

Girl Scout Ceremonies

These are ideas created and shared online and in other ways by other leaders. I have tweaked some to reflect changes in the Girl Scout Program, others will reflect more of the “old ways” and older language. Don’t feel like you need to use these verbatim. Take what works, and then modify it as you need to. Use these as ideas to create your own ceremonies. Think outside the box when it comes to supplies for your ceremonies. You don’t have to spend a bunch of money or have elaborate themes or props to give your girls and their families a meaningful experience. Also, don’t feel like you are tied to the category that someone placed these ceremonies into – just because a ceremony says it’s a “Bridging for Daisies to Brownies” doesn’t mean that’s the only way you can use the ideas. Make it work for you and your troop!

Flag Ceremonies

These are the basic Flag Ceremony commands. There are many versions & other commands that can be added. Do what you feel works for your group. These are just suggestions.

We always have a caller & an even number of girls for the color guard. When raising the flag up a "real" pole (one with a rope & pulley system) it usually takes two girls to do the actual raising.

Caller commands:

Please stand
Girl Scouts Attention
Color Guard Attention
Color Guard Advance
Color Guard Post the Colors
Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance
All recite Pledge
Please join me in the Girl Scout Promise
All say Promise
Color Guard Dismissed
Girl Scouts Dismissed
Please be seated

Flags---multiple levels

Opening: Quiet Sign

[Daisy Girl Scout Flag enters, carried by a Daisy Girl Scout]

Narrator #1: "I am the Daisy Girl Scout Flag. I have watched over the Girl Scouts in blue. I have watched them become Girl Scouts and now they seek the wise old owl."

[Brownie Girl Scout Flag enter, carried by a Brownie Girl Scout.]

Narrator #2: "I am the Brownie Girl Scout Flag. I have watched over the Girl Scouts in brown. I have guided their enthusiasm and now they fly from my arms."

[Girl Scout Flag enters, carried by a Junior Girl Scout.]

Narrator #3: "I am the Girl Scout Flag. I have watched over the Girl Scouts in green. I have watched them grow and now they step upward to Cadette Girl Scouting."

[World Association Flag enters carried by a Cadette Girl Scout.]

Narrator #4: "I am the World Association Flag. I watch over my Girl Scouts to appreciate Girl Scouting/Girl Guiding all over the world. They have the same international spirit that made me great. I watch Cadette Girl Scouts grow to become Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts. Please stand."

[United States Flag enters carried by a Senior Girl Scout.]

Narrator #5: "I am the United States Flag. I watch over all Girl Scouts. I can hold my head high when I am with them. I am proud of my daughters. Girl Scouts and guests, the Flag of your country. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. (after) Color guard, post the colors. Color guard, dismissed. Please be seated"

Candle Ceremonies – can be modified for Opening, Closing, Investiture, Rededication

Flame Ceremony

Materials: Six assorted shapes & colors of candles. The more mismatched, the better.

One tall multicolored (if possible) candle in the center

A green taper candle for each participant

Leader lights tall candle in the middle

Leader:

Stars that shine together form a galaxy. Flowers that grow together create a garden. Buildings that stand together create a city. People who work together make a difference. That is what valuing differences is all about.

1st Scout: (Lights first small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all of the people who are younger or older, bigger or small, richer or poorer than I.

2nd Scout: (Lights second small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all people who worship differently than I.

3rd Scout: (Lights third small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all people of a different nationality or ethnicity than I.

4th Scout: (Lights fourth small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all people who are a different color than I.

5th Scout: (Lights fifth small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all people who come from a different country than I.

6th Scout: (Lights sixth small candle)

I light this candle in friendship for all people who don't run, walk, hear, see, or learn the same as I.

7th Scout: (Lights her green taper from the big candle in the middle)

I light this candle for me, for I am unique & special.

She then walks to the beginning of the horseshoe & the first Girl Scout there lights her candle from the candle of the 7th Girl Scout & recites the same line. This continues around the horseshoe.

7th Scout: Watch the flames closely. Notice that the light from each candle is the same as the others although the outside of the candles is different. So, too, are all of us in the world. We wear different clothes, speak different languages, follow different religions or beliefs, sing different songs. And yet we all belong to the same human race. Inside we are all the same. We all wish to be recognized. We all wish to be called by name. We all wish to be loved. We all wish for friends. We all wish for peace. In the spirit of international understanding, we pledge ourselves to world friendship. (Pause) In the spirit of international understanding, we pledge ourselves to peacemaking. (Pause) In the spirit of international understanding, we pledge ourselves to accept the challenge to look wider still.

Each girl blows out her candle.

Juliette (Daisy) Gordon Low's Candle Ceremony

Attributed to Lori Roach aka "Ladybug" Totem Council- GSUSA

Equipment needed:

- Candle for each girl
- Matches/lighter
- Water bucket (with water in it)

Long ago, a special ceremony was formed. Juliette Low wanted her original girls to carry a special spark with them as their Scouting group broke up. Some from the troop were moving away, working to help their families, or wanted to help a group of girls a little younger than themselves. But whatever their reasons, Juliette knew no other group would ever be quite the same.

As the girls stood in a circle holding candles (they had made), Juliette knew what spark it was she wanted to pass on. She lit her candle & spoke.

"With this candle, I give you each something very special to pass on. As I light the candle on my right, I ask each of you to light the candle to your right & pass it on. I want you to carry this thought with you wherever you go. This is the ETERNAL FLAME for Girl Scouts. Each of you, after having a lit candle before you, will repeat the Girl Scout Promise with me, then pause & recall a few of the things we have done together as a group. I will hold my candle up, and as I do so, you will all raise yours and we will blow them out together. Before we separate from our circle, I want to ask you to keep this candle as a very special candle. It is not to be used for any purpose but passing on the ETERNAL FLAME. You may use it in other Girl Scout ceremonies, such as camps, encampments, campfires, bridging or court of awards ceremonies. I'm glad we were able to start a special tradition based on our ETERNAL FLAME.

Ribbons and Candles

Props: 10 white candles (either "real" candles, or battery operated, or even flashlights), each was tied with a colored ribbon representing each law.

If you cannot use open flames, you can also make "wands" with ribbon tied to them. Instead of lighting candles, girls can place their "Wand" into a vase. This works well also if you have lots of girls and want everyone to have a part in the ceremony.

