**Council Fire Opening Ceremony #8**

**Pre-Fire Lighting…The Spirit of the Gray Wolf**

**Overview:** Council Fire Openings set the stage for a great and memorable council fire for your program. It is written to be used at the beginning of a Longhouse council fire gathering. Featured here is a ritual that happens **before the entrance of the Longhouse Chief and before the Council Fire is lit**. The Sachem or Medicine Man conducts this “pre-ceremony” to rid the evil spirits from the grounds of the fire site for the entrance of the Longhouse Chief.

There is one central fire. In the top of the fire is a charge of flash or smoke powder that is wired to be set off remotely at just the right moment. Note that this puff of smoke is not the charge that would bring life to the fire.

The Sachem carries with him a pair of deer antlers.

**Participants:**

* Sachem, Elder or Medicine Man: Ceremonial Leader
* Drumbeater
* Longhouse Chief: enters at end of this portion

**Relevant Ceremonial Pieces:** You may wish to incorporate this ceremony with other ceremonial components to form your full ceremony. The following are basic suggestions. Your creativity is your limit.

* Parade to Ceremonial Location
* Fire Lighting
* Inductions
* Officer Inductions
* Special Awards
* Ceremonial Closing

**OPENING CEREMONY**

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| Scene | *(Council Fire is unlit as Longhouse membership gathers in a circle around the fire. All stand silently.)* |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats during this gathering time until instructed to stop.)* |
| Sachem | *(Carries with him a pair of deer antlers)* |
| Sachem | The Gray Wolf is the most feared animal of the north woods by both the Native American Indians and the white-tailed deer. The Indians say the Gray Wolf is brave enough to enter the Longhouse camp and carry off small children in broad daylight. It is legend that one bite by a Gray Wolf and that child becomes a small wolf his or herself.  Now it is well known that the favorite food of the Gray Wolf is the white-tailed deer. However, this powerful animal does fear the woods of the white tail one time of the year… and that is the mating season of the white-tailed deer.  It is in that mating season that we hear the noise of the clashing horns of the whitetail males *(make several CLACKING sounds while tell this)* CLACKING-CLACKING-CLACKING like this! The fear by the wolf of the fighting male deer drives the Gray Wolf deep into the woods. *(several more CLACKING sounds)*  So now… as we all prepare this ceremonial Council Fire to welcome our Great Chief, let me clack these antlers and sound the old Native Indian chant as we all watch closely for a sign from the GREAT ONE that the evil spirit of the Gray Wolf has left.  *(Facing the group and holding the antlers above head)*  “Oh Great Spirit, give us a sign of the departure of the Gray Wolf. Rid this Council Fire of the evil spirits. Show is his leaving… Show us… Show us now!” |
| REMOTE | *(A large, dramatic puff of smoke appears from the unlit council fire)* |
| Sachem | The Gray Wolf and the evil spirits have left this ceremonial ground. Enter now please, Great Chief (**Chief Indian Name**) and greet your tribes to begin this celebration |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats until Chief enters)* |
| Chief/ALL | *(Shouts Longhouse salutation in celebration, ALL return salutation* |
| Chief | I now declare this council of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse to be open. Let us begin. |
|  | **CONTINUE WITH FIRE LIGHTING & CEREMONY** |

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