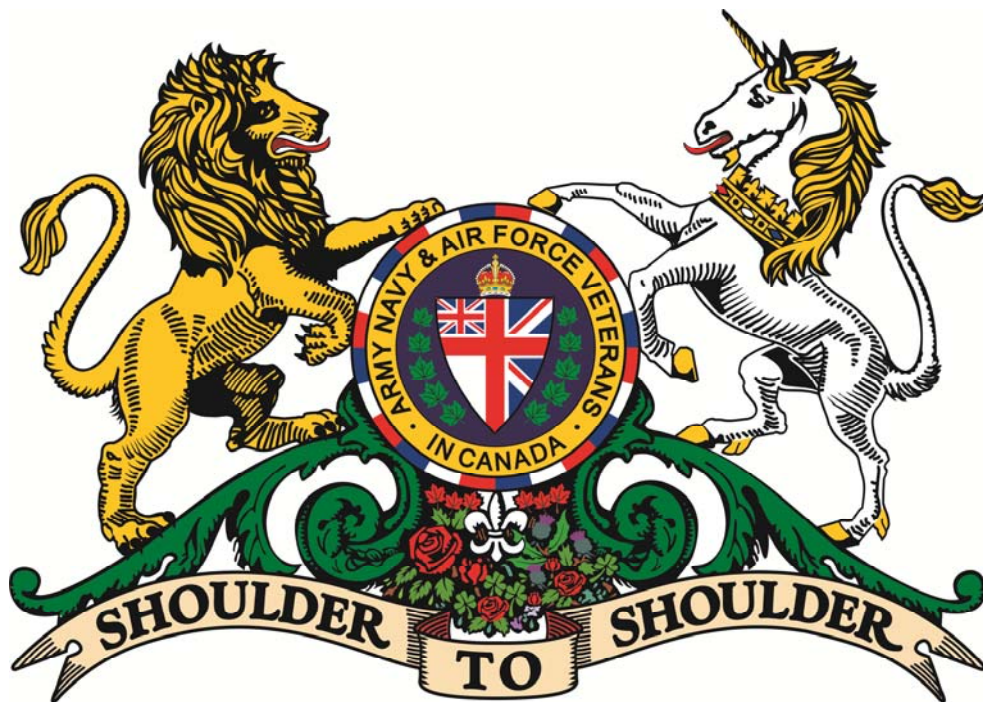


THE ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA (ANAVETS)

PUBLIC RELATIONS HANDBOOK



This handbook is a reprint of the Public Relations Handbook of the American Legion. Our good friends, the American Legion, have given us permission to reprint the book making changes where applicable and as required to modify it to our needs. For this privilege, we are indebted.

This handbook is an excellent guide for those of us whose job requires us to affect public relations whether at the Unit command or Dominion level. As a consequence we are indebted to those who have contributed to this book and who have made it the good work that it is.

Dominion Secretary-Treasurer

This handbook is produced for The Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada volunteer who has the public relations job at the Unit level. However, the principles and procedures discussed in the handbook apply at all levels within ANAVETS.

This booklet cannot make you an expert in public relations overnight. It contains basic Information along with tips and examples taken from the experience of people who have been working in public relations for many years. We hope it will help you have an exciting and productive PR Office term.

The ANAVETS Unit Public Relations Officer is fortunate in several ways. He or she represents an organization which has the public interest as the basis for all of its programs. The programs touch almost every facet of Canadian life and involve all ages. So there is a natural public interest in what ANAVETS is doing.

The job then is to be sure that ANAVETS members, the media and the general public know about the good work this organization is doing so they will continue to support it. The Dominion Public Relations Committee is available at all times to help volunteer PR Officers with advice and materials. We know how important your job is.

The Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada
Dominion Public Relations Committee

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SECTION I: THE BASICS

WHAT IS PUBLIC RELATIONS?

Public Relations mean different things to different people. Many people believe that public relations, marketing, and publicity are synonymous. Publicity and marketing are just two of the facets of an overall public relations operation. To clarify, Public Relations, as it pertains to the ANAVETS, is a planned effort to create understanding, favor, and support for our Association's programs. The main function of Public Relations is to build and maintain a positive image of the ANAVETS.

A good public relations program requires that one anticipates the needs and benefits which may result from ANAVETS programs for local, Provincial, and National communities. A key element is to identify public interest through building partnerships within the local, Provincial and National communities. These partnerships, when well built, will make the planning, implementation, and evaluation of ANAVETS programs easier to promote and expand.

ANAVETS is a non-profit service organization. Its members have provided vital, ongoing services to their Country on many levels, including during national emergencies. Now our members provide advocacy and support for their comrades in need and their local communities. ANAVETS lend their voice to the development of public policy and programs in order to protect the rights of Veterans, families and to preserve the heritage, independence, and freedoms of Canada.

Over the years, the ANAVETS has been successful its' service projects. This has enabled us to maintain a large diverse membership. The diversity of our membership has become the strength of our organization in providing the ANAVETS with volunteers who have a wealth of experience and skill. Our volunteers are a mainstay in developing and delivering our programs, which benefits the local communities.

While we have made strides in many communities, the job of ensuring ANAVETS remains an active force in it's' efforts is always ongoing. We recognize those who have provided service to their country with the designation of Active member. These service members include: Canadian and Allied military, Cadets, Coast Guard, Peace Officers, Correctional Officers, Firefighters, RCMP, Land & Forest Personnel, Fishery Personnel, Emergency Medical Technicians, Custom and Immigration agents. However, we also accept general community members who have learned about our organization and wish to help us move forward.

The reasons one joins the ANAVETS organization are based upon the need we serve for that individual and/or that community. We provide opportunity for camaraderie, volunteerism, program development, socialization, and most of all; we promote a sense of belonging to something larger than oneself. For those who wish to do more, our members are presented with an opportunity to advance in the organization, allowing them to take on greater roles with more responsibility along the way.

Attracting the right member for the right reason takes a cohesive effort on the part of ANAVETS. Public Relations have a strong role to play in promoting the positive aspects of our organization and making the opportunity for both personal and organizational growth apparent to the general population. These concentrated efforts will ensure that the ANAVETS will be recognized as a welcoming organization in any community.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS?

Every ANAVETS member is involved in public relations. Everything an individual member or a Unit does say something about ANAVETS to someone. But the Unit PR Officer has the primary responsibility for planning, organizing and executing a public relations program.

