Flag Display Days

New Year’s Day – January 1
Inauguration Day – January 2
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – third Monday in January
Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday – February 12
President’s Day (Washington’s Birthday observed) – third Monday in February
Easter Sunday – varies annually
Mother’s Day – Second Sunday in May
Armed Forces Day – third Friday in May
Memorial Day – last Monday in May (observed – until noon)
Flag Day – June 14
Father’s Day – third Sunday in June (added by Congress June 2008)
Independence Day – July 4
National Korean War Veteran’s Armistice Day – July 27
Labor Day – first Monday in September
Constitution Day – September 17
POW/MIA Recognition Day - third Friday in September
Columbus Day – second Monday in October
Navy Day – October 27
Veteran’s Day – November 11
Thanksgiving Day – fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day – December

Half Staff Days

Peace Officers Day – May 15 (unless this day falls on Armed Forces Day) (Per Flag Code)
Memorial Day - Until noon (Per Federal Flag Code)
Patriot’s Day – September 11 (Per Pres Proclamation)
National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day – December 7 (Per Pres Proclamation)
Public Law 110-41 - Gov may proclaim half-staff day for deceased active member of armed services.
Public Law 107-51 – Natl. Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service – The Sunday that precedes October 9

POW/MIA Flag

Display days – (Per Public Law 105-85 (Nov. 16, 1997) indicates the days that federal agencies, military installations and U.S. post offices are required to display the POW/MIA flag.)
Armed Forces Day – third Saturday in May
Memorial Day – last Monday in May
Flag Day – June 14
National POW/MIA Day – third Friday in September
Veterans Day – November 11

Service Dates

US Army – June 14, 1775
Marines – November 10, 1775
– October 13, 1775
Air Force – September 18, 1947
Coast Guard – August 4, 1790

PATRIOTIC HOLIDAYS

Washington’s Birthday (Presidents Day)

Washington’s Birthday honors George Washington’, the first President of the United States. It is widely known as “President’s Day” by organizations other than the federal government in honor of other American Presidents as Abraham Lincoln (who was born on February 12). While many states have renamed their state holiday “Presidents Day”, the legal name of the federal holiday remains “Washington’s Birthday” Congress first honored George Washington with a Federal holiday on February 22, 1879 (Washington’s actual birthday). On January 1, 1971, Congress shifted the federal holiday to the third Monday in February. The holiday honors the accomplishments of Washington, who created the first military badge of merit for common soldier. The Purple Heart Medal (revived on Washington’s 200th birthday in 1932 and bears his image) is awarded to soldier who are injured in battle.
By the mid 1980’s, the term “Presidents Day” began to appearing public, widely due to the advertising and marketing industries. Both “Presidents Day” and “President’s Day are correct usages of the term.

**Loyalty Day**

Loyalty Day is a day set aside for the affirmation of loyalty to the United States and for recognizing the heritage of American freedom. Loyalty Day originally began as “Americanization Day” in 1921 as a counter to Communists’ May 1 celebration of the Russian Revolution. On May 1, 1930, 10,000 VFW members staged a rally at New York’s Union Square to promote patriotism. Through a resolution adopted in 1949, May 1 evolved into Loyalty day. Observances began on April 28, 1950 and culminated on May 1, when more than 5,000,000 people across the nation held rallies. In New York City, more than 100,000 people rallied for America. In 1958, Congress enacted Public Law 529 proclaiming Loyalty Day a permanent fixture on the nation’s calendar.

**V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day)**

Germany’s unconditional surrender of its armed forces, therefore marking the end of the World War II in Europe. On April 30, Adolf Hitler, the Nazi leader, committed suicide during the Battle for Berlin. Germany’s surrender, therefore, was authorized by his successor, Reichprasident Karl Donitz. The act of military surrender was signed on May 7 in Reims, France and on May 8 in Berlin, Germany.

