

**Public Relations Committee**  
**Report to the ARRL Board of Directors**  
**July 2007**

**Document #24**

2007 committee members are:

Chairman: Sherri Brower, W4STB – Vero Beach, FL

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

Gordon West, WB6NOA – Costa Mesa, CA

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

The Committee meets monthly via telephone conference and in person during Dayton Hamvention® weekend. The Committee also has a private reflector to share ideas as it takes on tasks parallel to and in support of the Media & PR Manager as well as providing him guidance and feedback.

During the first half of 2007 the Public Relations Committee focused on the new EmComm PR campaign by providing ongoing PIO assistance via the PR reflector and individual e-mails to PIOs. To better coordinate PIC activities with clubs that are doing public relations work to non-hams, Jim KB9LEI, began a “featured site of the week” in May 2006, on the PR reflector. This proved to be popular and he continued to post information about club sites that link to Hello-radio.org. His virtual travelogue showcases clubs and hometowns across the country. In May of 2007 he began promoting featured sites linked to emergency-radio.org and the feature continues gaining in popularity.

The tools for PIOs on CDs are part of the ongoing effort to improve and increase HQ public information resources and direction to PIOs and PICs. They fulfill a desire of the PSC expressed several years ago. The materials contained in these tools were often written by or located by the Committee members.

In June the Committee judged the nominees for the McGan Silver Antenna Award and the recommendation has been included for a Board of Directors vote during the July 2007 meeting.

**Dayton Hamvention® Activities**

Sherri W4STB, Jim KB9LEI and Gordon WB6NOA spoke at the PR forum and Sherri and Gordon presented PR forums on the ARRL Expo stage. Media and Public Relations Department had a booth in the ARRL Expo area. Volunteers at the booth were Committee members Sherri W4STB, Kevin N0IRW, Jim KB9LEI, and Joyce KA2ANF. PIOs Larry McCalvy WA9JMO, Walter O'Brien W2WJO and Jack Sovik KB8WPZ assisted at the booth. Visitors to the booth had questions answered and were given copies of the EmComm brochure. Visitors expressing interest in PR activities were given a copy of the Swiss Army Knife for PIOs and/or the Talk on a Disk, as appropriate.

Throughout the year the Committee reviews and suggests materials for “*Contact!*” the monthly web based "E-zine" for PIOs.

**Planning for the future:**

Bluntly stated, the PIOs must work more closely with the local ARES groups. We continue to lose many media opportunities when no one is designated specifically to be in contact with the media and/or waits until days later to provide a wrap-up report on deployments. The 2007 campaign to educate the non-ham about the valuable emergency communications provided by amateurs is allowing the PIOs to become more involved with ARES, and this has been a topic raised in several PR forums. In a PSC report to the Board it was stated that SMs must understand the importance of public relations to the survival of Amateur Radio and give a higher priority to the public information function - especially in regard to emergency operations. The current PR tools, especially the "Talk on a Disk" CD will assist in this area. However, the SMs cannot motivate and reach all members. The PR Committee would like the Board members to actively promote the PR materials at hamfest forums and in their newsletters. We would also like to hold PR forums at ARRL state and section conventions, but without promotion from the directors these forums take a back seat to ARES and operating mode forums. Members look to the Board members for direction and the Board can assist Field Operations by mentioning the volunteer appointment opportunities for members in newsletters and at hamfests.

One mission of the Public Relations Committee includes recommending strategies for attracting new hams, and for recruiting and retaining ARRL members. We have begun and, for the balance of 2007, the Committee plans to work with Katie Breen W1KRB, Membership Manager and Norm Fusaro W3IZ, Clubs/Mentor Manager to provide short articles, about the value of ARRL membership, for clubs to use in newsletters and dues reminder mailings.

The Committee will work with Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP at the National Convention in Huntsville, AL.

The half page Media Hits column in QST receives attention from members. Because QST is such a powerful medium within the amateur ranks and sets the tone for activities by clubs and groups, longer articles about public relations are needed throughout the year.

The 2008 planned campaign will focus on the technological advancements resulting from amateur radio operators. This campaign will need more financial support than the 2007 campaign due to increased costs of production of PSAs and video. In addition we will lack the contribution from DARA that was used for the 2007 campaign brochure. There will be a need for video as it has been shown to be highly desired and effective -- and it probably will not be donated as it was in 2007. Board support is needed, not only financially, for ongoing public relations efforts.

The materials created from the PR campaigns are viable for several years and Board support for other departments to continue reproducing the materials is requested.

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