

Grand Knight's Message

Worthy Brothers:

Autumn is an exciting time of the year. By now, members have returned from their summer vacations, kids are back in school, football season is upon us, and the Council is once again buzzing as social activities are slowly resuming.



During this fraternal year, I have **three simple asks** from each member:

Get involved. The Council needs help in so many areas. If you're not sure how to get involved, reach out to me directly. Also, attend the meetings. We generally meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meeting notices are provided via the Council ListServ. If you're not on the ListServ, let me know and I'll add you to it.

Recruit a new member. Members are the lifeblood of our Order. We need new members – particularly younger ones.

Let's work together to grow Rock Creek Council for future generations of Knights. Our membership quota this year is 15 new members – let's see if we can double that!

Pay your annual dues. Charity is the first pillar of our Order. Your annual dues of \$75 (*less than 25 cents per day*) finances our charitable giving. Last year, we donated over \$7,000 to community organizations. If you're not sure what you owe, or if you need help covering your dues, contact me or the Financial Secretary. We're here to help. Last, many members owe several years of dues – please get caught up.

In other news, the KayCee club remains busy with their work. Several capital improvement projects are being lined up, including re-painting of the exterior of the entire facility, landscaping improvements at the new entrance to Cantrell Hall, exterior lighting upgrades and partial replacement of the roof, just to name a few.

Thank you again for your on-going support and I look forward to another great year! See you around the Council.

Ivan Galic
Grand Knight

The next issue of The Chatter will be posted in mid-January. If you have a story idea, email Jim Tise at jim.tise@faa.gov, or text/call him at 202-507-1287.

Rock Creek Council Responds to “SOS” from Veterans in Need

An Army sergeant based at Ft. Belvoir in Virginia goes to bed hungry because his young children want seconds and there’s not enough food to go around.

A U.S. Army chaplain is in dire need for hundreds of “Care Packages” for his unit’s troops based in Poland.

Elderly retired veterans turn to a food bank in Northeast Washington, D.C., to supplement their food budgets.

“They’ve put their lives on the line and this is how we treat them?” said John Yori. “It’s shameful.”

Yori, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, is responding to the needs of these and other veterans through an organization he co-founded called United Soldiers and Sailors of America (USASOA). A non-profit organization, USASOA supports ill, injured, and wounded veterans through charitable contributions; protects the interests of veteran-owned businesses, their healthcare, families, and caregivers; and promotes their voices through advocacy and policy work on Capitol Hill.



USASOA’s most recent achievement was working with other military organizations to successfully lobby for the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, which aids veterans who were exposed to toxic burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Thanks to Deputy Grand Knight Alex Lieb, USASOA has developed a meaningful partnership with the Rock Creek Council.

Alex and his family have long been associated with the military. He joined the U.S. Air Force but was sidelined by a prior injury after four months and was given an honorable discharge in 1982. Alex’s father served with British Intelligence, his sister was a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy, his brother and sisters’ father was a Green Beret who was killed in action in South Vietnam, and his father-in-law was a doctor in the U.S. Navy who later became a Jesuit priest. Also, two brothers-in-law served in the Air Force and Army.

The Rock Creek USASOA team includes (from left) Mark McAndrews, DGK Alex Lieb, Amanda McAndrews and Pat Corkery.

The idea to support USASOA came as “an epiphany” to Alex five years ago when he realized that “he was not doing anything to help anyone and decided to remedy that void.” He

began organizing food drives to help fill the pantries for veterans’ groups such as USASOA. Since then he has pulled in new members Mark McAndrews, his wife, Amanda (Little Flower), and Pat Corkery (Holy Cross). Perhaps you’ve seen them standing at the entrance of the Council taking drop-off food donations, or staffing a donation table outside of the local Giant Foods.

“They’re always very enthusiastic,” said Alex.

Mark's father served in the U.S. Marine Corps and his uncle lost a leg in Vietnam. With that background, and his upbringing near the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Mark grew up "proud of the country and our vets and everything they do." When he heard about USASOA, "it sounded to me like a good idea. I wanted to be a part of something different, offer my time to a good cause and represent Catholics to the community. That's how I got started."

Collecting food at Giant grocery stores has been particularly successful. The team hands out flyers as customers enter the store. "Once they see what it's for, most of the people come out with food," said Mark. "We've been able to get some really big hauls." On at least one Saturday, they had to make two trips to deliver donations to the Knights, where they are stored until transported to USASOA's offices in Northeast Washington.



DGK Alex Lieb at a Rock Creek Council food drive for USASOA.

"You hate to think about people who have sacrificed so much but now they're going hungry," said Pat Corkery, who's been helping out Alex since joining the Knights last fall. Fortunately, "people in Bethesda are extremely generous," he added.

Pat's father was a Marine who served onboard the USS Quincy before his unit went ashore to fight the Japanese on Guadalcanal. Shortly after, the Quincy went down with most of its crew, guns still blazing, after being hit by the Japanese during the Battle of Sava Bay. Pat's father knew many of the sailors who died. "My dad didn't wear the hat very often," said Pat. "I found it in his closet after he passed away. I think he would really appreciate it."

