



The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

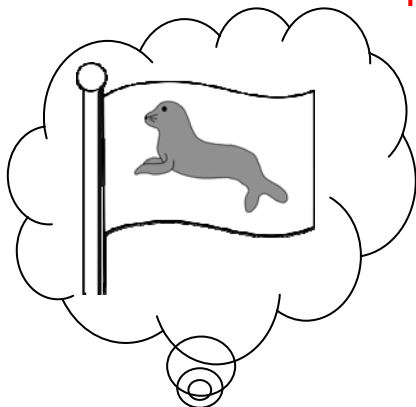
“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 67 December 2017

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www.portlandflag.org



SEAL ON A BEDSHEET

A term, intended to be derogatory, describing any such flag that bears a seal (as opposed to another form of charge) upon a plain field.

—FOTW's Dictionary of Vexillology

A Theory of City SOB Flags

By Ted Kaye

We're tracking over 100 city flag re-design efforts on the PFA website, and I've been involved in many of them personally (see p. 8).

When describing these in presentations at the recent ICV in London and the NAVA meeting in Boston, I've received insights from fellow vexillologists.

For me, the most interesting insight involves a confusion about just what a city flag represents.

It appears that in many cases, a city's leaders confuse a) representing the *city government* with a flag and b) representing the *city as a whole* with a flag. That is, does the flag represent the city's government—mayor, council, bureaus, employees, OR does it represent the entire city—all of its residents, its institutions, its territory? This is similar to a country's distinction between a state flag and a civil flag.

This confusion may help explain the predominance of city seals—the ultimate symbol of the city government—on city flags.

Here's another example of that confusion. Portland has been

known as “The City of Roses” for more than a century. The “city” represented by that motto is the entire city, not just its government. However, in the past few years, city government vehicles have changed to sport a new motto: “Portland—the City that Works”. Now, that's not a commentary on the industriousness of Portlanders. It's a promotion of the dedication of city government employees.

Cities that believe the flag represents the city government may be more likely to adopt an SOB—a “seal on a bedsheet”, using the city government's symbol, the seal, rather than a simpler and more compelling design. Thoughts, readers?

We meet the second Thursday of odd-numbered months. Please mark your 2018 calendars for PFA meetings at 7:00 PM at the following dates/locations:

| | |
|---------|-------------------------|
| 1/11/18 | John Schilke |
| 3/8/18 | Patrick Genna |
| 5/10/18 | Jessie Spillers |
| 7/12/18 | Ted Kaye |
| 9/13/18 | Joyce & William Gifford |
| 11/8/18 | Dave Anchel |

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

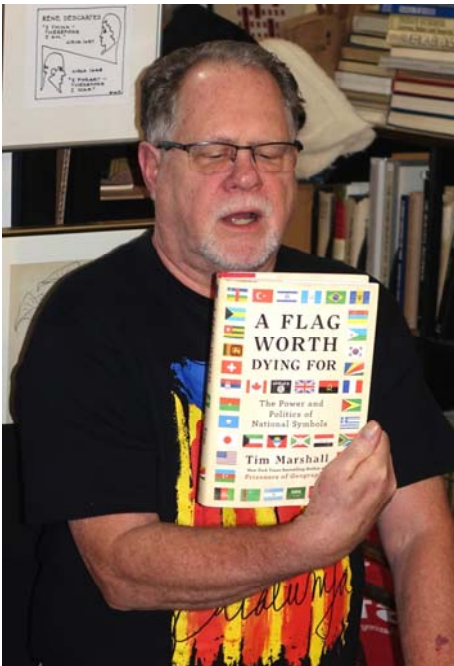
If you wish to compliment the editor, or to contribute in the future, contact Ted Kaye at 503-223-4660 or editor@portlandflag.org. If you wish to complain, call your mother.

November 2017 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our November meeting, hosted by David Ferriday, 15 PFA members enjoyed an eclectic 3+hour evening of flags. In the usual role of the host, David moderated the discussion.

He began by discussing his flag designs, pointing out many adorning his studio walls, then described his “trooping” of primary and complementary colors on a flag.

Mike Hale gave a book review of *A Flag Worth Dying For*, out in July.



Mike Hale gives an enthusiastic review of *A Flag Worth Dying For*.



The entryway to David Ferriday's studio welcomes PFA members.



David Ferriday shows a design demonstrating primary and complementary colors.

