

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS FOURTH DEGREE



LA District Biennial Meeting

Virtual Meeting

May 1, 2020

Donald Ducote
Louisiana District Master
321 South Jamie Blvd
Avondale, LA 70094

Submitted by:
Kell J. Luke
Louisiana District Scribe
Louisiana District Marshal

LA DISTRICT 35th Biennial MEETING MINUTES

1. Location: Virtual meeting
2. Date: May 1, 2020
3. Presiding Officer: Donald Ducote, Louisiana District Master
4. 9:03 AM **Louisiana District Master Donald Ducote**, "It is my honor to call the 35th Biennial Meeting of the Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree District of Louisiana to Order." Master Ducote stated that we are part of history as this is the first virtual meeting for the District of Louisiana.
5. 9:04 AM **LA State Chaplin Fr. Jamin David** lead the opening prayer. **Chief of Staff Shane Boudreaux** lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentations:

6. 9:06 AM **Michael Porter, Vice Supreme Master**: Opted to reserve his comments until later in the meeting.
7. 9:07 AM **Rennan Duffour, LA State Deputy**: State Deputy Duffour said that it was his pleasure and honor to be with us today. S.D. Duffour stated that over the past two years, the relationship between the LA State Council and the Master's staff has been very close and strong with great communication and participation at all 3rd & 4th Degree events. Goals and objectives were set to improve this relationship and S.D. Duffour believes we were successful in our united vision and mission. You could say we are "United in Spirit." S.D. Duffour went on to say that we have continued our mission and adapted and overcame obstacles presented by the Coronavirus Pandemic. S.D. Duffour thanked Brett Cormier for his time and resources in setting up the virtual 2020 4th Degree Biennial Meeting. S.D. Duffour went on to thank the Master and his Staff for their leadership for the past two years, and noted the 4th Degree growth in numbers, successfully dealing with significant changes, and that the 4th Degree is a stronger organization. S.D. Duffour closed by asking us to remember who we are: Knights of Columbus, Catholic men who value our faith, who are dedicated to the principles of the Order (Unity, Charity, Fraternity, and Patriotism), and who are men that are truly "United in Spirit."
8. 9:09 AM **Fr. Jamin David, LA State Chaplin**: Fr. David thanked us for the opportunity to be part of the 35th Biennial Meeting and recognized the Knights of Columbus for their efforts concerning the Coronavirus situation. Fr. David stated that God will help and provide what we need to get through this.
9. 9:10 AM **Louisiana District Master Donald Ducote's report: (Attached)** District Master Ducote extended greeting to everyone from the Patriotic Arm of the Order from the Louisiana District. Master Ducote stated that the last year was filled with opportunities and tragedies for all, but by the Grace of God we, we were still able to gather in non-traditional ways to serve our

Churches, Religious, and Communities. Master Ducote expressed his gratitude for the warm hospitality and fraternal brotherhood he received when attending the many Diocesan Meetings, Major Degrees, and Exemplifications across the state. Master Ducote extended a huge "Thank You" to the Louisiana State Family for the continued support they have shown to him and the 4th Degree and for their presence at 4th Degree functions, which exemplified Master Ducote's motto of "Knights United." Together we have strengthened our Order and have shown the Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism for which our Order is so well known. Together we were able to address questions and changes. To State Deputy Rennan Duffour, Master Ducote stated that his leadership was exemplary and was always available for support however needed. On behalf of the Louisiana District of the 4th Degree, Master Ducote offered our thanks and support to the incoming officers and asked that we continue to work as ONE ORDER for the support of our Holy Mother Church, our Religious, our Communities, and for the expansion of our Order. Master Ducote closed by mentioning the upcoming 4th Degree Officer Installations, to be discussed later in the meeting, and recognized members of his Staff who have provided help and support.

10. 9:12 AM **Appointments by Master Ducote:**
Parliamentarian: Tim Boudreaux, Former Master
Scribe: Kell Luke, District Marshal
11. 9:13 AM **Roll call of Assemblies and Delegates** by Administrative Assistant Warren Deemer, IFM/ PFN/ PGK.
Motion to seat Delegates as presented by: Warren Deemer
Seconded by: Kell Luke
Motion carried.
12. 9:26 AM **Balloting on the 34th Biennial Meeting Minutes and the Reports** as presented electronically.
Motion to accept by: Shane Boudreaux
Seconded by: Edward DiGiovanni
Motion carried.

