



Region 2 Newsletter – ‘Droppin The Deuce’

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Volume 3.0

Brothers and Sisters,

Riding season is upon us!!! Please check your bikes, if they've been sitting for a while, tire pressure in particular. It is also a good time to get together and re-hone those group riding skills. We all tend to lose some of our skills over the course of the winter. Nothing to be ashamed of, skill increases with repetition and there's no better way than with your brothers and sisters.

Auxiliary Scholarship. The cut-off date for the Auxiliary Scholarship Application window is approaching. 31 March is the deadline. If you have an applicant, please don't let them wait until the last minute. I'd also like to give a shout out to all the Chapters and Individuals that contributed to the Auxiliary Scholarship this year. A record breaking \$268,726.27 was donated to the Aux Scholarship fund this year and Region 2 Chapters and Members donated a staggering \$75,508.39. I know that the ANBOD has expressed their appreciation, but I wanted to simply say how proud I am of our Region. This is one of those things where 'Vets Helping Vets' is words and deeds coming together. Well Done!!

Charitable Donations. The Committee (which is made up of all the State Reps) has gone to work and is reviewing the submissions. I had the opportunity to talk with the Committee Chair who shared with me some of the issues they have found thus far. This has more to do with Chapters and their charities than it does the committee. Before you commit to making donations to a charity, look at their financials and IRS status. Is their EIN still in good standing with the IRS? Look the charity up using one of the free charity watch websites. CVMA® Chapters make donations to charities with an overall grade of F for various reasons but most commonly, financial pass through. Simply, they spend their donations at a higher rate for other things that what it is they're supporting.

Bylaws Committee. The bylaws committee has completed their work, and the submissions are being reviewed today by the NBOD. The NSEC will be pushing the BLCs to State Reps on or about 15 March. If you have not received them from your State Rep by the 17th or 18th of March, please reach back to them to see if they have them. Please take the time to read through the submissions prior to your Chapter Meeting when you vote. As a reminder, there are no further changes. It is not a matter of 'if' the BLC said this or that. Consider the language, the impact on the Association overall and vote your conscience on the proposals. There are a total of five (5) BLCs for consideration this year.

National Website. During the NBOD/RR meeting last month, we were informed that the 'new' National Website is about to go into beta testing. Also, if you were not aware, a National Webmaster was selected from a very qualified panel of applicants. Stephen 'PH' Mondaca, former Rhode Island State Representative was selected. He has been engaged for about 2 months and it appears that progress is being made. There is still no date for the roll-out, however, there are a couple of items that must be addressed as it comes online.

Member Email Addresses: Each member must have their own email address. This means that a Full member cannot share an email address with their Auxiliary Member. If you do not have your own email address (meaning, there is a duplicate in the database) you will not be able to access the website when it goes live.

Chapter Bylaws: IAW the Bylaws policy, each Chapter's bylaws must be accessible by the NBOD (as well as Region and State Representatives). In order to accomplish this, Chapters will have to upload their bylaws into the Chapter Request queue where they will then be hung on the Chapter section of the Command and Staff page. If your Chapter's bylaws are already there, you are good to go. If your Chapter bylaws are not on the new template, begin making that adjustment now. The target date for all Chapters to have their bylaws loaded is currently 1 May. I realize this causes some aggravation, but the intent of the template is to ensure that all State laws are addressed (meeting quorums, annual meetings, voting, etc.) by all Chapters so that we have no issues with our tax-exempt statuses.

Logo Use: I know this is everyone's favorite topic and there is much joy in the discussion. The UDL is not authorized for use when advertising or identifying your Chapter on social media or any printed documents (i.e. ride flyers). Please make this adjustment now to ensure that we aren't making corrections to ride flyers as we get them posted to invite everyone to our annually sanctioned events. Speaking of Ride Flyers – The R2 Rally flyer has been released and you should start seeing it posted. Please share.

Election Time and Candidates. There are about 2 weeks left for anyone interested in submitting their bio to the NSEC for either the National Sergeant at Arms or National Public Relations Officers positions. The cut-off date is 90 days prior to the National Meeting. There are currently 5 candidates for the 2 positions. I would encourage all to go to the forums and review the bios of the candidates. These candidates are traveling right now talking to members and introducing themselves to the membership. There is a forum thread under the General Membership section where any member can ask questions of the candidates. I encourage you to take a look at it. Some of the State Representatives are setting up Town Hall ZOOM calls where questions can be asked of the candidates. Lowside (VA SR) is one and I'm sure there will be more.

My sole caution (and yes, I am one of those candidates) is the making of campaign promises. I have heard everything from 'I will get the UDL reinstated', to 'I will publish a Member Bill of Rights'. Candidates are seeking to be a member of the National Board. This means that they possess a single vote and any item that does not garner 3 year votes will not pass. No single board member can act unilaterally. Take that into consideration when 'promises' are made.

National Level Voting. This has become a topic across the entirety of the Association. The by-laws committee received four (4) different proposals to change the bylaws to allow voting for National Officers at the Chapter Level. I am sure that there will be additional proposals next year. Some things to consider with this type of proposal. We are a national level organization, meaning that we are similar in structure to the American Legion, AMVETS and, VFW. Those organizations vote in the same manner that we do, at their National Meetings. The primary argument for chapter level voting is, 'not everyone can afford (in either time, money or, both) to attend the National Meeting'. This is true. However, that statement has been true for 22 years. This is information for each of you as we venture into a new year. I firmly believe that we should be talking about what is the 'best' that we can do for the Association, our Chapters and our Members.

Final Note. I'm sure that many of you are aware of how much time I spend on the forums. Under your breath you may have said, 'too much' while reading the last sentence. That may be true. If you ask my spouse, she will likely agree with you. However, sometimes, things are said on the forums that cause me to pause. A few days ago, in response to a comment, a member made the statement, 'we are a VSO'. I was shocked, amazed, all the words that go with wondering if we have somehow lost our way. CVMA is not a VSO. We are a motorcycle association. Are there times when we need to function as a VSO (helping veterans to obtain the benefits to which they're entitled or information on their service)? Most definitely. But that is not our 'purpose'.

When I was selected as your Region Rep just a couple of years ago, I made the statement that we must find the balance between being a group of veterans who ride motorcycles and are charitable human beings and being charitable organizations that occasionally ride motorcycles. We need to continue to identify our 'purpose'. Every individual who wears our back patch is my brother or my sister and I will do everything in my power to help them. My Chapter is my family and although we are sometimes dysfunctional to the point of requiring social services assistance, I will do anything I can for any one of them. I believe that if we can define ourselves as brothers and sisters first, the charitable nature of our beings will allow us to continue helping other veterans. However, if we lose the focus of taking care of one another first, we will have become something that was never intended for this Association to which we all belong. Are you your brother and sister's keeper?

PSA From the National Treasurer: Pay your dues!

Speed Safely,

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