

Hello Auxiliary members,

As many others have mentioned, spring is finally here. After such a lengthy time of snow and cold it is wonderful to see the leaves return and the early daffodils blooming.

I was honored to be the Department Americanism Chairman this year. What a wonderful program. I learned a lot and was thrilled to read some wonderful essays from the Americanism Essay Contest. The hard work, skill, and love of country was evident in the students' writing. We have some very talented and patriotic youth that I am confident will be great assets to the workforce and country in coming years.

The Americanism Essay Contest this year had the title: "What does patriotism mean to you?" The contest was open to youth in grades 3-12, including home-school and special-needs students. As the chairman, I had the tough decision of choosing one winner from each class category. What a job! The essays were all well-written and completed with purpose. The Department winners received a certificate, a \$25 gift card, and a chance to compete at the National level of the contest. Look for a call-out box elsewhere in this issue for a list of the Department essay contest winners

Ten units sponsored submissions at the Department Level. I am grateful to Department Secretary Marcy Schmidt for including the essay contest in a unit mailing and school mailing in December. We got full school participation from several high schools in history/social sciences classes where they had the essay become part of the curriculum. There were also several elementary school classes that participated as well. The Auxiliary units in these areas stepped up and judged at least 50 essays each on short notice from me. I am so pleased at the participation of the local Auxiliary units, the educators, superintendents, and most of all, the students. Way to go!! You all did this with a hearty "Yes. How can I help?" attitude that was amazing.

Proudly wave your flag and honor your veterans at upcoming Memorial Day events and summer parades.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

Shauna Dubuque  
Americanism Chairman