



# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

# WHAT IS A CHAPTER GATHERING?

It is the means whereby GWRRA has **FUN**, grows, teaches, educates, informs and establishes a basis for GWRRA's very existence. The Chapter gathering is the most important aspect of what we strive the hardest to accomplish; educating our Members in ways of safety, skill, knowledge and the FUN OF GWRRA.

If we, as Officers, recognize and acknowledge these responsibilities to our Members, we understand the importance and the difficulty of obtaining our goals as represented in our motto, "FRIENDS FOR FUN, SAFETY AND KNOWLEDGE." In paraphrasing an adage, "You can take Members to water, but you can't make them drink," we understand, in a volunteer, hobby environment, the difficulty in even getting our Members TO the water, much less getting them to take a drink. We have found the only way to get them involved (so we can provide the "water") is to provide a positive, FUN and worthwhile environment. We call this a Chapter gathering.

Properly done, a Chapter gathering is the perfect medium to carry out our prime responsibility to our Members. It provides them a place to come to gain fun, friends, knowledge and camaraderie. It provides us the opportunity to "sugar coat" the pills of safety so we can teach our "family" the tools and skills that will enable them to live longer and to better enjoy their chosen hobby —Motorcycling.

Our immediate goal is to entice our Members to come to a monthly activity with their "family." **We do this by making our Chapter gatherings FUN!** We make it a relaxed, non-political, non-religious, friendly place where there are No Strangers... good food, interesting people and educational programs. This is not as difficult as it sounds, but it is very basic to accomplishing another of our missions: **EDUCATE!** If we can motivate our Members to attend a Chapter gathering, our job is half done. We must then insure that the gathering is so good, so interesting, so entertaining, so rewarding and so much **FUN** that they will return every month. They will also "talk it up" with their friends, thereby helping GWRRA receive the positive publicity that goes a long way in attracting new Members into our "family."

Good **FUN Chapter** gatherings cannot be overemphasized. They are the backbone of a successful Chapter. Good luck, and may all your efforts be amply rewarded.

## HOW A NEW GWRRA CHAPTER IS ORGANIZED

### The Proactive Approach to Chapter Formation

#### Overview:

Healthy, active Chapters are GWRRA's best tools to retain and help the Membership grow. As Members and Officers, we are motivated to helping the Organization grow. It seems obvious that fostering Chapters in new and needed areas will benefit the Membership and the Organization. Everyone wins!!!!

A successful method that has been tried and proven to work is the Proactive Approach. With the Proactive Approach, we do not wait for a person to contact us; we offer them an opportunity to form a Chapter. This approach reminds me of the movie, where it was said, "If You Build it, They Will Come." We are not building the Chapter, but are giving all our GWRRA Members the opportunity to build their own Chapter.

This approach takes a lot of work on the part of the Membership Enhancement Coordinators and the District Directors. They must work together to target areas for new Chapters. Following, you will find a step-by-step version of what it takes to foster a new Chapter using the Proactive Approach.

#### **Process Flow**

##### **PHASE 1: Finding the Target Area**

- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinators use the Area Report Listing and/or Gold Book to target an area that can support a new Chapter or additional Chapter in a heavily populated area. A rule of thumb is that people should not have to travel more than 40 miles, or an hour over surfaced streets to attend a Chapter gathering. Easy access promotes participation. The target area may slightly overlap an existing Chapter; it is okay to offer an alternative (the goal is to reach the Members in the opposite direction).
- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinators may use a state map to mark all existing Chapters (where they *gather*, not where the Chapter Director lives) and the cities where we have GWRRA Members. This is a time-consuming process, but a crucial part of targeting an area for a new Chapter.

- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator then checks the number of Members in an area outside a 40-mile radius of an existing Chapter. If we have 10 Members or more, we have a **Target Area**. (Ten Members would include couples or individuals; i.e. a husband and wife would count as two members).
- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator will coordinate all the information and present it to the District Director for approval. After getting the District Director's approval, the Membership Enhancement Coordinator moves into the next phase of the process.

### **PHASE 2: Send out "Letter of Intent" and "Survey Form"**

- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator will generate a complete list of all Members in the area and send a "**letter of intent**". The letter explains what we are offering the Members in the area. A "**survey form**" will be sent with the letter, which asks for a response via telephone, letter or email by a specific date to verify interest.
- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator collects responses, coordinates information (yes or no answers), and reports to District Director. Together the District Director and the District Membership Enhancement Coordinator determine if the level of interest warrants further action. If the response is not favorable, a letter should be sent to all respondents thanking them for the response and stating another attempt may be made at a later date. If the response is favorable, the first informational gathering is arranged.

### **PHASE 3: Set up the First Gathering**

- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator, if not familiar with the area, may call on the District Director, staff or someone who gave a favorable response to the letter for assistance in finding a suitable location for an informational gathering. The gathering place should have a room that will hold at least 20 people.
- The District Director must approve the time and location of the gathering and appoint a facilitator for the informational gathering. The facilitator for the gathering may be the District Director, Member of District Director's staff, nearby Chapter Director, or an Ambassador. The facilitator must be familiar with Chapter structure and activities and be a good salesman to make the group want to join in. It is always a good idea to contact nearby Chapters to attend to show support and organization strength.
- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator sends everyone on the list a letter to notify them of the first informational gathering. As time approaches, telephone calls (if feasible) are a good touch, or email everyone that returned email addresses and give them a friendly reminder of the gathering.

### **PHASE 4: First Informational Gathering**

- The first gathering is crucial. Make everyone feel welcome. Thank everyone for taking their time to attend the gathering. Provide a sign-in sheet for all attendees.
- The facilitator should get everyone talking by asking them to give their name, city, bike information, or anything else that will help put everyone at ease with the other attendees.
- Topics of conversation should include Chapter fun, rider education, activities, staff requirements and positions, newsletters, funds, and **even more fun activities**. Fully-informed people are more likely to buy into a new idea.
- Always welcome questions. Questions usually lead to the person who will be interested in becoming Chapter Director (give a copy of attachment 5 to anyone that has an interest in becoming a Chapter Director.)
- A favorable response and attendance will prompt the announcement of the second gathering to be held in one month. The facilitator may even try to organize a ride (dinner or short trip) before the next gathering.
- Make sure everything has a positive note. Everyone should be thanked again for attending. **Never** make the statement "I wish we had a bigger turnout," since that statement is a real slap in the face to those that took the time to attend.
- A statement needs to be made that the District will support up to three gatherings. By that time, someone will have to step forward to become Chapter Director and take over the monthly gatherings. "The Chapter belongs to the Participants, not the District."

## PHASE 5: Set up Second Gathering

- The District Membership Enhancement Coordinator reports the outcome of the gathering to District Director, then sends out a letter to everyone on the list giving results of the first gathering and inviting them to the second gathering. Same actions are taken for the third gathering.

### FOOTNOTE: Goals of the Gatherings

The goals of the three gatherings are to be informational in nature, providing information regarding GWRRA Chapter formation and Chapter life. The group will become a Chapter before they know it. Don't be afraid to repeat information at each gathering to educate new attendees. All that is left is a Chapter Director to pull it all together, and it must be the right person to make it all work. It is the responsibility of the District Director to appoint the Chapter Director. Anyone showing interest should be noted for the District Director to contact. No one should be told they have the position until appointed by the District Director and approved by the Region Director.

The Proactive Approach is a proven method of fostering new Chapters. If you have areas with GWRRA Members and no Chapters, give this a try. It is a "Win-Win" proposition: the new Chapter and Participants, the District, Region and GWRRA Organization.

## CHAPTER CHARTER...CHARTERING PERIOD... CHARTER "MEMBERS"

At your Chapter "Kick-Off" Gathering, you will be presented with your Certificate of chaptership and may also receive your Badge of Office.

These items provide visual proof to all present that a Chartered Chapter of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association now exists within your assigned geographical area, and that you are authorized by GWRRA to begin to organize the Chapter with those willing Members and prospective Members. For the next ninety (90) days, all those GWRRA Members who help get the Chapter up and running will be Charter "Members" by virtue of their work and participation. This applies even to those Members who may actually reside outside your assigned geographical area. (All of us are Members of ALL Chapters.)

