

YOUTH ACTIVITIES



Catholic



INTRODUCTION

We've looked at the variety of activities for young people and considered how much things have changed in their lives and the effect of those changes. We hope that you will consider the impact that these changes have affected our youth and make an effort to sponsor activities which encourage our young people to participate. We'd like to see parents and guardians more involved in these activities that we promote and encourage the Council to extend that invitation to assure that this occurs. Some of the activities are familiar and others hope to provide new challenges for young people and for us as Knights in the upcoming fraternal year. We hope that as you sponsor some of these activities you recognize that there's an opportunity to elicit involvement of these by others who may not be a part of our faith. We truly have an opportunity to evangelize through our youth activities to those individuals who may not have an understanding of our faith or what we do as Knights of Columbus.

We seek to encourage participation in traditional youth activities but also introduce new activities that we hope will serve our youth. We have a responsibility to represent what our young people should aspire to become - responsible and responsive citizens. This endeavor can be achieved by their involvement in realizing the sacrifice that we make in providing our time and talent to demonstrate to our youth the principles of our honored Order. We can show that we are a collective group working towards a common good and hope that our young people can emulate our example.

We need to think of our Columbian Squires as Knights-in-training and give them an opportunity to shine in their role as future Knights. We must encourage the Boy Scouts of America and their zeal for service to God and country to find a sense of belonging in our activities. Our traditional Knights-sponsored programs are: Soccer Shootout, Christmas Poster Essay contest, Drug Awareness Poster contest and Basketball Free-Throw contest. This year we want to expand the programs offered to include the Catholic Bee and the Courage Lion program. Individually these activities serve our community but more importantly their emphasis is to involve youth and their families. In addition to our own programs, we will be recognizing the contributions of young people outside of our Order at an awards ceremony at the Founders Day reception.

To insure the survival of our Order into the next century, we must take an active role at the Council level and the community level to support youth activities that are incubators for future Knights. The Maryland State Council Youth Activities Team is here to support you and your Council. Feel free to contact me or any member of my team if you need any assistance. Regular program updates are available at Chapter meetings and Program seminars.

Together we will have a productive year through youth programming because "We Are Called To Serve".

Fraternally

Greg McClain

Gregory E McClain
Youth Activities Director

YOUTH ACTIVITIES TEAM

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Christmas Poster/Substance Abuse Essay Contest Chairman	James E. Colvin (11372) 207 Law Street Aberdeen, MD 21001	Connie 410-272-8391 edkccolvin@yahoo.com
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Courage Lion Program	John S. Ramming (7612) 2219 Tufton Ridge Road Reisterstown, MD 21136	Christine 410-584-7273 chris@couragelion.org

CALENDAR OF YOUTH ACTIVITIES

June 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend the GK Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
July 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
August 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a Youth Activity Program (1 st quarter) <input type="checkbox"/> Attend State Council Membership & Program Seminar <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
September 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend the State Council Picnic <input type="checkbox"/> Council Soccer Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
October 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Activity report for 1 st Quarter due by the 15 th <input type="checkbox"/> District Soccer Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
November 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a Youth Activity Program (2 nd quarter) <input type="checkbox"/> Keep Christ in Christmas Poster contest <input type="checkbox"/> State Council Soccer Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
December 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a Youth Christmas Party <input type="checkbox"/> Keep Christ in Christmas Posters due <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
January 2008	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Activity report for 2nd Quarter due by the 15 th <input type="checkbox"/> Council Free Throw Contest <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
February 2009	<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a Youth Activity Program (3 rd quarter) <input type="checkbox"/> District Free Throw Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Nominations for Youth Award due by the 1st <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
March 2009	<input type="checkbox"/> State Free Throw Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Award presented at Founder's Day reception <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
April 2009	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Activity report for 3rd Quarter due by the 1 st <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
May 2009	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend the State Council Convention <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct Youth Essay Contest <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting
June 2009	<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Columbian Award with Youth activities <input type="checkbox"/> Attend the Chapter of Grand Knights meeting

COLUMBIAN SQUIRES

The Columbian Squires are the official youth group of the Knights of Columbus. Members of the Squires are between the ages of 10 and 18. Each Squires Circle is sponsored by a Knights of Columbus Council or Fourth Degree Assembly and Knights serve as adult counselors to the group. Through the program, Squires elect their officers, run their events, and act independently as well as in conjunction with the sponsoring Council.

