

THE TALON



A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE
MEMBERS

Tidewater HOG Chapter 5344



To Ride Beyond—Lead Road Captain—Tom Sanchez

Whew! What a year this has already been! As I write this, our Road Captains have led rides for the chapter totaling over a thousand miles! We are excited to see what new adventures await as the weather turns nicer. Please remember to get your motorcycle serviced and ready for the warmer temperatures. It's important to have good tire pressure. And, the weather can affect you tire's pressure.

We started the year by coming together for our change of leadership ride as Mike Flynn passed the torch of the chapter to Linda Knowles. We had a wonderful breakfast at Golden Corral and had a great turnout for several other rides in January and February. We did find ourselves cancelling the Ride to The World Famous Run since the weather was below freezing and there were problems with ice at the HRBT. But we did manage to take a large group to Valentines, VA for our annual trek to drop off all those card and love-notes! We've also had several mid-week, Hookie rides for those that are retired or can get the day off from work. We have rides scheduled for every weekend in March and I'm sure the calendar for April will also be full by the time the Talon goes to print. In fact, April will see us striving once more to win the VA state Chapter Challenge as we try to beat all other HOG Chapters in riding to Colonial HD in Petersburg for this event. Since this ride is much closer than in previous years, we will be able to complete this in one day. But don't worry. We have several more overnight rides coming this year. These prove to be excellent opportunities to travel and hang out with your friends in the Chapter!

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March-April 2023
Issue 2
Art Verdin
Editor

EVENTS

Kiss My Grits Ride—March 4
Chapter Meeting—March 8
Irish Jig Ride—March 11
Daylight Saving Time—March 12
Not That Ripley's Ride—March 15
St. Patrick's Day—March 17
Hockey Game—March 18
Lion or Lamb Ride—March 19
Saxis Hookie Ride—March 22
Scavenger Hunt Ride—March 25
Easter—April 9
Chapter Meeting—April 12
State Chapter Challenge—April 24

MORE TO COME IN 2023

Why I Ride!

I have only been riding motorcycles for three years! I finally joined Tidewater H.O.G this year and thought I would share my riding journey. First, I did not come from a motorcycle family; neither of my parents rode. I have two uncles who have ridden for decades. However, we never talked about motorcycles, and I never really showed any interest. I mean, one of my uncles rode out from Erie, Pa, to Sturgis several times (also wrecked more bikes than we can remember, not really a vote of confidence in the activity as I grew up). I was introduced to the “joy” of riding by one of my uncle's friends, whom I ended up hanging around in my 20s. He rode with my uncle years ago and went to Sturgis with him; this guy loved bikes and used to be the top salesman in Erie for years, known as “Big Rick” he loved Kawasaki's and detailed why he loved riding and how fun it could be. That stuck with me for several years, and the more I thought about it, the more I started looking into how to learn to ride. I moved to Norfolk in 2017, and once I settled in, the idea of riding came up again, and this time, I really wanted to know if this was something I was even going to enjoy. So I enrolled in the 2-day MSF course they held at the Bayside H-D training lot. Let's just say when my instructor pulled me aside to let me know I passed, he also said, “Please take your time to learn some more; I don't want you to kill yourself.” A big vote of confidence...but I understood. I just passed the course, and for me, that was huge as I had never ridden a motorized bike! I also had been bitten by the “bug” I wanted to ride; I wanted to get better and really just GO!

Well, three years later, I am riding my third Harley; I love getting out on a country road and cruise! Joining the H.O.G group has been a very positive and pleasant experience; Southside H-D has been my second home, and I have built several friendships within the dealership, which has led to meeting some of you, and it is the sense of a caring riding community that drew me in.

For 2023 it is my goal to ride more this year than I ever have.

Ride On!

