

The

# Mid - Knight News

A quarterly publication of the Mid-West Regional Conference of the Blue Knights® International

Summer 2024 issue



## CONFERENCE OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN

**Tom Luellen**

spd846ret@hotmail.com

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**Bobby Clark**

bobbyc1563@gmail.com

SECRETARY

TREASURER

**Duane Potter**

duanepotter0936@gmail.com

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

**Doug Casteel**

Dougbkmo3@charter.net

WEB-MASTER

**Wayne Schwartz**

wayneschwartz@comcast.net

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**Scott Grabowski**

mwrc.safety@gmail.com

EDITOR

**Rick McCrea**

rickandtic@icloud.com

*Editor: This edition is a little late being published. Some of that is due to the date of the International Convention, and some to the troubles some had in getting home from the International.*

*At the Spring M.W.R.C., it was discussed to go to one Conference a year. After much discussion, it voted that we will have one business meeting as well as one full Conference each year. With that being said and no one placing a bid for any 2025 Mid - West Conferences, KS III, again stepped forward and offered to host the business meeting in the Spring of 2025. While no one is sure what to expect at the first business meeting, all members are invited to attend. As usual, it will run from Friday – Sunday. The dates have been announced by Kansas III and will be June 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> 2025.*

*If your chapter has not hosted a Conference for a while, talk to your chapter about hosting a Conference or a business meeting. The Fall 2025 Conference date is open as is the Spring and Fall of 2026.*



*Also, remember this is an election year for the Conference. The election will be held at the Fall 2024 Conference in Spearfish, SD during the business meeting.*

*Most of the photos in this edition are from the Spring 2024 Conference which was hosted by KS III.*

*I hope to see everyone in September in Spearfish, SD*

*Rick*



**From the M.W.R.C.  
Chairman  
Tom Luellen**

Greetings, sisters and brothers of the MWRC. I am starting this article while I am still on the road home from the 50th International in Maine. We had a pretty good showing from the MWRC with 17 members and spouses present. You may have seen the picture on our Facebook page. Even though the weather didn't

totally cooperate, not allowing us to ride as much as we would hope, the scenery was beautiful, and the camaraderie was even better. Our Blue Knight slogan "there are no strangers in the Blue Knights, only friends you haven't met yet", held true once again as I met friends from both Europe and South America. The relatively new chapter of Columbia I had several members in attendance, and it was fun to watch them bring some of their culture to the US. Namely, the coffee they were selling, whole bean coffee from Columbia. It's rather tasty. You might also have seen video of some MWRC members dancing with them in the hospitality room one evening. I won't say who, but you know who you are!

On Wednesday we visited the International Headquarters in Bangor. Unfortunately, it was raining that day. I took pictures of the commemorative bricks purchased by anyone in the MWRC, but as they were wet some of them had splotchy discoloration on them. I stopped again on my way home on a sunny day and took more pictures. I will bring those to Spearfish in September and have a slideshow at the meeting and / or the banquet.



Speaking of our fall meeting in Spearfish, this is our election year, which happens at the end of the Saturday morning business meeting. All four executive board positions are up for election. Your outgoing Vice Chairman, Bobby Clark, changed assignments at work and his new duties prevent him from continuing in that position. I want to take this moment to thank Bobby for stepping up when we needed somebody to fill that position and for serving well. I will miss your input on the board but I'm glad you'll still be around. As for the other positions, I am running unopposed for a second term as Chairman, Mark Smoot from IA 6 is running unopposed for Vice Chairman, and Duane Potter of KS V is running unopposed for a second term as Secretary / Treasurer. Scott Altic of NE II is running against your incumbent International Representative, Doug Casteel of MO III. If you want your chapter to have a say in this

election, please attend the Conference. "Decisions are made by those who show up" (*Jed Bartlett - The West Wing*).

I for one, am looking forward to riding the Black Hills again. It's always been a favorite place of mine. Iron Mountain Rd, Rushmore, Needles, Custer Loop, Devil's Tower, Spearfish Canyon, etc. I probably won't be able to fit it all in while we're there, but I can sure try! Too good to pass up.

