was observed on June 14, 1877.

While Woodrow Wilson proclaimed a day of recognition for the banner in 1916, it wasn’t until 1949 when regulators officially designated June 14 as Flag Day, a national day of observance. Do you know how you are going to celebrate this year? Consider sharing the occasion with your peers and loved ones.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

June 14 is a day to celebrate the historic symbolism of our nation’s banner. You can do your part by donating your time or resources to benefit the occasion.

Reach out to local leaders to inquire about volunteering to help raise flags



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throughout your community. Many businesses and public parks in your area may need help acquiring and displaying the banner. You also can offer to donate flags to ensure there are enough throughout the area.

Consider hosting a community event inviting peers and neighbors to celebrate the day. Make it an event where others reflect on what the flag means to them and praise the active or retired

service people in their lives.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

If you are an educator, Flag Day is an awesome opportunity to teach your students about their responsibility to respect the symbol. Take the following ideas from the National Education Association when developing a positive lesson plan.

• **History of Flag Day:** Discuss the

origins and importance of the holiday.

• **Changes to the flag:** The banner hasn’t always appeared the same, its history is an interesting and entertaining story to show students how the country has evolved; and

• **Overview of the War of 1812:** Explain how the significance of this conflict had in shaping the Star-Spangled Banner and its connection to the flag.