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COVER

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 PHOTO / BIKE OWNER Chett Hill
 BIKE 2013 H-D Street Glide

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LETTER FROM THE OWNER

Welcome Back

It's good to be back in the saddle again. I haven't been able to ride yet because as I am writing this there is still snow on the ground, salt on the roads, and it's only 36 degrees out. However, I am happy to be back in the saddle of publishing *Thunder Roads* again. Six months went by like the blink of an eye, but a lot has happened these past six months and I find myself in a state of gratitude for all of it.

On the cover is a picture of my dear friend Heather. What a sweetheart and natural beauty, both inside and out.

In this issue, you will find our favorite monthly features such as *Veterans Corner*, *In the Shop* and *Jokers Wild*, but there's a couple new ones you will want to check out. Take a look at the calendar of events so you can make plans to be at those awesome events. I just want to say thank you again to all that participated on Thunder Fun Night. To all our stops and sponsors, it was another year for the books.

As the events keep rolling in, I hope that you all have a great time, be safe, and please remember to patronize our advertisers. It is because of them that *Thunder Roads* is FREE.

We are looking for Ride Stops for this years annual Ride n' Win contest—so please tell your favorite stops to reach out to us so we can make them a Ride Stop. My contact info is just to the left of this article; contact me for more information.

I am also looking for a part-time sales representative, too. The position will only be seasonal since we are publishing just through the riding season, but it's a fun way to make a little extra spending money and have some fun while doing it! Contact me and I will fill you in on the details.

Be sure to like *Thunder Roads Magazine of Michigan* on Facebook to keep up-to-date with the latest happenings. Also, make sure to check out our website at ThunderRoadsMichigan.com for special announcements, featured articles and for upcoming events.

Remember you can purchase Thunderwear online at the website; just click on Thunder Store. Thunderwear always makes a great gift!

Thank you to all of our loyal advertisers—we appreciate you! Thank you, readers, for your support and making *Thunder Roads Magazine* #1!

Now for some "Mo" Advice:

Follow your soul, open your eyes to truth, listen for answers, feel what's right and receive all that is yours with a heart of gratitude.

Jody Mohowitsch
 "Jody Mo"



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The Positive Shift



What No One Wants To Talk About

Most would know me to have an aptitude for mentoring, educating, inspiring, encouraging, and empowering individuals to be the most extraordinary people they can be.

I am the founder of The Positive Shift, a consulting firm that does educating and motivational speaking. I am honored to be the new Director of Business Development for Family Funeral Care. The position fits perfectly with my enthusiasm for interacting with community members and educating them on life skills.

Many community members I meet with have been through similar struggles. Still, they understand we are all connected somehow and we can come out of anything stronger than ever. It's all in how we handle each situation.

It's important to know and understand where you are in life. Planning as much as possible is vital. If you're getting married, having a baby, changing jobs, losing a loved one or celebrating a new chapter in life, you are constantly going through stages of planning the next steps of your future.

Even funeral planning – an obviously sad life event – can be turned into a plus in people's lives. As an educator, I am able to talk about things that no one wants to discuss and connected them with an advisor who can help them plan their lasting legacy, 100% their way. When we think about funeral planning, it's not as bad as we think if we are proactive and have an open mind.

My biggest return on investment with Family Funeral Care is to feel and see peoples' comfort of understating the process and knowledge they gained. It lets me know I have done my part, especially when they come over and give me a big hug for no other reason than to say thank you.

For more information on Family Funeral Care, email Stacie at Stacie.zotkovich@dignitymemorial.com or call 248-682-0200.

Until then...Don't Coast in Neutral, Positive Shift Ahead!

~ **Stacie René**
Founder of The Positive Shift LLC
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"Event Funeral Planning ~ An Obviously Sad Life Event ~ Can Be Turned into a Plus in People's Lives" ~ Stacie Rene



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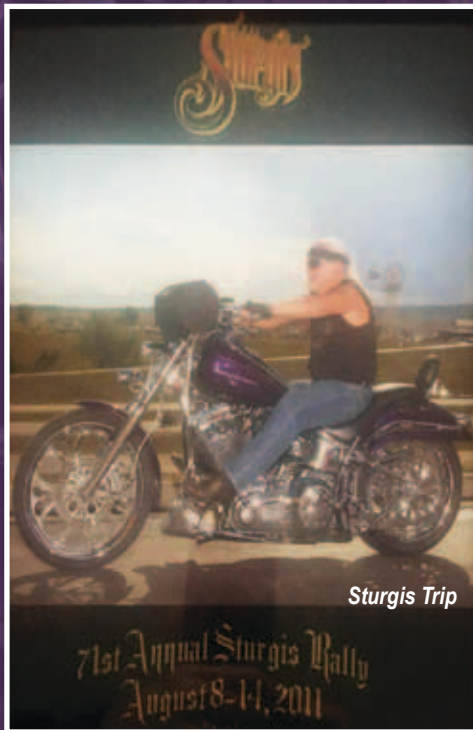
Dwight Fiske "Chopper"



