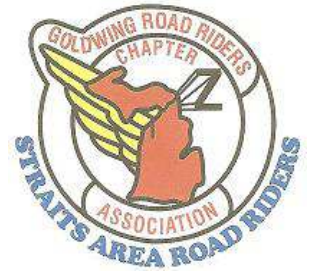


GoldWings Road Riders Association Chapter Z Straits Area Road Riders



www.gwrra-mi.org/Z/index.htm

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MARCH 2017

Well weather wise it has been a fairly mild winter so far. Not quite biking weather in our area yet but getting closer. Some of you who are in the south right now are smiling I would imagine so enjoy.

For those of you that don't know by now the GWRRA has lost a good man recently. Durand Benjamin (Ben) has passed away. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family. He will be deeply missed by all. Ben was the State treasurer for the Michigan District. Services information is to follow. When I get that information I will pass it on to you.

One of our gathering places has closed. Alan's Restaurant in Petoskey has been sold and as a result we have had to change some of our gathering places. We are for now alternating between the Cheboygan and Wolverine Senior Centers. The changes to our calendar are as follows.

GATHERINGS

April 23 Cheboygan Senior Center

May 21 Wolverine Senior Center

June 25 Cheboygan Senior Center

July 23 Wolverine Senior Center

Sept 24 Cheboygan Senior Center

Oct 22 Wolverine Senior Center

New Member Interest

If any current member of the GWRRA has contact with anyone interested in joining the GWRRA don't forget you can go on line and sign them up for a free 30 day membership with the association. This is where you can do this. <http://gwrra.org/freetrial.html>. We will have brochures to hand out at our ticket sales events regarding the GWRRA and it's features and benefits.

Plans are progressing for our June camp out at the Flywheelers Event Center the first weekend in June. If the flier and sign up sheet do not accompany this newsletter they will be distributed shortly.

We have our first ticket sales scheduled April 1st at Family Fare in Cheboygan from approximately 10 am to 2 pm. Any help with this is appreciated.

As the saying goes "More news ast 11". Until next month take care and stay safe.

Wayne Thornton
CD-Chapter Z-MI

Consumer Reports

Expert advice for first-time and returning riders

Published: April 2013

Don't buy more bike than you can handle. If you've been off of motorcycles for awhile, you may be surprised by the performance of today's bikes. Even models with small-displacement engines are notably faster and more powerful than they were 10 or 20 years ago.

When shopping for a bike, start with one that fits you. When seated, you should easily be able to rest both feet flat on the ground without having to be on tiptoes. Handlebars and controls should be within easy reach. Choose a model that's easy for you to get on and off the center stand; if it feels too heavy, it probably is. A smaller model with a 250- to 300-cc engine can make a great starter or commuter bike. If you plan on doing a lot of highway riding, you might want one with an engine in the 500- to 750-cc range so you can easily keep up with traffic. (Before buying, see our [report on motorcycle reliability and owner satisfaction](#).)

Invest in antilock brakes. Now available on a wide array of models, antilock brakes are a proven lifesaver. IIHS data shows that motorcycles equipped with ABS brakes were 37 percent less likely to be involved in a fatal crash than bikes without it. "No matter what kind of rider you are, ABS can brake better than you," says Bruce Biondo of the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles Motorcycle Safety Program.

The reason is simple: Locking up the brakes in a panic stop robs the rider of any steering control. That can easily lead to a skid and crash, which can result in serious injury. ABS helps you retain steering control during an emergency stop, and it can be especially valuable in slippery conditions.

This critical feature is now standard on many high-end models and adds only a few hundred dollars to the price of more basic bikes. You may be able to offset some of the cost with an insurance discount. Either way, we think it's a worthwhile investment in your safety.

Hone your skills. As Honda's Jon Seidel puts it, "There is nothing we could say or advise more than to go find a Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) riding course in your area. That's critical, absolutely critical." An MSF course or similar class can teach you the basics, as well as advanced techniques, such as how to perform evasive emergency maneuvers. The cost ranges from free to about \$350. An approved safety course may make you eligible for an insurance discount and, in some states, to skip the road-test and/or the written test part of the licensing process. Some motorcycle manufacturers offer a credit toward the cost of a new motorcycle or training if a rider signs up for an MSF course. The [MSF website](#) lists about 2,700 locations for such courses around the United States.

