

General Orders September 2025
Youth Activities 2025-2026
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Back to School in September! What better time than now to introduce yourselves to your local schools? I am sure there are several new teachers out there who are unaware of what programs we can offer them.

I will quote from Shannon Stanley our National Youth Advisor; "Remember, keeping the youth involved in all your programs and Auxiliary functions will only help increase our membership in the future."

"Auxiliary Youth Activities" allows our members to interact with our youth. It is my hope that our interaction with our youth will be a positive experience, not only for the youth but also for each of us. Isn't it wonderful to be involved with our youth and watch them grow (along with help from their parents, teachers and other leaders) into responsible adults?

I encourage all to continue to volunteer and help promote a positive fellowship with our youth. There are several ways your youth can be involved in your community and it would cross over to other "Auxiliary Programs"; such as, have the youth help with your local homecoming parades and hand out small American flags (Auxiliary Outreach and Americanism).

Remember to take advantage of the service aspects that some of our youth groups require. Many youth-focused organizations require various types of community service or activities to earn merits in their organizations. College-bound seniors may qualify and earn school credit for some of these activities.

Patriotic Youth Award:

The "Patriotic Youth Award" is designed to recognize individual youth for their patriotism and/or support to 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.

Patriotism through Literacy:

Promote and support reading among youth with this simple, fun and potentially free (use your local library) initiative. Introduce youth to historical figures and teach them about events in our nation's history while fostering a love of reading that can lead to a lifetime of learning.

Illustrating America:

Open to any student in grades K-8 who is enrolled in a public, private or parochial school, or home study program in the United States. Foreign exchange students and students age 15 or older are ineligible. National grade division winners of previous Illustrating America contests may enter the subsequent grade division but are ineligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous National winner.

Entries will be judged on patriotic theme and technique. The contest consists of three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8.

Deadlines (received by):

VFW Auxiliary – March 31, 2026
District – April 10, 2026
Department – April 15, 2026
National Headquarters – May 5, 2026

Official form, details on requirements and contest rules can be found in MALTA, Member Resources, or on the VFW Auxiliary website.

I have now updated the SD VFW Auxiliary Department Year-End Report for Youth Activities for 2025-2026.