

NCCW

Guidance & Resource Manual

CHAPTER 4 Public Relations

Always check the NCCW website for new and timely information: **nccw.org**

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The WHAT of NCCW Public Relations

Public relations promote understanding of the mission and programs of NCCW, the arch/diocesan councils, and their membership as well as creating an image of achievement within the councils and their communities. Public relations highlight the policies and concerns of NCCW, as well as its programs. This understanding and image are enhanced through all possible means of communications with a variety of audiences using a variety of media.

Public relations are a well-planned and continuous effort to keep the image of the councils of Catholic women, both nationally and locally, in the public eye in an accurate way. In other words, it works to portray us as we really exist and function, not allowing preconceived or erroneous opinions to cloud the picture. Through these efforts, our councils can achieve proper recognition as well as the acceptance and understanding they desire.

Good public relations with the community will:

- Ensure our credibility and accountability.
- Increase our coverage through all types of media, especially social media.
- Develop the strong public identity councils need to be visible and positive influences and voices in today's Church and world.
- Promote attendance, participation and the benefits of planned activities.

Our public relations responsibilities to our membership include our need to:

- Assist our affiliates with all communication questions.
- Provide technical support and information with major emphasis on education and image building.
- Aid councils in their continuous drive to both recruit and retain members.
- Alert our members to issues affecting our future as an organization and as individual women in today's Church and society.

Public relations coordination with council leadership will:

- Support planning of special activities to benefit council efforts and avoid conflicts which can/will interfere/impact attendance.
- Confirm the vetting of speakers per arch/diocesan/province requirements for approval prior to initiating publicity and registration efforts for programs. Vetting refers to gaining approval for speakers. Contact the Chancery office to determine whether the diocese requires vetting of speakers.
- Promote communication outreach to those not using modern technology.

The WHY of NCCW Public Relations

Every group or organization needs to develop a program that will maintain and build good public relations. NCCW is no different. If we expect others to find credibility in our organization, it is necessary to put the real story of NCCW before the public and in full view of members.

Our philosophy, positions, and activities should be regularly explained, reported, and conveyed to keep everyone interested and knowledgeable. Public relations through communications are an absolute must both internally and externally.

The image that NCCW portrays to individuals and the public must continuously be updated to reflect the present reality in technology, convenience and ready communication. We are not the same today as we were ten or even five years ago; neither are the concerns or projects of NCCW. Through an ongoing public relations program, we can share this growth and change as it occurs. Our ideas and responsibilities as women in the Church have grown with time along with the availability of ministries in which we are now involved, and this involvement must be communicated. It is our job to use every type of media to keep our activities before the public, showing our growth and continued development in today's Church. It is also our responsibility to inform council members and the community of our accomplishments and activities. This is not to receive praise but to interest and encourage more women to find their places within our organization—dedicating themselves to work actively for Christ and his Church through membership in NCCW.

The WHERE of Public Relations

There is no limit to WHERE you can place the name and activities of NCCW for your Arch/ diocesan council and your parish affiliate to bring our organization to the attention of the public and your membership. The following suggestions will serve as a starting point for you. Your imagination will help you find many more appropriate places to feature your organization and special events.

- Diocesan newspapers, magazines and e-blasts
- Secular newspapers, daily and weekly
- Magazines
- Bishop's newsletter
- Newsletters of other diocesan agencies and organizations (i.e. diocesan pastoral council or newsletter for parish councils, Catholic Charities, religious education, etc.)
- Arch/diocesan council newsletter, province newsletter
- Council websites and social media profiles/pages such as Facebook
- Diocesan and parish websites
- Diocesan and parish electronic bulletin boards, electronic mailing list or email list

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- Church bulletins
- Flyers
- Calendars
- Banners for visibility at large meetings
- Fact sheets
- Brochures
- Posters
- Displays at church and community facilities
- Bulletin boards —parish and community
- Exhibits at conventions and meetings
- NCCW Sunday celebrations
- *Catholic Woman* gift subscriptions for parish priests
- NCCW pins, scarves, aprons, bags and all logo items
- Distribution of NCCW prayer cards
- Distribution of NCCW publications
- Arch/diocesan council letterhead and envelopes
- Arch/diocesan council membership cards
- Arch/diocesan council calendars
- Arch /diocesan council name tags, scarves, aprons, business cards, clothing articles, jewelry, logo carry bags, notebooks, etc.
- Arch/diocesan council stickers for notebooks and date books, etc.
- Speakers Bureau
- Radio announcements and talk shows
- Local Catholic television and radio stations' bulletins