My virtual door is always open, so please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns. Until September, RWP!

Tom Luellen  
MWRC Chairman  
[spd846ret@hotmail.com](mailto:spd846ret@hotmail.com)  
417-860-2633



**From the M.W.R.C.  
Secretary / Treasurer  
Duane Potter**

I have enjoyed the last couple of months living everyone's journey, even if it was only via social media. It is good to see everyone out enjoying life and sharing it with the rest of us. Unfortunately, I've been stuck working since we were in Lawrence, so I am looking forward to traveling to Spearfish for the Fall Conference.

Speaking of the Fall Conference, this is an election year for our Conference leadership team. As of the close of our business meeting in Lawrence, the following individuals have expressed their interest in running for office:

**Chairman**

Tom Luellen, MO I

**Vice-Chairman:**

Mark Smoot, IA VI

**Secretary/Treasurer:**

Duane Potter, KS V

**International Representative:**

Doug Casteel, MO III

Scott Altic, NE II

The nominations for office closed at the conclusion of the President's meeting held on Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

While we're talking about the Spring Conference, if you've never attended one of our Conferences, you are really missing out on a good time. The rides are one thing, but the brotherhood is something entirely different. You should really consider coming, you won't be disappointed.

Why did I bring up attending a Conference? Well, the answer is really simple. In June, we only had 17 of our conferences 30 Chapters represented. Was yours one of them? Let's look and see who was there:

**Present at the Spring Conference were:**

- IA I
- IA III
- IA VI
- KS I
- KS III
- KS V
- MN I
- MN II
- MN IV
- MO I
- MO III
- MO X
- NE I
- NE II
- ND I
- OK I
- SD I



Remember the club moto is “There are no strangers, just friends you haven’t met!”

Looking forward to seeing all of the old faces and hopefully some new ones in Spearfish, SD on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Until then, Ride With Pride!

Duane



## **From the M.W.R.C. International Representative Doug Casteel**

West Coast Conference in Cody, WY; and Blue Knights® International Convention in Carrabassett Valley, ME.

Since the last newsletter, I represented you at the Mid-West Regional Spring Conference in Lawrence, KS;

At our Spring MWRC meeting we voted to move from having two conferences a year to one conference and one business meeting.

At the Board of Governors Meeting, the elections results were Chairman Mark Howard, Vice Chairman Andreas Hohendorf, Secretary Pam McClaren, and Treasurer Mike Rickard.

There was an update on the 2025 International Convention that will be held in Mol, Belgium on June 29<sup>th</sup> – July 4<sup>th</sup>. There is a train from the airport to Mol and there will be a shuttle to your accommodation, at Sunparks Kempense Meren in Mol. For further information and registration, visit [www.ic2025-Belgium8.com](http://www.ic2025-Belgium8.com). There will also be an after-convention bus tour through Celtic Horizon on July 4<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> through France and England at a cost of 1,989 Euro per person when doubling up in a room, with a single person supplement of 780 Euro.

It was also voted to approve the 2026 International Convention to be held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada on July 19<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> at Grey Eagle Resort and Casino.

In the General Membership meeting, Treasurer John Bull, advised we finished last year \$32,281.42 in the red, which was mostly due to overages in legal fees because of the lawsuit, drastically increased insurance premiums, and trademark fees.

VP North America Cal Ennals reported our current membership stands at 14,680 members.

President DJ Alvarez says to remember that the Accidental Death Benefit is not just for accidents resulting from vehicles, it covers any accidental death.

Headquarters Committee Chairman Guy O'Connor, reported that the brick campaign raised approximately \$22,000.

At the Board of Directors meeting, there was a lengthy discussion on the audit of the 2019 International Convention and the BOD will be sending a letter demanding NY II to turn over the excess profits.

The next BOD meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 1200 hours ET.

I hope to see you in Spearfish.

As always, if you have any questions or I can help with something, I am available via the contact information listed below.