There can be few undertakings more important than developing young Catholic leaders with beliefs and values that will define their character for a lifetime. This is what the Columbian Squires program is designed to do. In the words of Brother Barnabas, "The supreme purpose of the Columbian Squires is character building." The Squire Advancement Program has been developed to recognize and reward each Squire for acquiring the skills and attitudes of Catholic leadership. Through the Squire Advancement Program, a Squire will be able to advance through five levels of achievement – Page, Shield Bearer, Swordsman, Lancer, and Squire of the Body of Christ and provide a sense of accomplishment and recognition. Squires perform activities in the areas of Home and Family, Squires and Knights, Community and Country, and Church.

These Squires could be the Grand Knights of tomorrow. They will need all of the support we can give them and their organization.

FREE THROW CONTEST

The Free Throw Contest is a Supreme Council-sponsored event. All councils should strive to participate in this program. Packets are available from the Supreme Council using the form found in your "Forms Booklet" or on the Supreme Website. The competitions are divided into age groups 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 for girls and boys. At the council level, participants take 15 foul shots. At the District and State level, participants take 25 foul shots.

The competition should take place on three levels in the following timeframe:

- Council -- January
- District -- February
- State -- March

SOCCER SHOOT-OUT

The Maryland Soccer Shoot-out is not a Supreme Council-sponsored event. The Maryland State Council program is different from the Supreme Council program. This is a soccer skills program in which **all** youth, boys and girls, ages 8 to 18 can participate. Participants in Maryland will compete in ball throw-in for distance and accuracy, kicking for distance and accuracy, and goal shots for accuracy. The Soccer competition kit can be downloaded from the state website: www.kofc-md.org. Each contestant will be allowed 3 throw-ins, 3 distance kicks and 5 goal kicks.

This program is conducted at three levels in the fall:

- Council -- September

- District -- October
- State -- November

ESSAY AND POSTER CONTESTS

The Keep Christ in Christmas program is conducted in November and December. It is open to **all** boys and girls, grades 1 through 8. Each council should publicize, collect entries, and judge posters submitted from their area. Council winners will be submitted to the State Council for competition judging. Information on the contest is located on the MD State council website: www.kofc-md.org. Winners are judged on originality, theme, creativity and artistic ability.

The Essay Contest will be conducted in the same manner as the poster contest, and will be conducted in April and May. More information and resources on this program can be found on the Supreme website: www.kofc.org. The topic of the essay is the “Responsibility of the Catholic Citizen in a Free Society.”

BOY SCOUT PROGRAM

A new initiative has been organized by the Supreme Council. This new program is to establish and nurture Boy Scouts units in the areas of community service and youth ministry of the Catholic Church so that boys, young adults and adults may grow in Christian character, citizenship responsibility and with the personal fitness to achieve their potential. The Knights of Columbus and the Boy Scouts of America have a long relationship dating back to the early days of scouting in the United States. The Supreme Council has developed a kit of materials in order to help councils strengthen and expand the scouting experience through their councils.

The Boy Scouts, like our Columbian Squires, is a proven youth program. They build leadership training, build on their relationship with Jesus Christ, create team building opportunities, help our council youth programs, serve their faith congregations, provide responsible citizenship, and provide service to their neighbors. These scouts some day could become community leaders or members of the Knights of Columbus.

