Publicizing Your Unit

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What Is Public Relations?

In Scouting, public relations (PR) is best defined as the process by which we create and maintain a favorable climate of public opinion to help us achieve our mission of youth development. To better understand the public relations process, however, it's important to remember the basic functions of public relations.

Promoting Goodwill

As a volunteer organization, the Boy Scouts of America relies on the goodwill and support of the community, especially at the district level.

Reinforcing the BSA Image

Every favorable news story about Scouting reinforces the BSA's image as a positive force in the lives of young people. So too, then, does a negative story hinder the way Scouting is perceived by the public.

Promoting a "Product"

The Boy Scouts of America promotes one main "product": comprehensive youth development. Different marketing campaigns may highlight the particular means to that end—Cub Scouting, Boy Scouting, Venturing, Friends of Scouting, chartered organization service, etc.

Counteracting Negative Publicity

Whenever Scouting receives adverse press coverage, the function of public relations becomes that of presenting the Scouting side of the story in the best possible light. A news story that's being written on child abuse, for instance, might be turned into a favorable article by explaining to the media the BSA's achievements in youth protection.

Special Events

Camporees, courts of honor, fund-raising luncheons, and other council activities are all part of public relations. Not only do special events create opportunities for publicity; they also can be used to help participants identify more closely with the council and the BSA.

District and Unit Impact on Positive Publicity

Each district and unit in your council must help focus on promoting positive public relations every day in your local communities. And we must tell Scouting's story as often as possible.

Thousands of Scouting articles and photos carry a strong, positive message each month about the presence and vitality of the Boy Scouts of America and its impact in local communities.

We need your help in getting the word out. What can you do to help? The answer is simple. You can provide local media with information that communicates the fun and values of Scouting.

A newspaper is a business, and like most businesses, it is operated to produce a profit. At the same time, the newspaper's editors also recognize their responsibility to serve the people of the community and are always looking for items with local relevance. The people in your community want to know about Scouting. They want to read the articles about their neighbor earning his Eagle Scout Award and the Cub Scout pack collecting thousands of cans of food for the hungry. They also want to see the photo of Troop 272 setting up a neighborhood watch program as part of achieving the Crime Prevention merit badge. Therefore, your community newspaper is interested in reporting Scouting news about your pack, troop, team, or crew. Odds are that if you have a good story, it will be reported.

We have pulled together some practical, low-tech resources to help you tell the positive story of Scouting in your council. There might never be a more important time than now to let the public know that Scouting still believes in America's young people, and those children are worth the investment of both time and dollars. While today's children make up only 20 percent of the population, they are 100 percent of our future!

Developing Media Relationships

Introduction
Working with the news media is more than answering an occasional inquiry from a local reporter or periodically sending a community calendar release. True media relations are well conceived, carefully developed, and attentively maintained.

Media Relations Objectives
The ideal in media relations is having a number of reporters and other news professionals who

- View Scouting as a credible source of information on youth development
- View you as a credible source of information on Scouting programs and activities
- View you as a person who can be counted upon to provide the accurate information needed to produce a story—good or bad—about Scouting and/or youth on a timely and consistent basis

With the respect of reporters, photographers, editors, and producers, Scouting not only obtains the best possible coverage of important matters, but also the greatest chance of garnering balanced or even positive treatment of stories that could otherwise be negative or damaging. Story ideas that truly lack merit can sometimes be put to rest before they're printed or broadcast, **if** a credible and trustworthy relationship has been crafted with the media **in advance**.

Building Relationships With the Media
A well-written, newsworthy release will do no good unless it reaches the right media outlet and reporter. Remember, positive relationships with the news media are the result of deliberate actions.

The people who work on a newspaper are no different from those who work in any other business—except that they may be more pressed for time in order to meet deadlines. Like you, they have a concern for their families and community. Working under tight deadlines, they are engaged in writing, editing, and printing a large amount of material to fill their copy space. Being aware of their needs will allow you to be more efficient and effective when submitting your story to a reporter.

