

Okay Girls let's get rolling! Do you know the Who, What, When, Where and Why of the American Legion Auxiliary? If not, chances are the general public does not either. Public Relations (PR) is a tool for us to reach out to our Auxiliary members and our community and create a network of knowledge that is easily accessible no matter the method of communication.

Many do not have computer/internet access so we must maintain our paper and/or phone contact base. Members with access to computers and internet we seek your knowledge and experience to assist in promotion of our programs, events and reporting our successes. A "newbee" on the block is creating a website on the Unit, District and Department level.

The Department does have a website at www.nebraskalegionaux.net and National at www.ALAforVeterans.org.

The National website provides a PR port where anyone can download templates for news releases ranging from Girls State/Nation attendees, Poppy Day, Veterans Day, and more. Our most valuable PR tool on the Unit level is our Junior members who are likely more versed in computers, internet and websites than you or myself. Laptop computers brought to a Unit meeting serve as an invaluable tool of connecting Unit members with one another, their District, Department or National counterparts. Invite your Juniors to present a Website 101 study at your meetings.

This Chairman created an email bank of newspapers per District and you may get a set by emailing me your email address.

This year the Unit Public Relations Book has changes. Dates of coverage will be **February 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012**. This dateline aligns itself to the District Spring Conventions. You do not need last year's ABC Book to set up your book. You will use a **blue** 3-ring binder with a pocket on the outside front cover so the **cover page** can be inserted. Margins will be 1-inch on all sides. See guidelines for Unit Public Relations Book.

Department PR Goals: 1 – Have each Unit and District write news articles for local media; namely, newspaper, radio, TV and/or cable; 2 – Have each Unit and District exchange ideas and assistance in promotion of events, programs and successes; 3 – If your Unit or District is able create a website then share that with Department so members and the public may access; and 4 – Have each Unit and District provide at least three (3) news items (including photos) to this Chairman for inclusion in Department President Donna Hatfield's book. Have fun and share it with all of us!

National PR Goals: 1 – Be familiar with Auxiliary brochures describing our programs and make them available at local events to promote the Auxiliary and programs; 2 – Be prepared to explain why you are an Auxiliary member and why we need to increase membership; and 3 - Be prepared to sign up new members.

Awards offered by National:

Best Three Media Releases (Unit Award) – Award to one Unit Public Relations Chairman in each Division who can create an entry to include three different media publications, highlighting different ALA programs, published in three different months between September 1, 2011 and May 1, 2012, with the acceptable media publications supporting the Auxiliary's mission and goals. Unit entries to this Chairman no later than a **May 15, 2012 postmark**.

Innovative Public Relations Activities (Unit Award) – A citation to all Units submitting an online PR campaign (i.e., updating Facebook, posting Unit website updates, e-mail blasts, and online newsletters). Unit documents the PR campaign activity based on dates between April 30, 2011 and May 1, 2012. Unit entries to this Chairman no later than a **May 15, 2012 postmark**

New Website Launch (Unit Award) – Citation to all Units developing a website during the period September 1, 2011 and May 1, 2012. Unit will need to provide website URL, webmaster name and contact information. Unit entries to this Chairman no later than a **May 1, 2012 postmark**.

Best Media Coverage of Activity or Project (Junior Public Relations Award) – Award to one Junior group whether Department, District or Unit level who creates an entry to include articles, newsletters, pictures of displays promoting the event or project. Junior entries to this Chairman no later than a **May 1, 2012 postmark**.

Unit Public Relations Book: Your Unit Public Relations Chairman will prepare a Public Relations Book for competition prior to your respective Spring District Convention. District Presidents will advise Units to whom to mail the book and a date deadline.

The winning Unit Public Relations Book in each District must be to this Chairman no later than a April 30, 2012 postmark.

Guidelines for Judging Unit Public Relations Books: (Judges, points given in each category cannot exceed those given here; however, you may take away points in categories if you feel that category does not earn the total points. The points are not earned on an ALL or NOTHING basis. We do have leeway to jiggle downward only.)

POINTS

10 points 1. **Book** – blue 3-ring binder with a pocket on the front cover to insert Cover Page, 1-1/2” to 2” thick book to accommodate inserts neatly and carefully. All inserts are on standard 8-1/2” x 11” copy paper.

10 points 2. **Cover Page** – All data in capital letters, centered on the page from top-to-bottom, side-to-side and evenly spaced between the three sections. Section one will be 4 lines; namely, UNIT NAME AND UNIT NUMBER, AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, UNIT TOWN AND STATE, DISTRICT NUMBER; Section two will be 2 lines; namely, UNIT PUBLIC RELATIONS BOOK, FEBRUARY 1, 2011 TO JANUARY 31, 2012. Section three will be 2 lines; namely, NAME OF UNIT CHAIRMAN, UNIT PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN.

5 points 3. **First page** will be a blank sheet of standard 8-1/2” x 11” paper.

10 points 4. **Unit Officers** – All data in capital letters, centered on the page from top-to-bottom, side-to-side, and double spaced between lines. There will be two columns and the start of each column must create a straight edge should you draw a vertical line where each column begins.

35 points 5. **Contents** – The following pages will be your news articles and/or photos mounted on standard 8-1/2” x 11” copy paper, no cardstock or bond paper; all cut edges will be even, no pinking sheers; all items are glued down, no photo tabs or photo album pages; no dividers; no plastic sheets or page protectors; no decorations at all. Each page shall have a header that includes

the name of the newspaper and the date of the article centered at the top of the page in capital letters.

(Breakdown of the 35 points)

Correct paper used: 5 points Edges are even: 5 points

Items neatly glued: 5 pts Header at top of every page: 15 pts Items centered on page: 5 points
55 points 6. **Articles and/or Photos -**

(Breakdown of 55 points)

15 points: All articles/photos are from a local newspaper.

25 points: Every item must contain Unit Name & Number, American Legion Auxiliary, and Unit Town & State in first paragraph.

15 points: All items promote Auxiliary programs / events.

25 points 7. **Summary Page** – all items are provided and neatly arranged.

25 points 8. Extra points to Unit having most publicity inches.

25 points 9. Extra points to Unit having Best Overall Book.

Note: Item 8 is a special extra – the Best Overall Book does not necessarily have to have the most publicity inches.

Department Awards for winning books

First Place \$10 Second Place \$8

CITATION POINTS: 20 points available

(Citation Points do not apply to Judging points given above.)

5 points – Unit created a Public Relations Book.

5 points – Unit entered Public Relations Book in District competition.

5 points – Unit sent articles and/or photos to Chairman for President's book.

5 points – Unit sent "Thank You" to media sources for providing a service