

The background of the page is a faded American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The stars are in the upper left corner, and the stripes extend across the bottom and right side of the page.

## FLAG CEREMONY REPORT

April 19, 2013

Being chosen to conduct the flag ceremony this year was truly an honor for me. Thank you, Judy, for this privilege.

In preparation for the ceremony, in March I wrote to all the fifteen ESA members I felt should be the ones to take part. I asked if they would be willing to participate and, if so, to bring their flags, poles and stands (if applicable) as well as their white gloves. I also advised them about the time and location of the ceremony rehearsal.

All fifteen agreed to participate. However, just one week before convention, Jeannette Rhodes had to cancel her position as Foundation flag bearer due to a serious medical issue in her family. Fortunately, with a little bit of juggling, Lynn Hughes was able to replace Jeannette in that position. Lynn is a Past Foundation Chair and a current advisor to the Foundation directors so she was fully qualified for the task.

Since I was on the Convention Planning Committee, I was able to tour the facility prior to the convention and arrange for the use of both the American and Oregon flags as well as for a flag storage area. I chose not to have music included in the ceremony in order to give full attention to the flags.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity.

Joy Serkowney,  
Flag Ceremony Chairman



## **FLAG CEREMONY**

**April 20, 2013**

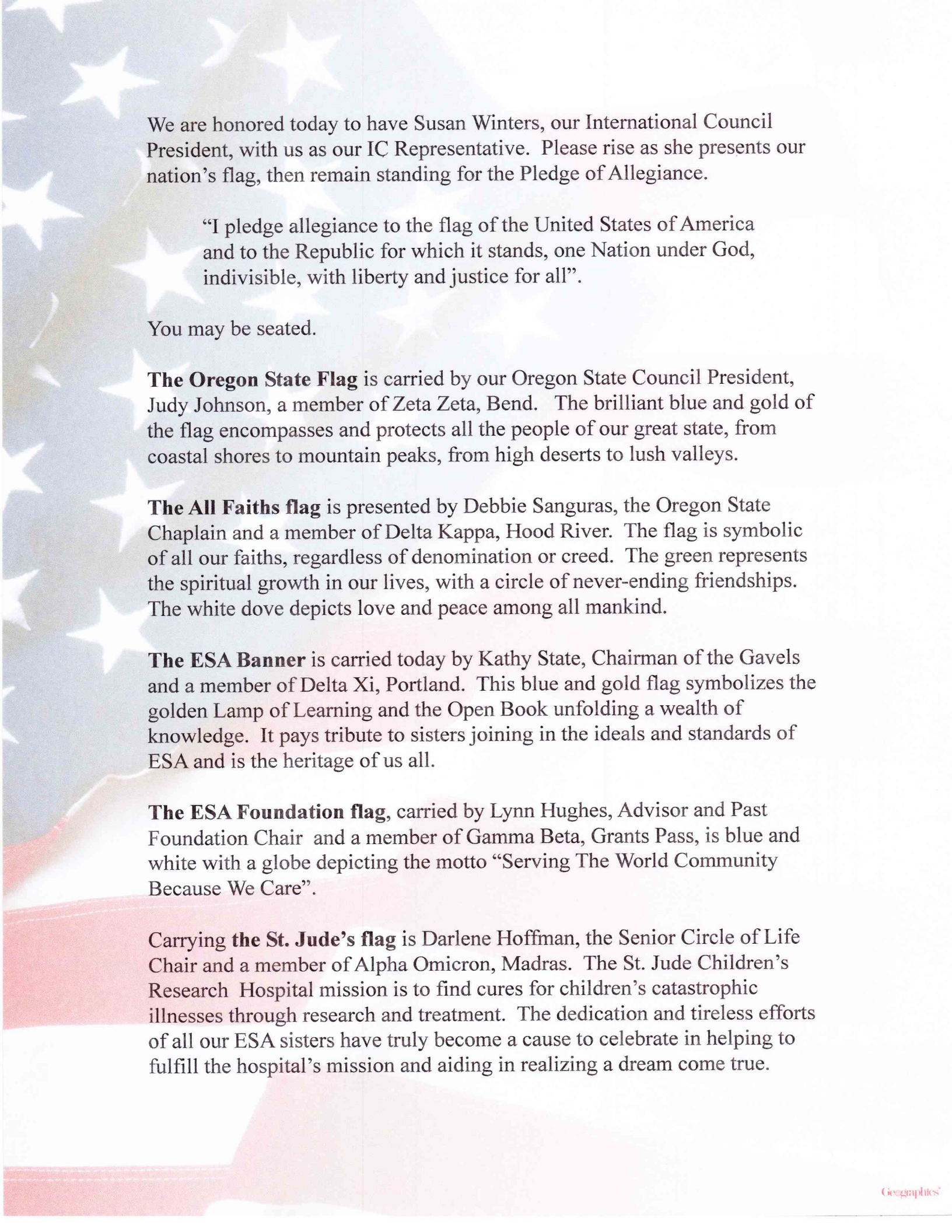
**Hilton Garden Inn, Springfield**

Good morning, and welcome to the 67<sup>th</sup> Oregon State Convention! Judy's theme this year has been "Heart and Hands Celebrate ESA", and that is what is planned for this weekend - to celebrate our sisterhood, to celebrate all the work we do for St. Jude, Easter Seal and our local communities and the fun we have doing it, and, most importantly, to celebrate the love and caring we share with each other.

