

2017-2018 American Legion Auxiliary Programs Action Plan

Department Historian

The Historian's purpose is to accurately record the accomplishments and significant events that occur throughout the year on all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas.

Department of Texas Historian

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Historians

I. Programs and Activities

It should be the responsibility of the Historian to record the activities throughout the year:

1. The Historian should develop a system to archive important communications such as newsletters, handbooks, guidebooks, brochures, and program information.
2. Include current events that impact the American Legion Auxiliary and its programs/projects in the written history of the year.
3. Collect information about famous Auxiliary members.
 - a. Include information such as members' full names, years of ALA membership, what they did, who they are, and why they're famous. Also include where you found the information.
 - b. All information should be sent to Department Of Texas Historian as it is collected.
4. Encourage Senior and Junior Historians to participate in the Veterans History Project. (<http://www.loc.gov/vets/kit.html>).
 - a. Work with the Junior Activities Chairman to promote the Veterans History Project through social media, emails, and during meetings.
 - b. Stress the importance of collecting the history and the ease of participating in the project through all communications.
 - c. Highlight details of the project on the ALA Historian's Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ALAHistorians/members/>).
5. Participate in and promote the "Members Remember" History Project and The Juniors Patch Program.
6. Each unit is encouraged to collect and write their history. Reminders about the importance of writing a history will be issued throughout the year.

Department Senior History Contest - It is strongly recommended that each Unit senior historian participate in the Department Senior History Contest. (See “Rules and Score Sheet.”)

Department Junior History Contest - It is strongly recommended that each Unit Junior Historian participate in the Department Junior History Contest. (See “Rules and Score Sheet.”)

II. Annual Reporting

An annual report is not required; however, a year-end summary and mid-year progress report are suggested as tools to gauge the direction and effectiveness of department activities. Both narratives should be sent to Department of Texas Historian February 7, 2018 for mid-year and April 15, 2018 for year-end. Contact information is provided on the front page of this program Plan.

III. Historian Awards

1. Senior History Awards

A Certificate of Participation will be given to each Unit, District, and Division Historian for submitting a Senior History Book.

In each of the four Divisions, a Certificate of Merit and Award will be given to the Unit Historian, District Historian, and Division Historian, respectively, for submitting the best Senior History Book.

2. Junior History Awards

A Certificate of Participation will be given to each Unit, District, and Division Honorary Junior Historian for submitting a Junior History Book.

In each of the four Divisions, a Certificate of Merit and Award will be given to the Unit, District, and Division Honorary Junior Historians, respectively, for submitting the best Junior History Book.

IV. Resources

1. *National Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules* of the ALA
2. *Policies and Procedures* of the American Legion Auxiliary
3. Members Remember how-to sheet (see attached)
4. Rules and Score Sheet for Department Senior and Junior History Contests (see attached)
5. Department history form for the national president’s visit (see attached)
6. Junior History Patch (See Junior Activities Programs Action Plan)
7. Veterans History Project: <http://www.loc.gov/vets/kit.html>



HOW TO RECORD YOUR UNIT'S HISTORY

Objective:

Write a Unit's history.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

It's important for every Unit to have a yearly history written. Here are some tips on what to include:

- 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.
- Be sure to start recording events as soon as the Unit president is sworn in. Include her theme for the year and how it relates to the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary.
- Department Presidents' visits to Units are important, so be sure to also include examples of what she did to support veterans, military, their families and communities.
- If the National President visits your department, please include in your history how she helped your Department focus on the American Legion Auxiliary's mission.
- Include all member activities as part of the Unit's history, not just activities of the President.
- Record special events that occur during the year. Examples:
 - Your city or county gets a declaration for poppy month.
 - Your Unit conducts a big fundraiser for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.
 - Record any current events that affect American Legion Auxiliary members, and include information about the Auxiliary's response to an 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 gets media coverage (i.e., a PSA on the radio or press release in the paper); include the details in your history.
- Pick out impressive statistics from committees. Examples:
 - Your AEF funds greatly increase.
 - You send more girls to ALA Girls State.
- End the history with information about your department convention that ends the year.

Once complete, present the history of your Unit to the State of Texas Historian.



HOW TO RECORD AND POST TO “MEMBER’S REMEMBER” HISTORY PROJECT

Contact Information for Questions:

historian@ALAforVeterans.org or national historian (see Programs Action Plan for contact information)

Objective:

Record the American Legion Auxiliary's history through the eyes of its members.

Background Information

The history of the American Legion Auxiliary begins in November 1919 and continues with you. The organization's history, like any other history, is more than names and dates. It is about its membership and how it developed the ALA's programs and projects to fulfill our mission of serving veterans, military, and their families who sacrifice so much for this country of ours.

A written history can only tell so much. However, when an organization's history is told through the eyes of its membership, everyone learns a great deal more about who we are, what we do, and why we matter.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Here are some tips:

- This is a two-person project, so find someone to assist you. This is a good time to enlist the help of your Junior members and/or college students due to their experience with technology.
 - Find long time members of the Auxiliary and ask them to share their stories in a video. These stories can be about:
 - A special project; ○ A particular highlight during her years of membership; ○ How many generations of her family have been members and why; ○ If a chartered member, her experience in starting the unit.
 - Find a location where it is quiet and where there will be no interruptions.
 - Record with smartphones and devices. Please keep in mind that your video file must be either a .mov, .avi, .mpeg, or a .wmv file extension.
 - Each recording should be no longer than five minutes in length. You may make more than one. Cover one topic in each video.
 - Post the video on YouTube. An instructional video on how to upload is located at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7iUiftbKU>.
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- Go to YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com>;
- Give the video the following title: ALA Dept. of (two letter abbreviation for your state) Unit_____Members Remember;
- Provide a description and tags that will help people locate the files easily. These will make it easier for others to locate the videos; ○ Under "Category," click on "Nonprofits & Activism"; ○ Under "Privacy," click on "Share your video with the world";
- Click "S



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