



## FLAG DAY

*By Patsy Owens KFRW Americanism Chair*

In the United States, Flag Day is celebrated on June 14<sup>th</sup>. It commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States--- which happened by resolution of the Second Continental Congress on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

Bernard Cigrand, who began his efforts as a 19-year old Wisconsin school teacher is generally credited with being the "Father of Flag Day". From the time he was 19 years old, he devotedly and fervently worked to bring about national recognition of the flag and its significance.

From the late 1880's on, Cigrand spoke around the country promoting patriotism, respect for the flag, and the need for the annual observance of a flag day.



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Cigrand once noted that he had given 2,188 speeches on patriotism and the flag--and the crowning achievement of his life came at age 50, when President Woodrow Wilson, on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1916, issued a proclamation calling for a nationwide observance of Flag Day on June 14<sup>th</sup>-- which was the day in 1777 that the Continental Congress had adopted the Stars and Stripes.

Flag Day is not an official federal holiday. However, it is at the President's discretion to proclaim officially the observance.

If so proclaimed, the week of June 14<sup>th</sup> is designated as "National Flag Week". During National Flag Week, the President may issue a proclamation urging United States citizens to fly the American flag for the duration of the week. The flag would also be displayed on all Government buildings, and some organizations will hold parades and events in celebration of America's national flag and everything it represents.

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity. It's been a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. And the American Flag has been a prominent icon in our national history.

Between 1777, when the Continental Congress passed the first Flag Act, and up to 1960, Congress passed several acts that changed the shape, design, and arrangement of the flag and allowed for additional stars and stripes to be added to reflect the admission of each new state.

Today the flag consists of 13 horizontal stripes--- 7 red--- alternating with 6 white

The stripes represent the original 13 colonies, the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well. RED symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, WHITE symbolizes Purity and Innocence and BLUE represents Vigilance, Perseverance, and Justice.

The flag has a special significance when folded by the honor guard at a military funeral.



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A first thought might be that the 13 folds symbolize the original 13 colonies, but each fold in fact has a very special meaning.

The first fold of the flag is the symbol of life.

The second fold is a symbol of the belief in eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing the ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of their country to attain peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents the weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace, as well as in time of war, for His divine guidance.

The fifth fold is a tribute to the country---for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right---but it is still OUR country---right or wrong."

The sixth fold is for where people's hearts lie. It is with their heart that they pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The seventh fold is a tribute to America's Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that soldiers protect their country and their flag, against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of the republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day!

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood and mothers. For it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.



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The tenth fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of their country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies in the Hebrew eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The twelfth fold represents an emblem of eternity, and glorifies in the Christian's eyes---God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The thirteenth and last fold---or when the flag is completely folded---you can notice that the stars are uppermost---reminding us of our nation's motto---"In God We Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in---it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the Sailors and Marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for them the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

As you can see---the American flag has deep meaning and represents many American traditions going back to our founding fathers and demonstrating how they used God's word and teachings to establish our great nation.



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*FCRWC getting ready for Flag Day  
Celebration 2014, Old Court House Steps  
Lexington, KY*



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In conclusion---want to share a Patriotic Verse by Howard Schnauber, which I think very well sums up the meaning of the American flag.

**I AM THE FLAG**

I am the flag of the United States of America.  
My name is Old Glory.  
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings.  
I stand watch in America's halls of justice.  
I fly majestically over institutions of learning.  
I stand guard with power in the world.  
Look up.....and see me.

I stand for peace, honor, truth and justice.  
I stand for freedom.  
I am confident.  
I am arrogant.  
I am proud.

When I am flown with my fellow banners,  
My head is a little higher,  
My colors a little truer.

I bow to no one!  
I am recognized all over the world.  
I am worshipped---I am saluted.  
I am loved---I am revered.  
I am respected---and I am feared.

I have fought in every battle of every war for more than 200 years.  
I was flown at Valley Forge, Gettysburg, Shiloh, and Appamatox.  
I was there at San Juan Hill,  
The trenches of France,  
In the Argonne Forest,  
Anzio, Rome, and the beaches of Normandy.  
Guam, Okinawa, Korea, Saigon and Vietnam know me.



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I was there!  
I led my troops.  
I was dirty, battleworn and tired.  
but my soldiers cheered me.  
And I was proud.

I have been burned, torn and trampled  
On the streets of countries I have helped set free.  
It doesn't hurt--- for I am invincible.

I have been soiled upon, burned, torn, and trampled on the streets of MY  
COUNTRY.  
And when it's by those whom I've served in battle-it DOES hurt.  
But I shall overcome--- for I am strong.

I have slipped the bonds of Earth  
And stood watch over the uncharted frontiers of space from my vantage point on  
the moon .

I have borne silent witness to all of America's finest hours.  
But my finest hours are yet to come.

When I am torn into strips and used as bandages for my wounded comrades on  
the battlefield,  
When I am flown at half-mast to honor my soldier,  
Or when I lie in the trembling arms of a grieving parent  
At the grave of their fallen son or daughter,  
I am proud!

My name is "Old Glory".  
Long may I wave  
O'er the land of the free  
And the home of the brave.