



GOLD WING ROAD RIDERS ASSOCIATION

**Friends for Fun,
Safety and Knowledge**



CHAPTER 'W' ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

**Region 'H'
Texas District**

**Eighth Edition
January, 2016**



I. Letter from the Chapter "W" Directors

Welcome to Gold Wing Road Riders (GWRRA) Texas Chapter "W". In this packet you'll find information on GWRRA, how it's organized, the GWRRA Education Program, and some history of Chapter "W". What you won't find is the heart and soul of Chapter "W" —the participants. Chapter "W" takes pride in being a Family, not just a group of people that ride together from time to time.

GWRRA's motto is "Friends for Fun, Safety, and Knowledge" and Chapter "W" personifies this motto. We are blessed with a Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) instructor that we can call on to help increase our ability to ride safely and keep us up-to-date on the latest safety information. We're proud of the fact that in 2008, Chapter "W" was 100% enrolled in the Rider Education Program displaying a commitment on the part of all participants to ride utilizing their training and skill to the fullest and to manage the risks inherent to our chosen sport. We are committed to continuing this goal in the upcoming years.

Please feel free to participate in all our Chapter activities and get involved. Our Chapter only grows if we have people willing to dive-in and add their special talents. The Chapter "W" website is www.gwrri-txw.org, will keep you informed about past activities and upcoming events.

If you have any questions about GWRRA or Chapter "W", please grab the nearest Chapter participant and ask. We're all available to help.

Cindy Harris
Chapter Director
Texas Chapter "W"



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**Chapter 'W' website:
www.gwrra-txw.org**



II. A Brief History of Chapter "W"

It is said that a Phoenix will rise out of the ashes. In this case, the Phoenix is a dynamic Chapter that grew out of a defunct group of riders. In May of 1986, the original Texas Chapter "F" disbanded and returned its Charter to GWRRA. There was, however, a small band of die-hard riders in the Katy area that still enjoyed riding together. They called themselves the "West Side Tour Association". They had no affiliation with any organized group or any by-laws or rules.

In July of 1988, with much discussion and a little prodding, the decision was made to join GWRRA as Chapter "W". Charter members included Glen & Pat Disheroon, Mike & Kathy Gwin, Mike & Elaine Hicks, Dieter & Pam Meyer, and Jim Vardaman.

The Chapter has met in a variety of places in the West Houston/Katy area. The original meeting place was the restaurant Skooters in Katy (since closed). The Chapter later moved to the Peppermill in Katy. Larger quarters required a move to K-Bob's on Highway 6, but not being convenient another move was made to Ryan's on Dairy Ashford. Circumstances soon dictated yet another change and the Chapter landed at Charlie's, to the Denny's on Fry Road. When Denny's made the room "Smoking", we moved to Ryan's on Highway 6. Planning meetings are sometimes held in the same location, but always on the third Thursday of each month. All are welcome to join in the planning of the Chapter's upcoming rides and events.

The Chapter "W" motto, "Flexing Our Wings", was bestowed upon the Chapter by Glen Disheroon back during the Chapter "F" days. They were looking for a motto that started with the letter F and the phrase came from "A Gathering of Eagles" by Alister McClain. Somehow, it seems just as appropriate now as it did back then.

Chapter "W" supports many events and charities of the other Chapters and organizations. This is done with a full schedule of weekend rides and social events. Over the years, the Chapter has received awards, both individually and as a group, at the many rallies they attend each year.

Overall, Chapter "W" is a very active, involved group of dedicated riders that truly live up to the GWRRA motto "Friends for Fun, Safety, and Knowledge". New members are always welcome and quickly become friends. The old saying "You are never a stranger but once", has never held more meaning.



III. Welcome to GWRRA



First, we would like to welcome you to our GWRRA family. We realize that there are many things you would like to know about GWRRA and Chapter activities. We hope that you will take a few minutes to read this pamphlet. It will provide answers to many of your questions.

This “Chapter Orientation Handbook” is published to help the new or potential GWRRA member become acquainted with GWRRA and Chapter operations. Even the seasoned GWRRA member can find something of interest here. From experience, we have found the best way to enjoy GWRRA and your Chapter to the fullest is to get involved and participate in as many activities as you can.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the Chapter Director, Assistant Chapter Directors or any staff member. They will gladly help explain the functions and activities of the Chapter and of GWRRA. They will also be glad to welcome you into the GWRRA family. Hopefully, this handbook will answer most of your questions.

What is GWRRA?

The Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) is the largest single-marquee motorcycle organization for owners/operators and riders of Honda Gold Wing and Valkyrie motorcycles and some say, the world’s largest family. GWRRA members enjoy the freedom of belonging to a non-profit, non-religious and non-political organization. Founded in 1977, GWRRA has grown to over 70,000 U.S, Canadian and international members in over 50 foreign countries. GWRRA is dedicated to the motto “Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge”.

How is GWRRA organized?

GWRRA’s National Office is located in Phoenix, AZ. The Executive Director is in charge of making the day-to-day decisions regarding the operations of the Association. Reporting to the Executive Director are Regional Directors. A region can be comprised of three to nine states or provinces (Canada). Region “H” is composed of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. Each individual state or province is considered a District. Each District has a District Director that reports to the Region Director. Each District is composed of several Chapters. A Chapter is a group of GWRRA members in a close geographical area that wish to participate together.

What are the different classes of membership in GWRRA?

You may register as an individual “Full Member”, which is the owner/operator of a Gold Wing or Valkyrie motorcycle. A “Family Membership” includes the owner/operator of a Gold Wing or Valkyrie motorcycle and all the individuals who reside in the same household as the “Full Member”. This generally includes your spouse and any children or parent still living in your household. An “Associate Member” is the owner/operator of a non-Gold Wing or Valkyrie motorcycle. A “Family Associate Membership” includes the owner/operator of a non-Gold Wing or Valkyrie motorcycle and all the individuals who reside in the same household. Associate Members enjoy most of the same benefits as the Full Members.



What do I get for my membership in GWRRA?

Wing World Magazine

A unique member benefit is the Wing World Magazine. This beautiful, glossy monthly publication is packed with touring stories, Chapter activities, Honda and after market products, technical advice from Honda Technicians and Gold Wing/Valkyrie accessory advertisements. Every issue also includes reader classifieds, rider education information, and an up-to-date listing of all national regional and local GWRRA events, as well as, a directory of GWRRA officers you can contact for information.

Gold Book

The Gold Book is the exclusive GWRRA directory, which lists participating GWRRA members names, phone numbers and what they can share with you if you are in need of assistance or just passing through: a trailer, help, information, tools, lodging, trip assistance, camping space, and fellowship. (Maybe even a good meal) If you find yourself needing help on a lonely highway, you'll find a GWRRA friend nearby. Many members think the Gold Book is the best highway insurance of all! And, it works best if kept on your motorcycle.

Towbuster Roadside Service

The Towbuster Roadside Assistance Program provides emergency towing service if your motorcycle is disabled, tire service if a flat can be repaired, battery service to jump start your motorcycle, delivery service of an emergency supply of gasoline, oil or water. In addition, the Towbuster Roadside Assistance Program provides locksmith service up to \$25, map service for trip planning and a theft reward for information regarding the theft of a GWRRA member's covered motorcycle.

Is there more?

Yes, depending on your membership class, you receive an enamel membership pin, an embroidered patch, safety decals and an embossed membership card-just to name a few.



IV. How is a Chapter organized?

Each Chapter has a Chapter Director who is responsible for organizing activities and conducting an informative meeting each month for the participants. The Chapter Director appoints several other members to Chapter staff positions to assist in Chapter activities. Other positions can include

Assistant Chapter Director (to assist the Chapter Director and fill-in when the Chapter Director is absent), Chapter Educator (promote motorcycle safety and the Rider Education Program), Treasurer (maintain the financial records for the Chapter), Activities or Ride Coordinator (plan and organize activities for the Chapter). In addition, Chapters may have several other staff positions to help coordinate Chapter life.

What is the Chapter all about?

The Chapter is the single most important benefit of GWRRRA because:

We make Friends.

We ride our motorcycles with our friends.

We promote safe riding to enhance our motorcycle experience.

We learn skills and safety techniques for riding.

We provide an atmosphere for people to socialize and develop camaraderie between participants.

We are family oriented.

Gold Wingers love to eat

FRIENDS FOR FUN, SAFETY AND KNOWLEDGE

How do I join a Chapter?

You don't join a Chapter, you join Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRRA). GWRRRA is the international organization and you participate with a Chapter or any number of Chapters of your choice. You only pay annual dues to the international organization. So the question could be asked "How do I become a Chapter participant". You do nothing more than attend a Chapter meeting, ride or event. The first time you attend, you are a "Guest". The second time you come to a meeting you're a part of our Chapter family. A local Chapter is one of the main benefits of belonging to our international association. There is no cost or formal application needed to participate in a Chapter.

