

Instructions for Grand Army of the Frontier Color Guard Ceremonies

Purpose: *These Instructions will provide the framework for planning and executing a Color Guard when requested for a SASS/NCOWS/WASA State or higher event or for other specific reasons.*

I - Color Guard Requests

A - Who makes/approves a Request?

A Request for a Color Guard (RCG) **MUST** be made by an authorized individual on the planning committee for the event in question. This person will become the Point of Contact (POC) between the planning committee and the Grand Army of the Frontier (GAF). Minimally, the POC should provide a contact telephone number (either work and/or home) and a valid email address for communications between the POC and the GAF. The RCG **MUST BE MADE AT LEAST 90 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT**. This will allow for adequate planning for a high quality performance by GAF members who attend the event.

Once the RCG is received, it will be forwarded to the GAF Command Staff for discussion. If the Command Staff feels there are sufficient assets available to fulfill this RCG in a high quality and professional manner, it will be Approved. The determination of sufficient assets entails asking GAF members on a public forum (either *The Frontier Spot* or the *SASS Wire*) or through email messages sent to known member in the area nearest where the event shall occur.

The Approval Determination Period may take between 5 to 7 days, after which a decision will be made stating whether the GAF can properly handle this request or not. If the RCG is Rejected, either an email or a phone call to the POC will be made stating as such. If RCG is Approved, a post will be made on a public forum stating an Approval was given for a Color Guard and planning for the event will occur immediately. One aspect of the subsequent planning for the GAF will include the naming of the Color Guard Commander (CGC), who will take responsibility for executing the Color Guard professionally.

B - What is needed to outfit the Color Guard equipment wise?

As a bare minimum, the GAF Color Guard **MUST** have the following equipment:

- **One (1) National Color with a minimum size of 3' x 5'**
- **One (1) Guidon Pole strong enough to stabilize the National Color while marching and while standing at ATTENTION**
- **One (1) Flag Bearer Belt, adjustable in size for the Flag Bearer and large enough to easily accept the base of the Guidon Pole**

If there is to be additional flags in the Color Guard Ceremony (state flag, et cetera), additional Flag Bearers will be needed for each flag, along with the flag itself, a separate Guidon Pole and a Flag Bearer's Belt. There should be a limit of four (4) flags used, however, good judgment should be shown to use only the flags that are truly needed to make the Ceremony solemn and patriotic. **If the Color Guard is to be for a formal event, each Color Guard member should supply their own white gloves for use during the ceremony.**

For all Color Guard Ceremonies, there will be two Flag Guards lined to the left and right of all the flag(s) used in the ceremony. This is the case for even a single flag. The Flag Guards may carry rifles, revolvers, swords or be unarmed, as determined for the event by both the POC and the CGC. However, the preferred way would be for the Flag Guards to be armed with rifles.

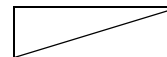
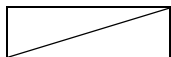
C - Who should provide what equipment?

For the vast majority of circumstances, after Approval is given, the POC should immediately be made aware of exactly what the GAF equipment requirements are, so the ***POC may gather the necessary equipment for use by the GAF Color Guard.*** In the event the POC is unable to acquire certain pieces of equipment, the POC **MUST** contact the GAF **IMMEDIATELY UPON DETERMINATION** stating exactly what is missing, so attempts for acquiring the needed equipment can be made forthwith.

II - Color Guard Manual of Arms & Sword

A - With Rifles

- 1 – **ORDER, ARMS**: When forming the Color Guard, the two Flag Guards shall position themselves to the left and right respectively. See the diagram below for further details. The Flag Guards are shown as boxes with a diagonal slash through them. When positioning themselves, the Flag Guards shall come to the position of **ATTENTION** and place the butt of their rifle on the ground near their right foot. The rifle shall be positioned with the bottom of the trigger guard directly ahead. The Flag Guard shall grasp the barrel of the rifle with their right hand in the most comfortable position while at the position of **ATTENTION**.



2 - PORT ARMS FROM ORDER ARMS

a. The command is **PORT, ARMS**.

b. This is a two-count movement from order arms.

