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**FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY SR917 DAY 2**

When the United States flag (Old Glory) 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 our nation's flag. The traditional method of retirement is to incinerate the flag, but this does not mean that one should simply drop the entire flag (intact) into a fire. Though I disagree with burning a flag for a political statement and truly feel it is a dishonorable act, I also feel that freedom of speech must be protected. However, today we are not burning a flag we are retiring a symbol of America's honor, courage, and strength. Therefore we request that all remain silent during this ceremony.

A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. In addition, it is easier to completely incinerate the flag, if it is cut into smaller pieces. A flag should never be torn up like an old bed sheet. It should be cut up with scissors or shears in a methodical manner. The corners of the flag should be stretched out over a table top and someone should cut the flag stripe by strip and then star by star.

**NOTE:** *Some organizations do not like the stars separated because the blue star field is it represents the union of the fifty states and one should never let the union be broken. Others feel that each state is equal to the others and therefore should have the dignity of the state's name being read.*

This flag has served us well, but the weather has taken it's toll. Tomorrow a fresh new flag will fly in it's place, to carry on the honor and dignity of "Old Glory" which flew many years ago. To the burial fire we add ...

REDWOOD: to remind us of the red-blooded Americans who fought and died to build our nation under this flag.

OAK:for rugged strength that carried the flag across this nation and today reaches for the stars.

CEDAR:to protect us from pestilence and corruption and preserve our American way of life.

WALNUT: to remind us of the rich soil, the beautiful countryside and the fruitful brotherhood founded by our ancestors.

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| **Leader:** "The U.S. flag is more than just some brightly colored cloth... it is a symbol of our nation." **Scout #1:** "Seven red stripes and six white strips; together represent the original 13 colonies that gained us liberty. The red stripes remind us of the lifeblood of brave men and women who were ready to die for this, their country." **Scout #2:** "The white stripes remind us of purity and cleanliness of purpose, thought, word and deed. The blue is for truth and justice, like the eternal blue of the star-filled heavens." **Scout #3:** "The stars represent the fifty sovereign states of our union. The American Creed states, "it is my duty to my country to love it, to respect its Constitution, to obey its laws, to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies." **Leader:** "The U.S. flag should be treated with respect when it's flying, and should be treated with respect when it's being retired." **Scout #4:** "Therefore, we retire flags with dignity and respect when they become worn, torn, faded, or badly soiled. A flag ceases to be a flag when it is cut into pieces. We separate the 13 strips that represents the original 13 colonies, and the 50 stars to pay homage to the 50 states that together make up this great nation.  |  |

**NOTE:** Place each stripe one at a time in the already going fire with a stick. You can either read the 13 colonies names in alphabetical order or the following sayings as you place each stripe in the fire. As this is done “God Bless the USA” is being played in the background.

Have the Scouts line up behind the already prepared flags and have them enter one at a time in a slow solum manner. When the stripe is placed on the fire the Master of Ceremonies reads the state or the Scout reads the saying. It is best to not have the Scout placing the strip to read the saying.

If you have more than one flag, separate them before into files. Place a stripe from each flag in each of the 13/50 piles. Place all corresponding stripes in the fire simultaneously.

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| **WARNING:** **Nylon flags ignite fast**! It has been suggested that it might be illegal to burn nylon in some states since the fumes given can be toxic. Check with you state before doing so.  |

**While the original 13 Colonies are being called out, each scout will reflect on what the flag means to them and say it. In the background will be playing “God Bless the USA”, by Lee Greenwood.**

