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THUNDER ROADS THUNDER CAM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ThunderCam.....3

Letter From The Owner.....7

Factory Feature ~ Triumph.....8

Is it a Scooter, a Moped or a Motorcycle?.....11

Veterans Corner.....12

Jokers Wild.....14

MI Motorcycle Show.....17

ThunderCam.....18

Readers Rides.....20

Ron Finch.....22

Pull-Out Calendar.....26

DIY: Ethanol Free Gas.....30

Chaps Folding 101.....32

Jody "Mo's" Thunder Fun.....33

Helmet Law App.....35

Tech Tips By Steve.....36

Biker Friendly Directory.....38

Thunder Roads Events Calendar.....41

Lansing Swap Meet.....46

ABATE.....48

NCOM News Bytes.....50

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It Doesn't Matter What You Ride Just As Long As You Ride!

Thunder Roads is the #1 free to readers MOTORCYCLE magazine in the state. I have been receiving wonderful ideas, comments and suggestions as well as compliments. Thank you! Starting this issue and each to follow we will have a factory feature each month. Most of us have ridden all kinds of motorcycles.

As I mentioned once before, my father owned a motorcycle shop, which I grew up in (literally they had a crib in the shop for me when I was little). Later in life, my dad became a Boss Hoss dealer. When I was a kid I rode a Honda Passport, dirt bikes and quads all over my parents 17 acres. The first time I ever rode a motorcycle I was 7 years old and although I don't recall exactly which model Yamaha it was I do remember at 7 years old it was a full size bike. My dad was on the back and he was teaching me about the clutch, throttle and shifting. Standing 6 feet tall now, you can bet at 7 years old I was able to reach the shifter. I remember my dad's instructions like it was yesterday.

When I was 16 I got my first road bike, a Kawasaki 305 LTD. I rode that bike for 2 or 3 years. My point is this, it really doesn't matter what you ride as long as you ride. After my Kawasaki, I went to a 1989 Police Special full dresser and have had a couple others in between. I have a 2002 Heritage Softail now that I bought new. I always like the idea of having a spare bike and along with my Softail I use to have a 77 blower bike, a Harley that my dad, my uncle and their friends tweaked so it had double the horse power. I have also ridden all kinds of bikes from a chopper to a Boss Hoss. So because this is a motorcycle magazine we will be featuring all kinds of motorcycles. I hope that you enjoy the feature this month to start out our monthly features... the Triumph.

Last month the TRM wing logo was on page 13 (actually in two places on that page). Can you find it this month? Don't forget to check us out on Facebook and make sure to download the NEW Thunder Roads App!. Please be sure to patronize our advertisers and let them know you saw them in Thunder Roads. The only way it is free is because of their support so please be sure to support them as well.

Thank you for continuing to make Thunder Roads Magazine the #1 Free to Readers Motorcycle Magazine in Michigan!

Now for some "Mo" Advice:

That what you think about in your life you will attract most. Make each day a positive one and surround yourself with people that believe in you and love you for who you are.



Jody Mohowitsch



TRIUMPH 2012 TRIUMPH THUNDERBIRD STORM~ THE PARALLEL ALTERNATIVE

BY Reynolds Mansson TRLA

The universe of cruiser and custom motorcycles is dominated by one engine design, the in-line V-Twin. It's a simple design, that's why since Indian introduced the V configuration in 1903, it has been a popular choice. But the V itself, while being simple to build and well suited to motorcycle use because of its narrow profile, does have a flaw. It requires a longer motorcycle frame to accommodate the two cylinders. Because it has become the ubiquitous engine choice for so many different bikes, it also forces a bit of cookie cutter sameness on the manufacturers. If a rider is looking for something unique, there is an excellent alternative, the Triumph parallel twin.

Edward Turner's 1937 Triumph Speed Twin may not have been the first parallel twin, but his 500cc motor in a lightweight frame changed motorcycle design and by the late 1940s there were dozens of brands being built around his design. Even American manufacturer Indian made a couple of versions. The design, in addition to allowing for a more compact bike, provided production cost advantages over the V that needed two separate cylinders and performance advantages through better cooling.

Fast forward 75 years to the modern Triumph and the newest application of Ed Turner's enduring design, the 2012 Triumph Thunderbird Storm. At first glance the Storm looks more compact than most bikes in its class. It is in fact only an inch shorter than the average wheelbase for large displacement cruisers (64" vs. 65") and has a couple of degrees less rake than similar V-twins. But these small differences, along with ergonomics that place the rider slightly more forward on the bike than a V Twin motor would allow, give the bike a feeling that while it is a big motorcycle it is not intimidatingly large or long. You don't feel like you must stretch out to reach the forward mounted controls and flat straight drag bars. A low 27 inch seat height and a tank that narrows nicely at the rear all add to the comfortable, compact and rider friendly feeling of the Storm.

The Storm is the higher performance version of the basic Thunderbird. The 1700 kit was originally designed as a dealer installed upgrade for the 1600cc Twin in the standard T-Bird. A larger bore cylinder, new pistons, cams and gaskets give the Storm 97 horsepower and a comfortable 115 foot pound of torque. The big bore kit gives it more plenty of power even at low rpms and delivery is smooth throughout its power band. A 270 degree crank gives the motor a V-Twin feel without a bunch of shaking and vibration.

All that smooth power does no good if you can't get it to the rear wheel. The Triumph's wide ratio 6-speed gearbox is one of the best I have ever experienced in the cruiser class, and the linkage for the forward control is tight and precise. The T-Bird's transmission is quiet and doesn't have the heavy clunking of many cruisers, especially when dropping into first gear. While I am not generally a fan of this riding position, the quality and comfort of the Triumph experience might change my mind.

At 750 pounds, this is not a lightweight motorcycle but the Showa suspension, rigid frame and good ground clearance, plus its Metzeler Marathon rubber work well together to allow a more spirited riding style without wobbles or constant scrapping of pegs and metal bits. The Thunderbird's low center of gravity gives it a stable feel even when it's leaned over and ridden aggressively.

It goes fast, it handles well but how does the big T-Bird stop? With twin 310mm discs and Nissin four-piston calipers up front and a rear 310mm disc and Brembo two-piston calipers at the rear, the ABS-equipped Triumph has great brakes with almost a sportbike feel to them. I had an opportunity to test the ABS in a real world hazard avoidance situation and I was very impressed with the way this big bike stops. It still amazes me that companies put 700 and 800 pound motorcycles on the road with single discs anchoring the front where all your stopping power is. I give this bike's brakes a 9 on a 1 to 10 scale. I might give it a little smaller rear brake but that's a matter of my personal preference.

The fit and finish of the Triumph Thunderbird Storm is top notch. I rode the flat grey version; with it's mostly blacked out motor and minimal shiny stuff. Everywhere I took the bike it attracted a lots of admirers. It's not a flashy bike, it's a bit understated really and I liked that. The twin headlights give the T-Bird an aggressive look, a street fighter power cruiser. Triumph's designers also did a very good job of disguising its radiator. It is small, narrow and barely noticed.



TRIUMPH STORM BY THE NUMBERS

Engine: Liquid-cooled, DOHC, 1699cc Parallel Twin
Fueling: Multipoint sequential EFI
Exhaust: Chromed stainless steel 2-1-2
Final Drive: Belt
Clutch: Wet, multi-plate
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel capacity: 5.8 gallons
Frame: Tubular steel, twin spine
Front suspension: 47mm Showa fork
Rear suspension: Steel swing arm, pre-load adjustable dual shocks
Wheels/Tires: 120/70 19-in. front - 200/50 17-in. rear
Seat height: 27.5 in.
Width (handlebars): 34.6 in.
Fuel Tank Capacity: 5.8 gal
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The only negative comment I had came from my test passenger concerning the small pillion seat the bike offers riding companions. It's narrow and hard, ok for a few miles but a 250-mile test ride became uncomfortable after an hour on the seat, but that's an easy fix.

Overall, The Storm is a powerful, sweet handling and very competent cruiser. It has strong advantages over many of its more established competitors. If you are looking for a large cruiser with a great motor and transmission you should consider this Triumph, it's the Parallel Alternative.

Thanks to Zach Materne and The Transportation Revolution of New Orleans for providing my test bike. They are located in the central business district at 901 Julia Street, corner of Baronne. Check them out on line a www.ttrno.com

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The Motorcycle Lawyer on THE LAW

Is It A Scooter, A Moped Or A Motorcycle?

I'm working on a case right now where my client was riding on an "automatic type, 2-wheeled motor bike." This means that it does not have a clutch and does not require the operator to change gears while driving. The bike simply had brake levers on the handle bars and a hand throttle. There were no controls for the feet to operate, just a platform where your feet would rest during operation. When I obtained the police report, the officer wrote that my client was on "a scooter." The initial binder from the insurance company called the vehicle "a scooter." The policy issued for the vehicle called it "a motorcycle." The registration listed the vehicle as "a motorcycle" and the original title listed it as "a motor scooter." Confused yet?

So, what is the legal term for the vehicle this man was riding and why does it matter? There are two sections of the Michigan Compiled Laws (these are the statutes or laws of the State of Michigan) that are relevant here. The first is the Vehicle Code and is cited as MCL 257.1 through 257.923. It deals with laws that apply to motor vehicles for example, moving violations like speeding, vehicle emissions standards, etc. The code even deals with snowmobiles, off-road vehicles and limousines. The second section of laws is the Michigan No-Fault Law and is found at MCL 500.3101 through 500.3179. The No-Fault Law deals with the requirement that certain vehicles be insured, and basically has to do with all parties' rights and duties after vehicle collisions. For example, the No-Fault Law describes who or what insurance company is responsible for paying medicals bills, the collision damage to a vehicle, whether a person can be compensated for an injury, and more.

Here are some relevant definitions from the Vehicle Code:

MCL 257.31 "Motorcycle" defined. "Motorcycle" means every motor vehicle having a saddle or seat for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than 3 wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor.

MCL 257.32b "Moped" defined. "Moped" means a 2- or 3-wheeled vehicle which is equipped with a motor that does not exceed 50 cubic centimeters piston displacement, produces 2.0 brake horsepower or less, and cannot propel the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on a level surface. The power drive system shall not require the operator to shift gears.

The definitions of "motorcycle" and "moped" are significant in the Vehicle Code (MCL Chapter 257) because vehicles that meet these definitions are subject to registration, having a license plate, laws regarding renting, motorcycle endorsements, specification requirements or restrictions regarding equipment such as head lamps, handlebars, noise, etc.

ANALYSIS:

Basically, just take away from the Vehicle Code definitions that if the 2 or 3 wheeled vehicle is 50cc's or more it needs a license plate, insurance, and its operator must have a motorcycle endorsement.

Now to the No-Fault Law's definitions and requirements:

MCL 500.3101 (c) "Motorcycle" means a vehicle having a saddle or seat for the use of the rider, designed to travel on not more than 3 wheels in contact with the ground, which is equipped with a motor that exceeds 50 cubic centimeters piston displacement. The wheels on any attachment to the vehicle shall not be considered as wheels in contact with the ground. Motorcycle does not include

a moped, as defined in section 32b of the Michigan vehicle code, 1949 PA 300, MCL 257.32b. Motorcycle does not include an ORV.

