

Gold Wing Touring Association

Chapter 1 Organization



A. Organizing the Chapter

General: All formal organizations, regardless of size, must have formal lines of authority. This chain of command is most visible when the organization is put to a test of either resources or results to achieve a goal.

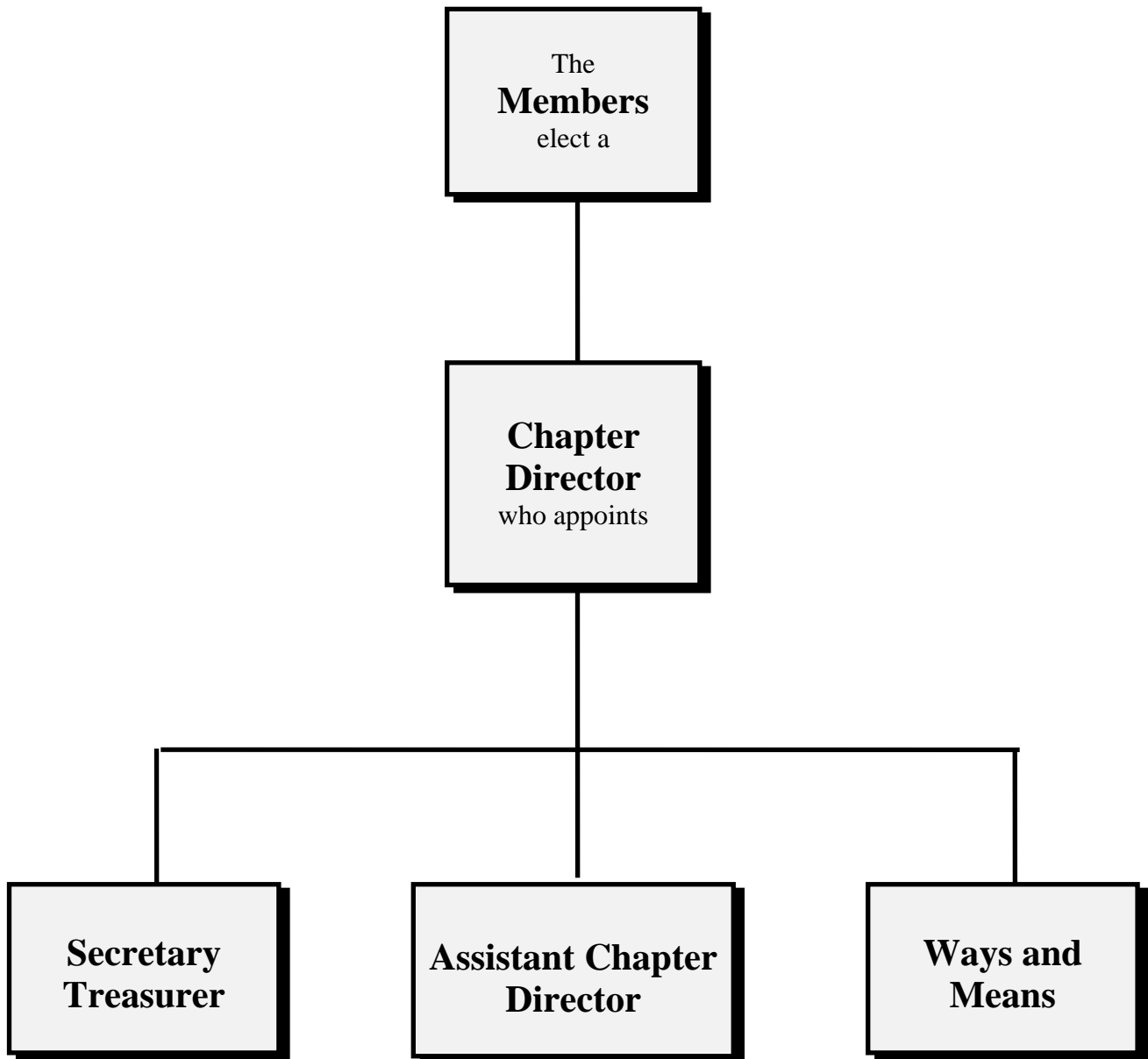
Chapters are no exception. In order to focus effort toward a common goal, all participants in the organization need to know where they fit into the group and what they're expected to achieve while participating. Unlike a formal business a chapter is a social entity and has no immediate profit orientation. It is therefore more difficult to maintain because it depends solely on the efforts of volunteers.

A functioning chapter is a sight and feeling to behold. The members are excited and full of ideas and self-motivated direction. When you come in contact with such a chapter, you can actually feel the energy.

How do we achieve this feeling? How do we start the ball rolling? There are several steps that should be taken in developing the chapter.

