

American Legion Auxiliary



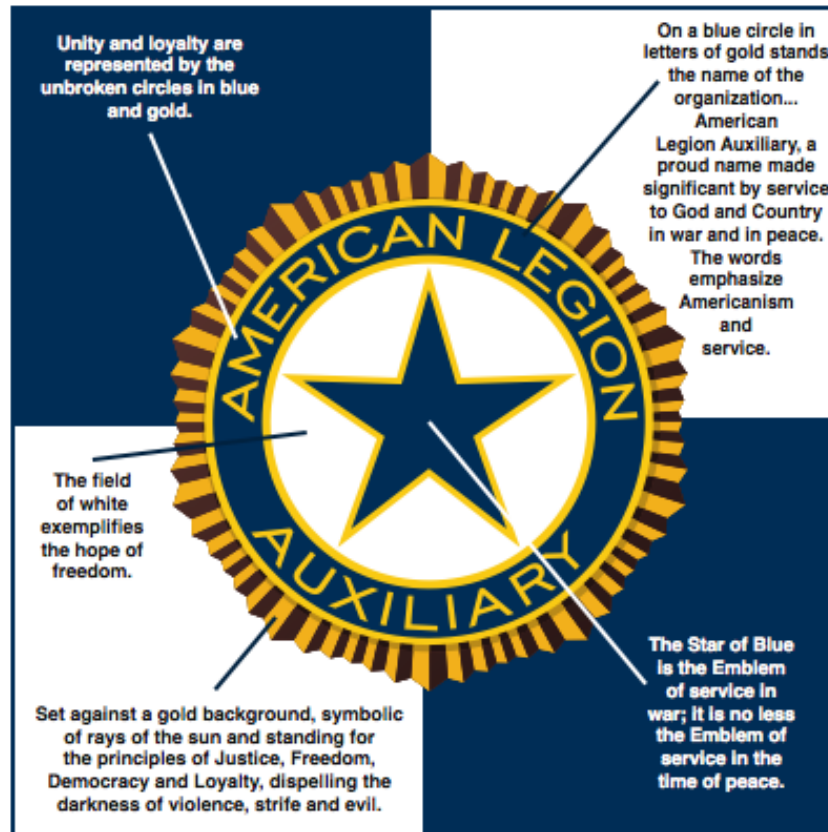
Public Relations 2011-2012...

**Imagination is more
important than knowledge.**

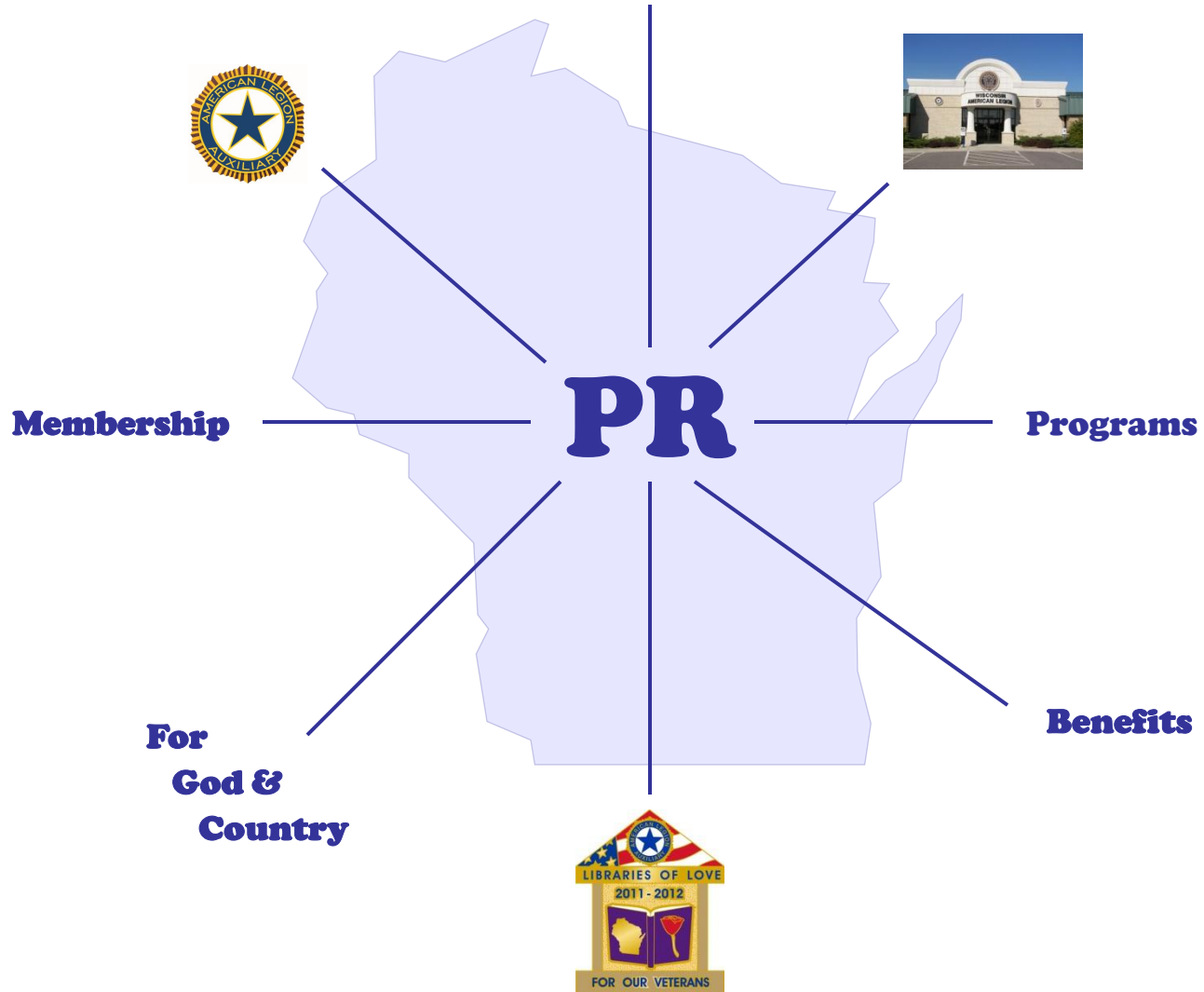
**For while knowledge
defines all we currently know
and understand,
imagination points to all we might yet
discover and create.**

