

Gold Wing Road Riders Association



GWRRA New Member Orientation Guide

Revised November 2015

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HISTORY

Founded in 1977 with a group of seven people, GWRRA now has members in the United States, Canada and countries all over the globe. Volunteer officers work with members to foster safe enjoyable riding while also working to improve the public image of motorcycling. The Association is built on five simple ideals:

1. Promote the "Positive Image" of motorcycling.
2. Promote "FRIENDS" among all motorcyclists.
3. Promote "FUN" which is the common thread that runs through the Association.
4. Promote "SAFETY" through Rider Education Programs for enjoyable riding.
5. Promote "KNOWLEDGE" through Training for Members and Officers.

BENEFITS

There are many benefits to GWRRA membership. Our Members enjoy the camaraderie, fellowship and prestige of belonging to the largest "family" of Gold Wing owners in the world.

The Individual and Family Members are guaranteed to receive:

- **Wing World** monthly magazine full of colorful stories, photos, articles and tips.
- **Gold Book** service directory, which is a traveling companion that includes Chapter, Members around North America with an index of how they are available to serve, and dealer listings and helpful traveling features.
- "Rescue" Emergency Roadside Assistance for your Motorcycle with the ability to add additional coverage for your autos and RVs at an extra cost
- Membership card, four-inch, full-color embroidered Association logo insignia, one-inch full-color membership pins and decals.
- GWRRA exclusive satisfaction guaranteed or your money back.

Additional benefits available to all Members are:

- Chapter Life full of Friendship, Fun, Safety and Knowledge.
- Officer Program with unequalled opportunities and Leadership Training.
- Rider Education (Safety) Program with award-winning graduated skill enhancement courses for Riders and Co-Riders and a Safe Rider Program celebrating the accumulation of accident-free miles.
- GWRRA Official Products
- GWRRA Customer Service Staff
- GWRRA website at <http://www.gwrro.org> which includes:
 - Full list of Member Benefits
 - Message Boards

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The Members of GWRRA receive support and direction from:

- *GWRRA Chapter Directors and their support TEAMS
- *GWRRA District Directors and their support TEAMS
- *GWRRA Region Directors and their support TEAMS
- *GWRRA Program Directors and their support TEAMS
- *GWRRA Deputy Directors
- *GWRRA Director
- *GWRRA President
- *GWRRA Chairman of the Board

The GWRRA support structure is almost entirely made up of appointed, volunteer leaders. At the Association's Home Office in Phoenix, Arizona, there is a small, paid staff; the Chairman of the Board, President of GWRRA and office personnel. The Home Office takes care of the day-to-day business activities, prepares the monthly *Wing World* magazine, publishes the *Gold Book* service directory, fills orders for the GWRRA *Official Products* and plans, manages and promotes Wing Ding, GWRRA's annual gathering.

Reporting to the GWRRA Director are three Programs headed by a Director, who is an appointed, volunteer leader.

1. **Operations** - There are Chapters, Districts, and Regions throughout the U.S., Canada, and a large number of overseas countries. The overseas countries are headed up by a Deputy Director, Overseas. Each of these is led by appointed volunteer Directors and Assistant Directors, who make up GWRRA Operations. In addition, each of the Chapters, Districts, and Regions have additional appointed volunteer TEAM Members. All Operations are headed up by the GWRRA Director.
2. **Membership Enhancement Program (MEP)** - The Membership Enhancement Program focuses on the "*Friends for FUN*" aspect of our motto. It oversees various programs including: Couple of the Year, Recognition and Awards (Chapter of the Year, Membership Enhancement Coordinator of the Year, Newsletter Award), Recruiting and Retention, and Special Interest Groups.
3. **Rider Education Program (REP)** - The purpose of the Rider Education Program is to make the motorcycle environment safer by increasing skills and awareness. It focuses on the "*Friends for Safety*" aspect of our motto. This Program provides Rider Education seminars, and both on and off bike courses, and maintains a close working relationship with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation. It provides a Rider Education Program, whereby Members can achieve recognition for advancing levels of rider safety and education. Motorist Awareness and Drill Teams are also a part of the Rider Education Program.
4. **Gold Wing University** - The Gold Wing University provides formalized training programs that provide opportunities for new learning experiences and personal growth to any of our Officers and Members who wish to increase their knowledge and training. This Program is responsible for the "*Friends for Knowledge*" aspect of our motto.

"**Officer**" - refers to the **Deputy, Region, District and Chapter Directors and Assistant Directors** in GWRRA Operations and to **Educators, Membership Enhancement Coordinators, Trainers, Treasurers**, as well as to each of the **Program Directors on TEAM GWRRA**.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

The Gold Wing Road Riders Association includes two Membership categories. Refer to the GWRRA web site or Wing World magazine under "GWRRA Application" for annual Membership fees for each category.

Individual or Family (Full) Membership

An Individual or Family who owns a Gold Wing or Valkyrie motorcycle and pays the annual Membership fee. The Family Membership applies to all persons living within the same household, who desire Membership within the Association.