This 90-day period (or a similar time period that you choose) is your Chartering Period, and all those Members who choose to become Chapter "Members" with their participation in Chapter activities are considered "Charter Members" of this new Chapter. They are eligible to receive a special U-shaped rocker to wear under their 4" GWRRA logo patch with the words, "Charter Member" on it. No more will be issued after the initial stated period. Your District Director will assist you in acquiring these Charter Member rockers which are given free from the Home Office.

## CHAPTER BOUNDARIES... CHAPTER "MEMBERSHIP" AND "PARTICIPATION"

There are some important distinctions to keep in mind when conceptualizing and discussing geographical boundaries and Chapter Memberships...

**CHAPTER BOUNDARIES**, refer to identifiable geographic perimeters; District lines, identify the District Directors geographic area of "prime" responsibility; zip codes, for convenience sake, identify the Chapter Directors geographic area of "prime" responsibility.

**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP** is non-existent. A Chapter is composed of PEOPLE, not some surveyed, plot of land. We make every attempt NOT to dwell on an individual's "Home Chapter." Our Members and guests make their own decisions as to the Chapters they wish to support... they belong to every Chapter that exists within the GWRRA.

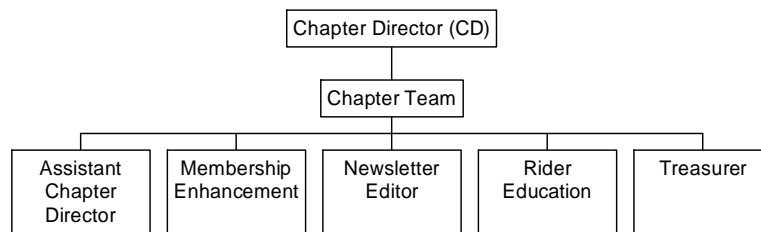
**CHAPTER MEMBER** is a designation that, unfortunately, is often misunderstood. GWRRA has Members. Chapters do not. **CHAPTER PARTICIPANTS** is the preferred term to use when speaking of Members that attend Chapter gatherings and participate in Chapter functions.

An important concept that Officers must always remember is that our Membership is NOT under obligation, real or imagined, to attend or participate with any individual Chapter. On the contrary, it is the responsibility of each Chapter Director to present as attractive a package as they can muster to encourage participation. That is the key. Make them an offer they cannot refuse! Your success as a leader is measured by the Chapter attendance at your events.

## CHAPTER ORGANIZATION DIAGRAM

This diagram was designed to help you get organized. There are some “job descriptions” included to better explain it. The lines connecting the “boxes” containing the job titles means that a channel of good communication and a close working relationship is needed there. You can use as much, or as little, as fits your Chapter needs at any given time. It can be adapted to a Chapter with a handful of Members or several. As your Chapter grows, you will find the need to share more of the “Fun” with others. This diagram may be used as a road map.

Regardless of which parts you wish to adopt, the final goal is to have a well-organized and coordinated Chapter where everyone shares the fun. When all Members have the opportunity to get involved, they become happy participants! It will take great skill to get all participants involved in the Chapter. Maximize involvement, and you maximize participation!



## NEEDED CHAPTER POSITIONS

### CHAPTER DIRECTOR (CD)

- A. Serves as Staff Member to the District Director
- B. Is a signatory on the Chapter checking account.
- C. Assumes organizational and advisory capacity of the Chapter.
- D. Arranges for a place to hold Chapter gatherings and staff meetings.
- E. Appoints Members to serve as Staff.
- F. Correlates activities and programs through the Staff.
- G. Acts as an information link between Members and the District.
- H. Sees that a newsletter is sent to all interested participants, other Chapter Directors in the District, the District Director, Region Director and the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix at least every 30 days.
- I. Makes an annual report to the District Director on activities and an annual report on finances.

TREASURER (Cannot be related to Chapter Director or Assistant Chapter Director and shall not live in the same household.)

- A. Keeps a record of finances and makes available to all interested parties after any Chapter gatherings or other times when requested by any Chapter Participant..
- B. Is a signatory on the Chapter checking account.
- C. Participates in expenditure decisions.
- D. Writes checks and manages Chapter funds for expenses
- E. Maintains receipts for all expenditures.
- F. Assists the Chapter Director in establishing prudent, reasonable and fair fiscal policies.
- G. Submits Annual Financial Report to District Director by December 31<sup>st</sup>, reviewed and signed by Chapter Director and Treasurer.

### ASSISTANT CHAPTER DIRECTOR (ACD)

- A. Assists the Chapter Director in his effort to bring about a well-coordinated, fun, active Chapter.
- B. Works with Staff Members.
- C. Assumes Chapter Director’s duties in his absence.
- D. Can be considered for the Chapter Director position.

#### CHAPTER EDUCATOR

- A. Promotes GWRRA's Rider Education Program to all Chapter participants.
- B. Relays information to all Chapter participants from District Educator.
- C. Reporting directly to the District Educator, works closely with the Chapter Director.
- D. Provides an article for the monthly Newsletter.
- E. Submits monthly reports as required.
- F. Refer to the Rider Education Handbook for additional duties and responsibilities.

#### MEMBERSHIP ENHANCEMENT COORDINATOR

- A. Develop and maintain a Membership listing for the Chapter from the sign-in sheet and provide support for the Chapter Director.
- B. Make sure everyone signs in at Chapter gatherings and check Member's expiration dates.
- C. Work with Membership data from Area Report (New Members, Prospective Members, Expiring Members and Unassigned Zip Codes).
- D. Contact New Members, Prospective Members and Expiring Members, via mail, email or telephone.
- E. Review Full Area Report list received in January and June for Members in the area who are not be attending Chapter gatherings and contact them.
- F. Serve as liaison to the District Membership Enhancement Coordinator making sure the District Membership Enhancement Coordinator is made aware of any changes to the Chapter Membership Enhancement Coordinators information (new Coordinator, email address, etc.).
- G. Promote changes positively to help keep politics away from the Membership.
- H. Be a mentor to New Members (explain the benefits of GWRRA, the terminology, Chapter Life, etc.).
- I. Promote involvement from the Membership – Encouraging everyone to become involved.
- J. Gather and/or write articles for the Chapter Newsletter.
- K. Work with the Chapter Director and Staff to promote Chapter activities and FUN events for the Members.
- L. May be asked to serve on the Couple of the Year selection committee.

## OTHER POSSIBLE CHAPTER POSITIONS

#### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

- A. Compiles and edits the Chapter newsletter and distributes, at least monthly, to all interested parties.
  - B. Receives articles from the Chapter Director, Staff Members and participants.
- Works with the Correspondence Secretary for information on mailing list, Chapter activity calendar, help with mailings, etc.

#### HOSTS AND WELCOME COMMITTEE

- A. Welcomes Members, prospective Members and visitors.
- B. Records visitors and introduces visitors at gatherings and other events.
- C. Contacts new Members, Prospective Members and expiring Members, via mail, email or telephone. Contacts any Member who was absent from a Chapter gathering to find out why. Were they ill? Are they unhappy with the Chapter? Maybe they were just out of town at the time. Let them know they were missed.

#### CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY

- A. Correlates and keeps current an activity calendar.
- B. Maintains a current mailing list.
- C. Assists Members with paperwork.
- D. Sees that GWRRA literature and a sign-in sheet is at all gatherings.
- E. Assists the Newsletter Editor.

#### ACTIVITY COORDINATOR

- A. Plans monthly activities as suggested by the Membership.
- B. Works with the Ride Coordinator when planning outings or events involving riding in groups.

#### RIDE COORDINATOR

- A. Instructs, informs and assists Road Captains, Group Leaders and other participants in group riding.
- B. Plans and directs group rides to (and sometimes from) the destination point.
- C. Selects Road Captains, Group Leaders, etc., for a given ride. Finalizes the route to be taken, the rest stops and other things for a safe and enjoyable ride.
- D. Submits an article to the Newsletter Editor to keep everyone current on group riding activities.

