

Department of California

Americanism Program



January 2025 Promotion

Diana Kulhanek Chairman

dirude@yahoo.com

Happy New Year!

Hoping you make the most of 2025!

When to fly the flag at half-staff- With the recent passing of President Carter I want to remind you of guidelines when flying the flag at half -staff.

The American flag flies at half-staff or at half-mast when the country or a state is in mourning. The president, a state governor, or the mayor of the District of Columbia can order flags to fly at half-staff.

In most cases, an American flag flying at half-staff marks one of three observances:

- The death of a government official, military member, or emergency first responder
- A national tragedy
- Memorial Day or another National Day of Remembrance
- It is difficult to display a house or porch American flag at half-staff. An accepted patriotic practice and display of mourning is to attach a black ribbon or streamer at the top of the American flag. For U.S. flags displayed on a short staff (house mounted) or for indoor flags that cannot be lowered to half-staff, tie a black ribbon above the full-staffed US flag.



It's never too early to start planning Valentine's for Veterans.

Patriotic Valentine's for our Veterans -

Contact your Youth Activities Program Chairman and connect with Youth Groups in your area and ask them to make Patriotic Valentine Day cards, and Valentine-theme favors to be dropped off at your VFW Post and VA Hospitals. Be sure to include a Patriotic theme (Red, White, and Blue and American Flags to your Valentine's! See the attachment below for samples.

January- Now that the ball has dropped – it's time to pick it up and run with it!

Let's re-focus on **our 4 main goals of the Americanism Program:**

1.Celebrate Patriotic Days:

January 1 – New Years

January 1 - During the American Revolution George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America

January 1, 1892- Ellis Island opened. Over 20 million new arrivals to America were processed until its closing in 1954

Martin Luther King Day -- January, Third Monday

The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., an African American clergyman, is considered a great American because of his tireless efforts to win civil rights for all people through nonviolent means. Since his assassination in 1968, memorial services have marked his birthday on January 15. In 1986, that day was replaced by the third Monday of January, which was declared a national holiday.

2. Flag Education: December 28th is referred to as the Pledge of Allegiance Day, continue to visit youth groups and schools to give out flags and educate our Youth.

3. Gold Start Family Recognition: Take the time to make a phone call or send thinking of you cards to the Star Families in your community. Let them know how thankful we are for their family member's ultimate sacrifice and that we care about them,

4. POW/MIA Recognition Day-

- Be sure to send in your report and let me know how your Auxiliaries participated.
-

National Symbol- The Pledge Of Allegiance

Congress formally gave recognition for the Pledge of Allegiance on December 28, 1945. Francis Bellamy receives credit for writing the Pledge of Allegiance. *The Youth's Companion*, a magazine for young people, first published it anonymously on September 8, 1892, under the title "The Pledge." It was written in celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America.

Bellamy had hoped that the pledge would be used by citizens in any country. In 1923, the words, "the Flag of the United States of America" were added. In 1954, in response to the Communist threat of the times, President Eisenhower encouraged Congress to add the words "under God," creating the 31-word pledge we say today. Today it reads:

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Patriotic Instructors: The Patriotic Instructor educates members about the proper salute to the U.S. Flag, as well as the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. He or she also takes the time to understand the VFW Auxiliary Ritual and Federal Flag Code. He or she helps members to understand the traditions and ceremonies of the organization. The Understanding Auxiliary Traditions help sheet and video are available on the website at vfwauxiliary.org/resources. For detailed information on Auxiliary traditions, rituals, and patriotic ceremonies, reference the VFW Auxiliary Podium Edition: Bylaws and Ritual. Patriotic items and educational materials are available for purchase through the VFW Store at 1-833-VFW-VETS or online at vfwstore.org #AuxiliaryPatriotism , remember to show your patriotic pride by using the hashtag.

National Awards

Award No. 1

Most Outstanding activity and / or event educating their community about lesser – known patriotic holidays.

- A citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions
- Entry form required available under MALTA Member resources
- Entry form due to the department Chairman by March 31, 2025

I'm so proud of the work you have done in promoting the Americanism Program and can't wait to see what you do in 2025! Here's to another year full of joy, laughter, and unforgettable memories!

