



# The Talon

A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE MEMBERS

Tidewater HOG Chapter 5344



## To Ride Beyond—Lead Road Captain—Tom Sanchez

Hello Tidewater HOG! Welcome to the new year! We are excited to see what this year will bring the chapter! We are looking forward to a lot of rides taking this chapter north, south and west (maybe east if you consider the eastern shore or muddy creek areas of the city!)

First, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Tom Sanchez and, as Linda mentioned in the last Talon, I will be taking over the duties as Head Road Captain. I am thrilled to be serving in this position and hope to bring you lots of great rides through our amazing Road Captains. I have been with this chapter for the last five years, arriving in 2018 as my wife, Dee, and I worked through her breast cancer treatments and recovery. We've enjoyed riding our Road Glide Ultra and have logged over 75,000 on this bike alone. I am currently a Virginia Beach high school teacher, teaching math, computers, aviation technology and personal finance. I also serve as an elder at Iron Horse Fellowship, a local biker church, and as the International Chaplain for Black Sheep Harley-Davidson's for Christ. I spent over 20 years flying helicopters for the US Navy and have also spent many years doing space research and development for the government.

My desire as Head Road Captain is to provide the chapter with lots of interesting and fun riding experiences. I hope to accomplish this by helping our Road Captains organize and lead more rides this year than last year. Additionally, I am looking to increase the number of members who are Road Captains. Our motto is that "We Ride The Most". In order to do this, we need men and women who will be willing to put in the time to plan routes, find restaurants, and lead groups of fellow riders on these wonderful adventures. Are you interested? We'd love to have you join us! There are several members in the process or beginning the process to become a Road Captain. We will help you develop the skills and experience you need to be able to guide our group safely to your destination. Come out and have some fun! Maybe you aren't interested in becoming a Road Captain, but you still have some ideas on great places to ride or a great restaurant to visit! Come talk to me or send me a note. One of our Road Captains may be able to take your idea and make a fun day out of it! Whatever the case, come ride with Tidewater HOG! We hope to see you out there!

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Art Verdin  
Editor



### **TRIKES EYE VIEW**

Now that the new year is upon us, many are making resolutions. Some make resolutions to eat healthier, lose weight, exercise more, etc...Normally I'm not one to make any resolutions, but I find myself having to make a very big one to save my spirit so to speak, and that is to cut all toxicity from my life. Having to face and deal with said toxicity for most of my life, I finally decided to take my life and sanity back and no longer giving the toxicity to have any form of control on my wellbeing. I'm sure many other people out there are doing this very thing and believe me it is definitely freeing. So here's to the new year of love and light to everyone reading this. Cheers to the new year 2023. I'm ready!

**Lisa Verdin**

### **EVENTS**

8 Bridges Ride—January 7  
Chapter Meeting—January 11  
New Member/Group Ride—January 14  
Hookie Ride—January 18  
Gatsby Night Holiday Party—January 21  
Valentine's Ride—January 28  
Chapter Meeting—February 8  
Chilly Willy Ride—February 11  
Valentine Dinner—February 12  
Italian Brunch Ride—February 18  
South for the Winter Ride—February 25

### **RIDE ON HOGs!!**

I have been blessed to ride over 250,000 miles with our Tidewater HOG Chapter over the past almost 17 years. During that time, we have traveled most of the roads in Virginia and many roads in West Virginia and North Carolina. We have made rides as short as 75 miles and rides that extended over many States and Canadian Provinces, thousands of miles.

We have benefited greatly from the hard work and dedication of our fine team of Road Captains, who are truly the glue that binds our Chapter. They spend hours researching and planning routes, finding restaurants (and Ice Cream Stops, of course!). They are particularly attuned to rider safety, always shepherding their group of riders over the highways and scenic byways of our beautiful state of Virginia as carefully as possible.

There are certainly opportunities to ride faster and to push the skills envelope a bit further. But the opportunity to ride our magnificent Harleys together, to enjoy the company of new and old friends, to have a look at the countryside, the mountains and the valleys where our Road Captains take us cannot be surpassed.

I urge each and every one of you to take advantage of the Tidewater HOGs riding program, and I look forward to seeing you on the less traveled roads!

**BILL JACKSON**



## Activities Officer

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year Tidewater H.O.G.s! I hope this holiday season has brought you joy, comfort, and a sense of renewal for the upcoming year. As we look forward to 2023, I wanted to take a few minutes to share my thoughts on my role as your Activities Officer, as well as a little background on why I chose to get involved in the leadership arm of the chapter.

