

THE  
VILLAGE  
NOMADS  
Orientation  
Hand Book

*The Village Nomads*

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the Village Nomads motorcycle club. We hope that you will come join us and become an active member in the club. We look forward to you becoming a part of the Village Nomads and join those who like to ride. Getting involved in the club's activities will allow you to enjoy the Nomads club to the fullest. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns; please feel free to ask the club president, the vice-president, or any of the other staff member. Someone will be able to answer your questions, or at least find someone who will. It is the goal of this handbook to provide as much information as we can to help answer any questions in advance.

## **What Is The Club All About?**

The club is an organization for fellow Villages residents who share the same interest of riding motorcycles. The club and The Villages organization, in general, provide for the mutual assistance, enjoyment, entertainment, education, physical, mental, and social benefit of its members and the general public. We promote and advance the sport of safe motorcycling, and serve the interests of motorcycle owners and users. Many members of the club work long and hard hours to raise money for our club charities.

## **Why Am I A Guest On My First Visit?**

All potential member candidates are guests on their first visit to the club. Interested persons can join the club by completing the necessary forms and submitting evidence as having a valid drivers license with the appropriate motorcycle endorsement. Members have full rights and access to all Village Nomads Web resources.

## **How Do I Join The Club?**

All potential members will complete a membership application and submit the application Membership Chairman or any Board Member (President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer) with club dues to any one of the club staff, preferably to the club secretary. The club will process the form. Once completed and approved, you will be added to the club email roster and allowed access to the club Facebook page.

## **How Long Does It Take To Become A Member?**

Once the membership application is completed and submitted, and dues have been paid, new prospective members will attend the next monthly meeting. Paperwork processing normally

takes 30-days with membership information provided to the club and the individual typically at the next monthly meeting.

## **Are There Different Categories Of Membership?**

The Village Nomads do not have different categories of membership as does other organizations. You are either a paid member or you are not. Of course, spouses are always welcome and are encouraged to be paid members to receive reduce fees at socials and meetings. There are club officer positions which are filled from the club personnel. Some of these positions have requirements imposed by The Villages.

## **Are There Dues?**

There are annual dues to become and remain a member of the Village Nomads. The fees as of this writing is \$15 per year for a single member or \$20 for a family. Most of the money goes to support the operations of the Village Nomads motorcycle club. Dues are required by the second week of December to the club treasurer. For individuals joining the club at a date other than the regular renewal time frame, the \$15 fee remains the same for the remainder of the year. The Calendar Year is January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. Dues are normally collected starting at the November meeting because we do not have a meeting in December Christmas Party. Initial or renewal fee payments are accepted in cash or check (preferred).



## **Where Does the Money Go?**

To support the club web services and to maintain support functions of the club such a banking account and Web site, the club retains all of the annual dues. The club also sponsors annual fund-raising events to support the various club functions other than meetings (parties, get-togethers, etc.).

## **What Is The Hierarchy Of The Club Staff?**

The club staff consists of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Board Members in that order of succession. Additionally, there are non-staff positions of Director of Safety and a team of Safety Officers.

## What Is The Role Of The Staff?

Officers are nominated for club staff positions at the October club meeting and are voted on annually at the November club meeting.

The **President** is responsible for all activities of the club with the help and support of the club staff and the club members.

Activities include but are not limited to:

- Annual Membership monitoring.
- Hosting club meetings which include coordination for facilities.
- Complete necessary forms and signatures for safety practice sessions.
- Perform as primary contact for other clubs and organizations' events and activities.

The **Vice-President** stands in on behalf of the President for all club functions, and stands ready to assume the role of the Club President in the event the President is no longer capable of, or no longer chooses to perform the responsibilities of that role.

The **Treasurer** is responsible for all financial aspects of the club and reports directly to the club and staff. The treasurer prepares and submits for approval monthly financial reports.

