IQALUIT, N.W.T.  
(Frobisher Bay)

By James Croft

NEW FLAG OF IQALUIT, N.W.T.

A display of 42 civic flags was included as part of the Northwest Territories pavilion at Expo '86 (1986) in Vancouver, Canada. Almost all of the designs were based on the Canadian national flag with its renowned “Canadian pale.” Although most of these flags were created just for the display, at least some of them were subsequently used on a defacto basis as the civic flag for their respective community.

One community civic authority, Iqaluit, had a flag in this display, though its status was never able to be determined by the author after the conclusion of the Expo. The symbols on this flag contained three semi-concentric yellow circles to signify the “midnight sun.” The name comes from the fact that the sun can be seen above the horizon at midnight. The midnight sun is important to the people of the north, as it signifies the end of the cold, dark winter days and the beginning of an easier life with more light and warmth from the sun.

The emblem also contained a black and white bird, the snow bunting (Plectrophewax nivalis). This bird is a member of the sparrow family Fringilidae. It breeds in the Arctic and winters in southern Canada and the northern United States. Why this bird was chosen as a symbol and what it signifies remains a mystery.

St. Jude’s Anglican Church is also featured and represents the many years of active service of the Anglican missionaries here, especially since 1957, when they established a mission. Across from the mission is a mountain of ice reflecting the local topography. Finally, the wavy blue and white stripes at the bottom of the symbol, signify Frobisher Bay. This bay is named after the explorer Martin Frobisher, who in 1576, thought this body of water to be the Northwest Passage.

Sometime between August 1987 and August 1992, Iqaluit adopted another flag. Although the new flag retained the “Canadian pale,” the outer stripes were changed from dark blue to sky blue, and the symbol on the central white stripe was radically changed. The new symbol is in black, white and sky blue. It reflects the sea and mountains, as the old symbol did, but also contains ice (a glacier?) and the sky. These elements symbolize the local topography of the area which has an irregular coastline flanked by mountains. The name “Iqaluit” is Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit or eskimo) meaning “fish.” The four black fish at the bottom of the shield play upon the place name. Iqaluit is located near the site of a traditional South Baffin Inuit fishing camp when Frobisher arrived. The name of the municipality is also written in black lettering in English above the shield and in Inuktitut below. Once known as Frobisher Bay, the community began using its Inuktitut name as the official name in about 1987. This action resulted from the Inuit beginning to assert their political rights.

FLAG DATA: Proportions: (unspecified) 1:2, relative widths of vertical stripes are 1:2:1. The height of the emblem is 26/35 the width of the flag.

A Canadian pale, that is, three unequal vertical stripes of light blue, white, light blue, bearing in the center the Iqaluit emblem. The emblem is a light blue shield below the word Iqaluit and above the same word in Inuktitut (ᐃᖃᓗᐃᑦ), both in black, bearing from top to bottom the following symbols — three white mountains bordered above in black, two black triangles extending inwards from the sides, a white glacier bordered below by a black-outlines zigzag edge of alternating oblongs of gray and white, and four black fish with white eyes and gills, separated by a black zigzag line; and the shield is bordered in black, with arches at the top. (Special thanks to the Flag Research Center, Winchester, MA for the description of the emblem.)

OLD FLAG OF IQALUIT, N.W.T.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

...NICHOLAS ARTIMOVICH

Congratulations to member Joseph E. Fallon who won the contest for the Kennedy Center flag. Mr. Fallon’s membership renewal form was received before December 31 of last year, and his name was drawn at random. He will have his choice of one of the 8 foot by 14 foot national flags that the National Park Service donated to NAVA in 1992. The flags of the nations recognized diplomatically by the United States were part of Edward Durrel Stone’s original design for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Some of these

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]
Page 2
is Missing
1952-1991—R field with Y hammer, sickle, star emblem ("emblem" from this point on). B+ horizontal stripe through center of field. (90mm x 180mm made in USSR for this and all of the other 14 Soviet Socialist Republics)
1991-date—Return to tricolor.