Upon defeat of Germany (Italy having already surrendered) cheers could be heard throughout the world. In the United States, the victory happened on President Harry S. Truman’s 61st birthday, and massive celebrations took place in Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami and New York.

**Armed Forces Day (third Saturday in May)**

Armed Forces Day is a day to pay tribute to those who defend America’s freedoms every day. Lead by the effort of President Harry S. Truman to establish a single day for Americans to thank the nation’s military members for their service to our country, Armed Forces Day was created on August 31, 1949, following the unification of the armed forces under the U.S. Department of Defense. First observed on May 20, 1950, the day was designed to replace separate Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard days, but the separate days are still observed, particularly within their respective services.

**Memorial Day**

Memorial Day is a day to honor the men and women who died while serving in America’s Armed Forces. Originally called “Decoration Day”, it originated after the Civil War to commemorate those who died in the war by decorating their graves. It was declared “Memorial Day” by federal law in 1967, by which time was the remembrance had been extended to honor all Americas who died while serving in America’s Armed Forces. Many people celebrate Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries and memorials; volunteers place small American flags on every grave in national cemeteries and some small local cemeteries.

Memorial Day, May 30 (traditionally) is a day sacred to all war veterans. America’s collective consciousness demands that all citizens be reminded of the deaths of their fellow countrymen. By honoring the nation’s war dead, we preserve their memory and thus their service and sacrifice. All U.S. flags should be displayed at half-staff during the day.

**Flag Day – June 14**

Flag Day is June 14 and celebrates the adoption of the flag as the official symbol for the United States; our Stars and Stripes. This day was first recognized by Congress on June 14, 1777, which became known as Flag Day.

Not only is the U.S. flag older than the union Jack, of Great Britain and the tri-color flag of France, but it also is the only flag to have flown on the moon. Congress first stated that there should be a star and stripe for every state. Our first flag had 13 stars and 7 red and 6 white stripes. In 1794, two new states were added and we had a flag with 15 stars and 15 stripes. By 1818 there were twenty states, but our country was still using the flag with 15 stars and 15 stripes. Congress thought about 20 stripes and agreed that it might become a
problem because its size so they passed a law that said there would be 13 stripes for the original 13 states, and they would add a star for each new state.
The U.S. flag has 13 stripes; seven red and six white. A blue field with 50 stars is located next to the staff in the upper left corner of the flag. It extends from the top to the lower edge of the fourth red stripe. The stars are arranged in alternating rows of six and five representing the 50 states of the United States. The stars do not represent any given state.
The colors used in the flag give special meaning to the flag: Red for valor and zeal; white for hope and cleanliness of life; and blue—the color of heaven – for reverence and loyalty.
The stars are an ancient symbol of the heavens. Our flag’s 50 stars represent each state as part of the nation, but also a separate level of government. Our federal government was not given the power to control so that each state would be able to govern themselves in those things they could do better. When you are looking at the flag, you are looking at the magnificent history of all Americans who have lived before us, your ancestors and the most enduring nation of free people that has ever existed.

Independence Day – July 4
Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July or July Fourth, commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. On July 4, 1776, the signers of the Declaration of Independence Asserted that all are “created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” With these words, our forefathers formed a new nation and put forth a vision of liberty and democracy that would forever after history. Every Fourth of July, Americans celebrate this pivotal moment in our history, which set into motion the development of a land of freedom and opportunity unequalled in the world.

Patriot Day
Patriot Day, also known as the National Day of Service and Remembrance, occurs on September 11 each year, in memory of those killed during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Those we lost on September 11, 2001, will forever hold a cherished place in our hearts and history of our nation. By joint resolution approved December 18, 2001, (Public Law 107-89), Congress Authorized the President to designate September 11 of each year as “Patriot Day” as to perpetuate the memory of those who perished in the attack on America and to pursue peace and justice in the worlds and security at home. Appropriate ceremonies and activities include a moment of silence beginning at 8:46 a.m. EDT, remembrance services and candlelight vigils. Flags should be flown at half-staff on Patriot Day.

