

**American Legion Auxiliary  
Department of California  
Americanism Program  
2011-2012**

**October 2011**

**Bulletin #2**

Howdy Y'all,

Congratulations on your appointment as District or Unit chairmen for the Americanism program for 2011-2012. This year I hope to be able to give you some insight on the different aspects of this program each month. As with most programs of the auxiliary there are a lot of parts and it's almost impossible to work them all, so maybe by learning about some of the different aspects of the program we can all work Americanism in our own way. What works for some may not work for all. So find what works for you and your District/Unit and run with it.

With this bulletin I am going to give a recap of the workshop (Wild West Show) material I provided for those who may have missed it so we will all be on the same page. (No pun intended) ☺ So, here we go!!

**The purpose of the Americanism Program is to promote patriotism, American ideals and to uphold the principles of American democracy.** A secure America is one in which its citizens hearts and minds are ingrained with and have a love for those principles on which our country was founded. Americanism work is largely based on education in three parts: educating the youth, educating the adult and educating the community at large.

In addition, flag etiquette and all matters pertaining to the flag or any kind of patriotic education are classified as Americanism activities.

**This year the National Plan of Action has three objectives:**

1. Be a patriot through involvement in community events. Promote the ALA's value of Americanism through community education about flag etiquette and respect by demonstrating leadership in support of our country and our military.
2. Increase awareness and participation in youth activities that support proper respect for our flag and loyalty to our country.
3. Promote Auxiliary participation in The American Legion Americanism programs.

The full step-by-step instructions on how to implement these ideas can be found on the department website under the POA tab.

Some examples include: Start a pocket flag project in your unit; promote the Americanism essay contest in schools; and support American Legion baseball, or better yet, sponsor a team of your own.

**LONG MAY SHE WAVE!**

Fly your flag everyday if possible. Encourage the community and businesses surrounding your area to do the same. You can help by providing flags where they are needed and giving

recognition to those businesses, schools and churches that display the flag proudly. Please remember to keep those notes and letters going to your senators and congressman in support of the Flag amendment which would make it a crime to desecrate the American flag. The flag of our nation deserves proper respect and care.

### **DEPARTMENT AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST**

I would encourage all Units to get the essay contests to schools as early as possible. Teachers have a lot to do and they will need to make time for their students to write the essay. So getting to them early gives you a much better chance of getting into their calendar. Once you have given them the titles and rules please remember to keep in touch in case there are questions about the rules or how to prepare the essay. Also encourage the teacher to submit titles for next year's essay contest and please feel free to submit titles yourself.

#### **Essay titles for 2011-2012 are:**

- Group I (Grades 4 & 5) – Why should we stand as our flag passes by?
- Group II (Grades 6 & 7) – Why are we called the Land of the Free?
- Group III (Grades 8 & 9) – For God and Country: What does it mean?
- Group IV (Grades 10, 11 & 12) – Americans: Let's learn from the past but live in the present.
- Group V (Exceptional needs) – Why I salute the flag.

### **GET OUT THE VOTE!**

As another election year is fast approaching I would encourage you to become involved. Volunteer to work the polls; or drive seniors and disabled so that they may cast their vote. Attend local debates to really decide where you stand on certain issues you believe to be important. Most Americans that have the right to vote DO NOT use it. This is sad and unacceptable in my opinion. I believe they feel their vote doesn't matter and of course if they don't vote they would be right. I believe voting is one of the most important duties we have as citizens and should not back away from the responsibility and privilege simply because things don't always turn out the way we want.

### **WHEN TO FLY YOUR FLAG**

**EVERYDAY!** However, if you can't fly your flag everyday then here are some dates to remember:

New Year's Day (January 1)  
Inauguration Day (January 20) Even if the other guy wins :)  
Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday (3rd Monday in January)  
Lincoln's Birthday (February 12th)  
Washington's Birthday (3rd Monday in February)  
Easter Sunday (optional)  
Mother's Day (2nd Sunday in May)  
Armed Forces Day (3rd Saturday in May)  
Memorial Day (half staff til noon) (last Monday in May)  
Flag Day (June 14)  
Father's Day (3rd Sunday in June)

Independence Day (July 4)  
National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27)  
Labor Day (1st Monday in September)  
Patriot Day (September 11) Generally half staff all day depending on Executive proclamation  
Constitution Day (September 17)  
Columbus Day (2nd Monday in October)  
Navy Day (October 27)  
Veteran's Day (November 11)  
Thanksgiving Day (4th Thursday in November)  
Christmas Day (December 25)

And such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; State Admission Day; and on State holidays.

**In short the Americanism Program can help provide the basics when it comes to being a good citizen and patriot.**

If you need any assistance with any project you may be starting please feel free to contact me anytime!

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