



Texas Chapter U

October 2006



Northeast
San Antonio

Fun, Safety and Knowledge

Jill and I are excited about being your new chapter directors. I hope we can continue to build on what John Simonick has started. We believe in what GWRRA is all about especially riding and having fun. We are relatively new to GWRRA having been members only since February of 2005, so we are not the experts at all things GWRRA. We are fortunate to have many experienced members like Olin and Martha Gover as our treasurers to help us along. They are Master tour riders and have been with GWRRA for a number of years. We also still have John Simonick filling in as the educator and newsletter editor until someone steps up to take it over. As if he doesn't have enough already to do as our district director! There are a number of you out there with lots of great experience that the chapter can use. Please remember that this is your chapter and we are here to serve you but can use some help from time to time! Also, feel free to email us anytime about anything! We enjoy hearing from you!

As mentioned above, Jill and I are into riding and having fun. We will do all we can to plan rides that you will want to go on and have lots of fun in the process. We want you to feel welcome and at home during the meetings and on the rides. Your ideas, comments and questions are always welcome. We hope you will enjoy and be proud to be a member of chapter U. To quote the ACD's, Buddy & Shirley Ward, of Chapter C:

- We are family oriented. We have fun.
- We make friends. We have fun.
- We ride motorcycles. We have fun.
- We promote safe riding to enhance our motorcycle experience. We have fun.

- We learn skills and safety techniques for riding. We have fun.
- We ride to eat and eat to ride again. We have fun.
- We strive to provide an atmosphere for people to gather to socialize and develop camaraderie between participants who want to have some fun.

Check the web site and ride schedule often. Changes do occur from time to time. Changes are made in red on the rides page of the website so you can spot them easier. As an example, the ride to Salado originally scheduled 2 Dec was cancelled

since no more rooms were available. In it's place is a historic homes tour in Gonzales. On the overnight, and some other rides, it is helpful to know if people are interested ahead of time. If it appears there is no interest, we may change the ride so it appeals more to the group as a whole.

Goals for the chapter are important. As the chapter moves forward, I would like us to get involved in a charity that we can support as a group. Some chapters are involved in several such as trash pickup and toys for needy kids at Christmas, etc. Please let us know of any suggestions you might have for one to get involved with. Rallies are an extension of the Fun part of GWRRA. They also can make money for the chapter. Problem is they can be complicated and require lots of hands-on support from the members and staff. Once we get a core group of participants and a staff put together, we should set our sights on doing a rally!

We are moving into one of the best times of the year to ride. The heat of the summer is gone and we can now ride in the afternoon and not burn up! Many of the rides we have scheduled are

short in duration and we can easily make them a bit longer on the ride back. We can decide that day. Jill and I realize that we all need to practice riding in all types of conditions and weather but riding as a group we prefer to keep our rides as safe as possible. We will avoid riding in the rain when we can and cancel rides when the weather does not look good. We will post the cancellations on the web site about ½ hour out. Feel free to call us if you wonder if the ride is a go or not. To promote safety of the group, we will also try stay off gravel and construction roads, stream crossings, etc as much as possible.

Finally, Jill and I both believe in education and knowledge. This is not just the rider education part of GWRRA but also understanding our bikes, ourselves and the areas we ride in. We hope you all will take part in the rider education program and many of the other educational offerings from the chapter and district.

Having said way more than I planned, I trust I am not scaring anyone away from participating in chapter functions! We welcome all and want all to feel welcome. We are proud to be a part of Chapter U and hope you will be too!

Brad & Jill Severe
Chapter U Directors

HONDA ROAD AGAIN, Here we are at the Kansas District Rally “Barnyard Bash” We have decided that some of what happens in the Barnyard should stay in the Barnyard. I don’t recommend following the cow chip tossing contest or the outhouse races with the pie eating contest without washing your hands.

