

# *Getting Your Message Across*



PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLICITY GUIDE



**KNIGHTS  
OF COLUMBUS**  
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

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# Introduction

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As a Knight of Columbus, you should continually search for new ways to enhance our Order's mission and contributions to the Church, community and fellowman.

Public relations can be a very useful communications tool, advancing Knights of Columbus principles and building community support for your council and its activities. This guide is designed to provide your council with the "tools of the trade" needed to carry out a successful public relations program.

Public relations is simply communicating a message to an audience. To build a truly effective public relations program, messages should be ongoing to strengthen the council's image and broaden its impact on society.

Following the guidelines in this manual, you will be able to conduct effective and consistent publicity programs for your council.

There are many rewards and benefits to a well-planned public relations program. For the Knights of Columbus, an effective program can:

1. Create awareness in the community for your council and its contributions.
2. Build a positive image for the Knights of Columbus as a whole, and your council in particular.
3. Create valuable exposure for the council and its activities.
4. Communicate key messages to target audiences.
5. Clear away misconceptions.
6. Strengthen community support for the Knights of Columbus and its mission.
7. Assist in recruiting new members.

Your introduction to public relations begins with a Glossary of Terms. Special sections on Getting Your Message Across, The Mechanics of Public Relations, The News Peg and Hands-on Tips follow. Sample supporting materials are included in the Appendix.

Welcome to the world of public relations. We hope this guide will help you achieve your public relations goals.

# Glossary of Terms

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## **Message**

A message is the information you want to communicate to your key or target audience.

## **Media List**

A media list is a list of newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations in your area. You will direct your public relations activities to these media outlets.

## **Key or Target Audience**

The key or target audience is the primary group of people you want to reach with your message. Your audience may include families, youth, etc.

## **Press or News Release**

A press or news release is a typewritten announcement of a newsworthy activity or program for distribution to the print media (newspapers and magazines) and/or broadcast media (radio and television). (See Appendix, pages 20-25 for samples.)

## **Photo Release**

A photo release includes a photograph and typewritten caption (a short description of the photo) for distribution to the print media. (See Appendix, page 28 for sample.)

## **Media Alert**

A media alert is a typewritten advance announcement of an upcoming event listing details of Who, What, Where, When and Why, for distribution to print and/or broadcast media, encouraging their attendance and coverage. (See Appendix, page 26 for sample.)

## **Public Service Announcement**

A public service announcement (PSA) is a typewritten or audiovisual announcement of a community service activity or event for distribution to newspapers, radio or television stations. (See Appendix, page 27 for sample.)

## **Feature Story**

A feature is a story of wider scope than a news release and often includes a human-interest angle. It is distributed to print and/or television media.

## **Local Cable Access**

Many local cable companies have cable access channels for programming that originates locally from community organizations or individuals. These channels offer publicity opportunities.

## **Media Spokesperson**

A media spokesperson is the person designated by your council to talk to media, discuss programs and provide quotes.

## **Media Mention**

An article about or mention of your program or activity appearing in a newspaper or magazine, on radio or television is an example of a media mention, either placed by your council or initiated by the media itself. Quality coverage will mention the name of your organization and council.

# Getting Your Message Across

## Public Relations and Publicity

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### Definition

Public relations is communications designed to create positive, widespread awareness of an organization, its role, programs and mission.

A critical part of public relations is publicity. Successful publicity efforts result in *editorial* media exposure in the form of news or feature articles in newspapers and magazines, and references, announcements or interviews on radio and television stations. Publicity is a very effective way to inform the public about the many aspects of the Knights of Columbus in your community.

### Public Relations and Publicity vs. Advertising

Like advertising, public relations relies heavily on the media to convey a specific message to key audiences. But unlike advertising, the publication space and station time resulting from public relations efforts are free. For example, the cost of a half-page advertisement in a major newspaper could be about \$15,000, while the same amount of space for an editorial article generated by public relations is free.

Unlike advertising, public relations cannot guarantee control of where, when and even if coverage will occur. That is the media's final decision. But when successful, public relations can create a major impact, since the media present the desired message on editorial pages and news broadcasts as opposed to paid advertising space and broadcast time. This is called a "third-party endorsement" and is very valuable to the credibility of an organization and its message.

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## How To Recognize a News Story

Information sent to editors and broadcasters must describe local, timely, newsworthy events that will appeal to readers, listeners and viewers.

Following is a sample list of council activities in which the media may be interested. There are bound to be others related to your specific council and community.

1. Awards presented to members or to the council and awards the council presents to others;
2. Number of new members recruited during a membership drive;
3. New officers;
4. Basketball Free Throw Championship and Soccer Challenge;
5. Senior citizens programs;
6. Refund Support Vocations Program (RSVP);
7. Fund-raising projects for people with intellectual and/or physical disabilities;
8. Sponsored cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or other health related courses;
9. Unusual or extensive church renovations;
10. Student loan programs, scholarship winners;
11. Other community service or fund-raising projects;
12. Knights of Columbus support after natural disasters;
13. Hands-on assistance to families that have suffered personal disaster, loss or illness;
14. Council awards to “Family of the Year” and “Knight of the Year”;
15. Local results of Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity;
16. Financial contributions to community agencies;
17. Major anniversaries or related activities;
18. Almost anything that is superlative: biggest, smallest, latest, newest, oldest.

## Print and Broadcast Media

Media outlets fall into two major groups: print and broadcast. Both should be used to target information about your local activities.

### *Print Media*

- Newspapers include daily, weekly and community papers — secular, diocesan, ethnic and state council publications.
- Magazines include state and community publications, company and association publications, as well as general and special-interest magazines, such as sports or youth publications, and *Columbia*.
- Newsletters include council, church and organization (senior citizen, chamber of commerce, local service clubs) bulletins, and library and school publications.