**Azerbaijan**—1918-1921—Horizontal stripes of B-, R, V+ with W star and crescent overlapping three stripes.
1953-1991—R field with Y emblem, B+ stripe along bottom of field.
1991-date—Pre soviet flag readopted, but star and crescent now smaller to fit within central stripe.

**Byelarus**—1918—Tri-bar of W - R - W
1936-1951—R field with Y emblem. Y initials in Cyrillic for BSSR under emblem
1994-date—R field with V stripe at bottom, R lace design on W at hoist, no emblem.

**Georgia**—1917—R++ field with canton of W over N.
1951-1991 R field with B disk in canton. R emblem on disk with R and B rays emanating from it. B horizontal stripe runs from disk to fly of flag.
1991-date—Pre-Soviet flag readopted.

**Kazakhstan**—1953-1992—R field with Y emblem, wide B horizontal stripe near bottom, with narrower R stripe below.
1992-date—B+ field with Y sun and eagle emblem in center. Y decoration at hoist.

**Kirghiz**—1953-1992—R field with Y emblem, wide B+ horizontal stripe through center bisected with narrow W stripe.
1992-date—R field with Y sun emblem in center.

**Moldova**—1952-1991—R field with Y emblem, N horizontal stripe through center.

**Russia**—pre-1917—Horizontal tricolor of W-B-R
1917-1990 Flag of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic used. See "USSR" above for history up to 1954.
1954-1991 R field with Y emblem, B vertical stripe along hoist.
1991-date W-B-R flag readopted.

**Tadzhik**—1953-1992—R field with Y emblem, lower half of field divided into horizontal stripes of W, V, R with W stripe twice the width of each of the other two stripes.
1992-date Horizontal R-W-V field (central W stripe somewhat wider) with Y crown and stars emblem in center.

**Turkmenistan**—1953-1992—R field with Y emblem, 2 B horizontal stripes through center separated by narrow R stripe.
1992-date—V field with vertical stripe near hoist containing 5 oriental carpet motifs. A W crescent and stars is in the upper hoist portion of the V field.

**Ukraine**—1930's-1949—R field with Y hammer and sickle (no star!) with Cyrillic initials "URSR". (3'x5')
1949-1991 R field with Y emblem. Broad B- horizontal stripe along bottom of field.

**Uzbek**—1952-1992—R field with Y emblem. B- horizontal stripe through center of field, fimbriated W.
1992-date—Horizontal tribar of B-W-V, with R fimbriation separating the W stripe from the colored stripes. In the hoist end of the B stripe is a W crescent with W stars.

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**
1972-date—R vertical stripe at hoist, rest of field divided horiz. V-W-N.

**UNITED KINGDOM**
1801-date—B field with wide R "Cross of St. George" throughout, and diagonal W "Cross of St. Andrew" from corner to corner. Within W diagonal cross are the counterchanged arms of a R "St. Patrick's Cross."

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
1877-1890—38 W stars on B canton. Field divided into 13 horizontal stripes, alternating R and W.
1890-1891—43 stars.
1891-1895—44 stars.
1895-1908—45 stars.
1908-1912—46 stars.
1912-1959—48 stars.
1960-date—50 stars.

**URUGUAY**
1830-date—Y sun in W canton. Field divided into 9 stripes alternating W and B.

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_Note: The price $75.00 or the best offer._

Write to:
Mrs. Beth Leakeks
276 Leslie Court
Mountain View, California 94043
Tel. (415) 968-6542

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Check out the Flagman's Page on the web at
[http://www.xmission.com/~pengar/flagman](http://www.xmission.com/~pengar/flagman)

Suggests NAVA member Peter Orenski.
A NAVA RETROSPECTIVE

by Dr. Whitney Smith

{Part Two of a Two Part Series}

The origins of NAVA

The initiation of NAVA can be traced to the full-page notice published in The Flag Bulletin, Vol. VI, Nos. 1-2 (Winter 1966-1967), p. 36A. Several things are remarkable about that call which I made for a conference to take place on June 3, 1967. I had already selected the title North American Vexillological Association to emphasize the scientific character of the intended society, knowing that in the United States any name involving the word flag would likely be misunderstood as being related only to the Stars and Stripes.