Ride with Pride,

Doug Casteel, International Representative  
Mid-West Regional Conference  
[Mwrc.rep@blueknights.org](mailto:Mwrc.rep@blueknights.org)  
+1 (314) 412-4449

**From the M.W.R.C.  
Web-Master  
Wayne Schwartz**



Hello Knights! Where is the summer going? Here we are already approaching the end of July and we just had the International Convention up in Maine. To those that attended, I hope you had a great time and got all the club's business accomplished. Our website continues to get a lot

of activity which is why it's here. All that is needed to register for our upcoming Fall Conference in Spearfish, SD is posted. Be sure to make your hotel reservations and get your registration forms in as soon as possible so that SD I can get all their planning and ordering done for the conference. A lot of work goes into the planning and organizing of a conference. I have also updated the information posted about the 51<sup>st</sup> International Convention to be held in Mol, Belgium in June / July, 2025. Please contact me if you have any changes to your chapter information so I can keep all the chapter's data current. If you have a member transfer to Heaven I, be sure to let me know so I can add them to our Heaven I page. If your chapter has any events coming up and would like to post information, let me know and I will work with you to get the word out. I look forward to seeing all of you in Spearfish, SD in just a few short weeks. Until then, stay safe, healthy, and as always

Ride with Pride,

Wayne Schwartz  
MWRC Webmaster  
[wayneschwartz@comcast.net](mailto:wayneschwartz@comcast.net)





## From the M.W.R.C. Safety Officer Scott Grabowski

### GROUP RIDING

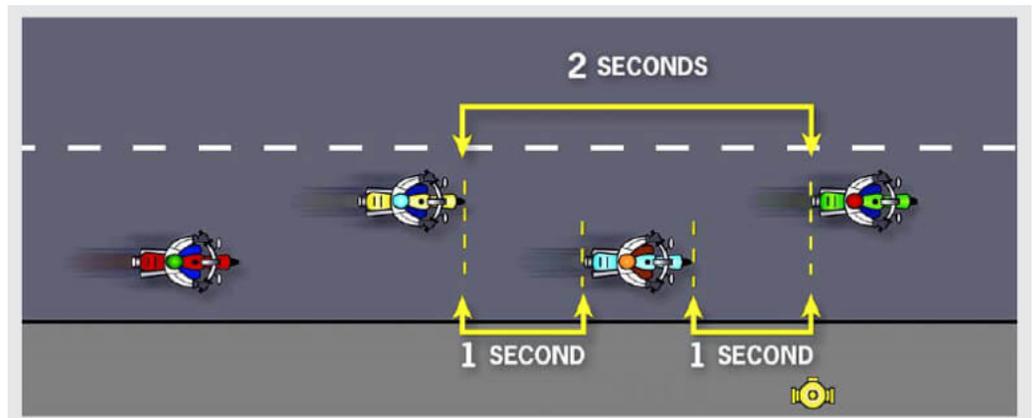
As a club we often ride in groups. Group rides consist of a lead, tail gunner or sweeper and riders. In a group, no matter your position, it's still every rider's responsibility to make the ride safe and ride within your skill level.

Whether it's a fun ride or organized ride, arrive prepared. Show up on time with a full gas tank. Hold a riders meeting to discuss the route, rest stops, fuel stops, hand signals, how gaps are to be filled etc.

Lead rider and the tail gunner should have some sort of communication with each other, especially in large groups.

The lead sets the pace, lane selection, speed. If there starts to be large gaps, slow down and let the gap close. Others might be going slower and staying in their comfort zone. Don't rush any riders; this may put them or you at risk.

Use a staggered formation. The lead is in the left third of the lane and the next rider stays one second behind in the right third and so on. If your group stops at a red light, stop side by side (stay in gear). When the group starts the lead should start out slow, until the whole group gets moving then slowly get up to speed. If you take off like a rabbit it will cause gaps and separation, now your ride will have large gaps. After all it's a "group" ride not a "groups" ride. When starting, as soon as the bike in front of you starts moving you should too, don't try to stagger right away, in larger groups the rear might not make the light, as the whole group gets going start your spacing and staggering as speed increases.



Remember the goal, as with all rides, is to make your destination safely. If greater speeds is your riding style then skip the group ride and go out on your own ride.