"It is absolute insanity to repeal helmet laws," says Orly Avitzur, M.D., a Consumer Reports medical adviser.

Use your head. Yes, helmets are an emotional topic for some riders. But the facts show the risk. Riders without a helmet are 40 percent more likely to suffer a fatal head injury in a crash and are three times more likely to suffer brain injuries, than those with helmets, according to government studies.

When Texas and Arkansas repealed their helmet laws, they saw a 31- and 21-percent increase in motorcycle fatalities, respectively. "It is absolute insanity to repeal helmet laws," says Orly Avitzur, M.D., a neurologist and a Consumer Reports medical adviser. "Because helmets do save lives, it is

insanity to expose the skull and the brain to potential trauma that could be prevented or at least mitigated.”

A full-face helmet that’s approved by the Department of Transportation is the best choice. (Look for a DOT certification sticker on the helmet.) Modern helmets are strong, light weight, and comfortable, and they cut down on wind noise and fatigue. Keep in mind that helmets deteriorate over time, and may not be safe even if they look fine. The Snell Memorial Foundation, an independent helmet testing and standards-setting organization, recommends replacing a helmet every five years, or sooner if it’s been damaged or has been in a crash. Beyond potential deterioration due to aging and exposure to hair oils and chemicals, Snell points out that there is often a notable improvement over that time in helmet design and materials.

Wear the right gear. Jeans, a T-shirt, and sandals are recipes for a painful disaster on a bike. Instead, you want gear that will protect you from wind chill, flying bugs and debris, and, yes, lots of road rash if you should slide out. For maximum protection, go for a leather or other reinforced jacket, gloves, full pants, and over-the-ankle footwear, even in summer. Specially designed jackets with rugged padding and breathable mesh material provide protection as well as ventilation for riding in warm weather. You’ll also want effective eye protection; don’t rely on eyeglasses or a bike’s windscreen. Use a helmet visor or goggles. And keep in mind that car drivers who have hit a motorcycle rider often say they just didn’t see them, so choose gear in bright colors.

Be defensive. A recent study by the University of South Florida’s Center for Urban Transportation Research found that in collisions involving a motorcycle and a car, car drivers were at fault 60 percent of the time. So, you need to be extra alert, especially in this age of epidemic phone use and texting behind the wheel. Keep an eye out for cars suddenly changing lanes or pulling out from side streets. And don’t tailgate; keeping a safe following distance is critical, both to ensure you have enough stopping distance and so you have time to react to obstacles in the road. An object that a car might easily straddle could be a serious hazard when on a bike.

Avoid bad weather. Slippery conditions reduce your margin for error. Rain not only cuts your visibility but reduces your tires’ grip on the road, which can make cornering tricky. If you need to ride in the rain, remember that the most dangerous time is right after precipitation begins, as the water can cause oil residue to rise to the top. And avoid making sudden maneuvers. Be especially gentle with the brakes, throttle, and steering to avoid sliding. When riding in strong side winds, be proactive in anticipating the potential push from the side by moving to the side of the lane the wind is coming from. This will give you some leeway in the lane, should a gust nudge you.

Watch for road hazards. A motorcycle has less contact with the pavement than a car. Sand, wet leaves, or pebbles can cause a bike to slide unexpectedly, easily resulting in a spill. Bumps and potholes that you might barely notice in a car can pose serious danger when on a bike. If you can’t avoid them, slow down as much as possible before encountering them, with minimal steering input. Railroad tracks and other hazards should be approached as close to a right angle as possible, to reduce the chances of a skid.

Be ready to roll. Before each ride, do a quick walk-around to make sure your lights, horn, and directional signals are working properly. Check the chain, belt, or shaft and the brakes. And inspect the tires for wear and make sure they’re set at the proper pressure. Motorcycle mechanics we’ve spoken with say they routinely see worn-out brakes and improperly inflated tires that greatly increase safety risks. When tires are under-inflated, “handling gets really hard, steering gets hard, and the bike doesn’t want to lean,” says Mike Franklin, owner of Mike’s Garage in Los Angeles.