

**Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter 1  
Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes of Rolling Thunder, Inc. Illinois Chapter One General Membership Meeting**

January 7, 2009  
in attendance

only 23 of 80 members were

President Doug Mahar called the meeting to order.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was made.  
Guests present were Paul Simpson our webmaster.

**President - Doug "Skippy" Mahar**

Doug reported on the welcome home and escort for Ozzie. Rolling Thunder had a good turn out. The welcome home event was reported on Ch 2, Ch 7 and the Chicago Tribune.

**Vice-President - "Harley" Steve Pletzke**

Harley read the Rolling Thunder Mission Statement which is quoted below:  
The major function of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is to publicize POW-MIA issues: To educate the public that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all previous wars and to help correct the past and to protect future veterans from being left behind should they become prisoners of war-missing in action.  
We are also committed to helping American veterans from all wars.  
Harley also has 50 bike raffle tickets available for Rolling Thunder XXII raffle in Washington, DC on Memorial Day. Tickets are \$10 each and have three entry stubs per ticket. We, as a chapter, need to sell these tickets for our National organization.

**Treasurer - Jim "Snipe" Murray**

Treasury Report reviewed and updates completed. Members at the meeting were provided a detailed accounting of the chapter's finances. We have a budget for 2009. Dollars have been allocated to categories such as Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans, Hines, Donations, BTR seed money, chapter expenses, etc. The key point is, while it may appear that we have a lot of money just "sitting around" most of this money is already designated to budget categories and should be considered "spent money." The actual amount of money available to spend is much smaller than the treasury total today.

This budget discussion evolved into further discussions about renewing our commitment to the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans. Snipe asked for a motion to again donate to the MSHV for year 2009. The motion received, seconded and passed unanimously.

Snipe delivered the second reading of our proposed new bylaw. The text is presented below:

## **Donations**

Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter one has a mission of action on behalf of POW/MIA's. Keeping this issue in the forefront is the national direction of this organization and therefore the primary objective of this chapter.

It is recognized that Illinois Chapter One has the opportunity and obligation to help veterans and veteran organizations in whatever capacity comes to bear. We are pledged to assist other veterans by becoming physically involved as a chapter or by donation as a chapter.

At times, it is recognized that donations and assistance may be called upon for civilian needs. These needs must also be considered but not at the risk of the obligations stated above.

Therefore the following donations policies are established and will be adhered to by this chapter.

### **Civilian**

Once approved by the board and then a majority vote of the membership present at a subsequent meeting, a donation to a civilian individual or cause will be funded using the formula of \$3.00 per paid member. Individual support either in labor or finance is the choice of the member(s). Community involvement of chapter members is supported and encouraged.

### **Military**

There are occasions within which we, as a chapter, are called upon to assist a veteran in need. These needs, once approved by the board and then a majority vote of the membership present at a subsequent meeting, will be funded using the formula of \$5.00 per paid member.

In the event that individual veterans or organizations that support veterans are in need of our help, we as a chapter have the sanction to approve via the board and a majority vote of all members present at a subsequent meeting, a monetary amount befitting of the request. This amount will not have an arbitrary limit and will be decided upon by the membership.

This proposed Donation Bylaw will be read again at the next meeting.

## **Secretary - Bill Houghtaling**

The 2009 dues renewal season is here. The dues remain at \$30 per year. Checks should be payable to Rolling Thunder.

Dues can be mailed to: Rolling Thunder IL Ch1 PO Box 1042 Warrenville, IL 60555

As Secretary, I maintain the most current list of chapter member email addresses. There seem to be updates, deletions or additions every month. Many members on email keep a list on their computer too. This creates several lists of our addresses but only my list is the most current list. So when sending an email to our Rolling Thunder group "cut and paste" from my list to your email header. Or use the process Snipe so eloquently described:

1. Go back to last month's minutes email
2. Click on "Reply to All"
3. Delete the minutes content and insert your information
4. Hit "Send" and your email will go out to the group.

The Rolling Thunder National Constitution has been updated subsequent to the November conference in DC. This updated copy is on the National website at: <http://www.rollingthunder1.com/PDFs/CONSTITUTION%202008%20FOR%20WEB.pdf> There is some interesting reading there regarding patches, vests, PGR, member participation requirements, etc.