I am so excited and proud to be standing before you today since this is the first flag ceremony I've been able to conduct since becoming a citizen of this great country a year and a half ago. Thank you, Judy, for allowing me this honor. When we hear the words "Oh beautiful, for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain, for purple mountain majesty above the fruited plains, America, America, God grant thy grace on thee, and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea", we can't help but visualize the glory of this great nation that we call home. We are thankful for the men and women of our armed forces that fight to protect our freedom, and we are grateful for all those that rally to the needs of their fellowman when disaster strikes. This has never been more evident than during the travesty that occurred in Boston this past Monday, when bystanders rushed to aid those injured in the blast, when participants in the race continued running to nearby hospitals to donate blood, when Americans all across the country responded as one to the call for prayer and compassion and assistance. This is our country at its best. This is America!

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our nation's strength and unity and a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. Born in Philadelphia on June 14, 1777, our flag symbolizes the patriotic ideals of a nation 'conceived in liberty'. Originally, the flag had thirteen stripes, alternating seven red and six white, and thirteen white stars in a blue field, representing the first thirteen states. Today, the flag still has the same thirteen horizontal stripes, representing the original 13 colonies, but there are now fifty stars, representing the 50 states. The red of the flag symbolizes Hardiness and Valor, the white is for Purity and Innocence and the blue represents Vigilance, Perseverance and Justice.



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We are honored today to have Susan Winters, our International Council President, with us as our IC Representative. Please rise as she presents our nation's flag, then remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all”.

You may be seated.

**The Oregon State Flag** is carried by our Oregon State Council President, Judy Johnson, a member of Zeta Zeta, Bend. The brilliant blue and gold of the flag encompasses and protects all the people of our great state, from coastal shores to mountain peaks, from high deserts to lush valleys.