The Unit PR Officer must be the eyes, ears and voice of the Unit. He must know how to get the word out to the members, and he must know how and when to get information to local news contacts in radio, television, newspapers and have access to the different social networks available.

Next to the Unit President and Secretary, the PR Officer should be the most knowledgeable person about Unit activities and operations. He should be included in the planning of all programs, and kept advised of everything the Unit and its officials are involved in that might be newsworthy -- good or bad.

The PR Officer must be able to stand back and look at his Unit and its activities as a newsman, a prospective member or the general public would. He must constantly ask himself these questions:

- What should they know about ANAVETS?
- What would be important to them about a particular youth program, a patriotic holiday service or some other activity?
- How can the Unit best communicate with the people who should know and care about these programs?
- How can the Unit best symbolize ANAVETS with veterans' and their needs?

The PR Officer should have better than average communication skills. He should be able to write and to speak clearly and concisely. He/She should be capable of establishing good working relationships with media in his/her area. He must understand their requirements and limitations, and they should learn to count on him as a reliable source of information.

So, while every member should help spread the word about the good things his/her Unit and its member do, the Unit PR Officer has the job of establishing a comprehensive program to collect and distribute information to the people who should have it.

The selection of this officer is crucial. The PR Officer's effectiveness could make the difference between a really outstanding Unit operation and a mediocre one. Remember, everything ANAVETS does requires effective communication -- both internally and externally. After the Unit President has selected the PR Officer, he should provide the essential tools to do the job.

These include:

- A computer and internet access.
- A filing cabinet would be useful to keep news releases, publications and reference materials.
- A camera is an asset that can save money if the PR Officer knows how to use it. If he doesn't, he may rely on a member who is an amateur photographer to take pictures of Unit activities. As a last resort he may use a commercial photographer.

HOW IS PUBLIC RELATIONS DONE?

Good public relations begin with the Unit President establishing policies and practices that are ethical, honest, and in keeping with the public interest. Then the PR Officer can take those policies and practices to the public for acclaim, understanding and, if need be, for use in defense against attack.

The Unit PR Officer is expected to provide four basic services:

- Advice and counsel - the PR Officer should advise Unit officers of the impact policy decisions will have on the media, on the community and on the members.
- Communications service - encompasses the total process of letting the members and the public know via newsletters, booklets, speeches, news media, good citizenship example and other means.
- Public relations research -- means identifying, evaluating and communicating to the Unit leaders and members' information of community or world events that would help the Unit manage its affairs better.
- Public relations promotion - includes a variety of programs and activities designed to gain acceptance for the Unit among members and within the community.

To be able to provide these services effectively, the PR Officer must first establish ways to find out what is going on in the Unit. For example:

- What events are being planned for what dates?
- Which important meetings are coming up?
- Is the sport schedule set?
- Who are the committee chairmen and when do they meet?
- For which holidays does the Unit provide colour parties or other participation?

Obviously, the PR Officer has to know what is going on before he can tell anybody also about it. Without information he cannot do his job.

Not only does the PR Officer have to know what is going on, he has to find out far enough in advance to prepare an effective public relations plan.

There are four basic steps in the development of public relations plan:

- Research-Listening -- Have you really listened to the people in your community? What is their attitude toward the Unit and its programs? Don't assume that because you believe in ANAVETS everyone else will too.
- Planning. Decision Making.. Now that you have a good idea of how you are perceived, you can develop a logical, consistent plan to either maintain or improve your image.
- Communication-Action -- Here's where you put your ideas into effect, telling your story to the community according to your plan.
- Evaluation -. Was your effort successful? The evaluation effort should begin with the planning process and continue through the action phase - a continual effort to keep abreast of things in order to modify your goals or programs if necessary.

Basic research can provide an objective look at ourselves so we know ourselves better. It can reveal potential trouble spots before they create serious image problems and it can increase the effectiveness of your internal and external communications. You will know what to say, how to say it, and to whom you should say it.

One big help would be the construction of a Unit Calendar of Official Dates". Meetings, patriotic holidays, sports events, dates for election of officers, social events, blood drives, school medal award dates, youth programs dates, and other potentially newsworthy activities should be placed on the planning calendar. This gives the PR Officer a look ahead. It tells him when he must prepare news releases, make phone calls to news people and use all forms of media at their disposal. Arrange for photography and do other things to support an event.

The next step then is designing the program you are going to use. To do this properly, you need to have input from all who will be charged with carrying it out. A well-planned program should be:

- Sincere
- In keeping with the purpose of ANAVETS
- Firm and positive in its approach and appeals
- Comprehensive
- Continuous in its application
- Clear containing simple messages
- Beneficial to both the Unit and the community

The plan must consider the money available to accomplish what you set out to do. The most effective public relations plan ever designed is worthless unless you're willing to spend the money necessary to see that it meets its goals.

We've been talking about the four planning steps as if each comes in its turn. But building and maintaining a positive Image of ANAVETS does not always follow the same sequence. You always should be listening to members and the community, developing new plans for new programs and putting those plans into action. And you must always evaluate; during the listening stage you are in effect evaluating what has been done before.

While going through all of these phases, remember that there are no overnight public relations miracles. Good public relations require continuous effort.

FORMS OF MEDIA

There are six forms of media you may be dealing with:

- Newspapers (dailies, weeklies and others)
- Periodicals (newsletters, local magazines and news and trade magazines)
- Radio Stations (especially those featuring local programs)
- Television Stations (those physically located in your area)
- Internet and Websites
- E mail Campaigns

The seventh form of media is the wire services. The major ones are Canadian Press (CP), Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI). These wire services disperse news to the various media across Canada, North America and outside.

Inputs to the wire services will be done from the Dominion Office under the jurisdiction of the Dominion Public Relations Committee and the Dominion Vice-President (Publicity).

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers differ greatly from one another, not only according to their frequency of publication (daily, weekly, etc.) but also in their emphasis on news and features. In general, you will find the smaller dailies and the rural weeklies or semi-weeklies more receptive to smaller stories like election of officers or 50-year-member citations.

As outlined elsewhere here, you will need to find out from the media people themselves in your area what they want and will use. You begin by phoning the newspaper, getting the names of the editor and/or managing editor in the case of weeklies, and the city editor or metro editor for large dailies. Be sure to find out when the last edition goes to press so you can avoid calling these people just before a deadline.

