

CHAPTER HISTORY
GWRRA CHAPTER D/ Greater Kalamazoo

The first GWRRA member in the Kalamazoo/Portage area was Duane Luedecking. He spotted an add for the GWRRA in the Rider magazine in the summer of 1979 and during the Christmas holidays, he sent in an application for membership.

Being the only GWRRA member in this general region of the state, he decided to drop his membership because there was no activity. Reluctantly, he renewed his membership in 1980 and 1981. When he renewed in November 1981, he checked the box at the bottom of the application, about forming a chapter. The Michigan state director, Jim Tessmer, contacted him and asked to set up a preliminary meeting to see if there was any interest in the area for a chapter.

The first meeting was held at Denny's restaurant at Sprinkle & Cork Streets in February 27, 1982, with 25 people attending. After the initial meetings and found there was interest in the area, Duane applied for the charter. Quite a long time passed and neither Duane nor Jim Tessmer had heard from the National Headquarters on the application for chapter D.

In the meantime, Jerry Fowler, of Monroe, also applied for a charter for a chapter in his area, the paperwork went through like clockwork, and thus Chapter C was born. How did Monroe become Chapter C rather than Kalamazoo? Well, Jim Tessmer found the lost application for Kalamazoo in the back of his truck and by the time he had sent it in, Duane finally acquired the charter for the newest Chapter, "D".

The first official meeting of Chapter D was held in the service area of Honda World in March of 1982, with 45 people in attendance.

Under Duane's leadership and enthusiasm, the chapter grew in leaps and bounds. By the time the chapter was only six months old, Duane attended the state area reps meeting and volunteered the chapter to host the 2nd annual state rally. Most members complained that we joined this organization to have fun, not to work, but since we had been committed, we all pitched in & pulled off a great rally with a record number of 382 in attendance. Putting on a state rally was the glue that put the chapter together in a strong, close friendship, and formed a strong foundation for the chapter's growth.

In the years since, the chapter has been active in every aspect of the organization. By the chapter's 1st birthday, 1983, we were planning our first Wing Ding, traveling to Steamboat Springs, CO. Twenty-one members traveled across the country for this event.

In 1984, the chapter again attended the Wing Ding in Lake of the Ozarks, MO, in force and brought home the trophy for having the largest in attendance, with 45 members. We also had great pride in one of our members, Carol Luedecking, who was chosen 'Wing Ding Queen.

In 1985, we attended Wing Ding in Knoxville. We came home with third place trophy for the "Best Dressed Chapter". The third place was wonderful, but the real joy was the fact that we had worked hard for weeks prior to the event practicing a routine to use for the competition. Chapter D was the very first chapter to have a planned choreographed routine for Best Dressed competitions and it has been copied at every event since.

Chapter D produced two state queens, Peggy Hamlin, 1985, and Pam Carlton, 1987.

In January, 1988, after struggling to come up with a fund raiser that wasn't dependent upon the weather (we got rained out of the last three fun runs), we came up with a very unique way to raise funds for the treasury and at the same time, enable the participants to have fun. It was called the "Good Neighbor Tour". The concept was to request a signature card, visit five separate sister chapter functions anywhere in the

world, have the A/R or ADA MILCHER/R sign the card, and return it for a pin. The next tour results in a bar to attach to the pin. One can participate in any or all of the 15 tours, with a bar for each tour. The 15th tour earns you an anchor pin. The tour enables members to see how other chapters do things, offers ideas for your own chapter, and gives an approach to scheduling different things for your own chapter events. This tour has been going strong for nearly 10 years. The concept was so successful because of the number of members one meets in the travels. The more members you meet, the more you know when you attend the state events such as the Wingless Weekend and the State Rally, and the more fun you have.

Chapter D has had many accomplishments throughout these past 15 years. The most important, of course, is that we've all met so many wonderful people and have known a friendship that is so close and unique.

We have been able to enjoy our sport with other people with the same interests. That certain bond we have enables us a trust that is sometimes hard to find.

We share the joys of rides, picnics, tours, rallies, Wing Dings, parties, and vacations. We have become involved in our own way, whether it be the ones who always volunteer and can't seem to stay away, or the ones who participate and are always there to finish the circle of completion.

We've hosted a state rally, brought home trophies from bike shows, won the title of queen, volunteered to help on committees at Wing Ding and State Rallies. We've hosted poker runs, raised monies for needy families at Christmas time and donated money to the Sunshine Foundation and the Make-a-Wish Foundation so that terminally ill children may see their last wish come true.

Chapter D members decided to change the meetings from Sunday mornings to the first Tuesday evening of every month in November 1994. We gather at the Sport's Page on Gull Road. This proved to be very successful with many new members attending. Chapter D came to a stand still in June of 1995 but later regrouped in September 1995, through the help of new members and old. Chapter D has and will continue on. Although our chapter has experienced the highs and lows, we now welcome new guidance and enthusiasm that will heal and unify members once again. Our motto "Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge" is alive and well in GWRRA Chapter D. We're nearing our 15th anniversary and are proud of our accomplishments. But most of all, we're proud to be a part of this big family we call the GWRRA.

