DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA



Area & Post Americanism Guide

2026-2027

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Department of Florida

Dear Post Americanism Chair,

As your Department Americanism Chair, I want to welcome you to the "Americanism Team" and thank you for stepping up to serve as the Americanism Chair for your District or your Post. Serving as your Area or Post Americanism Chair is one of the most important roles you could have within the American Legion Department of Florida, and I wish you the absolute best as you begin to execute your Americanism Plan for your Area or Post.

Americanism is one of the Four Pillars and the most visible within our communities, which is vital to our reputation and our continued growth. Americanism is the cornerstone of the American ideals of freedom, justice, democracy, and individual rights. It embraces the freedoms we cherish, and the rights guaranteed to each of us under the Constitution.

We have prepared the Americanism Guide to help you better understand your duties and responsibilities while serving in this critical role. We have included key points of contact, sample forms and events, scheduling guidelines, and timelines all provided to assist you as you begin to plan your District or Post Americanism Plan.

My challenge to you this year is for your Area or Post to take on at least one Americanism project or event that you have not done in previous years. Keeping in mind that you do so with enthusiasm and absolute commitment to ensure program success. We have so much to offer, so let us make this a record-setting year for your Area and your Post.

In closing, I ask that you spread the word throughout your towns, cities, and communities about Americanism and the programs we have to offer within the American Legion Department of Florida. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for all you do for the American Legion and the Department of Florida. Americanism Rocks!

"For God and Country"

Shelby Windham

Shelby Winham
Department Americanism Chair

2026-2027

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HISTORY OF AMERICANISM:

At the first National Convention held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1919, the National Americanism Commission of The American Legion was created. The charge at that convention made for the establishment of the Americanism Commission was as follows: *"... Shall be the endeavor to realize in the United States the basic ideal of this Legion of 100 percent Americanism through the planning, establishment and conduct of a continuous, constructive educational system designed to:*

- ***Combat all anti-American tendencies, activities and propaganda;***
- ***Work for the education of immigrants, prospective American citizens, and alien residents in the principles of Americanism;***
- ***Inculcate the ideals of Americanism in the citizen population, particularly the basic American principle that the interests of all the people are above those of any special interest or any so-called class or section of people;***
- ***Spread throughout the people of the Nation information as to the real nature and principles of American government;***
- ***Foster the teaching of Americanism in all schools.****"*

It is the main objective of the Americanism Commission to translate Americanism precepts, principles, and ideals in an understandable and practical manner to Legion Posts, Auxiliary Units, Sons of the American Legion, community, individuals, and Young America.

SET GOALS FOR THE YEAR:

Yes, goals are an important part of the planning process. After all, setting measurable objectives will let you know what you have accomplished at year end. In developing your goals remember:

- ***Be Realistic*** - That is something that must be done.
- ***Make them Measurable*** - If it is not measurable then how will you know when it is accomplished? You must have a time limit in which to accomplish your goal, and your goal must be written down!
- ***Listen*** - Find out your Post's concerns and allow yourself adequate time.
- ***Formulate a Plan of Action*** - This plan will be the basis of your coming year, so make sure your objectives are realistic. Look at them carefully in terms of the resources you have available (manpower, time, and money). Break them down into bite-size pieces. This makes them more manageable.
- ***Promote a Special Project*** - Your main project could cover any area affecting Americanism that you feel is important. Maybe your Post will want to promote individual projects. This is fine! Give it all the support you can. The key point to remember here is that it is better to concentrate on one- or two-yearly projects and be successful, than to run off in different directions and accomplish nothing.

By taking these small steps and building on their successes, you are maintaining interest, reducing potential frustration, and climbing ever closer to your overall objective.

DEPARTMENT, AREA, AND DISTRICT MEETINGS:

Meetings are an excellent way to communicate internally. You need to constantly remind your members of your program. How many Department, Area, or District meetings do you attend each year? How often do you meet with other Posts in your District? If you're an Area Chair, do you or your designated representative have a spot on the agenda? Remember ... You know your program is the greatest, give others the opportunity to gain experience and share in your enthusiasm, just as you share and learn from theirs. If you do not get this program "out front" and "out front often," interest will be lost and the importance you have originally given this program will suffer. *Do not let this happen.*

PUBLISH OR PERISH:

Your internal lines of communication are important, but do not stop there. Promote your programs to the general membership and the public. There is an old saying, "Publish or Perish!" While a bit on the dramatic side, it holds true. Does your Post have a Public Relations or Social Media Committee? How can they assist you in spreading the news? What are you planning and who needs to know? Do you know that several Posts and Districts in the Department carry a monthly or bi-monthly flyer or newsletter about their specific activities and future events? Several Posts

use Facebook and other social media pages. How much space do you have in your Post or District newsletter? When you write your newsletter or e-mail notice to your membership about an event, go over it and make sure the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, and WHY are detailed. Once that is done, send it to your public media outlets. Do not be discouraged if the local paper does not publish your item. Keep trying.