MCL 500.3113 Persons not entitled to personal protection benefits. (b) The person was the owner or registrant of a motor vehicle or motorcycle involved in the accident with respect to which the security required by section 3101 or 3103 was not in effect.

ANALYSIS:

Basically take away from the No-Fault Law (MCL 500.3101) that if the 2-wheeled vehicle is, again, over 50cc's you are only entitled to No Fault benefits (including payment of medical bills forever) if a "motor vehicle" (car, truck, van, bus but NOT a motorcycle) is involved in the crash. AND if you are the owner and operator of an uninsured motorcycle, you do not get any No-Fault benefits; this is very significant.

INTERESTING TIDBIT:

Did you know that to operate a moped on public streets, you must have a regular driver's license or a special moped license? Therefore, a person who loses his or her license for say drunk driving cannot use a moped to get to and from work. The special moped license is usually utilized by 15-year-olds who are under the age limit to obtain a 'regular' operator's license.

So, even though your vehicle looks like "a scooter" or drives like "a moped," the key component is whether it exceeds 50 cubic centimeters piston displacement. If so, the State of Michigan considers it "a motorcycle." There may be significant ramifications for not following the letter of the law. A misdemeanor traffic ticket for not having a motorcycle endorsement or proof of insurance is minor compared to being excluded from No Fault benefits, the loss of which could I have seen on many occasion bankrupt a family when confronted with huge medical bill for accident-related injuries.

Attorney Jason A. Waechter

is a Michigan attorney specializing in the areas of motorcycle and motor vehicle injury litigation as well as Michigan's Motor Vehicle No-Fault Law. Mr. Waechter has collected millions of dollars in settlements, awards and verdicts for his motorcycle clients over the past 20 years. A portion of each case settled goes to educational resources for bikers, funds to help bikers while their cases are being litigated and our motorcycle accident prevention campaign.

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VETERANS CORNER



Caregiver Assistance From The VA

Do you or your spouse need caregiver assistance? This month we are going to discuss a little known VA benefit (Improved Pension) if you or your spouse need caregiver assistance. First, bookmark the following website <http://www.veteranaid.org/> I will be quoting almost all this info on the Improved Pension from that site as they explain it best. This benefit has been around for over 60 years, but hardly any veteran seems to know about it.

There are 3 levels to Improved Pension. All 3 levels should be applied for by using form 21-526 for the veteran, and 21-534 for a surviving spouse.

Aid and Attendance (A&A) is the highest level awarded to a veteran or surviving spouse who requires assistance with their daily living such as dressing, bathing, cooking, eating, etc.

The applicant must show that while they may not need assistance for everything, they cannot function completely on their own. You do not have to be in a facility to be eligible for this level. The care can be provided in the home by either outside agencies or family members. The A&A can provide up to \$1,732 per month of a veteran, \$1,113 per month to a surviving spouse, or \$2,054 per month to a couple. A veteran filing with a sick spouse is eligible for up to \$1,360 per month.

Housebound pension: This is the 2nd level, and the criteria is basically the same. The applicant is not as limited in their need for assistance as someone meeting the needs for Aid and Attendance, but still requires help with daily living activities. A veteran alone must have countable income LESS than \$14,457 per year, and a veteran with a spouse must have countable income LESS than \$18,120 per year. See the following for determining countable income: <http://www.veteranaid.org/docs/income.pdf>

Basic Pension. The first level of the Improved Pension. Once a veteran reaches the age of 65, the VA considers and classifies them permanently and totally disabled regardless of their physical fitness. A veteran alone must have countable income LESS than \$11,830 per year, and a veteran with a spouse must have countable income LESS than \$15,493 a year.

Eligibility: Any war-time veteran with 90 days of active duty, 1 day beginning or ending during a period of war is eligible to apply for the A&A. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially. To qualify medically, a war-time veteran or surviving spouse must need the assistance of another person to perform daily tasks such as eating, dressing, undressing, taking care of the needs of nature, etc. Being blind or in a nursing home for mental or physical incapacity or residing in an assisted living facility also qualifies.

Eligibility must be proven by filing the proper Veterans Application for Pension or Compensation. It will require a copy of your DD-214 or separation papers, medical evaluation from a physician, current medical issues, net worth limitations, and net income, along with out-of-pocket medical expenses.

To qualify financially, an applicant must have on average less than \$80,000 in assets, EXCLUDING their home and vehicles. See the reference above for countable income and other info regarding assets.

I first heard about this "unknown" benefit a little over a year ago, so I personally do not yet know of anyone receiving it. Check out the [veteranaid.org](http://www.veteranaid.org) web site if the info I provided is as clear as mud. It still seems like mud to me, so check out their site.

More info on how to apply for it is at <http://www.veteranaid.org/apply.php> which includes links to forms.

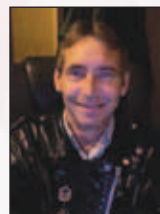
Oh yes, the website is a 501(c)(3), and they do take donations for helping to educate the public on this little known VA benefit.

Of note for post 9/11 veterans is the Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010. This provides assistance directly to families caring for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Caregivers receive a stipend for a maximum 40-hour workweek. The American Legion and other veteran's organizations are trying to get that changed to provide around-the-clock care, especially for veterans with brain injuries. Caregivers receive on average between \$600 and \$2,200 per month, based on care needs and local wage rates for home health aides in their area. Caregivers may also receive health insurance through the program. For more info check out www.caregiver.va.gov or call their support line at 1-855-260-3274

Next month we will talk about having VA pay to modify your vehicle or motorcycle if you have a VA disability and need the modification to operate your vehicle due to your disability. I'm sure the info about modifying your motorcycle caught your attention! Until next month, possum out!

David McCallister "Possum"

Retired AF MSgt computer tech.
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Four guys have been going to the same fishing trip for many years. Two days before the group is to leave, Ron's wife puts her foot down and tells him he isn't going. Ron's mates are very upset that he can't go, but what can they do. Two days later the three get to the camping site to find Ron sitting there with a tent set up, firewood gathered, and dinner cooking on the fire, sitting having a cold beer. "Shucks, Ron, how long you been here, and how did you talk your missus into letting you go?" "Well, I've been here since last night.

Yesterday evening, I was sitting in my living room chair and my wife came up behind me and put her hands over my eyes and asked, 'Guess who?' I pulled her hands off, and there she was, wearing a sexy little nightie. She took my hand and pulled me into our bedroom. The room had candles and rose petals all over. Well she's been reading "50 Shades of Grey"..... On the bed she had handcuffs, and ropes! She told me to tie her up and cuff her to the bed, so I did. And then she said, "Do whatever you want." So, Here I am. Let's get them beers on ice and get them hooks baited.


The Mexican maid asked for a pay increase. The wife was very upset about this, and decided to talk to her about the raise. She asked: "Now Maria, why do you want a pay increase?" Maria: "Well, Señora, there are tree reasons why I wanna increaze." "The first is that I iron better than you." Wife: "Who said you iron better than me?" Maria: "Jor huzban he say so." Wife: "Oh yeah?" Maria: "The second reason eez that I am a better cook than you." Wife: "Nonsense, who said you were a better cook than me?" Maria: "Jor hozban did." Wife, increasingly agitated: "Oh he did, did he?" Maria: "The third reason is that I am better at sex than you in the bed." Wife, really boiling now and through gritted teeth. Wife: "And did my husband say that as well?" Maria: "No Señora....The gardener did." Wife: "How much are we talking here, Maria?"

WHY? do cats always look at their poop before they cover it up and we do we always look at ours' before flushing it down the toilet? Odd.

A man came home from work one day to find his wife on the front porch with her bags packed. 'Just where the heck do you think you're going!', said the man. 'I'm going to Las Vegas', said the wife, 'I just found out I can get \$400 a night for what I give you for free! The man said, 'Wait a minute!', and then ran inside the house only to come back a few minutes later with his suitcases in hand. 'Where the heck are you going?', said the wife. The man said, 'I want to see how the hell you're gonna' live on \$800 a year!'

In case you didn't already know this little tidbit of factual trivia.... On July 20, 1969, as commander of the Apollo 11 Lunar Module, Neil Armstrong was the first person to set foot on the moon. His first words after stepping on the moon, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," were televised to Earth and heard by millions. But just before he re-entered the Lander, he made the enigmatic remark - "Good luck, Mr. Gorsky ." Many people at Nasa thought it was a casual remark concerning some rival Soviet Cosmonaut. However, upon checking, there was no Gorsky in either the Russian or American space programs .

Over the years, many people questioned Armstrong as to what the - 'good luck, Mr. Gorsky' statement meant, but Armstrong always just smiled. On July 5, 1995, in Tampa Bay , Florida , while answering questions following a speech, a reporter brought up the 26-year-old question about Mr. Gorsky to Armstrong. This time he finally responded because Mr. Gorsky had died, so Neil Armstrong felt he could now answer the question. Here is the answer to "who was Mr. Gorsky": In 1938, when he was a kid in a small mid-western town , he was playing baseball with a friend in the backyard. His friend hit the ball, which landed in his neighbor's yard by their bedroom window. His neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Gorsky. As he leaned down to pick up the ball, young Armstrong heard Mrs. Gorsky declaring to Mr. Gorsky, "Sex! You want sex?! You'll get sex when the kid next door walks on the damn moon!" Amazing.....but true.

HAPPY ST. PATTY'S DAY & HAPPY EASTER, BIKERS Just toss the Easter eggs in the green beer and knock out two holidays at once. 



- Ron Finch

- Jason Waechter

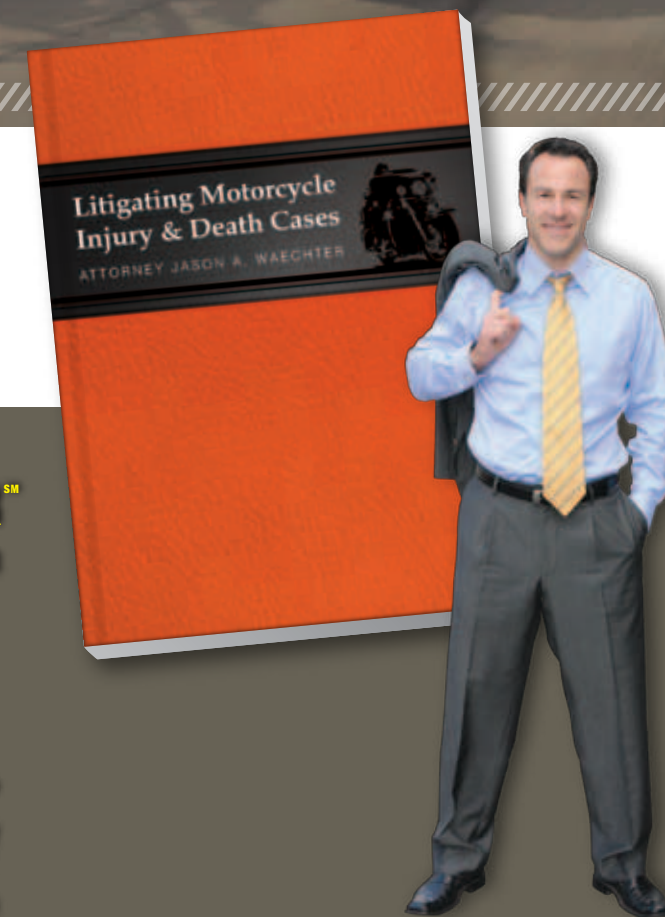
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25th Annual Michigan Motorcycle Show

by Don Clark



January 19th was the first day of the two day event for the 25th Annual Motorcycle Show at the Birch Run Expo Center. As the weather turned out to be in the 40s it allowed many people to feel like getting out and doing something, which made for a really good turnout. With lots of bikes on display and many vendors, it gave everyone plenty to look at, from custom bikes to leather, parts and accessories. The students from P.S.I. were also on hand, building a bike for everyone to watch and enjoy. Psycho Customs and others were there doing an airbrush competition. Besides all the individuals that had their bikes on display for all to enjoy, there were also Steven's Cycle, Reflections Custom Cycles, Jason the Lawyer, Michigan Biker's Association, Thumb Chrome, Nord Ride with the new Can-Am Spyder, and many others. Everyone seemed to have a smile on their face, having a good time! If you were among the lucky ones that came out, watch for your picture in the Thunder Cam photos! So just

keep reminding yourself that spring is just around the corner with lots of things being planned already, so hang in there! Till we meet again, may you and your family be safe and healthy.

