PFA and FIAV

The PFA recently applied to join FIAV, the International Federation of Vexillological Associations, anticipating admission in 2013.

We have named Max Liberman as our representative to handle the formal application for our group to join the 50 or so other flag-studies associations from around the world.

By formalizing our constitution and assuring that we have an ample number of dues-paying members, we have completed all the requirements for membership. Max has now submitted our paperwork to the FIAV board through its secretary general.

FIAV is the acronym for the French version of the organization’s name, the Fédération internationale des associations vexillologiques.

Flag organizations worldwide belong, not only at the national and trans-national level, but at the sub-national level as well. In the U.S., similar FIAV members include CBFA, CSVA, GWAV, NEVA, and VAST.

Those acronyms stand for: Chesapeake Bay Flag Association, Confederate States Vexillological Association, Great Waters Association of Vexillology, New England Vexillological Association, and Vexillological Association of the State of Texas—all peers of the PFA.

The FIAV Board will make a recommendation on our application to the FIAV General Assembly, which will vote on it in August 2013 at ICV 25 in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

We currently expect Max to represent us in Rotterdam; among the other PFA members who plan to attend are Scott Mainwaring and Ted Kaye.
The April 2012 issue of *National Geographic Magazine* featured this flag-related item, quoting our colleague Graham Bartram on flag design and echoing the five basic principles articulated in NAVA’s *Good Flag, Bad Flag*, compiled by Ted Kaye in 2001 and published in 2006.
By Michael Orelove

Troutdale’s Summer Fest Parade, on Saturday, July 21, featured a trooping of flags through the city’s downtown. I served as Grand Marshal (the main advantage of that role is that one gets to walk in front of the horses, not behind).

One of the members of my local Kiwanis club had suggested that we march in the Troutdale parade carrying the flags of some of the 80 countries that have Kiwanis clubs. My fellow club members know that I am interested in flags and have a large collection, since I have given a flag presentation to the club.

We carried nearly 30 flags. Leading the parade was the Kiwanis flag, to announce our organization, followed by the U.S. flag, and then all the other flags. The U.S. flag was the largest, a 48-star design in the official proportions of 5 x 9½ feet. It had been used at a funeral of a veteran and we carried it proudly to honor veterans from World War II and Korea. We hoped that many people who saw the 48-star flag would remember those who served then.

I reviewed the U.S. Flag Code to clarify the proper display of the U.S. flag when there are other national flags included. In general, the U.S. flag should be the largest and in a place of honor.

The other flags ranged from 4 x 6 inches to 4 x 6 feet and larger.

I mounted the 3 x 5 foot flags on PVC pipe of 7 feet. A few of the larger flags were on PVC pipe of 8 feet.

The parade started at 10:00 AM and went 7/10 of a mile, ending at a park with Summer Fest activities, food, drink, and games. Patrick Genna of the PFA and other friends joined me in the parade.

We showed that it's not a parade unless there are flags—without flags it's just a bunch of people walking down the street!

Flags—large and small—ready to parade in Troutdale.
In our September meeting, hosted by Scott Mainwaring in the “eco-lounge” of his Tupelo Alley apartment building (on N. Mississippi Ave.), ten PFA members enjoyed a lively evening of flags and (mostly) related topics.

Scott led our discussion, starting with flags of the just-completed London Olympics. He shared some images of “bad flags” and opined on the use of the Union Jack there in flags, uniforms, and the set for the closing ceremony. He also shared example results from Random Flag Generator Mk-1 (available on openprocessing.org), some of them surprisingly good designs.

David Ferriday showed the Olympics-related flag he flew from his office (the U.S. flag has 13 stars), and the U.S. flag boxer shorts he might have worn—had they fit him. He also passed around a patriotic sheet music cover from 1898 that he’d found in a picture frame a while back.

This year Michael Orelove planted his “flower bed” in an Olympics theme—a Union Jack. He painted a wooden frame for the white stripes and used red and blue petunias for the rest. He led a discussion of methods for half-staffing the flag and noted that Gettysburg Flag Co. is one flag manufacturer that sends out “half-staff alerts” at the national and state level. He explained the new practice of cutting embroidered stars from worn-out flags and presenting them to veterans.

Dave Anchel described the level of demand (or lack thereof) for national flags at Elmer’s Flag & Banner during the Olympics, noting that Norway was a best-seller and the official 5-ring Olympics flag is controlled by the IOC and not available to the public (despite earlier sales—see image above).

Mike Hale called for volunteers to take up the management of the “flag-flying holidays” database, created by John Hood and updated for 2012 by Scott Mainwaring. Perhaps work could focus on developing an algorithm to determine the “moveable feast” holidays each year. He will continue to work on the plans for John’s flag collection. He also showed a new acquisition: a Japanese book with a profusion of Samurai flags.