When asked what he would communicate to his Brother Knights, Pat said, "It's a very small sacrifice on a Saturday considering our freedom lay their hands. They've done so much for us and they continue to do so much for us."

"It's been very rewarding," said Mark about his participation with USASOA. "I enjoy representing the Knights and I think there's potential there to do more."

For instance, the lounge will be donating proceeds from its Friday night music series to USASOA.

"If we had more Alexs, more Marks, more Amandas, more Patricks, we'd probably be out of business," commented John Yori. "We wouldn't need to have an organization because people like them are recognizing what's important in life." *Those who wish to make a tax deductible donation to USASOA may do so by accessing usaso.org and clicking on "Donate."*

A Warm Welcome to Wounded/Injured Warriors from Local Hospitals

The Rock Creek Council extended its hand once again to injured troops from local military hospitals on Friday, September 9. It's the latest in a continuing series of dinners we host to honor our troops. The Council provided its hall and drinks free of charge.

The latest event, co-sponsored by the Lido Civic Club, was arranged with Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a nonprofit charity that provides lifetime support for veterans of all generations and their families. Last year, the organization provided more than 163,000 rides to veterans attending medical appointments and assisted in filing over 151,000 claims for benefits. DAV's services are offered at no cost to all generations of veterans, their families and survivors.



Among the members of the military who attended the Friday night dinner were (from left) Jacques Cabrol, Amanda Seward and Ryan

This was the organization's second visit to the Knights, known as a DAV Night Out. The Council has hosted a total of 32 patients and 62 family members, caregivers and others over those two events.

For Amanda Seward, the dinner marked her "retirement" from the U.S. Army after 10 years. She recently completed therapy at Walter Reed and is now transitioning to civilian life after having served as a supply sergeant.

Amanda was on her way to a drill weekend on January 12, 2019 when she was involved in an accident that severely damaged her right leg. After enduring months of surgeries in an attempt to salvage the leg, she elected to amputate. Due to continued difficulty with walking, she returned to Walter Reed this past May to have more of her leg amputated.

"I'm back to walking alright," she says. "If I had known where the Knights were located I would have walked my butt down there," she added.

Amanda enjoyed the laid-back atmosphere of the dinner, especially compared to other events that are more formal and feature military brass. "It's really nice, just getting to see everybody a little more relaxed, versus compared to hustling around. Hey, just sit down and chill."

For Jacques Cabrol, the dinner is "just a reminder I'm still alive. There are still things to look forward to after Walter Reed. You don't eat the dining hall food every day."

Cabrol, a technical sergeant in the U.S. Air Force for 14 years, suffered severe head trauma from a biking accident while deployed with the U.S. Air Force in Abu Dhabi in the Middle East. He was unconscious for five days and suffered brain hemorrhages that lasted two weeks. The accident left him with blurred vision in his left eye. Through therapy at Walter Reed he's been learning how to live with it.

He, too, enjoyed the social aspect of the evening. "You talk about job opportunities with people who have already been there. It's just another way to connect with people. They can help you transition better," he said.

Ryan Kowalski has been at Walter Reed for 19 months. He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in March 2016 and as his condition worsened was transferred to the Bethesda facility. "The treatment is going as well as it can be expected," said Ryan, a hospital corpsman second class in the U.S. Navy.

DAV has been helping him fight for his benefits through the military bureaucracy as he prepares to transition to civilian life in December after 11 years in the Navy.

Ryan is familiar with the Knights and the good work the organization does; his father belongs to the council in Berwick, Pa. Dinners like the one arranged by DAV are important to Ryan. "It's one of the only ways I get any kind of social interaction," he explained. "I appreciate what you all do, going out of your way to provide a space for us to mingle and interact and meet other service members we might not otherwise meet," he added.

Justin Hart is one of the DAV employees who helped arrange the dinner with the Knights. An Army veteran, Justin understands the challenges faced by soldiers and sailors. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sgt. Hart was injured when his truck rolled over an anti-tank mine. It fractured his left fibula and left shrapnel in his lower back. DAV was there to help him and his wife during his recovery and transition out of the military. After he got out, Justin joined the DAV.



Justin Hart (right) and Danny Soto from DAV helped arrange the dinner with the Knights of Columbus.

The dinners the Rock Creek Council offers are "an important part of their healing process," explained Justin. "Their lifestyle is mostly wrapped around receiving treatment. Having a way to step away from that and just enjoy yourself is definitely very beneficial."

Justin says he hears regularly from the patients and local military hospital staff about how grateful and supportive they are of the Friday night dinners. "There's more to treatment than just physical," he said. "There's the mental side as well. It goes a long ways hand-in-hand with the healing process."

Justin praised the Knights and our hall. "The Knights have always been more than supportive. They go out of their way to meet the patients and the patients really value that," he added.

