



Girl Scouts®

Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes, Inc.



Ceremonies



MISSION

**Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence and character,
who make the world a better place.**

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Introduction

Like folklore, Girl Scout ceremonies have been composed by everyone - by leaders and by girls in all parts of the country. The ceremonies in this pamphlet are ones used most frequently in Girl Scouting. Please remember that these are only suggested ways of doing them - your girls may have other ideas and additions.

The material included here is supplemental to information found in the leader's guide or ceremonies book.

The following suggestions are important, no matter what the ceremony:

1. Ceremonies should be simple and sincere, have real significance and beauty, and avoid the sentimental. When too elaborate, too numerous, or too often repeated, they cease to be impressive.
2. Long-faced solemnity should be avoided. Humor may have a quiet dignity.
3. Every ceremony has a framework you can follow. Remember to incorporate the new Leadership Model, including the three keys - Discover, Connect and Take Action - and the three processes - girl-led, learning by doing and cooperative learning - to ensure a great leadership experience.
4. When candles or fires are used:
 - a. Not recommended for Girl Scout Daisies or Brownies.
 - b. Careful instruction should be given in safety precautions.
 - c. Constant supervision by adults.
 - d. Soft cotton or other easily inflammable materials should never be used near a flame.
 - e. Fire extinguishers or buckets of water should be close by (for campfires).
 - f. Local fire laws should be known and understood by all.

Ceremonies in Girl Scouting

What is a Girl Scout Ceremony?

The many ceremonies that have been developed in the Girl Scout program over the years play a big part in achieving the purpose of Girl Scouting, and the ideals of the movement are expressed in them. From Girl Scout Brownies making the Girl Scout Promise in their Investiture ceremony, to the many ceremonies held at the Girl Scout Adult level, even simple ceremonies in Girl Scouting are filled with meaning.

Ceremonies in Girl Scouting are held for various reasons. They are used to honor special occasions, to recognize accomplishments, or to simply begin or end a meeting. Ceremonies provide a means of expressing feelings, friendship, patriotism, and service. They actually can be held for any reason.

Your ceremonies may be held at any time of the day or night, may be formal or informal, and can be held by a large or small group. In planning the ceremony you should know the framework given is a guide, but as a troop you can personalize it. The Girl Scout leadership model is also essential in planning.

The sample ceremonies in this packet are suggestions and starting points, designed to give the newcomer all of the information they need to get started, as well as to give the seasoned volunteer some variations on ceremonies they have already experienced.

A word about guests!

The troop may invite guests to their ceremonies. Guests may include family, friends, another troop, consultants, or sponsors. It is suggested that the girls arrive one half hour before to prepare. A greeting to your guests, an explanation of your ceremony's theme or purpose, is then in order. If a horseshoe is used, have the open end facing the audience.

Please remember that although some ceremonies, for example Court of Awards, in which girls receive recognition, are nice things for parents to see; some others, for example Investiture, Rededication, and Bridging, are highly personal in nature and full of meaning for each girl. Some ceremonies may lose their meaning if they become a "show" or performance given for an audience.

Ceremony Glossary

Bridging: A bridging ceremony is an activity held to let girls be recognized and welcomed into another level of Girl Scouting.

Fly-up: This is a ceremony when Girl Scout Brownies become Girl Scout Juniors. At this time, girls renew their Girl Scout Promise and receive the Girl Scout pin. They also receive their Brownie wings to show they have “flown-up.”

Investiture: A ceremony to welcome new girls and adults into the Girl Scouting program. It is held anytime a person joins the Girl Scouts as a new member. An Investiture is a very important and meaningful step in the lives of every person as she becomes an active Girl Scout for the first time.

Rededication: A ceremony for girls and adults who have already been invested. It is a time for them to reaffirm their belief in the Girl Scout Promise and Law and to reflect upon the meaning of Girl Scouting in their lives. Usually it is held at the beginning of each Girl Scout year.

Girl Scouts’ Own: An inspirational, *girl-planned program* to express their deepest feelings about something such as the Girl Scout Promise, friendship, nature, and ideals or values that have meaning for them. This is not a religious ceremony.

Because of the importance of these events, a beautiful and meaningful ceremony should be planned and carried out. Many on-going troops have joint Investiture and Rededication each year.

