

Grand Knight's Message

Worthy Brothers:

This past fraternal year has been remarkable and I am pleased to report that Rock Creek Council No. 2797 is stronger than ever! I would like to highlight a few of our most notable achievements during this time frame:

1. We added over 20 new members; as such, Rock Creek is poised to earn **Star Council** - one of the most prestigious awards attainable.



2. We contributed over **\$6,000 in charitable donations** to worthwhile organizations - including \$1,600 raised through our Youth Chess Tournaments and \$1,000 raised via the "Tootsie Roll" program which supports persons with Intellectual Disabilities. As well, we collected thousands of dollars worth of food donations to help support veterans and others in need.

3. We reinstated the **Teacher of the Year** program and awarded \$1,250 to highly deserving teachers in our Parish schools (see Jim Tise's interviews with the winning teachers below).

4. We **awarded over \$5,000** in Catholic high school scholarships to member families via the Charles O'Hara Scholarship Program. Importantly, the scholarship fund is poised to support member needs for the long-term due to an improved investment strategy and active account management.

5. In partnership with the KayCee Club, we made **significant improvements to our Council facility** - with more to come.

These significant accomplishments were made possible because of YOU.

On behalf of the Council's leadership team, I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to each of you. I ask for your continued support and active participation, and I look forward to serving as your Grand Knight again for the 2022-2023 Fraternal Year.

Ivan Galic
Grand Knight

Montgomery County Softball Team Medals in Special Olympics

It took 12 years but Brother Kyle Bausch finally made it to the Olympics and he and his softball team didn't waste the opportunity, winning the bronze medal in Orlando, FL. After winning their first three games, his Montgomery County Team, which is sponsored by the Rock Creek Council, was placed in the top division where it competed against three other teams from around the country. A tough one-run loss to Wisconsin led to the bronze medal round, where Montgomery County beat a team from Texas 10-6.

"I worked with these guys a lot and being able to watch them compete on the biggest stage and having them succeed was very rewarding," said Kyle, an 11-year member of the Rock Creek Council.

Kyle, a graduate of St. Elizabeth's grade school and Gonzaga HS, got involved with SO through his best friend's little brother, who is special needs. "He's an amazing athlete and the greatest guy ever and that's how I started coaching Special Olympics." Kyle has coached in competitive leagues before joining SO. While winning is fun, the sheer happiness of competition exemplified by his players is better. "We get new team members every year who've never played, but they're good athletes," explained Kyle. "Watching them get their first hit or catch their first fly ball is the most rewarding thing. When they succeed the joy for them is insurmountable."

Through fundraisers he and his fellow coaches helped raise \$50,000 to transport the softball team to Orlando. He estimates that \$15,000 of that sum came from three fundraisers he held at the Council, which provided the space and all refreshments and food for free. Using the Council's connection with Riddell Sports through Brother Fuzzy Meyers, the Knights also provided his team with hundreds of dollars worth of jerseys and socks.

Kyle started coaching softball, but when the SO basketball coach had to quit, he took over that team. And since golf is his strongest sport, Kyle began coaching that as well. He puts in hundreds of hours of his time volunteering with SO. "The camaraderie, seeing them having fun with each other all the time, is a good thing," he said. "I've made lifelong friendships out of Special Olympics sports."



This Maryland SO athlete sports the jersey that the Rock Creek Council contributed to the team.



The bronze-medal-winning Maryland SO Softball Team. Kyle Bausch is back row second from left.

Senior's Report

Rock Creek Seniors will hold a summer picnic on Wednesday, August 10 at 3 p.m. at the Council. The cost is \$10. Attendees are asked to bring a dish. For reservations call Helen Brennan at 301 530-5120.

Rock Creek Council Election Results

The following are your elected Council Officers for the 2022-2023 Fraternal Year:

Grand Knight: Ivan Galic; Deputy Grand Knight: Alex Lieb; Chancellor: Kevin August; Warden: Jimmy Norris; Recorder: Matt Trebon; Treasurer: Charles Gormly; Advocate: Kevin Kittka; Inside Guard: Mike Naas; Outside Guard: John Titus; Trustee 3-yr: Jon Schneider; Trustee 2-yr: Mike Houlihan; Trustee 1-yr: Joe Doniger; Delegate: Ivan Galic; Delegate: Mike Houlihan; Alternate: Mike Horan; Alternate: Joe Doniger.

