

**State Deputy's State of the State Report  
2010 State Convention  
Des Moines, Iowa**

**Patrick O'Keefe  
State Deputy**

Worthy State Chaplain Fr. Brian Danner, Worthy Supreme Director David Bellendier, Worthy District Master Richard Makinster, Worthy Past State Deputies, my fellow State Officers, Directors and Chairmen, District Deputies, Delegates, Brother Knights and guests.

It is my pleasure and honor to welcome you to the 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Iowa State Knights of Columbus. This year's convention committee has been meeting for well over a year to put together this event. Many people have worked hard to make this a memorable weekend. I especially want to thank committee chairman Mark Moore and his wife Barb, along with Rick Garneau and his wife Heather. I am sure that you will agree with me that the convention committee has done a terrific job.

Fraternal Survey

The Iowa Knights have done an outstanding job of donating your time and money to benefit the Church, Community and Youth. Based on the 2008 Fraternal Survey completed by the Iowa councils you gave away \$568,631 to the Church, \$994,196 to the Community and \$278,730 to Youth. The total number of volunteer hours came to 994,730. Over the past eight years if you included the Church, Community, Youth monies and donated hours (at \$17.50 per hr) the average contribution per member is \$578. This is an outstanding figure and the Knights of Iowa should be proud of the accomplishment.

Disaster Relief

At this time last year we putting to use our Disaster Relief Fund as the state struggled to recover from floods and tornadoes. This year disaster has struck in Haiti and the Philippines. Again the Iowa Knight responded with money to help with relief efforts. Both countries received a thousand dollars from the Knights here in Iowa. An additional four thousand dollars was given out through the Disaster Relief Fund.

Membership

Without new members the Iowa Knights would slowly fade away. New members bring new life and enthusiasm to our order. It is for these reasons that membership is the responsibility of every Knight. State Membership Director Joe Ramirez and State Membership Chairman Pat Kelly have worked hard to continue to coordinate our membership efforts. At this time we have brought into the order a total of 827 new Knights for a total of 31,443 members in the state of Iowa.

## Retention

It is not enough for us to get new members though. It is just as important that we retain the members we have. New Knights are excited about joining our order. It is important that we not allow that excitement to fade. Our retention chairman, Marvin Menke, along with Roy Bills, has done a fine job of working to retain members. They have worked hard to contact members at risk of being suspended by their councils. Countless calls have been made to discover the status of members who have slipped away from their councils. Like membership, retention is the job of every Knight. How much better is it to reach out to the member who is not involved and make a connection with them before they get to the point of suspension? It is so important to have active calling trees to keep in touch with members. Email is a wonderful tool but it cannot replace the personal contact of a phone. We are a brotherhood and we need to take care of our brother Knights.

## New Council Development

Through the hard work of IPSD Mike Gaspers, five new councils have been added this year. I would like to welcome Fr. William Edmonds Council in Cedar Rapids, the St. Catherine of Sienna Council at Drake University, St Wenceslaus in Iowa City, Gilbert council in Gilbert, and the new council at the University of Northern Iowa. It is especially great to see the addition of two more college councils. Each new council takes us closer to our ultimate goal of a council in every parish.

## Round Tables

Building our Round Table program gives those in parishes without councils the opportunity to support the needs of their own parish community. At this time there are 76 Round Tables in the state. I would like to thank our Round Table Chairman John Steinkamp for his hard work. We still short of our quota of 110 though. I know that he would be glad to help establish new Round Tables in parishes where there is interest. Please contact John if you know of a possible location for a Round Table.

## Squires

The future of our order depends upon its continued growth. Developing Squires groups helps us to bring an interest in the Knights to young men. Barry Johnson and Martin Pasker are working to assist current Squires groups and to develop new ones. Currently we have eight Squires groups. In this world with so many negative choices for our youth, a Squires group can be just what is needed for our young men. Please consider starting a Squires group in your parish.

## Support Team

Ken Bauer, Ken Kafton, Jerry Rank, and Dan Werner along with Don Burger have done an excellent job of supporting the District Deputies and Grand Knights in their various parts of the state. They provide an important link in the chain of communication and training. I have really appreciated their help and support.

The newly formed Forms Team headed up by Mike Laake, Ed Pancrazio and Kevin McKinney has help to obtain a 100% reporting on many reports into Supreme. This year we received a check from Supreme in the amount of \$5,500 for getting nearly 100% of the Partnership Profile Reports completed at the council level. All of this money will go the Iowa Special Olympics.

Program Director Terry Herrman and the team of Program Chairmen have worked hard to develop programs related to church, youth, charity, and family that will be meaningful and exciting to the members of our councils and to their parishes and communities.

In addition to the Regional Directors, District Deputies, and Program personnel, support is also available from Training Chairman Rick Gareau, FS Chairman Steve Vonnahme, and Special Activities Director IPSD Michael Gaspers. They are there to answer questions and provide support for councils. PSD Jim Murphy and PSD Henry Fullick are available to help those councils who are in need of additional assistance. In other words, if your council has questions or concerns, if you are interested in new programming, or if yours is a council that needs special support, we have dedicated Knights ready and willing to help.

