



# KNIGHTS COURIER



NE KofC Newsletter  
Fall 2025 Vol. 54 Issue 1

State Deputy  
Michael "Schaef" Schaeffer

## Support Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Week October 12-18, 2025

As the summer draws to a close we start to look ahead to the many activities we enjoy each fall. From football games to trips to the pumpkin patch, we all have activities that bring our families closer this time of year. One activity to consider adding to your annual list is the Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities.

Brother Knight and Governor Jim Pillen has been asked to sign a proclamation declaring the week of October 12-18, 2025, as "Support Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Week" in the state of Nebraska. To follow suit, the State Council has designated October 12th to 18th as the official dates for the campaign, but each Council is welcome to pick dates based on their availability. We are also fortunate to receive proclamations from many local mayors supporting our event this year.

The 2024 Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities was extremely successful, raising over \$175,000 to support the organizations across the state of Nebraska serving those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). These organizations vary from educational facilities such as Villa Marie and Madonna School to those helping adults with transitional services to learn the skills to make day-to-day life easier and be competitively employed such as MOSAIC,

Duet, the Southwest Area Training Services and many others.

Other organizations such as ARC help individuals and families locate and take advantage of the many services available in Nebraska to those who have IDD. Places like S.M.I.L.E. Inc., Buckboard Riding Academy and Camp Scott provide therapeutic services and the ability for individuals and families to experience life to its fullest potential and enjoy the recreation that many take for granted. Special Olympics Nebraska, as well as its local chapters, provide athletes with the opportunity to showcase their abilities and compete in local, regional, state and national competitions.

As you can see, a wide variety of programs and services receive support from the Intellectual Disabilities Foundation. None of this is possible without our Councils.

This year we have the goal of raising over \$200,000 through the Campaign for People with Intellectual Disabilities. In order for that to happen, we need all of our Councils to participate. This can be through the "traditional" campaign and distributing candy, by hosting a parish breakfast where the proceeds are donated to the Campaign, by partnering with local businesses to do a "kick back" program, and many other options.

Continued on page 12.

## Testimonial Dinner for IPSD Bob Wolf

This year, at the Mid-Year Meeting, we will have the pleasure of recognizing our Immediate Past State Deputy, Bob Wolf, and his wife, Chris, for their service to the Nebraska Knights of Columbus. The Testimonial Dinner for IPSD Bob Wolf and Chris will be held **Saturday, December 6, 2025**, at the Younes Conference Center - South.

This event is a great opportunity to express our thanks and gratitude to both Bob and Chris for all their time, effort and dedication, not only while serving as State Deputy of Nebraska, but their service as State Officers and part of the State Family throughout the years.



For the Testimonial Dinner, we will have an opportunity to reflect on Bob's and Chris' service, our friendships, and share our memories. Anyone interested in presenting/speaking during the Testimonial Dinner should reach out to me via email ([mwlowerykc@gmail.com](mailto:mwlowerykc@gmail.com)) so I can begin putting together a rough agenda. Time will be limited, so not everyone that reaches out to me will be able to speak that evening. The sooner you reach out to me, the better chance you will have.

More information on hotel rooms and meal costs will be made available as we get them. If you have any questions regarding the Testimonial Dinner, please feel free to contact me.

Registration for both the Mid-Year Meeting and Testimonial Dinner will be through Eventbrite and begin in mid-October and shut down around mid-November. You will be able

Continued on page 11.

## Embracing Unity Through Christ

Hello! It's been a great joy to begin serving as State Chaplain of the Knights, and I am grateful to Mike Schaeffer and the State Officers for their leadership and friendship.

As I began this role, I was blessed with two unique opportunities. First, in June, I went to New Haven with Mike for the State Deputy and Chaplain meeting. I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to go on pilgrimage to the churches where Blessed McGivney served, inspiring me to serve as he did and to support our leaders in this valuable mission.

Second, I attended the Supreme Convention in Washington D.C. in August. What inspired me most was the awesome vision of leadership that Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly and Supreme Chaplain Archbishop Lori presented to us. It's incredible to see the great work that the Knights are doing all throughout the world in charity, service, and faith.

Particularly, our leaders reflected on Pope Leo XIV's call for the Church to live in hope and unity. The pope himself sent a video message and blessing for us, which I encourage you to watch. As we continue our Jubilee Year of Hope, the Holy Spirit wants to inspire us with supernatural hope, based not upon the passing circumstances and evils in the world but upon the real

presence of the Kingdom of God.

Pope Leo stated at his inaugural Mass, "For our part, we want to be a small leaven of unity, communion and fraternity within the world. We want to say to the world, with humility and joy: Look to Christ! Come closer to him! Welcome his word that enlightens and consoles! Listen to his offer of love and become his one family: *in the one Christ, we are one.*"

As Fr. Rooney reflected in his last column, this unity comes first through thinking with the Church, particularly with our bishops. Second, this unity comes with each other, learning to overcome obstacles and to live in reconciliation. Finally, Christ will lead us in unity with all people in the world seeking truth and goodness.

I am particularly excited to see how greater Christian unity will come in the years ahead. May Christ lead us in unity, charity, and faith, as we receive all the Holy Spirit's gifts for our mission!

Vivat Jesus!

Fr. Bill Cremers  
State Chaplain,  
Archdiocese of Omaha



Be sure to follow the Nebraska Knights of Columbus on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and at [www.nebraskakofc.org](http://www.nebraskakofc.org)



## Diocesan Marshals Installed



Sir Knights,

The 4th Degree newly appointed District Marshal and Diocesan Marshals have been installed at the recent July State Leadership Seminar in Kearney. They will be entrusted with the responsibility of supporting their Assemblies and Exemplifications through this Fraternal Year.



Photo: Diocesan Marshals SKs Ken Prokop, Phil Tamsiea, Mitch O'Neill, Don Ferneding-FDM, State Chaplain Fr. Bill Cremers, Mark Borytsky-DM, Mike Schaeffer-SD, Rich Lowery-FDM, District Marshal Shawn Wilke, Mitchell Lowery and Todd Anderson. Not pictured: District Friar Fr. Joshua Brown and Diocesan Marshal SK Jim Vath.

