

Historian/Social Media

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The theme for this year's Historian's program is to "Embrace the Waves of Change". This is a true statement regarding the Historian's programs, which have changed over the years: from being a nationally recognized program to not being recognized as a national program, and then back to being a national program with the introduction of social media, and finally the changes within the world of social media.

While everyone gets excited about that shiny new toy, we can't forget the ones that have been our favorites along the way. This is a way of saying that we need to honor our history and traditions while embracing technology and new ways of doing things. This in no way means that the way we have done this is wrong or outdated, but maybe we now have a more efficient way of doing things.

"Share Our Stories"

We have all heard the saying, that the VFW and the Auxiliary, are the best-kept secret. It's time to let the secret out, "Spill the tea". Share the info in Department mailings, and on Social Media. When you see posts on the **VFW Auxiliary National Organization** or **VFW Auxiliary Department of NJ**, share them with your District or Auxiliary pages. The information that is open to the public (Scholarship information, etc.) should be shared on the County News and Events pages, you never know where that winning Scholarship entry may come from or even that new member.

Media

Social Media sites and apps are the best, fastest, and easiest way to spread the message about our programs, and what we (the Auxiliary) do for veterans and their families.

If you ask a “seasoned” member which Social Media they use, they will probably say Facebook. But if you ask a younger member, they may answer Instagram. **Did you know, that since both platforms are owned by Meta, you can post to Instagram and Facebook at the same time?**

While we use Social Media, let’s not forget about traditional sources of media. This includes newspapers (don’t forget about those community newspapers that you pick up for free around town), TV, radio, and newsletters. Some cable services have a free access channel that you can put information on.

Newsletters are available digitally and printed. Keep the Auxiliary members and the community up to date on what’s going on at the Post. If you have members who do not have e-mail, send them printed ones during the year. Content for the newsletters can be simple or complicated, they can include:

- Prepare a monthly/quarterly newsletter, to be mailed and e-mailed to members. Also, leave copies at the Post Home.
- Recognize members! We usually get messages from the Department when a member needs cheering up, maybe sick, or for a deceased family member. Let’s start sending cards for happier times: birthdays, and anniversaries, acknowledge volunteer work. Include dates of upcoming events as well.
- Regularly update your Post/Auxiliary and District Facebook pages.

Reels

The newest part of the Social Media program is the addition of Reels. Now I know what your first question is, “What the hell is a Reel?”. Reels are those 90-second videos you see at the top of your Facebook or Instagram feeds.

- These are vertical videos, up to 90 seconds. Meta features a suite of editing tools and music for your videos. You can also add captions, stickers, backgrounds, and more!
- Reels don’t have to be strictly videos, they can be photos or a combination of photos and videos. Descriptions and hashtags should be used.

Historian

The duties of the Historian include being a memory keeper and collector of the 5 W's (Who/What/Where/When/Why (I include a 6th one How) of your Auxiliary or District. This individual compiles and chronicles memories and events in written and digital formats, including photos, memorabilia, print news, audio and/or video clips, and social media posts. They also narrate the Program Year. On all levels, they get the information out about the Auxiliary to our communities.

Resources available in MALTA

Malta is a great source of information for all programs. The following information is available for the Historians program:

1. The VFW Auxiliary Publicity Guide
2. Local and National Talking Points
3. Photo Release forms
4. Sample Speeches
5. Website and Social Media (Facebook) information
6. Sample Press Releases
7. PowerPoint and letter templates
8. Photography tips

Department President's Official Visit

When Department President Gloria Lisicki visits your Auxiliary or District, send a report of her visit. Yes, this contest is available to Auxiliaries not in a District and all current Districts. DO NOT SEND MINUTES. Please submit reports in a two-pocket folder.

Remember we are Forever Serving Veterans.

Important Links

VFW Auxiliary National
MALTA

www.vfwauxiliary.org
malta.vfwauxiliary.org

VFWA NJ

New website coming soon

VFWA NJ Facebook
Instagram

VFW Auxiliary Department of NJ
www.instagram.com/vfwadeptnj

AWARDS

National Award No. 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 and Media Relations Chairman by **March 31, 2026**, for judging. Instructions on how to make a social media reel in MALTA Member Resources under Historian & Media Relations, Websites & Social Media – Websites, How To Create a Facebook Reel.

The Department Historian & Social 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.

Department Awards

1. Most Outstanding Social Media Reel highlighting the VFW Auxiliary in Action

Citation to each Auxiliary that enters with the Most Outstanding Social Media Reel highlighting the VFW Auxiliary in Action. Submit a two-pocket folder reel that can be e-mailed to the Chairman. Each Auxiliary submitted will receive a citation. **Entries are due to the Department Chairman by March 15, 2026.**

- 2. Department President's Official Visit** This contest is open to all Auxiliaries not in a District and all current Districts. Submit a report in a two-pocket folder detailing the visit of the Department President to your District or Auxiliary. Each Auxiliary submitted will receive a citation.**DO NOT E-MAIL THIS REPORT. All entries are due by April 15, 2026.**
- 3. Outstanding Social Media Page**
Submit a two-pocket folder with screenshots from your Auxiliary Facebook page (**MAX 25 PAGES**). Each Auxiliary submitted will receive a citation. **DO NOT E-MAIL ENTRIES. All entries are due by April 15, 2026.**