Activities include but are not limited to:

- Receive funds, make deposits, perform disbursements, and reconcile accounts as needed.
- Provide a monthly report at club meetings.

The **Secretary** is responsible for maintaining monthly reports and minutes for each club meeting or function. The Secretary reports directly to the club and staff on such activities.

Activities include but are not limited to:

- Present previous monthly meeting minutes.
- Record current minutes at monthly meetings.
- Document minutes and distribute as necessary.

The **Board of Directors** consists of the club president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

Safety officers are like the law enforcement of an organization. They know safety procedures and requirements and act "by the book" to ensure each one is upheld. If they see misconduct or activities that could result in an accident or penalty, they're the first ones to speak up. The Safety Officer informs and educates the club on new laws as they pertain to motorcycle riding and safety, identify weaknesses in fellow riders, and make recommendations for riding improvement. The safety officers are also responsible for the education of new riders on the Village Nomads rules of riding.

The **Director of the Safety Committee** oversees the Safety Committee.

Activities include but are not limited to:

- Coordinate with club president for safety practice sessions.
- Report incidents and accidents to the club president.
- Support other chapter functions.
- Provide input to other riders making recommendations for improvement.

The **Quartermaster** is responsible for the items for resale in the club store. This individual also replenishes supplies, submits orders for pins, patches, and/or coins as deemed necessary by the Club President.

Activities include but are not limited to:

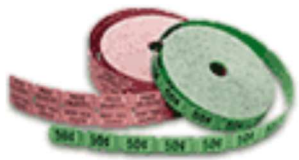
- Displaying club sales items at each club monthly meeting
- Identify and coordinate with vendors for new/replacement items.
- Collects monies for sales and submits to the Club Treasurer.
- Provide support for other club functions as necessary.

The **Membership Chairman** is responsible for the club membership. This individual maintains the club roster, updating as necessary, and recruiting/retaining the club membership.

- Activities include but are not limited to:
- Accepting and reviewing membership applications for completeness and accuracy.
- Submits membership roster to the club board as needed.
- Supports the Board of Directors in any club functions as necessary.

## What Are They Talking About?

### 50/50 or 50/50 Tickets



The club is responsible for funding to cover expenses. The only funds that are self-generating are a small percentage that comes from the annual dues. To that end, the club sells raffle tickets at the monthly meeting to help raise funds to offset the costs of running the club and supporting local events. Buying tickets is completely voluntary and no one will force or coerce you into purchasing tickets. The up side is that all monies taken in is divided – 50% of the take goes to the club coffers and the other 50% is given to the winning tickets.

### **What are Poker Runs?**

Poker runs serve as a fund-raising event to support a club or a club's charity. Most poker runs have an entry fee which serves as the donation for the event. Poker runs are different from one event to another, but all follow a basic fundamental process: a ride to various points within the region sponsoring the poker run to draw a card or roll dice in hopes of obtain either the best hand or worst hand. Yes, more often than not there is an award for the worst hand. Awards can come in the form of door prizes, cash awards, or event plaques. Regardless of the rewards the events are always fun and raise money for a good cause.

## **Club Meetings**

### **How often does the Club Meet?**

Once a month, the club will get together. The meetings occur on the first Monday of the month. In the event that the first Monday is a holiday, the club president will identify the next date and location to host the club meeting. The date, time, location, and in most cases additional information is provided by the Club President and/or Club Secretary via email for those that did not attend the previous month's meeting or any rides prior to the next meeting.

### **Where does the club meet?**

The club meets month-to-month the majority of the time in the Alamanda Recreation Center, but because of scheduling conflicts or holidays may be held elsewhere.

### **Vest and patches/pins?**

The club quartermaster maintains a club store where you can purchase pins, patches, and other various items for a vest. Understand though that the Village Nomads do not have a vest requirement and is optional should a member choose to wear one. As for the vest, you can purchase those from any vendor on the Web, or at any rally with participating vendors. You are also eligible to purchase pins at nearly every rally that you attend. The Village Nomads Club patches can be purchased from the Club Quartermaster. See the Quartermaster for the current price and availability of patches. The quarter master also has various flags for display on your motorcycle or other modes of transportation.