Each girl read her line, then lit the candle:

I will do my best to be: (all the girls said together)

- Honest and fair (girl #1)
 - The purple ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of honesty and fairness. A Girl Scout works honestly and keeps her promise. She is fair in all she does and with those she meets.
 - Friendly and helpful (girl #2)
 - The blue ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of friendship and thoughtfulness. A Girl Scout is amiable and loyal to her friends. She helps others wherever and whenever she can.
 - Considerate and caring (girl #3)
 - The orange ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of kindness and warmth. A Girl Scout works well with others and looks out for the well-being of others.
 - Courageous and strong (girl #4)
 - The red ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of adventure and independence. A Girl Scout attempts new tasks and braves new endeavors. She is confident and self-assured in her actions.
 - Responsible for what I say and do (girl #5)
 - The gold ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of ownership and pride in her work. She readily admits her strengths and weakness and is aware of the consequences of her actions. A Girl Scout is up front with her intentions.
 - And to: (all the girls said together)
 - Respect myself and others (girl #6)
 - The white ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of integrity. A Girl Scout directs her thoughts and deeds to encompass her own beliefs and to be sensitive to, and respectful of the beliefs of those around her.
 - Respect authority (girl #7)
 - The yellow ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of regard for another's position. A Girl Scout understands the importance of having a leader of a group to make final decisions. She works with that leader to make the best decisions for the good of the group.
 - Use resources wisely (girl #8)
 - The green ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of being careful with resources. She uses her materials, money, time, and energy wisely. A Girl Scout does not waste the Earth's resources.
 - Make the world a better place (girl #9)
 - The brown ribbon on this candle represents a girl's sense of improvement. A Girl Scout strives to be clean, and to conserve and enrich the world around her. She believes it is important to leave a better place than when she found it.
 - Be a sister to every Girl (girl #10)
 - The silver ribbon on this candle represents a girl's loyalty to sisters all over the world. A Girl Scout is always ready to accept more friends into her ever widening circle. She treats all of her sister Girl Scouts with kindness, acceptance, and warmth.
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Spirit Candle

This candle represents the spirit of Girl Scouting. It burns throughout our meeting to represent the friendship and fun we enjoy together.

Look to the flame and see its challenge to you:

- ... to do more than belong... Participate.
- ... do more than care... Help.
- ... do more than believe... Practice.
- ... do more than be fair... Be kind.
- ... do more than forgive... Forget.
- ... do more than dream... Work.
- ... do more than teach... Inspire.
- ... do more than live... Grow.
- ... do more than be friendly... Be a friend.
- ... do more than give... Serve.

Bless you for being just who you are --- Girls are great!

Lighted Candles

Scene: A table, with 13-candle board/log on it; flanked by American and GSUSA flag.

1st Speaker: "Tonight we are here in to invest those who have joined Girl Scouts for the first time this year. We are also here to rededicate each member, new and old, to the Girl Scout Promise and Law. You should all understand that these are the ideals by which Girl Scouts try to live, and through which we, as leaders, help girls to gain worthy citizenship." [a large candle is lit and house lights are dimmed].

2nd Speaker: "Before you, you see a golden flame. The flame symbolizes a Girl Scout's honor, which must never be dimmed. When a Girl Scout makes a promise, she is placing her honor, the brightest thing in her life, before her fellow Girl Scouts, her leaders, her parents, and her friends. Girls should understand that giving the Girl Scout Promise on one's honor is a serious thing."

3rd Speaker: "From this golden flame we light the flame of duty to God and country." [light small candle and say:]

ON MY HONOR I WILL TRY: to serve God and my country

4th Speaker: "We light the flame of duty to people." [light second small candle and say:]

ON MY HONOR I WILL TRY: to help people at all times

5th Speaker: "We light the flame of duty to self." [light third small candle and say:]

ON MY HONOR I WILL TRY: to live by the Girl Scout Law

6th Speaker: "We now bring to light the flames of the Girl Scout Law, which make bright and clear the trail that leads from girlhood to womanhood. Let us all stand and repeat together the Girl Scout Law." *Pause until all stand; then 10 more candles are lighted as the ten parts of the law are said.*

7th Speaker: "These burning candles represent the points of the Girl Scout Promise and Law and how they brighten the life of the Girl Scout who observes them. When through practice they become a part of our daily lives, they also brighten the lives of all whom we come in contact."

8th Speaker: "We can too easily forget that the Girl Scout Promise is a serious pledge. We must guard against repeating the Girl Scout Promise and Law in a parrot-like manner, as though the words were meaningless."

[Ceremony continues with house lights turned on. Each member present (who wishes to) is invited to say a few words about what being a Girl Scouting has meant to her.]

[Song, "On My Honor", is sung.]

9th Speaker: "Sisters, we are fortunate to be members of the greatest organization of women and girls: the World Association of Girls Scouts and Girl Guides. It is a privilege to wear the emblems of Girl Scouting. The whole world admires and respects us."

[Participants stand while leader puts pins on each one]

Closing: "With our ceremony ended, we now put out these candles. But we do so with the certain knowledge that we carry the flame of Girl Scouting eternally with us, in our hearts."

Candle Investiture/Rededication

(this ceremony can also be adapted for use on Thinking Day)

All: Repeat the Girl Scout Promise

Speaker:

Juliette Gordon Low knew well that time flies swiftly,
Today is soon tomorrow,
And all of our tomorrows lie in the hands of our youth.
Her gift to youth was Girl Scouting.
And her dream a tree of fellowship grown from a tiny seed.
She knew the seed would ripen
The tree grew
Nourished by faith
Watered by service
Tended by love.

(Light one small candle to light the rest of the candles with)

Girl 1: This candle is for the founder of Girl Scouting in the United States, Juliette Gordon Low.

Girl 2: We watch the glowing flame with grateful thoughts of Girl Scouts here and abroad who have put their friendship to a special test and found it true.

Girl 3: This candle is for the founder of all Guiding and Scouting, Lord Baden-Powell.

Girl 4: We light the candles of friendship. These are symbols of our pledge as Girl Scouts of friendship to all the world, and a special friendship to Girl Scouts everywhere. The flames are small but burn steady and bright. We light them with the thoughts of friendship glowing steadily and brightly in our hearts.

Girl 5: This candle is for all Girl Scouts and Girl Guides wherever they may be tonight.

Girl 6: This candle is for service to our country.

Girl 7: This candle is for the hope of peace in every land.

Girl 8: This candle says, "Good luck to all who are away from home."

Girl 9: This candle is for the Girl Scout law.

Girl 10: This candle is for the Promise we make as Girl Scouts.

Speaker: We quench the flame of our candles, but the flame of friendship still glows in our hearts. May we always be true and helpful friends to each other and to all mankind.

(Leader pins each girl and gives the Girl Scout handshake) All candles are extinguished EXCEPT the Juliette Low candle. This candle is put out after the closing ceremony.