Additional Resources

For more information on Girl Scout ceremonies, please visit the following websites:

www.scoutingweb.com

http://www.girlscouts.org/program/qs_central/ceremonies/

Framework for Planning a Ceremony

What do we need?	Ideas!
A purpose, theme, or reason for a ceremony	Thinking Day Juliette Low's Birthday Girl Scout Week Girl Scouts' Own Court of Awards Rededication, Investiture International Friendship
Who will be invited?	Troops and leaders Another troop Parents, friends, relatives Troop committee, Service Area
Location	Indoors or outdoors Troop meeting place School gym or auditorium
Several ways to express the purpose or theme	Girls' creative abilities Reference materials, handbooks Songs, stories, poetry, artwork Quotes, short stories, drama
Beginning of the ceremony	Song Welcome by girl or leader Flag ceremony
Main part of the ceremony	Songs Candlelight ceremony
Ending to the ceremony	Friendship Circle Songs
Ways to get from the beginning to the main part to the ending	Songs Skits
Who will do each part?	Individuals or groups (include all)
What do we need and who will bring it?	Flag stands, etc.

With the framework worked out and a good practice session, you can produce either a traditional or original ceremony.

Troop Ceremony Worksheet

Troop Number: _____

Date: _____

Girl's Name: _____

Name of Ceremony: _____

Date of Ceremony: _____

Place of Ceremony: _____

What time do I arrive?: _____

I am responsible for:

My special part is:

Songs we will sing:

I will bring to the ceremony:

My other duties are:

****This is a sample of a form a leader could prepare for members of the troop who are responsible for preparing or taking part in a ceremony.**

Sample Ceremonies

Fly-Up Ceremony

A Fly-up Ceremony is the one at which girls leave Girl Scout Brownies and become Girl Scout Juniors. If the girls have been registered Girl Scout Brownies, they are entitled to wear Brownie Wings on their Girl Scout uniform. Since this is their last time as Girl Scout Brownies, the girls may want to sing their favorite Girl Scout Brownie songs. It is nice to have some type of “bridge” for the girls to travel across as they move from Girl Scout Brownies to Girl Scout Juniors.

A Fly-up Ceremony may be planned jointly by the Girl Scout Brownie and Junior troops or by either of the troops individually. Ideally, both troops will be present at the ceremony. This is a double ceremony; the flying-up from the Girl Scout Brownie Troop, and the rededication to Girl Scouting as each girl renews the Girl Scout Promise and those moving up to Girl Scout Juniors may receive their trefoil pin. Both the Girl Scout Brownie and Junior leaders participate.

The Girl Scout Brownies and their leaders stand on one side of the bridge, and the Girl Scout Junior troop and their leaders stand on the opposite end of the bridge.

Girl Scout Brownie Leader: “Girl Scout Brownies, you are just about to become Girl Scout Juniors. In your new troop, you will find Girl Scouts are loyal, friendly, and kind. If you bring your Girl Scout Brownie smile and kindness to the troop, the community and the world, all will love you. So now we give you golden wings - that you may fly to do Girl Scout Junior things.”

(The wings are pinned on each Girl Scout Brownie who in turn, bids her Girl Scout Brownie leader farewell and as she crosses the bridge to Girl Scout Juniors. She may toss her Girl Scout Brownie Beanie over her shoulder. She is met on the other end of the bridge by her new Girl Scout Junior leader, who pins on her new trefoil pin, and introduce her to her “big sister” or “buddy”, a member of the Girl Scout Junior troop who will help her get started in the new world of Junior Girl Scouting. Sometimes, the buddy will place her own Girl Scout Junior hat on the new member to indicate full membership into the new troop. This is on loan for the ceremony only, of course!)

When all of the Girl Scout Brownies have “bridged over” into the Girl Scout Junior troop, the group forms a horseshoe and sings “*Girl Scouts Together*”, etc. If the Girl Scout Brownie troop has completed the required bridging activities to earn the Bridge to Junior Girl Scouts Award, the patch is presented at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Investiture Ceremony

Investiture by Candlelight

Supplies Needed: A table, three tall white candles (to represent the three parts of the Girl Scout Promise), three candlesticks (one taller than the others) and ten medium-sized white candles (to represent the ten parts of the Girl Scout Law). The three tall candles are placed on the table behind the leader.

Ceremony: The leader takes her place before the table.

Leader: We are about to receive into the Girl Scout sisterhood the girls who have proven themselves ready to become Girl Scouts. The Investiture is their first great international bond, for it is by this same promise the world over, that girls, regardless of their nationality, creed or race, become affiliated with our worldwide movement.

The Girl Scout Promise has three parts. That is why our pin is in the shape of a trefoil. *Leader lights the center candle as she speaks.*

Leader: The first part concerns the duty to God and country. The second is to help other people at all times. *Leader lights the second candle.* The third is obedience to the Girl Scout Law. *Leader lights the third candle.*

At this point the ten girls representing the Girl Scout Law come forward-- five on either side of the table and light their candles as each repeats her part of the law. (Each smaller candle is lighted from the larger center one.)

