



The Mini Page

Betty Debnam, Founding Editor and Editor at Large

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Happy Independence Day!

The Star-Spangled Banner

Do you sing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at school or before sporting events? Francis Scott Key’s famous anthem is a tribute to our nation’s flag. Do you know the words?

*O say can you
see by the dawn’s
early light,
What so proudly
we hailed at the
twilight’s last
gleaming?
Whose broad
stripes and bright
stars through the
perilous fight,*



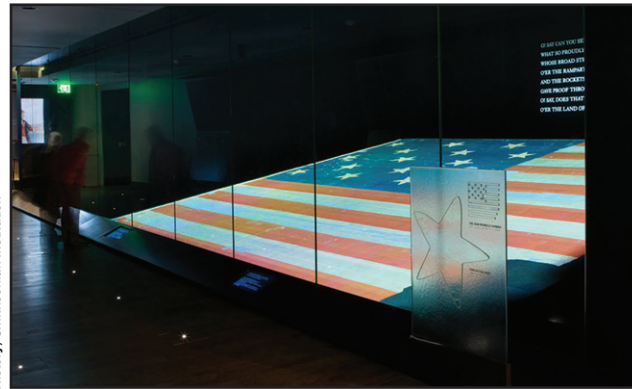
Francis Scott Key

*O’er the ramparts we watched, were so
gallantly streaming?
And the rockets’ red glare, the bombs
bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our
flag was still there;
O say does that star-spangled banner
yet wave,
O’er the land of the free, and the home
of the brave?*

A holiday tribute

This week, in honor of Independence Day on July 4, The Mini Page shares more about the flag that inspired Key’s lyrics and that has become a symbol of U.S. freedom.

photos courtesy National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution



The Star-Spangled Banner as it is displayed today at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

The flag was made by Mary Pickersgill in the summer of 1813 — 200 years ago. She made it for Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Md.

The original flag was 30 feet tall by 42 feet wide! It was big so that it could be seen from far away.

A gift to the country

By 1907, the flag that inspired Key during the War of 1812 belonged to Eben Appleton of New York. He lent the flag to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., to display, and in 1912 he turned the loan into a gift.

Smithsonian experts wanted to preserve the flag. Seamstresses sewed a linen backing onto it to make it stronger. They used about 2 million stitches!

This is how the flag looked when it arrived at the Smithsonian in 1907. For many years the flag was displayed hanging. A linen curtain that protected it from light was lifted for five minutes about seven times a day so the public could view the flag.



Saving the banner

In 1998, Smithsonian specialists began the long process of **conserving**, or saving, the flag. They carefully moved it to a special lab, where the temperature and humidity were kept steady.

The linen backing from 1914 was removed stitch by stitch, then the front and back of the flag were cleaned with dry sponges and other methods.

To complete the work, conservators attached the flag to a lightweight polyester material to support the fragile areas.

In November 2008, the banner went on display in a new state-of-the-art gallery at the National Museum of American History. In its new display, the flag is secured to a table tilted at 10 degrees. Visitors can view it, but it is still supported.

Flag Rules

Respecting the flag

The U.S. Congress has set up rules about how our flag should be treated. Here are a few of them:



- When the flag is displayed flat against the wall, the stars should be at the top and to the flag's own right (our left).

- A flag should be taken down if the weather is so bad it could be badly damaged.

- When the flag is flown along with state flags, the U.S. flag should be displayed above and in the middle of the state flags.



- Do not place any other flag above our flag, except at the United Nations. There, the U.N. flag flies above all others, and the flags of all the countries are flown in alphabetical order.

- When a flag is flown outside, it is usually flown during the day and taken down at night. In public places, flags flying at night should be lighted.



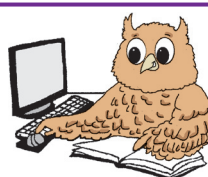
image courtesy National Archives

- A flag flying at **half-staff**, or halfway up the pole, stands for mourning. This photo was taken of the White House on Sept. 14, 2001, three days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

- Do not display the flag upside down unless as a signal of distress.

- When a flag becomes so worn that it must be destroyed, it is preferable to burn it. Groups such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the American Legion often hold flag-burning ceremonies, sometimes on Flag Day (June 14).

Ready Resources



The Mini Page provides ideas for websites, books or other resources that will help you learn more about this week's topics.

On the Web:

- amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner
- bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/flag.html
- usconsulate.org.hk/pas/kids/sym_flag.htm

At the library:

- "Stars and Stripes: The Story of the American Flag" by Sarah L. Thomson, Bob Dacey and Debra Bandelin
- "The Flag We Love" by Pam Munoz Ryan



Words that remind us of our flag are hidden in the block below. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find: BALTIMORE, BANNER, BRITISH, CONSERVE, DISPLAY, FLAG, FORT, HALF-STAFF, HOLIDAY, INDEPENDENCE, KEY, LYRICS, MCHENRY, NATIONAL, SMITHSONIAN, SONG, SPANGLED, STAR, SYMBOL, TRIBUTE.

Star-Spangled Banner

TRY 'N' FIND

B	E	C	N	E	D	N	E	P	E	D	N	I	W	F
A	R	T	O	H	V	D	A	L	Y	R	I	C	S	F
N	O	I	U	N	O	Y	E	T	O	M	T	J	G	A
N	M	S	T	B	S	L	R	L	I	B	X	R	N	T
E	I	Y	T	I	I	E	I	N	G	O	M	C	O	S
R	T	G	E	A	S	R	R	D	E	N	N	Y	S	F
Q	L	A	D	K	R	H	T	V	A	H	A	A	S	L
Y	A	L	P	S	I	D	H	B	E	Y	C	P	L	A
W	B	F	N	A	I	N	O	S	H	T	I	M	S	H

Mini Spy . . .



