



**RED KNIGHTS
INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS
MOTORCYCLE CLUB®
Boylston, Massachusetts Est. 1982**

Office of the International Vice President
Norm Beausoleil
vicepresident@redknightsmc.com
+01 (508) 958-4560

Greetings one and all, and welcome to 2025! This past year has brought new insight to me regarding the Club, its members, and its leadership. Now it's time to bring everything together and bring you up to speed on the Vice President's front!.

The year 2024 was certainly an eventful year for me. It started off with me in my new role as VP and I was, to say the least, quite overwhelmed, but with support from the other board members I was able to hit the ground running with only a few obstacles that were fairly easy to maneuver. I was quite busy with travel, meetings, rallies, conventions, and the MAL Program, and I enjoyed nearly every minute of it all

As many of you know, I love to travel, and that passion leads me to going places and doing things that bring me great joy, and this year was no different, albeit with greater purpose, the opportunity to meet more of you! Since 2013, I have made every effort to attend the UK/Ireland meet (always the last weekend of April), but this year was quite different. The rally held outside of Cork (Ireland 1) in Bantry, Ireland, was as enjoyable as ever! I was honored, not for being a Founder or the VP, but I was nominated and entered into the prestigious English "Order of the Horse's Arse" fraternity! Ask me how I qualified next time you see me!

What made this trip to Ireland even more memorable was that when I left Cork, I went to Edinburgh, Scotland, and got to meet our first Red Knight from Scotland, a member I welcomed into the Club as an MAL earlier in the year. He was a most gracious host as he gave me a wonderful tour of that area of Scotland. From Scotland I took a train to England where I was again honored. The members of England 4 created the **National Red Plaque Memorial** in Essex, England – and asked that I make the opening remarks at this event which featured speakers from the fire service, union, city, shire, and even the Crown. It was a truly humbling moment.

My next trip was to Keene, NH, for the annual Yankee Rally where, once again, I was given the honor of speaking at the re-dedication of the New Hampshire Red Knights Memorial, as both a representative of the RKIFMC Executive Board and as a Founder.

At the end of July, I left for Berlin, Germany, eventually arriving in Leipzig for the 2024 Annual convention and business meeting. The members of Germany 18 did a fabulous job! Their ability to entertain and provide great hospitality was amazing! Thank you to Matthias and his crew! Job well done. For me, the highlight of the event was the Saturday night awards banquet. Last year, long time Board Member Leo Patry stepped down from his position as Region 2 Director after 30 years in various positions on the Board. I am extremely proud and grateful to be part of the board that found a way to recognize such dedication with a level of recognition that is unlikely to be replicated anytime soon - the well-earned and deserved honor of "Director Emeritus". I would like to once again publicly say **thank you Leo** for your dedication to the Red Knights.

My final "personal" trip of the year was a last-minute decision to attend the first ever Region 6 Rally – known as the Scooter Stampede. Another memorable moment in the books for me. Not only did I get a great tour of Oklahoma City and the surrounding area, I was also greeted with unmatched generosity! The highlight of the event was the Saturday evening dinner where the

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raffles and auctions were held. Many of you know that I held a fundraiser years ago with Jack Daniels in support of the mortgage on our Memorial House and property. I still had an unopened bottle from the fundraiser, so I decided to offer it for auction or raffle. Well – much to my surprise, that 1 bottle fetched **\$1,105.00** in a live auction. I would like every member of the Club to recognize Ryan Morrison, OK 10, for his generosity. I would also like to give a huge shout out to Buddy Myers, president of OK 10 and the rest of the Scooter Stampede committee for their generous donation of the 50/50 proceeds (\$177.00) to the same cause. Finally, Cheryl Crabb, OK 10, also earned a place in my hall of memories for her generous donation of \$100.00 to purchase an empty JD bottle from the fundraiser. All-in-all, I walked away from Oklahoma and the Scooter Stampede with about \$1,385.00 in funds to go towards the principal on the mortgage.

Now, down to the business end of my report!

Representing the membership this past year I was able to attend all Conference Calls and Zoom Meetings of the R.K.I., R.K.R. and R.K.M.F. to which I was invited or expected to be at. I attended, in person, the following meetings and events:

RKIFMC Spring Board Meeting (SBM), Baltimore, MD April 10 - 14, 2024

UK/Irish Meet, Bantry, County Cork, Ireland April 26 - 28, 2024

Yankee Rally (Region 1), Keene, NH, June 6 – 9, 2024

RKIFMC Summer Board Meeting/ Convention/ABM & EuCon, Leipzig, Germany. August 13 - 18, 2024

Scooter Stampede (Region 6), Oklahoma City, OK, September 20 – 22. 2024

RKIFMC Fall Board Meeting (FBM), Baltimore, MD November 13 – 17, 2024

2024 R.K.M.C. Heaven One Honors:

As I oversee the R.K. Member-At-Large (M.A.L.) Membership worldwide, it is also with a heavy heart that I announce the passing of one (1) Member-At-Large, since my last EOY Report.

