It's hard to believe that it's been 3 years already and at the stroke of midnight I am officially turning over the reins to your new President of the IFMR-NA, Chris Jones. When I looked back at the last 3 years and thought about what we might have accomplished I realized that with a lot of help from a lot of people there were some positive changes made that I truly believe created a more stable platform for our organization to work from going forward. These changes will still allow for needed changes and updates as time goes forward. Some of these changes included the creation and implementation of a working Leadership Plan, the selection and placement of Regional Directors, the selection and placement of Ride Guides, updating our website and membership renewal process, and streamlining the merchandise ordering process to name a few.

Unfortunately between work getting in the way and a couple of health issues I wasn't able to get out and meet more of our members and participate in more of our rides and events. The good news is that a lot of those issues have resolved so I look forward to being able to participate more going forward.

As you can imagine it takes a lot of folks to make an organization like ours run smoothly. Thank you to your new President, Chris Jones for stepping up and serving as Vice-President for the past couple of years and being that voice of reason and counsel. Bob Shriner, I can't thank you enough for all you have done for this organization and for me the past 3 years. Raymond Plue, you got me into this mess! Seriously Raymond thank you for being my friend all these years and for your advice. And thank you for serving as the IFMR World President! Hal James, thank you for serving as treasurer and making sure the books balance. Ken Brandt, you are the king of merchandise. Jean Dores, thank you for taking care of membership all those years and making sure we were on track. Larie Trippett, thank you for taking over from Jean when she retired and continuing to help us streamline the membership process. Juan Yebra, thank you for stepping up to take on the newsletter and giving Bob Shriner a much needed rest. Thank you to the Regional Directors and Ride Guides for all you do. You are the front line representatives for this organization and I appreciate what you do. And most importantly Thank You to our members for your continued membership and support of this organization. You have heard me say it several times, without the members we have no IFMR-NA. You are the reason that we have this group in the first place and I look forward to continued growth.

Let me be the first to congratulate our new President, Chris Jones and Vice-President, Gerry Jackson. I am confident that they will do a tremendous job leading this organization and I look forward to working with them in the future.

On a personal note...THANK YOU! Thank you for the amazing opportunity to be a part of this group and the honor to serve as President the past 3 years. Rotary has always been like another family to me and this group is no exception. It truly was an honor to serve. Thank you again.

Tim D. Cudd
Immediate Past President
International Fellowship of Motorcycling Rotarians - North America
Greetings from sunny, and hot, Charlotte, NC

By IFMR-NA President, Chris Jones

Have you been out riding this summer? Around here the weather has been good for riding – I only wish I had more time to get involved in it myself. In fact, the last ride I did was the IFMR 2016 SPRING RIDE, 3-Day PA-MD-WV Mountain Tour, May 12-16, 2016. And what a ride that was. We saw nice, sunny weather, and we also saw a day of heavy rain, and then snow – in May. But in all fairness, we were in the mountains. But still… SNOW… in May. The good news is that we all made it out alright and we had great fellowship throughout the entire ride.

As the incoming President of IFMR-NA, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself and talk about some of the exciting plans we have coming up. While I have not met all of you, I have had the chance to meet many on several of the rides we have done. And one of the rides that sits high in my mind was the trip to New Orleans for the Rotary International Convention in 2011. What a great experience that was with outstanding fellowship. We were all so excited to be together and to ride to the Convention. And we will want to do more of that for the Atlanta Convention. More on that shortly.

Serving in the role as the IFMR-NA President is one I take seriously and not lightly. It is a huge responsibility and one that I am so grateful for all of your confidence. During time leading up to this point, I have received counsel from IFMR World President Raymond Plue, Current President Tim Cudd, and Past President Bob Shriner. Thank you to each of you for guiding me well to this point, and rest assured that your days of counseling me are far from over. Your services are requested to continue please! I also welcome all counsel from any IFMR-NA members as well. My “door” is always open and I encourage you to reach out and share your thoughts, ideas, concerns, and other/any feedback. The only way we can get better is if we are meeting the needs of our members. So any improvements you want to offer, I am all ears.

Just a little background on myself:

• Joined Rotary in 2001 as a Charter Member of the Rotary Club of Catonsville-Sunrise, MD in District 7620
• Served that club as Secretary for 3 years, and President-Elect
• Relocated to Charlotte, NC in 2006
• Inducted into The Rotary Club of Lake Norman-Huntersville, NC in District 7680
• Served that club in many capacities including Club President, 2008-09
• Served District 7680 as an Assistant Governor, Membership Chair, District Governor (2012-13), Paul Harris Society Chair, Foundation Chair, and several other positions
• Served Zone 33 as an Assistant Rotary Public Image Coordinator, 2013-2016
• Serving Zone 33 as a Rotary Coordinator, 2016-19
• Serving Carolinas PETS as its Curriculum Coordinator

Vocationally I have settled in nicely as the Rotary Relations Manager for Stop Hunger Now. This is a great position because I get to do all things Rotary in my job, since Rotary is my client. Does it get any better than to have Rotary as a client? Stop Hunger Now has a great, hands-on, service project for Rotary clubs to get involved with. I am happy to expand more if you would like to know.

