

## **Americanism / Patriotic Instructor**

### **Promotion #4, January 2024**

**Department of California**



**#MoreThanLetters #AuxTRIBE**

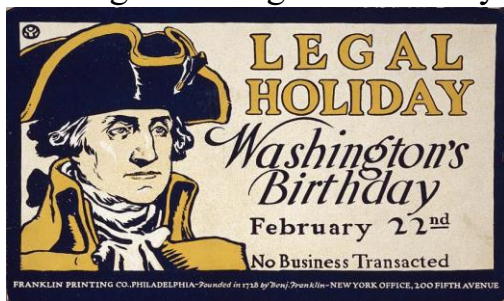
**Program Goals**

**Celebrating Patriotic Holidays, Flag Education,  
Promoting Patriotism, Recognizing Star Families**

HELLO, Sisters and Brothers. How time flies, it is hard to believe that 2023 is gone and 2024 is here. I hope your 2023 goals were realized and that you have set new goals for 2024. I also hope you all had a great and safe New Year's Eve and that your personal and auxiliary goals and objectives will be fulfilled in 2024.

I have chosen "Celebrating Patriotic Holidays" for this promotion. There are several to celebrate in the remaining auxiliary year. I am only going to discuss the first four in this promotion, saving the last three for a later promotion.

Although Washington's Birthday was celebrated by American Citizens for several years before it was declared an official Federal Holiday, it was not until January 31, 1879, that it became official. Washington has been celebrated for over a century as the "Father of our Nation" and his military career. He is also the creator of the Badge of Distinction and the Badge of Military Merit. The significance of



the badges is that they are the first recognition of service by ordinary soldiers, not officers.

On June 1, 1968, Congress passed the “Uniform Monday Holiday Law.” The purpose of this act was to make the observance of several federal holidays to specified Mondays instead of several dates, which provided long weekends for federal employees.



Arguably, the most significant change was the observance of Washington’s and Lincoln’s birth days from the actual birth dates to the third Monday in February. While it is commonly referred to as “President’s Day,” it remains officially as Washington’s Birthday in federal law. As stated above, this act only applies to federal employees, however it was not long before states adopted the dates also. There are eight states that still observe the holidays on the actual birth dates and nine states that do not observe the holidays at all.



As noted above, Lincoln is not observed on his actual birth date. However, Lincoln stands out for his extraordinary orator skills, most notably his Gettysburg Address, ending the Civil War, and for all intent and purposes, ending slavery.

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR VETERANS DAY, observed on March 29 of each



year. This day of recognition was enacted on March 28, 2017, and is to recognize the bravery and sacrifices to the 8.7 million Vietnam area veterans. It marks the anniversary of the date that combat forces departed Vietnam, in 1973. The Vietnam War was the longest conflict in U.S. History. There were 47,434 deaths, 10,786 in-theater deaths, and 153,303 non-mortal woundings during the period.



This holiday reaffirms our loyalty to the USA and our undying heritage of American freedom. It was originally celebrated as “Americanization Day” in 1921 as a counter to the Communist’s celebration of the Russian Revolution. In 1958 Congress enacted a public law proclaiming Loyalty Day as a permanent day on the nation’s calendar.

I would suggest that if a Veterans of Foreign Post does not plan an event to commemorate these National Holidays, the auxiliaries to the post should request the commander to consider an event or seek permission from the commander to have their own event. Just saying.

Before closing, I will remind auxiliaries that to be eligible for the Americanism auxiliary award No. 1, a completed application form must be submitted to their Department Americanism Chairman by March 31, 2024. The Department Chairman will sign the form and send it to National Ambassador Linda Roloff for judging. The form is available to all auxiliaries on Malta under “Resources” – “Americanism” – “Award Forms.”

Thank you, Department President Diana Russell-Milton, for allowing me to be the Department Chairmen for this fascinating Program. It has been an exciting challenge and I appreciate your having the trust that I would be successful in the position.

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