

PUBLIC RELATIONS CURRENTS



IN THIS ISSUE

- Writing a strong narrative
- The power of recognition
- Social media that reaches your community
- Capturing the moments, photo tips



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April is recognized as the **Month of the Military Child**, a time dedicated to honoring the resilience, strength, and sacrifices of children growing up in military families. Established by the U.S. Department of Defense and sponsored through its Department of Defense Military Community and Family Policy program, the observance shines a light on the vital role military children play in supporting the nation's armed forces community.

Military children often face unique challenges that most young people never experience. Frequent relocations, adjusting to new schools and communities, and long periods of separation from a deployed parent are part of their everyday reality. Despite these challenges, military children demonstrate remarkable **adaptability, courage, and strength**.

Purple is the official color of the Month of the Military Child, symbolizing the blending of all branches of the military, a mix of all the different uniform colors. National **Purple Up! Day is April 15**. Snap your photos and share them to **ALAFL Public Relations** and use hashtag **#PurpleUpDay** - if you're on Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, or X, make sure to tag us **@ALAuxFlorida**

The Month of the Military Child is an opportunity for us to recognize these young heroes and **show appreciation for their sacrifices**. Take a moment to read this informative blog - [Preparing for Month of the Military Child](#)

★**Reminder**★ [Florida Children & Youth Picnic](#) is on Saturday, April 11 at American Legion Post 117, 189 Veterans Dr SE, Palm Bay, Florida.

WRITING A STRONG NARRATIVE FOR END-OF-YEAR REPORTS

By *Virna Luke*

End-of-year reports are more than paperwork; they tell the story of the American Legion Auxiliary in action. Every hour volunteered, every dollar raised, and every item donated represents compassion in motion. When these efforts are reported by units across Florida, they become powerful data that demonstrates the true impact of our organization.

These numbers and stories are combined with reports from Auxiliaries across the country. Together, they help show government leaders, community partners, and national leadership how the ALA supports veterans, military families, children, and communities. Simply said, our collective impact matters, and your report helps make that impact visible.

A narrative tells the story behind your program's impact. Think of it like sharing the highlights of a meaningful journey.

Strong narratives often include:

- A clear **beginning, middle, and end**
- A focus on **specific program or project**
- Descriptions of activities and outcomes
- Use numbers to help show the difference your project made.

When describing participants, avoid using individual names. Instead, use phrases such as *members, volunteers, a group of Auxiliary members, or the unit*. Avoid using the word "I."

Good storytelling makes your project memorable. Use vivid details, engaging language, and measurable results to show what your unit accomplished.

Every report adds another chapter to the story of the ALA. When we share both the numbers and the narratives, we show the true strength of our organization:

a community of volunteers serving Veterans, military, and their families.

★Check out the [video](#) of the reporting class that was lead by Jan Farrington and Mary Kelly-Perkins. There is a fantastic [ALAFL Reporting Manual 2026](#) created by Jan Farrington, that is available online.

By: Jan Farrington

WRITING A COMMITTEE REPORT AND FILL OUT IMPACT REPORT



Jan. 2026

THE POWER OF RECOGNITION

By Virna Luke

One of the most effective public relations tools we have is also one of the simplest: **recognition.**

Recognizing volunteers, members, and community partners does more than say “thank you.” It tells the story of your organization and inspires others to become involved.

In today’s digital environment, recognition also plays a role in visibility. Posts celebrating member achievements, service milestones, and volunteer efforts often generate strong engagement because people naturally enjoy celebrating others.

Recognition can take many forms:

- Highlighting a volunteer who goes above and beyond
- Celebrating a unit milestone or successful project
- Recognizing youth involvement and community partnerships
- Sharing photos of members serving Veterans or supporting events

These moments demonstrate the heart of the Auxiliary. They show the dedication, compassion, and teamwork that drive our mission forward.

Recognition also strengthens **membership retention.** When members feel appreciated and valued, they are more likely to remain active and encourage others to join.

In PR, stories matter. By recognizing the individuals who make our work possible, we create meaningful stories that reflect our values and showcase the impact of our Legion Family.

The most powerful message we can share is simply this: **our members make a difference.**



Sonya Reed receiving the Billy Award from Commander Bob Hoffman for her outstanding dedication to the Legion Family at Post 402, Panama City Beach.

The BILLY AWARD was created by Florida Past Department Commander Billy Anderson (1956-1957). He was a strong believer in the power of gratitude. He was known for sending hundreds of handwritten birthday cards and thank you notes throughout the Department of Florida, this inspired the creation of the Billy Award.



SOCIAL MEDIA THAT REACHES YOUR COMMUNITY

By Virna Luke

Social media continues to be one of the most powerful tools available to organizations like the American Legion Auxiliary. In 2026, the key to success is not simply posting more, it's posting with purpose.

Recent nonprofit communications research shows that **Facebook remains one of the most reliable platforms for nonprofits to reach their audience and meet communication goals**, especially when posts focus on storytelling and community engagement.

One of the biggest trends shaping social media today is the shift toward **AI-driven content discovery**. Platforms such as Facebook increasingly show users posts based on their interests rather than simply who they follow. That means engaging content can reach people far beyond your current followers.

For Auxiliary units and districts, this creates exciting opportunities to connect with the community.

Simple ways to improve your social media presence:

- **Share real stories.** Highlight volunteers, veterans, and community partnerships. Authentic stories connect better than overly polished posts.
- **Use photos and short videos.** Short-form video and storytelling content continue to drive engagement across platforms.
- **Ask questions.** Encourage comments by inviting members and supporters to share memories, opinions, or experiences.
- **Promote events.** Community events, volunteer activities, and recognition posts often receive the most engagement.
- **Post consistently.** Even one or two strong posts per week can help keep your organization visible.

Remember, social media is not just about announcements. It's about **building relationships, sharing impact, and inviting the community to be part of the mission.**

When members share your posts, tag friends, or comment on stories, your message spreads even further, helping more people learn about the work we do for Veterans, military families, and our communities.

**DON'T JUST
SCROLL BY!**

**Like, Share, Comment,
and Engage**



CAPTURING THE MOMENT: PHOTO TIPS FOR BETTER PR

By Virna Luke

A great photo can tell a story faster than a paragraph, and in today's digital world, strong images are essential for effective public relations.

Whether you're sharing a Facebook post, submitting a report, or promoting an event, photos help people see the impact of your work.

The good news? **You don't need professional equipment.** Most smartphones today are capable of capturing excellent images when used thoughtfully.

Here are a few simple tips to improve your photos:

Focus on the moment.

Candid photos of volunteers working, members laughing, or veterans being honored often feel more authentic and engaging than staged pictures.

Use natural light whenever possible.

Photos taken outdoors or near windows typically look brighter and more appealing.

Keep backgrounds simple.

A clean background helps the subject stand out and keeps the viewer focused on the story.

Capture different angles.

Wide shots show the whole event, while close-ups capture emotion and detail. Having a variety of images helps tell a more complete story.

Take several photos.

The best image is often the one taken after the "official" shot, when people relax and genuine moments happen.

Photos of service projects, recognitions, and community events not only document your activities, they help **share the Auxiliary's story** with members, supporters, and the public.



Unit 238, Safety Harbor, Fla. donaton for \$1,238 for ALA FL Disaster Relief



**PURPLE
UP!**

APRIL Military
Kids



DEPARTMENT OF WAR EDUCATION ACTIVITY