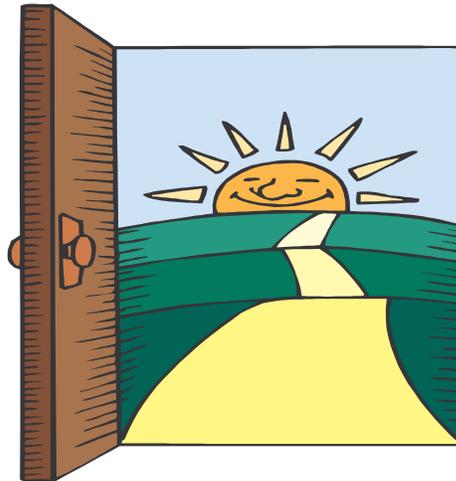




# American Legion Auxiliary

## Unit Development & Revitalization



A Unit's Road to Success

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# Unit Development & Revitalization

**Unit Development & Revitalization (UD & R)** may be a perplexing title for an American Legion Auxiliary program. However, when we dissect the name, the title of the program becomes self-explanatory. First, we have Unit Development, the starting of new Units. Secondly, we have Unit Revitalization, giving new life to Units that are on a decline in membership or experiencing other problems, which are causing stagnation of the Unit. Unit Development & Revitalization is all about finding new members with new ideas that breathe life into our Units which leads to growth.

**Unit Development & Revitalization** is more than just organizing new Units and trying to help Units hold on to charters. Unit Development & Revitalization is also about providing mentors for struggling Units, providing training for new members, and finding leaders to replace long-time chairmen and officers. Unit Development & Revitalization is about suggesting ways that new members can be given opportunities to be active. Unit Development & Revitalization is about trying new ideas and exploring new ways to get better attendance at Unit meetings. Unit Development & Revitalization is **not** about solving personality conflicts in the Units. However, through "conflict resolution" training, Unit members learn to solve their own problems.

# Developing a Unit UD & R Team

- A. The Unit President should select two or more highly interested, motivated and knowledgeable members to comprise a Unit team. One is to be appointed chairman.
- B. Team members do not have to be Unit officers (either past or present). There are many dedicated members who do not aspire to these high offices and this is an excellent way to utilize their talents. Ask the following . . .
- Are they knowledgeable of Auxiliary programs?
  - Are they knowledgeable of Auxiliary benefits?
  - Are they comfortable speaking to strangers?
  - Do they present a positive, personal image?
  - Are they physically able to do canvassing?
  - Are they willing to visit members?
- C. The Unit UD & R Team will receive training from the District or Department Team who will provide additional support as needed.
- D. Unit UD & R Team:
1. Communicates monthly with District/Department Chairman to inform her of Unit activity.
  2. Provides training for additional Unit volunteers assisted by District/Department Team.

# How To Be a Good Chairman

Any journey takes planning, but planning alone is not enough. As a Unit Development & Revitalization Chairman, you need to “Be” many things.

## **Be Knowledgeable**

A good chairman should be knowledgeable about the total program. The Unit UD&R Chairman should know the key people of the American Legion Auxiliary at the District and Department levels.

## **Be Available**

Make yourself available to answer questions. Be prepared to talk with people. If you are out when someone calls, always make the effort to return their call. Sometimes you will encounter questions you cannot answer. Be wise enough to say, “I do not know,” then find the answer, and get back with the person.

## **Be Practical**

To succeed, be practical. As chairman, there will be many demands on your time and energy. One person can only do so much. It is impossible to do every single task yourself. Delegate tasks to others on your committee. Remember to praise your committee members for a job well done.

## **Be Cooperative**

There is always room for **change** and improvement. As our society is so complex, it is extremely difficult to meet the needs of everybody. It is imperative for us to cooperate with other organizations and agencies. Do this to reach as many people as you can.

## **Be Energetic**

You must demonstrate to others that you possess the capacity to do the job. You must first motivate yourself to the highest degree possible. A clear understanding of the program’s purposes will help you to motivate others.