That invitation was addressed equally to vexillologists of the United States and Canada. The great geographical spread of both countries and the relatively small number of vexillologists recommended this, but there was a more important underlying reason for this binational approach. It was clear that vexillologists in Canada would find it difficult to assert the unique aspects of flag-study within the newly formed Heraldry Society of Canada—as was clearly seen in parallel situations in Europe over the following decade.

In the United States, on the other hand, the danger was always one of having patriotism rather than scholarship set the tone for activities and publications. There already existed several organizations dedicated to flag-waving; at best NAVA could contribute little to that field. Moreover, it could hardly take a scholarly approach to flags in general if its emphasis was on honoring the United States flag.

The Flag Society of Australia faced a similar problem at the time of its foundation in 1983, since the public there was embroiled in the question of whether the existing Australian national flag should be maintained, modified, or replaced by a totally new flag. Fortunately, the leadership of that society was able to steer a clear path by publishing objective information about all sides of the question, in addition to many other flag-related issues. Its credibility as a historical and scientific research organization has been preserved and the contribution it has made to knowledge of the "new flag question" in Australia will live on, while groups dedicated to supporting or opposing the existing Australian flag will disappear once the debate is resolved.

The conference held on 3-4 June 1967 gave North American vexillologists their first chance to meet in person, even though some had corresponded previously. This was particularly important because of the healthy mix of scholars, hobbyists, flag manufacturers, and those involved in flag promotion. Sites of flag-related interest were visited, including the Flag Research Center. I set up an exhibit of flag books and flags at our meeting rooms at Boston University; others brought small flags or publications as handouts. We discussed terminology, flag colors, flag preservation, ways of making vexillology better known, and the problems of communication and research in the field.

Several lectures were presented. There was broad agreement that a formal association should be launched, not simply to represent North Americans at the international level in FIAV and at International Congresses of Vexillology, but to offer the benefits of fellowship and scholarship to those throughout the United States and Canada on a regular basis. The types of membership, the outlines of what would become our bylaws, the concept of regular meetings, and encouragement for the interests of individual members were considered.

Most participants instinctively assumed that NAVA would be part of the Flag Research Center and that The Flag Bulletin would become its journal. In contrast I stressed that NAVA must have its own independent personality. Just as Gary and I had created the Flag Research Center and would not be interested in handing it or editorship of The Flag Bulletin over to others, so NAVA must have the full opportunity to develop as its members saw fit—with changing leadership, special projects, annual meetings in different places, etc. While the Flag Research Center would be glad to help as requested—such as making its mailing list available for soliciting membership in NAVA—the association should never feel beholden to the Center, should never feel that the Center's permission was needed for any activity it wished to pursue, and should not in any way compromise the nonprofit status which everyone agreed NAVA should seek.

I asked only that NAVA not directly compete with the Center in such a way that the existence of the latter was undercut—for example, by trying to duplicate the documentation services of the Center which benefit flag manufacturers and publishers. This was eventually reflected in the phrase in NAVA bylaws stating that one of the objectives of the association was to "cooperate with the Flag Research Center and other national, regional, and international vexillological associations."

In the subsequent 25 years, I never felt it necessary to invoke that clause or ask NAVA to desist in some action it was taking or intended to take.

NAVA'S EARLY YEARS

NAVA's 1967 organizational conference ("NAVA #0") was followed five months later by our first annual membership meeting. It is often forgotten that the NAVA president chosen in June 1967 was Professor Pierre Lux-Wurm. I was secretary, there were no other officers. Professor Lux-Wurm organized the November 1967 meeting at the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart in Purchase, New York, where he was teaching.

