

Honor The Past – Build The Future



The American Flag Foundation, Inc.

PO Box 435, Riderwood, MD 21139 ★ (410) 563-FLAG (3524) ★ Fax (410) 821-1252 ★ www.americanflagfoundation.org

Annual Pause for the Pledge of Allegiance

At 7:00 p.m. (EDT) on Flag Day, June 14, Americans all across the nation will pause to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag. While most of us know the words of the Pledge, there are a large number who do not know of its origin.

Mr. Francis Bellamy, an ordained minister of Rome, New York is credited with the authorship of the original Pledge. It was he, who on the eve of the 400th Anniversary of the discovery of America, initiated a campaign for the establishment of a national holiday on October 12, . . . to celebrate the day on which Columbus discovered America. In his concept, he envisioned that flags should be flown over every school-house and public building from coast to coast.

In the material which he nationally circulated, he wrote, "Let the flag float over every school-house in the land and the exercise be such as shall impress upon our youth the patriotic duty of citizenship." He also included the original 23 words of the Pledge which he had developed.

"I pledge allegiance to my flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Thus it was that on Columbus Day in October 1892, the Pledge of Allegiance was repeated by more than 12 million public school children in every state in the union.

The wording of the Pledge has been modified three times. In 1923, the words "the flag of the United States" were substituted for "my flag." In 1924, "of America" were added. On Flag Day 1954, the words "under God" became

a part of the Pledge. Thus the 23 words have become 31 words.

By a Joint Resolution on June 9, 1966, the Congress requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as National Flag Week and calling upon citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

The idea of the annual PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE originated in 1980 at the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House in Baltimore, Maryland. Since then the concept has swept across the country in a grassroots movement supported by a broad spectrum of individuals, organizations, and businesses.

The National Flag Day Foundation, Inc. was created in 1982 "to conduct educational programs throughout the United States in promotion of National Flag Day and to encourage national patriotism by promotion of the PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE."

On June 20, 1985, the Ninety-Ninth Congress passed and President Reagan signed Public Law 99-54 recognizing the PAUSE FOR THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE as part of National Flag Day activities. It is an invitation urging all Americans to participate on June 14, 7:00 p.m. (EDT) in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The effect of this simple ceremony, which transcends age, race, religion, national origin, political and geographic differences, is a stimulating patriotic experience at home and a sign of unity abroad.