### *Broadcast Media*

- Radio includes AM, FM and online stations with news or talk segments or shows.
- Broadcast television includes network, independent and local television stations (and their Web sites).
- Cable television includes cable stations with local-origination programming available. Not all local cable companies have local programming capabilities, so check your television listings or call the local cable operator to find out which stations have local programming.

# The Mechanics of Public Relations and Publicity

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## Defining Target Markets

Reaching the right people with the right message is critical to a successful public relations/publicity program. First, look at the subject of your message. Who should receive that message? Are you trying to reach families, young people, community leaders, business people or general audiences?

As you develop your media list (see page 6 for details), you can match your target audience to the appropriate media outlet to reach that audience. The media can tell you who their audiences are.

For example, if your council in Peoria is planning a major activity or event that requires public support, the appropriate medium is Peoria's *Journal-Star*, not the *Chicago Tribune*.

## Distribution

Distributing news and feature releases requires attention to several mechanical functions.

## Duplication

Your release should be clearly printed on appropriate Knights of Columbus letterhead. Be certain that all copies are legible and clean.

## Distribution

### *Hand-Delivered*

If you are in a small community, you may want to hand deliver your releases. This is an effective personal touch.

### *Fax or E-Mail*

Most reporters have distinct personal preferences on *how* they receive news releases. A reporter may have an e-mail address, but may strongly prefer to get a time-sensitive release via fax or in other "paper" form.

### *Mail Distribution*

If you mail your releases, send them first-class and address them by name to a specific contact. Call the media outlet for the name of the individual to whom your release should be directed.

### *Electronic Distribution*

There are professional services that specialize in distributing news releases by electronic wire directly to media newsrooms. If you have any activity that is particularly timely or important, and has interest beyond your local community, this vehicle can be useful.



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## Timing

To be successful, publicity must be timely. Similarly, the success or failure of an event often depends on the publicity surrounding the event. Your council should use publicity for two main purposes: (1) to announce forthcoming events in order to ensure full participation by members or the public, and (2) to inform members and the public about the accomplishments of the council and the Order.

Proper timing of your releases can make the difference in getting media coverage. You should schedule your release about an upcoming event so that the media has it in hand at least two weeks prior to the event or activity. Follow up with phone calls closer to the time of the event.

For releases that pertain to new members or officers, results of fund-raising or other activities, plan to get the release to the media as quickly as possible and no later than two days after the event or activity. There is no news in old news.

Your credibility as an information source will falter if you extend last-minute invitations to the media or send announcement information after the program or event has taken place. You also will not receive the coverage you request. Allow adequate time to prepare and distribute your material.

## Developing and Maintaining Media Lists

A key component in any public relations effort is an up-to-date and accurate media list. To develop this list, consult your local telephone book for a listing of all newspapers, magazines, radio, television and cable stations. Check with your local chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators, Public Relations Society of America or Women in Communication. These organizations may have local media directories already prepared, or may be able to identify outside companies that sell media lists. Your local library might have media resource books such as *Bacon's Radio/TV/Newspaper/Magazine Directory*, or *The Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media*. Also include church and state council bulletins and diocesan newspapers on your list.

For newspapers, the right contact is usually the city editor or religion editor. For television, radio and cable stations, the news or assignment editor/director is the proper contact person. PSAs should be directed to the public service director. The best way to find out who is the most appropriate contact is to call and ask, "Who would be the person most interested in receiving a release on (subject)?" Keep in mind that releases on different topics might have to be directed to different people at the same publication. When you call the media to ask for a contact name, you can also ask who is the major audience for that newspaper, magazine or station.

You should know the deadlines of the media on your list. The media will be glad to provide these to you. Keep in mind that even at the same publication, different departments may have different deadline schedules. Note how best to reach your contact with news materials — fax, mail, hand-delivery or e-mail.

You should plan to update your list every three months. In the media business, people move around a lot. A quick and simple phone call can verify that your contact is still there.

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## Establishing Media Relations

After you have developed your media list, the next step is to get personally acquainted with your new contacts. Keep conversations short and to the point, particularly with newspapers and television stations in large cities.

Always remember these simple guidelines when contacting the “right person” by telephone:

- Identify yourself, your organization and the purpose of your call (to introduce yourself and your role as public relations representative for the Knights of Columbus).
- Editors and broadcasters work on deadlines, so always ask if the timing of your call is convenient. If not, ask when to call back.
- Once you have reached your contact, you can talk by phone or set a convenient time to meet to discuss your council’s upcoming activities and determine what type of information your contact may be able to use in the future.
- Always be appreciative of the time you are given. Once you have established a basic relationship, continue to touch base with your contact from time to time. Don’t become a bother, as editors and broadcasters are busy. Don’t ask if they will use your story.
- Remember that your story is competing with many others for limited space and you will not always succeed in attracting coverage. The media are not obliged to cover your news. Demanding their support will jeopardize your relationship.
- Send a note occasionally thanking contacts for the help they have given your council.



# The News Peg

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Coming up with angles to interest the media isn't always easy. Timeliness is important, of course, but it's also important to focus on some aspect of the program or event that is interesting to the media and the public. This is called the "news peg."

As a planning aid, develop and maintain a "forcing events" calendar: a comprehensive chronological listing of pending initiatives and developments that have the potential of becoming news pegs.