It is a balmy Indian summer Friday afternoon and we are tired from a 600 mile day yesterday in the wind, the hustle and bustle of the Rally all day. We decided to return to our motel for a bit of rest before the festivities of the evening. Alas I gave in to the beautiful weather and decided to go for a short ride around Winfield and surrounding areas before returning to the motel. We went through the Island park and headed out

north on US 77. I was drinking in the comfortable feeling of being in familiar countryside in warm Indian summer weather and was really enjoying the ride, when I went on full alert. A car coming southbound on the two lane highway was headed right for us. As he crossed the center line I came eyeball to eyeball with him and he was glaring at me. I swerved and managed to miss him and still stay on the road. It took a mile or so for me to regain my thinking ability and compose. I did a U-turn and took off after him with Candy yelling “STOP STOP” in my ear. I explained that I was not going to confront him but either he was angry with motorcyclists in general or he was having a medical problem or he was drunk/high and in either of those cases did not need to be on the road. After a couple of miles I saw the car now stopped in the middle of the road and pulled up behind, noted the windshield wipers going in the bright sunlight. I flicked my headlight modulators on and it had no effect. I noted the license plate info and did not want him anywhere behind me. I elected not to pass but do a quick U turn and go back where I could safely call 911. I called and reported the information and made another quick U turn and headed back. By the time I came back the mile or so the first Sheriff’s Deputy was already on the scene. I was trying to stop shaking and started filling out the witness report as two other sheriff units arrived. The first deputy was administering a field sobriety test and the driver was not doing well.

How quickly can a wonderful, relaxing ride through the beautiful countryside change to panic, probable catastrophe and carnage. Luckily this incident did not progress past the panic stage but was close enough for us to declare that we had enough excitement for that day.

I thought about what allowed me to be able to make that swerve at 65 miles an hour, miss him and stay on the road. I remembered the “Smith System of Defensive Driving” and went to the first Item in the system. A system like the “Smith System” when practiced and made our own allows us to react on motor memory and make these required adjustments that just may

prevent an unplanned dismount. “Smith System” goes like this:

1. Aim high in steering. On the highway, the practice of aiming far down the road that enables the driver to make fewer and smaller steering corrections and to better predict events to which he or she may need to react. How many times have you been passed by someone in a big hurry have them pull in front of you and jam on the brakes. Not looking very far ahead are they? Look ahead about 12 seconds to allow you time to react to potential obstacles and danger.
2. Keep your eyes moving. In driving, we need to keep track of a number of systems. Smith suggests frequent glances to each side, the instrument panel, and the rear-view mirrors. After each quick glance, return to the primary focus, the path ahead. A continual scan of those items will be the best way to note any problems with the engine gauges and potential items of danger that you will need to react to.
3. Get the big picture. In riding, we combine what we see ahead and around us to get the big picture. We have a concept of our overall route (from a roadmap or experience). To that we add the pavement conditions, traffic levels, weather conditions and a dozen other factors and analyze that data. Based on that analysis, we may decide to modify our speed or direction to ensure a continued safe journey.
4. Make sure others see you, make eye contact with other drivers or riders, We need to actively be recognized. At night wear reflective clothing and position yourself in a position to be seen.
5. Leave yourself an out. They always used to tell us not to fly into a box canyon, I thought that was stupid because no one in their right mind would fly into a box canyon but I realized that in slightly

different ways it happens everyday where people put themselves and others in a box canyon with no means of escape if something happens. There is nothing like suddenly realizing that you have no options. Like being boxed in by a group of big rigs.

You may vaguely remember the smith system from high school driver Ed or some other source. Bring it out and dust it off and think about it. Start practicing the five elements and see if it doesn't make you a better, safer rider.

Until next time, as Willie says, We are Honda Road Again.

Remember Our Safety is your responsibility.

Charlie & Candy Brown
Chapter H Educators

From the Co-Rider's Corner...

It never ceases to amaze me that my life is full of new adventures, usually entailing learning and trying new things. I learned to ruck march 12 miles in less than 2 1/2 hours when I was 35. I learned how to sleep in a lava-filled military training field on the Big Island of Hawaii when I was 37. I learned Air Force ranks when I was 40 and worked with the Air Force here in San Antonio. I became a high school history teacher at the age of 44, and learned how to ride a motorcycle at the age of 47. Little did I realize that when I was 48, I would try to learn how to be a leader in GWRRA! Life is exciting and each new experience has always brought with it a lot of challenges that are “do-able” due to the support and experience of friends. Brad and I are excited to be part of Chapter U. We are only part of GWRRA due to the friendliness, mentoring, and support we have received from other GWRRA members. We hope you will join us in Chapter U for “Fun, Safety and Knowledge.” We’ve had a great time riding with other Gold Wings in the last few years, and we hope to ride with many current friends and make new friends in Chapter U.

