

## **AMERICANISM**

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Americanism and Patriotism are symbols of our American pride and our way of life. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "True patriotism springs from a belief in the dignity of individual freedom and equality not only for Americans but all people on earth." This year, as Americans, we are joining **"Together Helping Veterans."**

As the Patriotic Instructor this year I am responsible for the crucial role of teaching each member to give the proper respect due our American Flag, so that you can take that knowledge out into the communities and schools, to share with family and friends. I will also be teaching you about the traditions of our Organization. It is important to learn about the proper way to salute our Flag and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, as well as understanding the VFW Auxiliary Ritual and Federal Flag Code.

Demonstrating Americanism and patriotic spirit is respecting and properly caring for the U.S. Flag. Flag etiquette covers everything from how to display our Flag properly and acceptable conduct around this symbol of our Nation. It also covers the proper way to dispose of Flags that have served their purpose and need to be retired. For more information about Flag etiquette read the U.S. Flag code by visiting [vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette](http://vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette).

### **RESPECT FOR THE FLAG – ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY**

Flag Education in Schools – Educating our youth about patriotism is a major step towards good citizenship.

Recognition of outstanding Community Flag Display – When businesses, individuals or organizations take the time to fly "Old Glory," recognize their patriotism by presenting them with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Auxiliary.

Flag Retirement Ceremonies – These ceremonies honoring our Flag are beautiful and moving forms of respect for our country. They can be a way to involve the community alongside the Auxiliary and Post members.

Parades – demonstrate your Patriotism by standing and saluting as the American Flag passes by. Use this opportunity to teach our youth by passing out Flags along the parade route and wave them proudly.

Flag Education during Patriotic events – we should never miss an opportunity to teach flag etiquette:

- How to properly salute the flag.
- When and how to display the flag.
- How to conduct a flag raising ceremony.
- How to fold and store a flag.

Promote patriotic holidays and special days for our branches of service. It is important to demonstrate our pride in our military service persons for what they represent, the sacrifices they have made, and the reason we are free.

- U.S. National Guard – December 13, 1636
- U.S. Army – June 14, 1775
- U.S. Navy – October 13, 1775
- U.S. Marine Corps – November 10, 1775
- U.S. Coast Guard – August 4, 1790
- Air Force – September 18, 1947
- U.S. Space Force – December 20, 2019

Hold ceremonies to educate honor veterans who are or were Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

- Auxiliary members are enthusiastic about showing respect and bringing recognition for POW/MIAs to educate and honor these Veterans by conducting the Missing Man Table Ceremony. (This ceremony can be found in MALTA Member Resources.

Honor the Gold Star, Silver Star, White Star and Blue Star Families.

- **Gold Star** Family is one which has experienced the loss of an immediate family member who has died because of active military service.
- **Silver Star** Family is an organization that is dedicated to honoring and supporting wounded, ill, and injured Veterans from all armed forces of the United States of America.
- **White Star** Family recognizes families who have lost a service member to suicide whether military or first responder.
- **Blue Star** Family consists of family members of a service member during a time of conflict.

Lesser-known patriotic dates:

- April 5, 2024 - Gold Star spouses' day
- April 14, 2024 - Air Force Reserve Birthday
- April 23, 2024 - Army Reserve Birthday
- May 1, 2024 - Silver Star Banner Day
- May 1, 2024 - Loyalty Day
- May 10, 2024 - Military Spouse Appreciation Day
- May 18, 2024 - Armed Forces Day
- May 27, 2024 - Memorial Day
- June 6, 2024 - Anniversary of World War 2
- June 14, 2024 - Flag Day

- June 23, 2024 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Birthday
- June 27, 2024 - National PTSD Awareness Day
- July 4, 2024 - Independence Day
- July 27, 2024 - Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
- August 7, 2024 - Purple Heart Day
- August 29, 2024 - Marine Forces Reserve Birthday
- September 11, 2024 - Patriot's Day
- September 17, 2024 - Constitution Day
- September 20, 2024 - Pow/Mia Recognition Day
- September 29, 2024 - Gold Star Mothers and Family Day
- October 26, 2024 – Day of the Deployed
- November 11, 2024 - Veterans Day
- December 7, 2024 - Pearl Harbor Day
- February 3, 2025 - Four Chaplains Day
- March 3, 2025 - Navy Reserve Birthday
- March 25, 2025 - Medal of Honor Day
- March 29, 2025 – National Vietnam Veterans Day

We should be patriotic **“From Our Roots to Our Branches Extending Service To Our Veterans.”**

## **DEPARTMENT AMERICANISM AND PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR**

### **AWARDS AND CITATIONS**

1. Citation to the VFW Auxiliary with the most outstanding promotion of patriotic holidays in the community.
2. Citation to the VFW Auxiliary with the best POW/MIA promotion/recognition service.
3. Citation to the VFW Auxiliary who presented the most certificates to businesses or citizen in recognition of them displaying the American flag an POW/MIA flag.
4. Citations to the top three VFW Auxiliaries who distributed the most American flags.
5. Citations to the top three VFW Auxiliaries who distributed the most POW/MIA flags.
6. Citation to the VFW Auxiliary with the best recognition of Blue, White, Gold, and or Silver Star Families. (Must send description and or photos to Department Chairman.)

**ALL OBLIGATIONS INCLUDING AUDITS, BONDS, DELEGATE FEES, PLEDGES, SUPPLIES, ETC. TO NATIONAL, DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS AND DISTRICT MUST BE MET FOR YOUR AUXILIARY/DISTRICT PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMEN TO QUALIFY FOR AWARDS.**