For the Knights of Columbus, interesting news pegs might be:

1. Announcement of new officers;
2. Winners in the Free Throw Championship or the Soccer Challenge on a local, district, state council or international level;
3. Dollars raised for the community through fund-raising efforts with examples of where the money goes and how it is being used;
4. How senior citizens benefit from the Order's programs, with examples of one or two individuals;
5. Oldest or youngest Knight's involvement;
6. An interesting community service project and the volunteer hours and number of volunteers involved;
7. Results of the Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity;
8. Squire activities or honors.

These would not only make good news stories, but also offer excellent photo and feature opportunities. For example, send an action photo of the Free Throw Championship or help the media develop a feature story on a senior citizen who has been aided through a Knights of Columbus program. If you take the photo, be sure it is of professional quality — a sharp, clear image with good contrast and interesting subject.

Use your imagination, and don't be afraid to ask your media contacts for advice. In most cases, you'll find they will be eager to help you. They're as anxious for a good story as you are for a placement.

# Hands-on Tips

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## Written Media Materials Guidelines

Even with the right information, failing to comply with a few copy guidelines could ruin your chances for media coverage. Written media materials that require the least amount of effort on the part of the editor have the best chance of publication. When sending any written materials (including press releases, photo releases and media alerts) to an editor or broadcaster, always make certain you do the following:

- Remember that the appearance of any news release or other correspondence reflects the professionalism of the Knights of Columbus and yourself.
- Keep the information as brief and concise as possible.
- Print releases double-spaced on 8½" x 11" Knights of Columbus letterhead paper, if possible, using the front side only.
- Make margins at least 1" on both sides of the release for editing and making notes.
- Include the Knights of Columbus contact person's name, title and telephone number in the upper right-hand corner of the release's first page. If letterhead is not available, add the council name and address to this block of information.
- Precede your first paragraph with the city and state/province (printed in all caps) where the information originated, as well as the mailing date.
- If your story runs more than one page, use the word "more" at the bottom of each page except the last. Identify second and subsequent pages with page numbers and a reference to the subject so that the pages may be put back together in the event they become separated.
- Use the symbol "###" centered on a line by itself after the last paragraph, to indicate the end of the release.
- Standard language describing the Knights of Columbus and its mission should be included in every press release. (See samples in Appendix, pages 20-25.)
- For future reference, keep copies of all information you send.
- Distribute your materials by hand-delivery, fax, e-mail or regular mail. Depending on the time sensitivity and various media deadlines, all modes of distribution should be considered for your distribution plan.

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## Press Release Guidelines

(Use for print and broadcast media.)

- Use a short, eye-catching action headline (title) on your release.
- Identify the primary purpose or goal of your release and make it your “lead” in the first paragraph. Write your lead so it will catch and hold the editor’s attention.
- Make sure that your release answers six important questions about your topic: Who, What, Where, When, How and Why.
- When writing your release, always put the most important information at the beginning. Organize the information in order of descending importance, with the least important facts at the end. (If the media cuts the release to make it shorter, most often they’ll cut the end and the most important facts will still be included.)
- Make sure the names, numbers, quotations and other factual information are correct. Make sure all quotes are properly attributed to the person saying them, including the person’s name and title.
- Keep the information factual; avoid opinions, except attributed quotations.
- For every person quoted in the release, always obtain verbal or written consent to have his or her name and statement published.
- Keep your release short and to the point. A press release should be very focused, discussing one subject at a time.
- Follow up by phone to make sure your release was received. Be prepared to send another copy if an editor is interested in the story but can’t locate or can’t remember receiving the release.

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## Photo Release Guidelines

- Send glossy black-and-white prints, 4" x 5" or 5" x 7", to newspapers. *Columbia* magazine prefers color photographs.
- When setting up the photo, make sure the background is simple and uncluttered.
- Try to include people in the shot whenever possible. Because they will be representing the Knights of Columbus, make sure your subjects appear neat and comfortable, not posed. Also try to include some Knights of Columbus identification . . . lapel pins, council banners, jackets and T-shirts, caps, etc.
- Try to get action that tells a story into your photograph. For example, instead of getting a photo of a Knight handing over a check to a local hospital administrator (called a "grip and grin" shot), create a photo which will show the use of the donation, such as a patient using equipment, etc.
- Obtain written usage consent from every person who appears in the photograph. It is useful to have a prepared photo-consent form available on site. (See Appendix page 31 for sample.)
- Always send a typewritten photo caption, identifying the people from left to right, with the photograph. Double-check all names and titles. Use 8½" x 11" sheet of paper. Type the caption on the lower half and tape the photo on the upper half.
- Never write on the front or back of a photograph or staple it to a press release.
- Send photos only to print media. Exception: some television stations may use a color slide as backdrop to an announcer telling the story.
- Follow up by phone to make sure your photo was received.
- Do not request media to return photos. Produce enough copies to keep one for your files.
- Note: If you have access to the technology, print media and electronic media can now use photos via an e-mail. Check your contacts to learn if they are interested in this approach.

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## Media Alert Guidelines

(Use for print and broadcast media)

- Send media alerts to announce an upcoming event and to encourage the media to attend.
- Type “Media Alert” at the top of the page.
- Write a catchy, short headline (title) designed to get the media’s attention.
- Keep the media alert to one page — the shorter the better.
- List the Who, What, Where, When and photos in clear simple words. Tell the media WHY they should cover this event.
- Follow up by phone to make sure your media alert was received.

## Feature Guidelines

- Unlike “hard news” stories, which typically focus on concrete data (names, numbers, specific events, etc.), feature stories tend to concentrate on the “human interest” of personalities and personal relationships.
- A feature story may, for example, deal with personalities or the history of programs or the Knights of Columbus itself.
- Most often, a feature is written or produced by the media. You must interest the media in writing or producing it.
- To “pitch” or tell the media about a feature opportunity, you should write a short synopsis of the idea and call a specific media outlet to talk about your idea.
- After you talk, send a letter with your synopsis.
- A feature is usually offered as an “exclusive.” This means that you offer it to just one media outlet, as opposed to press releases, photo releases and public service announcements, which should be sent to all media outlets at the same time. If the first outlet declines, then you can offer it to another, and so on. Do not try to interest more than one outlet at a time in your feature story.

