



Michigan Department VFW Auxiliary

Americanism – April - May 2026

www.vfwauxmi.org

Facebook Page: Americanism - Michigan

National Theme: *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free*

Department Theme: *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*

WOW! Hard to believe this is my final bulletin. I want to thank Madam President Debbie again for giving me the honor of doing this chairmanship. I would like to thank all the Auxiliaries and members for all they do to promote patriotism within their Auxiliaries and communities. It has been a great pleasure to read your reports and the great work you are doing for Americanism and to promote and build a patriotic environment *From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans Who Keep Us Free* because *We Don't Know Them All, But We Owe Them All*.

I hope you all enjoyed the flag etiquette crossword puzzle in the last bulletin. Here are the answers so you can check if you were correct:

Across

3. Heart
7. Patriotic Instructor
8. Twice
9. Yes
10. U.S. Flag Code

Down

1. Right
2. Stand
4. Toward members
5. Burn to ash
6. Ritual
8. Two

We may be nearing the end of our program year, but these promotions for Americanism and promoting patriotism are not a once-a-year thing. Work on it every day and every month of every year. Lead by example and what you do will be witnessed and emulated by others.

FROM OUR NATIONAL AMBASSADOR – DIANA RUSSEL-MILTON

Like a Flag, spring is unfolding. With spring comes a season of renewal and rejuvenation, and this offers us a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the principles that define Americanism within the VFW Auxiliary. This is a time to honor those who have served our country and to strengthen the spirit of unity within our communities. Spring invites us outdoors, into our neighborhoods, our schools and our gathering spaces, where we can actively demonstrate our patriotism through service and connection. Whether it's participating in a Flag ceremony, volunteering at a local event, or simply flying the American Flag at home, each act is a powerful expression of gratitude and pride. Americanism is more than a symbol; it is a commitment. It is found in the way we uplift one another, educate future generations and preserve the values of freedom, respect and unity. Teaching children about the history of our Flag, sharing stories of service and engaging in community efforts all help keep these ideals alive. The VFW Auxiliary encourages each of us to take part in this mission. By coming together with purpose and appreciation, we not only honor those who sacrificed for our freedoms, we ensure their legacy continues to inspire.

Flag education – Teach what the folds of the flag represent when a flag is folded for fallen veterans. Did you use the tools provided on MALTA. Even discussion groups are good. Remember proper respect for the flag by saluting in our meetings, parades, and events. Teach people what the proper heart salute is – provide demonstrations. Maybe put an article in the paper about how the flag has developed to the current flag as the states were added. Make flyers for kids teaching them.

POW/MIA – Many people don't know this stands for Prisoners of War/Missing in Action. Promote remembrance of those still missing and to never forget until they are all home. Teach kids what the families of these veterans suffer and have sacrificed. Provide information from the Washington Weekly that tells of those that have been found and brought home.

Patriotic Holidays and branch of service birthdays – Post the information on your Facebook pages, put articles in the newspaper, have an event at the Post or in the community to honor these days. Go a step further and provide information about these days to promote patriotism. How did the observance start? Was it through an act of Congress or just by Executive Order? This is another opportunity to promote Americanism and patriotism by educating our members and communities on the history behind these days. Do something fun to get the kids involved – maybe puzzles or coloring contests.

LOYALTY DAY is May 1, 2026 – This is a day for all Americans to come together and reaffirm their commitment and loyalty as citizens of the United States. Plan an event and publish it in the local paper inviting the community. Have flags and educational information – Flag Etiquette booklets, Respect for the Flag booklets.

MEMORIAL DAY is May 25, 2026 – Most Posts and Auxiliaries have an established program, but if you don't, consider going to a neighboring Post and get involved with their program. This is a hard day for our Gold Star Families. Consider doing some kind of special recognition or have a presentation for them. Maybe a flower or some other token to show them we care and thank them for the sacrifice their family suffered.

Distribution of flags – U.S. and POW/MIA – Always keep flags on hand for distribution whenever you have the opportunity. Are there homes in your community where there's a flagpole but no flag. Give them a flag to fly. Give others a flag house kit. Remember to tell me how many flags you distributed and whether it is U.S. or POW/MIA.

Certificates of Patriotic Appreciation or Respecting the Flag – There are several types of certificates available on MALTA or you can create your own. This is about catching patriotism and Americanism in action. Give them to local businesses or other organizations. Have a few available for when you go to all the sporting events for your kids and/or grandkids and give out to people who are properly respecting the flag by saluting or singing the National Anthem. Give them to people in your neighborhoods who fly the flag.