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READERS RIDES



BOB

Well, before I start my story I would like to say that before we know it the weather will be getting warmer and the days longer, and we all know what that means in Michigan. Time to pull those covers off the bikes that have been sitting all winter long and hit the roads again. My name is Bob and I grew up always tinkering with different things, from cars to bikes and everything in between. It has always been a dream of mine to build a custom bike of my own. After doing a little research and figuring out prices, I decided to purchase one already complete and ready to ride. So to eBay I went and started my search. After eight months of looking I finally found a bike that had all the features I was looking for. So I placed my bid in on it and waited. Then it was finally confirmed that I was the highest bidder of the bike, and by only one hundred dollars, so off to Florida I went to pick up my new bike. The bike is a 2004 softail custom built by Pit Bull Motorcycle Company. The bike supports a 130 cubic inch Patrick Billet polished engine connected to a Baker 6 speed transmission with back cut gears. Other than the normal vibration of a custom softail the bike rides and handles very well. I still do have the dream of building my own custom bike one day but until then, I will still be hitting the roads of Michigan enjoying the beauties that life has to offer! I would like to wish each and every one of you a happy and safe 2013 riding season. Also a special thanks to all the local bars that make the bike nights possible. A big thank you to Thunder Roads of Michigan and Don Clark for sharing my story!

Bob
PHOTOS BY Don Clark



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Ron Finch's "Chopper at LARGE"

BY Pooch

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS BY Bob Mazur

Howdy everyone! It's been a while, but I'm back. Did ya miss me? Here's a little story of the weird way things sometimes can connect. Although the entire story would take up way more room than I have here, I'll try to do the best I can with limited space. If you get a chance to see Ron in person, he'll be glad to fill in the details. Who could have thought that a chance meeting between a couple guys near the Wurtsmith Air Museum (<http://www.wurtsmithairmuseum.org/Museum/museum.html>) in Oscoda would culminate in a (literally) larger than life motorcycle, on exhibit in downtown Grand Rapids? One man with some old airplane parts, and the other man with a talent/vision that never ceases to amaze me. Well, if you're familiar with my good friend Ron Finch, you know anything is possible.

Cut to a nice sunny day in the middle of August, my girlfriend Berta and I happened to stop by Finch's on our travels. Just to say "Howdy" and see what was new. And when you go to Finch's anything can happen. Ron had just finished up a build and needed some pics for an upcoming gig. Always willing to help out my friend, I was eager to lend a hand. And being the ever vigilant journalist/photographer (that I try to be), I had my camera with me. So after a few hours, a couple locations and a several hundred shutter clicks later, we have the required pictures. More on that in a little bit.

So now, back to our story..... While attending the Grand Opening of the Melvin Motorcycle Museum (<http://www.melvinmotorcyclemuseum.com/>), Ron met Chuck Goldstrom and was offered a few old airplane engine cylinders. And so just a stones throw away from the museum, Ron acquired some of his newest "found metal" items. These are from an old radial-type engine, but look like they could easily be for your favorite v-twin. Except for one small detail, these things are HUGE!! Well knowing a good thing when he sees it, Ron said "OK". And so it began.....



Chopper at LARGE by Ron Finch

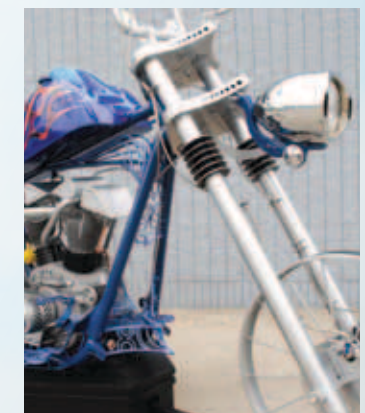


The vision of a towering custom V-Twin chopper was conceived in June of 2011, when the cylinders from a vintage Pratt-Whitney Radial Airplane engine were presented to Finch from the Wurtsmith Air Museum in Oscoda, Michigan. Finch fabricated the frame, engine cases, transmission, exhaust, rear fender and handlebars. Many of the components were fabricated from "found metal". The gas tank was created from two 1950 GMC rear truck fenders. The rear wheel consists of two Fordson Tractor wheels. The headlight is a beauty salon hair dryer, the tail lights are aluminum vases, and the oil tank is made from propane tanks. Look closely...the cycle is meticulously detailed to affectionately represent a functioning motorcycle. The finishing touch a "Finch Custom Paint Job".

It's now mid-September 2012 and Chopper@LARGE was ready to take to the highway, heading to Grand Rapids, Michigan and the ArtPrize (<http://www.artprize.org/about>), trying to win some of the \$560,000 prize money and competing with over 1500 other artists. This is one of Michigan's largest art exhibits. And I mean "largest". Starting back in 2009 it gets bigger every year, no pun intended, as the "gallery" is the whole city. And each artist secures their own venue, and each venue seeks out their own artists. Definitely, this is something to check out

this coming September. But I digress. So after over 2 weeks and 2 rounds of voting, the winners were selected. And although Chopper@LARGE didn't win any money, it did finish in the Top 100. Not too bad for an old biker and some found metals, huh? Well Ron had some help: Gary Maurer of Kustoms, Inc., Ron Harris at Chop Doc's Choppers, Bill and Bobby at Peerless Metal Works, and a lot of Finchmen!

Oh, and about those pictures I took. Well, they ended up as thousands of 2-sided, color postcards that were handed out at the show by Ron to garner votes for Chopper@LARGE. My work seen by thousands.....man it doesn't get any better than that!! (My Thanks to Ruth Finch for her help in writing this article.) And so now you say, "Gee, I wonder what Finch is up to these days?" Here's a hint, does the idea of a Million Mile Bike and the name Bean're mean anything to you? Stay tuned kiddies....



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						Gibraltar Swap Meet / Taylor
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gibraltar Swap Meet / Taylor	Bike Week / Wolverine H-D	Bike Week / Wolverine H-D	Bike Week / Wolverine H-D Biker Night / Biker Bob's HD	Bike Week / Wolverine H-D	INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY Bike Week / Wolverine H-D Garage Party / Sandy's HD	Bike Week / Wolverine H-D
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS Giant Swap Meet Cleveland, OH					TTT/Garage Party Ray C's H-D	Used Bike Sale / Zips H-D Soup Cook-off / Capitol H-D St. Patrick's Party/Clinic Biker Bobs H-D
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
ST PATRICK'S DAY St. Patrick's Party/Clinic Biker Bobs H-D Swap Meet & Expo Kalamazoo			SPRING BEGINS Biker Night / Biker Bob's HD		Open House Ray C's Extreme Used Bike Sale Biker Bob's H-D	Open House / Ray C's Extreme Used Bike Sale / Biker Bob's HD Performance Workshop Capitol H-D Cancun Connection Bash Muskegon Gibraltar Custom Bike Show Mt. Clemens
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Used Bike Sale Biker Bob's H-D Giant Swap Meet Grand Rapids	PASSOVER BEGINS			Bike Night / Stevens Cycle	GOOD FRIDAY	Swap Meet & Expo / Cadillac
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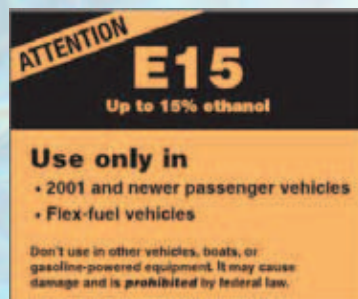
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DIY: Ethanol Free Gas

BY Mark The GoldWing Doc (TRO Contributor) Goldwingdocs.com



Ethanol is the scourge of owners of motorcycles, boats, and many other gasoline-operated vehicles and implements. E10 (10% ethanol) is pretty much the only available gasoline in most of the country now, with a few stations offering ethanol-free gas. And E15 (15% ethanol) is coming soon, recently approved by the EPA for 2001 and newer cars - even though the car manufacturers don't want it, and it is not approved for use by any motorcycle manufacturer either. You can thank the ethanol lobby for that.



Ethanol IS NOT intended for motorcycles.

"E15 won't be a problem - I'll just select my regular E10 on the pump," you may say. Well, there is a problem - the pipes and hose of the fuel pump contain about 3/4 gallon of whatever was last dispensed - and that could be E15. 3/4 gallon isn't much when you're pump-

ing 15 gallons into your car, but when you're only pumping a few gallons into your bike, which doesn't like ethanol to begin with, 3/4 gallon makes a big difference!



What's the problem with ethanol? The biggest problem is phase separation. Like brake fluid, ethanol is **hygroscopic**, which means it bonds very easily to water. If there is moisture in the air (which there always is), the moisture bonds with the ethanol. The combination of

water and ethanol is heavier than gasoline, so it falls to the bottom of the gas tank, where the pickup is. Let your bike sit for any

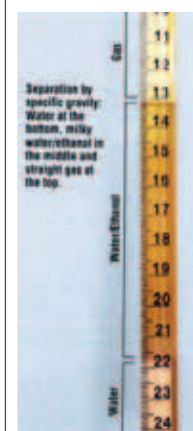
length of time, particularly with a partially-full gas tank (because the air space left will contain moisture, and will expand and contract with heat, sucking in more moisture-laden air), and your tank will have a layer of water/ethanol mixture on the bottom. This is called **phase separation**. Guess what gets sucked into your engine the next time you start it? The water/ethanol mixture will burn in your engine, but it will burn much leaner and hotter, with the potential for serious engine damage as a result.

Ethanol is particularly corrosive to plastics, rubber, aluminum and fiberglass when compared to straight gasoline. If you have a vintage bike with a fiberglass tank, and are running E10 gasoline in it, the tank is likely swollen and on its way to failure as the ethanol breaks down the fiberglass. Many bikes have developed leaks and problems from swollen gaskets and failed rubber hoses and seals, all as a result of E10.

When E10 is allowed to sit for a long time, particularly somewhere where air can get in, like a normal vented gas tank, the volatile portion of the fuel will eventually evaporate. What's left is a milky goo. This goo eventually hardens into an amber solid, which then cracks into tiny pieces - heading directly into your carburetor to clog jets and cause failures.

