

Department Youth Activities Chairman
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YOUTH ACTIVITIES

“Above and Beyond the Power of Faith”
“In the Spirit of America-We are the Champions of America’s Cherished Heroes”

Auxiliary sisters, as we embark on the New Year 2006-2007, there will be a much greater emphasis on the Youth Programs that are sponsored exclusively by the Ladies Auxiliary. As part of this new emphasis, each auxiliary must make it a priority to be well informed about each of these programs. It is my responsibility to help educate each and every auxiliary as to the impact these programs can have on our youth if only we get out there and share the information and promote participation.

Our first youth program that you will need to be up to speed on is the **Patriot’s Pen essay contest**. This essay contest is shared with our VFW and is open to all students in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The theme for this year 2006-2007 is “**Citizenship in America.**” There is a few rules that must be followed—essay length is 300-400 type written words; students must write their own essay; all essay should be type written in English with no color or graphics and can not be less than 300 words or greater than 400 words in length. School is open, so please get your Patriot’s Pen brochure to the schools now! And let the teachers know what prizes will be awarded to the local winners, as well as District and Department winners. Give the students an incentive to participate! **Student deadline is November 1, 2006. Auxiliary and Post deadline November 15, 2006. District judging is December 6, 2006, Department judging is January 7, 2007, and winners must be in to National by January 15, 2007.**

The next Ladies Auxiliary program that you will need to be up to speed on is the **The Outstanding Young Volunteer of the Year Award** is for all students, ages 12-15, who have provided outstanding volunteer services to his/her community for the year 2006 (January 1—December 31, 2006). The most important part of the application is for the student to complete the section “**Why I Am A Volunteer,**” using not more than 150 handwritten words, explaining how his/her volunteer efforts go above and beyond normal activities. Deadlines for this program is as follows! **Student deadline is February 3, 2007 Department deadline is February 17, 2007 National deadline March 3, 2007.**

Our National Youth Activities Director would also like to see the Auxiliaries become more informed and involved with the Girl Scout Awards that are sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary. The bronze, silver and gold Girl Scout Awards are available from our National Office. Get in touch with your local scout units now, and discuss with the scout leaders those scouts who qualify for one of these awards. Arrange for a special presentation at one of their scout meetings, and be sure to contact your local newspaper editor for coverage.

Other youth programs that our Ladies Auxiliaries throughout the Department can and should support include sponsoring sports activities such as bowling teams, soccer clubs, softball teams, basketball teams, lending assistance to your local 4-H chapter, working with your local Girl Scouts, promoting youth safety through such programs as DARE (drug awareness), Lite-a-bike, Lite-a-tyke, and fire safety education. These are just a few programs that are out there to help our youth develop into upstanding American citizens who will be our leaders of the future. It is our obligation to aid in this endeavor, not just by donating money, but by giving our time and supporting our youth at their events.

In closing, there is no doubt that 2006-2007 will indeed be a successful year. This year we will all be pulling together to educate our members, our communities, and most of all our young people. We must bring life to our programs so our young people will experience patriotism, volunteerism, and self-worth. Through the Ladies Auxiliary Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest, our Outstanding Young Volunteer of the year, and all the other programs we provide, all this can be achieved.

Betty Jo Bryant
Department Chairman