

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

October 3, 2007

27 of 79 members were in attendance

Chapter President Doug “Skippy” Mahar called the meeting to order at 1930 hours. A quorum was present and an official meeting was declared.

The Pledge of Allegiance was made.

Visitors present were Cathy, a friend of Mike Jordan and former frequent guest and now our newest member Ralph Ledbetter.

President - Doug “Skippy” Mahar

Doug and delegate Ronda Bach just returned from the Rolling Thunder National Convention/Conference in Washington, DC last weekend.

One highlight of the conference was the announcement of the newly formed Rolling Thunder Charities which is a 501 (c)(3) charity. Rolling Thunder is a not for profit 501 (c)(4) organization (not-tax deductible) because we seek to influence legislation and politics. The newly formed Rolling Thunder Charities has tax deductible status for donations as it is formed under IRA code 501 (c)(3). This is a huge change as donations can now be referred to the charity by IL Chap 1 and be fully tax deductible to the donor. This program is setup primarily for corporate donations and but can be just as easily be used by private donors in small amounts. (ed. here is a link for additional plain English info on 501's [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/501\(c\)#Deductibility_of_donations_to_501.28c.29.284.29_organizations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/501(c)#Deductibility_of_donations_to_501.28c.29.284.29_organizations)).

Some of the practical details of this program as they apply to us are;

1. Each chapter will have an account on the RTC (Rolling Thunder Charities) ledger to which their donations will be earmarked for that chapters use. The individual chapter will then determine how the donated funds will be disbursed.
2. Donation checks must be made payable to RTC and can reference IL Chap 1 in the memo field.
3. Donations must be solicited by mail or email, not in person. A conversation may be followed by a letter soliciting a donation.
4. Funds must be sent directly to RTC.
5. Chapters may then request funds from RTC for their local needs and uses. A receipt must be provided for the funds used. Future funds will not be disbursed until prior receipts are provided.
6. We will provide the RTC tax number and address as soon as we learn it.

National has also directed all chapters to have a membership/patch person to keep membership records and account for all boot, rocker and eagle patches. In our chapter those duties are performed by the chapter secretary. The chapter president must be copied on all information and provided with a duplicate set of records.

The biggest news and announcement of the conference was that **all Patriot Guard Rider pins, patches, names, flags and emblems must be removed from any part of our Rolling Thunder vests.** This is shocking news as many of us feel a real kinship with the Patriot Guard and have ridden with them on their missions. It was announced by Rolling Thunder National that a credible and trusted source has confirmed that the Patriot Guard is organizing as a motorcycle club. The PGR will be adding MC and IL to their vests. Consequently some angels and outlaws have stated they cannot protect or guarantee Patriot Guard Riders safe transit as they ride through some areas. This is a huge problem in California and other areas. Rolling Thunder from its beginning has not been a motorcycle club. Artie solicited the Angels and the Outlaws when RT was being formed and received their permission because **Rolling Thunder is not a motorcycle club.** This directive from Rolling Thunder National is non-negotiable and effective immediately.

Some of the member discussion from the meeting revolved around: You can not ride with PGR while wearing RT vest. Get another vest to wear on those missions. You can not go to PGR events as an RT member. PGR has not received an ok from those groups to form as a MC. A third party function can be attended by RT and PGR, just no PGR on our vest. Having IL and MC on a vest without permission is a declaration of war. We can be at the same event but can not have any PGR pin, patch or emblem on our vest. It one or the other.

Doug will provide an email with further information.

There is a new IL Chap 3 forming in Bloomington, IL. Greg Wilson is leading the formation of the chapter. Our chapter is the Illinois state charter chapter and state leader and state director. We will provide guidance and oversight as needed to IL Chap 3.

Items voted upon and approved at the National conference included having a state chapter director, a state board to resolve conflicts and each chapter must have a membership/patch person.

Fred Folkerts will start updating our website.