Two stroke engines definitely have problems with E10: ethanol breaks down the lubrication provided by the fuel/oil mixture, leading to engine seizures!

So what is the solution? Well, you can check out the web site <http://pure-gas.org> to try to find a gas station near you that sells ethanol-free gas. Hint: many boat marinas sell ethanol-free gas, because with the added moisture in a boating environment, E10 plays havoc with boat engines.



The water and Ethanol automatically separates itself out from the gas..

Or...you can make your own ethanol-free gas. Yes, you heard me right! Make it yourself! I never even thought about doing this, until I read the excellent article "Removing Ethanol from E10 Fuel" by Dave Searle in the December 2012 issue of Motorcycle Consumer News - my absolute favorite magazine. If you haven't got a subscription to this magazine yet, stop reading this right now and go subscribe! I promise you won't be sorry. I've using a few pictures from Dave's article in this article.

So as you can guess, you don't actually make your own gasoline, you take regular E10 gasoline and remove the ethanol. Because ethanol boosts the octane in gasoline, I recommend you start with premium gas. Removing the ethanol from the premium will in the process lower the octane to the equivalent of regular gas. If you start with regular E10, you will need to add an octane booster, available at any auto store, or Wal-Mart.

So how do you remove the ethanol from E10? It's quite simple, actually - just add water! Remember, ethanol binds strongly to water. All you need to do is add some water to the gasoline, agitate to make sure it mixes well, then let it sit for a few minutes. The water will bond with the ethanol, and it will phase-separate out, falling to the bottom of the container.

How much water do you add? Well you can't add too much. If you don't add enough, then it won't remove all of the E10, and what E10 does bond with the water, will separate to the bottom of your container. If you add too much, the available ethanol will bond to the water, and the remaining water will separate to the bottom. You'll then have three layers: gasoline on top, ethanol/water in the middle, and water on the bottom (see the picture).



In Dave's article, he used a cheap plastic separatory funnel with a small valve at the bottom, along with a 500cc cylinder for measuring the fuel and a 25cc burette for measuring water:



Once filling his funnel with E10, adding water and letting it sit, the water/ethanol separated out, and could be drained using the valve:

So how much water do you add? It depends on a few things, including the actual concentration of ethanol (which will vary - it's seldom exactly 10%), and ambient temperature. Dave's testing shows that the optimal amount of water is 2% by volume of the E10. That's 2.56 oz per gallon, or 12.8 ounces for a five-gallon gas can. Remember that extra water will simply separate out, so two cups (16 ounces) of water in a five-gallon gas can is safe. You should use distilled water only, to avoid leaving behind any minerals or other additives that your engine may not like (does fluoride keep your carburetors clean?).

The biggest problem - in what sort of container do you perform this procedure? Dave suggested a five-gallon glass or PET plastic jugs, like those that are found at <http://www.midwestsupplies.com> - fitted with stopcocks and vent tubes.



My suggestion is a bit simpler: Buy a regular five-gallon gas can.



To the end of the spout, glue several inches of large, transparent PVC pipe.



At the end of the PVC pipe, fasten a valve with a compression fitting.

Fill the can with E10, add two cups of distilled water, fasten the spout/pipe/valve, shake well, then turn the gas can upside down - fit it in a sawhorse or some other fixture so that the PVC pipe is pointing straight down. You want the absolute lowest point of the gas can to be the outlet for the spout, so that all of the heavier water and ethanol/water moves out the spout and then into the PVC tubing. Wait for the ethanol/water to separate out and drop down into the PVC (you'll see it), then open the valve slightly to drain out the ethanol/water. Once it's drained out, turn the gas can back upright - and you're done!



So do you want to do this every time you fill up your bike? Probably not. But it's certainly doable for small batches of gasoline for use in small engines (lawn mowers, weed trimmers, any two-stroke engine), to put in your bike just before putting it away for the winter (or for storage of any length of time), or for putting into devices that sit for long periods of time without being run - like backup generators.

CHAPS FOLDING 101



by Kathleen Howell

Here is a great way to secure your chaps and keep them from unfolding or unrolling in your trunk or saddle bag. Thank you to Al Russom at AM Leather in Romulus, MI, for sharing this trick!



1. Lay your chaps on a flat surface, unzipped so that the legs lay open flat against each other. (At any time, you may stop laughing at my 3 foot long chaps. I'm only 5' 2".)



2. Fold the belt and buckles in, as shown.



3. From the top, fold in the right side to form more of a straight line.



4. Fold the chaps in thirds.



5. Fold the left and right sides in towards the center (where the snaps are located), and snap together.

Voila! Your chaps are now in a secured bundle.



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Inspiration

Ask yourself this question: "Will this matter a year from now?" ~ Richard Carlson (Don't Sweat the Small Stuff).

It is not work that kills men, it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more on a man that he can bear. But worry is rust upon the blade. It is not movement that destroys the machinery, but friction. ~ Henry Ward Beecher

Hear the meaning within the word. ~ William Shakespeare

A wise man learns by the mistakes of others, a fool by his own. ~ Latin Proverb

How well I have learned that there is no fence to sit on between heaven and hell. There is a deep, wide gulf, a chasm, and in that chasm is no place for any man. ~ Johnny Cash

Riddles

A. It walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon and three legs in the evening. What is it?

B. I never was, am always to be. No one ever saw me, nor ever will. And yet I am the confidence of all, to live and breathe on this terrestrial ball. What am I?

C. At night they come without being fetched. By day they are lost without being stolen. What are they?

D. I am a box that holds keys without locks, yet they can unlock your soul. What am I?

Fun Facts

A 10-gallon hat barely holds 6 pints.

A cockroach can live several weeks with its head cut off.

A hippo can open its mouth wide enough to fit a 4 foot tall child inside.

A jellyfish is 95 percent water.

Weird Laws

Indiana: In Indianapolis, no horse shall be driven or ridden on any street in the city at a speed in excess of ten (10) miles per hour.

Kentucky: A female shall not appear in a bathing suit on any highway within this state.

Ohio: In Youngstown, you may not run out of gas.

Oklahoma: It is illegal to have a sleeping donkey in your bathtub after 7pm

Answers: A) Man (or woman) crawls on all fours as a baby, walks on two legs as an adult and uses two legs and a cane when they're old. B) Tomorrow or the future. C) The stars. D) A piano

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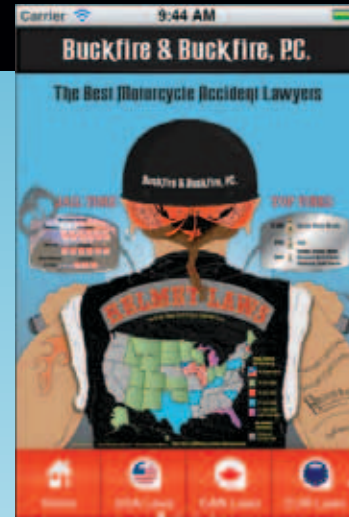
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The Motorcycle Helmet Laws App, Created by Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C., Motorcycle Accident Attorneys, Allows Riders To Access Important Helmet Law Information for Bike Trips Across U.S., Canada, Europe and Australia; Available for Download on iTunes and Google Play Store

Southfield, MI (February 7, 2012) – A new free motorcycle helmet App has been developed for bikers riding their motorcycles across the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia. The Helmet Laws App, created by the Michigan personal injury law firm of Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C., provides bikers with the helmet laws for every state, country, or province that they might encounter on their road trip. Now available for immediate download, the Motorcycle Helmet Laws App allows motorcyclists to access important helmet law information quickly and conveniently right from their smartphone. The App is available for the iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch, and Android.

To download the free app, just go to iTunes or Google Play Store and search for "Motorcycle Helmet Laws." To watch a demo video of how the app works, as well as learn more about the Motorcycle Helmet Laws App and the Law Firm of Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C., visit <http://bit.ly/MIMotorcycleAccidentLawyers>

About Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C.



The personal injury attorneys at Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C. are nationally recognized as top legal experts in motorcycle accident injury cases. The award-winning law firm has a reputation for meticulous case preparation

– an approach that results in major verdicts and settlements for their injured clients. The attorneys at Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C. have earned the highest possible rating in the legal profession for their skill and integrity and are rated "Superb" as top rated Michigan motorcycle accident lawyers by the most prestigious Internet lawyer rating service. They are also members of ABATE and frequently speak to bikers and motorcycle clubs on important insurance issues affecting Michigan bikers. For more information, visit <http://www.BuckfireLaw.com>

"The idea for the Motorcycle Helmet Laws App came from the tremendous interest we experienced with the creation of our State by State Motorcycle Helmet Laws Infographic, which visually displayed the helmet law requirements in every state in the United States," says Partner and Attorney Lawrence Buckfire. "As a free resource to bikers, we created the App to provide motorcyclists with the helmet law requirements for every geographic part of their trip."

In addition to noting individual helmet laws, there are many other additional features and valuable resources for bikers available as part of the App, which include:

- Access helmet laws in multiple countries.
- GPS Bike Finder allows users to place a GPS pin for their bike's location and set a time for when the user needs to return. This feature also allows you to quickly and easily email your current location to your friends.
- Submit images of cool helmets and see your images in the cool helmet gallery.
- Utilize the accident checklist – what to do after a motorcycle accident.
- Take and save photographs of motorcycle damage and accident scene.
- Receive discounts at some of your favorite bike shops around the country.
- Connect with fellow bikers and read recent informational blog entries with the social media feature.
- Access the Buckfire & Buckfire, P.C. law firm website motorcycle resource center.
- Contact the best motorcycle accident lawyers to discuss your legal rights and options.

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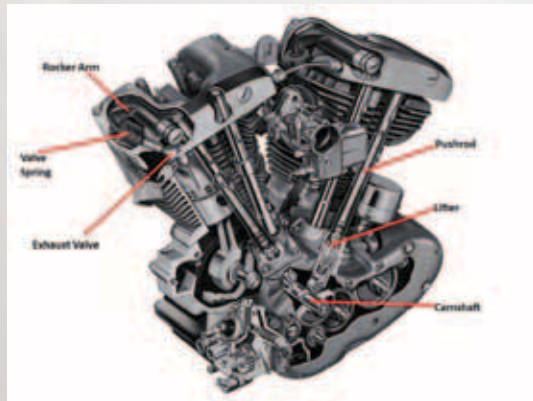
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Last month we talked about stage one items and how we get more air and fuel in and get more exhaust out, now lets take it all up a notch! Getting a camshaft into your bike will help your stage one upgrades work even better, and get some serious response from your motor. I don't want to be too technical so I would like to make this simple and keep with the typical overhead valve pushrod engine (sorry, no flatheads or overhead cam engines today). Basically there are two things limiting your stage one's ability to let all that glorious fuel/air mixture into your motor and get the exhaust out, and they are your camshaft(s) and heads, today we are going to talk about camshafts and how a nice cam can really wake your bike up!