## Ethnic Outreach

Antonio Banuelos, Ken Kafton and Juan Partida have worked hard in their roles as ethnic outreach coordinators. In August the State Council helped sponsor a Hispanic congress which was held in Sioux City. Pat Kelly is currently working on starting a Vietnamese council in the Des Moines area.

## Ceremonials

PSD Jim Chambers has worked to coordinate Degree Teams. This is a very big job and I thank him for his hard work. Since July, there have been twenty-six 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degrees throughout the state of Iowa. This has taken a tremendous amount of work on Jim's part and on the part of the Degree Teams. They do an excellent job.

## Fourth Degree

The Fourth Degree continues to grow in the state of Iowa thanks to District Master Richard Makinster and IPDM Francis Schlueter. Friday's exemplification makes six in the past year. The Fourth Degree Assemblies throughout the state have continued to grow. Fourth Degree Knights serve as Honor Guards for funerals and other religious and community functions. I hope that those of you who are not currently Fourth Degree Knights will seriously consider joining this highest degree of our order.

### Youth Activities

Youth Director John Beckman has done an excellent job with the many youth activities available through the Iowa Knights. The Free Throw Contest, Substance Abuse Poster Contest, Essay Contest, Soccer Challenge, and Spelling Bees provide both physical and mental challenges for young people from as young as 8 to as old as 14. This year we had a young man in the Penalty Kick Soccer Challenge who was a winner in his age group at the national level! We also had a young lady be a co-winner of the 2010 International Free Throw Championship in thirteen year old division. A young lady received second place in the International Substance Abuse Poster Contest. I encourage all councils to participate in each of these youth activities. Our youth are our future.

### College Councils

Currently there are 5 college councils in the state. Last weekend I had the opportunity to attend the first Iowa College Conference. The men at Loras College demonstrated their leadership skills, putting on an informative conference. The future is bright for the young Knights in these schools.

### Church

The Knights of Columbus are the back bone of the Church. We donate countless hours of serve in the ministries of the Church and we work hard to support our clergy. From the Vocations and Catholic Education Funds we have disbursed funds for Vocation Grants, Diocesan Work, Discernment weekend and Retreats, monies to Bishops, Catholic Advertising, Newman Centers, Catholic Communications and Birthright. The state donated \$7,400 to the Knights of Columbus Christopher Fund. We contributed \$4,000 to each of the dioceses in Iowa to be used for vocations. We also gave each of the four Bishop's a check in the amount of \$2,000 to be used at their discretion. We must continue to take the lead to demonstrating our Christian values.

### Pro-Life/Birthright

Our efforts on the behalf of the unborn continue. The State and local councils financed billboards throughout Iowa for the support of Life. Iowa is one of a handful of states to have helped with the purchase of an ultrasound machine to help women be fully informed. These efforts are important ways to spread our message of the importance of every life.

## Communication

Whether it is at the local, state, or Supreme level, good communication is a must. I have had the opportunity to see council newsletters from around the state. I am really impressed with what I have seen. The Knight Lite, put together by Terry Herrman and the Knight Today, edited by Francis Schuelter, do an excellent job of getting information out to members around the state. Our Webmaster, Bill Swedenhjelm, has made our website a great source of information. The website will likely become more and more important in the future, as it gives us the opportunity to post information as it becomes available, and it will help us to save paper and postage.

## Football Frenzy

I would like to thank Richard Jacoby for his tremendous work on the Football Frenzy. Last year the Football Frenzy grossed \$60,500. \$8552 of that went back to the councils. Richard is the kind of guy who is always ready to help, and I am grateful to him that he stepped to the plate and ran this program. This program allows us to avoid increases in dues, it helps to fund our operating costs, and it makes possible additional contributions to the Foundation and other worthy causes.

## Charitable Works

It would be impossible to list all of the charitable works done by councils throughout Iowa. Some are big projects, such as the Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Drive (PID), which this year raised over \$588,000. Others are much smaller, things like window washing for a widow, food pantry drives, raking leaves for the disabled. All of these works, whether large or small are part of Fr. McGivney's vision for the Knights.

The Iowa Knights also continue to support of the Iowa Special Olympics. We have a long tradition of financial support for Special Olympics. However, just as important are the hours of volunteer support that Knights around the state give to these special athletes.

Other programs such as the Wheelchair Foundation, Pennies for Heaven in support of vocations, the Perpetual Memorial, and the Charitable Foundation allow the Iowa Knights to make a real difference in the lives of so many. The Iowa Knights of Columbus Charitable Foundation since its inception 3 years ago has distributed nearly \$19,000 to 25 individuals. There are always more individuals, groups, and communities who are in need. We know that we can't help everyone or solve every problem. But as Knights of Columbus we should be proud of the many ways that we help those who cannot help themselves.

It is hard to believe that my two years as State Deputy will come to a close in just two short months. As State Deputy there are always calls to be made, emails to answer, and paper work for Supreme. Sometimes it gets to be pretty overwhelming. But as State Deputy I have had the opportunity to attend council meetings, anniversaries, Degree ceremonies, to be there when new councils are formed, and to get help to those in need

after disasters. I have met Knights from across the state, the country, and even from around the world. Every day of my term I have been proud to represent you, the Iowa Knights of Columbus. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Vivat Jesus!

Patrick T. O'Keefe  
State Deputy