The co-rider has a different perspective...probably because we sit on the back of the Wing and have time to notice the scenario while alerting our riders to possible safety issues, weather concerns, and anything else on our minds. I think we all enjoy riding with our riders, otherwise we wouldn't be on the back of the Wings, but an additional enjoyment is the fun and sharing with other co-riders. I have learned a lot from other co-riders such as what types of clothing to wear in really hot weather, where to get those really cute boots or shirt, suggestions for good rides and restaurants, and whether they have been to certain rallies and events. Co-riders are an important part of our chapter, and we miss you when you aren't able to participate in a ride or attend a chapter meeting. Life is busy but keep in touch!

There is one pending issue that perhaps the co-riders can decide. There have been a lot of queries regarding having a chapter shirt. Chapter U does have a logo that has been used previously. We can decide to keep that logo or we can decide to design a new one. The logo is below. We need input on whether or not you think we should keep the logo or design a new one. We also need input as to what style of shirt and color, please let myself or Martha Gover, our Treasurer, know. (Thanks Martha!)



(The previous logo had "Spring Branch, South Central Texas" instead of the "San Antonio" as in above. The basic logo was scanned from a shirt and is quite similar to 2 banners we have. One banner is Spring Branch and the other Bulverde.)

We're looking forward to great riding in the next couple months thanks to the chapter members that came to a ride coordination meeting last month. Stay tuned to the website for the latest information. At the end of October, we are planning a Halloween-themed progressive lunch. We could still use one or two more volunteers to host a course at their house. Let us know if you are interested. Meanwhile, think of safe costumes you can wear riding your Gold Wing. There will be more details to follow.

Looking forward to great rides and friendship,

Jill Severe

Local Phone Company :

A Louisiana farm wife called the local phone company to report her telephone failed to ring when her friends called and that on the few occasions when it did ring, her dog always moaned right before the phone rang. The telephone repairman proceeded to the scene, curious to see this psychic dog or senile lady. He climbed a telephone pole, hooked in his test set, and dialed the subscriber's house. The phone didn't ring right away, but then the dog moaned and the telephone began to ring. Climbing down from the pole, the telephone repairman found:

1. The dog was tied to the telephone system's ground wire via a steel chain and collar.
2. The wire connection to the ground rod was loose.
3. The dog was receiving 90 volts of signaling current when the number was called
4. After a couple of jolts, the dog would start moaning and then urinate.
5. The wet ground would complete the circuit, thus causing the phone to ring...

Which demonstrates that some problems CAN be fixed by pissing and moaning.

(Provided by John Navin)

Riding on Gravel Roads

From www.motorcycles.about.com by Sue Slate

Riding on gravel roads can take you to lots of interesting places. Below, I've noted a few strategies I've employed to make riding on gravel fun.

1. Downshift and stay in at least one gear lower than you would normally. This allows for minor adjustments in your throttle to take over braking duties without the need to change gears. Staying smooth and fluid with your motions is appropriate for all riding, and is especially important when negotiating on dirt, gravel, and uneven roads.
2. Use your legs as shock absorbers by standing up on your pegs. You also get the added advantage of lowering the center of gravity to the pegs instead of your seat.
3. Avoid paddle walking. This throws the bike back and forth thereby undermining the benefits gained from centrifugal force established through forward motion.
4. Allow the bike to move under you. It wants to stay up and will if you stay on the throttle. The law of science that a body in motion tends to stay in motion definitely applies in this instance.
5. When going uphill lean a bit forward. This works best if you are standing on the pegs.
6. When going downhill, shift your weight towards the back.
7. Keep your heads and eyes up and look to where you want to go.
8. Experiment with body steering. Simply shifting your weight to your right peg will help you go right utilizing far more subtle adjustments to steering. The converse is true as well. Subtle, smooth

adjustments in steering will feel more stable to you.

