

# Iowa K of C Wheelchair Fund

Worthy State Deputy, Mike Gaspers and Community Chair, Jerry A. Wells , announce a renewed effort in our most recent charitable program to be launched by the Iowa Knights .

The Iowa Wheelchair Fund which was set up in the summer of 2006 for the purpose of raising funds to purchase wheelchairs for persons in need all over the globe is alive, but we need to change our focus in an effort to reach our goal.

The Iowa Knights of Columbus partnered with the National Wheelchair Foundation along with several other states in an effort to provide a wheelchair to those around the world who have no means of mobility other than to be carried wherever they go. Imagine yourself unable to walk on your own, having to pull yourself around on a shovel, or other device fashioned out of whatever was available. It is estimated that around the world, there are approximately 100 to 150 million people in need of a wheelchair, yet only about 1% have access to one .In the spirit of charity, the Knights of Columbus in Iowa are trying make a difference .

The Wheelchair Foundation was founded in 2000 by Kenneth Behring , former owner of the Seattle Seahawks and partnered in 2002 with the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus. I believe the state of California was the first to join the project and Iowa was probably the 12<sup>th</sup> state to join the program in July, 06. We immediately set a very lofty goal. Lofty yes, but attainable, absolutely!! If you remember, our goal was to raise funds to purchase a sea container of 280 wheelchairs for distribution to a developing country of our choice. For every \$75.00 raised, the foundation will match that amount, and a chair can be purchased for \$150.00. If we can raise \$21,000, the match of \$21,000 will allow us to purchase a full container or 280 chairs . The chairs are sturdy, easily repaired, and will have the KC logo on the back. Ask your District Deputy to show you the DVD He received at our December, 06 meeting for a better look at how the distribution works, and just how much a chair can make a difference in someone's life. I think you will come away with a better understanding of how important this project is and what a great change it could make in a person's life.

As of this writing, the Iowa Knights have raised funds enough for 26 wheelchairs, or a total of \$1961.00. As a good source of funds for this program consider the fish fry, steak fry, or other dinners held by your council as a possibility. Tell everyone in advance what the profits will go for and how this might tie in with the spirit of Lent . Also remember that charity begins at home. Have the DVD from the Wheelchair Foundation available for showing at such events, you may be surprised at the results.Remember that people give more freely to a program when they are fully informed as to what the proceeds are going toward. When the

civic clubs in your community are putting on a barbeque, or a chicken supper , or even a pancake supper, you can be sure that they are telling the general public where the funds are to be used. This makes one feel a part of the project. I firmly believe the way to make our goal possible is to enlist the help of everyone around us,,not only the Catholic men in our councils ,but those folks we celebrate Mass with, and those in the community that we work with everyday. Don't forget the civic clubs in your area, Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, and others who may be looking for a worthwhile charity to donate to. Remember to ask, and you will receive. If you don't ask, someone else will, and they may get the funds you could have gotten. This program is so important and certainly exemplifies charity, one of the principle upon which our order was founded. Please give this your attention, and be assured that Father Michael McGivney, our founder, would be proud to say " that's what I had in mind when we founded the Knights of Columbus". Keep his vision alive!!!!

The Donation form can be found on the web at [www.iowakofc.org](http://www.iowakofc.org), and sent to me at 856 Division St., Webster City, IA. 50595 Please make the check payable to **Iowa KofC Wheelchair Fund** and include your name or Council # to help me track all donations.

Fraternally, Jerry A. Wells  
Community /Wheelchair Fund Chairman.

\*\*Please note that if your council intends to submit a community program, the award application is due no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>.