

Folding the Flag Retirement Ceremony

Leader #1: Our flag is far more than the red, white, and blue cloth of which it is made. It is the symbol of America. It stands for the past, present, and future of our country.

Scout #1: Red stripes are for the valor of the men and women who worked to make and then keep this a free country. *(hold the flag)*

Scout #2: White is for purity and can represent American helping other nations throughout the world. *(hold opposite end of the flag)*

Scout #3: Blue signifies justice for everyone and perseverance in doing what is good and right. *(hold a corner of the flag)*

Scout #4: The star is the symbol of the heavens. The stripe is symbolic of the rays of light coming from the sun. *(hold a corner of the flag)*

(Scouts fold the flag while Leader speaks)

Leader #2: First we fold in lengthwise in half. Next in half again, with the blue on the outside. A triangular fold resembles the tri-corner hat of our forefathers.

Leader #3: The flag should be cleaned when soiled, mended when torn and destroyed privately by burning when beyond repair, as is this flag. Respect for our flag, every day, and every way.

Leader #4: Tonight we retire this flag, which has waved for many years as a symbolic reminder to all of the great nation of America, by burning it. Please stand and salute the flag as we unfold it and lower it into the fire.

(burn flag, sing "America")

FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY

Leader: We are here tonight to give our flag honor as so many have done before. As the box is passed around, please take one piece of our flag. Hold it tight for it's still our flag.

(let everyone take a piece before continuing)

Those of you who have a white piece please come forward and place it on the fire.

Scout 1: The white represents purity that is in all our hearts it represents the honor deep inside our soul.

Leader: Those of you who have a red piece please come forward and place your piece on the fire.

Scout 2: The red stands for the men and women in the armed forces who have served or died to keep freedom alive.

Scout 3: It also stands for those on our soil who have died to protect the rights of others.

Leader: *(after all the red pieces have been placed on the fire)* Will the Webelos scouts with the blue field please come forward.

Webelos Scout 1: The blue stands for valor and courage that binds our fifty states together.

Webelos Scout 2: The blue field is indicative of God's heaven under which it flies.

Leader: Please place the blue field in the fire. *(wait until the blue field is in the fire and has begun to burn.)*

Our Flag is more than colored cloth shaped into a design; it represents us, you, and I. Tonight we have lain to rest a very dear old friend. Although this flag did not lead soldiers into battle, it has served us well. This particular flag flew proudly in front of Mr. Locke's house in Frazier Park for many years. Mr. Locke, a veteran of the Navy, has asked us to honor his flag tonight by retiring it for him. Though we have laid this flag into our fire, it is not sad, for this flag has served with pride and its spirit has been passed on to new flags.

Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance.

FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY

Saturday, August 4

7:30 pm

HISTORY:

Pack Master: “_____” and prayer for retiring the flag.

SET UP:

- Scouts line up on one side of the fire. Each scout gets a card with their statement about the stripe they will burn. (Kathy and Carolyn to be at either end of the line of scouts to assist.)
- Bret, Otto and Kevin stand at the rear of the fire facing the audience waiting for the Color Guard, “Please stand”.
- Color Guard (Cole, Aaron, Trent) walk through the audience, past the line of scouts and fire. Stop at the other side of the fire and face the audience. Color Guard unfolds the flag and holds it up so it shows through the flames during the reading.

SCRIPT:

Bret: “I am your Flag. I appear in many places. I have taken many forms and been called many names. I was authorized by congress in 1818 in the form you see now and have remained unchanged except to add a new star each July 4th after a new state joined the union until I reached by present number of 50.”

Otto: “I am more than just red, white and blue cloth shaped into a design. I am a silent sentinel of freedom. People of every county in the world know me on sight. Many countries love me as you do. Other countries look at me with contempt because they don’t allow the freedom of Democracy that I represent – but county looks on me with respect. I am strong and the people of America have made me strong. My strength comes from your willingness to give help to those who are in need. You strive for world peace yet stand ready to fight oppression. You send resources and offer technology to less fortunate countries so they may strive to become self-sufficient. You feed starving children. You offer a home to anyone who will pledge allegiance to me.”

Kevin: “Your sons gather beneath me to offer their lives on the battlefields, to preserve the Liberty I represent. That’s why I love the American people. That’s why I have flown so proudly. Scouts and their families are some of my favorite people. I listen to your patriotic songs. I’m there at your flag ceremonies and I appreciate the tender care you give me. I feel the love when you say your pledge. I notice that your hand covers your heart when I am on parade. How smartly you salute as I pass by and I ripple with pleasure when I see it.”

