

Barb Sweger  
319 Magnal Ave  
Oglesby, IL 61348  
Phone: (815) 481-8288  
Email: [deptyouth2223@gmail.com](mailto:deptyouth2223@gmail.com)

### **GRAVES BEAUTIFICATION**

A new part of the Youth Activities Program this year is Graves Beautification. It holds a special place in National Chairman Ramona Henson's heart. Your local cemeteries take great care of the hallowed grounds; sometimes certain graves just need a little more zhuzhing (to improve the appearance). Veterans' graves deserve to be well maintained.



Steps for caring for Veterans' graves are:

1. Contact the cemetery for permission.
2. Follow the VA's National Cemetery Administration's guidelines for cleaning headstones and markers (visit [www.cem.va.gov/hmm/cleaning.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/hmm/cleaning.asp)).
3. Check out online video's showing safe practices for cleaning headstones.
4. Gather a group of young people to assist in this project.
5. When cleaning is complete, place a Flag on the gravesite – be sure to follow the guidelines of the cemetery. Sometimes civilian cemeteries only want Flags on wooden sticks placed directly in the ground. If the cemetery allows, Flag holders can be made with PVC pipe by cutting 1/2" PVC pipe to correct length. Place the Flag ten inches (or one combat boot size) from the front of the headstone in the center. Step back to make sure "Old Glory" is straight.

When reporting a Graves Beautification project, please include the following:

1. A before and after picture of every headstone cleaned.
2. A log of the gravesites cleaned during the project (see form attached), including the:
  - a. Name of Veteran,
  - b. Cemetery name,
  - c. Cemetery city and state.

In order to be considered for any award for participation in this part of the Youth Activities the pictures and log's must be completed and sent to me with the required 2022-2023 Youth Activities Award form that you can find at [malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources](http://malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources). This form needs to be filled out and sent before March 31, 2023. I have also attached a copy with this bulletin.

I would love to see all the Auxiliaries send in this form and be recognized for our continued efforts!