

AND THE HEAT GOES ON

I am writing this while sitting on the deck of a condo a friend let us use in the Tennessee mountains. I have just come back from a very scenic ride with my son Adam as co-rider. There were many winding roads with perilous switchbacks we had to negotiate. I have found the "Look where you want the bike to go" rule very handy in situations like this. It was dangerous on three wheels; it would have been a nightmare on two. The hairpin turns with long drop-offs were scary enough without the road having been constructed of gravel, dirt, and boulders. Add to all that the steep banking of the road on these turns, and you have a dangerous roadway. We stopped halfway down the mountain next to a car and jokingly asked the driver when she thought the pavers would be through. Her answer: "Never, I hope. We got enough traffic up here as it is." Oops! She hated us for intruding on her mountain. Obviously, she was not a member of the Gold Wing family.

Looking back on Wing ding this year, I recalled an interesting fact I picked up. As you know, Voyager kits and Instatrikes are not allowed on our ranges. However, if you already have an endorsement and wish to move to or stay current at Level 2, you may use a Parking Lot Practice to do so. The reason we don't use PLP's for two wheel or three wheel credit for Level 2 is that we offer, free of charge, so many ERC's and TRC's throughout the District. Other states use PLP's for all bike and trike levels credits because they have limited ranges available and the courses are not free.

Speaking of District ranges, as you read this, we will have painted a trike course on our Hawthorne range, with the assistance of our GWRRA member and instructor, John Moody. It will be available to us in the fall. That will give us eight two wheel ranges and five three wheel ranges. I'm not sure, but I would bet the farm that that is more ranges than any other District anywhere.

Your Area Coordinator will be getting in touch with you to start planning for ERC's and TRC's in the fall. We back off a little in the summer for obvious reasons, but we will be in full swing soon. We do have the Rider Ed Fair in St. Petersburg on November 8, 2008. The fliers can be found on the Rider Ed website and the District web site.

On a sad note, we recently lost another one of our outstanding members, Joe Calhoun. This widely loved and talented member was the former Chapter Educator of FL1-S, Zephyrhills. According to chapter members, you could always get your bike fixed by Joe. He fought a long and brave battle against Lou Gehrig's Disease. We hope Donna will remain active with us; in fact Jan already has her signed up to help with tickets at the 2009 district Rally.

Last, we need to mention something that is of concern to all of us who work to keep our members safe. At last year's Region A meeting in Georgia, Ron Lantz, Region Educator, discussed the large number of non-current members on the Region Rider Ed Greenbar. Florida is certainly a large contributor to this problem. While Bobbi Roy and Chapter Educators are working diligently to update the Florida Greenbar, we'd like to have many more members actually current in the Levels program. I would like everyone to think of possible incentives for keeping people current. Please share any ideas you have with me. We are going to discuss this at our CD conference in January. I hope you all can make it there, as we will once again be having an informative and fun time.

As always Ride Safe, Have Fun, and Carry Your Raingear
Joe and Jan (Gracie) Mazza
District Educators