

# Segway Riders Club of the Villages: A Welcome & Overview

A sincere welcome to the SRC—Segway Riders Club of the Villages. We hope your experience with the Club is adventuresome and rewarding. Here's an overview of the organization:

The SRC is a group of Villages residents who love to explore and do so while riding Segways. Not only do club members participate in club rides, but they also give back to the community, ride in local parades, and enjoy other Segway related adventures. Club members must either own or have access to a model I2 or X2 Segway (or an equivalent machine) to ride with the group.

## **Ride Qualifications**

The first item that needs qualification is the machine. According to Florida State Statutes, sections 316.003 and 316.2068, Segways (personal assistive mobility devices) can be ridden on any street, road, bicycle path or intersection where bicycles are permitted, the speed limit is 25 mph or less, and the local authority or municipality has not specifically banned their use. As long as the Segway rider alerts pedestrians of their presence and yields right of way to pedestrians, Segways are permitted. There is more legalese to the statutes as a person can imagine, but in essence Segways are permitted to travel nearly everywhere we want to go.

Given that Segways are permitted to go just about anywhere, the club offers rides each month to locations that vary from The Villages itself to Lakeland, St. Augustine, Tarpon Springs, Wekiwa State Park, and Silver Springs State Park among others. In order to ride, club members must do a few things:

First, a person must be a Villages resident to join the club. Membership dues are \$10 per year payable by January 1 of each year.

Second, a member must complete an instructional session under the direction of the Club's Training Officer which we call "Boot Camp" (see below). Regardless of a member's Segway experience or Segway ownership, completion of Boot Camp training is mandatory.

Third, Segway owners are considered continually qualified once Boot Camp is successfully completed. If you are not a Segway owner but are using someone else's machine to ride with the Club, you must ride in an outing at least one time per year to remain "ride qualified". If a non-owner member does not ride within that year, they must re-qualify by attending Boot Camp again. If there is any question about qualification status, a member should contact: [membership@srctv.org](mailto:membership@srctv.org) to obtain that information.

## **Boot Camp**

Boot Camp is specialized Segway rider training. It is under the direction of the Club's Training Director. You must bring your own Segway to training as one will not be supplied. New members are required to sign-up in advance for this two-hour training session that both acquaints new riders with the machine and teaches them how to handle/ride the machine in different circumstances. Since the Segway is a

versatile mobile machine, it can travel on pavement, asphalt, dirt, sand, over tree roots, uphill, down slopes and in places a person may not imagine. SRC outings will experience all of these over the course of a year of outing adventures. Boot Camp helps new riders learn how to maneuver and stay upright through all of these different terrains and conditions, as well as when wisdom dictates walking the machine over or around a hazard. Just as importantly, it helps the rider know their limitations and that of the machines they ride.

To register for Boot Camp, a member must contact the Club Training Director to schedule a mutually convenient date for training. Each rider must view the 15-minute training video located on the Boot Camp page of the Club's website prior to arriving at training.

Each ride that the Club schedules is rated by degree of difficulty (1=easiest, 3=most difficult) to help riders determine if the ride meets or exceeds their current skills.

## **Outings**

The Club has organized the members into six teams led by Captains or Co-Captains to plan, coordinate, organize, and lead monthly outings. Each team is responsible for two outings per year that are six months apart so that everyone riding with the Club has a role to play, everyone is doing their share to make the Club a success, and no one is overwhelmed with work.

The process of riding in an outing is fairly simple. Teams are assigned ride month responsibility by the Outings Committee Chairman but are then free to plan all the rest of the ride details such as where they wish to ride, the dates for their outings, and the time they wish to schedule their outing. These dates are also subject to change as ride specifics are developed. The ride location is announced no later than the meeting two months prior to the ride. The Ride Team Captain will open the online Sign-up App for reservations on the morning following the Club meeting in which the ride is announced and explained and stay open until the week before the date of the ride. The purpose of requiring advance sign-up is to allow the teams to properly conduct the ride by planning such details as to the number of groups we will need in the event there is a large demand, making sure there are enough ride leaders familiar with the ride and the route, and to assign road guides and tail gunners in advance so there is not confusion on the day of the ride.

Members must use the Club website ([www.srctv.org](http://www.srctv.org)) to reserve their spot on a particular ride date using the Sign-up App.

In the week preceding the outing, riders will receive via email specifics about the exact location and time of the meeting at the ride site. On the day of the outing, riders will gather at the prescribed location with your Segway, each bringing his or her helmet, water, sun block, bug spray, snack and wearing suitable (closed-toe) shoes. All riders must ride full size Segways (currently either the I2 or X2).

The ride will begin with a safety and ride orientation. At the conclusion of the ride (2-2 ½ hours later), riders will reload their machines and gear into their cars. A part of each ride is lunch either during the ride or at its conclusion, but everyone pays for their own. After the ride and lunch everyone heads

home. Riders are encouraged to provide their opinion of the ride and lunch location. Occasionally, an overnight stay is recommended by Ride Teams for some rides.