Summarized Attached District Chairmen Reports:

District Membership Director Russell Ruh's Report: (Attached)

Membership Chairman Russell Ruh said it was a pleasure to serve as the District's Membership Director for the past two years and traveled the state making almost all of the Major Degrees authorized by State Deputy Duffour. Director Ruh noted that at each Degree, pamphlets containing a letter from the Master and Supreme Master, a Form 4, and pertinent information for the 4th Degree and upcoming Exemplification were handed out to the candidates and any 3rd Degree Brother Knight wishing to join our ranks. Director Ruh felt this process worked well for the District. In Director Ruh's report, he noted the Exemplifications held by Master Ducote and the number of candidates for each. Director Ruh expressed his gratitude to the Exemplar Team members for their consistent effort to produce a good Exemplification and stated that the Degrees are very powerful because of the Team's presentation. Director Ruh closed by saying that we all need to start recruiting for the next Exemplification and stated that it is essential for us to grow and to have new members to be our next officers.

District Exemplar Chairman Timothy Boudreaux's Report: (Attached)

Exemplar Chairman Tim Boudreaux opened his report by thanking District Master Ducote for allowing him to serve the District as Exemplar Chairman. Chairman Boudreaux noted the two Exemplifications held in the 2018-2019 fraternal year: Slidell on 2-16-19 and Alexandria on 5-18-19. For the 2019-2020 fraternal year, three Exemplifications were held: Lafayette on 8-17-19, Houma on 11-16-19, and Prairieville on 2-15-20. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Exemplification scheduled for May 2020 has been cancelled. Chairman Boudreaux's report listed the members of the Louisiana District's Exemplar Team and noted the dedication of each member to exemplify the virtue of Patriotism to all candidates. Chairman Boudreaux's report also listed the Exemplification Expense sheets for each Exemplification. Chairman Boudreaux expressed his gratitude all the Exemplar team members for their dedication and expressed how rewarding it is to be Chairman. He then stated to the Exemplar Team "Without you, there would be **NO EXEMPLIFICATIONS!**". Chairman Boudreaux closed by thanking and congratulating all the Assemblies in the LA District for all they do to promote Patriotism in our great state and in our great nation.

District E.R.E. Chairman Kell Luke's Report: (Attached)

Chairman Kell Luke expressed his appreciation to Master Ducote for allowing him the honor and privilege to serve as Chairman. Chairman Kell Luke started his presentation by recapping the 2019 E.R.E. Program; stating that the District collected \$21,607.00 (82% of quota), withheld \$310.00 (1.5%) for administrative supplies, and disbursed \$21,297.00 to the seven Bishops of the State. He then stated that the 2020 E.R.E. District quota is \$26,030.00. As of April 24, 2020, the District collected \$11,562.00, which is 44% of quota. Chairman Luke stated that the deadline for Assemblies to donate to the program will be extended to June 30, 2020 due to the Covid-19 situation. He then closed by expressing his appreciation to all the Assemblies who have supported the program in the past and who continue to support the program.

District Patriotic Chairman Warren Deemer's Report: (Attached)

Chairman Warren Deemer stated that the Patriotic Program for the District of Louisiana remains viable from the voluntary donation of \$2.00 per regular member per Assembly. Chairman Deemer stated that the 2020 awards were purchased and distributed as per the request for awards, due on December 1, 2019. Some Assemblies waited to submit their request in February and March. It became necessary to purchase additional rewards. The Coronavirus situation prevented us from meeting to distribute the awards, so additional postage was necessary to mail the awards. Chairman Deemer requested that all Assemblies assist the next Patriotic Chairman by honoring the due date for ordering awards. Chairman Deemer stated that he received comments about the Assemblies wanting to receive the Patriotic Essay information in July of each year. The 2019-2020 information was distributed to all Assemblies who attended the July 17, 2019 Promotional Meeting in Baton Rouge. The Promotional Meetings are held to provide information on programs that Assemblies need to keep their chairmen and members informed. Chairman Deemer stated that several Assemblies failed to submit their voluntary donation which is used to fund the Patriotic Program which is used to teach tomorrow's leaders about Patriotism our Nation needs. Chairman Deemer closed by saying that if we fail to keep Patriotism alive,

Supreme Court Justice Storey's greatest fear will come true, and democracy will cease to exist.