## **Be Dedicated**

To have a successful year, you must be dedicated. **Your dedication is the key** to a successful program. Dedication is maintaining your own level of motivation and enthusiasm, even when it appears your committee members have misplaced theirs. Your dedication gives you strength to carry on.

# Getting Back To Basics

The future of the American Legion Auxiliary is determined by what Unit members do today. Where will your Unit be in five years? What kind of investment in the future are **YOU** willing to make? Concerned Auxiliary members can promote the growth and well being of our Units. **We must get back to the Basics**—it's time to go “back” to the future.

We aspire to serve God and Country. We are an organization with goals to do good for veterans, youth, and our communities. Anyone who enters the American Legion Auxiliary, for whatever reason, is entitled to respect and courtesy. Do we **need** to like everyone in our Unit? Of course not, we are all individuals and our likes and dislikes are what set us apart. **But we do have a responsibility to treat each member of our Auxiliary with respect.**

When someone new enters your Unit, do you acknowledge them and make them feel welcome? When someone unknown comes to a meeting, do you leave them sitting alone? Are you part of a small group that sits together at meetings? Do you treat others as you would like to be treated? Do you snub others? Do you judge? Do you gossip?

At your next Unit meeting or function, introduce yourself to someone alone or unknown to you. Find out something about them even if it is nothing more than their name and where they live. At each meeting, make a point to talk to someone unknown to you or someone that you do not know very well.

Consider how you appear outside our organization. What message do you send to prospective members? Consider how you appear to those just joining? What message are you sending?

**Look deep into YOUR heart for ways to strengthen YOUR own Unit as the American Legion Auxiliary searches for ways to grow as an organization.**

# Basic Research

To better relate to a prospective member, do some research on why members join. Answer the When, Where, What, Who, and Why to help you recall why you joined the American Legion Auxiliary.

Use this page to survey Unit members. Their responses will reveal useful information. You will learn where your Unit has succeeded and discover areas that need improvement. Also, responses to the survey should provide a guide for future recruitment of members.

1. **When** did you hear your first message about the American Legion Auxiliary?

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2. **Where** did you hear it?

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3. **What** attracted you?

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4. **Who** did you connect with?

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5. **Why** did you join and become active?

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- Did you join as a volunteer in service to others?
- Did you join to find out what YOU could GIVE to the Auxiliary?
- Did you join for recognition and power?
- Did you join for what YOU could get FROM the Auxiliary?



## Do You Know Me?

It amuses me to think how the American Legion Auxiliary spends so much time looking for new members—when I was there all the time. Do you even remember me?

I'm the woman who came to every meeting, but nobody paid any attention to me. I tried several times to be friendly, but everyone seemed to have her own friends to talk to and sit with. I sat down among some unfamiliar faces several times, but they didn't pay much attention to me. In fact, they looked at me like I should not be sitting at their table.

When I joined the American Legion Auxiliary, I hoped the Unit President would ask me to work on one of the committees. I wanted to somehow participate and contribute to the Unit. In fact, I would have washed dishes if I had been asked. But no one did.

Finally, because of illness, I missed a meeting. The next month no one asked me where I had been. I guessed it didn't matter very much whether I was there or not. So, when the next meeting came, I just stayed home and watched a good TV program.

Do you know me? You might say I am a good person, a good family woman. I hold a responsible job, and I love my community and my country.

Do you know who else I am? I'm the member who will probably never go back to another Unit meeting. And someday soon, I'll wonder what reason I have to renew my membership in the American Legion Auxiliary.

## Is This Woman a Member of Your Unit?



## How to be a Unit Mentor

Mentoring is an invaluable service we give our new members and our successors in the American Legion Auxiliary. What is mentoring? Mentoring is the art of teaching, counseling, listening to and advising others so they can be successful.

A mentor is a knowledgeable person who is willing to give her time to explain the programs of the Auxiliary. A mentor provides encouragement and guidance and is enthusiastic about teaching others. A mentor is patient and understands that a new member may be hesitant and unsure of herself.

How do you mentor a new member or a member wishing to become active in the Unit?