RESPONSIBILITIES AS A POST CHAIR:

BE PRACTICAL – It is imperative to keep things in proper perspective. One person can only do so much. Take a reality check. That is STOP, EVALUATE, PRIORITIZE, and DELEGATE. Delegation to others on your committee will enable you to concentrate on the overall program and provide you with more time to guide and prepare others. Remember ... *a job well done, always deserves a word of thanks.*

BE AVAILABLE - When you accepted the position as Post Americanism Chair, you said "I will make myself available." Make yourself available to answer questions. Be prepared to talk with people before, during and after the meetings. If you are out when someone calls, always make the effort to return their call. From time to time, you will encounter questions that you cannot answer. Be wise enough to say, "I do not know," then find the answer and get back with the person who asked the original question. You will find if you make it a point to be there when you are needed, either in person or by delegation, you will be more successful.

BE COOPERATIVE - There is always room for change and improvement. As our society today is so complex, it is extremely difficult to meet the needs of every child. Therefore, it is imperative for us to cooperate with other organizations and agencies concerned about our nation's children and youth. We do this to avoid duplication and to reach as many young people as we can. Internal cooperation is also extremely important, as The Legion collaborates closely with the members and partners of the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion. Remember, there is but one Americanism program for The American Legion Family and it is through such cooperative ventures that our program can be most effective.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE - You must be knowledgeable about the total program, always keeping in mind its purposes, principles, and methods of operation. The Chair should know the key Legion officials at the Department, Area, and District levels. They are listed in this manual and can be found on Department of Florida's website (floridalegion.org). In addition, the Chair should know the key people of the Auxiliary and the SAL, where applicable.

BE ENERGETIC - You must demonstrate to others that you possess the capacity to do the job. This will become evident as you proceed with the challenges ahead and will be seen in both your ability to delegate responsibilities and your ability to motivate others.

BE DEDICATED - Your dedication gives you the strength to move forward with enthusiasm

and provides the conviction to do what is needed. It is the glue that holds the whole equation together. YOUR DEDICATION IS THE KEY to a successful Americanism Program.

Your year as Post Americanism Chair is especially important,
not only for yourself, but for the young people in your community.
They are depending on you to show them the way.

Post Americanism Chair Timeline

Keep the Americanism Manual and extra brochures with you.

AUGUST

- Contact them members of the Americanism Commission; Let them know you are available.
- Attend all Post meetings to promote Americanism and maintain communication.
- Baseball's Regional Tournaments and World Series take place.

SEPTEMBER

- Begin contacting your local high schools for Boys State and Oratorical participants.
- **01 September** – Shooting Sports Registration and 1st round target sales open.
- **14 September -** Posts may begin to send in Boys State Registration Fees – the deadline for submission is 15 January 2027.

OCTOBER

- Make plans to attend Fall Conference – many Americanism programs hold training sessions.

NOVEMBER

- Contact your District Chairs to let them know if you are holding any Americanism events; Encourage them to participate.
- **11 November** – Veterans Day.
- **16-20 November** – American Education Week.
- **20-22 November** – Fall Conference.

DECEMBER

- Posts should be conducting their Oratorical Contests.
- **07 December** – Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.
- **15 December** – Shooting Sports registration and 1st round target sales closes.

JANUARY

- Has anything new come from Department concerning Americanism? Are there any current local, state, or national issues which your Post should become involved with?
- **01 January** - Baseball Registration opens.
- **06 January** – Boys State Delegate/Alternate Registration opens.
- **15 January** – Boys State Registration Fee deadline.

- **17 January** – Post Level Oratorical Contests must be completed.

FEBRUARY

- February is Americanism Month! This is the perfect time for that "new" Americanism event that you have been challenged with. Make sure you get the word out to the community and your members.
- **01 February** – 1st round Shooting Sports targets due to be eligible for 2nd round.
- **07 February** – District Level Oratorical Contests must be completed.
- **15 February** – 2nd round Shooting Sports targets sent out.
- **21 February** – Area Level Oratorical Contests must be completed.

MARCH

- Contact your local High Schools and Colleges for ROTC and School Medal program participation. Several schools have their award ceremonies in May.
- End of Year packets go out to Posts.
- **01 March** – Cadet of the Year and Eagle Scout of the Year Scholarship applications due.
- **09 March** – Baseball rulebook change requests due.
- **13 March** – Department Oratorical Contest.

APRIL

- Tell Posts to start preparing their one-two page narrative write up for the Post's End of Year Awards – Best Post Americanism, Best Post Shooting Sports, Best Post JROTC, Best Post School Medals, and Best Post Scouting. The narrative can be written in paragraph or bullet format.
- School Medals and ROTC medals – Make sure each Post has a Chair going to the local schools to present these medals to deserving children.
- **01 April** – 2nd round Shooting Sports targets due.
- **09 April** – Baseball recruiting zoning map due.
- **15 April** – Teacher of the Year nominations due.

MAY

- Boys State District Orientations should be taking place.
- **03 May –** End of Year Program Award nominations due.
- **14-16 May** – National Oratorical Contest.
- **15 May –** Armed Forces Day.
- **31 May –** Memorial Day.
- **31 May –** Baseball registration ends.