The WHEN of NCCW Public Relations

It is our aim to keep the name and positive image of NCCW and its affiliated organizations before the membership and the public at every opportunity. This means we must be alert to any happening that is newsworthy and can be made suitable for our public relations program. To do this and to generate coverage for stories other than “big news,” we should study and observe the kind of story that most appeals to each media outlet available to us. By reading newspaper articles written about other organizations, we can pick up clues about the type of story that most appeals to the editors and reporters in our area. By listening to public service announcements and radio and television talk shows, we can select the right time to express ourselves, reflecting NCCW’s viewpoint on current topics. PR supports upcoming events with optimism, communication, participation and benefit to council. In all cases, our news will be considered valuable when announcements and features address the following:

- Timetable:** When your event is happening tomorrow, the news is still good. When it happened today, the news is “okay.” When it happened yesterday, the news is not as good, but it is still news. Daily and weekly papers use different criteria, but the rule of thumb is the sooner, the better.
- Scope:** When the event is taking place within the circulation area of your paper, your news will be most readily accepted. When reporting on national events, relate its effects or application to the local council.
- Involvement:** When your article involves people within the community or well-known local leaders, it will be newsworthy. The prominence of speakers and guests makes them natural newsmakers, for example, a nationally known speaker or a visit from the NCCW president.
- Consequences:** When your story affects local people or is of concern to a large number of people.
- Appeal:** When your story shows your organization as a group concerned with the special needs of others, or expresses human emotions to the reader, news editors will be interested.
- Prominent Issues:** When your story involves an issue that is timely, provocative, or debatable, it will most likely get reported.

Important Happenings: The following events are reportable:

- Election outcomes
- Conventions
- Seminars
- Regional meetings
- Special liturgies
- Communion breakfasts
- Retreats
- Workshops
- Prominent speakers
- Statements about national issues. These statements must be made by the National Council of Catholic Women.
- Fundraisers for special causes
- Events marking historical milestones
- Community service projects
- Participation in nationwide efforts through NCCW

Non-happenings -- When you don't have an event, plan and create one.

- Conduct a poll
- Sponsor a contest
- Award a special citation or honor
- Write a feature about or schedule an interview with:
 - the newly elected president of your council
 - a speaker from your convention
- Recall a memorable council effort linked to current happenings
- Promote the council website with a feature of the month

Always obtain the permission of your subject before using her or him for a story, and if possible, ask them to review your story for accuracy of details. The best features include direct quotes from the person featured as well as observations from others.

The WHO of NCCW Public Relations

The “WHO,” in this case, is the Public Relations Chair. It is through your efforts and hard work that the image of NCCW can be conveyed. It is through you that the people, vital programs, and policies of NCCW will come alive and be known. Your enthusiasm, planning, and expertise are the necessary ingredients to achieve the main aim of your public relations program—to convey NCCW favorably to your members and the public.

You may be the first or the only contact some editors, reporters, or other media personnel have with NCCW. Provide name, title and contact information to news establishments when beginning a term as PR Chair. Provide alternate contact information. Making appointments/personal contact with media personnel builds association and relationships toward desired publicity development.

As public relations chair, you will have the opportunity to keep your members and the community talking and thinking about NCCW in a positive way. Be convinced of the importance of NCCW. You are the liaison among NCCW, your local organization, and the community. Your efforts will take effect in an upward, downward and lateral direction. As public relations chair, your objective is to communicate the reality of NCCW to all, by every media means available to you. Keep in mind that although your position is important, it is also one that requires you to be “out of the picture” most of the time. Your goal is to showcase the work and successes of others. Your greatest efforts are behind the scenes and your effort and reward will be measured in your ability to convey the actions and work of those about whom you report. In doing this successfully, your own achievement will be in reflecting the visible, viable, vital contributions being made by other equally dedicated Catholic women around you.

The Public Relations Chair Should:

Recruit competent members for the committee representing varied locations within the council area to maximize area-wide communications/news updates. Include the e-secretary on the committee. You will need help gathering news, photography, art work, typing, writing, copying and emailing.

Develop or update a public relations file: names of newspapers and other media, contact persons, including phone numbers, email addresses, and other materials. This information should be passed on to the person who succeeds you in this job!

