

# HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS



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Preserving the history of our Auxiliaries and Posts is evolving right now. No longer are we limited to gathering physical photos in scrapbooks to be left in a pile in an attic or on a shelf in a closet. Utilizing popular social media outlets to memorialize our work is the best way to reach more of our community about Auxiliary news, events and projects. It allows us wider reach to keep our members and community in the know about what we do as a whole and what we're doing for our Veterans. This "community" is able to expand farther than our local newspaper or flyers can reach. Our reach has expanded across cities, states, and even to other countries where we've been able to share the great deeds of the VFW and our Auxiliary. Social media is continually changing and more outlets are being presented constantly. This allows for everyone to find their niche. By preserving the memories and histories of our Auxiliaries, we ensure that future generations understand our patriotic traditions as well as who we are and why we do what we do. No matter how much the platforms change, the basics will always remain the same. It is the duty of the Historian & Media Relations Chairman to ensure documentation throughout the year of duty of the Five Ws: Who - What - When - Where - Why.

## **Media Relations**

It's important to know what "Media Relations" encompasses. While a big push this year and in the years to come is on Social Media presence, this is not the only way to communicate our mission. Media Relations includes many different forms of communication that can all be recorded and reported on such as:

- News Articles
- TV Appearances
- Door Hangers
- Flyers

- Newsletters
- Social Media Posts

**Social Media Outlets include (but are definitely not limited to):**

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Reddit
- X (FKA Twitter)
- YouTube
- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Pinterest
- Telegram
- Etc.

**Recording Auxiliary History at Every Level**

It is important to document all major moments in the history of the Auxiliary. Think of this work as a constantly growing time capsule. The members of the Auxiliary in 5 years, 20 years, or 100 years from now, should be able to look back at this information and know the members that came before them and the great works that these members did for our Veterans and communities. Documenting these moments includes gathering the written reports, photos, event memorabilia etc. for records. Include any newsletters, event flyers, thank-you notes, menus, and other mementos from these events. Include the Five Ws in the reports and document the date taken and the names of all parties on the photos recorded. There are many ways to keep this documentation, which include:

- Digital Photo Albums
- Digital Scrapbooks
- Memory Books
- Traditional Photo Albums
- Traditional Scrapbooks
- Three-Ring Binder

## **District Historian & Media Relations**

Recording our history and putting out our message is as important on the District Level as it is on an Auxiliary level. The work in terms of media on this level is, in some parts, easier than on the Auxiliary level, and in other parts, harder. This person is tasked with advocating for the technology takeover of our Posts on the Auxiliary side. They should be sharing all major event posts from all of their Auxiliaries to help spread the work of their events. They should also be sharing important Department and National information, such as Call to Actions, Scholarship Deadlines, etc., so that their Auxiliaries can get this information to their members.

The District Chairman is expected to collect and submit records of Department President Karen's visit to their District this year along with photos and any videos taken of her appearance.

Supplemental material can include photographs and newspaper clippings that document special Auxiliary events.

## **Getting Started with New Avenues**

A great place to start for media resources is MALTA Member Resources. This site includes:

- The VFW Auxiliary Publicity Guide - information and ideas on promoting your auxiliary
- The VFW Auxiliary Elevator Speech/What We Do - summary of who we are, what we do, and how we describe ourselves as an organization to the media
- Website and Social Media Information - resources showing the basics of starting your Auxiliary's social media presence.

## ***Photography tips***

Photos should be clear and sharp, at least 1 MB (megabyte) in size and taken with attention to detail. Keep in mind the context of the photo and the subjects within the photo. Avoid the following photo faux pas:

- Closed eyes
- Mouths open or full of food
- Distracting objects in the frame or awkward placement of people or things (e.g., trees popping out of someone's head, bunny ears, etc.)
- Offensive language on articles of clothing
- Any content that is not "on brand" with the event you are documenting

## **STATEWIDE PROJECT**

### ***Time to get Techy!***

This year's focus will be on the promotion of our VFW Auxiliary Programs through social media sources. There are many ways this can be quantified and many avenues that you can take for the sources you wish to use.

Entry form required and available in MALTA Member Resources. VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to their Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2025, for judging.

*Project elements to submit:*

- At least 1 link to your Auxiliary Social Media Account
- At least 30 photos, videos, or other promotional article
- Any other information to put you over the top!

You are able to submit the media pieces utilized, but I also encourage you to submit any analytic reports showing your media reach. This is a standard FREE tool through Facebook Business Suite (if Facebook is the avenue you're taking), and I will provide a how-to on obtaining this information with My Secrets. To be considered for the award you must specify if the report is for the post or the district. Any reports not clearly marked will automatically be assigned to the post submitting them. Remember only **Historian & Media Relations Chairmen** are eligible for this award.

Awards

1. Plaque to the **Post Auxiliary Historian & Media Relations Chairman** submitting the most outstanding promotion of VFW Auxiliary Programs to the community through social media sources.
2. Plaque to the **District Historian & Media Relations Chairman** submitting the Best Report and the Best Overall selection of pictorial data on the Department President's Official Visit within specified time.
3. Plaque to the **District Historian & Media Relations Chairman** submitting the most public relations media promoting the work of their District and Auxiliaries.
4. Plaque to the **Post Auxiliary Historian & Media Relations Chairman** showing the most consistent communication to their entire membership about necessary Auxiliary information via email, printed mail, text, phone call, or utilizing Slack.  
(Expectation for consideration of this award is quarterly communication)

Plaque to the **Post Auxiliary Historian & Media Relations Chairman** submitting the most effective and well-organized website (either individually or jointly with their Post counterpart).

## 2024 – 2025 Historian & Media Relations Reports

Mid-Year Report must be received by District President by *December 10, 2024*.  
District President will forward the report to Department Chair by *December 20, 2024*.

Year-End Report must be received by District President by *April 10, 2025*.  
District President will forward the report to Department Chair by *April 20, 2025*.

Auxiliary Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Auxiliary No. \_\_\_\_\_ District No. \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did your Auxiliary utilize any of the materials/resources available for this program in MALTA Members Resource? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Did your Auxiliary create a recorded history of the year's events by any means? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did your Auxiliary send a monthly or quarterly newsletter or other communication thread to your members via email, printed mail, text, phone call, or utilizing Slack? \_\_\_\_\_

- If Yes, Please specify the frequency of the communication thread. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Did your Auxiliary have their own Auxiliary Facebook page? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Did your Auxiliary have a joint Facebook page with your sponsoring VFW Post? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Did your Auxiliary have their own Auxiliary Facebook page? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Did your Auxiliary have a joint website with your sponsoring VFW Post? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Did your Auxiliary hold any Media Relations training for their membership?  
(Examples: how to log into MALTA, signing up for email communications, navigating Facebook, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Auxiliary Historian: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_