Patrick Genna brought his usual trove of news clippings showing flag use worldwide and local, and displayed a set of prospective flag designs for the subjects of the might-have-been Imperial Republic of Russia.

Ted Kaye showed off Canadian City Flags, the recently-published volume of Raven, which he edited and for which Scott Mainwaring

David Ferriday supported Team USA.
wrote the articles on Newfoundland municipalities. Ted shared copies of the Croatian flag group’s newsletter (courtesy of Željko Heimer—he is now helping edit the English text.

Ted also described his experience helping to start a world college, gifting it 34 4’x6’ national flags over its 20-year existence to honor graduates from or studying in other countries, recovering the flags at the college’s closure 20 years ago, and now distributing those flags to those graduates all over the world.

Max Liberman led a discussion of finalizing the Constitution of the PFA, in anticipation of our applying for membership in FIAV, the International Federation of Vexillological Associations. PFA members present approved the document unanimously, paid their dues, and named Max as our representative to submit the application and attend the vote at ICV 25 in Rotterdam in 2013.

Having recently moved to the Hillsdale neighborhood in Portland, Dave Anchel was delighted to get an order at Elmer’s for light-pole standards—he helped tweak the original design, which too closely resembled the Japanese naval ensign. Also, in memory of Neil Armstrong, he shared recent images using the flag-on-the-moon theme, one showing that flag at half-staff.

John Niggley recently visited Sweden, specifically his wife’s home region of Östergötland. He brought back several full-sized flags, including the banner of arms of that county (län), and related how he purchased them with his Swedish brother-in-law.

Ken Dale offered the lengthy and interesting definition of “Flag” from his 1911 dictionary, noting that its reference to nationality only occurred half-way through.

We had a great 3-hour meeting.
Cascadia

Definitions of the region’s boundaries vary, but usually include the area between the Cascade Range and the Pacific Ocean, and some part of the Coast Mountains. Other definitions follow the boundaries of existing sub-national entities, and usually comprise British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon, while others also include parts of California, Idaho, Alaska, and Yukon.

In general, the area in and around the Cascadia region is more commonly referred to as the Pacific Northwest. As this vast area has common economic concerns in the primary sector of industry, it is a matter of debate whether the arid rain shadowed areas further east (such as Eastern Washington) should be included. Long united by similar indigenous cultures, Cascadia was once briefly a single political unit: the Oregon Country—shared by several nations.

The region has since been divided into different political jurisdictions, but Cascadia still retains a sense of self identity.

This particular Cascadia flag (among several—see FOTW) was designed in 1994-95 by Portland artist/teacher Alexander Baretich. The “Doug Flag” can increasingly be found in cities throughout the Pacific Northwest and is becoming a common sight at soccer games, occupy protests, and on local microbrew labels.

The blue of the flag represents the moisture-rich sky above and Pacific Ocean along with the Salish Sea, lakes, and other inland waters. Our home is of continuous cascading waters flowing from our sky and mountains back to the Pacific, for Cascadia is a land of falling water from the Pacific to the western slopes of the Rockies and Cascades where water cycles as vapor and then rain and snow to run through creek and river back to the Pacific. The white represents snow and clouds and the green to represent the evergreen forests and fields of the Pacific Northwest. The lone standing Douglas Fir symbolizes endurance, defiance and resilience, named for botanist/explorer David Douglas, author of the first written account of the bioregion as a land of cascading waters and from which our primary mountain range takes its name. All these symbols of color and icon come together to symbolize what being Cascadian is all about.

The CIP sells 3’x5’ Cascadia flags for $23.50, directed to cascadian-mycelium@gmail.com using either Paypal or Wepay. The flag is also available on cascadiaflag.com and at Elmer’s Flag & Banner.

[Adapted from the website of the Cascadia Information Project (CIP), cascadianow.org]
What’s that Flag?

By Max Liberman

Can you name these flags and identify the theme?

Answers in the next issue...

Georgia, 1879

Oklahoma, 1911

Colorado, 1907

Vermont, 1837

Maine, 1901

Mississippi, 1861

Louisiana, 1861

The theme that links these flags: all are former flags of U.S. states. Some lasted longer than others, some are reflected in the designs of current flag.
November Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 p.m., Thursday, November 8, 2012, at Mike Hale’s house, 4904 S.W. Martha St., (503) 245-5283. See the map at right.

We look forward to seeing those of you who have been otherwise committed, and hear some new war stories, see some different flags, and hear some provocative discussion.

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

Members of the Timbers Army, the extremely enthusiastic fan base of our major league soccer team, the Portland Timbers, have become the most active promoters of the flag of the city of Portland. Here they wave it from the stands of Jeld-Wen Park in Southwest Portland. Source: Portland Tribune, 6/14/12, Nick Fochtman, photographer