9. Practice these skills on a decent gravel road first. Then when you face a more challenging situation, you'll have more confidence in your skills.
10. After a while, you'll come to enjoy gravel roads and the places they can take you and your motorcycle. Even if you never purposely go down a gravel or dirt road, there are always those roads under construction! However, you'll be ready to deal with them.

(Well...she might like gravel roads but I doubt she has done any on a Goldwing! I prefer to stay off gravel roads but it is handy to know how when the sign ahead says "Pavement Ends"! Brad Severe)



Lined up and ready to head back from the Chapter X Rally in Corpus Christi, 23 September. We all made it back before the storms!!

The Co-Rider's Co-Rider A Tribute to Bonnie

As I look back on all our group rides since joining GWRRA in 2001, most of them included Bonnie. I always knew that if she was along it would be a good time. Most often than not, someone was teasing her about seeing (or smelling) her friend, Pepe L'PEW, in repose alongside a backroad. It was easy to tease Bonnie, because she was

so good at giving it right back. She would be the first co-rider off the bike at our destination, and the first one on the bike at our departure. She didn't want to miss anything whether we were coming or going. She would go ahead of us to make sure the restaurant was ready for our group. She made sure everyone was comfortable and got waited on - she didn't want anyone left out. She was famous for her birthday celebrations - some unsuspecting rider or co-rider would never see it coming - and then all of the sudden here comes singing waiters. Even though we celebrated at our monthly chapter meeting; if you were along for a ride, you probably got celebrated again. She was always by John's side, not often seeing one without the other. For those of us co-riders who are not comfortable speaking in front of a group, there was always Bonnie who would speak for us. She took part in skits that no one else would volunteer for - she was always up for a challenge. She was able to sweet talk sponsors/vendors out of freebies for our chapter events, never seeming tired of being called upon. Bonnie was the first to volunteer to help not only at chapter events/rides, but also to sit with a sick friend at the hospital, or call a member to cheer them up. On their many trips, Bonnie would pick up small trinkets to bring back to friends - I remember the time she brought back a miniature limousine and presented it to Len because she knew that it would have a special meaning to him. She once gave me a bubble gum machine "diamond" ring before Olin gave me the real thing. I still have it. That's the kind of impact Bonnie made on

my life. And I suspect that other co-riders would echo my sentiments. I miss her, and am grateful to have called her "friend." Her heart and smile touched the lives of so many, and will not be forgotten.

Martha Gover

Ride Schedule

October 2006

Sunday 1 October - Ride to the Silver K Cafe in Johnson City for their Sunday Buffet. Leave the Wal-Mart at 10am and pickup any others at 46 & 281 at 10:30

Saturday 7 October - Lunch ride to Maverick Restaurant in Floresville. 6671 Hwy 181 North, Just a few miles south of 1604 on 181. Meet at 10:30 at the Wal-Mart!

Saturday 14 October - Motorcycle Maintenance Day. We will have a get together at David Lonning's or Brad & Jill's house and take care of repairs, oil changes, etc. Details to follow!

Also: Renaissance Festival, open 8 weekends in October & November. 6 miles south of Plantersville, TX. Come for the day or for an overnight. Host hotels in Shenandoah, TX (20 miles or so) include Budget Inn, Comfort Suites, Hampton Inn, Homewood Suites and La Quinta. If you need more info, just contact Brad & Jill. There doesn't seem to be much interest for an organized ride so this is for information only!

Wednesday 18 October - Chapter "U" Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant; 2301 Pat Booker Rd; Universal City. "Meet-to-Eat" at 6:30 pm. Information Sharing begins at 7:30pm.

Saturday 21 October - Fredricksburg National Museum of the Pacific War. We will leave the Wal-Mart at 9am and pickup at 46 & 281 at 9:30. Cost for the museum is \$6 We will find

someplace to eat downtown.

Saturday 28 October - Progressive Halloween Run!! Ride from one house to another with a different part of a meal at each house! Details to follow!