- (1) At the command of execution and for the count of one, slide the right hand up and grasp the barrel. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the barrel with the thumb wrapped around the inboard portion. Without loss of motion, raise and carry the rifle diagonally across the front of the body until the right hand is level with and slightly to the left of the face. The elbow is held down without strain. The barrel is up and bisecting the angle formed by the neck and left shoulder. The butt is in front of the right hip. At the same time, smartly grasp the lower portion of the barrel with your left hand. The sling, if present, is included in the grasp. The fingers are joined and grasping the rifle. The little finger is in line with the Thumb on the inboard side of the barrel. The left wrist and forearm are straight. The elbow is held in against the body.
- (2) On the second count, release the grasp of the right hand and smartly regrasp the small of the stock behind the trigger guard. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the small of the stock with the thumb wrapped around the inboard portion. The right wrist and forearm are straight and parallel to the deck. The elbow is held into the side and the upper arm is in line with the back. The rifle is about 4 inches from the body.

3 - RIGHT SHOULDER ARMS FROM ORDER ARMS

a. The command is **RIGHT SHOULDER, ARMS**.

b. This is a four-count movement from order arms.

- (1) On the command of execution, **ARMS**, grasp the barrel of the weapon with the right hand. Without loss of motion, raise and carry the rifle diagonally across the front of the body until the right hand is level with and slightly to the left of the face. The right wrist and forearm are straight. The right elbow is held down without strain. The barrel is up and bisecting the angle formed by the neck and left shoulder. At the same time, grasp the barrel with the left hand (same as in count one for port arms).
- (2) On the second count, release the barrel with the right hand and grasp the butt placing the heel of the butt between the first two fingers. The heel will be visible between the index and middle fingers.
- (3) On the third count, release the grasp of the left hand from the barrel and carry the rifle to the right side. The left hand remains in contact with the rifle in order to assist in the movement. At the same time, with the right hand, rotate the rifle a quarter turn counterclockwise and place the rifle into the right shoulder. Slide the left hand to the junction of the stock. Guide the rifle into the shoulder with the left hand. The thumb and fingers are extended and joined with the palm turned toward the body. The first joint of the left forefinger touches the barrel. The left wrist and forearm are straight. The left elbow is held against the body. The grasp of the right hand is unchanged. The right wrist and forearm are straight and parallel to the deck. The elbow is held into the side with the upper arm in line with the back.
- (4) On the fourth count, move your left hand back to the left side at the position of **ATTENTION**. The rifle is held at a 60 degree angle from the deck.

II - Color Guard Manual of Arms & Sword

A - With Rifles (Continued)

4 - ORDER ARMS FROM RIGHT SHOULDER ARMS

a. The command is **ORDER, ARMS**.

b. This is a four-count movement.

- (1) At the command of execution and for the count of one, pull the rifle butt back quickly with the right hand so the rifle comes off the right shoulder. At the same time, with the right hand rotate the rifle a quarter turn clockwise so that the pistol grip is to the left. Allow the rifle to fall diagonally across the front of the body. Bring the left hand up and smartly grasp the barrel with the sling included in the grasp. The fingers are joined grasping the barrel. The thumb is on the inboard side. The left wrist and forearm are straight. The elbow is held in against the body. The barrel is held up, bisecting the angle formed by your neck and left shoulder. The butt is in front of the right hip. The grasp of the right hand has not changed. The right arm is nearly extended with the elbow held against the body.
- (2) On the second count, release the grasp of the right hand from the butt and smartly regrasp the barrel. The palm of the right hand is to the rear. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the barrel with the thumb wrapped around the inboard portion. The little finger is just above the bayonet stud. The right wrist is on the outboard portion of the front sight assembly.
- (3) On the third count, lower the rifle initially with the left hand while changing the grasp of the right hand to the junction of the barrel and the front sight assembly as in the position of order arms. Without loss of motion, release the grasp of the left hand from the barrel and, with your right hand, carry the weapon to your right side until the butt is 3 inches from the deck. The barrel is in a vertical position and the pistol grip is to the front. At the same time, guide the weapon with the left hand until the right thumb is on the trouser seam. The fingers of the left hand are extended and joined and touching the rifle near the muzzle. The palm of the left hand is toward the rear. The left wrist and forearm are straight and the left elbow is in against the body.
- (4) On the fourth count, return the left hand to the left side at the position of **ATTENTION**. At the same time, gently lower the rifle to the deck with the right hand.