Mini Spy and her friends are about to sing “The Star-Spangled Banner” at school. See if you can find:

- kite • key • ruler • heart • cat • sock • bell
- pencil • letter B • book • dog • word MINI
- safety pin • tooth • caterpillar • number 7
- number 3 • coffee pot • letter A • letter E
- man in the moon • sailboat



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Rookie Cookie's Recipe Oven-Baked BCT Sandwiches

You'll need:

- 8 slices whole-wheat bread
- 4 slices tomato
- 4 slices cheddar cheese
- butter or margarine
- 8 slices bacon, cooked
- lemon-pepper seasoning (optional)

What to do:

1. Butter 4 slices bread. Lay buttered side down on cookie sheet.
2. Layer cheese, 2 slices bacon (cut in half) and tomato on buttered slices.
3. Sprinkle lemon-pepper seasoning as desired on tomatoes.
4. Butter last four slices of bread and place on top.
5. Bake in preheated 400-degree oven for 6 to 7 minutes on one side.
6. Flip with spatula and continue baking for additional 6 minutes.
7. Slice in half and serve.

*Makes 4 sandwiches. This is a good recipe to double if you are making a large quantity of sandwiches at once.

You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

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Meet Ross Lynch



photo by Bob D'Amico, courtesy Disney Channel

Ross Lynch stars as Brady in the Disney Channel movie “Teen Beach Movie.” He is also known as the singer Austin Moon on the Disney Channel series “Austin & Ally.” He is in a band, R5, with two of his three brothers, his sister and a family friend. He plays the guitar, drums and piano.

Ross has been in several TV commercials and print ads. He has also been in music videos for shows such as “Hannah

Montana” and “Kung Fu Panda.”

Ross, 17, was born in Littleton, Colo. He was home-schooled for most of his education. He enjoys ice hockey, drawing, and remote-control airplanes and helicopters. He has two turtles.

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Goldie Goodsport's Report

Supersport: Cristie Kerr



Height: 5-3 1/2 **Birthdate:** 10-12-77 **Hometown:** Miami, Fla.

Some of her friends went to the pool. Some of them just romped in the Florida sunshine. Little Cristie Kerr often went to hit golf balls instead.

She started playing at age 8 and is still having fun on the fairways at age 35. Kerr has 16 career wins on the LPGA tour, is the all-time leading American women's money winner, and held a No. 10 world ranking in late May this year.

She has used a portion of her resources to help build the Cristie Kerr Women's Health Center and support the fight against breast cancer.

Other interests include fishing, watching movies, cooking and spending time with her husband. Tour life, with its constant travel and intense competition, is tiring, but Kerr continues to survive and thrive.

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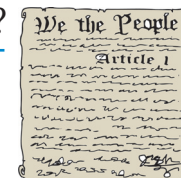
MIGHTY
FUNNY'S

Mini Jokes

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All the following jokes have something in common.
Can you guess the common theme or category?

June: Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
Julie: At the bottom!

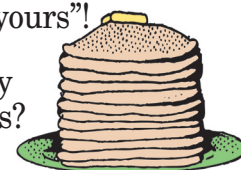


James: What did one firecracker say to the other?

Jackie: “My pop is bigger than yours”!

Jessie: What happened when the angry lady put a firecracker under her pancakes?

Jinx: She blew her stack!



Star-Spangled History



courtesy White House Historical Association

The White House as it looked after the British burned it in 1814. The exterior walls had to be torn down because they were not stable enough. The building was rebuilt by 1817.

The War of 1812

One of the reasons America went to war in 1812 was that the British had been attacking American ships. The British wanted to stop America from trading with their enemy, France. The British also captured American sailors and forced them to serve in the British navy.

In 1814, the British invaded Washington, D.C. After burning the Capitol and the White House, British troops went into Maryland. A doctor, William Beanes, organized a posse to lock up these troublemakers.

The British captured Dr. Beanes and took him onto their ship, which was anchored in Baltimore Harbor. A Washington lawyer, Francis Scott Key, tried to negotiate Dr. Beanes' release.

Key was held under British guard on a nearby ship for several days. The admiral refused to let him leave until the British had finished bombing Fort McHenry.



image courtesy National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

This image shows a view of the bombardment of Fort McHenry in September 1814. Can you see the “bombs bursting in air”?

After catching sight of the flag during the bombing of Fort McHenry, Francis Scott Key took a letter from his pocket and jotted down the famous words on the back of it.

‘Bombs bursting in air’

On the morning of Sept. 13, the British began shelling the fort. Aboard the nearby ship, Francis Scott Key watched the British fire about 1,800 mortars and shells.

At night, he could see the bombs bursting in the air, but could not tell if the fort had surrendered or not. About 2 o'clock in the morning, the British stopped firing. Key thought this meant the Americans had lost.

But the British had stopped bombing so they could secretly land troops. When this failed, they started bombing again at about 4 a.m.

Finally, in the dawn's early light, Francis Scott Key could see the flag was still flying. The Americans had not lost after all!

Next week, The Mini Page meets some fascinating Antarctic animals.

The song

Francis Scott Key called his song “The Defence of Fort McHenry.” He wrote it to a popular British tune.

Key had written other words to this tune before.

His earlier song was about the American victory against the Barbary pirates in 1805.

“The Star-Spangled Banner” was a big hit right away. Congress made it our national anthem in 1931.



The Mini Page thanks Valeska M. Hilbig, deputy director, Office of Public Affairs, National Museum of American History, for help with this issue.

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