

## ***It's a Fact – You're Gonna Go Where You Look...***

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This is our first article as your new Chapter Educator. What we would like to do is, from time to time, share with you some of our riding experiences, and we would like to include some of yours as well. We can read books and attend seminars (they are important!), but we believe there are also important lessons to be learned from our riding experiences. Riding with a well-informed group like Chapter Z minimizes riding mistakes but they can still happen and we "happened" to learn a very important lesson the hard way. Here is one of our stories...



Out riding with another couple on January 2, 2003, we were headed to Woodville to eat at The Picket House. All four of us were looking forward to a great meal. It was very cold that day and we were well-wrapped... we were 2-up on our VTX... it was our first trip on it since the pinstripping and artwork had been completed. We were so proud of it – it really looked great!

We had left early so we arrived in the Woodville area before we planned. Since we had a little extra spare time, we decided to take one of the back roads that kind of loops around Woodville – 256 – it's designated as a "scenic" road. The other couple was leading and we were following... the road was great... lots of twistees and curves and the weather was perfect – wow!!! What a day it was turning out to be... but... speaking of "turning", the road did and we didn't. We went off the road and because there was about 6" drop-off between the pavement and the soft shoulder, we couldn't pull the bike back onto the road.

We believe that Bubba's initial reaction was to hit the brakes and when he did, Carolyn was thrown off and turned in the air landing on her right side. She rolled until she came to a stop in a ditch. She was muddy and couldn't bring herself to her feet because she was shaking so bad. She got up on her hands and knees and saw Bubba laying half in the road and half on the shoulder... the VTX was in the ditch about 15 feet from him. Carolyn crawled to Bubba, thinking all the time how could he be playing such a trick on her – pretending to be hurt – at a time like this. However, when she reached him, he wasn't breathing.

It was about this time that the other couple realized that we were no longer behind them and they doubled back. To make a long story short, Bubba started breathing, quit again and started breathing for a third time. Someone came by, stopped and called 911. Bubba was hurt pretty bad and was life-flighted to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Beaumont.

After about a 3-month recovery period, the friend who had been riding with us asked Bubba if he thought they should take a Basic Riders Course. Bubba has been riding since he was 13 years old, but agreed that it would probably be a good thing.

And, a good thing it was! During Bubba's recovery period, we had been talking and trying very hard to figure out what could have made us go off the road like we did – not knowing what caused the accident was really bothering us. During the BRC, Bubba spent some time talking to the instructor and they determined that he had **taken his eyes off the road!** Yes, just that one quick instant when he glanced away could have very well cost both of us our lives... we were both very fortunate.

So, the next time you are riding along on the back roads ... all comfy and enjoying the scenery... remember to... **keep your eyes on the road – because you're gonna go where you look!**

Ride safe, have fun and always take the long way home.

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