Max Liberman continued his exploration of flags for the queen of Canada, including the use of maple leaves and crown—as well as in orders and insignia.

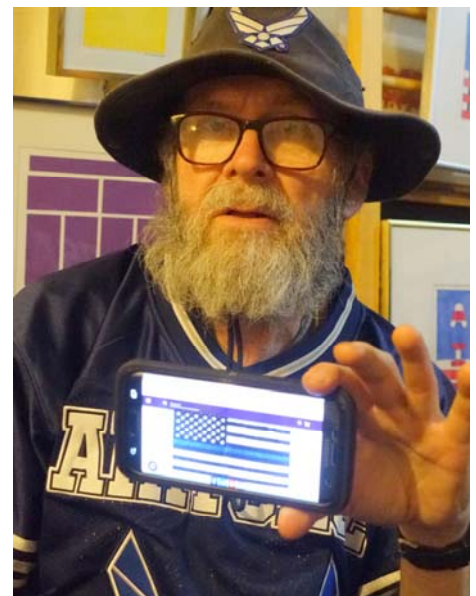
Fred Paltridge led an extensive discussion of the “thin blue line flag”, spurring inquiry about its origin and variants, and its co-opting by groups with agendas beyond

supporting the police. The flag merchants added their perspectives on sales of the variants.

Dave Anchel shared the flag from his stepson's bar mitzvah, a flag used in Mexico celebrating Columbus Day, and a marking for bike lanes using the Portland flag.



Max Liberman shows a proposal for a flag for the queen of Canada.



Fred Paltridge explores the support-the-police Thin Blue Line Flag.



Dave Anchel explains a bike lane with the Portland flag. (See p. 12)

He told the story of globe-circumnavigating Saudis on Harleys buying \$200 of flag merchandise during the August solar eclipse.

Ted Kaye brought his usual file of clippings and many flags and related items to give away. He then displayed his collection of flags representing schools and universities, including the U.S. Naval Academy (Annapolis) and the U.S. Military Academy (West Point).

John Niggley followed with his experience at National Capital Flag providing West Point with a flag for the Corps of Cadets.

Patrick Genna distributed a handout on the flag Eritrea—the “three triangles flag”, and discussed its predecessor (the EPLF) and its unusually-oriented star.

Scott Mainwaring reported on NAVA 51 in Boston and the results of the annual business meeting votes electing a new board and



Patrick Genna waxes enthusiastic over the flag of Eritrea, and explains its origin in the EPLF flag.



Ted Kaye displays the flag of the USNA Brigade of Midshipman, which he had acquired in honor of his father, USNA '53.



Scott Mainwaring shares Whitney Smith's 1978 proposal for an Antarctica flag in International Orange.



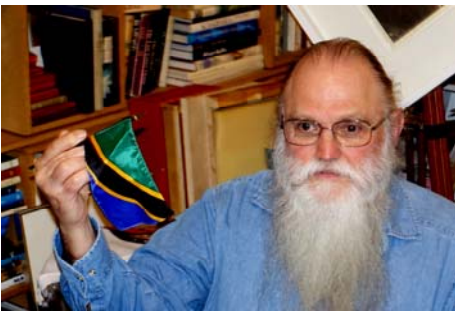
John Niggley finds the flag of the USMA Corps of Cadets.

updating the bylaws to allow universal voting (he represented the PFA), and showed some of the flags he sold there under the trade name VexiCool Flags, including Whitney Smith's 1978 proposed flag for Antarctica. He's also now tracking over 100 U.S. city flag change efforts on our “Municipal Flag Improvement” web page.

Continued on next page



Joyce Gifford brings up the finalists in the Burlington, Vermont, flag effort.



William Gifford gives away 4"x6" flags as part of a guessing game.

Joyce Gifford followed Ted Kaye's report on Burlington, Vermont (see p. 8), showing the seven finalists and eliciting comments.

William Gifford gave away 4"x6" flags, asking each person to take one unseen from a box, then identify it. The group's consensus was correct every time, even if some individuals faltered. He described Oregon City's new ban on "feather flags", learning that Mike Hale had invented them when running Elmer's Flag & Banner.

In honor of Veterans Day, Michael Orelove (in camouflage uniform and medals) and Kathleen Forrest



In honor of Veterans Day (formerly Armistice Day), Michael Orelove and Kathleen Forrest unfurl her Poppy Flag, a reference to the 1915 poem *In Flanders Fields*.

displayed a U.S. flag certified as having flown over the USS *Arizona* (for WW2) and showed a Poppy Flag (for WW1).

