

## Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary

Department of Maryland

### **HISTORIAN – MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM**



*Dorothy Swigon, Historian*

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### **Forming an Auxiliary Speaker's Bureau**

Raising public awareness of your auxiliary is an effective way to help our veterans and their families. To increase visibility, form a Speaker's Bureau – a team of members to educate and inform the public and other groups about the VFW Auxiliary and our programs. The Bureau sends an individual member or small group to speak to groups in your community when they have their meetings. Choose representatives that are comfortable with public speaking and also knowledgeable about the VFW Auxiliary.

The VFW Auxiliary National website provides resources to make your contact with other groups an effective tool. They suggest you approach groups such as:

- \* Church and faith-based groups      \* Chambers of Commerce      \* Local businesses
- \* Rotary, Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, and other service-oriented groups      \* Military bases
- \* Youth groups including scouts and sports teams in your community

Always contact the group to request to speak at one of their meetings. A sample letter that could be used to send your request is also available online.

Speaker's Bureaus are a low cost but high impact media tool all auxiliaries could use.

### **Grab Those Group Photo Opportunities!** We love to see group photos.

Are you keeping your Facebook page and website up to date with photos of what is happening at your Auxiliary? Here's one of the group that took the bus to the National Home Celebration.



*Bus Crew to National Home 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

*"While tradition and history are revered in our organization, it's equally important that we find a way to look forward and ahead."*

*-Kristin Digiacommo, National Historian*



# #HASHTAGS

Is it a number sign? Yes. A pound sign? Yes. But in the modern world of technology, it's a **hashtag** symbol too. **Hashtags** can be a fun way to enhance communication and connect yourself to others discussing the same topic. On social media sites and applications, especially Twitter, it will identify digital content on specific topics. The **hashtags** can be used to spread awareness, publicize events, and even promote our VFW Auxiliary National Programs.

Using **hashtags** is easy. All you need to do is put a **hashtag** symbol (#) before a word or phrase. There is one rule that you need to be aware of when writing **hashtags**: No spaces are allowed, and neither are special characters and punctuation marks like commas and periods. The best hint to writing good phrases with **hashtags** is to keep it short and simple.

Why are **hashtags** an important tool for media relations? They are an excellent way to quickly discover content relevant to our interests. Using **hashtags** also fosters a sense of community for users with similar interests. And, the **hashtags** are one of the best tools to mobilize collective action on issues affecting our veterans and their families.

Try using a **hashtag**. Auxiliary Outreach Chairman Kathy Williams is waiting for photos of your auxiliary helping in the community. Use **#AuxiliaryOutreach** to enter her contest with the winner announced at the Christmas Conference.



## Best Practices for Creating Reels

Creating a Reel isn't hard but making it catch the interest of your viewers can be a challenge.

Here are 3 tips social media managers have recommended.

1. **Focus on your introduction.** The quickest way to lose viewers is by drawing out the intro. Don't start with a title screen. Begin with action or something unique.
2. **Think outside the box.** Don't think about just auxiliary members. Focus on what would be interesting to any viewer.
3. **Include engaging CTA's.** What are CTA's? They are **Calls To Action**. It's an engaging question or when you ask viewers to share their thoughts with you.

Learn from the pros when creating your Reels.



## Uses of the Reels

Why make a Reel? They can be helpful in these ways:

- ✓ Educational Content  
*Teach the public the history and importance of the buddy poppy.*
- ✓ Announcements  
*Promote our programs and your projects for the community.*
- ✓ Interviews  
*Showcase a veteran with an interesting story to tell.*

### Dorothy Swigon

Historian-Media Relations Chr.  
2546 Lodge Forest Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21219  
443-695-0456  
froggiedar@yahoo.com