Territorial Courts do not have a State Court; therefore, they will not be judged on State Coverage and their Total Possible Score is 90.

Catholic Daughters of the Americas®

National Newsletter Contest

September 2025 from: National Newsletter Chairman, Karin Dudash

Re: 2025-2026 National Newsletter Contest

The 2024-2025 Newsletter Contest is over. Now is the time to start thinking about the 2025-2026 Contest. What an exciting project for both local and state courts. Many courts are using website links or email to distribute their newsletters and saving postage, ink, and paper- a great way to save on budgets and worth consideration by more courts. But always remember to mail a copy to those members without internet access.

NOW is the time to review your local court newsletter to see if you need to make any changes to meet all the requirements. Maybe it is time to start a newsletter for your court. The purpose of your newsletter is to keep the members engaged and informed. Whether you brought home a certificate and ribbon from the National Convention or not—you are all winners.

Why have a court newsletter?

- They are a wonderful tool to educate new members (or even old-timers) all about Catholic Daughters.
- They help members to understand how they are part of our national & state levels of the order.
- They communicate to the members of your court current activities, upcoming events and special projects the court may be planning.
- They are of special interest to those members that are unable to attend meetings due to illness, being homebound or because of work, school, or family responsibilities.
- Leaving copies of your newsletters in the church or distributing them to women of the parish can go a long way to pique interest and bring in new members!

An EFFECTIVE newsletter will: *Inform *Motivate *Inspire

Please remember that your newsletters are judged specifically on their content, not whether they are printed in black and white or color or how many pages it contains. What is important is the coverage of your local, state, and national CDA news, and the interests of your court and community. One of the rules for judges is that they cannot be CDA members. Remember this when you include national and state news. They will not know what is local, state, or national if you do not point this out to the reader.

In addition to this letter, the 2025-2026 Newsletter Contest Guidelines, Cover Sheet, and Score Sheets are included (Note: different score sheet for Local and State entries). If you are not the newsletter editor, it is very important that you give/ send her a copy of this packet as soon as possible to help her make adjustments now to meet the requirements for the 2025-26 contest. PLEASE be sure to review ALL Qualifications! Too many entries are disqualified every year due to failure to comply with the requirements. Let's see if we can get 100% of the 2025-2026 Contest entries to meet all requirements!

As the National Chairman, I encourage all courts to publish a newsletter and participate in the 2025-26 contest. We had wonderful participation in 2024-25, let's see if we can double the entries in 2025-26, giving us all an opportunity to learn more about the amazing things our CDA sisters are doing around the states and territories. We want to encourage entries from our Campus and JCDA courts too. We have a wonderful story to tell…do your part in writing it.

Approved by:
Susan Moné, National Regent

2025-2026 National Newsletter Contest Guidelines
National Chairman Karin Dudash

DEADLINES:

- The State Regent is responsible for setting the state's contest deadline for entries in the local, campus, and JCDA state contest, keeping in mind national's deadline date of April 1, 2026.
- April 1, 2026, is the deadline for state and territorial courts to get their entries submitted to the National Newsletter Chairman.
- The State Regent, or State Newsletter Chairman, must send the 1st Place winner in each category and division, with a signed letter, from either party, verifying that each submitted entry was their state's 1st place winner. This needs to be sent to the National Newsletter Chairman POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE April 1, 2026. Newsletters will not be accepted for judging if not postmarked by this deadline date.
- Territorial and State Courts send their entries directly to the National Chairman POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE April 1, 2026. They also must include a verification letter stating that the entries submitted are original as distributed to the membership and have not been altered for the contest in any way.

REQUIREMENTS:

Each newsletter must include the following elements. Failure to comply with any of the following guidelines will result in automatic disqualification. These requirements are for each local, territorial, campus, JCDA and state entry.

1. CDA **Mission Statement**. If you have a JCDA court submitting an entry, also have the CDA Mission Statement included to show the affiliation with the National Organization.
2. CDA **Registered Logo** (can be located at www.catholicdaughters.org). JCDA courts can use the JCDA Logo but please also include the CDA Logo and sponsoring court name and number.
3. **Regent AND Editor information-** Name and email address. This information must appear near the nameplate at the top of the newsletter, in a designated editor block, or at the end of the newsletter. Make the information easy to find. If the Regent and/or editor do not have email, then an address *and* phone number are required. If you prefer not to use your personal address, a PO Box or church address could be used. This is an either-or option but either option needs to have the required information. If you are both regent and editor, indicate on your letterhead by saying Regent/Editor.
4. **Court name, number, and location** (no court name or number on state entries—just which state the newsletter is for) must appear at the top of the first page of the newsletter.
5. **Three (3) SETS** of the last three published newsletters must be submitted. This is required so that each of the three national judges will have their own set to look at. Each set must also include the following:
   - Completed Cover Sheet signed by either the Regent or Newsletter Chairman
   - Score sheet for the appropriate entry (state entry has a separate scoring sheet). Only fill out the top three lines. If the same scoring sheet is used at the state contest, please be sure to submit a clean scoring sheet for the national entry.
6. A **signed letter** by either the State Regent or the State Newsletter Chairman. This is to verify that each submitted entry was their state's 1st place winner. If it is a State Court entry, a signed letter by the State Regent verifying that the entry submitted is the original newsletter distributed to the members and that nothing was altered or changed just for the contest. This is the same requirement for Territorial Court entries except the letter will be signed by the local court regent.
7. Please **staple or use binder clips** for each issue and use binder clips for each set of three issues. DO NOT use plastic sleeves or folders.
8. All Territorial and State Court newsletters are **submitted** directly to the National Newsletter Chairman**.** All Local, Campus and JCDA Court entries are submitted to the National Newsletter Chairman after being judged at the state level.