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## Public Service Announcement Guidelines

- Use public service announcements (PSAs) to announce a Knights of Columbus community activity that is open or available to the public (e.g. Free Throw Championship or fund-raising program) or to provide information of use to the community (e.g., a message on youth safety or a family activity). Fund-raising activities for the needy, special community projects and special events would be appropriate subjects for a PSA.
- For radio, contact the public service director at the stations to identify the format for their PSAs. Most use 30-second PSA spots, but some use 60-second spots. You have two options: you can write your PSA, time it to meet the 30- or 60-second time frame by reading it aloud, or you can arrange to record your PSA for distribution to stations. Check with the stations to see what they require.
- For television, contact the stations' public service directors to get their PSA specifications, including length and use of visuals. Visuals can usually be either a slide or brief video. You can supply the appropriate visuals with your script or have the PSA produced by a local production facility. Although your visuals do not have to be slick or commercial, they should be clear, interesting and professional.
- Along with the recording, it is important to provide a cover letter stating why the PSA is important and of interest to local viewers.
- Whatever format you use for radio and television, always include a printed copy of the message (done in all capital letters, double-spaced, with the length of the announcement specified). Type "Public Service Announcement" at the top of the page.
- When writing your PSA, remember that your text will be read aloud. Read it aloud yourself to hear how it sounds.
- Make sure your PSA is addressed to the public service director of each radio or television station.
- Follow up by phone to make sure your PSA was received and is suitable for airing.
- If you are producing your own video PSA, it need not have a slick appearance, but it must meet broadcast standards. The PSA should be shot by a professional camera operator. A production company can be located by looking in the Yellow Pages of your telephone directory. Using home video would not be appropriate.
- On occasion, the Supreme Council produces radio and television PSAs which local councils can obtain free of charge to provide to local media. Councils can help get more air time for a PSA by calling the public service directors of local stations to encouraging them to air the PSA, emphasizing the importance of its message to the local community.

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## **Columbia Guidelines**

Members of the Order receive *Columbia* magazine each month. Published in English, French, Spanish and Polish (online only), it contains general interest features, columns and news on the Order.

“Knights of Columbus News” is a monthly roundup of developments from the Supreme Council, the board of directors and the Supreme Council office.

“Knights in Action” highlights activities of local and state councils, assemblies and circles that may spark ideas for projects in other jurisdictions, and serve as a model of Columbianism for Knights or prospective members. Examples of activities appropriate for this section include a council that raises money for a crisis pregnancy center, runs a weekly soup kitchen or sponsors a nonprofit housing development for elderly people.

A large majority of all news items submitted by local and state councils eventually appear in *Columbia*. Due to the magazine’s production schedule, though, material for “Knights in Action” is prepared up to two months in advance of its publication. Because of space limitations and the large number of local councils submitting materials, it often takes several months for an item to appear in the magazine.

Every 30 days, the previous month’s “Knights in Action” reports received by *Columbia* are edited and posted at [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org).

*Columbia* is particularly interested in feature stories, of interest to all readers, on K of C projects aimed at solving community problems. Ask yourself: “Is our activity of interest to members in...?” and think of an area at least 500 miles away.

The magazine also seeks action color photos of volunteer projects for the “Building A Better World” page. This is a

feature on the inside back cover that highlights a council’s service to Church or community and the need for recruiting new members.

The *Columbia* Online edition is available at [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org), by clicking on the “Columbia” link. Posted monthly, *Columbia* Online contains many of the features and columns found in the print magazine, as well as a timely and expanded “Knights in Action” section. Virtually all submissions of written materials and photos from K of C units appear in this section, which is updated monthly.

A flyer, “Your Story in *Columbia*,” providing guidelines for submissions to the print and online “Knights in Action” sections, including tips for taking quality photos, is available from the magazine. Copies of the flyer are provided to each council in the annual “Surge...with Service” mailing. If your council did not receive the flyer, please contact *Columbia* by using the contacts listed below. If you do not have the flyer, follow the press release and photo release guidelines given elsewhere in this booklet. In all cases, photo submissions should be in color.

Materials for magazine and online “Knights in Action” sections should be sent to *Columbia*, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326; or by e-mail to [columbia@kofc.org](mailto:columbia@kofc.org). Photos via e-mail should be sent as separate attached image files and not as part of a Word document. Images should be at least 4.5 inches wide and have a resolution of 300 dpi or greater. Be sure to include caption information in the e-mail.

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## How press releases are distributed by Supreme Council

News from the Supreme Council may have local, state, national or international significance. The nature of the news determines how widely a press release is disseminated outside the Order's network.

Supreme Council press releases are posted on the Order's Web site, [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org), under the "News" link, where all Knights have access to them. All press releases also are sent via e-mail to state council officers, usually state deputies and publicity chairmen, for inclusion in K of C state and local publications.

Depending on the scope of the news, press releases may also be sent to various religious and secular media outlets, such as the Catholic News Service (which supplies all diocesan publications), local radio stations and national newspapers.

## Other Supreme Council Publications

### *Knightline*

*Knightline* is one of the Order's primary communications tools for disseminating information about the Supreme Council and its varied programs, the Order's Board of Directors and its activities, and other news and information



from the Supreme Council office. *Knightline* is mailed 12 times a year to council officers and Service Program personnel, keeping them up-to-date on news, programs and initiatives useful to them in carrying out their responsibilities at the local level.