Prepare and distribute publicity materials. This may include announcements for parish bulletins and community papers, special newsletters, flyers and posters. When emailing the materials to individual parishes, be certain to send in a format that prints easily such as PDF.

Include photographs, if possible, when providing materials to newspapers. Be sure the photographs show women enthusiastically involved in an activity important to the overall program. Make sure the photographs are of high resolution and good quality.

Assist the president in publicizing arch/diocesan council events so that your whole parish can benefit from and make use of special events and services.

Be responsible for showing appreciation to members of the media through special invitations and by making their work as easy as possible. Assign someone to greet the media person at an event and to stay with them to assist them throughout.

Keep a publicity file (preferably electronic) to assist your successor.

Share articles, photos and special events with NCCW.

It is a big job but one that can be fun and very fulfilling. A flair for the creative will help, but hard work and dedication are your prime requisites. If you are a beginner, start slowly and never hesitate to solicit help when you need it. We are all learning as we go along.

Public Relations Committee

The challenge of the public relations committee is to project a positive image of Catholic women serving the Church and the larger community to:

- Current council members
- Prospective members

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- Parish and community members as a whole
- Arch/ Diocesan/ Province/ National Councils of Catholic Women

To achieve this:

- Be aware of the goals and purposes of the council.
- Have general knowledge of the areas covered by the council and commission projects.
- Communicate with the commission and project committee chairs so you will have sufficient information for publicity.
- Build and sustain an image of women united in concern for the religious, social and educational betterment of the world.
- Whenever possible, connect service and action to the mission of the Arch/diocesan and National Councils.

Checklist for Public Relations Committees

Public relations is important.

We all agree here. What we need to define is:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- With whom?

Then we must work, keeping these two points foremost in mind.

Our public relations program is part of the whole.

We must keep the PR program in tune with the aims and emphasis of our commissions and annual themes. It is our responsibility to plan and implement publicity and PR with all chairs for every program and event.

Public relations is organization wide.

Members of our organization must be given the opportunity to be part of our plans and offer suggestions. They must be involved to be effective “Public Relations Ambassadors.”

Public relations helps to maintain harmony.

We must seek participation of groups with like interests in line with Catholic teachings, planning our programs to strengthen our positions on issues of general concern. Include professional advisors when your cause needs support.

Identify actual needs for public relations.

Avoid wasting time and money aiming PR activities at the wrong targets. Research and identify real needs while working at the same time to clear up imagined problems.

Publicity is not the whole aim of public relations.

Publicity attracts attention, creates impressions, and imparts information. But if our objective is to build a strong, enthusiastic membership, we must keep in mind our organization's total PR program. Provide ways your affiliates or members can participate and not merely be on the receiving end as listeners to our story.

Good public relations plans are flexible.

We cannot continue to meet only yesterday's needs but must also reflect our involvement in the needs of Catholic women today. We must gear our programs to keep abreast of today's developments and the continuous shifting of local and national issues that concern our members.

Public relations programs need to be realistic.

Public attitudes are built slowly. Moving from indifference or passive acceptance to enthusiasm takes time and planning. We, therefore, must set realistic goals that are possible for us, considering the limitations of time and funds. Each step we take will continue to move us forward towards our goal if each activity is chosen with that goal in mind. Publicity communication efforts must be aware of, and conform to, due dates and timelines per varied publicity resources.

Public relations evaluation is important.

Evaluation helps us plan the next initiative. Analyze your efforts by asking:

- Are we achieving a balance in our programs?
- Are we gaining recognition?
- Has our media coverage increased?
- Are we utilizing varied media coverage?
- Has our membership increased?
- Does our image reflect our reality?

By evaluating our program, we can keep our PR on track and continue to learn as we develop a better overall program.

Public Relations and Communication Tools

In teaching, in talking, and in carrying out a program of effective public relations, we not only supply information, but strive to create a specific impression about our subject. Both council image and membership can benefit from good communication efforts and relationships.

There are many ways of communicating to the public. One is to discuss the program you wish to promote with other people on an informal basis. A more formal kind of public relations would be to designate one of your members to represent your organization in a community group, interpreting your program for them.

An even more formal PR method is to arrange newspaper, radio, or television coverage of your program. By using the proper media channels for your program, project or event, you may recruit a whole community of friends for the organization. Enhance PR benefits by providing membership information.

Flyers, Posters and Brochures

A flyer is a single sheet carrying a message to promote varied kinds of council activities. It should be inexpensively produced so it can be distributed widely in large quantities but should not be cheap in appearance.

