

THE TALON



A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE MEMBERS

Tidewater HOG Chapter 5344



To Ride Beyond—Lead Road Captain—Tom Sanchez

One of the greatest features of our Chapter is and has been our Road Captains. From my first ride in this chapter over 6 years ago to now, our Road Captains have made it their job to offer great rides that give us a fun experience while keeping us safe. Road Captains spend time planning rides looking for fun roads that we'll enjoy – back roads where we won't have to deal with traffic, curvy roads to make for an experience to remember, beautiful scenery to make it more enjoyable, and also a nice lunch stop to ensure we have the opportunity for a good meal.

Our Road Captains communicate with each other to maintain consistency with the dynamics of the ride. The hand signals we use, the radio calls we make, the way we conduct the ride, even the brief we give before the ride is done to ensure we all work the same way and provide a safe environment. Long before I came to this chapter, these policies and procedures were put into place. As a new rider, it made me comfortable with the group riding experience. I was able to learn how to ride with others while building up miles. I was able to ride at my comfort level while increasing my ability to handle more challenging roads and situations. As a retired Naval Aviator, this consistency reminded me of how we did things when I was flying. And as I became a Road Captain, I've worked to maintain that tradition. In addition to the communications, we pay attention to the experience level of our group, the road conditions, and the weather to help make the day enjoyable. If there ever was an incident, our Road Captains would be there to take charge of the scene and help anyone involved. SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT. The Road Captain is much more than the guy or gal up front who's supposed to know where we're going (...and when we're going to eat!). There is responsibility involved, which requires planning, communication, heads-up leadership, and full-time attention to the riding situation at hand. As you scroll through the newsletter, you'll see the names of our Road Captains. This month we have the privilege of adding another name to that list. Sabrina Mazol has stepped up and accepted the challenge and opportunity to be a Tidewater HOG Road Captain.

Please welcome her and congratulate her when you next see her!



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Art Verdin
Editor

FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Your PIN is your Friend!

What is your motorcycle's PIN? If the battery in your FOB dies or you lose your FOB, you can start your bike by using your PIN. To find out what your PIN is, you need your FOB. But if you don't know the PIN and you lose your FOB you are stuck! That isn't a good feeling in the mountains two hours before sunset.

In this video, you can find your PIN (and change it) at time 1:30 for pre-2014 models and at time 8:36 for 2014 and later:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zf0aCrD1OSg>

REGIE FARR



EVENTS

SSHD 34th Anniversary—March 2	Ride TBD—March 30
HOGS Hockey ride—March 9	NYC Ride—April 1
Spring Ahead Ride—March 10	Catina Sabrina Ride—g Butt Ride—April 6
Chapter Meeting—March 13	Chapter Meeting—April 10
Kiss the Blarney Stone—March 16	Smoking Butt Ride—April 14
Country Roads Ride—March 17	Hookie Ride—April 18
Oscar Ride—March 20	State Chapter Challenge—April 19-20
Air Museum Ride—March 23	Hookie Ride—April 24
Ricks Birthday Ride—March 24	Birthday Ride—April 27
	Squigly Wiggly Ride—April 28

More to come...

CROSS COUNTRY, 50 YEARS AGO

June, 1973, oh dark thirty, crawl out and get ready to ride!. It's raining, as is usual in San Francisco, with heavy fog rolling in off the cold Pacific Ocean. I woke up my roommate and we grabbed a quick bowl of Cheerios, picked up our travel bags and trudged down the 2 flights of stairs in our apartment building to the underground garage where our bikes were stored, mine a 1973 Electra Glide named General Patton, (yep with three silver stars on it's fairing), his a Kawasaki 900 . That fairing was a thing of beauty, had a sound system including radio and an 8 track tape deck which worked pretty well except on really bumpy roads. There were no factory tour packs back then but I had a custom one, painted with factory paint and it was BIG, probably 50% more cubic inches of space than today's tour packs.



