

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of California
District 28

Americanism
End of Year Supplemental
2021-2022
(596 Words)

This year has been a rough one for our District. We've have several Units that are really struggling and barely functioning post covid. Units are trying to bring in new members, reintegrate the programs, and keep older members involved. As we finally get back into the swing of things Units are trying to find new methods to introduce the Americanism program to their members, juniors, and community.

This chairman has provided information at each district meeting to our Unit chairman regarding the Americanism Program. I've done a lot of discussion about Flags for our Heroes. We've talked about mailing postcards for warn flags to homes, checking out the Americanism Facebook page, the Americanism Essay Contest, Star Spangled Kids, Military Family Month, Veteran's Day. At our Upcoming meeting we'll be discussing Memorial Day and Flags for our Heroes once again.

We had one Unit that hosted an "Introduction to Our American Flag". It was held on October 9, 2021 at 11Am for ages 4-15. Four Auxiliary members hosted the event and recruited three Veterans to help. They introduced the Pledge of Allegiance, a short history of the American Flag, the 48 Star American Flag, and a folding of a 50 Star American Flag. The eleven juniors including one member participated in a craft project and received snacks. Each junior also received gift bags which contained red, white and, blue items, sanitizer, snacks, crafts, and a 3x5 flag. This Unit is only a few years old and this was their first Americanism Project. The juniors seemed receptive and were interested in coming back for more. We also had one Unit that worked with the schools to try to participate in the Americanism Essay Contest. Rules and Titles were all presented to the school and follow up was done, but the schools didn't end up supplying any essays this year. Normally the Unit provides monetary

awards for the essay winners. Each year this Unit also hosts a Teacher Appreciation night where they recognize teacher's accomplishments.

One Unit replaced or placed flags on graves at local cemeteries. The old flags were taken to the post for proper disposal. They work with the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts to perform a flag retirement ceremony immediately following the Veterans Day Ceremony at the post. This year this District Chairman donated 100 flags to each Unit to participate in the Flags for Heroes program in support of the Sons of the American Legion National Commander. Thus far we've had three three Auxiliary members place flags on veterans' graves in local cemeteries while paying their respects to deceased loved ones. A total of three hours have been volunteered on this project.

Our Units have also supported our Department through Donations. Units have sent \$125 to Department for the Americanism program and \$25 to Spirit of Youth.

Units are already planning their next events. We have discussions of presenting the American Flag and it's History in Sign Language and doing short presentations at local elementary schools. We have Units that participate in annual Memorial Day Ceremonies all over Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties. We'll be placing Flags for Heroes on Local Private Cemeteries, City Cemeteries, and on National Cemeteries in these counties.

This year has definitely been a building year for District 28. We're bringing in new members, reintroducing the programs, and trying to find new ways to incorporate the programs that will keep things interesting. As a whole we need to find a way to bring in new members that want to be active and help us grow in new exciting ways.