

# **Americanism/Patriotic Instructor**

## ***March 2024***

Greetings to all our NM Dept. Officers, Auxiliary Chairpersons and members, and National Americanism Ambassador, Linda Roloff.



This year, one of our themes for the Americanism program of our Auxiliary is #MoreThanLetters. One of those acronyms we use often are the letters “POW”, signifying our many soldiers throughout history who have made tremendous sacrifices and suffered extreme hardship after being captured by the enemy in the course of fighting for our country overseas. During the month of March here in Southern New Mexico, we gear up for the annual Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range. This event is a great opportunity to remember and recognize those prisoners of war from New Mexico who were a part of the 65-mile march forced upon captive U.S. and Filipino soldiers by the Japanese in WWII. The march began in April of 1942, and went on for several days in devastating conditions. Approximately 10,000 men died on this march, and the survivors still had many hardships ahead, as they spent much of the remainder of the war in prisoner of war camps, where many more died. New Mexican families were heavily impacted, as 1,816 men from our state were fighting in units from NM, and of these, 829 never returned to their homes, losing their lives in battle, on the brutal march, in prisons, or after liberation. If you would like to know more, information on the annual march and its history can be found at <https://bataanmarch.com>.

The memorial march will be held this year on Saturday, March 16, and it is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this important and inspiring event. A virtual event will be available online at the same website, as well.

March is also the month to send in your Program Award entry for Americanism. Here is the link to the fillable form to be sent to me at the contact information provided:

<https://vfwauxma.org/uploads/Documents/2023-2024AmericanismAuxiliaryAwardNo.1.pdf> The deadline for submitting entries is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Finally, a special thanks to all who have reported for your Auxiliary this year—I have enjoyed reading them. There’s still time to send them in before our June conference, so keep ‘em coming!



***Yours in Service,***

***Marsha Short, Dept. of NM Americanism/Patriotic Instructor Chairman***  
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