



**Youth Activities Program**  
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Today's Youth is the future of tomorrow! Today's Youth will be our future leaders, our future government officials, doctors, lawyers, teachers, laborers and much more! Today's Youth are our future military and military spouses and VFW and VFW Auxiliary members!

### **Grave Beautification**

Many of us have lost, or know someone who lost, a Veteran in our lives that we pay respect to by visiting their graves. Sometimes, there are even Veterans that unfortunately have no one to visit them and pay respect. Even though cemeteries have general maintenance, sometimes it doesn't include cleaning the headstones. We as a VFW Auxiliary can organize an event with our youth to help clean and beautify these Veterans' final resting places. Contact the cemetery to get permission for this event. Go to the VA's National Cemetery Administration's website: <https://www.cem.va.gov/hmm/cleaning.asp>. It will give you guidelines on how to clean headstones and markers.

#### **Requirements for Reporting:**

1. Take a picture before and after of every headstone
2. Keep a log of gravesites beautified during your event. Record the names of the Veterans in your log along with name of the cemetery including town/city.
3. Place a flag on the gravesite. Follow the cemetery's guidelines for placing Flags near the headstone or markers.

**Thank you for your Service on Veterans Day!** Auxiliaries are encouraged to reach out and /or connect with youth groups. Request that they create a card and /or write a letter to thank a Veteran for their service. Letters and /or cards can be presented to your Post Veterans on Veterans Day or distributed to Veterans in VA Hospitals, nursing homes or delivered to homebound Veterans. Remember to report this project when completed!

### **Patriotic Youth Award**

The Patriotic Youth Award is designed to recognize individual Youth for their patriotism and/or support of our veterans, service members, and their families. **A fillable, printable version of the Patriotic Youth Award is available in MALTA Member Resources under Youth Activities.**

### **Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations**

These citations are one way to recognize youth groups for their projects honoring veterans, service members, and/or their families. The citation is available in MALTA Member Resources under Youth Activities.

### **Patriotism Through Literacy**

Everyone **LOVES** to read! With Patriotism through Literacy, we can introduce our youth to historical figures and teach them about important events in our history. How can we participate in Patriotism through Literacy!

- **Volunteer** to read historical or creative nonfiction picture books to children at your local library, school or even read to your grandkids.
- **Donate** historical fiction or creative nonfiction books to local schools, shelters, or libraries.
- **Host** a read-a-thon and award small prizes for the number of books or hours read.

### **Reading Buddies**

This pairs well with Patriotism Through Literacy. Be a “Reading Buddy.” Read one-on-one, in person or via ZOOM or telephone with a child who might be struggling with reading or simply lacking confidence in his/her own abilities. Reach out to schools, Scouts, Family Readiness Groups, local libraries, or after-school programs to see if they need volunteers to read with kids.

- Host a “Reading Buddy Day” at your Post
- Get proper permission from schools and parents and require parents/guardians attend Reading Buddy Post events
- Use **#auxreading buddy** to promote your Auxiliary Reading Buddy Program

### **Illustrating America**

Illustrating America is an Art contest for students in grades K-8 that are enrolled in public, private, or parochial school, or home study programs. Students must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. national. Foreign exchange students and students ages 16 or older are ineligible. The contest is divided into three grade divisions K-2 3-5 and 6-8. Entries will be judged on Patriotic theme and technique.

The Department’s first place winner in each division will receive \$25.00 and a citation and the entry will be forwarded to Auxiliary National Headquarters.

Deadlines are **Local** Auxiliary- March 31 **Department**-April 15 **National** Headquarters-May 5

**National Awards for Auxiliaries:** A citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most creative and/or unique activity of the Auxiliary working with a youth group.

**Department Awards:** Awards can be found on page 4 of this Guidebook.

***REPORT!!!***

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***DON’T FORGET REPORTS ARE DUE BY THE 1ST OF EACH MONTH!!!***

***REMEMBER TO “ALWAYS STAY TRUE TO OUR RED, WHITE, AND BLUE”  
“FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA HONORING VETERANS WHO KEEP US FREE”***

Scan the QR for more  
Information.