Shovelhead Cutaway

The Basics

What the heck does a camshaft do anyway? Well, let's start with a quick explanation of valve train components. The heart of your engine is the camshaft which is usually a chunk of forged steel that is ground down so that it is a shaft with eccentric lobes; the typical camshaft has twice as many lobes as cylinders. For example, a two cylinder engine with two valves per head will have four lobes, two intake and two exhaust, whether it is a single cam, two cams, or a Sportster four cam setup, it still has four lobes total, as long as it is a two valve per cylinder head. There are multiple valves per cylinder styles, but remember we are keeping it simple today, great motor heads! The camshaft is driven by the crankshaft via a chain(s) or gears and it has the responsibility of opening the intake and exhaust valves. This can be either a pushrod style or overhead cam setup. A pushrod setup uses camshaft(s) lifters, pushrods, and rocker arms to make it all work (typical Harley and some metric V engines). An overhead cam system puts the cam up top above the valves and deletes the lifters, pushrods and rocker arms; this system is used on the Harley V-Rod and many metric bikes, mostly the inline four and six cylinder ones.

A camshaft operates at one half the rotation speed of the crankshaft, so the crank has to rotate twice to each single rotation of the cam, this completes the four stroke cycle (intake, compression, power, exhaust).

For the rest of the article, I am going to focus on pushrod style engines. The crank rotates the cam, the lobes on the cam push up or let down the lifters which operates the pushrods in turn this makes the rocker arms rotate either opening the valve or allow it close from the pressure of the valve springs, this process will allow air/fuel mixture in and the exhaust out at the right times.

That's the components and a basic description of what there functions are, next we will go into a description and terminology of cam grinds and what engineers look for in each particular grind for a particular result, such as lift, duration, overlap, lobe centerline, lobe separation angle, and valve timing

Camshafts... it's all about the Lift and Duration!

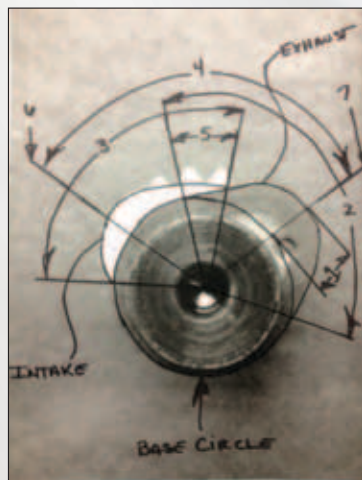


Sportster Cams

Here we will talk valve lift and not cam lift, while cam lift on some engines are identical to valve lift there is a separation of each term. Why can it be different you ask? Rocker arm ratio ... if you have a Knucklehead the rocker arm ratio is 1.000:1, Panhead 1.500:1, Shovelhead 1.420:1, and the Evolution and Twincam are 1.625:1. So in the spirit of keeping it simple ... valve lift it is! Valve lift is the amount of separation of the valve from the cylinder heads valve seat, in theory the more lift you have the more air/fuel mixture can come in and the more exhaust can go out and the more power you have (both torque and horsepower). Some limiting factors are the heads flow capabilities, valve springs, case clearance (on twincams S&S solved the case clearance problems with their gear drive system by reversing the direction of the rear cam, very cool) and piston clearance. Your head flow capabilities will be your first limiting factor (valve springs can be in 04 and earlier engines) So there is no reason to put a huge cam in if your heads will not let the flow in and out, and you can actually lose power.

Duration

Camshaft duration is how long the valve will be open, simplistically put the more duration the higher RPM horsepower is obtainable, however low RPM torque is sacrificed. It is measured from the point at which the lobe first ramps up opening off the base circle until it ramps down and closes onto the base circle.



I took a cam and painted the intake lobe white to differentiate it from the exhaust lobe and did some scribbling to help give you a visual of the terms I have been talking about...hope it helps.

- 1) Cam Lobe total lift
- 2) Exhaust lobe duration
- 3) Intake lobe duration
- 4) Lobe separation angle or LSA
- 5) Overlap
- 6) Intake lobe centerline
- 7) Exhaust lobe centerline

Overlap

Valve overlap is the angle in crankshaft degrees that both the intake and exhaust valves are open; it is at the end of the exhaust stroke and the beginning of the intake stroke. Increasing lift duration and/or decreasing lobe separation increases overlap. At high engine speeds, overlap allows the exhaust gasses exiting help pull the air/fuel mixture into the cylinder. In theory the more you twist that throttle increasing engine RPMs the better this process works. There are tradeoffs as always, while increasing overlap, increases top-end power it will reduce your low-speed power and idle quality.

Lobe Separation Angle (LSA)

Lobe separation is the angle in camshaft degrees between the maximum lift points of the intake and exhaust valves. It is the result of the placement of the intake and exhaust lobes on the camshaft. Lobe separation affects valve overlap, which affects the power curve, idle quality, idle vacuum, and so on. As a rule of thumb, a tighter LSA improves midrange torque and results in a faster revving engine. A tight LSA also tends to produce a narrower powerband since the torque and horsepower peaks usually occur closer together. An engine with a narrow powerband usually requires higher ratio gears for optimum acceleration. In contrast, a wider LSA produces a broader powerband and more peak power. A wide LSA also improves idle quality and fuel economy while reducing exhaust emissions.

Lobe Centerline

Intake and Exhaust cam lobe centerlines are imaginary lines that simultaneously pass through the point of maximum lift on the lobe's nose and the camshaft's center of rotation axis. The point at where the actual centerline of the intake lobe occurs in relationship to Top Dead Center (TDC) position of the piston is defined in degrees of crankshaft rotation after top dead center (ATDC).

The valve is closed when the tappet is moving along the cam's base circle surface. The ramps on the lobe start the valve's opening and finish its closing. The time from which the valve leaves its seat to the time it again is seated results in the cam lobe's duration. The intake lobe centerline is calculated by dividing the intake duration by 2, then subtracting the intake valve opening. The values of the cam's intake and exhaust lobe centerlines are used in the calculation of another specification called Lobe Separation Angle.

What camshaft should you pick?

You are going to have to compile a bit of information for you or your local shop to make you cam decision. What type of riding do you do? Do you tow? Two riders or one? Are you a rider that wants a ton of take of torque and a nice amount of speed or do you want top end speed? What kind of machine and rider weight

are we talking here? What kind of exhaust and air cleaner do you have or want. What are the total engine upgrades you desire? Are you going to do headwork and increase bore size? Take some time do some research and talk to some shops and riders and see what they like, then make a wise choice ... it's no fun buying more than one cam.

Note: Depending on the year of Harley you have, you may want to select a gear driven cam to get away from the early twin cam chain tensioner problems or upgrade to the new chain tensioner style. This tensioner can go out as early as 10K miles but may last 40K, bad part if you don't catch it there is a possibility of some serious engine damage. Where ever you are in mileage if you have a 1999-2005 you should inspect the tensioner. Harley makes a nice upgrade that is about \$500 plus labor to install, which includes a new cam plate and hydraulic tensioners and a high flow oil pump.



Some other considerations

I have not discussed the other items you need to look at, like the cam selection for a carbureted bike verses an injected bike, valve springs, adjustable pushrods, and lifter selections ... these will need to be addressed upon your cam install too, not to mention installing new cam bearings ... a MUST!

OK I am done for today, I hope you are getting ready to ride soon and keeping a big smile on! A shameless plug here ... We will be at the Gibraltar Trade Center in Mount Clemens on March 23-24th for their huge Custom Bike Show and Expo! Come see us and say hello!

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Mackinaw City, MI. 49701
800-633-1515

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517-394-7840
www.huntshogshop.com

Paragon Leather
7215 S Westnedge Ave.
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269-323-9483
Paragonleather.com

Retail Warehouse
1640 S Centerville Rd.
Sturgis, MI. 49091
269-651-2464

INSURANCE

Cycle Insurance Specialists
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2140 44th ST. SE
Grand Rapids, MI. 49508
800-815-9372
www.bestbikerate.com

Irving Insurance Agency, INC
3033 N Linden Rd.
Flint, MI. 48504
810-230-0250

Biker Owned
Safeguard Insurance Agency
3214 Fashion Square Blvd
Saginaw, MI 48603
989-799-4800
smetiva214@yahoo.com

PHOTOGRAPHY

Diamond Photo
Tom Rossman
586-899-7442
www.diamond-photo.us
facebook.com/Tom.Diamond.Photo

Kathleen Howell Photography
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www.kathleenhowell.com
734-644-2954

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Wixom, MI 48393
248-773-0004 studio
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Fax: 734-439-7279
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Shields Fire Protection
5066 S. Seven Mile Rd.
Bay City, Mi. 48706
989-737-9335

Victory Biker Church
Pastor Brian "BMAN" McKay
12190 Miller Rd.
Lennon, MI. 48449
810-247-6332
info@victorybikerchurch.org



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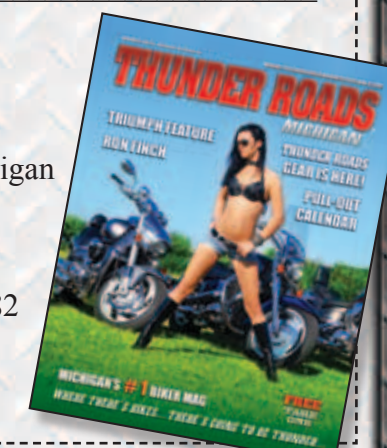
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TRM EVENTS CALENDAR 2013

MARCH

March 2-3
 Gibraltar Trade Center Motorcycle Swap Meet & Expo
 Taylor, MI Sat 12-7 pm & Sun 12-6 pm. Fantastic Bargains

March 4-9
 Wolverine H-D Bike Week
 Clinton Township, MI. Go to www.wolverinehd.com for more info (See full page add inside front cover this issue).

March 6
 Biker Bob's H-D Biker Nights
 See www.bikerbobshd.com for locations (See full page add this issue).

March 8
 Men's/Women's Garage Party
 Sandy's Harley-Davidson, Fremont, MI. 6-8pm. Visit www.sandysharley-davidson.com for more info. (See ad this issue).

March 8
 Relay for Life Spaghetti Dinner Benefit
 Keg Bar & Grille, Waters, MI. 6-8 pm, door prizes, \$7.95 donation for adults, \$4.95 for kids under 10. More info at www.relayforlife.org/otsegocountymi or call 989-731-2055

March 8-17
 Daytona Bike Week, Daytona Beach, FL.

March 10
 Giant Motorcycle Swap Meet
 Cleveland, OH. I-X Center, One I-X Center Drive. Adults \$9, Kids \$2. (See ad this issue).

March 15
 "TTT" Talk to the Tech
 Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI. 5:30-7 pm. Maintenance of your motorcycle. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info.

March 15
 7th Annual Women's Garage Party
 Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI. 5:30-7 pm. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info.

March 16
 Zips H-D Used Bike Sale
 Zips 45th Parallel H-D, Gaylord & Mackinaw City, MI. www.zips45thhd.com (See ad this issue).

March 16
 Soup Cook-off
 Capitol H-D, Dimondale, MI. Sponsored by Capitol area H.O.G. Chapter. 12-2:30 pm, \$5 donation to taste. More info www.capitolhd.com

March 16-17
 St. Patrick's Party
 Biker Bob's H-D, Taylor, MI. 10 am- 5 pm. Also, from 1-2pm Clinic Series being held on Boom Audio & Helmets. www.bikerbobshd.com (see full page add this issue).

March 17
 2013, Kalamazoo (Michigan) Wings Stadium Show
 40th Annual Kalamazoo (MI) Motorcycle Swap Meet & Parts Expo in Wings Stadium, 10am- 4pm, Buy-Sell-Trade, Bikes, Parts Leather, Food, Beer, www.paragonspromotion.com (See ad this issue).