All: Sing "Girl Scouts Together" (or other appropriate song)

Bridging, Investiture and Rededication

Brownie Pond Investiture – can also be used as part of the Bridging Ceremony from Daisy to Brownie

Props Needed: Brownie Girl Scout “Pond” (can be constructed from a piece of cardboard covered with foil and border with greenery, or use a mirror and border with greenery, or use a blue tablecloth with greenery and mirror tiles or use a real one!)

Also need Brownie Pins for each new member.

Lay pond on the floor in your ceremony area. If you are also using a bridge for your ceremony, you can place the “pond” so it looks like it’s coming from under the bridge. If desired, new members can be sent outside with the assistant leader. If new girls stay in the room, they should be on one side of the pond and the other girls should be on the other. All stand or sit around the “pond” and then the leader says the magic words:

Cross your little fingers, stand upon your toes
That’s a bit of magic every Brownie knows
Now we all are standing in a forest glade
Listen very carefully, see the magic made

If the new Brownies have been sent outside, the girls knock on the door

The leader with the troop asks: “Who comes to the Brownie woods?”

Brownies-to-be: “We do”

Leader: “What do you want?”

Brownies-to-be: “We want to be Brownie Girl Scouts”

The leader may ask why, and the girls may give their own reasons (help them prepare them before the ceremony if you plan on asking). Then they enter and gather around the pond. At this point you may have a simple dramatization of the Brownie Story by the older Brownies or the leader may tell or read the story to the girls.

Leader: Who comes first (or next) to the Magic Pond?

Co-Leader: (Reads girls names, one by one)

Leader: *Turns girls, one by one, while saying:*

“Twist me and turn me and show me the elf
I looked in the water and saw _____”

Girl: Myself!

Leader pins on Brownie Pin, gives the girl the Girl Scout handshake and welcomes her to Girl Scouting.

After each girl receives her pin, the **Leader says:**

Uncross your little fingers, down from off your toes
Then the magic goes away, everybody knows

Older Brownies can help clean up the “magic” while the leader sings this song:
(Sung to the tune of London Bridge)

Weave the magic in and out, in and out, in and out
Weave the magic in and out, for we are Brownies
We have tidied everything, everything, everything
We have tidied everything, for we are Brownies

Flowers of Friendship Investiture/Rededication

The original ceremony appears in "Ceremonies in Girl Scouting", however, this is updated to reflect the recent changes in the Girl Scout Law

Items needed: Ten groups of flowers, a container to set flowers in, sachets or potpourri for each girl. To make it more budget-friendly, you can use paper flowers or pompoms on pipe cleaners. You can involve the girls in their ceremony by having them spend some time during the meetings before your ceremony by making or coloring the flowers! You could even do a slide-show of each type of flower to project during your ceremony.

Introduction:

Welcome to our investiture/rededication ceremony. In almost all countries and cultures there are ceremonies to mark important events in life - days of celebration, sad days, joyous days, days on which a special commitment is made, days that mark an achievement. Girl Scouts, too, have ceremonies to mark important events and significant days. Tonight, we are here to confirm or reaffirm our belief in the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The Girl Scout Promise and Law are the foundation of all Girl Scouting. The Promise is like a basket that holds flowers. Flowers have always played an important role in human life. From the very earliest times, they have been given as tokens of love and respect and have served in ceremonies and rituals of all types. The flowers we mention in this ceremony symbolize the ten parts of the Girl Scout Law.

Main Part of Ceremony:

Please join me in repeating the Girl Scout Promise *(All girls recite)*.

And now we will dedicate ourselves to living the Girl Scout Law *(as each part of the Law is read, the corresponding flower is placed in the basket)*

I will do my best to be:

honest and fair,

This part of the law is represented by the White Chrysanthemum. It shows truth, honor, trustworthiness, equality and fairness.

friendly and helpful,

The Zinnia represents thoughtfulness about friends, while Baby's Breath represents generosity.

considerate and caring,

Together, a Red and a White Rose stand for a warm and caring heart.

courageous and strong,

The garlic plant grows anywhere and has a strong flavor. It represents courage and strength of character and body. The Indian Paintbrush shows cheerfulness even in difficulty.

and responsible for what I say and do,

The Gladiola symbolizes strength of character, maturity, and responsibility. Binding it with straw, we show that we honor our word and keep our agreements.

and to respect myself and others,

The White Rose and White Zinnia show that we hold ourselves worthy and good. Winter Greens symbolize the harmony we try to keep between ourselves and others.

respect authority,

The Daffodil represents careful thought, attention, and concern. With the Daffodil, we are saying that we hold others in high regard.

use resources wisely,

The Foxglove shows thriftiness. When we use our resources wisely, we are being thrifty.

make the world a better place,

The Cattail represents the peace we are trying to bring to the world when we help others. The Caladium shows the great joy and delight we take in the world around us.

and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

With the Striped Carnation, we are saying that we think about those Girl Scouts and Guides who are not here with us. It helps indicate our love for our fellow Scouts and Guides.

Closing:

The sachet (or potpourri) symbolizes our dedication to the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Flowers alone do not last. The sachet (or potpourri), a combination of color, texture, shape, and aroma of each of the symbolic flowers, will always remind us of our commitment. A gift of fragrance is a gift of remembrance.

Lesson of The Pearls Rededication

This is written as a ceremony for adult rededication at the Service Unit level. It can be easily modified for use at the troop level, perhaps for the C/S/A girls, as well as for leaders. The girls seem to love the tradition of Juliette's pearls.

Set Up:

- Parts assigned
- "Treasure Chest"
- 2 Candles
- 10 Large Plastic Pearls

Leader 1: Tonight, we are gathered to share in the dedication of our new and old leaders to the ideas of Girl Scouting.

Leader 2: At this time, the members of _____ Service Unit will share with each other the "Lesson of the Pearls," found in our discovered treasure chest of Girl Scouting.

Pearl 1: The first pearl stands for WISDOM. You have shown your joy in exploring wisdom through Girl Scouting. (Place pearl in treasure chest)

Pearl 2: The second pearl shall symbolize BEAUTY. You are beautiful to your sister Girl Scouts, for you give of yourself. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 3: The third pearl is STRENGTH. You are the strength of the future in Girl Scouting. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 4: The fourth pearl will symbolize TRUTH. You are an example of the truth of the ideas of Girl Scouting. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 5: The fifth pearl will be FIDELITY. You have kept your promise and affirmed it for life. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 6: The sixth pearl is our symbol for FELLOWSHIP. You have extended the hand of friendship and you have gained the rewards. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 7: The seventh pearl is COOPERATION. You are an example of cooperation and your many accomplishments reflect your willingness to work in harmony with others. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 8: The eighth pearl will stand for LOYALTY. You are committed to the Law of Girl Scouting and strive to live by it. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 9: The ninth pearl is for VISION. You can see the future of Girl Scouts and you will do your part to ensure its continued success. (Place pearl in chest)

Pearl 10: The tenth pearl will stand for service. You continue to give of yourself to others in need. (Place pearl in chest)

Leader 1: You stand here, a golden link in our chain of green and gold. A chain of friendship that encircles the globe. Our chain is made strong by your caring, your sharing, and your desire to be the best that you can be.