Posters are not commonly used, but they are still popular in small communities. They should be moderate in size since merchants do not wish to hide their window displays with oversize cards, and space on parish bulletin boards is also limited. The printing should be large enough to read at a glance. Use color wherever possible and cut down on words.

A brochure is a single piece designed to tell what your organization is and what it does. Plan a professional looking piece with a bright, attractive layout using good graphics. Keep it concise and designed for easy mailing. Use it to issue an enthusiastic “welcome” to all. Clearly state the purpose and goals of your organization. Briefly outline the scope of your activities from personal spirituality to international concerns. Point out the numerous benefits of membership—service, leadership training, legislative information, and continuous education on Catholic issues. Include contact information and website. Have your brochures readily available for distribution at all times, with regular reviews for needed updates and reprinting. Be sure to check the downloadable brochures on your website to be certain all information is current and correct.

Newsletters, Bulletins and Calendars

Internal publicity is as much a part of the chair’s job as any other—that is, you must keep council and parish members informed about the workings of the organization and its members.

A newsletter may be used very effectively to make members aware of events and to publicize commission news. One of the best ways to keep an organization together is to send out a regular newsletter. It can be simple or elaborate. Regardless of format, the goal is the same: to inform, to educate, to stimulate thinking, to exchange ideas. The newsletter can meet a mutual need—the need of the organization to communicate and the need of its members to participate. Increasingly, councils deliver their newsletters electronically to save time and money. Remember to plan for communication distribution of printed (or hard) copies to members not utilizing electronic resources.

Identify an editor. Someone with writing experience is preferable, but the important qualities are enthusiasm about the organization, its activities, its goals, its people and eagerness to communicate that enthusiasm to members. Schedule several open meetings to generate enthusiasm, search out specific ideas for content, and recruit volunteers. Share responsibilities by employing the talents of as many members as possible to write, edit, research, type, do art work, distribute, and conduct follow-up surveys. Find someone willing to use a computer to produce the newsletter.

Select a format. First, choose a name. Some organizations announce a Name the Newsletter contest which brings in good suggestions and creates publicity at the same time. An artistic design for the masthead will attract attention. It should include the newsletter's name, editor's name, email address and telephone number, date of the newsletter, volume and number. A simple, consistent logo enhances easy council identification in communications.

Keep an overall neat and uncluttered appearance that will be eye catching and assure easy reading in print or on the computer. Letters or articles should identify the authors, such as the president or spiritual advisor, including their full name and title with the item. Most newsletters are designed as self-mailers (requiring no envelope). One half or one third of the back page could be used for the address.

You will want your newsletter to go to all active members of your organization and, at least occasional issues, to inactive members as well. Copy priests, deacons and seminarians on arch/diocesan council newsletters as these are periodically reassigned and this communication will provide familiarity with council leadership, activities and services. The chancery office may assist with this communication effort. The parish secretary may also support publicity, links to council contacts, activities and membership.

Overview of a Good Newsletter

Masthead

Name of the council, city/state/province

Newsletter name

Date of publication

Issue number

District/diocese/deanery/region/council logo

Names, email addresses and telephone numbers of the newsletter editor and officers. *Note:* Check for personal approval to use email addresses and phone numbers of council members prior to publicizing such. Another option can be to consider the establishment of a council email address for contact listing, which has the added benefit of continuity when officers change.

National Council website address: www.nccw.org

Layout and Production

Typed and formatted for readability

Proofread (Have each newsletter read by several people for content clarity, readability and errors.)

Spell out full council names (e.g. St Agnes Council of Catholic Women)

Mailed, emailed, or posted on council and/or diocesan or parish website

Content

Calendar of events

Interesting mix of material

Do not copy and paste copyright materials without permission; this includes photos

Council business: new officers, appointments, programs

Committee/commission news and activities

Education: some NCCW fact

Fellowship events: promotions, anniversaries, members' milestones

Messages from national, diocesan, and/or local officers

New member biographies

Legislative information

Program announcements

Good quality photos

Distribution List

Local council members

Chancery offices, priests, deacons, seminarians and parish secretaries

Diocesan/subdivision officers, NCCW office, NCCW Secretary

The parish bulletin can keep the parish aware of your activities. Space is at a premium; be brief and to the point. Many parishes limit items to short announcements. Despite these limitations, don't hesitate to use the bulletin. Be sure to include information about the topic/speaker/focus of the meeting, not just the time and place. Submit information well in advance of deadlines.