GENERAL PATTON AND ME

We were going to be camping and, having the bigger bike, I had the bigger load: Sleeping bag, 3 man tent, camp stove, coffee pot (and coffee) and army mess kit. And a lot of lightweight food. Had one saddlebag full of "stuff", clothes and rain gear, etc., the other one full of tools, spare parts and oil. These big ol' bikes back then had chains, and automatic chain oilers; oil from the crankcase was dripped directly on to the chain as you rolled – you could determine that the chain was getting adequate oil by the amount getting splashed on to the rear of the bike. You couldn't win with that oiler. It had a screw that you used to adjust the flow of oil onto the chain. But, it was either dropping too much (big mess) or not enough in which case chain would get dry.

Off we went, down Lombard Street, the famous or infamous "crooked street" in San Francisco, (You ain't done San Fran 'til you done this!) then across the Oakland Bay Bridge. We turned northward on I50 across the Sacramento River on the Alfred Zampa Bridge, the windiest bridge in the United States, always blowing, most times 30-50 mph or more.

CONTINUED



SAN FRANCISCO'S LOMBARD STREET

The following morning, we were up, not so early, and, after a wonderful Café breakfast, and onward toward Twin Falls, Idaho. Riding through the west side of the Rocky Mountains was magnificent and challenging! Reaching there around 3:00 or so, I was worrying that I was hearing a knock from the innards of General Patton. A local gas station attendant told me there was a Harley Dealer just “down the road” and we found it. It was a John Deere Dealer also.

They parked me by a giant tractor and one of the mechanics came around took General Patton’s pulse, etc., and told me I had too much imagination. There was nothing wrong!



PARKED RIGHT BY THIS GUY

Okay, on to Pocatello Idaho. We found a park and pitched the tent, got some dinner and called it a day. Heavy rain beating on the tent got us up early. We made coffee, ate some dried out rolls, then packed. Sleeping Bags had to be wrapped in plastic. Then two “full grown” men, one of ‘em 6’5”, had to, once again, struggle into rain gear (or what passed for rain gear back then. LEAKED. LOTS.) We rode through the mountains all day in heavy rain, and finally reached the outskirts of West Yellowstone, found a flat spot by the side of the road and pitched the tent. (Bears don’t go out in the rain, right?)

By morning, the rain had gone and it was bright and sunny with a nice breeze. We hung up everything that was wet. (Everything!) and went into town for breakfast and to wait while our geared dried out a bit. And then,

CON'T

YELLOWSTONE, OLD FAITHFUL AND THE PAINT POT.

So beautiful it's difficult to describe. The mountains range up to 11,000 feet and more and are majestic, jagged peaks. The waterfalls are spectacular and the water clean and cold. We rode through that splendor and dropped down to "Old Faithful"! It erupts 100+185 feet high every 45 minutes to 2 hours, consistently, spouting 4000-8500 gallons of boiling water. The beautiful Paint Pot.



OLD FAITHFUL GEYSER



THE PAINT POT

Continuing on, we saw buffalo grazing in the valleys and once, late in the afternoon, a couple of wolves across the valley, obviously hunting for dinner. Then on to one of my favorite small towns in the world, Jackson Hole, on the eastern side of the mighty Teton Mountains.



JACKSON HOLE WYOMING

Time was getting short, "work" was summoning us so we took the "short cut" home (LOL), via the Bonneville Salt Flats Utah.

In *total*, with a few sightseeing detours, we ran about 2500 miles in 9 days, camped out mostly, fed ! quart of oil to the General (chain, mostly) , used about 75 gallons of gas at about .75 per gallon.