- Sit with the Unit member during meetings and get to know her.
- Offer to car-pool together to meetings, if feasible.
- Introduce her to others, particularly to committee chairmen of any committees in which she has an interest.
- Encourage her participation in Unit activities.
- Answer any questions she may have about procedures.
- Answer any questions she may have about the programs of the Auxiliary.
- Follow up if she misses a meeting. Let her know that she was missed and send her any handouts or notes from the meeting.
- Stay in touch. Call her and send birthday, get well cards, etc.
- Socialize with her if it agreeable to both of you.
- Invite her to attend District meetings and Department workshops.

**Share what you know—Be a mentor!**

# How to Cultivate Active Members

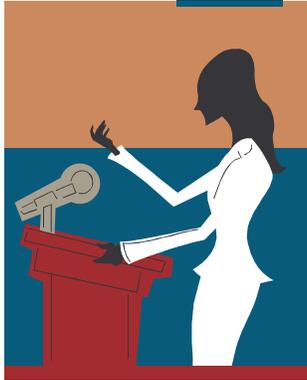
## 1. Get Members to Attend Meetings

Members may or may not attend meetings. They may attend meetings only occasionally or they may attend social meetings only. They may only want to receive a newsletter or mailing from the Unit. They may communicate with others by telephone, getting and giving information about Unit activities. You may never hear from some members except they may pay their dues or send donations regularly. Nevertheless, these members are your Unit and you must never forget, without them, there would be no American Legion Auxiliary.

Your efforts to get members to attend Unit meetings are just that—efforts. The members control whether or not they choose to attend. You only control your efforts to motivate them to attend. So, if you make no effort at all, there is almost a 100% probability that no one will come.

## 2. Develop a Program to Offer Members

How do you motivate members to become **active** members? You need to develop a balanced program to offer to the members of your Unit. There are three important components of a balanced program: (1) meetings, (2) newsletter, and (3) personal contact.



## Meetings

There will be meetings for those who want to or can be influenced to attend them. It's very important to have a permanent place so members know where the meeting will be held. It's too confusing when the meeting is held at one place one month, moved to another location the next month, or held at different locations each month.

Carry a membership brochure with you or a business card. It should list a contact person, time, place, and date of meeting for your Unit. When you run into members who have not been attending meetings at the grocery store, at the mall, doctor's offices, etc., invite them to a meeting. Give them the brochure or the business card. Make sure the Unit membership knows about your meetings—use all public relations outlets to get your message out.

A member will not travel 25 minutes to attend a meeting that lasts 15 minutes, nor will she travel 25 minutes for a meeting that lasts 2 hours! Control the length of your meetings with a printed agenda. If you cannot get copies of a printed agenda for everyone, print the agenda on a large flip chart or poster paper and display it at the front of the room. (One member asked what to do about bickering at the meeting. It was suggested that she have an agenda printed or displayed for all to see. Then she could point to the agenda and tell them that “bickering” was not on the agenda and it was not going to be taken up in the meeting!)

# Newsletter



There will be an information-filled newsletter for those who won't or can't attend meetings. When the Unit Secretary or Membership Chairman sends out membership cards, she should include a letter thanking the member for joining or renewing and invite them to a meeting. Send new members a short note, hand-written on pretty stationery or on a blank greeting card thanking them for joining the Auxiliary.

## **Units can afford a newsletter!**

The newsletter can be sent with membership cards. It's going to cost \$.37 to mail the membership card, so include all the information you can in the mailing. A newsletter can be a list of future activities or a report of what was done the previous year to benefit veterans, children and the community. Always give the member some information about the Unit; there just might be something in the newsletter that she's interested in or she might want to help with the activity. Newsletters can be as simple as a hand-written note in a blank card listing upcoming activities, speakers or programs. Always include a reminder about the meeting date and time. A report of each meeting should be included in the newsletter or as part of future mailings. The goal is to motivate the reader to wish she had been there. Do not ever pass on an opportunity to give members information.