COURAGE LION PROGRAM

Uncertainty, insecurity and fear befall everyone during a severe illness, trauma abuse or crisis; but this level of disquiet is magnified for children, especially the developmentally disabled. In the United States, 500,000 children enter critical care facilities and 45,000 die annually. This is only the tip of the iceberg as millions of children experience similar uncertainties, insecurities and fears as a result of:

- Critical illness or trauma
- Critical illness, trauma or death of a sibling
- Critical illness, trauma or death of a parent or close friend
- Family violence
- Abuse
- Separation
- Abandonment
- Other significant family crisis

Advances in modern medicine make it possible for more accurate diagnosis and significantly improve prognosis, but the process of illness or trauma, although often shortened from previous years, still occurs. It is the two-fold effect of going through the physical illness or trauma compounded by the residual psychological consequences that impact the child. Fostering an atmosphere of compassion, comfort and understanding has immediate and strategic benefits.

In January 2005, the “Courage Lion Program” was founded to provide children in crisis with creative solutions for: facilitating communication, engendering hope, and bolstering courage. Because these children must possess an extraordinary dimension of courage, they are given a lion as a partner to accompany them on their journey. These 14-inch and 9 inch high stuffed animals are augmented by a perceptive and well-illustrated 32 page children’s book and a CD to serve as an audio book.

Play is a natural way for children to process their experiences, offering the opportunity for children to express themselves through the toys and materials they use. With the “heart of a lion” and the creative features of the “Courage Lion Program” children will more naturally be able to express their feelings, fears and concerns. As an example of how children can use the lion in playful ways to express themselves, the lion has longer front legs, offering children a way to place the paws over the eyes of the lion, if he or she is feeling fearful or overwhelmed, or over the ears, if the message being conveyed is of concern. An additional feature of the lion is the courage pocket which can be used by children to gather and display messages or symbols of their own courage and accomplishments; while medical professionals will use it as a part of the therapeutic treatment.

The related children’s book, *Courage Pockets*, introduces the story of a young lion, Duffy, who faces the challenge of recovering from an injury. In reading about Duffy’s feelings and experiences, children have the opportunity to identify and communicate about their own feelings and situations. When read with a parent or other adult, the book offers valuable opportunities for children and caregivers to identify and validate feelings, concerns and coping strategies, expand self-awareness, and encourage sharing and discussion. One advantage to the use of storytelling is that it is often less threatening to displace a traumatic event onto a character in a book, thus allowing children to express their own fears through the characters in the story. Also, children are able to merely enjoy the book as a story that need not be analyzed. In essence, children can take from the story only what they are ready to find.

The accompanying CD offers an audio version of the story and a rich variety of original songs that complement Duffy’s story, reinforcing the message of hope and courage. The CD may be used for children who are not old enough to read, developmentally disabled or whose injuries have interfered with their ability to read. The upbeat music offers a close reflection of the themes of the story, enabling children to recall messages they took from the story in a comforting and enjoyable way.

The courage lion, *Courage Pockets*, and accompanying CD combine music and storytelling with imagination to help transform a child’s hospital bed into a much more comfortable and healing space.

CATHOLIC BEE

Long Green Valley Council conducts this program annually. They begin preparation for the Catholic Bee by convening their committee to prepare a list of several hundred questions regarding our Catholic faith. Those questions are then disseminated to local parish religious education programs and parish schools to be used as a study guide for their 6th, 7th and 8th graders. The parishes conduct their own Catholic Bee to narrow the field down to their top two contestants. Those contestants then come to the council on a Saturday for the final Bee.

There are three judges and a moderator at the finals. The Bee begins with two practice rounds so that the students (contestants) get accustomed to the process. Each contestant is asked a question (true/false, multiple choice or fill in the blank), they come to the microphone and are given one minute to answer the question. When a contestant answers the question correctly, the next contestant steps to the microphone. If the contestant answers incorrectly, they take their seat and slide their chair towards the back of the stage; however, they remain on the stage. When the final two contestants are determined, they both come to the microphone at the same time and are each asked a question. The contestant who answers two questions in a row correctly is declared the winner.