June

- Make sure your Post notifies the Programs Director of any last-minute changes in Boys State Delegates.
- **01 June** – Baseball team rosters due.
- **14 June** – Flag Day.
- **20-26 June** – 83rd Boys State session.
- **24-27 June** – Department Convention.

July

- National holds the Shooting Sports Championship.
- Senior & Junior State Baseball Tournament.

American Legion, Department of Florida

PROGRAMS OF AMERICANISM

Program Name	Description
American Legion Baseball	American Legion Baseball is one of the major youth activities of the National Americanism Commission. It teaches citizenship through organized recreation. Qualities such as loyalty, respect for the rules and decisions rendered, fair play, courage and physical fitness that are essential to the proper development of American youth, are learned on the field. State-level championship teams, who represent all 50 states and Puerto Rico, annually enter competition for the national championship of American Legion Baseball. National recognition and a trip to the Major League World Series goes to the winners. The Department of Florida won the 1996-1997 World Series.
Scouting	Scouting utilizes the service-learned skills and abilities of the veteran in building character and desirable habits in "Young America." It is a Post activity that brings public credit and goodwill to the Post. Legion-sponsored Scout units should be a "must" in every Post. **Eagle Scout of the Year** The Florida American Legion sponsors Eagle Scout of the Year scholarship awards. The winner receives $2,500, the first runner-up receives a $1,500 scholarship, second runner-up receives $1,000 and third runner-up receives $500. *Selection Process* Applications must be received by Department Headquarters no later than **March 1st**. The Department Selection Committee will receive all nominations. They will select, in their judgment, the most deserving nominee as Department Eagle Scout of the Year. The application judged best in the Department will be forwarded to the National competition where first place is awarded $10,000 and three runners-up receive $2,500 each in scholarships.
Florida American Legion Boys State	American Legion Boys State has been a program of the National Americanism Commission since 1935. Forty-nine states conduct this program of citizenship education and instruction in the operation of government. At Boys State, high school students are exposed to the rights and privileges, the duties, and responsibilities of a franchised citizen. The training is objective and practical with city, county, and state governments operated by elected and appointed officials duly placed in office by citizens of Boys State. Activities include legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies, and recreational programs.

	High school juniors are selected cooperatively by school officials and Legionnaires to participate in Boys State. More than 28,000 boys take part annually in the program; 500+ boys within the Department of Florida. They learn the wheels of politics as they operate their own government, acquiring the knowledge and practical experience that is vital to the development of responsible citizenship. Many of these young men go on to the military and universities and become responsible citizens. Several return each year to help with the Department's program.
American Legion Boys Nation	Two of the most outstanding participants in each of 48 Boys State programs are invited to participate in American Legion Boys Nation. This activity held annually in Washington, DC, also emphasizes citizenship education but is centered on the study of the federal government and its supporting agencies. Like American Legion Boys State, Boys Nation is an exercise in the two-party system of government. Each delegate becomes a senator and is assigned to one of two parties, Nationalist or Federalist. The boys' caucus, organized into committees, conduct hearings and act on bills that they introduce into the Boys Nation Senate. People who are prominent on the Washington scene participate in Boys Nation, providing their expertise on the many facets of federal government. Special visits to federal agencies, national shrines and other points of interest are included in the busy week-long session.
Community Service Activities	In several instances, the community service project will place special emphasis on the organization of safety-first campaigns, the elimination of fire hazards, establishment of playgrounds and the erection of living memorials. More than 200 diverse types of projects, designed for the betterment of communities, are sponsored by more than 15,000 Posts each year. Realizing that every community is in need of improvements, many local American Legion Posts take the leadership role in campaigns for community betterment.
Education Assistance Program	The American Legion offers a unique educational assistance package for students (and parents) as they enter the world of higher education. Part of the program is USA Funds, based in Fishers, Indiana (www.usafunds.org). Through this association a wide range of services are offered.
American Education Week	The American Legion has had a vital role in American Education Week since 1921. Representatives of the National Education Association and the then newly formed American Legion discussed problems in the schools and their talks led to the first joint observance of American Education Week in 1921. Since that time, ten other groups have joined in national co-sponsorship, the most recent of which are the United States Office of Education, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National School Boards Association.

