

PUBLIC RELATIONS

CURRENTS



**KINDNESS AND POSITIVITY IN 2025**

*By Virna Luke*

Let us start the new year with a popular anecdote about the importance of filtering information. Have you heard of the Three Sieves by Socrates? If not, please read it [here](#). This has endured the test of time, coming from the Ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, goes like this:

1. Truth - Is it true?
2. Goodness - Is it good or kind?
3. Usefulness - Is it useful or beneficial?

If it does not pass through the three sieves, then do not share. This is also applicable to your unit's social media posts and shares. Just like our home post, we want our social media to be welcoming, inspiring, energizing, positive, respectful, and kind. Make the human connection by being authentic and relatable when replying to comments or messages; this will build a relationship and loyalty with your followers. A person who has a good experience with a group will invite their family and friends. What a simple and effective way to gain new followers and potential members. The ALA can only be successful and grow with renewals and new members. **My best wishes to you and yours in 2025!**

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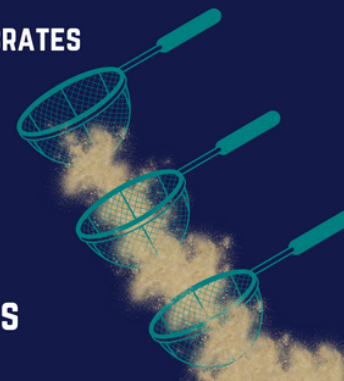
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**THREE SIEVES OF SOCRATES**

- 1 TRUTH
- 2 GOODNESS
- 3 USEFULNESS





## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY

By. Virna Luke

On January 20, 2025, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday will celebrate its 30th anniversary as a National Day of Service. This day was established to remember Dr. King's life and legacy while encouraging all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

Volunteering in your community gives you an opportunity to not only share the message of the American Legion Auxiliary's mission but also meet and engage with potential members. Create a project/event and invite your community

to participate—from collecting food, clothing, toiletries, home goods, laundry supplies, and pet supplies. Invite them to paint the house of a Veteran, clean the yard, or build an accessible ramp. Engage with your community to secure donations and volunteer at a stand-down event (provide supplies and services to homeless Veterans). Always wear your branded apparel so your community knows that the ALA is making a difference. Need to find volunteer opportunities? Check out [AmeriCorps](#) (a federal agency for national service and volunteerism).

Spread the word to your local newspaper, news stations, and radio about your project/event. Use the fillable media templates available [online](#); the section MLK Day has a letter to the editor and a news release template. Make flyers and distribute them in your community. Be specific with the timeframe, deadlines, full address to drop off donations, and list of specific needs.

On the date of the event, invite your local media to attend. Take those great action photos and share them on Facebook groups—unit, district, ALAFL Public Relations, and ALAFL Community Service. Use the hashtags #BuildABridge and #BuildingTheHouse. Don't stop there; send high-resolution jpeg photos to your local papers with your write-up.

I look forward to seeing all your social media postings and photos.

Remember to - **Make it**

**"a day on, not a day off."**





## NEW YEARS RESOLUTION: STRATEGIC PLANNING

By Erin Hoffer, APR, CPRC

What Are Your ALA New Year's Resolutions for 2025?

While the holidays are a time of giving, they also provide an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and consider the steps we want to take to shape our future. Consider setting New Year's Resolutions this year for your Auxiliary and your public relations efforts. Here are some tips on how to do this:

**Identify your New Year's Resolutions.** The first step in creating a New Year's Resolution is understanding where you want to go and setting goals. Goals are overarching aims or desired results. Perhaps you want your unit to recruit new members, launch a new program to support one of the Auxiliary's initiatives, or you simply want to see your unit gain more local press coverage.

**Identify reasonable, attainable goals.** Make sure you can reach your goals. The last thing you want to do is set goals that are unattainable, as this is a quick route to burnout and feeling disenchanting. Instead, choose goals that are achievable and can be accomplished within a reasonable timeline.

**Limit the amount of New Year's Resolutions.** Don't take on too many resolutions, or goals. This can be overwhelming and can halt your progress. Be kind to yourself and only identify the amount of goals that can actually be accomplished.

**Write your goals down.** Once you have identified your resolutions, write them down. There is proven science behind writing your goals down. You are more likely to stay focused to achieve them.

**Choose motivating tasks.** Make sure that you've identified goals that you actually want to achieve, and then, to reach them, be sure to choose tasks that you're passionate about. This will help you to stay committed to the process.

**Set up accountability.** You do not have to do it on your own. You have an entire unit with members willing to assist you as you work toward reaching your Resolutions. Be sure to tap people to help keep you accountable.

New Year's Resolutions offer us an opportunity to reflect and then plan for the future. We hope you get a moment during this busy holiday season to do just that. If you need assistance, lean in on your unit and district leadership, as this is a great resource of mentors willing to share their insights and knowledge.



