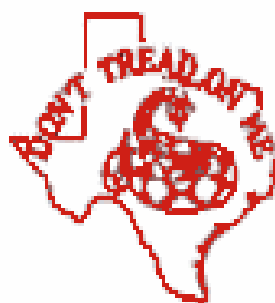


FIVE STEPS



*One of
these stars
belongs to me.
I'll do what I must to keep it Free!*

TO FREEDOM



TEXAS MOTORCYCLE RIGHTS ASSOCIATION

Five Steps to Freedom

Each trip begins with one step. The reason so many people fail to accomplish goals is they attempt to do everything at once. How about if you humor an old brother and try it this way one time. As I tell my bro's, don't look at the big picture, just do your part, one step *at a time*, and the whole will come together just fine. Try it.

Register to Vote

Before you can have any input in the political process you must become a registered voter. Registering is easy and it is free. To qualify as a registered voter you must be 18 years of age, a US citizen and a resident of the county in which you register. The Texas Election Code, Section 13.001(a)(4), allows that a convicted felon may petition for reinstatement of their voting rights 2 years after having satisfied their judgment to the court. Contact your voter registrar at your local courthouse or call the Secretary of State office for details. 1-800-252-8683.

You can pick up a voter registration card at any courthouse or post office in the state. Fill out all necessary information and drop into any mail box where mail is retrieved. (no postage necessary) You must be duly registered 30 days prior to an election to be eligible to vote in that election.

Upon receipt of your voter card you will need 4 pieces of information. Your precinct number (which will be on the card). Each county is divided into voting precincts. The location for voting in each precinct will be published in your local paper or can be found at the local courthouse prior to each election. Except in special cases the location will generally remain the same. It is not necessary to re-register as long as you vote at least once each two years or don't move. The other three bits of information may or may not be on your voter certificate. The State of Texas is divided into 150 State Representative Districts, 31 State Senatorial Districts ~ 30 US Congressional Districts. If this information is not on your voter certificate, it can be found at your courthouse. Each state is also represented by 2 US Senators. You must then learn the name, address and phone number (both local and capitol offices) of each of these people. They are the ones to contact when you have any questions or requests concerning political happenings. They are the ones you will vote for or against each two or four years as the case may be. These four elected officials are the ones who will vote on issues for you personally. It is also a good idea to get the same information for the County and Precinct Chair of each Party.

You are now a registered voter. You have all the necessary names, addresses and phone numbers of those people you must deal with in order to be politically effective. Congratulations, You have completed step 1. It has cost you very little time, no money and is probably one of the biggest decisions you have made during this lifetime. You are now in a position to truly have a say in the political future of your city, county, state and country. It is now imperative that you become familiar with the voting record of those 5 people who supposedly serve your needs at both the state and federal level.

Thus begins step 2!

Five Steps to Freedom

Get Acquainted

It is now time to make use of the information you have gathered. Elected officials are normal people and can not be expected to have all the answers. They depend on their constituents to keep them informed. Today most of their information comes from paid lobbyist. You must change this situation. They will look more favorably on a friend than someone paid to influence their vote.

Sit down and write a letter to each of the top 3 elected officials in your district. your letter should be hand written, no more than one page and cover only one subject. Pick any current subject in which you are interested. Identify yourself, explain how you feel about the issue and why. Ask how they see the issue and ask for a response. Example:

Dear Senator Anyone;

I am an avid motorcyclist but both my wife and I drive automobiles. I am quite disturbed by the current push for No-fault insurance in Texas. Everything I have been able to learn about this subject is negative. It appears to me, that drivers with good driving records and especially those who ride motorcycles would be unfairly treated under such a plan. Hawaii and Canada have both repealed their No-fault as being too costly.

I would like to know how you feel on this issue and how you would vote on the issue should it come before you in the next session. If you support No-fault I would like to know your reason for doing so. I await your reply.

Respectfully,
John Doe
VRN 186701/9

(VRN is voter registration #)

Since our interests are primarily motorcycle related it would be good to list any MC Club or Rights Organization to which you belong. This will establish your standing for the future.

Each official should receive at least one letter per month. Comment on quotes they have made to the media or action taken on a specific issue. Watch for announced meetings the officials will attend and be there. Introduce yourself at the first meeting and make it a point to be certain they are aware of your presence at all future meetings. Don't miss an opportunity to praise any official when they have performed well. The best way to do this is thru the Letters to The Editor section of your local newspaper. These papers are read by the official or his staff each morning.

You have now established yourself as a person who is knowledgeable, active in the political arena and a registered voter and are therefore seen as a constituent who deserves consideration. Officials are visited by paid lobbyists on a daily basis. They realize these people are not really interested in a piece of legislation except in how it affects their salary. It is refreshing to have someone who really cares about an issue to share information with them. Remember these are

Five Steps to Freedom

plain men and women, just like you. For the most part, they ran for office to make a difference. Having arrived in the capitol they came to realize things are not always as they seem. Change doesn't come easy when the status quo has been established for years. That is why we need more of us up there.