When I first bought the bike



Me and my first bike ~
1965 305 Honda
Scrambler



Sturgis Trip

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I bought my first motorcycle in 1965. It was a 305 Honda Scrambler. I had a handful of bikes in between, but on 12/23/01, I purchased my 2002 Harley-Davidson Softail Deuce that I have now. It was cold out and there was some snow on the ground, but not on the roads. Fuzzy at Gildner's Harley-Davidson spent a lot of time going over the bike. Within six months, I was making changes and slowly over the past 18 years it has become the bike that it is. It's been called a lot of things: "Purple People Eater" to "Chopper's bike." I have met so many people that I now call my friends. The biker community is a world of friends from all different walks of life. My passion is riding, whether it's a short ride or a long ride. I met Jody in my office many years ago. Believe it or not, she sold DRUGS—she worked for a pharmaceutical company. She is so biker-friendly. Love that woman and best of all, she is my friend.

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IF you have not attended a Thunder Fun Night yet...well, you will want to make sure you sign up next year. I typically host the night of fun in January, February, or occasionally March. Why in the middle of winter? First, I don't want to compete with any advertiser event, and in the winter, there are not usually any events except for swap meets going on. Since Thunder Roads is supported by advertisers, they come first and I want to make sure I am not stepping on any toes. Also, because we bikers get a little stir-crazy in the wintertime and this event gives us something fun and safe to do and an opportunity to meet up with friends we haven't seen since we were able to ride. We can also make new friends that share our passion. It's funny to watch friendships form from this event. I have introduced friends to many other friends and now they are all friends with that friend—try to say that five times fast!

I will warn those that have not attended this event that it is not for the faint of heart.

We dance, sing, and party like rock stars and just have some good ol' drama-free fun!

Some people attend the event in a four-person group, some solo, but no one is ever left out and a good time is always had by all. People can check in early and get the party started or enjoy the hotel amenities, and then we meet in the lobby and grab dinner (very important to put food in the bellies of these wild animals). The party bus picks us up from the hotel and away we go.

Throughout the night, we raffle off prizes at each stop. I would like to thank the following sponsors for their contributions to Thunder Fun Night 2019: Thank you to the Bay Valley Resort for accommodations, Midnight Madness Party Bus, Ned Seeburger

of Compound BBQ which was delicious. Thanks also to the hosts of our Stops: 702 Club, My Alibi Bar & Grill, WillLew Lounge, Iron Horse Bar & Grill, our sponsors Great Lakes

H-D, Shiawassee H-D, Dunbar Metal Arts, SunKini Tan Salon, Baker Transmission, leuter Insurance, and Billy D for taking photos. It was a big success—thank you!

Appreciate seeing everyone that came out of hibernation and attended this year. See you again soon!

VETERANS CORNER



Talons Out Honor Flight now accepting Vietnam veterans, despite rising costs

The Kalamazoo-area branch of Honor Flight has announced it is now accepting applications from Vietnam War veterans. Talons Out Honor Flight is a volunteer-run nonprofit that offers veterans paid flights to tour the National World War II Memorial and other sites in Washington D.C.

As the World War II and Korean War veteran population ages, dwindling numbers of applicants led to the decision to open applications to Vietnam War veterans this year, the Portage-based organization announced Tuesday, Feb. 5. When the Southwest Michigan branch of Honor Flight was founded in 2013, it focused solely on World War II veterans. In 2016, the organization also began accepting Korean War veterans. It also has been open to terminally ill veterans of all wars.

The decision to add Vietnam War veteran applicants came amid discussion of the nonprofit's financial challenges, Talons Out President Bobbie Bradley said. Five years ago, a 186-passenger plane cost about \$52,000 to charter, Bradley said. Over the last few years, the cost to charter the same plane has increased to \$93,000, she said. Many other Honor Flight hubs across the nation face similar financial challenges, Bradley said. Some have closed after serving WWII veterans and Korean War veterans, she said.

