

PUBLIC RELATIONS 2025-2026
SHANNON MEAD, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

This year was a great year for the Units in Arizona! One great thing that has grown is social media. Many units have created not only websites but Facebook, instagram and LinkedIn pages to help keep their members connected as well as reaching out to the community. Radio and newspapers have been improving this year on the reports as the local community newspapers seem to be opening up a bit more with available space. One noticeable thing with some local newspapers is that they are charging for stories on events if the event is not free.

This year our Department website was revamped and added many wonderful pieces of information. In the past it has been said that it was difficult to find certain things on the site. The web creator took this into account and created many wonderful tabs, drop down menus and navigational points of interest through the site. It is a work in progress and always being updated monthly.

It has been asked in reports to have a better way of getting information from Department out to the units. It is normally posted on the website as well as Facebook. All of the monthly bulletins are available for download but a lot of units state they have no idea where or how to get them and preferred the mail system. Mailing is costly and perhaps there needs to be a new way or more training for how and where to access these materials. PLEASE NOTE that a Department representative always covers how and where to find the information at each convention and conference.

This year the PR Chairman added in tips and tricks each month on the Ring your bell social media page as well as in bulletins. There were a lot of great pieces provided from Nationals for use. The National PR newsletter was also posted each month on the Ring your bell page to help spread the word and great tips. This is something that should continue to help ensure that our PR teams have great tools to use each year in promoting the mission.

One noticeable issue this year was lack of interest in free publicity surround the Luke Air Force base magazine Sound of Freedom. Emails were sent out as well as Facebook posts regarding free publicity for any and all events and press releases sent in. After speaking to the editor and sales representative it was noted that not a single thing was sent in from the American Legion family. Disappointing to say the least. Perhaps next year there can be emails and posts sent out during each deadline as a reminder.

Most units used social media, newspaper, newsletters and of course websites to get out their information as well as keeping members informed. Here is a breakdown of the media outlets used to help spread our mission.

- Unit 81 Lake Havasu used several outlets for getting our the word such as Speakout radio, Murphy

broadcasting, Radio Central River Scene on-line magazine, newspapers, Today's News Herald, Tri-City news and of course website and social media.

- Unit 6 Prescott used the Prescott Daily Courier, Chamber of Commerce, City of Prescott Facebook page, as well as social media and unit website.
- Unit 35 in Chandler utilized the local TV stations KTVK 3, KPHO 5 and Fox Channel 10 for stand downs and parade interviews.
- Unit 52 in Sierra Vista uses the local radio station as well as the town Facebook page called CoolFM to help spread the word.
- Unit 53 in Buckeye is very active and gets great help from the local town, chamber and schools with posting all upcoming events and community related information.

A total of 32 reports (same as last year) were turned in to the Department PR chairman out of 87 units. This has always been a struggle to get units to report at year end.

There were several Units put in for National Public Relations awards as well as Department awards. In all 2025-2026 was a great year and lots of events and promotion took place along with more use of the branding out in public to help start those elevator speeches.

An end of year is not something to be sad about. It is a great start to the next year with a great path to continue to change, evolve and follow. Blessings for the 2026-2027 year.

Shannon Mead

American Legion Auxiliary

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Public Relations Chairman