

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**2023-2024**

Do you want to offer the youth of today a way to foster the traditions and the values of Patriotism? When you promote and participate in the Youth Activities program with the VFW Auxiliary, you can do that! Today's young people have many different ways and opportunities to serve Veterans and their families. Be a part of the program that helps acknowledge these outstanding youth in their support of our Veterans.

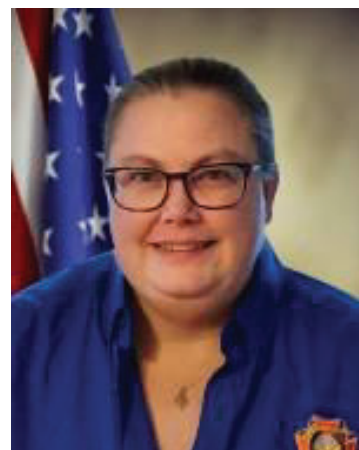
**GET EXCITED FOR THE RED WHITE AND BLUE!:** This program helps in learning the lyrics to the Star-Spangled Banner while promoting their creative side.

This contest consists of a **SOLO** vocal performance of "The Star-Spangled Banner" that has been recorded between July 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024. The performance must be submitted on a flash drive or uploaded to an online video platform, for example: YouTube or Vimeo. **Please save the video as follows: Illinois – Student Name – Grade.** Example: Illinois – Tiernan Murphy – 10<sup>th</sup> Grade.



Vocals can be either acapella or with backing tracks, or instruments. The arrangement can be sung in an arrangement or genre of the contestant's preference. **NO WORDS CAN BE CHANGED!** A completed contest entry form with Parent/Guardian signature is required.

This contest is open to anyone in grades K-12 who are in public, private, or parochial schools as well as those who are home-schooled in the United States, the territories and possessions, or the dependents of US Military/Civilian Personnel in overseas schools. There will be winners in two grade divisions: K-8 and 9-12. The contestant must be a US Citizen or National. No relationship to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member is needed to enter. Foreign Exchange or Students who are over 20 years old are not

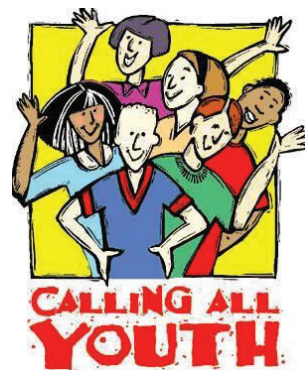


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## **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- ✓ Creating, Sponsoring, and Working with Youth Groups
- ✓ Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations
- ✓ Patriotic Youth Award
- ✓ Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue!
- ✓ Patriotism Through Literacy
- ✓ Illustrating America



eligible. If you were a winner of a previous Get Excited contest, you are eligible as long as your entry is in a different grade division.

The following First Place Awards will be given: K-8 grade winner will receive \$25 and 9-12 grade winner will receive \$50.



**Illustrating America:** This contest is for elementary, middle, and junior high school students. It encourages the artist's creative abilities and rewards them. There are three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. One 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place National winner will be selected for each grade division. Pictured is an example of an entry. First Place awards given in each grade group will be as follows: K-2 \$25, 3-5 \$25, and 6-8 \$50.

Rules for this contest are:

1. Art is two-dimensional
2. On either canvas or paper
3. Canvas entries must be on a stretcher frame or canvas board. Other entries are to be matted in white or reinforced with heavy paper.
4. Size should be between 8" x10" and 18"x24", not including mat.
5. Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker, glitter, or other media may be used.

You can find more information and entry forms for both the Get Excited & Illustrating America contests online at [www.malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources](http://www.malta.vfwauxiliary.org/MemberResources) under the Youth Activities tab.

The best way to get the information out is by using a press release that is sent to the local newspapers. Also, notify the local schools by sending a packet of contest information from this and other programs, you will be surprised by the number of contacts you get!

Deadlines for these contests are entries to the local Auxiliary by March 31<sup>st</sup>. The winners from the local Auxiliary need to be received by Department by April 15<sup>th</sup>. There are judging sheets for both contests available under Member Resources in Malta.



# Random Act of Patriotism

Did you know that our youth love awards? Whether it is for a job well done, good grades, etc. What better reward than the VFW Auxiliary R.A.P. Card!