The excitement of our assemblies moving forward in this Fraternal Year is phenomenal.

At our recent July Leadership Seminar in Kearney and thanks to our State Deputy Mike Schaeffer, the 4th Degree held a "Come and See" what the 4th Degree is all about lunch and presentation. We welcomed everyone to attend and filled the room with 147 attendees. The overall response from the attendees was appreciation, well done on content, and loved the new 4th Degree banner.

Our Assemblies are doing a great job promoting patriotism, and we will ensure they receive all the information and support they need.

Together we will make this Fraternal Year the best to date. God Bless,

Mark Borytsky, PSD,  
Nebraska District Master  
402.212.9612 cell, [mborytsky@cox.net](mailto:mborytsky@cox.net)





## Evangelizing Our Families and Communities

Worthy Brothers Knights,

We started off this Fraternal Year with a fantastic Summer Leadership Training Seminar in Kearney. The State Program and Growth teams did an excellent job providing you with the tools you need for your Council to succeed.

Our Supreme growth goal this year is 1,021. Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly charged us to invite every eligible Catholic man and his family to join the Knights. Catholic families are thirsting for Faith and Community and that's exactly what the Knights of Columbus provide. I've challenged our State Officers, Growth and Program Teams, District Deputies, Regional Growth Directors, and General Agents to empower our Councils to achieve their growth and program goals. I know that I can count on you because we're stronger together.

As we finish the first quarter of this fraternal year, we've held some regional meetings around the State. It is important that Council leaders attend these meetings, especially if they did not attend the July organizational meeting. There will be new information for the Grand Knights and Council members.

District Deputies are working with their Councils to ensure their forms have been submitted and their Safe Environment training is complete. Holding a program and growth event early can help you get off to a fast start.

Our delegates to the Supreme Convention in Washington DC were made up of Knights from across the Jurisdiction.

We met with brother Knights from around the globe and built friendships rooted in Catholic fraternity. The Supreme Knight spoke about how important the COR program is to our Councils and Parishes.

Both the Supreme Knight and Supreme Chaplain also talked about expanding our charitable outreach saying, "just as unity is essential to charity, charity deepens unity." We are doing that by holding our annual Coats for Kids drive in all three of our dioceses (Fremont, Beatrice & Scottsbluff). If your Council is not hosting a local Coats for Kids drive, please consider donating to our State drive.

Finally, Shelly and I want to thank all the Knights and your families who embody a remarkable legacy of faith in action, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering commitment to evangelizing both family and community through countless acts of service, prayer, fellowship, and protecting the right to life. We will continue to strengthen faith and family life with Christ at the center to serve as a beacon of hope and encouragement, inspiring others to live out the Gospel in both word and deed.

May God continue to bless you and your family. St. Matthew the Evangelist, pray for us.

Vivat Jesus,

Mike "Schaeff" Schaeffer  
State Deputy



## Legislative Corner

During this Jubilee of Hope, Pope Leo XIV has addressed numerous pilgrims around the world who have traveled to Rome. Many of them have come for specific mini-jubilees within the grand Jubilee, such as the Jubilee for Youth or the Jubilee of People with Disabilities. Another of those jubilees was the Jubilee of Governments, which had as its aim the bringing together of governmental leaders to discuss issues of peace and justice as they reflect on the Church's mission and teachings.

In his address to Jubilee of Government pilgrims, Pope Leo XIV drew on the wisdom of Catholic social teaching when he told attendees that "politics is the highest form of charity." Interesting, but what does this mean? In some sense, this statement almost seems controversial. After all, aren't there higher forms of charity, such as laying one's life down for another? Those are fair questions, so let's explore what Pope Leo was getting at.

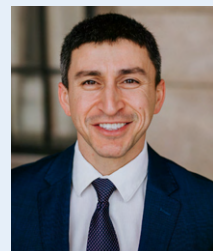
Far too often, the word "politics" is seen as a dirty word or something people don't want to get involved with. Politics is perceived as some sort of selfish enterprise for those seeking profit or gain for themselves. At best, sometimes

politics serves the community, but otherwise it is too often corrupt.

But in telling us that "politics is the highest form of charity," Pope Leo is reminding us of the dignity of politics. Politics is, in fact, a beautiful activity and pivotal to building up the common good. Properly understood, politics takes us out of ourselves into service of our community. It provides us an opportunity to demonstrate love for God, by properly ordering our communities toward Him, and to demonstrate our love for neighbor, by ensuring that our communities properly serve those in need. And, after all, aren't these the two great commandments that all the laws and prophets are built on?

So, next time you get frustrated with politics and want to give up on it, take a moment to reflect on this wisdom of the Holy Father and allow it to restore within your mind and heart a proper vision of politics.

Tom Venzor  
Executive Director, NE Catholic Conference



## The Pilgrim Icon of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

We are excited to announce the return of the Pilgrim Icon program, featuring the magnificent **Sacred Heart of Jesus**. Over the next two years, three of these beautiful icons will embark on a special journey, traveling throughout Nebraska to every Council.

This is a unique opportunity for our entire brotherhood to participate in a powerful act of faith and veneration. The icon is a reproduction of the revered 1767 masterpiece by Italian artist Pompeo Batoni, which is permanently housed at the Church of the Gesù in Rome. Each reproduction carries the Apostolic Blessing of Pope Francis, making it a truly blessed object for our communities.



Our goal is simple but profound: to promote the veneration of, and devotion to, the Sacred Heart.

When your Council is scheduled to receive an icon, you are asked to host a **Holy Hour of Veneration** or similar program. This is not just an event, but it is a time for solemn prayer and reflection, inviting all Brother Knights, their families, and the wider parish community to join together in devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Comprehensive booklets containing the details of the Holy Hour service will accompany each icon, providing the framework for a reverent and meaningful experience. Additionally, for more information and resources, please visit Supreme's Pilgrim Icon website at <https://www.kofc.org/en/what-we-do/faith-in-action-programs/faith/pilgrim-icon.html>.