### **Do I have to do anything at a meeting?**

Yes – have a good time by interacting with your fellow riders. Enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of being a fellow Village Nomad.



## Recruiting and Retention

It is incumbent upon all members to help recruit and retain the membership of the club. New members are always welcome. Invite a current or former rider to attend a club event (ride, meeting, or fund raiser) to make a determination if this is for them.

## When do we ride

The normally schedule club rides are on Wednesday's and Saturday's. There are two rides scheduled: the short ride and the long ride. All riders will meet at the Colony Recreation Center at the far west end of the parking lot. Departure time (Kick Stands Up/KSU) is as close to 8:30am as possible. Prior to departure of each ride a staff representative will provide an update of up-and-coming events or items of importance to the club. Upon departure of the last group on the short ride, the long ride group departs. You are asked to be at the Colony Recreation Center at a minimum of 20 minutes prior to the ride departure. This allows coordination with the destination restaurants as to the number of personnel to be expected.

## Short Ride

The short ride is for the breakfast club and usually entails a short ride directly to the breakfast destination. It is not uncommon for Ride Leaders to take alternate paths to the same destination and you can expect at least two or more small formations of riders. Because of the number of riders that prefer the breakfast ride or have other events scheduled on the same day the grouping will be based on the total number of riders. Do not get upset if you are separated from your buddy on the ride. We all will ride to the same destination although arriving at different times.

## Long Ride

The long ride is for the lunch crowd and is typically a two-hour ride (if not more) with an intermediate break (not always) in the ride to the destination restaurant. This group leaves the Recreation Center shortly after the short rides departure also after the ride briefing.

## A Note of Caution

While the ride schedule is prepared in advance of the month in which the rides are to take place, things happen. It is very possible that a ride may be changed on the day of the ride and is usually a group suggestion due to a closure of the destination or already being overwhelmed by other local bike and car clubs. To make an attempt to meet up with the group at a destination only to find that the Nomads never appeared is very possible and may set the wrong impression

of the club. In most instances the rides will go as scheduled, but understand that conditions and destinations are always subject to change. If you miss the ride, do not worry. There is always the next ride only a few short days away.

Ride suggestions are always welcome and if you know of a place that can house the numbers of riders bring it up to one the chapter staff. Be sure to include all pertinent information such as road miles to and from the destination, destination name and food service, plus contact information of the restaurant.

### **Other Riding Activities/Honor Flight**

The Village Nomads motorcycle club supports other local clubs and organizations throughout the region. Likewise, Motorcycle Sales and other vendors may show up at a club meeting to advertise an event at their site which may be included in the ride schedule at the last minute. The prominent organization that the club supports is the Honor Flight hosted by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post located in Lady Lake. These activities will be announced several times during the ride brief in the morning and also at the regularly scheduled club meetings.

