



VFW Auxiliary Department of NH

January 2024 General Information



Historian Media Relations

2023-2024

Happy New Year Everyone!



Keep up the great work and keep posting your event's pictures and upcoming events!

How to Share Your Local Auxiliary Story Ideas to Social Media

- **Promote in Our Local Community**

- News Papers
- Radio
- TV
- Fliers
- Facebook, X (Twitter), TikTok, Instagram

- **What is not Newsworthy?**

- These are all good Calendar of Event, Local Tidbit items, etc. **NOT** Feature Stories.
 - Your meetings
 - Who was elected to various positions in your Local Auxiliary?
 - When you are having a Spaghetti Dinner, Raffle, etc

- **Before you contact anyone to cover an event your Auxiliary is hosting or participating in, answer the following questions:**

- Are local people involved? (yes or no)
- Is the event happening in the near future - within the next month? (yes or no)
- Will non-members be interested in attending or hearing about the event? (yes or no)
- Will the event help the local community? (yes or no) If yes, how? (describe)
- Is the activity or event unique? (yes or no)
- Does the activity or event promote a new idea or concept? (yes or no)

- **What is Newsworthy?**

- Events hosted by an Auxiliary at a VA facility.
- Decorating graves for Veterans Day & Memorial Day; attending Wreaths Across America.
- Assisting families of deployed troops (Hosting holiday events, i.e. Christmas parties, Easter Egg hunts, Trick-or-Treat events, offering financial assistance, etc.)
- Adopting a Unit through the VFW's Veteran and Military Support Program
- Collecting supplies for deployed troops
- Meeting troops at the airport as they return from deployment and helping them complete their journey home.
- Members and youth who are participating in a "Buddy" ® Poppy Drive or POW/MIA remembrance ceremony.

- Scholarship winners' ex: The winner of the Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest.
 - Flag presentations to community groups.
 - Publicizing what your Auxiliary has done to help natural disaster victims.
 - National President's Visit.
 - Repairs on a Veteran's Home/Building a Wheelchair Ramp/etc.
 - Walks/Runs/Events to raise awareness/funds for Veteran Issues/PTSD.
- **Something To Note**
 - While we encourage you to share events/activities that are hosted jointly with the VFW, we are really interested in what your Auxiliary is doing in your community!
 - While our mission is to support veterans, active-duty military and their families, we are two separate organizations.
 - This is applicable for the National VFW Auxiliary Magazine and Facebook page as well as other media.
- **How to get your event covered?**
 - Remember if you want the event to be shown on **WMUR** send me the details.
 - Submit news releases to the media on a regular basis (i.e. monthly).
 - Contact the media when something unique or unexpected happens.
 - Be the contact person the media calls to get information related to VFW Auxiliary and its area of expertise.
 - Maintain contact via email with various TV stations, newspapers and other publications.
 - Recognize media who have published articles by giving them a Communications Award, available free from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters website.
 - **Most Importantly**
 - Be excited about all your activities, events and programs.
- **Who to Contact**
 - At the weekly newspaper, ask for the Editor.
 - At the daily newspaper, ask for the City or Metro Editor, or the Editor or columnist for the section or column where you want your article to run.
 - At radio stations, ask for the News Director, if it is newsworthy; Program Director, for a talk show or the calendar.
 - If you don't know whom to contact, ask the person answering the phone.
 - Keep a list of contacts at local newspaper and radio stations.
- **Suggested Media Contact Timeline**
 - One-Two Months Prior
 - Call and email to secure public service time on TV or radio.
 - Call and email to arrange interviews on TV or radio talk shows.
 - Email to be included on TV or newspaper community calendars.
 - Two Weeks Prior
 - Email news release to newspapers, TV and radio. Mention if there will be a photo or video opportunity.
 - One Week Prior
 - Email second release and Fact Sheet to Assignment Editors at TV and radio stations to encourage them to cover the event. Mention if there will be a photo or video opportunity.

- Three-Five Days Prior
 - Follow-up phone calls and emails to Assignment Editors at TV/radio and Editors at newspapers to see if someone will cover the event. Only do this if it is really an important event, and if there is something that is particularly newsworthy about it. Mention if there will be a photo or video opportunity.

