

Council Program Director

(extracted from Supreme Pub 962-2010)

Entertaining, Enjoyable and Beneficial

Many of the activities of the Knights of Columbus sound demanding, and certainly many are, but that does not mean that others can't be just for fun. Members of your council are your neighbors, friends and acquaintances, who are just as interested in athletic, cultural and social events as you are. Programs and activities that come under the council activities section are unlimited — golfing, softball, soccer, hockey, curling, tennis, bowling, art exhibits, movies, lectures or demonstrations, holiday dances, picnics, open houses, council anniversary or birthday parties — all the events that are an important part of fraternal life.

Public relations activities are also included under the council activities section of the Service Program. Serving under the director of council activities, public relations personnel are charged with the responsibility of keeping the council's membership accurately and constantly informed of current and future events. Additionally, the image of the council must be maintained within the community through the use of newspapers, the Internet, radio and television. People deserve to know the good work your council does. To fulfill these obligations, the public relations chairman and his committee members must work closely with all Service Program directors and council officers.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Every council should have a **monthly bulletin for its members**. This may be a letter from the grand knight, a copied paper, a printed folder, booklet or news sheet detailing the council's news, programs and business. Such a publication arouses the active interest of members and keeps them informed. Copies of all bulletins issued by your council should be forwarded regularly to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services, as well as the council's field agent and general agent.
- A principal means by which a council can develop public knowledge of our Order is through the use of newspapers. Each public relations committee should **release regularly to all local Catholic and community news editors announcements** concerning: Church, athletic, civic, cultural, social, family, fraternal and membership projects; committee appointments; meetings and plans; council meeting programs, speakers, etc.; and international programs of the Order. In some communities, special promotion opportunities can be found through feature section articles on the council or Order; fraternal page stories; human interest items about members; special editions for state council meetings; and weekly council news columns. To assist with your council's public relations efforts, the Supreme Council office has produced a PR handbook, *Getting Your Message Across — Knights of Columbus Public Relations and Publicity Guide* (#2235). The handbook is distributed to each council annually as part of the "Surge . . . with Service" kit and is also available through the Supreme Council Supply Department. Photographs or electronic images, with captions explaining the action and identifying everyone in the picture, should be submitted with newspaper articles as often as possible.
- Each January, after the council has completed and submitted its **Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity** (#1728) for the previous year, be sure to promote the council's total volunteer commitments and financial contributions. Use the council newsletter to build awareness and pride in these accomplishments among members, and submit a press release to local media announcing the totals.
- Establish a **council Web site**. Also, regularly consult the Order's Web site at www.kofc.org for up-to-date information and news.
- **Occasions for broadcasts and telecasts are found in Columbus Day programs, communion breakfasts, Founder's Day (March 29) celebrations, religious and patriotic public demonstrations, forums, open meetings, banquets, charity balls, outings, major sporting events, etc.** Support Catholic radio and television programs. Additionally, the council could sponsor a weekly broadcast or telecast on Catholic and community subjects. Cable television stations sometimes donate public service time to local organizations. Contact the

program director at your local cable network and ask for time to show one of the Order's promotional films. The Order occasionally produces radio or television Public Service Announcements or other addresses dealing with issues or events such as "Keep Christ in Christmas" campaigns, volunteerism, etc. These items are available at no charge and are promoted in the Order's publications.

- Another valuable medium for developing council publicity is a **speakers' committee**. Select five or more articulate members to give short lectures on the Order to other fraternal organizations, service clubs, etc.
- **Set up a display** in the council home, parish hall, public libraries, store windows, etc. to promote council events and contests.
- **Council bulletin boards** provide all types of information to help members perform and enjoy more fully their fraternal, civic and religious duties as Knights of Columbus. Post any announcements, bulletins, newsletters and clippings that are relevant to members and their families. Keeping the board up-to-date will keep your council members up-to-date. Maintain a scrapbook of newspaper clippings, pictures and publications for future reference and historical use. Photographs of council affairs and members should be exhibited in the council home. Photos, slides and videos of council activities should be taken and used for entertainment and promotion of upcoming events.
- Preparation of a **council's history** is an important form of long-term public relations. The best sources of historical data are the recorder's minutes, listings of council officers and program chairmen, rosters, newsletters, scrapbooks, etc.
- Utilize the electronic clip art version of the Order's emblem, a personal computer and printer to create a variety of **personalized council stationery**. For instance, most office and home computer software comes with a program to produce mailing labels. Printing the Order's emblem, the council's name and return address on label stock (or envelopes) will create a handy return address label for your letters. Another idea is making council letterhead by preprinting the emblem and the council's name and return address on sheets of paper. There's no limit to the personalized items you can produce. The Order's emblem and other clip art can be downloaded from our Web site www.kofc.org, at no cost.