November 2006

Saturday 4 November - Texas District 1st Annual Education Day at Angelina College, Lufkin, Texas (4 hour ride). Please note that the Road Captains course will not be given. There will not be a scheduled ride for this event. Please contact Brad & Jill if you are interested in going!

Saturday 11 November - Lonestar Motorcycle Museum, Vanderpool, TX We will eat burgers at the cafe there! Admission charge is \$5. Meet at Wal-Mart 9am. Pick up at 46 & 281 at 9:30 Maybe take a cruise thru Lost Maples SP if we have time!

Wednesday 15 November - Chapter "U" Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant; 2301 Pat Booker Rd; Universal City. "Meet-to-Eat" at 6:30 pm. Information Sharing begins at 7:30pm.

Saturday 18 November - Ride to the Central Texas Museum of Automotive History in Rosanky, TX. We will leave the pickup point at 10am and stop for Bar-B-Q in Luling on the way. This is a joint ride with Chapter H.

Saturday & Sunday 18-19 November - Horizons class will be hosted by Chapter S2 of League City and held at the at the Seabrook Volunteer Fire Department.

Sunday 26 November - Berclair Mansion, Only open the last Sunday of each month: Berclair Mansion located between Beeville and Goliad. It is only open on the last Sunday of each month, and then only for 2. Admission is \$10.

December 2006

Saturday 2 December - Gonzales candlelight tour of historic homes. We will leave the Wal-

Mart at 10:30 and stop and get some lunch along the way. Tour begins at 2pm.

Saturday 9 December - Ride to Dripping Springs for the 2d annual Christmas on Mercer Street. We can eat at the Salt Lick or maybe Riley's bar-B-Q. Details to follow soon.

Saturday 16 December - Ride to the Fredricksburg Trade Days, 2-wheel or 4-wheel should be lots of great gifts to buy! Meet at the pickup point at 9:30. We can eat some Oma Sausage or other vendor goodies there.

Wednesday 20 December - Chapter "U" Meeting, Golden Corral Restaurant; 2301 Pat Booker Rd; Universal City. "Meet-to-Eat" at 6:30 pm. Information Sharing begins at 7:30pm.

Saturday 30 December - Impromptu lunch ride. Let's meet and decide where we want to go!

Chapter U

Serves northeast San Antonio & surrounding areas

Acting Chapter Directors: **Brad & Jill Severe**

Phone: 210-403-9299

e-mail: usedphoto@aol.com

Chapter U (new) website address:
<http://www.texaschapteru.org/>

Chapter Gatherings:

3rd Wednesday of every month

Golden Corral: 2301 Pat Booker Road

Universal City

Eat between 6:30 – 7:30

Fun and Information Sharing at 7:30

Staff selection tips

(including concepts from the Horizons Program)

The official officer appointment process for CDs and ACDs (in summary) is as follows:

Chapter Directors are appointed by the District Director and approved by the Region Director

Assistant Chapter Directors are appointed by the Chapter Director and approved by the District Director

When a Chapter Director is appointed and approved, s/he is considered a member of the District Staff. An appointment of a Chapter Director is extremely important to the Chapter and to me, and is not taken lightly. When I make an appointment, I consider it as I would an appointment to my own staff. Here are some of the things that I personally consider.

- Is the person/couple enthusiastic?
- Do they realize that the position is not about power, title, or about them, but rather about serving the Chapter?
- Are they trustworthy? Do they keep their word, honor their commitments, and are they honest?
- Do they believe in and promote GWRRA?
- Are they open to the ideas of others, and willing to learn?
- Do they promote the TEAM concept rather than dictate their own beliefs?

It is true that I cannot assure that every bullet point applies to each individual being considered for appointment, as my interaction with the individual may be limited. A lot is subject to gut feel. And like in my work and personal life, I will make mistakes. But at least experiences with individuals that contradict the bullet points can prevent me from making some bad choices.

As new or even existing Chapter Directors, you are faced with the same challenge when you assume the Director position or have a staff

member to replace. What is important in making a staff selection? When should you appoint a person to your staff? The easy answer to the “when” is simple – when the “right” person is found. The “who” and the “how” are more difficult, and I will try to provide some food for thought here based on my approach.