Bret: “Now I am tired and it’s time for me to rest in the Sacred Flames of your campfire. My colors are faded and my cloth is tattered but my spirit remains unbroken. To set my spirit loose, first cut the blue field away from my stripes.”

Color Guard: Using scissors, all three boys cut off the blue field of the flag.

Bret: “Tear each of my 13 stripes and lay it on the fire, one at a time. As you do this, think about the 13 original colonies and the pioneers who carved a nation out of a wilderness. They risked everything to fight for the Independence which we enjoy today.”

Color Guard: Cut each stripe of the flag and tear off the rest of the way. One of the Color Guard hands the stripe to each scout waiting in line.

Bret: “As you rip me apart and watch me burn, do not be sad or feel sorry for me. I have had the great Honor of being your flag of the United States of America and the Republic for which I stand, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.”

Kevin: “The Red stripes stand for all of the men and women who have died in the service of our county, both as members of the armed forces and as everyday citizens.”

Otto: “The White stripes stand for the purity in all of our hearts and the tears shed by Americans who lost their sons. It also represents the honor that each of us should show in all that we do in our everyday lives.

1st Stripe (red): First scout in line gets the stripe and stands by the fire. “The 13 stripes stand for the original 13 colonies which are in order of becoming states: Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and finally Georgia.” With both hands, place the stripe in the base of the flames, salute, and starts a new line up on the other side of the fire.

2nd Stripe (white): Next scout in line, “The white stands for purity.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

3rd Stripe (red): “The red stands for courage.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

4th Stripe (white): “Give me liberty or give me death.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

5th Stripe (red): “One if by land, two if the sea.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

6th Stripe (white): “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

7th Stripe (red): “We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

8th Stripe (white): “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

9th Stripe (red): “Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

10th Stripe (white): “Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth to this continent a new nation.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

11th Stripe (red): “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

12th Stripe (white): “Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

13th Stripe (red): “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.” Place the stripe in the fire and stand in the new line.

Bret: “My blue field is indicative of God’s heaven under which we fly. My stars clustered together, unify 50 States as one for God and Country. As we place it in the fire, let it burn brightly and remind us how truly our flag represents our country.

Color Guard: “Please join us in saying the Pledge of Allegiance followed by ‘The Star Spangled Banner’ while the flag burns.” Lay the blue field on the fire.

Bret: “Now I am just a memory, but if there is a tear in your eye or a lump in your throat; if you felt a shiver in your spine as you watched me burn, then I will be back the next time you need me and my colors will be fresh and bright and my edges won’t be ragged anymore. When I climb to the top of the flagpole, I’ll wave at you and remember the love and respect that you have showed me here tonight.”

Pack Master: Prayer and dismissed.

Flag Retirement Ceremony

Everyone line up in two lines away from the fire. Start moving the flag slowly through the line towards the campfire. Two scouts at the campfire take the flag and hold it up while each person reads their part.

Leader:

Today we are retiring a flag that has proudly flown as a symbol of our Country, our beliefs and ideals. Our scouts will recite some history involving the flag as based on the Johnny Cash song "Ragged Old Flag".

Scout #1:

We got a little hole in the flag there,
When Washington took it across the Delaware.
And it got powder-burned the night Francis Scott Key
Sat watching it writing "Oh Say Can You See."

Scout #2:

And it almost fell at the Alamo
Beside the Texas flag, but she waved on though.
There was Robert E. Lee, Beauregard, and Bragg,
And the south wind blew hard on that Ragged Old Flag.

Scout #3:

She turned blood red in World War II.
She hung limp and low by the time it was through.
She was in Korea and Vietnam.
She was sent where she was by her Uncle Sam.

Scout #4:

Our tattered flag lay in the dusty ruins in its darkest
hours,
To honor the thousands of innocent people who died at
the Twin Towers.
And she's getting threadbare and wearing thin,
But she's in good shape for the shape she's in.

Scout #5:

'Cause she's been through the fire before
And I believe she can take a whole lot more.
So we raise her up every morning, take her down every
night.
We don't let her touch the ground and we fold her up
right.

Scout #6: The Red stripes stand for all of the men and
women who have died in the service of our country, both
as members of the armed forces and as everyday citizens.

Scout #7: The white stripes stands for the purity in all of
our hearts and the tears shed by Americans who lost
loved ones for our country. It also represents the honor
that each of us should show in all that we do in our
everyday lives.

Scout #8: The 50 stars are placed on the sky-blue field,
one for each state in the union. As we place it in the fire,
let it burn brightly and remind us how truly our flag
represents our country, our beliefs, and ideals.

Place the flag carefully on the fire.