Certificates are given to each contestant along with a Rosary. The top three contestants are given monetary prizes and the schools and/or parishes that they represent receive an equal amount. Refreshments are served as well.

The guidelines for implementing this activity throughout the State are still in development. Details will be provided at a later date.

SUGGESTED YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Below are examples of some successful Youth activities and the councils where the activities were conducted. Grand Knights should contact the councils directly for more information on these activities. Many more worthwhile activities are listed in the annual Book of reports.

Father Maurice J. Wolfe Council #11372

This council's youth activities begin with a swimming party held at Knight Diver Pool in Edgewood, MD for all children who served in St. Francis de Sales parish ministry such as altar servers, children's choir, and teacher's aids. The young adults swam for three hours and were treated to pizza, snacks, and a small gift was given as a token of our appreciation. In December, we held our annual Christmas Party with approximately 45 children in attendance. The party was complete with entertainment from expert storyteller Susan Wooden, craft making, and a visit by jolly Saint Nicholas. Our third activity was our Kid's Bingo where, for a small admission fee, families played for prizes such as board games, movie passes, toys and a grand prize of a 13" TV/VCR combo was awarded to the winner of a full-game bingo card. Due to the generosity of a brother Knight, we were able to give a prize to most of the children who attended.

St. Joseph – Taneytown Council #11631:

In December, many of the youth in the Parish's Religious Education Program participated in the annual Christmas Youth Poster Contest. The winners were presented awards at the annual Christmas Party. In January, the Council sponsored a local competition of the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship. 39 of the 62 youths that signed up participated. Both of these numbers were an increase over last year's competition. The 39 participants were one of the largest turnouts ever for this event. Four of our council champions won at the District competition and two of them won 2nd place; one placed 3rd in the State Championship Competition.

Madonna Council # 3964

This council held an Easter Party ... 'A learning, living, playing experience' for the children. The story of Easter was read, they did an Easter craft, played Easter bingo, had an egg hunt, guessed the number of jelly beans, broke a donkey piñata, had refreshments, were given lots of gifts and dyed eggs.

We had a special 'living, learning, and playing experience' at our Christmas Party as well. As the story of the First Christmas was read, the children placed the figures and animals in the Children's Nativity provided. Their craft was a Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer goodie bag which each child made and was filled with many, many gifts. The children played musical chairs, pin the hat on Frosty, and guess the number of candies in the jar. We played Christmas bingo using Christmas terms (religious and lay) instead of numbers. Santa provided a gift specially selected for each child and the children presented Santa with food items for the needy.

We held a Soccer Shoot-Out and winners moved on to the State level. We held a Basketball Free Throw contest with winners going on to the State level as well. Our soccer and basketball winners received trophies and certificates at a Youth Appreciation Day.

We sponsor a Catholic Child and have sponsored her since she was 8 years old. Madonna is ONE of 80 Councils in the Order to do so. We also collected new and gently used books videos for the St. Vincent and Villa Maria centers. Two sets of encyclopedia were included.”

Father Rosensteel Council # 2169

This council reinstated the Friday Night Sundae Nights with two of them in the month of March. On March 7th the children learned the true story of St. Patrick from Chaplain Fr. Perkins and Chairperson Beth Ward. After the bible lesson, the children made shamrocks and pasted the prayer of St. Patrick in the center. After Fr. Perkins left, they made him a special one and each child signed it. The shamrock was presented to Fr. Perkins at the St. Patrick’s Dance. When the crafts were cleaned up, the children enjoyed ice cream sundaes, thus the name ‘Friday Night Sundae Night’. On another “Friday Night Sundae Night, the children learned the story of ‘Benjamin’s Box’ which teaches the story of the Crucifixion of our Lord.

