



Red Knights International Firefighters Motorcycle Club ® Inc.

Office of the President

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Fellow Red Knights,

In writing my last report as International President and as a member of the Board I want to recap a few things. I have watched this organization grow bigger and bigger each year, overcoming obstacles along the way to keep up with the expansion. I started my journey as a Chapter Officer and accepted a position at the State level. As a chapter member, I had no idea what went on behind the scenes, truly a learning curve! As a State Officer is where I began to learn workflows, different levels in which to work and the importance of each. Making calls to the International Board and how to solve problems. My first convention was in 2011 Ocean City, Maryland where I met some of the board members that had helped me along the way. Going to the ABM that Saturday morning was a great event because of what I learned. In 2013, in Rutland Vermont, I was asked to fulfill the remaining term of the Regional 4 director position. This took me by total surprise, and I had to call home to talk to my wife. She said do it and the new journey of Regional 4 Director began. At my first fall meeting I was the quite one setting back learning how and what the board did. When asked to take the office, they said it was going to be easy and no problems. Well, it was not easy and yes there are problems. After 5 years as Regional 4 Director I was approached by some members to run for International President. I was shocked! This was not on my thought process at all. After discussing it with some members and my wife, the challenge was accepted. One of the first things I had to learn was to listen and not speak to soon. Listening to all was hard at times, but I learned to do this and put it all together to make the best decision for the club.

I believe the hardest point being on the board was during COVID. We were not able to hold conventions and see each other or have face to face meetings. During this time, I saw our members step up and hold this group together. We grow members, TLMA went through the roof because everyone had nothing else to do but think of new ideas on how to make items for their chapters and for everyone else. This also promoted our club to a different level. Thanks to all of you, the members, we stood tall during this time.

ZOOM meetings were held not only for the board but by other chapters to keep everyone engaged. I am from the old school which meant I had to learn something new. Computer or high-tech guy are not in my resume 😊. This was a great way for all of us as members and the board to keep in contact and carry-on business as usual. The board started having zoom meetings once a month to keep up on our business, it was/is great! We are now “zooming” once a month because everyone agrees this allows us to stay informed.

It's hard being a on the board or even being an officer of the chapter. Everyone is always watching your every move, comments, behavior and asking questions. A great deal of time is spent away from our families and friends. Each year everyone on the board attends the fall



meeting, spring meeting, and the convention. Now these are roughly 3 weeks.

This does not include Zoom meeting, phone calls, emails, etc. During my years on the board, I never missed a meeting pertaining to the Red Knights, I did miss many family events and vacations. However, I made the decision to take the office(s), therefore this was one of my obligations as an officer. Trying to fulfill my duties where tough at times, but I was committed to the members and the Red Knights Motorcycle Club, as well as what we stand for.

This year 2023, I have attended all the board meetings; eight Zoom meetings and just halfway through the year. Last year 2022, we had 16 zoom meetings! I will be attending the convention this year, as well as local and state events. After leaving my position as International President my plans are to engage back in at the State level, making North Carolina chapters the best! I also look forward to engaging back in my Chapter to continue to help us grow and be a model for other chapters.

My door is always open to listen or help in any way that I can.

I would like to thank all the board members that I have worked with for all your hard work. No one knows how much you do behind the scenes and the time it takes away from your families and friends.

Thanks to everyone that has supported me over the years.

Remember who we are and the basis of the Red Knights!

"My profession is somewhat unique in comparison to that of the average person. At any one fixed moment in time when duty calls upon me, I am prepared to sacrifice my own life to save the lives of others I may not even know. I am willing to do this because I understand that we all make choices in life. As for myself, this is the choice and path of service that I have chosen to follow. Though my job is often rewarding, it can also be unsettling. I often reflect upon the simplicity of one question, "Who am I?" At times, I cannot provide this answer, not even for myself. So, "Who am I" to choose a profession in life that regularly shows no mercy for the preciousness of life? "Who am I" to willingly, without hesitation, invite myself into some of the most uninviting situations known to mankind? "Who am I", so that when duty calls, may never again lay eyes on the loved ones I could leave behind? The assumed simplicity of this question is not so simple after all. Understanding "Who I am" may be difficult to answer at times. However, all I need to do is pause, think about, and remember those lives I have positively influenced and maybe even saved. All I need to do is look back on the years of service I have given to my community and realize that I helped make the world a safer place in which to live. In my heart, I know I made a difference. "Who am I?" I am a Firefighter!"
Respectfully and lovingly,

Joey Powell