



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

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2025 Convention Report

Well, welcome to Springfield, no, Decatur, awe, heck, no, Peoria, and congratulations to the Illinois State Association for hosting the main event of the year, the RKIFMC® Annual Convention and Business Meeting.

Another year, another moment in history! I want to thank every single one of you. Not only those of you here in East Peoria, but every single one of you. Really, I mean it. I've finished my first complete year as your International Vice President and you haven't made me want to quit, yet, lol. And, like I said last year (and I'll say it every year), without you the Red Knights wouldn't be who we are, where we are, or what we are today. You have helped make my life full and I can only hope the Club has done the same for each of you. You represent the Club the Founders could only dream about!

Last year in Leipzig, Germany, the membership experienced their second International Convention outside of North America, and if you were there, you'd have to agree that, like Füssach, Austria, the year before, it did not disappoint! Beautiful scenery, fabulous motorcycling, delicious food, picture perfect weather, (well, it didn't rain, much) and European hospitality all made the experience another for the record books. Danke Schön!

The convention welcomed 2 new members to the International Board - Brian Singleton, Region 6 Director, and Andy Young, Region 8 Director. I'd like to express my thanks to Allen Aurich (R6) and Ken Mahon (R8) for all they did over the years. They served this Club and the board with honor, pride, and dignity, and so far, their replacements have stepped into their shoes running.

Since the ABM in Leipzig I've continued to be kept busy with the Member-at-Large (MAL) Program and a few other duties, both required and voluntary, for the Board and the membership.

Briefly (y'all don't want (or need) the sordid details, do you?) I have attended:

The 2024 Fall Board Meetings and the 2025 Spring Board Meetings in Baltimore, Maryland;

All full board Zoom meetings except one.

All conference calls of the RKI and RKR as requested

2025 Yankee Rally in Bangor, Maine,

As well as several local & regionally sponsored R.K. rides/events in Florida and beyond.

I hosted several overseas (Switzerland, Germany and Ireland) Red Knights families at my home in Florida – you're all welcome anytime, just check with my wife, first!

Following convention here in Illinois I have my sights set on the EuCon Rally in Florence, Italy, in September and the UK/Irish Meet next May in Essex, England.

Although I have not had the honor of representing the Board at any Heaven One Ceremonies, I bow my head for all those that have passed in the past year and before. Godspeed and Rest Easy.

“Loyal to Our Duty”



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

At the time of this report... we have 296 M.A.L.'s

Region 1 = 27	Region 2 = 20
Region 3 = 20	Region 4 = 33
Region 5 = 37	Region 6 = 39
Region 7 = 104	Region 8 = 15
Overseas (Mexico) = 1	

Through the hard work and perseverance of many Chapter Presidents and their Officers, we have or will be able to plug twenty-three (23) M.A.L. applicants into chapters for chapter member status. Seven (7) MAL applicants were approved and in April/May they recruited one more member and formed a new chapter in Iowa. Finland has grown from 3 MALs to 24 and we are all hoping a Finland chapter will soon be welcomed. And we have 2 pending MALs in Mexico.

And now, I'm going to repeat myself, as this is my core belief as your VP

As the MAL Program Manager, I want to reiterate what the MAL Program was originally designed for and what I believe it is supposed to do. The program was designed to give a fledgling Club (1980's) exposure in areas that we hadn't reached "en mass". Many states, provinces and even countries started out with a single MAL here and/or there. Their presence gave the new Club exposure, and soon more firefighters joined those MALs and formed chapters. The Program is a steppingstone TO chapter membership and formation, NOT FROM chapter membership to independent riding.

Today, we are so well represented around the world that I am doing my best to place every MAL applicant in a chapter. A vast majority of those applicants are fully in favor of chapter membership. Now, I need ALL chapter officers to open the door to remote members. Take them under your chapter's watchful eye, expose them to life as chapter members, then let them spread their wings and start a chapter of their own out yonder. A chapter member 100 miles from his chapter should be doing the same thing an MAL is expected to do.

There are many chapters (and their officers) that are unhappy with some (maybe a lot) of their member's attendance records, so they shy away from bringing in new members that will clearly not be attending everything due to the travel time and distance. My position, and that of most officers I speak with, is this: **If they weren't in your chapter yesterday, attending meetings, helping at events and joining you for rides, whose loss is it if they aren't there tomorrow? Certainly not the chapter's – you can't lose what you don't have.** And, they may be in an area your chapter wouldn't necessarily ride to so, new adventures for you!

My vision and plan with the MAL Program is to urge **current MALs that move** to an area that has a chapter to join that chapter. The benefits for both are overwhelmingly good. If a chapter forms near an MAL, I will urge that MAL to become part of that chapter for the same reasons. Any MAL applicant that is within a reasonable distance of an existing chapter will be referred to that chapter, and I will expect that chapter to welcome the member with an open-door policy.



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Finally, for those chapter members that move away from their home chapter area and ask for MAL status, I will **urge** them to remain with their chapter. They are already members. I ask, honestly, as a member of the Red Knights, what benefit is it for YOU to change the bottom rocker?

Lastly, for those chapter members that look to leave a chapter because you (or someone is making you) feel that you are letting them down, falling behind or not carrying your fair share of the load, remember this. In the Red Knights, it should be understood by the members AND chapter and Club leadership **that family, religion, and the ability to provide come before the Club**. Without happy and healthy members, chapters **and** this Club can't survive. This Club was not formed with a "*Club first*" mentality, so, if you EVER experience that within your chapter, I want you to call me right away. We didn't design this Club to require attendance of any kind, and, as a Founder, I pray it never does.

When Dave Hamilton (RIP), Jack Pierce, Ed Wright, Dave Hunt, Colin Mackey (RIP), Roger Wentzell, Jon Tripp, Bob Bourassa, Don Parker, Bob Goulet (RIP) and I closed our meeting in August (and October) of 1982 there were 11 members in 1 chapter, representing 3 towns in 1 state. Today, thanks to all of you believing in our dream, we stand nearly 10,000 strong, representing 27 countries around the world, with more on the horizon.

In closing, I recognize that we all can't, and won't, agree on everything. Each of us see problems, issues and solutions differently. If we all agreed, if we all saw it the same way, life would be boring, wouldn't it! Change can be good, and honestly, I believe very often it is good, but it can't and won't happen if you sit back, complaining loudly to a few but silently to the many. I truly enjoy my role as your vice president, and I look forward to another 2 or more years representing all of you. But I would urge anyone that feels they have something to offer, sees something they believe is being missed or feels there is a need for change to step up and throw your name in the hat. No challenge, no change. Give the membership a voice. Give them a choice!

Remember, **we came to ride!**

As always, I remain,

Loyal to Our Duty

Norm Beausoleil

RKIFMC International Vice President

Life Member & Founder of Massachusetts Chapter 1, and,

Proud to be a member of Ireland 1, Switzerland 4, and any other chapter that calls me brother!