The GWRRRA has a network of Chapters worldwide, so you're never far from "home", even when you're on the road.



Why am I a “Guest” at the first meeting?

We like to honor potential new participants as a “Guest” at your first meeting for two reasons. First, it allows us a chance to recognize you and introduce you to the other members of the Chapter; secondly, it gives you a chance to take a look at us. This allows the potential new participant a chance to decide if they are interested in becoming part of our family. It’s our belief that nothing is worse than attending a meeting to have fun and seek out potential new friends, only to sit around considering if anyone is interested in you as participant. Sometimes, in getting ready to conduct a meeting, the Chapter Director and/or Assistant Chapter Director might become busy and forget to introduce themselves. If this happens, please seek them out and introduce yourself to them. They are truly interested in meeting you.

Do I have to wait until the second meeting to become a Chapter participant?

No, you don’t. Just tell the Chapter Director or Assistant Chapter Director that you would like to participate and want to receive the Chapter Newsletter and the ride schedule for the Chapter.

What are they talking about?

50/50 Tickets

Individual Chapters do not receive money from the home office in Phoenix, AZ. In order to pay Chapter expenses, we sell tickets during monthly meetings and events. After the tickets are sold and totaled (the pot), a winning ticket is drawn and the winner and Chapter split the pot 50/50. The Chapter’s 50% is deposited in the Chapter treasury. The Chapter pays for printing and mailing of the Chapter Newsletters and to support other Chapter activities. Buying 50/50 tickets is voluntary and you are not obligated to purchase tickets.

Chapter Rides

Most Chapters have scheduled rides. These rides leave from a designated location or ride point. The time of departure varies, so make sure to read your Chapter Newsletter or ask the Chapter Director who will be happy to assist you. If you have special roads, parks or restaurants that you would like to share with the Chapter, make sure and let the Chapter Director or one of the Chapter Staff members know.



Many of these rides will start from early to mid-morning and run until early evening. Sometimes Chapters schedule trips that may include an overnight stay during a weekend. Chapters are always looking for new ride ideas. So, be ready with your input to the Chapter Director and/or Assistant Chapter Director and/or staff member.

Monthly Meetings

Once a month, Chapters hold a monthly meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to keep the Chapter members informed of upcoming activities and events and to provide an atmosphere for members to socialize with each other. The meeting can also include speakers, videos, ride schedule planning, safety information and plenty of socializing. These meetings are not business meetings. GWRR does not operate in a “Club” format. Therefore, there is no voting, minutes or Treasurer’s report. The Chapter Director, who is a volunteer leader and is appointed by the District Director, makes all decisions regarding the Chapter activities. The Chapter Director may, however, utilize input from the Chapter staff and Chapter participants in scheduling events, which are of interest to the Chapter participants.

What are all those pins on people’s vest?

The pins represent a variety of things. One is the GWRR Membership pin along with a year bar for each year the individual has been a member. Others may be for completion of safety training courses. A majority of the pins are for other events. Every time a Chapter puts on a poker run or you attend other special events like a District Rally, usually a ride pin is available, and is sometimes included in the cost of registration. The pins are basically souvenirs that are fun to look back on for the memories each represents.

Hint: Lots of pins=an “old hand” you may want to ask them lots of questions!

How do I get a vest?

You need to ask the Chapter Director or one of the Chapter Staff to find out the current arrangements for your Chapter. Usually, vests are purchased by the individual member at a rally, through mail order or at a store. Some Chapters prefer to have a special color for their vests and arrange for an individual to make the vests for the Chapter Participant. The participant pays a preset price for the vest. Vests are optional for participants, but many wear their vest to proudly display their many pins and awards.



Where do I get the patches?

The 10" GWRRA logo and other rocker designations, such as Chapter and state rockers, can be purchased for your vest from your Chapter Director or a designated person who handles patches in the Chapter. Ask the Chapter Director and they will be glad to assist you in ordering patches.

You will receive the small 4" GWRRA logo that you see on the front of member's vest free with your membership. Other patches can be purchased upon successful completion of requirements, such as the Rider Education Program.

What is a Poker Run?