Calendars are published regularly in some diocesan and local newspapers. These provide another way to share your information. Also, many parishes maintain a calendar even if they don't publish it, so request that your activities be listed. This may prevent other activities from being scheduled at the same time.

Radio and Television

A publicity chair who decides to use radio and/or television should become familiar with community and metropolitan station programs which use local interest material. Some interviewers and newscasts accept spot announcements, interviews, and dramatic skits for women's groups or church issues. Stations also make public service announcements.

A local station may be compared with the community newspaper—it has few, if any, network programs and has more time available for local events of a public service nature. It also has limited staff and may welcome your assistance in providing background material and lining up knowledgeable interviewees.

Once you have determined where you want to place your news, contact the station program director, or in certain instances, the broadcaster who handles the program you have in mind. Have your material well organized, explain what you wish to accomplish, how you want to handle the material, and ask for suggestions. Incorporate these suggestions and present them for approval well in advance of broadcast time. Scripts must be cleared and carefully timed before airing. They must not violate station policies; the Federal Communications Commission holds a station responsible for all that goes over the air.

Be sure there is a real objective behind the broadcast or telecast. The stations are offering a service to their listeners, not just selling tickets for you.

Spot announcements are a concise digest of facts, lasting no more than two minutes, publicizing a current project. Interviews are usually a five to fifteen-minute session with a member of the organization to discuss a current project.

After the publicity chair has secured station time, she should follow through with her assignment, serve as the liaison between the organization and the station. She should suggest that members write the station after the broadcast. She should write a letter of thanks herself, including contact/council communication information.

A Word on Interviews

Once your organization builds an identity in the community, radio and television newscasters may contact your organization for interviews or comments on current issues. You may be asked to express your candid view as an officer or member on a major local or worldwide happening. Often this could come through a telephone call from a reporter or newscaster.

Never express an opinion if you are not sure to whom you are speaking or exactly what the question is. You must check with the national office on any given issue and this will ensure the correct answers are shared.

Expressing your own opinion is another story. Most of the time you are called because of your office or known connection with the council, and you should answer with that in mind.

If you are not sure of your stand, do not hesitate to:

- Request time to consider your answer.
- Refer the caller to someone more knowledgeable on that subject or decline to comment all together.
- Don't feel pressured to comment on something you feel unqualified to address. It is better to say nothing than to have to retract your words later because of a snap judgment.

Establishing Press Relations

Be sure that only one council member is responsible for contacting the newspapers and channeling news.

If feasible, meet the editor of the local and diocesan paper who will handle your type of news release.

Some local papers have special editors for society, club, school, church, social and general news. Walk in and introduce yourself. Tell the editor what organization you represent and that you are willing to provide a story about the group from time to time. Provide background materials that the editor can keep on file.

Some dioceses have a separate communications director in addition to the diocesan newspaper editor. The communications director may coordinate web and calendar communications. Become familiar with the communication divisions in your arch/diocese and build a relationship with all of them.

Routine meeting notices are not news and are of little interest to anyone but members of your own organization. Make them short and save longer stories for occasions that warrant them. Be appreciative of the privilege extended you and not dictatorial about the handling of the material.

Find out the format your editor prefers for receiving copy — email, fax or postal service. More and more small newspapers want press releases via email.

Respect deadlines as conscientiously as any member of the newspaper staff. Copy should always be at the proper desk before deadline time. Submit your story at least 24 hours before the paper's deadline.

Address the material to the editor by name; and better yet, when you have an important story, deliver it to the editor in person. It will give him/her a chance to get quick answers on any questions he/she may have about the story.

It is wise to clear long-range promotion projects involving several releases with the proper editor in advance. This is an advantage to both of you. The editor can schedule his space more effectively, and he might be able to suggest angles not apparent to you.

Invite the editor to be a guest at one of your big functions. Don't expect a story. Tell the editor beforehand you have appreciated the interest and would like to have her or him as your guest. You may reap future dividends in a story or spread where you least expect it.

A thank you for good press coverage is always appreciated and leaves a positive impression of you and your organization.

Feature Stories

Although there is no set formula for determining a good feature, the publicity chair must be alert to recognize it. Briefly speaking, the news event itself is played down and the unusual aspect, situation, person or facts related to it are reported in a more informal and interesting manner; that is, play up the humor, pathos, or human connection. Be imaginative: look with fresh eyes on every story; utilize the unusual. This is the type of story that commands high readership.

