

# TEXAS CAPITOL WINGS



## From the Director's Chair

*Jim & Dee Dee Evans, Chapter Directors*



Hello All,

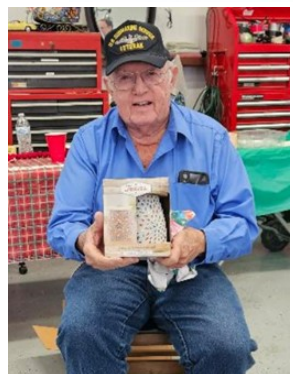
Another year done and we've had some great rides and enjoyed the company of our friends and EWMA family. This year I hope we can make a few more rides and continue our gatherings with more of our members and guests. We also need to get in some classes and training. Continuing education always helps keep us better and safer riders. I would also like to have more meetings and rides with our other EWMA chapters here in Texas. There are many rallies and ride-ins planned for 2024 in Texas and other parts of Region B. The Texas District Yellow Rose Ride-In is scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A lot of great riding will start on Thursday morning.

We had a good turn out at our annual Christmas Party, 30 people even with the absence of Richard and ChesLynn. Barbara was there to help facilitate the party and Tom was tasked to move cars out and back into the shop. I think we had enough food for dinner and lunch the next day. After lunch we had our gift exchange, I've never seen so much stealing in one day!!! Everyone had a great time and look forward to next year.



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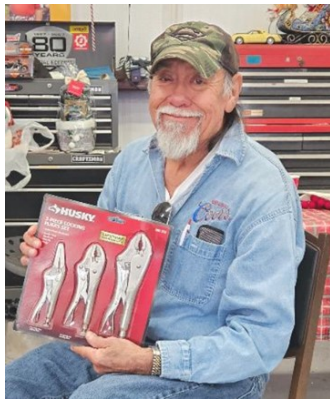
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Sunday after our Christmas Party, a few of us joined a mass of bikes for the Tri-County Toy Run. We met at Jim McMillian's house and rode to the Frank W. Mayborn Civic and Convention Center in Temple. The six of us arrived a couple hours early and had time to visit the vendors, have lunch and meet some other people from our area of Texas. I met a group from Ding Dong, one couple rode a grey Indian bike. At KSU, the ride took us from Temple to Lampasas escorted by many Officers from all three counties. Many people along the route on bridges and hill sides cheered us on. A great ride for a great cause.





## Improving Your Riding Skills

Randy Reese

It's a brand new year and most of us will at least think about resolutions to make us happier, healthier, and better persons. It's also a good time to think about how you can improve your motorcycling lifestyle and enjoyment. Much of this can be done by deliberately pursuing activities and training to help sharpen your riding skills and safety awareness.

I'm the first to admit that I have let my skills deteriorate during and since Covid. The lack of training opportunities and my own laziness have kept me from keeping my riding skills as sharp as they used to be. My last ARC was over two years ago now.

EWMA does support Safety but does not have the robust training opportunities that GWRRA used to have. However, they do offer some basic training activities (parking lot practice and games) on their website that can be accessed by anyone and practiced on your own or taught in a group setting by anyone. If your membership is current, just go to Member Resources/document library/parking lot practices and you can download the activities for yourself. They have both two-wheel and three-wheel activities. Most required the use of small cones or 1/2 tennis balls for markers and a long tape measure for setting out the ranges. I have a pretty good quantity of both and would be glad to lend them to you if you are interested.

Another resource for training is RPM Training Academy courses. They obtained the rights to all GWRRA training materials and offer almost all of the classroom seminars that GWRRA used and also have resources for on-bike riding courses. I have published a list of the classes several times and can email you one upon request. We have at least 4 training instructors in our chapter (Tom, Lyle, Sheri, and me) who can help facilitate the classroom training. Jim has also discussed with me the possibility of offering a road-captain/team riding class in the near future to help us review and remind ourselves and any new riders that have joined us in the past two years how we can ride safely together. More on that later.

