

Flag Retirement Ceremony

Materials and personnel needed:

1. Flag(s) to be retired.
(Note: if there will be more than one flag, all but the ceremonial flag should be folded in rectangles and placed in separate paper bags before the ceremony.)
2. Flag case made of ¼ inch wood
3. Honor Guard
For Cub Scout Packs – 4 Web II scouts and 2 adult leaders
For Boy Scouts Troops – 4 selected honor scouts and 2 adult leaders

Script:

Leader 1: When the United States flag becomes worn, torn, faded or badly soiled, it is time to replace it with a new flag, and the old flag should be "retired" with all the dignity and respect befitting a symbol of our nation. Like a fallen soldier, a flag that is being retired must be handled with reverence and dignity. The traditional method of retirement is to incinerate the flag, but this does not mean we simply drop the flag, into a fire. Instead, the flag, like that fallen soldier, will be properly encased and prepared for cremation and burial. Therefore we request that all remain silent during this ceremony. Honor guard please approach.

Actions

Four scouts file in and stand in front of the fire. The first scout carries the ceremonial flag to be retired. The second scout carries nothing. The third and fourth scouts carry the flag's case.

Actions

The first scout holds the proper triangularly folded flag in front of him.

Leader 2: "A flag that is in good condition and that will be displayed again is folded in a triangle with only the blue field and white stars of the union visible."

Leader 1: "A flag being retired is folded in a rectangle prior to being encased."

Actions

The first and second scouts ceremoniously unfold the flag and refold it in a rectangle. The second scout then holds the refolded flag in front of him in his hands with the palms up.

Leader 2: "We now place this flag, that has represented our country and all those who have sacrificed for our liberty and freedom, in its case."

Actions

The third and fourth Scouts come forward with the case, and the first scout removes the lid. The second scout places the flag into the case. The first scout replaces the lid.

Leader 1: "This flag is now ready to be retired by incineration as recommended by the United States Code."

Leader 2: "All rise."

Actions

The two scouts holding the case place it on top of the fire with the handles extending past the edges of the fire.

Leader 2: "Scout hand salute. Bugler, please play taps."

Leader 2: *(at the end of Taps)* "Two."

Leader 1: "This concludes our flag retirement ceremony. The honor guard will remain behind to assure the retired flags are completely incinerated. Good Night."

Actions

Honor Guard stays and places the paper bags containing the remaining flags to be retired in the fire, one at a time.