Be prepared by knowing your local media representatives and planning ahead.

- Find out what reporters, photographers, and other news professionals need to put a story together, and what the BSA can do to make that task easier.

- Examine the media in your area regularly to determine what types of stories and photos they use.

- Ask reporters about their deadlines and what times are best for you to call and discuss releases or story ideas. Before sending a news release, check with local media to learn their lead times. Be sure to keep an accurate record of these items by specific media outlet and contact person.

- Develop **and maintain** an up-to-date media list, including staff changes, deadlines, phone and fax numbers, and radio formats and audiences. Knowing names, deadlines, and topics of interest prior to placing a release can make a difference in getting your news published or broadcast. Make note of the best ways by mail, fax, or phone tip to deliver news releases to each local media outlet.

- Note that titles for media contacts vary depending on the media outlet and its size. For example, you may contact the managing editor of a small weekly paper and a youth news editor of a metropolitan daily. Again, maintaining a detailed media list will help in keeping these contacts organized.

- Once your relationship is established, send BSA calendars marked with important BSA dates.

- Invite local reporters to BSA activities to experience Scouting firsthand. Remember to brief youth so that they can answer a reporter's questions with confidence.

- Ensure that the news media knows how to reach you. Be sure to respond promptly to reporters' inquiries.

- Don't be afraid to thank or compliment reporters on a well-written story. You may want to mail holiday thank-you messages to all media that have written about or visited your council, or have a youth or unit send a note. You may want to consider giving awards to reporters and news outlets that go above and beyond the norm in their coverage of BSA events and activities.

- Don't overlook weekly community publications as a target for your news releases. The competition for space in a daily newspaper is robust. Community media can

be just as effective in reaching your target audience, and many smaller community outlets are starving for news and story ideas.

- Don't forget to send releases to nontraditional media outlets such as church, educational, community, or corporate newsletters.

Follow these pointers when working with your local newspaper:

- Inform the media of your story through a news release. Submit a story about a scheduled event about one to two weeks in advance of the event. You will find more details on writing the news release in a later section.

- When there's not enough time to write a news release, the media alert comes in handy. It takes only a short time to write and can be faxed to your media source. It can also serve as an announcement of an important upcoming event; planning ahead allows the paper to reserve a prominent space for your article. In this case, you may want to send a media alert two to three weeks prior to the event and follow up with the news release one to two weeks prior to the event. Sample formats for the news release and media alert are included in this guide.

- If you need to call the managing editor or reporter assigned to your story, Monday mornings usually are the best and most efficient time to reach him or her. When familiar with the reporter's deadlines, be careful not to call during that busy time. Remember that you are not the only person pitching a story idea to the reporter. Other callers are trying to sell their story idea also.

- Find the "hook" or "angle." Each news medium identifies reporters that cover a specific area; for example, one reporter may be assigned to sports and another for business or finance, family, religion, entertainment, etc. This will allow you to contact different reporters with fresh ideas and pitches. Send only one release per story to each publication. If for some reason you do furnish duplicate releases, let the recipients know, for example, note, "Also sent to Sports Editor."

- Avoid fax pollution. Fax only important messages.

- Most newspapers draw sharp lines between the news and advertising departments. New stories find their way into the paper on their individual merit; don't demand that an article be published.

- Use bullets to highlight different story angles.

- "No" means "no." Don't persist; be polite. Don't take it personally if a reporter may be too busy to do your story right away. Perhaps follow up by sending your own photos and news release. Save your energy for the next time you have a story to pitch. If your story is not used, it could be because of a number of reasons: didn't meet publisher's deadline, no space available, or it's not as newsworthy as other stories that particular week. There's no need to call the reporter every time a story is not used. If it happens consistently with no luck, you might want to talk to the reporter to seek advice on what material would be beneficial to him or her. Continue promoting your events.