	Although American Education Week is a nationally observed program, the success of this activity may well be determined by the degree of Post and Unit involvement in each community. The caring and willingness to face school problems with a positive attitude is most important in combating the forces which threaten our education system.
High School Oratorical Contest	The American Legion's National High School Oratorical Contest was first conducted as a national Americanism activity in 1938 and was developed primarily to instill a greater understanding and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States among high school students. Other objectives of the contest include leadership development, the strengthening of speaking ability, and inducement to study in preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights, and privileges of American citizenship. High school students who are U.S. citizens are eligible to compete, subject to national rules. Prepared orations of 8 to 10 minutes and extemporaneous talks of 3 to 5 minutes are based upon an aspect of the U.S. Constitution. There are three rounds of competition in the national contest. Each Legion Department (State) winner who participates in round one will receive a $2,000 scholarship. Each 1st round winner who participates in the second round, but does not qualify for the Finals, will receive an additional $2,000 scholarship. Contestants in the National Finals will be ranked according to the opinion of the judges and will receive scholarships in the following amounts: first, $25,000; second, $22,500; third, $20,000. The Department of Florida offers scholarships at the state level. First place is $2,500, second place is $1,500, third place is $1,000 and fourth through sixth place is $500. District winners who compete in the Area Contests, but do not advance to the State finals, will receive a $100 scholarship. Students interested in participating should contact their local American Legion Post or Department (State) Headquarters offices.
Sea Cadets	The USNSCC was formed in 1958 by the Navy League to create a favorable image of the US Navy with America's youth. In 1962 USNSCC gained their federal charter and that was amended in 1976 to allow women to enroll in the program. USNSCC consists of hundreds of local units across the United States, Hawaii, Alaska and U.S. Territories. Florida consists of 40 Units in 7 Regions. **The mission of the Sea Cadets is to build leaders of character.** The culture stresses self-discipline, service to others, accountability, and patriotism. At young ages, cadets are given leadership opportunities by staffing summer training events, planning unit drill sessions, and teaching others. Sea Cadets gain unique and valuable experiences that incorporate hands on learning and teamwork. Our diverse program includes seamanship, sailing, aviation, security, building robots, medical, STEM, SCUBA, submarines,

	photography, culinary, special forces training, and an International Exchange Program.
School Medals Program	The School Medals program is designed to place emphasis on the development of the qualities of courage, honor, leadership, patriotism, scholarship, and service. Promoting the development of these qualities encourages young people to live their lives as outstanding examples of good citizens. The School Award program, with medals and certificates made available by National Emblem Sales, recognizes the most outstanding boy and girl of the graduating class in elementary, junior high, high school and college.
Flag Education	Flag education has been a major program of The American Legion. Each year, American Legion Posts across the country distribute volumes of Flag literature to schools and groups as a community service. Hundreds of thousands of **Flag Codes** and **Let's Be Right On Flag Etiquette,** a compilation of the most-asked questions regarding the Flag, are distributed annually.
Flag Protection	The National Americanism Commission is actively involved in an effort to obtain an amendment to the United States Constitution to protect the U.S. Flag from public physical desecration. This campaign, based on a Supreme Court decision in 1990 which ruled all state and federal flag desecration laws unconstitutional, was initiated by The American Legion and now involves many organizations.
Junior Shooting Sports	The American Legion's Junior Shooting Sports Program is a national activity administered through Post-sponsored Junior Shooting Clubs. The program exists to provide gun safety and marksmanship training for young people, ages 14 through 18, as well as offering opportunities for competitive shooting which includes an annual national tournament. The American Legion recognizes the fact that guns are a part of society and probably always will be. Proper instruction in the safe handling of firearms serves as a means of protecting youth and adults alike. Shooting is an attraction for all, and target shooting is not only safe and fun, but also a legitimate athletic discipline. The national network of Legion Posts provides a vehicle to conduct club operations, while Districts and Departments are encouraged to promote and supervise the overall operation of the program.
Annual Americanism Post Awards	Each year a Distinguished Service Citation is awarded to the post in each department that conducts the most outstanding Americanism and Community Service activity. A Meritorious Service Citation is awarded to the runner-up in each department. Every post which conducts a satisfactory Americanism Program may receive an Annual Americanism Citation.

BROCHURES AND MATERIALS
AVAILABLE FROM DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

Limited to 25 copies each

Brochure	Quantity	Brochure	Quantity
American Legion Baseball		How to Join a Shooting Sports Club	
Florida American Legion Boys State		How to Start a Shooting Sports Club	
Operation Comfort Warrior		R.O.T.C	
Oratorical Contest		Shooting Sports	
Teacher of the Year		The American Legion & Scouting	
Sea Cadets		Vote America Guide	
School Medals		Department Scholarships	

Please send requests to:
The American Legion, Dept. of Florida
ATTN: Programs Director
P.O. Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854-7859

Post number: _____

Name/title: _____

Address: _____

City, State, & ZIP: _____

AVAILABLE FROM NATIONAL EMBLEM SALES

(See **current** National Emblem Sales Catalog for prices)

Declaration of Independence

Our Country's Flag Comic Book

Light of Liberty Comic Book

Geography Coloring Book

School Medallion

School Lapel Pin

Oratorical Medal

Oratorical Lapel Pin

Let us Be Right on Flag Etiquette

Flag Code

School Medals & Certificates

Flags (Indoor or Outdoor)

Americanism: Nothing more signifies Americanism to me than the flag of our country. Flying proudly, it represents so much, including the symbolism of freedom, our way of life, and a reminder of the sacrifices and bloodshed by those who serve to defend her. Wouldn't it be great to see every house on your street or business in your town flying it proudly? This is where you at the Legionnaire can play a significant role.



After a period of time of flying proudly and working so hard to represent the USA, our flags will become tired, tattered, and torn. It then comes time for the flag to be retired. The US flag code dictates that the flag must be destroyed by burial or by burning in a dignified manner. Does your American Legion Post retire flags? Many posts offer this type of service to your community. Do you collect them from the community and/or have others retire them for you? Or do you retire them yourselves? Do they need to stop by when your there or can they drop them in a mailbox outside your post? If so, great! If not, please consider doing this today. Whatever you are doing, I ask that maybe you take two extra steps.