Let us seize this opportunity to deepen our faith and share the love of Christ with our communities. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is a symbol of God's boundless love for us. By hosting these Holy Hours, we not only fulfill a core tenet of our Order's mission but also become instruments of that love, extending a personal invitation to others to encounter Christ.

We look forward to seeing the icons travel across our state and the spiritual blessings that will follow. Councils will be contacted regarding route and additional information will be posted on the State website.

## Join the Father McGivney Guild

Born Aug. 12, 1852

Died Aug. 14, 1890

Feast Day Aug. 13th



Questions?

Ask Rod Hofschulte  
402-510-7250 or  
rhofschulte@msn.com

The Guild promotes the cause for sainthood of Father McGivney who founded the Knights of Columbus in 1882 at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, CT. He was a man of the people. He was zealous of the people's welfare, and all the kindness of his priestly soul asserted itself more strongly in his unceasing efforts for the betterment of their condition ...Oh, Reverend Founder. . .that act alone which gave life to the Knights of Columbus has surely secured for thee everlasting joy and eternal peace.

The cause for his canonization was opened in December 1997. He was beautified on October 31, 2020, with the first miracle attributed to him. A second approved miracle is needed for him to be canonized as a saint of the Catholic Church.

Let us pray. Report favors to the Guild Director.

Please complete your contact information to become a member of the Fr Michael McGivney Guild.

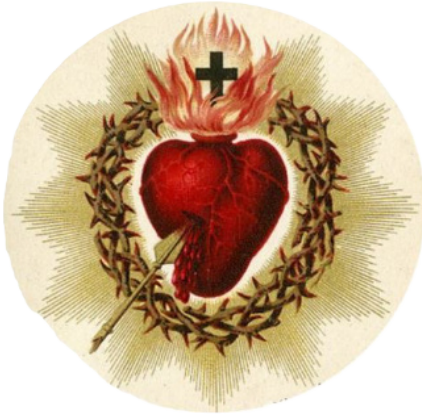
Title_____	First Name_____	Last name_____
Address_____		City_____ St_____ Zip_____
Email Address_____		Phone Number_____

To join the guild on-line go to: [www.FatherMcGivney.org](http://www.FatherMcGivney.org)

K of C Address: Father McGivney Guild, One Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510



## COR - A Place for Every Catholic Man to Grow



Christ, through his teaching, through his companionship, through his love, strengthened his brothers (his disciples and apostles) as they walked and talked together. Take a moment and imagine the conversations. We are blessed that some were recorded

for us, but can you even begin to imagine the private, intimate questions that the disciples and apostles asked Jesus? Conversations about life, about wives and children, about work, and about the future. Each conversation, each question growing more serious, more intimate, more intense as the days, weeks and years passed. Do you have friendships like this?

Today's world does not always provide the opportunities for men to build these intimate, long lasting friendships. Each of us is so busy with family, work, sports, and so many other things that having, or taking, time to build friendship is not available.

What if there was an hour once a week or once a month where all those obligations could be put aside and where men could become brothers, bonding and learning to love and support each other as well as building an eternal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ?

COR is that safe place, that tranquil, supportive, understanding place where men can open up about their cares and their fears, where men can learn together about our Catholic faith and how that faith can sustain each of us in our daily lives.

COR, Christ Centered Fellowship, provides a safe, healing, nurturing, place for men to build bonds of trust. Trust is essential for building bonds. Those bonds are essential to promote true sharing. Sharing one's deepest fears, thoughts and concerns builds friendships that can be counted on no matter the situation. This is the same type of trust that Jesus wants us to have in Him.

Fr. McGivney knew that this trust, this friendship, had to be developed and nurtured to grow, and he knew that the Knights of Columbus was a way to do that. By preserving and growing the Catholic faith, Fr. McGivney provided a way to strengthen men in their faith and through that make them better fathers.

Offer COR to the men of your parish, Knight or not. Give every Catholic man a place to grow in faith, fellowship and prayer. Through COR our Catholic faith can become the bedrock of a Christ centered society.

Use the resources at [Nebraskakofc.org](http://Nebraskakofc.org) and [KofC.org](http://KofC.org) to help you start and build your COR program. Contact Fr. Fulton or me if you have questions or need help.

Vivat Jesus!

Richard Lowery, PSD, FDM  
Evangelization and Faith Formation Director



Be sure to follow the Nebraska Knights of Columbus on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and at [www.nebraskakofc.org](http://www.nebraskakofc.org)



## Keep Christ in Christmas Program

The kickoff for Keep Christ in Christmas 2025 was at the July meeting in Kearney.

Suppliers are staying the same (Catholic Prayer Cards, LLC, for English cards and stocking stuffers, and Christ is Christmas, LLC for multicultural Christmas cards and promotional items).

Councils can enter orders online for Catholic Prayer Cards, LLC. Christ is Christmas orders need to be sent using the paper form found online or provided at the July meeting with checks payable to **Knights of Columbus to the Faith Director, Mark Main, 808 Karen Dr., Lincoln, NE 68522.**

See the State website for a complete list of items and the ordering process for each vendor.



Mark and Julie Main, Faith Directors



## Growth through Evangelization



At the summer Leadership Training Seminar, the Membership team noted the opportunity of new members based on the 2020 United States Census Demographic. The most recent census stated there are over 165,000 men 18 years of age or older in Nebraska who are Catholic.

There are a little less than 27,000 current Nebraska Knights of Columbus. The numbers would indicate there is an opportunity in Nebraska for 138,000 additional Knights!

Seems a bit unreal, doesn't it? So where are they? How can we connect with them?

Evangelization is the answer! Sometimes we view evangelization only in the context of those that are not Catholic, which is good. However, we should also evangelize with those that are Catholic. Caring conversations with Catholics to deepen their faith, increase their active practice, and encourage them to fully, and publicly, live their Catholic faith will build our parishes and the Order.

At the end of Mass, we are "sent forth." I encourage all brother Knights to be prepared and willing to engage with men inviting them to church, to the parish community, to the Order. There are many materials available in your parishes and from Supreme to assist you in these conversations. 'Fishers of Men' is a wonderful framework for how to engage men and plant the seed to grow future brothers.

