

Goodbye, Old Glory: Scouts Retire Two U.S. Flags

By Cathy Dausman



Boy Scouts Clint Walker (left) and Greg Fellows assist in Troop 224 Flag Retirement Ceremony. Photo Cheryl Tyler

U.S. flags fly in great numbers at least several times a year – notably Memorial Day, Flag Day (June 14), 4th of July and Veteran’s Day. As Veteran’s Day approaches, take a look at the Old Glory flying on your staff. Is the flag still a fitting emblem of this country, or should it be retired?

Retirement ceremonies for humans are often joyful, boisterous events. A retirement ceremony for an aging U.S. flag is quiet in comparison. Flag retirement ceremonies may be held by Boy Scout groups, fraternal or veteran’s organizations, and all are respectfully done.

This fall, Lafayette’s Boy Scout Troop 224 incorporated a flag retirement ceremony into one of its regular weekly meetings. In accordance with U.S. code title 36, section 176: “The Flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.”

Although committed to fire, the proper terminology is a flag retire-

ment ceremony. While a U.S. flag burned abroad is intended as a national insult, a U.S. flag retired at home is laid to rest with honor befitting its status as a national treasure.

One September evening shortly after dark Troop 224 gathered to tend a small wood fire on the grounds of Happy Valley Elementary School, where the troop meets under a cooperative agreement with the Lafayette School District. Members of Contra Costa Fire Protection District were there to observe and assist if necessary.

Senior Patrol Leader Chris Lyman, acting as Chief of Flag Retirement, gathered his charges. A tangle of 20 middle school and high school-age boys, scoutmasters and several parents aligned around the fire pit. A Boy Scout Color Guard marched out bearing the troop’s U.S. flag; the group recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Chaplain aide Joey Layshock gave an invocation. Gregory Fellows read aloud U.S. flag his-

tory. Scouts unfolded, displayed, and then attached a worn cotton U.S. flag to burn poles.

The troop only retires flags made of cotton, said Scoutmaster Grant Walker. “Synthetic flags when burned give off a noxious odor,” he said, or “melt and leave a sticky mess.” They may also burn so quickly they become hazardous to those handling the flag.

To the sounds of the national anthem, scouts saluted, the retired flag was guided into the flames by its burn crew, and consumed. A second flag was also retired with a smaller burn crew when the rest of the troop re-assembled for their meeting.

After the ceremony, the ashes of the retired flags were buried. “This ceremony is the first I know of in the past five years for our troop but the response was very positive,” Walker said. “We’re considering having the event once a year.”

Joanne Layshock, whose son is a Troop 224 member, said the retirement ceremony reminded her of the Scout oath “to do my duty to God and my country.” Brian Candell thought his son had a new appreciation for the flag and the country it represents.

“Being in Scouts has given my son and our whole family, for that matter, the chance to learn the proper treatment of a U.S. flag,” scout parent Claire Phillips said.

To learn about proper flag retirement, visit www.usflag.org/flagetiquette.html.



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Three Quarter Moon - Dreiviertelmond (original title)

By Sophie Braccini



Photo provided

If you liked the last movie featured by the International Film Showcase (IFS) in Orinda, *Noodle*, you will also delight in this month’s presentation, *Three Quarter Moon*. “They are both wonderful movies where the relationships between people are so great,” said IFS co-founder Efi Lubner.

Hartmut Mackowiak is overwrought: his wife of more than 30 years is leaving him for another man. The aging taxi driver mulls over his resentment, and his anger is transferred to the clients who step into his taxi. Of particular disdain to him are young people and foreigners. When he discovers in his taxi a six-year-old Turkish girl, Hayat, who is completely lost and doesn’t speak a word of German, he will do anything he can to try to get rid of her. But their meeting ultimately gives new life to the lonely and disillusioned man.

The theme of this movie is a cross between *Noodle*, in which an adult gains purpose in her loveless life by caring for a vulnerable foreign child, and the very uplifting and optimistic theme that it’s never too late to change one’s life, as depicted in the Swiss

film *Late Bloomers* that was shown by IFS in August. *Three Quarter Moon* is definitely a feel-good movie, even with some serious issues touched upon along the way.

Mercan Türkoğlu (Hayat) is a delight to watch. While she and the old taxi driver have both lost important emotional bonds at the outset, the movie portrays the deepening of their relationship, beginning with a scared little girl clinging to a grumpy old man and shifting gradually as the two friends find a way into each others’ hearts.

The idea of a cantankerous man turned caretaker to a precocious and confused child is not a new idea in cinema, but there is additional depth to *Three Quarter Moon*, its concept created by German director Christian Zübert and his Turkish wife Ipek. The dimension of communality, not only between young and old, but also between people from different cultures is well done.

Three Quarter Moon opens in Orinda on November 16 for one week. For tickets and more information, visit lamorindatheatres.com/index_orinda.asp.

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ASK SAM

Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

You Chose your Doctor and Your Hospital—Now Choose Your Recovery

I’m frequently asked “How do I choose where I go for recovery?” The center you choose will significantly impact your rehabilitation outcome—here’s some information to help you:

- (1) Visit and Tour different facilities.**
View the rehab department, view the rooms, meet the staff in different departments, and ask questions about care delivery.
- (2) Make sure they can demonstrate a proven track record of successful outcomes.** Ask for evidence of how successful they are at improving patients walking, bathing, dressing, and ability to manage their own care at home. ManorCare measures these things on admission and discharge, so we can see the impact our services have on our patients.
- (3) Social workers are a crucial part of the equation.** Ask for how they plan discharge and who manages the process. At ManorCare, we plan patients discharge from the start so that the patient has a smooth transition back home. This eliminates worry and anxiety for both the patient and the family.
- (4) Who is managing your insurance?** At ManorCare we have RN Case Managers who manage your insurance benefit from admission to discharge. You have an advocate during your stay to ensure you are able to maximize your benefits.
- (5) Specialized care and services.** Certified wound care nursing, specialized pain management techniques, speech language pathology and respiratory care are standards at ManorCare—they are critical pieces of recovery. Ask the facility how they manage these clinical issues.
- (6) 24-hour RN coverage.** We pride ourselves in our clinical management and skills. We highly train Registered Nurses who can manage the highest levels of acuity here around-the-clock. Ask the center what level of clinical care is available throughout the day and night.
- (7) Customer service.** How does the center measure their customer service outcomes? Just like clinical outcomes, ManorCare measures how we do with our customers—you. A third party survey’s all of our discharged patients and asks them questions about the quality of care and service they received while a patient at ManorCare. We’re proud to say that the scores come back over-whelmingly positive.

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