

## **Youth Activities Promotion #1 | July 2023**

Joyce Caldwell

2023-2024 National Youth Activities Ambassador

[jrcaldwell1@cox.net](mailto:jrcaldwell1@cox.net)

I am the 2023-2024 Youth Activities National Ambassador for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. I am a Life Member of Broken Arrow East VFW Auxiliary 10887, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

In 1977, I joined the Auxiliary on the eligibility of my husband, Randy Caldwell, a Vietnam veteran. I have served our organization as an Auxiliary and Department Chairman, receiving first-place honors Nationally. I have also served as past Auxiliary, District and Department President as well as National District Council Member. I continue to serve in my Auxiliary as Secretary and as District President. I am a member of the Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary and a Life Member of the VFW National Home.

I retired as a paralegal, having worked in the legal field for more than 50 years. In my spare time, I enjoy scrapbooking, reading, traveling and being with my husband, Randy, and family. Together, Randy and I have two children, Randy Jr., a Navy and Army veteran; and Melissa, a first-grade teacher, and we have six grandchildren.

Our youth today are our leaders of tomorrow. We can ensure this aspect if we instill in our youth the value of our veterans and their sacrifices in order for them to understand our freedom and patriotism. How do we define patriotism for our youth? It is the “love or devotion to one’s country.” Focusing attention on our youth beginning at a young age is vital for them to appreciate our history and our veterans’ sacrifices. We can start this focus by reaching out to them as young as 5 years old. Education is the key to helping our youth become who they will be tomorrow.

To support that, we can promote:

- **PATRIOTISM THROUGH LITERACY** – reading among our youth.
- **SUPPORTING AND WORKING WITH YOUTH GROUPS** -- including working with older youth.
- **GET EXCITED FOR THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE!** – through our national anthem singing contest.
- **ILLUSTRATING AMERICA** – express patriotism in art through the eyes of students K-8.

As we proceed with this year’s Youth Activities Program, I look forward to receiving promotions on how your Auxiliary focuses on our future leaders of tomorrow.