

**SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
DETACHMENT OF NEW YORK**



AMERICANISM COMMISSION

AL Americanism Commission

History and Organization

- The American Legion National Americanism Commission was established at the charter convention in Minneapolis in 1919. Among its first responsibilities were –
 - Combating anti-Americanism,
 - Educating citizens in the ideals of true Americanism,
 - Distributing information about “the real nature and principals of American Government”, and
 - Fostering the teaching of Americanism in all schools.

SONS of The American Legion

- The Sons of The American Legion was first authorized by The American Legion's National Convention in 1932.
- But it was not until May 1972, a revised SAL Constitution and By-Laws, approved by The American Legion's National Executive Committee, actually provided the framework for a National SAL Organization.

SAL Americanism Commission

- Sons are urged to participate in American Legion and public observances.
- Just as each Legion Post determines the extent of its services to the community, state and nation, so each Squadron is permitted flexibility in planning programs and activities to meet the needs of its own age groups.
- This encouragement is carried through to the different levels of the Sons Organization to support American Legion Programs.

What is Americanism?

- As taken from Lesson Three, American Legion Extension Institute, 1996 Edition, The National Americanism Commission often uses the following definition: **“The love of America; loyalty to her institutions as the best yet designed by man to secure life, liberty, individual dignity and happiness, and the willingness to defend our Flag against all enemies, foreign or domestic.”**
- Another common definition given is: **“Allegiance to the United States of America and its customs and institutions.**

What is the Americanism Commission?

- The Americanism Commissions of the Departments and Posts are charged with carrying out the obligations embodied in the Preamble to the American Legion Constitution:
 - To uphold and defend the Constitution of The United States of America,
 - To foster and perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism,
 - To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the Community, State and Nation,
 - To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses,
 - To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principals of justice, freedom and democracy.

SAL Detachment of New York Americanism Commission

- Encouragement is given for all Squadrons to participate in the Americanism Programs as listed on the Consolidated Report Form.
- All Divisions, Detachments, Districts, Counties and Squadrons are encouraged to complete a Consolidated Report Form each year to report their activities in these programs.
- This information is tabulated to demonstrate the impact that The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion have in supporting Americanism, Children and Youth, and our Veterans through the various Divisions, Sections and Programs of The American Legion.

SAL Detachment of New York Americanism Commission

- Detachment Programs
 - What America Means to Me Essay Contest. Students in Grades 1-5 are challenged to write an essay about what American means to them. There is one winner for each grade participating and a pizza party is awarded to the class of our winners along with a \$100.00 Savings Bond for the winner.
 - Flag Etiquette and Education Program materials are purchased and distributed during the mid-winter conference.
 - The Lt. Michael L. Lewis Jr. (one time \$1000) and Cerullo Memorial (renewable \$500) Scholarships are awarded annually
 - Detachment NEF donations (\$12,355) and community service donations (\$36,000) to other organizations

National Americanism Award

- In 2010 the Detachment of New York won the Atwood, Beyea, York Award for Best Detachment in Americanism.
- The Sons of The Detachment of New York contributed \$351,061.92 and over 58,268 hours towards community service, education and other Americanism Programs.
- This is the information complied from the Consolidated Reports submitted by only one-third of the Squadrons in the Detachment.



What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- Your squadron can claim any Boys you sponsor for Boys State (9) and the cost of the sponsorship or any donations that help send a boy to Boys State (10).
- Your squadron can claim any Girls you sponsor for Girls State (11) and cost of that sponsorship, or any donations that help to send a girl to Girls State (12). (Volunteer hours should be claimed under Community Service).
- If any members took the 5 Star / 10 Ideals tests, you may claim the number of participants (13) and the cost of those tests and awards under the Education Category (14).

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- You may claim all 3'x5' flags that you presented to any schools, organizations, or individuals in your communities (15), and the cost of those flags that you replaced (16).
- You may claim credit for each smaller flag that you placed on a Veteran's grave (17), or gave out at parades or other events (18) such as a flag education program, and the number of hours spent giving out or placing those flags (19).
- Your squadron may claim the amount of money that they donate to scholarship funds, individual scholarships, or Legion and/or Auxiliary sponsored scholarships (20). If you sponsor a scholarship you may count the amount of money spent on those scholarships. You can claim any volunteer hours spent on scholarships or other educational programs (21) and hours volunteering at schools in the community, or any and all educational programs that they put on in schools in the community such as Veterans Day programs, tutoring students, etc.

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- You may claim any Squadron sponsored Oratorical Contest (22), the number of contestants that you sponsored (23), and the cost of the contest (24) and any hours spent putting on the contest (25).
- Your squadron may claim any donations to help sponsor a Color Guard or any Color Guard teams that you sponsored (26). The number of appearances that the Color Guard made (27), and the cost to your squadron for those appearances or any supplies your squadron paid for (28).
- Your squadron may claim any donations that they made to the National Emergency Fund (N.E.F.) (29).

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- You may claim the number of Flag Etiquette and Flag Education (30) Programs and their costs (31) and the number of hours spent on these programs (32).
- You may claim the number of Flag Retirement Ceremonies that your Squadron performs (33) and the number of hours spent performing these flag retirements (34).

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- The following items should be classified under Community Service (35):
 - Volunteer hours as a coach for any sports teams in your community as long as you don't receive payment.
 - Volunteer hours as a scouting leader.
 - Volunteer hours as a paramedic, firefighter, rescue personnel etc. as long as don't receive payment for your services.
 - Volunteer hours performed for your Post and/or Unit such as repairs, fundraisers, or assistance with Legion/Legion Auxiliary Programs.
 - Volunteer hours spent raising money for medical research.
 - Volunteer hours spent as a hospital volunteer, nursing facility or any health care facility.

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- All costs/donations (36) to any of the before mentioned programs such as sports teams (not mentioned before), donations to fire departments, rescue squads, police departments, police athletic organizations, donations to your Post and Legion Auxiliaries, donations to any Veterans organization, donations to all medical research programs or hospice and hospital programs, donations made to schools in your community or head start programs, donations to any community food cellars, community shelters or charitable organizations.

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- You may claim the number of scouting units (Boys or Girls) that your squadron sponsors (37), the number of youths involved in your sponsorship (38), and the total cost of your sponsorship (39).
- Your squadron may claim the total number of youths sponsored for the Junior Shooting Program and Gun Safety Program (40). Your squadron may claim the total number of hours that were spent on Junior Shooting Sports and Gun Safety Courses taught by squadron members (41). Your squadron may claim the cost of these courses and/or sponsorships or any donations that were used to help fund these courses (42).

What Donations and Hours Can I Put on the Annual Americanism Consolidated Report

- Your squadron may claim the number of American Legion Baseball Teams that they sponsored (43) and the cost of those sponsorships (44). (Volunteer hours should be claimed under community service).
- Your squadron may claim the number of pints of blood collected during blood drives sponsored (45) and the number of hours volunteered for those blood drives (46).
- Your squadron may claim the cost (47) of sponsorship for any other sporting teams that they sponsor, other than American Legion teams.

IN CLOSING

- There are 12 categories on the Consolidated Report Form under Americanism. Squadrons may not participate in all of them but they should guide the programs the Squadrons do participate in.
- Consolidated Reports should be submitted to Detachment Headquarters by April 30, 2012.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.**