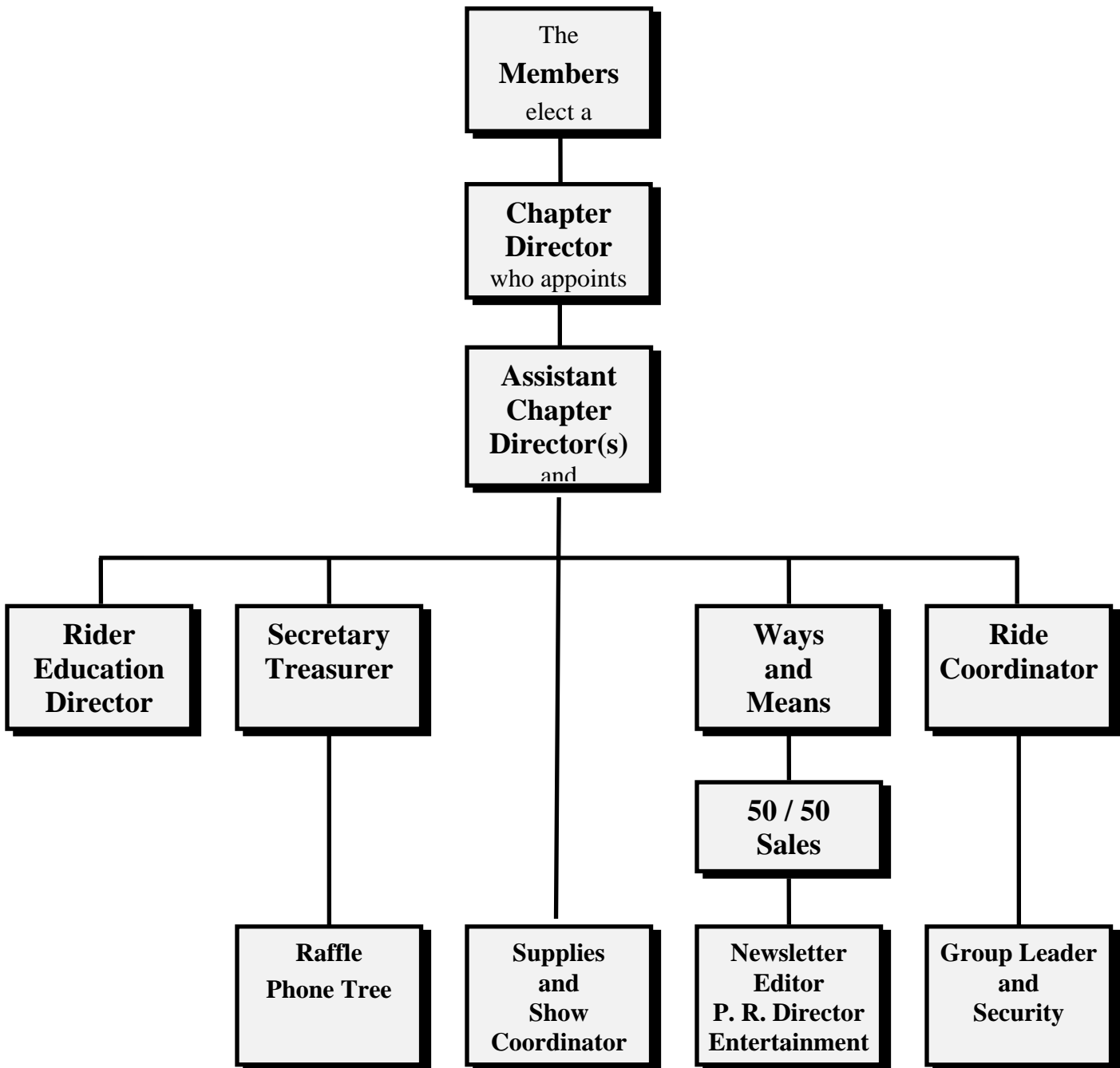
- 1. Develop an Organization Chart:** The organization does not have to be as formal as indicated in this guide. The idea is to determine what is necessary for your chapter. Some chapters may be able to get along with a minimum of officers such as director, treasurer and ride coordinator.
- 2. Develop Job Descriptions:** Job descriptions give prospective and current job holders a GUIDELINE for their activities. There is no sense asking someone to take a job if they have no idea of how to accomplish their task(s).

3. Chapter Organization Diagram #1



This diagram is a guide to organizational configuration for a new chapter. Chapter directors should modify the chart to suit their chapter needs.

4. Chapter Organization Diagram #2



The above diagram is an example of a chapter that has matured. Please note the bottom row of position titles. As the chapter grows, the chapter director may find a need for additional positions in order to involve more members in chapter operations and relieve others of dual duties.

B. Job Descriptions

1. **Assistant Chapter Director:** The assistant chapter director (ACD) needs to be willing and able to lend a conscientious hand to the chapter, yet have initiative and executive ability. The ACD will often supervise committees and fill in for the CD when necessary. The ACD shall also act as a liaison to state/provincial, regional and national directors when so directed by the chapter director. A chapter may have more than one ACD if desired.
2. **Treasurer** will maintain a detailed set of books (with supporting documentation) on the chapter's financial standing (refer also to treasurer). A year-end financial report will be prepared and available to the chapter membership, and a courtesy copy sent to the State/Provincial director.
3. **Secretary** must be a good communicator, well-organized, have good vocal skills, and be a people-oriented individual. This is a pivotal point in the organization. Choice of vocal and written word to either internal or external communicators is extremely important and sensitive. The chapter's credibility can rise or fall on the incumbent's activities (refer also to treasurer). The secretary will be responsible for all chapter correspondence.

In the absence of a Membership chair, maintains the chapter roster and compares to other records at regular intervals and ensures corrections are appropriately completed. When notified of address/telephone changes, ensures members notify the staff responsible for membership records at national.

Minutes of staff, special, and general meetings may be maintained in a sequentially numbered log and approved at each monthly business meeting if the chapter chooses to record their history in this manner. The minutes may include information from the monthly treasurer's report. Pertinent information of various decisions or directions pursued by the chapter will also be entered. This record may evolve to a historical writing of reasons, decisions, and policies of the chapter. (refer also to treasurer).