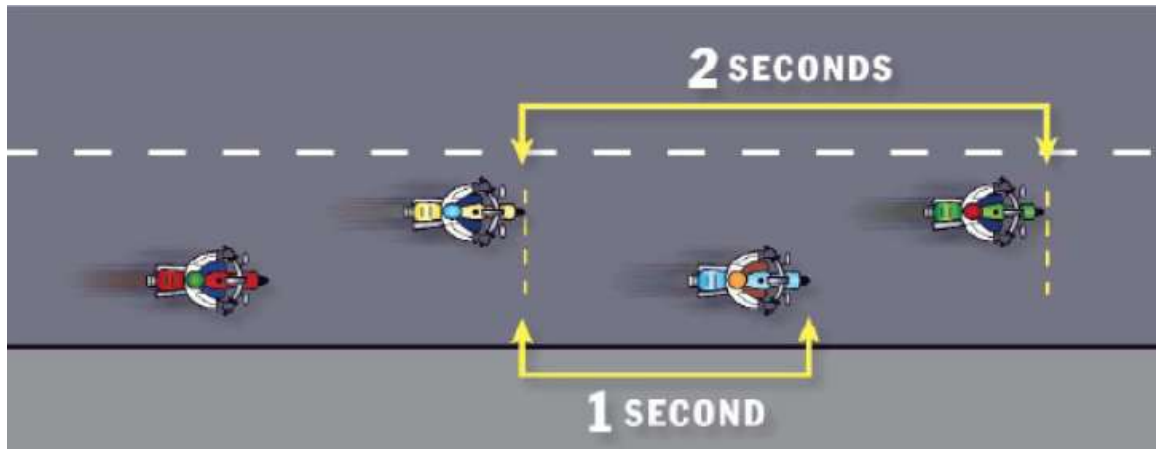
### **Group Riding**

The purpose of riding in an organized group instead of an undisciplined pack is to provide the additional safety that a well-organized group inherently generates. This comes from within the group and from the outside. When a group rides in an orderly fashion, people don't get in each other's way, and the organization of the formation itself discourages cars from attempting to cut in. Anyone violating the rules, and compromising everyone else's safety, will be warned, and if their actions continue, will no longer be welcome to ride with the club.

### **How Do We Ride As A Group?**

The club rides in a group formation known as the staggered trail. This is where one bike leads the ride in the left track of the lane of travel and each bike is staggered back and offset in the opposite track. The format allows for easy observation of road hazards and plenty of reaction time should anything happen up front.

The group formation uses a delay of time between each of the riders, using the Motorcycle Safety Foundations timing of two seconds (or more) between riders. This diagram taken from the MSF depicts the group formation.



It is important to understand that the two second gap allows riders in either track to react to potential road hazards and allow a rider in either track to pull off to the shoulder of the road.

In the event that a rider or riders withdraw from the formation, simply readjust the staggered formation by change from one track to the other. This prevents issues in the group especially where trikes are concerned as passing is more difficult. If you are uncomfortable changing to another track, simply wave the rider behind you forward to your place as roads and safety permit. Some riders tend to shy away from the left track due to oncoming traffic and road hazards. Changing into the left track may not be an option for these riders.

### How Do I Ride With The Group?

1. Arrive with a full tank of gas.
2. C.B. channels should be established prior to any movement. We usually use channel 1. C.B. radios are not required by the membership.
3. Each bike should ride in staggered formation within a traffic lane: the leader rides in the left track: the next rider, the right-tire track, etc. On curves, individual riders should pick their own track. Then reform the staggered formation after the curve.
4. When stopping at a traffic light or stop sign, all bikes pull up, so that your front tire is adjacent to the rider to your front left or right's back tire. This allows room for immediate response to any incidents at a stop.
5. When starting, the leader moves out first, accelerating slowly enough for all bikes to move out in turn. No one should accelerate even with, or pass, another bike.
6. Allow a minimum of two or three second's stopping distance between following bikes, one or two second stopping distance between staggered bikes. Do not allow too much space to

develop between bikes, however. The goal is to ride as an organized unit to prevent unwanted vehicles from breaching the formation.

7. Don't just follow. Be sure to check the traffic before lane changes or other maneuvers. Remember, you are responsible for your own bike and riding safety.

8. If someone in your group pulls to the shoulder of the road and stops, do not follow. The rear bike designated by the leader will stop and give assistance.

9. When passing other vehicles on a two-lane highway each bike should pass in order and in turn. The leader should accelerate far enough ahead for the rest of the group to pass, and the tail bike should inform the leader when the whole group has passed and is back in formation.