Other Youth activities that we have had include the following programs. We held a middle school Youth Dance, as well as children’s Halloween, Christmas and Easter parties. We award \$3,000 in scholarships to four high school students (two for \$1,000 and two for \$500). Our Squires Circle continues to grow and be active. They helped in many Council activities (in the kitchen, coat check, serving and bussing tables, etc.). Our youth and children participated in many activities including the Free Throw Competition and Soccer Shoot Out. The Council (with the assistance of the ladies auxiliary) prepared and served a dinner for the Catholic Youth at Maryland University while the Grand Knight handed out several Form 100’s which resulted in a new Council in the State of Maryland.”

St. Michael’s Of Poplar Springs Council # 10525

This council sponsors a Boy Scout Troop and helped fund an Eagle Scout Project. This year we are also offering support to a Girl Scout for her Gold Award Project; this is the highest award a Girl Scout can achieve. We also held a Youth Fingerprinting and Home Safety Program with the Maryland State Police.”

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Council # 7612

This council took the members of our Squires Circle and parish Altar Servers to a University of Maryland football game; we lucked out and saw a peach (bowl) of a game – the word’s out and next year we’ll need at least 50 more tickets. Our annual art auction continued to fund the Robert H. Clark Memorial Scholarship, an \$8,000 award to a graduating local high school student who has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement in addition to church and community involvement. We also provide for a need-based grant administered by Carroll Community College.”

Other Suggested Youth Activities

Sponsor a Squires Circle

Send Squires to regional, national, and/or World Youth Day

Sponsor a Boy / Girl Scout Troop through the Archdiocese

Donate KofC rosaries to graduating classes or First Communion classes

Volunteer in helping with the Special Olympics

Conduct sporting events for the developmental disabled or underprivileged children

Set up haunted houses for the youth of your area

Hold children’s Christmas and Easter parties

Plan activities to coincide with World Youth Day
Honor altar servers in your parish
Hold a “College Fair” for graduating seniors
Child Safety Seat Program
Children’s Fingerprint and I.D. Program
Catholic Leadership Programs
Youth Communion Breakfasts
Breakfast with Santa
Youth Rosary Programs
Post-Prom Parties
Model Rocket Program

YOUTH ACTIVITY AWARD CONTEST FORM

SEND TO STATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Dan Ward
9713 Dixie Ridge Terrace
Gaithersburg, MD 20882

Date received by State Program Director _____

From GRAND KNIGHT _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____

COUNCIL NAME _____ NUMBER _____ DISTRICT _____

LOCATION _____
(CITY) (ZIP CODE)

THE INFORMATION THAT FOLLOWS DESCRIBES OUR COUNCIL'S PROJECT AND SERVES AS OUR ENTRY IN THE STATE COUNCIL'S SERVICE PROGRAM AWARDS CONTEST.

DATE PROJECT CONDUCTED _____

TITLE OR NATURE OF PROJECT _____

WHO BENEFITED MOST FROM THIS PROJECT? _____

CHAIRMAN _____
(NAME-ADDRESS-TELEPHONE NO.)

NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN PROJECT _____

DESCRIBE PROJECT IN DETAIL. (PHOTOGRAPHS, NEWS CLIPPINGS, ETC. MAY BE INCLUDED WITH THIS REPORTING FORM. USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS AS NECESSARY)

SIGNED _____
(GRAND KNIGHT)

ATTEST _____
(DISTRICT DEPUTY) (DATE)

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE COUNCIL CHAIRMAN. COMPLETED ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR AS FOLLOWS:

- () BEST FIRST REPORT PERIOD ACTIVITY (APR THRU SEPT) DUE BY OCTOBER 15TH
- () BEST SECOND REPORT PERIOD ACTIVITY (OCT, NOV, DEC) DUE BY JANUARY 15TH
- () BEST THIRD REPORT PERIOD ACTIVITY (JAN, FEB, MAR) DUE BY APRIL 1ST

PLEASE INDICATE REPORT BEING SUBMITTED