FRATERNALISM

- Maintain a **strong, friendly and fraternal atmosphere** throughout your council and among its members and families. Make sure new members feel welcome.
- Sponsor **joint programs with your Squires circle and with other fraternal groups in your community**. Invite leaders of other fraternal benefit societies or service-oriented organizations to your council affairs — social, athletic, cultural, etc.
- Begin or revive the practice of **having everyone wear an identification badge** during your council meetings and activities.
- Include an annual "**Recognition Night**" in your council activity schedule. An excellent assortment of colorful and attractive certificates for use by the fraternal recognition committee is available from the Supreme Council Supply Department. A generic certificate (#2898) is also available. The certificate's multipurpose design (which includes a four-color Knights of Columbus emblem) was developed in response to numerous requests for special program certificates. By using a computer and a printer, councils can easily design their own professional looking certificates at a reasonable cost for any occasion. All certificates should be ordered by the grand knight or financial secretary on the official requisition for supplies. A sample copy of the certificate will be sent upon request. The Knights of Columbus Certificates Flyer (#2640) is available from the Supply Department and describes the wide variety of certificates that can be ordered.

- Present **degree certificates** to the members of each degree class immediately following an exemplification. First Degree certificates are available in English (#268), Spanish (#268S) and French (#268F). Second Degree certificates are available in English (#269), Spanish (#269S) and French (#269F). Third Degree certificates are available in English (#270), Spanish (#270S) and French (#270F). Fourth Degree certificates are available in English (#1467), Spanish (#1467S) and French (#1467F). Each of these certificates is available for \$.25 from the Supreme Council Supply Department.
- Order “**Certificates of Merit**,” (#1454) available from the Supreme Council Supply Department, for presentation to civic leaders, law enforcement officers and military personnel in your community.
- Select a “**Knight of the Month**” and/or “**Knight of the Year.**” Appropriate certificates (#1476 E,F,S and #1545 E,F,S respectively) for presentation are available through the Supreme Council Supply Department. Recipients should be chosen for exemplary service to Church, community, council, family and youth.
- Recognize the important moments in the lives of your members and those individuals who are important to your council by sending **Knights of Columbus greeting cards**. Birthday (#757 E,F,S), Anniversary (#1484 E,F,S), Get Well (#1483 E,F,S), Sympathy (#1932 E,F,S) Thank You (#2010 E,F,S) and Congratulations (#2087 E,F,S) cards are available from the Supreme Council Supply Department in English, French and Spanish for 25¢ each.
- Publish annually a **council directory** and distribute it to all council members. List contact information for your council’s field agent and make sure he gets a copy of the directory. Such a directory not only enables members to become better acquainted with their fellow Knights, but also can be used as a basis for forming “fast-contact” committees or “telephone squads.” List the current Supreme, state, district and council officers, Service Program directors in your council, Fourth Degree officers of your local assembly, and Squires circle counselors and officers. List every member’s name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address, and arrange them alphabetically by parish. You may want to include each member’s occupation, his wife’s name and other useful information. The inside cover could contain a calendar of the fraternal year.
- Spearhead **Columbus Day celebrations** each October in your community. Sponsor a communion breakfast, hold an open house, a parade or a dance. Participate in any civic observances scheduled. Encourage your council’s public relations committee to issue news releases about Columbus Day plans, Christopher Columbus himself, and Knights of Columbus programs and activities.
- Celebrate **Founder’s Day**. March 29 is the anniversary of the day the Knights of Columbus was granted a charter by the state of Connecticut. This day calls for a special celebration in every council throughout the Order. In honor of our founder, honor and recognize your council’s founders — your charter members. “Charter Member” certificates (Item #1456, E, F, S, 25¢ each) are available from the Supreme Council Supply Department. Other Founder’s Day activities might include a communitywide reception or open house, a dance, or a Mass of thanksgiving for the Order’s founder, his fellow incorporators and all the K of C leaders who helped shape the Order over the years. Petition state and community leaders to issue celebratory proclamations. Schedule a showing of the Supreme Council production about our founder, *The Life and Legacy of Father McGivney* (#24358), available from the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services. Founder’s Day offers many opportunities for press coverage as well. Publicize Founder’s Day activities in local newspapers and on television and radio. Issue articles to newspapers about the founding of the Knights of Columbus, the good works Knights do on a state and international level, and your own council’s record of achievement within the community.