4. **Membership:** The duties and responsibilities of a membership chair are:
 - Monitor monthly membership rosters for expiring members and encourage renewals. Follow up on non-renewals (in the absence of a chapter secretary).
 - Suggest general procedures for inviting potential members. Suggest ways to recruit new members and help the chapter grow.
 - Provide information and suggestions to the staff.
 - Suggest procedures for the guidance of chapter chairmen and officers in maintaining a high level of member interest and participation.
 - Prepare and maintain a new member packet containing general information about GWTA, the chapter, group riding, events, etc.
 - Welcome new members at meetings. *Make sure they're not sitting alone.*

5. **Newsletter Editor:** The editor of the monthly newsletter will be responsible for selection, editing, preparation, content and mailing. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep the members informed of upcoming events. Any article submitted may be edited by the newsletter editor or chapter director at their discretion to maintain a positive attitude about GWTA and the chapter. The chapter director is ultimately responsible for newsletter content.
6. **Public Relations:** The role of a chapter public relations (PR) official is one of public image and visibility. PR will of necessity be linked to other official duties of the chapter. The PR person must work with others, exuding cheerfulness, enthusiasm and dedication at all times. PR duties will include formal gatherings, shows, news media, advertising and meeting information involvement. This individual should be active in the chapter; an innovative talent will be an added asset to this position.
7. **Rider Education Director:** The prospective applicant may have been asked to become an R.E.D. or may have volunteered for the job. The R.E.D. at the next higher level is informed of the chapter director's choice. In deciding on the applicant one must remember that they need not be a motorcycle safety instructor. The applicant should be a self-starting, self-motivated person who can work with both the chapter director and the R.E.D. at the next higher level. This person should also have a genuine interest in the members' riding skills, safety and knowledge.
8. **Group Leader (Ride Leader)** will work under the guidance of the ride coordinator but will be totally responsible for travel routing and safety of the group. Individual safety lies within the province of each motorcycle operator. Other duties include supervision of road map preparation for members, alternate routes, and sufficient stops along a route for fuel, food and rest.
9. **Ride Coordinator:** The responsibilities of the ride coordinator are many and varied. The ride coordinator should:
 - Solicit, review and develop all tour activities to meet chapter objectives. Ride objectives must include thorough planning to maximize participant enjoyment.
 - Supervise and support the group leader(s) in ride preparation. Minimum criteria for safety, rest, fuel and food stops must be developed and met.
 - Present selected rides on an annual basis to the chapter staff for review and approval. Approved rides will be scheduled, promoted and advertised in the monthly newsletter.
 - Communicate with the general membership (and staff) on a regular basis and evaluate ride objectives.
 - Have a direct voice in the selection of group leader(s).
 - Review past chapter activities in newsletter articles to promote fellowship and future participation of members.
 - Keep abreast of future annual chapter events and see that proper and timely planning has been implemented.

- 10. Show Coordinator:** As the title implies, the incumbent may initiate, advertise, and chair functions relating to motorcycle shows and other special events. He/she should work closely with other officers to inform and coordinate efforts before, during and after shows. Efforts may involve working closely with others in similar capacities. Activities could involve design, structure and display content, personnel scheduling, exhibit materials planning, and activity guidelines for all participants. Chapter dress, if applicable, is encouraged at all activities.
- 11. Entertainment:** When the size of the chapter makes it necessary, this committee chair can be formed to share the load that otherwise falls on the public relations chair at such functions as dinners and larger than routine meetings. Since such affairs require much attention to detail, the entertainment portion of the program can be delegated to this committee. Activities could include arrangements for music, booking of entertainment, speaker engagements, direction of a show, and providing equipment for movies.

C. Staff Selection

Determining the type and quantity of organization positions that will be initially required is dependent upon membership numbers and membership needs. A large chapter may want to use a selection committee to put together a pool of possible candidates to fill the various positions that are needed to successfully operate the chapter. Smaller chapters will have fewer staff positions, usually appointed by the chapter director. You must decide whether to self-appoint your staff or appoint a committee to seek out candidates and help in the selection process. If you are going to use a committee, be sure the makeup of the committee represents the diversity of your chapter.

The next task will be to survey your membership to find out what talent, skills or interests the membership can bring to these positions. There are many talented individuals in every chapter and a great way to find these people is through a survey. A membership survey form has been included in this section. It is a guide only. Add, delete, or modify according to your situation.

When the surveys (or a good portion) have been returned, it's a good idea to record the results. One method used is to list all the people returning the survey down the left side of a large columnar accounting pad. List all the job positions across the top of the pad. Simply make a check mark or remark in the job column opposite the member name.

When you get together with your selection committee or member(s) of your staff, you have a ready reference of members that have indicated a desire to do a particular job. When selections are complete, it is very important that someone approach these chosen members with a couple of thoughts in mind:

- This is a volunteer organization, do not demand. Be very warm and sympathetic to their life styles and personal situations.
- The appointee will need to know what is expected of them. Be sure to give them a description of job duties.

- Some appointees will want to know the amount of personal time commitment required to fulfill the job. Do not hedge -- give your best estimate! If you try to snow them, they will know!

Sample Chapter Survey Form

Date _____

Fellow Members:

Staffing a chapter is particularly difficult in a voluntary organization – especially when there are no tradition-bound methods of selecting staff positions from within membership ranks. Staffing appointments must be accomplished via knowledge of member’s desires and talents. I am asking that this brief survey be completed to give me an idea of your thoughts and of each individual's desires. I believe that we have a great reservoir of talent within our chapter -- and I'd like to tap that reservoir as soon as practical. PLEASE, PLEASE -- return this questionnaire right away ... Staffing and direction will be significantly influenced by YOUR thoughts.

Thank you for your consideration

	YOUR EXPERIENCE	CAN YOU HELP ?
ADMINISTRATION		
Treasurer	_____	_____
Secretary	_____	_____
Membership	_____	_____
Editor	_____	_____
Selection	_____	_____
Aide	_____	_____
OPERATIONS		
Public Relations	_____	_____
Safety	_____	_____
Show Coordinator	_____	_____
Tour Director	_____	_____
Road Captain	_____	_____

Your comments on chapter organization, rides, social activities and meeting conduct will be most welcome ... please comment

Your Name _____

D. Meetings

General: So far, we have discussed how to organize and staff the chapter. Now consideration should be given to the chapter's needs. Take a moment to ponder the following questions about the total organization and the chapter.

- Why has GWTA been so successful?
- What does GWTA do that makes us one of the fastest-growing motorcycle organizations in the world?

