

State Deputy's Message September 2018

Dear Brother Knights,

The Arizona heat and our annual Monsoon, with its rain, dust storms, and humidity, have not managed to slow down the Knights in our state. Recruitment of new members is on track. Our degree teams have been very busy this past month.

Our second month of "Always Be Recruiting (ABR)" is behind us. I'm very impressed that so many of you are living the concept of ABR to grow your Councils and Districts. As of the end of August we have recruited 121 new members. Congratulations Brothers! During August, there were 10 Admission Degrees (one in Spanish) and a Formation and Knighthood Degree held in Tucson last month. District Deputy #18, Albert Ustaszewski, held Church Drives in Somerton at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish for five straight weeks and now has enough Knights for a New Council. Congratulations to Albert, Fr. Bart, and the New Knights at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish.

September 30th is the last day to take advantage of the Fast Start Program. Each member needs to recruit five new members by the deadline to win a \$50 Knights Gear Gift Card. So far, we have 21 members in the Fast Start Club. Also, I've made available this year special travel packages for the top 10 recruiters to go to Minneapolis to attend the Supreme Convention next August. From now till June 30, 2019, we need only to recruit 88 new members per month. We can do this!

My congratulations go out to all the Knights from around the Valley who rallied to help St. Gregory and Fr. Andres revive their Council #3510 by attending the 10am Sunday Mass and then holding a Church Drive. I understand that State Treasurer Luigi Baratta gave an outstanding pulpit announcement, and signed up 3 new eMembers.

At each Formation and Knighthood Degree Exemplification, it is my happy duty to pick someone to be the Class Honoree for the degree. On August 18, 2018 in Tucson, Brother Knight Edwin "Skip" Hople was the Honoree for that particular class. Below are a few of the remarks I made regarding Skip's selection.

Skip joined the Knights of Columbus on October 1, 1990. Today, he is an Honorary Life member of the Fray Francisco Garces Council 3855 and Fray Francisco Garces Assembly 1294. Skip served his country honorably in the United State Air Force as an officer and a fighter pilot. Even though he retired from the Air Force, he has continued on in civilian life training pilots in the latest generation of combat fighters.

Brother Hople, from day one, has consistently gone the extra mile as a Knight of Columbus. In his 28 years in the order, he has served in various council positions and as Grand Knight, and has similarly served his assembly in the same manner and as Faithful Navigator. He quickly found that he had an affinity to completely memorize and participate in the ceremonials of the order. This included the first, second, third, and fourth degrees. His service in the Air Force made him a natural leader in ceremonials, in his council and assembly and the state council.

Over the years, Skip served in various positions in the state council. He began working his way through the state council chairs and eventually reached the position of State Secretary. His family and work demands were so high, that he had to relinquish his office. Did this stop him? No! Skip is the kind of man that continued to focus what time he had to spare as the State Ceremonials Chairman in as a member of the ceremonial teams and as Conferring Officer.

Brother Skip Hoplex exemplifies all that we hold true as a brotherhood. He is charitable, he can lead men in unified action, he cares fraternally for his brother Knights, and he is truly patriotic. I can't wait to see what he can accomplish next. These are a few of the many reasons that I have selected Brother Edwin "Skip" Hoplex to be today's Class Honoree. His actions set a high bar, but if you serve the order, its member, your church and family, with a small portion of Skip's commitment, determination, enthusiasm, and character, you will achieve great things.

Strong programs help us reach our membership growth goals. Every program a council holds should include a recruitment component. There are a couple of great opportunities coming up that can be great recruitment opportunities. The first is the Knights at the Ballpark, to be held September 22, 2018 at 5:10 p.m. The Diamondbacks will be playing the Rockies. Tickets are only \$30 for the lower level and \$18 for the upper level. The deadline for ordering tickets is September 13, 2018 to receive them by mail or, September 21, 2018 to pick them up at Will Call the day of the game. Proceeds benefit Special Olympics. Ticket order forms can be found at: <https://kofc-az.org/knights-at-the-ball-park>. If you have questions, contact Program Chairman Rich Ryan by e-mail at RRyan2708@gmail.com, or by phone at (602) 425-8151.

Also, this month, we will hold the Persons With Intellectual Disabilities (PWID) drive, or as it's been called, the "Tootsie Roll Drive." This year, the dates for the program are September 28-30, 2018. Check the new state website www.kofc-az.org/pwid-2018 for more information. Bring your family, or invite your buddies and their families from church to help out. Use it as another great recruiting opportunity.

Coming in October is the 43rd annual Arizona Rosary Celebration. It originated in the Phoenix Diocese as Rosary Sunday. Then, seven years ago, the Tucson Diocese became part of the tradition with its separate celebration. This tradition has now spread to Yuma and other locales where similar Rosary events are held during the same weekend as those conducted in Tucson and Phoenix. Today, it is collectively known as the Arizona Rosary Celebration. This year's dates are Saturday October 20 in Tucson and October 21 in Phoenix.

The Arizona Rosary Celebration is sponsored primarily by the Arizona Knights of Columbus and is considered the largest continuous annual gathering of Catholics anywhere in the United States, with attendance of nearly 7,000 of the faithful each year. The celebrations in Phoenix and Tucson are expensive to produce; about \$80,000 per year. Support comes primarily from funds received through personal donations and Program Book advertising sales. As of this date, the response from councils and assemblies is at an all-time low. The last day to receive advertising contracts is September 8, 2018, and it's fast approaching.

Brothers, the success of the Arizona Rosary Celebration relies on the support of every Knight of Columbus, every Council, and every Assembly; as well as parishes and many other benefactors. Every Council and Assembly is expected to support the event by taking out at least a half page advertisement

and to encourage the parish to do the same. If your council, or assembly, has not yet purchased an advertisement, do so immediately. It bears repeating, the cutoff date is September 8, 2018. All the forms you will need to demonstrate your support can be found on the Arizona Rosary Celebration web site, www.AzRosary.net.

Remember, Faith in Action, is about sharpening our beliefs, helping our pastors build up their parishes, supporting and protecting our families, building up our communities, and protecting life at all stages. Programs + Recruiting = New Members. Faith in Action + New Members = a Strong Order and Strong Church. We are Knights of Columbus, we are here to help make our world a better place for all.

Tom Kalisz
State Deputy