<u>**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**</u>

Eagle Scout Helps Residents Properly Retire American Flags

Belleville, Ill. – March 9, 2020 – If you're wondering what to do with your worn American flag, Eagle Scout Jake Buettner has the solution for you.

Buettner, who has been a member of Boy Scout Troop 529 with Our Lady Queen of Peace in Belleville for seven years, designed and built a retired flag drop box to store worn flags until they can be properly retired. Buettner chose Firehouse #4, 1125 S. Illinois St., for the flag collection box as he felt it was an appropriate location given its proximity to the 9/11 Memorial.

The box is available for anyone to retire a worn flag, and drop offs can be made at any time.

For the project, Buettner researched and purchased a collection box that provides a place for flags to be stored to ensure they are kept secure and dry. He fundraised and solicited donations from many family members and friends, and also worked with Pro Signs By Design to help him design the labels and lettering that are displayed on the exterior of the box. The leaders and other members of Troop 529 met to assist in preparing the space, placing forms, pouring concrete and permanently affixing the box to the ground.

"I'm proud of the flag collection box and am also excited to see the enthusiasm with which it has been met," said Buettner. "Many people have already gone out of their way to make sure their worn flags are retired properly. In fact, we held a flag retirement ceremony this past Veteran's Day and respectfully retired almost thirty flags. So, I thought this would be a great addition to help serve the community."

To learn more about the City of Belleville, visit www.belleville.net.

Cutline: Eagle Scout Jake Buettner is pictured with the retired flag drop box he created that is located at the City of Belleville's Firehouse #4, 1125 S. Illinois St.

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The City of Belleville, Illinois, incorporated in 1814, is the St. Clair County seat and the largest city in southern Illinois. With a current population of 44,478 (2010), Belleville is home to the longest contiguous main street in the United States, excellent education and healthcare organizations, and thriving businesses and neighborhoods, including three National Historic Districts. Mayor Mark Eckert runs the municipal government along with elected officials including City Clerk Jennifer Gain Meyer, Treasurer Dean Hardt, and 16 aldermen representing eight city wards. The vision for the City of Belleville is one where all sectors of the community work together to help the city grow and prosper and to become a model for other communities to follow.