Blue Knights International does have a group riding handbook on the International web site in the members section, committees, safety committee. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) web site also has a group ride section.

Till next time, RWP, Ride safe, Practice often

Scott Grabowski  
MWRC Safety Officer  
mwrc.safety@gmail.com

## Update on the Fall 2024 Conference

The Blue Knights of South Dakota I, would like to encourage you all to join us at the 2024 MWRC Fall Conference. Held in beautiful Spearfish, SD in the Holiday Inn, it promises to be a great event. We will have guided rides and self-guided rides through the amazing Black Hills, wonderful food, exciting raffle prizes and the most important component - comradery.

It is not too late to register. Please print the form from the MWRC website and return to the address listed.

We look forward to seeing you there!

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## Update on the Spring 2025 Conference

The MWRC Spring 2025 business meeting, will be hosted by Kansas III in Lawrence, KS Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, through Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The business meeting will be at 9:00 am on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The location will be announced and the registration information will be posted on the MWRC webpage at a later date. The DoubleTree by Hilton, was perfect for the Spring 2024 Conference because of the number of different event spaces we needed and because of their banquet capabilities. Since we only need a meeting space this time, we are looking at other options to try to keep the room cost as affordable as we can. We will probably charge a small registration fee to pay for the meeting room. I will provide more information as we get it. Thanks for your patience.



“Ride With Pride”

Jim Miller  
Kansas State Rep  
Kansas III President

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## Mid-Knight News Requirements

The Mid-Knight News is published quarterly. The deadlines are January 15<sup>th</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup>, July 15<sup>th</sup>, October 15<sup>th</sup>, with the projected publication being February 1<sup>st</sup>, May 1<sup>st</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, and November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Any member of the Blue Knights MWRC can submit an article for publication. However, the article must be sent from the Chapter Corporate e-mail. This ensures chapter approval of the article and its contents.

Articles should be submitted in MS “WORD” in Arial 12 - point with justified left and right margins. Please try to limit your article to one page. Photos may also be submitted, but please send them in a “jpeg” format.

## **CHAPTER DUES ARE DUE**

In order for a chapter to remain in good standing with the Conference, each chapter must pay dues of one dollar per member with a maximum of twenty-five to the Conference on an annual basis.

The dues must be paid before the chapter will be allowed to vote at the MWRC business meeting.

You can mail your dues to:

Mid-West Regional Conference  
P.O. Box 73,  
Goddard, KS 6705

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### **MWRC State Representatives Contact Information**

Iowa:	Dave Eyman	<a href="mailto:BKIARep@gmail.com">BKIARep@gmail.com</a>
Kansas:	Jim Miller	<a href="mailto:jimmiller@jim-san.com">jimmiller@jim-san.com</a>
Manitoba:	Peter Savinkoff	<a href="mailto:tundrapjs@shaw.ca">tundrapjs@shaw.ca</a>
Minnesota:	Chris Boerner	<a href="mailto:cboerner9@aol.com">cboerner9@aol.com</a>
Missouri:	Don Tyes	<a href="mailto:bigdude@stjoelive.com">bigdude@stjoelive.com</a>
Nebraska:	Frank Bergmark	<a href="mailto:bikerbergs@charter.net">bikerbergs@charter.net</a>
North Dakota:	VACANT	
Oklahoma:	Tom Ashing	<a href="mailto:tomashing@cox.net">tomashing@cox.net</a>
South Dakota:	Dave Thorsgaard	<a href="mailto:dq17thor@midco.net">dq17thor@midco.net</a>

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## **STATE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

Before each newsletter, I send out a request to each of the State Representatives asking them to send me an article for the Mid-Knight News.

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### **Iowa Representative Dave Eyman**

No response

## **Kansas Representative Jim Miller**

The summer is going by way too fast! I just got back from the International Convention in Maine. It was a great time, and it was so good to see some old friends and to make some new ones!

I want to thank everyone who came to the MWRC Spring 2024 Conference in Lawrence in June. I also want to thank everyone for their generous support in purchasing 50 / 50 and raffle tickets. We finished the Conference with \$4,000.00 profit. Kansas III will be riding to the Concerns of Police Survivors National Headquarters in Camdenton, MO to deliver a \$4,000.00 donation!