March 20
 Biker Bob's H-D Biker Nights
 See www.bikerbobshd.com for locations (See full page add this issue).

March 22-23
 Yamaha Spring Open House
 Ray C's Extreme Store, Lapeer, MI. Visit www.raycs.com for more info.

March 22-24
 Biker Bob's H-D Used Bike Sale
 Taylor, MI. www.bikerbobshd.com (See full page add this issue).

March 23
 Michigan Dressers Spring Bash
 Athena Hall Roseville, MI. 7 pm-1 am, live band, dinner, beer, pop, & raffles. Facebook Michigan Dressers MC in Fraser, MI

March 23
 Performance Workshop
 Capitol H-D, Dimondale, MI. 2-2 pm. More info www.capitolhd.com

March 23
 Cancun Connection Kickoff Benefit Bash
 Cancun Connection, Muskegon, MI. Doors open at 6 pm, live music, benefit auction & more. See Sandy Corley Ad this issue for more info or www.cancunconnectionbar.com

March 23-24
 6th Annual Custom Motorcycle Show & Expo
 Gibraltar Trade Center, Mt. Clemens, MI Sat 10-8 & Sun 10-6, Adm. \$7 (See full page add this issue).

March 24
 Giant Motorcycle Swap Meet
 Grand Rapids Deltaplex, 11 am- 4 pm, Visit www.motorcycleswap.com for more info. (See ad this issue).

March 28
 Stevens Cycle Bike Night
 Stevens Cycle, Bay City, MI. 5-8pm. Food, entertainment & prizes. More info at www.stevenscycle.com (See full page add this issue).

March 30
 10th Annual Cadillac Motorcycle Swap Meet & Expo
 Wexford County Civic Center, Cadillac, MI 10 am- 4 pm, Adults \$6, Buy-Sell-Trade, Bikes, Parts Leather, Food, Beer, www.paragonspromotion.com

APRIL

April 5
 Boot Camp
 Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI. 5:30-7 pm. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info (See ad this issue).

April 5-6
 24th Annual Pigfest
 Mid-Michigan Motorcyclist & Ramada Lansing Hotel, Lansing, MI
 Must pre-register. Overnight accommodations available. Pool party, raffles, music, & cash bar. For more info contact 517-316-1337 or www.harleyrider.net

April 5-6
 Spring Open House
 Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI held during regular business hours. Demo rides & food. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info (See ad this issue).

April 6
 Wolverine H-D Motorcycle Boot Camp
 Clinton Township, MI. See www.wolverinehd.com for more info (See full page add inside front cover this issue).

April 13
 ABATE Region 20 Annual Awareness Party
 Union City Field, Flint, MI. Charity benefiting "Look Twice, Save a Life". \$10 person, more info at www.abatemichregion20.com

April 13
 Guns & Hoses Relay for Life Benefit
 Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI Held during regular business hours. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info.

April 14
 Detroit Area Giant Motorcycle Swap Meet
 The Suburban Collection Showplace, Novi, MI \$9 Adults, more info at 800-968-4242 or motorcycleswap.com (See ad this issue).

April 20
 Michigan Blood Drive
 Zips 45th Parallel Harley-Davidson, Gaylord, MI. Contact 989-732-8000 for more info. (See ad this issue).

April 21
 Tri-Cities Giant Motorcycle Swap Meet
 Birch Run Expo Center, Birch Run, MI 11-4pm. More info at 800-968-4242

April 21
 Motor City Chapter 2368 Ladies of Harley Indoor Swap Meet & Garage Sale
 Joy Manor, Westland, MI 10 am- 4 pm, contact Laura at loh@motorcityhog.com for more info.

continued on next page

GIANT MOTORCYCLE SWAP MEETS

- '12's - '13's
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4.21.13	TRI-CITIES	Birch Run Expo Center	11600 N Beyer Road

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GIANT MOTORCYCLE SWAP MEETS

April 24-28
Laughlin River Run, Laughlin, NV.

April 27
"Moses" Bib Bash
Museum of Moses, McBain (Vogel Center), MI. 11-2 pm, Wear your bib overalls, prizes. For more info call 231-825-2219 or visit www.museumofmoses.com

April 28
8th Annual Blessing of the Bikes and Bike Show
Gibraltar Trade Center, Mt. Clemens, MI Reg. 11am, Blessing & Bike Show at 2pm. More info contact pastortroyns@yahoo.com (See ad this issue).

MAY

May 4
2nd Annual Hastings Motorcycle Swap Meet
Barry County Expo Center, Hastings, MI 10 am- 4 pm, visit www.paragonpromotion.com for more info.

May 4-5
Thunder Across the Thumb Caro, MI. In Honor of our Servicing & Fallen Soldiers. Bike show, police escorted ride, food & all welcome. For more info call Bill 989-823-2554 or go to www.thumbmotorcyclechrome.com

May 4-5
WERA Sportsman Series
Grattan Raceway Park, Belding, MI
More info at 770-720-5010 or wera.com

May 5
Walneck's Motorcycle Swap Meet & Bike Show
Monroe Co. Fairgrounds, MI 8am-3 pm, www.walneckswap.com or 630-985-2097

May 5
14th Annual Church of the Living Word's Blessing of the Bikers
Ovid, MI Arrival 9:30-10:30, Service 10:30-11:30, Hog Roast 11:30, \$5 all you can eat, bike show at noon, blessing at 1:30pm, charity ride at 2pm. More info at www.cotlw.org or call 989-834-5950

May 10-19
Myrtle Beach Bike Week, Myrtle Beach, SC.

May 11
29th Peotone Motorcycle Show & Parts Expo (Indoor & Outdoor Event)
Will County Fairgrounds, Peotone, IL 10am- 4 pm, contact www.paragonpromotion.com for more info.

May 11
33rd Annual Midland Motorcycle / Classic Car Swap Meet & Show
Midland County Fairgrounds, Midland, MI \$7 Adult, 12 & under free. More info contact 989-835-8486 or cspeaker@charter.net

May 11
1st Annual Somerset Beach Blessing of the Bikes
Somerset Beach Campground, Somerset Center, MI Reg. at 10am, blessing at noon, \$5 person. More info contact John 269-808-7512 or docjohn85@yahoo.com

May 11
Annual Blessing of the Bikes
First Church of the Nazarene, Jackson, MI. Starts at 11am, blessing at 1pm. No Alcohol allowed, MI Veterans Traveling Wall, prizes, bike show. For more info call 517-782-7084

May 16
2013 Tecumseh Classic Car, Bike & Bicycle Show Series
United Bank & Trust Hickman Financial Center parking lot, Tecumseh, MI
Check in at Gregory's Barber Shop from 5:30-7pm, more info at 517-424-6555 / 517-424-6003 or email kwelch@tecumseh.mi.us

May 16-19
Blessing of the Bikes- Camp ALLY for CF
Baldwin, MI. Benefits Cystic Fibrosis, on-site camping, bike games & pig roast. See www.blessingofthebikesbaldwin.com for **more info.**

May 17
Harley's at the Dragway
Milan Dragway, MI 4pm- 12am (See full page ad this issue).

May 17th
13th Annual Pride Ride
Lansing, MI A motorcycle safety awareness ride to remind all to Look Twice & Save a Life. Free, police escorted motorcycle ride and show. Reg. 8am-9am. Line up 9:30am, ride 10am sharp. More info contact Barb at baroercrc@aol.com, or Linda at turtlehatch@att.net or 517 694-7914

May 17-19
Paragon Rocks the Blessing at 41st Annual Blessing of Bikes Festival
Baldwin, MI. Vendors, food fest, and camping. Gates open at 9 am, \$5 donation per bike. More than 40,000 bikers attend. Contact www.paragonpromotion.com for more info.

May 18
St. Stans Blessing of the Wheels Motorcycle & Car Show
Bay City, MI Blessing at noon. More info at 989-894-0832 or www.baycitystans.com

May 18
Sandy's Harley-Davidson Spring Open House
Fremont, MI 8 am-3pm, go to www.sandysharley-davidson.com for more info

May 18
ABATE of Michigan Awareness Ride/ Fund Raiser
Kritter's Hideaway, Rapid City, MI
Breakfast 10 am, blessing noon with ride to follow. Food, fun, 50/50 & silent auction.

May 18
Rest in Peace Run, hosted by Abate of MI Region 7. Starts at Noon from Evergreen Park--Ride in Memory of Deceased Region 7 Members--Donations Accepted to help pay for R.I.P. Memorial--989-673-4743.

May 19
4th Annual Antique Motorcycle Swap Meet & Bike Show
Centreville, MI Wolverine Chapter

March 23
MRF Fund Night (Motorcycle Riders Foundation) Hosted by Abate of MI Region 7. Held at Farmers Tavern, Ruth, MI 3-9pm, Spaghetti Dinner, and all the fixin's \$9.00. Fun & Games, 50/50s, live auction. Test your skills on the Virtual Reality Run for \$5.00. All proceeds go to help support the MRF! more info www.abateofmichigan-7.org--989-864-3714

May 25-26
25th Annual Spring Valpo-Fest Motorcycle-Car Show & Swap Meet
Porter County Expo Center, Valparaiso, IN 9 am-4pm. Contact www.paragonpromotion.com for more info.

May 26
Val & Susie's Veterans Poker Run
Regis. 10-12 at American Legion in South Haven, all proceeds go to Veteran Families at Christmas, \$10.00 person. More info call Twisted Twin Custom Motorcycles 269-637-3395 or contact our Facebook Page

May 30-June 1
Harley Heroes
Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI. Held during regular business hours. Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info

May 30--June 3rd
20th Annual Evergreen Park Benefit--Sponsored by Abate of Michigan Region 7, Bands, Showers, Girls, Games, Bike Show, Vendors. \$20 per bike, \$20.00 per vehicle inside Park & \$30.00 for RVs. Golf Carts only for Handicap--more info at www.abateofmichigan-7.org or call 1-989-673-4743.

May 31-June 2
Arachnophobia / Fear Spyder
Ray C's Extreme Store, Lapeer, MI
Visit www.raycs.com for more info.

March 31- June 9
Ohio Bike Week, Sandusky, OH.

JUNE

June 1st
C&S H-D Mt. Pleasant, MI Open House & Central Michigan HOG Chapter Bike Raffle drawing, for details and raffle tickets call 989-772-5513

June 1-2
Blessed in Hell Sponsored by Abate of Michigan Region 14
Hell Creek Ranch, 10866 Cedar Lake Road near Pinckney. Swap meet, bike show, music, and vendors. Adm. \$10.00 per bike. For more information call (313) 407-4671.

June 7-9
Great Lakes Harley Round-up
Interlochen, MI. Motorcycle rally, more info at http://www.cycle-moore.com/motorcycleshopcampground.php?page_location=roundup

June 8
The 18th Annual Vintage Motorcycle Ride
Hickory Corners, MI. Free Ride. Reg. 9-10am. Ride at 10am. For more info contact 770-427-4820.

June 8
Toni & Trish Memorial Run
Willew Lounge, Bay City, MI Starts at noon and goes till 2am. Bands, Beer & Bikes. For more info contact Willew Lounge or Bubba's Tri-City Cycles.

June 8
Laconia Bike Week, Laconia, NH.