Then call each editor, introduce yourself, explain your ANAVETS connection, and ask when would be a convenient time for you to ask some questions regarding types of stories you might send, who should get them, and when and what, if anything, you might do help the paper in its coverage. Don't hesitate to say the PR job is new to you (if it is) and that you would appreciate any advice as to how you might best be of service.

Don't be shy. You have something that newspapers want news. News is a valuable commodity, and local news usually is the most desirable kind. It may surprise you that public relations people originate much, if not most, of the news you read. No newspaper can cover everything all by itself.

PERIODICALS

Do not overlook periodicals when deciding which media outlets should receive a particular story. There are various newsletters and small magazines in your area that might publish the news or feature story you have to offer. Give them a call or write to them to see if they are interested.

If you have a story that you believe would be appropriate for a national news magazine, you should see that it gets proper coverage. We do recommend that you discuss the story with the Dominion PR Officer first so he can put his facilities to work for you as needed.

RADIO

Radio news usually is a series of brief summaries. However, news and feature programs of about three minutes' duration are becoming increasingly popular. These often involve a brief interview with an authority on a particular subject and are often designed for automobile-commuter audiences. Short programs on veterans' benefits or Veterans Day ceremonies are examples. They are called "mini-docs" or miniature documentaries, and should be kept in mind when you have a good interview type story.

Since radio and TV stations are licensed to use public airways, they usually devote some broadcast time to public service and educational material without charge. Talk with the public service program directors about making use of this free air time; they welcome good material.

TELEVISION

Television news directors often are looking for the same kinds of stories as are their counterparts on newspapers. But in addition, they are seeking dramatic angles and personalities who have visual impact. If the picture possibilities of a story are good, the news can be of lesser importance. And if a TV station is interested, it will tell you whether to bring your people and visuals to the studio or whether a reporter and camera crew will visit your event.

The possibilities for presenting ANAVETS programs on TV are not confined to meetings. Any time you have a particularly articulate member or a special event that includes action, you have a potential telecast.

Since TV is the fastest-paced medium you should keep these general rules in mind:

- Keep it visual.
- Keep it concise.
- Keep it in the terms of the layman. If the reporter does not understand what is being discussed, neither will the audience.

One thing to remember in dealing with the broadcast media: When you propose something for their use, it will be up to you to make the arrangements. You must get the person or persons and their "visuals", if any, together and to the proper place on time. If it is an interview or panel discussion, you may be called on to help with the questions. This is best done if you put yourself in the place of the non ANAVETS viewer you are trying to interest.

GETTING TO KNOW THE MEDIA PEOPLE

One of your first duties should be to compile a list of media people potentially interested in the types of stories you will be generating. If you did not fall heir to such a list (it probably would need updating, anyhow), your chamber of commerce will have one. Using the procedure outlined under "Newspapers", phone the following to get an appointment to talk for a few minutes about your work:

- City editor (daily)
- Editor or managing editor (weekly, semi-weekly, etc.)
- Bureau chief or correspondent (wire service)
- News director or program director (radio and TV)
- Editor or assistant editor (appropriate periodicals - listed in Ayer Directory of Publications, Editor & Publisher Yearbook, or Working Press of the Nation in your library or your organization's PR office)

You can learn from these people the kinds of stories they want: Are they interested in routine meetings? Elections? Awards? Or just the occasions where something 'newsworthy' occurs? They also will tell you what they consider newsworthy. And they will give you the names of people on their staffs that specialize in your programs. It is advisable to meet and talk with these specialists, too. Prepare your questions ahead of time, be brief, to the point, and take notes; these are very busy people, even in their slow times.

An especially important item to include in your list of media contacts is each person's deadline(s). This tells you when your material must reach them. Remember, only something extraordinary would be considered near deadline. When you seek advice or help from your contacts, always do it during their less busy times -- or during lunch or other social occasion if your PR budget allows.

After you have established a working relationship with media people, keep your communication channels open. Don't pester them or submit material of doubtful news or feature value. And don't play favorites. Mail or deliver releases uniformly so all outlets have an equal chance to carry your story. However, keep in mind that weeklies may need special consideration.

When a reporter phones, give him or her the information sought as quickly as possible. If it is not at hand, find out when it is needed and do your best to oblige.

You should make a special effort to be more than a voice on the phone to your media contacts. Call on them in person or meet them for lunch. Sometimes there is a policy against their accepting free meals, but don't let this keep you from inviting them; they will simply pay their own way. You may want to throw a media party for media managers (most working media members avoid them because of time restraints and they do not want to feel "bought"). Of course, lunches and parties are subject to the limitations of your PR budget.

OTHER CONTACTS

Another group you should establish contact with is other public relations people in your area. This includes, for example, PR directors at service and civic organizations, universities and local governments. These people can give you excellent advice, particularly regarding media contacts. You might, in fact, want to work with some of them in publicizing speeches by ANAVETS members employed in their organizations.

In colleges or universities that offer degrees in PR, don't overlook faculty members in these departments. Through your PR contacts you may gain access to a local press club or PR group that you might visit occasionally -- or join. Some of these clubs have news conference facilities, which you might arrange to use if the need arises. And they often are popular gathering places for both media and PR people.

These colleges or universities could be a source of help with your PR program. Students are anxious to get internships for experience and for class credit. There is a bonus in this for ANAVETS. Not only do you get some free or very reasonable good PR help, you also have a future professional communicator learn about ANAVETS. A student might also be your answer for good photography.

Another consideration is that how-to materials for writing news releases, getting information into a newspaper or on radio or TV are available from certain professional organizations or from the news media.

INTERNET AND WEBSITES

There are many sites to help you set up your web page on the internet. Here are some helpful items to remember when set up your site

- Proof read your site. Leave it for sometime and proof read it again before you start the site. Be professional in your approach
- Make sure you set up a security for the site or anybody could change your site on you. Set up a web master.
- Add some type of feedback, so readers can make comments or suggestion to your web master to improve the site.
- Be careful what you link your site to.

E MAIL CAMPAIGNS

There are many sites to help you with the etiquette for sending e mail to members and others. Here some of the basic rules.