Godspeed

May you rest in peace

RKF

State of the Member-At-Large (M.A.L.) Program

12-31-24... we have 306 R.K.M.C., Member-At-Large Members: 258-Active/41-Social/ 7- Junior

In 2024 we received 108 R.K.M.C., Member-At-Large applications and I've worked on an additional 44 from previous years. 68 have been approved as MAL, 35 have been referred to chapters, 2 transferred from chapters to MAL and 2 were denied membership, the rest are still pending. We also had 14 Member-at-Large resign from the Club. The biggest note of all is that we have accepted 14 MALs in Finland bringing the total to 16. They do not live close to each other, but they may work on 1 National Chapter, similar to Norway 1.



In accordance with the By-Laws Article 2, Section 2:10 3. International Dues;

It is unfortunate I report that there are 89 Member-At-Large Members on restricted service.

31 have not paid dues since 2022 and have removed from the roster.

27 have not paid since 2023, are now 2 years in arrears, and in jeopardy of being removed, and

62 have not renewed for 2025 and are now 1 year in arrears.

All have been advised that they are now on restricted service.

We do hope that you take this opportunity to renew your membership and return to in good standing status. **If you are an MAL and have not received a “Dues Reminder” e-mail** from me, please send an e-mail to vicepresident@redknightsmc.com. The most likely cause is an incorrectly recorded or copied email address on the roster – mistakes happen.

If you are an MAL and have dues owed, please contact the International Treasurer, Scott Ryan, at treasurer@redknightsmc.com.

Member-at-Large Program Update

As manager of the Member-at-Large Program (the Program) I have a great deal of freedom with the process, and I would like to pass my thoughts on to all of you, particularly chapter leadership and those members that move away from your “home” chapter.

The Red Knights is an organization based on **Chapter Membership**, and the Program was designed to allow the Club to gain exposure in areas where we are not established. **It is designed to be a starting point to eventual chapter membership, it was not designed to be an endpoint membership location for chapter members to transfer to.** For example, a motorcycling firefighter in Colorado, Saskatchewan or Latvia hears about us and asks to join. Voila, a perfect MAL candidate. We have no chapter in the state, province or country yet, so the MAL program can do just what it was designed to do – RKMC exposure in a remote area. New member, new place, no question.

Where I am taking a different approach is this: **First**, I am asking current chapter members that move to **seriously consider** several things before I approve a transfer to MAL.

Let’s say a member from MA 1 moves to Colorado. That member is already a Red Knight, and, although the By-Laws (Section 2:06(2)) allow a transfer to MAL due to a “travel hardship” – and I won’t necessarily deny the request – **I will first ask 3 very serious questions.**

1 – Why do you want to leave your chapter?

2 – Why do you want to be an MAL? Based on your answers to 1 and 2, I will ask

3 - Why should (or would) I approve your request to become an MAL? Remember, we are a **Chapter Based** organization, and a chapter member is able to represent us in a new area, and with their access to information from their (current) chapter, i.e. newsletters, e-mails, contacts, etc., they can do the same job as an MAL, including starting a new chapter, with the benefit of current chapter support.



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You might say that that member won't be an active member of the chapter – he/she won't make meetings, rides, events, parties, etc. I SAY, SO WHAT? I'll bet every chapter already has local members that fit that description. Having that member move away won't affect chapter activities, will it? And, this Club does not approve or condone attendance requirements EXCEPT at the International Board level. Finally, the member that has moved will benefit more from being included in all communications from their chapter. Who loses? I don't see anyone suffering from that scenario.

Second, I'll now reverse the roles a bit. Let's say I receive an MAL application from a prospective member who lives in Florida, 100 miles from any other chapter. I have been referring those applicants to ALL chapters in the state, listing closest first, and **asking the chapter presidents**, along with the respective state/province/country reps and the regional directors, **to ALL reach out to the applicant and invite that applicant to join their chapter**, for EXACTLY the same reasons as above. I can only see good things coming to a chapter that can get additional members and a remote member that isn't "active" will still be in the loop and may surprise you, where an MAL may not even know your chapter exists. Once again, who loses? **This one is a win-win**. Once again, I won't *necessarily* deny the application, but if someone wants to be a member, and chapter membership is available *and*, on the table, why should that applicant refuse?

This is where I need your help – yes, every one of you that is already a member of the RKMC. Welcome and/or invite new members and be open to receiving new members, no matter how far away they live, into your chapters. If they are active look at the benefits. If they are inactive, what have they changed? New blood can infuse new life.

In closing, I am looking forward to **2025 AND BEYOND** in serving you, the members, to the best of my ability. Thank you for trusting me and, to my wife Kathy, thanks for putting up with me and being the best travel partner a guy could ask for! I hope to see you on the road, or at any of the many upcoming Red Knights events, rides and rallies in 2025, particularly the Yankee in Bangor, Maine, the International Convention in Peoria, Illinois, and the EuCon Rally in Florence, Italy, among other possibilities.

As always, I remain,

Loyal to Our Duty

Norm Beausoleil
RKIFMC® International Vice President
Life Member & Founder
Massachusetts Chapter 1, Ireland 1 and Switzerland 4