I challenge each of you to contemplate next year and how you can increase and enhance your EWMA experience. Hope to see each of you on the road soon.

Ride Safely, Ride Often, and HEY! – Be careful out there!

**TEXAS**

Friends for Fun, Safety & Riding  
WWW.EWMA-TX.ORG

**Yellow Rose Ride-In**  
**March 20th - 23rd, 2024**  
**Kerrville, Texas**

**Y.O. Ranch Hotel and Conference Center**  
**Kerrville, Texas**

**Special Rate \$119 a night**  
**Reservations: (830) 257-4440**

**Early Registration**  
**\$15 per person or \$20 at the door**  
**3 days of Scenic Led and Self Guided Rides,**  
**25-25-25-25, Ice Cream social, Drawings and**  
**Prizes**

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

### Bucket List — Richard Seay

I never had a plan to ride a motorcycle in all 50 states, but a few years ago I realized I only had 13 states left. Eleven were in New England & the other two were Alaska & Hawaii. "On the way home" from the Wing Ding in Des Moines, Iowa I rode thru the 11 New England states & D.C. In 2012, I rode to the 1st ever Gold Wing Rally in Anchorage, AK but didn't get to ride home because I had a wreck on a rented BMW dual sport bike 30 miles south of the Arctic Circle. I did get to cross the Arctic Circle, but it was in an Alaskan Pipeline ambulance.

Fast forward to 2023. I still had not ridden in Hawaii. My lady friend ChesLynn Browning & I planned a trip to Hawaii in December that included a 7-day cruise around all the Hawaiian Islands. We went to Hawaii 3 days before the cruise & toured Oahu (in a car). The morning before we were scheduled to board the cruise ship later that day, I rented a motor scooter & rode it about 5 miles in Honolulu.

I had finally completed my bucket list! I rode a motorcycle in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia! Maybe I need to ride in all 8 continents, after all, I've already ridden in one, so only 7 to go.



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### Reservations — Gayle Thomas



As most of you know, Gayle likes to frequent the Tapatia Restaurant near her home. Imagine her surprise when she arrived during the holidays to find this special sign from her breakfast friend Julian. It says . . .

**"Reserved for Ms Gayle"**

I would call that very special treatment. You deserve it!

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### Auto Train — Russ & Joan Miller

Joan and I drove to Florida to visit with her brother, which was sort of mundane. The real reason for the drive to Florida was to catch the Amtrak Auto Train in Sanford. The train is an overnight, one stop train which lets you off in Lorton, VA; which just happens to be 30 miles from Darling Daughter's house.



Spent a quiet Christmas with her and husband and tomorrow, we will drive to Lorton and take the train back. The train also carry's motorcycles. It has been a pleasant experience.



Auto Train is an 855-mile scheduled daily train service for passengers and their automobiles operated by Amtrak between Lorton, Virginia, and Sanford, Florida. Auto Train is the only motorail service in the United States.



## CHEAP WATCHES

*submitted by Tom Sprague*

If you were in the market for a watch in 1880, would you know where to get one? You would go to a store, right? Well, of course you could do that, but if you wanted one that was cheaper and a bit better than most of the store watches, you went to the train station! Sound a bit funny? Well, for about 500 towns across the northern United States, that's where the best watches were found. Why were the best watches found at the train station? The railroad company wasn't selling the watches, not at all. The telegraph operator was. Most of the time the telegraph operator was located in the railroad station because the telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks from town to town. It was usually the shortest distance and the right-of-ways had already been secured for the rail line.

Most of the station agents were also skilled telegraph operators and that was the primary way that they communicated with the railroad. They would know when trains left the previous station and when they were due at their next station. And it was the telegraph operator who had the watches. As a matter of fact, they sold more of them than almost all the stores combined for a period of about 9 years. This was all arranged by "Richard", who was a telegraph operator himself. He was on duty in the North Redwood, Minnesota train station one day when a load of watches arrived from the East. It was a huge crate of pocket watches. No one ever came to claim them.