- Be concise and to the point
- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation
- Do not attach unnecessary items
- Do not write in capitals
- Add disclaimers to your e mails. (our hall only holds 150 people)
- Read the e mail before you send it
- Do not use abbreviations
- Avoid long sentences.
- Never send or forward e mails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks
- Keep your language gender neutral
- Allow the reader to be able to reply to you so they are able to remove themselves from your e mail announcements and also to make suggests improving your e mails.

Remember what you send out will be out there in the computer world forever. If you are professional that professionalism will reflect on you and your unit or command.

After you have established a working relationship with media people, keep your communication channels open. Don't pester them or submit material of doubtful news or feature value

SECTION II: THE RULES TO FOLLOW

WHAT IS NEWS?

Text books define news in many ways. A safe one is: 'Previously unpublished information on a person, place or event'.

There's another definition that you won't find in any books. But it comes closer to reality. News is 'what the reporter or news director says it is'. Sounds flip, but it isn't. Consider that until the word is put out through a reporter or news director, it remains unpublished and therefore 'non-news'. The trick is to get to know what really news is and who will put the word in print or on the air.

Judgment of what constitutes news varies from medium to medium, and even from paper to paper and station to station. All news media, however, are in business to satisfy the public's desire to know what is going on in the world and in your community. Items that affect the welfare, health, or wealth of a large number of people, or stimulate their imaginations, will find ready acceptance as news.

You must make person-to-person contact (as discussed) to determine the type of news each outlet in your community is most interested in and the format in which they prefer to receive it.

That way you can avoid a mistake beginners often make, the use of the shotgun approach. Write a story and send to everyone, the newspaper, radio and television without regard for their preferences. People in the media soon know your releases aren't in their format, or concern something that doesn't fit their audience. So it's pitched, sometimes unopened and into 'file 13'. You wonder why no one gets the word.

To help determine what news you will be able to get into the media in your community, let's look at two basic types of news, they are hard and soft. Hard news is a fire, a shooting or a drug bust. It's something that is happening right now and won't be repeated. You probably won't be dealing in hard news very often.

Soft news is something of general interest, but it is not earthshaking. It's the special events, awards, honors, elections and feature material. If you analyze the content of a newspaper, radio or television newscast, you'll find that soft news makes up a good part. It's what you will be dealing with the most.

Every time a Unit takes action of any kind it creates news involving one or more Unit members, who are local citizens. And therefore news about them should be of interest to the local media.

Possibilities for news coverage include the following:

- **Special Events.** This is your best chance for wide coverage. It can be as simple as a visit by the Dominion or Provincial President or as complex as hosting the biennial Dominion Convention. It could also include participation in Special Olympics or the conduct of an oratorical contest. Any event you deem appropriate for news coverage should be brought to the attention of the media.
- **Election of Officers.** When new officers are chosen, or a week before they take office, send the information to the local media. In large urban areas, concentrate on suburban newspapers and radio stations serving the areas where the officers live. Omit large TV stations and the wire services, and send to large dailies only if you know they have someone handling personnel changes or if they publish suburban editions or supplements. Your release should give the name, title, and hometown for each new officer, along with the date he or she takes office. Conclude with a brief description of the Unit and if available, a photo of the new officer, to print media only.

- Award Presentations. Announcement of awards to winners can be handled much the same as the election story. If the award won't be given for several months, a second release based on the presentation might be sent a week before the ceremony to those publications not carrying the story at the first announcement,
- Food Functions. If a luncheon or dinner is involved, invite the media as guests. Such as the reporters and photographer/camera crews from the media outlets you would like to have in attendance. For the sake of food planning, include an RSVP card, but don't depend on responses. If you really need to know how many, phone your contacts a day or two ahead of the function to get a count - and then divide by two. Media turnouts for "business' lunches and dinners often are minimal, especially in urban areas. A press table if warranted should be near the head table but off to one side so the media guests can come and go inconspicuously.

Photographers move about on their own and TV crews usually will set up ahead in areas you designate, unless using minicams, which are handled much the same as still cameras. In general, invite the media to functions where something newsworthy will take place or be announced.

Local Unit Meetings. Assuming there is a guest speaker on a subject of public interest or a testimonial dinner for a well-known member of the community, an announcement of the event should be sent to the media. This notification can be followed up with a news release summarizing the main speech and other highlights, marked for release the day of the event. This should be mailed or delivered to arrive two or three days before the event. A very poor alternative is a release delivered the day after (do this only when a speech is not available in advance - as when made from notes). Talks employing slides should be summarized as if the slides were part of the text. The best way to secure coverage of a meeting, of course, is to have reporters in attendance.

Some other possibilities are:

- Membership Drives
- Unit Social Events
- Community Services
- Contests of All Kinds
- Committee Reports
- Blood Donor Drives
- Resolutions
- Campaigns of All Kinds
- Installations
- ANAVETS Provincial Sports
- Meeting Notices
- Baseball, Darts and Curling
- Sponsorship of Projects
- Children & Youth Activities
- Guest Speakers
- Service Officer's Report
- Provincial Meetings
- Convention Plans
- Birthday Anniversaries
- Deaths of Members

Also, Dominion Headquarters issues many publications which can be adapted as "localized stories.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

We have just discussed "straight news". That is providing factual information without purposely trying to influence the reader or audience toward some value judgment. In other words, reporting without injecting personal biases.

An editorial does express an opinion about something, and ANAVETS certainly does have opinions or mandates about many things. For example, ANAVETS has always felt that those who served their country in time of war deserve special attention when they need help. There are times and ways that this opinion should be expressed by Association officials or by individual members.

Some newspapers allow "guest editorials" to be printed; others have "opened" columns which allow the reader to be exposed to two opposite points of view on a subject. Another approach is to send letters to the editors of newspapers. Many radio and television stations have "guest editorial" spots that ANAVETS members can use to express their opinions for or against a policy decision, such as one affecting veterans' health care. But editorial comment must never be confused with straight news reporting. And when you do get into the editorial area, be sure that opinion is backed by factual knowledge about the subject.

When editorializing for ANAVETS, be sure that you accurately state the current official Association position on the subject. Confirm with the Dominion Vice-President (Publicity) and get his/her "blessing" before you express your editorial comment.