Congrats to all members who were elected.

Welcome to the Rock Creek Council

The KofC continued its march to win Star Council status when it exemplified four new members on June 14. They are Kevin Driscoll (St. Jane de Chantal), Kaveh Samimi (Our Lady of Lourdes), Paras Sanghvi (Our Lady of Lourdes), and Chris Worch (St. Elizabeth). Welcome aboard, gentlemen! GK Ivan Galic thanked the members of the exemplification team — DD Dave Czarnecki; PGKs Mike Houlihan, Neil Dorian, Kittka and Chris Ryan; FBA Steve Upton; Father Hughes; and, DGK Alex Lieb — for their help with the ceremony.

KofC Announces its Teachers of the Year

The Rock Creek Council bestowed its annual "Teacher of the Year" awards on four very worthy educators: Patty Holt, Holy Cross; Nancy Ramsayer, St. Jane de Chantal; Deirdre Walsh, Our Lady of Lourdes; and Margie Davin, Holy Redeemer. Ms. Ramsayer was selected as the overall winner. She will receive a check in the amount of \$500. Each runner-up will receive a check for \$250. Brothers Ivan Galic, Terence Ryan, Charles Gormly, and Mike Horan comprised the committee that decided the winners.

"This is one of the best parts of being Grand Knight," said Ivan. "It's inspiring to read about these teachers and the efforts they make to educate our children. Congratulations to the winners and all of the nominees."

Learn more about our excellent teachers below.

Patricia Holt teaches math, social studies, reading, and spelling to 4th graders, as well as social studies and religion to the 5th grade at Holy Cross. A teacher for 18 years, Patricia grew up in Bowie, Maryland, and attended St. Pius X Elementary School, Class of '80, and Elizabeth Seton High School.

When and why did you decide to become a teacher?

My older sister teaches at Holy Redeemer in College Park. When we were in college I saw how much she enjoyed her classes, then how happy she was and how much she loved teaching. Although my undergraduate is not in education, the last class I took before graduating was an elective. I chose to take Children's Literature (because I love to read.) My sister told me two things about that class. One, it was a very good class. Two, I'm going to have to work very hard on it. She was not kidding! However, as I exited the class on my very last night as an undergraduate, a thought hit me like a bolt of lightning and that was, "You just got the wrong degree!" Shortly after graduating, I began to search for certificates in education, and subsequently earned my teaching certification from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland.



Patricia with two of her students.

What was your reaction when you heard you'd been named a teacher of the year?

My reaction was one of gratitude. Then I immediately wanted to share the news with my 90-year-old parents. They were ecstatic! It means so much to me because it means so much to them. They are the reason I am a devout Catholic and why I chose to teach in a Catholic School. Not only can I pray with my students, we can pray the rosary as a class. And my parents are the people who taught me that great devotion to our Blessed Mother. I am so happy to share it with my students.

Is there one moment/memory/instance with a student that made you think, "This is why I became a teacher."

I have had several moments. One former student (who is now a freshman in college) wrote a note to me telling me that out of all the teachers she had up until that point, "I understand you the best." I still have that note. Another time was when a student blurted out after learning a particularly challenging math concept, "Oh, I get it now!" The last one I will share is the time a student whose father was quite sick with cancer said on a Friday afternoon at 2:45 p.m., "I can't believe I don't want to go home this weekend." The father of this student ended up passing away on Sunday. The student was out on Monday, but on Tuesday his mom emailed to say that he really wanted to be in school. He walked into our classroom and his classmates and I followed his lead for the day. Nothing was said, we did nothing out of the ordinary. I believe we provided a safe and happy environment for him, and that is part of the reason why he wanted to return to school even when his two siblings chose to stay home for the week.

Do you have a teaching philosophy?

My teaching philosophy is to make sure that every student who walks into my classroom knows that they are safe and loved. I want them to feel happy because they will spend so much time in their 4th grade classroom and we will spend the next 10 months together. I want them to know they are in a judgment-free zone with a supportive learning environment. In these last few years we have had many students of other faiths join our school community. I want those students to know that we welcome them, and do all I can to teach them about our rich Catholic faith. Finally, I keep in mind that each of my students is a precious child in the eyes of God and their parents, and equally important that Jesus sees me through the eyes of all of my students.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

I love my job! I am so grateful to God for giving me the calling to be a Catholic school teacher. He is so good!

