

JULY 2015



INSIGHT

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OUR
VOLUNTEER OFFICERS WORLD WIDE.

focus

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OUR MEMBERS ARE CRASHING WHAT MORE CAN WE DO TO HELP? By Ray Garris and Bob Berry

In the last few weeks, we have received word of at least FIVE crashes involving our two and three-wheel riders. All of these crashes were serious and involved critical injuries and even some fatalities. Bob and I find ourselves each time asking ourselves if we as an Association have done everything possible to help our Members avoid these tragic situations.

We are blessed with the best, most thorough Rider Education and Skill Development Program in the world. In addition, most Members can participate in Motorcycle Safety Foundation courses, and safety/skill training by Street Masters, Total Control, Ride Like a Pro, and a myriad of other training opportunities that keep us safe.

We have trained Educators at all levels, fabulous live seminars on a variety of subjects focused on keeping us safe, professionally designed “on-bike” training courses, several video presentations and much more.

But, can we do more? What else can we do to equip our

Members with the education and training to hopefully avoid these serious accidents?

That, my friends, is the question that we are asking of you. As a key person in GWRRA leadership, you are in a unique position of influence...and responsibility. We ask you to ask yourself, “What can I do to help prevent these heartbreaking events?” Are the Chapters you are responsible for passing on all of the information that is available in Rider Ed? Do we reserve at least 5 minutes at each gathering to share some important Rider Ed safety tips? Do we feature an article offering more in-depth Rider Ed information in each of our newsletters at all levels? At our rallies or “Training Days” do we include some Rider Ed seminars and/or on-bike (trike) training wherever possible?

We will probably never know what really caused many of the tragic accidents that we hear about. Several of these are single vehicle events. Did we share our knowledge about the changes that occur as we get older? Did we equip our Riders and Co-riders with enough knowledge about Rider Ed to help them make smarter and safer decisions as they travel the highways and byways?

We all know that “RISK” is a “Constant Companion” on all of our opportunities to ride and enjoy our hobby. Are we doing everything possible to reduce that risk for ourselves and all of our Members? Here’s a good way to get started.

In a few weeks, thousands of our Members will be on the road to Wing Ding in Huntsville, Alabama. Every year, we hear of incidents/accidents/crashes that occur on the way to or from Wing Ding. We ask...no, we challenge each of you to do all you possibly can to have those statistics and those for every ride we take, be ZERO.

We look forward to hearing from you with any comments or suggestions you might have on how we can help keep our Members safe on the highways and byways.

Please ride safe and as often as your weather will permit.

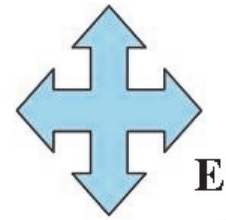
Thank you.

Ray & Sandi Garris

Bob & Althea Berry

Your Directors of GWRRA

Directors of Rider Education



How We Have Fun in our Chapter

When we all joined GWRRA we were looking for a group that liked to ride and liked to have fun. In Chapter FL1-A, Tampa that is exactly what we found 21 years ago. Hi, I'm Nan Shrader; the Chapter Director for Chapter FL1-A in Tampa, FL and one half of the Deputy Director Team for Regions A and N.

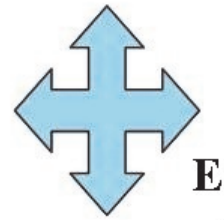
Some of the best times we have had in Chapter A are on our overnights. A good ride on back roads to our destination, pool time, dinner and then an evening of laughter, card games, joke telling and just plain story telling. It becomes a family very quickly when all of this comes together. It leaves lasting memories and a desire to do it all over again as soon as possible.

We schedule at least 2 rides a week and sometimes 3. For over 20 years we have met every Friday night rain or shine for a dinner ride. The Chapter Team picks destinations about 2 months in advance and then they are put on the calendar so everyone knows where we are going. It is not uncommon for folks to meet us at the restaurant if for some reason they couldn't ride or were running late. It is such a tradition that when we don't make it we really miss it. Suggestions for destinations are always welcome.

