Americanism promotes patriotism and responsible citizenship.

Committee Contact Information
Americanism@ALAforVeterans.org

What can you do?

1. Be knowledgeable on flag history, etiquette, and proper disposal methods, and promote the observation of patriotic holidays so your community will look to the ALA for information.

Ideas:
Member
• Publish flag etiquette tips in your newspaper and on social media.
• Model respect for our flag at public events, such as sporting events.
• Visit schools at the beginning of the school year to give some basic facts about our flag, our national anthem, and when we stand and put our hands over our hearts at parades and ball games.
• Volunteer for a local patriotic event.
• Sign up at www.legion.org to receive notifications on when to display your flag at half-staff.
• Contact and ask state and federal representatives to support the flag amendment.
• Vote! Take your children/grandchildren with you when you vote – many places have kid-related voting. Encourage others to vote.
• Recruit others to support the flag amendment by explaining what it is and why it is important. Sign up for The American Legion’s Legislative action alerts and follow flag issues.
• Work with local schools to further education of the Constitution, either whole or in part such as the Bill of Rights or the Preamble.

Unit
• Work with your Legion Post to increase respect for the flag in your community; invite the public to participate in a flag disposal ceremony.
• Teach proper handling, displaying, and respect for the American flag, as well as our National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance.
• Organize a patriotic holiday event or participate in local patriotic holiday events (i.e. march in a parade).
• Volunteer to keep up the area around the flag pole at your community’s civic government area by planting seasonal flowers and collecting trash.
• Encourage local businesses to fly the American flag, especially on patriotic holidays.
• Encourage Legion Family members to fly an American flag at their home.
• Provide American flags to your local schools for classrooms.
• Order pocket flag kits and distribute to members.
• Identify and distribute assembled pocket flags to active-duty military overseas.
• Encourage Auxiliary members to contact state and federal representatives and ask them to support the flag amendment.
• Encourage members to participate in Get Out the Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns. For more information, refer to www.legion.org/vote and www.kidsvotingusa.org.
• Work with local schools to further education of the U.S. Constitution, either whole or in part such as the Bill of Rights or the Preamble.

Department
• Share information from The American Legion’s publication Let’s Be Right On Flag Etiquette in your department newsletter each month.
• Conduct a flag disposal ceremony.
• Host flag etiquette awareness events and communicate information in schools, at your post home, and/or at public functions.
• Compile a list of patriotic holidays and events and share with your units.
• Acquire flags flown over your state capitol building to present to honored guests that visit your unit.
• Encourage members to contact state and federal representatives and ask them to support the flag amendment.
• Encourage members to participate in Get Out the Vote and Kids Voting USA campaigns. For more information, please refer to www.legion.org/vote and www.kidsvotingusa.org.

2. Increase participation in the Americanism Essay Contest. The theme for the current year can be found in the Americanism Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan available at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

Student Award: Americanism Essay Contest
Type of award: Citation, $50 prize and additional $50 donation added to the Children of Warriors National Presidents’ Scholarship Fund.
Presented to: 30 students total, six from each division, one student for every class in each division
Materials and Guidelines:
• The contest shall include six classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Word Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>3 and 4</td>
<td>150-250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>5 and 6</td>
<td>250-300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>7 and 8</td>
<td>350-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>9 and 10</td>
<td>450-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>11 and 12</td>
<td>450-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Students with special needs</td>
<td>Word count should correspond with student’s grade level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Students with special needs are defined as:
  o Those in special education classes.
  o A student recommended for special education classes, but who has not been admitted due to a waiting list or various other factors.
A child identified as having a disability, but not in a special education class due to lack of facilities; identification contingent upon discretion of school officials.

- Entries must include the Americanism Essay Contest cover sheet found in the Americanism Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan.
- Unit winners are sent to the department Americanism chairman, following department guidelines.
- For deadline and division Americanism chairman contact information, please refer to the Americanism Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan.
- National winners will be informed of their award via communication from National Headquarters. The award check will be mailed directly to the student and the citation will be forwarded to the department for presentation.
- While ALA representatives will do their best to return all essays, it is not guaranteed. We recommend participants retain a copy of their submission for their own records.

**Ideas:**

**Member**
- Encourage your children/grandchildren to participate in the essay contests.
- Offer to contact schools or other organizations.
- Help judge the essays.