- Don't ask the editor for a clipping. Good manners and common sense dictate that you buy a copy of the newspaper and do your own clipping. Reporters have moved on and are busy preparing for the next issue. Make vital use of each contact with the media.

- Send copies of releases and clippings to your local council's public relations director.

- On quarterly and annual intervals, review your success. What articles were published? What can you do to improve the quantity and quality of the news coverage? It will surprise you how soon you will begin to develop a "nose for news," knowing when an event is news and when it isn't.

- **Thank the reporter.** Send a personal note after the story runs. Don't say "thank you" as if the reporter did you a favor—acknowledge the reporter for "doing a good job in covering the topic."

How to Deliver the Pitch

Get the reporter's attention. Begin with the realization that you might be only one of dozens of publicists trying to reach a reporter that day. Be creative. Be concise. Be informative.

If you've sent creative material to prime the media, your call stands a better chance of being well received.

Begin with your best angles. In this business, it's often one strike and you're out.

Don't start by saying, "I'm following up on some material I sent you last week to see if you're interested." Many reporters say that line immediately turns them off. Use something more creative.

Keep selling the story. Newcomers sometimes become so flustered when a reporter listens to them, they forget to sell the story. Once you have the reporter's attention, sell. Run through a list of different story angles on a script when you are on the phone, or use bullets to highlight different story angles in your media material.

Get a commitment for the next step. If you get a "maybe" because the reporter doesn't know enough, keep pitching. If you get a "maybe" because your contact doesn't want to schedule the story yet, make a note to call back. If a reporter asks for more information, take it as an expression of interest and get the information to him or her right away.

"No" means no. Most reporters will hear you out. They know how to say "no" if they can't or don't want to do the story. Don't persist, pester, or waste their time. You'll merely find it harder to get through to that reporter the next time.

Note the response on your media list. Tracking responses becomes particularly important if you are pitching with several other people. If you are highly organized in your pitching, you will find that you cover all the bases and end up harvesting publicity from reporters others might miss.

Work the local angle. Look for a local angle, or "hook," in every story and make sure the appropriate bureau knows about it.

Think photos. An interesting photo takes planning or luck. You can't count on luck, so you must plan. If you're pitching an event, be sure to pitch the photo desk as well as the reporter.

If a wire photographer doesn't make it, don't give up. Get your photographer to take an interesting photo and give the film to the wire service immediately. Wire services will often accept a photo if they can't (or don't) cover an event with their own photographer.

Avoid fax pollution. Some newspapers welcome and encourage faxes. However, some media resent having their lines being tied up. Be considerate and ask your contacts their preference.

Once you have a reporter's interest, don't let go. Be polite, be creative, and be persistent. Don't take it personally if a reporter is too busy to do your story right away. Reporters are busy people and often cannot control their own agendas. They receive assignments from editors, news directors, or bureau chiefs that take precedence. Keep calling back

with updates and time angles. Anticipate when reporters will be looking for material related to your story.

Develop a short list of key reporters. Keep sending good new material and new angles that relate to your issue, and include a brief note. Persistence pays.

Once a reporter covers your story, give that reporter a break. You can start fresh during your next pitch. Do send a personal note after the story comes out. Acknowledge the reporter for doing a good job in covering the topic.

Final Notes on the Pitching Process:

Working successfully with the media depends on a number of factors:

- Knowing and understanding the story
- Knowledge and understanding of the media being targeted
- Newsworthiness of the story idea
- Ability to mold a story idea and supply useful information under a deadline
- Professionalism when working with the reporter
- Respect and rapport between the reporter and the publicist.

Getting media coverage takes hard work and a will to succeed. It's hard to take the rejection you might encounter when you're pitching. Stick with it; learn from your mistakes, and develop contacts and pitching skills. It will all pay off when your story is covered on television or in a magazine or a major newspaper.

