



International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians

North American Chapter

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-- IFMR-NA President's Newsletter --

Chapter President

Robert D. Shriner
7347 Stuart Circle
Warrenton, VA 20187
540-349-8193
bob@shriner.com

IFMR "Atlantic Canada" Tour

The IFMR post-convention motorcycle tour of eastern Quebec and the Canadian maritime provinces was a fantastic experience. The morning after the convention the group headed up the north shore of the St Lawrence River to Quebec City with 27 riders and passengers, including IFMR members from eight countries – Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Holland, United Kingdom, and USA.



Along the way a number of other Canadian riders from local Rotary clubs joined us and rode with us for a few hours, or a few days. We also had 'meet and greet' opportunities with six different local Rotary clubs along the route, where we exchanged banners and had an opportunity to make new friends and hear about local club projects and other activities. (See our blog at ifmrmontreal2010.blogspot.com)

But the best part of the tour was the great roads and spectacular scenery of Atlantic Canada: the highlands that flank the St Lawrence River, the Gaspé Peninsula, the rolling countryside of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and the awesome beauty of Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Highlands National Park, to name just a few. And the weather was great! Though we had a few misty/foggy mornings, we had less than a hour's rain during the entire 13-day ride. *A great trip!!!*

IFMR-NA.org Improvements

One of my top priorities is improving the IFMR-NA.org website, which has suffered from limited attention and updating in recent years. To address the matter I recruited a team of IFMR members who have experience as webmasters of their local clubs and other organizations to review the capabilities and constraints of the existing website, make recommendations for needed changes, and then oversee and accomplish those changes, plus develop a self-sustaining team of IFMR members who can maintain the site and guide future developments to keep pace with changing technologies and usage patterns.

While it's too early to see results, the team is already at work reviewing the existing site and assessing what changes can and should be made. Headed by IFMR co-founder and former IFMR World President **Ron Lyster** (and internet chairman of his Rotary club in Santa Monica, CA), the team includes **Leticia Parra** (IFMR member and chair of ROTI-Fellowship of Rotarians on the Internet and webmaster of RotaryMexico.com), **Don Marx** (IFMR member and president and past webmaster of the RC of Washington DC), **Gary Wegener** (IFMR member and webmaster of the RC of Woodlands, CA), along with me and other IFMR-NA officers.

We are all acutely aware of the limitations of the site and will be working hard to get it updated and improved soon. Meanwhile, if you have suggestions to pass along to the team, or would like to become involved in helping improve and maintain the IFMR-NA.org website, contact the team at

IFMR-internet@yahoogroups.com.

Planning for New Orleans 2011

With the 2010 Montreal convention only one month behind us, it's hard to realize that it's already time to begin work on preparations for the 2011 RI convention in New Orleans, which will be held earlier than usual, May 21-24. I plan to appoint a team to plan and coordinate IFMR activities related to the convention, including preparing and staffing the IFMR booth in the House of Friendship,



coordinating IFMR rides to/from New Orleans from various parts of North America, making arrangements for an IFMR headquarters hotel in New Orleans, etc. If you've been to previous conventions you know how important it is to make plans well in advance. If you've been to previous RI conventions, are considering attending the New Orleans convention next year, and would like to help IFMR 'do it right' by serving on the IFMR convention team, then please let me know and I'll find you a role to play.

And if you're simply thinking about attending, let me encourage you to 'just do it'. It's an experience you will never forget and will greatly enjoy. Get together a local group of motorcycling Rotarians and ride to New Orleans next May.

IFMR Dues & Renewal Time

IFMR-NA Membership Registrar **Jean Dore** has been hard at work updating our membership roster and synchronizing it with the list of subscribers to the group's website, IFMR-NA.org and the IFMR-NA@YahooGroups.com list server. The task is nearing completion and Jean plans to begin sending out dues and renewal notices very soon. Once we have a significant share of the dues and renewal responses back, we'll be able to provide up-dated directory information to all who have paid their IFMR-NA dues.

We are also boosting dues slightly to reflect the rising cost of postage and other operating expenses. If you pay your dues by September 15, the cost will still be \$15; but after September 15 the dues will be \$20. So it pays to pay early. We will also begin limiting access to the website and YahooGroups list server later this year to dues-paying members, while also making it easier to pay dues and purchase IFMR merchandise by providing on-line credit card payments for dues, merchandise, etc.

More Local IFMR-NA Activities

The comment I've heard most frequently from many IFMR-NA members is their desire to have more local rides, rallies, and get-togethers in their area and to have more information about rides, rallies, and get-togethers going on in other areas, both near and far. We're moving on several fronts to help bring that about.

I mentioned in the previous report on dues and renewals that we'll be making an updated membership directory available later this fall after we've made progress on dues collections and renewals. That will be a big step toward increasing and improving contacts among our members and helping organize local and regional activities, as will the improvements we'll be making to the website.

Another step that I'd like to take is to work toward the development of a stronger network of local and regional IFMR-NA leaders to promote, encourage, and coordinate events. My vision is to have a leadership pyramid with 5-7 regional leaders/representatives who serve on the IFMR-NA executive committee and who in turn develop district and local IFMR-NA leaders and membership in every Rotary district, who organize and hold a wide range of local and regional events, and occasionally even events that attract riders from other IFMR chapters outside North America (as our recent "Atlantic Canada" tour did).

Another part of my vision is to develop IFMR side-events and get-togethers with some of the major motorcyclist events such as Sturgis, Americade, Daytona, Myrtle Beach, Rolling Thunder, etc. These might be just an IFMR breakfast get-together, with a day-ride afterward, or they might become something larger, depending on what IFMR participants want to make of them – what YOU might want to make of them.

In order to make this vision into reality, we'll need IFMR members who are willing to fill these roles as leaders, representatives, 'evangelists', and organizers at the national, regional, district, and local levels. If you are interested in playing that kind of 'entrepreneurial' role as part of an IFMR-NA leadership team to help create a larger, stronger and more vibrant IFMR over the next several years, I'd like to hear from you – about yourself, your area, and your ideas for growing a flexible, active, inclusive IFMR.

Together, we can make it happen!