The meeting was a great success. Newton Blakeslee, for many years editor of NAVA News, reported on the International Congress of Vexillology which had taken place in Zurich two months previously. Dr. Clarence Rungee spoke about his large collection of flags and his broad experience in delivering lectures on the subject. The son of a Japanese flag maker came to our meeting; today he is the head of the Tanaka Flag Manufacturing Company. Others made contributions as well.

At this meeting one of our members introduced a motion urging the United States government to issue a postage stamp to commemorate the salute to the United States flag which had taken place 200 years previously, at the island of St. Eustatius in what is not the Netherlands Antilles. Later, it was recognized that this kind of promotion, even if we had the resources to undertake serious work in this direction, was not really in keeping with the stated principles of our organization. Therefore, whenever subsequently one individual or group asked NAVA to support a point of view or campaign having nothing to do with flag scholarship, we quite properly declined to become involved. On the other hand the association did endorse a motion in November 1967 to encourage dictionary publishers to include vexillology and its cognates in their publications, as a small part of our drive for scholarly recognition.

At this meeting NAVA also adopted the flag it still uses and its bylaws, now many times amended. It agreed to cosponsor the 3rd International Congress of Vexillology in Boston two years hence and to have NAVA represented in the official founding of FIAV which was to take place at that congress. NAVA thus became one of FIAV's charter members. Lectures on various topics were delivered at our first annual meeting and plans were made for the next year. A slate of officers was elected and I began the first of ten one-year terms as president of NAVA. A budget was drafted, discussion was held on how to increase NAVA membership, and different groups within the association expressed their views about the direction we should take.

All of this, of course, sounds very familiar: one has only to attend a single NAVA meeting to see these patterns repeated more than a quarter of a century later. The important thing to remember is that in 1967 everything was brand new—we had no guidelines, no obligations, not even any examples from history or from other countries to follow in our work. I personally did not belong to any organization except the American Association of University Professors, which in...
fact meant no more than paying my dues and receiving its quarterly magazine.

Fortunately, as president during the years from 1967 to 1977, I had extraordinary people to assist me on the Executive Board, on committees, as editors of NAVA News, as lecturers, and as meeting organizers. To name but a few, NAVA could not have survived those years without the help of people like Bob Gauron, Ashley Talbot, Gary Grahl, Emmet Mittlebeeler, Newton Blakeslee, Bill Spangler, Ralph Spence, Ken Huff, John Purcell, John Szala, Harold Diceman, John Lyman, and many others.

Our collective efforts lead to the establishment of certain very important principles for NAVA in its early stages. The association would be open to every interested in any kind of flags: there was room for hobbyists, scholars, publishers, flag manufacturers, and others. Our emphasis was to be on the study of flags (and related subjects such as state heraldry) as a scientific discipline rather than as a patriotic or commercial or religious endeavor.

Fellowship was to be an important part of the association with ample chances to meet informally, to talk, exchange ideas, show off collections, give the latest news, ask questions, trade (or even sell) items. On the other hand we sought and won recognition from the Internal Revenue Service as an educational, charitable, and scientific organization, not as a fraternal society. While the expectation was that everyone would enjoy meetings, the more important premise was that our fundamental purpose, individually and collectively, was the advancement of knowledge.

For this reason as time went on we brought in knowledgeable outsiders as guest speakers; began a program of publishing reprints of important old articles and pamphlets; visited museums and other sites of important flag collections; encouraged members to professionalize their lectures and put them into written form for publication. We also undertook to share our knowledge and learn from others by sponsoring International Congresses of Vexillology—In 1969 in Boston, in 1977 in Washington, DC, and (after I was no longer an officer) in Ottawa in 1981 and in San Francisco in 1987. NAVA also was represented at every subsequent International Congress of Vexillology by an official delegate and by one or more members who participated.

NAVA News was firmly established as a regular publication, giving members important information about their society on a quarterly basis as well as informative and entertaining flag-related material. In addition to the reprint booklets, in those early years NAVA regularly issued a handbook which included a list of members, their interests, and activities.