Since its focus is solely on the news generated by the Supreme Council office, *Knightline* should not be contacted by local councils for publicity about their activities.

### *Program Supplement*

*Program Supplement (P.S.)* is issued 12 times a year and forwarded to council leaders in conjunction with *Knightline*. *P.S.* provides timely information and reminders to councils regarding Service Program activities and membership recruitment efforts. The newsletter serves as a supplement to the "Surge . . . with Service" programming materials provided to councils at the start of the fraternal year.

Although some *P.S.* features invite reader response and input on programs and activities, most of the material is generated from the Supreme Council office. It is not the proper place to seek council publicity.

### *Squires Newsletter*

*Squires Newsletter* is a monthly publication for and about the people involved in the Columbian Squires, the official youth organization of the Knights of Columbus. *Squires Newsletter* provides news and information relating to the Squires program to an audience of Squires themselves and the Knights who oversee the program.

*Squires Newsletter* welcomes reports of individual Squires or circle activities. Following events involving these young men, send releases to: Editor, *Squires Newsletter*, Knights of Columbus, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326.

# Monthly Council Newsletter and Council Web Site

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The council newsletter gains membership support of activities and stimulates interest in the Knights of Columbus.

An editor should be appointed for the council bulletin. He should have a keen sense of organization and administration, as well as a flair for news. His duties include contacting council officers and committee chairmen to obtain items of interest, soliciting advertisements, writing editorial copy and overseeing the layout of the publication.

Use the same guidelines for photos, features and press releases to develop articles for the council newsletter. Send a copy of your newsletter to the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326.

Below are suggestions for appropriate content.

- Features and press releases developed for local newspapers and magazines. If an item is of interest to the general public, it will certainly be of interest to council members.
- Announcements of planned council events and special notices on council business such as dues, elections, etc.
- A regular column by the grand knight to highlight important news and to give credit for outstanding member achievement.
- Information received from the Supreme Council office, such as a Knights of Columbus film being aired on television, or letter-writing campaigns to legislators.
- A chaplain's column to provide comment on pertinent matters.
- Reports from each of the Service Program directors on scheduled activities.

- Excerpts of speeches by visiting dignitaries.
- A calendar of coming events for members' quick reference.
- Listings of birthdays, anniversaries, deaths, congratulations, etc.
- Membership campaign promotions.
- Knights of Columbus insurance column written by general or field agent.
- Notice of First, Second and Third degree exemplifications.
- Reprints from *Knightline* or *Program Supplement* of news stories and programming ideas of interest to all members.

The format of the council newsletter will depend on budget and volume of news available. Make your newsletter look as good as possible. Readability is as important as well-written articles. If at all possible, have a professional artist or desktop publisher from your council design your newsletter. In developing a "layout" design, keep the following in mind:

- Be sure to indicate the council name, number and location in a conspicuous place in your bulletin.
- Do not try to put too much information on a page — it will be difficult to read. Be sure to leave plenty of "white space" (blank space) around articles and artwork.
- Do not use more than two different typefaces. The use of many different styles creates a confusing look.
- Photographs and artwork help develop reader interest. Knights of Columbus clip art can be used to add graphics to the council newsletter. Clip art is also available on the Order's Web site at [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org). This clip art

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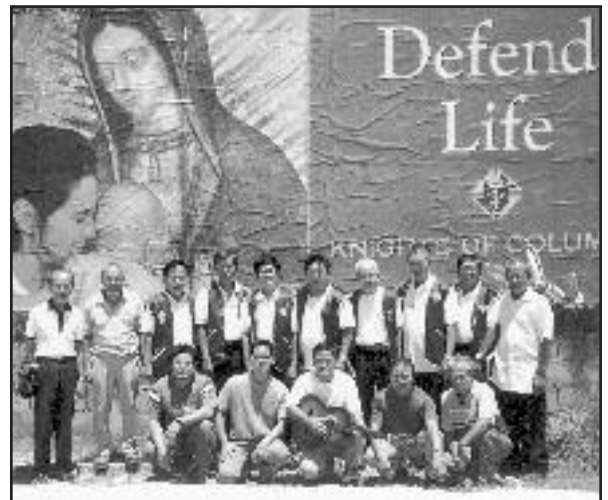
contains samples of the Order's various emblems; seasonal, programming, membership and religious artwork; and other images. Be sure that the photographs and artwork relate to a nearby story, and that any photo is clearly captioned.

### Council Web Site

Many councils now maintain Internet home pages. They can easily be found and offer many ideas which your council may want to adopt or modify for its own use. Virtually all of the Internet "how to" books provide easy-to-follow instructions on how to set up your own home page. The "For Officers" section of the Order's Web site includes a council Web site template.

As with anything in public relations, bear in mind your basic communications objectives and the interests of the target audiences you want to reach. In addition to whatever other information you offer on your Web site, be sure to post your news releases as well and that they are directly accessible from your home page.

Once you have created a council Web site, keep it fresh with updated material and promote your Web address through all your other public relations materials. Be sure to include it with the council telephone number, mailing address, and e-mail address wherever they appear—especially on council news releases. You can include a link to the Supreme Council site — [www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org) — or links to your state council site or other nearby council sites. Prior to publishing materials from another site or any source, you should request permission from the source and include attribution.



### Advertisements

Many councils finance their entire publication through the acceptance of carefully chosen advertisements. For purposes of editorial and financial planning, obtaining ads from a specific group of advertisers who pay a flat fee in exchange for publication in each issue throughout a fraternal year is more efficient than trying to sell individual ads on a monthly basis.