Rock Creek Council Supports Local Seminarian



The Rock Creek Council is sponsoring a seminarian at the Saint John Paul II Seminary in Washington, DC. The Council donated \$500 to Gregory Lawrence to pay for his tuition, books, and other living expenses.

“It’s really great to know that the people of God want to support their priests,” said Gregory. “It brings great comfort and great confidence ... that you’re already seeing the willingness to give and the willingness to be there for the shepherds of the future church.”

Gregory’s home parish is Immaculate Heart of Mary in Lexington Park, MD. He attended St. Mary’s Ryken High School in Leonardtown and Ave Maria University in Florida.

Gregory says that from a young age he found the priest to be an interesting figure at Mass. “There’s this mystery and wonder about him,” he explained. While at college Gregory “was really able to see day to day what the priest does. I was able to grow an attraction and, interiorly through prayers, I think the Lord opened my heart.”

Baseball Hall of Famer Makes His Pitch to Council Members



Tim Kurkjian, recent inductee into the Baseball Hall of Fame and local-boy-made-good, stopped by the Council on Sept. 21 to regale attendees with stories from his epic career as a broadcaster and writer.

The event was a fundraiser to fight ALS — Tim’s brother, Matt, has the condition — and raised \$2,300. Dozens of people attended, including half a dozen members of Catholic University’s baseball team, who showed up to honor former Cardinal shortstop Matt. They wore jerseys with “Kurkjian” on the back and the number 2, which was the number Matt wore in his college playing days.

Welcome New Members Sean and Patrick



Patrick Keane (left) and Sean Dwyer are the newest members of the Rock Creek Council. They joined the Council on September 20.

Sean had been a parishioner at Holy Redeemer in Kensington where he went through RCIA on the way to converting to Catholicism. He now resides in St. Jane de Chantal parish. He grew up New York before moving to the DC area 20 years ago. He has two children in high school, Shannon and Aidan.

Patrick belongs to Mother Seton Parish in Germantown, where he grew up and attended Northwest High School. He went to McDaniel College for undergraduate studies and is currently at George Washington University getting his PhD in organic chemistry.

The Council's membership target for the 2022-2023 is 15 new members. Through September, we are 20 percent towards meeting this target with Sean, Patrick, and one new transfer member.

GK Ivan Galic asks that members please encourage your eligible Catholic friends and family to join our Council. Joining is easy: visit our website, <https://www.kofc2797.org/>, click "Become a Knight," and fill out the form. Once the form is submitted, the new member will receive an invitation to attend a Council hosted New Member Exemplification ceremony.

If you have questions, please contact the Grand Knight.

How Long Has It Been Since You've Had a Family Insurance Review?

Blessed Michael McGivney certainly knew how important life insurance was to a family. But many members are not aware of how involved Fr. McGivney was in developing the Order's insurance program.



Steven Upton

According to Christopher Kauffman, the author of the centennial history of the Order, "Faith and Fraternalism, The History of the Knights of Columbus 1882-1982," one of Fr. McGivney's two main reasons for founding the Order was "the need to protect families during sickness and death." (pg. 17) Kauffman goes on to say that Fr. McGivney "spent his energy in promoting the insurance feature." (pg. 35)

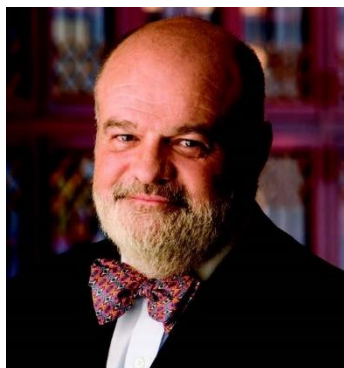
Originally, when the Order was founded, there was no such thing as an "associate member." Everyone was insured; that was one of those two primary reasons for joining. While the Order is now well known for its charitable works and strong advocacy for the most vulnerable, strengthening men in their faith and protecting them and their families with life insurance were twin catalysts in forming the Order. While young Catholic men still seek to strengthen their faith,

we know families still need protection from untimely death. This mission remains just as important today.

How proud Blessed Michael McGivney would be of what the Order has accomplished. His vision of an organization that can provide for the financial protection of Catholic families has succeeded to become one of the most successful — and highest rated — providers of life insurance in North America. How long has it been since you have had a family insurance review? We are Brother Knights serving Brother Knights and their families.

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Learn About Purpose-Driven Retirement Strategies



Rock Creek Council members are invited to attend this presentation by Joe Jordan, an award-winning author, financial thought leader and Brother Knight.

Joe will show you the keys to a prosperous retirement without losing sight of your faith and values. His message has helped boomers and seniors with successful retirement strategies that go beyond just ROI (return on investment) and deal with ROL (return on life).

In "Purpose Driven Retirement Strategies," Joe will discuss the two fundamental questions you face when planning for retirement: 1) How will you spend your time? 2) How are you going to pay for it?

The presentation will take place October 28 at 7:30 p.m. Click [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#) to register.