**First Stripe** "The thirteen stripes stand for the thirteen original colonies which are:

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| Order | State | Settled | Capital | Entered Union |
| 1 | Delaware DE | 1638 | Dover | Dec. 7, 1787 |
| 2 | Pennsylvania PA | 1682 | Harrisburg | Dec. 12, 1787 |
| 3 | New Jersey NJ | 1660 | Trenton | Dec. 18, 1787 |
| 4 | Georgia GA | 1733 | Atlanta | Jan. 2, 1788 |
| 5 | Connecticut CT | 1634 | Hartford | Jan. 9, 1788 |
| 6 | Massachusetts MA | 1620 | Boston | Feb. 6, 1788 |
| 7 | Maryland MD | 1634 | Annapolis | Apr. 28, 1788 |
| 8 | South Carolina SC | 1670 | Columbia | May 23, 1788 |
| 9 | New Hampshire NH | 1623 | Concord | June 21, 1788 |
| 10 | Virginia VA | 1607 | Richmond | June 25, 1788 |
| 11 | New York NY | 1614 | Albany | July 26, 1788 |
| 12 | North Carolina NC | 1660 | Raleigh | Nov. 21, 1789 |
| 13 | Rhode Island RI | 1636 | Providence | May 29, 1790 |

**Second Stripe** "The white stands for purity"

**Third Stripe** "The red stands for courage"

**Fourth Stripe** "Give me liberty or give me death"

**Fifth Stripe** "One if by land, two if by sea"

**Sixth Stripe** "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution on the United States of America."

**Seventh Stripe** "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal. They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

**Eighth Stripe** "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

**Ninth Stripe** "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or press."

**Tenth Stripe** "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

**Eleventh Stripe** "One Nation under God."

**Twelfth Stripe** "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

**Thirteenth Stripe** "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

The Field of Blue will remain intact and placed on the flame, indicating “And the remaining 37 States”. At this point, say the Pledge of Allegiance, and finish by all joining in “God Bless the USA” by Lee Greenwood.

***REMEMBER ME?***

*Some people call me Old Glory, others call me the Star Spangled Banner, but whatever they call me, I am your Flag, the Flag of the United States of America... Something has been bothering me, so I thought I might talk it over with you... because it is about you and me.*

*I remember some time ago people lined up on both sides of the street to watch the parade and naturally I was leading every parade, proudly waving in the breeze, when your daddy saw me coming, he immediately removed his hat and placed it against his left shoulder so his hand was directly over his heart...remember?*

*And you, I remember you. Standing there straight as a soldier. You didn't have a hat, but you were giving the right salute. Remember little sister? Not to be outdone she was saluting the same as you with her right hand over her heart...remember?*

*What happened? I'm still the same old Flag. Oh, I have a few more Stars since you where a boy. A lot more blood has been shed since those parades of long ago.*

*But now I don't feel as proud as I used to. When I come down the street you just stand there with your hands in your pockets and I may get a small glance and then you look away. Then I see the children running around and shouting...they don't seem to know who I am...I saw one man take his hat off, then look around, he didn't see anyone else with theirs off so he quickly put his back on.*

*Is it a sin to be patriotic anymore? Have you forgotten what I stand for and where I've been?...Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea, Vietnam, and now the Persian Gulf. Take a look at the Memorial Honor Rolls sometimes, of those who never came back to keep this Republic free... One Nation Under God...when you salute me, you are actually saluting them.*

*Well, it won't be long until I'll be coming down the street again. So when you see me, stand straight, place your right hand over your heart and I’ll know that you remembered...and I'll salute you, by waving back.*

**All:** "Say pledge of allegiance while flag burns.” This is followed by all joining in singing “God Bless the USA”.

Go around the circle and ask everyone to mention the name of a soldier they know who may be in active duty, retired, or who gave his life for his country.

This is followed by Taps and a moment of silence.

**NOTE:** *The Scouts maintain a vigil over the fire until all traces of the flag remnants are destroyed. Then, the fire is extinguished and the ashes are buried before sunset the following day. The ashes and the metal grommets are buried in separate unmarked graves. The burial can be completed with a moment of silence while taps is played by a bugler.*

**NOTE:** *This Retirement Ceremony is the one used by our Venturing Crew. All the information is a compilation of items found in the Internet.*

*[Another Option: If you have separated the 50 stars: Now have the Scouts one-at-a-time take a star and a stick then place the on the fire. As the Scout places the star on the fire an adult read each state in the order they entered the union. The stands by the fire until the state is read. Then he returns to the end of the line. The next Scout does not enter the fire ring until the previous Scout leaves. Continue this for all 50 states.*

*If you have left the field intact place them on the flame and then read the 50 states.*

