



Flag Education

In 1989 I began my Sons of The American Legion state level career in The Detachment of Maine that office was Americanism I have always gravitated towards Americanism. One of the burning issues at the time was flag desecration in particular the burning of the American Flag. It was rampant at that time and I hate to say it still is. The attacks on the symbol of our country have been many, varied and relentless. As you can see this spans almost thirty years and I felt at the time that I could assist by developing a Flag Education Program and make it available to the Squadrons in the Detachment. This being done I set out on my own mission to see how the program worked and what the response would be. I had a tremendous amount of support with this from my Squadron and with their help we tried to educate as many people as we could. It was considered a success and soon my duties changed to other concerns in the Detachment.

Over the years through the many parades I have been in and in my job, I have seen many sports events that shows how much Flag Etiquette can be maligned and disrespect to the American Flag. It has been a concern over the years and I have given plenty of thought about how we can try to get the general public to display and respect the Flag correctly. It seems that the youth of our country is an important piece of this puzzle. Generations have come and gone since 1989, so we need educate each generation over and over again. Although it may have been a success we were not successful because we should have continued that program into perpetuity.

The American Legions stand on Flag desecration is clear and their position has not changed in all of the years. Recently a statement was made by our president- elect who thought that there should be penalties for desecration of the flag. So does The American Legion although they do not offer any ideas on what those penalties should be. I am sure that the Supreme Court justices will deliver a fair verdict on any question that needs to be defined.

I believe that The Sons of The American Legion have a responsibility to their eligible veterans to help protect and educate the public on proper flag etiquette. We also have a network in place and squadrons can reach out in their areas to achieve this very lofty goal. Our communities have come to rely on the many projects and programs that assist people, youth sports, and organizations that help kids, Police, Fire Departments and the list is endless.

I have always said that if you were to take an American Legion Post out of a town it wouldn't be very long before it would be missed and that town would not be as vibrant as it once was. I believe that part of our responsibility is to promote the ideals and patriotism that our eligible veterans displayed and to carry on for God and country. We also have a responsibility to our country and collectively we as Sons of The American Legion have the energy, the commitment, we have the network to deliver Americanism programs across this country and beyond.



So, it would seem to me that this type of project could actually be developed and put into our Squadron By – Laws as a Standing Committee. I stated in an earlier communication that many of our Americanism programs are already developed for use by The American Legion and Flag Education is no exception. There are assorted publications available for a modest fee at The American Legion Flag & Emblem Sales.

Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette	\$1.00
Our Country's Flag Comic Book	\$.75
Light of Liberty Comic Book	\$.75
Pledge of Allegiance Comic Book	\$.75
The Flag Code	\$.20
A DVD "For Which It Stands"	\$9.95

The DVD comes with different segments to either break it down in to parts or run a 20-minute video and a teacher's guide to accomplish the lesson. There is special pricing available for all of these items when purchased in bulk of 100.

You can even go through the Let's be right on Flag etiquette booklet pick out the areas that you feel are important to the group that you will be teaching. The lesson should be enough to whet the student's appetite for more knowledge; all students depending on their age are given a copy of one of these publications so that when the class is over it really is just the beginning of their Flag Education. It would be important to include some hands-on training such as the folding of the flag. This will assist in driving home the lessons as well.

We have begun this Flag Education in my Squadron and have been invited to and completed a class for our sponsored Boy Scout troop. In the next article, I will share those results and the outcome of another class that I we intend on doing with our sponsored Cub Scouts. I believe that this effort is important to our communities and I would love to report on any and all Squadrons, Districts or Detachments efforts in Flag Education in my next article in April. Let's give back to our communities by offering an educational experience that will definitely keep on giving.

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National Americanism Commission
The Sons of The American Legion