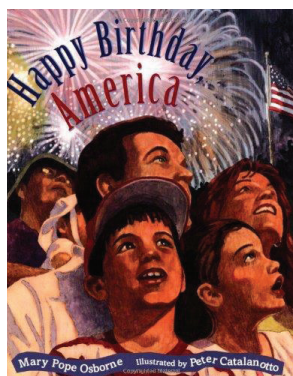
All you need to do is answer “Yes” to one of the following:

- Did you observe a youth showing patriotism?
- Did you see a child thank a Veteran?
- Witness a child or youth put their hand over their heart correctly?
- Witness a child or youth respecting the American Flag?



All these “Yes” answers deserve a R.A.P. Card! You can explain to those receiving the card what R.A.P stands for! As you hand out these cards, you help our youth to continue demonstrating patriotism in our communities. You can find the template for these cards in Malta under Member Resources/Youth Activities. Make sure to report when you hand out these cards!

## *Patriotism Through Literacy*



One of the easiest ways to promote patriotism is through reading among our youth. It is simple, fun, and free (if using a library.) We need to educate our youth at an early age about who our historical figures were that helped to build this great country, the United States of America.

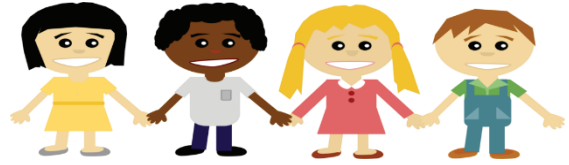
Introducing historical events through literature is priceless! Books teach our youth about the many events that molded our nation. They also foster a love of learning that can last a lifetime. If you ask your Auxiliary how you can help, here are a few ideas: Volunteer to read at the local library;

Donate a historical fiction book to the local school library; Host a Read-A-Thon with your local grade schools – you can award prizes for the number of books read. Prizes could be a book for them to take home, stickers, coloring books, etc. If you need help finding a book recommendation, you can find a list of recommended books on Malta under the Member Resources/Youth Activities tab.

Don't forget to report all that you do for this project on the report form.

## **By Youth, For Youth**

Developing young people to become leaders, and to acknowledge and identify needs in their communities is what this part of the program covers. The youth in our Veterans' families make sacrifices for this country with some outcomes a parent gives all for our freedom.



Hold an event/benefit to help the young in your community with the help of other young people. A couple of ideas would be to promote a collection drive around the holidays to help those who would not otherwise receive presents. Do a Back-to-School drive to help with all those little items that are needed for school: backpacks, pencils, crayons, etc. Your local schools can help with supply lists for each grade. Food drives are another way to help out families in need. All you would need to do is gather a group of young people that want to give back and promote the heck out of it.

## **Creating, Sponsoring, and Working With a Youth Group**

Did you know that many youth groups are service-oriented? High schoolers are looking for community service activities in your area to participate in for school credits. Involving the youth in Veterans services can boost your Auxiliary's membership, too. Sponsoring a youth group helps your community as well as helping your Auxiliary.

There are citations and patriotic awards for all parts of the Youth Activities Program in Malta under Member Resources. The files will be updated after National Convention in July.





# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

## Program Awards

### DEPARTMENT AWARDS

#### Auxiliary Awards

1. A citation to each Auxiliary that is reported in the Youth Activities program by December 31, 2023.
2. An award to the Auxiliary with the most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizing the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.). Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the completed entry form to the Department Chairman by March 31, 2024, for judging.
3. A citation to every Auxiliary that has an entry in both the Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue! and the Illustrating America contests.
4. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Get Excited for the Red, White, and Blue! contest. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the promotion, but no later than April 15, 2024.
5. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Illustrating America contest. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the promotion, but no later than April 15, 2024.
6. An award to the Auxiliary Chairman with the best promotion of the Youth Activities Program in an Auxiliary meeting. Reports must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2024.

#### District Awards

1. A citation to each District with 100% of its Auxiliaries reported in Youth Activities by December 31, 2023.
2. An award to the District Chairman with the best promotion of the Youth Activities Program in a District meeting. Report must be received by the Department Chairman within 30 days of the meeting, but no later than April 15, 2024.

# NATIONAL AWARDS

## Awards for Auxiliaries

1. Most outstanding activity and/or event educating their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizing the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.)
  - Citation to every Auxiliary that hosts an activity and/or event that educates their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.). Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. Auxiliaries must send the entry form to their Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2024, for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to participating Auxiliaries from National Headquarters.

- Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the four Conferences that hosts the most outstanding activity and/or event that educates their community about Patriotism Through Literacy and utilizes the Random Act of Patriotism card (R.A.P.).

Citations will be mailed directly to winning Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into Auxiliary account after National Convention.