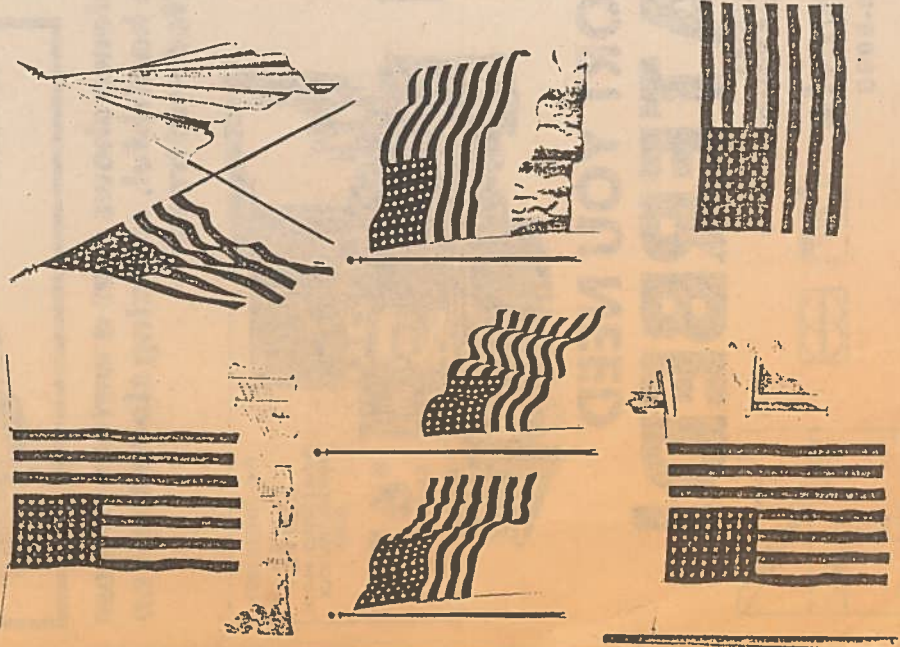


# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## Flag Etiquette

On Flag Day, which was June 14, I just couldn't help noticing several American flags in our county which were improperly displayed. I'm sure the individuals responsible are simply unfamiliar with proper flag etiquette. Therefore, it seems like an appropriate time to present some rules on how to display our flag.

With Albion's Strawberry Festival coming up on June 26 and 27 everyone in Albion has been encouraged to fly their flags. Likewise, with July Fourth celebrations just around the corner, the American flag will certainly be prominently displayed. To do it correctly, here are some rules to follow as published in a booklet by the United States Marine Corps entitled **Our Flag**.

1. When displayed over the middle of the street, the flag should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street, or to the east in a north and south street.
2. When displayed with another flag from crossed staffs, the flag of the United States of America should be on the right (the flag's own right) and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.
3. When it is to be flown at half-mast, the flag should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-mast position; but before lowering the flag for the day it should again be raised to the peak. By half-mast is meant hauling down the flag to one-half the distance between the top and the bottom of the staff. On Memorial Day display at half-mast until noon only; then hoist to top of staff.
4. When flags of states or cities or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States of America, the latter should always be at the peak. When flown from adjacent staffs the Stars and Stripes should be hoisted first and lowered last.
5. When the flag is suspended over a sidewalk from a rope, extending from house to pole at the edge of the sidewalk, the flag should be hoisted out from the building, toward the pole, union first.
6. When the flag is displayed in a manner other than by being flown from a staff, it should be displayed flat, whether indoors or out. When displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the

flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window it should be displayed in the same way, that is, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street. When festoons, rosettes or drappings are desired, bunting of blue, white and red should be used, but never the flag.

7. When carried in a procession with another flag or flags, the Stars and Stripes should be either on the marching right, or when there is a line of other flags, our National flag may be in front of the center of that line.

8. When a number of flags of states or cities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs with our National flag, the latter should be at the center or at the highest point of the group.

9. When the flags of two or more nations are displayed they should be flown from separate staffs of the same height and the flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.

10. When displayed in the chancel or on a platform in a church (auditorium) the flag should be placed on a staff at the clergyman's right; other flags at his left. If displayed in the body of the church, the flag should be at the congregation's right as they face the clergyman.

Of all the above, one of the most common mistakes made is in rule number six. Frequently I've observed flags displayed flat against walls with the union in the wrong place. Pay particular attention to this rule, the union should always be in the upper left hand corner from the observer's viewpoint whether the flag is hung vertically or horizontally.

Finally, I'd like to express special thanks to Bill Covell of Carlton who on several occasions has mentioned to me his own concern about improper display practices of our flag and his motive force in this article.

*"This flag, which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation. The choices are ours. It floats in majestic silence above the hosts that execute those choices, whether in peace or in war. And yet, though silent, it speaks to us--- speaks to us of the past, of the men and women who went before us, and of the records they wrote upon it."*

--Woodroe Wilson--