“Ride With Pride”

Jim Miller  
Kansas State Rep  
Kansas III President

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## **Manitoba Representative Peter Savinkoff**

No report

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## **Minnesota Representative Chris Boerner**

No response

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## **Missouri Representative Don Tyes**

We all had a great time at the Spring Midwest Regional Conference in Lawrence, Kansas. Kansas III did an excellent job in organizing and executing the event. Now we are in the heat of summer and wow, has it been hot. I think the cooler weather is on the horizon and I can't wait.

Next up is the Fall MWRC on September 5<sup>th</sup>, at the Holiday Inn in Spearfish, South Dakota. The temperatures should be pleasant and the scenery, off the chain. We hope to see you there, God willing. Finally, don't forget about the Fallen Officers Memorial Ride, on September 28<sup>th</sup>, in St. Joseph, Missouri. This event will begin at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #3 at 621 South 36<sup>th</sup> Street. Be there to show your support to the survivors of these heroes. We will have lunch and a raffle following the ride.

“Ride with Pride”

Donald R. Tyes, President, MO X  
Missouri State Representative, RWP

## **Nebraska Representative Frank Bergmark**

Nebraska I, Past President John Gericke, was in the hospital for pneumonia and fell and broke his hip. If fellow Blue Knights could keep a good thought for John, I am sure that he and Pat would appreciate it. Other than that, looking forward to Fall in Spearfish.

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## **North Dakota Representative VACANT**

Representative wanted  
If interested, contact  
MWRC Chairman Tom Luellen

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## **Oklahoma Representative Tom Ashing**

No response

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## **South Dakota Representative Dave Thorsgaard**

Greetings from the Black Hills of South Dakota. Let me start off by thanking the Kansas Blue Knights for a great time in Lawrence. Our group had an awesome time with you and hope to see all of you this fall.

Before we made our journey to Lawrence, we made a run to Colorado Springs for the South West Conference. Our brothers and sisters from SWRC were very hospitable and we had a lot of great rides, made more friends and invited them all to our part in September. A couple of our members made the trip to Cody, WY for the West Coast Conference as well. They reported it too was an awesome time with great people, fantastic rides and unbelievable entertainment. Thanks to both of those Conferences, you did a great job.

June and July have flown by, with so many activities for some of us, but we did get in a lot of riding. Not always as a large Blue Knight group, but we were out there. It's starting to get hot here and the bikers are already here for the Sturgis rally.

Have a safe summer and hope to see you all in September.  
Dave Thorsgaard  
MWRC State Representative SD I

# STANDING RULES FOR THE MWRC



1. Carrying firearms at MWRC events after consuming alcoholic beverages is prohibited. Event hosts are required to provide secure storage for firearms if requested by any attendee.

2. All members are entitled to make motions and participate in discussions during Conference meetings. However, only the President (or Regular Member appointed by the President) of each MWRC Chapter in good standing will be allowed to vote on items of business and candidates for office at Conference meetings. Any Chapter which has not paid its annual dues shall not be considered in good standing.



3. MWRC officers shall consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer, and International Representative. The officers shall serve two (2) year terms and shall be elected at the Fall Conference meeting during even numbered years. Candidates must declare (in writing) the office they seek to the MWRC Secretary / Treasurer prior to the adjournment of the Spring Conference meeting of the election year. No later than August 1<sup>st</sup> of the election year the MWRC Secretary / Treasurer will provide the President of each MWRC Chapter with a list of the candidates for each office. This is meant to allow the Chapter President to confer with his membership prior to the voting.



4. Each Chapter in the MWRC shall pay annual dues to the Conference in the amount of \$1.00 (US) per chapter member, up to a maximum of \$25.00 (US) per year.



5. Bids to host MWRC conferences may be accepted up to two (2) years in advance.

6. All participants in parades or group rides, at any Blue Knights® Midwest Regional Conference event, must wear an approved motorcycle helmet.



7. The MWRC board will notify any active chapter within 50 miles prior to authorizing a charter to any new chapter, however final determination and approval will reside with the board