Leader 2: Our wish is for you to explore the treasures to be found in our chest of pearls. Remember to always be a golden link in our chain of friendship and let nothing break this chain of green and gold. Please join me in reciting the Girl Scout Promise.

All: Recite Promise

On My Honor - This is a simple investiture ceremony that is always memorable. Have girls form a horseshoe. Each girl holds a fresh or artificial daisy. The leader & co-leader stand in the middle of the horseshoe with a table in front of them. On the table are three candles in a holder, a candle snuffer (a spoon will work) a Girl Scout pin for each new girl & an empty vase. Feel free to use note cards to help each girl (and adult) remember her part.

Leader: For several weeks, we have been learning about what it means to be a Girl Scout. We have learned the Girl Scout Motto.

Girl 1: Our motto is "Be Prepared."

Co-leader: We have learned the Girl Scout slogan.

Girl 2: Our slogan is: "Do a good turn daily."

Leader: Most importantly, we have learned the Girl Scout Law.

Girls 3-12 each say a part of the law

Co-leader: Will the continuing members of the troop please come forward and renew their Girl Scout Promise.

Continuing members come forward and make their Promise together. They each place their daisy in the vase and shake hands (Girl Scout hand shake) with the leader & co-leader.

Leader: Will the new members come forward.

New members come to table

Leader: The promise you are about to make has three parts. On the table are three candles which we will light to help you remember your first day as a Girl Scout. Let us say the Girl Scout Promise.

Co-leader lights three candles as girls say promise.

Leader: Please come forward to receive your Girl Scout pin.

New girls come up, one at a time, place their daisy in the vase, go to the leader to receive their pin, give the Girl Scout hand shake and return to the circle.

Troop sing: Suggested song is "When'er You Make A Promise"

Leader: Now that you have made the Promise and received your pin, you are an official Girl Scout. Let's think for a moment about this lovely bouquet of daisies. Daisy was the nickname of our founder,

Juliette Low. She loved her country and the world and wanted every girl to be the best that she could be. I hope through our activities this year that you will have fun & learn to be the best you can be.

Patchwork

An Investiture & Rededication for Leaders Written by Cathron Deutsch, San Jacinto Council, GSUSA

Being a Girl Scout Leader is like making a quilt.

First, we gather together our scraps – our girls – from different origins and cuts of material. Some are shy, unimposing – like pale pastels. Others are dizzy patterns of vibrant color.

We must bind them together, matching their sameness, blending their differences. The thread of scouting is strong. Our own hands must be steady and sure, patiently making each stitch small and even.

Until – finally – the quilt is finished, with a background of the Promise and Law and a thick padding of love and understanding. And though each patch is different, together they are strong, beautiful, and warm.

And the seamstress can be proud.

This, then, is Girl Scouting. It is the Girl Scouting of returning leaders and the Girl Scouting of leaders to come. Would the new leaders please step forward to make their Girl Scout Promise and a commitment toward building such a patchwork piece.

New leaders come forward and make their Promise, then receive their pins & Girl Scout handshake.

Now, would the continuing leaders rise & commit themselves to continuing their pieces of patchwork by making the Promise together?

Returning leaders stand and make the Promise.

Let us all join in singing “When’er You Make A Promise”

Put a patchwork quilt on a stand or in a hoop. Speaker could even be seated & actually working on a quilt. Each leader could be given a small piece of patchwork as a memento, etc.

Junior Rededication Ceremony

This is written as a Junior Ceremony but can be tweaked to make it work for other levels as well.

Opening: Friendship Circle

Leader: We gather here today to join hearts and hands in the spirit of friendship. We welcome our new Girl Scouts & rededicate those girls who have been with us in years past.

New Girl 1: I bring to the log a candle of green. The color symbolizes the riches I find in the values and lessons of Girl Scouting. (Insert candle into middle hole)

New Girl 2: I bring to the log a candle of royal blue. The color royal blue symbolizes the admiration that I have for myself and for my fellow Girl Scouts across the world. (Insert blue candle next to green)

New Girl 3: I bring to the log a candle of white. The color white symbolizes the honesty that I will practice toward others and Girl Scouts around the world. (Insert white candle on other side of green candle)

New Girl 4: I bring to the log a candle of silver. The color silver represents all girls new to Girl Scouting. May we all become true friends. (Insert silver candle next to white candle)

New Girl 5: I bring to the log a candle of gold. This gold candle represents all members of this troop that have been down the Girl Scout road of adventure for many years together. May we all continue down the same path for years to come. (Insert gold candle next to blue candle)

Leader(s): We now intertwine the candles, holding them together with a rope of leadership. Under my (our) guidance, may these girls continue on the path of kindness towards each other and all Girl Scouts around the world. (Carefully weave rope between the candles)

All: Recite the Girl Scout Promise

Cadette, Senior and Ambassador Rededication Ceremony

Older girls have different needs. Many times, they have been in Girl Scouts for many years and they may have outgrown some of the ceremonies. This is a lovely option for those girls. This can be incorporated into a multi-level Rededication Ceremony.

Setting: Room is dark except for thirteen lit candles.

Leader: We know our Promise & our Law. We have recited it many times over the years. We may have questioned its importance in our life or forgotten its value. But, what would the world be like if we stopped serving God and our country? (*blow out one candle*)

What would the world be like if we stopped helping people in need? (*Blows out one candle*)

What would the world be like if we stopped living by the Girl Scout Law? (*blows out one candle*) (*At this point, Leader can pause, then blow out all ten remaining, or continue...*)

What would the world be like if we all chose to be dishonest & self-serving? (*Blows out one candle*)

Continue through the law until all candles are out & room is dark. Pause.

If we choose this path, our world becomes very dark. *Pause*

But I (we), _____, make a commitment today to serve God and my country. (*Re-light first candle*)

Who else wants to renew their Promise and Law?

Allow girls to re-light each candle while they say their part of the Promise and Law.

Girl: I, _____, make a commitment to _____ (be honest & fair, etc.)

Close with a favorite Girl Scout song.

Brownie Fly-up

Brownie fly-ups tend to follow this basic flow:

Brownie troop in horseshoe on one side of bridge; receiving Junior troop on other side.