- Albert Einstein

The American Legion Auxiliary Emblem...



Wisconsin



Public Relations

According to the dictionary, 'public relations' is the practice of establishing, maintaining, or improving a favorable relationship between an institution or person, and the public.

The triangle, created by our Department President, can answer most any question...



Goal

PR = PR

Public Relations = Positive Response

Who are we & what do we have in common?



1. _____



2. _____



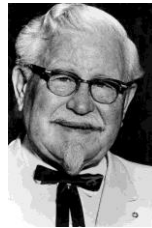
3. _____



4. _____



5. _____



6. _____



7. _____



8. _____



9. _____



10. _____



11. _____



12. _____

These phrases describe us...

- a. He proudly sings 'Plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what a relief it is!'
- b. This little guy declares his products to be uncommonly made and uncommonly good!
- c. General Mills walks in the valley of the jolly, ho ho ho...
- d. Be a donor, save a life!
- e. He *bears* a stern warning: "Only you can prevent forest fires!"
- f. The Golden Arches believe *you deserve a break today* and offer two all beef patties...
- g. The pancake queen was based on a real life person named Nancy Green.
- h. Buckingham U. Badger is his full name and red and white is his game. Go Badgers!
- i. Procter & Gamble boasts "gets rid of dirt and grime and grease in just a minute"
- j. Did you know her first name is Joy? She's sweet, buttery, and twice as thick as the others.
- k. Poppin' Fresh and a high-pitched 'Hoo Hoo' giggle
- l. Finger lickin' good is the claim to fame.

The answers...

1c - 2i - 3k -4b - 5j - 6l - 7d - 8a - 9a - 10h -11f - 12g

What do we have in common?

1. We are all PR icons.
2. We portray a positive image that sells.
3. We have something that catches your eye or ear, such as jingles, music, color, or personality.
4. We are well known because we are 'out there' - always in the public eye.
5. We have become familiar because we are repetitive. You have seen us again and again...
6. We maintain a positive image, which keeps us popular.

What do the icons have in common with the American Legion Auxiliary?

1. The ALA has its own icon, the blue and gold starburst, which can be displayed and explained to the public.
2. That emblem portrays a positive image. It's simple, crisp, and easily recognizable.
3. The symbol is eye-appealing and proudly notes the name of the organization.
4. Keeping the emblem and name 'out there' in the public eye creates interest.
5. Frequently displayed, the starburst has become familiar and yet continues to arouse curiosity.
6. A positive image keeps the organization popular, which promotes membership.

Back to the basics...

Think back to grade school English class where the five **Ws** were introduced.

Who, What, When, Where, Why?

Who? Every Unit should have a publicity chairman or a committee willing to promote the organization. Then again, every member could and should be a walking American Legion Auxiliary representative.

What? There's plenty to tell about our great organization! Sharing that excitement with others fuels the fire!

When? Constantly talk it up! Promoting the Auxiliary should be ongoing!

Where? Use whatever means are available - local newspaper, cable &/or radio station, flyers, posters, e-mail, Website, newsletters, public bulletin boards, and whatever you can think of to keep your activities in sight.

Why? Interest in membership is important. There can never be too many members to care for our Veterans or lend a helping hand in the community.