#### PHONE TREE COORDINATOR

- A. Sets up and maintains a phone tree among the Members.
- B. Works with the Activity Coordinator to put out information and reminders to the Membership of special activities and gatherings.

#### TECHNICAL COORDINATOR

- A. Plans and develops programs to inform Members of proper Gold Wing maintenance, new products, tips, etc.

#### SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR

- A. Directs the planning and implementation of special events such as poker runs, pie runs, fun runs, etc.

#### RECOGNITION AND SPECIAL AWARDS COORDINATOR

- A. Locates and recommends pins, trophies, awards, etc., which can be used at events.
- B. Maximizes recognition efforts for as many Members as possible.

#### WAYS & MEANS COORDINATOR

- A. Conducts 50/50 drawings, door prize drawings at Chapter gatherings, etc.

#### CHAPTER HISTORIAN

- A. Produces a running documentation of Chapter events and happenings by use of a photo album or scrapbook.
- B. Encourages Chapter Members to share photos, written articles, etc.

#### WEBMASTER

- A. Responsible for designing, developing, marketing and maintaining the website.
- B. Change and manipulate comments on the website.

## CHOOSING YOUR STAFF

Okay, your KICK-OFF gathering is behind you. You have a list of names, phone numbers and addresses of all who attended. These Members are your Chapter “participants” (if they choose to continue participation in your Chapter).

You will need to evaluate each participant now, looking for potential Staff Members. This staff will help the Chapter grow with your guidance, counsel and direction.

Remember that the Assistant Chapter Director appointment will be recommended by you but approved by your District Director. Also, the Chapter Educator is appointed by the District Educator with your concurrence. Since the office of the Educator is not tied to the tenure (or “time in office”) of the office of the Director, if a Chapter Educator is already appointed they will remain in this position on your staff. However, no Chapter Educator will be “forced” onto a Chapter Director. The Chapter Director should work with the District Educator to resolve any issues. Beyond this, you as the Chapter Director can appoint as many Members to serve as Staff as you can persuade. This process should not be rushed. Look for those you feel have special skills and talents that will really make the Chapter operate smoothly. It is easier to leave a position open than to appoint the wrong person for the job.

The Chapter Treasurer cannot be a family Member of the Chapter Director or Assistant Chapter Director. Outside of this, you are unrestricted in your choice of Chapter staff.

You will need to set a time and place for your staff meetings. This is where your Chapter “business” is taken care of, leaving your regular monthly gathering free for its purpose of informing, socializing, entertaining and fun. Although a Staff meeting is a meeting that you and your staff are prepared to make plans for your Chapter Family, a written agenda should be followed. It should be as “informal” as possible, avoiding the club format of “business meetings.” Can any Member attend a Chapter staff meeting? Yes, but it should be diplomatically discouraged. This is a meeting that you, as the Chapter Director, have called to have business time with your Staff Members. If a Member still wishes to participate in the meeting, they may want to consider accepting a Staff position. Meet as often as you need for smooth Chapter operations, but don’t meet just for the sake of meeting.

Staff only hold their appointments as long as the Chapter Director holds his. When a new Chapter Director is appointed, they may appoint a new Staff. To insure a smooth transition, the previous Staff Members should agree to function with the new Chapter Directors for the period of time it takes to re-staff. If previous Staff Members want to hold the same positions, then the new Chapter Director must confirm this and agree to a new term of service.

It is suggested that an Assistant Chapter Director who does not want to step into the Chapter Director position at the end of the Chapter Director's tenure, be appointed as a Coordinator. This premise is very important to the overall succession process and should be followed without fail.

## **THE ASSISTANT CHAPTER DIRECTOR (ACD)**

The status and role of the Assistant Chapter Director is very important to the Chapter. They must receive final approval from the District Director. This gives the Assistant Chapter Director official Officer status.

You and your District Director should do a lot of discussing about prospective Assistant Chapter Directors. The choice should be made with the thought in mind that the Assistant Chapter Director may be the next Chapter Director. Anyone accepting the role of Assistant Chapter Director will be considered for the Chapter Director position upon completion of the Chapter Director's tenure. If at any time the Assistant feels that they cannot accept the eventual responsibilities of a Chapter Director, the Assistant will so inform their appointing Officer as soon as possible.

Your Assistant Chapter Director should be heavily depended upon and considered almost as you would a "partner" in the operation of the Chapter. Your Assistant can do many things that you would normally do, including conducting gatherings and, if need be, staff meetings in your absence.

The Chapter Director has final approval on all decisions relating to the operation of the Chapter, and if your Chapter staff is functioning as it should, then you will become more like an administrator to the Chapter, giving directions to coordinate a smoothly operating Chapter where everyone feels a part.

In fact, your job, as Chapter Director should consist mostly of educating, informing, training, coordinating and directing the Chapter through the Assistant Chapter Director(s) (yes, you can have more than one Assistant Chapter Director in a large Chapter) and Chapter staff.

The more you make the Members feel an important part of the decision-making, the better operating, more enthusiastic, fun-to-be-in Chapter you will have.

So, use your Assistant Chapter Director as an extension of yourself. They should function in that capacity under your direction just as you function under the District Director's direction. If they are to be the next Chapter Director, you owe it to the Assistant Chapter Director and your Chapter participants, to provide all the training and experience possible.

The more you allow your Assistant to do for you, the more they are helping the Chapter. Give them all the responsibility they will take. You are going to put in many hours of hard work over the months and years ahead building a good Chapter. Some day you will place everything you built into the hands of another Chapter Director. Shouldn't they be the best-prepared hands you could train?

## **WORKING WITH YOUR DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

One of the best friends you will have as a Chapter Director (CD) will be your District Director (DD). They are there to mentor, teach, train, encourage, and assist you, as well as to provide you with a shoulder when you need one. They know what information you may need at each level of Chapter development and can offer suggestions to help you.

One of the best ways you will receive help is through your District Staff meetings. You, as an Operations Officer in your District, are also a Member of the District Operations Staff. You will meet with your Director, and the other Chapter Directors in your District, usually two-to-four times a year. This depends on how many meetings your District Director feels are necessary for the best operation of GWRRA in that District.

By coming together in these meetings, you and your spouse will meet other Chapter Directors and their spouses in your District. You will find new friends with a common bond, and, under the direction of your District Director, you and the other Staff Members work together to coordinate an overall "program" for GWRRA development and activity within your District.

These meetings will provide you with information, training, a way to help solve problems and an opportunity for social contact with other Officers and their spouses in your District. It also allows you a place to input information to the District level. These meetings may well be the most important single series of events for the betterment of the Members in your District. Your District Director will keep you well informed as to when these meetings are scheduled and may also ask

your assistance with certain presentations of material. Remember, you are the representative for your Chapter, and it is your duty to learn and bring the information back and teach.

## NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters inform Members and Officers of what's going on. No matter how plain or fancy, the central purpose of its existence is to be a communications medium for and to the Members.

Chapter participants cannot be charged an additional fee to receive a newsletter; nor should Members be solicited for a contribution to receive a newsletter. Newsletter costs should be charged off as an operating expense to the Chapter and paid for from the Chapter operating funds. It should be available to all interested Members.

The format you choose may undergo some experimenting, but the "heading" of the newsletter must have the Chapter name, or initials and the GWRRA logo on it to indicate that it is a GWRRA newsletter. Your Region, District and Chapter letter designation should also be visible, along with the month and year.

The Newsletter will provide you an opportunity to "talk" with the Members on a one-to-one basis and is **never** to be used as a platform for personal tirades or "politicking" for, or against, a particular cause. Information from Home Office, Region and District should be included for the edification of the Members and to assist them in understanding the concept, goals and workings of GWRRA. Other contributions will come from folks like your Rider Educator with items on safety. Members and/or staff may submit interesting items about trips, experiences, anniversaries, etc. All Chapters within a District are encouraged to exchange complimentary newsletters with copies sent to your District, Region and the Home Office in Phoenix.