Never lie to an official to make your case seem more solid. They have heard them all and you will only brand yourself as a phony. Don't offer a compromise you are not certain your Association will honor. Let the official realize you will always be above board on any issue. Treat each official with whom you come in contact with honesty and integrity as if dealing with a friend and you might just find you are. Always address only one issue per letter or visit unless requested to do otherwise.

You have now established rapport with those elected officials in your District. They know you as an honest, caring person, interested in your community and registered to vote. You have taken Step 2 and passed with flying colors. Your new political future is moving closer to reality and all you had to do was take one more step.

Pretty simple trip so far isn't it? NOW move your left foot back in Front and let's take Step 3.

The Campaign

Much has been written about how best to support a candidate of your choice. There are as many ways as there are candidates. All probably work equally well if done properly. Since Motorcycle Rights Organizations always suffer a shortage of funds, we will deal here with personal involvement.

Your prior contact with the candidates has given you a choice as to whom you will support in the election and why. (This Association does not tell members how to vote but we do make recommendations based on past performance or information gathered). Personal involvement in a campaign is better and receives more notice, from a candidate or their staff, than a cash donation. Others may disagree and I won't argue with their views. This Association began on the assumption, a rider becoming educated in the process and getting personally involved can make a difference. This theory has been proven to be correct. Flyers are picked up at the campaign headquarters at a designated time and passed out on the street, in shopping malls or anywhere not prohibited by law. You may volunteer as often or as sparingly as you wish. Once or twice a week about 2 hours per day is generally sufficient.

Stuffing envelopes is the best way to become familiar with other campaign workers, the candidate and their staff. You will meet with other workers to collate, fold and put campaign material into envelopes to be mailed later. This task gets your candidates message out and allows you time to interact with others who could be helpful to our cause in the legislative session. This

Five Steps to Freedom

is the perfect job for someone not adept at going out and talking to strangers but can be group friendly.

The next form of service in a campaign is working on phone banks. For this task you will show up at a designated time and location which will have several phones installed. You will be given a list of names to call and to convince the person with whom you speak to not only vote but to vote for your candidate. 2-3 hours per evening, twice a week is considered sufficient but if you can give more time, do so. For this assignment you must have a strong clear voice and have no problem speaking with strangers. As a phone solicitor you won't have as much time to interact with other workers but your services won't go unnoticed.

Putting up yard signs is the tried and true method of involvement in a campaign. Again you can do as much or as little as you choose. You will need a crew and a pickup for this job and it is normally done on weekends. If you choose to do the standard job, you will pick up assembled signs at a predesignated location. You will be given a list of specific area to cover and a list of addresses where the occupants have agreed to allow signs to be erected. It doesn't hurt if you can provide extra locations for this project. You will generally spend most of the day Saturday and possibly Sunday afternoons on this assignment. You will travel to each location and speak with the occupant if possible. Identify yourself and verify their willingness to allow the signs to be posted. Place the sign(s) in the location of their choice and move on to the next location.

If you have the time and manpower and really want to get involved you can run the entire sign campaign. If this much involvement is possible it will really be beneficial to you in the future. Signs will be picked up unassembled and you will not only distribute them but assemble them as well. If your interest runs in this direction we will be more than happy to train you and your crew as to the best methods possible to conduct this very important undertaking. As you move on to Step 5 you will see why this is so important). This is the ultimate in volunteer duty. By accepting this much responsibility you show yourself as willing to go the extra mile. You also are freeing up other workers and cash to be used by the candidate elsewhere.

The campaign is over and election day has arrived. **Put your right foot forward one more time and take Step 4.**

The Primary

You have worked hard and hopefully your candidate will be victorious. Win or lose you have made friends and proven yourself to be a hard worker and a staunch supporter of those who have the same feeling on the issues as you do. You have also seen how important citizen involvement is to the political scene. It is now time to put that knowledge to work and take advantage of the delegate process.

1. Get out and meet with your neighbors.

Five Steps to Freedom

- a. There is a saying, (Good fences make good neighbors), open your gate and Bar-B-Que Pit and let your neighbor be your friend. Explain our goals and ask for their support to become a delegate. Offer transportation to the polls, even if it means using 4 wheels.

2. Vote in the primary of your choice:

- a. When you sign in to get your ballot ask for the time and place of the caucus meeting (they won't volunteer this information)
- b. If it is convenient, it is best to vote close to closing time so you won't have to return later.

3. The Caucus Meeting:

- a. Call to order at the appointed time by the precinct chair.
- b. Preparation of list of qualified participants in attendance. (only those who voted in the primary are qualified)
- c. Announcement of the Agenda and basic rules of procedure.
- d. Nomination and election of temporary officers of the Pct. meeting. *This is where you need your friends!*
- e. Announcement of time and location of county or district meetings and temporary committee meetings, if known.
- f. Nomination and election of delegates to the county or district convention, whichever the case may be in your precinct.
 1. If the number present is less than the number of delegates and alternates needed, names can be picked from the list of those who voted.
 2. The above is usually the case. That is why your participation is so important. Know which, if any, of your supporters voted but were unable to make the Caucus and get them appointed as delegates.