Photo By Maddi Bazzocco, Unsplash

## RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH A COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

By Erin Hoffer, APR, CPRC

Many of us in PR are not mathematicians, so the idea of conducting an audit sounds daunting. Believe it or not, a communications audit can be fun and insightful. They can lead to designing better flyers, crafting more engaging social media posts, sending better press releases and more. [PRWorks identifies](#) how to conduct a communications audit in five easy steps:

**Step 1: Understand your target audiences.** For ALA units, this is most often our Post Family, our unit and our community. Understanding your target audience for each communication piece is important to know if you are delivering the right message in the right way.

**Step 2: Collect samples and analyze.** Print out your unit's flyers, a handful of social media posts, all of your press releases and any other communications from the last year. Spread them out on a table and ask yourself the following:

- Are you using the brand correctly?
- Does the content include all of the necessary information (who, what, when, where, why and, sometimes, how)?
- Is there a clear "Call to Action" – such as "join us" or "visit us" or "renew today"?
- Is the format and presentation appealing?
- What was the delivery method right for the audience, and was the frequency appropriate?

Take note of your observations as you go. Remember to be objective and ask yourself if anything could have been done better.

**Step 3: Collect audience feedback.** Poll some of your members to ask their opinion and if they thought the messaging and delivery was effective. This will give you some outside perspectives.

**Step 4: Conduct a SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges) analysis.** Bring in your unit's leadership and ask them to answer the following questions. (This can be done as a group as a brainstorm activity).

- **Strength:** What unit communications are working well?
- **Weakness:** What unit communications aren't working well and need to be changed?
- **Opportunity:** Are there opportunities or resources you could use to improve?
- **Challenges:** Is anything (outside or inside your unit) causing your communication efforts to be challenging?

**Step 5: Plan.** Using the observations and information collected, you should be able to see areas for improvement and steps you can take to develop better communications for your unit.

A communications audit is a great way to see what can be improved and plan for 2025.



## STAY ORGANIZED IN 2025 WITH AN EDITORIAL CALENDAR

By Erin Hoffer, APR, CPRC

One of the best ways for a PR chair to stay organized is to develop an editorial calendar that tracks all of the deadlines, publish dates and content that need to be produced to promote a unit's programs, projects and services. As you head into the new calendar year, now is a great time to start planning your 2025 Editorial Calendar.



Photo By Unseen Studio, Unsplash

While there are many ways to develop this, here is a simple way to get started.

First, list the 12 months on a separate piece of paper. Under each month, list the important programs and holidays that you want to recognize. Then, for each program and holiday that you listed, identify the following:

**Type of content:** social media post, flyer, press release, etc.

**Deadline date:** the date it is due for review (if applicable)

**Publish date:** the date it will publish

**Channel:** Facebook, Instagram, media list, your unit's flyer location distribution list, etc.

**Copy Description:** a short description of the who, what, when, where, why (and, sometimes, how)

**Photo Description/Link:** If applicable, a description of the image or the image name and file location

**Content Creator:** the person responsible for creating the content

**Content Publisher:** if applicable, the person who publishes the content (for example, the person who schedules social media posts or sends press releases)

Capture the above information in a number of ways, including a Google Sheet/Excel file (place each subject area in Row 1) or on a physical or electronic calendar. Either way, editorial calendars are meant to keep you organized, efficient and more effective as you tell the story of the work your unit is doing to make a difference in the community, at the Post, for active military, and veterans and their families.

## JOIN LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS FOR GROWTH IN 2025

By Virna Luke

At Fall Conference during the general session, we discussed joining other Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and like-minded organizations, clubs, and charities to help with growing your unit membership; we all depend on membership and volunteers to contribute to the betterment of our community.

With that being said, you can also engage with relevant organizations and clubs on social media to build a supporting network. With millions of users and countless groups, social media provides an opportunity to interact and thrive together. While a “like” is good, leave a comment to contribute to the conversation by sharing your knowledge, insight, feedback, and ideas. This will help to establish a rapport and supportive relationship.

Make sure to tag organizations in relevant posts. If you’re doing a fundraiser for Honor Flight, tag the Honor Flight page. Sharing pictures from an event that you worked with your local VFW, tag them. If you’re thanking Mission BBQ for donating food, tag them in your thank-you message, etc. Tag National **@alaforveterans!**

Also, add the appropriate hashtags; read the PR article in the December issue of [the Florida Toolbox](#) to learn more. For information on National’s social media hashtags, visit the [National page](#). Remember, the idea is to create a supporting network in which both your unit and the other organization may grow while also providing important information to your followers.



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*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
from  
Virna, Patricia & Erin*

[ALAFL.org](http://ALAFL.org)