District Veterans Affairs Chairman Larry Jones' report: (Attached)

VA Hospital: VA Voluntary Services Designated Representative (VAVS) assigned by Supreme. Chairman Jones attended all quarterly meetings at the new Veterans Hospital, New Orleans, LA, also attended Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) quarterly meeting at the VA Hospital, and was selected by the Director of the VA Hospital to become the Chairman of the Veterans Community Council. Chairman Jones coordinated the presentation of the JROTC awards to five high schools in the New Orleans area and the Patriotic medallion awards to six high schools in the New Orleans area. The awards were all mailed. Chairman Jones coordinated the presentation of the ROTC awards to Tulane's Air Force, Navy, and Army cadets. The awards were engraved, but the presentations were canceled due to Covid-19. Chairman Jones said the Patriotic Award certificates we give out have no place to put the recipient's name and the glossy paper does not accept printing well and suggest we use heavy certificate paper instead. Chairman Jones spoke about the coordinated efforts with the LA Dept. of Veterans Affairs to help raise money for the cremation of veterans remains who had been abandoned at morgues around the state, so they can have a military funeral that they deserve. Chairman Jones also commented on funds raised to purchase Christmas gifts for the residents of the St. John Veterans Home. Chairman Jones closed by saying it has been a pleasure to serve as the Louisiana District VA Chairman.

13. 9:27 AM **Old Business:** No old business was brought up or discussed.

14. 9:30 AM **New Business:**

A. Reading of the resume' of each candidate for District Master for the 2020-2022 term by District Master Ducote:

1. S/K Renan Duffour, State Deputy
2. S/K Kell Luke, District Marshal
3. S/K Donald Ducote, District Master

Master Ducote stated that he was mandated to add his name to the list because he has to submit three names, but will decline to repeat as Master, because he feels the District has too many qualified members for him to repeat.

One other candidate submitted his name but did not meet the guidelines for consideration set by Master Ducote.

Peter Snatic took responsibility for the potential candidate not receiving the information in time.

Jack O'Reilly commented that it is Supreme who appoints the District Masters.

Parliamentarian Tim Boudreaux explained the guideline for the District Master appointments and that an election is to be held only if more than three names are submitted.

B. Resolutions for Consideration:

1. Submitted by Msgr Peeters Assembly #332: Resolution to resend the removal of the colors of red, white, and blue and our USA flag being worn on our Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus attire. Signed by Faithful Navigator Robert Istre and Faithful Comptroller Al Daboval, Jr.

Former Master Tim Boudreaux said that we should all be in support of this resolution.

2. Resolution for dividing the Districts of the Bienville Province in the State of Louisiana.

NOTE: This resolution was read to 35th Biennial Meeting Assembly, but since the resolution was not signed and sealed by the submitting Assembly, it does not follow the legal protocol and will not be accepted and submitted to the Vice Supreme Master.

15. 9:51 AM **Michael Porter, Vice Supreme Master's Comments:** VSM Porter mentioned that the Supreme Master has reduced the membership quota by 40% for the remainder of the year due to the Coronavirus situation, which should help more Assemblies achieve Star Assembly. The Louisiana District's quota is now at 218 new members from 363. VSM Porter stated that Supreme has granted permission to hold virtual Exemplifications. There will be one held in Arkansas on Saturday May 9, 2020. Master Ducote has the information to log in and all necessary information for candidates to attend. VSM Porter stated that the \$12 fees per candidate to Supreme are still to be paid and that the candidates should still receive a 4th Degree social baldric and lapel pin, and a certificate. VSM Porter said that the \$70 candidate fee can be reduced to \$50.

O&A for VSM Porter:

IFVSM Russell Ruh inquired as to why the 4th Degree had to pay the \$12 fee when Supreme canceled the assessments for Councils? VSM Porter said the cancelation of fees was for the 3rd Degree only.

Former Master Ron Fogarty asked about the knighting for a virtual Exemplification. VSM Porter said that if the current District Master couldn't be there, then if a Former Master attends, he could do it. If not, then a Past Faithful Navigator can be appointed by the District Master to knight a candidate.

Former Master Tim Boudreaux asked about an online Form 4. VSM Porter said that Supreme will not approve that. FM Boudreaux also asked about the candidates purchasing their own social baldric if they want one. VSM Porter said that we will continue to use the social baldric and that the Districts need to provide them.