5 - ORDER ARMS TO PRESENT ARMS

a. The command is **PRESENT, ARMS**.

b. Order arms to present arms is a two-count movement.

- (1) At the command of execution slide the right hand up and grasp the barrel. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the barrel. Without loss of motion raise and carry the rifle to a vertical position centered on the body. The pistol grip is to the front. The wrist is on the right side of the front sight assembly. The elbow is held down without strain. At the same time, smartly grasp the rifle at the barrel with the left hand. The sling is included in the grasp. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the barrel. The little finger is on line with the thumb on the inboard side of the barrel. The left wrist and forearm are straight and parallel to the deck. The elbow is held into the side with the upper arm on line with the back.
 - (2) On the second count, release the grasp of the right hand and regrasp the small of the stock. The charging handle rests on the thumb of the right hand. The fingers are extended and joined diagonally across the snail of the stock. The right wrist and forearm remain straight. The elbow is held against the body. The rifle is 4 inches from the body.
- c. Port arms to present arms is executed in one count. The rifle is rotated clockwise with the right hand, the muzzle moves to the right, and the rifle is regrasped with the left hand.

II - Color Guard Manual of Arms & Sword

A - With Rifles (Continued)

6 - PRESENT ARMS TO ORDER ARMS

- a. The command order is **ORDER, ARMS**.
- b. Present arms to order arms is a three-count movement.
 - (1) At the command of execution, release the grasp of the right hand from the small of the stock to regrab the barrel. The palm of the right hand is to the left. The fingers are joined and wrapped around the barrel. The elbow is held down without strain.
 - (2) On the second count, lower the rifle initially with the left hand while changing the grasp of the right hand to the junction of the barrel and the front sight assembly as in the position of order arms. Without loss of motion, release the grasp of the left hand from the barrel and, with the right hand, carry the weapon to the right side until the butt is 3 inches from the deck. The barrel is in a vertical position and the pistol grip is to the front. At the same time, guide the weapon into the right side with the left hand. The fingers of the left hand are extended and joined with the thumb along the hand. The tips of the forefinger and middle finger are touching metal at a point near the flash suppressor. The palm is towards the rear. The left wrist and forearm are straight. Guide the weapon into the right side so that the thumb of the right hand will be on the trouser seam and push back on the barrel until the toe of the stock is on line with the toe of the right shoe. The entire right arm is behind the rifle.
 - (3) On the third count, gently lower the rifle to the deck with the right hand so the toe of the rifle is on line with the toe of the right shoe, and the barrel is in a near vertical position; at the same time smartly and in the most direct manner return the left hand to the side as in the position of **ATTENTION**. The thumb of the right hand remains along the trouser seam and the right arm remains behind the rifle.

7 – RIGHT SHOULDER ARMS TO PRESENT ARMS

- a. The command is **PRESENT, ARMS**.
- b. This is a two-count movement from Right Shoulder, Arms.
 - (1) On the command of execution, **ARMS**, grasp the barrel of the weapon with the left hand. Without loss of motion, raise and carry the rifle diagonally across the front of the body until the left hand is level with and slightly to the left of the face. The barrel is up and bisecting the angle formed by the neck and left shoulder. At the same time, grasp the stock with the right hand.
 - (2) The rifle is rotated clockwise with the right hand so the trigger guard is to the front, the muzzle moves to the right, and the rifle is regrabbed with the left hand.