Individual or Family Associate Membership

Any Individual or Family that does not own a Gold Wing or Valkyrie but is interested in GWRRA Membership and pays the appropriate Membership fees. The Family Associate Membership applies to all persons living within the same household who desire Membership within the Association. Associate Members are welcomed and encouraged to hold Team positions, but are not eligible to hold Director positions (Operations) or participate in the Couple of the Year selection process at the District or Region level. An Associate Member may serve as a Rider Educator, Membership Enhancement Coordinator, Trainer, or Treasurer.

Life Membership

Effective January 1, 2008, this program is available to all Members who have been a part of the GWRRA Family for 20 or more consecutive years. Full and Associate Members in the Life Membership category receive discounts on Membership rates, GWRRA Official Products and Rescue Plus (Emergency Roadside Assistance). When a member joins the New Life Membership Program they receive a Life Member Pin, Special 4" Patch and a special 10" Rocker.

***Note:** Family Life Members who move from the primary Member's household are required to obtain their own Membership to maintain Membership status in the Association. The Member's join date will remain intact provided any lapse in Membership is less than six months.*

CHAPTER LIFE

Many Members feel the Chapter is the single, most important benefit of belonging to GWRRA and for many reasons such as:

- Countless new friends are made with a common interest.
- Many events to ride our Gold Wings with friends.
- Safe riding emphasis to make our riding experience even more enjoyable.
- Training experience to improve riding skills and safety techniques.
- An opportunity to live the motto of "Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge."

When you receive your first issue of Wing World, look for the "Officer List" that shows the location of all Chapters. Take your first step to **FUN** by attending a nearby Chapter Gathering. The monthly Gatherings are really social events designed to inform, educate and to just plain have **FUN**. When you first attend, you will be introduced as a "guest." This allows the Chapter to recognize you as a first-time guest and to introduce you to the Chapter Members. During subsequent visits you will be welcomed as one of the Chapter's "extended family."

During your first Chapter Gathering, you may have several questions, some of which we will try to address here. We want your first visit to be as much **FUN** as possible.

First of all, you don't "join" a Chapter. You are a Member of GWRRA and a Participant of any and all Chapters. You can participate in as many or as few activities and Chapters as you wish! **There are no applications or fees needed to participate in a GWRRA Chapter.** With Chapters all over the globe, you are never far from "home" when you travel.

What's a "CD" or "ACD"? Each Chapter has someone who has volunteered to facilitate the Chapter and they are known as the "Chapter Director" or "CD." Their assistant is called the "Assistant Chapter Director" or "ACD" for short. These are the individuals who can answer most of your questions. They help organize and run the Chapter. Their primary function is to make sure the Members have FUN.

GWRRA Chapters publish a Chapter Newsletter. When you attend a Gathering, you will probably be asked to sign in so you can be added to the mail and/or email list. The newsletter is a wonderful source of information about happenings in your Chapter, as well as information on rallies throughout your District and Region.

You may see or hear someone selling "50/50" tickets at the Chapter Gathering. First and foremost, you are under no obligation to purchase these tickets or anything else at a Chapter Gathering. Your attendance does not cost you a cent. These tickets are sold (where legal) to help the Chapter cover operating expenses, such as website hosting fees, meeting room rental, etc.

Chapters are self-supporting and do not receive any portion of your annual GWRRA Membership dues. Because most Chapters incur expenses (e.g., website hosting fees, printing annual ride schedules, event flyers, meeting room rental, etc.), various methods of raising funds are found. In addition to "50/50" tickets, other events, such as a Chapter Rally or fundraiser are conducted by the Chapter. While there is no obligation to purchase "50/50" tickets or attend a Chapter Rally or fundraising event, doing so will help ensure the health of the Chapter.

During the non-riding season, there are numerous Chapter events, such as bowling parties, potluck suppers, chili dumps, and many others. After all, this is an organization where it's Members like to be with other Members when not riding their motorcycles.

VESTS, PINS AND PATCHES

One thing you will notice is the number of Members wearing leather or fabric vests with pins and patches (and "little dangly things"). Most of the pins and patches represent a fond memory of a "ride" or "event" the Member participated in. Others represent a volunteer leader position the Member holds or has held, while others signify the achievement level in the Rider Education Program or a Leadership Training course. These pins and patches are basically souvenirs that are fun to look back on for the memories each represents. Other than the 10" GWRRA patch on the back of the vest, there is not a right or wrong way to display your pins or patches on your vest.

When you begin to participate, you too will soon have a host of pins and patches to remind you of the fun times! However, wearing a vest is certainly not required.

RALLIES

Each year GWRRA Rallies are held at the District, Region and National levels.

