

2017 RIDE: Sunday, July 23rd~ Friday, July 28th

Welcome to Water Warriors!!

Water Warriors is a VOLUNTEER organization that operates directly under Special Olympics MI (SOMI). This organization belongs to ALL Members, so we encourage you to bring your ideas forward, share your expertise, be involved & have fun.

The main goal of Water Warriors is to raise money for Special Olympics Michigan (SOMI) so we can help provide quality sports programs for adults and children with intellectual disabilities, help athletes develop physical fitness, experience the joy of new friendships and participating on a team, build their self esteem and achieve their dreams. There are over 23,000 Special Olympics athletes in Michigan!

Water Warriors is a unique organization that helps SOMI provide programs and equipment to the athletes by using the resources of our vast waterways, love of watersports and a desire to help people. Our members participate as Riders, Boat Spotters, Boat Captains and Land Support personnel.

Water Warrior members who participate as Riders or Boat Spotters are required to raise a minimum of \$1,500 (5 days participation) by soliciting funds from friends, family members & co-workers, hosting fundraisers and securing sponsorships. We also ask our Land Support Personnel to raise a minimum of \$100. Water Warriors & Special Olympics offer support, assistance & resources to help raise your donations for Special Olympics. Water Warrior members raise funds directly under Special Olympics MI which is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are turned in at meetings, mailed to PO BOX 234, Anchorville, MI 48004 or given to the Coordinator on the ride.

The **Water Warriors Mackinaw Ride By-laws** provides detailed information, rules & regulations about the ride. Copies are available via email or at meetings.

Here is some information you may want to know.....

- All details of the ride including meals, hotels & harbors are arranged prior to departure.
- Members are responsible for the cost of their hotel rooms. You'll receive a Hotel List (discount prices) & a deadline to call & book your rooms. Please let us know if you're looking for someone to share a room with. Most of our meals are donated. A few of our meals are fundraisers. Daily details will be on the Itinerary.
- Gas for the PWC's is paid for by the organization. Our Support Boats pay for their own fuel. Docking for PWC's & Support Boats is donated or covered by Water Warriors.
- There is some necessary paperwork that will need to be completed prior to the ride. (1) SOMI Volunteer Form (2) Medical Form (3) Lodging & PWC info form.
- PWC TRANSPORTATION TO MACKINAW CITY: PWC's are loaded on semi trucks (at the VFW in New Baltimore– back parking lot on Friday prior to the ride or B & D Drywall on Groesbeck in Clinton Twp. during the week before the ride) & arrive in Mackinaw on Saturday morning. You may also transport your own PWC. More details will be given.
- Warriors start arriving in Mackinaw City on Friday afternoon thru Sunday. We have a member who tries to coordinate carpooling for rides up to Mackinaw. If you bring a vehicle on the ride, you MUST have your own driver.

- PWC's are NOT loaned out. Any borrowing must be a mutual agreement between the owner & borrower.
- Riders with their own PWC's have an opportunity to ride the Straits under the Mackinaw Bridge & to Mackinac Island over the weekend before the ride begins. Your PWC must have a full fuel & oil tank to begin the ride. Mackinaw fuel dock closes at **5:00 pm** on Sunday.
- Our Mackinaw City Headquarters is the American Legion Hall across from the harbor. Please feel free to stop in anytime over the weekend for a drink & to chat with your fellow Warriors.
- At 5:00pm on Sunday before the ride, there is an opportunity to meet Special Olympics athletes at the harbor and give them a ride inside the harbor on your PWC. The ride is kicked off by a 6:00 meeting at the harbor. Members and our fleet are blessed in Mackinaw by Sister Chris after the meeting. ☀️ Directly afterwards dinner is donated & served across the street at the American Legion.
- You will be emailed a detailed Itinerary prior to the ride and copies will also be available on the ride. Please be on time for all departures so we don't leave anybody behind.
- All Riders & Spotters will be assigned to a specific Support Boat or Land Support duty. A 'Ride Board' will be posted in the mornings. A mandatory morning meeting will be held daily. Daily information, water & weather conditions will be announced. We have many safety rules in place & will review them at the morning meetings.
- Members are transported by Land Support to and from the hotels.
- Water & snacks will be provided to riders while on the water by your Support Boat & Land Support at fuel stops. Don't hesitate to ask if you would like something.
- Your luggage is transported in our luggage trailer. In the mornings, you put your luggage in the lobby or designated area of your hotel & it will show up at your next hotel at the designated area.
- We have Special Olympics Athletes that greet us at many of the harbors. There will be a couple of occasions to give them a ride inside of the harbor on your PWC. Athletes will also join us a few times on the Support Boats throughout the week.
- There are 'gatherings' in the evenings after all the scheduled events are done. There will most likely be a few choices of where people are gathering. You are always welcome everywhere & will no doubt have a lot of fun!!
- On Thursday when we arrive in Port Huron, our riders put on their crazy hats for the parade up the Black River. Some decorate their PWC's, etc. It's just a fun crazy time. If you choose to pop open an 'adult beverage', please disguise it.
- If you have family or friends anywhere along our route, please invite them to join us. The more the merrier!
- On the last day, you will have to make arrangements for transportation home from Harsens Island. Family & friends are invited to join us at Brown's on Harsens Island for our End-of-the-Ride celebration. Each active Member will receive a lunch ticket and additional tickets can be purchased for \$15 for friends & family.