A few answers could be:

- An alternative method of operation
- Our common identity with the Gold Wing
- A need for strong, dedicated leadership in the motorcycle community

Whatever the final answer, we normally find that two answers become a common and fundamental part of every analysis:

- We like to gather together to socialize
- We like to dine out (or potluck) together

We all become bored with a long, exhaustive, unproductive meeting.

Who wants to go to a meeting?

Who wants to sit through a meeting?

Who wants to listen to a boring speaker? NO ONE!

If you put people together who share a common bond, a motorcycle for instance, they will engage in socializing. They will talk, laugh, see friends, share a meal, and thoroughly enjoy themselves and each other. This socializing aspect of the organization draws our members together. It is our job to provide that opportunity for enjoyable gatherings.

1. The Timing: Varied times have proven to be successful. Some chapters will meet for breakfast during the weekend and follow the meeting with a ride or sponsored function, while other chapters have found that their members prefer to have a meeting during the evening hours. In either case, you will find dividing the meeting into segments will ease your planning.

These segments might be:

- Socializing
- Eating
- Informative time
- After-meeting ride

If you meet for a dinner meeting during the week, it will generally be too late for a ride after the meeting. It's probably not too late for an ice cream run, though.

Ideal times generally center around 7:00-10:00 AM for a weekend meeting, and 6:00-8:00 PM for a weekday meeting informative period. Make sure members have had a chance to finish eating before beginning the session, don't rush. A few suggestions:

- DO start promptly as promised
- DON'T have the waitress collecting money, collecting dishes, pouring coffee
- DO try to have dirty dishes cleared away before you start
- DON'T have music playing in the room while the meeting is in progress
- DO try to have a room away from others where you can have some privacy

Try to arrange the room so that tables do not give an image of a business meeting (no head table or rows of chairs). Tables should be arranged informally. Staff members should NOT sit together but sit at different tables so they can socialize and learn about membership likes and dislikes in an informal atmosphere. All members should be able to see and speak to the chapter director or the speaker.

2. The Gathering Place: It has previously been suggested that meetings could be divided into several sections, the first two being socializing and eating ... to accommodate those needs you'll require a gathering place. Generally, a local restaurant fills this requirement. The management would have to be approached for permission to use their facilities on your planned date and time. You should consider:

- Will the facility allow a motorcycle group?
- Will they allow you to have a private room or area?
- Will they turn off any music or PA system to the area?
- Will they provide good service and food, reasonable prices?
- Is there a proper parking area -- for group parking?
- Is there reasonable access to gas stations and major highways?

About every three months, you should talk with the facility owner to determine if the owner is happy with the chapter presence and activities. If there's a complaint, try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. You should also talk with the waiters and waitresses. They are very important in providing a pleasant atmosphere and enjoyable service for the members. Ask if they are satisfied with tips, with member conduct, and any other items you may think of that could have an effect upon your chapter/business relationship. You might also check to see if MOST of the members are understanding and considerate and correct any problems.

Keep in mind that many restaurants bring in extra help for your benefit. For this help to come in, it must be worth their time. They must be there an hour before you arrive to set up, and they are there an hour after you leave to clean up and rearrange tables. They are working 4-5 hours for your chapter gathering.

When you make arrangements with the owner to be at the restaurant on a given day, **STICK TO IT!!** Do not be bouncing around from planned date to planned date. If you are unable to attend a meeting, have your ACD conduct the informative part. If the ACD is unavailable, then have one of the staff or another designated person lead the meeting. Your chapter members look forward to that special time. **DON'T CHEAT THEM!!** You also create a hardship on the owner; he has other people besides you to consider in all arrangements.

In the beginning when the chapter is relatively small, you can hold meetings in a restaurant and order from the menu. Be aware that as the chapter grows, this will become cumbersome to both the restaurant owner and the waitresses, not to mention a corresponding decline in services. When attendance reaches 80, you will need to consider looking for an alternate location, or consider alternate methods of food service: maybe having a buffet instead of sit down service. Buffet service has an advantage for the servicing of large numbers of people very quickly. The drawback is the generally higher cost per person. If you do utilize the buffet style, you'll probably will lose some of the meal participants. People do not want to pay a higher cost for the same food. However, if people are enjoying themselves with the chapter function and each other, they generally will not mind the slightly higher cost and the chapter will continue to grow in membership. As a chapter grows, it can become a victim of its own success. At some point in time, your chapter may become too large and unwieldy. An alternate to large chapter numbers is the possibility of spinning off another chapter. This option should be discussed with your state/provincial director. The chapter should not grow so large as to make new people feel lost or left out.

3. General Meeting Day: Staff meetings have been held, newsletters have been mailed out and now is the big day, the chapter meeting. Prior to the date, you should sit quietly alone and put on paper those items you wish to discuss. Remember not to make the meeting a place for doing all the business of the chapter. The proper place for the business portion is the business meeting. Items to help you for the general meeting are:

- Review information from state/provincial and/or regional office.
- Pull out your last two newsletters and review them for important messages that should be reviewed.
- Reread other chapter newsletters.
- Review last month's correspondence from other motorcycle organizations.
- Thumb through *Touring News* for items of interest.
- Review conversations in the last month with other chapter members:
 - . who bought a new motorcycle
 - . whose grandson painted Grandpa's bike
 - . who had a funny incident

3" x 5" cards are easy to use for your notes.

At top of the first card put:

Welcome
 Introduce guests
 Assure all have signed in

At bottom of last card put:

50/50
 The ride today is
 It will be led by
 Leaving ato'clock
 Motorcycle gassed and ready

Use more cards to jot down ideas, inserting them between the first and last card according to your desire. You may make short statements as memory joggers to discuss items, such as:

- March 15-upcoming ride-leader
- April 4-7 camp out-cost-leader
- John Smith - new Gold Wing

Tip -- always keep at least two 3" x 5" cards blank. Prior to the informative portion of the meeting, someone will come up and ask you to make an announcement. Write it down on a blank card and insert it in your meeting format stack. Before you know it, you will have 5 or 6 items to announce.