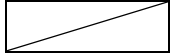
8 – PRESENT ARMS TO RIGHT SHOULDER ARMS

- a. The command is **RIGHT SHOULDER, ARMS**.
- b. This is a four-count movement from Present, Arms.
 - (1) On the command of execution, **ARMS**, the rifle is rotated counterclockwise with the right hand so the trigger guard is to the left, the muzzle moves to the left, and the rifle is regrabbed with the left hand.
 - (2) On the second count, release the stock with the right hand and grasp the butt placing the heel of the butt between the first two fingers. The heel will be visible between the index and middle fingers.
 - (3) On the third count, release the grasp of the left hand from the barrel and carry the rifle to the right side. The left hand remains in contact with the rifle in order to assist in the movement. At the same time, with the right hand, rotate the rifle a quarter turn counterclockwise and place the rifle into the right shoulder. Slide the left hand to the junction of the stock. Guide the rifle into the shoulder with the left hand. The thumb and fingers are extended and joined with the palm turned toward the body. The first joint of the left forefinger touches the barrel. The left wrist and forearm are straight. The left elbow is held against the body. The grasp of the right hand is unchanged. The right wrist and forearm are straight and parallel to the deck. The elbow is held into the side with the upper arm in line with the back.
 - (4) On the fourth count, move your left hand back to the left side at the position of **ATTENTION**. The rifle is held at a 60 degree angle from the deck.

II - Color Guard Manual of Arms & Sword

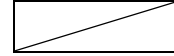
B - With Revolvers

ORDER, ARMS: When forming the Color Guard, the two Flag Guards shall position themselves to the left and right respectively. See the diagram below for further details. The Flag Guards are shown as boxes with a diagonal slash through them. When positioning themselves, the Flag Guards shall come to the position of **ATTENTION**. **THE REVOLVER SHALL BE UNLOADED AND SECURELY HELD WITHIN A HOLSTER.**



AFC

CGC

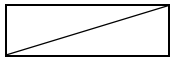


The Manual of Arms for a Revolver is much simpler than that for a Rifle since **the Revolver remains in its holster for the entire Ceremony**. The only movement needed when armed with a Revolver shall be to execute a close quarters salute. A Close Quarters Salute is done only with the right hand. When the command **PRESENT, ARMS** is given, a one-count movement is used to raise the right hand directly up to a position besides the face and not touching it. The right hand shall be flat, fingers together, with the thumb to the right, the tip of the middle finger aligned with the eyes. When the command **ORDER, ARMS** is given, a one-count movement lowers the right hand back to the position of **ATTENTION**.

C - With Swords

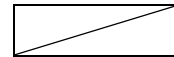
NOTE: ADEQUATE ROOM SHOULD BE MADE BETWEEN THE COLOR GUARD AND ANY SURROUNDING ONLOOKERS TO PREVENT ANY ACCIDENTS OR MISHAPS!!!

1 - CARRY, SWORD (ORDER, ARMS): When forming the Color Guard, the two Flag Guards shall position themselves to the left and right respectively. See the diagram below for further details. The Flag Guards are shown as boxes with a diagonal slash through them. When positioning themselves, the Flag Guards shall come to the position of **CARRY, SWORD**. The Sword shall be unsheathed and comfortably held in the right hand so the knuckle bow is to the front and the false edge of the sword blade shall rest against the right shoulder and the right hand against the right leg's trouser seam.



AFC

CGC



2 - PRESENT, SWORD (ARMS)

- a. The command is **PRESENT, SWORD (ARMS)**.
- b. This is a one-count movement from Present, Sword (Arms).
 - (1) On the command of execution, **SWORD (ARMS)**, the right hand is raised to chin level. The sword's hilt is placed in contact with the chin, the knuckle bow to the left and the blade is tilted forward at an angle of 45 degrees from vertical.

3 - ORDER, SWORD (ARMS)

- a. The command is **ORDER, SWORD (ARMS)**.
- b. This is a one-count movement from Order, Sword (Arms).
 - (1) On the command of execution, **SWORD (ARMS)**, the right hand is lowered back to the side so the knuckle bow is to the front and the false edge of the sword blade shall rest against the right shoulder and the right hand against the right leg's trouser seam.

D – Unarmed

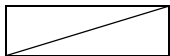
An unarmed Color Guard will act similarly to those armed with Revolvers, the only movement required when unarmed being a close quarters salute. A Close Quarters Salute is done only with the right hand. When the command **PRESENT, ARMS** is given, a one-count movement is used to raise the right hand directly up to a position besides the face and not touching it. The right hand shall be flat, fingers together, with the thumb to the right. The tip of the middle finger shall be aligned with the eyes. When the command **ORDER, ARMS** is given, a one-count movement is used to lower the right hand back to the position of **ATTENTION**.