They all have one express purpose in mind: to provide a fun, social environment for the participants. District rallies are normally two days; Region rallies are normally three days, and the National rally (Wing Ding) is usually four days. Depending upon the size of the rally, they are held at Convention Centers, hotels, fairgrounds, schools or other locations. Wing Ding is the largest GWRRA Rally of the year, drawing thousands of participants and numerous vendors. The Gold Wingers fill a Convention Center and the surrounding town for 4 days of clean, wholesome family fun. Over the past 30 years, Wing Dings have been held in places such as: Tulsa, OK; Madison, WI; Louisville, KY; Albuquerque, NM; Greenville, SC; Billings, MT; Huntsville, AL; Springfield, MO; Fort Wayne, IN; Grapevine, TX; Nashville, TN; Des Moines, IA; and Knoxville, TN.

Regardless of which rallies you attend, they typically have several things in common. For those who like to compete, there are bike shows, on and off bike events and talent shows. In addition, seminars, poker or observation runs and many other fun-filled things are provided. The Convention vendors sell most everything: leather, chrome, polish, pin striping, cargo trailers, campers, tires, tune-ups, oil changes, helmets and a multitude of other "must have" accessories. Many riders enjoy the "safety chrome" that is available to enhance your already beautiful ride.

When the weather turns colder and the riding season winds down, many Districts also hold "Winter Conventions" to give our Members an opportunity to socialize during the off-season months. These Conventions or events go by various names, such as "Wingless Weekend" and "Cabin Fever". They offer many of the same activities as the warmer weather events.

TERMINOLOGY

As with any organization, there are terms you will hear which may be new to you or may have some unique meaning within GWRRA. We've attempted to identify and define some of these. However, if you hear something not described in this Guide, feel free to ask your Chapter Director.

Charity or Toy Run: You will find that people in this Association have a big heart and like to help the less fortunate. Many times a "charity" or "toy" run is held where you will meet at a pre-arranged point with a new toy. With the assistance of the local law enforcement you may be "escorted" to a children's hospital or ward to deliver toys to children with critical and even terminal illnesses. Visits are also made to nursing homes, homeless shelters and other similar places to share some joy and happiness.

Couple of the Year: The Couple of the Year Program was started in 1988 as a way to recognize couples that best represent the qualities and ideals of GWRRA and its Members. The program starts with the "Chapter Couple of the Year" and proceeds to "District Couple of the Year", "Region Couple of the Year", and finally "International Couple of the Year." All are based on a friendly selection process and the Couples of the Year serve for one year. At the International level, the selection process at this level includes Region Couples of the Year from both the United States and Canada. Beginning in 2013, GWRRA instituted an Overseas Couple of the Year program to represent the Countries outside the United States and Canada. For more information, please see the "Couple of the Year Manual" available from your Chapter Director, or go to the Membership Enhancement Program website at <http://mep.gwrra.org>.

Dessert or Ice Cream Ride: This is similar to a "dinner ride" except, as the name implies, a stop is made for some sort of dessert like ice cream since most GWRRA Members love ice cream!

Dinner Ride: Most Chapters schedule dinner rides (year around by bike or, in bad weather, by car) to their favorite restaurants. Normally these rides will be published in the Chapter Newsletter or in the "Annual Ride/Activity Schedule." These rides will start from a designated point and may be a short ride or a longer ride with a final stop for dinner.

Field Events: These events can be either on-bike or off-bike. On-bike events are done at low speed within a designated area and are designed for fun! Off-bike events are similar to on-bike events except they are done off the bike. Plaques, trophies, certificates, or other forms of recognition may be given to recognize the winners within each event.

Fifty-Fifty (50/50): To help fund expenses, tickets are sold (where legal) and are based on a random drawing. Half the money (50) is given away, typically in increments of 25, 15 and 10 and the other half (50) is deposited into the treasury. 50/50 tickets may be sold (where legal) at Chapter Gatherings, Conventions, and other Events.

Poker or Observation Run: A Poker or Observation run may serve as a fundraiser for Chapter, District or Region. There are many formats, but these are basically conducted as follows: You sign in, pay a nominal fee and receive a set of directions for a scenic ride. During the "Poker Run," you may be required to stop at certain checkpoints and draw a card or draw all your cards at the end of the ride when you check in. As in poker, the best hand wins a plaque, trophy or certificate. An "Observation Run" is similar, but requires that you answer questions about sites along the route. The person who answers the most questions correctly wins.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact your Chapter or District Director whose names and phone numbers are listed in the Officer Listing in Wing World magazine. You may also contact any of the Directors throughout the Association or Customer Service at:

GWRRA Home Office Mailing Address:

GWRRA Inc
PO Box 42450
Phoenix AZ 85080-2450

GWRRA Home Office Physical Address:

Gold Wing Road Riders Association
21423 North 11th Avenue
Phoenix AZ 85027

GWRRA Home Office Contacts:

Phone: 800-843-9460
(623) 581-2500 (local)
Fax: (623) 581-3844
Email: customerservice@gwrro.org

Websites:

- GWRRA Main
 - <http://www.gwrro.org>
- GWRRA Programs
 - Membership Enhancement Program
 - <http://mep.gwrro.org>
 - Gold Wing University
 - <http://www.gwrro.org/gwu.html>
 - Rider Education Program
 - <http://www.gwrro.regional/ridered/index.html>