One other point to keep in mind: try to pick a positive item to start and to end the session. Start on a high note -- end on a high note, such as:

- At the beginning sing Happy Birthday to someone
- At the end thank someone for a job well done
 (with applause)

Remember ---- people will sing in a group and they will applaud. They enjoy the participation of others.

Above all, stay AWAY from:

- Reading secretary reports or financial reports.
- Going over the same material you have already put into the newsletter, unless there has been a significant change that will affect everyone.

Now that you have planned, gather all the material for the meeting the night before:

- Local, state/provincial, regional, national flyers
- Sign in sheets (and pens or pencils)
- New articles
- Checkbook
- Blank 3" x 5" cards
- Chapter flag or banner
- Hand outs
- Lists for rides, events, etc.

- Welcome letters
- A big smile

When you rise the next morning, you will be ready! Organized! Positive thoughts about the day will be buzzing 'round your head! You'll be looking forward to seeing all the chapter folk. Try to arrive at the meeting place as early as possible to make sure the room is in order and the restaurant is ready to receive the group. It is not necessary to stand at the door and greet everyone as they arrive but prior to the actual meeting, you should try to stop and chat with as many people as possible. Your assistant should also be circulating, making sure that everyone feels welcome. You should make a point to be introduced to or to introduce yourself to EACH NEW FACE.

During the pre-meeting time, there are usually one or two representatives circulating around the meeting area, selling 50/50 tickets. Because of the activities during this socializing period, you may not have time to eat. As your chapter grows, your assistant and staff will also run into this problem. This is a great time to go on a diet!!

You will find the chapter is made up of many interests. Some members come to the meeting for the meal and socializing, while others come for socializing and the ride after the meeting. You must try to accommodate all these varied interests, a tough balancing act at best. Try to allow about 30 minutes of tire kicking after the meeting for those people who do not want to ride. This time will also help to clear the parking lot of those who are not going on the ride and give time for the road captain to organize the groups for those riding.

Just a few more words about the get-together:

- Start promptly as promised
- Make your announcements from your cards
- If you have a guest speaker, do the introduction
- Try to keep discussion to 1/2 hour or less
- Be positive, energized; start high, end high

Be available for comments, questions, or suggestions from the membership after the meeting -- until it's time to start the ride.

Be a good listener. People have ideas. Try to do what your chapter members suggest. If a suggestion is made by a member, ask them to consider chairing the activity, then invite them to the business meeting. Get them involved, if possible.

Gold Wing Touring Association

Chapter 2 Membership



A. Welcome Envelope

Stop for a minute and reflect about the first time you went to a GWTA chapter meeting. You were probably apprehensive, felt out of place, didn't know what was going to happen, or what to expect. Right? Wanted to sit in a corner by yourself? You had a hundred questions: What is GWTA? What is the cost? Jackets? Patches? Who does what?

Then someone comes up, sticks out their hand and says "Hello, my name is ---, Welcome to Chapter ---". Then they hand you an envelope with one word on it -Welcome.

What is in a welcome envelope?

1. A welcome letter from the chapter director, explaining something about GWTA, the chapter and the key staff members.
2. A copy of the latest chapter newsletter with a calendar of events.
3. A GWTA brochure with application.
4. Group riding tips.
5. A questionnaire about the prospective members. Be sure to stress that the questionnaire is optional. You may add or delete questions on the questionnaire form as needed.

This welcome letter will need to be updated periodically as changes occur in either leaders, eating places, chapter growth, etc. Either you, your ACD, or someone you have designated as a welcoming person should be helping new prospective members at each meeting. Refer to the next few pages for some suggested letters of welcome.

Sample Letter #1

CHAPTER BANNER OR LOGO

Dear Fellow Motorcyclist

Thank you for your interest in GWTA.

Many who are familiar with organized motorcycling want to know what makes us different from other organizations. The following paragraphs will answer some of those questions.

Our organization was established in 1987 because a few hundred people decided they wanted to start an organization whose leaders were answerable to the members and only the members. Why were they driven to this monumental task when many were saying "Others have tried and failed, so will you!" ? These few hundred were driven by the desire to enjoy motorcycling and they were convinced the only way they could reach that goal was with **freedom**. They felt if they could establish **freedom, fun and friendship** would quickly follow.

FREEDOM

The founders of GWTA felt the members needed the freedom to decide for themselves what would bring them enjoyment. It all begins with a few individuals in a community who get together and decide amongst themselves what they might enjoy doing together. This is what a GWTA chapter does. The first step is the election of a chapter director. The director is elected by the members from those in the chapter who are interested. The job is simply seeing that the wishes of the members are carried out, while at the same time operating within the boundaries set forth by the member elected board of directors. Does this person have to ride a Gold Wing? No. The chapter director is given a copy of 'TA WAY', a *guide* book on how a successful chapter may be operated. Please note that the word *guide* is in italics. This means it is not law but suggestions on how to operate a chapter. What your chapter does, when you do it or what your chapter uniform will be (which is optional), is all up to the membership. Majority rules. **Any funds the chapter raises belong solely to the chapter. The chapter is accountable only to its chapter members.**

FUN

If you have freedom you can't help but have fun. The prime driving force behind our (the members') organization is fun. We are not driven by profit or numbers but by good times and friendships. GWTA activities are planned to give the member a maximum of fun at a minimum cost.

FRIENDSHIP

This is by far one of the greatest rewards GWTA has to offer its members. If you choose to be involved in your organization you will gain many lasting friendships. You will be involved with people who have something in common: a passion for motorcycling, fun and friendship.

We are expecting continued growth as our organizational concept becomes known and experienced. Ask our members your questions. They'll tell you anything you want to know. We are very confident that what we offer is just what you're looking for.

