

Flag flying etiquette is a real thing

By: Susan Marquez -
 With America 250 celebrations cranking up this summer, now is a good time to brush up on your American flag knowledge. I find myself driving up and down I-55 from Madison to downtown Jackson and beyond more than I ever imagined. Along that drive, I can't help but notice the number of businesses flying the American flag. High atop a flagpole, there are small, medium, and large flags flying high in front of car dealerships, hotels, office buildings, and other businesses. Some flags are huge (we see yours, Mac Haik Ford). It always gives me a sense of patriotism to see them flap in the breeze. The companies are not required to fly a flag; it's something they do to express their pride in our country, where free enterprise is a good thing. Many years ago, I was

the marketing director at a local shopping mall when 9-11 happened. Never before or since have I seen such a public outpouring of civic pride, patriotism, and pure love for our country. People came together as one, united in their allegiance to our flag. People wore flag lapel pins, and we saw flags where we had never seen them before. Most impressive to me was the huge flag draped from the side of St. Dominic's medical tower. On that tragic day when our world forever changed, I noticed flags at half-mast on my drive home. There was a flagpole in front of the mall (there probably still is), and I wasn't certain of the protocol for flying a flag at half-mast. I recall from my Girl Scout days that the president calls for flags to fly at half-mast nationwide. But for how long?

Believe it or not, Google wasn't a big thing on September 11, 2001. When I got into my office the next morning, I called the White House. I was directed to their secretary of protocol. She told me the flags should fly at half-mast for three days, as per presidential orders. Fast forward to last week, Friday, May 15. I was driving south on I-55 from Madison to Hal & Mal's (it was catfish Fri-Yay, y'all, with Jessie Robinson playing the blues!). I noticed Patty Peck Honda's huge flag flying at half-mast. I didn't recall any major news events in the past 24 hours that would call for that, so I was curious. I noticed that none of the other flags from that point to the Pearl Street exit were at half-mast. I Googled it when I got to the parking lot, and it seems the person in charge of Patty Peck's flag got it right. Flags were to fly at half-mast on May 15 according to a nationwide order tied to a federal observance. May 15 is recognized as Peace Officers Memorial Day, which falls on the same date each year. Each flag in the state should have been raised at sunrise - first to the top of the flagpole, then lowered to half-mast, where they should have remained until sunset, when the flags should again have been raised to the top of the pole before being lowered.

removed, and folded properly. It has been a long-standing practice for states to mirror federal actions; therefore, flags across Mississippi should have been flying at half-mast, yet Patty Peck's was the only one I saw in compliance with the proper flag protocol. More research resulted in valuable information from the Department of Veterans Affairs. According to a document posted by Veterans Affairs, "An easy way to remember when to fly the United States flag at half-staff is to consider when the whole nation is in mourning. These periods of mourning are proclaimed either by the president of the United States, for national remembrance, or the governor of a state or territory, for local remembrance, in the event of the death of a member or former member of the federal, state, or territorial government or judiciary. The heads of departments and agencies of the federal government may also order that the flag be flown at half-staff on buildings, grounds, and naval vessels under their jurisdiction." Different public offices require a different number of days. For example, in the event of the death of a president or former president, the flag should remain at half-mast for 30 days. Others range from three to ten

days. A governor may order flags flown at half-mast in their state for a number of reasons. Flags also fly at half-mast for certain federal observances. The next one will be Memorial Day (May 25). According to the Veterans Affairs site, "On Memorial Day, the flag should be flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon only, then raised briskly to the top of the staff until sunset, in honor of the nation's battle heroes." The president may also order the flag to be flown at half-mast after a tragic event, such as the aforementioned 9-11 tragedy. I remember watching as a gigantic 30' x 34' flag was revealed at the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. The flag, which is revealed hourly, is known as The Star-Spangled Banner, and it was the flag that was raised over Fort McHenry in Baltimore on September 14, 1814, that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the poem that became our national anthem. The flag had 15 stars and 15 stripes. It was an inspiring sight for me to see. Since the fourth of July in 1960, our flag has had 13 stripes (seven red, six white) to represent the original 13 colonies. There are 50 white stars on a blue background representing

the states' unity within our country. Those are basic facts about our flag that all Americans should know. If you have a flagpole or you display a flag anywhere, you must observe proper flag etiquette. Thankfully, Google and other search engines are now readily available. To find all you need to know about flag etiquette and protocol, you can go to The American Legion site, US Flag site, or the Old Farmer's Almanac. For specialized information, such as proper flag disposal, or folding the flag, try the National Flag Foundation. Once you read some of this information, you'll have a better idea of the standards of respect for our flag. You'll know how to display a flag both indoors and outdoors, and about parading and saluting a flag. With America 250 celebrations cranking up this summer, now is a good time to brush up on your flag knowledge. And while you're at it, pass some knowledge to your children so they'll learn to respect the flag as well.



- June 4** - Scott Ellis, Nathan McCloskey, Milton Brighton Hutchinson, Hoover
- June 5** - Scott Howell, Steven Edwards, Anderson Barrett, Claire Tate, Jana Cannon Johnson, David Cross, Jr., Honeii Scott
- June 6** - Dylan Holladay Lowe, Brenda Russell, Christopher Bailey, Terra Rushing Foster, Carolyne Loflin, Juanita Watson,
- June 7** - Chriduris Brown, Elizabeth Loflin, Katherine Montone, Lauren Loflin
- June 8** - Betty Springer, Brantley Holder, Brooke Bell, Trey Leflore, Tommy Garrett
- June 9** - Kent Pepper, Chris Cain, Paul Hager, Lindy Bunch McCain, Pam Killebrew, Amber Ray, Xavier Black
- June 10** - Denise Grover



- June 4** - Mike and Patty Hood, William and Bettie Holmes, Murray and Pam Burrell
- June 5** - John and Pattie Lowe, Landon and Rebecca Hood, Tracy and Karen Eldridge, Hank and Erica Wentworth, Taylor and Sterling Aldridge
- June 6** - Josh and Kaley Carpenter, Ellis and Janie Harris, Brett and Carrie Narmour
- June 7** - Bootsy and Pam Hooker, Christopher and Shannon Woo, Justin and Chrissy Branch
- June 9** - Ben and Marisa Atkinson, Swayze and Rose Cheatham, Wirt and Lois Hayes, Wesley and Molly Dew, Drew and Amanda Broyles



- WEST GROVE MB CHURCH**
West Grove MB Church, 472 West Grove Road, Lexington, will hold a Pre-Father's Day program on Sunday, June 14 at 11:00 a.m. 6-4,11
- WEST GROVE MB CHURCH**
Salem MB Church, 1218 Salem Road, Pickens, will hold its pastors 9th anniversary program on Sunday, June 14 at 2:00 p.m. 6-4,11
- TRINITY MB CHURCH**
Trinity MB Church will hold a church anniversary program on Sunday, June 7. 6-4
- NEWPORT MB CHURCH**
Newport MB Church, 2028 Newport Road, Lexington, will hold a Family and Friends Day program on Sunday, June 14 at 11:00 a.m. Dinner will be served. 6-4,11
- SALEM MB CHURCH**
Sweet Home MB Church, 11808 Ebenezer Road, will hold its annual Men's Day service on Sunday, June 21 at 11:00 a.m. 6-4,11,18
- FERRELL FUNDRAISER**
A fundraiser will be held for Lamar and Dana Ferrell due to their loss of their house due to a fire on Saturday, June 13 from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. at the Coxburg Community Center. Hamburger plates will be sold, dine in or carry out. 6-4,11



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