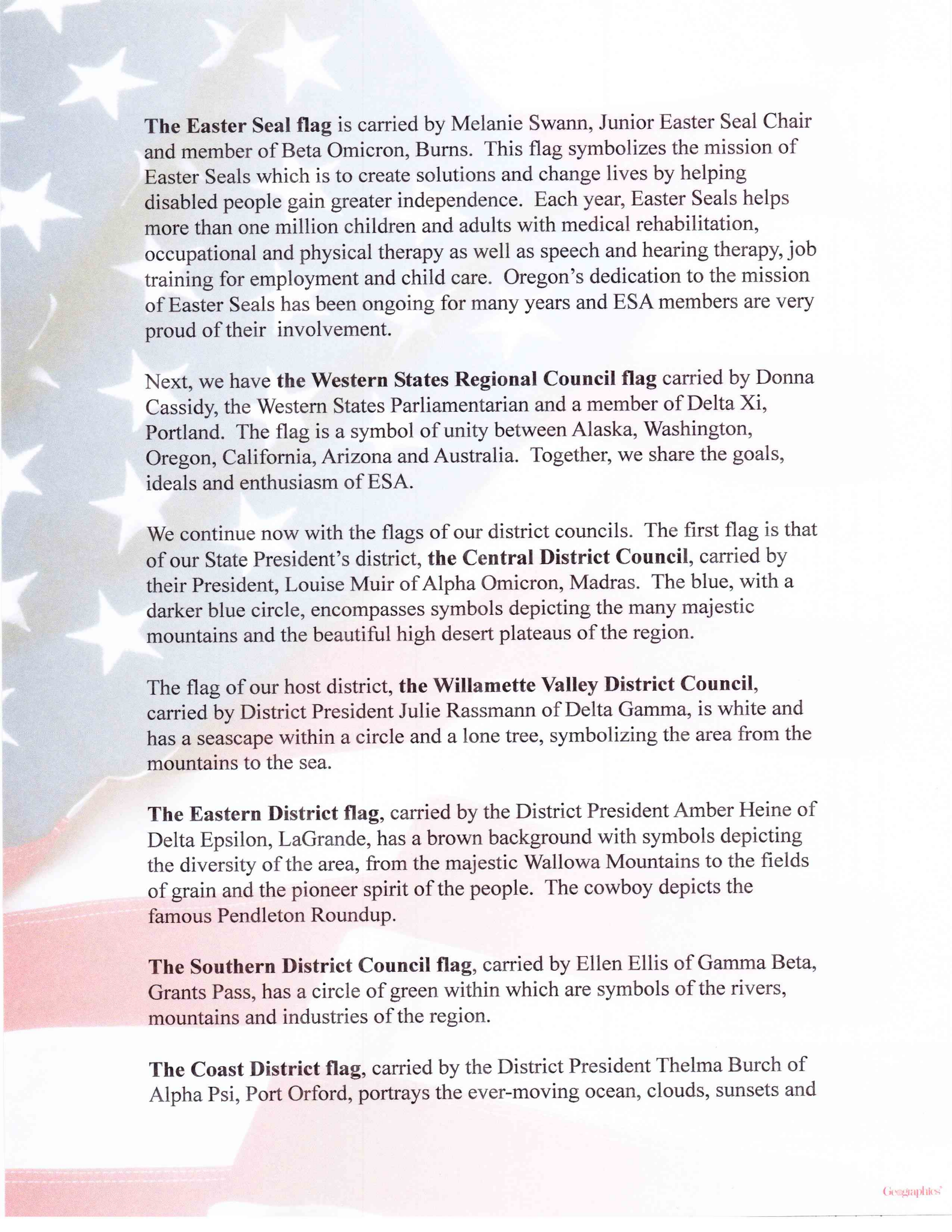
**The All Faiths flag** is presented by Debbie Sanguras, the Oregon State Chaplain and a member of Delta Kappa, Hood River. The flag is symbolic of all our faiths, regardless of denomination or creed. The green represents the spiritual growth in our lives, with a circle of never-ending friendships. The white dove depicts love and peace among all mankind.

**The ESA Banner** is carried today by Kathy State, Chairman of the Gavel and a member of Delta Xi, Portland. This blue and gold flag symbolizes the golden Lamp of Learning and the Open Book unfolding a wealth of knowledge. It pays tribute to sisters joining in the ideals and standards of ESA and is the heritage of us all.

**The ESA Foundation flag**, carried by Lynn Hughes, Advisor and Past Foundation Chair and a member of Gamma Beta, Grants Pass, is blue and white with a globe depicting the motto “Serving The World Community Because We Care”.

