

**ARRL Board of Directors  
Second Board Meeting  
July 2004**

**REPORT OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

The first six months of 2004 have been busy ones for the PRC, even though the work of the committee did not begin until late January when the appointments were finalized. The group is scattered across the country, and keeps in touch via monthly conference calls and the committee reflector. The first conference call was held February 10. The reflector has been a forum for many open -- and often lengthy -- discussions of various issues and projects. Several members of the committee attended the annual breakfast meeting held during Hamvention weekend in May. ARRL President Jim Haynie, W5JBP, joined the group briefly at the breakfast. As always, travel and lodging for Hamvention is at the expense of the individual committee members.

**The members of the PRC for 2004 are:**

Chairman - Sherri Brower, W4STB --Southern FL SM  
Jeff Reinhardt, AA6JR  
Diane Ortiz, K2DO  
Rich Moseson, W2VU  
Jim McDonald, KB9LEI  
Bob Josuweit, WA3PZO  
Bill Morine, N2COP  
Tim Lewallen, KD5ING  
Bob Weinstock, W3RQ  
Tony Zona, WB3KGT  
Board Liaison - Tuck Miller, NZ6T  
Staff Liaison - Jen Hagy, N1TDY

**Individual members contributed the following projects since Jan 2004:**

- Rich, W2VU -- BPL sample letter to the editor and talking points to help ARRL PR volunteers work with local press contacts on the issue. He also wrote a letter to editor of *The Wall Street Journal* in response to a story about BPL.
- Rich, W2VU and Sherri, W4STB -- PR Forum, with Gordon West, WB6NOA, and a cameo by Jim Haynie, W5JBP, at the Miami Tropical Hamboree.
- Jeff, AA6JR, Jim, KB9LEI, Tim, KD5ING, Rich, W2VU, & Sherri, W4STB -- PR Forum at Dayton Hamvention which was coordinated and moderated by Jim KB9LEI.
- Bob, WA3PZO -- interview for *Homeland Protection Professional* magazine.
- Diane, K2DO, and Rich, W2VU -- PR Forum at Ham Radio University event in NY.
- Bill, N2COP -- extensive work with Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, covering BPL issues in NC.
- Sherri, W4STB, as SFL SM, spoke at the National Hurricane Conference in Orlando. Along with WCF SM Dave Armbrust, AE4MR, and NFL PIC Mike Welch, KF4HFC,

she assisted Dan Miller, K3UGH, with a booth on the trade show floor. The group received and handled several requests for assistance with emergency communications networks, and recruited and referred to the SM or PIC in other sections several amateurs from relief agencies that were willing to be part of the Speakers Bureau.

- All members regularly conduct PR work in their respective ARRL sections. Jeff, AA6JR, Sherri, W4STB, and Diane, K2DO, gave PR-related talks at local club meetings.

### **Utilizing the Public Relations Reflector for Grassroots Outreach**

PR volunteers at all levels of the organization continue to share press releases, media hits, ideas, and assistance on the PR reflector as part of the Grass Roots Initiative. Members of the PRC monitor reflector messages on a regular basis and comment when appropriate. They also have contributed a number of original postings, in an effort to "seed" the reflector with ideas. The PIC reflector was shut down in early 2004 due to lack of participation, and all members of that group were added to the PR reflector (if they were not already subscribed).

### **Work on Programs and Services Committee Directives**

In 2003 the League's Volunteer Resources Committee, now the Programs and Services Committee (PSC), recommended the development and presentation of a public relations segment for the 2004 SM Workshop, including materials that can be shared with SMs who do not attend. Sherri, W4STB, contributed a short PR segment for the 2003 workshop which is being revised to include helpful ideas on how to find a good PIC and PIOs, and how to use the tools available to SMs for internal PR. One of the items about internal PR to newly licensed hams was sent to all SMs in late January with the monthly mailing labels. Outreach to the SMs about PR efforts, the Speakers Bureau, and PR ideas is being fulfilled by Sherri's postings to the SM reflectors.