Members of GWTA Chapter _____

Sample Letter #2*CHAPTER BANNER OR LOGO***Dear Fellow Motorcyclist**

We would like to introduce you to what many of our new members call the best kept secret in organized motorcycling, the Gold Wing Touring Association. The main goal of GWTA is to bring motorcyclists together for the purpose of **friendship, fun** and the **freedom** to achieve that goal. We are owned and operated by our members.

Under the heading of **fun** GWTA membership offers you a wide variety of activities on and off the motorcycle throughout the year. All of these activities will lead to the ultimate goal, **friendship**.

Your membership fee entitles you to the following benefits:

1. GWTA logo back patch (es), pin(s) and decals.
2. GWTA membership card(s)
3. A monthly copy of our organization magazine *Touring News*. Our magazine is dependent upon our members for its content. You will find interesting articles, features, information about happenings in GWTA throughout the US and Canada, and upcoming activities and events.
4. Our Blue Line is a national directory of members and their telephone numbers indicating what assistance they may be able to provide a fellow member. If you should have a breakdown, emergency or simply the need for information you are only a phone call away from a fellow member who can be there to assist you. This directory is a valuable resource to our members as they travel.

If you enjoy people and motorcycling and decide to become involved you will be making a lifestyle change you will never regret. We believe GWTA is the finest motorcycle organization around. We're proud of what we the members have created and we want to share it with others.

The members of GWTA Chapter _____

B. Group Riding

This is an overview of group riding. For further details see the GWTA Group Riding Guide available through your rider education director.

New chapter members are often reluctant to acknowledge the fact they've never ridden with a group. Rather than putting the new members in the uncomfortable position of figuring it out for themselves, provide them with the information before their first ride. This will make the group riding experience much more enjoyable for them and those they are riding with.

Riding with our group is strictly voluntary.

We advocate the use of good quality helmets, boots, eye protection and protective clothing. The ultimate safety of the rider, passenger and motorcycle rests solely with the rider. Traffic and road conditions change quickly and what may have been okay for the group leader and those ahead of you may not be okay for your own safety. Your first responsibility is for your own safety, staying with the group is secondary. The safe operation of your bike is of utmost importance to those riding with you.

The first bike is generally the group leader who knows the route and destination. The last bike in your group is the back door. Group leaders lay out a route and do their best to avoid hazards. Back doors accompany the group and keep the group leader informed of progress through traffic congestion, intersections, etc. Back doors are present to assist and summon more assistance in the event of a breakdown or other mishap.

Where conditions permit, such as freeways or other wide lane roads, we use a staggered riding formation with a minimum of two seconds between you and the bike directly in front of you (same side of lane). This action automatically adjusts the distance between bikes for speed and gives enough time to take proper avoidance maneuvers in case the bike ahead encounters a problem.

Narrow roads require a greater distance between bikes and single file riding.

Know the final destination and the general route. Carry a map of the area to be traveled. If you should get separated (highly unlikely) you can rejoin your friends at their final destination.

Gold Wing Touring Association

Chapter 3 Activities



Financing Chapter Activities

- 1. General:** The financing of chapter activities according to the wishes of both the general membership and specifically the staff can be a very sensitive issue for the chapter director. Generally all parties come to a mutually agreeable solution when the problem is presented logically to the planning committee (staff). A final plan can be started after discussion.

Several methods have been developed over the years to help produce funds for the chapter treasury. The primary purpose of a chapter is fun, socializing, and developing friendships --- not for the sole purpose of gaining monetary stature. Funds developed for a chapter are to defray operating expenses and to fund special charitable events, etc.

- 2. 50/50 Tickets**

A common method of funds development at functions for all organization levels is 50/50 ticket sales. For every dollar of revenue, 50 cents goes to the treasury and 50 cents will be given to the winner of a ticket draw. *Ticket sales must comply with any gambling laws applicable in your state/province.*

Tickets are normally sold according to a schedule. One of the most common is \$1.00 per ticket and 6 for \$5.00. It is up to each chapter to adapt a schedule according to the needs and desires of the members.

- 3. Raffle**

A raffle can be set up so that additional funds are available for the treasury or a special event, with the profits being scheduled for a specific purpose. Raffles must comply with applicable state/provincial laws governing them.

Items for the raffle are usually donated by members. Motorcycle parts and accessories are not the only items to consider for raffling: there's also quilts, jewelry, household items, camping items, crafts, etc. Open your field of thinking and you will be amazed at the number of items you can secure. Consider a staff approval for using a certain percentage of the profits to purchase items for the next raffle. Just make sure that as a general rule, the cost of the item should be no more than approximately 1/4th of the normal sales of your raffles.

- 4. Fun Run**

Many chapters will host an annual fun run, charging a nominal fee to participants. The chapter identifies a specific scenic route, and may or may not have participants engage in an activity at stops along the way, or merely provide a route, and engage in an activity upon their return from the ride. If the chapter has never organized a fun run or

other gathering, it is suggested that the state/provincial director be contacted for ideas and suggestions for the most efficient, cost-effective standards and methods.

5. Specialty Items

Some chapters have developed specialties, either for sale or as giveaways. Such items may be annual calendars, pens, hats, key rings, etc. Care must be taken that regulations are followed regarding either trademarked or copyrighted logo marks (or other marks). Research the officer manual for guidelines, necessary forms and procedures to follow.

Gold Wing Touring Association

Chapter 4 Public Relations



A. Guidelines for Parade or Ceremonial Riding

Parade riding, as with any form of group riding, can be a great deal of fun. In addition to the enjoyable aspects, a parade is an excellent way for motorcyclists to share their sport with the public. It offers us an opportunity to show people the positive aspects of motorcycling and helps dispel the rumors and stereotyping we are often forced to combat.