Carrying **the St. Jude's flag** is Darlene Hoffman, the Senior Circle of Life Chair and a member of Alpha Omicron, Madras. The St. Jude Children's Research Hospital mission is to find cures for children's catastrophic illnesses through research and treatment. The dedication and tireless efforts of all our ESA sisters have truly become a cause to celebrate in helping to fulfill the hospital's mission and aiding in realizing a dream come true.



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**The Easter Seal flag** is carried by Melanie Swann, Junior Easter Seal Chair and member of Beta Omicron, Burns. This flag symbolizes the mission of Easter Seals which is to create solutions and change lives by helping disabled people gain greater independence. Each year, Easter Seals helps more than one million children and adults with medical rehabilitation, occupational and physical therapy as well as speech and hearing therapy, job training for employment and child care. Oregon's dedication to the mission of Easter Seals has been ongoing for many years and ESA members are very proud of their involvement.

Next, we have **the Western States Regional Council flag** carried by Donna Cassidy, the Western States Parliamentarian and a member of Delta Xi, Portland. The flag is a symbol of unity between Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona and Australia. Together, we share the goals, ideals and enthusiasm of ESA.

We continue now with the flags of our district councils. The first flag is that of our State President's district, **the Central District Council**, carried by their President, Louise Muir of Alpha Omicron, Madras. The blue, with a darker blue circle, encompasses symbols depicting the many majestic mountains and the beautiful high desert plateaus of the region.

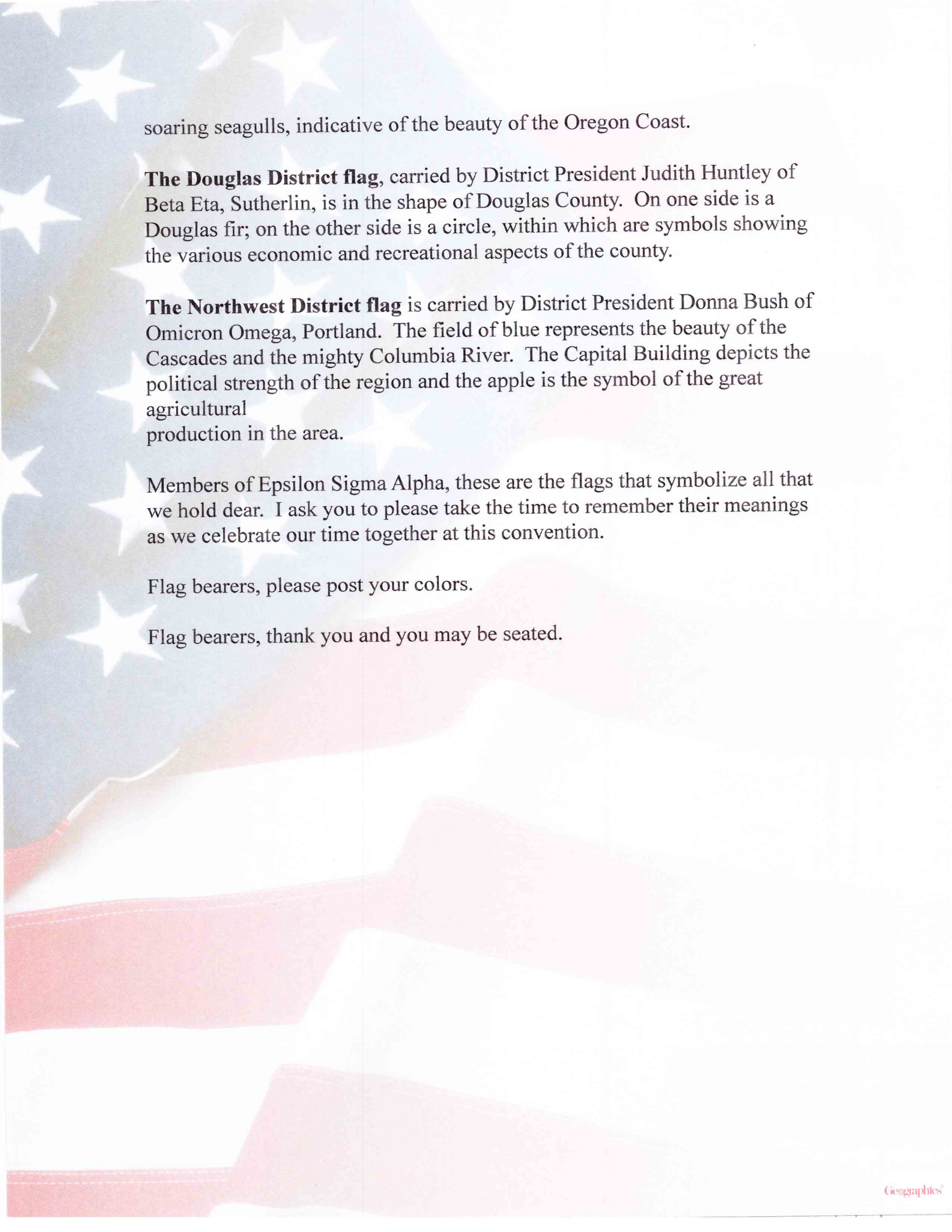
The flag of our host district, **the Willamette Valley District Council**, carried by District President Julie Rassmann of Delta Gamma, is white and has a seascape within a circle and a lone tree, symbolizing the area from the mountains to the sea.