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| Order | **State** | Settled | Capital | Entered Union |
| 1 | **Delaware DE** | 1638 | Dover | Dec. 7, 1787 |
| 2 | **Pennsylvania PA** | 1682 | Harrisburg | Dec. 12, 1787 |
| 3 | **New Jersey NJ** | 1660 | Trenton | Dec. 18, 1787 |
| 4 | **Georgia GA** | 1733 | Atlanta | Jan. 2, 1788 |
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| 12 | **North Carolina NC** | 1660 | Raleigh | Nov. 21, 1789 |
| 13 | **Rhode Island RI** | 1636 | Providence | May 29, 1790 |
| 14 | **Vermont VT** | 1724 | Montpelier | Mar. 4, 1791 |
| 15 | **Kentucky KY** | 1774 | Frankfort | June 1, 1792 |
| 16 | **Tennessee TN** | 1769 | Nashville | June 1, 1796 |
| 17 | **Ohio OH** | 1788 | Columbus | Mar. 1, 1803 |
| 18 | **Louisiana LA** | 1699 | Baton Rouge | Apr. 30, 1812 |
| 19 | **Indiana IN** | 1733 | Indianapolis | Dec. 11, 1816 |
| 20 | **Mississippi MS** | 1699 | Jackson | Dec. 10, 1817 |
| 21 | **Illinois IL** | 1720 | Springfield | Dec. 3, 1818 |
| 22 | **Alabama AL** | 1702 | Montgomery | Dec. 14, 1819 |
| 23 | **Maine ME** | 1624 | Augusta | Mar. 15, 1820 |
| 24 | **Missouri MO** | 1735 | Jefferson City | Aug. 10, 1821 |
| 25 | **Arkansas AR** | 1686 | Little Rock | June 15, 1836 |
| 26 | **Michigan MI** | 1668 | Lansing | Jan. 26, 1837 |
| 27 | **Florida FL** | 1565 | Tallahassee | Mar. 3, 1845 |
| 28 | **Texas TX** | 1682 | Austin | Dec. 29, 1845 |
| 29 | **Iowa IA** | 1788 | Des Moines | Dec. 28, 1846 |
| 30 | **Wisconsin WI** | 1766 | Madison | May 29, 1848 |
| 31 | **California CA** | 1769 | Sacramento | Sept. 9, 1850 |
| 32 | **Minnesota MN** | 1805 | St. Paul | May 11, 1858 |
| 33 | **Oregon OR** | 1811 | Salem | Feb. 14, 1859 |
| 34 | **Kansas KS** | 1727 | Topeka | Jan. 29, 1861 |
| 35 | **West Virginia WV** | 1727 | Charleston | June 20, 1863 |
| 36 | **Nevada NV** | 1849 | Carson City | Oct. 31, 1864 |
| 37 | **Nebraska NE** | 1823 | Lincoln | Mar. 1, 1867 |
| 38 | **Colorado CO** | 1858 | Denver | Aug. 1, 1876 |
| 39 | **North Dakota ND** | 1812 | Bismarck | Nov. 2, 1889 |
| 40 | **South Dakota SD** | 1859 | Pierre | Nov. 2, 1889 |
| 41 | **Montana MT** | 1809 | Helena | Nov. 8, 1889 |
| 42 | **Washington WA** | 1811 | Olympia | Nov. 11, 1889 |
| 43 | **Idaho ID** | 1842 | Boise | July 3, 1890 |
| 44 | **Wyoming WY** | 1834 | Cheyenne | July 10, 1890 |
| 45 | **Utah UT** | 1847 | Salt Lake City | Jan. 4, 1896 |
| 46 | **Oklahoma OK** | 1889 | Oklahoma City | Nov. 16, 1907 |
| 47 | **New Mexico NM** | 1610 | Santa Fe | Jan. 6, 1912 |
| 48 | **Arizona AZ** | 1776 | Phoenix | Feb. 14, 1912 |
| 49 | **Alaska AK** | 1784 | Juneau | Jan. 3, 1959 |
| 50 | **Hawaii HI** | 1820 | Honolulu | Aug. 21, 1959 |

If you have a small number of flags, or one that has seen special service it is nice to give its history: First Raised (when): At (location): Memorable event or fact: ]