

Public Relations Committee
Report to the ARRL Board of Directors
July 2006

The Public Relations Committee has two primary missions. The first is to provide guidance to the ARRL PR staff in presenting the story of Amateur Radio to the public at large, the press, and to the amateur community at the national level. This includes recommending strategies for attracting new hams, and for recruiting and retaining ARRL members. The second is to support and encourage the development of the local Public Information Coordinators and Public Information Officers in the field by providing PR education, guidance and public relations tools to assist them in their efforts. During the first half of 2006 the members of the Committee have had an active on-going dialogue with the Media and Public Relations Manager, Allen Pitts, W1AGP. The members have also been active in support of the Field Organization PR appointees.

2006 committee members are:

Sherri Brower, W4STB – Vero Beach Fl

Diane Ortiz, K2DO – Copiague, NY

Rich Moseson, W2VU – Bloomfield, NJ

Jim McDonald, KB9LEI – Muncie, IN

Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO – Philadelphia, PA

Bill Morine, N2COP – Wilmington, NC

Kevin O'Dell, N0IRW – Ardmore, OK

Bob Weinstock, W3RQ – Tacoma Parl, MD

Pat Mullet, KC8RTW – Shepherd, MI

Board of Directors Liaison is Vice Director, Joyce Birmingham, KA2ANF

Awards

At the January 2006 meeting the BOD named Marilu Lozada as the 2005 Bill Leonard, W3SKE, Professional Media Award winner. The plaque and cash award was presented to Ms Lozada by Director Frank Butler, W4RH and ARRL PR Committee Chairman Sherri Brower, W4STB at the annual meeting of amateur radio operators at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Fl.

The announcement for the McGan Award was reworked to clarify that professionals acting as volunteers can be considered for the award. The committee has made a recommendation of the recipient of this award to the board.

“Hello” Campaign

The “Hello” campaign has met with success this year and the coordinated theme based on that logo was welcomed and noticed by ARRL members at the Dayton Hamvention. Committee members are actively engaged in local PR activity. Jim, Sherri and Allen collaborated on a QST article about the “Hello” campaign and Fessenden. Kevin worked with Allen getting footage for the Hello video commercial and is working on the long

form version. Kevin has worked with most all the clubs in his section on the Hello campaign and has presented programs on Hello at several hamfests. Jim began a “featured site of the week” on the PR reflector about club sites that link to Hello-radio.org. There has been much discussion on the PR reflector on how to promote visibility of the “Hello” brochure and this discussion is valuable for the visibility of future campaigns and other ARRL brochures. An operating event is planned for the week between Christmas and New Year’s to commemorate Fessenden’s broadcast. This event will include something to engage the non-ham audience.

Dayton Hamvention® Activities

Jim coordinated the volunteers at the PR booth in the ARRL Expo. Sherri, Rich, Bill, Jim, and Joyce assisted at the booth. Sherri, Jim, Kevin, Rich, and Bill spoke at the PR forum and Kevin and Bill presented PR forums on the ARRL Expo stage. During the PR forum a member of the audience indicated that CB Radio was listed in the journalism stylebooks but Amateur and Ham Radio was not. Allen has submitted a proposed listing, written by Rich, to the AP stylebook and is awaiting confirmation that it will be added.

Other Activities

PIOs are mentored on reflector and one-on-one off reflector by various members. Committee members are distributing the Swiss Army Knife and “Hello” brochures to PIOs and club publicity persons. Sherri does outreach to the SMS. Bob J. has been speaking at various hamfests, ARRL leadership meetings and ARES conferences. His presentations include what training is expected of hams, what government groups and relief agencies are saying about the value of hams, how ARES and RACES groups can promote their groups, and how to obtain local publicity even when you are not in the disaster area. Bob J. has also written articles about amateur radio for several national publications and is currently serving on the IARU EMCOMM subcommittee.

Future Planning

Discussions have been ongoing about pairing PIOs in disaster areas with PIOs outside of the disaster area in order to facilitate getting information to the media and to ARRL Media and PR Dept quickly. The PIOs need to work more closely with the local ARES groups. Plans for 2007 are for a campaign to educate the non-ham about the valuable emergency communications provided by amateurs. The 2007 campaign will allow the PIOs to become more involved with ARES and will help them work with the media during major events.

Vice Director, Joyce Birmingham, KA2ANF has sent additional comments to be submitted. These comments are attached.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherri Brower, W4STB
Chairman, ARRL Public Relations Committee