First, a little bit about me. I've been riding for a little over 10 years now, and my 1st motorcycle, sadly, was not a Harley-Davidson. I quickly transitioned to a Dyna Switchback, and a couple years ago, jumped up to a red 2020 Police Electra-Glide, named Ariel (Yes, I named my motorcycle, doesn't everyone?!?)

When I first joined H.O.G. I didn't really know what to expect, but I quickly came to understand that it was really just a group of folks who were passionate about enjoying what riding a motorcycle does to the human soul. The sense of freedom (even though you may be in the middle of a group of 10 other motorcycles, with a 2-sec gap from the bike directly in front of you and a 1-sec gap from the bike adjacent to you) that riding can provide is very therapeutic, and provides a calming effect. I work in a reasonably stressful occupation, and the stress relief that riding provides is a very welcome distraction from the day-to-day stress of my job. At the same time though, I always seem to find myself wanting to be involved in the operations of an organization. I truly enjoy the satisfaction that comes from putting in the behind the scenes effort to reach a common goal, no matter how stressful it can be in the moment. That's what led me to get involved at another local H.O.G. chapter where I stepped in mid-year as the Activities Officer and somehow got nominated to take over as Director later that year. I served as Director for 2 years, and I'll tell you with absolute certainty, I have great respect for everyone who has ever held that title. It is a difficult task, and they deserve a kudos every time you see them.

As the Activities Officer, according to the H.O.G. Chapter Charter, I am "responsible for assisting in planning and administering chapter events". While that sounds simple enough, there's a bit more that goes into it. One of the questions I'm always trying to find an answer to is, "what would our members enjoy doing away from their motorcycles?"

Sometimes that can be very tough to answer. We can all agree that we love our Harley-Davidson Motorcycles, but we don't always agree on what's fun once we're off of them. For instance, I love going to a Norfolk Tides Baseball game and enjoying a delicious Hot Dog with my favorite frosty beverage, but others are really into bowling and billiards. So, even though bowling and billiards isn't my dream activity, I'm happy to help make it a reality. At the end of the day, every chapter officer is focused on seeing the chapter grow and be seen as an organization that is worth participating in. While we may think we can do it alone, we routinely realize that we need input and help from our chapter members. If you ever have an idea for an activity, or want to share your thoughts on past activities to help improve them, don't hesitate to put a note in the suggestion box, or email me ([activities@tidewaterhog.com](mailto:activities@tidewaterhog.com)). I'm always open to constructive feedback, and I'll be glad to assist you in planning and administering the next chapter event, because hey, that's my job.

**CHRIS MOORE**  
**ACTIVITIES OFFICER**

## PRE-RIDES SAVE LIVES

Fellow HOGs,

There are a number of considerations we all have to factor in when planning a ride, whether a Road Captain or not; gas stations, restaurants, ice cream stops, and the more challenging details; route, road conditions, flood prone roads and weather among them. Most of you are aware that to best opportunity possible, Road Captains will pre-ride the route to ensure the ride is safe and to change the route as required prior to the day of the actual HOG ride. Here is an example of a pre-ride which resulted in a route change.

Here I am on VA 604 Halifax Road in Petersburg VA about to turn right on to Wells Road (if I turn left that is Vaughn Road).



When I got to the stop sign, I saw a terrible blind spot to my left. So sharp an approach that I could not inch my way out to take a peek without entering the lane of traffic. Traffic in both directions was moving very fast. Taking the right was a risk. Imagine the slight blind spot to our left when we take a right out of Wawa. Now imagine the cars are going 60 mph. It was a risk trying to get one bike to make that right turn. Trying to get 14 bikes through that was an unacceptable risk.

Here is what the blind spot looks like.



After I got home, I ~~started drinking~~ went back to the map and changed the route, and yes, conducted another pre-ride for the new route.

As we make our way to the destination, if you notice a potential hazard or something that can be improved upon, please bring it up at the next stop. The dogs running loose in the country, the close proximity to the golf course, or the overgrowth of tree limbs reaching out into the road may have been missed by the person leading the ride, and because we typically recycle some rides on an annual basis, any input that would improve the ride for future use and make for a safer ride for all is greatly appreciated.

# SAFETY

Motorcycling is a unique experience; the rider is an active participant in negotiating curves, playing along with the rhythm of the road, shifting, accelerating and braking with precision. Whether you ride to and from work, prefer the camaraderie of a group ride on the weekend or enjoy the vistas of an off-pavement excursion, motorcycling engages all your senses and creates an exhilarating sense of freedom.