THE NEWS RELEASE

The most useful tool in your efforts to reach the news media will be the news release. There are two basic release forms: one for the print media and one for broadcasters. However, it is permissible; in fact it is common practice to send print oriented releases to all media outlets. Therefore, unless you have special training and the time to prepare two releases, simply prepare the one described below:

There are several basic rules to follow:

- First, your release must be accurate, the facts straight and names and places spelled correctly.
- Next, it must include all the basic facts in the first or at most first two paragraphs, the who, the what, the why, the when, the where and how of the story.
- The most important sentence is the first one that is called the "lead". Decide what the most interesting and significant information is then boiled down to one lead sentence.

If at all possible, tie your release to a current event or condition already in the news that relates to what you're writing about (this is called a *news peg and will help get your material used). This can be done in the lead or the first paragraph or two with just a few words -perhaps a connection with a current controversy or a bill going through Parliament or the provincial legislature.

Keep sentences and paragraphs short. Arrange paragraphs in descending order of importance, so the release can be cut from the bottom, if necessary.

Stick to the facts. Don't editorialize or present opinions unless they are attributed to responsible authorities. Try to anticipate the reader's questions and answer them. Exaggerations and misstatements are remembered and likely will send subsequent releases from you directly to the wastebasket. Credit statements to the persons making them, using direct quotes when feasible. Avoid the use of flowery adjectives in describing the event or situation.

In the matter of people's titles (Dr., Mr., Ms., Etc.) and other elements of style, it is best to check with the publications in your area and use their style. Most follow the Canadian Press Style Guide.

RULES FOR THE RELEASE

Type all releases. Use 8 x 11 white paper, and only one side of each sheet. Do not send carbon copies; use photocopy or other legible duplication processes.

- Across the top of the first page, include the words 'NEWS RELEASE' in large type; the words 'THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA'; the name and the address of your Unit headquarters (see sample).
- In the upper right hand corner below the top strip, list your name and telephone number and/or those of someone else who can answer questions. This should be preceded by 'For More Information'; or simply 'Contact' (see sample).
- In the upper left hand corner opposite 'Contact', indicate the date and/or specific time the story may be used. (This is especially important if you are releasing a story based on a speech which will be given at a specific time and date in the future.) If the release date is not a factor, indicate 'For Immediate Release' (see sample).
- Begin the first sentence of the release about a third of the way down the page, thus leaving room for the editor to write instructions for handling or a headline. Do not carry paragraphs over from one page to the next; end each page with a complete paragraph.
- Double-space between lines, and leave wide (1") margins on both sides. Staple the upper left corners when there is more than one page. Put a brief, identifying headline or "slug" (e.g., ANAVETS MEETS IN WINNIPEG") at the top left of all pages except the first, where it can be either flush with the left margin or centered over the first paragraph. This helps identify the story when pages are separated. Number all but the first page.
- Write "more" at the bottom right of all pages that are to be continued. Use "end" or "30" to mark the end of the story. Put the date the release was mailed or delivered at the bottom of the last page.
- Be sure it gets into the mail or is delivered by hand in plenty of time to meet news deadlines.

SECTION III: THE ALTERNATIVES

OTHER WAYS TO COMMUNICATE

So far, we have dealt mainly with personal contacts and the news release. There are other ways to reach the public through the news media, including the following:

- Other written communications
- The interview
- The news conference
- A speakers' bureau
- The Fact Sheet

The fact sheet is a simple way to make information available to the media -- and to ANAVETS members and the general public -- on topics of interest. The type of information usually included could be:

- A short history of the Unit with background on its name
- Brief description of the regular programs of the Unit
- A more detailed description of a particular activity
- Membership numbers and perhaps a profile of the membership
- List of officers, to include names and titles

Such basic fact sheets can be used as background information for news people who are covering a particular event or can be included in media kits when you are conducting a press conference. They also can be given to members to keep them informed or passed out to the general public when they attend special events that you conduct.

The fact sheets must be accurate and must be updated when any of the information changes. A sample fact sheet is included in the Appendix.

THE NEWS MEMORANDUM/MEDIA ADVISORY

You also can reach the media with an advance news memorandum or media advisory TM. This gives all the basic information at a glance -- the who, what, when, where, and perhaps how and why (see sample). The information Sheet (Broadcast Media)

In dealing with the broadcast media, the most important thing is personal contact. For most ANAVETS members starting out in PR work, it will be a questioning and learning experience. Don't be reluctant to ask questions of media representatives or to present ideas. You will gain by their suggestions and guidance. Take notes on what is said; they won't all agree, so it's important to remember who said what.

When you think you have a promising idea for a broadcast, give the news or program director or talk-show host an information sheet outlining the idea and listing all the important information he should have, including your name, affiliation, and phone number (see sample). Leave blank spaces for his notes. If he likes your idea, he will refer you to someone who will get the details and make arrangements for a taping session.

If you bring a guest to a TV station for an interview or talk-show appearance, give the interviewer an information sheet identifying the person, area of expertise, possible questions of public interest, name of your

organization and any other items you think appropriate. Always include the affiliation with the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada.

THE INTERVIEW

The most direct way to transfer information from a member to a reporter is by means of the interview. Preparing for and conducting an interview cannot be taken lightly. An interview in which the interviewee tries to "wing it" is seldom successful, and while it might produce spontaneity, it can easily result in post-interview problems. Remember, how accurately the story is written is as much the responsibility of the interviewee as the reporter. In dealing with complex information it becomes even more crucial that the presentation is understood.

Interviews for radio, television, or print media are basically the same. The initial approach to the reporter, editor, or station manager should be made after you have thought out the value of the story as a news item or feature. On occasion, a reporter will approach you regarding an interview.