The first step is an additional service to the community, but also can turn into a money-maker for your Post. Here's how! Ask yourself the question, **"if someone is willing to go to the effort of driving to your Post to drop off a retired US flag, then wouldn't they be more than willing to buy a new US flag from you if you could offer it to them easily?"** Through Emblem Sales, we have American flags that are very high-quality, made in the USA and where all the proceeds go directly towards supporting veterans who have served. Even though the cost of a flag from Emblem Sales may be slightly higher than what you can get in the local discount store, those cheap, foreign made flags do not last very long and the proceeds do not go towards our veterans. Plus, a little-known fact is that Emblem Sales will give your Post a credit in the amount of 10% for all sales made each year. Use those funds to buy more flags. Then apply the proceeds from those sales towards American Legion programs.

For example, if in 2019 you sold $4500 worth of flags, your post would get a $450 credit at the end of the year. This is the same amount it cost to send one Delegate to Boys State each summer. So why not attach an order form to the collection box so that those who are dropping off can place an order for a new one? Then 1-2 times a month you can hand-deliver the new US flag to whomever bought it. This way you can personally thank them for supporting the American Legion and may result in recruiting a new member.

The second step happens when you retire a flag by burning. You see, once the fire is out, all that is left behind are the **ashes and the brass grommets** that once held the flag to the pole. Typically, these are swept up and thrown away. But here in the Dept of Florida, we are starting a campaign to collect all the burned/retired flag grommets. The idea is to gather as many grommets as possible that we can each year, so that they can be melted down into something of value. Imagine a beautiful brass piece of art made of retired US flags that can be awarded each year as a traveling trophy to the Post with the Best Americanism program or a beautiful brass monument to be displayed at our Dept HQ made from the melted grommets. Please start collecting those grommets from your fire pits today!

United States Flag Folding Program

We fold from the stripes toward the stars, for whereas the stripes represent the thirteen original colonies, they are now embodied in the fifty sovereign states represented by the stars.

- **FIRST FOLD** - A symbol of life
- **SECOND FOLD** - A symbol of our belief in the eternal life
- **THIRD FOLD** - Made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks and who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.
- **FOURTH FOLD** - Represents our weaker nature; for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for his divine guidance.
- **FIFTH FOLD** - A tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but she is still our country, right or wrong."
- **SIXTH FOLD** - Stands for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we 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.
- **SEVENTH FOLD** - A tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all the enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.
- **EIGHTH FOLD** - A tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it files on Mother’s Day.
- **NINTH FOLD** - A tribute to womanhood It has been through their faith, love, loyalty, and devotion that the characters of the men and women who have made the country great have been molded.
- **TENTH FOLD** - A tribute to father, for he too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.
- **ELEVENTH FOLD** - in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the

seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

- **TWELFTH FOLD** - In the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God We Trust."

PATRIOTIC HOLIDAY PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS

ARBOR DAY

The exact date for the observance of Arbor Day is set by proclamation. However, it is generally observed throughout the United States during the months of April and May each year. The American Legion should take the lead each year in the observance of the day because it is an appropriate time for the planting of trees as living memorials to the war dead of the community.

Here is a suggested program for the day:

Call to Order.

Song "America," by assembly.

Reading of Governor's proclamation

Recitation by school child, "The Little Red Apple Tree," by James Whitcomb Riley

Talk, "History of Arbor Day"

Song by school children, "Trees," by Joyce Kilmer

Planting of trees

Appropriate poems that can be used for an Arbor Day program

"Among the Trees", William Cullen Bryant

"Under the Willows", James Russell Lowell

"The Friendly Trees", Henry Van Dyke

"Woods in Winter", Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

NOTE: If the trees planted are memorial trees, a Legion speaker should be on the program to talk on the purpose of memorial trees.

FLAG DAY

June 14 is the birthday of the Flag of the United States of America. It is truly Old Glory's day and every Post of The American Legion should see to it that ceremonies are conducted in their community to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of our Flag. It is suggested that your program be scheduled to include a "Pause for the Pledge" of Allegiance at 7:00 PM, EDT, to coincide with Flag Day activities held at historic Fort McHenry in Baltimore, MD.

1. See that every school in your community has a Flag and a Flagstaff.

2. Organize a student Flag squad to raise and lower the school Flag every day.

3. Promote the idea that every home in the city should own a Flag and properly display it on special occasions.

4. Distribute copies of the *Flag Code, Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette,* and of *Our Country's Flag.*

Here is a suggested program for a Flag Day observance:

Call to Order

Invocation Post Chaplain or local minister

Bugle Call to the Colors, at which time Colors will be advanced

Mass singing of "America"

Pledge to the Flag -- by assembly

Reading - "Your Flag and My Flag," by Wilbur D. Nesbit

Introduction of speaker - by Post Commander

Address on the Flag

Mass singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner"

Bugle Call - Taps

Benediction

INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Fourth of July 1776 was the date of the birth of the United States of America.

