

# Americanism

2009-2010 Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Auxiliary  
National President's Theme: Reconnect and Energize!

Plan of Action: Americanism Committee

Purpose: To inspire, recognize and perpetuate responsible citizenship through education and acts of patriotism in order to raise awareness and increase appreciation of the price paid for our fundamental freedoms.

## Committee Contact Information

E-Mail: [americanism@legion-aux.org](mailto:americanism@legion-aux.org)



**National Chairman**  
Name: Krisann Owens  
Department of Oregon

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**National Vice Chairman**  
Name: Karyl Horn  
Department of New Hampshire

**Committee Member**  
Name: Mickie Prendergast  
Department of Texas

**Committee Member**  
Name: Donna Ray  
Department of Ohio

**Central Division Chairman**  
Name: Ann Rehbein  
Department of Iowa

**Eastern Division Chairman**  
Name: Bonnie Lamson  
Department of Maryland

**Northwestern Division Chairman**  
Name: Gayla Schmid  
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**Southern Division Chairman**  
Name: Janice Crosby  
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**Western Division Chairman**  
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## National-level Objectives

1. **Objective:** Increase awareness of flag protocol by scheduling etiquette sessions in communities prior to Flag Day, June 4, 2010.

### Action Steps

- a. Contacting local schools, community centers, and Girls Scout Councils offering to present sessions at their locations.
- b. Distributing information two weeks prior to any major community parade or gathering of how to honor our flag.

2. **Objective:** Focus on protecting "Old Glory" by supporting legislation when introduced.

### Action Steps

- a. Work with congressional representatives to engage members to get community support on the importance of allowing citizens to vote on its protection.
- b. Collaborate with The American Legion to support their Americanism initiatives.

3. **Objective:** To further the development of our country's most promising young citizens by increasing the number of Americanism Youth Conference (AYC) Participants in five departments.

### Action Steps

- a. Contact departments that do not participate in AYC.
- b. Continue to work with Operation Military Kids (OMK) and increase their student participation by 10.
- c. Encourage ALL departments to send at least one student.

4. **Objective:** Promote Awareness at unit level about the Girls Scout Achievement Award resulting in 20% increase in applications.

### Action Steps

- a. Promote the Girls Scout Achievement award by contacting local Girl Scout councils.
- b. Clarifying with Departments that it is a national-level scholarship; award money does not come from departments or units.

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## To be filled out by Department Chairman:

Department Goals relating to above. Should have no more than three department-level goals supporting the National objectives outlined above. Department Chair - please share these with your Committee and forward a copy to your National Chairman. (This process does not need national approval.)

### 1. Objective:

#### Action Steps

a.

### 2. Objective:

#### Action Steps

a.

### 3. Objective:

#### Action Steps

a.

## Programs and Activities

1. Americanism Youth Conference is hosted by Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania usually the first weekend in March. The program is open to students in grades 10, 11, 12. The essay they are required to write will be based on the theme: "Civic Education...Why it's Important to Me."
2. Americanism Essay Contest provides the American Legion Auxiliary with an opportunity to reach out to the youth of our nation. The Americanism Essay Contest conducted within our school systems is a starting point to teach respect, patriotism and the role students will play as they grow into productive citizens. The essay all classes are required to write will be based on the theme "What is My Patriotic Role as a U. S. Citizen?"
3. Girl Scout Achievement Award: The goal is to recognize those Girl Scouts who exemplify the best that the Girl Scouts of the USA has to offer. Each department and participating unit should develop a plan to acknowledge those who qualify. Fostering a relationship with the Girl Scout Councils within each community is a desired outcome as it is another opportunity for the American Legion Auxiliary to reach out to our youth. The Girl Scout Achievement Award is a national-level scholarship and funded at the national-level.