Whether it's this week, this year, or this decade, planting a seed in a fertile area will undoubtedly yield fruit. Use the power of evangelization to cultivate the soil allowing that seed to take root and grow.

Nebraska achieved just below 70% of last year's growth

goal. Through continued promotion of current, and new programs, of the Knights, we will continue to attract more men to the organization.

Never overlook an opportunity to share the faith and brotherhood of the Knights of Columbus with the men of your community. Utilize e-membership often, fill the pool of potential brothers and then advance them with Charity Unity & Fraternity exemplification degrees held regularly.

As this publication enters the hands of our brother Knights, we will be ending the 1st quarter of the fraternal year. Council's and the State will be assessing how well recruiting momentum has sustained. Did we start fast and not take the summer off?

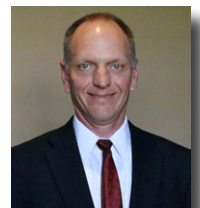
Use of e-membership continues to streamline the process for Councils and provides benefits to the State. Please continue to utilize this resource; place a link (<https://www.kofc.org/secure/en/join/join-the-knights.html>) in your parish bulletins, provide the QR code on all materials.



Lastly there are many incentives that the State utilizes in recognizing members and Council's efforts throughout the year. I will continue to recognize those that have achieved and advise of the next opportunity. The full list of incentives begins on page 9 of the Growth Book that was provided at the Leadership Training Seminar to each Council; the book can also be downloaded from the State website in the Membership section.

God bless you. Let's strengthen the Church through our membership and grow the Church by evangelizing our families and communities.

Rob Ostdiek, Membership Director  
rob.ostdiek1989@gmail.com



## State and Supreme Per Capita Due NOW

Wow, I don't ever remember it being this green in Nebraska this time of year! I am grateful for the moisture and am glad it is coming as rain and not snow.

Your State Per Capita dues were emailed out on July 1st to all Council Grand Knights and Financial Secretaries. Payments were due September 1st. Per Capita payments do not require a vote by the Council Membership to be paid. As of August 9th, I had received payments from 78 of 164 Councils. The State Officers have worked hard to create a balanced budget and depend on your Per Capita payments to maintain that budget. Don't hesitate to reach out via text, email, or phone if you have any questions.

Speaking of email, I strongly encourage all Councils and

individual members to set up an email address. We all know that postage rates keep going up, and one way the State Council, as well as your local Councils, can save money is by utilizing email. It is a fast and easy way to quickly get important information out to our members.

Thanks for all you do.

Vivat Jesus,

Don Hypse  
State Secretary  
402-369-0814  
[hypse2729@gmail.com](mailto:hypse2729@gmail.com)



## Faith, Fraternity, and Learning at the Leadership Training Seminar

On July 12-13, 2025, Council and District Leaders from across the state gathered at the annual Leadership Training Seminar to learn and share ideas with other leaders. Many of the Councils across Nebraska were represented at this meeting filled with information and comradery. Those in attendance not only got to spend time talking with old acquaintances but also meeting new friends and learning along with them.

During the training, the State Leadership set out the new goals and plans for the upcoming fraternal year. Councils were provided with informational packets including the new State Program Book and State Growth Book, as well as resources to aid Council leaders in running effective programs and recruitment events.

Our Supreme Guest, Sterling Roach, talked about the importance of growth, strong programs, and making all our Councils compliant with Safe Environment Training. A large emphasis was placed on the requirements for getting Council Leaders enrolled and certified with the Office of Youth Protection.

The new Keystone Projects were announced and discussed, focusing on different areas of programs in the Knights of Columbus. Councils were provided with resources for

running these programs as well as given information on how to effectively turn these programs and events into recruitment opportunities for their Councils. Like last year, Councils that participate in (and report) the Keystone Projects will receive a reduction in their Membership Goal for the 2025-2026 ICC Program.

For more information about the Keystone Projects and for resources from the Leadership Training Seminar visit the State website. Visit <https://nebraskakofc.org/resources/2025-summer-leadership-training-seminar.html> to view videos from the weekend and find important information passed out at the event.

Keep an eye out for all 3-Month Look-Ahead documents coming from the State as well. Planning ideas and reminders about programming and recruitment events will be made available through those documents.

If you have any questions about any of the topics presented at the Leadership Training Seminar, please don't hesitate to reach out to the State Program Director, State Membership Director, or one of the State Officers.

Mitchell Lowery  
State Warden



## Get the Word Out about the Knights' Good Works

Please think of us when your Council hosts an event or conducts a service project. Send us your event pictures and include a description and Council number so we can credit you. While we can't promise every one received will be posted, we do whatever we can.

We're on Facebook @NebraskaKofC, Instagram @kofc\_nebraska, and Twitter @kofc\_nebraska. If you haven't followed us yet, Do Not Be Afraid. The pictures can be sent to Mark Botytsky, Jr.: nekofcsocialmedia@gmail.com.

## McGivney Foundation Statewide Raffle

The McGivney Foundation has heard more Knights would like to participate in its mission of providing financial assistance to those organizations and individuals experiencing crisis. To facilitate this, all Knights will have this chance through a statewide raffle.

The raffle has three cash prizes:

- 1st prize \$1,000.00
- 2nd prize \$ 500.00
- 3rd prize \$ 100.00



Tickets are \$10 each, and there are 1,499 tickets. The tickets were distributed during the Summer Leadership Training meeting to the District Deputies, who will distribute them to their Councils.

The McGivney Foundation distribution policy allows for the distribution of up to half of the interest earned each fiscal

year to those organizations and individuals whose request for assistance are approved by the board. During 2024, the Foundation donated over \$5,000 to organizations and individuals requesting financial assistance.

Our goal is to increase the fund balance, so the interest earned increases as well. Please remember to continue your individual, Council and Assembly donations to grow your Foundation.

Please send the raffle ticket monies and stubs to: Dan Wells, PO Box 98, Elkhorn, NE 68022, postmarked by Nov. 15, 2025. The winners will be drawn and announced at the Winter Meeting in December 2025.

We appreciate your participation and efforts for the McGivney Foundation which helps those in need!