RIDERS:

- PWC's must be in excellent running condition.
- Every PWC **must have 2 tie lines**.
- PLEASE don't be the one who sucks their line up into the intake. Let's see if we can go 1 year without having to cut a line out.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT FOR RIDERS:

- **Whistle secured to your PFD - MANDATORY**
- Wet Suit
- Rain gear (can be a rain coat & rain pants. Pack rubber bands with it to put around the sleeves & ankles to keep the wind out.) Frogg Toggs rain gear works well. (Available through Amazon.) Rain gear is worn over your wet suit during inclement weather.
- Clear zinc (for sunscreen on your face) & chapstick with sunscreen. From experience, clear zinc is the only thing that works on your face. Putting regular sunscreen on your face tends to wash off quick & can run into your eyes & burn.
- Water Shoes
- Sunglasses w/strap & extra pair of sunglasses and/or vented goggles. Polarized glasses helps to read the waves better. A spare set of glasses with yellow lenses works great in fog. **Birdz Eyewear** available through Amazon is one type of glasses recommended.
- Shoe lace - just a suggestion to tie on to the strap on your sunglasses & to your PFD in rough water.

RAIN GEAR is recommended for Land Support & Boat Support members also.

AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS: Email waterwarriors.mackinawride@gmail.com or call Barb: (586)630-6286

- By-laws (hard copy & email)
- Pamphlets
- Fundraising Manuals (hard copy & email)
- Sample fundraising letters (email)
- Corporate Sponsor forms
- WW & SOMI logo's available for fliers, print material, etc. via email
- Water Warriors Fact Sheet
- Special Olympics Fact Sheet
- Water Warriors Business Cards
- Thank you cards
- **Plaques:** Members can order a plaque for a business or individual. The plaque is free to members for a \$500 or more donation or otherwise can be purchased for \$12. Send plaque orders to: waterwarriors.mackinawride@gmail.com
- WW cut outs (to sell in bars, etc.)
- **Posters** to distribute at businesses

Our Support Boats and Land Support are in radio contact with each other throughout the ride on ship-to-shore radio's on Channel 88. Some riders will also be equipped with radio's. Extra trailers are towed along the way in case of breakdown or a rider wants their machine pulled. PWC dealers along the way are notified of the ride and will attempt to fix any breakdowns as fast as possible. Members are responsible for any costs involved.

The safety rules will be announced at the morning meetings. Our Emergency Plan will be emailed out to all members prior to the ride.

Members with medical training will be wearing an orange ribbon.

We ride in a variety of condition but do not ride when there is lightning. If you feel you need to have your machine pulled out of the water for any reason, please speak up. Members who cannot keep up to their Support Boat may be asked to pull their PWC at the discretion of the Boat Captain. We make every attempt to run as close to schedule as possible.

** There are web cams at many of the harbors. Your family & friends not on the ride just might be able to catch us on camera.

CONTACT INFO:

Water Warriors email address: waterwarriors.mackinawride@gmail.com

Water Warriors web site: waterwarriors.us

Water Warriors Coordinator: Barb Vanover (586)630-6286

Chairwoman: Ann Plegue (586)725-5518

Water Warriors mailing address: PO Box 234 Anchorville, MI 48004

Water Warriors facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/waterwarriorsmackinawride/>

Special Olympics Liaison: Ted Grossnickle (248)931-0603

Special Olympics State Office – Central Michigan University (800)644-6404

Special Olympics web site: somi.org

Please remember that everybody has had a first year. The week is fast paced, full of laughs & good times & forever changing. You'll meet a lot of new friends who will feel like family by the end of the week. You may not remember all the names, but we don't give quizzes either. LOL Please don't hesitate to ask questions. We welcome you with open arms.

The ultimate goal of the Ride is to raise money to provide opportunities for our special friends, the Special Olympics Athletes, so they can participate in sports, benefit from good health and make new friends. Did you know there are over 21,000 Special Olympics Athletes in Michigan?? It is the greatest feeling on earth to know that we can make their dreams come true!!