Aaron Wygant, Tidewater HOG



2023 Tidewater HOG Pool Tournament

WHAT A FUN TIME!! Minnesota Fats and Fast Eddie Felson have nothing on the Tidewater HOGS. On February 26th we restarted our annual pool tournament at Q Master Billiards, 5612 Princess Anne Road, VB and it was something to behold! Sixteen members signed up to show their cue stick skills while other members gathered to watch. Teams were picked through a blind drawing to make try and make is even for all. As I have said before, you would either be amazed or amused – probably more to the latter than the former as our members battled it out on the tables with a single elimination round. It was a battle to the finish but one team prevailed. The competition was fierce (kind of) as the teams used finesse, strategy and luck to win. It came down to two teams for the final round. The team of Gene Melfy and Ted Lawson finished first and second place went to Dee Sanchez and Steve Cain. First place won \$50 each gift cards and second place won \$25 each gift cards. As we had time left, we were able to play another round. For the second round Tim Bregard and Steve Cain won first and Gene Melfy and Diane Norton came in second. First place won \$20 each and second won \$10 each. We also held a raffle which included some great prizes. Thanks to all who participated and we hope you had as good a time as we had putting it on. A big Thank You goes out to Tom Vincent and Billy Jackson for organizing and setting up the tournament for us. We also want to put a big Thank you out to Q Master Billiards. They are great and treated us really well. The facility is wonderful and they have a great menu of delicious food. Billy and Tom are already talking about setting up next year's tournament there. It's a nice place to spend time!

Linda Knowles



This year's Tidewater Chapter Ride is a Scavenger Ride to places of interest. You will be given a booklet of places to go and hunt for answers about the places. You will need to find the answers and take a picture of it with you in the picture. If you are able to get a Harley Davidson motorcycle in the picture you will get extra points. Your rides will prove to be a lot of fun and you will find interesting things about the places you go to. Most of these places are easy day rides by yourself or with a group of riders.

The cost will be the same as it has been \$15.00 for the ride booklet and you will receive a very nice pin after you turn in your form.



Tidewater Virginia Beach Chapter Scavenger Ride 2023



**Scavenger
Hunts**

SAFETY

PREPARE FOR THE SPECIFIC HAZARDS OF SPRING MOTORCYCLE RIDING

For those of us in the northern half of the United States, it's the time of year when we're happily getting the motorcycle out of hibernation and taking those first good rides of the year. In the enthusiasm, it's easy to forget that spring presents some unique challenges and hazards we may not encounter the rest of the year, so in addition to making sure your ride is ready, the key to having fun and staying safe (can't do the former if you don't do the latter) is to ensure you're mentally prepared.

Spring's unique hazards fall into three basic categories: where we ride, who's around us and what's within us.

I'm listening to me

Cinders, sand and gravel applied to the roads in winter can make traction scarce and stopping and cornering hazardous until spring rains wash it away.

ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

Spring can be a messy time of year on the road. Where I live, the biggest hazard happens to be sand, gravel or cinders that the local road departments strew around at intersections and on steep grades when it snows. It takes a lot of spring rain to wash all that grit away, and meanwhile it piles up in traction-robbing clumps. I'm especially cautious around rural intersections this time of year and sometimes the required line through a curve is not the sweeping arc I'd choose under ideal conditions, but one that follows the asphalt that's been swept clean by car tire tracks.

Thinking in advance about the potential spring hazards in your area will help you spot them sooner and react more quickly. In areas prone to spring rains and flash floods, could there be sand or other debris washed across that low spot in the road ahead? In the mountains, roadside snow banks are a sign to watch for snowmelt running across your path. You don't want to be leaned over steeply and hit a quarter-inch-deep stream of cold water flowing across the pavement.

Urban riders must be vigilant for the potholes that bloom in spring as reliably as flowers. Trail riders know that winter ice storms probably dumped branches and trees in their path and rain could have washed away part of the trail. The key is to anticipate the hazards in your particular riding environment, be alert for them, and be ready to react decisively if they appear



Safety continued

BEWARE THE OTHER GUY

We all know those infamously common six words that follow so many car-motorcycle collisions: “Officer, I didn’t see the motorcycle.” It can be infuriating when car drivers look right at us but pull in front of us anyway, but they may be telling the truth when they say they didn’t see us. Researchers who have studied the phenomenon call it “inattention blindness.” Test subjects given the task of watching a video of people passing around a basketball and counting the number of passes were totally oblivious to a person in a gorilla suit walking through the scene. They swore it never happened until they were shown the video again.