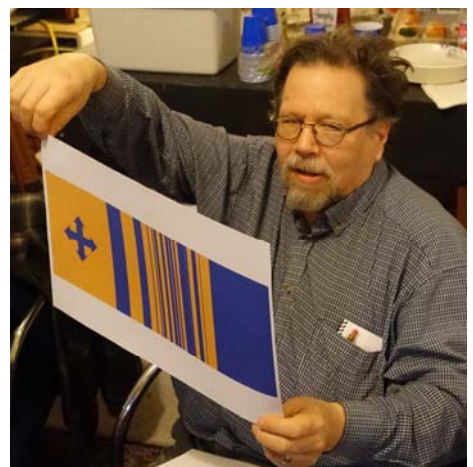
Ken Dale also commemorated the upcoming Veterans Day, with a recitation of the Gettysburg Address and his reminiscences as an officer commanding a Titan II missile launch group in the 1960s at the height of the Cold War.



Ken Dale recites the Gettysburg Address and recalls the Cold War.

David Koski showed a graphic depicting all of the aspect ratios used by the 243 countries and dependencies listed in Wikipedia. It includes a symbol he'd developed to represent the concept of the aspect ratio: a cross with arrow-point ends.

Our next meeting will be at the home of John Schilke on 11 January. Ken took the Portland Flag Association flag home for him, the customary task of the next host.



David Koski explains his graphic depicting flag aspect ratios.

Roundup



Monongalia County, West Virginia, flag, designed by Andrew Riley and adopted 11 October 2017.

A high school student recently won a contest to design a new flag for Monongalia County, West Virginia.

Reader Erik Herron reports that the winning design is exactly what the contest rules were designed to produce. They recapitulated the principles in *Good Flag, Bad Flag*, but changed “No Lettering or Seals” to: “The county seal must be used in some form on the flag”, and “The year the county was formed, 1776, must be on the flag”.



Veteran Ken Dale recites the Gettysburg Address at a 2017 Veterans Day breakfast. He stands before a 48-star flag to honor veterans of World War II.



A flag for Vegetarians, an initial idea by John Niggley.

Inspired by the recent Vegan flag (described in VT# 66), John Niggley presents his initial thoughts on a Vegetarian flag:

“Similar but more complicated or more options than Veganism. Yellow to include eggs and cheese or the sun—or for no reason. Initially I put the green on the bottom, but chose to match Portland more closely since we have so many vegetarians.”

Sherlock and Flags

Michael Orelove notes that in the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle story *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor* Sherlock Holmes says “It is always a joy to meet an American, Mr. Moulton, for I am one of those who believe that the folly of a monarch and the blundering of a minister in far-gone years will not prevent our children from being someday citizens of the same world-wide country under a flag which shall be a quartering of the Union Jack with the Stars and Stripes.”

Readers: Aside from the obvious four-flag version, what might such a flag look like?



The Italian Vexiday celebration for 2017, held in Genoa at the Museo Navale dPegli-Genova—image sent by Bandiere Storiche.

Flag enthusiasts around the globe celebrated Vexiday 2017 (see VT #66 for Portland’s celebration). Among the early adopters of the

event among FIAV members were the Italians, led by Flavio Livio Marchetto, of Bandiere Storiche (Flag History).

The Flag Fusions of Pedro Lasch

By Scott Mainwaring

Mexican-American artist, activist, and Duke professor Pedro Lasch is fascinated by what he called “the culture of cross-class cosmopolitanism” and the ways in which national identities collide, often in the context of immigration. I recently had a chance to see some of his work at part of the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture’s “BorderLands” exhibit (seattle.gov/arts/borderlands, unfortunately since closed). BorderLands hosted immersive installations by nine artists to “explore the ideas of belonging and resistance”.

Hung from the rafters in the cavernous top floor of Seattle’s King Street railroad station were 48 large printed flags from his “Flag Fusions” project, part of a larger series of works and performances entitled *Abstract Nationalism & National Abstraction*.

To produce the flags, Lasch used the alphabetical list of 192 nations published in the 2001 *World Almanac and Book of Facts*. He segmented the list into groups of four, and created a flag for each group by fusing elements of all four countries’ flags.



Pedro Lasch.



Artist Pedro Lasch’s combination of the flags of Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and Egypt.