Brownie leader says a few words, then calls the girls one-by-one.

Sometimes the Brownie takes off her sash/vest and gives to Brownie leader who might give the girl a flower. Brownie starts across the bridge, may stop at apex to say something or simply to wave. She may make a wish and drop 'wishing dust' into the "water" under the bridge.

Brownie continues across the bridge and is greeted by 1 or 2 Juniors or the Junior leader who give her a Girl Scout handshake, welcome her to Juniors, and put on her vest/sash. If she does not have her new

vest or sash, you can make her a sash from ribbon. All of her new pins, tab, bridge, wings, etc., are on either her vest, sash or ribbon; which makes the ceremony move faster than having the girls struggle with pins.

Finally, the girls all together sing a song.

Sample Brownie Fly-up, Speaking Parts

[Scouts form two horseshoes facing each other, juniors in one, brownies in the other with the bridge separating them.]

BROWNIE LEADER:

"Brownies, you are just about to become a Junior Scout.

Next year you will find that Junior Scouts are true and kind.

So now I give you Brownie Wings so you may fly to bigger things."

[She pins the wings on each brownie.]

[Brownies all take a few steps forward.]

JUNIOR LEADER:

"Hello there. Who are you all dressed in brown with such cheerful smiles and not one frown?"

BROWNIES:

"We are the Brownies and we like to have fun. Junior Scouts we'd like to become."

JUNIOR LEADER:

"By what right do you ask?"

BROWNIES:

"By the right of our wings." [Point to wings]

JUNIOR LEADER:

"We welcome you to Juniors. Please cross the bridge one at a time."

[As each girl crosses, she is met by the Junior Leader and a Junior Scout. She is given her Junior Pin and led to the Junior horseshoe by the Junior Scout.]

[After all the brownies are in the Junior horseshoe:]

JUNIOR SCOUTS:

"Welcome to Junior Girl Scouts, you're a Brownie nevermore.

We'll have lots of fun and lots of games as we teach you Girl Scout lore.

WELCOME BROWNIES!"

[All sing, "Make New Friends"]

Daisy Bridging Ceremony (to Brownie Girl Scouts)

Each Daisy Girl Scout who is Bridging receives a Daisy.

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: These flowers represent the spirit of Girl Scouting. This spirit is often represented with the Daisy, which was our founder, Juliette Low's, nickname

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: The first three flowers represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: On my honor, I will try: To serve God and my country

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To help people at all times

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: And to live by the Girl Scout Law

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: I will do my best: To be honest and fair

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means that you will always tell the truth and that you will share things and take turns with others

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To be a sister to every Girl Scout

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means that you will ask a new girl to play with you and when you see a job that needs to be done, and you can do it, you will be willing to help do it

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To be considerate and caring

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means that you will respect the feelings of others and care about how they feel and what they think

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To be courageous and strong

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you are willing to try new things, even though you may be a little scared and that you will stand for what is right

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To be responsible for what I say and do

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means that you will be careful about what you say and do so that you don't hurt other people or things

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To respect myself and others

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you will try to be the best person you can be, and will be courteous to others

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To respect authority

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you will respect adults, obey the law and will cooperate with others

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To use resources wisely

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you will try not to waste paper, will turn off the lights, and turn off water faucets after you use them

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To make the world a better place

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you will help with a neighborhood clean up, put litter in trash cans, and treat all animals kindly

DAISY GIRL SCOUT: To be a sister to every Girl Scout

OLDER GIRL SCOUT: This means you will be a kind friend to everyone, not just to a few people

Girl Scout Promise Bridging

The girls come in from the left, are announced, and cross the bridge. Members of the receiving troop/group are on the other side and hand each girl an unlit candle. The girls are then escorted into a horseshoe around the sides and back of the stage.

After all girls had crossed the bridge candles are lit from the ends of the horseshoe and passed from girl to girl while singing "Whenever you make a Promise".

(Have the receiving troop teach this song to all the leaders and the girls so everyone knows the song. It can be sung in 3-part rounds while the flame was being passed.

Start the flame by lighting the end candle on each row. Girls will pass the flame from one to another.)

Speaker:

The bridging ceremony marks a milestone in the life of a Girl Scout. It is symbolic of the change of rank from one level to another. Parts of the ceremony center around the stories we have all learned as Girl Scouts.

There is a story about a little girl trying to learn how all the little jobs were finished - as if by magic. As the story goes a wise old owl told her she could find out who the Brownie was by going to a magic pool and looking into the water. What does she see? She sees that she is the Brownie.

In our ceremony the Bridge represents the bridge by the edge of the magic pool. Each girl crosses over the Bridge, traveling from one stage of Girl Scouting to another. Each girl is greeted by an older sister Scout, where they make the Girl Scout Sign and are made welcome.

Brownie Girl Scouts receive wings when they bridge. These wings represent the growth girls have made during the previous years spent as Brownies. Just like young birds, they receive their wings and can now fly.

Juniors are more experienced. As they bridge to Cadettes they are continuing to learn and experience life together.

[As the girls name and troop number is read the girl crosses the bridge - makes the GS sign and shakes hands with a member of the receiving troop, who walks her over to stand in line and hands her a candle.]

Announcer:

This marks a milestone in your lives as Girl Scouts and is a mark of progress for both you and your leaders. We Girl Scouts are moving forward as a small group just as the whole Girl Scout organization is constantly moving forward. It is a joyful journey we are following together, and we find that the greatest joy of the journey is the friendship of working together, playing together and growing together. All that we share with each other, some other Girl Scout is sharing with us. As soon as we understand this joy of sisterhood we long to have others share it too.

This Candle flame represents the sisterhood bond that we all share. From the experienced Girl Scout Ambassador Scout to the smallest Girl Scout Daisy, we pass the flame of sisterhood---from one to another.

You have now moved from one level of girl scouting to another. One thing remains constant ---the Girl Scout Promise. The promise is a solemn oath you make to your leaders, parents and community to support one another. This is your promise to try to live up to the teachings of your own religious faith while, at the same time, respect the beliefs of others; to be a good citizen of your community and to help other people in small, everyday ways as well as in large ones.

Let's make the Girl Scout sign and renew our Girl Scout promise. *[Girls make the sign and say the promise]*

Multi-Level Arch or Bridge Ceremony

This can be done with either an arch or a bridge or even stepping stones; just change the wording as appropriate. You can incorporate the “pond” with the arch, the bridge or the stepping stones. Stepping stones do not have to be stone – they can be made of paper circles, carpet pieces, or whatever you have available. An arch can be formed by leaders or girls raising arms to make the arch, or by holding branches to make an arch, or by having a floral arch.

