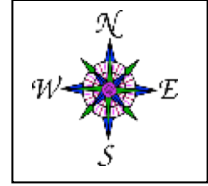


History - Program Action Plan

“Navigating the course for veterans and their families”



It is the objective of the historian at all levels to record the history of their activities throughout the year.

What and Why?

The American Legion Auxiliary's History is in its records. Items and notes that officers, members, and volunteers have produced and compiled over the years provide unique testimony to the achievements of an organization. Records contribute in many ways:

- Members look back and learn what was successful or unsuccessful. Knowing what went wrong as well as the achievements can assist in determining future strategies.
- Records show pride in our organization and has a direct correlation to motivate the current membership to bring in new members, achieve more goals, present sense of strength and conviction while developing leaders.
- It is invaluable to our organization to maintain and preserve our records. Be informative and educate future users with a variety of resources. In other words, the Auxiliary benefits itself and the public by preserving its records and making them available for use by everyone inside and outside of our organization.

Our history is contained in artifacts, documents, newspaper articles, publications, meeting minutes, photos, newsletters, written histories, etc. We do this to honor those members who have made a difference in our organization at all levels. History allows us to build a stronger organization based upon those experiences.

What is expected?

The historian should develop a system to archive communications such as newsletters, fliers, handbooks and program information. Be sure to record this new system in the mid-year and annual narrative reports.

- Historians should promote the Veterans History Project through Facebook, emails and during meetings. This would be a great project to partner with the Junior Activities chairman.
- Highlight details of the project on the national historian's web page.

Collect information about famous Auxiliary members:

- Include full names, years of Auxiliary membership, details of what they did, who they are and why they are famous. Remember to include where you found the information.
- This information should be sent to the national historian as it is collected throughout the year with a deadline of June 1, 2017.

Members:

- Share Auxiliary memorabilia with your unit or department.
- Ask longtime members of family members of deceased members if they would like to donate an item(s).
- If you enjoy history and want to learn more, volunteer to be the History/Cavalcade chairman or committee member for your unit/department.

Unit:

- Appoint a History/Cavalcade Committee chairman. Invite members to participate.
- Post your unit history on the Legion's Centennial Celebration webpage at <http://centennial.legion.org/>
- Involve junior members helping them earn the History patch.
- Participate in the Members Remember project (see Resources).
- Highlight historical/important/interesting events in your unit.
- Create and maintain digital images and records.
- Inventory of your entire collection: i.e. organizational documents, written histories, and scrapbooks. Be sure to include information such as who donated the item and when.
- Feature a historical item or write an article about an important time in the unit's history in your department newsletter.
- Ask members to consider donating or loaning important items they may have.

Initiate a History project

- Search throughout the post/unit home for items.
- Gather photos and document the event(s) at which they were taken as well as the people in the photos.
- Learn the history of your unit, department and national organization. If you do not have a written unit or department history, volunteer to help put one together.
- For documents and photos, digitize them, making sure to make more than one copy and have the additional copies stored in different places.

Find:

- History is in more places than just artifacts. It is in your meeting minutes, governing documents, newspaper articles, photos, etc. Set up a system as to how these will be kept.
- Initiate a record management program. Review the records management policy sample in the Department Operations' Guide to see which records you are mandated to keep permanently.

- Invite the community and members to familiarize themselves with the organization's history and accomplishments.

Instructions to Unit Historians

What's your story?

Unit Historians shall write a Unit history to be entered into the Department Contest. Start compiling information early, check the Department Historian's Program Action Plan and bulletins for additions or further information.

Eleanore Kernaghan Senior History Trophy

See unit guide for rules

- History must be written in narrative form as events occur, beginning with Department Convention (See how to write a narrative in Program Action Plan – Historian).
- Must include officers' list.
- Photos, mementos, souvenirs will not be considered in judging. These items may be added later.
- Fly Page must contain:
 - a. Unit name and number
 - b. Location of unit (city and state)
 - c. Name of Historian and President
 - d. Present year of history being recorded
 - e. Membership grouping

MID-YEAR REPORTS

Units must send a narrative mid-year report to the District Historian and be received no later than December 1, 2016.

District Historians must send their narrative mid-year reports to the Department Historian, received no later than December 15, 2016.

The Department Historian's mid-year report must be received by Southern Division by January 5, 2017.

END OF THE YEAR REPORTS

Units must send a narrative mid-year report to the District Historian and received no later than April 1, 2017.