The national Honor Flight Network was founded in 2007 out of a merger of two similar efforts spearheaded by individuals in Ohio and North Carolina. Since then, the network has grown to include about 150 regional Honor Flight hubs, which include Talons Out Honor Flight in Southwest Michigan and Mid-Michigan Honor Flight, based in Mecosta.

"After much discussion, we found there was only one direction we could move, and that is forward," Bradley said. With rising costs, the organization may only be able to fund two trips a year, rather than its usual three to four trips, Bradley said. Providing veterans a quality trip to the nation's capital will remain the priority, she said. Talons Out Honor Flight's first flight of the year is expected to depart April 20, 2019, from Kalamazoo Battle Creek International Airport.

Saginaw VA Medical Center working to combat veteran suicide

For the past 11 years, the Aleda E. Lutz Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Saginaw has worked with veterans across mid-Michigan to help them with mental health issues, addiction and preventing suicide.

"Of all the veterans that we serve, almost 22 percent have mental health issues, and with that, it puts our veterans at relatively high risk for suicidal thoughts (and) suicidal behavior," said Barbara Bates, chief of staff and acting medical director of the facility.

The center, which cares for over 36,700 veterans in the 35-county area they serve, has had a suicide prevention program implemented since 2008 with Sharleen Gray as a prevention coordinator since the beginning. Staff help to oversee roughly 83 veterans who are considered a high-risk for suicidal behavior.

"The program has grown exponentially," she said, adding they now have two full-time and a part-time case manager. "The VA has really adopted a philosophy of suicide being everybody's business."

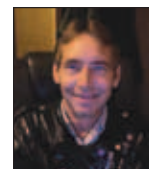
Bates added that one of the startling factors staff has found out about veteran suicide is that many veterans who take their own lives are not in the agency system or attempting to get in the system.

Dr. Nazzareno Liegghio said there is still a stigma around veteran's dealing with mental health issues and they won't always talk to the medical center. "There is a stigma of 'man up and move on'... they won't tell us for the fear of what we might do," he joked. "We encourage them to develop the veterans groups outside that are self-led. Veterans like to talk to veterans; they don't trust us."

Carrie Seward, public affairs officer for the center, provided data that shows in 2016 the suicide rate was 1.5 times greater for veterans than non-veteran adults after adjusting for age, gender, and nationality.

Gray added that women veterans are also seeing an increase as well. "There have been a couple of reasons floating around. One is the occurrence of military sexual trauma that is a big one," Gray said. "Also our female veterans are (more) comfortable with firearms unfortunately...we have done a lot to try and engage with the female veterans. They still struggle with feeling comfortable (after serving), and all the pressures of motherhood, it's just a combination."

"Part of the VA's plan is to expand our eyes, ears to the outside to try and identify these patients or these veterans early," Liegghio said. "One of the big ones was the suicide prevention coordinators and case managers that have build upon the need to have a resource right then and there."



David McCallister "Possum"
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The Motorcycle Lawyer... and a YouTube Host?

Immersing Himself in All Things Motorcycle



For over 25 years, we've known **Jason Waechter** as **The Motorcycle Lawyer**. Well, he's still proudly representing injured bikers but, now, he's adding more motorcycle fun to his busy schedule with the launch of a new **YouTube** channel! **Ride Free TV** went live in late 2018 and has been gaining traction in the riding community ever since. The concept comes from a place of wanting to connect more directly, and Jason is all about shining the spotlight on those folks making a difference. He loves attending events across the state of Michigan, getting to know all the players, from the riders to the distributors, as well as the artists and inventors. Now, he can share the experience with his followers, passing on some helpful information and having a great time in the process.

Recent Topics Covered



[Become a Michigan RiderCoach!](#)

As you can imagine, staying connected to the riding community is a high priority to Jason, and the recent **RiderCoach** shortage in Michigan was important to share. Subscribe to our channel today to be among the first to hear about opportunities like this, as well as accident scene management classes and rider certification programs! (Watch: <https://tinyurl.com/RFTV-RiderCoach>)



[Michigan Law Q & A Series](#)

In January 2019, Jason was honored to speak at an **Indian Motorcycle Riders Group** meeting. This talk sparked a great series that covers topics such as Michigan's No-Fault Law, the role of the CY driver's license endorsement and the recent changes to Michigan's Move-Over Law! Do YOU have a question related to Motorcycle Law in the state of Michigan? Let us know on Facebook **@RideFreeTV** and you might just see it answered! (Watch: <https://tinyurl.com/RFTV-MichiganLawSeries>)



