

Southern Tier, NY Chapter of the Harley Owners Group

Frequently Asked Questions.

What is H.O.G.? How do I join?

The Harley Owners Group was established in 1983 by Harley-Davidson Motor Co. to develop a close relationship between fellow riders, your local Harley-Davidson dealer and the Motor Co. Their motor is "Ride and Have Fun" and they offer several benefits and services to do so. H.O.G. membership enrollment, including Associate Membership for family, is available by calling 1-800-CLUBHOG, www.hog.com or visiting your local Harley-Davidson dealer.

What is the Southern Tier, NY Chapter? How do I join?

The Southern Tier, NY Chapter was established in 1987 and is sponsored by Gowanda Harley-Davidson and Harley-Davidson of Jamestown to bring the H.O.G. experience to a local level. It is our sponsoring dealers' philosophy that belonging to a H.O.G. Chapter and riding your Harley-Davidson motorcycle should not feel like a part-time job. It's in this spirit that we put no mandates on how much or how little you wish to participate in Chapter activities. The majority of our rides and events are 'members only' to put the emphasis on riding and having fun, not working. To join, you must be a national member of the Harley Owners Group. Dues are \$15 per year, renewable on March 31. Applications are available at our sponsoring dealers. Membership includes an open invitation to participate in Chapter rides and events, subscription to our Chapter Newsletter and Members Only access to our Chapter website.

Who Runs the Chapter?

Our sponsoring dealers, together with Chapter Director, Mick Ragona and the primary officer team manage the Chapter business and finances. This team, together with discretionary officers, works hard to bring riding and having fun to you. All Chapter Officer positions are held by election, which occurs annually in October. In early spring, we conduct a Chapter Planning Meeting open to all members to create a schedule of rides and events for the upcoming riding season.

When and Where Do You Meet?

Chapter Meetings during riding season (May-Sept.) are typically held on the third Sunday of the month at 10:00am. Locations vary and are announced in our Chapter newsletter. Sunday afternoon day rides are planned following the meeting. Off season Chapter meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm and rotate between our sponsoring dealers. Several other activities are planned throughout the year and are advertised in your newsletter. It is our hope that by holding an open annual Chapter Planning Meeting that scheduled Chapter meetings, rides and events will vary throughout the year to allow everyone the opportunity to participate in a few activities.

What kind of Chapter is it? A hard-core riding group, a social group or a charity fundraising group?

Obviously, it is impossible for any Chapter to be "all things to all people." The membership of the Chapter ultimately determines which direction the Chapter takes. The H.O.G. motto is "Ride and Have Fun," and our intentions are to offer a good balance of events, rides and activities to address the various interests of the members, whether these are short day rides, picnic & dinner gatherings, weekend trips or donating to a local charity.

I've heard a lot of Chapters can be "cliquish." Is this so with the Southern Tier, NY Chapter?

It's human nature for sub-groups to form within any larger organization. This is not necessarily bad; a lot of good things have benefited the entire Chapter from just a few close members. We hope that members will make friendships with other members who share their same riding styles and interests, but not to the point that there is an "inner circle" which excludes other individuals.

I've heard it can be expensive to attend Chapter activities. How will this be addressed?

We try to offer a broad range of Chapter rides and events, ranging from brown bag picnic rides to overnight touring trips. By nature some activities will cost more than others. In addition, some Chapter activities are subsidized by dues to reduce the cost for those who attend.

Why should I join the Southern Tier, NY Chapter?

This is a personal decision. We hope that by hosting a good mix of rides and events, together with encouraging volunteerism, we can provide you the opportunities to meet fellow enthusiasts, ride your Harley-Davidson motorcycle and have fun along the way.

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Group Riding Tips & Hand Signals

Provided by the Harley Owners Group and the American Motorcyclist Association

- Split large groups into smaller groups. It is each person's responsibility to know where the ride starts, ends and how to get there. Each person is also responsible for their own safety. Individual safety is more important than keeping the group together.
- Always ride at the capability of the least experienced rider. A Road Captain should lead the group, inexperienced riders should be in the near the front or middle and a Road Captain should ride at the back of the group.
- When in a tight curve, the rider on the outside of the curve is required to give room to the rider on the inside, in case the curve is too tight to negotiate at that speed without excessive crowding.
- Use the buddy system when riding with a group. If your buddy must pull out of the group, pull off the road with him or her.
- Know the stopping power of your motorcycle. Seventy percent of the stopping power is in the front brake.
- Maintain a constant speed. This helps prevent the "rubber band effect."
- Be aware of openings as you ride so that you will have a place to maneuver in case of an emergency. Also, be aware of the riders around you (especially the one to your side) and give each other as much room to move as possible in any situation.
- Always keep the group tight without crowding each other. Stay close through the intersection and traffic lights, so the group doesn't get divided.
- If there is a vehicle that has to get on the freeway, let that vehicle through and then close the gap as quickly as possible afterwards.
- If an exit is missed, stick together as a group, proceed to the next exit, then return to the correct exit.
- Never ride in someone's blind spot.
- Remember, you are not safe from lightning on a motorcycle.