## **Personal Contact**

There should be a member visitation program to reach members through personal contact. **Former members have said that the main reason they did not renew was because no one contacted them after they were mailed their membership card.** Personalize your written correspondence with members; short notes should be hand-written. Remember long-time members with birthday cards or notes of appreciation. Say thank you for all successes. Write notes to loyal members who have not been attending meetings for a while. Buy or make a pretty blank card for loyal members and include a hand-written message such as:

**Volunteering without you just won't do!  
Since you've been gone, the number of veterans has grown.  
So come back, brighten up a veteran's day—and ours.  
Please come back and bring a friend.  
We miss you.**

Unit leaders have to make members feel special and appreciated. Give members a phone call or make a personal visit when you think it is appropriate for certain situations. Two other ways to make personal contact are through calling committees and a “Welcome Women” committee, both of which are discussed on the following pages.

There are simply too many good reasons for members to miss Unit meetings from time to time, such as conflicts with family and community events, illness, etc. The key to saving a Unit and seeing it through low member attendance is for the members to remain FLEXIBLE and POSITIVE. The kiss of death for any Unit is to suspend meetings for several months at a time or to stop having meetings. Adjust the Unit's agenda, try new methods, but **do not give up.**

# How to get Members Active

What you want are **active** members who come to meetings and those you can recruit to hold other volunteer jobs. This is extremely challenging because now you are competing with all the other demands on their personal lives and are asking them to give the Auxiliary their time and effort.

1. **Invite them to meetings.**

The initial challenge is to get members to come to their FIRST meeting. If you can get a member to come to a meeting—even once—you have an opportunity to market your Unit's programs to them personally and motivate them to continue attending meetings. The first contact you have with a Unit member should be accompanied by a personal invitation to come to the next meeting. The personal invitation should be followed by a reminder call. If the member doesn't come, call again and invite her to the following meeting. If she says that she doesn't drive at night, offer her a ride. If you really want members to attend Unit meetings, you have to put forth an effort.

2. **Offer attractive meetings with program, speaker, social time, refreshments, etc.**

Simply expecting members to attend meetings just because they belong doesn't work. Meetings must have something interesting and worthwhile to attract members. You must sell the Auxiliary program, the social benefits, the membership benefits, and the opportunity to help others. Have a special program at each meeting. Program speakers are relatively easy to get. Set aside time for members to socialize before or after the meeting.

3. **Give members positive reinforcement.**

First and foremost, at every meeting you have to make each member feel their attendance is appreciated. Give each member positive reinforcement. You should talk with each attendee, face-to-face, if only for a few moments, to look in their eyes and tell them how glad you are to see them and how much you appreciate their coming out for the meeting. Speak in positive terms about what will happen at the next meeting and tell them that you hope to see them there too. This has the added benefit of helping leaders to get to know members better. When members attend their **FIRST** Unit meeting, they should receive special treatment. The Unit President needs to give them a little welcoming speech saying how pleased she is that they are attending the meeting. Invite the **first-time** members to tell the Unit something about themselves. Make sure that someone talks to and socializes with the members who are attending for the first time. Make sure that the members do not sit alone! The goal is for the members to leave thinking, "Everyone was so friendly and helpful!" Don't forget to show appreciation to long-time members and reward them for their successes. Say "Thank You" often.

**(Role play making a welcome speech to a first-time member.)**

4. **Get feedback from members.**

Members who keep coming to meetings do so because they get something out of them. Talk to these members and find out what they value about the meetings. Talk to people who have stopped coming and try to find out why. Ask them what might bring them back. **Think like a business owner. These members are your customers. You want them to buy your products. If they stop buying, as a business owner, you would certainly want to know why and how you could fix things. A business owner wants to keep all loyal customers.**

5. **Give work assignments.**

Another way to encourage members to continue coming to meetings is to involve them in some special way. For example, you may want to get two or three members for each meeting whose mission is to talk to members who are sitting alone, to make sure that no member sits alone, and to get new members socializing with others. Try in some innovative and fun way to separate the small group or clique that always sits together. Everyone you can persuade to bring refreshments will attend. Every member that you can persuade to come and give a brief report of some community project will attend. Assign a special project to new members to get them active (make sure it is something they like to do). Don't be afraid to ask Unit members for help. Often, it's not that difficult. Many members are eager to contribute in some way. All you have to do is ask.