Newsletters should be distributed at least monthly to all Chapter participants. Sometimes, Chapters "piggy-back" their information with a "sister-Chapter" or participate in a District publication for more efficient use of resources. This is acceptable.

We know many distribute newsletters through email or on your web sites; but we must also remember there are those Members who do not have access to the Internet. Therefore, hard copies of newsletters should be mailed to those Members.

Any income derived from selling advertising in Newsletters or Chapter publications should be reported as Unrelated Business Income. Please consult with your tax professional to determine how this will effect your tax filing requirements.

## WEB PAGES

Most Chapters, Districts and Regions develop web sites to share information regarding Membership enhancement, rider education, activities, announcements, etc. This form of communication is the most common method today and anyone worldwide has access to these sites. Therefore, to represent an association with GWRRA, it is recommended that these guidelines be used:

- The GWRRA Logo, and the words "Gold Wing Road Riders Association" or the acronym, "GWRRA", should be included as a part of the web page.
- Region, District, Chapter designations, plus city and District will serve to identify the web page for those visiting the site.
- It may be helpful to appoint a specific person as Webmaster, as a point of contact for inquiries and questions.
- A link to the GWRRA Home Page (<http://www.gwrra.org>) would be beneficial to those who may be surfing the web for information regarding Gold Wings/Valkyrie organizations.
- We do not advertise or link to competitors.
- Some web pages identify Staff Members with direct email links to each Staff Member.

## RELIGION

GWRRA is purposely designed to be free of religious persuasion and ceremony. This is not because the Association is opposed to religion but religion is, and should be, a personal choice. No Member should be compelled or forced by virtue of their attendance at a GWRRA function to participate in a religious ceremony that may be in conflict with their own beliefs. If for some reason it is determined that prayer is appropriate, make it a moment of silence so everyone in attendance can offer their thoughts in their own way. If worship services are offered at GWRRA functions, they should be announced in advance and denoted as “optional” on the event program and staged in a separate location for those who “want” to attend. This discussion pertains to all levels of GWRRA.

## VOTING

A GWRRA Chapter is designed to operate as a politically free, educational, social unit of our Association. As Officers, it's our responsibility to maintain this environment. If we have “voting,” two things will happen. First, Chapter Members assume the responsibility which lies with the Chapter Director; and second, it starts the process that will lead the Chapter out of the GWRRA Chapter concept and back into the club format, resulting in the loss of GWRRA Chapterhood.

If we don't do any “voting,” what about the times when a decision needs to be made and you need input from your staff and the Members? How do you reach a decision if you don't call for a “vote?” There's a very simple way to do this. We survey our Staff and our Chapter participants for their opinions, ideas, desires and find the consensus of the group. You should get all the input and advice you can, weigh it with what you know about GWRRA procedure and policy, then make your decision. A decision that will give the Members what they want!

Most of the time, your decisions will be in agreement with the majority of your Staff and/or Members, but there will be times when you will need to explain why your decision can't be a certain way. This is where your leadership ability will really count. This is where you will really need to know and understand how GWRRA operates and be able to convey this information to your Members so they will understand your decision. Sometimes, decisions may be proper but not popular—explain well!

There will be times when you won't feel you have enough input to make a good decision. That is when you need to call your District Director. If necessary, they have the Region Director to depend on. Although the District or Region Directors may not always be able to solve a particular problem for you, they often can help find information to provide you with input that should help you resolve the issue.

This discussion of voting pertains to all levels of our Association.

## FINANCES / IRS

Each Chapter Director, District Director and Region Director must appoint a Treasurer. The Treasurer must be a member and may not be a Director, Assistant Director, spouse of either or live in the same household.

GWRRA, Inc. holds a 501(c)4 “not-for-profit” status with the Internal Revenue Service which means it is not subject to corporate income tax on certain portions of income. Its primary exempt purpose is devoted to social welfare such as education or recreational purposes. Donations to GWRRA may be a legitimate business expense, but they are not tax deductible contributions.

Regions, Districts, and Chapters have no exempt status of their own. They are recognized by the IRS as subordinates of GWRRA. As a subordinate to an exempt association, a Region, District, or Chapter is required to acquire a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN). Use Form SS-4 to acquire the EIN ([http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/documents/1-17\\_Sample\\_IRS\\_Forms.pdf](http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/documents/1-17_Sample_IRS_Forms.pdf)). **The Business Name should read Chapter xx-x, District xx or Region x. Since Chapter, Districts and Regions are affiliates of GWRRA and are separate from GWRRA, do not use the name GWRRA on the application. After receiving the EIN, you must provide the number to the Home Office.** This number stays with the Chapter, District or Region for all time. **When an Officer change occurs, only an address change is required on Form 8822 and NOT a new EIN.** Each subordinate must acquire their own EIN, but all subordinates should use GWRRA's Group Exemption Number (GEN) “7196” on all forms submitted to the IRS.

The Federal Code for 501(c)4 non-profit organizations states that subordinates with annual gross receipts of **more than \$25,000** are required to file Form 990 “Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax.” If Form 990 is mailed to you

by the IRS, you must complete it and return it regardless of the amount of your gross receipts.

**Subordinates with annual gross receipts of \$25,000 or less must electronically file the e-Postcard (Form 990-N) at <http://epostcard.form990.org/>.**

Subordinates must also file an IRS Return using Form 990T (Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return) if their annual gross Unrelated Business Income (UBI) is **greater than \$1,000**. Information on UBI can be obtained from IRS Publication 598, "Tax on Unrelated Business Income of Exempt Organizations." There are two points to keep in mind. 1) GWRRA is unique in that all Officers and staff volunteers are unpaid; and 2) most all functions are put on entirely by Members who are unpaid volunteers.

The income posted in the first four columns of the GWRRA Annual Financial Report are GWRRA Business Related Income. They are generally not UBI.

- Rallies
- Poker Runs (includes Dice Runs, Hobo Stew Runs, etc.)
- Official Product Sales (GWRRA-related items ie. Chapter jackets, hats, shirts, items with the logo on them, etc.)
- 50/50s (where permitted by State law)

The income posted on the remainder of the Financial Report may or may not be UBI. First of all, the activity in which the funds were raised must be **Regularly Carried On** for the income to be UBI. Activities are considered Regularly Carried On if they show a frequency and continuity and are pursued in a manner similar to a comparable commercial activity of nonexempt organizations. Second, and very important, activities in which substantially all of the work is performed for the organization without compensation is exempt from the UBI definition. These two points exempt most Region, District and Chapter income from the UBI category.

Areas that seem to concern many of us are advertisements, vendor fees and rental fees for display space. Advertisements in newsletters or rally books are generally not UBI if they are sold in a casual manner by Members who are not compensated in any way. Vendor fees and rental fees for display space are generally UBI.

**It is recommended that a tax professional be consulted when a subordinate has gross receipts more than \$25,000 and/or unrelated business income is greater than \$1,000.**

It is very important that good clear records are kept, **RETAIN ALL RECEIPTS** and use the EIN on all correspondence with the IRS.

For further information, go to <http://www.gwrra.org/oconnect/documents/IRS.pdf>.

## **CHAPTER/OFFICER FINANCIAL STATEMENTS... CHECKING ACCOUNTS**

**GWRRA subordinates are responsible for the maintenance of operating funds and must keep accurate records of income and disbursements. Checking accounts must be non-interest bearing and should have at least three signatures on the Bank Card -- the Director, the Treasurer and the Director's appointing Officer. Two signatures are required on each check. If the parties are not in close proximity, each check written by any of the signatories on this account must have prior written approval from one other signatory, and this document is to be kept on file.**

Each January, these records must be summarized on the annual Financial Statement. You, as the Officer, have the total responsibility of insuring that your financial statement, along with the financial report cover sheet, equipment list and December bank statement, is submitted to your District Director, Region Director or the Home Office prior to January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. All District and Region Officers have similar responsibilities. When a new Chapter Director is appointed to an existing Chapter, the Chapter Treasurer must close out the books and prepare a closing financial statement. A check should then be made payable to the depository institution selected by the new Chapter Director for the balance of the account, less any checks that have not been presented for payment.