Nancy Ramsayer teaches STEM to grades Pre-K through 8th at St. Jane de Chantal. A teacher for 14 years, she was born in Bethesda and attended Westbrook Elementary, Westland Middle School, and Bethesda Chevy Chase HS.

When and why did you decide to become a teacher?

I first became a Technology Teacher in 2008 upon returning to work once my three older children were all in school. I was eager to take my tech skills from many years with Oracle Corporation and blend them with my love of the students.

What was your reaction when you heard you'd been named a teacher of the year?

I was shocked and humbled by the notion, truthfully. This year has been one of great transition for me, much like being a first-year teacher, but I was continually motivated by the positive response of the students to build and learn and grow with me.

Is there one moment/memory/instance with a student that made you think, "This is why I became a teacher."

Honestly, this year has been transformative for me. Pivoting from Technology to STEM was daunting. However, I quickly realized how most of the students seemed to embrace the change and the challenges. I also learned it's okay for me not to have all the answers. We grow together, which empowers some and excites others. My classroom is bustling and messy but the participation and the students' reactions are priceless!

Do you have a teaching philosophy?

Of course, I work hard to try and facilitate engaging content that students will look forward to. I am just as motivated to get to know the students and build trust with them to help them grow as Godly young people. Having any impact there is very important to me. I want them to feel comfortable with me and to know that even when the boundaries are pushed I adore them nonetheless.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

I am just truly grateful for the opportunity to be in a school such as St. Jane de Chantal. I feel blessed to work with amazing teachers who truly care about each and every student and to have the support and guidance of our wonderful principal, Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton. Working with the staff and students here is a bit of a "safe haven" of sorts in a time when things are less than predictable. I appreciate that.

Margie Davin teaches 6th, 7th, and 8th grade English (writing, vocab, grammar) at Holy Redeemer. Margie, who has been teaching for three years, grew up in Massachusetts and went through the public school system. She is a convert to the Catholic faith and just celebrated her 25th anniversary this Easter. Her husband attended Holy Redeemer and Georgetown Prep, and her children attended Holy Redeemer and Georgetown Prep and Georgetown Visitation.

When and why did you decide to become a teacher?

I consider this vocation my "second act" in life. Soon after receiving my master's in international communication and working for the World Bank, my husband and I married and began our family. I was a stay-at-home mom with our four children for 22 years. During that time, I held several volunteer leadership roles that put me in front of a "class" or group of people, including pre-school Bible teacher; CCD teacher; team leader and group leader, section director, and guest speaker for my Regnum Christi women's section; and WW leader. I had also done some content editing and writing. With these experiences, the transition to "teacher" felt very natural for me. Three years ago, there was a need for a middle school English teacher at our parish elementary school, Holy Redeemer, where our children attended Pre-k through 8th grade. Simultaneously, with our children in college, my husband and I decided it was time for me to go back to work. I prayed that I would be able to find work where I could use my God-given gifts and talents in service to the Church and help support my husband's efforts to put our children through college. I am so grateful to Joan Hosmer who took a chance on me when she was struggling to fill the role of middle school English teacher. I was hired on a Saturday and school began the following Tuesday, so I had to learn quickly! With prayer and the support of my principal and colleagues, I was able to adjust and quickly fell in love with the role.



Nancy Ramsayer with her family.



Margie Darvin with her students.

What was your reaction when you heard you'd been named a teacher of the year?

I had to read the email twice before I understood that I had not only been nominated by my principal, Tommy Corrigan, but had been selected as a winner for an award. Teacher of the Year recognition was not even on my radar screen so when the message sank in, I began to tear up. I was shocked, surprised, and humbled to be in the category with so many award-winning teachers. Daily, I see teachers pour themselves out for their students so I think this award could go to any of my colleagues who each in their own way are deserving of recognition. It's very humbling.

Is there one moment/memory/instance with a student that made you think, "This is why I became a teacher."

When I first began teaching, I had assigned students in 7th grade a personal narrative. One student clearly struggled with punctuation and understanding how to construct a complete sentence. Tears spilled down her cheeks when I met privately with her during class to go over her work. She was clearly overwhelmed by all I was explaining, so I offered to meet with her during recess to re-write her paper together so that I could demonstrate and teach her one-on-one. She was so grateful that a year later, as she was nearing the end of her time here at HR, she typed me a heart-felt, one-page letter thanking me for my help and the confidence she had gained as a writer over those two years. Her letter begins, "Thank you so much for everything. You have been a huge part of the two years you have taught me." I thought, "Wow, I'm making a difference." I keep that letter tucked in my drawer as a reminder that this is why I became a teacher — to make a difference.