4. Resolutions:

- a. The caucus chair asks the floor for any resolutions to be considered for the county convention. (Our list of resolutions will be prepared in advance and you will have several copies)

Raise your hand and say "Mr. Chairman, I have (how many) resolutions to be entered for our precinct. Each resolution will be read, seconded and voted. Our people will have the same resolutions in each precinct so don't panic if some don't pass. **Note the source of opposition for future reference.** After all resolutions are introduced and voted and all announcements made, the meeting will adjourn. (generally less than an hour).

The County or district Convention is a miniature State Convention. The committees have been chosen and will do their work. The number of delegates from each precinct will be announced and the precinct delegates will each elect their delegates for the State Convention. The Resolutions passed at this Convention shall move forward to be considered at the State Convention. The State Convention is the culmination of this whole process. This will be three days of hard work and glorious pleasure as payment for going the distance. As we progress we can place enough members on each committee to truly affect our future. There are 254 counties in Texas. If we could get just 10 State Delegates from each county we could control either Party. Since we are not interested in control for it's own sake we can interact with others to form a party

Five Steps to Freedom

which is fair to all. Only by gaining support of others can we guarantee our right to ride free for years to come.

This is just a simple outline of the process. If you have chosen to become involved we will provide workshops for more specific training prior to the actual Primary. Having taken these 4 steps you have moved into the realm of knowledge as to real workings of Texas politics. You are as adept at the process as any county chairman currently in office. It is now time to step completely into the arena. For years we have worked to put biker friendly people in office. Now it is time we reap the full benefit of our training and labor. **Place your left foot forward again and take Step number 5.**

(our next workshop is scheduled for November 8-9 in Abilene)

Run For Office

Having taken the 1st 4 steps, as outlined, you have become well known to the movers and shakers in the local political arena. It is now time to toss your hat into the ring and become a candidate for public office. Again we shall outline how this can be accomplished with very little cash outlay by you. This step will in no way cover every aspect of this task. It simply gives the basics on how to start using the knowledge you have gained through the 1st 4 steps.

Pick an office you would like to hold. It is generally wise to start with a local office, but not always necessary. Contact your county courthouse or office of Secretary of State and declare your intent to run. You will receive the necessary forms, which explain in detail the requirements to get on the ballot for the office you have chosen. There is generally a filing fee for most offices. These fees can, however, be waived by receiving enough signatures of registered voters. I recommend the petition because if you can't get the signatures (generally 500 or less) then you can't win an election anyway and it will have cost you nothing but time. Select your treasurer and campaign staff, get on the ballot and let the fun begin. You and your friends have already run campaigns for other candidates so this is just a matter of repeating the process but the rewards are much higher.

Timing is a key ingredient for making your 1st campaign a success. If possible it is best to seek an office which has no incumbent. An incumbent always has the advantage over a challenger unless they have totally screwed up. Few people are really well informed during an election, relying completely on the media for their information. They will vote for an incumbent, thanks to the media, simply because they recognize the name. Sad but true. Also, anything an incumbent says or does is covered by the media news while you are ignored. A good way to overcome this bias is to have several of your friends write the Letters to The Editor section of the local papers on a daily basis. Have them tell what you are saying and doing and ask why there is no media coverage. This will get your name and message before the public *at no cost*

If you must face an incumbent it is best to wage this campaign when a particular issue, which directly affects the office you have chosen, has galvanized the public to action. Study the issue from all angles. If your position is different from the incumbent and the voters are vocal, the time

Five Steps to Freedom

is right. Go for it!! Attend all meetings in your area and speak out. Talk to any group which will have you. Talk to individuals on the street, in stores or anywhere you encounter them. Set a goal to meet every voter in your district. You can't, of course, but don't stop trying.

A few friends willing to use their phone to make calls to local voters will fill the need for a phone bank (no charge). Several can get together at each home or office and have fun while taking turns making calls. You will, of course, have to purchase signs and campaign literature. If you have a friend in the business, great. If not, these can be purchased from a mail-order house at reasonable rates.

The rest is up to you. State your position honestly, forcefully and often. You must sell not only your ideas but yourself. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know, but if you will tell me how to contact you I will find out and get back with you " then do it!" Point out differences between you and your opponent but always do this in a positive manner. Never make negative remarks about your opponent. Instruct your campaign, workers that they are never to say anything negative about them. Stick to the issues. Get your views before all the voters possible. A good way to end each speech is to encourage people to vote. **Example:** "I want to thank each of your for attending this meeting and giving me the opportunity to express my views. It is extremely important that each of you vote in this election. I encourage each of you to vote, even if you choose to vote for my opponent. Only if you all vote can the winner truly be the choice of the people. If any of you are not registered to vote we have voter registration cards here which you can fill out tonight or take home with you." **Don't use a prepared speech. Speak from the heart and you will probably touch hearts.**

Having won your 1st elective office you have realized the true American Dream. You have become someone who can make a difference using hard work and the help of friends, rather than money. The Five Steps are now complete but your journey has just begun.

Congratulations - Good Luck - God Bless

Thanks to NCOM, MRF, Senator Dave Durenberger, Jesse McDugald and all the MRO Leaders from across the country who have inspired me. Thanks to all or members who have carried the load and made our Association Successful.....