



## Perris Press Release

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### Worn Flags Receive a Fitting Retirement Ceremony

Perris Valley veterans, Boy Scouts and military cadets gathered Thursday to dispose of 3,000 American, state and Prisoner-of-War flags torn and frayed from flying over businesses, government buildings and private residences.

Military etiquette dictates that all worn flags be burned in a "retirement ceremony" and that the ashes gathered up and buried.

Member of Perris American Legion Post 595 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 888 were among those who participated in the annual retirement ceremony, which took place on Flag Day. Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans, a former Marine, said the ceremony is deeply moving to all who wore a U.S. military uniform.

"It reminds of why we served—to protect freedom and democracy and strive for peace," Evans said.

About 25 people gathered at the ceremony at the Miller-Jones Menifee Valley Memorial Park, south of Perris, to participate in the flag retirement ceremony. The event included singing of the National Anthem and recital of the Pledge of Allegiance. Cadets from the California Military Institute in Perris served as the Color Guard and also helped retire the flags. Boy Scouts from Troop 695 in Sun City also participated.

The flags were burned individually in a pit that included a raised container, meaning they never touched the ground. As flames consumed each flag, the people who had placed them in the pyre stood at attention and saluted.

Flags that are torn, faded, frayed and discolored are considered unserviceable and should not be flown, said Richard Bostick, a Vietnam veteran and commander of Post 888.

Throwing them in the trash would mean they would ultimately end up in dumps and landfills, and to men and women who served under the Stars and Stripes, that is simply unacceptable.

"These flags have flown in service to our country and we retire them in a manner that is respectful and dignified," said Bostick, who served with the Marines at Da Nang in 1965.

Scoutmaster Bob Rokes Jr. led the contingent of three Boy Scouts and two Eagle Scouts from Sun City. Although the youngsters from 11 to 16 are out of school already, they considered it an honor to take part in the annual flag retirement ceremony.

"I am extremely proud of these young men and it is an honor and privilege to be their Scout leader," Rokes said. "It is an honor to retire these flags which have lived their lives for our country."

The ashes from the retired flags will be buried at a later date inside a vault at the Memorial Park.



Perris City Councilwoman and former Marine Joanne Evans (right) and Lynn Durbin prepare to retire a U.S. flag during a ceremony Thursday morning.



Cadets from the California Military Institute in Perris stand at attention and salute as torn and frayed flags are retired.



Scouts from Troop 695 in Sun City who took part in the ceremony: Joshua Allec, 11; Christopher Ireland, 11; Tanner George, 13; Scout Master Bob Rokes Jr.; Jordan Allec, 14, and McKay George, 16.