The story could relate to an event, personality, hobby, or anything that might be interesting to the public. In any event, here are some points to consider:

- Select an articulate and knowledgeable spokesperson. The person's appearance, particularly on television, goes a long way toward "selling" a story. Dresses, mannerisms, eye contact, tone of voice, are all important in establishing credibility and a generally acceptable image of the interviewee and the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada.
- Arrange time convenient to both parties, remembering that it usually is the reporter who is working against a deadline. Select a suitable place, free from noise and interruptions.
- It is assumed that everything said in an interview is for publication. So before the interview begins, set any special ground rules and be certain they are agreed to by both the reporter and interviewee. In setting ground rules, going "off the record" means that the reporter cannot use the information presented; going "on background" means that the reporter cannot attribute a statement to the interviewee. Except in rare and often unique circumstances, it is best to stay "on the record" or "for attribution". The reporter always will prefer it that way. Nevertheless, ground rules, if any, come first. After the interview, it is too late to say, "Oh, by the way, please don't use what was said about such-and-such".
- After the interview, don't expect or ask the report to show you the story before it is published. It is a hallmark of the journalism profession that stories normally are not reviewed for content by outsiders. However, particularly on highly complex matters, it is appropriate to offer to go over the information to ensure accuracy. The reporter may ask you to do this, anyway. Give him or her your phone number and be available for any follow-up questions.
- Accuracy means something different to an ANA VETS member than to a reporter. The reporter is limited by both time and space. He or she may have to condense the content of an entire book, plus related material, into a two-column newspaper article or a 90-second television spot. While the ANA VETS member might consider it inaccurate not to name all other people who have contributed to the work or to skip some of the procedural detail, the reporter (and often the editor) must make the story fit into the time or space allotted. The reporter's "accuracy" is to get the overall gist of the story and the correct details into the final product. Remember, if you or the interviewee can make the key points clear to the reporter, it will serve you both well -- and the public, too. The reporter's job rides on accuracy.
- It is important, therefore, to concentrate on these key points before the interview. Such preparation is as important as a lesson-plan to a teacher.
- While the foregoing applies primarily to in-person interviews, both print and broadcast, it can apply also to telephone interviews. These often come when a reporter is near a deadline, and may require faster

action than you can provide. For instance, you may not be able to locate an appropriate interviewee on short notice. Also, the interviewee - and this could be you in a pinch -- should have time to get his thoughts in order before talking with the reporter. Don't hesitate to ask for 15 minutes or so before calling the reporter back - to give you time to think. If you have to decline a last-minute telephone interview, try to arrange an alternative, possibly at a later time.

- If there is time before the interview, prepare a summary of the subject to help the reporter formulate questions. You may even suggest avenues of approach and questions which will help make the story clear and complete. Photos, diagrams, and graphs are often helpful. The reporter can refer to your summary while writing the story, as well. Taking the time to do these shows professionalism, and your cooperation will help ensure the accuracy and quality of the story.
- The interviewee should understand that the reporter is not the only one who affects the story; the editor also makes critical choices on length and accuracy. Also, the reporter usually does not write the headline; this may be done by someone totally unfamiliar with the content of the story. So, if the story does not come out exactly right, it will do no good to criticize the reporter.
- In case of a gross error, it can be brought to the attention of the editor in an amicable manner. Such cases are extremely rare, however. Conversely, when the story appears, it is appropriate to compliment the reporter if the job is well done.
- Keep in mind that few reporters are specialists in such areas as Veterans Affairs and Children and Youth programs. Usually only the larger papers or stations can afford such specialists. Therefore, you normally will be dealing with general assignments reporters who cover a wide variety of stories. Just as a reporter should know about the person being interviewed, it is important to know about the reporter's background and interests. A few tactful questions should put you on the right track.
- Finally, don't forget the reporter's deadline. Your timely responses to queries and requests will make for good media relations as well as good stories for the public.

THE NEWS CONFERENCE

A news conference is an effective way for an ANAVETS officer to deliver a specific message to the public as well as clarify general policy information to the news media. However, before you schedule a news conference, you must determine whether the message is sufficiently important or interesting to the media to attract a reasonable turnout. (It is embarrassing -- and hurts your credibility with the media -- to schedule a news conference and have only one or two people show up.) The alternative is to set up individual interviews, which most reporters prefer anyway.

When you do schedule a news conference, there are some general rules to follow to ensure the media is allowed the best possible chance to get their story:

- The news conference should be announced well in advance by a written advisory sent or hand-carried to the appropriate editor of each news outlet.
- A follow-up telephone call the day prior to the conference to confirm that the editor has received the advisory is proper. You can explain the general subject matter so editors can decide if they want to cover it; but do not disclose all of the news details, and do not promise anything you cannot deliver.
- Time the conference considering news deadlines; midmorning is best, with early afternoon being the alternative. This allows time for writing and editing the story for evening newscasts and for the next day's morning papers.
- In the case of visiting ANAVETS officials, avoid scheduling a news conference immediately after he or she gets off the plane. Allow sufficient time for him or her to freshen up, change clothes and be briefed on local issues.

- Try to hold the conference at a location reporters can get to easily and quickly, such as a downtown hotel meeting room or other public facility. Select a room large enough to accommodate television equipment and crews as well as print reporters. Be sure the electrical supply is adequate for electronic media lights, cameras and recorders. The room should have a lectern or podium and sufficient seating for at least one representative of each news outlet contacted. Also anticipate extra seating for uninvited - but always welcome - news organizations.
- Limit access to the room. The news conference is for news media -- not onlookers. Only members of the official party should attend. Others only detract from the importance of the event.
- Have news releases, fact sheets, copies of statements, or other handouts ready to distribute at the beginning of the conference.
- Conduct the conference in a businesslike manner. Start on time. It is proper for one of the official party to offer a very brief introduction of the ANAVETS official who is holding the news conference.
- After a brief opening statement by the official who is holding the news conference allow 15-20 minutes for questions by reporters. If, prior to the 20-minute limit, there is a noticeable pause in the questioning, it is appropriate for the member of the official party who opened the news conference to announce that if there are no further questions, the news conference is concluded.
- Remember, a news conference is business. It should be conducted as such. Its importance should not be diluted by "piggy backing" it with a brunch or some other social event.

THE SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Perhaps the most effective way to communicate with other people is by talking to them. Your manner of speaking adds much to the words you are saying. Gestures, raising and lowering your voice, eye contact and facial expressions are some of the things which help your listener better understand what you are trying to convey. Speaking also has the advantage of giving your listener the chance to question you if he does not understand completely what you are saying.

ANAVETS members have many opportunities to tell audiences about their activities and programs. And they should take advantage of all of them. People who are not familiar with the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada are constantly amazed at the scope and breadth of our interests and programs. But, like all of the other forms of public communication we have been discussing, a good speech requires careful planning, accurate information tailored for a specific audience, and an appropriate message carrier -- in this case, a good speaker.