We have a yearly picnic/auction for Chapter Members. On every ride or Chapter function Members are given "Chapter Bucks". Every June we spend those bucks on items that everyone donates. Bidding can get heated but all in fun. Millions of bucks are spent at this affair. Believe me, everyone wants their "bucks" when they attend a function and they never let me forget to give them their due!

Our Chapter gatherings are known for the infamous "brown bag". The motto is "if there is something in the bag to wear you must put it on". Of course there is always something to wear in the bag. No one wants the "bag" but everyone get it at one time or another. Believe me ,cameras come out of the woodwork on this one.

Our "Dipstick Award" is always a hit. If you do something memorable



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(something that you yourself may not want to remember) then you can look forward to the award at the gathering. It is always in fun and in no way ridicules. A large candy bar is also part of the award to "make it go down smoothly".

We always attend our District Rally and enter all of the competitions. Chapter Pride, Chapter Shirt, the Talent Show, Chapter Scrapbook, Chapter Collage, Chapter Banner and whatever other competition arises. What fun it is to practice for Chapter Pride and the Talent Show. The practices are so fun that we audio tape them for laughs later.

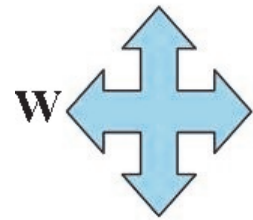
Other Chapter visitations are also a good way to find out what works for them. It is always nice to visit fellow GWRRA Members and make new friends in another area. Again, we all have the same thing in common: riding and having fun.

We have the honor of being named the 2014 Florida District Chapter of the Year, the 2014 Region "A" Chapter of the Year and the 1st Runner Up for the International Chapter of the Year. All this has been accomplished by a great group of Members that ride together, eat together, play together and work together to make Chapter FL1-A the best.

Nan Shrader



Bob & Nan



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TEAM, a Demonstration of How It Works

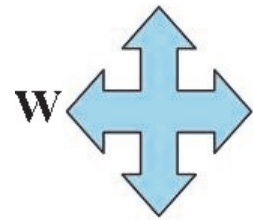
GWRRA talks a lot about TEAM. We are to “govern” as a TEAM. We are to act as a TEAM. What we haven’t spent enough time talking about is how we make this happen. There are many components in making any TEAM work, many people and personalities! Let me share with you a TEAM that worked like a finely tuned machine.

Region F is a very vast Region covering 7 Districts/states and that includes Hawaii. There is also a city that is included in the Region, El Paso, TX is part of the New Mexico District due to distance from their TX fellow Chapters and Members. There are just fewer than 6,000 GWRRA Members who live in this Region. It is the Southwest Region and nicknamed Region “F”un!

Memorial Day weekend has been Region “F”un’s rally for many years. This year a new location was chosen, a 5 star resort in Tucson. The Region TEAM all worked on their responsibilities to make this rally a success under the leadership of Director Keith and Teresa Morrison. They have 3 Assistant Region Directors who live in California, Colorado and New Mexico so they are spread out around the Region. Planning was coming right along and then a personal tragedy happen for Keith and Teresa with Keith’s brother Jerry’s cancer coming back after a long hard fought battle. Keith and Teresa went to be with Jerry and left the TEAM in the hands of their Assistants.

First lesson for all TEAMS, how are your Assistants doing? Ray wrote about Assistants = Assistance and in this case we didn’t know how true that was about to be demonstrated! Directors and I’m talking to all Directors/leaders of all positions in GWRRA, designate an Assistant and then make them a vital part of what you do. They should know as much as you do and should be able to step in for you should the need arise. Keith and Teresa’s Assistants are kept in the loop and they are ready.

Second lesson regarding a rally, take your TEAM on a site visit if it’s a new location so they know where things are as well as you. This also helps them “sell” the new location to the Members because they can speak from knowledge. Region TEAM had their site visit last October so they were aware



of the location and they had definitely been selling all its assets and they were many!