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4. American Legion Auxiliary Junior Programs: Working closely with our Junior members offers opportunity to instill patriotism and good citizenship in the youngest of our members and it seals the future of our organization. Flag etiquette is a top priority for all Juniors to learn as well as inspiring them to be mentors to their fellow students in the ways of patriotism and good citizenship.
5. Fly Our Flag: The need to encourage local businesses, organizations and citizens to display the Flag on their properties each day is an excellent way to foster relationships within our communities. This is an opportunity to educate our citizens on proper Flag etiquette, which will in turn inspire them to respect and honor the Flag of our nation. Local schools and churches are areas where we can provide flags as well as an opportunity to distribute flag etiquette materials. It is also important to recognize those who fly the Flag with certificates indicating our gratitude for their patriotism.
6. Get Out the Vote: Encouraging our citizens to vote in all elections whether local, state or national helps us promote awareness in the issues that affect veterans and their children as well as support our communities with knowledge of local issues. This is also an opportunity teach the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The American Legion Auxiliary also supports Meet the Candidate events that encourage all of us to know our potential leaders so informed decisions can be made during elections.
7. Kids Vote: This is an excellent way to involve students in grades K-12 in the voting process through the Kids Vote Program. Utilizing members who may be on election boards and or just have an interest in educating our youth will be able to establish mock elections the week before the national election and also have meet the candidates program at the local American Legion Post and/or go into the schools with the candidates for a discussion on the issues based on different age groups.
8. Patriotic Holiday Observances: Restoring the significance and history behind our American patriotic holidays should be a priority of every American legion Auxiliary member. Encourage communities to fly their flags for each holiday, with units holding special events to bring significance to the patriotic holiday will help restore and bring pride to entire communities. It's the responsibility of each member to remind our communities that it's ok to be patriotic as it's not just reserved for national tragedies, (i.e. 9-11-2001). Remind everyone that every day is Veterans Day.
9. Operation Military Kids (OMK): Is an exciting new opportunity for our members to partner with their local 4-H Councils to support the children and youth impacted by deployment of their loved ones. The American Youth Conference (AYC) is proving to be a significant relationship builder for the Auxiliary to interact with military kids. Distribute brochure for the AYC and work with the staff of OMK in selecting students who are interested in attending. This is also a good tool to help foster a relationship with the National Guard support group with families.
10. Month of the Military Child  
Support initiatives in communities that offer the opportunity to focus on military children and honor their sacrifice. Consider sponsoring a patriotic project during the month of April.
11. Pocket Flag Project  
For more information, contact [www.pocketflagproject.com](http://www.pocketflagproject.com) or Pocket Flag Project, PO Box 740847, Arvada, CO 80006.

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## Committee Awards:

- I. Americanism Essay Contest:  
One award in each of five classes will be presented in each Division. Winners will receive \$100 and a citation. One national winner will be chosen from the Divisional winners. The award will be for \$500 and a citation plaque in each of the five Classes. Department Chairman is responsible for informing units of the deadline date. All department entries must be postmarked by May 15, 2009, and sent to the Division Chairman. Division Chairman must submit their winners to the National Chairman by June 15, 2010. The essay cover sheet for departments and units is available on-line.
- II. Clara B. Smith Plaque:  
A plaque will be presented to the department that reports the most outstanding three-point Americanism program encompassing youth, adult and community. Entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. The entry may include up to five pictures and news articles. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2010, and sent to the National Vice Chairman.
- III. Department Awards:  
A plaque will be presented to the Department Chairman in each Division reporting the Most Outstanding Overall Americanism Program. The entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. Do not include pictures, clippings, scrapbooks, folders, etc. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2010, and sent by the Department Chairman to the Division Chairman.
- IV. Dorothy Pearl Plaque:  
A plaque will be presented to the Unit that reports the Most Outstanding Americanism Program targeted to children and youth. The entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. The entry may include no more than five pictures and news articles. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2010, and sent to: Committee Member, Mickie Prendergast, 1114 Fawn Ridge Rd, Duncanville, TX 75137.
- V. Junior Americanism Award:  
A plaque will be presented to a Junior group that reports the Most Outstanding Americanism Program. The entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. A maximum of five pictures and news articles may be included. All entries must be postmarked by June 1, 2010, and sent to: Committee Member, Donna Ray, 5724 Willnean Dr., Milford OH 45150.
- VI. Girl Scout Achievement Scholarship:  
One \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a Junior or Senior High School student earning the Girl Scout Gold Award and the appropriate religious emblem. Award application is available online. Interested students will complete the online application and submit a 500-word essay and letter of recommendation to a sponsoring unit. Units and departments will select deadline dates and point of contact (who the application and essay should be sent to); each department will select one winner who's application materials will be advanced to the National Chairman by May 15, 2010.

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## Resources

1. Americanism Youth Conference Facebook Page
2. Freedoms Foundation [www.ffvf.org](http://www.ffvf.org), (800) 896-5488
3. Girl Scout of USA, [www.girlscout.org](http://www.girlscout.org)
4. Operation Military Kids, [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)
5. Capitol Building Flags: To order flags flown over the Capitol, contact your Congressional Representative or Senator or visit his/her web site. Flags are available for a nominal fee; 4-6 weeks should be allowed for delivery.
6. Unserviceable Flags, The Ceremony transcript can be found at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org); click on Americanism
7. Kids Vote, [www.kidsvotingusa.org](http://www.kidsvotingusa.org)

See program page on [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org) for additional resources