

We speak frequently of dangers bikers must face “out there”. Please allow me to pontificate a bit regarding the driving age. It is my opinion that allowing 16 year olds to drive automobiles increases the danger factor for us on the road. Recently in Citrus County our local paper reported that a 51-year-old motorcyclist was hit and killed by a 16-year-old driver, who entered a busy highway and cut in front of him. The motorcycle driver didn't have a chance, since the 16 year old apparently turned in front of him at the last second. Of course, the young person reported that she didn't see the bike. This is a common excuse, whatever the age of the person who cuts us off. After teaching driver education for many years up north, it is my opinion that generally 16 year olds are not mature enough to recognize the dangers inherent in sharing the road with motorcycles.

On another matter, we would appreciate it if all our Chapter Educators would make a special effort from now on to get the monthly reports in. At the present time less than half of the CE's are sending them. Please understand that these statistics are not just a string of numbers. They are sent on every month to our Regional Educator who organizes those of the five states in the Region and sends them on to our national office. Your statistics back up the fact that Florida has the number one Rider Education program in the country.

But these numbers have a very personal meaning for us in terms of meeting GWRRA, chapter, and personal goals of members. As former chapter CE's, we found as we would look over our “stats” for the year , we could see the strengths and weaknesses of our chapter. Have all your members joined the Levels program and taken safe riding classes? Are renewals needed? How about education in CPR and first aid? With the Rider Ed Fair just around the corner on Nov. 4th, it's the perfect time to see where your members stand and encourage them to take advantage of this valuable resource. Remind them that the check they send in to hold their spots in class will be returned to them the day they take the class.

We'd like to thank those of you who are sending us your wonderful newsletters. They are such enjoyable reading and are helping us get to know the membership better. Many of the points mentioned are ones we haven't dealt with, so we will be quoting them in our column from time to time. For example, Joe and Donna Calhoun from Fl 1-S discuss some of the challenges tollbooths offer. They mention slippery conditions (from oil, antifreeze, transmission and other fluids) and the frequent need to lower the kickstand and find neutral.

We also appreciate it when you reprint the district newsletter in your issue. It's another good avenue for sharing information.

***Keep up the great work and stay safe.
Joe and Gracie Mazza***