Basically, people see what they’re looking for, and a driver about to turn left is mainly looking for an oncoming car. The image of the motorcycle hits his retina, but his brain ignores it. In one sense, the driver truly doesn’t see us.

This ever-present danger increases greatly when motorcycles have been absent from the roads for several winter months. Drivers aren’t used to seeing motorcycles, much less actively watching for them.

What can we do? Realize that this hazard is at its peak this time of year. Be extra alert at intersections and other danger spots. Choose a lane position that optimizes the space between us and threats. Always be thinking about an escape route or a plan of action if the worst-case scenario begins to unfold. And finally, follow that old piece of advice: Ride as if you’re invisible. Because to some inattentive drivers, essentially you are invisible.



As soon as the weather breaks, everyone wants to get out for a ride. Just make sure you’re ready.

INTERNAL THREATS

Aside from external threats such as debris washed across the road or careless drivers, we can sometimes be our own enemies. After a winter layoff, our skills are dull. Even for those of us who ride all winter are out of practice because our mileage is usually very limited.

So even though we can’t wait to get out on the road or the trails when the first nice day arrives, a little practice first makes good sense. Street riders should practice some emergency swerves and stops in a parking lot before charging down a favored stretch of twisties. Trail riders can spend some time on forgiving terrain, relearning the feel of the tires cutting loose and hooking up, before they set out to conquer that challenging single-track that gave them such trouble last summer. These drills refresh our muscle memory of the crucial feedback the motorcycle provides.

Also, if your first rides of the season are group rides, keep in mind that all your friends are rusty from the layoff, too. Extra space is a good idea.

Spring has returned and you can finally ride. The last thing you want to do is to fail to recognize and avoid one of the specific hazards of spring and put yourself or your motorcycle out of commission, just when the fun is starting.

From [The Ride So Far](#)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

2023 has started out with a bang! We've had lots of rides including the First Ride of the Year on New Year's Day, the Gatsby Party, our annual ride to Valentines, Virginia, Valentines Dinner at the Aberbeen Barn and we restarted our annual HOG Pool Tournament. The 2023 Chapter Tour Ride is different with it being a Scavenger Ride. Not only do you get to ride to find the places, you might learn something along the way. Your Board of Directors and Road Captains are already filling up the calendars for the next few months with day and multi-day rides and we are looking at planning more fun things for the Chapter to do along with some surprises. Coming up we have the HOGS on Ice event to attend a Norfolk Admirals Hockey game on March 18th. For some of the events we are planning, we will be asking members to help us out. Many of you showed up for our first volunteer event for Southside's 33rd Anniversary event on February 25th – please know your participation was greatly appreciated. A special shout out goes to Aaron Wygant for volunteering to head up this event!

Chapter Membership renewal is temporarily unavailable through Motorclothes. You can join/renew at our monthly Chapter meetings and we will post when we will be at Southside on certain Saturdays for those who wish to join or renew. If our Membership Officer Bill Arnold is on a ride, he will be able to take care of your membership needs at that time. If you have any questions, our Membership Officers can be reached at membership@tidewaterhog.com.

Coming up on April 22th, the annual State HOG Chapter Challenge will occur. For those who are unfamiliar with this, once a year the HOG Chapters in Virginia converge on one spot with all Chapters trying to have the most members show up. There are four divisions based on the number of members in your chapter along with an overall winner. Riders count as two points and passengers and those in cages count as one point. Last year we won our division. This year the meetup will be held by the overall winner of last year's challenge, Colonial HOG out of Colonial Harley Davidson in Prince George, Va. Please put this date on your calendar and plan on riding with the Chapter and let's be the overall winner this year! Let's Do This!!

Linda Knowles
Director
Ride and Have Fun!





**TIDEWATER HOG OFFICERS AND ROAD CAPTAINS
2023**
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