6. **Appoint a calling committee.**

A way some Units keep attendance up at meetings is to appoint a small calling committee. Each committee member is given a list of names and telephone numbers, and asked to call everyone on their list to remind them of the meeting. The impact of the calls can be enhanced if the caller tells them about the speaker or program that is scheduled. This is a reminder call only - **Unit does not solicit dues or donations during these calls.** You want to get members to attend meetings, so don't drive them away by asking for money! (One organization reported using this method for 30 years and that it was very successful.)

7. **Establish "Welcome Women" for personal contact.**

Set up a committee of "Welcome Women" (or whatever you want to name the committee) to make personal visits. If you can get a husband/wife team to make visits together, this will show Legion family unity. For a new member, explain what the Unit does in the community, provide a benefits sheet, the meeting schedule, and newsletters. **This committee does not solicit donations or dues.** The purpose of this committee is to welcome new members, explain programs of the Auxiliary, give invitations to meetings, and to show that the Auxiliary is a caring organization.



Make the American Legion Auxiliary look like both a meaningful and fun group! STRIKE UP THE BAND!

# Personal Contact



Do not let the dues notice sent by National be the only contact with Unit members. If you are going to revitalize your Unit and get more renewals, you have to get back to **personally** contacting members. Make phone calls and personal visits.

Contacting members by phone is good, but nothing takes the place of a **personal visit**. Call or send a note to let members or non-renewals know that 2 or 3 Unit members will be in the area making visits and may stop by. (Appendix, short letters, page 11) Members, or former members, should not be surprised by strangers knocking on their doors. Always carry some American Legion Auxiliary identification, membership applications, information about Auxiliary programs, and Member Benefits sheet.

## **When Making Personal Contact with Members/Non-Renewals:**

- The most important thing to do is to **listen**. People just want someone to listen to their concerns. Find out what the problems were and why the member did not renew.
- Tie their interest to American Legion Auxiliary programs.
- Provide information about meeting place, time, projects, programs of the Unit. You should tell about benefits and provide brochures.
- Invite them to come back to the Auxiliary. (You will need applications)
- **Thank them.**
- Ask for leads (Are there family members eligible to join; is the neighbor eligible; do they have any female relatives in the Armed Services?)
- **Thank them again.**

## **Personalize Your Correspondence**

Letters should be personalized. Renewal letters and short notes should be hand-written on pretty stationery. Never use form letters where you just fill in the blanks.

# WORDS

Talk in everlasting words, and dedicate them all to me . . .  
It's only words, and words are all I have, to take your heart away.  
"Words" by Bee Gees

## **"Talk In Everlasting Words"**

Use words to attract members. Learn how to talk to prospective members. "Word of mouth" is an effective way to recruit new members. Enthusiastic, happy members giving out information to people who ask about their volunteer work are the Auxiliary's greatest publicity tool.

Be prepared to talk to everybody; however, you must also develop skills in the technique of active listening. When talking to a prospective member, ask open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are ones that require more than just a "yes" or "no" answer. You want to ask questions that require the prospective member to talk about themselves, their interests, concerns, etc. At a large social event it much better to talk with a smaller number of people, thus having a quality conversation with each one.

Many members of the Auxiliary, when talking to prospective members, talk about the work or tasks the members can perform. For example: "You can work on the parade float, help with the banquet, etc." A more effective message is to include information about the advantages and benefits of becoming a member. Use words that grab the prospective member's attention, interest and desire. Also, give them the "This is the American Legion Auxiliary," brochure and a business card. (Business card, page 19)

## **"It's Only Words"**

How do you gain great free publicity for the Auxiliary? Newsletters, flyers, brochures, business cards, and other written material are all means of getting your message out to the community. Be creative! Use one of the most read sections in a newspaper, the letters to the editor. It's easy to get your recruiting message in there and it's free!