Daisies and sister Brownie troop/group should stand and proceed to the designated area for the Arch/Bridging Ceremony.

Speaker:

When I was a very young girl.
I wore Daisy Blue, with Daisy friends so true.
But now that I am older, I'll take along my happy smile
I'll wear a vest of brown, to Brownies I am bound.

Daisies cross through the Arch as leader says:

Through the arch to a wondrous thing
A Daisy joins the Brownie Ring.

Fly-up Brownies and sister Junior troop assemble.

Speaker:

When I was a young girl I wore a vest of brown
I learned the B's of Brownies and friendship all around.
Now the vest I'll wear will be of Girl Scout green
Old friends join hands with new as a Junior I'll be seen.

Brownies now cross the Bridge to Junior troop/group. Bridging Juniors and Cadette sister troop/group assemble.

Speaker:

When I was a young girl I wore a vest of green,
I learned through helping others what happiness can mean.
Now I'll follow in proud footsteps. where other Scouts have been
Exciting Cadette adventures, where I'm ready to begin.

Juniors now cross the Bridge to Cadettes. Bridging Cadettes and Senior/Ambassador troop/group assemble.

Speaker:

When I was a young girl I wore vests of blue and brown, green and tan
By service to others I've learned what some go through
To Seniors (or Ambassadors) I am going, I know I'll achieve my goal,
By learning the world around me, I'll discover my own role.

Girls now cross the Bridge to Seniors/Ambassadors

Adult Speaker:

When I see a young girl who hasn't worn our vests and seen
All the wonders of Girl Scouts and what our Promise and Law mean
We've watched our girls grow and marveled at what we've seen
And now that we are older we still love our Girl Scout green.

Tree for The Future- A Multi-Level Bridging Ceremony

These ceremonies can also be modified to be an opening or a closing for a Court of Awards without bridging, since they are symbolic of how all the “parts” fit together: all the girls together, make our troop; all the acorns, roots, tree trunk, branches and leaves make the “tree”, and all of the “flames” on the candle poster symbolize the “flame of Girl Scouting” in our hearts.

Supplies:

An oak tree drawn on poster board & cut into pieces to include: acorn, roots, trunk, branches, leaves
Tape

A large poster or a wall where the tree can be assembled as the ceremony progresses.

CEREMONY:

Acorn:

Just as an acorn is the beginning of a majestic oak tree, so is Daisy Girl Scouting the beginning of adventures in Girl Scouts. (Each Daisy places an acorn)

Roots:

Roots sprout from the seed and reach out into the earth to anchor the tree and seek nourishment. Brownie Girl Scouting is the root of our organization. It provides a firm foundation of growth through the completion badges and Journeys. (Each Brownie places a length of root.)
(Daisy Scouts who are bridging to Brownies can be bridged at this point)

Trunk:

Just as a tree trunk reaches up from the ground into the world, so do Junior Girl Scouts reach out further into their world by earning badges and Journeys and the Bronze Award. (Each Junior may place a piece of the trunk – the number of Juniors dictates how large each piece is)

(Brownies who are bridging to Junior can be bridged at this point.)

Branches:

A tree’s branches allow it to spread and seek even more of the world. Cadette Girl Scouting allows a girl the opportunity to seek both group and individual fulfillment through opening up new horizons. (Each Cadette places a branch – if you only have a few Cadettes, they may place more than one branch)

(Juniors bridging to Cadettes can be bridged at this point.)

Leaves:

Just as the leaves of a tree are its crowning glory and a source of additional nourishment, so does Senior and Ambassador Scouting top off a girl’s experience in Girl Scouts. It allows her to explore her interests while reaching a high level of skill and leadership.

If you have any Ambassador Scouts bridging to adult scouts, give them each an acorn so that they may go out and start the program all over again with other girls. Have them write a dream for the future on the acorn and place it at the base of the tree.

You can also do the same idea, only with a candle. The candle would be symbolic of the “Flame of Girl Scouting” that burns in our hearts. Have a “candle” base on a large poster board (or expanse of wall if one is available). Have each girl place a “flame” at the top of the candle. You can even have the girls prepare their “flame” ahead of time and put a wish or goal for the upcoming year. This might work better than the tree if you don’t have girls from each level in your troop/group.

Court of Awards

We always have awards attached to “something” with the girl’s name on it. This way we avoid having a hundred or so little patches and pins scattered all over by the end of the ceremony. It’s also a great way for parents to get pictures of their Girl Scout receiving her awards if they are not put into a baggie or other container. For instance, you can attach badges to a ribbon or a decorative piece of felt or construction paper. The sky is the limit as to what you can use. We have used the large felt seasonal mats from Dollar Tree a LOT for this. There is room enough to staple all of their awards, you can put their name on it, and it makes a great photo op for parents!

Four-Winds

North Wind:

I am the North Wind. People say I am cold, but to our girls, I will always bring the warmest weather because she has been true to the Girl Scout Promise and has lived up to the Girl Scout Law.

South Wind:

I am the South Wind. I wish you all success in Girl Scouting. Over hill and dale I have carried stories of our girls and their experiences. As a Girl Scout they have been happy, willing, and fair---a credit to her troop and community.

East Wind:

I am the East Wind. I wish you well. I have spread the story of our girl’s fun and happiness in Girl Scouting with her troop, and of how she lived up to the Girl Scout Promise and was fair and helpful.

West Wind:

I am the West Wind. I would like everyone present to know that these girls did not walk the trail to today alone. They had the wonderful help and guidance of parents and other important adults. Please continue to help our girls achieve and grow into courageous and strong young women, who are Goal-Getters, Innovators, Risk-Takers and Leaders!

Flashcards Court of Awards

Write each letter on a 9” x 12” piece of construction paper or poster board. On the back, write the explanation. Use as flashcards for a Court of Awards. Girls may have their own ideas for what each letter could stand for.

B – Stands for Badges to be presented today. What is a badge? An outward sign of an inner accomplishment. The scrap of colored material is not nearly so important as the job that was done to earn it.

A – Awards presented at the Court of Awards. Here we are not rewarded for the badge itself but for what the badge represents. It means new knowledge, new skills learned, and new opportunities to be of service to others.

D – Stands for Deeds. Good deeds to be done now and in the future for family, friends, and the community. Good deeds done with the knowledge and skills acquired through the badges.

G – Is the Girl in Girl Scouts and the growth we achieve through living the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

E – Is for Eagerness and Energy necessary to earn badges. Badges do not come easily and they should not, or their value would be small. Badges present challenges and satisfaction in accomplishment.

S – Stands for so many things. Service to others, Self-Development, and most important, Self-Respect -- the way you feel about yourself as a person.