[Event Coverage & Shenanigans](#)

You've probably spotted Jason at a swap meet or two, and we try to keep our followers in the know regarding motorcycle events all over the state of Michigan. Now that the season is getting ramped up, we'll be uploading content on upcoming events, every week! AND, if you subscribe to our channel, you'll get immediate access to quality gag reels like the one found HERE: <https://tinyurl.com/RFTV-Bloopers1>



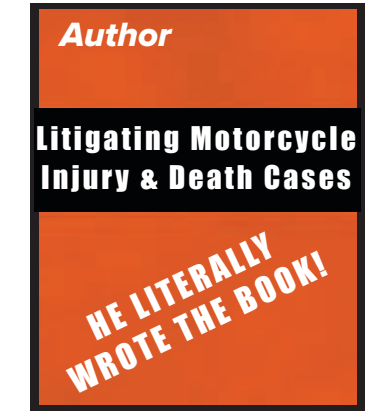
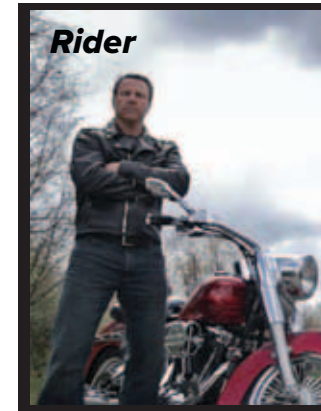
We like to keep things short and sweet at Ride Free TV. You'll find most of our content hanging out around the 1-2-minute mark, so they don't require much of a time commitment. So, what do you say? **SUBSCRIBE** to our YouTube channel at <https://tinyurl.com/RFTV-YouTube> and LIKE us on Facebook **@RideFreeTV**.

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 25 years. A portion of each case settled goes to education resources for bikers, funds to help bikers while their cases are being litigated and our motorcycle accident prevention campaign. Call Attorney Jason Waechter toll-free at 1-877-BIKER LAW or visit www.motorcyclelawyermichigan.com.

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The JOKERS WILD

Definition of A Smart Ass: 'Towken', a biker named Ken who drives a tow truck for a living, was driving along on an old gravel back road and noticed a sign that read: Caution: Low Bridge Ahead. In 5 seconds flat, the bridge is right in front of him and his tow truck gets wedged under it. Several cars are backed up and most are honking out of frustration. Towken is totally pissed. Finally a police car arrives on the scene. The cop gets out of his car and walks up to Towken's driver side window, puts his hands on his hips and says, 'Got stuck, huh?'

Towken shakes his head and says, 'No, actually I was delivering this bridge and just ran totally dry out of gas.'

You can't count your hair.
(providing you still do have hair)

You can't breathe when your tongue is out.
(you just tried didn't you? Of course you can breathe)

You can't say the letter 'P' clearly without parting your lips.
(you just tried didn't you? Of course you can't)

Definition of Honesty: It's 4 a.m. and Joey is flying down the interstate at around 270 mph in his new Hennessey Venom GT. He looks in the mirror and wayyyy further back sees those old familiar flashing blue lights. Joey pulls off onto the shoulder and checks his texts while waiting for the cop to pull up behind him. The cop walks up to the car and says, "Well, I guess you know why I pulled you over?". Joey looks up at him, shrugs his shoulders and replies, "Because I let you".

My wife texted me a selfie in a possible new dress from the fitting room, "Does this make my butt look big?"
I quickly texted back "Noo!"
My phone auto-corrected my reply to "Moo!"
(just a tad scared to go home now)

A wife romantically texted her hubby, "If you are sleeping send me a dream. If you are laughing share the joke. If you are eating send me a bite. The husband texted back "I am currently on the toilet. Please advise".

A Perfect Man
- wakes up at 5 am every day
- exercises daily
- makes the bed
- cleans up after himself

- works quietly and steadily
- does not drink alcohol
- helps out in the kitchen
- does not indulge in the 'night life'
- is always punctual
- prays daily
- reads
- hits the bed at 9 pm sharp
- you can find this perfect man in jail.

Lil' Johnny was antsy as could be while sitting on the hard pew at church. His Uncle V-Twin had promised to take him out riding on his bike after church. His Dad looked over at him and said "I've warned you 3 times now. Next time we're dang sure enough headed out the door."

Sure enough 2 minutes later Lil' Johnny was swinging by his belt loop as his Dad walked him towards the exit. He loudly yelled out, "Y'all be sure and pray for me cause' he's dang sure enough gonna' whup my ass!"