What do I ride? Funny story – My first bike (of my adulthood) was a 1991 Honda Goldwing Interstate Anniversary Edition. Great bike and it rode well. But when the opportunity came along to ride to New Orleans for the RI Convention in 2011, my wife, Colleen, said she did not want me riding a 20-year-old motorcycle that distance. And who was I to argue with her? She is an attorney by the way, so I would not win anyway <grin>. So I found a still, new-in-the-crate, 2010 Goldwing GPS model, and acquired that for less than I could have obtained a 2006 or newer prior-owned model. And that’s what I rode to the 2011 RI Convention, and what I am still riding today. The 1991 stayed in my stable for 2 years into owning the 2010 model as I just couldn’t face selling it. But alas, it was time for it to go on to a new rider – unfortunately not to a Rotarian however.

Let me update you on one exciting change for IFMR-NA.

It was recently announced that Gerry Jackson would become the Vice President of IFMR-NA effective 1 July 2016. Gerry will be a wonderful addition to our Leadership Team, and I am truly excited to be serving with him (as I am to serve with all the rest of the IFMR-NA Leaders). One of Gerry’s interest and talents within Rotary is Membership, and so I have asked Gerry to look at IFMR-NA from a strategic perspective and put some process and plans in place to enhance the membership experience and look to grow our membership during the next 3 years. Knowing that Gerry will be successful in this endeavor (I was so glad he accepted), he will build IFMR-NA so that when he serves as our President, we will be in an even better position. If you have ideas about Membership for IFMR-NA, please share them directly with Gerry at geraldwjjackson@gmail.com.

Website. We know that our website is tired and out of date, and also needs to be moved to a platform that is mobile friendly. Immediate Past-President Tim Cudd accepted my ask of him to lead this project. This will improve our communications and also provide newer technology to our new member online form and also the renewal process. More to come in the coming newsletters on this topic.

In closing, I am truly excited to lead IFMR-NA to the next level, standing on the broad shoulders that have brought us to where we are today. It is my highest wish that all past officers of IFMR-NA will continue to serve as “Advisers” to help IFMR-NA be the best it can be. It is also high on my list that we continue to expand our based of leaders with new members. If you have a desire to serve our Fellowship in any way, please do not be shy – send an email to me of give me a call.

Let’s start this new Rotary year off strong with many fun rides and great fellowship. Wishing all a Happy New Rotary Year!
The Atlanta Convention
IFMR-NA President, Chris Jones
7680DG1213@gmail.com

I have heard from many that there are plans in the formation for rides to the Convention and also a ride after the Convention. To help with communication around all of this, we are looking for a Ride Coordinator for the Ride(s) to the Convention, and also a Ride Coordinator for the After Convention Ride. If you are interested in serving IFMR-NA in this capacity, please let me know. This will be a wonderful opportunity to get to know many of our members and also to help facilitate a more streamlined ride. We would like to have a Coordinator in place as quickly as possible. And if a few of you that would like to do this together as a team, that may work very well. Please do not take the thought process of, well someone else will step up and do that, because then no one will. We do need someone(s) to help, so please put your Service Above Self hat on and volunteer for this.

Membership Renewal
IFMR-NA Membership Director, Larie Trippet
membership@ifmr-na.org

Happy New Rotary Year!!!

It is time to renew your membership in IFMR-NA for 2016-2017. Dues remain $20 per year.

Simply go to ifmr-na.org and choose "Pay/Renew Dues" in the left column. Follow the instructions.

It is that simple!

I recently sent 3 sets of emails:
- 1 set to those owing dues for 2016-2017
- 1 set to those owing for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017
- 1 set to those owing for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 and 2016-2017

If you did not receive one of those emails, that means you are already paid up for 2016-2017. Thank you!!!

I even have 1 member who paid for 2017-2018! Wow!

If you have any questions you can reach me at membership@ifmr-na.org

Please note: I will be out of the country from July 10 thru August 6 on a motorcycle tour in Norway :) I will not be processing renewals or providing detailed responses during that time.

Cheers,
Larie Trippet
IFMR-NA Membership Director.
Visit the IFMR-NA Store

www.ifmr-na.org/store.htm

for banners, shirts, caps, & more!