During each ride a small number of riders are assigned as road guards, crossing guards or “tail gunners.” Whatever they are called, their function remains the same: protecting fellow riders from local traffic. These individuals are more experienced riders who wear brightly colored vests, block traffic to enable riders to safely cross streets and intersections, and zip around in the name of safety. The Club is always looking for experienced volunteers to become trainers (training assistants) during Boot Camp and also serve as these guardians of safety.

## **Ride Locations**

Ride locations are determined by the Ride Teams composed of Segway Club members. Ride Teams explore potential sites; develop the route and any historical or ecological background to enhance the ride. This often requires repeated site visits and extensive research.

## **Helmets, Bug Spray and Shoes. Oh, My!**

The only thing that comes before fun on a Segway is SAFETY. Everyone who mounts a Segway is required to wear a helmet. In the SRC everyone owns their helmet. A simple bicycle helmet found at specialty stores or major retailers will suffice. Whether moving a Segway 10 feet or 10 miles, a helmet is required. Another requirement is closed-toe, soft-soled shoes. Flip flops or Christian Dior, jewel encrusted sandals are not acceptable. A rider’s feet will thank them for the consideration of safety and comfort. Other useful items to bring to a ride include:

- a. Water
- b. Sunscreen
- c. Bug Spray
- d. Snack
- e. Safety vest
- f. Two- way Walkie Talkie Radio (preferably one with an earphone or speaker mic attached)
- g. Poncho
- h. Small First Aid kit
- i. 3 legged portable folding seat
- j. Spare battery for the Segway key controller
- k. Insurance card
- l. Copy of Florida Statutes for Segways
- m. Face mask
- n. Hand sanitizer

Finally, new members will notice the snazzy and chic orange (atomic tangerine) shirts worn by more experienced members. Orange is the official color of the SRC in honor of our state fruit. The shirts are recommended for official club functions, such as meetings and outings. Shirts with Club logo can be

purchased at Custom Apparel located at 3451 Wedgewood Lane, the Villages 32162 (in the Publix Shopping Plaza on Rte 466). Store personnel will help members pick out a shirt and arrange to have the Club logo and member name embroidered on the shirt all at the member's expense. They do not have long sleeve collared shirts, but they will order long sleeve t-shirts or sweatshirts for cooler weather.

## **Giving Back**

As with most clubs in the Villages, philanthropy has been a large part of the SRC annual efforts. This was accomplished through the "Segway Experience." In both fall and spring, the Club had hosted a one-day effort to provide 30-minute (\$25) rides for area residents. Each day's effort raised about \$2,000. One hundred percent of the funds were dedicated to the purchase of a new Segway for a mobility challenged veteran, a Village resident when possible. The balance between the price of a new Segway (purchased at cost through Segway Dave) and money raised through the "Experience" was provided by our partner in funding, the Villages Chapter 150 of the Disabled American Veterans. Each Segway Experience was a Club effort and required the participation of Club members, volunteering for a morning or afternoon shift in one of several different functions. In this spirit Segway Dave and Sandy contributed their time and arranged for the use of the machines without cost.

Corona Virus has intervened to discontinue this fund-raising effort and the Club is looking for other opportunities to provide funds and assistance to Veterans in a post Covid 19 world.

## **Parades & Drill Team**

The SRC Drill Team volunteers to ride in several parades throughout the year, including the Christmas parades in the Villages and Mt. Dora, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Italian-American Parade and Oktoberfest in the Villages. Membership in the Drill Team is limited but we are always looking for members that would be interested in joining the Drill Team.

## **Structure**

The SRC is a sanctioned Villages club which operates under a set of Club approved by-laws. The Club has an eight-member Board of Directors, which includes a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chairman, plus three at-large members. Four Board member positions are up for election each year in November. All members are elected at-large after which the Board itself elects the specific officers. All members are encouraged to participate in Club governance.

In addition to the Board of Directors, there are committees that help improve the Club. Two such committees are the Social Committee and the Outings Committee. The Social Committee organizes the treat donations provided at each membership meeting, as well as special social activities, such as Club dinners. The Outings Committee oversees the monthly Club outings and Ride Teams.

## **Meetings**

The Club meets each month on the third Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Sea Breeze Regional Recreation Center (2384 Buena Vista Blvd). Each meeting provides the membership with social interaction and specific information about the Club's activities, such as reviews of previous rides, announcements of future rides, fundraising progress, Boot Camp, new members, and other information of interest to Segway owners. Coffee is provided by the Club; treats are voluntarily provided by members; and there is a 50/50 drawing.

In addition to the membership meetings, the Board of Directors meets to discuss the Club's progress, its future and how the Club can better serve the membership.

## **Website**

The Club operates a website ([www.scrtv.org](http://www.scrtv.org)) to better serve its members. Like most websites, it is an evolving instrument designed to make it easy for members to stay current on Club information. To be effective, the site needs to be used by members and Club officers need feedback about its usefulness.

The website is also used by members to register for upcoming rides. Members will need a password to access some website functions. As noted above, passwords are provided to members with annual dues renewal. However, if the password is lost, a member should contact the Club's Membership Director at [membership@srctv.org](mailto:membership@srctv.org) to reacquire the year's password.

The Board of Directors and the membership encourage you to become an active member: joining others for monthly rides, attending membership meetings, participating in Club governance, and adding yourself to the social fabric of one of the most interesting and exciting clubs in the Villages.