

Flag Day

By Karen Zhang

为纪念1777年6月14日在第二次制宪会议上美国国旗的采用，1949年8月3日，美国国会批准了63 Stat. 492号联合议案，将每年的6月14日定为国旗日。每年的这一天，在美利坚的国土上随处可见星条旗飘扬，全美各地都会举行纪念活动，以示对国旗的敬意。



Americans not only celebrate their Independence Day on July 4th, they commemorate [纪念, 庆祝] the adoption [采用] of the American flag on Flag Day.

Flag Day falls on June 14 every year. The flag of the U.S. represents freedom and has been an enduring symbol of the country's ideals since the flag was adopted in 1777. American people celebrate by displaying the American flag outside homes and public buildings. It's remarkable to see the star-spangled banner—a nickname [清一色地] of the American flag—lined uniformly [清一色地] outside rows of houses. The red-white-and-blue American flags surely keep reminding me that I am standing on American soil [土地].

If you visit historic sites in America on Flag Day, such as military academies, national monuments and cemeteries [公墓], you may see some flag-raising ceremonies, another popular way of observing this holiday. Some American neighborhoods will hold musical salutes and street parades, and quizzes and essay competitions about the American flag will

Karen in America

take place at schools. Even the U.S. President or military officers will announce awards given to veteran soldiers on Flag Day for special recognition.

I notice Americans are very proud of their national flag. Not only on Flag Day but also on normal days, they hang up the American flag or artwork of the American flag to decorate everything from restaurant entrances to motor bikes and the windows of their homes. You can see the image of the flag on handbags, suitcases, scarves and furniture.

I initially wondered if all this displaying of the American flag was too much patriotism. But the more I'm exposed to American culture, I realize it's no different from the mandatory flag-raising ceremony of the Chinese flag at schools in China every Monday morning. American schools don't have a weekly flag-raising ceremony, but American people have their own way to honor the American flag.

Like the Chinese national flag, the design of the American flag is symbolic. The American flag has 13 red and white stripes, representing the original 13 colonies. In the upper left corner is a blue rectangle bearing 50 small, white, five-pointed stars, representing the 50 states. Well, if you're interested in learning about the symbols on other national flags, you can get an atlas [地图集] of the world. It tells you all about the stories behind each flag. 