Stainless steel 12 oz travel mug with IFMR logo

Great for coffee, tea, or your favorite adult beverage! A great way to show your IFMR colors!

NOTE: The logo will include "IFMR-NA.org"

plus an IFMR bandana and doorag

Now Just $27 for all 3!

Show IFMR pride on your next ride

IFMR long-sleeve blue oxford button-down shirt

Great for club meetings and beyond . . .

$40 delivered

Now just $30

SHOP OUR ONLINE SPECIALS & SAVE BIG $$$

www.IFMR-NA.org/store/specials.htm

A photo of the IFMR group from the recent ride in Michigan organized by Rory windrim and Gerry Jackson. Thanks for the great fellowship . . . again!

(Photoby Bob Shriner)
A word from our New VP
IFMR-NA VicePresident, Gerry Jackson
geraldwjackson@gmail.com

Hi all. I’m thrilled to be serving as your new VP for the next 3 years. And speaking of serving, your new President Chris and I have agreed that part of my responsibilities to you would be to lead us into a new era of membership development.

Did you know that IFMR is the 2nd largest of the Rotary Fellowships with over 2000 members worldwide? (OK, for those curious, only the Yachting Fellowship has more members). However, we have only just over 300 members in our North American chapter. We should be much larger … dare I say 1000?

Just about everywhere I ride, and in particular our great IFMR rides, I run into motorcycling Rotarians that have no idea IFMR exists. So obviously we need to do better at getting the word out about our great Fellowship, giving these other Rotarians the opportunity to get more out of their Rotary experiences too. So over the next few months I will compile ideas and launch some initiatives to provide easy tools to help all of us share our beloved IFMR-NA with our fellow Rotarians (and prospective Rotarians too). I have a few ideas including canned PowerPoint presentations you might want to offer as Rotary club presentations in your area. Details and more ideas to come soon. And I certainly welcome your ideas too, please share them with me (geraldwjackson@gmail.com).

Speaking of both new ideas as well as prospective Rotarians, Past IFMR-NA President Bob Shriner has motivated me on a new idea that is now taking form … an online Rotary e-Club based on an IFMR flavor. Part of the motivation is we have a number of folks that are former Rotarians that have moved and not yet found that new club that “fits” them for their style of Rotary (you know it’s done 33,000 different ways around the world) as well as a number of non-Rotarians (er… Not-Yet-In-Rotary) that enjoy riding with us.

At first one might think the motorcycle base would be a concern of lack of diversity, however when you think about it, we come from many walks of life and many areas of the country (even world), so it is quite diverse, perhaps even more so than the “normal” Rotary club. Additionally, e-Clubs often suffer a lack of “community”. Motorcycling can be this club’s basis of community. We can even envision unique fund raisers and unique world community service projects all based on motorcycles … or even bicycles.

I have had the privilege of helping start 5 new Rotary clubs in the past. I am thrilled to help this new club start. I have both our President Chris’s endorsement and that of my District Governor. The paperwork is soon to be filed and I will keep you all posted. In the meantime, please realize this new venture is NOT intended to be a collection of existing Rotarians leaving their club but primarily a place for new or former Rotarians. One thing we’ll figure out is an official club status of “Associate Member” that will allow you to officially participate without leaving your own special Rotary club.

A final thought to share: Over the next 3 years as your VP, and the following 3 years as your President, I would dearly like to ride in one of your IFMR events in your area throughout our IFMR-NA region. Each time you schedule an IFMR ride in your area:

1. Please include opportunity for fellowship with Rotary clubs along your ride; and
2. Please invite me to join your ride!

As I close, please do feel free to contact me with your ideas and comments. I am happy to receive them as well as serve you in this new venture of my life.

Cheers, Gerry Jackson
October 12th, 2015 to October 31, 2015

After the IMT tour of Morocco ended in Malaga, Spain, where it had begun, Bob Shriners (who has previously written about that tour) and I parted company. Bob went home to Virginia and I went to visit relatives in Germany before heading to Alexandria, Egypt, for the Cross Egypt Challenge, which is essentially a scooter tour of some of the highlights of Egypt.

THE ROUTE

Because of road construction, politics, permissions from military and police authorities and some unfortunate Mexicans going off route, the route changed sometimes.

The route was originally scheduled to depart from Alexandria and end in Cairo, which it did. However, originally the tour was to swing west, sort of in a loop through the western Egyptian desert, cross it and return via the roads along the Red Sea, but the route was modified so that we rode north and south more or less along the Red Sea.

The scoots – mostly scooters but also some motorcycles

The 100 or so scoots were divided into four sections. The approximately 25 motorcycles of various sizes -but none of large displacement- were in the first section while three sections were populated by the 150 cc scooters.

