

## HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS AMBASSADOR

### KRISTIN DIGIACOMO

418 Edmond Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15224-2012  
412-867-0021  
vfwauxpahistorian@gmail.com

#### *Embrace the Waves of Change*

While tradition and history are revered in our organization, it's equally important that we find a way to look forward and ahead. While those tried-and-true methods of the traditional media outlets are still reliable and important to utilize, we must also realize that social media outlets are the way of the future.

We must remember that the future can learn from the past just as much as the past can learn from the future!

If we aren't sharing the stories of our Auxiliaries by using as many means of media as possible, including both traditional and social/digital, then those are missed opportunities for us all! We must continue to do our part to grow the Auxiliary as a whole.

#### **Media**

Social media platforms are the BEST (and fastest) way to get the word out about our Programs, our Auxiliaries and what we do for both our veterans and their families. Many of our seasoned members utilize Facebook while many of our younger members prefer Instagram. So, what is stopping your Auxiliary from utilizing these two social media platforms? Did you know that those two platforms can "talk" to one another, and you can cross-post to both platforms by linking your two profiles together?

Communication through traditional media outlets is also important. This includes our newspapers, TV, radio and newsletters.

It's so important to keep our current members up to date on what's happening with our Auxiliaries! Newsletters (both digital emails and printed) are a fantastic way to spread the information about what's happening at your Post and around your communities. Keep in mind that not everyone has an email address, and that is OK. So, what can you do to spread the word and connect with your membership?

- **PREPARE** a monthly or quarterly newsletter to be both mailed and emailed out for your members. Also include some copies at your Post home as well!
- **RECOGNIZE** those members who are celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, volunteer work, etc. Include dates of upcoming events!
- **UPDATE** your Auxiliary/Post Facebook page(s) regularly

#### **Reels**

This year, I would love to focus on Auxiliaries using and creating Reels to spread the word about our Programs and what you're doing in your communities! I bet you're thinking to yourself, "What the heck is a Reel?"

- Reels are full-screen vertical videos up to 90 seconds long. They feature a suite of editing tools and audio tracks, as well as trending voice/sound snippets. Reels allow you to add captions, stickers, and backgrounds; upload multiple video clips; use a range of filters and loads more!
- Reels can be made up of a single video, several clips edited together, still photos or some combination of photos and video. Reels can be posted to both Instagram (which has more than 1.3 billion users!) and Facebook. Reels have outstanding visibility and usually appear at the top of your feed.

- Descriptions and hashtags should be used for the Reels as well and those are easy to add.
- Visit MALTA Member Resources, Historian & Media Relations, to read about how to create a reel.

## **Department Historians & Media Relations Chairmen**

Documentation of the National President's Official Visit to the Departments is a very important responsibility for the Department Historian. Each Department Historian should submit to me a slide show presentation (this can be done in PowerPoint, Keynote or Google Slides) including the following:

- A minimum of five (5) photos of the National President during her visit to your Department.
- A maximum of 10 slides may be used and should tell a story of events, fundraisers, meetings and ceremonies that take place throughout the year.
- All photos should be clear and not blurry.
- All slide show presentations should be emailed to the National Ambassador, shared via Google Drive or OneDrive, or submitted via snail mail on a flash drive to the National Ambassador. Must be received by the National Ambassador by April 30, 2026.









## HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM

### Historian Duties • Media Relations

The member responsible for Historian & Media Relations duties is a memory keeper, and collector of the five Ws: the who-what-where-when-and-why of your Auxiliary. These individuals compile and chronicle memories and events in written and digital formats, including photographs, memorabilia, print news, audio and/or video clips and social media posts. The Historian & Media Relations member captures the narrative of the Program Year. At the Auxiliary, District and Department levels, these members are the people who get the word out about the Auxiliary to our communities.

The Historian & Media Chairman is also the member who gets the word out about the VFW Auxiliary to our communities. They inform the public about activities, events and our valuable National Programs.

#### Auxiliary and District Historian & Media Relations

This member keeps a written report of the history of their Auxiliary or District and submits this to their respective President at the end of the year. Supplemental material can include photographs and newspaper clippings that document special Auxiliary events.

#### Department Historian & Media Relations

This member keeps a comprehensive record of the Department President's activities, and should include travels, Official Visits and other official functions. Collect material in written form to capture your Department's history in chronological order. As with the Auxiliary Historian & Media Relations Chairman, this position also compiles photographs and newspaper and/or video clips of Auxiliary news.

The Department Historian & Media Relations member also documents and photographs the National President's visit and may reach out to local media outlets to organize interviews and news opportunities for the National President.

#### National Historian & Media Relations

This member documents the travels and activities of the National President. Department-level reports and photos are essential for this job.

#### What's newsworthy?

Consider these questions: Does it involve local people? Does it interest non-members? Is it timely? Does it help the community? Is it unique and new? If the answer is yes, this is a chance for you to pitch a story with an "angle" that will showcase your Auxiliary's hard work and accomplishments. Let's show our communities, and our nation, everything we do to improve the lives of veterans, service members and their families.

#### Who Should you Contact About Auxiliary News?

Learn the names of reporters who cover stories most similar to yours and tailor your own list of media contacts. Send information directly to these contacts rather than the editor. News staff who specialize in relevant areas, like society and calendar page editors, are more likely to be receptive to including Auxiliary events. Feel free to send a reporter or editor a personal email and be sure to include your contact information.

#### Historian & Media Relations Resources

MALTA Member Resources is a great place to find valuable information including:

- The VFW Auxiliary Publicity Guide
- Local and National talking points
- Adult and youth photo release forms
- Sample speeches
- Website and social media/Facebook information
- Sample press releases
- PowerPoint and letter templates
- Photography tips



## HISTORIAN & MEDIA RELATIONS PROGRAM AWARDS

### **Awards for Auxiliaries:**

1. Most outstanding social media reel highlighting the VFW Auxiliary in action.
  - Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions with the most outstanding social media reel highlighting their VFW Auxiliary in action.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form and the social media reel to the Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging. Instructions on how to make a social media reel is in MALTA Member Resources under Historian & Media Relations, Websites & Social Media – Websites, How To Create a Facebook Reel.

The Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department-winning entry form and the social media reel to the National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador by April 30, 2026 for judging.

Citations will be mailed directly to winning VFW Auxiliaries from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the VFW Auxiliary account after the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

### **Awards for Departments and Department Chairmen:**

1. \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best training and/or education promoting how to use social media reels.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

2. The Outstanding Performance Award and Second-Place Outstanding Performance Award will be awarded in each of the 10 Program Divisions based on the criteria listed on Page 5 and for the promotion of the Program goals listed at the top of Page 32.

Winners will be announced and awards will be presented at the 2026 VFW Auxiliary National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.



# VFW Auxiliary National Year-End Report Worksheet Historian & Media Relations 2025-2026

This form is for statistical purposes only.

The Department Chairman must submit this report form to their Department President by May 1.

This report is to be processed in MALTA by the Department President by May 10.

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of participating VFW Auxiliaries: \_\_\_\_\_

1. The number of VFW Auxiliaries that communicated quarterly to each of their members via email, mail, text or phone call. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The number of VFW Auxiliaries that have a Facebook page with or without the VFW Post. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The number of VFW Auxiliaries that have a website with or without the VFW Post. \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chairman signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Conference: \_\_\_\_\_