**Unit**
- Contact schools and other organizations such as the Young Marines, Girl and Boy Scouts, and 4-H about the essay contest.
- Encourage Junior members to participate in the essay contest.
- Create information packets explaining contest rules, deadline dates, theme, and award opportunities.
- Contact the essay winner and their parents. Invite the parents to bring their child to your next Auxiliary meeting to read his/her winning essay. Provide refreshments.
- Work with school administration to identify guidance counselors, history teachers, etc. whose students would be interested in participating.
  - Arrange for a day with the schools (preferably during a student assembly) to present the essay winners with their prizes. Provide cash award and/or savings bond.
- Be sure to include this information on your unit report to your district, department, and national chairman.

**Department**
- Remind members about the essay contest, provide information, and encourage members to promote it.

**3. Participate in the promotion of The American Legion Americanism programs.**

**Ideas:**

**Member**
- Support American Legion Baseball.
  - Help with statistics.
  - Work the concession booth.
  - Donate to a team.
  - Contact local sports shops and ask if they would be willing to make donations
toward a fundraiser or offer a discounted price to purchase needed items.

- **Support the Oratorical Contest.**
  - Help prepare post home to sponsor local or district contest.
  - Offer to be a judge or timekeeper.
  - Offer to help out with refreshments.
  - Provide transportation for candidates.
  - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
    - Contact history teachers or debate coaches.
- **Support the Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and marksmanship training for youth.**
  - Volunteer to help out with scoring, supervision, or transportation.
  - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
    - Contact JROTC at local schools.

### Unit

- Work with the post and/or district Americanism chairman.
- **Support American Legion Baseball.**
  - Sponsor a team.
  - Help with statistics.
  - Man the concession booth.
  - Hold a fundraiser.
  - Drive the team to games.
- **Support the Oratorical Contest either at your post level or district level.**
  - Offer to provide volunteers as timekeepers or judges.
  - Offer to help out with refreshments.
  - Offer to host a contest.
  - Help recruit candidates at local schools and other organizations.
- **Support Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and marksmanship training for youth.**
  - Offer to provide refreshments on event day.
  - Arrange transportation and/or supervision on event day.
  - Host an event at your post/unit home, if you have the space.

### Department

- Work with The American Legion Americanism chairman in your department.
- **Support American Legion Baseball.**
  - Sponsor a team.
  - Sponsor a tournament.
- Encourage units to support the Oratorical Contest in conjunction with their respective posts or districts.
- Encourage units to support Junior Shooting Sports, which promotes gun safety and marksmanship training for youth.
Americanism Reporting*

Mid-Year Reports
Mid-Year reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and are intended as an opportunity for mid-year correction. Each department Americanism chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division Americanism chairman, plus copy the national Americanism chairman.

Annual Reports
Annual reports reflect the program work of units in the department, and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Each department Americanism chairman is required to submit a narrative report to the division Americanism chairman, plus copy the national Americanism chairman. Members and units should follow their department’s protocol and deadlines.

*For deadlines and contact information, please consult the Annual Supplement to the 2017-2022 Programs Action Plan or visit the Americanism Committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

• How did you promote the Americanism essays contest?
• How did units promote the flag program?
• How did you promote patriotic holidays?
• How did units encourage support of the flag amendment?
• Did units support The American Legion Americanism programs? How?
• How did units promote Americanism in their community?

Americanism Awards
Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing! It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps to add your part to our national success story:

1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet found in the awards section of the Programs Action Plan.
2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award’s materials and guidelines section.
3) Submit as indicated in the Annual Supplement to the Programs Action Plan.

National Report and Awards Cover Sheet, deadlines, and Americanism committee contact information may be found on the Americanism committee page on the national website, www.ALAforVeterans.org.
A. Unit Award: Dorothy Pearl Most Outstanding Unit Americanism Program
   • Award: Citation Plaque
   • Presented to: One unit in each division (5)
   • Materials and guidelines:
     o The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
     o The entry may include no more than five pictures and five news articles.

B. Department Award: Best Department Americanism Program
   • Award: Citation
   • Presented to: One department in each division (5)
   • Materials and guidelines:
     o The entry must be typewritten in narrative format, not to exceed 1,000 words.
     o Include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc.

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. American Legion Flag and Emblem Sales: www.emblem.legion.org
   • Flag education DVD: explains the history, significance, meaning, proper display, and treatment of the U.S. flag.
   • Let’s Be Right On Flag Etiquette - a question and answer booklet on proper flag etiquette.
2. The American Legion Flag Advocacy: www.legion.org/flag
3. The American Legion’s Action Programs of Americanism brochure: www.legion.org/publications
4. Capitol Building flags: To order flags flown over the Capitol, contact your congressional representative(s) or senator or visit his/her website. Flags are available for a nominal fee; four to six weeks should be allowed for delivery.
6. Your national Americanism committee members (see Americanism program page on the national website or Annual Supplement for contact information)