When soliciting advertising for your publication, keep in mind the following resolution adopted by the Knights of Columbus Board of Directors in 1985:

“VOTED, that the Board of Directors reaffirms its position that fraternal publications, (state, chapter, council assembly or corporations) are prohibited from accepting advertisements and news items relating directly or indirectly to the sale or servicing of life or health insurance other than advertisements and news items promoting the Order's insurance program, and that a violation of this rule by any publication will constitute cause to prohibit the further use of the name and emblem of the Order by said publication.”

# Fund-Raising for People with Intellectual Disabilities

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Members of the Knights of Columbus do a great deal to assist people with intellectual disabilities. As your council works to improve the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities, some guidelines to follow in referring to people with intellectual disabilities might be useful. Council bulletins, committee reports, posters and flyers, press releases and everyday speech should be accurate and considerate when referring to people with disabilities. The following are some “DOs and DON’Ts” of language:

- **DO** talk or write about “people with intellectual disabilities,” not “the retarded.” You should not identify the person as a label — leave room for having intellectual disabilities to be just one of the many ways you can describe a person. In addition, put the person before the condition — “people with intellectual disabilities” is probably best.
- **DON’T** refer to all people with intellectual disabilities as if they were children. Adults with intellectual disabilities should be spoken to and about as adults. A newsletter article which would normally refer to its adult subject as “William C. Smith” should not refer to an adult who has intellectual disabilities as “Billy,” or otherwise treat him as a child.
- **DON’T** use negative terms like “victim of,” “afflicted with,” “suffering from,” “unfortunate,” etc., when describing an individual with intellectual disabilities. Say someone “uses a wheelchair” rather than “is crippled” or “is wheelchair-bound.”
- **DON’T** imply disease when speaking or writing about someone with intellectual disabilities. He or she is not “sick” and you cannot “catch” the condition.

Most importantly, people with any disabilities — mental, physical or emotional — are still people. Speak or write of these individuals with the respect any human being deserves. Keep in mind that how you refer to people can have a great impact on the way others perceive them.

## “Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities”

One of the most popular and successful programs conducted by Knights of Columbus state and local councils for the benefit of people with intellectual disabilities is the fund-raiser in which councils collect donations outside stores and on street corners. In appreciation, the donor is offered a candy bar, often a Tootsie Roll. The high visibility of this program has led to the campaign being referred to as the “Tootsie Roll Drive.” The nickname is understandable, but misleading.

The Knights of Columbus has no official tie to Tootsie Rolls or their manufacturer. In fact, many councils participate in the same fund-raising drive, but distribute other items. References to this program should highlight the good the money does, not advertise a candy bar. For these reasons, it is strongly recommended that this project be promoted as the “Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities” rather than the “Tootsie Roll Drive.”

# Other Public Relations Possibilities

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A good public relations chairman should always be looking for additional ways of publicizing and promoting the activities of his council. In addition to the usual media — council bulletin, town newspaper, radio, television, *Columbia* — consider using some of these news outlets:

- **Local Plant and Industry Publications.** Employee publications of the industries in your town are often interested in news of clubs to which employees belong. Call the editor to find out if he or she uses such news.
- **Outdoor Advertising.** The outdoor advertising industry contributes space annually on both a national and local basis. Local groups may get space by contacting and discussing the merits of their program with a member of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, Inc., in their city or area. If the member's name is not known, it can be obtained by writing to: OAAA, Inc., 1850 M Street, NW, Suite 1040, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 833-5566, or [www.oaaa.org](http://www.oaaa.org). The Order promotes, or makes available at reasonable cost, billboards promoting issues such as "Keep Christ in Christmas," pro-life, etc.
- **Free-Shopping News.** These weekly semi-monthly "handouts" concentrate on food store and other retail advertising. Besides advertising, some also carry news.
- **Direct Mail.** Postcard mailings allow councils to target a chosen audience with a succinct message. Postcards are good reminders for voter registration; elections; voter referendums; bazaars; benefits; rummage sales; fraternal, church and school affairs.
- **Posters.** Attractive window posters build awareness of special events. Enlist the talents of the artists in your council, hire a professional to design a poster, or use posters supplied by the Supreme Council office. Always remove posters as soon as the event they publicize is over. This gives you a chance to thank those who displayed them and to report on the success of the event.
- **Resort and Convention Publicity.** In many resort and convention cities, the chamber of commerce publishes leaflets for visitors listing events of interest. These are distributed through hotels and motels in the area.
- **Hand Bills, Community Bulletin Boards, Cruising Loud Speakers.** These are popular in some towns; frowned upon in others. Check their acceptability in your area.

# Appendix

## Sample Press Release

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person and filling in specific information from your council. Supreme Council data is available from the Supreme Council Department of Fraternal Services (1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510-3326, telephone: 203-752-4270).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
(Name, phone number, e-mail address)

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS GAVE (dollar amount), (number of hours) HOURS TO  
CHARITABLE WORK IN (year)

*(Name of City, State/Province, Mailing Date)* — The Knights of Columbus from *(name of council)* Council *(number)* in *(city)* gave *(dollar amount)* and *(number)* hours in personal service to charitable and benevolent activities in *(year)*, according to the organization's Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity.

The figures were released by Knights of Columbus Grand Knight *(full name)*. "These totals represent a remarkable outpouring of generosity — not only in money but in personal commitment on the part of Knights in *(city)*," *(last name)* said.

The Knights of Columbus is an international Catholic lay organization with more than 1.7 million members in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Poland, and several other countries.

There are *(number)* Knights of Columbus members in Council *(number)*.

Internationally, state and local units of the organization volunteered *(total volunteer hours)* hours to programs and projects serving the Church and communities, and contributed *(total \$)* to charitable and benevolent causes in *(year)*, according to reports from *(number)* percent of the local units.