That membership grew regularly. The first NAVA meeting in 1967 had had 17 people in attendance; a year later there were 58 members in all. By the time of our fifth anniversary in 1972, membership had grown to 123 with 55 attending the annual meeting. On our tenth anniversary in 1977 members had again more than doubled, to 258; attendance at that year’s meeting was 100.

NAVA’S FUTURE

Many important decisions made in the early years of NAVA impact on its present situation. The International Federation became a society not of individuals, but of groups. NAVA made a commitment to scholarly, impartial, international research and publication on flags of all kinds. We established a newsletter, a regular annual meeting, bylaws and objectives, recognition from the Internal Revenue Service, and many procedures which could help us achieve our ends, plus enthusiastic people willing to spend some time organizing this.

We avoided becoming involved in politics, partisanship for one flag or flag custom, and nationalistic/patriotic efforts that could produce conflict or divert our attention from real vexillological work which no other group was doing. The choice of a continental rather than a national organization was part of that plan. The relationship of NAVA to the Flag Research Center (based on mutual respect and separate work) was crucial, especially in the years when I headed both institutions. Even the type of members we sought to attract had important consequences.

In all this work an unspoken element of the greatest importance was the vision which NAVA leaders had. In an established institution it is all too easy to focus on the next meeting, the next newsletter issue, the next project, the next lecture. Procedures already exist; traditions and routines continue from year to year. Just as organized heraldry lost sight of the fact that flags, supposedly part of its own domain, were being grossly neglected, so it may be that the very success of NAVA today creates barriers to facing important issues that should be dealt with. Decisions about such questions as bylaws changes and the budget ultimately can only be made if the leadership of the organization clearly perceives where NAVA is heading and what it must do to arrive there.

Since NAVA is a democratic organization, that implies a full and frank discussion of options. Some individuals, of course, will be happy enough with what is being done now and will want no change; others may have very ambitious revisions for the future of NAVA in mind. Whatever the outcome of the ongoing dialogue, the important thing is to acknowledge that foresight, goals, and decision-making are as important today and in the future as they were during the first decade of NAVA’s existence.

ERRATA

1) The volume number Roman numeral should read XXIX, No. 1.
2) Diocese of Edmundston, New Brunswick—Peter Edwards of Toronto correctly questions the use of the term “Canadian pale” to describe this flag. Peter refers to the definition of a “Canadian pale” by Stephen Friar in his book A Dictionary of Heraldry (New York: Harmony Books, 1987), as “a vertical band occupying the central half of the field . . . ” The reference here is to the field of the heraldic shield. On the Canadian flag the pale is square. So the use of this term is incorrect regarding the Diocese’s flag as the central white stripe is greater than half of the flag’s field. It is obvious this flag is patterned after the Canadian national flag and that is why the editor in his article used this description. The illustration is taken from a paper hand held flag, so the stripes I surmise are out of proportion. I have written to the Diocese for clarification on the measurement of the stripes on an actual flag. Should I receive a reply, I will print their answer. For the correction proportions of a Canadian pale see the two flagstaffs on the front cover of this issue.
3) In Dr. Whitney Smith’s article, “A NAVA Retrospective,” twice the word “flag-waving” appears as “flag-waiving.”

EDITOR’S NOTES

There are several items which I should bring to the attention of our readers.

• I am considering changing the masthead on the front page of NAVA News. Several readers have mentioned to me how they felt it should be updated with a more modern look. John Ganez has already submitted several suggestions (feel free to send more John if you care to) and I am seeking more. Once we have an assortment they will be presented to the Publications Committee who will make a final choice.

• I realize that the first and second issues of this year’s newsletter are lacking illustrations. I hope to rectify this problem in the upcoming issues. Once again I can only publish what I receive.