Here is a suggested program:

Meeting called to order by Chair

Music by band or orchestra

Invocation by Chaplain or local minister

Advancement of Colors by Legion Color Guard

Pledge of Allegiance

"America," sung by assemblage

Introduction of speaker by Post Commander

Independence Day address

Flag drill (massing of Colors)

"The Star-Spangled Banner," by band

Retirement of Colors

Benediction

Other Activities: dedicate a memorial or new community achievement, community picnics, band concerts, athletic events, battle re-enactment, Boys and Girls Scout rallies, model airplane contests, veterans' reunions and pilgrimages to sites having a historical significance.

MEMORIAL DAY

Thousands of Legion Posts conduct Memorial Day services in their respective communities. They decorate veterans' graves and scatter flowers upon the water in memory of the sailor dead.

A suggested program for a community Memorial Day service follows:

Call to Order
Reading, "Original Order" by General Logan in 1866
Post Colors
"The Star-Spangled Banner", sung by entire assembly
Invocation by clergyman
Pledge of Allegiance
Reading, "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address"
Vocal solo
Recitation, "In Flanders Field", or other appropriate world war poem
Introduction of the speaker by Post Commander
Memorial Day address
Benediction
Taps by Post Bugler

Where ceremonies are held in the cemetery, the following is suggested:
Order of march to the cemetery -- Colors, music, firing squad, Gold Star Mothers in cars, war veterans, American Legion, others. On arrival at the cemetery the entire assembly will take seats. Gold Star Mothers, war veterans and distinguished guests will take seats reserved for them on the platform and Legionnaires will file into a reserved section.

Post Colors
Invocation
Introduction of Memorial Day speaker by Post Commander
Brief Memorial Day address
Decoration of graves
Salute to the dead by the firing squad
Taps

NOTE: It is suggested that all speeches used in Memorial Day services be strictly in the nature of a tribute to or eulogy of the dead of all wars, as distinguished from Veterans Day speeches, which are to commemorate victory in the world wars. All speakers, for the day, should be so advised.

WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN BIRTHDAYS

The birthdays of Washington and Lincoln should be observed in every schoolroom in America. Your Post should cooperate with the schools in the two observances. Preparatory to the observances of Lincoln's birthday, the Gettysburg Address should be taught. A contest in the delivery of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address might interest the school and the public. The winner should appear on the holiday program.

The following is suggested for the observance of Lincoln's Birthday:

Post Colors
Opening song, "America"
Salute to the Flag
Reciting in unison the Pledge to the Flag
Song, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"
Story of Lincoln's life, told by pupil
Reading, "Why Should the Spirit of Mortal Be Proud?"
Reading, "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address"
Citizenship talk by war veteran
Song, "The Star-Spangled Banner"

Following is a suggested program for observance of Washington's Birthday:

Post Colors.
Song, "America"
Salute to the Flag
Reciting in unison the Pledge to the Flag
Story of Washington's life, told by pupil
Song, "Columbia the Gem of the Queen"
Tableaux, depicting scenes from Washington's life or the American Revolution
Reading, "Washington's Farewell Address"
Song, "America, the Beautiful"
Citizenship talk by a war veteran

VETERANS DAY

For many members of The American Legion, Veterans Day will always have a very deep personal significance. All Posts are urgently requested to see to it that their communities observe the occasion.

Here is a suggested program for the day:

7:00 A.M. -- Sunrise gun (can be fired with anvils in case no cannon is available).
8:15 A.M. -- First call (bugle or parade formation).
8:30 A.M. -- Assembly (bugle call for parade formation).
8:45 A.M. -- Starting gun or bomb parade.
9:45 A.M. -- Arrival of parade elements at the assembly point.
9:50 A.M. -- Salute of one gun; band, "The Star-Spangled Banner."
10:00 A.M. -- Invocation.
10:05 A.M. -- Music by band, soloist, or chorus.
10:10 A.M. -- Reading of Governor's or Mayor's proclamation on Veterans Day.
10:15 A.M. -- Remarks by Post Commander or designated person.
10:20 A.M. -- Music by soloist or chorus.
10:25 A.M. -- Roll call of the dead of world wars of the community by Post Adjutant of The American Legion. Ceremonies: presentation of service flag, plaque or roll of men serving in armed forces; presentation and dedication of U.S. Flag in honor of members of community in service.

10:45 A.M. -- Address by Legion speaker of day (caution must be used not to permit this speaker to utilize more than 15 minutes if this time schedule is used).

11:00 A.M. -- Salute of three guns; bugle call, "Taps," with echo, if possible (in larger cities several calls may be used in various sections). Thirty seconds of silent prayer for the dead of the world wars. All business ceases.