Boot patches were awarded to:

Ron Tuttle, James Slenk, George Wright, Rudy Dubis.

Rockers and Eagles were awarded to:

Ralph Ledbetter, Janet Ross,

Congratulations to all! We received a nice thank you note from the Bradenburgs.

### **Chairman of the Board - Rick "Popeye" Montgomery**

Popeye is looking for volunteers to assist selling PBTF bike raffle tickets at the International Bike Show in Rosemont (Stephens Convention Center) on Feb. 5, 6 and 7. Volunteers will receive free admission but must cover their own parking expenses. Contact Popeye.

### **Old Business and New Business**

Harley Steve wants to nominate Beth for Media Chairperson and Event Coordinator. Doug said these are separate functions but could be performed by one person. This led to much good discussion. We are missing many good publicity opportunities. Doug is also looking for an Education Coordinator for POW/MIA issues. Doug will put together an email describing these opportunities and positions. Watch for an email from Doug.

Beth suggested setting up a donation account on our website using Pay Pal or credit card service. This is under investigation with other website upgrades.

Doug reported on the City Limits Harley raffle we participated in. The event went well. No monies distributed or totals are known yet. We anticipate a possible check at a photo opportunity.

Member George Wright is organizing a welcome home for an Iraqi vet who is a friend as well. There will be an escort from Heritage HD in Lisle to the City Club in Naperville on Jan 31. George has promised to keep us updated by email.

Bill "Hawk" Sharpness has a sign up sheet for those going to Rolling Thunder XXII in Washington, DC. We have been asked by National to provide escorts for the Gold Star Mothers during the parade. They need to know our response by Feb. 15th. The sign up sheet will be at the February meeting too. Here is a link to RT XXII info: <http://www.rollingthunder1.com/PDFs/RT%20XXII%20Master.pdf>

Contact Bill with any questions or sign ups. Ralph Ledbetter's son Jason will be joining us in DC with a group of soldiers riding from Ft. Stewart and additional riders from Ft. Bragg.

Doug stated the issue of starting the meeting at 7:00 was considered but not approved at the last mid-month board meeting.

It was suggested that we exclusively support Wildfire and City Limits by making them our "proprietary dealer sponsors" at the BTR and other IL 1 events.

Weebles introduced our webmaster Paul Simpson to the membership. Paul spoke about website updates, shopping carts, Pay Pal, credit cards, linking to Rolling

Thunder Charities to our website. Also discussed was the danger of a member, not fully trained in HTML coding, could inadvertently create a disaster on our website. It was recognized by all, that our former webmaster Fred Folkerts, did a lot of good work creating a great website.

A motion was presented to purchase a bike for a raffle at this year's Big Thunder Run. This initiated much discussion regarding the risk vs. benefit of a bike raffle. Some of the discussion points were:

- The bike raffle is a major money maker for us, it is not worth the risk because we might not sell enough tickets to cover the cost, we do not take advantage of selling opportunities such as weekends at Wildfire, we do not offer establishments an opportunity to sell tickets for us, we do not have enough members who sell tickets,
- People come to the BTR for the bike raffle and want to buy tickets there (last year on BTR Day 1700 tickets were pre-sold and a whopping 800 were sold at BTR),
- People hang around and spend money until the time of the raffle, we have never lost money on the bike raffle, the last several years we have sold out the raffle and no more tickets were available. Weebles suggested no bike raffle, just a cash prize raffle.

These are only some of the points raised. Doug will send a BTR raffle email to all members prior to the February meeting. Motions were withdrawn and the issue tabled until February.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Houghtaling, Secretary

Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1

[billhoteling@gmail.com](mailto:billhoteling@gmail.com)

**Upcoming Events: (Chapter events in Bold)**

Jan. 31	Welcome Home Escort, watch for George Wright email.
May 17	Frogs for Freedom
May 17	Armed Forces Day
<b>May 24</b>	<b>Rolling Thunder XXII, Washington, DC</b>
June 14,	Flag Day
Sept. 18 & 19	The Ride Home, <a href="http://powridehome.org/">http://powridehome.org/</a> Andersonville, GA
Sept. 18	National POW/MIA Recognition Day
Sept. 27	Gold Star Mother Day
Oct. 3	<b>Big Thunder Run</b>