

Hi everyone –

We would like to take this time to thank all those that attended the La Crosse Ride-In and the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual District Picnic. Both were well attended, and the weather couldn't have been much better for either event. We look forward to seeing everyone again at next year's events.

Lately there has been some discussion pertaining to how Chapters should be run. Our District Directors, Frank and Sharon Jackson, email every officer, whether on District or Chapter staff, a copy of the GWRRA Officer Manual. This has just been revised and published on the GWRRA website and it is also on our District website. You as an Officer within your Chapter or District should read this to make sure you stay current with the changes since the last publication.

Some of the chatter we've been hearing pertains to how a Chapter operates versus how a club operates. Most of you know that we are an association and our Chapter is chartered under GWRRA, and we are not a club. We'll refer to some of the basic information that is within the Officer's Handbook. A club is self-governing and a regulated body of local individuals. Members pay monthly dues, vote, funding and disbursement disagreements, and individual's qualifications may not be important in holding office. Our Chapters do not and should not operate in this manner. There is no voting or dues collected or formal business meetings at Chapter gatherings. When a Chapter Director has a business meeting with his/her team, this is where the finances are discussed, never at a Chapter gathering.

We have been members since 2010 and on various Chapter, District, or Region staffs since 2011, and we only asked the question once how much our Chapter had in their checkbook. The reason we did is because we didn't understand then the true difference between GWRRA being an association versus being a club. We truly thought our Chapter did the same thing as any other club we have belonged to in the past. It is up to the Director to make sure the Chapter/District operates within the guidelines of the Officer's Manual. We are more concerned if the members are having fun and how we can do things differently to keep it interesting to the members.

Again, the Chapter does not have to raise a ton of money to survive. As you know each Chapter must pay a charter fee of \$100 towards the end of each year. If your Chapter raises money above and beyond that, this money should go to the operations of the Chapter. Some of the expenses that apply are office supplies, raffle baskets for the District Rally, a camera for the Chapter Team Members for zoom meetings, reimbursing the Chapter or District Team any expenses they may incur for traveling to a District Operations Meeting. These are operational expenses. If you wish to raise money via soliciting sponsorships from a business it should be explained to those businesses what you are going to use the money for. It should never be used for the purpose of "giving it back to the members." Remember you are soliciting this money for the sole purpose of using it to operate your Chapter or District. Using these types of funds to promote Rider Education within your Chapter is a great way to promote safe riding by offering to pay your member's fee that attend and complete a rider safety course, such as an ARC/TRC course. Or even to promote the Levels Program; if they attended a Medic First Aid course the Chapter would reimburse them the fee after completion.

Those are some of the things that Chapter funds should be used for, not to supplement a Chapter Christmas party or similar event (as GWRRA is a 501(c)4 non-profit entity). We have heard many times from some Chapter members throughout the District, "what is the Chapter giving back to the members." Doing some of the above-mentioned things are giving back to the member and it is a

win-win situation. The member doesn't have the expense of paying for the course and they obtain more knowledge of being safe on their motorcycle. Also important to remember is that "if you choose to have a fundraiser for a specific entity, all contributions go directly to the entity and DO NOT go through your treasury."

There are far more explanations in the Officer's Handbook that will go into greater detail of how to better operate your Chapter. My challenge to each officer - if you have questions pertaining to how things should be done, read the handbook. And if you still have questions, that is why you have a District Director and staff. They would gladly help with any questions that may arise.

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