\$\$\$ Good PR is Priceless! \$\$\$

Communication is important!

Internal

Members...

- ✓ Keep members informed
- ✓ Furnish Updates
- ✓ Use visuals to inform & remind
- ✓ Encourage involvement
- ✓ Share what the organization is doing

External

Public...

- ✓ Inform public
- ✓ Inspire with member excitement
- ✓ Arouse curiosity & interest in membership
- ✓ Promote a positive image
- ✓ Stay in the public eye

Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I'll remember. Involve me and I'll understand.

- Confucius

Staying in the public's eye is important...

The more members, the lighter the load.

The lighter the load, the less likely members will tire and lose interest.

***The more interested members a Unit holds,
the easier it becomes to attract new members.***

Who joins a lifeless organization?

Consider this 'POW'er-packed sentence...

Patiently prepare to promote, publicize, and present your programs prominently to the public and prospective members with your powerful pride in this productive process.

Public Relations means spreading the good news in a variety of forms.

It's up to each Unit to find its own powerful promotion punch!

Getting the word out...

Newspaper - Not comfortable writing? Contact staff writer

Pictures

Meeting notices

After meeting write-ups

Letters to the Editor

Ads for special events

E-Mail - Great way to stay connected with computer members

Cable - Set up an interview. Use cable message board.

Website - Create a Website or share one with your Post. Check WI & National Websites for info.

Facebook & Twitter - For computer-involved individuals, social networking is excellent way to share news.

Newsletters - This source serves as a reminder for active members & keeps inactive and long distance members in the loop.

Word of Mouth - Excited members will attract prospective members.

Keep in mind that 'actions speak louder than words!' The opposite attitude will produce negative results.

Wisconsin's Plan of Action

The American Legion Auxiliary has been divided into five pods:

- 1) Youth Development
- 2) Membership Development
- 3) Family Support
- 4) Organizational Support
- 5) Veteran/Military Support

Public Relations falls into the Membership Pod, along with the Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF), Membership, Leadership, Strategic Planning, Office Policy, and the M. Louise Wilson Fund.

Purpose: To inform, promote, and publicize the programs of and membership in the American Legion Auxiliary - the largest women's patriotic service organization in the world.

Inform

Action Steps...

A. To inform, be informed.

- Attend Unit & County meetings, Fall Forum, District Conferences, & State Convention
- Take the ALA Leadership Course. You will learn by having fun!
- Read ***The Badger Legionnaire*** and ***Wisconsin***.
- Check out the state and national ALA Websites, which link to the Legion Family sites.
- Connect with Dept. officers & chairmen with your questions, concerns, & ideas.
- Contact Headquarters. The staff is always ready & willing to help.
- Purchase a Red Book and ALA Unit Handbook.

B. Once informed, share that knowledge & excitement with each other & prospective members.

C. Don't assume members and the public know about the ALA or the rest of the Legion Family.

Promote

Action Steps

A. Be ready!

- *Always carry Legion Family membership applications!* Never leave home without them
- Make it personal. Share your own story.
- Put to use what works best for your Unit. (one on one, invitation to meeting, open house)
- Have a brainstorming session to come up with fresh ideas to try.
- Don't be afraid to step outside the box. Try something you haven't tried before.
- Draw a potential member's attention by noting that the ALA is the largest women's patriotic service organization in the world *and* that her membership would be a wonderful tribute to the Veteran in her life.
- Toot your own horn! Talk up your Unit's programs and share your current projects; then explain how they impact our Veterans, the community, and you!
- Let your excitement show!

B. Find your Unit's powerful promotion punch. (What makes it special & attracts members?)

Publicize

Action Steps

A. Get the word out by whatever means are available to your Unit.

- Newspaper, Radio, Cable, Website, Facebook, Twitter, Word of Mouth, Flyers, Posters,
- E-mail, Pictures, Newsletters, Telephone
- Purchase a gift subscription to the *Auxiliary* magazine for a friend, or donate a copy to your local library or other businesses in the area: (\$15 payable to ALA National Treasurer)
 - American Legion Auxiliary National Headquarters
 - ATTN: *Auxiliary* magazine gift subscription
 - 8945 N. Meridian Street
 - Indianapolis IN 46260
- Place ALA brochures around town, stamped with your Unit's name and contact info.
- Share your tried and true ideas, accomplishments, and events with other Units.

Food for Thought...

1. Be brief.

- Long, drawn out articles are boring and quickly lose the reader's attention - unless sleep is your goal!
- Avoid falling in love with your words, making it difficult to edit.

2. Stay positive.

- Consider feelings. Negative comments hurt, whether written or spoken.
- If talking, be aware of your surroundings! Overheard under the breath comments hurt!
- Negative: Membership plunges! - Positive: Seeking to boost membership! (1/2 cup theory)
- It's much harder and takes a lot longer to right a wrong than to think before you write/speak.