10. Groups should have a leader and rear bike equipped with CB radios when possible. The lead bike leads the group; the rear bike controls the group. Expect ride suggestions from the rear bike and accept suggestions to improve the groups' riding performance. It is best practice to have two bikes with radios at the rear of the formation. This allows an alternate to take over the rear "sweep" or "tail gunner" communication and responsibilities should the primary pull off or suffer an equipment failure.

11. All riders and co-riders should wear proper riding apparel. This is not mandatory, but is strongly recommended for your safety. Dress appropriately and anticipate weather changes bringing the necessary gear to protect yourself and your passenger.

12. Each rider is responsible for his/her own ride and safety and riding equipment.

13. Relax and enjoy the ride, and remember, getting there is the fun.

There are only two people responsible and in charge of a group ride: the ride leader (in most cases designated as the Road Captain) and the rear rider (aka Sweep or Tail Gunner). As rider in the group you will not make any changes in direction or path that will affect the group ride. If you know of a better path or shortcut, present these to the ride leader at the end of the ride.

### **Road Captain/Ride Leader**

The Ride Leader must be aware of the length of the columns, and must gauge the passing of merges, highway entrances and exits, etc., to allow for maximum safety and keeping the group together. He/she must make sure that he leaves enough time/space for the formation to get into the appropriate lanes before exits, etc. All directions come from the ride's leader. The Ride Leader makes all decisions regarding lane changes, stopping for breaks and fuel, closing of gaps, turning off at exits, any concerns of what lays ahead, accepting/rejecting radioed messages from other individuals, and so on. No individual will assert himself independently without direction from the Ride Leader to do so.

## **Tail Gunner/Sweep**

The ride sweep serves as the eyes in the back of the Ride Leader's head. He/she watches the formation, and informs the Ride Leader of any potential problems within the group. He/she watches other vehicles, and informs the Ride Leader (and anyone else with radios) of hazardous conditions approaching from the rear, such as vehicles trying to cut into the formation and trucks passing with potentially dangerous wind blasts. He will watch for merging lanes, and will move into a merging lane (or stay in a merging lane just vacated by the group) in order to "close the door" on other vehicles that may otherwise find themselves trying to merge into the formation. At the Ride Leaders request, the Sweep changes lanes before the formation, to secure the lane so the formation can move into it. On most rides a primary and alternate sweeps may be designated in the event the primary pulls off to check on and support a stopped member.

## **New Riders**

The position of new riders inexperienced with GROUP riding within the formation is significant. New riders should be positioned as close to the front as possible. This allows the Ride Leader to set the pace of the ride to the least experienced group rider.

## **Lane Changes**

All lane changing starts with a radio request from the Road Captain/Ride Leader to the Tail Gunner/Sweep. The Tail Gunner will (when it is safe to do so) move into the requested lane and will inform the Road Captain when the lane is clear.

At this point, the Road Captain has three options:

### **(A) Simple Lane Change**

This is an ordinary lane change, and can be used in most situations. After the Sweep has secured the new lane, the Ride Leader will put on his directional signal as an indication that he/she is about to order a lane change. As each rider sees the directional signal, he/she also turns on his/her turn signal, so the riders following him get the signal. The Ride Leader then initiates the change. All other riders change lanes too. The important concept is that NO ONE moves until the bike in front of him/her has started moving. It is considered good practice that the Sweep inform the Ride Leader the lane change is complete or report any riders caught between vehicles.

### **(B) Block Lane Change**

This can be used interchangeably with the Simple Lane Change. It requires a little more work, but it is well worth the effort. It's quite impressive to watch, and gives the riders a tremendous

feeling of "togetherness". This may seem a little complicated, but is actually very simple to do. After the Tail Gunner has secured the new lane, the Road Captain will put on his directional signal as an indication that he is about to order a lane change. As each rider sees the directional signal, he also turns his on, so the riders following him get the signal. The Road Captain then raises his left arm straight up. Each rider repeats this signal. Then, as the leader lowers his arm to point to the lane into which he is moving, he actually initiates the change. All other riders lower their arms at the same time and change lanes too. This allows the entire formation to move from one lane to another as a single block.