1/99 update - Both our 15th and 16th anniversaries were celebrated with a skating party/potluck at the Rink. Our 17th anniversary will be celebrated at the Activity Hall in March with an afternoon potluck, games, and socialization.

We decorated our campsites at the state rally in 1997 with Chapter X with a zoo theme and 1998 with Chapters R, X, and I with a farm theme. Both years we were awarded plaques, but the most fun was meeting our new and old friends as they toured our zoo and farm country. Many of us who camp together have joined forces and eat together. Ron and Jan Smith have been the self-appointed grocery shoppers, and the rest of us join in to cook and clean up. We've fed almost 40 hungry campers at some of the meals. Colleen Ullrey has been singing the national anthems at opening and closing ceremonies both years and won the talent contest at Wing Ding 1997. In 1997, we joined Chapter I for a camp out/fun run in Marshall and are now doing this annually. Since the fun run wasn't very successful in 1997, we now host a hog roast during the camp out. We did a mall show at Maple Hill Mall in 1997 and both Maple Hill and Crossroads Mall in 1998 where we had 29 bikes along with camping units. Steve and Colleen were instrumental in getting Chapter D into Crossroads and we've been invited back in 1999.

Chapter D has had representatives at Wing Ding and Region D rallies. Each year more and more have invested in campers and are camping at these events. We hosted the DIRTJ Fun Run in Oct. 1997 at M&M Honda with over 100 participating. Oct. 1998-1999 we assisted the American Diabetes Association with their walk for diabetes. The Gold Wings rode the course to keep tabs on the walkers during their trek. Four GWRRA members raised funds and did the walk. In 1999 we had a seven-member team who raised over \$1200. Chapter D has supported the Gospel Mission of Kalamazoo since 1996. We had a blanket meeting Nov. 1998 and were able to deliver 30 new blankets to the mission. In 2000, with the help of Marty Myers of Chapter X, the mission was donated approximately 35000 bars of soap from Guest Distributors in Detroit. In 2001 Dee Miller sent a letter to Guest, and within days received a phone call that they had another 52831 bars of soap and 2880 bottles of lotion to donate.

In 1998 Mike Bielski with help from his son developed and published to the world wide web, the chapters first web page. A year later, Rusty Shelburne developed and published to the web what is now our current web page. Now the whole world can not only read about chapter activities they can also see photos of each chapter event. The web page has links to the national GWRRA as well as the State and district web sites. April 2000 the chapter published its first newsletter on the web.

January 2002 Chapter D installed Roger Miller as its first ever rider educator.
January 2002 Dee Miller, Membership Enhancement.

Both Dee & Roger resigned December 2004 to take Membership Enhancement for Region D

Sue Patch took Membership Enhancement December 2004.

CHAPTER D AREA REPS/Chapter Directors:

Duane Luedeking	Area Rep and founder of Chapter D January 1982 to November 1984
Larry Lovely	Assistant Area Rep - January 1982 to November 1984 Area Rep- November 1984 to July 1985
Don Stevenson	Assistant Area Rep - January 1985 to July 1985 Area Rep - July 1985 to July 1987
Doug Banner	Area Rep - July 1987 to October 1988
Peggy Hamlin	Assistant Area Rep - September 1985 to Oct, 1988 Area Rep - Oct, 1988 to July 1990
Dale McQueen	Assistant Area Rep - February 1989 to December 1989
Doug Parish	Assistant Area Rep - December 1989 to July 1990 Area Rep - July 1990 to September 1991
Merift Herpst	Assistant Area Rep - July 1990 to September 1991
Brock & Linda Inglehart	Area Rep - October 1991 to May 1993

Tom & Esther Yeomans	Assistant Area Rep - December 1991 to May 1993 Area Rep/Chapter Director May 1993 to December 1994
Kaye & Dana Hickman	Ass't Chapter Director - November 1993 to December 1994
Cathy & Doug Banner	Chapter Director - February 1995 to May 1995
Steve & Diana Oliver	Chapter Director - October 1995 to October 1996
Steve & Colleen Ullrey	Ass't Chapter Director - December 1995 to October 1996 Chapter Director - October 1996 to Jan, 1999
Roger & Dee Miller	Ass't Chpt. Director - Feb, 1998 - Jan, 1999 Chapter Director - January, 1999 - 2001 Extended January 2001 - 2002
Ray & Eunice Mastin	Ass't Chapter Director - January, 1999 - 2000 Extended January 2001 - 2002
Greg & Cindy Straka	Ass't Chapter Director - January, 1999 - December 2000
Kaye Hickman & Sue Patch	Chapter Director Jan 2002 - 2003 Extended January 2004 - April, 2005
Rusty & Laurie Shelburne	Ass't Chapter Director April, 2004 - Oct 2004
Marvin "Bill" & Pat Bremmer	Ass't Chapter Director Dec. 2004- March 05 Chapter Director - April, 2005 - May 2007
Harold & Linda Burgan	Chapter Director May, 2007
Sue Hickman	Ass't Chapter Director, May, 2007 -

Revised April 2007