Lasch treats flags as works of visual art, and combines them in ways that play off order and disorder. The resulting collage-like recombinations of colors and geometric shapes are sometimes jarring and gaudy, sometimes subtle and delicate. If one considers flags a language, Lasch plays little attention to its grammar. In his free associations, it’s as if random word phrases from different texts were cut out and reassembled to produce a kind of prose poetry.

Against this often discordant background, national emblems stand out as intact quotations. Some flags feature fascinating juxtapositions of two or even three complete emblems, each locally legible but in combination surreal. The overall background of discord is reinforced by Lasch’s decision to strictly abide by alphabetically ordered quartets of nations, which produces some very odd bedfel-

lows as countries sharing little in common—geographically, culturally, politically, or economically—find themselves sharing a flag.

Given all these tensions and complexities, Lasch’s flag fusions are aesthetically uneven, unpredictable, and often unsatisfying in their arbitrary meaninglessness. I read this as a critique of the very idea of the national flag, a piece of cloth which can never really do justice to the complexities of people, place, and history that it represents. In this sense, these are anti-flag flags.

As a commentary on the flows and mixtures of national identities coming out of globalization, migration, and immigration, I think Lasch’s art is somewhat less successful, as it seems to emphasize the randomness and arbitrariness of the strange encounter. Actually, the mixing, movement, and

Continued on next page



Amidst swaths of primary colors, subtle hues occur in some of the flags.

segregation of the world's peoples is driven by social, cultural, and economic forces that are anything but meaningless.

Nevertheless, there are moments of real beauty and surprising delight in Lasch's work. Though he is critiquing nationalism by critiquing its manifestation in flags, he is also calling attention to the beauty and artistry within the flags themselves. Putting a flag into a gallery setting cannot help but insist: flags, in addition to all their other symbolic and functional uses, are works of art.

Overall, Lasch's art flags celebrate multicultural diversity in its sometimes chaotic beauty, and provoke reflection on the nature of flags.

See more flags in the Quiz

Ready to test your flag-recognition skills? Try the quiz based on Lasch's flags—see page 11.



The "BorderLands" exhibit, hosted by the Office of Arts & Culture at the King Street Station Gallery in Seattle, Washington, 3 August–29 October 2017.

For more on Lasch's art, see:
pedrolasch.com.



More flags in the exhibition.



The Koreans meet in this detail.



Combining the flags of China, Colombia, Comoros, and Congo.

A New Flag for Burlington, Vermont

By Ted Kaye

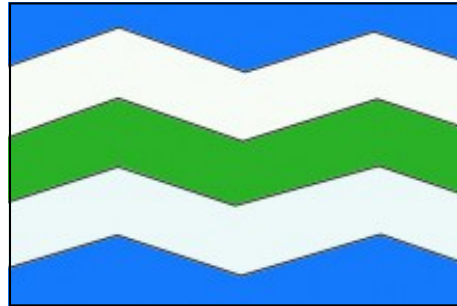
In January 2017, Burlington, Vermont's mayor Miro Weinberger and its city council asked Burlington City Arts to develop a process to design a new flag for the city.

Vermont native and college student Kiernan Nicholls had reached out to the city about updating the flag. The BCA's director, Doreen Kraft, wanted to "bring as many people as possible into the public process", and tasked staffer Deb Caulo to coordinate the effort.

The BCA launched a contest in September 2017, open to all residents of Burlington and offering a \$250 prize. The competition cited the design principles of *Good Flag*, *Bad Flag*, the Roman Mars TED talk, and provided examples of great U.S. city flags.



The previous flag of Burlington, designed in 1990 by 8th-grader Cara Wick. It was rated 3.2 on a scale of 0–10 in NAVA's 2004 survey.



The new flag of Burlington, designed in 2017 by twin 7th-graders Owen and Lucas Marchessault.

Continued on next page



The seven finalists submitted for public response and rating.



Burlington, Vermont's flag selection committee considers designs in its third round of culling in October 2017.

Burlington's contest rules stated:

1. Your design must have a 2:3 or 1:2 ratio.
2. Designs will only be accepted online.
3. Your submission must be in a JPEG or GIF format.
4. The design should follow the Five Basic Principles of Flag Design.
5. You can submit one design. Additional submissions will not be considered.
6. You must live, work, go to school in, or own a business in Burlington.
7. Designs must be original.
8. Designs must be positive in spirit.
9. Designs with religious symbols will not be considered.
10. Designs construed as hateful, defamatory, or discriminatory will not be considered.
11. Designs with references to alcohol, drugs, or illicit activities will not be considered.
12. Anonymous submissions forfeit any right to prize money.