A poker run serves as a fund raising activity for a Chapter. There is usually a registration fee for each attendee, which serves as a donation to the Chapter or District. Each poker run may differ in one way or another, but are basically as follows: you sign-in and get a set of directions to a "check point". When you arrive at the first "check-point", you draw a playing card. You continue on to the second and subsequent "check-point", until you reach the final point. The highest poker hand wins a prize or share in the funds collected for the event. Some organizations have observation runs in which you may have questions to answer about sights along the route. Some poker runs have off-bike and on-bike games. Some provide a lunch. Many give out awards for the largest Chapter in attendance and several other categories. If it seems a little confusing, don't worry. We were all confused at first. Just ask some of the "old hands" and they will be more than glad to help.

What is a District Rally?

First of all, you must understand GWRRA is an international organization. As such, a title was needed to define specific geographical locations. Therefore, in the United States, a "District" is the same as a "State". In Canada, a "District" is the same as "Providence". Individual Districts may have a two or three day event for the expressed purpose of providing a fun, social environment for the participants and provide a fundraising event for the GWRRA District Director's office. There is a registration fee for each attendee. Bike show judging, vendors, Rider Education videos and courses, 50/50's, motorcycle light show, on-bike and off-bike games and much more is available at the rally. District rallies are open to all GWRRA members and guests.



What is a Regional Rally?

GWRRA has divided geographical areas up into regions comprised of several States or Provinces. It is held once a year generally over a three-day period. There are many of the same events and attractions offered as at the District Rally, only on a larger scale. There is also a registration fee for GWRRA members and guests. It is held at various places in the Region to give members a chance to visit and ride to various areas of the Region. The Region Rally is the major fundraiser for the Region Director's office. Funds from the rally must support the Region's expenses for the next year. Region rallies are open to all GWRRA members and guests.

What is Wing Ding?

Wing Ding is GWRRA's International Rally for all GWRRA members and other interested motorcyclists and guests. It is held at various locations throughout the country. This rally also charges a registration fee. It has all the events and activities you would find at Region and District rallies but on a MUCH, MUCH larger scale!

How is Chapter money used?

The Chapter Director uses Chapter funds to cover operation expenses of the Chapter. These expenses include the cost of printing and mailing the Chapter newsletter, staff and officer training meetings, which may include gas, meals and motel, postage, telephone calls, the Chapter charting fee, supplies, etc., which are necessary to run the Chapter. If a Chapter raises enough money, it may pay for certain events for the Chapter participants or make a contribution to a charity. Annually, the Chapter Director must submit a financial statement to the District Director who reviews the summary of the Chapter's finances.



V. Riding Tips and Techniques

Reasons to “Ride”

Do motorcyclists really need a reason to ride? Not really. However, Chapters do an excellent job of planning activities for its participants. The following is a list of the more common types of rides.

- Rides to Poker Runs, District and Region Rallies**
- Breakfast, lunch or dinner rides**
- Dessert rides (any old time)**
- Touring and sightseeing rides**
- Rides to nowhere**
- Rides to other motorcycle events**

But, more importantly, the reason we ride is to enjoy the friendship of our fellow GWRRA members and the fun of enjoying our favorite pastime of motorcycle riding.

Group Riding

As the name implies, it is riding with a group. Most of our organized Chapter movements (rides) will use group-riding techniques.

How do I ride in a Group?

The following guidelines are beneficial for riding in a group:

- 1. Arrive at the meeting place on time and with a full tank of gas.**
- 2. Attempts should be made to limit individual groups to 5 to 7 bikes.**
- 3. C.B. channels should be established prior to any movement. The group should not switch to a different channel until all members have been informed.**
- 4. Each bike should ride in a staggered formation within an automobile lane, the leader rides in the left tire track, the next rider the right tire track, etc.**
- 5. In curves, individual riders should pick their own track, and reform into staggered formation after the curve.**
- 6. When stopping at a traffic light or stop sign, all bikes pull up two abreast, directly behind the bike they were following.**



7. When starting, the leader moves out first accelerating slowly enough for all bikes to move out in turn. No one should accelerate along side of/or pass another bike in the group.
8. Allow a minimum of two seconds stopping distance between you and the bike directly in front of you and one second stopping distance between you and the bike in the staggered position to your front side. Do not allow too much space to develop between bikes, this prevents cars from darting in and out between the riders.
9. Don't just follow. Be sure to check for traffic before lane changes or other maneuvers.
10. If someone in your group pulls to the shoulder of the road and stops, do not follow. The last bike should, designated by the leader, stop and give assistance.
11. When passing other vehicles on a two-lane highway, each bike should pass in order and in turn. The leader should accelerate far enough ahead for the rest of the group to pass and the tail bike should inform the leader when the whole group has passed and is back in formation.
12. Groups should have a leader and rear bike equipped with C.B. radios when possible. The lead bike leads the group and the rear bike controls the group. Expect ride suggestions from the rear bike and accept ride suggestions to improve the group's safety and performance.
13. All riders and co-riders should wear proper riding apparel. This is not mandatory, but is strongly recommended for your safety.
14. **NEVER RIDE BEYOND YOUR CAPABILITIES.** If you feel uncomfortable riding in the group, then announce your intentions and pull out of the group. You can ride ahead of the group, behind the group or take a different route and meet the group at the destination. That is your right to do so.
15. Relax and enjoy the ride and remember – getting there is the fun.