Parade riding requires a positive approach. Planning, organization, and safety are of paramount importance in preparing for a successful parade or ceremonial ride.

B. Parade Planning

A great deal of the initial planning will be the responsibility of your chapter's parade coordinator or similarly designated individual. This person will become your chapter's contact point, organizer, and the primary solicitor for getting your group involved in ceremonial activities. The following list contains some of the items that should be considered in the planning stages.

1. Parade or Ceremonial Theme: A parade permit may be necessary, so this should be one of the first items checked into.

Care should be taken to ensure your chapter does not commit to participate in events that promote ideals or themes that may be contrary to those of the organization or might lead people to believe that the entire organization supports a particular group or individual.

Examples of this might be participation in a parade geared toward showing support for a particular political candidate. You must remember that while riding in any parade under the association banner, you are not only representing the motorcycling community but GWTA also. This does not preclude individuals from lending personal support to any cause they feel committed, as long as they do not portend to represent the association.

2. Parade Route: The parade coordinator, if possible, should obtain a copy of the parade route from the organizing committee. The coordinator should attempt to personally examine the parade route in advance. Specific items to be sought are

- Length of the parade route
- Type(s) of road surface(s) along the parade route
- Width of the parade route (one lane, two lanes)
- Possible hazards in the road or along the route
- Request that motorcycles be before the horses

- 3. Motorcycles:** Consideration should be given as to whether the number of motorcycles participating in a particular event should be limited or if maximum participation should be solicited. This will primarily depend upon the requirements of the parade organizers.

- 4. Participants:** Advance notice is extremely important. This information will maximize chapter participation because people will have an opportunity to adjust their schedules. A decision should be made as to whether participants will wear some type of coordinated outfits (such as chapter uniforms or similar clothing) or if dress will be left to personal choice.

It is preferable to use some type of chapter sign-up sheet; this will get members to commit themselves to participate in the event. Phone numbers as well as names should be included on the sign-up sheet so people may be contacted with information regarding the event.

Participants must realize that if they commit to participate in an event, they have a responsibility to participate. If they cannot attend, they should give the parade coordinator as much advance warning as possible. There's nothing worse than to plan on having a certain number of bikes for a parade and have only half show up. Remember, parades and ceremonies are a great way to show the pride we have in our association, ourselves and our bikes.

5. Final Planning Note

Participants should arrive at the starting point with a FULL tank of gas. Motorcycles should also have been checked to ensure that all other fluids are at maximum levels and all necessary maintenance has been performed. Lights and fuses should be checked. There is nothing more embarrassing than having a bike break down during a parade or having one on which all the equipment does not function properly. For parades occurring during the warmer months of the year, remember to pay close attention to coolant levels. The slow pace of a parade can easily overheat an engine if coolant levels are not adequate. Some members have installed fan bypass switches, so that the engine fan may be engaged before the temperature gets very high.

C. Parade Organization

Once all participants have arrived at the formation area, the parade coordinator should review with them the parade route and formation. Basic formations should have been decided ahead of time, based on parade route knowledge and the number of bikes.

The following ideas may help in deciding which formations to use:

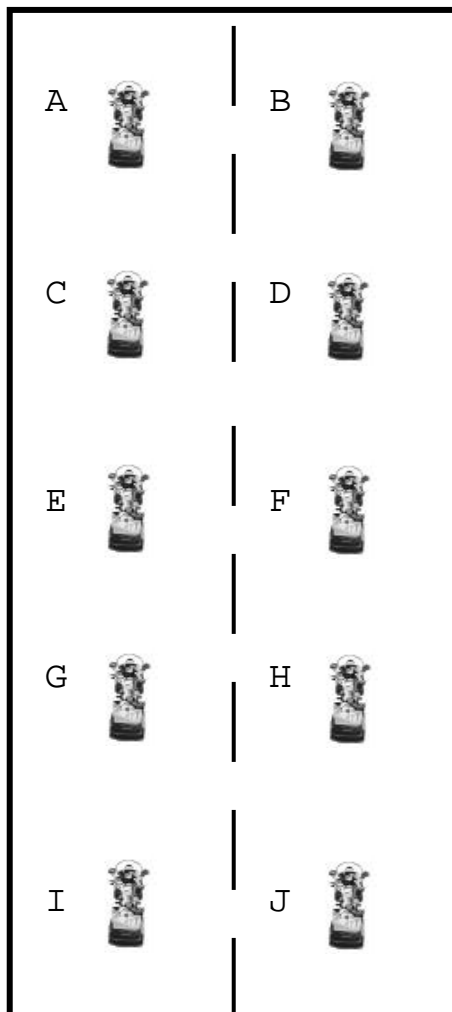
1. **Width of Parade Route:** This determines the type of formation used and the spacing between motorcycles.
2. **Type of Motorcycles:** A group that contains motorcycles without sidecars or trailers is going to be more flexible in the type of formation used. Diagram 1 shows a standard side by side formation that is not only symmetrical but allows each rider to position by using two points of reference -- a bike directly in front and one alongside. This formation looks especially good if you have a large number of motorcycles. Formations containing sidecars and/or trailers require some special considerations.
 - Unless you have an even number of motorcycles with sidecars and/or trailers, you will probably want to use the diamond formation (or variation) as shown in diagram 2. This formation allows placement of special unit cycles in the center of the formation where they have more room and maneuverability.
 - Even if you have an even number of motorcycles with sidecars, you should ride single-file if the parade route is not a full two lanes wide. Without this much room the sidecar units would be too close together for safe maneuverability.
 - If you should have someone towing a trailer with the chapter or association banner, this unit should be as far forward in the formation as possible, either leading the formation or second in line following the parade leader.
3. **Total Number of Motorcycles:** If you have a small number of participants, a diamond formation or a single-line formation will make the group seem larger.
4. **Experience of Riders:** Consideration as to a person's placement in a formation should also involve the level of their riding experience in either group, formation or parade riding.
5. **One-Up/Two-Up:** An attempt should be made to arrange the motorcycles so that rider only bikes are grouped together and rider/passenger bikes are grouped together. You are putting on a display for the public; the formation should be as precise, symmetrical and pleasing to the eye as possible.
6. **Radios/Stereos:** A decision should be made as to whether or not the group will have music playing through external speakers during the parade. If the decision is yes, it is recommended that a single radio station be selected for everyone to use. This promotes an impression of unit cohesion within the formation. Music should be kept at a minimal level so as to not interfere with communications.