There are feature possibilities in:

Places. Extra-large or very small? Unusual location: a library in a trailer, a retreat given in the woods.

Persons. Names make news and features! Search beyond the names. What is different? A president pouring tea? NO! But a council member who has been elected to the national board is news.

Things. What makes them different? Bake sales or cakes from heirloom recipes, a committee making First Communion dresses for the children of migrant workers.

Numbers. Statistics and figures are dull when only listed, vital when used intelligently. What do they say when examined carefully? Money given to charity, hours of volunteer service, people who have served in education programs (total attendance at workshops, conventions, etc.) are interesting figures.

Tie-ins. Look for a connection to a larger group or a better-known organization: affiliation with and support of the program of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, representation on a governing board by a member, such as NCCW. Use photos with council members, in logo attire, participating in community and ecumenical events.

News Stories: Working with Community Newspapers

Since local news and names are the lifeblood of community papers, the editors will usually print your release if you send them in usable form and on time! Your main aim is to secure for your organization good will and understanding in the community. It is essential that you know your organization and its purposes. Emphasize news that demonstrates how your organization is serving the community as well as the Church.

What is news? The *who, what, when, where, and why* are the essentials of a news release and should be included in the first paragraph. Emphasize the *why* to interpret your organization's purpose.

Writing a Press Release

Use a press release to provide information—that can be reprinted verbatim—to print, radio and television media about something newsworthy that will happen soon or that has just occurred:

- An event involving members of the council.
- The release of a study on an issue of community or national importance.
- An award or special recognition for council members, especially if the award relates to an issue, a project, or a controversy of local or national concern.
- Use a press advisory for any of the above to give the press enough lead time to attend the event or assign a reporter to collect background information.

The major components of both the press release and press advisory are the same:

- Masthead or stationery identifying your organization.
- Notation of the kind of announcement: For Immediate Release or Press Advisory.
- Date of your release.
- Contact person, email address and phone number.
- A title that summarizes in one or two lines the whole story. For example, "National Council of Catholic Women Raises over \$370,000 to Aid Poorest Women and Families Worldwide in 2010."
- The text of your information containing who, what, when, where, why, and how. Organize your information in decreasing order of importance. If you have a quote from someone, put that in the first three paragraphs. Check locally accepted press release requirements; if it is two pages, type "More" at the bottom of the first page.
- One or two lines at the end of your release to identify your organization's purpose.

Photographs and Images

Getting good photographs for publicity purposes is not a simple procedure. Newspapers want action shots of a person doing something such as collecting clothing, sorting bottles for recycling, creating items for a bazaar, or holding up a poster-size check image for a donation.

Avoid the stereotypical shot of the pastor and four officers standing at ramrod attention and consider using photographs showing members:

- Boarding a bus bound for a party at the state mental hospital or for a legislative tour of the state capitol;
- Welcoming a delegation of foreign students at a train or bus station. (An excellent feature article on an international day sponsored by one parish group used such a picture and others showing host families entertaining their guests.);
- Consulting with the police chief in his office regarding a panel discussion on juvenile delinquency scheduled for the next meeting;
- Distributing books, food, clothing, supplies, etc.

Use high resolution photos that are bright and clear. Keep your background plain to feature your central interests and avoid unnecessary distractions. Limit your subjects to four, if possible. Always include a caption when emailing a picture.

Ask members to take photos during activities/events to share for PR efforts and files. Designate the person(s) to whom photos are to be sent. Keep a file of high quality general photos to use in newsletters and community displays. Have a professional print some enlargements to hang at conventions or meetings. Display them in your local library or church for Council Sunday. When you feel you can handle it, try a picture story. Be imaginative!

Public Relations and Communications from A to Z

Appoint a committee to share the work of publicity and image building.

Bring a camera to special events; send high resolution images to diocesan and local newspapers.

Communicate the council message by print media, radio and TV, websites and social media, community calendars, letters and conversations.

Develop personal communication skills.

Editors should get to know you personally. Have a media party to introduce council members and to improve your public relations.

Familiarize yourself with media jargon and proper format for submitting newspaper articles.

Give complimentary tickets to media personnel for your special events.

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Have letters of appreciation sent by your public relations chair to the media. This assures coverage in the future.

Initiate better communication at every opportunity to promote the council.

Just remember no one comes to you for news. It's your responsibility.

