

## PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAT 2025 #1 – OCTOBER 30, 2024

### TOPIC – PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE HOLIDAYS

#### **PR ideas for the holiday season and beyond**

- Holidays provide a great reason for us to promote our missions, with a special focus on our community, our members, and veterans and their families
- The purpose of Chat #1 was to share ideas, learn new ideas, and open ourselves up to trying new things

#### **The discussion started with gathering ideas from the attendees of what they do during the holidays and other ideas they would like to try**

- Adopt a vet in a nursing home. Visit them during the holiday season – talk with them and provide company as often as possible. More ideas later in the summary.
- Visit a veteran's facility or other nursing care facility with gifts and basic items, as well as holidays items
- Attach candy canes and poppies to any gifts or items you present to them
- Hold a Veterans Day gathering (or on any holiday) with Girls and Boys Staters. Have them talk about their experiences at Girls/Boys State, and also have the vets talk to the youth about their experiences.
- Several units mentioned presenting Quilts of Valor during the holiday season
- Partner with other group/businesses (Piggly Wiggly, Lions Club, Rotary, etc.) to build gift baskets and deliver them to nursing homes or home-bound veterans. Consider doing the same thing for those members of your Local Legion Family that you rarely see.
- Several Units mentioned volunteering for Salvation Army bell ringing
- Participate in Wreaths Across America
- Several units mentioned Vets Day or holiday parties/dinners
- Make your December meeting a purely social affair. Make an effort to get rarely seen members to the lunch/dinner. Provide transportation for them.

- Breakfast with Santa (or the Easter Bunny)
  - Pre-arranged gifts for the children who attend (requires registration/sign-up with ideas for gifts) Oak Creek Unit 434

### **Other general thoughts for activities were discussed**

- Cards and phone calls – Make cards for your members and deliver them during the holidays. You can also do this throughout the year
- Home visits – Some of your members cannot make it to your activities. Take the time to pay a them a friendly visit (make it a Local Legion Family event)
- Caroling – Get some cool winter air and let your voices ring out!
- Use all holidays and special days during the year as a reason to reach out to our members
- Delivers meals or snacks for first responders working on holidays

### **Other Specific Ideas - Adopt a local vet or an entire family**

- Identify a Local Veteran, Non-Post Member or Post Member, and their family
- Retirement or Assisted Living Homes; adopting a veteran from one of the homes and/or visiting to Christmas Carol or provide cards to residents.
- Solicit the community for nominations and assistance in finding vets to “adopt” for a holiday.
- This can be for the entire season (November – January), Thanksgiving, or Christmas.
- Introduce the Veteran to the Public with a Facebook and/or Instagram Post, with Photo and introduction info
- Let the public know about the Veterans “Wish List” and also provide a wish list of an organization who is looking to supply or gift items to veterans.

## **Thanksgiving Idea**

- Interview your ALA Family. What are they grateful for this holiday? Post in newsletter and social media (with a photo).
- Ask Veterans if they have any stories about being deployed or on base during the holiday. What was memorable to them? Create a special newsletter with the stories. And again – use social media to tell their stories
- Poll the public. The week before Thanksgiving ask the public what the best side dish is for Thanksgiving dinner. Post it on your social media
- Contact local schools and ask teachers to provide student answers to, "I am Thankful for..." Leading up to Turkey Day feature answers from those schools or students on various social media platforms.

## **December Ideas**

December offers a number of holidays and special days for us to engage with our community and our members. Each of these days gives us a reason to tell our stories, and to be a positive presence to our members and our communities.

### **- Christmas Ideas**

- Letters to Santa. Think about posting a box outside the post or contact schools volunteering to take letters to Santa in the North Pole. Volunteer different Legion Family members as Santa, Mrs. Claus, and the Elves in helping to answer those letters.
  - Highlight local businesses who offer a discount to veterans during the holidays.
  - Provide "Wish Lists" for local veteran organizations.
- And let's not overlook other special days and events in December
- Pearl Harbor Day
  - Army-Navy Game

- Hanukkah
- The First Day of Winter
- Kwanzaa
- Boxing Day (if you have any members of Canadian or British descent)
- New Years Eve and Day

### **Chat #1 Wrap-Up**

- As you can see, we covered a lot of topics during the chat session, as shown by the length of this summary. We had 28 people attend the Chat. That's awesome! Next time let's try for 35-40.

- Take these ideas and use them to bring new life to your Unit PR efforts. February will bring us another great month for holidays and special days, so look ahead and let your creative spirits take charge!

- The next PR Chat2025 will be Wednesday evening January 30 (that's Lunar New Year), where we will continue to focus on PR ideas for events coming up in the ALA calendar, as well as continuing to mention special days in the year when we can try new, exciting, and interesting PR activities. The Chat will run from 6:30-8:30. Remember, members may attend the entire session or drop in anytime during the session to listen and/or participate. Members of the PR Committee will be available in the chat room the entire 2-hour period each month. If members wish to continue talking past 8:30, we welcome that enthusiasm and will remain engaged.

- In the meantime. Please contact any member of the PR Committee with questions or, even better, some great PR ideas. Our contact info:

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