When and How to use my C.B.?

What Channel do I use?

Each Chapter uses a predetermined C.B. channel for communicating directions, turns, lane changes and other pertinent traffic information and potential dangers to the group. Ask the Chapter Director what C.B. channel the Chapter uses. (Channel 1 is GWRRA's established channel nationally but not necessarily used by your local Chapter.)



C.B. Chatter

Having a C.B. can help add to the fun and enjoyment of riding in a group with your friends. However, there are times when idle chatter should be held to a minimum. Limiting idle chatter is particularly critical during departures and arrivals. There are times when group leaders must transmit several messages to the riders when forming up and departing the meeting place. Also, the same is true in heavy traffic and when the group is arriving at its destination. Experience has shown that these are the times that unfortunate incidents tend to occur. During these situations, limit unnecessary chatter so that participants in the group can hear what is happening and can follow the directions of the lead bike. And most of all – BE ALERT!

Defensive Riding Practices

Safe Riding Techniques:

General

- 1. Participate in the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Basic or Advanced course and/or the various GWRRA courses (Two Up Course, Trailering Course, Trike Course, etc.). Speak to the Chapter Director or the Chapter Educator for more information.**
- 2. Headlights should be on at all times during operation of your motorcycle.**
- 3. Never ride into a space that you cannot see your way clear to ride out.**
- 4. Never over ride you're own or your motorcycle's limits.**
- 5. Never be over confident.**
- 6. Always wear leather gloves and safety glasses, or a faceshield.**
- 7. If you lose control of your motorcycle while stopped and it begins to fall over, don't attempt to hold it up when it goes past center. It's better to hurt your machine than yourself.**

Roadway Surface

- 1. Avoid grease, oil, water, loose sand and gravel, etc. on the roadway. It can be slippery.**
- 2. Avoid the center of lanes, particularly at intersections, and left turn pockets because of oil and water accumulation.**
- 3. Keep off lane strips as they are frequently made from a rubber-based paint and are slippery.**
- 4. Avoid parking where vehicles have left oil/grease deposits.**
- 5. If you encounter an object on the roadway that you cannot avoid, straighten the motorcycle & attempt to go over the object at a 90-degree angle and accelerate.**



Braking

- 1. When following another vehicle, ride where you can see the driver in his rear view mirror. This will keep you out of vehicle's blind spot.**
- 2. Practice using both hand and foot brake even though Gold Wings and Valkyries are equipped with an integrated braking system, 70% of your stopping power is in your front brake.**
- 3. Avoid braking sharply during turning movements.**
- 4. In case of a flat, decelerate gradually. Avoid heavy braking and always clear the lane.**
- 5. When forced to brake hard, always keep the front wheel straight. If the rear tire locks and begins to slide, don't release your foot brake. Your rear wheel will follow your front wheel. However, if you release your rear brake and the rear wheel is off center, your motorcycle will attempt to correct itself and will probably "high side" you!**

Lane Changes and Passing

- 1. Use your mirrors but never rely on them. Glance over your shoulder to confirm what you think your mirror shows you.**
- 2. After making you lane change, always resume the same position you occupied in the group. The same applies when you are passing.**

Curves

- 1. Slow down prior to entering the curve to turn.**
- 2. Look as far through the curve as you can see.**
- 3. As you enter the curve, pick your best line to follow through the curve. Be sure of the roadway surface.**
- 4. As you start to lean your motorcycle into the turn, roll onto the throttle to stabilize your motorcycle.**
- 5. When not familiar with the road, SLOW DOWN. Excessive speed and driver's error in curves are the leading causes of motorcycle accidents.**

Intersections

When approaching an intersection and if you observe a vehicle facing toward you and attempting to turn left across your path, assume the driver does not see you and will turn directly across your path. Watch its front wheels even if the vehicle is halted. If the wheels start turning attempting to turn left, assume that the driver does not see you and will turn directly into your path of travel. WATCH OUT!