

**ARRL Public Relations Committee
Report to the Board of Directors, December 2016**

The 2016 Committee Members Are:

Committee Chair, Scott Westerman, W9WSW
Katie Allen WY7YL
Sid Caesar, NH7C
Randy Hall, K7AGE
Angel Santana, WP3GW
Media & Public Relations Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X
Board Liaison, Jeff Ryan, KORM

Mission, Purpose, and Scope

The Public Relations Committee's (PR-COM) mission is to ensure the ARRL's public relations practices and techniques are effective in presenting Amateur Radio and the ARRL to amateurs, served agencies, and the general public.

The committee's purpose is to advise the Board of Directors via the committee's Board Liaison on policy regarding public relations strategy, allocation of resources to public relations, and the structure of public relations activities. In addition, the committee works with the Public Relations Manager (PR MGR) to define, guide, and review public relations components.

The committee's scope includes media and messaging techniques, resources allocated to PR, policy governing PR activities and components, and evaluation of PR activities. The committee is not responsible for the creation or implementation of specific PR components.

During the second half of 2016, the ARRL Public Relations Committee focused on the following primary objectives:

- 1) Completion of the ARRL Public Relations 101 manual rewrite**
- 2) Bring the National Parks on the Air (NPOTA) over the finish line**
- 3) Launch an ARRL Collegiate Amateur Radio Initiative**
- 4) Continue to promote the new ARRL "The Doctor is In" podcast**
- 5) Raise the ARRL staff profile across all social media platforms**
- 6) Facilitate the annual selection process for public relations oriented awards**

Public Relations 101 Re-write

After seeking input from PRC members and PIOs, the committee retained a professional writer to help complete the full rewrite of the Public Relations 101. This is nearly complete and should be released well before Hamvention in Xenia, Ohio.

Activities in Support of National Parks on the Air (NPOTA)

Aggressive engagement by PR Manager Sean Kutzko, Norm Fusaro and members of the PR committee in *QST*, on social media in general, and the NPOTA Facebook page in particular, contributed to one of the League's most successful initiatives. Amateur Radio operators made nearly 21,000 visits to 460 of the 489 eligible NPOTA units, resulting in 1.1 million contacts made for National Parks on the Air. Participants have great enthusiasm for the

event, and many Amateurs became active in portable operating for the first time since becoming licensed. Most NPS employees were happy to have Amateur Radio promoting their Centennial, NPOTA merchandise has sold well beyond projections, and certificates are now starting to be ordered by NPOTA participants. NPOTA is an unqualified success on several fronts, and ARRL can be proud to have created a fun on-air activity that was enjoyed by Amateurs worldwide.

The Collegiate Amateur Radio initiative

At CEO Tom Gallagher's direction, the PR Committee undertook promotion of a nationwide Collegiate Amateur Radio Initiative(CARI), seeking input from college clubs and working to take control of an existing, private Facebook page dedicated to the project. PRC Committee Chair Scott Westerman, W9WSW, engaged in two outreach activities in support of the initiative, meeting with AB1DQ from the Yale Amateur Radio Club and K8HTC & N8FWY from Ohio State. An ARRL-sponsored collegiate event is being planned for the forthcoming Orlando HamCation as CARI continues to be expanded.

Podcasting and Video

PRC has encouraged PR Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X, in his efforts to expand ARRL content in "new" media streams. Kutzko has worked with PRC member Randy Hall, K7AGE, who has one of the most popular Amateur Radio-related channels on YouTube, in techniques for creating new video content with ARRL branding. The audio podcasts "ARRL The Doctor Is In" and "ARRL Audio News" have proven very popular additions to the ARRL content brand. PRC will continue to look for new promotions and avenues for ARRL-branded audio and video content.

Promoting ARRL Personalities

Thanks to PR Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X's vigorous social media efforts, several ARRL staffers are becoming the face of the organization. 2016 certainly saw Kutzko and Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, embraced as "the National Parks on the Air Guys" in all ARRL online media. ARRL Lab Assistant Manager Bob Allison, WB1GCM, has been the face of ARRL Product Review video for quite some time. And the success of the "ARRL The Doctor is In" podcast has made Joel Hallas, W1ZR, synonymous with ARRL technical expertise. These successes capitalize on ARRL's brand, and more examples such as these should be pursued, to help "humanize" ARRL and sustain ARRL's role as the leading authority on Amateur Radio online. .

2016 ARRL Leonard Award Nominations

Upon review of Amateur Radio's media hits for 2016, the PR Committee recommends the following journalists should receive the ARRL Bill Leonard Award for Media Professionals:

Print: Wayne Rash, Senior Columnist, *eWEEK* and contributor to Yahoo Tech: "Why Modern Makers are Bringing Back Ham Radio." <https://www.yahoo.com/tech/why-modern-makers-are-bringing-1363811879927862.html>

Audio: Jamala Henderson, reporter for KUOW-FM Seattle: "Ham Radio Operators Could be Superheroes When the Earthquake Hits." <http://kuow.org/post/ham-radio-operators-could-be-superheroes-when-earthquake-hits>

Video: Derek Felton, Videographer/Editor, WGNO-TV, Metairie, LA: Field Day coverage of W5G, the Jefferson Amateur Radio Club in Metairie, LA, focusing on 12-year-old club member Bryant Rascoll, KG5HVO.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Westerman – W9WSW
ARRL PR Committee Chair