Use the following words in your written messages:

earn	profit	win	discover	new	love
gain	health	save	achieve	get	you
easy	results	avoid	guarantee		

Experts say these words have been found to "spark" the most interest from people.

## **"Words Are All I Have To Take Your Heart Away"**

In order for the Unit members to learn the language of recruitment, have them practice using the words listed below to describe the benefits and programs of the American Legion Auxiliary. Use as many of the words as possible in the same sentence.

gain	health	save	achieve	earn
win	profit	new	discover	love
easy	results	get	avoid	you
guarantee				

Example: Through our Legislative program you will discover important issues and gain a new understanding of them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Play a game similar to “Name that Tune” where the person naming the tune with the smallest number of notes won the game. Call your game “Describe the Auxiliary” with the winner being the person who has written a sentence using the highest number of the words listed above. Award a prize—make this activity both educational and fun!



## Elevator Speech

As you enter an elevator, a woman asks about the Auxiliary emblem which is visible on your shirt.

(You have one minute to explain.)

**This is what you can say:**

“The American Legion Auxiliary is the world’s largest, patriotic women’s group. Our nearly 1 million members are women who are either veterans themselves or

immediate relatives of American Legion members or deceased veterans of war. We were founded in 1919 to serve the needs of American veterans and their families. Today, Auxiliary volunteers work for many worthwhile causes that benefit veterans, youth and communities. I have a brochure that explains the Auxiliary in more detail.”

Hand the brochure, “This is the American Legion Auxiliary,” to the woman before she departs the elevator. Always carry the brochure where you can get it at a moment’s notice. On it make sure that you have a label with the name, address, and telephone number of the local contact person. Also, you should have a business card to give to prospective members. Along with pertinent information, you should list some contributions your Unit has made to the community.

## Sample Business Card

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
Ceredo-Kenova Unit 93  
302 Eighth Street, Kenova, WV 25530  
Meetings on Third Thursday, 7:30 P.M.  
Contact: Shirley Davis (304) 444-1234

**FRONT OF CARD**

**Did you know that Ceredo-Kenova Unit 93:**

Donated \$2400 to Huntington VAMC  
Sponsored four girls to Girls State  
Awarded four scholarships totaling \$2000  
Donated Americanism materials and flags to schools

**BACK OF CARD**



## Renewal Phone Call

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Name) (Name and Number)  
here in \_\_\_\_\_. Are you \_\_\_\_\_?  
(Location) (Member's Name)

The reason I'm calling is we noticed you have not renewed your membership in the American Legion Auxiliary for the current year. Your membership is very important to us and we want to make sure everything is all right.

- If there is a problem, listen and see if the Auxiliary can be of help, or if a problem can be solved.
- If they have paid their dues, check it out and get back to them.
- If there is no problem, suggest times and dates you could come by and pick up her dues.
  - Could I come by in the next 30 minutes to renew your membership, or would tomorrow about 10:00 a.m. be better?
- Confirm the response by repeating it, and also confirm her address with directions to her home.
- Thank her for her time no matter what the outcome!



## Role Playing

Fears are based on assumptions about the person on the other side of the door or on the other end of the line. Put yourself in that position and go for it.

- Make a list of the fears you have when you call or knock on doors. What is the worst thing that can happen?
- When you face your fears, they will become less scary. This will help you to be prepared for what may actually happen during canvassing/recruiting.

### Reasons people say **Yes**:

- They like the person asking
- Believe in the program or organization
- Get something for the money
- Feeling generous
- Know their dues will be used well
- Feels guilty saying no
- Wants to support troops
- Knows someone in the organization
- No time to volunteer so joins just for the number

### Reasons people say **No**:

- Does not believe in the program or organization
- Organization has a bad reputation
- Can't afford it
- Bad mood that day
- Belongs to too many other organizations
- Not sure what the dues will be spent on
- Person asking is too pushy

A negative answer is usually not the fault of the person asking. There are usually reasons outside our control or knowledge. Hopefully, taking time to look at the reasons realistically will help with the barriers around asking someone to join. Think about what you would say and why. The worst that can happen is she might say NO. If you are asked a question you cannot answer, respond by saying, "I don't know, but I will find out for you." Then get back to her.