### **(C) Rear Fill-in:**

This is sometimes necessary if a long enough gap cannot be maintained in the new lane, for example when trying to move from the right lane to the center and vehicles from the left lane keep cutting into the opening. After the Tail Gunner has secured the new lane, the Road Captain usually at the suggestion of the Tail Gunner) will call for the group to fill in the space from the rear. He signals this by raising his hand to shoulder height and "pushing" it towards the new lane. All riders repeat the signal, and the last bikes move into the space in the new lane ahead of the Tail Gunner, then the next-to-last bikes move in ahead of those, and so on until the Road Captain finally moves into the space ahead of the entire formation.

### **Riding Emergencies**

In the unlikely event of an emergency condition, the Road Captain will make every attempt to move the formation to the shoulder in an orderly manner. If a bike breaks down, let the rider move to the right. DO NOT STOP. The Tail Gunner will stop with the problem bike. The Road Captain will lead the group to a safe stopping place.

### **When And How To Use My CB?**

We use a predetermined CB radio channel for communicating directions, turns, U-turns, lane changes, and other pertinent information such as breaks. (Channel 1 is the standard CB channel for the Village Nomads.)

### **CB Chatter**

Limiting idle chat is particularly critical during departures, during a ride, and at destination arrivals. There is a tendency for riders to be tense during take-off and somewhat lax during landings. Experience has shown that these are the times when unfortunate accidents occur. Although it is great to chat with other riders, it is best to keep the "chatter" down so that pertinent information can be passed along as needed.

## **Safety**

### **Ride Briefing**

Prior to each ride, the road captain or ride coordinator will provide a safety briefing which will cover briefly how we ride (see above), destination, and any pertinent safety concerns along the route. Likewise, Nomads rarely miss an opportunity for a photo op and as such you can expect to be asked to join in a pre-ride photo shoot or at a minimum to present your smiling profile at a gathering at the destination.

### **Helmet Law**

Florida does not require the use of a helmet, however; other state may. We, as a group, ride with helmets to demonstrate our commitment to riding safely and to avoid unnecessary stops at the state line, but it a matter of personal preference. You will not be harassed or teased for your choice either way. Only you know what's best for your riding style.

### **Rider Education**

The Village Nomads sponsor a rider education/refresher program typically over the winter months. There are presentations, discussions, and exercises performed by our club members in an enclosed parking lot normally at the Rohan Recreation Center. Members have the option to participate at the level of experience they choose although going the extra mile is encouraged. The practice sessions cover those topics most critical to our club: slow riding in parking lots, stopping, avoiding hazards, and entering/exiting intersections to name a few.

There is no cost to you, the club member to participate in the riding exercises and will further enhance your skills. Information as to session dates and times will be announced at club meetings, part of the ride brief prior to departure, and again via email to the club membership.

## **The Village Nomad Resources**

### **Where do I go to get more information?**

Typically at each monthly club meeting a fair amount of information is provided to the membership by all staff officers in their monthly reports. Additionally, the information presented is captured by the Club Secretary and is recorded in the meeting minutes. Additionally, the ride schedule is prepared and release for upcoming month. This schedule is emailed to all members and is posted on the club Web site

Additional information can be obtained from the Club's Facebook page once you become a club member.

<https://thevillagenomads.com/>

Here information is posted about upcoming rides and events that are of interest to the club as well as information from previous rides along with a photo collection.

Members can also reach out to any one of the club staff to get an update on what is happening. While this is not the preferred method you can and will get an answer. Just don't expect a warm welcome once you've become established in the club.

### **Handbook Update**

Recommendations for changing, clarification, or additional and/or removal of information contained in this document should be submitted to the Club President and/or the Club Secretary at the next monthly meeting.

Updated: Saturday, October 1, 2024