• There seems to have been some controversy about my allowing the publication of a “Letter to the Editor” by someone who is not a member of NAVA. First, this is not the first time someone who is not a member of NAVA has written to the editor and had their letter published. Secondly, I believe it was the content of the letter which

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 6]
was upsetting to the individual(s) who protested my publishing this letter. Third, I am publishing an opposing point of view by Kin Spain, who happens to be a NAVA member, in this issue. I personally wholeheartedly agree with Kin's viewpoint and I am in total disagreement with Dave's. However, I do not believe in censorship and this is the reason I chose to publish Mr. Martucci's letter. Even if Dave had not expressed these views, some other member would have. As I said in my previous note, there will be information published on this topic both for and against in the coming issues so members will be informed when they are required to vote on this matter in Sacramento.

- This leads me into my next point. I have written to Dr. John Purcell, NAVA Publications Chairman, of the need to develop both an editorial and advertising policy for NAVA News. I am publishing in this issue an ad from Mrs. Beth Leakos for a 45 star US flag she wants to sell. I am doing this because she wrote me in October and I feel it would be unfair for her to wait any longer till NAVA develops an advertising policy. Since becoming editor it is clear to me some guidelines must be set on these two issues for NAVA News.

- I would like to congratulate on behalf of all the members of NAVA, Mr. Kevin Harrington of Scarborough, Ontario, a NAVA member himself. As many of you know, Kevin has, for the most part, single handedly produced a very fine vexillological periodical over the past ten years—FLAGSCAN. Having just edited my first two issues of NAVA News, which is only eight pages long, compared to FLAGSCAN's usual 30 pages, and with having most of the material already written rather than having to do most of the research as he has done, I can attest to some degree that this was a monumental effort. Kevin has shown the world the Canadian vexillological treasure trove that exists. he is to be commended—we THANK YOU! We can only hope that someone will step in and continue his work so that our sister publication can continue. We wish only the best for Kevin, FLAGSCAN and the Canadian Flag Association.

Note: I would like to thank all of the members who have sent me condolences regarding my father's recent passing on February 29th. I appreciate the support and empathy shown by them and it makes me aware that NAVA is a wonderful organization made up of fine and caring people. It is this fellowship which binds us together through our mutual interest of flags. I also thank the membership for their understanding in the delay of this issue's publication due to this circumstance.

Jim Croft

VEXI-BITS
Edited by David Pawson


The Globe and Mail, Toronto, 7 Sept. 1995. "From the Archives." "50 years ago: On Sept. 7, 1945, The Globe and Mail reported that the Speech from the Throne had said parliament would be asked to approve a design for a distinctively Canadian flag and to revise and clarify the definition of Canadian citizenship. (submitted by Peter Edwards)

The Gazette, Montreal, 14 Sep. 1995. "Greece and Macedonia near end to embargo." Greece and Macedonia have agreed to take steps to end their disputes. Among the concessions from Macedonia is the redesign of their national flag. Macedonia will discontinue the use of a 16-pointed star displayed on the red background of its national flag. Greece contends that the symbol, called the Sun or Star of Vergina, is intrinsic to its own cultural heritage." (submitted by David Ruddy)

Florida Today, 12 Oct. 1995. "Astronauts unfurl American history." The American flag which was carried on both the first and the 100th manned US space missions was presented by Alan Shepard and Robert Gibson, commanders of those flights, to the Astronauts Hall of Fame in Titusville. (submitted by Bernard Couture)

Press-Journal, 17 Oct. 1995. "Confederate Flag Flies at March." "Many banners and emblems waved over the Million Man March, including one Stars and Bars, the Confederate battle flag. 'This flag is part of the history of the black man in the United States, we have to fight to overcome this as much as anything else,' said Charles Nixon, who stood near a Union Civil War memorial on the Capitol grounds. A tall, angular educational consultant from Richmond, VA, Nixon lifted the battle flag despite evidence his message was being lost on the crowd. One black man jeered him. 'Give that flag back to the white man who used it to try and keep us slaves,' he said. Another middle-aged man, carrying an 'Indict Fullman for Perjury' sign, angrily accused Nixon of having a 'slave mentality.' But Nixon remained unperturbed in the face of those opposing his symbolism. 'For those who have said anything to me, all I can tell them is this too is part of the black story, and we should be thinking about how we are going to deal with it.'" (submitted by Bernard Couture)