## Form a Renewal Team

Create a Membership Renewal Team. The team should be made up of two or three highly motivated Unit members whose only job is to focus on membership renewals. They would be expected to track down those who have not yet renewed and make sure they remain members of the American Legion Auxiliary. These renewal team members should organize postcard campaigns, make phone calls, write letters, or knock on doors to contact non-renewals.

The Membership Renewal Team might also want to hold a Renewal Open House at the beginning of a new year to collect dues. It should be a special occasion, lasting one to two hours depending on the size of your Unit. It's not expensive to make copies of a computer-generated flyer or invitation to send members. Flyers should also be posted in various locations, especially in the Post home and on community bulletin boards. A flyer/invitation must contain pertinent information such as the sample below.

**YOU ARE INVITED!**  
**RENEWAL OPEN HOUSE**  
**WHEN:** September 10, 2005  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Your local Auxiliary Unit  
Street address  
Town, State  
Phone Number  
**WHO:** Members of local Unit

An exclusive for valued members like you  
Renewal made quick and easy  
Door prizes will be awarded  
Food/snacks will be served  
Music/Entertainment

**RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP . . .**  
take advantage of the many benefits provided by the American Legion Auxiliary.

# UNIT REVITALIZATION

## PLAN DEVELOPMENT

1. **Commitment:** There must be commitment from members in a Unit who want to reorganize/revitalize their Unit. Without commitment, nothing positive will occur. Commitment involves:
  - A. Sacrificing time, giving of self
  - B. Willingness to change old habits
  - C. Desire/courage to try something new
  - D. Letting others hold office or chairmanship
  - E. Removing existing “cliques”
  - F. Determining desire—Do Unit members have desire to change?
2. **Recruiter Profile**
  - A. How do you look?
  - B. Are you knowledgeable about programs and benefits?
  - C. Are you energetic, enthusiastic, flexible?
  - D. Can you talk “off the cuff” or “on your feet”?
  - E. Does not have to be a Past President or officer
3. **Work as an American Legion Family**
  - A. Working together enables more to be accomplished
  - B. Is Post home inviting to prospective members and/or family members?
    1. Is a smoky bar the first thing one sees when entering Post?
    2. Are visitors and prospective members welcomed?
  - C. Have “together” functions—installation, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Legion birthday
4. **Goals**
  - A. When revitalizing an existing Unit, there must be goals
  - B. Set a goal for number of former members/renewals you want to enroll
  - C. Set a realistic goal; you want to be successful
  - D. Establish a time frame—completion time from start to finish should be no more than two (2) months
5. **Networking**
  - A. Know which organizations are active in your community
  - B. Talk with members, find out their activities, how successful are they, learn from them
  - C. Perhaps Unit can do project with one of these organizations

**CONCLUSION:** If you are to be successful in your efforts to revitalize your existing Unit, remember the three **A’s of success: APTITUDE, ATTITUDE, ACTION.**

# Steps for Revitalization Effort

- I. **Canvassing Date**  
Select dates and times for canvassing effort; weekend is probably best. Be aware of unsafe areas.
- II. **Publicity**
  - A. Have efforts publicized in Post and/or Unit newsletters two months prior to canvassing.
  - B. Two weeks prior to canvassing have newspaper coverage. Display posters/flyers in the area (community bulletin board, grocery stores, church bulletin board, etc.).
- III. **Post Roster**  
Ask Post Adjutant if membership roster is on the computer and if so, that it be provided to a UD&R Team member. If Post cannot provide roster, ask Adjutant to secure from Department Adjutant a membership roster in Alpha and zip code order with home phone numbers. Check to be sure phone numbers are correct; make corrections if necessary.
- IV. **Letters**
  - A. Secure mailing labels from Post/Department or make your own.
  - B. Letters are to be mailed two-three weeks in advance of the canvassing effort; allows time for letters with wrong addresses to be returned.
  - C. Letter should be mailed 2-3 weeks prior to canvassing to Post members whose wives are not Auxiliary members, members of Department Headquarters Unit in the canvassing zip code area, Unit non-renewals for last three years for canvassing zip code area (secure list from Unit or Department Headquarters).
  - D. Letter to Post members from Commander and President can be found in Appendix, page 4.
  - E. Letter to Auxiliary members from Unit President can be found in Appendix, page 5.
  - F. Sample letter to past Auxiliary members from Unit President and UD&R Chairman inviting them to rejoin can be found in Appendix, page 6.

