

Americanism/Patriotic Instructor



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“Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States when men were free.” These words were once said by President Ronald Reagan. Our military heroes are the keepers of this freedom. It is our job as members of the Ladies Auxiliary VFW to teach the people of this land how important it is to support them.

We can meet this challenge by educating our youth to have pride in their country. To teach them respect for the flag. After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, our flag was flown everywhere. There were flags on cars, every home displayed one, people wore patriotic clothing but that has dwindled. You very seldom see a flag displayed on a car and many homes no longer fly one. We must encourage our citizens again to proudly display the American flag. We can promote patriotism by presenting flags to schools, city offices, and scout groups. Encourage businesses to fly the flag. Also collect old flags for proper disposal. Place a proper receptacle outside of your Post home for collection and make the community aware of this.

We must recognize teachers who teach our children to care about America. The VFW annually recognizes our elementary, junior high and high school teachers who promote America's history, patriotism, civic responsibility and flag etiquette. You may know of a

teacher who promotes development of democratic values and beliefs. I encourage you to obtain the information concerning the National Citizenship Education Teacher Award and honor him or her. The information is available through the VFW Web site at www.vfw.org.

In November 2008, there was a record turnout during the election of the President of the United States. Many young people voted for the first time along with many older citizens who also voted for the first time. We must encourage them to continue to do so, not only to vote during a presidential election but in all elections. This is one of the freedoms of this great country of ours. We are given the freedom to select our leaders and laws.

On the third Friday in September, we observe POW/MIA Recognition Day. Please inform your community of the importance of this day. There are still those classified as prisoners of war and missing in action. We must stress to our government to obtain the fullest possible accounting for all Americans missing and unaccounted for from all conflicts. Their families deserve this.

On May 1, 2010, Loyalty Day will be observed by VFW Posts and Ladies Auxiliaries across the nation. This is the day we reaffirm our loyalty to our country. Encourage the community to be involved. Invite city and state officials along with our police officers and firemen. Thank them for everything they do for their community and country.

How many times has a member attended a Ladies Auxiliary meeting and did not know what to do? As Patriotic Instructor, we must instruct them on the proper salute, what parade rest means and what to do when the national anthem is played. We must teach them the proper way to say the Pledge of Allegiance and inform the members of upcoming holidays and patriotic events.

Remember: our freedom is because of the sacrifices of our military heroes, the men and women who served and are still serving. ***It's Time for America's Military Heroes.***

AWARDS FOR DEPARTMENTS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN:

For each program award, unless otherwise noted, \$25 will go to the first-place Department and a keepsake to the Chairman; second-place Department will receive \$15 and a citation to the Chairman.

1. *Citation to each Department Chairman with at least 80% participation by Auxiliaries.
2. Award to the Department with the best overall promotion of POW/MIA awareness program.

3. Award to the Department with the most unique promotion of teaching the youth patriotism.
4. Outstanding Performance Award in each Membership Group based on criteria listed on Page 1.

AWARD FOR NATIONAL CHAIRMAN:

“It’s Time for America’s Military Heroes” Plate to the National Chairman based on quality and timeliness of material.

***NOTE: Winners will be published in the Year-End Officers’ & Directors’ Report Book and awards will be mailed to the 2009-2010 Department President for distribution.**

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