

Knights of Columbus Idaho State Council 111th Annual State Convention Awards and Recognitions

Throughout the year, Idaho Knights work hard to provide service to their church, community, youth, family, council and in pro-life outreach. Prior to each year's State convention, Councils submit applications for recognition of excellence in these services to their State Councils. The State Councils then submit applications for recognition by the Supreme Council. This year at the Burley convention, the following Councils and individuals were recognized.

SUPREME ACTIVITY AWARDS: (Awarded by the Supreme Council):

CHURCH ACTIVITY: Upgrading a Retired Priest's Residence. Council # 892 – Pocatello – Patrick Taney, GK

- Designed and built a new patio deck.
- Funded and installed a power garage door.
- Installed a new air conditioning unit.
- Upgraded kitchen cabinets.
- Almost a dozen other upgrades.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY: Providing medical devices for those who cannot afford the cost. Council #12854 - Risen Christ – Boise – John Fealko, GK

- Nearly 5,000 volunteer hours and 4,000 miles were driven picking up used equipment.
- Service provided to nearly 5,200 individuals and families this past year.
- The cost of the medical equipment loaned is valued at over \$600,000.

COUNCIL ACTIVITY: Running the "KC Dog House" Food Booth. Council #11623 – St. Pius X – Coeur d'Alene – Dave Sonnen, GK

- This council operates a food booth at the North Idaho State Fair.
- This year the fair netted about \$3,500 for the Council.
- Funds support The American Wheelchair Mission, Birth Right, Vocations, Holy Family Catholic School, Special Olympics and many others.
- Brother Knights show the community the meaning of Christ in everyday life.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: Staging a Parish Summer Fiesta Council # 3086 – Our Lady of the Valley – Caldwell – Thomas Miller, GK

- It raised money for the church and brought the Parish community together.
- It was a day filled with fun, food, dancing, ethnic costumes and games for the children.
- It was a tremendous success with plans to make it an annual event.

CULTURE of LIFE ACTIVITY: Establishing a Permanent Memorial to the Unborn. Council #11623 – St. Pius X – Coeur d'Alene – Dave Sonnen, GK

- Designed, funded and erected a permanent memorial to the unborn on the grounds of the Parish Columbarium, approved by the Pastor, Parish Council, and Columbarium

Management committee.

- It is a reminder of abortion's awful toll and an invitation for prayer to end abortion.
- The Memorial was dedicated in October, 2017.
- This Council also participated in the annual March for Life.

YOUTH ACTIVITY: Scholarships for Graduating High School Seniors.

Council #11623 – St. Pius X – Coeur d'Alene – Dave Sonnen, GK

- Funds are raised through pancake breakfast and Lenten fish fry with supplemental funds from the annual hot dog booth at the North Idaho Fair.
- Provides a minimum of \$1,500.
- Applicants for a scholarship fill out a questionnaire and submit letters of recommendation.
- This year there were five awards presented, including one to a young lady who was the first member of her family to attend post secondary education.

STATE AWARDS:

VOCATIONS:

Council # 11623 – Pius X – Coeur d'Alene -Dave Sonnen, GK

- This council has participated in the Supreme Council's RSVP program for several years.
- This Council supports the local chapter of Serra International.
- This Council holds fundraisers for their Pastor to use as he determines for Vocational support and prays at every meeting.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/NEWSLETTER:

Council # 11623 – Pius X – Coeur d'Alene -Dave Sonnen, GK

- This council produces a monthly newsletter containing information about what they have done and what is coming on their calendar.
- Items of interest are included, as well as Program Reports, notes from the State Council, a report from their Grand Knight, District Deputy and General Insurance agent when applicable.
- They also have developed a Facebook page promoting the Knights and the work of their council.

HELPING the ELDERLY and DISABLED:

Council #12172 – St. Marks – Boise – David Hammes, GK

- This council has worked tirelessly in support of the Idaho Special Olympics. Hundreds of hours were provided by council volunteers at Special Olympics local and regional games.
- Council members participated in fundraising efforts such as the "2017 Truck Raffle."
- They participated in "Tractor Pulls", "Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot" and others, resulting in over \$2,400 in donations to Special Olympics.
- This council also assists with Risen Christ's Medical Equipment Supply operations.

RECOGNITIONS

FAMILY of the YEAR: Tom and Katie Starr **Council # 10581 – Our Lady of the Rosary – Boise – Walt Donovan, GK**

This year's selection as "Family of the Year" couldn't fill the title any better. Tom and Katie Starr, and their nine (9) children from Boise, are all very active in their Council, Church and Community. As a family, they are involved in religious education, Eucharistic adoration, altar serving, choir members, helping in the nursery and in the Idaho Catholic Youth Conference. They are strong pro-life advocates and are active marchers in the March for Life rallies in Boise. Tom shared that one of the most important things they do is to pray together each night. When they pray together they form a forgiveness circle to forgive one another and a friendship circle to recognize and be thankful for the things they have done for each other.

