



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary **Department of Wisconsin**

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www.wivfwaux.org

The Flag of our nation is a powerful symbol of pride and the freedoms we hold dear. One major component in promoting Americanism and demonstrating the patriotic spirit is respecting and properly caring for the U.S. flag. It is our duty to educate youth and adults on our Flag's history, proper etiquette and retirement ceremonies. Flag etiquette covers everything from proper display of our Flag to acceptable conduct around this symbol of our nation. For more information and to read the U.S. Flag Code, visit www.vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette

This past week-end, a VFW member from our Post told me about a neighbor he has that flies his Flag daily, but the Flag is tattered and torn. He said he would like to give him a new one, but he doesn't know how to go about it without possibly hurting his neighbor's feelings. I suggested that perhaps he could present his neighbor with a VFW Patriotic Citizen's Award for daily displaying his Flag, and at the same time, present him with a new one in appreciation for his patriotism. His eyes lit up and I told him he could check with the Post to see if we have any of the certificates, and that they can be ordered from the VFW Store catalog (item #4385 for the VFW certificates and item #4432 for the Auxiliary certificates). I would encourage our Auxiliaries to do likewise and present a business or community member who flies a Flag with a VFWA Citizen's Award and a new Flag, particularly if a Flag is in need of replacement. Our Auxiliary plans to present a certain number of certificates and Flags on an annual basis.

I have attached a separate sheet on the meaning of the thirteen folds of the Flag. Please print and distribute to your Auxiliary members. Printouts can also be used for Flag education and be distributed at schools or community events or handed out to community members any time a Flag-folding ceremony is conducted.

Welcome to our "Reaching For The Stars For Veterans" 2018-2019 year! For starters, look to the stars on our Flag.

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Meaning Of The 13 Folds Of The Flag



The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The **second** fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks, and who gave a portion of his or her life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The **fourth** fold represents our weaker nature; as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace, as well as in times of war, for His divine guidance.

The **fifth** fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, “Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right, but is still our country right, or wrong.”

The **sixth** fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The **seventh** fold is a tribute to our armed forces, for it is through the armed forces that we protect our country and our flag against all enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The **eighth** fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor our mother, for whom it flies on Mother’s Day.

The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womanhood, for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.

The **tenth** fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.

The **eleventh** fold, in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The **twelfth** fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, “In God We Trust.” After the flag is completely folded and tucked in (considered the **thirteenth** fold by some), it has the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under Gen. George Washington and the sailors and Marines who served under Capt. John Paul Jones and were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the U.S. Armed Forces, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

(Information taken from <https://www.legion.org/flag/folding>)