MEDIA CONTACT SHEET

Name of Newspaper/Magazine_____

Mailing Address_____
_____

Delivery Address_____
_____

Contacts:
Editor _____
Reporter/Columnist _____
Reporter/Columnist _____
Reporter/Columnist _____

Telephone Numbers:
News Desk_____ Fax_____
E-mail_____ Other_____

Publication day_____ Deadlines_____

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
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_____
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_____
_____

MEDIA ALERT FORMAT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ALERT

WHO: _____

WHAT: _____

WHERE: _____

WHEN: _____

Background: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

For more information, please contact _____ at _____
(Contact Name) (Phone)

Gaining Positive Publicity

After you have set your objectives, identified your target audiences, and developed your main message points, it's time to decide which communication tools best meet your needs.

Many people think public relations is nothing more than getting publicity—a story or report—via the news media. But publicity is only one of several tools you can use to communicate your messages to target audiences. Many other methods are available, including public service announcements (PSAs), newsletters from chartered organizations in your community, advertisements, and special events.

Ideas for Gaining Positive Publicity

- **Utilize public service announcements.**

- **Regularly take inventory of activities within the district.** Of the activities planned for the coming months, which programs or events most closely resemble the types of stories that reporters within have covered in the past? Consider:

    - Is the activity or event new?
    - Is it novel?
    - Does it affect many area residents?
    - Does it involve a celebrity or local distinguished person?
    - What impact will it have on the future of the community?

- **Stage an event.** Look for ways that Scouting could respond to a local problem.

- **Capitalize on local Scouting statistics.** Reporters look for stories that can be built around statistics.

- **Look for unusual or interesting photo opportunities.** Local newspapers and magazines periodically will have a space to fill and can use a unique photograph that you supply. Include a caption attributing the photo to the Boy Scouts of America. Alternatively, be alert for opportunities for local media to photograph events that might not warrant a full news story, but might justify a caption story such as Scouts building a tent from plastic milk jugs.

- To request a photographer: Inform a newspaper about a photo opportunity no less than one week before a scheduled event. The managing editor will determine whether the newspaper can use the photo and if a photographer is available. In many cases, staff photographers take photos only during normal business hours of 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday.

- If you take your own photo: If you take your own photographs, they must be sharp, preferably at least 5x7 inches in size. Many of the Instamatic-type snapshots are not sharp enough for newspaper use; however, if that's all you have, give it a try.

- Taking an interesting photo: An interesting photo takes planning or luck. Newspapers prefer photos of no more than three subjects—the fewer the people, the better the photo. Individuals in photos should be doing something, not just looking at the camera. Identify people from left to right by typing, or printing clearly, full names on a full-sized sheet of paper, then clipping or taping, not stapling, the paper to the photo. Do not write on the back of the photo, it may show through when printed. If you need your photos returned, designate that at the time of submission.

- **Look for current events that the district can use as a backdrop for promoting the positive values that Scouting instills in young people.** A story about urban Scouts rebuilding a park damaged by recent flooding can demonstrate the team spirit and community service focus of Scouting. Such an activity could tie into an opinion or editorial piece on the merits of Scouting, to be published over a prominent volunteer's signature.

Alternate Publicity Instruments

- Letter to the editor. A simple, straightforward statement, written to the editor of your local newspaper

- Bylined articles: A formal article designed to be placed in local newspapers and magazines. Such articles are written to appear under the name of a council president, board chair, or a representative of a chartered organization.

- Op-ed page: "Opposite the editorial page." Some newspapers use this page to print reader opinions and articles by columnists.

- Target vertical media, publications that target special interests, such as magazines for parents and kids, outdoors publications, and other youth development magazines in your area.

- Send releases to local business newsletters and community bulletin boards.

- Speak formally at churches and other community and civic organizations, as well as informally with parents, friends, and coworkers on behalf of your council.

- Decorate a float for Scouts to ride on in your local parade.

- Hang banners during Scouting Anniversary Week or to promote School Night for Scouting.