Do you have a teaching philosophy?

Encourage, encourage, encourage. I try to meet each student where they are, build their confidence, and remember that they have been entrusted to me by their parents who love them and desire the best for them. When my patience is running thin, as sometimes happens as a teacher, I remind myself to see each student through their parents' and God's eyes.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Though teaching takes time, is challenging, and tiring, it never feels like "work." I delight in seeing the kids every day and am interested to hear about what's going on in their lives and support them in any way that I can. I also find it a joy to support those who desire to go above and beyond, which is why I jumped at the chance to launch our first writing contest in conjunction with the Writer's Center in Bethesda when the idea was presented to me, and to take over the newspaper club. It's so fun to see kids having fun "working" and "learning" outside of the classroom and growing in confidence as a result.

Deirdre Walsh has been teaching preschool at Our Lady of Lourdes for five years. She attended Blessed Sacrament, and her six youngest children attended Our Lady of Lourdes, during which she would often volunteer during the school day.

When and why did you decide to become a teacher?

When the youngest was in third grade I began substituting, and eventually started working here full time.

What was your reaction when you heard you'd been named a teacher of the year?

I was shocked when I heard that I had been named teacher of the year and also very flattered, as I have seen so many wonderful teachers who have made such positive and lasting impressions on my own children win the award. It was really unbelievable because this year I work with a group of exceptionally talented and dedicated educators. So I am truly grateful to Mr. Long for having nominated me and to the Knights for the award.



Deirdre Walsh

Is there one moment/memory/instance with a student that made you think, "This is why I became a teacher."

I work with the youngest children in our school and not a day goes by that I'm not grateful for their innocence and joy. Teaching them their faith is especially rewarding because they have the purest of hearts and they ask some of the funniest, yet insightful questions! In the beginning of the school year I was talking to the children about God and how He is always with us. Sometimes we don't see him, but He is there for us to talk to Him and watching over us, and that sometimes He talks to us. Soon afterwards our Principal, Mr. Long, came over the PA system and one girl looked surprised and asked, "Is that God?" Sometimes when we pray they look at the crucifix and they ask to pray for Jesus because he's hurt on the cross. It's these little reminders of their innocence that make teaching this age group so rewarding!

Do you have a teaching philosophy?

My teaching philosophy for our youngest students is let them be children. I learn from their questions as much as they learn from my answers.

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Thank you again for the award. I am truly grateful that you and the Knights support our local Catholic schools. God bless!

Farewell from Departing District Deputy Dave Czarnecki

Congratulations gentlemen, we made it through another Fraternal Year. Congratulations to the newly elected or about to be newly elected Council Officers. Most importantly, on behalf of the Worthy State Deputy Vince Grauso, the deepest appreciation to the outgoing Council Leadership for a very successful year. Your hard work has been much appreciated and recognized. It has been another exceptional year; again our own State Council is number one in the nation for FIA programs reported.

During May 13 thru the 15, the State Council conducted the 124th Annual Maryland State Convention in Ocean City, MD. Over 700 Brothers and guests attended. A number of awards were distributed to Councils in our own District 18. Congratulations to Rock Creek (#2797) for receiving 2nd place Membership Award in Division A; St. Joseph Manyanet Council (#5567) for receiving 1st place for the Box of Joy Program, donating 699 Boxes (more than the 2nd and 3rd place finishers – combined).

For specific Faith-in-Action Programs, Rock Creek Council received 3rd for Community Activities in Division A. Finally, Rock Creek Council, St. Joseph Manyanet Council, and Msgr. Thomas Wells Council (13008) were among the 89 Councils receiving awards for participating in each Maryland State Faith-in-Action Program category for each reporting period for the fraternal year 2021-2022.

Some State Council business was also conducted. Congratulations to our new State Warden, Tom Gruel, current State Lecturer and State Patriotic Chairman, elected on the first ballot. Also of note: Your State Delegates approved amendments to the State By-Laws that allows the Grand Knight of each subordinate Council in good standing be seated with a voice and vote at the Annual Meeting of the State Council. Each subordinate council shall elect a Past Grand Knight to serve as Delegate, and two 3rd Degree members as Alternate Delegates, during the council elections conducted May 1 to June 15. The Grand Knight or Financial Secretary shall submit an email to the State Secretary listing the council representatives no later than September 1. A 20% increase in Per Capita Tax to fund the operating cost of the Maryland State Council was also approved.

