

AMERICANISM/PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR, 2019-2020

SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION

We've all heard this many times and have volunteered to carry out these ideals for the coming year: "Americanism is an unflinching 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". Following are the major items that need to be addressed for the coming year: flag education, promote patriotism, POW/MIA recognition, Smart/Maher National Citizenship Education Award. These haven't changed much in the past years so we should have lots of experience in getting this done.

Most positive answers to the year-end report questions can be accomplished easily, such as:

- Celebrate holidays – if a serious ceremony cannot be accomplished, just mention something about this special day to a couple of people you come into contact with during the day. You have remembered and celebrated! If we celebrate patriotic holidays and observe occasions of national pride or reflection in any way, we will remain a nation that values its heritage.
- You nominate the teacher of the year from each level of teachers (elementary, middle, high schools) – don't wait for the school to do this for you!
- Do POW/MIA recognition during scholarship recognition events. In the past, I have had students set the table as the "Missing Man - Remember" dedication is read. They and their family members remember this event for a very long time! Let's remember that the United States is the only country in the world that cares enough to spend money, time, and effort to preserve our military history of "never leave a comrade behind".
- Distribute RAP coins/cards – or say a simple "thank you" when someone salutes correctly as respect our flag and/or national anthem.
- In addition to just conducting a Family Freedom Festival, send me a photo collage of this event. I will forward to the Americanism Ambassador so our Department President will be favorably honored.

Again, to accomplish all these, checking items against the year-end report 3 to 4 times throughout the year is a good way to get started. It is our job to educate members of the Auxiliaries and our community members on the proper care, respect, etiquette, display, conduct (including appropriate salute) during the movement of the flag, Pledge of Allegiance, playing of the National Anthem, 21-gun salute, and Taps. The necessary job of education boils down to be a code of ethics and good citizenship – which cannot be developed overnight by edict or official pronouncement. It is developed by years of practice and performance of duty according to high standards. It must be self-policing. Without such a code, a professional group (such as the VFW and its Auxiliary) soon loses its identity and effectiveness. As said by Linda Roloff last year, "the VFW and its Auxiliary know the price of freedom. We have paid it in blood, with fear, and in separations from our homes and loved ones. We have felt the pain of loss and the elations of victory. We have answered our country's call and remain committed to its ideals."

Let's be proud, not arrogant. Let's be humble, not braggarts. It sounds like its old and honest, but it projects an aura of Americanism at its best. Let's continue to light our way to unwavering support for uncommon heroes.