Can we do our own flag retirement ceremony?
Yes! Why not? There is no single “Ceremony”. The only thing to remember is that it is done in a dignified and safe way. No special equipment is required. A flag retirement ceremony can be a moving experience, and your options are limited only by your imagination. Experience ceremonies done by others, and feel free to create your own that fits the personality, style, and talents of your scouting unit. By doing so, you are indeed performing your duty to your country.

We love our flag!
… but we see people fly flags that have seen better days.

WHAT CAN OUR UNIT DO?

Scout Oath
On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

Scout Law
A Scout is:
Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful,
Friendly, Courteous, Kind,
Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty,
Brave, Clean, Reverent
"To do my duty to ... 
... my country"

The United States Flag Code states the following:

“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.”

As scouts, if your unit spots an unfit flag, feel positive about talking with the flag owner. Market your willingness to help retire a worn flag. You will find most citizens care about their flag but simply do not know what to do. They will welcome your offers to help them out!

We’re ready to help! 
But now what?

A fantastic way to help is to educate. A vast majority know that our flag is something to treat with the highest respect. However, for many, that is they know. No one wants to disrespect our flag, so many will do nothing instead. By educating the public on what they can do to ensure that their flag is respectfully retired, you will be giving more people the confidence to fly their flag proudly and to know that they are doing it right.

First, hand out the companion brochure “I love my flag! But it has seen better days. What can I do?” Make sure your unit information is written or printed on the back.

Second, offer to take the flag and give the promise that it will be respectfully retired. You have now helped by educating and acting!

We have a worn out flag 
So now what do we do?

An excellent question! If your unit does nothing more than ensure the flag gets to an organization that regularly does flag retirement ceremonies, such as the American Legion, you have already done a great service to your country.

Consider doing more. Worn flags make for excellent teaching tools at all level of scouting. Packs, troops, varsity scouts and venturing crews can all work rank achievements. Thrifty!

Get the word out. Let those around you know that your unit can help with retiring worn flags. Distribute brochures during patriotic holidays, at sporting events or even while fundraising or selling popcorn. It is a great time to visibly market your unit making a positive impact on your community. Remember to wear clean, sharp uniforms and show scouting courtesy!