Third lesson is to save what you did last year; it can be reused each year and just needs some updating. Agendas, schedules, hours, table plaques, trophies ordered and for what, and how much tickets will cost are valuable pieces of information that will give you a blueprint for the years to follow. (Side Note: I was taught to save everything in My Documents so I only have to back up My Documents to have all the files that I have worked on and don't want to lose. Now I have a lot of folders in My Documents to keep me organized but it is comforting to know 1 backup and I've got all those important files.)

So how did these lessons come together at Region "F"un rally? With Keith and Teresa's absence Assistant Mark Davis drove all the materials to the rally. Assistant Cathy Diaz and sidekick/husband George, along with Treasurer Patti O'Neill, organized the workroom so everything was easily assessable and ready to go when needed. Vendor Coordinators Donna Pickens, Jan and Ken Pedder took their responsibilities and went to work to give their vendors an exceptional experience. As the rest of the TEAM arrived they started doing what they needed to do to get their areas of responsibilities ready to go. The ultimate goal, all would run smoothly, Keith and Teresa had nothing to worry about except Jerry, and the Members would have an outstanding event.

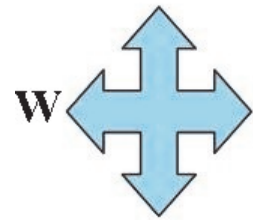
Fourth lesson is to remember to reach out to those who have gone before, they can be your best resource and biggest cheerleader. They are happy to help out, just ask.

The Members start arriving and the TEAM is there to welcome them with open arms. Assistants Mark and Cathy are leading the TEAM and acting just like ducks, calm on the surface and paddling like heck beneath the surface. As the Deputy Director along with Director Ray and Sandi Garris, we consistently checked in with Mark and Cathy to offer any assistance. Our primary task, keep them calm.

Opening ceremonies is just minutes away and nerves are a bit on edge. They want the very best for the Members, they want it to be FUN and for everything

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to go super well. While talking with Mark, he gets a call, it's Keith and his brother Jerry has just passed away, RIP Jerry. With that emotion raging through, Mark gathers it together and he and Cathy take the stage. From the audience they looked as though they'd been doing it for years. The mistakes (only they knew where they were) were humorous events and everyone was having FUN. Ray then gets up and has everyone take a selfie, group selfie, whatever and then we sent them all to Keith, glad we didn't blow your phone up Keith!

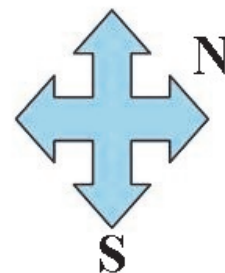
This TEAM worked hard all weekend putting their personal emotions for the loss in check and the Members appreciated everything they did and from the outside looking in, it was one incredible TEAM that came together for the Members and made it happen! Every person on the TEAM acted together, worked together and stood together and that is what TEAM is all about!!!

Let's hope you never have to find out if your TEAM could weather a storm like this with the grace and confidence that the Region "F"un TEAM did, but just in case, let's plan for the what if and be intentional with our actions and build interconnected TEAMS that work together, play and have FUN together, have each other's backs without hesitation, and always be aware that the Members want to see the happy and FUN end result not all that it takes to get there.

Congratulation Region "F"un TEAM, your performance was AWESOME!

Anita & JR





By the Book

“By the Book” articles are intended to help familiarize GWRRA Volunteer Leaders and Members with the policies, procedures, and information contained in the GWRRA Officer’s Handbook (OHB). A copy of the Officer’s Handbook can be found at the following Internet website: www.gwrra.org/oconnect/officerhandbook.html

Please feel free to reprint these articles in Region, District, or Chapter newsletters.

Are You Having Fun?

