

FEATURE



Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier



(Above) Staff Sgt. Vicky Wetzel (left) and Senior Airman Shirley Riley, members of the 437th Wing Staff flag detail, fold the flag as they prepare to secure the colors during retreat.

(Left) Members of the 437th Wing Staff flag detail remove the flag during the retreat ceremony at the base flagpole June 30.

Paying respect to 'Ol Glory

Charleston AFB Reveille and retreat is held at the same time each day, Monday through Friday.

Reveille sounds at 7 a.m. and signals the beginning of the duty day. Retreat is sounds at 4:30 p.m. and serves two purposes, according to the Promotion Fitness Examination Guide (July 1, 1999). The purpose of retreat is to signal the end of the duty day and to pay respect to the U.S. flag.

The base holds a formal retreat ceremony each Friday, consisting of a flag detail and a formation of troops from a designated unit on base. The procedures for those not involved in the formation are the same for both reveille and retreat. As the first note of the music is played, everyone should turn and face the base flagpole. If it's not visible, they should turn and face the direction from which the music is coming.

Military members in uniform should stand at attention until the last note of reveille or retreat is played. Military members not in uniform and civilians

should stand at parade rest

Once retreat is played, the National Anthem begins. Those in uniform should continue facing the flag or the music and render the proper salute. Military members not in uniform and civilians should stand at attention with their right hands over their hearts. They should stay in that position until the last note of music is played.

When in a vehicle, at the first note of the music, the driver should bring the vehicle to a complete stop and remain there until the last note of music is played. At times, it may be difficult to hear the music when you're in a car, so people are encouraged to pay attention to the clock and watch others around them.

It's not acceptable for anyone to drive around a car that's stopped for reveille or retreat and it's not acceptable to reenter a building or a vehicle once the music has begun to play.

(Submitted by the CAFB Airman Leadership School)

The history

Reveille was originally conducted as "Troop" in 1812 and was designed to muster the unit or for roll call. It was not originally intended specifically as honors for the flag.

Retreat was first used in the French army and dates back to the Crusades. Retreat was sounded at sunset to tell the rank and file to get to their quarters. During the 18th Century, command retreat was a daily occurrence, not to honor the flag but as a signal for units to call the roll as a final accounting before reveille the following morning.

The ceremony remains a tradition in today's military by marking the end of the military day and it honors the flag as it is lowered. The bugle call "Retreat" precedes the flag ceremony.

What does retreat mean to you?



Staff Sgt. Wayne Capps
16th Airlift Squadron

"It's a way of showing respect to the flag and to our history. We should be proud to salute and pay tribute to the flag.

I don't have time for people who run at the first sound of the music."



Staff Sgt. Deshield Goddet
16th Airlift Squadron

"It's basically about showing respect to the flag, your country and those who came before you.

I don't think people take it as seriously as they should."



Staff Sgt. Sharon Pace
437 AW Legal

"It's a reminder to why we wear the uniform and come to work every day.

I'm appalled when I see people who don't pay the proper respect, especially military members."



Shelly Grimes
Family member

"I interpret retreat as a matter of respect to the flag and military tradition."