In addition to the financial statement and the aforementioned additional documentation, certain checking account information must be on file at the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix. This information consists of the account number, bank

name, and signatures and must be reconfirmed annually as well as when any change in information occurs. Like the financial statement, the checking account information needs to be submitted prior to January 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

Submitting this information is just as important as the chartering fee discussed below and failure to properly supply this information will result in a confrontation with the IRS. Remember that the Chapter Treasury belongs to the Chapter; and if for any reason the Chapter ceases its operation, the balance must be turned over to the appointing Officer upon request. Checks of this nature should be made payable to the GWRRA District and the balance will be held in escrow for 90 days. After 90 days, the balance will be turned over to the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix until the Chapter is reinstated.

For further information, go to [http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/documents/Checking\\_Accounts.pdf](http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/documents/Checking_Accounts.pdf).

## **YEARLY CHAPTER CHARTERING FEE**

The Chapter Chartering fee (currently \$50.00) is due annually by December 1. The Chartering fee is for items furnished by GWRRA which were outlined by your appointing Officer. These items include charter Member rockers, Officer pins and patches. Most importantly, it covers an annual premium that protects the GWRRA Officer and a designated third party (mall, meeting place, co-sponsoring authority, etc.) with a two million-dollar liability insurance policy. Chapter Charter fees must be forwarded to your District Director. The District Director will collect all the Chapter Charter fees and forward one check to the Home Office. Failure to submit this fee will result in the Chapter being suspended and the Chapter forfeiting its Charter with GWRRA.

The liability insurance policy goes into effect immediately upon the approval of an Officer and the receipt of the annual chartering fee. While the insurance offers comprehensive liability coverage, there may be an occasional request for evidence of insurance or a facility wants to be listed as an additional insured. The certificate can be found at <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/Officerresources>. If the facility wants to be listed as an additional insured, you must complete an Evidence of Insurance Request, which can be found at <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/InsuranceInformation>. Once the forms are complete, attach a check and send these to the Home Office. This certificate is NOT an additional policy of insurance coverage. You (and the facility) are covered whether or not a certificate is issued. The nominal fee is to offset the administrative charge incurred by our insurance carrier.

## **“CHARTERING” A GWRRA CHAPTER WITH OTHER MOTORCYCLE ASSOCIATIONS**

The question may arise about “chartering” a GWRRA Chapter with another motorcycle association. Although that works well for the independent clubs, a GWRRA Chapter does not fit into that category. Our Chapters are not formed independent of GWRRA. We, as a Chapter, are a local extension of our international Association set up for the educational, social enjoyment and participation of its Members. GWRRA Chapters receive the “charter” to organize from our international Association. GWRRA causes the Chapters to begin; the Chapters do not cause GWRRA to begin. The Chapters are not just an extension of our Association, but a product of it. We are already “chartered” with GWRRA and cannot charter with another Association.

## **THE DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS**

One of the most difficult tasks we have as professional volunteer leaders is determining how well we are doing our “jobs.” We all gain close friendships in the process of doing these “jobs” and that’s okay; but it becomes very difficult to get objective criticisms or learn more about our weaknesses and/or strengths. GWRRA to the rescue!

If we can isolate the Learning Process from the Friend Process, we will all get more “bang-for-our-educational-buck.” GWRRA truly believes that, as Officers, our first responsibility is to our Membership -- to serve them in the best way we know how. Our second responsibility is to ourselves. To be all we can. If we can learn to be the best, then the Membership will benefit, our spouses will benefit, our jobs will benefit, our friends will benefit. Truly a Win-Win!

So how can we accomplish this? By an unusual Progress Review. Enclosed herein is our attempt at listing all the different traits and job processes that we believe are necessary to be a good GWRRA Officer. It is your task to use this format to help yourself and your peers to become better leaders. What makes GWRRA different with this process is that you have the opportunity to review your subordinates and your appointing Officer. Properly done, we all benefit and grow!

How does it work? New Officers (those with less than one year of tenure) will have the opportunity to review subordinates and their appointing Officer twice. Once, approximately five months into your tenure as an Officer and secondly, approximately ten months into your term as an Officer. For example, if you're a new District Director, make copies of the review form for each of your Chapter Directors and one for your Region Director. Ask the Chapter Directors to honestly complete the forms and mail them to the Region Director. He will closely scrutinize the forms, blacken out the names (and any other distinguishing identification) and return them to you, the District Director. He will go over them with you, and both of you will mutually discuss objectively how to learn to be a better Officer and person. In the meantime while this is going on, you, the District Director, will write a review of your Region Director, and send it to the Executive Director. He will protect your identification and use your information to objectively help your Region Director in understanding how to better help you do your job. Do this again around October 1st. Hopefully, you will better understand how to serve your subordinates and what they need from you to do their jobs well. Of course, if they're doing their jobs well, it will be easier and better for you, GWRRA and all our Members!

If you're an "Old Soldier" (more than one year of tenure) you only need to do this process once, around October 1st. Naturally, you don't have to wait until review time to communicate! We all hope (and expect) that you and all of us will stay in communication as often as needed, which in the beginning is especially necessary! Enjoy the abilities of your peers!

The important thing about this review process is to learn to be all we can be. Don't fall into the trap of doing reviews as if the Reviewed is the Almighty himself. You know, perfect marks on everything! This is a tool to help you, and us, eliminate our weaknesses and improve our strengths. Long live GWRRA's strengths and good luck with your education process!

## **PHANTOM MEMBERS** (Sometimes called "Hitch-hikers")

After 30 years of successful growth, GWRRA has caused a peculiar phenomenon. We caused it by being TOO friendly! We have always understood that GWRRA's organization and its benefits are exclusively for its Members. However, our meetings, and many times our events, have always been for Members and their guests. Obviously, we do this to give potential Members a chance to look us over and, hopefully, they will join our family. Our friendliness also extends to former members, much to our credit... again hoping they will re-join our family.

However, and this may be hard to believe, there seem to be some folks who see no reason to re-join us. Not because they don't like us, but because they have seen the FUN we have is an "open door," and they don't feel that "Membership" is necessary to take advantage of these important benefits. We all know that two of our most important benefits are the Chapter and the wealth of activities that constantly go on within GWRRA.

Some of these Phantom "Members" have friends who give them old copies of *Wing World* magazines and sometimes an old Gold Book for when they travel. Many dues-paying Members ask, "Aren't we being too kind?" Many wonder how some of these folks can see no reason to REALLY belong to GWRRA. They also wonder why a Phantom Member takes free what others are paying for.

Understand, we are not talking about our guests here. We're talking about those who once were part of us and now (for whatever reason) are not. Yet, they continue to participate in the fellowship and friendship of something that was created for "Members Only." We know that many of our Officers do not believe they have this problem. If so, that is good for you, your participants and GWRRA. However, if you're like some, there could be as much as 33% of your Chapter that are phantoms. Be aware, that if this trend continues, your Chapter will eventually cease to be, and a Club will be born.

Here is our dilemma. We don't want to be "snobbish" or rude, but we need to help these folks understand the reasons and advantages of true Membership in our family. They need to understand the difference between Membership, friend or guest. Several Chapter Directors have dealt with their problem through the Phantom's wallet i.e. most Chapter events use "sign-in" sheets (<http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/documents>). All participants show their GWRRA Membership Card. The expiration date can usually be verified. No card? That's okay, BUT coffee, pie, 50/50 tickets, etc. etc. could have a surcharge for all "non-members." Perhaps you could have a supply of paper name tags saying, "Hi - I'm XXXX, a visitor". This would serve two purposes: 1) identify the guest (or the former Member) for special get-acquainted-type actions or friend-making, and 2) help them understand how special Membership in GWRRA really is.