## Project Lori Spreads Christmas Joy in All NE Dioceses

We are excited to announce that “Project Lori” will continue under the Knights of Columbus Intellectual Disabilities Foundation of Nebraska. With the Blessing of our State Deputy, Mike and Shelly Schaeffer, we have moved this program under the Intellectual Disabilities Foundation to continue the legacy of Past State Deputy Matt and Connie Richardson, as well as Connie’s parents, Paul and Jan Hostert. Matt and Connie will be special advisors of Project Lori again this year, and we are thankful for all of their insight and passion.

A little history first. Each year around this time, Paul and Jan Hostert would start the Region 4 Christmas program. Lori, their daughter and Connie’s sister, had special needs and attended Region 4 Services where she lived in a group home in O’Neill. The first year she was there the Hostert’s bought every resident a jar of candy decorated as Santa. The staff told the family how much the residents loved the gift and how many residents did not receive any Christmas gifts because they had no family.

This moved the family, and the next year Jan requested a Christmas Wishlist from each resident. With no idea how the family would pay for such an extensive list, they prayed it would work out.



The lists they received taught the true meaning of Christmas. The wants were simple, but heartfelt – soap, Kleenex, a book, socks, maybe a shirt.

The extended Hostert family, the local Knights Council, friends, neighbors and soon people from other Nebraska communities heard about the effort and wanted to get involved. The blessed donations and gifts poured in – such that the family would spend hours of the night wrapping, sorting, and labeling presents. The excitement of watching residents open gifts taught everyone the true meaning of giving, and the Hosterts continued this amazing work for many years.

We have seen much of the same over the last two years of Project Lori – the smiles lighting up faces as the individuals

receive their gifts, the same simple requests, but things that mean so much.

Building upon the success of Project Lori’s past four years and after speaking with many of the individuals this project has served, as well as with your help, we are looking to continue its expansion again this year. We will again partner with organizations in each of the three Nebraska dioceses. The requests of these individuals and organizations are simple but very needed. Your generosity last year allowed us to reach Villa Marie in the Lincoln Diocese, Madonna Ability Alliance in the Omaha Archdiocese, Buckboard Therapeutic Riding Academy in the Grand Island Diocese, and Mosaic, which serves all three dioceses.

We are asking all Knights, Councils and families across Nebraska to express the true meaning of giving this Christmas. Please take a moment and consider a monetary gift to Project Lori, which will be used to purchase gifts for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The work of Project Lori happens in early December, so we would like to receive all donations by December 1st. This will allow distribution of gifts in time for Christmas.

If you can assist us in the effort of spreading the true joy of Christmas, please send your monetary donation payable to the Knights of Columbus Intellectual Disabilities Foundation of Nebraska. Please put “Project Lori” in the memo line and send donations to:

Project Lori  
1301 Thunderbird Blvd.  
Lincoln, NE 68512



Your donation will make a difference in the lives of so many this Christmas season. Thank you for all your support and may God Bless you and your families.

Sammi Lowery  
Intellectual Disabilities  
Foundation Director

Connie Richardson  
Wife of PSD Matt Richardson

## Vocations to Focus on Newman Centers



For the next two years, the State Officers have decided to move our work with the Newman Houses and Centers around Nebraska into the State Vocations program.

We recognize that the Newman Centers are a great resource to help young men and women discern a path to the Priesthood and Holy Life. As it has been in the past, the RSVP Program will be the Vocations featured program.

If your Council is interested in doing a Vocations event, please contact me, and I will try to help. If you are in an area that has a Newman Center, please let me know, and I will contact you about how to help them.

God Bless,

Bob Wolf, IPSD  
Vocations Director







## Join Our 2025 Coats for Kids Drive!

Brother Knights, as the chill of fall approaches, so does one of our most heartwarming initiatives: the Knights of Columbus Coats for Kids program for 2025! This is our chance to make a real difference in the lives of children across Nebraska, ensuring they stay warm this winter.

Since 2009, this incredible program has distributed over a million new winter coats throughout the United States and Canada. This year, the Nebraska State Council is continuing this great program and hoping to take our efforts even further!

### State-Wide Impact: Three State Council Coat Drives

In addition to any local Council drives, the State Council will host three Coats for Kids Drives – one in each of our dioceses – on Saturday, October 18th.

Mark your calendars and consider joining us at one of these vital locations:

- Archdiocese of Omaha: Phil Sheridan Council 1497 in Fremont
- Diocese of Lincoln: Beatrice Council 1723 in Beatrice
- Diocese of Grand Island: Fr. Timothy P. Molony Council 2681 in Scottsbluff

We welcome the participation and support of all Councils across Nebraska, no matter your size!

### Your Support Warms Lives: How to Donate

To make this year's program our most impactful yet, the State Officers and I are humbly asking for your help with donations to fund this crucial program. Whether your Council plans its own drive or not, every contribution makes a difference. Please consider donating to this GREAT cause so we can do the most good for our needy children. We'd appreciate donations by September 20, 2025, but please know that contributions made after this date will still be accepted and put to good use.

Please make checks payable to: **Nebraska State Council**

Mail them to:

Michael Howick, State Community Director,  
5104 North 140th Street, Omaha, NE 68164

### Get Involved: Purchasing Coats and Distributing Locally

For Councils looking to purchase coats directly, pre-packs of 12 coats in various sizes are available by visiting the web site [knightsgear.com](http://knightsgear.com). Please remember that shipping can take several weeks from your order date, and payment is best made by credit card. Smaller Councils, remember you can team up with other Councils in your district or region to purchase cases of coats together!

Once the coats are in hand, the opportunities to distribute them and connect with your community are endless! Try to work with organizations in your area to find the people who are most in need this winter. Think about partnering with:

- Your local parish or school
- Community centers
- Fire halls or police departments (ask first responders if they would be interested in helping with distribution)

### Beyond the Coat: Community and Membership

The Coats for Kids program offers far more than just warmth. It's a powerful way to strengthen your Council's connection with your parish and the broader community. It's a chance to proudly showcase the good works of the Knights of Columbus, inspiring others to support us and even join our ranks!

Consider setting up an information booth during coat distributions. It's an ideal membership opportunity for parents to learn more about the Knights of Columbus and the positive impact we have.