- Pass out fliers promoting School Night for Scouting.

- Set up booths at trade shows or fairs. Provide information that visitors can take home with them.

- Hang posters and fliers in places where boys and young adults will see them. The school may have a bulletin board for these items.

- Host a media pancake breakfast where Scouts deliver pancakes to local radio personalities on a chosen day. This could be done during fall recruiting. The radio personalities could talk about Scouting. Give the personalities a public service announcement or flier listing details of the recruiting program or coming event.

- With more than 100 merit badges, there should be something that will interest almost anyone. Market the possibilities a youngster can be involved in through merit badges. Create a story about the Cooking merit badge for the food section. Include a recipe of an item that can be prepared for a group of hungry young men. Write an article about the Personal Management merit badge for the finance section in local publications, or the Music merit badge for the local theater's playbill. How can you create interest and generate positive publicity through the other merit badges?

- Promote your community service projects.

- Develop a Web page.

- Word of mouth can be the best marketing tool. It is a free and effective method to spread positive messages. So, how do you do it?

1. The best place to start word of mouth marketing is inside the organization, in the unit, district, and council. Sparkle originates internally; enthusiasm starts in your council.

2. Enthusiastic volunteers attract and sustain positive attention at civic, social, and industry functions. Create positive energy, and people inside and outside the organization will feel it. It's rarely mentioned in marketing plans, yet enthusiasm is a powerful persuasion tool.

3. Share your excitement with people. They will want to know what you are so excited about and will want to learn more. Share Scouting's message with other groups you feel could benefit from hearing the Scouting story. You can talk formally with churches, community and civic organizations, and informally with parents, friends, and co-workers.

4. Encourage everyone associated with the BSA to be informed, enthusiastic, and anxious to tell everyone about the fun and benefits of Scouting. Maybe a district meeting question to ask is, "Who have you told about Scouting this week?"

5. Ask everyone you know to pass along the good word.

6. Smile!

Public Service Announcements

Public service announcements (PSAs) are non-commercial messages that the broadcast media air at no charge to keep their audiences up to date on important public developments and issues. PSAs might be considered as radio or television spots for which there is no charge.

Because the BSA is a nonprofit organization, there are more opportunities for PSAs than may be available to a corporation or other type of profit-making enterprise. Nevertheless, overtly commercial PSAs—advertisements in the guise of public service announcements—have little chance of being aired, regardless of the source.

For example, a PSA announcing a change in travel plans for Scouts going to a summer camp is not likely to be used because its obvious purpose is to benefit only the BSA. On the other hand, announcing a food drive or a new program to fight illiteracy has inherent public appeal.

Generally 10, 15, 30, or 60 seconds long, PSAs can be of enormous benefit in promoting special events, such as School Night for Scouting or Scouting for Food. They can also be helpful for Friends of Scouting campaigns and other fund-raising projects.

Some television PSAs are available from the National Council, but you can easily produce your own. If you create your own PSA, be sure include your district positive publicity coordinator in the planning process. Simply take a color slide that is an interesting representation of what you're promoting, develop a brief script, and submit both to the public service director of your local television station. Shorter spots are easier for the station to schedule, so consider keeping the copy to 10 or 15 seconds in length. Also be sure to note station lead times and deadlines.

Occasionally, you may find that a local television station is willing to work with you to produce a more sophisticated PSA. This is especially true if you've had the foresight to recruit the station manager for your public relations or marketing committee.

Radio PSAs are the same as television PSAs, only without the visuals. Again, lengths are 10, 15, 30, and 60 seconds, with the shorter PSAs being easier to schedule. In many cases, radio stations will write a PSA script if you provide the who-what-when-where-why information. Each radio station will have a public service director responsible for PSAs.

