



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY CHILDREN & YOUTH



"CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF SERVICE"

CHILDREN & YOUTH eBULLETIN SERIES 2019-2021 - #14



DATE: October 14, 2020
FROM: Barbara Santillanes, Western Division Children & Youth Chairman
SUBJECT: Youth Hero & Good Deed Awards

Six-year-old Caleigh Pesina, a little girl with a curious mind, was watching a commercial on television and saw that the children of St. Jude do not have hair. She asked her mom. "Why?" Her mother explained, to which Caleigh asked how she might help them get hair. Her mom Googled and found that wigs are made for children of cancer from donated hair.

The following Saturday, Calieigh and her mom went to the local hair salon, Revive, where Caleigh cut over 14 inches of her hair. Such a brave and generous little girl! The owner of the shop named a hair style called the Caleigh in her honor.

A few days later, they were contacted by the local newspaper; it was uncovered that not only had she donated hair, but earlier in the year, she collected money for 25 boxes of Girl Scout cookies that she then donated to her favorite first responders, Los Lunas Sheriff's Department. They were so pleased that they presented Caleigh with a medal of honor, again being a news story in the local paper. Since then, her entire family brought hamburgers and hot dogs to the Sheriff's Department at her urging. This little girl is a Good Deed doer in her heart and soul.

The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 122 in Albuquerque, New Mexico submitted this little angel for a Good Deed Award. In preparation to present her with the award, COVID-19 changed the way we all do things. But the Legion Family was not to be deterred.

In the middle of the COVID-19 crisis, the entire American Legion Family at Post 122 made posters, decorated cars and had a parade. The Legion Family participated and invited the Guardians of the Children Motorcycle organization along with an escort from the Sheriff's Department to join them. The parade of people, cars and motorcycles rolled right in front of her front yard. The Unit President then presented her Good Deed Award, framed and signed by our National President Nicole Clapp, read the letter attached, and placed a Legion medal on a ribbon around her neck. Caleigh was a proud little girl!

When you see an angel doing these kinds of things in your area, or perhaps even bigger things that save a life by an act of valor, it's a simple thing to nominate them for the ALA Good Deed, or Youth Hero, Award. And even in these time of this pandemic, ALA NHQ has created a fillable Youth Hero-Good Deed nomination form! It is on our National website as well as our ALA Children & Youth Facebook group. Even Unit and Department certifications can be done with digital signatures so no need to print, sign, scan and email to the next recipient. It's really

that easy!

Remembering and recognizing these wonderful children is one of our goals in the C&Y program. It is our duty to make sure that these children are recognized for the kindness that they have, and making sure our neighborhoods, communities and households know of their good citizenship.

On a side note, members of New Mexico's Unit 122 have continued to communicate with Caleigh. She wants to run for President when she grows up but plans to continue to help people.....Atta girl!

Details on the ALA Children & Youth program, including the new Youth Hero Good Deed Nomination Form, can be found in the Members Only portion of the National website at: <https://www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/Children-and-Youth/>, on the ALA Children & Youth Program Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALACHildrenandYouth/> or you can contact National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500 or children&youth@ALAforVeterans.org.

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