And so we have badges to be presented today in this Court of Awards.

The Spelling of Girl Scouting

These can be put on pieces of poster board or just read (or memorized) as the girls choose.

G is for the Gracious way we live our lives
I points to the Ideas shared and those we'd like unearthed
R is for Respect we have for every race and creed
L is for our Loyalty to promises we heed
S is for Sincerity of deed and word and mind
C is for the Countless ways in which these are combined
O is Obligation that we owe to fellow man
U means that it's You who must be first to lend a hand
T is for the Teamwork which has evidenced our growth
I is for Integrity which backs the Girl Scout oath
N is for the Noble way we remember days of old
G is for the Grateful thanks for efforts toward our goal
Each of these is Girl Scouting

What work! What fun! What pride!
To recall with admiration
And seek with greater stride.
Receiving all these badges
For all that we have done
Shows the pride we carry
What pride! What work! What fun!

General Ceremonies

Campfire Ashes

Legend has it that Baden-Powell would always take a small amount of ashes from the campfire and spread these ashes into the next campfire. Ashes taken from a campfire are sprinkled into the flames of

the next campfire. The next morning, when the ashes are cold, they are stirred, and each Guide or Scout takes some along to mix with her/his next campfire. If more than one Guide/Scout brings ashes to the same campfire, the lists are pooled, with the dates and places of all campfires recorded and passed on. It is tradition that only those present at the ceremony may carry the ashes from that ceremony

Charge of the Ashes

May the spirits of past campfires be here with us tonight, carrying fellowship in these ashes from other campfires, thus uniting us with friends and comrades in other lands.

[Now, sprinkle saved ashes over fire]

May the joining of the dead fires with the leaping flames of our campfire tonight symbolize once more the unbroken chain that binds Guides and Scouts around the world. Fond greetings to Girl Guides and Girl Scouts of all nations, everywhere.

Gifts of a Dime and a Tiny Box

We have something we want to give each of you girls tonight---A bright, shiny new dime. Now, a dime doesn't do much by itself. You have to put it with something in order for it to be useful. Put 25 cents with it and you have enough for a phone call. Put 40 cents with it and you might have enough to buy a candy bar or a pack of gum.

You can save more dimes, put it all in the bank and let it make more money in interest. You could take this dime home, throw it in a dresser drawer and not use it at all. You could even lose it before you get home!

Now, I want you to tell me, how many pennies does it take to equal this one dime?

Right, it takes 10 pennies - 10 very equal and important parts. Well when you take the 10 parts of the Girl Scout Law and add it all together, it equals Girl Scouting!

[Repeat the GS Law]

Now we have one more thing to give you: a tiny little box. The wrapping may be a bit wrinkled and the ribbon may not be quite perfect, but its what's INSIDE that counts!

Just like the dime, you have to put something with it to make it really worthwhile.

Now, you won't be receiving all of your gift at one time. We hope to give it to you over a period of many years, in small doses and as painlessly as possible!

We want to give you Girl Scouting!!!

And with this gift we also give you our hopes that you will learn from it, grow with it, work with it, use it every day, enjoy all of it and keep it with you for the rest of your life!

Now, new Girl Scouts and old Girl Scouts alike, let us all join together in saying the Girl Scout Promise.

[Repeat the GS Promise]

As we're sure you have already noticed. The little box that we just gave to you was wrapped in gold paper and tied with silver ribbons - this is to remind you of all of the wonderful, wonderful friends you are going to make this year. As the song goes, "Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other is gold!"

And now as we share our friendship, we will all think about all of our special Girl Scout sisters right here and around the world and all of the fun and excitement that awaits us this year!

Golden Trefoils

These golden trefoils in my hand
Upon our new Girl Scouts we will bestow;
But first the meaning that the Trefoil bears,
The spirit of our Promise we must know.
Three gold leaves the trefoil wears
Threefold the Promise that it bears,
To serve God and your Country dear,
To bring others hope and cheer,
And every day in every way the Girl Scout Law learn to obey.
And yet another message, too,
These three gold leaves should bring to you;
These three gold leaves each girl should grow
Three sides of life each Girl Scout should know.
Your body is the temple of your soul;
Oh, Girl Scouts, build it strong and straight and fair,
In God's great out-of-doors your kingdom lies,
Health and happiness await you there.
In knowledge, too, as young eager minds unfold from day to day,
So do you grow with every finished task,
At home, at school and rightful play.
In beauty, too, in this great land,
The Great Spirit made so fair,
Seek long for Beauty, nay ever more,
Make beauty where no Beauty was before.

The Magic Necklace - A Lesson on the GS Promise

[Hint: doing the craft while telling the story is doubly effective]

Once upon a time, there was a wise old needle who decided to make a beige necklace. It enlisted the help of some string and set out on its journey. Beads rushed by the thousands to join. The needle welcomed all the beads and quickly threaded them on. This process went on for quite some time.

The necklace got longer and prettier. After some time, the needle turned around to look at its work. It was surprised to note that among all the beige beads it had put on, there were a few blue ones. When asked, the blue beads insisted that they had just as much right to be there as did the original beige beads. The needle was a little bit shocked, but upon reflection, it realized that the necklace would become even more beautiful if beads of all sizes and colors were added. No sooner had it admitted this than it noticed tiny brown beads lurking timidly on the sidelines. "Come on in," it called. "Being part of this necklace is one of the best decisions you'll ever make!"

Well, you guessed it--those little beads lined right up to be threaded on – and it didn't stop there. Beads of red and green and blue and pink and yellow flocked to the needle.

Not all chose to stay, but many more joined than left. With each new bead the necklace gained strength. Pretty soon it was so-ooo long that it wrapped around the entire world. Eventually the needle was unable to help anymore, but it passed on the trade to some of the beads, and they gathered enough momentum to keep threading the beads by themselves. One day, a small brown bead got a little nervous. "This necklace is awfully long," she said to her navy-blue sister. "And the needle isn't here to run things anymore.

"What if the necklace falls apart?" The older, more experience bead tried hard not to laugh. "Don't worry, little one," she said, "there's no fear of that happening. We have the strongest clasp possible!"

The brown bead breathed a sigh of relief. "I'm glad, but I don't remember us having a clasp" she said in confusion. "What does it look like?"

The confident blue bead explained. "You can't see the clasp. It's hidden in your heart, and in the heart of all the beads who have ever been part of this great necklace. You can find it if you try. What is it that really makes you part of the necklace? Say it with me." The brown bead smiled slowly. "I think I understand" she announced. And together the beads spoke the words that had linked them ever since the wise needle had had its inspiration, and that would continue to link them forever: "On my honor I will try, to serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and to live by the Girl Scout Law."