June 13-15
25th Annual Sandy Corley Memorial Run
Double JJ Resort, Rothbury, MI. Live music, bike show, auction & bike events. For more info go to www.sandysharley-davidson.com (See ad this issue).

June 15
Cops on a Run - a benefit for the Michigan Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Poker Run begins 2233 Burdette St, Ferndale, MI. 8am- 10pm. Police escorted, \$25 rider, \$25 passenger, for more info contact 313-930-3853 or facebook page ww.facebook.com/copsonarun

June 15-16
AHRMA Road Racing
Grattan Raceway Park, Belding, MI
Vintage racing. For more info call 615-420-6435 or <http://dev.ahrma.org>

June 15-17
Blaney Park Rendevous
Blaney Park, Mueller Township, MI For more info call 906-586-3477 or www.blaneyparkrendevous.com/index.htm

June 20
2013 Tecumseh Classic Car, Bike & Bicycle Show Series
United Bank & Trust Hickman Financial Center parking lot, Tecumseh, MI Check in at Gregory's Barber Shop from 5:30-7pm, for more info call 517-424-6555 / 517-424-6003 or email kwelch@tecumseh.mi.us

June 21
Harley's at the Dragway
Milan Dragway, MI. 4pm - 12am, (See full page ad this issue).

June 21-23
8th Annual Ray C's Rodeo
Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info.

June 23
Poker Run
Ray C's H-D, Lapeer, MI Visit www.raycsh-d.com for more info.

June 23
ABATE Reg 12 Annual Poker Run
Eagles, Lawton, MI Great prizes, sign up at 11am, Kickstands up at NOON For more info contact Jackie 269-330-1542

June 26-29
SturgisFest 2013
Downtown Sturgis, MI, Motorcycle Rally, More info at www.sturgisfestmi.com

June 28-29
Thunder on the Grand
Barry Expo Fair Grounds, Hastings, MI 100% of \$ raised goes to American Cancer Society. More info at www.thunderonthegrand.com or 517-282-9846

JULY

July 6
AMA Motocross- Red Bud National Red Bud Trail, Buchanan, MI. More info at -media@mxsportspracing.com

July 9-14
Rivertown Bike Week Expo
DeltaPlex Arena, Grand Rapids, MI. Benefits Wounded Warrior Project. More info 616-437-0973 or www.rivertownbikeweek.com

July 12-13
Wheels of Thunder
Grass Lake, MI. Battle of the bands, vendors, custom bike builders, poker run, stunt riders, free admission, Contact Joe for more info 517-474-6222 or smokenjoe63@yahoo.com

July 13
3rd Annual Ride for the Walk Poker Run
Mulliken Roadhouse, Mulliken, MI
Sign in at 10am, kick stands up at 10:45am. \$10 bike, \$5 passenger, door prizes and live music. More info e-mail jberry3412@yahoo.com

July 13
Freedom Run
Starts at Hot Rod H-D, regis 11, departs Noon. See www.hotrodhd.com for more info

July 14
28th Peotone (Illinois) Motorcycle Show & Parts Expo (Indoor/Outdoor)
Will County Fairgrounds, Peotone, IL. 10 am- 4pm, more info www.paragonpromotion.com.

July 14-21
Ogemaw Hills Bike Week
Ogemaw County Fairground, West Branch, MI. More info 989-896-6429 or www.ogemahillsbikeweek.com

July 18
2013 Tecumseh Classic Car, Bike & Bicycle Show Series
United Bank & Trust Hickman Financial Center parking lot, Tecumseh, MI.
Check in at Gregory's Barber Shop from 5:30-7pm, More info at 517-424-6555 / 517-424-6003 or email kwelch@tecumseh.mi.us

July 18-21
7th Annual Muskegon Bike Time
Downtown Muskegon, MI. More info at 317-236-6515 or www.muskegonbike-time.com

July 19
Harley's at the Dragway
Milan Dragway, MI. 4 pm - 12 am, (See full page ad this issue).

July 25-27
Michigan State HOG Rally
Alpena, MI. Music, activities, & vendors. More info at 517-930-1509

July 26-28
Detroit Bike Week
Commerce Township, MI More info at www.detroitbikeweek.com

AUGUST

August 3
Northhaven Resort Biker Bash Weekend
Brooklyn, MI Motorcycle rally, clothing optional, poker run, on-site camping. More info email velmaatnorthhaven@aol.com or call 517-592-6170

August 4
2nd Annual Kevin "Moses" Memorial Ride
Museum of Moses, Vogel Center, MI. 11am. UPS 98.5 Michael J will be live, no fees, all donations to the museum, hamburgers, hot dogs and homemade

ice cream, prizes and raffle for 110th Anniversary collectibles. For more info contact Karla 231-825-2219

August 5-11
Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, Sturgis, SD.

August 9-10
Del Shannon Car Show
Coopersville, MI Car enthusiasts, motorcyclist and general public. More info at 616-947-2055

August 10
Harley's at the Dragway
Milan Dragway, MI 3pm - 12am, (See full page ad this issue).

August 10-11
WERA Sportsman Series Motorcycle Racing
Grattan Raceway Park, Belding, MI
More info 770-720-5010

August 14-18
The Americas 911 Ride
Days Inn, Manistee, MI. Reg. fee \$150 rider/ \$40 passenger, includes stops in Somerset, Pennsylvania, Washington DC and New York City. For more info call 231-398-3611 or <http://americas-911ride.org>

August 15
2013 Tecumseh Classic Car, Bike & Bicycle Show Series
United Bank & Trust Hickman Financial Center parking lot, Tecumseh, MI
Check in at Gregory's Barber Shop from 5:30-7pm, more info at 517-424-6555 / 517-424-6003 or email kwelch@tecumseh.mi.us

August 17
Ribbon Ride for Autism Awareness Poker Run
Big D's Trikes & Bikes, Palmyra, MI. Reg. 9-11. Rain or Shine, \$20 Rider/\$10 passenger. More info at 517-215-3887 or millie@autismhopeoflenawee.org or facebook Autism HOPE of Lenawee Motorcycle Run

August 22-25
Porcupine Bash 2013
Otter Lake Campground, Chatham, MI. Destination rides, games, food, camping. More info at 906-439-5111 or www.porcupinebash.com

August 23-24
Hot Rods and Harleys- 10th Anniversary
Mulliken, MI. Eaton County's Largest Street Party, Rain or Shine, Free Car, Motorcycle, Bicycle Show, & Vendor Space. Fri 6- midnight, Sat 9am-1am. More info: 517-927-7981 or www.hotrods-n-harleys.org

August 25
Michigan Dual Sport/Ride for Kids
Ann Arbor, MI Sponsored by Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation. More info 800-253-6530 or email pbtfus@pbtfus.org

August 30- September 1
Leathernecks MC 2013 Muster
Wolverine, Lumbermen Park. Open to everyone 21 and older. \$25 per couple or \$15 person gets you in for the week-end. Band, bike show, camping. More info contact liljoekeyes@yahoo.com

SEPTEMBER

September 15
Walneck's Motorcycle Swap Meet & Bike Show
Monroe County Fairgrounds, Monroe, MI. 8am- 3pm, Adm. \$6, vendors \$40. More info at www.walneckswap.com

September 19
2013 Tecumseh Classic Car, Bike & Bicycle Show Series
United Bank & Trust Hickman Financial Center parking lot, Tecumseh, MI
Check in at Gregory's Barber Shop from 5:30-7pm, more info at 517-424-6555 / 517-424-6003 or email kwelch@tecumseh.mi.us

OCTOBER

October 17-20
Biketoberfest, Daytona Beach, FL.

October 20
40th Annual Motorcycle Swap Meet & Parts Expo
Kalamazoo County Expo Center & Fairgrounds, Kalamazoo, MI 10am- 4pm, Adm. \$7, More info at www.kalamazooswap.com or email Paragonleather@yahoo.com

EVENT LISTINGS ARE FREE!!!

Increase your attendance by posting your event in Thunder Roads Magazine of Michigan

All Advertised Events in our Magazine will have their event Posted on the Pull Out Calendar (when admissible) and your Event will be Highlighted in the Thunder Roads Events Calendar of the Magazine and an EVENT Tab will be added to the page with your ad.
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Your Michigan Biker Connection
(Call about our Special Discounts for Charity Events)

To get your event listed in Thunder Roads Magazine and on our website, send the information to Editor@thunderroadsmichigan.com
Event information must be received prior to the 10th of the month preceding the event month to be posted in the magazine.

Remember to call ahead before planning to attend any event as the information/dates may change. Thunder Roads is Not responsible for errors or omissions.

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Lansing GIANT Swap Meet

by Kirk Quenby



Giant Motorcycle Swap Meet was the place to be at the downtown Lansing Center on January 27th! It was a freezing cold Sunday here in the Capitol City, but a perfect day to do what I en-

joy most – anything motorcycling. I have been attending this hometown event so long that it seems like a meet and greet event or a reunion of sorts.



If you have never been to a swap meet it is the place to find everything motorcycle in one place. It is always good to get to a popular swap meet early to get a parking spot. Once parked, I already have my plan of action and head for the door. My strategy is to look around, say hi to old friends, and take photos for Thunder Cam.

Giant Swap Meets are a great place to get tires, leather, parts (old and new) to get ready for spring riding. Which by the time you read this . . . is right around the corner.

Enjoy the pics and see you this spring.



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ABATE OF MICHIGAN

HOW ABOUT THAT CYCLE ENDORSEMENT?

I must confess that when I turned 16 in 1976 and went to get my cycle endorsement, it wasn't much of a fuss. I rode my Honda to the Secretary of State's office, took a very short written test, then demonstrated my ability to do a figure eight and brake to a stop in the parking lot.

As far as I know there were no motorcycle safety courses at that time, and definitely none in the rural area of the state I grew up in. I learned how to ride in the fields and on the trails around the area, and then on the local roads and highways. I did everything wrong that can be done wrong, and was fortunate on more occasions than I care to think about some 37 years later.

I admit I was lucky, and am a survivor of a lot of possible scenarios and crashes that just never happened to me. I have always owned a motorcycle since that first one, and I rode a lot. In hindsight, I would guess it was a good ten years at least before sense started taking hold, and skill by virtue of experience taught me the valuable techniques and knowledge needed to truly be a safe operator of a motorcycle.

It's no longer so easy to get a cycle endorsement. And while it's not inordinately difficult, it does at a minimum require a practical demonstration of ability and knowledge of the techniques it otherwise takes years of experience and a lot of luck to get. These days inexpensive training courses also allow new riders, (or old riders without an endorsement), to get the training and techniques and use the graduation from the course as the skills demonstration component of getting their endorsement.

ABATE of Michigan has lobbied the legislature for years to create and maintain the availability of these training courses. ABATE instructors teach many of these courses and train the trainers of these courses. The state sponsored courses are offered for \$25. That's for a full weekend of on the bike training that will literally put years of skill creating knowledge in your hands. And it will make you legal to ride.

About half of all the motorcycle crashes, resultant injuries and deaths each year in Michigan are perpetrated by un-endorsed riders of motorcycles. Motorcyclist safety has always been the intended priority of ABATE of Michigan. Non-motorcyclists and those with a profit margin may not agree with that statement

based on our helmet position, but we have always been of the mind that decreasing crashes is a far better answer to decreasing death and injury than making people put on a helmet. And the reality of that fact is evident.