Let's make 2025 the year that every Council in Nebraska participates in this truly impactful program. Together, we can ensure no child in our great State goes cold this winter. Have questions or need more information? Please don't hesitate to reach out to Michael Howick at [michael.howick@gmail.com](mailto:michael.howick@gmail.com) or 402-714-3180.



## Inspiring Others by Sharing Your Projects and Events

Brothers,

As I write this, I am finishing up preparations for the Regional meetings this fall and beginning to make plans for the Mid-Year Meeting in December. In between those events our Councils will be doing a lot of incredible Council projects.

The Fall holds many great opportunities to be present in our communities, help families and witness to our Catholic Faith.

A lot of planning will go into these events and projects. The larger the project or event, the more resources and attention the Council will probably put into it, but even the smallest project by the smallest Council takes planning, preparation and attention.

As you make these plans, do not neglect the reporting of these projects.

After you've cleaned up, counted the profits and distributed the proceeds to your beneficiaries, don't forget to fill out the paperwork to report on the event or project. You can do this using the Supreme "Fraternal Programs Report Form," Form 10784, to report this to Supreme. Then, fill out the appropriate ICC report. And the remarkable thing is that you don't have to do the work twice – fill out the 10784 and have a copy sent back to your email address,

then attach that copy to the ICC report. Fill it out once, but submit it twice.

Reporting is not about earning awards and being recognized. Rather, it is about sharing the wonderful things that you are doing, and inspiring other Councils to make a difference in their parishes and communities, too.

Sure, the State Family loves to recognize Councils that do great things – but we don't encourage the reporting just so we can give you an award. We legitimately want to know what great things you are doing.

We want to then share those great programs so that other Councils around the state can follow your example. And, possibly, even have your program shared by Supreme so that it is shared all around the country and can make a difference all around the world.

So, remember to take the final 5-10 minutes of your Council's next event or project to fill out the reports. Your brother Knights around the state are waiting to hear what great things you are accomplishing.

God bless you,

Kevin Ost diek  
Program Director



## Nebraska Knights of Columbus State Golf Tournament Sunday September 28, 2025 Four Person Scramble



Checkin opens at 7:00 a.m. Shotgun start at 8:00 a.m.

Eagle Hills Golf Course, 501 Eagle Hills Drive, Papillion, NE 68133.

**\$90.00 per golfer with foursomes encouraged. Open to any Catholic, age 18 and older.**

**Men 65 and older shoot from seniors' tees; women shoot from red tees.**

Includes golf cart and steak dinner at the South Council Hall, 4323 Washington, Omaha, NE  
Cocktails 12:30 p.m. Ribeye dinner 1:00 p.m.

Not golfing? Join us for drinks and dinner for just \$20.00 per person.

**Make checks to: Knights of Columbus**

**Mail reservation and check to**

**Joe Bober**

**4070 I Street,**

**Omaha, NE 68107**

**Deadline Sept. 25, 2025**

**Questions? Call Joe 402-290-7954**

### Players in Foursome

Name	Address	Phone	Parish

### Dinner only


## Mid-Year State Meeting

The Mid-Year Meeting is Dec. 5 – 7, 2025, at Younes Convention Center in Kearney. It is a chance for District Deputies and the State Membership Team to gather with the State Officers and specific Directors and Chairmen to discuss the State's progress over the first half of the year.

District Deputies will have time to learn about program updates and ways to encourage and support their Councils with growth opportunities.

The Mid-Year Meeting gives District Deputies the opportunity to provide feedback from the Councils they

support to State Leadership which allows us to prepare for the second half of the Fraternal Year. All Councils are encouraged to work regularly with your District Deputy, so they are prepared to represent you at this important meeting.

Registration for this event is through Eventbrite. All questions about the registration process should be directed to the State Event Coordinators, Pat Rupp (prupp8@gmail.com or 402-850-1642) and Jesse Hines (jesse.hines86@gmail.com or 615-587-1694).

### Testimonial Dinner for IPSD Bob Wolf Continued from page 1.

to register by following this link (<https://KofCMidYear2025.eventbrite.com>) once the site is opened. Registration instructions will be sent out by State Executive Secretary Mike Vaughn prior to the opening of registration, most likely in early October.

All questions about registration for the Mid-Year Meeting or Testimonial Dinner should be directed to the State Event Coordinators listed above.

Mitchell Lowery, State Warden

## Silver Rose Continues through Nebraska Focusing Prayer



From August 11th to September 12th, the Silver Rose continues its travel across Nebraska, touching the lives of countless individuals and uniting us in prayer for the sanctity of life.

This annual pilgrimage of the Silver Rose passing among 32 different Councils is a powerful display of faith and fraternal unity. Each stop is a unique opportunity for brother Knights, families, and parishioners to gather for a rosary-centered prayer service, renewing our commitment to the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe and her intercession for a Culture of Life.

We extend our sincere gratitude to every Council that has hosted, or will host, the Silver Rose. Your assistance and organization ensured that this journey is a meaningful experience for all who participate. Special thanks also go to the many Brothers and their families who took the time to attend a service, offering their prayers for the dignity of every human life from conception to natural death.

After its time in Nebraska, the Silver Rose will continue its journey south, heading towards its ultimate destination at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

While the pilgrimage continues through Nebraska and beyond, we hope that the prayers offered and the spiritual graces received will continue to ripple throughout our communities.

This program serves as a powerful reminder of our core principles and our unwavering commitment to the Church and the pro-life cause. We look forward to the Silver Rose returning to Nebraska next year.





## Culture of Life Foundation

### Show Support for Mothers Who Choose Life

Brothers, as we enter the fall, life gets rather busy. Kids go back to school. Everyone is getting ready for winter, and we do enjoy the cooler weather and Husker Football. Through it all, we must make sure to keep in mind the mothers that we support who choose life for their babies.

This time of year is a great time to plan an event to continue supporting these families. Consider diaper/formula drives, hamburger feeds, pancake breakfasts or encourage your wives to host a tea party for life. All these activities are a great way to show your support and are a true blessing to be part of.