CULTURAL

- **Fully utilize the council lecturer** when preparing material for the “Good of the Order” section of a meeting. The grand knight appoints the lecturer to provide suitable education and entertainment programs for the council. He is responsible for the “Good of the Order” section of the council meeting. It’s up to him to plan and present worthwhile programs that will help build meeting attendance and benefit the attending members. To do this the lecturer needs to be knowledgeable of all aspects of the council programming. Even with a thorough understanding of council programming and the workings of the Order, it can be difficult to come up with new topics for meetings. Fortunately, there are several sources the lecturer can turn to for fresh ideas. The types of programs arranged by the

lecturer are limited only by his imagination and creativity: panel debates on issues facing the community or the Church; speakers such as the coach of a high school team, a town or parish historian, or a local newspaper columnist; quizzes on history, the Bible or sports; discussions of movies, books or plays; performances by theater groups or choirs; presentations by members on their crafts or hobbies; screening a classic film; a presentation on health issues by a doctor; ethnic night celebrations; arranging a talent show; past grand knight dinners; and holiday celebrations are just some possible programs. A good place to look for ideas is *Program Supplement*. Another excellent source of ideas is *Columbia*. State newsletters, newsletters from other councils, diocesan newspapers and parish bulletins are also good sources for discussion topics. Lecturers should also familiarize themselves with the video productions offered by the Supreme Council office listed in the Knights of Columbus Audiovisuals flyer (#1539).

- Invite **speakers from your community** to appear in a series of lectures for your members and their families to discuss the arts and entertainment. Plan demonstrations, exhibits, movies and talks by educators, artists, musicians, etc.
- Plan an annual **Knights of Columbus Art Festival** and feature exhibits by local artists. Award prizes.
- Conduct a “**Show and Tell**” program where members and their families can exhibit and discuss their own handiwork, crafts, collections, etc.
- Urge **group attendance** at concerts, operas, musicals or plays.
- Consider **open meetings**, the Good of the Order section of business meetings, or family events as opportunities to conduct a film program. Showing a film can be a good way to add interest and diversity to your events. The Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services can provide your council with a listing of various film titles available to councils.

SOCIAL

- Plan **council dances** in connection with various holidays — New Year’s Eve, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, Canada Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. These dances may be formal or informal, depending on council preferences.
- Conduct an **annual “Open House”** for members and their families. It can be held in conjunction with a holiday or at any time of the year. Clean and decorate the council home, invite your members and families and receive your guests with the council’s most gracious hospitality. Plan special entertainment — games, dancers or singers, films, etc.
- Use the occasion of your **council’s anniversary** as an opportunity to sponsor varied activities. Sponsor a First Degree exemplification; recognize any members who share the council’s birthday; show slides or prepare a photo display of significant events in the council’s past year or entire history; exhibit trophies and awards, council scrapbooks, etc.
- **Institute a “Family Night”** possibly on the second Tuesday of each month, or the fourth Friday of each month or every Thursday. Encourage council and Squire circle families to participate. Serve a meal at the event such as pizza, spaghetti, burgers and hot dogs, etc., and charge a minimal fee to cover expenses. Conduct activities for the whole family, such as speakers on the topics of drugs, pro-life activities, crime, etc.; indoor and outdoor athletic events; board game competitions and whatever else you can think of.

BLOOD DONORS

- **Give blood**, the gift of life. The blood donor program is successful only because so many councils are participating in this “fraternity in action” project. Donor ages are 17-up and any healthy person can safely give blood every 56 days.

- Contact the **local Red Cross** about conducting a council or community blood drive.
- Establish a **blood donor committee** within the council. A council blood donor project can easily be worked out in the local Red Cross program. If this is not available, councils can work out separate programs through local hospitals on a cooperative basis.
- **Volunteer assistance to the Red Cross** in promoting the blood donor program throughout the area. Even those who can't give blood can help, so seek their assistance as drivers, aides, clerks, or in helping to prepare and serve lunches for the donors.
- Implement a program to **inform members who regularly donate blood of the dates and locations of local blood drives** and of emergency situations in which Knights or family members need blood.
- Recognize donors by presenting them with the **Knights of Columbus Blood Donor Certificate (#1444, 25¢ each) and identicard (#1444A)**, available from the Supreme Council Supply Department.

ATHLETICS

- Sponsor **council clubs, teams, leagues, tournaments and contests** for members in:
 - Table Tennis • Baseball • Fishing • Basketball
 - Curling • Bowling • Softball • Golf
 - Volleyball • Hockey • Hunting • Soccer
 - Tennis • Football • Billiards • Swimming
- Conduct **sports clinics** for youngsters in the neighborhood or community. Enlist the support of former sports stars who are members of your council or reside in your area.
- Plan an **annual group outing** to a professional sporting event.
- Consider **sponsorship of teams** in Little League, Junior Hockey, Babe Ruth, Pony League, etc.
- Promote **competition with your Squires circle, other Knights of Columbus councils** or other fraternal.
- Sponsor **sports demonstrations**, exhibits, movies and talks by coaches, officials, players, sportswriters, etc.
- Invite local sports stars to participate in an annual "**Sports Night**" for your council