Nickname (Camp Name) Ceremony

Camp Names are frequently not chosen/given until a girl is older and goes to sleep-away camp. Camp Names may be chosen by the girl or "bestowed" on her by her peers. This is a cute ceremony for girls who have chosen or been given a camp name that they want to keep. It would be very appropriate to do at a campfire ceremony.

Materials needed:

Large cut glitter (that will not get lost in a girl's hair)

Name tag with nickname on it

Assemble girls/adults in horseshoe & state that it we have girl(s) now ready to adopt their Nickname or Camp Name. Those girl(s) will step forward. Have a Leader read the following poem:

I knew a mystery girl,
She was a friend of mine.
We knew each other from grade school,
It's been a long, long time.
She had lots of pins and badges,
You see, she'd been everywhere;
They were on her sash and uniform,
But one thing wasn't there.
This thing is like a special gift
This is given by someone you know.
You can't see it, touch it, taste or feel it,
But you'll have it forever more!

I asked her if she had one.
She replied, "Can I buy it? What's that?"
I told her if she had one
She'd say "Yes!" right off the bat.
So, my friend doesn't have this special thing
That you will get today.
When she found she couldn't buy one.
She hung her head & walked away.
When you receive your gift today
Hold it dear to your heart.
And remember how you got it,
No matter if we're far apart.
Each one was chosen carefully
To fit you in and out!
Now I have you wondering
Just what is she talking about?
Well, here goes, let's give the first one
To a super (age level) Girl Scout!
Go stand in front of the first girl & hold your hand over her head. Sprinkle glitter slowly over her head & shoulders & say the following:
By the power vested in me as leader of Troop ____, I hereby bestow the following name on (girl's real name). On this day & forever more, you will be known as (nickname). Pin tag on girl's shirt. Do this with each girl until finished.

Nobody Told Me

Reader 1 :

Nobody told me I would really feel part of something so big, so wonderful, that when we said the Girl Scout Promise together tonight that I would mean every word. Will I ever know all the words? You'll learn them, I was told.

Reader 2 :

Nobody told me that while I worried and fretted about about "doing the right thing at the right time", I would now be looked upon as "knowing all the answers" by the younger scouts. What if they won't listen to me? They'll learn from you, I was told.

Reader 3 :

Nobody told me I would really have to cook on an open fire. "I don't know how to scramble eggs or put up a tent." You'll learn, I was told. Nobody told me that I would really want to go camping again. You'll learn, I was told.

Reader 4 :

Nobody ever told me that I would become queasy or that my voice would crack when I led the Flag Ceremony. "But, I've never done a flag ceremony, I said. What if I forget the words? You'll learn, I was told.

Reader 5 :

Nobody told me that the Laws were made to help us become better people. How will I learn to get along with so many girls, we're all so different. You'll learn, I was told.

Leader :

Nobody told me that getting to know these girls would be so much fun. Nobody told me, I learned.

In Unison :

We are Girl Scouts. Four words, but, behind them, hundreds of feelings and thoughts. We are Girl Scouts because we love the out-of-doors, singing, reading, learning how to make things, and because we enjoy sharing with our friends in Girl Scouting. Nobody told us that we would make so many friends! Nobody told us. We learned.

The Origin of 'Taps'

This is story of how "Taps," first came to be played at military funerals.

The time was the United States' Civil War. Confederate Army Colonel, Dan Butterfield, a courageous and able soldier, was also a man of music. To honor his fallen comrades, he composed on July 2, 1862, a simple and heartrending melody. Later that summer, Union Army Captain, Robert Ellicombe, was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. On the other side of this narrow strip of land was a contingent of the Confederate Army.

During the night, Capt. Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. The captain lit a lantern, suddenly caught his breath, and went numb with shock. In the dim light of the lantern he saw the face of the soldier---it was his own son!

The following morning, the heartbroken father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite the young man's enemy status. There was reluctance to grant any such request. Certainly, a burial with full honors was not permissible because the soldier was a Confederate. But some sort of funeral was acknowledged as appropriate.

The Captain asked if he could have a group of army band members play a dirge for his son at the funeral. This request was denied; but, out of respect for the Captain, his superiors agreed to let one musician play. The Captain chose the bugler. He gave the bugler a note that had been taken from the pocket of the dead youth's uniform, on which a series of musical notes were written. The bugler agreed to play them. That music was Colonel Butterfield's melody; it henceforth became the haunting bugle tune we now know as "Taps."

So now you know that "Taps" originated as a beautiful closing, given to all the world through compromise.

From information submitted by Edward C. Iberger of Riverhead, NY, and Pat Skelly Plymouth Bay GSC, Massachusetts

Wish Bundles

Have each troop, patrol, or group gather a bundle of sticks, usually one stick for each girl & tie them together with ribbon or yarn. (I suggest a different color for each group, so you can tell them apart.) Ask each group to decide on a wish that they would all like to see come true. Then, all the bundles get thrown into the campfire. If your bundle burns all the way, your group's wish will come true. This is even better if you do the ashes ceremony, too, because it makes the ashes more "magical" to the girls.

Values of Life Ceremony

Props: Large Trefoil, seven candles

Leader (Pointing to Trefoil): The emblem you see before you represents the Girl Scout program. The seven candles represent the seven rays of the sun. We will now tell you what each of the seven rays stands for.

- 1: WISDOM – Wisdom does not necessarily mean superior knowledge. It means putting to the right use the knowledge one possesses.
- 2: COURAGE – Courage is not the quality that enables people to meet danger without fear; it is being able to meet danger in spite of your fear.
- 3: CHARITY – Charity is not limited to donations to the less fortunate. It is acceptance of others even when you do not understand them.
- 4: JUSTICE – Justice is the practice of dealing fairly with others without prejudice or regard to race, color, or creed.
- 5: FAITH – Faith is the conviction that something unproved by physical evidence is true. A good example is when an eight-year-old once said, “Faith is when you turn on the light switch you know the light will come on.”
- 6: HOPE – Hope means to expect with confidence. Always hope for better things to come. A person without hope is of little good to herself or her community.
- 7: LOVE – There are many kinds of love – love of family, love of home, love of fellow man, love of God, and love of country. All these loves are necessary for a full life.



Flag Retirement Ceremony

This is just one idea for a solemn and respectful way to retire a US Flag that has seen it's last glory day. Have six girls hold the flag, three on each side. One girl uses scissors to cut each stripe away as another reminds us of the original thirteen colonies names. Each stripe is placed in the fire after it is cut off. When all the stripes were removed, place the field of stars into the flames & remember the fifty states for which the stars stand.
Close with taps.