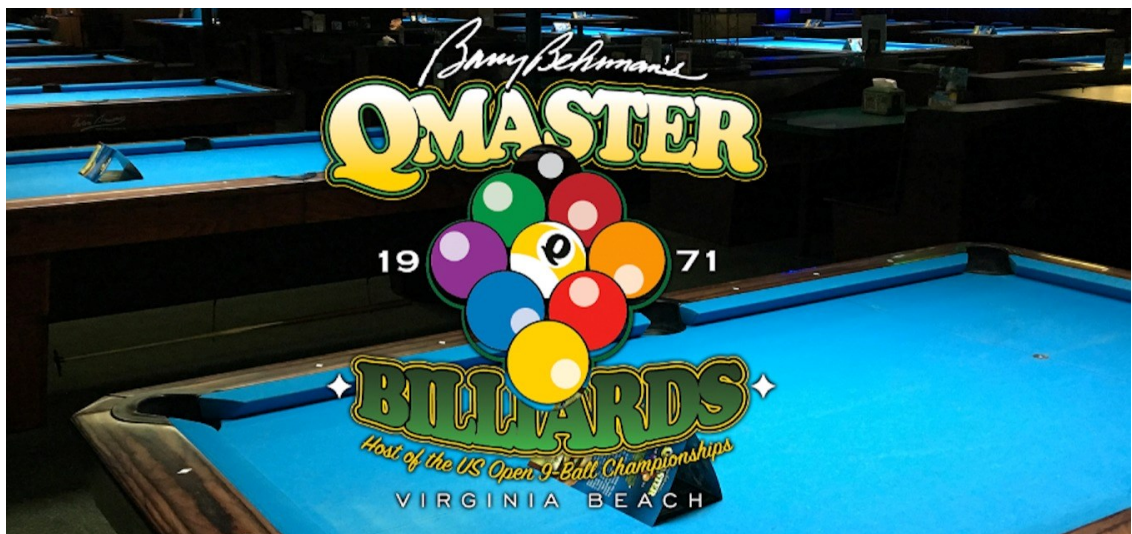
BILL JACKSON

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Sunday, February 18th was the date of our annual Chapter Pool Tournament. As always, the competition was fierce (sort of). Your fellow Chapter members pondered shots, strategized with their partners, crossed their fingers and hoped for the best. You heard some groans and cheers but the sound you heard most was laughter. We had other members who came out to watch and hang out, cheering the players on and have fun. After some long and short matches, we had our winners. **First place went to Gene Melfy and Fred Honeycutt with second place going to Ted Lawson and Tony DeBose.** Congratulations to our winners!

We had some raffle items with the proceeds from the raffle going to Edmarc Hospice for Children. Southside Harley-Davidson donated some items for our raffle. We are very fortunate to have them as our Chapter Sponsoring dealership and we thank them for their donations. Also, thanks to The Butcher in Wakefield who donated a Country Ham and Plantation Peanuts for canned and bag of unshelled peanuts which Billy Jackson added to the raffle. Some of our members donated items which Jo Ann Emmons turned into fantastic baskets. Finally, I would like to thank Q Master Billiards for hosting us again this year. Q Masters staff always take such good care of us, giving us tables to play on, the food is tasty, which makes for an enjoyable time. Based on comments I heard, plans for next years tournament are already being made!

**LINDA KNOWLES
DIRECTOR**



FROM THE DIRECTOR

WOW! We are just into March of 2024 and we have been busy. The weather hasn't cooperated with us on some ride days BUT there still has been a lot to do. We started the year off with our First Ride of the Year on New Years Day which has been a tradition of this Chapter for many years. Some rides were rained out but we were able to do the Valentine's Ride on February 3 . This is another long-time tradition – I spoke with someone who was a member in the 90's and they also did this ride to take our Valentine's cards to the Valentines, VA post office for the special heart stamp. We have had fun events such as the Valentine's dinner and our Chapter Pool Tournament. We have an addition to our Road Captains, Sabrina Mazol whom we thank for stepping up to help out with planning Chapter Rides. I look forward to riding with you on many of the rides already planned for the next few months along with our HOGS on Ice night on March 9 and trip to the Aviation Museum on March 23rd for a tour. Hopefully the weather will cooperate with us and we can put some miles on our bikes. Don't forget to turn in your 365 miles!

LINDA KNOWLES

DIRECTOR



RIDING IN SPRINGTIME

Riding a motorcycle in the springtime can be a lot of fun. Nature is waking up and more motorcycles are on the roads. Being mindful of the changing weather is important along with making sure your bike is in good running order.

Spring weather can be unpredictable, so always check the weather and wear or bring the proper gear to stay ahead of it.

I dress in lighter layers so I can peel them off as the weather warms up.