The PSC also recommended that PICs be encouraged to participate in existing online resources, including the PR reflector and the *Contact!* on-line newsletter. The PRC is working on several projects to assist the SMs, PICs and PIOs. These projects include the Speakers Bureau, training ideas for PIOs and revision of the PIC and PIO welcome letter and info sheet for new appointees. Chapters on dealing with bad press, Internet media, and crisis communications are being written for the PIC/PIO Handbook with targeted completion in late July.

### **The McGan Award**

The committee has judged and recommended to the BOD (via the PSC) a recipient of the 2004 McGan Award. As Staff Liaison to the PRC, Jennifer Hagy will meet in-person with the PSC to go over the recommendation and present other PRC-related items as well.

### **The Speakers Bureau Project**

The largest project the committee has been working on this year is the Speakers Bureau, based on the PSC recommendations of 1) better coordination of PIC activities with clubs that are doing or want to do public relations work aimed at non-hams and 2) that SMs and PICs be educated on the importance of establishing a speakers bureau to share the Amateur Radio story with non-ham

audiences. The job description of the PIC includes "maintaining a section-wide speakers bureau," and SM responses to the VRC in 2002 indicated a lack of speakers bureaus.

The PR Committee's project includes how to start a bureau, how to find speakers, how speakers can promote their availability and locate groups needing speakers, helpful Web sites for speakers and bureau organizers, public speaking tips, and talking points for speakers to use when writing their speeches. The talking points are geared to target audiences such as kids, scouts, civic groups, outdoor enthusiasts, and public officials.

### **Starting with a Speakers Bureau Pilot Program**

Since most sections need to start a speakers bureau (or rejuvenate an existing one), the committee plans to have several sections pilot the project during the second half of this year. This pilot will provide feedback needed to develop ideas for large vs. small geographic sections, rural vs. urban areas, PIC vs. PIC and other volunteer(s) as chair/co chair(s) of the bureau, and other improvements and suggestions. The sections volunteering include small and large geographic areas, one without a PIC and one with an existing speakers bureau. Sections participating are SFL, SD, LA, NV, CO, EMA. Materials are being sent to these sections this month. An interim report on the pilot, from the SMs and PICs to the PRC, will be due in the fall of this year. Incorporation of suggestions and improvements will be made and a report on the pilot will be given to the Board of Directors in January 2005. Targeted opening of the program to all sections is early 2005.

While the six sections are testing the materials for the Speakers Bureau, the PRC will write a boilerplate presentation to explain Amateur Radio to non-ham audiences. The talking points geared for specific groups, local interest comments and a speaker's own style could be added to the boilerplate.

To promote the Speakers Bureau project Jennifer wrote an article in the February 2004 issue of *Contact!* We promoted the project and recruited one section at the PR forum in Dayton. Two sections were recruited during the SM meeting at Dayton and Sherri, W4STB, personally contacted two other sections to request participation. During the test period we plan a Web news item, a *QST* article, outreach to SMs, ACCs, and PICs via e-mail and promotion at all hamfest PR and ARRL forums. SMs participating in the pilot will also promote the speakers bureau in their own sections.

Pilot participants will be asked for comments throughout the test period and for comments to help promote the project to the other 65 sections. Sherri, W4STB, has posted, and will continue to post, messages on the SM reflectors about internal and external speakers bureaus.

### **The Work Ahead**

During the remainder of the year the PRC will continue to look at ways to motivate and assist clubs to do year-round PR efforts because the committee members believe that "Field Day is not enough." Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, recently joined ARRL Headquarters as the ARRL Affiliated

Club/Mentor Program Manager. The PRC will work with him to get the word about PR to the affiliated clubs and to explore ways to help PICs and ACCs work together.

In addition to the Speakers Bureau Project and ongoing assistance to the PICs and PIOs the committee will explore ways to get members involved in a grassroots legislative lobbying effort.

Special thanks to Jennifer Hagy, N1TDY for her support and long hours of assistance.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sherri Brower, W4STB

Public Relations Committee Chairman