



Michigan District

Region D "The Great Lakes Region"

"Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge"



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Our Mission:

**To Save Lives
Through Quality,
World Class Education**

Our Motto:

"Safety Is For Life"

RIDER ED DIRECT

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A Monthly Communication to Michigan's Chapter Educators
From your GWRRA Michigan District Rider Ed Team
Volume 2 Number 8

To: All **Chapter Educators**, and **Chapter Directors** *without* an Educator

This is intended to *support* your Rider Education efforts. If you need a topic idea for your required "Gimme 5" talk at your Gathering or for your chapter newsletter article this month, feel free to use this material in part or in whole. It is **not** mandatory that you use this either for your talk or in your newsletter. If you choose to use it, feel free to change it to suit your audience. If you use this as your article *without change*, however, please credit the MI District Rider Ed Team. *Thanks!*

(Possible "Gimme 5" for Chapter Educators for **September, 2008**)

Monthly Topic: What, Me Worry? Yes, You'd Better!

In GWRRA we are always doing things in groups. We meet our fellow chapter members and ride together for a weekly dinner run. Or we join each other for a weekend breakfast before going on a run. Or we make an ice cream run together on a weekly basis. Most chapters have this kind of camaraderie and fellowship in one form or another. Then there are the monthly Gatherings where we meet and eat and have fun. And the rides to visit other chapters and support them at their Fun Run or Anniversary Party or Pig Out, and various other events that chapters put on. Most of the time we ride together in groups to and from our destination.

Whenever we ride in groups, someone is in the Lead. Hopefully, it is one of our GWRRA-trained Road Captains. In our chapter, it is someone whom we trust, respect and have confidence in. Someone with good judgment who is prepared to lead the group from the starting point all the way to our destination. Someone who has planned a route and shares it with all who join the ride. S/He holds a pre-ride meeting with all participants to tell us the route, advise us of any stops along the way, and discuss our speed on the road. Our Lead may ask questions about who is on medication, who may need to stop at shorter intervals (perhaps due to a smaller gas tank), who has a CB radio, and who does not, etc. Our Road Captain covers hand signals for riders that are new to our group, too. Our Road Captain has been leading our rides for a few years. We don't think twice about following him/her because s/he never lets us down. We always arrive safely when we follow our Road Captain. We are very fortunate to have such a Road Captain in the Lead!

We also have another Road Captain, trained in the GWRRA way, to bring up the rear of the group. (This is our Drag bike, or Tail Gunner.) These two work together like Lennon and McCartney. The Drag seems to know what the Lead is thinking, securing the lane almost as the thought passes through the mind of our Lead. They communicate well with

each other. They let the group know what is going on around them. They inform us about things, like telling us we will be turning – in advance of the turn; when a car is attempting to pass the group on a 2-lane road; or when a car is passing on the right when we are on the highway. Our Lead and Drag are always making us aware of hazards on the road and around us. We know they are looking out for the safety of the group. With Road Captains of this caliber, we feel very safe. We know we can enjoy the ride and watch the scenery with these two in charge.

Wait! Stop right there! We *all* need to remember that even those of us in the middle of the formation have responsibilities. We are responsible to pass on the hand signals from the Lead, such as for single file, stagger formation, pointing out potholes and road kill, sand in the corners, and other hazards, etc. We need to be aware who we are riding with, too. The burden is not all on the Road Captains. We cannot sleep because we ride in the middle of the pack. We need to maintain safe spacing with the other bikes around us. And most importantly, we need to ride our own ride. We *must* stay alert. Hazards don't always appear in front of the Lead bike. Sometimes they come at the riders in the middle of the group. We need to be aware of our surroundings and ready to react to the unexpected at all times. We must remember that, just because our Road Captain is leading us, we are not excused from thinking for ourselves and riding our own ride. We are *all* responsible for our own safety at *all* times. Never give that responsibility away. It is nice to have someone willing to help look out for your safety, but ultimately, it is your life. Guard it wisely! Be sure to ride your own ride, even in Team Riding!

Planning Reminders:

1. Team Riding and Road Captain seminars are available for presentation at your chapter. Invite neighboring chapters and share the knowledge opportunity. Seminar request form is available here:

http://www.gwrra-mi.org/RiderEdForms/Seminar_Request_Form.pdf

2. This is a good time to set up your off-season First Aid / CPR / AED training. Beat the mid-winter rush. The request form is available here:

http://www.gwrra-mi.org/RiderEdForms/MFA_Request_Form.pdf

3. The Fall Officer's meeting is scheduled for November 1st – just 2 months away. This time it does not conflict with Deer Camp (for rifles)! We hope to see all the Chapter Educators with their CDs & ACDs at the meeting in Bay City at the Doubletree Hotel. Make plans now with your CD to attend. Educators are chapter officers, too!

Thanks for all you do for Rider Education! And remember: **Safety Is For Life!**

Bruce & Melissa Thayer