The Unit PR Officer should establish a "Speaker's Bureau™. Every Unit has members who can speak well and convincingly before groups. These members should be recruited as speakers available to appear before a variety of audiences representing religious, educational, professional and other types of organizations. A list of available speakers should be provided to each organization.

The speech writer's problem is not one of lack of material, but rather selection of material for a particular audience. And that is where you must begin when preparing a speech -- with the audience. A youth group is certainly different from a Rotary luncheon gathering. However, for all audiences, make the speech fairly short. About 20 minutes is a good length.

When you schedule an ANAVETS speaker, don't forget to let your news contacts know about it. While the speaker may be addressing only 50 or so people, if a newspaper or radio or television station reports on his speech he will be reaching thousands more.

Bear in mind that when one of your speakers is signed up to talk to a local group, you are responsible to both the speaker and the group to see that all necessary arrangements are made. This includes giving the group's emcee introductory material on the speaker, making sure the microphone works, setting up a movie or slide projector and screen if needed, making sure slides are loaded in proper order and that there is some dependable means of running them, and getting someone to dim and raise the lights. Usually these things are taken care of by the host organization, but you should see that they are.

Also, make sure the speaking date, place, and time are confirmed in writing, along with the speech title and any special arrangements. It is a good idea to reconfirm by telephone two days in advance. Speeches are effective, and every Unit should try to have a speakers program. But, a word of caution. Just as a good speech delivered by a well dressed, polished speaker will enhance a Unit's and ANAVETS' reputation in a community, a poor, boring speech given in a slovenly manner will lower the audience's opinion of the organization.'

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

The number of ways a Unit can communicate with its members and with the general public is limited only by imagination, talent and resources. Some possibilities are:

- **OUTDOOR ADVERTISING** -- Window cards and bumper stickers on various activities and programs can be made available to Units. The costs are nominal. Details are available from Dominion Headquarters.
- **ANAVETS EXHIBITS** - At fairs and other public events are also good ways to tell the ANA VETS story and to attract new members. The pamphlet on ANAVETS is available from the Dominion Office for display or to hand out.
- **MUSICAL ORGANIZATION** - Music is an international language. Those Units that have bands, choral groups, drum and bugle corps, color parties and drill teams have an especially popular way of getting the Unit and ANAVETS in front of the public in a very positive way.
- **CABLE TELEVISION** -- The growth of cable television offers yet another channel for ANAVETS communications. Units should consider using it to make regular broadcasts in their communities. Most cable operators will help organizations like ANA VETS produce programs of general interest to the communities they serve.

UNIT PUBLICATIONS

Perhaps the most important public a Unit must communicate with is its own membership.

Your members have to get the word if they are to participate as active members. When your members are informed they pass the word to others -- prospective members, their friends and neighbors in the community, and to media people.

You could publish a newsletter that goes out regularly to each member; you can have a more elaborate publication. You also could use bulletin boards at the Unit or where members work to pass on news items.

Putting the news media on the distribution list for your publications is one way you can keep them informed of Unit activities.

Another consideration is to approach your local newspaper about running an ANAVETS column on a regular basis.

THERE IS MORE TO IT

At the beginning of this handbook we defined public relations, as it pertains to the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, as the planned effort to create understanding, favor and support for ANAVETS' programs and objectives among the members, the media and the general public. In essence, the function of public relations is to build and maintain a positive image of our Association.

Also, public relations includes anticipating benefits for both the community and ANAVETS that might result from its various programs, getting support for those programs Planning them, publicizing them and evaluating them.

We have covered -- for the most part -- how to build and maintain a positive image. Most of the emphasis has been on internal and external communications that we all are generally familiar with. But there is a little more to public relations than that.

Remember, everything that an individual member does says something to someone about the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada.

SECTION IV: THE RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

A good PR Officer must also think in terms of good community relations. This is an important part of the ANAVETS overall public relations program.

Community relations are not a separate area of public relations. It is more an "approach". It is recognition that our country is made up of a lot of communities, each containing most of the same elements that make up our entire nation. This means that ANAVETS relationship with the Canadian public is a composite of our relations within each community throughout the country.

This relationship is important -- to our Association, to you and to the community.

Some of the major activities which should be undertaken by an ANAVETS Unit to enhance this relationship are:

- Sponsorship of programs such as Unit Home for senior citizens, Special Olympics, Cadets, youth sports teams, oratorical contests, and school medals for youth
- Participation in activities of schools, churches, fraternal, social and civic organizations, and in many other aspects of community life
- Participation in blood donation clinics
- People to people and other humanitarian acts
- Cooperation with government officials and community leaders

You should record the involvement of and financial support from your members in community activities and sports teams. The public should know the dollar value and the hours spent in your involvement.

The Unit record of community service is the foundation for ANAVETS' total public relations effort. Unit PR Officers should continue to encourage the involvement of members in community activities. And they should let the media know about that involvement.

NEWS MEDIA RECOGNITION

The tendency today is to criticize the news media when they do not report an event as we wish they had, or to cite them for what we consider to be unbalanced or unfair coverage of some issue. We should be just as quick to tell them when we think they have done an outstanding job presenting a subject in which ANAVETS has an interest.

But you do not have to have a lavish award presentation to recognize good work by a local newsperson. A letter or a phone call complimenting them on a particular article or program will show them that you follow their work and appreciate outstanding efforts.

Units might wish to invite all of the local news people they work with regularly to some social function at which they can be recognized. This would be a good time too to make any special awards that the Unit might establish for news people.

HOW TO HANDLE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY

Because ANAVETS does so many things; because it represents a cross-section of Canadians; and because it is in the public eye, something is bound to happen which doesn't look good in print. Unfortunately, this is the type of thing which is most newsworthy in the eyes of the media and the general public.

For example, support Billy Smith almost drowns while on an ANAVETS sponsored Boy Scout outing. Suppose further that Billy is on his way down for the third time when an observant ANAVETS member who is a strong swimmer snatches him out of the water.

News? Of course it is! Will the publication damage the ANAVETS' sponsorship of Boy Scout outings?

It won't if you give all the facts to the media as quickly and as accurately as you can. Do not say "no comment". And don't ask the press to withhold the story. Papers have social consciences just like ANAVETS Units do. They will print the story because it's news. But they will do it in such a way that it appears as a news item only - not an indictment of ANAVETS and its programs.

