

Region Meeting/District Goals 2008

We've just returned from an enjoyable and informative weekend in Ft. Gaines, Georgia for Region and District staff. An annual event, we always benefit from meeting other staff members in Region A and comparing notes as to how goals are accomplished there. Since the Seadorfs and the Mazzas were the only "old" officers to represent Florida District staff, it was no doubt of great benefit to all the new staff members too. We were so glad to work and socialize with Region A staff who were formerly of Florida District staff.

At the Saturday meeting each District Director gave a report of many areas in his respective district. They discussed goals for the coming year, problems, membership statistics, Rider Ed programs, and upcoming rallies. This information is valuable to Florida District staff as it plans for 2008 and beyond, tries to deal with problems, and primarily keeps GWRRA a fun organization to which staff and members belong. It is interesting to note and helpful to know, that many of the difficulties we face are also experienced by other districts. Recruiting and retention and participation in the Rider Ed program seem to be universal problems throughout the Region. The best way of dealing with them is putting our collective heads together annually and hashing out possible solutions.

Rick and Madalena Buck, of Region A staff, gave an interesting presentation on Membership Enhancement, and we plan to use our collective enthusiasm to implement their ideas. Ron Lantz made some general remarks about Rider Ed, with a small breakout session later with District Educators. This session really gave us a chance to do some goal setting and problem solving. At the general session, Ray Erikson discussed the Motorist Awareness program. As we all know too well, it is other motorists' lack of awareness of motorcycles that causes a high percentage of accidents.

In the breakout session for educators, led by Ron and Pam Lantz, we discussed common problems. Ron, as are we all, is very concerned about the number of members who are not current in the Levels Program or not even enrolled in the program. For the past year Florida Educators have focused on enrolling members in Level I of the program. We see no reason for not having virtually every chapter member so enrolled. We congratulate our Educators on enrolling 324 members in Level I this year. This required a lot of enthusiasm and hard work on the part of the Educators. Thanks again, folks, for a job well done. Making the commitment to ride safely is certainly an excellent way for members to become involved in chapter life.

For the year 2008 we in Florida plan to focus on bringing the Level I's up to Level II and getting the existing level II's to be current. We feel this is a worthwhile goal and one towards which we can make significant progress. We are calling this the Level II Extravaganza. Lets all pull together to spread the word that no matter how

long a person has been riding, one never knows all there is to know. This is not to say that we are going to ignore the other levels. They are equally important. We can easily slip into unsafe habits, and taking classes periodically is the best way to remain on our toes. Besides that, these get-togethers are fun and usually end up at a pizza place or Dairy Queen. This has been a particularly difficult year for Florida GWRRA in terms of accidents, injuries, and loss of members through these accidents. We need to drive as defensively as possible to avoid these, even if the unsafe condition is caused by another motorist.

At the CD Conference on January 4-6, 2008, we will be going over the levels program, the paperwork, and the Level II Extravaganza. Please make arrangements to come to the conference to discuss this valuable information. If we can save a life or a limb, it is all worth while. Without the lessons learned in the Rider Ed program, many of our members would not be here today. If your chapter doesn't have an Educator, please try and appoint one. It is a very rewarding position and not that much work. For chapters without educators, some of the CD's are doing two jobs and for that we are grateful. If you do not have an educator, please try and have someone attend the Rider Education Program at the conference or at least pick up the materials distributed. CD's can be of tremendous help in developing interest in the program, and we will be glad to help in any way possible. For chapters without Educators, members may call (352-746-9030) or e-mail (jmazza4465@embarqmail.com) us directly for information about classes and programs.

For those of you we don't see in December, have a safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to starting 2008 with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, making motorcycling a safer activity for all.

Best Regards
Joe and Gracie Mazza
District Educators