Next month, during the Christmas meeting we will be filling out and addressing Christmas cards to recovering soldiers at Walter Reed Hospital and Hines Hospital. Doug will provide boxes of cards. Brad will oversee Hines. Ralph Ledbetter will provide postage and do the mailing.

Big Thunder Run was our most successful yet. The net from the run was \$ and the net from the bike raffle was \$. Congratulations to all.

Mike Morias has been elected by the board to be the Chairman of the Board. As COB Mike will represent members and present member issues to the Board.

Vice-President - John “Cupcake” Sedlacek John was disappointed the Hines vets were unable to attend the Big Thunder Run. Their handicap accessible bus broke down and was unable to be repaired in time for our invitation. John suggested that next year we hire a bus to transport these special guest to our event. The cost would be approximately \$.

Treasurer - Kriss Sedlacek The treasury currently is at \$. Next month, December is the last month of our \$ monthly commitment to the Nichlas Larsen Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans.

Secretary - Bill Houghtaling. New members welcomed this month are Philip Ferrer, Janet Ross, Ralph Ledbetter and Raye Lynn Hart. Rob Wilkins is also back as a paid up and active member.

Thank you notes from the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation (Ride For Kids), Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans and an especially nice hand written note from the Ladies Auxiliary of the Glendale Heights VFW where we performed our Remembrance Table in the rain.

We also thank Stephen and Colleen Brummel of Warrenville for their donation of \$ the Big Thunder Run. I will take care of sending them a thank you note.

Old Business and New Business

A motion from the floor was made to re-new our \$ monthly donation to the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans starting in January. Much discussion followed regarding how the money will be spent by the MSHV and our desire to have it go directly to helping a veteran. A vote was taken and the motion passed. Dirk Enger and Bob Adams will be invited to the December meeting to talk about the MSHV. <http://www.helpaveteran.org>

Steve Pletzke and Brad Hart will host and cook a turkey dinner for the residents of the MSHV sometime in the near future. A motion

was passed to budget up to \$ to cover the expenses of this meal. Contact Steve or Brad if you would like to help.

Steve and Beth Pletzke thanked RT members for their condolences and escort for their granddaughter.

An Iraqi vet and Purple Heart recipient, Tina Foulkes of Lisle, will be returning home in early January. Steve asked if RT could provide and welcome home escort from the airport to home in Lisle. Discussion followed and an RT Escort in January will be a Chapter Event (either on bikes or in cars). A motion was passed to provide a veterans donation (equal to \$5 per member) to assist Tina in her transition to civilian life. Steve will keep us updated with the return date.

Connie of the Tioga VFW in Wooddale, good friend and supporter of Rolling Thunder (you may remember Connie gave us a personal donation to cover the cost of a second Remembrance Table set) is hosting a fundraiser benefit for a friend severely injured in a recent Warrenville motorcycle accident of Rt. 59. This is late notice; the fundraiser takes place on November 10. Call 847 812-4398 or 847 812-4685 for further info.

Mike Morias and Howard Bushnell recommend a chapter ride to the BTR stops and corporate sponsors to show our support for their efforts. This will take place next spring.

Kriss has taken the lead on the RT Christmas Party to be held after next months abbreviated meeting. All members and a guest are invited; bring a side dish or dessert to share. Please contact Kriss with your attendance and food item you are bringing. Kriss Sedlacek at 630 365-1286 or Kristina.sedlacek@sbcglobal.net

We do not yet have an in-country email or snail mail address for Ozzie.

On Nov. 8 the Amvet Post in Aurora will be hosting a Marine Corp Birthday party. My notes say something about cake and diet drinks. Must be a typo.

The meeting was adjourned and a BTR planning session commenced

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Houghtaling, Secretary
billhotaling@gmail.com

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

Dec. 5 IL Chap 1 Christmas Party

Jan. 2008 Welcome Home Escort for Tina Foulkes of Lisle