**2026 Pro Life Gala:** We are planning the 2026 Knights of Columbus Pro Life Gala. Currently, we are looking at dates and venues for the Gala. If you are interested in becoming part of the committee, please contact us because we are gathering a list of volunteers to assist. More information will be forthcoming soon, so stay tuned.

**One Rose One Life Prayer Cards:** We will need each District/Council to order One Rose One Life Prayer cards/envelopes by **October 15th**. DDs, when you are submitting your District numbers, please make sure we know how many cards your District needs in English and how many in Spanish, along with the number of Pro-Life envelopes you will need. Due to the increase in paper and printing costs, we will not reprint cards or envelopes after the initial order. Please make sure your requested amounts are as accurate as possible.

**One Rose One Life Prayer Card Art Contest:** Now is a good time to start thinking about hosting the One Rose One Life Art Contest for the 2027 prayer card. All requirements for this contest are in your Leadership Training Handbook. We hope to see an increase in entries for this year's contest.

Remember to pray the rosary daily, pray for the sanctity of life and pray for all priests and bishops.

God bless,

Mike and Mary Conrad  
COL Foundation Directors



## Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities

Continued from page 1.

If you have not already done so, please reach out to local businesses and schedule a time when the Knights can conduct their drive. Speak with your parish priest about setting up a weekend to hold the drive after Masses. We are always willing to help come up with ideas to run a Campaign! If the weekend of October 12-18 does not work for your Council to hold your Campaign, please feel free to pick another weekend that works for you locally.

As a reminder, the final report and ALL money collected are due to the Intellectual Disabilities Foundation Directors by January 31, 2026. All money that a Council collects during the drive MUST be submitted to the Foundation. Once the money and report are received, the Foundation will write a check(s) back to the organization(s) each Council identifies on their report for up to 50% of the collected funds.

The remaining 50% is used by the Foundation to provide support for special requests from Nebraska organizations. Any funds not requested by a Council by June 30, 2026, will be forfeited by the Council, becoming Foundations funds.

We are counting on each of you to make the 2025 Campaign

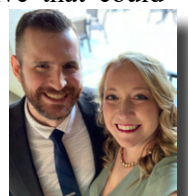
for People with Intellectual Disabilities a success.

Do not hesitate to include your families and friends. Growing up, some of my first memories of the Knights of Columbus were helping hand out Tootsie Rolls® with my dad and grandpa. Last year, our sons helped us hand out candy at local business and collected money after Masses at our local parish. Allowing your families to be part of the philanthropic experiences that we do as Knights creates memories and traditions that will live on for years to come. Remember the Knights of Columbus is for the whole family. You can also use your Campaign to promote the Knights of Columbus and the work we do to recruit new prospective members and their families.

If you have any questions, need any assistance with your campaign, or have an idea to conduct a drive that could benefit other Councils, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

God Bless you and all you do.

Stephen and Sammi Lowery  
Intellectual Disabilities Foundation Directors





The Knights of Columbus “Keep Christ in Christmas” Poster Contest promotes the true spirit of Christmas in homes, schools, parishes, and communities. Please be sure to use the newest entry form with five age/grade categories that was introduced a few years ago.

We have made the “Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest” a Keystone project for 2025 – 2026. The big news for this year is that we have realigned the poster contest with international guidelines. This will allow our students to create poster masterpieces during the Christmas Season rather than the Thanksgiving Season.

Grade divisions are Kindergarten, grades 1-2, grades 3-4, grades 5-6, and grades 7-8. First and second place winners are awarded for each category.

Your Council poster contest should be rolled out to your parish youth during the first week of December. Councils should collect the posters during the week before Christmas.

Posters judging starts with the local Council's Officers as soon as feasible after collection. The 1st and 2nd place posters from each category are chosen and submitted to your District Deputy.

The DDs will announce district judging, place and time. A representative from each Council (preferably the Grand Knight or Deputy Grand Knight) within the district should join the DD to identify the top two posters in each category from all received in that district. These district winners advance to your respective Regional Growth Director by January 10th.

With the help of their respective DDs, the Regional Growth Directors will select the top two entries from each category for their region. These need to be submitted to the State Youth Chairman by January 31st.

With the help of the Regional Growth Directors, the State Youth Chairman will advance the top posters from each category for international consideration. This will be done at a scheduled Regional Meeting held in February 2026.

Winning Posters must be submitted to Supreme by the State Youth Chairman by February 28th to be considered for an International Award.

## 2025 Youth Soccer Challenge



### State Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge

**Saturday, October 25, 2025, at the Schuyler Field House**

The Field House is an indoor facility connected to Schuyler Middle School. The address is 200 W. 10th St., Schuyler, NE 68661. Registration begins at 12:30 p.m. with shooting at 1:00 p.m. As a state, Nebraska offers this program to boys and girls ages 9 to 14 (based on their age on September 1st). This competition is open to all youth, no matter if they attend a Catholic school or not.

The contest will be divided into four levels of competition: Council, District, Regional, and State. State winners will be forwarded on to the Supreme office for consideration at the international level. In 2023 and 2024, Nebraska has had an international winner. The Youth Chairman is responsible for regional competition medals and state competition trophies. The Youth Chairman does not set district competition or regional dates. Those dates are set by Grand Knights and District Deputies.

Council competitions should be held between now and September 15th, with Districts taking place by the end of September.

Regional competitions should be scheduled for early October. All the information that you need to run your Council competition can be found in the Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge Kit. Kit and program guide sheets can be ordered at Officers Online. This kit can be ordered by your Grand Knight, Deputy Grand Knight, Council Youth Director, or your Council Knights of Columbus Soccer Challenge Chairman, and will be provided to your Council free of charge.

If your Council wants to hold a competition, call Gary Groteluschen, State Youth Chairman, at 402-750-8747, and if at all possible, I will bring the equipment to your competition. All you have to have available is a soccer goal. Last year we even made a goal out of baseball backstop.

### State Free Throw Contest

The Youth Free Throw contest is held after the first of the year with local contests. Generally, these are scheduled for January and February, with a Regional Competition, if necessary, in March 2026.

The State Competition is scheduled for Sat., April 11, 2026, at Grand Island Central Catholic schools in Grand Island.