So, Richard sent a telegram to the manufacturer and asked them what they wanted to do with the watches. The manufacturer didn't want to pay the freight back, so they wired Richard to see if he could sell them. So Richard did. He sent a wire to every agent in the system asking them if they wanted a cheap, but good, pocket watch. He sold the entire case in less than two days and at a handsome profit. That started it all. He ordered more watches from the watch company and encouraged the telegraph operators to set up a display case in the station offering high quality watches for a cheap price to all the travelers. It worked! It didn't take long for the word to spread and, before long, people other than travelers came to the train station to buy watches. Richard became so busy that he had to hire a professional watch maker to help him with the orders. That was Alvah. And the rest is history as they say.

The business took off and soon expanded to many other lines of dry goods. Richard and Alvah left the train station and moved their company to Chicago – and it's still there.

YES, IT'S A LITTLE KNOWN FACT that for a while in the 1880's, the biggest watch retailer in the country was at the train station. It all started with a telegraph operator: Richard Sears and his partner Alvah Roebuck!

*Bet You Didn't Know That!!!*



## Upcoming Events

[www.goldwingaustin.org](http://www.goldwingaustin.org)

- 1/20 Capitol Wings Monthly Gathering
- 3/21-23 Texas District Yellow Rose Ride-In Kerrville, TX
- 4/18-20 Louisiana District Rally & Ride-In Ruston, LA
- 5/16-18 Arkansas District Rally Harrison, AR



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Jan Vargas 1/1
- Mark Heene 1/3
- Boonmee Laue 1/9
- Patty Browder 1/23
- John Osborn 1/25
- Charlie Diggs 1/26

## ANNIVERSARIES

- Harry & Polly Bowers 1/27



## **The Meaning of Freedom to a Military Wife**

by: Lori Kimble, 31 year old Teacher & Proud Military Wife  
originally published in April 2003

Article submitted by Tom Sprague

*Although the following is a little dated the message stands true. During the holiday season remember the brave sons and daughters of the folk that signed the contract to give their life for your freedoms.*

I was sitting alone in one of those loud, casual steak houses that you find all over the country. You know the type – a bucket of peanuts on every table, shells littering the floor, and a bunch of perky college kids racing around with longneck beers and sizzling platters.

Taking a sip of my iced tea, I studied the crowd over the rim of my glass. My gaze lingered on a group enjoying their meal. They wore no uniform to identify their branch of service, but they were definitely “military”: clean shaven, cropped haircut, and that “squared away” look that comes with pride.

Smiling sadly, I glanced across my table to the empty seat where my husband usually sat. It had only been a few months since we sat in this very booth, talking about his upcoming deployment to the Middle East. That was when he made me promise to get a sitter for the kids, come back to this restaurant once a month and treat myself to a nice steak. In turn, he would treasure the thought of me being here, thinking about him until he returned home to me.

I fingered the little flag pin I constantly wear and wondered where he was at that very moment. Was he safe and warm? Was his cold any better? Were my letters getting through to him? As I pondered these thoughts, high pitched female voices from the next booth broke into my thoughts.

*“I don’t know what Bush is thinking about. Invading Iraq. You’d think that man would learn from his old man’s mistakes. Good lord. What an idiot! I can’t believe he is even in office. You do know, he stole the election.”*

I cut into my steak and tried to ignore them, as they began an endless tirade running down our president. I thought about the last night I spent with my husband, as he prepared to deploy. He had just returned from getting his smallpox and anthrax shots. The image of him standing in our kitchen packing his gas mask still gives me chills.