Constitution Day – September 17
This day commemorates the formation and signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787 by 39 delegates to the Constitutional Convention. This document established the framework of our government and the rights and freedoms that “We the people” enjoy today.
In 1940, Congress designated the third Sunday in May as “I am an American Day”. In 1944, “I am an American Day” was promoted by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. On February 29, 1952, Congress moved “I am an American Day” observation to September 17 and renamed it “Citizenship Day.” In 2004, Congress renamed it the holiday “Constitution Day and Citizenship Day” and mandated that all publicly-funded educational institutions and all federal agencies provide educational programming on the history of the American Constitution on this day.

POW/MIA Recognition Day – Third Friday in September
POW/MIA Recognition Day honors the commitments and the sacrifices made by our nation’s prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action.
National POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law on which the black POW/MIA flag
shall be flown over federal facilities and cemeteries, post offices and military installations. By custom, it is on
the Third Friday of September.

**Gold Star Mother’s Day-Family Day – Last Sunday in September**

Gold Star Mother’s/Family Day honor mothers and families who have lost a service member in combat. The name
comes from the custom of families hanging Service Flags in the windows of their homes. The Service Flag has
a star for each family member in the armed forces. A blue star represents a family member in active-duty
service, a silver star represents a family member wounded or injured in a war zone and a gold star represents
a family member killed during active-duty and stands for sacrifices made for honor and freedom.
The Gold Star Mothers, Inc. was founded shortly after World War I by Grace Darling Seibold, who lost her son,
George Vaughn Seibold, during the war. Gold Star Mothers are often socially active, but are non-political.
Gold Star Mother’s Day was designated by Congress on June 23, 1936.
In September 2012, President Barack Obama rededicated the last Sunday in September as “Gold Star Mother’s
and Family’s Day.”

**Veteran’s Day – November 11**

Veterans Day is an opportunity to publicly commemorate the contributions of living veterans. Originally called
Armistice Day, it officially received its name in America in 1926 through a congressional resolution. It became
a national holiday 12 years later by a similar congressional action. If World War I had truly been “the war to
end all wars,” November 11 might be still called Armistice Day. Realizing that peace was equally preserved by
veterans of World War II and Korea, Congress decided to make the day an occasion to honor all those who
have served America. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as
Veterans Day. (the first Veterans Day parade took place in 1953 in Emporia, Kansas).
A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in Oct. It
soon became apparent, however, that November 11 was a date of historic significance to many Americans.
Therefore, in 1978, Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

**Pearl Harbor Day – December 7**

On the morning of December 7, 1941, Japanese bombers staged a surprise attack on U.S. military forces in Hawaii. In a
devastating defeat, the United States suffered 3,435 casualties and loss of or severe damage to 188 planes,
eight battleships, three light cruisers and 4 miscellaneous vessels. Japanese losses were less than 100
personnel, 29 planes and five midget submarines.
The day after the attack, before a joint session of Congress, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress for
a declaration of war against Japan. President Roosevelt’s message conveyed the national outrage over the
Pearl Harbor attack by pronouncing December 7, 1941 “a date which will live in infamy.”
FDR was furious at Japan’s confidence in their “inevitable triumph” of the United States. On December 8,
1941, the United States declared war against Japan; on December 11, Germany and Italy declared war against
the United States.
Today, the USS Arizona Memorial on the island of Oahu honors the lives lost on the day of the attack. Visitors
to the memorial reach it via boats from the naval base at Pearl Harbor. Although December 7 is known as
Pearl Harbor Day, it is not considered a federal holiday in the United States.
Patriotic holidays are opportune times to involve the entire family and provide visibility of the Auxiliary to the
community. Prospective new members will walk through your door, when the family fun events are
presented in the community. Patriotic holidays are the perfect way for the Auxiliary to show what patriotism
is and that veterans and their families are a top priority.