

Youth Activities Bulletin #2

September 2026

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I am excited to continue working with each of you to support and encourage youth in our communities. Youth Activities give us a wonderful opportunity to recognize young people for their patriotism, service, leadership, and creativity while helping them understand the importance of honoring our veterans and supporting our country. This year, I hope every Auxiliary will find ways, big or small, to involve youth and share the impact those activities are making.

Important Dates

- Dec. 15, 2026 – Illustrating America Art entries due to local Auxiliaries
- Jan. 15, 2027 – First-place Illustrating America Art entries due to Department Chairman
- April 15, 2027 – Youth Activities Year-End Report due to Department Chairman
- March 31, 2027 – Youth Activities National Program Award due to Department Chairman

Youth Involvement

Now is the time to reach out. There are many simple and meaningful ways to include youth in our Auxiliary programs. Consider inviting students, scout groups, church youth groups, homeschool groups, 4-H clubs, sports teams, and school service clubs to participate in projects that honor veterans and support our communities.

- Encourage youth to make cards, posters, placemats, or small appreciation gifts for veterans in hospitals, care centers, or local Posts.
- Invite youth to help with patriotic ceremonies, flag etiquette programs, parades, Buddy Poppy drives, or community service projects.
- Promote the Illustrating America Art Contest by sharing information with schools, libraries, art teachers, and youth organizations early in the year.
- Recognize youth volunteers with certificates, thank-you notes, bulletin mentions, or short presentations at Auxiliary meetings.
- Keep track of youth participation, hours, photos, and project descriptions throughout the year so reporting is easier in March.

VFW Auxiliary Lending Library

Our Youth Activities Ambassador, Debbie Little, shared a new initiative: the VFW Auxiliary Lending Library. Auxiliaries are encouraged to create small lending libraries where children can borrow patriotic books and reading materials. A library can be placed at a Post, school, community center, or other approved location. Members may purchase a library box, use a simple container, or build one of their own. Items may be borrowed and returned so more youth can enjoy them throughout the year.

- Patriotic books from the Patriotism Through Literacy reading list.
- Books for all reading levels.
- Take a book. Share a book.
- Illustrating America Art Contest flyers.

Tip: Label materials and include Auxiliary contact information.

Remember to track donations, youth participation, and volunteer hours for reporting.

Use #auxlendinglibrary to promote what your Auxiliary is doing for the VFW Auxiliary Lending Library Project.

In Closing

Thank you for all you do to support youth in our communities and promote patriotism, service, and respect for our veterans. Every project, big or small, helps young people learn the value of giving back. Please continue sharing your Youth Activities projects, photos, participation numbers, and volunteer hours so we can celebrate the great work happening across our Auxiliaries.

In Service and Friendship,

Debbie Bowling

Youth Activities Chairman