Who:

When looking to fill a staff position, I look for someone with skills that would be able to handle the position, someone with passion for the position, or at least some passion to serve the Chapter (or District), someone who is willing to learn, and ideally someone who is more capable (at least in the area for appointment) than myself. Finally, I look for someone that is TEAM oriented and realizes that the capability of a team is much greater than a collection of highly skilled “I” oriented people.

How:

The route to success here is not the easy path nor the commonly traveled path. That path leads to disappoint and to a “death spiral” is asking at large at Chapter gatherings, through the Newsletter, and via the Website for volunteers, and expecting positive results. I am not saying this will NEVER work, but don’t forget the downside to this approach – the person that volunteers might be someone that isn’t a believer in GWRRA, doesn’t understand that the role is to *serve* the Chapter, might be someone that simply wants a rocker, or someone that may disrupt a functional team by bring a strong “I” (rather than “we”) attitude into the staff.

The approach that I am committed to is a two step process. There are no shortcuts, either. It is the following.

Step 1 – Get to know people; Build relationships

I need to get to know the people I want to consider. This requires more than a handshake or hug at a gathering. I have to spend time and make conversation with people I don’t know very well. It is much easier and more comfortable to sit with people I know, but I have

to realize this and be willing to get out of my comfort zone. When I talk to people about their work, their family, their other hobbies, and in essence, get to know them as a person, not just a GWRRA member, I gain some insight as to their skills, passions, and interests. Realize that this isn't something that should be done only when looking for staff. This relationship building should be encouraged all the time. Building relationships is what builds strong chapters. A great restaurant to gather at, a great ride schedule, great events, etc. will not build a strong chapter. So step 1 is to get out of my comfort zone and spend time with people I do not know well, and get to know them better – establish relationships. This will take time – there is no shortcut here.

Step 2 – Ask them in person, in private!

When I know someone well enough and have assessed that their skill set and attitude would be a benefit to the Chapter, I will have a conversation with them *in private*. The conversation will be sincere and honest. First, I will tell them what I perceive about their skills, and compliment them on those skills. I would also comment on their attitude and what a positive impact it makes on those around them. I would describe how their skills are a fit for a particular staff position, and ask them if they would consider helping me and the Chapter by accepting an appointment to the position of ... I will then discuss the objectives and working relationship of the current staff. It is important to share what the goals of the staff are, and the approach that is being undertaken to achieve them. Finally, I would personally assure them of my full support. I expect that they would need to discuss it with their significant other, and I wouldn't press for an answer immediately. I'll reiterate how much this would mean to the Chapter and me, and thank them for considering it. Again, the conversation must be sincere and honest.

Bottom line – relationships and common direction is the key to a team. If I don't invest in the relationship (i.e., spend time with individuals, get to know them, and care about the

relationship), I can't expect them to provide me with help and support.

John Simonick

Texas District Director

Mid-Winter Round-up

The Seminar/Forum schedule for the Mid-Winter Round-up has been set. The day's schedule is listed in two formats (text and visual) and is available in the Texas District newsletter:

<http://www.gwr-ra-tx.org/photos/oct06.PDF>

The seminars/forums are repeated (one morning presentation, one afternoon presentation) to accommodate varying arrival times as well as allowing early arrivals to attend several of the offerings. This is a great chance to see what is required of the various staff positions whether you are currently on a Chapter Staff, are considering taking a staff position, or are simply curious about what one or more staff positions involves. Remember, ALL members of GWRRA are invited – not just Chapter Staffs!



One of the "out house" entries from the Kansas District Rally

Photos from Kansas District Rally



Louisiana District Director



Theme Dress Competition





Cycle Rider, Inc.

349-9534

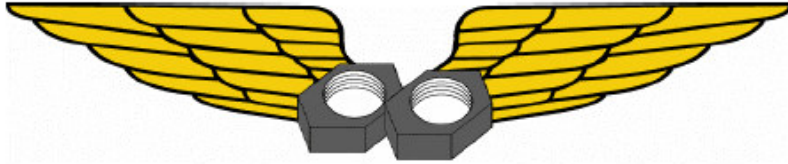
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