#AuxiliaryPatriotism and Understanding Auxiliary Traditions – We may be nearing the end of our year, but this is something that is always relevant and continue to develop. Pick a topic each month for your meeting from the Bylaws, Auxiliary resources or Building on the Foundation to discuss and teach at a meeting.

National Anthem and Pledge – These are the very fundamentals of patriotism and American pride. These are part of the Ritual for our meetings. Take the time to do it please! Singing the National Anthem is not about how good or bad we do it, it's the pride of doing it! Take the opportunity to properly respect our flag by not only reciting the Pledge of Allegiance but sing! Show the pride and love you have for our country when you sing the National Anthem. How can we expect others to do it if we don't do it ourselves?

REPORTING

Final day for reporting is April 20, 2026. Look over all your notes and events for the year and be sure to report what you have done if you haven't reported it already. Reporting tells the story of your Auxiliary and all that you do. Tell me about it.

HOLIDAYS & OBSERVANCES

April 1 – U.S. Air Force Academy Day – President Eisenhower established the academy on April 1, 1945, and Congress passed the legislation in 1954. The pioneer class of 1959 was sworn in on July 11, 1955. The day celebrates the achievements of the academy and the significant role it plays in training future Air Force officers.

April 5 – Gold Star Spouse Day – Honors the surviving spouse of service men and women who lost their lives in military service and the sacrifice that their spouses must endure.

April 6 – Army Day – Day to recognize and appreciation soldiers' roles in national security and global operations. Established by Colonel Thatcher Luquer and originally celebrated on May 1, 1928. Changed to April 6th in 1929 to correlate to the U.S. entry into WWI. It was officially recognized by Congress in 1937.

April 9 – National Former POW Recognition Day – solemn reminder of the resilience, bravery and sacrifice of American service members who endured captivity during wartime and what their families went through while awaiting their return. Began by former POWs in 1984 and the date commemorates the Bataan Death March of 1942. Congress recognized this date in 1988.

April 13 – Thomas Jefferson's Birthday – Founding Father and 3rd U.S. President. This day was recognized officially by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1938.

April 14 – Air Force Reserve Birthday – Air Force Reserve was established by President Truman in 1948 as a standby force for emergencies.

April 20 – Patriots' Day – Recognizes the beginning of the Revolutionary War with the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775. Observance began in Massachusetts in 1894.

April 22 – In God We Trust Day – Adopted by Congress as the official U.S. motto in 1956 and signed into law by President Eisenhower to appear on all U.S. currency.

April 23 – Army Reserve Birthday – Formally established in 1908 to provide a trained and ready force to augment active-duty personnel.

April 27 – Morse Code Day – Commemorates the birthdate of Samuel Morse in 1791, the inventor of the Morse Code which provided essential and advanced ability to communicate by telegraph. The first successful message was sent in 1844 which said “What hath God wrought”.

April is National Military Child Month – intended to recognize the unique challenges faced by children with one or both parents serving in the military.

May 1 – Loyalty Day – This is a day to reaffirm our loyalty, allegiance and fidelity to our country and to uphold the vision of our Forefathers. First celebrated in the 1920’s to promote patriotism and combat the rise of Communism. Congress made this an official holiday on July 18, 1958, and the first observance was on May 1, 1959.

May 8 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day – Observed on the Friday before Mother’s Day. This day is to honor the spouses who provide the most basic support for our military which provides immeasurable improvement in morale and the foundation of military communities.

V-E Day – Victory in Europe Day was May 8, 1945, and is celebrated to remember the surrender of the German army and the end of WWII.

May 13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day – Intended to recognize the challenges faced by children who have lost a parent in military conflict. The date was chosen to commemorate the establishment of Arlington National Cemetery on May 13, 1864.

May 16 – Armed Forces Day – Celebrated on the third Saturday of May. This day to honor and show appreciation to members of all military branches was announced by Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson on August 31, 1949, and the first observance was in 1950.

May 22 – National Maritime Day – Established by Congress in 1933 to recognize the support of the Merchant Marines to the U.S. trade and military in times of both war and peace. During times of war, the Merchant Marines are part of the U.S. military.

May 23 – Memorial Day – Originally called Decoration Day and dates to the end of the Civil War in honor of those men and women who gave their lives for freedom and country. The name was changed in 1882. This holiday was originally celebrated on May 30th, but Congress changed the date to the last Monday of the month in 1971.

Feel free to reach out to me any time if you need assistance, help or have questions about reporting or what goes where. I love hearing from and helping the membership.

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