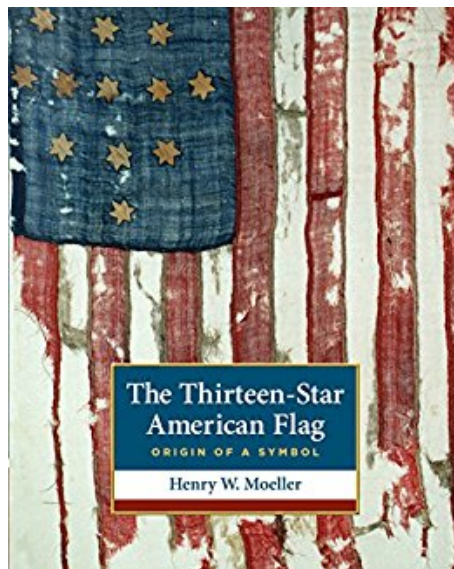
In the event of significantly similar or identical designs, the artists' statements will be considered in the scoring. Should the artists' statements also reflect a significantly similar design process, the first design submitted will be considered.

By the 15 October deadline, 138 designs had come in. The very next day I helped the 6-member flag selection committee narrow the field to seven finalist designs, which were quickly unveiled for public input and rating. The winning design was announced on 27 November.

The mayor expressed his delight and the city council is expected to adopt the flag in time to unveil it on 31 December during First Night, Burlington's annual New Year's Eve celebration.

www.burlingtoncityarts.org/btvflag

The Thirteen-Star American Flag



Flag scholar and NAVA member Dr. Henry W. Moeller recently published *The Thirteen-Star American Flag*. The result of 42 years of intensive research and writing, it is available as an eBook for \$12.99.

Dr. Moeller asserts that is the first book to explain the sources and the meanings of the 13-star U.S. flag's heraldry and symbolism. It has 187 pages; 61 color illustrations & 47 black-and-white illustrations. Published by Tempus Press, it is available everywhere eBooks are sold. ISBN 9780998712512.

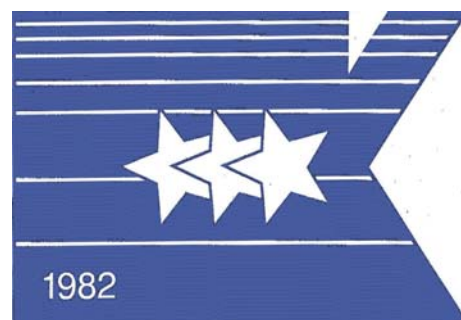
Mark Leepson, author of *Flag: An American Biography*, writes: "No one knows the ins and outs of the origins of the flag of the United States as well and as thoroughly as Henry Moeller does. This book is, by far, the most complete and accurate resource on how the Stars and Stripes came to be. Highly recommended."

Oregon Flag Registry Update

PROJECT STATUS

| | |
|-----|----------------------------|
| 246 | Total Prospects Identified |
| 32 | Total Entries Assigned |
| 13 | Total Entries Completed |

The Oregon Flag Registry is under way: oregonflagregistry.org. We need volunteers! Contact Scott Mainwaring to join the team: info@portlandflag.org.



The city clerk of Keizer, Debbie Lockhart, just sent us a full update on her city's flag.

The field of blue is outlined in the letter "K", signifying the city of "Keizer". The blue is separated in gradients of white reflecting the progressive growth and development of the community.

The three overlapping stars express the fundamental qualities which served as the basis of the incorporation: Pride, Spirit, and Voluntarism (the city motto).

1982 marks the city's incorporation year. The blue derives from the colors of McNary High School.

Ordinance R83-031 of 8 August 1983 made the flag official.

Travels with Flags

By Michael Orelove

Flags and Teddy Bears

Kathleen and I did not march in this year's Teddy Bear Parade in Gresham.

Instead we sat in lawn chairs and watched my Kiwanis Club marching and carrying some of my historical American flags.

Students from both the Corbett and Reynolds High School Key clubs carried the flags and everybody was wearing teddy bear ears including us.

Lewis & Clark's Flag

We recently took a drive from Portland up the Columbia River Gorge to the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center & Museum in The Dalles, Oregon.

The museum has many exhibits on both Oregon history (think Lewis & Clark) and the local history of The Dalles area.

