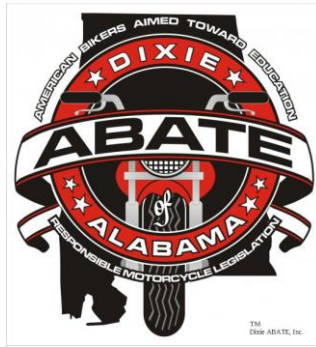


DIXIE ABATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Matthew Schroeder: State Director
Shane Coker: Assistant State Director
Larry Lindsey: Education Director
Freddy Wheeler: Acting Legislative Director
Kris Cook: Secretary/Treasurer

Address:
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www.dixieabate.org

NORTHEAST REGION, NOCCALULA
FALLS CHAPTER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

James "Ghost" Johnson, Director
Shane Coker, Secretary/Treasurer
Garland Medlock, Assistant Chapter Director

EAST CENTRAL REGION, TRI-COUNTY
CHAPTER (Montgomery area)

Ira "Cowboy" Jones, Organizer
Jeffrey Meck, Assistant Organizer

MEETING NOTES: 6/23/18: Natural Bridge Park, Natural Bridge, Alabama

In attendance:

Matthew Schroeder
Carolyn Schroeder
Kris Cook
James "Ghost" Johnson
Wayne "Wolf" Littrell
Jim Johnson
Freddy Wheeler
Vicki Todd
Brittany Peterson
Joe Peterson
Tyler Jones
Larry Lindsey
Rodney Green
Leann Raper
Tyler Montgomery

Kris passed out meeting notes from the last meeting and the treasurer's reports for both Dixie ABATE, Inc. and Dixie ABATE Awareness & Education, Inc. All were approved.

Joe Peterson introduced himself. He is a fairly new member, and this is his first meeting. We love it when our members come to meetings!

We talked about the Dead Red bill that was introduced for us by Rep. Wayne Gaston, of Mobile, this past legislative session. It died in committee. (Will Ainesworth was chair of the committee.) We need a strategy for next year. We have members all over the state that need to call their own legislators. We need to network – we are all members of other organizations as well as Dixie ABATE, so we need to call on the members of those organizations too. Rodney remarked upon how ironic it is that the red light at the end of Barber Motorsports road will not change for a motorcycle.

Freddy will develop a list of members sorted by what district they live in. We also need to be there when the committee meets, next year. In addition to the Dead Red bill, he also wants to pursue a law like Tennessee's, which will allow a motorcyclist to ride up the emergency land to the next exit if traffic on the highway is stopped. He will find out how it is working out in Tennessee. Kris can help, by using the MRF's database.

Freddy restated our goal of making sure only sensible legislation is passed, as it pertains to motorcyclists.

Matt suggested we hold a chili day for legislators, or at least the members of the committee that is involved in reviewing our desired bills. Larry reminded us that it's best to learn who our legislator's staff members are, and appeal to them.

We talked about funding. Larry said we need to approach corporations – the larger the better. Polaris just located in the state and they now also build Indians. Matt said he met their district rep at MOTM. Freddy said if you work for a corporation, ask for a donation to the A&E. They will often match your donation.

Larry said we also need to get to know the people between the local and state level governments, like the county commissioners. They have a hot line to Montgomery. Rodney suggested we form a liaison with the motor scouts in the state as well. They are experts in the field and maybe we could get their endorsement. We could contact the lieutenants of the motor patrol in Mobile, Prattville, and Montgomery.

We talked about the state budget. All but 7% is earmarked – by far the most of any state.

Wolf wondered if we have any specifically biker-friendly state reps.

Freddy, Larry, Wolf and Matt reported on the NCOM convention that was held in Mobile in May. They all participated in a mock legislative session, which was about changing the helmet law to 21 and below. Frank Ernst ran it. Next year it will be in Orlando. It was similar to the MRF's MOTM (Meeting of the Minds), but not quite as well attended. He said the clubs don't intermingle, so there isn't as much idea-trading going on. Wolf was a keynote speaker. His talk was entitled, "How did we get into the fix? Why do we have so much trouble getting things done?"

Larry reported on Dixie ABATE's education efforts – it is still going on like it has been for the past five years. All Baldwin county schools are covered. He and Juju Lessard are covering Huntsville, Montgomery, the middle part of the state, Mobile County, and Andalusia. This past spring, Andalusia had a regional safety event. He displayed his motorcycle, talked about reaction time, etc. He is invited back this October.

Freddy will start working with Larry this summer.

If you know any school board members, ask them to bring it up at their board meetings, or go yourself and talk to the board. We need to have someone in every drivers ed class. School boards meet in the summer, so you can contact them now. This curriculum is endorsed by the Alabama Department of Education. It will eventually be incorporated into the drivers education course of study. Joe suggested we piggyback off the Share the Road bicycle program. We are working for some of the same goals that bicyclists are.

Wolf talked about the perception problem motorcycle riders have. Look at the history of movies about riders. Easy Rider comes to mind. Then there was Sons of Anarchy. Then Wild Hogs, which didn't help our stereotype much. We change our image by being the good guys. We look for good public relations activities. When we do something good, like ride for a charitable cause, we should call the local TV station ahead of time so they can send someone out. While something good is on people's minds, contact your legislator. Freddie has an invitation to speak at the Goldwing convention in Eufala next spring.

Freddie supported Wolf's point that the public sees every motorcycle in the same way: as a two-wheeled terror. And groups like the Bama Riders don't help this perception when they do their huge group rides that block the highway while they ride like fools. Groups like that invite the profiling that we fight so hard against.

Recently Ashley Knight, a reporter in Mobile, did a motorcycle safety piece about the Wallace Tunnel, which is a chokepoint for traffic. It helped people understand that sometimes a motorcyclist is forced into a scary situation.

Legislators look at us and what we want with one question: "Is it going to hurt me if I do not support you?" Most think "that motorcycling thing, it's a choice these people make." We need to make everyone see that it is not just a recreational thing; it's transportation. We need to take every chance to be interviewed. Use Facebook and Instagram. Use all avenues to get information out there about what we have pending.

Larry suggested we get someone to make videos to put on Facebook and Instagram showing us going good things and talking about what we do. We need exposure.

Finally, we welcomed latecomers Leann Raper and Tyler Montgomery. Both are young people who are on the verge of learning to ride. Leanne has applied for our rider scholarship program. The rules stipulate the recipient must join Dixie ABATE and be a participating member for one whole year, then renew the membership, before she gets the cost of her BRC refunded. Since she is 15 ½ and does not have a way to come to two meetings a year (the definition of an active member), we voted to waive the requirements, and when she signs up for the BRC, we will pay her \$200.00 tuition. We will send notification of this arrangement to Rick Randolph and his secretary Vicki, at the Alabama Traffic Safety Center. Congratulations, Leann!

Our next meeting is August 4, 2018, from 2 to 3:30 in the Barber Room, on the restoration level of Barber Motorsports Museum in Birmingham, AL. We have paid your admission. This level is not open to the public. Come early!!