

UPSTATE TOURING & RYDING CHAPTER

U.S. SPYDER RYDERS

Carolina Byker Foundation

Chapter Leadership Suggestions

For some time now, various Chapter Presidents and other officers have asked us how we have managed to build such a successful group. Kathy and I are very proud of our chapter, but make no mistake, it's the **members** who make it successful. **NOT JUST THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**. We've been asked to put some thoughts on paper as to why we think our chapter has reached the point it has and continues to grow and get even better. Here are some thoughts:

- Basic principals we have always adhered to from the beginning.
 - The Chapter **needs** members. The members do **not need** the chapter to enjoy ryding.
 - People join clubs for several reasons
 - To meet people and make new friends while having **FUN**
 - To participate in something they **enjoy** doing
 - To be involved in something **worthwhile** (Everyone has their own definition).
- Keep **everything** you do **enjoyable**
 - Our members look forward to our monthly meetings
 - We **deliberately** meet at a restaurant a full 90 minutes before starting the meeting so people can socialize **before** getting down to business.
 - Have an outline of what needs to be addressed at the meeting prepared in advance so you can **keep the meeting moving**. We try to keep our meetings to an hour.
- **ASK** your members for their **suggestions frequently**. We have always been a **member driven** group. We try hard to **NOT DICTATE** what we as a chapter are, or are not, going to do. Let the membership as a whole tell you what they would **LIKE** to do (or where they would like to go). In other words, **KEEP MEMBERS INVOLVED**. People like to be asked their opinion. It makes them believe that **THEIR** opinion or suggestions **have merit and are of value** to the group.
- Get to know your members. The potential leaders will become apparent to you as you get to know them better. You will probably have some members who want to hold a particular position in your leadership team but may not be qualified to hold that position in your opinion. Don't blow him off. Perhaps he or she is better qualified to hold a different position. Talk to them. Perhaps they had never thought of it themselves. Of course, you will always have those who don't want to be responsible for anything. They just want to participate. That's fine.
- Have chapter activities besides just rydes and a Christmas party.
 - People like to do other things besides ryding and eating. Does anyone in your chapter have a swimming pool? We've had 2 very successful pool parties this summer at the home of one of our members. Picnics? Bowling? A movie? A potluck cookout at someone's home? Get creative.
 - Our lady members, regardless of whether they ryde their own bikes or not, periodically get together to go for a "Girls Night Out". Once or twice a year, they even go for a "Girls only Weekend" somewhere.

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- Chapter Rydes
 - Most MC riding clubs, (GWRRA, Star, etc.) have planned rides **ONCE** a month. In our opinion, that's not a riding club. We have **AT LEAST 3** chapter rydes monthly on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays, and the 3rd Sunday afternoon for people who go to church. The fact, however, is that we ryde nearly every weekend day, weather permitting.
 - Most people have other obligations or things planned in advance. If you only ryde once a month, some folks won't make it. They've already made a commitment or other obligation for that day. They've missed their only chance to ryde that month.... **bummer!**
 - Ryding numerous times a month changes the whole dynamic of the chapter. I.E. – Our grandson's birthday party is this Saturday, so we won't be able to make the ryde, but that's OK because we'll go on the one next weekend (or 2nd weekend, whatever). The point is to give them as many opportunities to ryde as you can. Have multiple people plan and lead rydes (Ryde Captains).
 - Do you have members who are retired or work on weekends with days off during the week? Plan some weekday rydes.
 - Supporting worthwhile charitable organizations is great. We all do that. But don't make charity events and rydes the **only** rydes you do. Good causes, yes, but generally they are very time consuming with comparatively little riding. Also, people don't want to have to shell out more money every time you have a ryde. They've spent plenty on their bikes already.

In Summary

Give your members the opportunity to get together often to get to know each other and come to be friends ... more like an extended family, really. Some will always be more active than others, of course. But don't make the occasional folks feel left out. Just the opposite in fact. Keep welcoming them back. Tell them you've missed seeing them and that you're glad to see them. Some will start showing up more often.

Unfortunately, every now and then you'll have someone who causes ongoing problems. Make every fair effort to resolve the situation **QUICKLY**. If they won't let it go, remove them. People don't want any **drama** in this type of group. It will run off the good ones.

Not long before the "**Carolina Spyder Rally**" this past May, we ran into a major problem which could well have caused the rally to **NOT HAPPEN AT ALL**. Very few people outside of our chapter even knew what happened. Our Leadership Team took swift and decisive action to quash the attempted "hostile take-over" of the rally. We then went to the membership at large with the issue and let them know we were going to need a lot of help to make the rally a success. The response was overwhelming. A large majority of the membership, even people who were still Trial Members, stepped up to help. People took time off from their jobs to help us get ready for the rally. The result was that it was an even bigger success than the first one in August, 2018, which was also a great success, even though it was our first with only 3 months to plan it. Our **MEMBERS** made it happen.

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Between the two rallies, were able to donate over \$30,000 to the **Road Warrior Foundation** in well under 1 year.

When we ryde, or have other functions, it's with a group of good friends, not merely chapter members. We're growing every month. At last check, we retain over 90% of our members. Perhaps you can see why.