Along with that freedom comes responsibility. All states require some form of license to ride on the street to demonstrate a minimum level of riding skill and knowledge, and liability insurance is required. If your state does not require a hands-on training course before applying for a license, consider taking one anyway to learn basic riding skills and how to stay safe in traffic.

Riding a motorcycle requires a heightened sense of awareness, and more strength and coordination than driving a car. Riding also involves some risks not encountered when driving other vehicles. Motorcycle riders require more maneuvering skill and are more vulnerable in a crash. Motorcycles are not as easily seen as cars or trucks because of their narrow profile. Other motorists, particularly those who don't ride a motorcycle, may not be looking for motorcycles in traffic. This places the motorcyclist at risk, particularly at intersections.

All these risks can be managed through [training and education](#). The Motorcycle Safety Foundation offers a wide variety of tips and videos on general riding safety, as well as on specific aspects of motorcycling. Check out the complete training subjects at the Motorcycle Safety Foundation.

## MOTORCYCLE SAFETY FOUNDATION



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!!!! Wow, what a year 2022 has been! As my time as Lead Road Captain ends and I look back at the past year, your Road Captains took the Chapter on 61 rides, not counting the 14 rides cancelled due to weather. That means your Road Captains planned 75 rides in 2022! Six of those rides were overnight rides that ran from one overnight to several days. The total mileage for Chapter rides was 16,957 miles. It takes a huge amount of time for the Road Captains to plan the rides, find fun roads, gas stops, places to eat, in addition to arranging for hotels, etc. for the overnight rides. The dedication to the Chapter by our Road Captains is truly amazing. Tom Sanchez will be taking the reins as Lead Road Captain for 2023 and I am confident he and our Road Captains will continue to work towards another stellar year of rides for our Chapter.

Now as far as my new position, I hope you are looking forward to 2023 as much as I am. I am very excited about being Director this year. I joined the Tidewater HOG Chapter in December 2008 after taking the Basic Riding class and buying my first motorcycle, a 2006 Dyna Superglide. I had no idea what I was doing when I showed up in January 2009 for my first ride and it showed when I dropped my bike at the stop sign right after pulling out of the parking lot at Southside. I'm sure there were those members who wondered about me but they helped me pick up my bike and I got back on and finished the ride. I received such wonderful support and encouragement to continue to hone my riding skills and because of those who helped me, I feel I owe this Chapter a lot. I know I would never have become the rider I am now without their support. I was encouraged to get more involved in the Chapter and in 2011 I started on the Board as the MDA officer which is a position we no longer have. I also became a Road Captain that year. In 2012 I became a Member at Large and in 2013-14 I was Secretary. After that I took a little break from the Board though I continued as a Road Captain. I was back on the Board from 2017-2019 as Assistant Director. In 2021 I became the Lead Road Captain and have held that position until this year. I feel strongly about Tidewater HOG as it has afforded me the opportunity to spend many miles on my motorcycle, riding fun local roads and taking trips to places I would most likely never have gone to otherwise. The biggest plus for me has been meeting some wonderful people whom I have forged friendships with, laughed with, and have ridden all over the country with. They have made my time with Tidewater HOG very meaningful to me and I hope your time with the Chapter will mean something to you too.

Your Board members are working towards making next year a fun time for all. Your Road Captains are already setting up rides for you to enjoy. Fellow members are stepping up and planning fun times such as the Gatsby Night Holiday Party, Valentines Dinner, a Chapter pool tournament and a HOG night at the Admirals Hockey game. We will also have another fun Chapter Tour Ride this year that will have a little different spin than those in the past. That's just the first few months so there will be more planned as they year goes on. We will be getting together with our sister chapter, Hampton Roads HOG Chapter to plan our Two Chapter Challenge and talk about some other fun events we can do together.

We hope to plan other fun activities for our Chapter members and will be asking you to help us out. This Chapter only works when our members are actively involved in events we plan. If you hear we are looking for volunteers to help out I hope you will be willing to step up. If you have an idea for an event, let us know and I hope you will be willing to help make it happen. Let's make this a great year and I hope to see you at a meeting, on a ride or at an event soon!

**LINDA KNOWLES**  
**DIRECTOR**

**RIDE AND HAVE FUN!**

TIDEWATER HOG OFFICERS AND ROAD CAPTAINS  
2023  
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