Keep news files or scrapbooks in order and display them at CCW functions.

Leaders know that events should be well advertised to attract attendance.

Media contacts need to be renewed at least annually.

Newsletters are an inexpensive means of communication. Most arch/diocesan councils have one.

Objectives and goals need constant "airing" to attract interest and motivate members to inform the public.

Publications in local libraries are excellent sources for leadership training and how to's in public relations.

Questions, problems and ideas should be discussed with members so that everyone is involved.

Readng materials about communication should be shared at meetings. Try a "share table" for free materials to inform members.

Support council in every way possible. Brainstorm at your next meeting. Find ways to share funds and local talent with all levels of council.

The NCCW publication, *Catholic Woman*, should be recommended reading for each member.

Understand your responsibilities and continue to find ways to expand your knowledge base.

Visual aids are effective in spreading the NCCW message in our image-oriented society.

Watch for artistic members to make posters, cartoons, and sketches for printed media.

Xpect to deepen your faith and prayer life through communication. Council offers many opportunities for prayer and reflection.

Younger members make excellent PR committee members. If properly welcomed, they will join and spread the news about the work of the council to friends.

Zealously communicate with everyone while carrying out the duties of any office or committee and you will reap satisfaction from A to Z!

Copyright Guidelines

Prepared by Julie French

NCCW Convention 2003

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References: U.S. Copyright Office; Oregon Catholic Press; Tara Neumann of MSU

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A Speakers Bureau

The development of a Speakers Bureau comes within the scope of the Leadership Commission. It might be considered as a project or area for a vice president, or it might be an added responsibility for the public relations vice chair. Making speakers available

to district level gatherings and to both affiliated and unaffiliated local groups supports these groups and encourages affiliation.

Purpose

- To aid in the development of meaningful and relevant programs for affiliated and other organizations.
- To feature the program areas of each of the commissions.
- To attract more affiliates to NCCW.
- To encourage women who have talent and interest in public speaking to become more knowledgeable about council work and to become members of the Speakers Bureau.
- To provide competent and knowledgeable speakers for community, civic or other church-related organizations.

How to Develop a Bureau

- The Leadership Commission Chair, in consultation with the President, appoints a committed woman as a Vice Chair who will give serious study, effort and time to the project. She should enlist the aid of others as committee members or consultants. If the Public Relations Vice Chair assumes the responsibility, she needs to involve the committee or consultants.
- The committee compiles a list of possible candidates for the Speakers Bureau and reviews them and their qualifications together. Solicit suggestions from all sources.
- The committee institutes a file system for overall diocesan or sub division use, distributes this and encourages its use. The file (list) should provide names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses, of available speakers, the subjects on which the speakers are knowledgeable, the geographical areas in which the speakers are willing to appear, and the fee (if one is requested). The file may be kept in a central location and all requests channeled through this central contact, or the speaker list distributed throughout the council, unless the speakers request that they be contacted personally by those using the service.

Recruiting Capable Speakers

Personal contact is best. If this is impossible, a written invitation should be sent describing the program or topic, discussing whether an honorarium is provided and if so, requesting information on the approximate amount (usually to cover expenses only).

The Leadership Commission should set up training sessions for those who are interested, providing them with necessary information and resource material.

Possible Participants

- Persons known to have talent and skills in specific areas, especially those who are expert in the field of commission programs, or persons who have acted as consultants to commission programs.
- Current or past officers or commission/committee chairs and vice chairs.
- Women whose professional or non-council volunteer experience has given them relevant skills and/or interests.

Publicity

Since it may require some time to compile a workable and effective list of qualified speakers, it may be helpful to advertise that one is being formed. This could be done through a simple announcement in the council newsletter or other communication. As soon as a reasonable number of speakers have volunteered and have received the necessary information, training and orientation, publicize a temporary listing. It should include titles of talks or addresses as well as explaining the specific subject matter to be covered. Make every attempt to give interesting and engaging titles as this will aid the organization in local publicity.

As the bureau develops and becomes a permanent reality, additions may be made to the temporary listing. When finalized, the list should be distributed at least annually. As in all projects involving a considerable number of people, there will be changes in personnel. Some will no longer be interested, and new ones will be attracted to this program.

Some means of determining the effectiveness of speakers should be developed. One way to do this is to make it common practice to distribute an evaluation form at the end of every program. This will also help identify topics of interest and may provide speakers with helpful feedback.