All our events already charge a different price for non-members, if for no other reason, to identify the benefits of GWRRA Membership and because GWRRA activities are primarily for GWRRA Members. We're not suggesting that money is the answer or even the proper tactic. Some have used these methods with a certain degree of effectiveness. Obviously, there are other things that can be done to help us regain our Members. Maybe you will have to delve more deeply into

why they have chosen to alienate themselves from us and see if there is something we can do to make them feel better about GWRRA. Many times you will find that miscommunication is the prime difficulty.

As already stated, if this is not a concern for you, then continue your path of success. If this is starting to be a problem, then be alert for these phantoms - be diplomatic - be kind. If necessary, you may have to limit their "activities" with us, but don't let these folks "steal" (so to speak) that which is only for our GWRRA family. If you need more ideas or have other concerns, talk it over with your appointing Officer or your staff. In any case, ALWAYS try to find the Win-Win answer.

## MEMBERSHIP/AREA REPORTS

When a GWRRA Chapter is chartered or, as sometimes happens, its area is realigned, the Chapter Director and the District Director will determine and list all the zip codes that are included in the geographic area to be served by the chapter. This listing must be sent by the District Director to the Home Office.

This report, referred to as the Area Report, is NOT a list of Members who BELONG to the designated Chapter. It is only a tool for the Chapter Director to use for contacting prospective Members, new Members, expiring and expired Members or for an initial mailing list.

It has previously been mentioned and deserves to be again...the Members of GWRRA BELONG TO ALL CHAPTERS! "Your" Chapter was chartered as a convenience and benefit to the general Membership who reside within a convenient distance of your gathering place.

Once the Chapter has been established, the Report becomes more important as a management tool and less as a "mailing list." In most instances, sign-in sheets become your primary indicator of "Chapter Participants" and, in turn, lead to more effective Chapter mailing lists. Please remember that the Area Reports are proprietary and confidential to GWRRA and MUST be used only for the expressed business purpose of GWRRA.

Only with a written request from the District Director can we change or modify an existing zip code zone. It must be noted, however, that everyone living in a particular zip code area will also be changed.

The Area Report is sent monthly to the Region Directors and the Region Membership Enhancement Coordinators who then divide up the report and forward it to the District Directors and District Membership Enhancement Coordinators. The District Directors or the District Membership Enhancement Coordinators divide up the report and send it to the Chapter Directors and the Chapter Membership Enhancement Coordinators. The monthly report includes a list of all new, prospective, expiring and expired Members for the period covered. The Area Report shows the status of Members, their joining and expiration dates and other information that is useful in recruiting and retaining Members.

***Information specific to reading the Area Report and the Privacy Policy can be obtained in Officer Resources in Officers' Connection <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/> "Understanding Your Area Report" and "Privacy Policy."***

## MARKS AND LOGO APPROVAL

American Honda Motor Co., Inc. has the right, license, and ownership (in the 50 states of the U.S.A., the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) to use the trademarks 'GOLD WING', 'WING' and the 'WING DESIGN' anyway it wishes. GWRRA is a licensee with American Honda and has permission to use and reproduce these names and marks on items of insignia indicating Membership in LICENSEE (GWRRA) as may be approved by LICENSOR (American Honda).

There are two more important items of the agreement to convey so you are aware of the why's and wherefore's of our policy regarding the use of logos, names and marks.

"...LICENSEE (GWRRA) agrees that all goods and services in connection with which it uses the marks GOLD WING and/or WING and/or WING DESIGN and/or the Licensed Name shall be to the standards, specifications and quality established from time to time by LICENSOR (American Honda)..." and:"... LICENSEE may authorize local Chapters of LICENSEE located in the Licensed territory to use the Licensed Names and the Licensed Marks only to the same extent

as LICENSEE is licensed hereunder but without the right to further sub-license; provided that such Chapters shall be under the direction and control of LICENSEE and that LICENSEE shall require that each such Chapter and all such uses comply with all the terms and conditions of this Agreement...”

With all of that said, you now understand the importance of the logo, name and marks approval requirement that has been instituted. We shall now describe the use of Marks.

## COMMERCIAL USE OF ‘MARKS’

Any individual, Officer, Chapter or company may apply to GWRRA for permission to use its insignias, emblems and/or logos, including, but not limited to, ‘GWRRA,’ ‘Wing World,’ ‘Wing Ding,’ Logo and Corporate Name. All such situations are licensed or copyrighted or registered as trademarks and hereafter referred to as ‘Marks.’ Marks reproduced in any form **for a marketable value** cannot be manufactured, marketed or sold without written approval of the Executive Director of GWRRA according to policy established by the Board of Directors. Requests for such license shall include sample or drawing of item, costs, marketing strategy, quantities, material, resale price, etc. License tenure is for twelve (12) months from the written date of GWRRA’s approval and subject to renewal each January. The license fee is \$750 per year, per category and payable in advance, submitted to the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix. A pro-rated fee will apply to license purchases of eleven months or less.

There is also a Wing Ding-only license that is good for the month of July. Contact the Home Office for details.

## OFFICER USE OF ‘MARKS’

It is important to understand the distinction between ‘COMMERCIAL’ and ‘OFFICER’ use of marks. Briefly stated, income is the primary criteria. **If income is generated**, ‘COMMERCIAL’ use will be adhered to. Requests are automatically granted if the following criteria are met:

- 1) The reproduction of the ‘Logo’ is exact and utilized on high quality products that convey a positive image of GWRRA.
- 2) The reproduction is used only for GWRRA events.
- 3) When using the ‘Logo’, only the proper rendition is acceptable...insure that the word ‘International’ and registration/copyright mark, do not appear.
- 4) There is no income or “sale” of the item.

It is not within the authority of a GWRRA volunteer Officer to approve marks utilization. Such authority can only come from the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix. If the item is not used to generate income and is used only for identification of GWRRA Member events, approval is not needed. Other marks may not need approval — subject to quality standards as mentioned above— and, in certain circumstances, income MAY be generated for use as office fund-raising. If in question, ask the Executive Director.

## CHAPTER PATCHES

The GWRRA LOGO cannot be subordinate to any other. The only official back patch is the 10” GWRRA LOGO. For Chapter identification, with approval of the District Director, a four (4) inch (or less) chest-type LOGO patch will give any Chapter the individual identification desired. Keeping in mind that Chapters are an arm of GWRRA, the foremost emphasis is always on our GWRRA Logo. Chapter patches must have at least one of the following on the patch: “GWRRA,” “Gold Wing Road Riders Association” or logo.

## MAILING LABEL REQUESTS

If a GWRRA Officer requires mailing labels from the Home Office, the request (See <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/officerresources.html>) must be submitted to the Region Director for approval. Once the

Region Director has approved the request, it will be forwarded to the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix. The cost for mailing labels is \$.08 per label and payable upon receipt.

## **GWRRA, ITS EVENTS AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

While GWRRA makes no attempt to legislate policy as it relates to an individual's freedom, we must give strong consideration to potential liability exposure of the Officer group. For this reason, GWRRA CANNOT: 1) sell alcoholic beverages; 2) profit from the sale of alcoholic beverages; 3) distribute as an award or prize any alcoholic beverages at a GWRRA event; 4) encourage its use by advertising its availability or causing it to be available at GWRRA events.

### **AMERICAN HONDA**

If an Officer of GWRRA must solicit door prizes and other giveaway or raffle items that's OK...with one exception, American Honda. ***All direct contact with American Honda is handled only through the GWRRA Home Office in Phoenix.*** It has taken a long time, and considerable effort, to establish the present rapport we enjoy with American Honda; and in order to maintain this relationship, they and we want ALL contact done through the Home Office.

### **TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

A GWRRA Membership can be transferred upon the sale of a Member's Gold Wing, and provided that a minimum of three (3) months remains. Upon receipt of the Transfer Form (<http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/officerresources.html>), the new Member will receive a 4" logo patch, Membership pin and the remaining issues of "Wing World" magazine, through the seller's expiration date. A \$10.00 certificate will be issued to be redeemed on the first renewal of the buyer's Membership.