Leader: Every great movement has a code of behavior. The Girl Scout code is embodied in the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

The rest of the troop members now come forward in an orderly fashion and form a horseshoe around the table. At this time, the girls to be invested are brought forward to the leader by their patrol leader or other troop member. Each new girl is presented to the leader by a troop member who says:

Leader: "(Girl's name) wishes to become a Girl Scout."

The leader asks the girl to make the Girl Scout Promise, helping her if she has difficulty. When the Promise is made, the leader pins the girl saying:

Leader: This pin tells everyone you are a Girl Scout. I know you will wear it proudly.

After all new members have been invested, the leader or designated girls may say a few additional words of welcome to Girl Scouting and to the troop. The invested girls take their places with the troop. A closing song such as, "Whene'er You Make a Promise" is appropriate at this time.



Rededication Ceremony

A Rededication ceremony is held at special times when Girl Scouts want to renew the Girl Scout Promise and review what the Girl Scout Law means to them. Troops often hold one at the beginning of a troop year, sometimes in conjunction with an Investiture. Service Teams often have a Rededication for those adults who were Girl Scouts as girls and want to rededicate themselves to the ideals of Girl Scouting. A candle lighting ceremony is frequently included in a Rededication ceremony.

Opening: Presentation of Colors.

Choral readings:

All: We believe.

1st reader: In the sacredness of a promise, a girl's word accepted without doubt. That character, not power nor position, is of supreme worth.

All: We believe.

2nd reader: That a dedication to the rendering of service is the common duty of mankind. That only in the fire of unselfish sacrifice is selfishness consumed.

All: We believe.

3rd reader: In the supreme worth of the individual, and her right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

All: We believe.

4th reader: That every right implies a responsibility, every opportunity an obligation.

All: We believe.

5th reader: That keeping physically fit and mentally alert develops a keen sense of responsibility for one's self and a concern for others.

All: We believe.

6th reader: That in helping other people we will help ourselves.

All: Together we rededicate ourselves with the Girl Scout Promise.

All repeat Girl Scout Promise

All: Sing (slowly and with feeling) "*Whene'er You Make a Promise.*"

Use a simple candle lighting ceremony while repeating the Girl Scout Law.

Closing: Retire the Colors.

Girl Scouts' Own

Some thoughts on a Girl Scouts' Own:

A Girl Scouts' Own is a ceremony, not in the true sense of the word, but a ceremony in that it is inspirational in nature and that it is special and serious. It is a Girl Scouts' Own because it belongs to the girls themselves.

Because it is the Girl Scouts' Own program, it is usually planned and carried out by the girls. There is no prescribed time or place. It is usually unrehearsed and can be done on the spur-of-the-moment. However, it may be planned in advance.

The main purpose of the Girl Scouts' Own is to elaborate on one of many themes, usually associated with Girl Scouting. The props used are whatever words, music, inspirational ideas or any other visual aides the girls may decide to use. It is important to remember that this ceremony is for all girls to participate in, each one helping to create a mood in which to express her feelings.

The first step in planning is to allow the girls to select a theme. It can be related to the troop, troop program, badges of interest, other work they have done or experiences they have shared. They can now find material that would expand on their chosen theme. Leaders should assist girls in the planning, if needed, and also remind the girls that this is not a religious ceremony.

A Girl Scouts' Own usually lasts about 15-30 minutes. It should include some elements of formal staging as in the members of the troop entering a central area, perhaps some lighted candles, a friendship circle, or in the out-of-doors, a walk to a clearing in the woods. These simple rituals will in themselves set a special mood.

Suggestions for Themes

- service to others
- duty to God or country
- responsibility
- honor
- loyalty
- nature
- peace
- friendliness
- friendship

Why do we have a Girl Scouts' Own?

- To rededicate ourselves to the ideals of Girl Scouting
- To celebrate a national or Girl Scout holiday
- At a campfire

A Progressive Girl Scouts' Own

A Girl Scouts' Own at camp may be merely a quiet stroll around the camp to enjoy the sunshine, the trees, or the lovely day. Groups may pause at favorite spots: the camp lodge, the lake, the brook or beach, a campfire circle, a woodland cathedral, hillside, or camp green. Short, dignified programs or thoughtful talks on a Girl Scout theme may be presented at each stop.

An International Girl Scouts' Own

A program of songs from other countries may be given before a display of world flags, a map of the world, or a series of "living pictures" - girls costumed according to the country represented and posing as a typical family group, craftsmen or dancers. One person speaks on Girl Scouting and International Friendship.