NOTE: Another possible option would be the idea of a chapter theme song. Several chapters have themes taken from popular music. A repetitive recording of a chosen song played from one external speaker might be something to try for a parade.

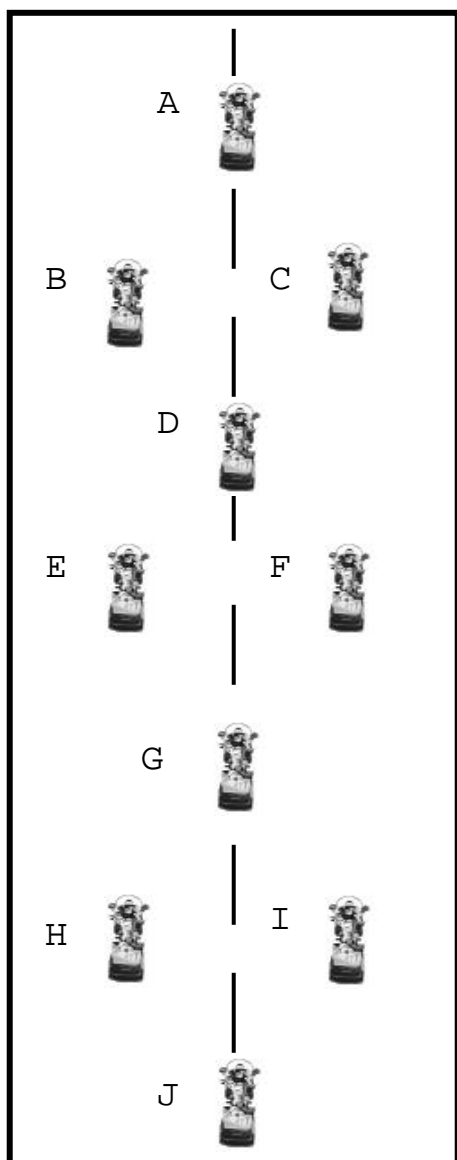
- 7. Communication:** Dialogue between motorcycles is very important. It allows the road captain to provide information regarding anticipated maneuvers and hazards. Communication is another factor which must be considered in making a decision about the use of external music speakers. The recommended procedure is that all individual radios and tape players be turned off during the parade. This will ensure good communications and avoids distractions. Not using external speakers prevents distracting or irritating onlookers with music that they may dislike. We are trying to look and act as professional as possible!

Special Note: The most important thing to remember about communications is that the parade leader has TOTAL control over the proceedings. If anyone has any questions regarding instructions or plans, those questions should be asked prior to parade movement. Under no circumstance should anyone argue with or try to change the established process during an event as this creates a potentially hazardous situation.

Diagram #1



- ◆ Used primarily for formations involving a large number of motorcycles.
- ◆ Not a recommended formation with any sidecars and/or trailers.
- ◆ Parade group leader should be in position A and the back door in position J.

Diagram #2

- ◆ Used primarily for formations with a mixture of motorcycles with or without sidecars and trailers.

- ◆ Position A or B should be the parade group leader. Use position B if A is a unit carrying the chapter banner.

- ◆ Sidecar units and trailer units should be in the centerline positions. (i.e. , A, D, G, and J.)

- ◆ The back door should be in position J.

D. Parade Safety

Safety must be of paramount concern in planning any ride. The following are recommendations involving personal safety and personal protective gear.

Helmets: no matter how hot the parade is, how short the route is, or any of the other reasons people might come up with, GWTA highly recommends the wearing of approved helmets. We're trying to promote a safe motorcycling image. State/provincial laws must be followed.

Recommended apparel for both rider and passenger: boots, long pants and gloves. Jackets or long sleeves are optional, based on the weather.

Motorcycles in the formation should be spaced at intervals so as to have a safe amount of maneuvering room, while maintaining the integrity of the group. Riders should attempt to accelerate and decelerate as smoothly as possible while maintaining the established distances in front, behind and abreast. These distances should have been established and agreed upon prior to the parade and will be based on the route, the number of motorcycles and the experience of the riders.

Not all possible contingencies can be covered when planning and organizing a ride. Something may happen that is totally beyond anything anyone expected. Proper planning and organization will hopefully have covered most common situations that could arise. If something does occur during the parade which requires an individual motorcycle to take action or to drop out of formation, safety for the rider, passenger and parade onlookers must be of primary concern. The parade coordinator or group leader should determine if a motorcycle in trouble requires immediate assistance or if the formation can return later to render assistance. Communication is the key. If immediate assistance is required the back door should drop out of the formation and render assistance and the next designated rider should assume the duties of the back door.

E. Parade Conclusion

Parade or ceremonial riding can be a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding experience. It also provides us with the opportunity to display our pride in ourselves, our association and our motorcycles. We can dispel some of the myths and stereotypes that people have associated with motorcyclists and do so with style and grace.

Planning + Organization + Safety = a POSitive impression

Enjoy your Riding !!

F. Donations

Getting donations for chapter functions can be a very difficult task unless you're fortunate enough to have an outgoing person within your group. Such a person may be able to approach motorcycle dealers or distributors with ease to solicit items for gatherings. Someone else may seem to have a way with grocers or hardware dealers, or convenience store operators. Theme or ride parks such as 6-Flags or Great America should not be overlooked.