

**CHARLIE HODDE – LEHIGH ACRES, FL**

Late last year, Jeanette Free sent me some material that she hoped I would find a use for. One of the things she sent was the commemorative brochure prepared for the retirement of Charlie Hodde in 1982 after 45 years of Western Union service. Charlie died in March 2008 and that brochure allows me to tell you the story of Charlie's career with WU and some facts about his life. Born and raised in Pawtucket, RI (with the accent to match), he was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. His Western Union career started in 1937 as a messenger for two years in Pawtucket. He then moved up through the operating department ranks and then into sales, followed by stints in administration and retired as District Manager / Operations for the New England region.

My fondest recollection of Charlie is when he was running the "Snowbird Luncheons". My wife and I timed our winter trip to Florida in time to attend several of these luncheons. The last few were run by Charlie who took over after Molly Moore and Pat Meyers and he had to call it quits due to his living over 100 miles from St. Petersburg (the site of the luncheons) and being unable to make the trip any more. Thus, after what I think was a 45-year history of these luncheons, the tradition ended when no one would step up to run them. Charlie was a wonderful, jovial man who will be missed by the many who knew him.

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**U. S. FLAG FOLDING PROCEDURES AND SYMBOLS**

**Margaret Yarbrough** of Morrow, Georgia requested that we once again run the article on the folding of the U.S. Flag and what each of the folds symbolizes. Margaret lost her husband, **Barney**, in December of 2007 and was presented with the U.S. Flag after Barney's Military Funeral. Since I couldn't find the original article, I went into the Internet and found the American Legion site and what follows is taken from their site.

Although there are no Flag Code provisions requiring any particular method, the traditional method of **folding the flag** is outlined here. Tradition also sets the meaning of the flag folds along with the actual program for folding the flag.

- To properly fold the Flag, begin by holding it waist-high with another person so that its surface is parallel to the ground.
- Fold the lower half of the stripe section lengthwise over the field of stars, holding the bottom and top edges securely.
- Fold it lengthwise a second time to meet the open edge, making sure that the union of stars on the blue field remains outward in full view.
- Make a triangular fold by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open (top) edge of the Flag.
- Turn the outer (end) point inward, parallel to the open edge, to form a second triangle.
- The triangular folding is continued until the entire length of the Flag is folded in this manner.
- When the Flag is completely folded, only a triangular blue field of stars should be visible.

**Symbols for the 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 the eternal life.
- The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks, and who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
- The fourth fold represents our weaker nature; for 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 it 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, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers, sailors and marines who served under General George Washington and Captain John Paul Jones and who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

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