



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary
Department of Maryland



HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM

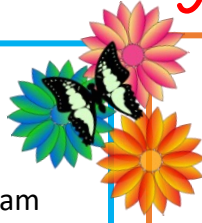
Telling Our Story in AUGUST

Are you starting out strong?

It's been over a month since our School of Instruction. Hopefully, every President has appointed a Historian and formed a Media Team that will report your auxiliary's work at telling our current story through publicity and at promoting memorabilia and legacy members to bring your past history alive for your newer members.

Reporting is an important tool that we can each use but is often ignored by Auxiliaries. Take time to report each month to let me know what you are doing or, if that is confusing, send a report each time your members complete a project.

Cathy Gistedt
Department Historian



Consider Trying a Template

The Historian & Media Relations Program is about getting publicity out for everyone to understand (and appreciate) all that the VFW Auxiliary does for our veterans and our communities.

Rather than starting a document from scratch, templates can save you both time and energy. Templates are predesigned documents that can be used without worrying about basic formatting. The general set-up, design details, font styles, and spacing on the page are predetermined to present a *pleasing appearance* that will help you along in the creative process.

Select the template that works for you then add your text, photos or graphics (like our President's pin or the American flag), and even links to other information. Two templates are available for the Historian & Media Relations Program in MALTA under *Member Resources*.

1. *VFW Auxiliary Letter Template – Local:*
Insert your auxiliary's name and number to create professional-style stationery without the high cost of going to a printer. When formal requests in writing are needed on letterhead, you'll be ready with this template.
2. *VFW Auxiliary Power Point Template:*
Display information or photos on Power Point slides with this template. The template slide offers our VFW Auxiliary shield with a heading at the top of the slide and "Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes" spanning the bottom. Power Points can have a multitude of uses:

- Showcase your Past Presidents at your Installation Ceremony.
- Help present your District's School of Instruction materials so that they are easy to understand.
- Loop photos of events to present at an Open House.

Templates are great publicity tools with many applications. Work *easy* and not *hard* by using templates in our MALTA Resources when you can.



They're Telling Our Story

Lacy Whitby is reporting for Star Spangled Banner Auxiliary **10078**.

At each meeting, they "*nominate a spotlight regular member and Auxiliary member and post them on Facebook.*"

Keep telling our story, Lacy!



THE CHALLENGE

Each mailing you will be challenged to earn bonus points. This month's challenge is different from the others. At the School of Instruction, did any of your members sign in at the Historian & Media Relations display? Program displays offered information to start the year. If at least one member of your Auxiliary signed in at my display, you've earned **1 bonus point**. And if that member was your Auxiliary's Historian.....you have earned **2 bonus points** for this month!

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Remember that just talking at your Auxiliary meeting is NOT reporting. Send a completed Historian & Media Relations Report form each month to the Department Historian at: cathygistedt123@gmail.com

Polish Up Your Photos

Photographs are one of the best ways that we can capture memories and tell our story. Here are a few tips to help your Auxiliary's photographers get good shots of your events, fundraisers, and activities.

- Get in as close as you can. Zooming will decrease the quality of your photos.
- Take multiple shots of your subject and look at the photos later. Don't lose the moment working with your camera to preview.
- Make your photos interesting by using a variety of backgrounds and camera angles.
- Have a focal point in mind with each photo to eliminate unnecessary people or objects.
- Be sensitive to lighting and the surroundings before snapping the shot.

Whether you are posting photos online or in a collage or scrapbook, quality photos will make the difference.



Meet Our National Historian Tela Harbold



Our National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador for 2024-2025 is **Tela Harbold** from the Department of Florida. Tela joined the Auxiliary under her husband, a Vietnam veteran. She has held multiple chairmanships and offices at all levels of the VFWA.

The Power of Storytelling: Research tells us that when information contains a story, 5% remember the facts but 63% will remember the story you told.

NEWSLETTER TIPS

DESIGN

There are many online choices for newsletter templates. Past National Historian Libby Dalla Tezza recommended these during her year helping Auxiliary Historians across America:

- * *Vertical Response*
- * *Constant Contact* (free trial available)
- * *Benchmark*
- * *Mail Chimp*
- * *iContact*

Take a look at each template to see if one would work for your Auxiliary. Each offers something slightly different in design for your news.

Pencil This In



For August:

- 10th – VFW Department Commander's Homecoming 2pm at the Redmen Club in Williamsport
- 17th - President Debbie's Homecoming at Post 5118 in Easton from Noon until 5pm. All invited!

For September:

- 19th – 21st – National Auxiliary President Brenda Bryant will be visiting Maryland
- 20th - POW-MIA Recognition Day
- 22nd - Council of Administration Meeting (*information on time and place coming*)
- 20th - Gold Star Mothers & Families Day

Cathy Gistedt

Dept. Historian

2911 Ritchie Avenue

Edgemere, MD 21219-1244

410-477-1078

cathygistedt123@gmail.com



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Creating Your Collage of Memories

The word is **ARTISTIC**. Creating a collage is a unique approach to telling the story of your Auxiliary and it will earn you points toward Convention awards in May! But does your Auxiliary Historian have to make your collage? Creating a *Collage of Memories* uses skills different from writing a news article or posting a Power Point slide presentation. Remember, if you have a Media Team, your Auxiliary can choose from different members for different media tasks through the year.

Making a collage would be an enjoyable project for an **artistic** member of your Auxiliary. Talking about the *Collage of Memories* at your next Auxiliary meeting is a great first step to getting the right volunteer for the job. Don't wait. Get started on your collage today.

Setting Up an Email Group for Your Auxiliary

One way to keep members informed is by setting up an email group. An email group is a collection of email addresses, making it one of the quickest ways to send multiple emails without manually entering each recipient every time. Setting up an email group is time consuming but well worth the effort.

1. Go to *contacts.google.com*.
2. In the side menu, click the *Create Label* icon that looks like a plus (+) sign.
3. Enter a name for your group like "AUX123" then click *SAVE*.
4. Using a copy of your Auxiliary's roster that provides email addresses, enter each name and their email address as your *CONTACT*.



Information with more details on how to create an email group can be found at: zapier.com/blog/how-to-create-group-gmail/

Responsibilities of Historians

Our Auxiliary Historians have a unique position to fill as they document and preserve the history of our Auxiliaries for the 2024 – 2025 program year. Historians are storytellers communicating the stories of our work.



Auxiliary Historians:

- ✓ Create a permanent record of your program year for the President with photos, news articles, and other memorabilia in a collage or scrapbook.
- ✓ Create a showcase or display at your Post honoring your Auxiliary's history.
- ✓ Report!

District Historians:

- ✓ Share information from Department mailings with your Auxiliary Historians.
- ✓ Assure that each Auxiliary makes 1 report for the Historian & Media Relations Program but encourage monthly reporting.

We Know This Because...

Historians Told the Story!

Before alarm clocks and way before smart phone alarms, there were **knocker-uppers** to wake sleeping people so that they could get to work on time. They were common during the Industrial Revolution before inexpensive alarm clocks were made in the late 19th century. Tapping on windows and even using pea shooters, these *human alarm clocks* would not leave until their client came to the window to signal that they were awake.

The story that our Historians record will also be told by future Auxiliary members. Keep our story (like this one) remembered!



Setting Sail for Our Veterans