11:10 A.M. -- Introduction of guest speaker of the day.
11:15 A.M. -- Address by guest speaker of the day.
11:55 A.M. -- "America" by audience.
12:00 Noon -- Pledge to Flag

Adjournment

During the noon hour, a community dinner, picnic, or barbecue may be served, or Posts may serve dinner in large hall:

1:30 P.M. -- Afternoon program opened by firing cannon or aerial bomb.
1:40 P.M. -- Competitive drill by S.A.L. Squadrons, Boy Scout troops, ROTC units, fraternal drill teams and others; Football game or another sports program.
6:00 P.M. -- Banquet

The Certificate on the next page can be given from your Post to businesses who display the American Flag. We encourage you to publicly acknowledge the giving of this certificate, by ceremony or an ad in your local paper, in the hopes that other businesses will follow the example and want to proudly fly our Nation's Flag.

Please send _____ certificates to:

Name/title_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip+four_____

Mail certificate request to:

American Legion Department Headquarters

ATTN: Programs Director

PO BOX 547859

Orlando, FL 32854-7859

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Department of Florida



presents this

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

to

For loyalty and patriotism to our Country as exemplified by proudly displaying the Flag of the United States of America

Presented this _____ day of _____ , 20___

Sample

American Legion Youth Awards Programs
Developing Future Leaders … Today

Purpose: The purpose of the American Legion youth award programs is to develop America's future leaders by motivating and encouraging youth and recognizing exceptional performance in the areas of ROTC, citizenship, Americanism, Scholarship, Music, Athleticism and Essay. This program cannot be accomplished without at least minimal general guidelines for delineating the level of awards that would be appropriate commensurate with the youth efforts as acknowledged by parents, youth leadership, and school counselors. These general guidelines are not published by the national office of the American Legion or any of the Posts. General guideline suggestions or recommendations are intended to assist the Post, citizen, family member and youth leadership on acceptable criteria for awarding these awards from the Post or Legion. Additionally, these guidelines will assist in the current disconnect between American Legion and the schools today by suggesting a viable missing link that can help facilitate communications between the legion post and the schools they are affiliated with. This missing link is the Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA).

Background: The American Legion does not have paid positions to oversee these programs. Many of the school counselors cannot understand these programs even though introduced by the Legions, as most do not have a military background to support understanding of the core values of these programs. Furthermore, school counselors are not so inclined to promote these programs, as it simply means an additional workload that they simply cannot afford to invest their time in, due to the complex and vague nature of the award submissions criteria. Currently all these awards are highly subjective without any definitive criteria, which makes understanding the programs nearly impossible for the civilian but also even more difficult for the individual with the military background to discern the appropriate award or level of award that should be utilized to acknowledge the youth endeavors.

Areas of Responsibility: Posts are assigned regions that encompass the schools (elementary, middle, and high school) that exist within their local regional boundary, as dictated by the number of available Posts and reasonable division of the existing schools among the Posts. The school may submit the award requests to the (local) regional Post, but in the absence of the Post or the inability of the Post to process the award, an alternate Post may be used to submit the award(s).

The following are suggestions for consideration of recommended awards. Nothing herein should be considered to be absolute. The initial, (or in some cases the final), approval may come from the Legion Post where the award is submitted. Higher awards may need to be approved at the National Headquarters level.

Authority and References:

American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales, P. O. Box 36460, Indianapolis, IN 46236
http://emblem.legion.org/Medals/products/164/
call (888) 453-4466 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET

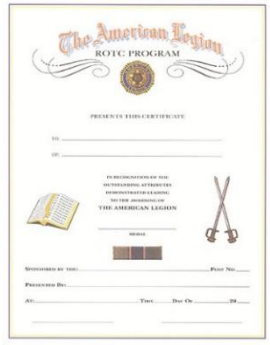
Award Criteria Guidelines

JROTC/ROTC Military Excellence Medal with Ribar: Bronze (High School), Silver (Jr. College or first two years of University), or Gold (last two years of college)



This award is normally recommended by the senior JROTC/ROTC instructor. It is awarded for outstanding cadet military performance.

- Approved for wear by Department of Defense
- Features Legion emblem
- Includes presentation box
- Item Number: 717.100M - $20.99 - $24.99



ROTC Military Excellence Ribar
Item Number: 717.100R - $7.99



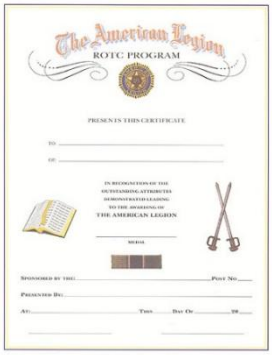
This metal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

JROTC/ROTC Scholastic Excellence Medal with Ribar (High School), Silver (Jr. College or first two years of University), or Gold (last two years of college):



This award is normally recommended by the senior JROTC/ROTC instructor. It is awarded for superior sustained academic performance and achieving a Scholastic "A" in JROTC/ROTC studies.

- Includes medal and matching ribar:
- Approved for wear by Department of Defense
- Features Legion emblem
- Includes presentation box
- Item Number: 717.101M - $20.99 - $24.99



ROTC Scholastic Excellence Ribar
Item Number: 717.101R - $7.99



This metal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Scholarship Medal: **(Bronze Silver or Gold):**



This award would be normally conferred upon a student who earns a scholarship or is awarded a stipend by a scholarship fund as a result either application to the scholarship fund or successfully winning an essay or other contest.