Finally, again congratulations to the newly elected officers and best of luck in the new Fraternal Year. I wish to extend my personal appreciation to Worthy District Warden Michael Watson for his continued assistance and support throughout the last two Fraternal Years and to those outgoing Grand Knights; GK Gavin Pereira (St Joseph Manyanet), GK Antonio Dubravcic (Mater Dei #9774), GK Richard Earenfight (St. Elizabeth #12796) and GK Pedro David Matias (Msgr. Thomas Wells for their awesome participation and contributions to their own Councils, the State Council and Order).

Greetings from New District Deputy Michael Watson

It is my great honor and privilege to serve as your District Deputy #18 and represent the MD State Council in the upcoming two fraternal years for your local Council. Let me introduce myself, I am a current member and PGK of Mater Dei Council #9774 in Rockville and a member of Sullivan Brothers Assembly #2681 in Derwood. My wife Karen and I live in Rockville with our three children – two are at University of Maryland and one at Richard Montgomery High School. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you over the past two years as the District Warden and I look forward to meeting many more of you.

This year at the GK Leadership Seminar in Solomons Island we had representation from all of our Councils in the District! This was a great opportunity to meet and listen to our new State Council officers including our new State Deputy Chris Powers. We should all look forward to a renewed call to action for our faith and our parishes under Chris's leadership. Chris's motto for his term is "Cry the Gospel with Your Life". One of the focuses for the new SD is to get Knight representation at all of the Parishes in MD as we are called to support our Priests, Parishes and Communities. Currently there are 328 parishes in MD and Knights only support 145 of them. In addition, two new Supreme initiatives will be rolled out: The National Eucharistic Revival that each Diocese in Maryland has rolled out to every parish with program materials and support from the Knights and the ASAP (Aid and Support After Pregnancy) to strengthen our commitment to Life activities at all stages of life. To help support the ASAP program every Council in Maryland will be directly linked to a local pregnancy center to provide direct support and aid to the center that goes beyond financial support to actively participating with the pregnancy centers. Watch out for these programs in your Council and Parish.

Finally, during our sessions at the Leadership Meeting a key statistic was highlighted that really brought home to me the need for all Councils to actively recruit and grow their ranks. Every day we lose between 140-180 Knights to the Lord across the Order, that is every single day. Hopefully you see the great need to reach out and invite every Catholic gentleman to our Order so it can thrive into the next century according to Blessed Michael McGivneys' vision. If you have not seen the Supreme Knight's video about our support to the Ukraine war and one story about a family the Order help relocate to the US, please do as the mother of that family stated very simply what Knights are about – "Good men doing great things in a Godly manner". This is what the world needs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our worthy outgoing District Deputy Dave Czarnecki for his hard work and dedication over the past two years. Dave's unflagging support and guidance to me along with his selfless commitment to the growth and success of each council in District 18 is greatly appreciated! Thank you Dave for all your hard work and support!

All the best and Vivat Jesus!

KofC is Going to the Dogs

At least for one important night, it did. On May 5, the Rock Creek Council hosted the Hero Dogs organization, a Maryland-based non-profit which “improves [the] quality of life for our nation’s heroes by raising, training, and placing service dogs and other highly skilled canines, free of charge with lifetime support of the partnerships.”

The organization has 150 volunteers, including Kerry August, mother of Brother Kevin August. Several years ago Kerry and her friends got involved in the organization, as well as with the Yellow Ribbon fund and Patriot Point. She helped organize the KofC event, raising around \$2,500 that night, and nearly \$10,000 over the years.

The event featured two therapy dogs, Norm and Fiona. They demonstrated how they could open a door, alert their owner if a phone rings, and turn on lights, as well as provide companionship to help their disabled owners.

The Council provided its hall and refreshments free of charge. “The Council and Mike Horan were so accommodating in every way possible,” said Kerry. “We cannot thank you all enough for supporting such a great cause.”



Sabrina Zambito (left) and Nikki Charles from Hero Dogs brought along super pooches Norm (left) and Fiona to the fundraiser.

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