

Public Relations

Your Public Relations (PR) program is vital to the success of not only your unit, but your district and our department. We can't expect everyone to know about the American Legion Auxiliary, but a proactive program will be essential to our success and growth. A well-executed and planned program can make the difference in achieving awareness.

Create a Plan

Save yourself a lot of work in the long run by taking the time to sit down with a calendar and create a plan for your year. Write down patriotic holidays, program months, and activities your unit is doing for the month and what you want to achieve. Next lay out your plan on how you are going to publicize. Plan where and how you are going to publicize; a newsletter, write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, send out emails, post on social media or your unit website. Make sure you also state your target audience for this information. Are you trying to get information out to your current members, are you looking for new member involvement, or are you educating your local communities?

Social Media

If you haven't already, start looking at social media. Look into setting up a Facebook, Instagram, or a Twitter account for your unit. These are free tools you can maximize and promote you unit. You can support our programs, your unit events, stories on why you are a member of the Auxiliary all through the power of social media. Find unique stories, viewpoints, or approach how our Auxiliary is a stand out organization. Remember that members can share posts to impact more of an audience which will build your pages and attract more people to follow your pages.



Minnesota American Legion Family Facebook Pages

American Legion Department of Minnesota

American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Minnesota

Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Minnesota

American Legion Riders – Minnesota



(Instagram): search for Dept. MN ALA

Media Releases

The two most important things to remember when you start writing your media release is to keep your audience in mind and make the story inform them, not sell them. It should be objectively written as though a reporter were writing the story for you. It should have a headline that grabs the reader's attention and the first paragraph should contain the information most relevant. Remember the five W's – who, what, when, where and why. Make sure to list a contact from your unit who can be reached in case there is follow up questions. Don't to forget to promote your media release on social media or your own website.

Included in this mailing, and on the department website, is examples of Veteran's Day and Pearl Harbor Day media releases and example letter to the editor.

On the National website, alaforveterans.org, you can find these same releases and letter examples that you can fill in with your information and print.

Persistence

The best way to enhance the reach of your PR efforts is to build loyalty with your members, volunteers, and supporters. These people become our brand promoters. Reach out to your members and use their testimonies in stories and materials you share. Also don't be afraid to follow up with your local newspapers to make sure they received your information and ask if they have any questions.

Measure Your PR Program

An important part in your PR program is measuring your results. How many of your press releases or letters to the editor are being printed in newspapers? How many people are seeing or sharing your Facebook posts? Are you getting new members into your unit from your PR program because of your coverage? Measuring your PR program may be a challenge the first couple of years, however, it is the key to the impact of your program and by asking some of these question you will see how your PR efforts relate with your expected outcomes.

It's important to spend time building up relationships with people who can help your units promotion efforts and to generate positive coverage.

Exciting News!

There will be four workshops available this year that will be combined efforts of the leadership, membership and public relations chairman. It will be packed with useful information for unit members. Flyers will be available in unit mailings and on the department website.

SAVE THE DATE: At 7pm on Thursday, October 26th at the Fall Conference in Willmar there will be a sneak peek at what the workshops will include.

Press Release Book

As a part of this chairmanship, I will be putting together a press release book for Department President Donna. Please send any newspaper, newsletters, etc. to me to be included in her book.



The American Legion Family

Minnesota American Legion	MNLegion.org
Minnesota American Legion Auxiliary	MNALA.org
Minnesota Sons of the American Legion	MNSAL.org
Minnesota American Legion Riders	MNALR.org

National American Legion Auxiliary	ALAFORVeterans.org
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