Print PSAs

Public service announcements are not limited to television and radio. Print PSAs can be used in a variety of ways throughout your local council. These include:

- Newspaper and magazine inserts
- Billboards
- Calendars
- Community directories such as chambers of commerce, real estate, new neighborhoods, churches, schools, civic adult and youth organizations, athletic leagues, etc.
- Door hangers and table tents
- Posters, brochures, and leaflets
- Postcards
- Grocery sacks and tray liners
- Utility bill enclosures
- Major corporate in-house publications
- Luncheon and dinner programs

The National Council has several print PSAs—both color and black and white—available for your use. However, a print PSA provides a great opportunity for local council localization. Create your own—pictures of local volunteers and activities, quotes from community leaders. Localizing a print PSA highlights the community involvement and appeals to a greater number of individuals. Be sure to include your district publicity coordinator in the planning process.

Several councils have found newspaper inserts to be very successful. These range from a four-page spread to an individual supplement much like the *Parade* supplement in the Sunday paper. The common element is telling the local story.

News Release Guidelines

Guidelines on News Releases

The following guidelines on placing news releases have been developed to improve your success rate in writing and placing information that will be published at no charge to your council.

Some of the media to target are

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Newsletters and bulletins
- Community directories (refer to the list under “Print PSAs”)
- Radio
- Television, including cable

A news release is the most common of all public relations tools. Basically, a news release is a document developed to communicate key information—the facts of when the news happened or will happen, and whom to contact for additional information—to reporters and editors in the news media.

Reporters and editors can receive thousands of news releases a week. Accuracy, clarity, brevity, timeliness, and newsworthiness are the key criteria used by editors in selecting releases for print. A newsworthy release can be described as one that appeals to the broadest group of readers or viewers, offering the most information with the greatest sense of urgency.

In most cases, reporters or editors will rewrite your release to fit their style, so it’s crucial to present the information as clearly and accurately as possible. The best way to do this is by following the journalistic method of organizing the material into an **inverted pyramid**. The inverted pyramid style of writing puts the most essential information at the beginning, followed by items of decreasing importance.

The Basics

All news releases begin with a headline designed to attract the reporter/editor and to encourage them to read the rest of the release. Remember, first impressions count! If the headline is dull and uninteresting, the reader will assume the same of the release. Large

numbers, or the use of "visual" language, can make the difference between a sparkling, attractive headline and one that is flat and lifeless.

The most essential information in a news release should be listed in the lead, the first paragraph of the release. What details should be included in the lead? Start with as many of the "who, what, where, when, why, and how" facts of the news item as possible.

For the majority of releases, the "who," the subject of the release, should include the name of the organization and the name of an individual who is either the expert on the subject or a contact. The more important or influential the organization and the individual, the greater the appeal of the release. (Importance can be considered in terms of competitive position or rank, or industry association affiliation.)

The second "w" is the "what," the topic of the release. Just as we readers, viewers, and listeners are drawn more to the unusual than to the usual, so are reporters and editors. Unusual can mean different, better, less expensive, unique, or beneficial to the community.

The third "w," the "where," should follow the same rule as the "what"; the unusual is generally more appealing than the usual.

The "when" of a release actually has two important parts. The first is the date and time of the news in the release; the second is the date and time the release reaches the editor. Election days and holidays can be very busy times for editors.

The last "w" is the "why." When addressing the "why" of a release, remember cause and effect. For example, what caused your council to relocate a camp, or to charter a significant number of new units? What effects will these changes have on adult and youth members? If the new location will be more convenient or if new areas of the community will be served, mention this information. A rule borrowed from advertising states that an organization shouldn't promote the features of its product or service, but rather the benefits to its customers.

The "how" of a news release can be addressed by answering, for example, "how" a decision was made; "how" you will achieve a reorganization; "how" it will affect youth, volunteers, and the overall Scouting program.

The main body of the news release should include significant details that relate to the lead, including quotations and succinct descriptions. Any related but nonessential information should appear toward the end of the release. Generally, the last paragraph provides overall information and statistics about the local council, such as territory

served, number of youth and adult members, and location of the council headquarters. It's also a good place to list a phone number for more information.

