

BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 2023



AMERICANISM

JANET KAYS, CHAIRMAN

In 1914, the members of The Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary set out to serve the veterans of this country in honor of the sacrifices and commitments of every man and woman who has worn the uniform. Today, we continue to work as a team. "We are nearly a half a million members from diverse backgrounds who have a common connection: all are relatives of a VFW-eligible veteran."*

The task that we have taken on to serve our veterans and communities is not always easy, but it is as important today as it was over 100 years ago. Americanism is one of the oldest programs of the auxiliary and a program that can be promoted in so many ways. By observing these upcoming patriotic holidays, you will benefit the veterans, our youth, and the citizens in your communities.

September 11, Patriot Day

November 11, Veterans Day

September 15, POW/MIA Day

December 7, Pearl Harbor Day

September 25, Gold Star Mothers and Family Day

Star Family recognition: A service flag or service banner is one that has been approved by the Secretary of Defense that family members of those serving in The United States Armed forces can display.

- Blue Star families are those with family members serving in the military during any period of war.
- Silver Star families have a family member who was injured, wounded or became ill during or as a result of combat.
- Gold Star families are those who had a family member that died during military operations.

I am encouraging you to recognize these holidays and families as part of your local program. It would be a great time to focus on an event that educates about VFW Auxiliary acronyms are "more than letters". Citations and awards will be given out by National Headquarters for those auxiliaries that send me information and entry forms by March 31, 2024. (Don't forget the value of promotion through media sources.)

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Because we are allied with The VFW, it would be beneficial to your auxiliaries to help your Post promote two of their community programs.

The Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Award: Teachers who promote civic responsibility, flag etiquette and patriotism are prime candidates for this award.

Scout of the Year program: Scouts who have demonstrated exemplary citizenship in school, Scouting, and community are candidates for this award.

Check out VFW.org under community to get more information on these programs which encourage patriotic lifestyles.

Please continue to promote flag education, educate members on Auxiliary traditions, and set good examples by being good citizens.

At this time, we are 1/3 of the way through our current reporting year, but only about 30% of our Illinois auxiliaries have reported on the x sheet in Americanism. Fall is definitely a great time to get your engines started and do what needs to be done. Don't forget to document your work and take photos when possible. And of course, please report!

* vfwaux.org web page