V. **Brochure**

From Department Headquarters get the brochure, "This is the American Legion Auxiliary" and in space provided on back, place label with name, address and phone number of contact person, plus date, time and location of Reorganization meeting. Get copies of the Auxiliary Member Benefits sheet, fold and insert in brochure.

VI. **Maps**

- A. Map should include street names, map grids and house numbers if possible. Check Chamber of Commerce, library, office supply, drug store, post office, book store, etc. Map areas may need to be enlarged.
- B. Personnel and supplies needed:
1. At least two members working as a team to do mapping
  2. Address list of Legion members (Post roster)
  3. Several copies of map of the area to be canvassed
  4. Several different colors of high-lighter pens
- C. Mapping tasks to accomplish prior to "door-to-door" canvassing
1. Make copies of Post roster. The number needed will be determined by the number of canvassing teams.
  2. Make copies of Unit roster and non-renewals for past three years. Cross-reference with Post roster for duplications.
  3. Place a number by each member's name on roster that lives locally (in canvassing area). Number the names consecutively 1, 2, 3 . . . etc.
  4. As you find each address on the map (street name and close proximity), put their corresponding number on the map where they live. Be sure it is clear enough to read.
  5. After you have located all the members on the map, make a grid and divide canvassing area into sections based on the number of teams. This should be an area that can be worked in about three hours.
  6. Use a different color marker for each section. Each section or area will have its own color or highlighted, numbered spots on the map according to the names on the list.
  7. Make each team a list complete with names and addresses for every member to be visited by that team.
  8. Combine the team lists and make a Master List. UD&R team leader should have master roster and map for each area.

VII. **Day of Canvassing**

- A. Meet at designated time at Post or other meeting place.
- B. Determine number of homes to be visited.
- C. Determine number of teams that will be needed.
- D. Each team should consist of at least 2 members and it would be better to have three or four per car. (Never have just one person per car)
- E. Know the amount of Senior and Junior Unit dues, (includes National/Department/District/County per capita).
- F. Know day, time and location of Unit meeting.
- G. Have open house at Post or other meeting place and have 2-3 people there to talk with walk-ins. Have Auxiliary, Legion and SAL program pamphlets/brochures and membership applications available.

VIII. **Visiting Homes**

- A. Wear appropriate clothing, make a good first impression.
- B. Wear visible name tag with Auxiliary emblem on it.
- C. Check roster to know name of individual so you can call by name.
- D. Two people go to door, with one doing most of the talking (if both talk, it could become confusing), take brochure (leave with individual or in door if no one is home).
- E. Return to car and give information to one responsible for recording, i.e. interested, not interested, call back, need ride to meeting, etc. It is essential for this information to be recorded for each home visited.
- F. Return to Post or other meeting place at designated time for all teams to report results. Turn in all completed applications, money for dues and notes you take. UD & R team member will compile notes and give to the Unit President.

IX. **Follow-Up**

Follow-up at a later date on those not home, those who asked to be called and reminded of meeting, those who might need a ride, etc.

# MASTER LIST

Team Name	Post Member's Name	Post Member's Address
	(Numbers by names correspond to their address on the map)	
<b><u>YELLOW TEAM</u></b>		
#1		
#4		
#8		
#9		
#16		
#17		
#21		
<b><u>BLUE TEAM</u></b>		
#2		
#3		
#6		
#12		
#19		
#22		
<b><u>GREEN TEAM</u></b>		
#7		
#10		
#11		
#13		
#14		
#15		
#20		
<b>PINK SPOT:</b> Meeting Location and time after canvassing		