



2024 - 2025 HOW TO WRITE A HISTORY

“If it’s happening now ...it will eventually become our History!”

The American Legion Auxiliary is full of rich history, all because someone took the time to write it down, document what happened, reported the events and accumulated it together. Don’t feel as though being the Historian is going to be exhausting and that it’s your entire responsibility to write everything that occurs, or get every photo, or collect every artifact and gain a copy of keepsakes that happen this year! You can ask others to share, write, record and collect on your and your Units/Districts behalf.

Remember, “You Can’t Be Everywhere!” You are the Supervisors and you have a work crew that can help.

Your history can instill a sense of identity and purpose as well as suggest goals that will honor and dignify for years to come.

Here are some tips in writing a History:

Be sure to start recording events as soon as your President is sworn in and keep it in chronological order. Include any theme, special project or specifics and how it relates to the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.

- Write the history in a third-person narrative. Your job is that of an intermediary – someone who witnessed the events and then describes them for the reader. Do not include your thoughts or comments on the events – only the occasion, the people involved, and what occurred.
- You can include current events that impact the American Legion Auxiliary (local and globally). These events have a cause and effect on the Auxiliary, resulting in new or resurrected projects and programs.
- Unit/District meetings and events that are attended and be sure to include examples if they supported veterans, military, their families, and communities. Department President visitations to Units/Districts are also important. Should the National President visit your area, include that in your history and how she helped your Unit/Districts focus on the ALA mission.
- Include all member activities as part of the Unit/District history, NOT just activities of the President.
- Include awards that your Unit/District received, especially those that have been given by the Department or National organization and any received from the community.
- Record special events that occur during the year. Examples:
 - Declarations & Proclamations for Poppy month.
 - Big fundraisers for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Honor Flight, National Campaigns or the Department Presidents Project.

- Current events that affect the Auxiliary members and the Auxiliary's response to that event. For example, if there is a weather disaster, write about how your members went above and beyond to help in the community, etc.
 - Any time your Unit/District gets media coverage (i.e., a PSA on the radio or press release in the paper). Be sure to include the details in your history.
- Pick out impressive statistics from other Committees & Programs or projects. Examples:
 - Your AEF funds greatly increase
 - The number of girls attending ALA FL Girls State
 - How many Histories were submitted
 - The amount of Juniors gained in membership
 - How many shares on Social Media and Public Relations submissions
- Be sure to include the failures as well as the successes as we all learn from errors. For example, the Unit/District tried a new project, but it didn't go as well as hoped. You can include why the project failed as future members may see the value of the project, but make the necessary corrections to make it a success.
- Include all amendments and resolutions that were carried and those that didn't. Especially if your Unit/District submitted the possible change. If one didn't pass, include the discussion so that others may learn why it failed.
- End the history with information about your year-end to include possibly upcoming elections and anything important to the Unit/District as well as the Department Convention.

Once complete, you can present the Unit (or District) President a history for the year. It can be in written report form, in a book, 3-Ring Binder, journal, pictorial book or scrapbook. Please share with the Department Historian a copy for its files and consider submitting for History awards.

I look forward to building our History together and sharing it, as well as assisting our Historians to record who we are, what we do and why we matter.

Dara Oliver
 2023 - 2025
Dept. of FL Historian
historian@alaf.org
 321-543-1069