

September 25, 2026

Details: Imagery poetry: Flags on My Bike

Owner/Poet/Designer: Mark M Pierzchala. **All Rights Reserved.**

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Imagery poetry: (my term) an interplay of images with poetry. In this work there are 4 poems and 4 images. Elements combine to show and explain the flags that I fly on my bike at the time this work was completed. The flags: The American flag, a Mattie J. T. Stepanek green peace flag, an LGBTQ Plus flag, and an Honor and Remember flag.

Poetry: All four (4) poems are original works created solely by Mark M Pierzchala.

Medium: Cell phone images and original text on landscape-oriented Power Point slides.

Software used: Microsoft Power Point, Microsoft Photo for image display, TechSmith Snagit for image capture and image file handling, Adobe Acrobat for pdf display and creation, Dictionary Media Group's Dictionary.com and Thesaurus.com, and RhymeZone.com.

Non-Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): I do not use AI to write poetry. The software I use for word searching may use AI in their respective algorithms. To speed things up, I use such software to find rhymes, synonyms, and definitions to find specific replacement words that better fit the already written poetry, as part of the revision process. I also did some general searches by typing into browser search boxes.

Photography: All photographs are original works by Mark M Pierzchala, taken over the past year plus. Pictures were uploaded to a private Dropbox repository from the cell phone. All images were cropped. One image was horizontally flipped in PowerPoint.

In the first poetry slide, the picture of the bicycle overlays a background that, from bottom-left to upper-right, proceeds from light blue, through light purple, to light red. To do this, the image of the bicycle needed to have a clear, transparent background. This was accomplished by using Snagit's fill tool to fill in a null background where it could. I brought this working image into PowerPoint on a white background. Then I used PowerPoint white rectangles and a white pen/marker to paint over any remaining non-white color. This was reimported into Snagit where the fill tool was used again, this time changing the all-white background to clear. The resulting image was saved as a .png file that can handle a null background (.jpg cannot). This took about 5 hours.

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Background: For at least 17 years, I have biked around Rockville, Maryland, with bicycles that have displayed the American flag. Sometimes the American flag has been by itself, but often the bicycles have displayed campaign signs, signs that I was an elected Rockville Councilmember, or signs with political commentary. The earliest picture I can find with flags on my bicycles is from 2009.

Many people have come to associate the display of the American flag as aligning with certain political views. This poetic work, and the sign on my bike, refute this notion.



Websites referenced: I visited the websites of the [Mattie Stepanek Peace Foundation](#), a leading LGBTQ Plus advocacy group [PFLAG](#), and the Honor and Remember organization [Honor And Remember](#).

About Mark M Pierzchala: I hold a master's degree in mathematical Statistics from Michigan State University following a bachelor's degree in mathematics and biology from Central Michigan University. I think analytically and scientifically.

After graduate work, I joined the Peace Corps and served in Swaziland (now eSwatini) in Southern Africa. I met my wife Lesley there; she was a British volunteer. I have visited approximately 45 countries through that experience and many others.

I served as a Rockville, Maryland, City Councilman for 12 years over a 14-year period. As a Councilman, I came to understand the value of visual, literary, and performing arts, and their ability to communicate differently from dry policy papers.

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Examples from over the years

2009 – Campaign Bikes



2025 – at Rockville's Senior Center



2024 – at Montgomery College

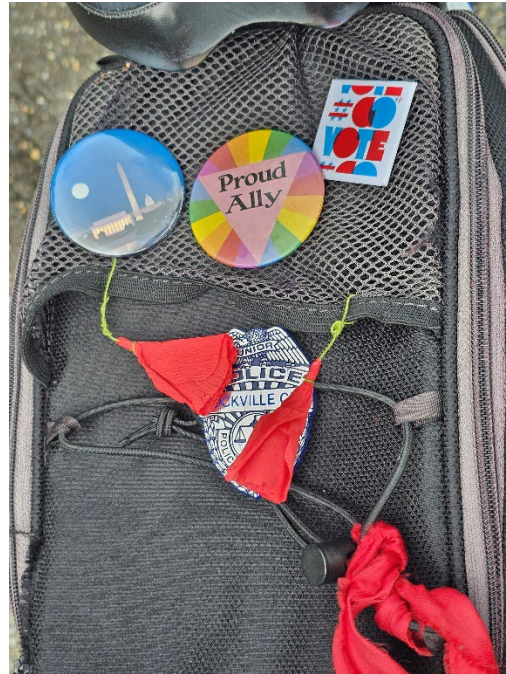


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2024 – The four flags working together.



2024 – Badges, American Legion's red poppies, red HIV awareness ribbon, Rockville Police souvenir badge.



2011 – on my way to a Rockville Mayor and Council meeting.



2018 – Riding in Rockville's Memorial Day Parade, one of many times.