## **CHAPTER, DISTRICT AND REGION PROPERTY**

***Each Director is responsible for the control of funds and property that belongs to his/her respective office. This includes property that may be in the possession of other Officers or staff Members, including Officers in Rider Education. Any item that is purchased with Chapter, District or Region funds, received from the previous Director or acquired by any other legal means, belongs to that office.***

Items purchased with official funds for the use of the Director, another Officer or staff Member must be noted and forwarded to the new Director when a change of Officer occurs. A record must be kept to log office equipment. As a minimum, this record will include the nomenclature, serial number if applicable, date of purchase, cost and disposition. The disposition will provide information as to the status of the item. If the item becomes inoperable, it should be noted. If the item was discarded, it should be noted along with some justification. This information must be kept up-to-date and passed on to the new Director with a copy to your appointing Officer when you leave office. A copy should be kept in your file as well.

If appropriate financial records are kept, there should never be any question concerning those items purchased during the tenure of any Director. The annual Financial Report is the prime document used to report all income and expenditures. Should there be any requirement to justify income, expenditures or the status of any property, it is the responsibility of the Officer to produce the necessary receipts or other backup to explain any inquiries. ***It is also the responsibility of each Officer to maintain this financial backup as a matter of record after he leaves office.***

## **MEMBER GRIEVANCE POLICY**

A grievance is a claim based upon the interpretation, application, or violation of GWRRA policies that have a negative impact on Membership enjoyment, Officer selection, Officer terminations, or any unfair or inequitable treatment. The Aggrieved person is the person making the claims.

GWRRA Members are probably the most easygoing, easiest to get along with bunch, that will be found in organized motorcycling. This doesn't mean that differences of opinion won't surface, however.

The large majority of such differences will be over operating procedures, sometimes compounded by personality conflicts. After all, we are only human. GWRRA can't help much with personality conflicts, but there is a system we use to settle differences of opinion from operating procedures. It's called GWRRA's Grievance Procedure. It allows any Member with a legitimate concern to get the District or Region Director involved to clarify points and/or settle their concerns. A copy of this procedure is discussed below and should be made available to anyone who comes to you with their legitimate concerns about GWRRA operations.

## **LETTER OF COMPLAINT**

Before entering into Level 1 of the Member Grievance Policy, a Letter of Complaint shall be submitted to an appropriate arbitrator (approved by parties concerned) listing the complaint of the aggrieved. This letter shall be available to all parties (accused). This allows the complaint to be resolved before becoming formal at Level 1. If the concerns of the aggrieved cannot be resolved, proceed to Level 1.

## **MEMBER GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

**LEVEL 1** — Within approximately ten (10) working days of the discovery of a grievance, the aggrieved shall first discuss it with the appropriate Chapter and/or District Director and other concerned persons with the objective of resolving the matter as close to the problem as possible. All efforts should be focused on resolving the complaint at this point!

**LEVEL 2** — If the aggrieved is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level 1 or if no decision was rendered within five (5) working days after the meeting on the grievance, the aggrieved may file a written grievance form to the Region Director. (See <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/officerresources.html>). Within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written grievance the Director and the aggrieved must meet or communicate in an attempt to resolve the grievance. Full documentation will be assembled and copied to all interested parties.

**LEVEL 3** — If the aggrieved is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level 2, the aggrieved may file a written grievance to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will, within fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the written grievance, review the claim and render a written decision, copying all interested parties. Such decision will be final in the grievance procedure.

### *MISCELLANEOUS*

**WRITTEN DECISIONS** -- All decisions rendered at Levels 2 and 3 of the grievance procedure shall be in writing, setting forth the decisions and the reasons therefore, and shall be transmitted promptly and entirely to all interested parties.

**SEPARATE GRIEVANCE FILE** -- All documents, communications and records dealing with the processing of a grievance shall be filed in a separate grievance file and shall not be kept in the file of any participant. The aggrieved shall have access to all documents pertaining to his/her grievance and may acquire copies of same.

**MEETINGS AND HEARINGS** -- All meetings and hearings under this procedure shall be conducted in private and include only interested parties and their designated or selected representatives. All meetings or hearings shall be at a time convenient to the aggrieved person and shall not interfere with his/her work schedule. If the aggrieved party is another organization, the grievance will be initiated at the appropriate level but in no case lower than Level 2.

At no time is the aggrieved to present any issues to the Executive Director, Level 3, unless said grievance has gone through due process of the District Director and Region Director (i.e. Level 1 and Level 2). It should also be noted that the Executive Director will not act on any grievance unless the aggrieved has gone through the appropriate Officers (i.e. Level 1 and Level 2) and the Executive Director has conferred with the appropriate Officers. Time limits provided in this grievance procedure may be extended by agreement of the parties.

## **OFFICER GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The Officer Grievance Policy is normally to be used in cases of extreme personal matters between a Member and an Officer. The policy was introduced to give Officers in GWRRA the opportunity to protect themselves and their families from physical and unreasonable personal attacks.

Disagreements between Members and Officers about structure, policies, procedures and general disagreements about GWRRA are **NOT** grounds for this Policy. We are a volunteer organization and good and reasonable people can disagree. When the disagreements degenerate into personal attacks, slander or the threat of physical harm, then an Officer has this Policy to address this.

A GWRRA Officer may file a grievance against a Member due to a specific reason. These reasons may include, but not be limited to, slander, threat of physical harm, actual physical harm, or destruction of personal property. The Officer who makes a grievance against a Member must be mindful that the charge(s) must be specific, provable by evidence, and witnessed by at least one other individual who is not a Member of the Officer's family.

For an Officer to file a grievance against a Member, the Officer must remember the bar is higher than a grievance filed by a Member. Policy and procedure disagreements are to be brought before the next level of Directorship for resolution. An example of this is a Chapter Director disagreeing with a District Director on an issue not specifically addressed in the Officer Handbook. This should be forwarded to the Region Director for ruling and resolution.

The first step in the Officer Grievance Policy is a written complaint, hard copy and signed, with any supporting documentation, US Postal mailed or hand delivered to their Appointing Officer. Electronic copies are not allowed. The Appointing Officer, when the complaint is received, is required to contact **BOTH** parties within 72 hours to discuss the issue. The Appointing Officer's main responsibility is to resolve the issue between the parties.

If the Appointing Officer cannot resolve the issue, either by following policies and procedures found in the Officer Handbook, latest edition, or by common accepted practice within GWRRA; then the matter is to be referred to the Region Leadership Trainer for consideration. All information gathered must be forwarded to him along with a written evaluation.

If the Region Leadership Trainer for the Region in which the Officer Grievance was filed is not available, then another Region Leadership Trainer from an adjacent Region should be contacted to help. If the Region Leadership Trainer accepts, then both parties in the Officer Grievance procedure **MUST** understand that any ruling by the arbitrator is **FINAL**. The Region Leadership Trainer or Officer who accepts this is referred to as an "arbitrator."

The arbitrator is to investigate the complaint by the Officer to determine if the complaint is valid and determine a course of action. Communication with both parties is crucial for the arbitrator to determine if the complaint is valid. Reconciliation is the goal for the arbitrator. All resolutions and decisions by the arbitrator must be documented in writing to both parties and the Director of Leadership Training.

If either party disagrees with the arbitrator's ruling, they must show in writing why they believe the arbitrator's decision is incorrect and send the document by US Postal mail or deliver in person to the Director of Leadership Training for final resolution.

Not following the arbitrator's or appointing Officer's decision by the Officer who filed the complaint can result in the Officer being subject to disciplinary actions.

The Member who rejects the arbitrators' decision and continues the behavior in which the decision was not in their favor risks erasure of their name from the GWRRA membership rolls and any unused membership dues refunded.

## **OFFICER DISCIPLINE / REMOVAL**

Perhaps the most difficult task a GWRRA Officer will ever have to undertake is releasing another Officer or staff person from their volunteer position. This outline defines the process and procedures for disciplining or releasing an Officer from their position in such a way that negative consequences for the Officer, the Members, and GWRRA are minimized or eliminated.