Gary Groteluschen  
State Youth Chairman



News from the **NEIL PFEIFER AGENCY**

Knights of Columbus Insurance Serving Northeast Nebraska and West Central Iowa

*Fantastic!*

Agents of the Month



May  
Matt Harm  
Omaha



June  
Tim Nowak  
Omaha



July  
Craig Pfeifer  
Madison

**Were You Aware Fraternal Benefits Recently Increased?*****Member/Spouse Accidental Death Benefit***

The Knights of Columbus will pay a benefit upon the death of a member or his spouse, occurring within 90 days, as the result of injury sustained in a covered accident. Protection is on a 24-hour basis for accidents that may occur anywhere in the world during activities on or off the job, on business, pleasure, vacation, or at home, except for the exclusions. This benefit is given at no cost to all members (and their wives) residing in countries that have been designated as insurance territories by the Supreme Council.

***Benefits***

<i>Years of Continuous Membership</i>	<i>Non-Insured Member Benefit</i>	<i>Insured Member* Benefit</i>
Less than 5 years	\$1,500	\$3,000
5 years or more	\$2,500	\$5,000
Age 65+	\$1,500	\$1,500

The spouse benefit at all times corresponds to the member's benefit. Should the member predecease his wife, she shall continue to be covered thereafter at a fixed benefit of \$1,500. Should the spouse and the member die within 90 days from the same accident, however, the scheduled benefit will be paid.

***Beneficiaries***

The accidental death benefit will be paid to the next of kin in accordance with Section 71.2 of the Order's laws. The claim for this accidental death benefit must be received at the Supreme Office of the Knights of Columbus within three years of the date of death.

***Exclusions***

This accidental death benefit will not be paid if death results from: suicide, self-inflicted injury while sane or insane; sickness or disease (except bacterial infection resulting from accidental cut or wound); flying, except as a fare-paying passenger on a regularly scheduled airline; or injury from driving or riding in a speed or organized contest.

**Are You Considering a Rewarding Career?**

Are you a Catholic gentleman who has an entrepreneurial spirit, is hard-working, and desires helping his Brother Knights and their families secure their financial futures? If so, a career with the Knights offers many financial and intangible rewards.

To learn more, please call 402-640-1239, Ext. 1, and leave a message.

Let's explore if a career with the Knights might be a fit for you!

Neil Pfeifer, General Agent for Northwest Nebraska and West Central Iowa  
402.640.1239 ext. 1 | [neil.pfeifer@kofc.org](mailto:neil.pfeifer@kofc.org) | [www.neilpfeiferagencykofcins.com](http://www.neilpfeiferagencykofcins.com)



News from the **TONY SWANSON AGENCY**

Knights of Columbus Insurance Serving Southeast, Central and Western Nebraska

**Guard. Grow. Give.**

Membership in the Knights of Columbus has many privileges, none more valuable than the financial products available to our members and their families.

Blessed McGivney founded the Knights primarily to provide financial assistance to Catholic families due to the death or disability of a breadwinner. To that end, life insurance and disability policies were offered to our members from the beginning.

Over the years our product offerings have been expanded to include retirement annuities and extended care Insurance. During that time, we became one of the highest rated companies in the industry.

Initially, all of our products included guarantees and primarily focused on guarding our members' financial well-being in the case of a tragedy and providing them efficient ways to give to their heirs or charity.

However, we now have a family of mutual fund portfolios through Knights of Columbus Asset Advisors that are focused on the growth aspect of financial planning through market investing.

Although there are other Catholic organizations that provide these programs, the Knights of Columbus is now the only Catholic organization that offers all of these products under one roof making us the exclusive one-stop shop for comprehensive Catholic financial planning.

If you want to Guard your family, Grow your assets, and Give to loved ones and charities while also working with a company that aligns with your Catholic Faith and gives its profits to charity, please reach out to your Knights of Columbus Field Advisor today!

**Are You Looking for a Rewarding Career?**

A career with the Knights offers many financial and intangible rewards for the Catholic gentleman who has an entrepreneurial spirit, is hard-working, and desires helping his Brother Knights and their families secure their financial futures.

If you are curious, please call 800-733-8980, Ext. 5, and leave a message.

We would be happy to see if a career with the Knights might be a fit for you!

*Great Job!*  
Agents of the Month

May  
David St. Hillaire  
Lincoln



June  
Mike Scholz  
Lincoln



July  
David St. Hillaire  
Lincoln

Tony Swanson, General Agent for Southeast, Central and Western Nebraska  
402.463.2845 ext. 1 | [anthony.swanson@kofc.org](mailto:anthony.swanson@kofc.org) | [www.swansonagencykofcins.com](http://www.swansonagencykofcins.com)



Be sure to follow the Nebraska Knights of Columbus on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and at **[www.nebraskakofc.org](http://www.nebraskakofc.org)**

**Charity**

**Unity**

**Fraternity**

**Patriotism**



KNIGHTS OF  
COLUMBUS  
NEBRASKA  
STATE COUNCIL  
PO Box 98  
Elkhorn, NE 68022

**26,000+ MEMBERS STRONG!**



## KEY DATES

### Mandatory Council Dates

Councils that **have not** submitted Form 185\*#, 365\*# and/or Semiannual Audit (1295#) for period ending June 30 are late. Grand Knight and Financial Secretary are responsible for ensuring compliance.  
**Complete and Submit ASAP**

When event is completed: Form 10784 Fraternal Programs Report Form

September 15: District Deputy Report

October 10: Supreme Semiannual Per Capita, etc. Due

January 31: Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity

January 31: Special Olympics (Use 10784)

February 15: Semiannual Audit (1295\*)

### State Officers and Directors

January 10: Inputs for the February 2026 Courier Newsletter

### Meeting Dates

December 5-7: Mid-Year Meeting, Kearney, NE

\* Submit electronically using Member Management under Council Administration.

# A copy of this mandatory report shall be emailed (preferred) to:

mikevaughnkofc@gmail.com or mailed to: Mike Vaughn,  
Executive Secretary, 1609 Hedgeapple Rd., Plattsmouth, NE 68048.