Depending on where I'm riding, I check for wildlife, whether it's the locals or animals. Spring fever can cause people to drive like idiots and I have to assume mistakes will be made. That way I'm not complacent. That's important. I also always have water to drink. I don't know about you but riding makes me very thirsty.

I try to take the time to enjoy the scenery and the fresh air as I ride. I love nature's essence.

WHAT IT MEANS TO RIDE, FOR ME...

Lets start from the beginning.....When I was very young, about 8years old, I received a “mini bike” it was a tiny frame with a small motor attached to it about 45cc. I loved it. I would ride around my back yard, my front yard and sometimes in the street (although I remember my Mom yelling about that). Then at about 10, I got an Indian 90 trail bike. Boy was I cool. I rode on the local trails and learned how to fall, a lot! But I learned a lot of other things about riding as well. About 2 years later, a guy asked me if I wanted to trade my Indian 90 trail bike for a RM125 motorcross bike AND a Suzuki 250 street bike. And like an idiot, I did. My father was PISSED! I know now what I traded away but..... I was on my way to doing a lot of speed and tricks on the bike. Got involved in a few junior races and really learned how to handle a motorcycle. Got my drivers license at 15.5 years old and my motorcycle endorsement at 16. And then got a Suzuki gal 550. I was traveling around on the roads now.

I went into the Air Force from there and rode a bunch of different bikes until I picked up a 58 Pan Head. Put a decent amount of money in it and rode it everywhere. Took a trip from San Antonio TX to LA. I know my back and butt couldn't do that now, definitely not on that bike but, it was great back then. After the military I rode a few other bikes, ones I loved were a V-Star 950, Vulcan Voyager (my first fully loaded bike), my Street Glide, The sport Glide and the Bike I am on now – the Ultra Limited Low.

I'm turning 60 this year, so I have been riding for more than 50 years. I can tell you that riding is a state of being for me. Yes, I still have cars and do drive them but, I put more miles on the bike than the car. Its an escape, a way to tune everything out, a sense of freedom. Even when you have someone on the back of the bike, you are still by yourself riding. No conversations, no phone calls, nothing but you and the ride.

I do have PTSD from the military and, riding helps with that a lot (and the gym). It gives me the needed escape from everything. I can just let go while on the bike. I couldn't imagine not being able to ride. I even tried a trike when I was having problems walking. Wasn't a fan of the trike, never felt safe on it. But, two wheels, that feeling, leaning into the turns, pushing the throttle out of the turn, seeing everything! It's a fantastic feeling. I am not a speed junkie and don't have a need to go whipping in and out of traffic. I can go fast if I need to but, I prefer to lean back and enjoy it all.

I have ridden with a lot of different groups over the years and I am very happy I landed with Tidewater H.O.G. a good group of people that seem to also have that love for riding “we ride the most” is right. If you are part of our group, it is always a pleasure to be riding with you. If you are not part of our group.... What are you waiting for??!!

Mike Pastore

24 for 24 Oddities Ride

Are you ready for a challenge that will take you on a journey through Virginia to discover the most unusual and interesting places? As a Tidewater HOG Chapter member, you can participate in the 24-for-24 Oddities ride and earn points by collecting photos of yourself, your HD motorcycle, and strange points of Interest. The farther you travel, the more points you earn, allowing you to explore new places and push yourself to achieve your goals. The cost of entry is \$15.00 per HOG member. Always participate at your own risk and take photos safely and responsibly. With the chance to win a Harley Davidson gift certificate, this is the perfect opportunity to test yourself, showcase your love for your motorcycle, and discover the hidden gems of Virginia.

So get ready to hit the road, explore, and capture those unforgettable moments! This is where you can earn points by collecting photos of yourself, your HD motorcycle, and strange points of Interest in Virginia. Please note that only Tidewater HOG Chapter members are eligible to participate, and entries must be submitted individually. Multiple entries cannot be combined into a single-entry form. By visiting 24 for 24 Oddities Ride points of Interest, you can earn points calculated based on the GPS mileage from Southside Harley (SSHD). You (the entrant) must be in the photo, and extra points will be awarded if you can also get your HD motorcycle in the photo. Only one photo per point of Interest is needed, and pictures can be submitted in digital or printed format. Please ensure the images are clear and legible, as blurry, fuzzy, illegible, or unrecognizable photos will not receive points. For each point earned, you will receive a chance in a random drawing for one of several Harley Davidson gift certificates. The top four mileage earners will receive award certificates.

