

## **25 Degrees is Child's Play**

**Our CD Conference held in Kissimmee in early January was a great success. We had 70 Educators and Assistant Educators attend the Rider Education portion of the conference. About half of the attendees were there for their first meeting and new to the position. It always amazes us that no matter how difficult the tasks may seem from time to time, we always have experienced riders willing to step up to the plate and members new to GWRRA also ready to take their turn and serve. Working in the Rider Education program is one of the most directly rewarding to the educators and their assistants. SAFETY is always our first concern. By learning about correct riding gear when our Gracie was a “newbie”, her foot was saved because she had on over-the-ankle boots,(albeit Harley), when we went down in Dallas. Without the helmet I was wearing, I would either be dead or a “zucchini” (Italian for badly brain damaged). We are doing well with most of our riders wearing helmets, but getting everyone to wear the other gear is not so easy, except when it is 25 degrees out.**

**Our main focus this year was twofold. First we wanted to familiarize our new Educators with the day to day intricacies of the program, such as filling out forms and setting up ERC, TRC, FA/CPR and other seminars. We also explained the sending of monthly reports, the availability of safety articles for their newsletters, and chapter talks. Since we include 20 excellent Rider Ed articles in the packet for each Educator, there is no reason not to have a safety article in every newsletter. Many CD's who have no educators have been putting those articles in the newsletter and we appreciate that. Second in the program, Bobbi Roy presented the procedures to follow when reporting member information for the National Database (Greenbar). Next Rex and Tina Prince explained the Medic First aid program we are adopting to assist members in achieving and maintaining their FA/CPR requirements for Level advancement.**

**Next we had a breakout session in which we separated into two groups. One was veteran educators and the other consisted of new educators. People seem more relaxed and willing to ask questions and join discussions in smaller groups. Bobbi, Rex, and Tina presented to one group while Don Danbury and I presented to the other. After about an hour, we switched groups. It seemed to work well.**

**During the weekend we recognized Gene and Eileen Heaney, FL1-H , as our educators of the year and also paid tribute to Walt Overlander, the retiring Chapter Educator for FL1B, Brandon. We consider both Gene and Walt to epitomize the qualities needed in a Chapter Educator, and their recognition was well deserved.**

**On January 17<sup>th</sup> we held a trike instructors' course in Gainesville and Hawthorne. The class was observed and graded by Ron Lantz, our Region A Educator. There were seven prospective instructors, including Don Danbury and Mike Roy – District officers- The students for the class were from Fl 1-X, Orange Park, FL 1-V, Jax Beach, and FL1-F2, Ocala. In spite of the fact that the day began with a 25 degree temperature, the day was a success. All the instructor candidates earned their cards. We now have seven additional**

**Trike Instructors we can call on, and Hawthorne can now be used as a trike course range, as well as ERC range.**

**On another note, a reminder to all our Educators, Don Danbury, Assistant District Educator, is now handling your monthly reports. These are to be submitted to Don on the #6 Monthly Activity Report form. Make sure to use the form with April 2008 found in the lower right hand corner. As recommended at the conference, the report should be submitted soon after the completion of your monthly meeting. It also helps those of us with CRS (me included) in expediting the whole procedure.**

**In spite of freezing temperatures, we think we have started 2009 on a good note. We have found it so rewarding to work with so many fine and dedicated people over the years in Rider Education. Keep up the good work. It is genuinely appreciated.**

**Have fun and ride safe  
Dress in layers for the cold**

**Joe and Gracie Mazza  
Rider Educators**