DISTRICT DEPUTY of the YEAR: District Deputy #5 – Brother Paul Petro

For his exemplary service to his Councils, the State Deputy and our Order, it is with great honor to announce that the District Deputy of the year for 2017-2018 is Brother Paul Petro

COUNCIL of the YEAR: Council #899 – Sacred Heart – Boise – Vernon Bauer, Jr., GK

How do you determine what council is worthy of this award? Honestly, it isn't easy. There are so many councils who have worked very hard this year in programs, or membership or in Supreme Council requirement compliance. This council, however, has met or exceeded expectations in each category. Well over 100% in membership, only one insured member short of their goal, they are safe environment compliant and all required reports have been submitted to Supreme.

KNIGHT of the YEAR: From Council #1416 in Twin Falls – Carl Corbin

The Knight of the Year is nominated by his council and this year's winner was chosen from several applications we received. This Knight has truly exemplified selflessness in his devotion to our Order and in his devotion to charitable works. In this past year he was elected Deputy Grand Knight but volunteered to step up to Grand Knight when the position became available. Although he suffered health issues he still maintained a presence and assisted at nearly all of his council's functions. He has instituted programs at his parish that involve families, including our Building the Domestic Church program. He has improved communications with the council members by bringing important information to them in a timely manner. He has worked with new members on their advancements and assists in degree exemplifications.

In addition to his work with the Knights, he volunteers in a big way with the local Cub Pack, and Boy Scout Council in leadership positions. He has been honored to be appointed as an Assistant District Commissioner and he was honored with the highest district service award, The Silver Beaver Award.

PRIEST of the YEAR: State Chaplain Father Benjamin Uhlenkott

The Idaho State Council of the Knights of Columbus has selected State Chaplain Father Benjamin Uhlenkott as the Knights of Columbus Idaho State Priest of the Year.

Father Ben is a native of Idaho, having been raised in Cottonwood, Idaho. After high school, he attended Lewis and Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho. He discerned his calling to the priesthood and was led to his educational development at Mount Angel Seminary in Oregon. He was ordained as a priest on June 8, 2006.

He has had several assignments within the Diocese of Boise, including Holy Apostles in Meridian, Risen Christ in Boise, Our Lady of Good Counsel in Mountain Home and he currently serves as the pastor of St. Mark's in Boise. St. Mark's is the second largest parish in Idaho and his duties also include overseeing the St. Mark's Catholic School. When he was assigned as pastor, the parish and school were undergoing financial difficulties and the school was struggling to keep its certification.

As the pastor of St. Mark's Father Ben has introduced several new programs to enhance the spirituality of the parishioners. New educational opportunities have been developed and implemented under his leadership; including laity led Bible Studies as well as participation in on-line learning opportunities, evangelization retreats and 24 hour Adoration. The theme for this year's outreach programs is GPS which stands for; Give – Pray – Serve. All members of the parish are encouraged to pray daily, attend Mass and Adoration, participate in reconciliation, serve others and tithe.

Father Ben is an avid hunter and outdoors "person". He loves encouraging the youth of our community in their spiritual walk with the Lord. He served as the head of the West Central Deanery and also as the State Chaplain for the Catholic Conference of Women. He is constantly seen participating in the numerous ministries of the parish and interacting on a daily basis with the students at the parish school.

He has served as the State Chaplain for the Knights of Columbus since July, 2016. During that time he has acted as the spiritual leader of the Idaho State Council and has helped each Knight in Idaho become better men, fathers, husbands and Catholics. Several of the State Officers recently had the honor of going to Mexico with him on a wheelchair distribution. As we walked the streets of Guadalajara, people came to him and asked him for blessing and comfort. Father Ben, who speaks fluent Spanish, greeted everyone openly and helped them all. He took the time to listen to each of them and to whatever he could for them.

At one of the homes we delivered a wheelchair to, we found a man who was lying in bed, unable to move, dying of cancer. Father Ben spoke with him and the family, providing them comfort. If Father Ben had not been there, there is little doubt that he would not have had the opportunity to see a Priest before his passing.

Idaho Knights of Columbus are proud of their Catholic faith; however, those Knights who were present in Mexico with Father Ben were honored and proud to have spent this time with him, serving our fellow man. He is everything that we expect a Priest to be and is a great example of what a leader of our Church should be.

We are proud to call Father Ben Uhlenkott Father and Friend.

The Idaho Knights of Columbus highly recommend consideration of Father Benjamin Uhlenkott for Priest of the Year for the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael R. Townsend, Idaho State Deputy
Dan Moberg, State Warden – Program Director/Awards Chairman