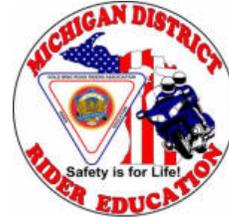




Michigan District

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

September 2009

A Monthly Communication to Michigan's Chapter Educators
From your GWRRA Michigan District Rider Ed Team
Volume 3 Number 7

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!*

Usually the MI Rider Ed Team gets a little "down time" after the MI Rally, but that didn't seem to be the case this year! In fact, we did not get a Rider Ed Direct out at all for August. We sincerely apologize! Things have still not slowed down so I have reached back into the archives to find a relevant article that can be used for September. We attended a chapter gathering last week where some visiting members were given a rapid explanation of the Rider Education Levels Program. We got to thinking that there were others out there who might benefit from this article that was written by former Senior District Educator Tom Rushman a few years ago.

(Possible "Gimme 5" for Chapter Educators for **September, 2009**)

MONTHLY TOPIC: TO BE OR NOT TO BE (Level IV, that is)

In the past year, we have seen tremendous growth at all Levels in the Rider Education Levels Program. Many members are signing up for the first time and those that are already in the Levels Program are keeping their certifications current. Getting started in the Levels Program is easy. The first step is a commitment to ride safe. Have you ever heard anybody say "No, I'm not going to be a safe rider/co-rider"? There is really no good reason why a GWRRA member is not at least Level I.

To reach the second step requires a little training. The rider needs to take a riding course (Advanced Rider Course, Trike Course, Sidecar Course, Trailering Course, Basic Rider Course, Experienced Rider Course, etc.) The co-rider can take a Co-Rider Course, attend a Co-Rider Seminar or watch the Co-Rider Video. The investment of time (1 to 8 hours, every 3 years) is small compared to what can be learned. Some members feel that

they won't benefit from this training but those who have taken the courses and/or seminars will tell you that they are more confident and they are better riders/co-riders. Level II also requires 5,000 Safe (accident free) Miles. When you see a member wearing a Level II patch, you know that they have taken the first step to increase their knowledge and that they are concerned about their safety and the safety of those they ride with.

Advancing to Level III takes a little more effort than Level II. Along with the Riding Course, Seminar or Video, the member must also carry a first aid kit on the bike and be current in First Aid or CPR. This involves taking an additional one day training class every 1 or 2 years (depending on what class is taken). With this additional investment of time, the Level III Rider/Co-Rider is prepared to assist in an emergency situation should one occur. A member wearing a Level III patch is not only concerned about safety. They are also ready to deal with emergencies, care for injuries or save a life!

Level IV, the next step in the Levels Program, represents the highest level of commitment to preparedness and safe riding. Some members choose not to move on to Level IV but the ones that do are shining examples to the rest of the GWRRA Membership. The requirements for this Level are more stringent than for the other Levels. In addition to fulfilling the requirements for Levels II and III the rider or co-rider must also have been Level III for at least a year and must have 25,000 Safe Miles. This requirement ensures that the applicant has obtained the proper training and has ridden sufficient time and distance to put that training to actual use. The member must also be current in both First Aid **and** CPR certifications. The final requirement to being a Level IV Master Tour Rider or Co-Rider seems to be the one that creates the most discussion. All Level IV Riders and Co-Riders must "wear proper riding apparel at all times while riding." This is probably the biggest reason why there are not more Level IVs than there are. Proper riding apparel includes a DOT approved helmet, eye protection, long sleeved shirt or jacket, long pants, over the ankle footwear and full-fingered gloves. The Level IV application also requires the applicant's signature to the following statement:

"I am affirming by my signature that I agree to abide by the requirements set forth by GWRRA for the Master Tour Rider including continuing training and preparation and by riding **at all times** in proper riding gear."

The fact that there are some members who will not make the necessary commitment for Level IV tells me that they are honest people. They know that they don't agree to these conditions and that is all well and good. An honest and dedicated Level I, II or III member sets a much better example than a Level IV rider who does not follow through on their commitment.

Most of us were raised with the idea that we lived up to our word, kept our promises and we didn't make commitments that we weren't willing to fulfill. The act of signing your name to something was serious and really meant something. These ideals are still alive today.

The decision to move to Level IV is not always an easy one. If a person is honest and has any integrity at all, this decision will not be made lightly. Some members know they will ride without gloves, boots, long sleeves or pants or without a helmet in states where that is allowed. This is still a free country (thank God and the Veterans) and we will each make our own decisions regarding these issues. We will each decide how much risk we will accept. For other members the decision is easy. They know that they will always ride wearing the proper gear. The decision to become Level IV should not be made based on peer pressure or by what is expected of you by others. It should be made based on what commitment you wish to make. A person who chooses not to be a Level IV is not any less safe a rider nor are they less dedicated to the Rider Education Program. What they are is honest with themselves.

If you are a current Master Tour Rider/Co-Rider, think about the commitment you made when you signed your name on the application. Are you setting the right example for other members to follow? Are you living up to what you said you would do?

If you are considering becoming Level IV, think seriously about what you are about to do. Is this a commitment that you plan to follow through on? Do you really plan to **ALWAYS** ride wearing proper riding gear?

Level IV. Master Tour Rider/Co-Rider. To be, or not to be. That is the question. The choice is yours. Please make it with honesty and integrity.

Planning Reminders:

1. Co-Rider, Team Riding, Road Captain, and other 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/REQUEST%20SEMINAR%20FORM.doc>
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 October 31st. 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!**

Your comments about this communication and your questions about Rider Education can be directed to:

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