The **mailing address** for the National Newsletter Chairman is:

National Newsletter Chairman
Karin Dudash
1705 Tyler Street
Altus, OK 73521
dudashcda@gmail.com

9. **Important Legal Notice**: It can be easy to copy articles, stories, poems, recipes, emojis, clip art, etc. from the web or from emails that have circulated. Since many such items don't seem to have authors listed, the assumption often gets made that these items are free to use. However, a very large number of such items are copyright protected (yes, even free clip art) and it is illegal to use them without permission. It is best to assume all items are protected by copyright or trademark law and seek permission before using them. Even if you print something without realizing it is protected, you could be taken to court and end up paying a great deal of money. CDA insurance does NOT cover copyright infringement cases.

JUDGING CATEGORIES:

o LAYOUT (Appearance, neatness, effective use of white spaces, etc.)
o HEADLINES (Informative, eye catching, capture interest)
o LOCAL, STATE, and NATIONAL COVERAGE (News, projects, activities)
o JOURNALISTIC STYLING (Readability, spelling, grammar, objectivity)
o SPECIAL FEATURES (Art, humor, pictures, etc.)

CATEGORIES: (It is possible for a state to have a state winner for each Category and Division)

CATEGORY I: **Local** Courts with 100 or less members
CATEGORY II: **Local** Courts with 101 to 200 members
CATEGORY III: **Local** Courts with 201 or more members
CATEGORY IV: **State** Courts with 500 or less members
CATEGORY V: **State** Courts with 501 to 1,500 members
CATEGORY VI: **State** Courts with 1,501 or more members
CATEGORY VII: **Territorial** Courts (States without a State Court)
CATEGORY VIII: **Campus** Courts
CATEGORY IX: **JCDA** Courts

DIVISIONS:

DIVISION I: Courts publishing 1-4 issues per year
DIVISION II: Courts publishing 5 or more issues per year

MISSION STATEMENT:

Catholic Daughters of the Americas strives to embrace the principle of faith working through love in the promotion of justice, equality and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.

2025-2026 National Newsletter Contest Guidelines

Following are some suggestions to help the newsletter editor arrange a newsletter with content that is newsworthy and appealing and to prepare for the National Newsletter Contest. It is very important that the Regent give the Newsletter Contest Guidelines to the court newsletter editor as soon as possible. Follow the guidelines carefully and if you have any questions feel free to contact the national newsletter chair for clarification.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEWSLETTER CONTENTS

• Contact Information: Include the name of the Court Chaplain, District Deputy and email of all court officers.

• Meeting Place and Time: Include the time, date and place of your next meeting. This is a great recruitment tool and listing your next meeting as "Next Meeting 7:30 pm September 7 in the School Hall" may not be sufficient. What school? What address?

• Court activities: Put them in short articles with the byline (name) of the person that wrote the article under the headline. Short articles are more likely to be read than longer ones.

• Acknowledgement of members for thank you, sympathy, announcements, promotions, etc., makes a newsletter more personal. It also gives information to members that do not or cannot attend meetings.

• Other Information: Ask your Court Chaplain and District Deputy to write an article or paragraph each month for the newsletter.

• National and State News: Include the most current information from your National and State newsletters. Since these newsletters are usually sent quarterly, divide up the news you receive into two or three newsletters. There is plenty of information to work with. Be sure to list any National or State Event early so that travel plans can be arranged.

• Website Information: You are connected to a national organization and members need to know how and where they can find current information of national activities. More information is on the national website at www.catholicdaughters.org. List your State and Court websites also (if applicable). Even if you do not use a computer, there are others in the court and their family members who may look into these.

• Number the pages beginning with page two (2). It is not necessary to number the first page, but page order can get mixed up without page numbers.

• Fill in empty spaces with a related graphic, prayer, poem, announcements, clip art, etc.

• Be creative but most of all have fun. We all enjoy receiving Court newsletters.

• Contact information is very important. Catholic Daughters are not the only ones that read our newsletters. Many courts place their newsletters in the lobby of the Church or offices of their parish and make the newsletter a great recruiting tool. Include contact information by email and church address if possible. Because ……. without ample contact information, we may have just lost a new member. So, check your newsletters, and make sure you have the necessary contact information in it.