



What is Americanism? “Americanism is an unfailing love of country; loyalty to its institutions and ideals; eagerness to defend it against all enemies; undivided allegiance to the Flag; and a desire to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and posterity.” – From page 9 of the 2024-2024 National Program Book or from the dictionary it means “attachment or allegiance to the traditions, institutions, and ideals of the United States.”

What’s more American than a good ole patriotic holiday? Every patriotic holiday is important to recognize and raise awareness of whether it’s a well-known or lesser-known patriotic holiday. These patriotic holidays are a good time to bring friends and families together and show your community how important our country is and what it means to you.

Here are a few ways we can promote lesser-known patriotic holidays:

- Study the history behind the lesser-known patriotic holiday and educate others.
- Raise awareness about the lesser-known patriotic holidays.
- Host a patriotic ceremony or event about the lesser-known holiday

Let’s talk about some known patriotic holidays. There are many important patriotic holidays throughout the year to recognize and celebrate. Some may be more commonly known holidays and others may be lesser-known holidays, it’s important to recognize all of them.

August 4 was U.S. Coast Guard’s birthday; how did you recognize it?

Purple Heart Remembrance Day was observed on August 7. How did your Auxiliary do anything to recognize the men and women who were wounded or killed on the battlefield by remembering the sacrifices they made?

Days to remember in September:

- Labor Day (First Monday of September): September 2
- Patriot Day: September 11
- VFW Auxiliary Birthday: September 14
- Constitution and Citizenship Day: September 17
- U.S. Air Force Birthday: September 18
- POW/MIA Remembrance Day (Third Friday of September): September 20
- VFW Birthday: September 29
- Gold Star Mothers/Family Day (Last Sunday in September): September 29

As the year goes on I will add more to the Sunflower Express for you to take advantage of to help celebrate and educate.

Let’s talk about the education of being an American and how we effect our youth. Are you ready to teach others about the Flag? With school starting back up, now is the time for you to go to the schools and set up an event, or see a few classes and teach our youth about the flag. Teach them how to fold the US Flag, how to raise and properly lower a flag, how to salute, and hand out the bookmarkers. Also with sports starting very soon you can go to the games and hand

out certificates to the youth that are showing you what a good American they are by holding still, placing their hand over their heart, removing their hat, or singing/playing the National Anthem or other patriotic song.

What better way to show true patriotism then to reach out to local businesses and other entities in town and see if they may have a flag that needs to be replaced or retired properly. While out and visiting, carry some patriotic materials that you can hand out or leave a pile to help educate others about the Flag. For more information about Flag etiquette visit vfw.org/community/flag-etiquette.

Some may ask what is POW/MIA? It stands for Prisoner of War/ Missing in Action. On National POW/MIA Day, we honor those who sacrificed and those still missing in action. On this day, the POW/MIA flag should be displayed below and not be larger than the American Flag. It's typically flown below or adjacent to the American Flag. Members are very passionate about bringing attention to former prisoners of war and those missing in action by holding special ceremonies to both educate their communities and honor these special veterans. One way to honor these veterans in by having a Missing Man Table Ceremony. You can find a sample of the ceremony and the proper way to set up the table underneath the MALTA Member Resources tab, go to the KS AUX website and find it under the Americanism tab or see your District President or District Chairman for a copy.

For those of you appointed as the Patriotic Instructor you have an important and crucial role in the Auxiliary. There are a few key things to remember as a patriotic instructor.

- Practice and learn our VFW Auxiliary rituals and traditions.
- See that the room is in keeping with the Ritual.
- Teach members about giving the proper salute to the American Flag.
- Educate members on the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Understand the Federal Flag Code.

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