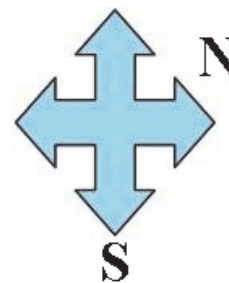
I'm going to depart somewhat from the 'normal' *By the Book*' format and talk about another Officer resource intended to help provide support for our motto of 'Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge'. If Chapter gatherings are nothing more than sharing information that could be obtained by reading the Chapter newsletter, then Members will lose interest in attending the actual function. Yes, everyone should enjoy the fellowship gatherings provide, and hopefully the food is good enough to bring them back; But if you're looking for a way to spice things up beyond just the routine 'reading of the newsletter', Rider Ed presentation and 50/50 drawing, then keep reading.

On the Membership Enhancement page of www.gwrra.org, there is a link to the Fun Activities Guide. That guide is a treasure trove of ideas to make your gatherings and rides much more FUN. Just as there are Regional cuisines, it's not uncommon for Regional activities to be commonplace, some of which you may not be aware of in your area. The Fun Activities Guide is by no means meant to be a comprehensive collection. But it is a good place to go for ideas which may be new to your Chapter participants. Some of the games may seem silly, but you'd be surprised by how much everyone enjoys them once they get started. There are ice breakers, which really get visitors and new Members involved in making new acquaintances or learning something new about old friends. There are games of 'skill' where everyone can take a turn at accomplishing a task. There are couples activities as well as individual activities. Take a cue from the TV show *Minute to Win It*. There are ideas for recognition awards. After all, who doesn't like to be publicly recognized for their accomplishments – okay, some 'happenings', while deserving of

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recognition, aren't necessarily enjoyed by the recipient. But remember, we're laughing with you, not at you. Well, sometimes we are laughing at you, but you'll get your turn to get even – which is part of what makes it fun. While these can be mildly embarrassing, they should never be in poor taste and always done in good fun.

We all enjoy just riding together – whether it be for food or just to enjoy a nice afternoon out. But there are ways to make rides more than just following each other to the destination. The Fun Activities Guide has ideas for that as well. Some of which can be easily turned into Chapter fundraisers if desired.

So take a look at the Fun Activities Guide. If you have other ideas, please share them – instructions for doing that are also part of the Guide. Don't lose sight of the first word of why we exist – FUN! Remember, if it's not fun, you must not be doing it right.

The more you know, the better it gets!

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THE ROLLING STOP

You know, even with all of the hype about “being aware of motorcycles” those \$#@!! 4-wheelers still don’t pay attention. We’ve all seen them. They’ll roll up to a stop sign, pause (not stop) for a second, and gun it. You’ve just about got enough time to apply all of those great ERC skills and maybe add your own touches, like the horn and a string of expletives that must have come from somebody else. (I didn’t know I knew all those nasty words!)

And if the skills don’t help, what’s the first thing those drivers tell the police officer? “I didn’t see the bike.” No kidding Sherlock. You didn’t give yourself time to look. I used to spend a lot of time berating 4-wheelers for that most inconsiderate, and dangerous practice until one day I was faced with an awful truth. I, and quite a few of my fellow riders, do exactly the same thing.

We roll up to a stop sign and if the wheels stop turning at all, it’s only for a second. The feet never hit the ground. Maybe there are times when keeping the tires moving is the safest way to go, but most of the time I have to ask myself if I’m just being lazy.

As I gain “maturity” I also have to look at reaction time, eyesight, and powers of observation. Why folks don’t “see the bike” is that they never really observe the roadway. They look but they don’t see. “Seeing” is a slow reaction. It takes those little cells and neurons some time to process what we thought we saw, and interpret it correctly. Could I really pick out from the background the speeding sport bike with no headlight in the nano-second I glance to my left while checking my rearview mirror, balancing my Wing at 2 mph, and trying to figure out if this is really the right turn to the closest Dairy Queen? I don’t think so. So I stop. Put my feet down. Collect myself, and go. So far, I’ve never had to say “I didn’t see the bike.”

Bob & Althea