For Council *(number)*, the *(dollar amount)* in contributions by members included *(dollar amount)* to youth activities, *(dollar amount)* to church and community activities, as well as other worthwhile causes.

The average per capita contribution of members of the Knights of Columbus from Council *(number)* during *(year)* was *(amount)*.

During *(year)*, council members also gave an additional *(hours)* hours in service to sick or disabled members of their families. The survey showed *(number)* visits to the sick and bereaved by these Knights in *(year)* and *(number)* blood donors.

(more)

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CHARITABLE WORK PAGE 2

In a statement issued at the Order's international headquarters in New Haven, Connecticut, Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson, the organization's chief executive officer, called the *(year)* figures on service and contributions by members "a record of remarkable generosity by Catholic laymen committed to the highest ideals of service to their Church and their communities."

"The Order's monetary contributions are noteworthy and commendable, but even more worthy of note is the record of personal service by members. This truly is charity in action," Anderson said.

With more than 1.7 million members, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people. In *(year)*, the Knights of Columbus at all levels of the organization raised and distributed *\$(number)* million to charity and rendered *(number)* million hours of volunteer service.

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## Sample Press Release

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person and filling in specific information from your council.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
*(Name, phone number, e-mail address)*

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ANNOUNCES NEW OFFICERS

*(City, State/Province — Date) — (Name of council) Knights of Columbus Council (number) in (city) today announced its new officers for (year).*

The officers are: Grand Knight or local president *(name/town)*, Chaplain *(name/town)*, Deputy Grand Knight *(name/town)*, Chancellor *(name/town)*, and Recorder *(name/town)*.

Other officers named are: Financial Secretary *(name/town)*, Treasurer *(name/town)*, Lecturer *(name/town)*, Advocate *(name/town)*, Warden *(name/town)*, and Guards *(names/towns)*.

The Board of Trustees includes: *(names/towns)*.

Grand Knight *(last name)* has been a member of the Knights of Columbus for *(number)* years, serving in the positions of *(list positions)*. A resident of *(city)*, Grand Knight *(last name)* is *(occupation, company and location)*. He resides at *(address)* with his *(wife/children, list names)*.

With more than 1.7 million members, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people. In *(year)*, the Knights of Columbus at all levels of the organization raised and distributed *\$(number)* million to charity and rendered *(number)* million hours of volunteer service.

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## Sample Press Release

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person and filling in specific information from your council.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
*(Name, phone number, e-mail address)*

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ANNOUNCES YOUTH FREE THROW CHAMPIONSHIP

*(City, State/Province — Date)* — The Knights of Columbus from *(name of council)* Council *(number)* in *(city)* will host a local competition for the Knights of Columbus International Free Throw Championship to be held on *(time)* *(date)* at *(location)*.

Open to all boys and girls ages 10 to 14, the Free Throw Championship is sponsored annually by the Knights of Columbus. Winners progress through local, district and state/province level competitions. International champions, judged on scores from state competitions, are announced by the Knights of Columbus international headquarters in New Haven, Connecticut.

*(Insert paragraph on benefits and awards for the program.)*

All participants must furnish proof of age and written parental consent. For entry forms or additional information, contact *(information)*.

With more than 1.7 million members, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people. In *(year)*, the Knights of Columbus at all levels of the organization raised and distributed *\$(number)* million to charity and rendered *(number)* million hours of volunteer service.

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## Sample Press Release

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person, and filling in specific information from your council.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
*(Name, phone number, e-mail address)*

### LOCAL KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL RECEIVES TOP AWARD

*(City, State/Province — Date)* Knights of Columbus Council *(number)* in *(city)* has received the distinction of Star Council, the international organization's top award for local councils.

The Star Council award recognizes overall excellence in the areas of membership, promotion of the fraternal insurance program, and sponsorship of service-oriented activities.

The award was presented to the membership by (title and name of presenter) at a special ceremony held on *(date)*.

*(Insert paragraph on council programs and accomplishments.)*

With more than 1.7 million members, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people. In *(year)*, the Knights of Columbus at all levels of the organization raised and distributed  $\$(number)$  million to charity and rendered *(number)* million hours of volunteer service.

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## Sample Press Release

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person, and filling in specific information from your council.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information contact:  
(Name, phone number, e-mail address)

### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS ANNOUNCES SUBSTANCE ABUSE AWARENESS POSTER CONTEST

(City, State/Province — Date) Knights of Columbus Council (*number*) in (*city*) will sponsor a local competition for the Knights of Columbus Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest.

All young people ages 8 through 14 are invited to participate in the Knights of Columbus Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest. Students are encouraged to develop an original poster and slogan idea designed to discourage their peers from experimenting with drugs and alcohol.

The Knights of Columbus Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest is an annual competition with winning entries progressing to local, district, state/province, and international levels of competition. There will be a division for youngsters ages 8 to 11 and a division for youngsters ages 12 to 14.

All contestants will be recognized for their participation. For entry forms or additional information contact your school principal or (*information*).

With more than 1.7 million members, the Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic lay organization. It provides members and their families with volunteer opportunities in service to the Catholic Church, the community, families, and young people. In (*year*), the Knights of Columbus at all levels of the organization raised and distributed \$(*number*) million to charity and rendered (*number*) million hours of volunteer service.

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**Sample Media Alert**

Print on council letterhead, including a local contact person, and specific information from your council.