At the time of Lewis & Clark the United States flag had 15 stars and 15 stripes, and as part of the exhibit the museum has a very nice example.

According to the flag code the U.S. flag is never obsolete. Any officially approved American flag, irrespective of the number or arrangement of the stars and/or stripes may continue to be used and displayed until no longer serviceable.



Teddy bears carry historic U.S. flags in the annual parade in Gresham, Oregon.

Puerto Rico

C. M. Owen is the president of my Kiwanis Club and is Puerto Rican. She has been keeping us informed about the current debate about Puerto Rican statehood. I gave her a 51-star U.S. flag, with three rows of nine stars and three rows of eight stars.



Michael Orelove and Kathleen Forrest find a 15-star, 15-stripe U.S. flag in the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center.

Sand Castles

Kathleen and I went to Cannon Beach to play in the sand. I built a sand castle with flags with personal meaning to me.



Puertorriqueña C. M. Owen shows a 51-star U.S. flag, a gift from Michael Orelove.



Flags top sand castles at Cannon Beach.

What's that Flag?

By Scott Mainwaring

Can you identify the four countries represented on each of these "fusion flags"? Hint: they are adjacent in the alphabetical listing in a 2001 world almanac. See the article on p. 6.

Answers in the next issue...



What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

By John Cartledge

The theme of these flags was "Johns".

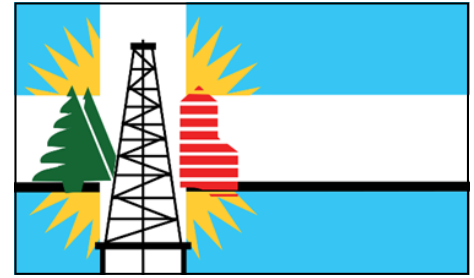
Kudos to solvers Mike Thomas and Bill Neckrock.



Tsar Ivan IV (Russia)



San Juan de Pasto (Colombia)



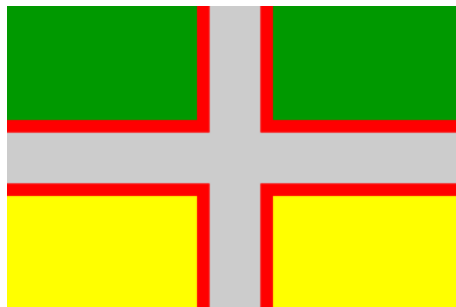
Fort St. John, B.C. (Canada) [former]



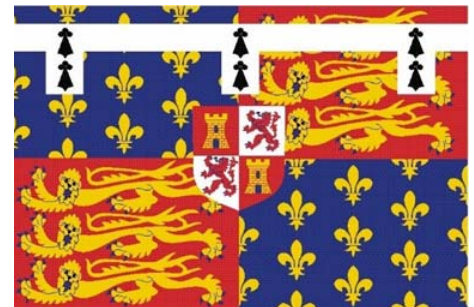
St. John Ambulance Brigade (Britain)



King João V (Portugal)



Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean (Québec)



John of Gaunt
(1st Duke of Lancaster, England)



Portland Flag Miscellany



Toketee NW offers “Oregon, Cascadia, and Portland gear”.
toketee.net



The Portland Thorns (women’s soccer) use a Portland flag in team colors.
patchpatrol.com



Wilson High School sophomore Chloe Unflat smiles with her winning Portland-flag-themed bike lane image on SW Sunset at Dewitt, next to the Hillsdale Library.



Zazzle offers Portland-flag-themed ornaments this season.

In May, PBOT and the Multnomah County Library invited students to design art for bike lanes and on neighborhood greenways across the city in its Bike to Books Coloring Contest

Chloe used the Portland flag in her design because it sums up Portland culture for her.

FLAG JOKE

How is a flag like Santa Claus?

They both hang out at the pole...



PLEASE SEND US YOUR JOKES!

January Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 PM, Thursday, 11 January 2018, at Mary’s Woods, the retirement village of John Schilke, 17400 Holy Names Drive, Lake Oswego.

See the map at right.

We look forward to seeing those of you who have missed recent meetings and engaging in provocative flag-related discussion. Newcomers are welcome!

If you can’t get to the meeting, perhaps you can give the editor something to share with readers.



Enter the DUROCHER parking lot. The number (17440) is over the entrance area of the apartment building. Park in an empty (free) space with a BLUE FLAG in the parking area. If nobody’s at the door, call John’s cell phone: 503-459-1213.

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.