- **Press Release – What to Include**
 - Contact Information
 - Who can this reporter follow up with? Don't forget to include a contact(s) name, email address and phone number.
 - This typically appears at the top of the page above the headline.

 - Headline Tips
 - Keep it Short
 - Use Active Voice
 - Avoid Jargon
 - Write it Last

 - First Sentence – Get their Attention!
 - When you read a book or article, isn't a good beginning what keeps you reading? The same holds true for a press release or subject line in an email when you're pitching your idea to the press. Make this first sentence or email subject interesting and factual.

 - First Paragraph – Be Concise & Get to the Point
 - Always include the who, what, where, when and why
 - **Who** – Who are you talking about? Can you include a quote from them?
 - **What** – What is the event or activity?
 - **Where/When** – Where and when can the reporter cover this story?
 - **Why** – Why would the reporter want to cover this? How is it interesting or unique?

 - Supporting Information
 - A good release will be no longer than one page at best and a page and a half at most. Reporters scan most releases. Less is more! Make sure you've included all of the important whos, whats, wheres, whens and whys.
 - **Spellcheck**, proofread and ask a friend to take a look!
 - Provide relevant links to your website or Facebook page, a copy of the National Facts Leaflet and the National Elevator Speech where writers can learn more about your mission and what you've already accomplished.
 - Is this a story and a photo opportunity? Say so! Include a line at the top of the release like: Photo opportunity: (Tell the news outlet about the photo opportunity here).
 - Getting a photograph with caption information is still great publicity!

- **You Received Coverage – Now What?**
 - Write a thank you note and/or email to the person who covered the activity/event. If they did a great job, copy their supervisor/boss on the email.
 - If photos were taken at the event, ask for them to be emailed to you or the appropriate person at your Auxiliary.

- Obtain the online link to the newspaper story or television/radio interview and post it to your Auxiliary's website and/or Facebook page.
- Email the online link to the newspaper story or television/radio interview to your Department President and National Headquarters. If you received photos, email those as well.
- Print out a copy of the story for your Auxiliary's Historian.

STARS

- Have you chosen your legacy member? Please email me with the legacy member's information that you have chosen to interview.
- Remember this should be fun and the legacy member is a great source of information.
- Photography opens doors to the past, but it also allows a look into the future. A camera is a SAVE button. Let your Auxiliary legacy members become STARS, for without our STARS, our Auxiliary would not exist. This Program Year, connect with a legacy member and complete a three-to-five-minute video interview:
 - Ask why they joined.
 - Please emphasis on bringing the past to life
 - Ask about their favorite memorable moment(s)
 - If your Auxiliary has no legacy members, look to your District or Department
- Submit your video interview to your Department Historian & Media Relations Chairman by March 31, 2024, for judging. The Department Chairman will sign and send a copy of the completed Department winning entry along with the winning video to the National Historian & Media Relations Ambassador by April 30, 2024. The winning video may be shown at National Convention
- **Tips & Tricks**
 - *Be clear when you speak.*
 - *Do not talk too fast.*
 - *Pause at the end of a question so that you don't talk over the interviewee.*
 - *Smile and look interested.*
 - *Sit up straight and have good body language.*
 - *Keep up good eye contact – look at your camera rather than at the screen.*
 - *Make sure the microphone on your phone or camera is close enough to hear.*
 - Test your phone or camera in advance to ensure it's working properly, and you know how to use it.
- **Need some Help?**
 - Give me a call and I will be glad to help!!



January Events to Capture in Pictures

- New Years Day!
- Battle of the Bulge (01/25)
- Martin Luther King (01/15)
- Meat Raffles / Dinners / Socials

Don't forget to keep posting on your Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and all other social media sites.

- Tags me on your Facebook Post with Pictures
 - Using **#NHVFWAUXHISTORIAN** & **#VFWAUXHISTORIAN**
- Email me Photos of your Events!
- Send me your event information to be sent to WMUR / Union Leader / Patch
- Request me to attend an event.

Best regards,

Julie DeRubeis – Dept of NH VFW Auxiliary Historian / Media Relations Chair 2023-2024

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