III - Color Guard Marching Orders

A - Configuring the Color Guard

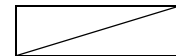
The Color Guard shall arrange its Members so the National Colors is carried in the farthest right position of any other flags present in the line. One Flag Guard will be to the right of the line, another at the far left. All Color Guard Members shall be distanced properly from others in the line by using the command **AT CLOSE INTERVAL, DRESS RIGHT, DRESS** to ensure all members are 4 inches (4") away from the person to their right.

The Color Guard Commander (CGC) shall carry the National Colors and shall issue any commands to the Color Guard while the Ceremony is being conducted. The CGC **MUST** use peripheral vision to watch distances prior to giving certain commands to avoid problem while marching. If at all possible, visual cues, such as painted dots on the ground, et cetera, should be placed at key points during the practice walk-through.



AFC

CGC



B - Marching Instructions

NOTE: THROUGHOUT THE MARCHING SEGMENT, THE NATIONAL COLOR MUST NEVER BE ALLOWED TO MOVE FROM A VERTICAL POSITION!!!

For most marching segments during the Ceremony, there will be only a few commands needed to be given, which are listed here:

1. **Detail, Attention** – The entire Color Guard assumes the position of Attention.
2. **Right Shoulder, Arms** – If armed with rifles, the Flag Guards shall move their rifles to the right shoulder. If armed with swords, the swords shall be brought to the Carry, Sword position. At this time, the Guidons shall be placed in their carriers.
3. **Forward, March** – The entire detail steps off the line, starting with their left foot.
4. **Detail, Wheel** – This is a **VERY** complex maneuver in that the entire detail shall rotate **AS A RIGID UNIT** in a counterclockwise direction **at a half-step pace** until the Detail faces the direction from whence it came, all while keeping in step. To achieve this movement, the right side of the line marches **FORWARD** in a circular arc while the left side of the line marches **BACKWARD in a circular arc**
5. **Detail, Halt** – The entire Detail stops marching.
6. **Present, Arms** – The Flag Guards and all Flag Carriers, except the person holding the National Colors, present their arms and dip their flags in salute.
7. **Right Shoulder, Arms** – All Flag Guards and Flag Carriers return to the position of Right Shoulder, Arms.
8. **Forward, March** – The entire detail marches forward and off the Ceremony area.

For the Color Guard Commander (CGC), a little knowledge of how to properly call **ONLY TWO COMMANDS** is truly needed: Detail, Wheel and Detail, Halt. All the other commands shall be given while stopped in one location. This should make things very simple to perform properly.

III - Color Guard Marching Orders

B – Marching Instructions (Continued)

With the Detail, Wheel, the practice walkthroughs shall determine the spacing distance needed to properly and safely perform the Wheel movement. Ensure no one on the detail will run into any obstacles in the marching pathway. The following paragraph describes how to execute the Wheel:

1 – While at a march, the CGC shall determine when the Wheel will start. The command to execute the Wheel shall be **DETAIL, WHEEL**. Both of these commands shall be given as the Left foot strikes the ground while marching, as follows:

Command			DETAIL		WHEEL	<half step>	<half step>
Foot Strike	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

2 – When the command **WHEEL** is given, the entire detail should now march **at a half-step** and begin to rotate counter-clockwise as a rigid line, with the right side marching forward and the left side marching backwards. Once the entire Detail is now facing the direction from whence it came, the entire Detail shall continue to march in place.

3 – When the entire detail is turned around, the CGC shall give the command to halt. The command to execute a Halt shall be **DETAIL, HALT**. Both of these commands shall be given as the Left foot strikes the ground while marching, as follows:

Command			DETAIL		HALT		
Foot Strike	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Remember there are two steps to be taken after the Halt command is given. Once the Detail is halted, the command of **PRESENT, ARMS** is given and the National Anthem shall play. Once the music stops, the command of **RIGHT SHOULDER, ARMS** is given, then the command **FORWARD, MARCH** is given to march the detail out of the ceremony area, thus completing the mission.