Sometimes an incident like this can be turned into an asset. It can be the basis of an excellent association with the media. Because you gave them the facts, quickly and accurately, they will appreciate your help. They will remember you. When you need their support, you will get it. And you will have earned it.

On any controversial or unfavorable story, see that the "ANAVETS side" is presented. Do not storm the editorial office ready to fight. The newsperson who gathered the supposedly damaging facts may not know the ANAVETS side. Be sure you tell him what it is.

Sometimes, when he knows the entire set of circumstances, he will kill the story, because it no longer is news. If the news person still feels he has to run the story, help him as best you can to ensure accuracy. Since ANAVETS has an overall good image, rare and temporarily unfavorable publicity will do little damage to that image.

SECTION V: THE APPENDIXES

SAMPLE FACT SHEET

John Osborn, V.C., Unit #1
#1 - 1395 Ellice Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba

CONTACT:
(Unit Contact Person)
(Contact Phone Number)

FACT SHEET

John Osborn, V.C., Unit #1 was the first unit ever established with the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada. It was founded August 30, 1918 in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, by a group of veterans who served in the Canadian Forces during World War I.

It was originally called Yorkton Unit #1, but the number later was moved to Winnipeg, the site of the Dominion Headquarters at the time.

The Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada is a federally incorporated veterans association chartered by Parliament in 1917 as a patriotic, mutual-help and community-service organization of honorably discharged war veterans. It is Canada's oldest veteran's organization with a membership of about fifteen thousand (15,000) members. Its 69 units and Ladies Auxiliaries are organized into 7 provincial commands.

To be eligible for active membership in the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, a man or woman must have served in the Canadian Forces, Regular or Reserve, the Merchant Navy, the Canadian Corps of Firefighters, allied forces of Her Majesty's Armed Forces and forces of member countries of NATO. Those not eligible for active membership may be accepted as Associate members. Honorary membership may be granted to those who should be so honored.

There is no requirement concerning length of service except that governing military cadets, members of the RCMP, Customs and Immigration Personnel, Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries Personnel, Department of Lands and Forest Personnel, Emergency Medical Technicians, Canadian Corps of Commissionaires and must have been unconditional and terminated by honorable discharge or retirement.

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA MEDIA ADVISORY

Steveston Unit #284 For more information:
11900 - No.1 Road *(Unit Contact Person)*
Richmond, B.C. *(Contact Phone Number)*
V7E 1S9

ANAVETS JOBS FAIR TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY

The ANAVETS Unit #284 of Richmond will hold its second annual Veterans' Jobs Fair on Saturday, June 18 at the County Recreation Center from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Representatives from a dozen local businesses will provide information and guidance to veterans looking for work. Regional job counselors from Employment Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada and the Small Business Administration will also participate in the fair.

The jobs fair was started last year because unemployment figures show that a large number of the area's jobless are veterans.

(Date)

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM

TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS

THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA

New Waterford Unit #217 CONTACT
P.O. Box 34 *(Unit Contact Person)*
New Waterford, N.S. *(Contact Phone Number)*
B1K 4K4

SUBJECT: Annual Holiday Blood Drive

SPONSOR: New Waterford Unit #217

WHEN: *(Date)*

WHERE: The New Waterford Memorial Hospital Auditorium
(Times) each day

WHY: Each year at this time emergency blood supplies are reduced to dangerously low levels. The Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, in cooperation with the Canadian Red Cross are sponsoring a blood drive to help hospitals deal with this shortage. Across the country ANAVETS donated more than 300,000 pints of blood last year. In Cape Breton County last year's week-long drive added *(Number)* pints of blood to the amount needed by local hospitals. ANAVETS and Red Cross volunteers will be at New Waterford Memorial Hospital to assist those who wish to donate blood.

(Date)

SAMPLE INFORMATION SHEET

FOR BROADCAST MEDIA

THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA

The Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada

CONTACT:

Ontario Command *(Contact Person)*
408 Royal York Road Public Relations Officer
Toronto, Ontario
M8Y 2115 *(Phone Number)*

Dear *(News Director)*:

The following is more information about the interview possibility we discussed on the telephone today. Bob Cassels, Provincial President of the Ontario Command of ANAVETS, will report on the progress of the "SAY NO TO DRUGS" Program to our Provincial Convention in *(City)* on *(date)*. Mr. Cassels will be available for an interview from about *(Times)*.

"SAY NOT TO DRUGS" Program is receiving national support from business and industry as well as police and educators. Some background material on the program is enclosed.

I will be happy to arrange an interview with Mr. Cassels at your convenience during the above times.

You are welcome to attend the dinner meeting that evening as our guest. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested.

Sincerely,

(Contact Person)
Public Relations Officer
End.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE VETERANS IN CANADA

Sir Winston Churchill Unit #3 -
8204 - 97 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
TOL 3A9

CONTACT:
(Contact Person)
(Phone Number)

Date of Release: *(Date)*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dominion President of the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, Niel McKinnon, will make his first visit to Edmonton on *(Date)*, since his election as Dominion President on *(Date)*.

He will deliver a luncheon address titled "The Noblest Motive is the Public Good" at noon in the restaurant of the Best Western Hotel on Broad Street.

At 11 a.m. Unit #3 President William Reynolds will escort President McKinnon to Bates Memorial Hospital, where volunteers from the local Unit started the province's first ANAVETS sponsored Infant Hearing Assessment Project. Since then, other Units around the province have initiated similar programs.

"This is the kind of program we are really proud of", Reynolds said. "Trained volunteers work with doctors and nurses at the hospital to check for hearing problems infants might have. I'll be proud to show it off to the Dominion President."

At *(time)*, the President will present a special commendation at Unit #3 to Brian Everly for his work in starting the program here.

President McKinnon will then have an informal discussion with members about ANAVETS programs.

(END)

SAMPLE CUTLINE (CAPTION)

LOCAL BASEBALL CHAMPS -- Jerry Jackson, coach of the baseball team sponsored by the Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada Unit #318 of Lennoxville, accepts the area championship trophy from Georges Tremblay Dominion Vice-President, following Unit's 318 victory in the area tournament held in Magog, July 18-21. Pictured are (left to right): Ross Lenoir, final game winning pitcher; Jackson; Dominion VP Tremblay; and Paul Sommers, catcher.

(date)

Photo and text by Jack Cummins