General Rules of Thumb for News Releases

- Always type a news release. Releases should be double-spaced and typed on one side only of 8 1/2-by-11-inch paper with 1-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Brevity is the key. Try to limit releases to one or two pages. Straightforward and concise writing style is the objective.

- Never split a paragraph at the end of a page.

- Type "-More-" at the bottom of a page when the release is more than one page in length.

- Number all pages.

- Type "###" or "-30-" to signify the end of the release.

- Clarity, accuracy, grammar, and neatness count. Don't submit copy with typos, misspellings, or cross-outs. Verify all names, addresses, and facts before distributing the release.

- Avoid the use of clichés, jargon, or fancy phrases.

- Don't use flowing tributes, flowery descriptions, or glowing adjectives when writing your news release. The news release should be more informative than subjective. Be impartial and objective; try to write the release as the reporter might.

- Use first and last names on first reference. Use last names only on subsequent references. Include titles and descriptions, such as district chairman, or a person's hometown or age. Provide the full name of groups with appropriate descriptions.

- If an editor must choose between two otherwise equal releases, he or she is more likely to pick the release that has an accompanying photograph. Make sure each photograph is self-explanatory and interesting. Every photograph should include a complete and correct caption identifying each person and the action in the photograph. Your photograph file should include the following information on each photograph: source, date taken, copyright information, and releases signed by people in the picture.

- Put the local news angles in the beginning if the story concerns a larger area that is beyond the community's borders or newspaper's circulation area.

- Include a good quote from Scouts, volunteers, or local distinguished individuals early in the story.

- Add "boilerplate" material, general information about Scouting, to help people understand the importance and relevancy of Scouting. For example: "Scouting has had more than 96 million members since its inception in 1910."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: [Contact Name], [Phone]

SCOUTS CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY!—____ YEARS YOUNG
[Anniversary Date]

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country,
and to obey the Scout Law, to help other people at all times;
to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.
—The Boy Scout Oath

([City], [State], [Date])—The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) celebrates its [#]th Anniversary this week, and [City] will be abuzz with Scouting activities commemorating the founding of the movement. One of the nation's largest youth development organizations, the BSA was founded on Feb. 8, 1910.

"We're working hard to make sure the youth of tomorrow are prepared for what awaits them," proclaimed Scoutmaster [First Name, Last Name]. [Unit] will celebrate by _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

"Within the span of just _____ years," [Last Name] added, "the name 'Boy Scouts' has become a paradigm for a good turn and the ideal of community service."

-more-

The idea for the Boy Scouts of America began in 1909, when William D. Boyce, an American businessman, was lost in a London fog. A young boy found Boyce and led him to his destination. Boyce offered to tip the young man for service; the boy refused, saying he was a Scout and could not accept payment for a Good Turn.

The businessman later asked the boy to introduce him to Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting in England and publisher of the handbook *Scouting for Boys*. The groundwork to bring Scouting to America had been laid.

Boyce established the Boy Scouts of America on Feb. 8, 1910, with the help of Baden-Powell, wildlife author and illustrator Ernest Thompson Seton, naturalist Daniel Carter Beard, and attorney James E. West.

Since the 1910 inception, the Boy Scouts of America has become one of the nation's premier youth development organizations, with more than 100 million people participating on adult and youth levels.

###

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: [Contact Name], [Phone]

CUB SCOUTS PARTICIPATE IN END-OF-THE-SUMMER CAMPING ACTIVITIES

([City], [State], [Date])—More than 100 Cub Scouts from the metropolitan area gathered this weekend for two days of fun-filled camping at [Location] for the traditional end-of-the-summer campout.

Cub Scouts, leaders, and parents pitched their tents and braved plummeting temperatures to participate in the last camping rite of summer. Activities started with a cookout dinner Friday night and ended with parents and leaders cooking breakfast on Sunday morning before everyone broke camp.