The Oregonian, Portland, 18 Nov. 1995. "Artists hoist world banners in "Flag Book for Olympic Games." Brazilian artist Fernando Lopes has created a flag book, to be published by Nexus Press, which will be sold at the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996. The book, entitled "Flag Book: Interaction Towards a Better World," is described as an "accordion-styled book comprised of triangular sections of flags from countries participating in the Games." Price is to be under $20. (submitted by John Hoos and Donald Klett)

Toronto Star, 22 Nov. 1995. "Nigerians burn foreign flags, demonstrate against critics." US, British and South African flags were burned in support of Gen. Sani Abacha, who has been under fire from these and other nations following the executions of nine men convicted of the murders of four pro-government activists. (submitted by Peter Edwards)

VEXI-BITS EDITOR'S NOTES: It has been suggested that VEXI-BITS include a page citation, as well as the usual source and date information. This is not usually possible, as clippings frequently arrive without that information. It is my belief that such notation is not so vital that it need be included, even where it is available.

Any comments?

Also, I find myself overwhelmed by the number of clippings that arrive. I would like to suggest that those of you who send them STOP! Instead, please write a brief summary of the article, including source, date, and title (you may also send the article). The current state of affairs requires that I read the entirety of each article I receive, which really eats up a lot of time.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: Any "photo with caption" and/or cartoons should be sent directly to the editor—Jim Croft, rather than Dave Pawson—VEXI-BITS editor.
LETTERS . . .

To the editor,

It was recently suggested that NAVA change its name to "Northern American Vexillological Association" if NAVA changes its bylaws to return to the pre-1991 situation in which active membership was restricted to residents of Canada and the United States. Without debating whether the bylaws should be amended, I am opposed to the idea of a name change.

To change NAVA’s name, we would at a minimum have to (1) request permission from both the United States Internal Revenue Service and the Illinois Secretary of State to change the name, (2) amend the articles of incorporation, (3) amend the bylaws, (4) verify that we do not need a new employee identification number from the IRS, and (5) purchase a new corporate seal (which would be expensive, possibly US$300-500).

Before we spend this much time and money, we should ask why we are doing this. Is it because most of us were taught in elementary school that "North America" means everything from Panama to the North Pole? One of the many things I learned by attending the International Congress of Vexillology in Warsaw last summer was that not everyone had the same elementary school teacher as I, and the definition of "North America" depends on who you talk to—one highly educated gentleman from what I refer to as "South America" strongly disagreed with me that North America and South America were separate continents, but are instead simply "America." Professors H.J. De Blij and Peter Muller, respected geographers at the University of Miami, argue persuasively in their book Geography: Realms, Regions, and Concepts that North America consists of Canada and the United States, and that Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean basin are more accurately referred to as "Middle America." I am no longer sure that my elementary school definition of "North America" is the only "correct" answer.

Is it the best use of NAVA’s limited resources to launch into a complicated debate about political, cultural, and sociological geography, and possibly change a name that we have used for thirty years? I, for one, joined NAVA to study flags. My preference is to leave the "correct" definition of "North America" to the geographers and to spend my time on flags.

Very truly yours,

Charles A. Spain
2030 North Boulevard No. 6
Houston, Texas 77098-5357

WELCOME...TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Mrs. Susan Braverman
The Flag Shop
1755 W. 4th Avenue
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V6J 1M2
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active member

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organizational member

Dr. Albert G. Mogor
Tarrant Count Community College,
N.E. Campus
828 Harwood Road
Hurst, Texas 76054
Home: (817) 656-5115
Work: (817) 788-6531
Interests: (1) G/A
active member

NEW MEMBERS [continued]

Mr. Mike S. Hill
178 Miami Avenue, North Bend, Ohio 45052
Interests: (1) D
associate-youth member

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