

I hope you were able to attend one of the three Training Academies in August. They are very informative and fun. The Department officers and Department Chairmen plan these events to help educate you on how the VFW Auxiliary runs and to give you information on the programs that the Auxiliary supports. I know I come home from these academies with information I can use and pumped up and ready for the coming year.

THIS IS SEPTEMBER. You need to get the information and applications out to students for the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen **NOW**. The **DEADLINE for both is October 31, 2026**, and it must be at the local VFW Post by then. This doesn't give us much time to promote this fantastic program.

Here are the **Themes** and requirements for this year's Voice of Democracy Audio Essay and Patriot's Pen Essay.

2026-2027 Voice of Democracy Audio – Essay Contest (3-5 minutes in length)

THEME – “What A Veteran Taught Me About America”

Who is Eligible to Apply?

- Any student in grades 9-12 by the October 31 deadline who is enrolled in a public, private, or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories, and possessions: or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.

2026-2027 Patriot's Pen Essay Contest

THEME – “What A Veteran Taught Me About America”

Who is Eligible to Apply?

- Any student in grades 6-8 by the October 31 deadline who is enrolled in a public, private, or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories, and possessions: or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.

Here are the deadlines for both Contests -

Student Entry Deadline to Local VFW Post – Midnight, October 31, 2026

Local VFW Post Judging Complete – November 15, 2026

Department Judging Complete – January 10, 2027

VFW Department winners to National Headquarters – January 15, 2027

You can find a list of rules and applications on the following sites -

VFW website: vfw.org/community/youth-and-education ; MALTA Member Resources;
VFW Auxiliary National website: vfwauxiliary.org/scholarships

Our scholarship fund is very low. We need each of our auxiliaries to think of ways to help fund this very important program. Each of your donations do so much to help our young people reach their potential. When making your donations to the scholarship program please make your check out to the VFW Auxiliary Department and send it to Department Treasurer Sonya Sallee 673 W. Sandpiper Ave. Hermiston, OR 97837. The more donations we receive the more scholarships and higher amounts that can be rewarded. So please consider making your donations to this program which helps to encourage young people while at the same time helps to instill in them patriotism and a heart for our country, its people and our veterans.

Let's make this a fantastic year for our Oregon youth.

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