

# American Legion Auxiliary delivers Memorial Day bags to local veterans

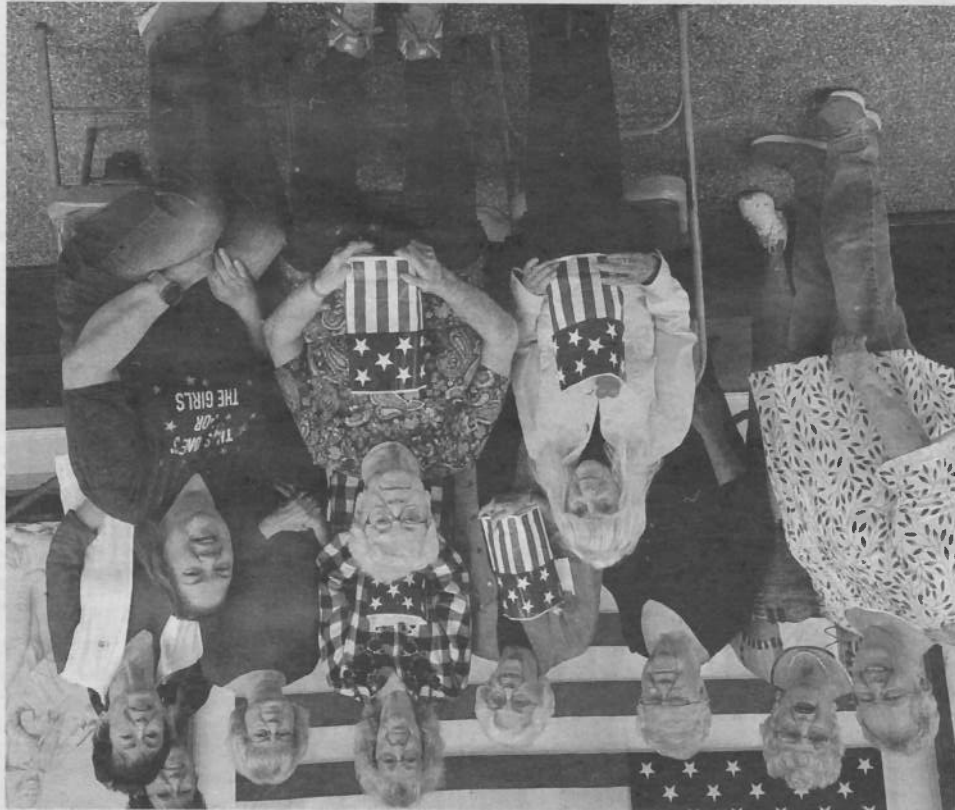


Photo provided by American Legion Auxiliary

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary who helped assemble and deliver Memorial Day bags to local veterans include (front row, from left) Jeanette Wedding, Sherrie Desalle, Cecilia Nemeth, (back row) Rhonda Leadley, Marie Fisher, Connie Anderson, Fran Lewis, Duane VeZain, Donna Michael, Mary Spratt and Jennifer Baumgartner.

Community donations support effort to honor nursing home residents and homebound

## SHAW LOCAL NEWS NETWORK

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The American Legion Auxiliary in Ohio assembled and delivered Memorial Day bags to veterans at local nursing homes, retirement homes and homebound individuals.

The effort was made possible by donations from community members, according to organizers.

"We welcome anyone interested in joining or donating to the ALA," member Mary Spratt said. Those interested can contact a member or call 815-866-7964.

Volunteers who participated in the effort include Jeanette Wedding, Sherrie Desalle, Cecilia Nemeth, Rhonda Leadley, Marie Fisher, Connie Anderson, Fran Lewis, Duane VeZain, Donna Michael, Mary Spratt and Jennifer Baumgartner.

# Teens can explore science for free at library

'Earth Explorers' offers hands-on learning kits; field trip prize for completers

## BY TOM COLLINS

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Thanks to a \$33,892 Project Next Generation Grant from the Illinois State Library, the Putnam County Public Library District will launch "Earth Explorers," a free, hands-on science program coming this summer.

Designed for youth ages 11-14, the program will spark curiosity, strengthen practical science skills, and expand access to engaging learning experiences

Launched May 26, Earth Explorers will introduce participants to three key areas of environmental science through rotating distance-learning kits: Weather Lab (weather and climate), Nature Detective (biodiversity), and Unearth It! (soil and watersheds). Each kit includes hands-on activities, career spotlights, and reading materials, all designed to be completed within a two-week window at their own pace.

Throughout the program, the Grantville branch will feature a newly purchased Bedrock Groundwater Simulator, a hands-on visual model demonstrating groundwater flow, wells, aquifers, and how contaminants move underground, alongside a rotating rock collection. Project Director and Mentor,

Rachael Blomquist will be available by email, Zoom or in person to support participants along the way.

Youth who complete all three kits will earn an invitation to an all-expenses-paid field trip to the Burpee Museum of Natural History in Rockford on Saturday, July 11, featuring guided tours, hands-on labs, museum exploration, and lunch. Green River Lines will provide transportation. Each qualifying participant may bring one parent or guardian.

Registration ends May 23. A parent or guardian must visit the Grantville branch in person to complete a registration form. Space is limited to 18 participants. For more information, call 815-339-2038 or email Rachael Blomquist at rblomquist@putnamcountylibrary.org.