This medal may be awarded at three levels (Bronze, Silver, or Gold).

- **Gold Medal:** This may be awarded for the top student in a significant endeavor or contest that wins the endeavor or contest.
- **Silver Medal:** This may be awarded to the student who is runner-up or second place than earns a minor scholarship award.
- **Bronze Medal:** This may be awarded for noteworthy efforts resulting in a minor award for a scholarship or third place in a contest.

This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number**:** 717.314 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $26.99 – $35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box

Scholastic Medal (Bronze, Silver, or Gold):



The purpose of the Scholastic Medal is to recognize and motivate students to excel to the highest levels of their scholastic abilities and recognize the high achievers for scholastic achievements.

The Scholastic Medal should be awarded for sustained superior performance in academic endeavors. Recommendations may come from either parent, school counselors, teachers, or youth leadership, which documented proof of academic excellence.

Based on the fact that there are 3 levels for this award, it could be considered that the 1st 2nd and 3rd choice for a youth (elementary school, middle school, high school) may be considered for either the gold, silver, or bronze medals, respectively for sustained Scholastic excellence.

- **Gold Medal:** This may be awarded for the top student in a grade, student of the year for the school, or for extraordinary performance in advanced classes.
- **Silver Medal:** This may be awarded for a high achieving student that achieved runner-up for student of the year or was ranked 2nd in academic endeavors for their grades.
- **Bronze Medal:** This may be awarded for the high achieving student that was ranked 3rd for the grade or otherwise would be eligible for an honorable mention in their scholastic endeavors.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.312 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $21.99 - $26.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box

Essay Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



The purpose of the essay medal is to recognize and motivate the youth to compete in the higher level of thought process that requires a written essay, which can be demonstrated by an especially well written and thought-out essay in the school environment or submission of and/or award in an essay or writing contest.

The essay medal should be awarded to recognize a youth's achievement in their cognizant and reasoning abilities, and to recognize the superior thought process that is involved in writing a successful essay that convinces the reader that the writer is sincere in their thought process. While this a highly subjective process in determining the award and level of award, care should be taken into consideration the age and education level of the youth petitioning for the award; as well as the level thought process required in the essay contest (if applicable).

- **Gold Medal:** This may be awarded for the highest-level thought processes as demonstrated by the context and substance of the essay. This could also be awarded as recognition for winning a significant essay contest.
- **Silver Medal:** This may be awarded for a high level of thought process as demonstrated by the context and substance in the essay. This could also be awarded as recognition has runner-up in a significant essay contest.
- **Bronze Medal**: This may be awarded for participation in an essay contest with good thought process as demonstrated in the context and substance of the essay. This could also be awarded as recognition for an individual significant effort in participating in an essay contest not resulting in being selected as a winner.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This metal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.
Item Number: 717.317 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $26.99 - $35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Athletic Achievement Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



The purpose of the Athletic Achievement Medal is to reinforce the value that not only is scholastic wisdom and citizenship an excellent attribute, but also maintaining good health is of optimum concern for youth. This award recognizes a youth's endeavors to excel in an athletic sport as recognized by longevity, awards, and leadership in the field of chosen sport.

This should be awarded to the youth that endeavors or excels in one or more sports. The different level of metals should be conferred with consideration to

the level effort required to achieve the level of excellence demonstrated and/or documented by coaches/teachers, parents, or youth leaders.

- **Gold Medal:** This may be awarded for attaining the highest level in a particular sport demonstrating perseverance and determination as well as good sportsmanship.
- **Silver Medal**: This may be awarded for team leadership, a high level of proficiency in good sportsmanship.
- **Bronze Medal:** This may be awarded for outstanding participation in a sport and contributing to a team's success.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This metal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.308 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $26.99 - $35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Americanism Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



The purpose of this medal is to reinforce the core values of Americanism in our children as they mature.
The Americanism Medal should be awarded for the youth's endeavors to be a patriotic and good citizen.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.301 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $24.99-$33.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Citizenship Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



The purpose of this medal is to reinforce the core values that are expected of a good citizen in today's society as reflected by our forefathers.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.302 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $26.99-$35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Marksmanship Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



This award is covered by the American Legion in the air gun program. This medal could also be awarded for excellence in handgun or long gun handling.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.307- Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $22.99-$29.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Medal of Merit: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



(Gold) conferred not only for meritorious achievement in various fields of endeavor, but also for achievement exemplifying ideals which The American Legion holds in high esteem like Duty, Honor, Country, Family, and Loyalty.

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.304 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $26.99-$35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Heroism Medal: (Gold, Silver, or Bronze).



This medal may be awarded at the Post level. The level of award (Bronze, Silver, or Gold) may be determined at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.316 - Bronze, Silver, or Gold: $20.99-$27.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.

Grateful Appreciation Medal



- Presented to returning Service Personnel from your community.
- Available in gold only

This medal may be awarded at the Post level. This medal should be awarded with the appropriate certificate.

Item Number: 717.300 (Gold Only): $35.99
Furnished with regulation ribbon, pin back with safety catch, and presentation box.