**The Eastern District flag**, carried by the District President Amber Heine of Delta Epsilon, LaGrande, has a brown background with symbols depicting the diversity of the area, from the majestic Wallowa Mountains to the fields of grain and the pioneer spirit of the people. The cowboy depicts the famous Pendleton Roundup.

**The Southern District Council flag**, carried by Ellen Ellis of Gamma Beta, Grants Pass, has a circle of green within which are symbols of the rivers, mountains and industries of the region.

**The Coast District flag**, carried by the District President Thelma Burch of Alpha Psi, Port Orford, portrays the ever-moving ocean, clouds, sunsets and



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soaring seagulls, indicative of the beauty of the Oregon Coast.

**The Douglas District flag**, carried by District President Judith Huntley of Beta Eta, Sutherlin, is in the shape of Douglas County. On one side is a Douglas fir; on the other side is a circle, within which are symbols showing the various economic and recreational aspects of the county.

**The Northwest District flag** is carried by District President Donna Bush of Omicron Omega, Portland. The field of blue represents the beauty of the Cascades and the mighty Columbia River. The Capital Building depicts the political strength of the region and the apple is the symbol of the great agricultural production in the area.

Members of Epsilon Sigma Alpha, these are the flags that symbolize all that we hold dear. I ask you to please take the time to remember their meanings as we celebrate our time together at this convention.

Flag bearers, please post your colors.

Flag bearers, thank you and you may be seated.

## RETIRING OF THE FLAGS

Flag Bearers, please take your places.

Please stand for the retiring of the flags.

As our convention comes to a close, let us once again salute and honor our flags, the symbols of our heritage and our lives.

The United States flag is being retired by our International Council President, Susan Winters. Susan, it has been an honor having you with us this weekend. We look forward to seeing you in Portland next year. This is our Star Spangled Banner - long may it wave o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

The Oregon flag - a symbol of our state's great heritage.

The All Faiths flag - may we go forth with God's blessing in all our endeavors.

The ESA banner - we are never alone in our quest to achieve our goals.

The ESA Foundation flag - Serving the World Community Because We Care.

The St. Jude flag - let us continue helping children with catastrophic illnesses.

The Easter Seal flag - let us continue helping people with disabilities.

The WSRC flag - symbolizing common goals among the western states.

Our District flags - the Pride of Oregon

Central District

Willamette Valley District Council

Eastern District

Southern District

Coast District

Douglas District

Northwest District

This weekend, we have enjoyed taking the time with Judy to celebrate ESA with our heart and hands. Now, as we begin another ESA year, let's answer Su's call to "Come fly with me" and soar with her to achieve goals higher than we ever thought possible.

Thanks to the Willamette Valley District sisters for all their hard work in hosting this convention. We hope you had a good time! Thank you and have a safe journey home.