ABATE of Michigan is going to work with the OHSP this year to do everything we can to ensure only endorsed motorcyclists are on the roads in Michigan. While this is only one aspect of motorcyclists safety and crash prevention ABATE of Michigan will be working on, it is going to receive special attention as being one of the main issues that needs to be addressed.

It's not that difficult. Go to the Secretary of State or Secretary of State Website and get a copy of the Motorcycle Operator pamphlet, this lays it out for you. You will need to either take a rider skill test administered by a testing organization (they have referrals), or pass a motorcycle safety training course. Then submit your test certificate within 1 year to the SOS. The endorsement fee is \$13.50, which is a lot cheaper than a misdemeanor ticket and the points on your license. Google "ABATE of Michigan" and follow the links on our website for a complete list of courses, dates, times, and contact numbers. The courses are by far the best and easiest way to get your endorsement, if not maybe save your life. I have never spoken to a single course graduate who has not thought it was the greatest thing since sliced bread. I have seen both my wife and my daughter before and after the course on a motorcycle, and I have no doubt that the course is worth the time and the \$25. If you have been putting it off, just do it.



Rusty Bongard
Communications Director, ABATE of Michigan
Asst. State Rep. MRF
Co-Director B.O.L.T. of Michigan
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NCOM NEWS BYTES 10-06
Compiled & Edited by Bill Bish,
National Coalition of Motorcyclists

CONGRESS TO CONSIDER BARRING E15 ETHANOL GAS

Legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate to overturn EPA approval of the sale of E15 gasoline. Calling the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's actions to allow the 15% ethanol blend "irresponsible" and "unfair to consumers," U.S. Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Sen. David Vitter (R-LA) filed a bill on Valentine's Day, February 14th that would reverse EPA waivers allowing E15 to be sold to the public for use in most modern cars and light-duty trucks.

"Whether you drive a car, truck, boat, or tractor, misfueling with E15 could result in engine failure, increased emissions, and the voiding of warranty coverage," Vitter said in announcing S. 344.

"EPA's flawed waivers allowing E15 amount to government bureaucrats issuing short-sighted regulations that negatively impact families and businesses across the country," added Wicker, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

No motorcycles or ATVs are approved to use E15, and manufacturers warn that its use could damage engines and void warranties.

In related news, in an effort to prevent consumers from inadvertently misfueling non-approved vehicles with E15, the EPA has announced a new requirement for gas stations that sell E15 to provide a separate E10/E0 pump. Retailers would be required to have a label on pumps that dispense multiple fuel blends of E15-and-higher that reads: "Passenger Vehicles Only. Use in Other Vehicles, Engines and Equipment May Violate Federal Law," and to post signs that indicate the location of the dedicated E10-or-lower fuel pump.

MIC OPPOSES MINIMUM NOISE LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLES

The Motorcycle Industry Council announced its opposition to a proposed rule by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that would require electric motorcycles to emit a minimum sound to protect pedestrians.

The MIC recently submitted comments opposing NHTSA's published Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for FMVSS No. 141, Minimum Sound Requirements for Hybrid and Electric Vehicles, which would set minimum sound requirements for hybrid and electric vehicles, including but not limited to, motorcycles. Pursuant to the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act in 2010, FMVSS No. 141 is designed to ensure that blind, visually impaired and other pedestrians are able to detect nearby hybrid and electric vehicles in a range of ambient environments.

In the MIC's comments, the motorcycle industry group argued that because of the unique attributes of motorcycles, NHTSA should not need to require a minimum sound for them. The MIC says that motorcycle riders are better able to see and avoid pedestrians because their sight is unobstructed, and motorcyclists are more alert because of their vulnerability. The MIC also stated that electric motorcycles are not quiet, so they shouldn't need to be subject to minimum sound requirements.

The MIC stated further that adding a speaker system to electric motorcycles to emit sounds would be an issue because motorcycles have less space to add such a system, the weight of the system would have a large effect on the motorcycle's low-speed stability, energy consumption of the speaker system would have a greater impact on a motorcycle's range and the price of installing the system would be higher than with automobiles.

NHTSA is seeking comments on minimum sound requirements through March 15, and details can be found at www.federalregister.gov.

ARIZONA BIKERS LOBBY FOR ANTI-PROFILING BILL

A hearing room filled with patch-wearing motorcycle club members broke out in cheers on February 6 as an Arizona Senate public safety committee voted to approve a bill requiring police to take training highlighting a ban on profiling of motorcyclists by law enforcement officers.

Senator Judy Burges (R-Sun City) sponsored the anti-profiling bill to address complaints from motorcycle club members who say they're frequently stopped by police for no legitimate reason.

The bill would require the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (known as AzPOST) to include courses emphasizing the prohibition against stopping a biker for riding or wearing club colors, or questioning or searching them based only on those factors.

Rick Rodriguez of Glendale, a member of the ALMA Motorcycle Club, said that harassment of patch-wearing bikers by police is rampant. "It's not illegal to be an Elk, it's not illegal to be an Eagle, it's not illegal to be a Shriner, a Knight of Columbus," he told the Associated Press. "We wear collective marks, we ride motorcycles, that's what we like to do. I understand the average Joe citizen doesn't feel our plight. But when they get done with bikers, who are they going to pick on next?"

Although the measure passed 4-0, with three Democratic members absent, committee chairman Sen. Chester Crandell cautioned the jubilant crowd that the bill still has a long way to go before it becomes law and needs major changes.

TEXAS BIKERS LOBBY FOR CRASH PREVENTION ACT

Suits and leather jackets rubbed shoulders in the Capitol's corridors in Austin, Texas on Monday, January 28, as the two disparate groups share a concern over education funding; while the state's universities lobbied lawmakers over the General Appropriations bill's impact on higher education, motorcycle associations are concerned that funds allocated last session to the Texas Department of Public Safety are not being used effectively to support road safety and thereby costing taxpayers.

More money is needed for motorcycle training and to educate the public about sharing the road with riders, said Terri Williams, a spokesperson for the Texas Motorcycle Rights Association (TMRA2) and on behalf of the Texas Confederation of Clubs and Independents. Texas' "Share the Road" campaign isn't long enough, only lasting the month of May, while states with yearlong programs have fewer accidents, which saves taxpayers money.

The motorcycle groups are asking state lawmakers to pass the Motorcycle Crash Prevention Act, a new bill aimed at lowering the number of motorcycle accidents across Texas by providing additional funding to expand Texas' "Share the Road" program -- a public service campaign intended to make drivers more aware of motorcycles on the road -- and if the proposed bill becomes law, it would also fund more training for riders.

OHIO MODIFIES HANDLEBAR HEIGHT LAW

Ohio has modified its handlebar height law using language amended into S.B. 114 by John Kasich to change the limit from 15 inches from the lowest point of the saddle to no higher than shoulder height of the operator when seated in the operator's seat or saddle. The bill also changes the definition of a motorcycle by creating a "cab-enclosed motorcycle" classification for two- or three-wheeled vehicles having an occupant compartment top that is either permanent or removable. The bill was signed into law on December 19, 2012 and changes take effect March 19, 2013.

CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS UNVEIL LANE-SHARING RULES

About 87% of California motorcycle riders reportedly slide between cars on crowded roadways -- while only half of car drivers know it's legal and 7% admit they've tried to block them -- which is why the California Highway Patrol is now providing guidance to safely maneuver the white lines.

California is the only state in the country where so-called "lane-splitting" or "lane-sharing" isn't illegal, but state authorities have never, until now, told motorcyclists how to weave between traffic safely.

The new rules, which the CHP posted on their website after consulting with other state agencies and motorcycle-rider groups as part of the California Motorcyclist Safety Program which trains new riders in the state, apply to city streets, highways and freeways across the Golden State.

"Basically, what we're most interested in is the speeds," said Sgt. Mark Pope, statewide motorcycle safety coordinator for the CHP. "You should lane-split no faster than 10 mph over the speed of traffic around you, and we recommend riders not split at all if the traffic is faster than 30 mph."

CHP officers have always had the legal authority to ticket motorcyclists who were driving dangerously fast, Pope said, but the new rules are designed to provide specifics.

The new written guidelines, which carry no legal weight, can be found at <http://bit.ly/XxlRJB>

NEW MOTORCYCLE SALES REV UP

Motorcycle sales in the United States revved up in 2012, rising a healthy 2.6% over 2011, according to a report released by the Motorcycle Industry Council. Better yet, the trade group said, retail activity was up in all four motorcycle "segments" -- the first time that has happened since 2002 -- with increases in scooter, dual-purpose, off-road and on-highway motorcycle sales.

Scooter sales rose the most, at 7.7%, with dual-purpose motorcycles following closely at 7.4%. Sales of dirt bikes rose 2.1%, while those of on-highway bikes, which make up by far the largest segment in terms of overall numbers, went up the least, at 1.8%.

The numbers were in line with expectations, as the MIC reported in December that for the first time since the market softened in 2006 and then crashed in 2008, it anticipated reporting an increase in sales figures.

Just over 1.1 million motorcycles were sold in 2006, and fewer than half that many in 2011 with 452,386 total new units sold in the U.S.

JAPANESE MOTORCYCLE EXPORTS TO U.S. FLATTEN FOLLOWING DRAMATIC RISE

Japanese manufacturers in 2012 exported 166,601 motorcycles to the United

States, an increase of 1% compared to 2011, following a dramatic 87% increase in 2011 after the OEMs exported only 88,074 motorcycles to the country in 2010.

JAMA reports that exports worldwide in 2012 decreased 5% to 479,163 after last year's upturn.

These figures come courtesy of the searchable database of the Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association. They pertain to the Big Four: Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha.

USED BIKE MARKET EXPERIENCES UPTURN

Used motorcycle sales have heated up, sparking optimism at dealerships where trade-ins have become more valuable.

As the economy has improved, even if it's been marginal, more people have decided to go ahead and buy a motorcycle. And if they can't afford a new bike, it could be a used one.

Used motorcycle prices have recovered meaningfully since 2008, rising to a level that supports a healthy demand for new bikes as well, according to a recent survey from Robert W. Baird & Co.

Used Harley prices were up 7% from a year ago and remain well above the low points found in the recession, said Baird analyst Craig Kennison who analyzed motorcycle sales data from the National Automobile Dealers Association. "If the demand for used motorcycles picks up, it usually suggests the demand for new bikes will go up as well," Kennison said.

2013 NCOM CONVENTION IN RENO

The 28th annual NCOM Convention will be held Mother's Day weekend, May 9-12, 2013 at the Silver Legacy Resort-Casino located at 407 N. Virginia St. in Reno, Nevada.

This annual gathering will draw bikers' rights activists from across the country to discuss topics of concern to all riders, so reserve your room now for the special NCOM rate of \$95 by calling (800) 687-8733.

Registration fees for the NCOM Convention are \$80 including the Silver Spoke Awards Banquet on Saturday night, or \$45 for the Convention only. All motorcyclists are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Meetings, seminars and group discussions will focus on legislative efforts and litigation techniques to benefit our right to ride and Freedom of the Road.

To pre-register, call the National Coalition of Motorcyclists at (800) 525-5355 or visit www.ON-A-BIKE.com.

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~ Henry Ford (1863-1947) American industrialist

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