Better yet, with enough information, you may well avoid the removal process altogether by helping Officers become adept at recognizing and addressing performance-related issues **BEFORE** they become problems. Two main areas of consideration should always be involved in Officer removals. They are: (1) Caring for the individual; (2) Concern for GWRRA and its Members.

Show and feel empathy, concern and caring; and be receptive to "ALL" problems, real or perceived, including possible unfairness on the part of either party, honest misunderstandings, lack of education or training, lack of resources, length of service and the particular situation of the Officer in question.

Always remember that Officers are people who have volunteered to help the Association progress by serving its Members in leadership positions. They deserve credit and recognition for their successes, and understanding and concern for their feelings and future in GWRRA, regardless of the nature of the action being considered.

The idea of discipline is to work with an Officer to resolve an issue whereby the Officer has done something which is considered a serious offense but not deserving dismissal. Discipline should be considered in the following concept. An Officer who recognizes their mistake and is willing to make amends and stop the behavior should be considered for a reprimand and or probation. The reprimand should be in writing, and it should be given in PRIVATE. This step should be taken only when the Officer being disciplined is willing to work to resolve the issue and has shown steps in doing so. The idea of probation, if necessary, should be for a fixed time (example being 30, 60, or 90 days) and when the Officer has shown their willingness and examples of not repeating the offense and evidence will take time. When the probation time is complete and the offense is not repeated or is resolved, the Officer should be commended in writing for their efforts.

No GWRRA Officer is to be removed from their position **without** an in-depth discussion of the matter with the approving Officer for that appointment prior to any action being taken.

The Officer with direct authority and responsibility over the situation will document and provide the reason(s) for discipline or dismissal to include, but not limited to, the steps taken to correct the situation, and written documentation as to the justification of the act. In addition to full documentation as described above, the affected Officer will also receive a copy of the grievance procedure outlining their rights in the matter. Copies of all correspondence and documentation must be forwarded to the appropriate Region Director and the Executive Director.

### *SOME CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINE OR REMOVAL*

1. Abuse of Member feelings or GWRRA policies.
2. Failure to submit the required financial report at year-end or upon request.
3. Failure to submit the annual Chapter Chartering Fee.
4. Misuse of GWRRA funds.
5. Actions unbecoming an Officer of GWRRA.
6. Lack of compliance with the Memorandum of Understanding.

## **OFFICER DISCIPLINE OR RELEASE CHECKLIST**

This checklist is to help Officers considering the removal of Officers or staff Members. Officers involved in such actions should carefully review and consider each of the following questions. Careful and thoughtful consideration may result in new ideas for developing a win/win solution other than discipline or removal of the person from their position. This recommended procedure would ensure fairness to all.

1. As a Coach and Mentor, have you done all you can to encourage, train, educate, support and contribute to the success of this person in their position? If not, begin to do so now.
2. Is the problem or concern yours or someone else's? If it is someone else's, have you defined your proper role in the action?
3. Is the issue based on emotional concerns? Is the issue more of personalities than of operational concerns?
4. Have you identified and documented the specific "root" cause(s) of this issue?
5. Are other Officers, Staff or Members aware of the situation in question? If so, how will you handle that?
6. Is, or will, GWRRA Inc. be affected by this situation or its possible outcome? If yes, what do you anticipate the repercussions from this action will be? What are your recommendations for offsetting any adverse reactions?
7. Have you reviewed all relevant GWRRA policies and procedures regarding discipline or removal of Officers?
8. Have you communicated with other "interested parties" for advice? (Your mentor, appointing or approving Officer)?
9. Have you considered other possibilities besides removing the Officer? Identify at least three other possibilities - including the possibility of finding another position to which the person is better suited.

10. Have you defined and considered all aspects of the "problem," yours and theirs?
11. Have you had focused one-on-one discussions either in person or via telephone with the person in question? If so:
  - a) When?
  - b) What was discussed?
  - c) Were all the problematic areas identified and addressed?
  - d) What were the actions taken, decisions made, and follow-up dates set?
  - e) What expectations were agreed to? Were they written down and were all parties provided with copies?
  - f) Were follow-up discussions scheduled and held?
12. Was a formal, written evaluation done? If yes:
  - a) When?
  - b) What follow-up action is/was planned?
  - c) Did the Officer in question receive a copy? Did he/she sign it?
  - d) Did you discuss the results of the evaluation with the person in question? When and how?
  - e) Was a time agreed upon for a follow-up progress review? If so, when?
  - f) Was an agreement reached regarding continuing or resigning the appointment? If not, what were your actions?
13. Has your appointing Officer been consulted in this matter? Do you have their agreement and support? Other options?
14. Has your appointing Officer been provided with copies of all relevant information?
15. Have you prepared a formal Letter of Appreciation for the affected party sincerely thanking them for their service to GWRRA and its Membership?
16. Is a replacement in place or planned for?
17. What is the plan for transition of Officers?

**REMEMBER:** Treat others as YOU want to be treated. Treat others with respect, courtesy and sincere concern. Don't allow mole hills to become mountains. Find the win-win solution! A volunteer Officer is first of all a Member and ALL Members are important!

## CHAPTER CLOSURE CHECKLIST

Considering a Chapter closure is a serious situation for GWRRA and its Members. Chapters are the very heartbeat of our Association. ***All Chapter closures can be prevented if the proactive steps are taken.***

This checklist is to help Officers considering the closure of an established Chapter. Officers involved in the closure of a Chapter should carefully review and consider all of the following questions and suggestions. It is imperative for the benefit of the participating Members that all resources are utilized to keep the Chapter active.

1. Has the reason for closing the Chapter been explained to all Chapter participants? It is important that they are aware of the situation and the reason the health of the Chapter is in jeopardy. Chapter participants can offer valuable suggestions and possible solutions to the problem.
2. Have all Chapter participants been involved in attempting to save the Chapter? Many times a problem-solving meeting or series of meetings of concerned Chapter participants can yield viable solutions to save the Chapter.
3. Have alternatives to closure been discussed with all Chapter Participants? They need to have a clear picture of the reason for closure and the alternatives that are available to keep the Chapter active.
4. Have key individuals within the Chapter been contacted for their input? Key individuals may have ideas or solutions that may not be expressed unless contacted directly for their input.
5. Has the Chapter Director explored all alternatives within the Chapter to keep the Chapter active? Do not leave any stone unturned. It is very easy when frustrated with a problem to give in. All alternatives must be considered for the good of the participants.

6. Has the Chapter Director involved the District Director? The District Director can many times lend support and offer additional ideas, suggestions or alternatives.
7. Has the District Director contacted and discussed the closure with any of the Chapter Participants? Many times, direct contact from the District Director can carry more weight and solve some problems that were unable to be solved at a local level.
8. Has the District Director met with Chapter participants in an attempt to avert the Chapter closure? At times, this might be advisable to allow the interested Chapter Participants an opportunity to work directly with the District Director to solve the problem.
9. Has the Region Director been consulted regarding the possible Chapter closure? Here again, the Region Director, with his/her experience, might be able to offer additional ideas, suggestions or alternatives not previously thought of at District level and below.
10. Have all alternatives to closure been exhausted? The Chapter should not be closed until all alternatives have been exhausted. ***No alternative should be left untried just because we feel it probably wouldn't be successful.***

If, after all attempts, it is finally determined that closing a Chapter is inevitable, the Chapter Director is to compile a packet of information. The packet is to be forwarded to the District Director who will verify that all the required information is complete, sign the appropriate forms and forward to the Region Director, who will then forward to the Executive Director with his or her approval for final processing.

In order for a Chapter closure to be accepted, the following information must be included with the Chapter Closure Application; final financial report, equipment list and a check for the funds remaining in the Chapter account. These funds are held in escrow by GWRRA and are available should the Chapter be revived in the future. (See <http://www.gwrro.org/oconnect/officerresources.html> for Chapter Closure Application, Financial Report form, Financial Report Cover Sheet and Equipment List.)

**REMEMBER:** Chapter participation is an important and invaluable benefit of GWRRA Membership. It is through Chapter participation that the GWRRA Member truly develops "FRIENDS FOR FUN, SAFETY AND KNOWLEDGE."