



## Red Knights International Firefighters Motorcycle Club ® Inc.

### Office of the International President

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Hello to all Red Knights!

9-September-2017

Before I get into the main purpose of this letter, I hope everyone is safe. As we all know, we have had a major natural disaster in Texas and has spilled over a small amount in Louisiana. Many Red Knights and their families have been directly and indirectly affected. This disaster is not over and not only continues today but will also continue for the weeks and months to come. If you would like to help out our fellow brothers and sisters, I would encourage you to send **gift cards** for Walmart or Target or **Gas Cards** for Shell or Speedway only in the amount of \$25 dollars or less. Please do not send checks or cash.

Any cards can be sent directly to

Josh Wilde (he is the TX association Treasurer)

321 E. Cedar St. #6

Angleton, TX 77515

About 10 years ago many thousands of dollars were donated by members for the members in Louisiana after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We were very disappointed when the state passed a law that all monies donated to the hurricane relief would have to be given to the overall hurricane relief fund and could not be sent to or earmarked for any specific person or group. The government wanted to control who got the donated funds. The International Board was forced to refund the monies to those who donated. Thus explains the suggestion above for using Gift Cards and the fact that the International cannot play a role in the collecting or distribution of any funds.

Please keep those in any of the affected areas in your thoughts and prayers. As Hurricane Irma is now approaching Florida, any unused cards will be sent to Florida Red Knights in need.

Now onto the new and exciting news!

I come bearing incredible news from your International Board and Convention. Some of the founders have called this announcement "EPIC" or "GROUND BREAKING" and "THE MOST IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT SINCE THE CULB WAS FORMED"

For those of you who do not know, the Red Knights Memorial Park in Boylston just had its 10 year anniversary, while the Red Knights ourselves just celebrated our 35<sup>th</sup> Birthday a couple weeks ago at convention. The Red Knights Memorial park was built by funding from you, the member and the labor of love of primarily the members of Massachusetts chapter 1 as well as members from around Massachusetts and surrounding states. The Park is located directly in front of the Boylston Fire Department at 599 Main St. The Town of Boylston granted the Red Knights the permission to build the memorial over a decade ago. Today, it still sits on their property today. The Red Knights Memorial Park is the location were we have the remembrance of all those who have gone before us, a separate monument for all the Red Knights who have suffered from a LODD and the placement of the only piece of 9-11 steel displayed by a motorcycle club. For those who have not had the chance to visit, this is a solemn place.

In April we were made aware by one of the founders that the adjoining property at 595 Main St was up for sale. Through some behind the scene discussions we were able to find out that the town of Boylston was very interested in the rear of the 595 Main St property in order to extend their parking lot for the Town House and Fire Department.

As we started looking into the viability of the acquisition of the property, among many other positive signs, we soon came across the last membership survey that was sent out. To summarize one of the questions, *would you be in favor of the Red Knights purchasing a property?* 83.6% of the 410 respondents to that question replied in the affirmative. Those members answering the above question as yes was **343**.....

As we believed we could then, and even more so now that we would be successful in negotiations, the Board unanimously accepted and acted on the support of all the surviving active Founders. We took on hard line negotiations with the seller and went to settlement on the home and land known as 595 Main St, Boylston, Massachusetts on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

In July, the Board authorized the formation of a new organization. The Red Knights Memorial Foundation (RKMF) came into existence on July 18<sup>th</sup> when the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts granted the business license for the RKMF. In record time, on August 10<sup>th</sup> we were happy to open a letter from the IRS. The letter granted the RKMF the recognition of a 501(c) 3 Non-Profit entity.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, your Vice President Spike Ostiguy, Founder Don Parker and Mass 1 Chapter President Peter Stone meet with the Town of Boylston's Selectmen. The proposal of the land swap by your representatives was positively received by all the Selectmen. The Selectmen encouraged the Red Knights to have a proposal for the land swap into their office prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> so they could have the town meeting vote in November.

Near the end of the Annual Business Meeting of the Red Knights at convention on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August I brought the entire membership in attendance up to speed. After a short discussion on a motion, the membership approved a \$4 dues increase per member in order to pay the property off early. Then, I was proud to bring up the Founders along with a few individuals that we needed help from during the acquisition process and the International Board. Before the meeting I asked each of these fine gentlemen to consider a donation to the newly formed RKMF. I was proud to announce that cumulatively those standing in front of the membership and their families pledged to donate over \$8,500.00 dollars. I then challenged the rest of the membership to meet or beat our initial donation to the RKMF. That evening, after the ceremonies were over, I announced the total amount received for the benefit of the RKMF and the property. I am very happy to announce that at convention, we as the membership in attendance raised roughly \$27,000.00. A huge thank you goes to all who made or pledged a donation.

As of Sept 1<sup>st</sup>, we have engaged a well-respected local land survey and engineering firm to draw new proposed property lines to include the Red Knights Memorial Park into the ownership of the Red Knights moving forward. This will ensure that the location that most of us hold dear, that displays the names of all the members who we have lost will never have to be torn down or moved.

We hope to be finished with all the needed projects and turn the house over for use as possibly a Red Knights Museum as well as a place that members can stay and meet while visiting the Red Knights Memorial Park (timeline and procedures to follow soon). Below you will see a link to pictures of the newly rebuilt Red Knights house along with a rough sketch of the existing and proposed property lines. The Memorial Park is located in the bottom right. Check out the other pictures of the memorial on the redknightsmc.com website under the memorial tab.

Now we have some more work to accomplish. We are asking that each member donates at least \$20 to the new nonprofit so we can start doing more good work.

When the new RKMf board met, we quickly decided that the 2017 fundraiser would be a very fitting plaque, mounted in an appropriate place in the house. The title of the plaque will be "RED KNIGHTS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION CHARTER DONORS" There will be 3 levels of donors recognized on the charter plaque. The White level is for those donating \$100 to \$499, the Gold level is for those donating between \$500 and \$999, for those individuals, chapters, associations or businesses choosing a donation of at least \$1,000 would receive the top recognition as Red Level donors.

We need each and every member to step up and help. Please go to our website and look on the main page ([redknightsmc.com](http://redknightsmc.com)). Click on the RKMf donation link and give a minimum of a \$20 donation. If you can comfortably afford to, please help out generously. Remember that all donations to the Red Knight Memorial Foundation are Tax deductible for U.S. taxpayers. If you will be making a donation of at least \$100, please ensure the spelling you your name or the name of your organization is spelled as you want it on the Memorial Plaque.

Please check back into the [redknightsmc.com](http://redknightsmc.com) website as well as keep an eye out for the upcoming website, [www.rkimf.org](http://www.rkimf.org) for RKMf updates.

In the below picture, the solid white lines are an approximate representation of the existing property lines. The dashed lines (which run on top of a 15 foot shale shelf) are a possible proposal for the new parcel boundaries to include the Memorial Park into the newly purchased property. (Local zoning ordinances would not allow for just the Memorial Park to be split off into its own parcel)



See the property yourself on google maps. Search for 595 Main Street, Boylston, MA.

Thank You to All,  
Chris