Itinerary

T minus 2 Hannover, Germany, via Istanbul to Alexandria, Egypt.

Because most airlines schedule their arrivals and departures very early in the morning, I arrived sleepless in Alexandria which was the start of the Challenge. Egypt was hot, and traffic was chaotic.

T minus 1

Somehow I couldn’t organize myself enough to visit the Ancient Library of Alexandria, which I have since regretted.

T Thursday, October 12th, 2015.

This day began with orientation meeting, received three green long-sleeved T-shirts which were required to be worn each day on the ride, and black helmets. Then a lunch which was followed by a night ride in the city on a scooter through Alexandria traffic to a shopping center where a huge celebration and the CEC ride opening had been scheduled. In conjunction with sponsors, there was a band, fireworks, TV and other media, and a big crowd of fans and family of the riders and organizers, all of whom cheered us as we rode into the roped-off area. We were Rock Stars! and with the moon out and no clouds, it was a wild and crazy night.

Day 1 First real riding day – Out of Alexandria.

Early in the morning, we were back to the previous shopping center for a briefing of the CEC riders who were joined by other Egyptian motorcycle clubs bringing around 200 scooter and motorcycle riders. We found out that we had press and TV, police, the military, three hundred or so two wheelers and assorted well-wishers in cars and vans. To move this phalanx along, it was necessary for the City police to stop all traffic for us and to accompany us with flashing lights and sirens. Without the support of the authorities, we would not have been able to move through towns and cities. Our day ended in Cairo with a side wind and the consequent low visibility sand storm.

(continued on next page…)
Day 2  Cairo to Ain Sokhna (Red Sea).

Cairo morning traffic was insane. People wanting to go to work while we rode through the city in a parade with police and military escorts. After a while in the countryside we did encounter road construction. The scooters needed to be refueled every 100 kms from the fuel truck that accompanied us throughout the whole route.

Day 3  Along the Red Sea.

Mountains on one side and the Red Sea cliffs bracketed our ride which encountered challenges from the rain of the previous night and road construction. Lunch in the desert was provided as part of the deal.

Day 4  To Luxor.

The roads were clear in the morning, notwithstanding the rains of the previous night and possible floods, we were off early as we did every day.

Luxor, a previous capital of ancient Egypt, claims to be the largest open air museum in the world, an impressive sight at night with the lights accenting the large pillars.

Day 5  Rest Day 1 in Luxor.

More sightseeing, balloon rides and other tourist activities, and a chance to do email and drink something cold along the pool.

Day 6  Rest Day 2 in Luxor.

Celebrations were planned for this day to commemorate the Fifth Cross Egypt Challenge Ride.

Day 7  Crossing the eastern Egyptian desert to Marsa Alam.

Our destination this day was a festival of sorts in the desert to celebrate Bedouin culture of the various Egyptian tribes. It included some music, recitations and camel racing. I walked to the beach and bathed in the Red Sea. My “5-Star” accommodation was a tent on the ground that I did not have to share with anyone else, but was able to score two pads on which to rest my bones for the night.

Day 8  The penultimate day.

Up in the morning and crawl out of the tent for a Bedouin breakfast before heading out to El Gouna. We headed north with the Red Sea to our right and the mountains to the left. This day was a short ride and we reached the hotel early in the day to have a cool one at the pool, while some brave souls headed out of the resort for more shopping. That evening we received our participation certificates and gave our feedback to the CEC organizers.

Day 9  Long haul to the Grand Pyramid in Giza (Cairo).

Woke up early in the morning, riding before until dawn as we had a long haul to Cairo. Riding through Cairo, the usual police and other escorts moved us through the traffic. We arrived at the pyramids and were waived though. At the top we overlooked from Giza to Cairo and used the background of the pyramids to take numerous photos and selfies. After handshakes and hugs we returned the motorcycles and scooters and went back to our hotels to pack and ship out for home. Some others, myself included, took a couple of extra days in Cairo before flying home.

Summary

The tour is well organized and well run. After a number of well publicized security events as the Arab Spring in Egypt, tourism is down in Egypt and the Middle East. The tour boats on the Nile sit idle and tied to the bank, restaurants are empty and customers are sparse. The CEC includes sponsors such as the Rotary Club of Alexandria, government agencies and commercial enterprises. Not only did we had police and even military escorts on our tour, on the road were a number of checkpoints through which we were waived. In Cairo I walked away from my hotel into the safe zone and noted the number of military at numerous posts ensuring my safety and that of all citizens.

The organizers and the Egyptians with whom I came in contact were friendly and inquisitive. The stalls and merchants offered their wares but were not pressing. This tour and my experience in Egypt showed me an interesting country with much history all while great value. Will go again for sure.. right after my scheduled Alaska ride!