Once again the woman’s voice invaded my thoughts. *“It’s all about oil, you know. Our soldiers will go in and rape and steal all the oil they can in the name of ‘freedom’. Hmph! I wondered how many innocent people they’d kill without giving it a thought? It’s pure greed, you know.”*

My chest tightened as I stared at my wedding ring. I could still see how handsome my husband looked in his “mess dress” that day he slipped it on my finger. I wondered what he was wearing now, probably his desert uniform, affectionately dubbed “coffee stains” with a heavy bulletproof vest over it.

*“You know, we should just leave Iraq alone. I don’t think they are hiding any weapons. In fact, I bet it’s all a big act just to increase the president’s popularity. That’s all it is, padding the military budget at the expense of our social security and education. And, you know what else? We’re just asking for another 9/11. I can’t say when it happens again that we didn’t deserve it.”*

Their words brought to mind the war protesters I had watched gathering outside our base. Did no one appreciate the sacrifice of brave men and women, who leave their homes and family to ensure our freedom? Do they even know what “freedom” is?

I glanced at the table where the young men were sitting, and saw their courageous faces change. They had stopped eating and looked at each other dejectedly, listening to the women talking.

*“Well, I, for one, think it’s just deplorable to invade Iraq, and I am certainly sick of our tax dollars going to train professional baby killers we call a military.”*

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## The Meaning of Freedom to a Military Wife

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Professional baby killers? I thought about what a wonderful father my husband is, and of how long it would be before he would see our children again.

That's it! Indignation rose up inside me. Normally reserved, pride in my husband gave me a brassy boldness I never realized I had. Tonight one voice will answer on behalf of our military, and let her pride in our troops be known.

Sliding out of my booth, I walked around to the adjoining booth and placed my hands flat on their table. Lowering myself to eye level with them, I smilingly said, *"I couldn't help overhearing your conversation. You see, I'm sitting here trying to enjoy my dinner alone. And do you know why? Because my husband, whom I love will all my heart, is halfway around the world defending your right to say rotten things about him. Yes, you have the right to your opinion, and what you think is none of my business. However, what you say in public is something else, and I will not sit by and listen to you ridicule MY country, MY president, MY husband, and all the other fine American men and women who put their lives on the line, just so you can have the "freedom" to complain. Freedom is an expensive commodity, ladies. Don't let your actions cheapen it."*

I must have been louder than I meant to be, because the manager came over to inquire if everything was all right. *"Yes, thank you,"* I replied. Then turned back to the woman, I said, *"Enjoy the rest of your meal."*

As I returned to my booth applause broke out. I was embarrassed for making a scene, and went back to my half eaten steak. The women picked up their check and scurried away.

After finishing my meal, and while waiting for my check, the manager returned with a huge apple cobbler ala mode. *"Compliments of those soldiers,"* he said. He also smiled and said the ladies tried to pay for my dinner, but that another couple had beaten them to it. When I asked who, the manager said they had already left, but that the gentleman was a veteran, and wanted to take care of the wife of "one of our boys."

With a lump in my throat, I gratefully turned to the soldiers and thanked them for the cobbler. Grinning from ear to ear, they came over and surrounded the booth. *"We just wanted to thank you, ma'am. You know we can't get into confrontations with civilians, so we appreciate what you did."*

As I drove home, for the first time since my husband's deployment, I didn't feel quite so alone. My heart was filled with the warmth of the other diners who stopped by my table, to relate how they, too, were proud of my husband, and would keep him in their prayers. I knew their flags would fly a little higher the next day.

Perhaps they would look for more tangible ways to show their pride in our country, and the military who protect her. And maybe, just maybe, the two women who were railing against our country, would pause for a minute to appreciate all the freedom America offers, and the price it pays to maintain it's freedom.

As for me, I have learned that one voice CAN make a difference. Maybe the next time protesters gather outside the gates of the base where I live, I will proudly stand on the opposite side of my own. It will simply say, "THANK YOU!"

**TO THOSE WHO FOUGHT FOR OUR NATION:**

*"Freedom has a flavor the protected will never know.*

**GOD BLESS AMERICA!**

