A GUIDE TO HOSTING A VHP DAY

Planning:

- You may want to form a committee and assign tasks to various members.
- Select a date and time for the Veterans History Project (VHP) Day, and begin planning months in advance.
- Three categories of participants are needed: veterans, interviewers, and transcribers (certified court reporters).
- Secure an adequately sized, quiet room(s) in which to hold the interviews.
- Consider what the audio visual (A/V) equipment needs will be for the interviews.
- Create a marketing plan.
- Determine who will be responsible for returning the completed packets containing the transcripts, audio files, required VHP forms from the Library of Congress Field Kit, etc. to NCRF (the court reporter or the event organizer?) and make that known to all participants in advance.
- Plan refreshments (optional).
- Plan a ceremony for participating veterans (optional).
- Liaison with the National Court Reporters Foundation for VHP materials and Transcript Formatting Guidelines from the Library of Congress.

Print Materials:

Print VHP Field Kits from [http://www.loc.gov/vets/pdf/fieldkit-2013.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/vets/pdf/fieldkit-2013.pdf) and email this link in advance to the participants when possible.

Create a Schedule with Time Slots for Interviews:

(Sample Schedule)

- 8:45 - 9:15  Arrival – set out refreshments (optional)
- 9:30 - 10:30 Conduct Interviews
- 10:45 - 11:45 Conduct Interviews
- 12:00 - 1:15  Lunch Break
- 1:30 - 2:30 Conduct Interviews
- 2:45 - 3:45  Conduct Interviews
- 4:00  Closing Ceremony (optional)
**Court Reporters:**

Contact your state’s court reporters association for assistance in recruiting professional court reporters to transcribe veterans’ stories during the VHP day. You may want to recruit one or two more than you think you will need in case you have some volunteers cancel at the last minute. Professional court reporters will be awarded 0.25 PDCs from NCRA for every transcription they complete for the VHP, up to a maximum of 1.0 PDC for completing 4 transcriptions within a three-year certification period. VERY IMPORTANT: all transcribers must complete a **Gratuitous Service Agreement (Pages 12 & 13 of the Library’s Guidelines)** for each interview they transcribe or the Library of Congress will not accept the material.

**Interviewers:**

Line-up court reporters and interviewers. The veteran may bring a family member or friend, who may be able to conduct a more personal interview. Please refer to the VHP field kit for guidance on what types of questions to ask and how to structure the interview. The interviewer must complete the required Field Kit form (**Interviewer’s Release**).

**Veterans:**

- Designate one person to correspond with the veterans.
- Set RSVP deadline date.
- Contact veterans.
- Have everybody; including veterans, RSVP one month before event.
- Limit the number of veterans to 15-20. Create a waiting list for a future event if you have limited resources.
- Send/email **VHP Field Kits**, which include forms & releases that need to be signed, to participating veterans.
- All required forms & releases should be read and signed prior to the VHP Day event and given to the designated person corresponding with the veterans.
- All required forms & releases must be turned in to the pre-designated individual (the court reporter or the event organizer):
  1. the Required Field Kit Form (**Veteran’s Biography**);
  2. the Required Field Kit Form forms (**Veteran’s Release**);
- Veterans may bring pictures or diaries they kept during their combat service that they would like to add to their transcript. These items will become part of the Library’s permanent collection, and cannot be returned. The veteran will need to complete additional forms from the **Field Kit** (e.g., **Photo Log** and **Manuscript**).
- Ask veteran if he/she is a member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and note on the top of their Biographical Data Form)
Marketing Plan:

- Distribute flyers to local businesses re VHP Day
- Issuing a Press Release to local television stations and newspapers.
- Sending invitations to local VIP’s, such as your’ Congressional representatives, for the awards ceremony (Optional).

Food and Beverage – (Optional)

- Contact local restaurants and ask them to donate food or beverages for the event.

Pulling it Together:

- Assign each veteran to a specific time, and then assign a court reporter and an interviewer.
- All interviews can be audio-recorded or video-recorded and a CD or DVD of the veteran’s interview may be returned with each transcript. (Optional, but preferred by the Library of Congress)
- Recruit volunteers to work at the VHP Day to direct participants, monitor schedules, set-up refreshments, handout materials, or fill-in for an interviewer. Have a backup list of volunteers in case you need someone to fill in at the last moment.
- Send out schedule, directions, and facilities information to all participants.
- Secure an MC for the awards ceremony. (Optional)
- Prepare signage for inside the venue and also for the exterior of the building – e.g., where restrooms are located.
- Prepare interviewing site(s) with chairs, tables, lighting, and A/V equipment.
- Prepare food & beverage area, if applicable.

Recognition of Participants – (Optional)

Plaques or certificates may be awarded to interviewers, court reporters, and veterans at the closing ceremony. Or consider having a plaque made that lists all participants’ names, and display it in your organization/school to commemorate your organization/school’s VHP Day.
Awards Ceremony – (Optional)

Contact local high schools and request that their ROTC groups participate in the closing ceremony by conducting a presentation of colors or flag ceremony to honor veterans in attendance. Awards ceremony may include:

- Presentation of Certificates
- ROTC Presentation
- Singing of National Anthem

Wrap-up –

- Send thank-you notes to veterans, court reporters and interviewers for donating their time and talent to this important project. (Optional)
- Send a note to court reporters reminding them to return the completed transcripts, CDs, DVDs, GSAs, required Field Kit forms to NCRF within 30 days! **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.**

Be sure to follow all instructions/guidelines developed by the Library of Congress for interviews, recordings, transcriptions, and release forms. **Please return all required documents and materials to NCRF VHP, 12030 Sunrise Valley Dr. Suite 400, Reston, VA 20191,** for delivery to the Library of Congress.

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list of tasks, but rather a short guide meant to help get you started in preparing for a VHP Day. We would welcome any comments or any improvements you might discover.

Thank you for supporting our veterans and helping to preserve our nation’s history!