The District Historian narrative mid-year report must be received by the Department Historian no later than April 15, 2017.

**Eleanor Amato, Department of Florida Historian email: historian@alaf1.org
892 Catfish Ave., New Smyrna Beach, FL 32169 386-427-1168**

What is a narrative?

A narrative is some kind of retelling, in words, of something that happened (a story). The narrative is not the story itself but rather the telling of the story. While a story is just a sequence of events, a narrative recounts those events. In a series of events, a car crash takes a split second. A narrative account, however, might be almost entirely about the crash itself and the few seconds leading up to it.

Why should I write a narrative?

Narratives shape history (the series of events, the story of what happened). Each year the American Legion Auxiliary uses narratives as a way to report the work that we do and the impact of that work. The narratives are used by the ALA to communicate not only to our members but also to people outside our organization including potential donors. Additionally, some of the ALA awards require a narrative.

How do I write a narrative?

When a Unit or a member of a unit does something to support one of the Auxiliary programs, the best practice is to write down what was done as soon as possible. On the following pages, there is a template that can act as a good place to start for writing your narrative. This template has been used by several Units and they have found it to be an easy way to get started.

On the next page of this document you will see a list of 21 questions. Once an event is held, fill in the answers to the 21 questions. Then print the last page, the "A Good Place to Start" template.

Using the guide on page 3 fill in the answers to the 21 questions on the template that you printed.

Now that you have started, keep going, add any additional information that you think is important, and add pictures.

Good Luck & Happy Writing!

Questions for Writing a Narrative "A Good Place to Start"

1. Name of your Unit _____
2. Number of your Unit _____
3. District or County Number for your Unit _____
4. State where your Unit is located _____
5. Number of members in your Unit _____
6. City where your Unit is located _____
7. Name of your Unit President _____
8. Name of the ALA Program you participated in (example: Children & Youth) _____
9. Name of the event you held (example: Star Spangled Kids)

10. Date you held the event _____
11. Where you held the event (example: ABC Elementary School)

12. Short description of the purpose of the event (example: To educate 3rd grade students on the US Constitution)

13. Number of members who worked on the event _____
14. Number of people who attended _____
15. Name of any other organization who came to help (example: SAL or VFW)

16. If tickets were sold for the event, how much was charged? _____
17. If donations were collected, what was the amount of funds or in-kind donations collected during the event? _____
18. Describe what you did during the event _____

19. List of dignitaries who attended the event (example: Principal Edwards, Julie Jones, Department President)

20. See Question #9 (Name of the event you held) _____

21. Describe the outcome (Did you fulfill the purpose of the event?)

A Good Place to Start

USE THIS PAGE AS A GUIDE TO FILL IN THE TEMPLATE ON THE NEXT PAGE

The _____ (1) _____ Unit # _____ (2) _____ in District/County _____ (3) _____ from the Department of _____ (4) _____ is a Unit of _____ (5) _____ members. We are located in the _____ (6) _____ area. Our President for the 2016-2017 year is _____ (7) _____.

Over the past year we have made _____ (8) _____ one of our priorities. One of our best events was the _____ (9) _____ . It was held on _____ (10) _____ at _____ (11) _____ . The purpose of our event was to _____ (12) _____ . _____ (13) _____ members worked on this. We were pleased to see _____ (14) _____ attend. _____ (15) _____ came to help. The tickets were sold for _____ (16) _____ (or there was no cost). _____ (17) _____ were donated. During our event we _____ (18) _____ . We were honored to have _____ (19) _____ be part of our _____ (20) _____ .

(Describe the outcome) (21)



A Good Place to Start

PRINT THIS PAGE AND USE THIS FORMAT AS A WAY TO START YOUR NARRATIVE BY FILLING IN THE BLANKS WITH THE ANSWERS TO THE 21 QUESTIONS

The _____ Unit # _____ in District/County _____ from the Department of _____ is a Unit of _____ members. We are located in the _____ area. Our President for the 2016-2017 year is _____.

Over the past year we have made _____ one of our priorities.

One of our best events was the _____.

It was held on _____ at _____ . The purpose of our event was to _____ . _____ members worked on this. We were pleased to see _____ attend. _____ came to help. The tickets were sold for _____ (or there was no cost).

_____ were donated. During our event we _____ . We were honored to have _____ be part of our _____ .

(Describe the outcome)