These extended campouts give Cub Scouts the opportunity to demonstrate to their parents skills ranging from knot-tying to first aid, and from tepee building to outdoor cooking. "The Cub Scouts get such a thrill out of being able to show their parents all the knowledge they learn at the weekly meeting," said Cubmaster [First Name, Last Name]. "It's not like they can run home after a den meeting and say, 'Hey Mom, let me show you how to light a campfire.'"

-more-

Activities during the campout included an outdoor obstacle course race, timed knot-tying competitions, and a mother/son fishing derby. Awards for the top three Cub Scouts and their mothers were presented at the Sunday breakfast. "The campout is also a great way for Cub Scouts from different elementary schools to get to know one another," said [Last Name].

"Sitting around the campfire and roasting marshmallows with the other guys and my family was great," said Cub Scout [First Name, Last Name], "but the best part was winning the fishing derby with my mom . . . she's the best."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: [Contact Name], [Phone]

ANNUAL SCOUTORAMA EVENT HELD AT [Event Site]

([City], [State], [Date])—Dozens of area Boy Scout troops and Cub Scout packs gathered this weekend at [Event Site] to present their annual Scoutorama. Open to the public, the Scoutorama allows youth from the community to demonstrate skills ranging from knot-tying to first aid, and from tepee building to outdoor cooking.

"This is just a great opportunity for our young men to showcase their talents and skills to the public and to give the boys a chance to form relationships with Scouts from other packs and troops," said Scoutmaster [First Name, Last Name]. "It is also a way for the youth who are not a part of Scouting to get acquainted with us and what we do."

The theme for this year's Scoutorama was "[Event Theme]." Highlights of the Scoutorama included an outdoor baking contest between Scouts of all ages, a timed rope bridge building contest, and an award for the three Scouts who sold the most tickets to this year's event. "I had a blast at this year's Scoutorama," said First Class Scout [First Name, Last Name], second-place winner of the baking contest. "My peach cobbler was good, but I didn't think that it would win an award."

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[First Name, Last Name], Indian wrestling champion, was equally excited about winning. “I’m a small guy, but it proves that speed can be more useful than size,” said [Last Name].

[Unit and #], chartered to [Chartered Organization], was formed in [Year Chartered]. With nearly 4.4 million youth members, the Boy Scouts of America is one of the nation’s largest youth development organizations.

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Copyright and Trademark Information

The Boy Scouts of America was incorporated by an act of Congress (36 U.S.C. § 21 et. seq.) which, among other things, gives it the sole and exclusive right to have and to use, in carrying out its purpose, all emblems and badges, descriptive or designating marks, and words or phrases used by it.

A number of trademarks/service marks have been federally registered on behalf of the BSA. Furthermore, the BSA protects its artworks and texts under copyright law. Those trademarks/service marks and copyrights protected by federal trademark and copyright registrations are the sole property of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of America has also adopted policies, published in the BSA *Rules and Regulations*, that address copyright and trademark protection.

- Article IX, Section 3, Clause 7(b) provides as follows:

  (b) A local council may not enter into a contract or business relationship that uses any logo, insignia, terms in common usage, or descriptive marks relating to Scouting, unless the relationship or contract conforms to currently accepted procedures and guidelines as established by the National Council, Boy Scouts of America. The contract or relationship must avoid endorsement of any commercial product or venture.

- Article X, Section 4, Clause 12 provides as follows:

  The national office shall have the sole right to authorize the use of insignia, words, phrases, designation marks, pictorial representation, and descriptive remarks relating to the program of the Corporation on commercial products, promotional efforts, and/or sale and distribution to members of the Boy Scouts of America and/or the general public. The use of same by local councils shall be only as authorized and approved by the national office.

A long list of court decisions has made it clear that words, symbols, mottoes, emblems and other insignia have become associated in the minds of the public with the Scouting movement and may not be commercially exploited or otherwise appropriated by others.