Oddities can be found on the computer at www.atlasobscura.com/things-to-do/virginia, and an additional website is available at www.onlyinyourstate.com/virginia/weirdest-places-va. So get ready to hit the road, explore, and capture those unforgettable moments! To enter, turn in the entry form and your photos of the 24 Oddities to Bill Arnold at any ride or meeting before the end of November 2024. Please note that the form must be received before November 30, 2024, to be eligible **24 for 24 Oddities in Virginia Tidewater Hog Tour Ride**.

Bill Arnold



Fulfilling Your Life with Drugs and Addiction

I am going to start with my story; I am a disabled Veteran. My injuries and medical conditions put me in constant pain. I wake up with pain, I live my full day in pain, I even have sleeping issues because of my pain. To sum it up simply... I am always in pain. My doctor, like most doctors, want to help me not be in pain. The first course of action is pain pills. We start with something small, lets say Vicodin. But that doesn't really do the trick, I have a high tolerance to pain meds. I had to take over 20 pills at a time to feel any real affect. So we went to oxycotin, almost the same problem I has with the first pills. Tramadol, same thing. Fast forward through a lot of pills and I got to morphine. Yes, I was taking that to combat pain! I lost 9 days of my life. I have 9 days that I do not remember. I did things, went to the store by car, had friends over, called people, and don't remember any of it. Apparently when the calls started is when my wife and sister helped me stop. I have no idea if I still felt pain during that time, I have no idea of anything I did during that time, and that is very scary!

It would have been very easy for me to continue on that path. If I had even the smallest of an addictive personality I probably wouldn't have stopped. I know people who have become addicts because of situations just like this. The intentions were good, the results are bad.

Even so, this is not the main reason why people are addicts! So lets look at another scenario; I'm at school (a long time ago) other kids are smoking pot and doing pills, and one of them says "you do it, right?". Well, I cant say no! If I say no, I wont be cool. So, peer pressure starts me on a path to addiction.

We have all heard that story. Most of us have been in a similar position (maybe not with drugs). But that isn't the main reason people are addicts!

If any of those reasons made an addict, I would probably be one! So, what makes someone an addict? I think it starts with a low self worth. An idea that there is something missing from your life and, you need to fill a void. There is a hurt somewhere in your heart and mind and, you are trying to feel better. Drugs make the hurt go away, makes you feel better, makes you forget. But, then you crash and it all hits you again so, you take more. And when that doesn't work, you look for something better. And soon enough, you cant find anything other than drugs to feel good.

Don't get me wrong, in the proper setting, for a limited amount of time and under medical supervision, drugs can do good. You just need to remember that they are a temporary relief from pain, not a cure for it. A mask, so to speak.

But, back to fulfilling your life with drugs and addiction. If you have a good balance in your life, friends and family support, health, work and play, you are doing very well and probably wont be in a position to need what I am writing here. But, it's a good idea to read on any way, to keep the mind going in the right direction.

Its when we are missing one or more of those things that we start to go down hill. But do we need to?? Can we balance out the other things to make up for one of the others? YES!

Every day we need to see ourselves and the world around us in a positive manner. There is a belief I have that goes; "you are only what you make everyone believe you are and YOU are the first person you have to convince." You have to invent yourself in your mind. You have to see yourself as great. You have to see your future you as doing good. You have to be positive no matter what. I have all the reason in the world to be negative. My physical capabilities limit me from working a meaningful job. My migraines affect my thought process a lot of times. Things I used to enjoy doing I cant do any more. Things I wanted to do are off the to do list as well. Throw on top of that the pain... well, I should be in a very negative place But, I am not.