3. Use good English.

- If you have an assignment and are unsure, ask for help.
- Look it up! Use a dictionary - readily available on the computer or in paper form.
- Ask someone to proof your copy. It's easy to overlook your own mistakes.
- Avoid run-on sentences. We've all read the sentence that *keeps on keeping on*.

4. Stay on task.

- Stick to your train of thought
- Maintaining a smooth manner holds attention. Jumping thoughts cause confusion.

5. Take your time.

- If you can...write, let it sit, and come back to it.
- Reading your article and re-reading it can make a huge difference.
- Be clear. The extra time helps assure that you are saying what you intended to say.

Resources

- ALA Websites: Wisconsin: www.amlegionauxwi.org National: www.legion-aux.org
- Media contacts in local areas: <http://capwiz.com/legion/dbq/media>
- The American Legion Websites: Wisconsin: www.wilegion.org National: www.legion.org
- The Sons of the American Legion Websites: Wisconsin: www.wisal.org National: www.sal.legion.org
- Sample news release templates: Available online or through National: alahq@legion-aux.org
- Pamphlet: *The Auxiliary Alphabet of Writing Tips* - It leads you step by step through the alphabet.
- Toolkit: *Getting Started in Unit Public Relations* - Online or by contacting National: *see above*
- www.ALAforVeterans.org
- Public Relations Resources CD - available from Department Headquarters (approx. \$3)
- *AP Stylebook* - www.apstylebook.com/
- Your local library

Where do we send PR info?

Info for President's Publicity Book

***Preference: Send actual newspaper clipping with paper's name, date, & page number
Include Unit's name, number, & city and the District Unit is in***

Send all PR info to:

Mary Petrie, Dept. PR Chairman
808 E. Cady Street
Watertown WI 53094
(920) 261-8161 or mmrtpetrie@charter.net

Send Dept. President scrapbook info to: More specifically, pictures & write-ups with Joan Chwala
Vonda Kinas, Committee Member/Photographer
P.O. Box 272
Gilman WI 54433
(715) 447-8141 or mandv@centurytel.net

Or

Gail Robaczewski, Committee Member
W14635 Tucker Lane
Gilman WI 54433
(715) 447-5734

Department Contests...

Best ALA Display (From now through the deadline)

Category: Senior & Junior *Award:* 1 Citation in each category *Deadline:* May 1, 2012

Set up an ALA display outside the Post (downtown storefront, department store, bank...)

Send picture to Dept. PR Chairman (Mail or E-Mail)

Include: Name of PR Chairman (or person submitting)

Unit's name, number, & city and District Unit is in

Best ALA PR Write-Up (From now through the deadline)

Category: Senior & Junior *Award:* 1 Citation in each category *Deadline:* May 1, 2012

Maximum 100 words - Describe the most unique way your Unit promotes the ALA

Send write-up to Dept. PR Chairman (Mail or E-Mail)

Include: Name of PR Chairman (or person submitting)

Unit's name, number & city and District Unit is in

Reminder:

***Units & Counties, remember to keep your District Chairmen informed
for their reports and to fill out your report for Department!***

National Contests...

Unit Awards

Program Emphasis - Best Three Media Releases - Award presented to one Unit Chairman in each Division Include three different media publications highlighting different ALA programs published in three different months (September 1, 2011 - May 1, 2012) Acceptable media publications must support the Auxiliary's mission and goals. Deadline: June 1, 2012 Send to National PR Vice Chairman Teri Miller - miller5058@att.net

Innovative Public Relations Activities - Citation presented to all Units submitting an online PR campaign (e.g., Updating Facebook, posting Unit Website updates, e-mail blasts, and online newspapers) - Unit documents the PR campaign activity and submits a copy to Divisional Chairman Sandy Findeiss - sandy.findeiss@rrsc.com Documentation must be from media source between April 30, 2011 and May 1, 2012 - Deadline: June 1, 2012

New Website Launch - Citation to all Units developing a Website during 2011-2012 - Website URL, Webmaster name and contact info - Website must have been created since September 1, 2011 - Deadline: June 1, 2012 Send to PR Committee Member Dee Dee Buckley - deebuckley@comcast.net

Junior Public Relations Award - Best Media Coverage of Activity or Project

Award presented to one Junior group (Department, District, or Unit) - Articles, Newsletters, Pictures of Display promoting events - Deadline: June 1, 2012 Send to PR Committee Member Gloria J. Shaw Johnston - gjohn01@bellsouth.net

The Membership Development Pod Committee has drawn up a monthly step-by-step plan for Units to create a Wall of Honor for their Veterans. For info, see pages 191-192 at:

www.alaforveterans.org/resources/planofaction2011-2012-lr.pdf



In Service, Not Self