MEDIA ALERT

For more information contact:  
*(Name, phone number, e-mail address)*

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FREE THROW CHAMPIONSHIP**

**WHAT:** *(community name)* youth compete in the Knights of Columbus International Free Throw Basketball Championship.

**WHERE:** *(name and address of location)*

**WHEN:** *(date and time)*

**WHY:** *(insert benefits of contest)*

**VISUALS:** Boys and girls aged 10 through 14 from throughout *(name of community)* give basketball free throws their best shot.

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**Sample Public Service Announcement**

Print on council letterhead and include local contact information.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

*(City, State)*

*(Date)*

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SPONSORS CPR TRAINING PROGRAM

CPR CAN SAVE LIVES. THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, IN COOPERATION WITH THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION, IS SPONSORING A SPECIAL CPR WORKSHOP ON MARCH 23 AT ST. JOSEPH'S HIGH SCHOOL FROM 9AM UNTIL 4PM. TO REGISTER CALL *(PHONE NUMBER)*. YOU CAN LEARN CPR. PLEASE DO. YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR COMMUNITY.

TIME: 30 SECONDS

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

*(NAME, PHONE NUMBER, E-MAIL ADDRESS)*

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**Sample Photo Release**

Provide a printed photo caption, identifying the people from left to right, with the photograph. Print the caption on the lower half of an 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper and tape the photo on the upper half.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS DONATES COMPUTERS

*(City, State/Province — Date)*

*(Place Photo Here)*

*(Name)*, a resident at the *(name)* home for people with intellectual disabilities, works at a personal computer with Grand Knight *(full name)*. Funds for the purchase of computer equipment were donated by *(name of council)* Knights of Columbus Council *(number)* in *(city)*.

For More Information Contact:  
*(name, phone number, e-mail address)*

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## **Rules Governing the use of the Name and Emblem of the Order**

Under the rules of the Board of Directors governing the use of the name and emblem of the Order, the following apply:

- a. The name or emblem of the Order, the name of any state council, chapter or assembly, the number of any council or the words council, chapter or assembly shall not be used on or in connection with any publication without permission of the Board of Directors.
- b. Such publication shall plainly state that it is the organ of the state or subordinate council, chapter or assembly and not of the Order at large.
- c. The publication shall be the property of the state or subordinate council, chapter or assembly, and all receipts and disbursements in connection with the publishing of such paper shall be handled in the same manner as other monies of the state or subordinate council, chapter or assembly.
- d. If published by a state council, the publication shall be subject to censorship by the state deputy; if by a subordinate council, by the state deputy and grand knight; if by a chapter, by the state deputy or president of the chapter; if by an assembly, by the master and faithful navigator; and such state deputy or other officers shall be held responsible for all matter, including advertising, published therein.
- e. Assessments by state or subordinate councils, chapters or assemblies for the purpose of publishing such paper shall be illegal.
- f. The emblem of the Order and the name "Knights of Columbus" shall not be used in connection with any emblem, other than the national flag or emblem of the country, or in connection with any name other than the name of the state or subordinate council or other branch of the Order.
- g. A copy of each regular and special number of the publication shall be filed with the supreme secretary.
- h. The provisions of subdivision 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 18, 19, 22 and 23 of Section 162 of the Laws of the Order shall be strictly observed; the applicable portions thereof being as follows:
  6. Willful insubordination, contempt or disobedience of the lawful orders of superior authority;
  7. Giving scandal, scandalous conduct or practice unbecoming a member of this Order;

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9. Speaking, writing, printing or publishing any matter or statement which shall be deemed to be detrimental to the harmony and good order of the Knights of Columbus, or tending to create discord and dissension among the members or create public scandal, or causing the same to be done;

10. Sending to subordinate councils, state councils, or their officers or members or to delegates to state councils or the Supreme Council written or printed matter or statements tending to defame or bring into disrepute officers or directors of the Order or decisions, rulings or actions of the officers or directors of the Order or its policies without permission of the Board of Directors;

11. Using the name Knights of Columbus or his membership in the Order in connection with any business, social or other enterprise, without permission of the Board of Directors;

18. Improperly using the name of the Order or without authority representing the Order;

19. Making unjust or false statements, accusations or personal defamation of or against any officer of the Order in his official capacity;

22. Issuance of appeals for aid or contributions within the state, district or territory, without the consent and approval of the state or territorial deputy; or outside the state, district or territory, without the approval of the Board of Directors;

23. Issuing appeals for, or soliciting by virtue of his membership in the Knights of Columbus, aid, or assistance or support by or in behalf of or announcing candidates for office (including delegates to state and supreme councils) in another society or body or in the Order. Any member who knowingly permits or acquiesces in such appeal, solicitation, etc. shall, if elected, be ineligible to hold office.

- i. No subscriptions or advertising shall be solicited other than in the state jurisdiction or council, chapter or assembly district in which the publication is issued.
- j. The publication of political advertisements or announcements of candidates for public office or for office in another society or in the Order is not permitted.
- k. The publication of advertisements of beer, wine or liquor or of establishments designed as places where they are sold is not permitted.

These rules are in effect and apply to any publication presently in existence or that may come into existence in the future.

The name "Knights of Columbus" and the emblem of the Order are protected by federal trademark law. This protection is vested in the Supreme Council.

Knights of Columbus Clip Art images, whether printed or in electronic form, are property of the Knights of Columbus and are protected by state and federal law. They are only to be used as directed by the Supreme Council.

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**Sample Photo Permission Release**

RELEASE FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby give KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, it assigns, licensees, and legal representatives the irrevocable right to use my name, picture, portrait, or photograph in all forms and media and in all manners, including composite representations, for trade, educational, public relations, or any other lawful purposes, and I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written copy, that may be created in connection therewith. I am of full age. I have read this release and am fully familiar with its contents. (Under age 18, parent or guardian sign.)

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_\_