My secret? I wake up every day. Yes its that simple. My day starts off perfect because I wake up, everything after that is a choice. I can focus on the negative or I can find the positive. I am active in the things I can be active in as much as I can be active in them.

When I cant, I find something else to be active in. I read and learn a lot, I do all sorts of different crafts, I write things like this.

I don't do this alone! I used to keep everything inside, the things I did, the pain, the medical issues. What wasn't visible, no one knew about. It was eating me alive and I didn't know it. I was sort of forced to open up. My wife demanded that I do it, and the alternative would have been bad. It wasn't easy at first, a lifetime of not being open about myself. But when I finally did, it turned a lot of things around. I feel so much better about life all the time. I talk about things that bother me. I try to find solutions to those things and I can ask for help.

I also play a game every day. I find things to be positive about, things to be happy about, things to learn and grow with. In making a point to find these happy positive things, my mind automatically looks for them now. I still get in a bad mood. I still feel the pain and react to it, but I can control that a lot better. I would rather be happy than angry.

With all of this said, I have come to the conclusion that we all need to find a purpose. We need to work or have some really good hobbies to keep our minds and bodies active and productive. We could even volunteer to help others (or even animals). We need to have money. So work is essential but, if you are like me, gainful employment is difficult. So learn something new and use that for employment or to sell craft items or teaching something you know really well. There are so many ways to be able to earn extra income without having to have a fulltime strenuous job. We need to have a support system. Family and friends are the best for this. If for some reason they are not available to talk to or, you just cant talk to them, there are a lot of support groups for a lot of different things. Use these groups! And lastly, and very important, You must find time to have fun. If you don't bring Happy into your life you will be missing something big, and then we go full circle back to the beginning.

TIDEWATER HOG OFFICERS AND ROAD CAPTAINS
2024
SOUTHSIDE HARLEY DAVIDSON, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
Dave Charette —General Manager Info@HRHD.com



OFFICERS 2024

HOG Manager	Jo Ann Emmons	hogmanager@tidewaterhog.com
Director	Linda Knowles	director@tidewaterhog.com
Assistant Director	Regie Farr	assistantdirector@tidewaterhog.com
Treasurer	Jo Ann Emmons	treasurer@tidewaterhog.com
Secretary	Art Verdin	secretary@tidewaterhog.com
Senior Road Captain	Tom Sanchez	srrc@tidewaterhog.com
Member at Large	Steve Cain	memberatlarge@tidewaterhog.com
Safety Officer	Yves Lugand	safetyofficer@tidewaterhog.com
Activities Officer	Mike Pastore	activities@tidewaterhog.com
Membership Officer	Vicki Melle/Bill Arnold	membership@tidewaterhog.com
Talon Editor	Art Verdin	taloneditor@tidewaterhog.com
Photographer	Lisa Verdin	photo1@tidewaterhog.com
Webmaster	Steve Cain	twhogwebmaster5344@gmail.com
Communications Officer	P.J. McGrath	communications@tidewaterhog.com

ROAD CAPTAINS

Tom Sanchez	srrc@tidewaterhog.com	Chris Ward
P.J. McGrath		Matt Woods
Yves Lugand		Fred Holtz
Bill Jackson		Rick Leighton
Bill Arnold		Mike Flynn
Linda Knowles		Regie Farr
Steve Cain		Sabrina Mazol

ADVERTISING



Diane Norton
REALTOR®, ABR, GRI
 Licensed in VA

4100 Holly Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23451
D 757.472.1021 | **O** 757.428.8845 | **F** 757.390.3559
 dnorton@roseandwomble.com
www.hrmls.com/dianenorton



HOG Members—We could use some ads. Ask some of your friends, or post one of your own. Even if it is just for a partial year or one issue. Your group needs it. Dues are also due now. Thanks in advance, and please request a copy of the form from me at taloneditor@tidewaterhog.com



Dee's Design's SEAMSTRESS

Dee Sanchez
 (757) 333-2462
deesdesigns690@gmail.com

Services Rendered



Gene S. Monroe, Jr.

C: (757) 848-8513
 E: GeneMonroe15@gmail.com

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