Comments:

Master Ducote said that the number of Sir Knights with the new uniform is going up in the District. He asked the Marshals of the District to continue to promote the uniform. Master Ducote recognized the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese for their number of uniforms. District Marshal Kell Luke reported that the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese currently has 24 members with the uniform. Master Ducote also recognized the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese for holding a quarterly 4th Degree Diocesan meeting and how well it allows for the dissemination of information to the Assemblies. Master Ducote said that things were going well in the District and progressing. Master Ducote also mentioned that the next Exemplification is scheduled for August 2020 in Lake Charles. He needs an Assembly to host. Master Ducote then suggested to the District Master appointee candidates that they consult with the State Deputy as soon as possible to schedule the future Exemplifications for the

next two years. Master Ducote thanks everyone who attended the 35th Biennial Meeting and recognized Brett Cormier and Warren Deemer for all their efforts in making the virtual meeting successful. Master Ducote talked about the recruiting efforts that are needed and recognized District Membership Director Russell Ruh for all his efforts and dedication to recruitment and for attending the Major Degrees. Master Ducote said that we can't get a 4th Degree unless we have a 3rd Degree, so he encouraged everyone to help promote and recruit membership at the council level. Master Ducote closed his comments by mentioning the great advantages to the 4th Degree when there is complete cooperation with the State Deputy.

Administrative Assistant IFM Warren Deemer recognized the LA State Family and the LA Former District Masters for their attendance, participation, and support at the Exemplifications.

VSM Porter stated that he appreciates the effort of the Louisiana District and the State Deputy. VSM Porter also mentioned that the Bienville Province Provincial meeting is scheduled for August 28th and 29th and maybe held in Hot Springs, Arkansas. He will send out the information when he has it put together.

S/K Peter Snatic said that the Lake Charles Diocese is looking to host the August Exemplification in either Sulphur or Deridder, LA. Master Ducote will be contacted when a host site and Assembly are secured.

Master Ducote stated that the final Exemplification for 2020 is scheduled for November in New Orleans. Master Ducote also mentioned to the District Master appointee candidates that they need to start looking for a date and venue for their State Installation and to make sure it is big enough.

VSM Porter explained the process for the District Master appointment and all he needs to do before the names of the candidates reach the Supreme Master. The next District Master appointments will come out after the Supreme Convention in August.

16. 10:30 AM **Good of the Order:**

Administrative Assistant Deemer said that with the Supreme Master reducing the new member quota to 4%, we may have up to 12 Assemblies achieve Star Assembly this Columbian Year and possibly more. FM Deemer recognized Assembly #336 in Houma for achieving 385% of quota and Assembly #2182 in Deridder for achieving 233% of quota.

VSM Porter said that Assemblies still need to hold their meetings and election of officers for the next term and also said that the officers are elected to a one year term and are to be re-elected to serve additional terms. VSM Porter also clarified that the Report of Officers (Form 186) for the 2020-2021 Columbian Year must be turned in by June 30, 2020 for the Star Assembly criteria.

Master Ducote said that many of our Assemblies are very close to achieving Star Assembly, because they have achieved their membership quota, but are lacking in submitting some of their reports and forms. VSM Porter said that Master Ducote is to select one "To Be A Patriot" entry and submit that to him. Master Ducote discussed the installation of officers for the next Columbian

Year and asked all Assemblies to submit a date with all the necessary information to him as soon as possible. An Assembly may request a Former Master for the installation, but that request must be submitted to Master Ducote for approval.

State Deputy Duffour said that if the installations can be done virtually, then the State's GoTo Meeting or GoTo Webinar platforms can be used if they are available and not currently scheduled for another event.

VSM Porter stated that the new District Master appointments should come out in mid August.

17. 10:45 AM **District Friar Fr. Pat Wattigny** addressed the Assembly and thanked all Knights for their help with the Coronavirus situation and said the Knights exemplified the virtues of the Order and Knights in Action. Fr. Pat also expressed his appreciation for our expression of Patriotism. Fr. Pat mentioned that EWTN will be televising the Consecration of the Church to Mary today, 5-1-2020.

18. 10:48 AM **District Friar Fr. Pat Wattigny** lead the closing prayer.

District Master Don Ducote thanked Fr. Pat for his service as our District Friar for the last six years and again thanked everyone who attended the 35th Biennial Virtual Meeting.

19. 10:50 AM Motion to adjourn by: Administrative Assistant IFM Warren Deemer

Seconded by: Chief of Staff Shane Boudreaux

Motion carried.

District Master Donald Ducote adjourned the 35th Biennial Virtual Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kell J. Luke

Kell J. Luke, FDD/ PFN/ PGK

Louisiana District Scribe

Louisiana District Marshal

May 1, 2020