

## AMERICANISM COMMITTEE

Eva Wallace, Chairman

### ALA AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST 2026 INFORMATION

Essay: **“Celebrating America’s 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday and the Veterans Who Fought for our Freedom”**

Due Date: **April 1, 2026**

To: Eva Wallace, Americanism Chairman, 14611 – 64<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Snohomish, WA 98296  
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**Rules Changes: #7** “Use of AI in writing essays is *not* allowed. Essays will be checked (*by National*) for use of AI. Any essay determined to be 30% or more AI will be disqualified”

“ AI checkers (or detectors) are tools that analyze text for patterns, word choices, predictability, and structure typical of LLMs like ChatGPT to estimate the likelihood of AI generation. While useful for academic integrity and content verification, they are not 100% accurate, prone to false positives, and struggle with human-edited AI text.”  
From Google AI Overview

Some online resources are ZeroGPT, Grammerly and GPTZero – I do not know the accuracy of these resources but give them out as places to check if you have a concern. (I found them on Google)

Recommendations from your Chairman:

- 1) Verify word count (had to disqualify 4 essays last year as they were inaccurate), I do verify the word count prior to reading the essays, sort by group, and do not look at the cover sheet again, until after they are judged by essay group, trying to keep it as neutral as possible and review each essay on its own merits by the judges.
- 2) Make sure all the information filled out on the cover sheet is legible, and please give me the contact details for the Unit Chairman, i.e. Phone, email, etc. so if I need to contact the person, I can. Just a separate note or card enclosed in the envelope would be great.
- 3) **Make sure I receive the essays prior to or by April 1, 2026.** Our Post Office is not the greatest on delivery, so you may want to consider priority or other mail service to make sure they are received quickly. I do date/time each envelope as I receive them and do not open until after April 1<sup>st</sup>. I try to get them mailed off to the WD Chairman within a week, and again, send by Priority Mail to her.

## LET’S GET READY FOR OUR DEPARTMENT CONVENTION AND CELEBRATE AMERICA’S 250<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY

PLAN TO WEAR YOUR RED, WHITE AND BLUE on FRIDAY JULY 19<sup>th</sup>  
Fun, Games, and Prizes  
Most Patriotic, Most Colorful, Best Hat, and Judges Choice Best of the Day