

RIDER EDUCATION



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As a safety person, most of the time, all I can do is count the failures and mishaps. But here's one story of the type I always like to receive. A story like the one below gives us GWRRA Educators a shot in the arm, makes things feel all warm and fuzzy and gives us all a reason to continue our work.

*Ride Safely,
Pete*

A Co-Rider Video Testimonial

By Lucrea Porter
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We had been attending a local poker run and swap meet in one of Baltimore's city parks with a bunch of our friends from Chapter MDC. As usual, when we all lined up to leave, my husband, Don, took the lead bike position. About seven other bikes were following our 1986 Aspenade as we started out the back street to the main road. We were probably doing about 30-35 mph when I glimpsed a shadowy movement to the right side of the bike. The next thing I knew there was a severe impact to my face that broke my face shield. I couldn't open my left eye after that. Though neither one of us saw it, a deer had come out the woods beside the road, and jumped over us.

A split second later, when I opened my other eye, my husband was gone! Though I wasn't sure what had happened, I assumed he was off the bike and something had hit us.

I stood up and reached the handlebars of the bike. Though I could only see a little bit out of my right eye, I was focusing on the engine stop switch (the "kill switch") to cut off the engine. I'm still not sure I hit it, but people told me later I was kind of wobbly going down the road as the bike lost momentum.

Since Don had gone off the bike to the left side, the bike headed left also, crossing into the oncoming lane of traffic. I

saw a curb coming. Though I knew it wasn't a good idea to hit it head-on, I didn't have a choice, so I steered over the curb onto a grassy area. The bike slowed down over the next 100 yards, then just came to a stop. As it started to go down, I started to put my leg out, but remembered that wasn't the right thing to do. As the bike lay down, I just stepped off.

As soon as my husband was knocked off the bike, the other Gold Wingers who had seen the whole incident came up and encircled him to protect him from traffic. Though I had blood going everywhere from having been hit in the nose, I wasn't hurt or anything. So I took my helmet off, looked back to see that Don was being taken care of and started walking back toward the street. Once I was sure he was alive, I sat down where I was.

By then, someone in the Chapter had used a portable phone to call for the ambulance. Though not badly injured, we were taken to the emergency room.

People from our Chapter picked up all our belongings and went with us to get us checked in at the emergency room, which was really helpful. A couple from our Chapter rode our virtually undamaged bike to their home, put it in their garage, then came to the hospital and drove us home.

During our week off of work to recover, we received many, many phone calls from GWRRA people we didn't even know. It was a really nice feeling to realize we had all these friends out there! At the end of the week, we brought our bike

home on a trailer. The following Sunday, we were back on the bike and out for a ride. We were a bit more conscious of deer, maybe, but back on the bike anyway!

I wound up with a scratched eye (which has since healed), and 17 stitches in my face which are in the process of healing. Though he was wearing jeans and a leather jacket, Don got some road rash on different parts of his body, but other than that, there was no major damage. We were both wearing open face helmets, and, yes, we had deer whistles on our bike.

We had watched the GWRRA Co-Rider Seminar video twice, and Don and I had gone out and sat on the bike, where he identified certain parts of the bike. I'm convinced my first reactions, to stand up and grab the handlebars and reach for the "kill switch" were from watching that video; I don't know what would have been on my mind otherwise. If I had done nothing, I might have crashed into the cars that were around, or worse, I could have gone out into a busy intersection or hit something and crashed.

When I reached the handlebars, I was pretty much lying flat from the back seat because I'm pretty small—just five feet tall and about 85 pounds. I've never driven a motorcycle by myself, and would just as soon stick to being a passenger!

I strongly encourage all Co-Riders to watch the Co-Rider video, and I'd like Mr. Woodruff to know that it helped me a great deal. ▲