Professional Chef Tip - if you stir coconut oil into your kale it makes it easier to scrape into the trash.

Two blondes are stretched out on their towels on the beach and the one confides "I took a pregnancy test yesterday." The other blonde asks very intently "Wow....so were the questions really hard?"

The first one looks solemnly into the eyes of the other, winks and replies, "No, but the thing that caused having to take the test sure was!"

A college teacher reminds her class of tomorrow's final exam. 'Now class, I won't tolerate any excuses for you not being here tomorrow. I might consider a nuclear attack, a serious personal injury, illness, or a death in your family, but that's about it, nothing else.'

A smart mouthed student in the back of the room raised his hand and asked, 'What would you say if tomorrow I said I was suffering from actual and total sexual exhaustion?' The entire class is reduced to laughter. When silence was restored, the teacher smiled knowingly at the student, shook her head and sweetly said, 'Well, I guess you'd have to write the exam with your other hand wouldn't you?'



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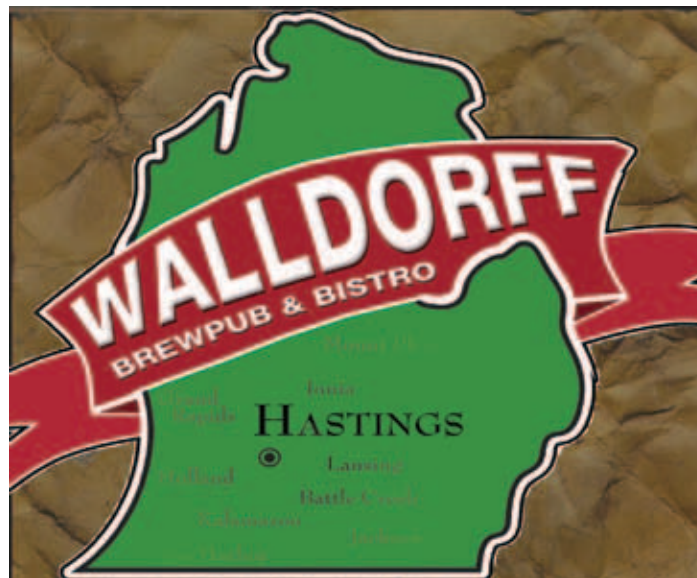
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TRMI EVENTS CALENDAR 2019

Don't forget to email your events to editor@thunderroadsmichigan.com.

Bold events indicate Advertiser/Supporter of Thunder Roads MI - please patronize our advertisers.

APRIL

April 14
Birch Run Motorcycle Swap Meet
Frankenmuth CU Event Center, Birch Run, MI. 10 am-4pm, \$8 pp, for more info or vendor spot call 989-893-5187 (See ad this issue).

April 20
16th Annual Cadillac Motorcycle Swap Meet
Wexford Civic Center, Cadillac, MI. 10 am- 4 pm, \$7pp, 12 & under free, parts, bikes, leather, food, beer & more. For more info call 1-800-800-6034 (See ad this issue).

April 28
38th Annual Grand Rapids Motorcycle Swap Meet
Delta Plex Arena, Grand Rapids, MI. 10 am- 4 pm, \$9pp, 12 & under free, parts, bikes, leather, food, beer & more. For more info call 1-800-800-6034 (See ad this issue).

MAY

May 5
20th Annual Blessing of the Bikers
Church of the Living Word, Ovid, MI. 9:30 am-10:30 am arrival, free refreshments, biker service 10:30 am-11:30 am, live music, hog roast 11:30 am- 1 pm \$5 all you can eat, bike show regis by noon, blessing 1:30 pm, charity ride 1:45 pm \$10pp, raffles & more. (See ad this issue).

May 11
1st Annual Chris Cares Homeless Ride & Blessing Retail Warehouse, Sturgis, MI. event starts 10 am, ride 1 pm, food, door prizes, 50/50, activities for kids, bake sale, family friendly. For more info email: info.chriscares@yahoo.com

May 12
39th Annual Mother's Day Swap Meet & Bike Show
Midland Co. Fairgrounds, Midland, MI. \$5 admiss, 12 & under free, 10 am- 4 pm, ride in bike show 10 am- 3 pm, regis 10 am- 1 pm, sell your bike or parts. For more info call 989-893-5187

May 18
TTBAD Customs Annual Customer Appreciation Day
5912 Mulliken Rd, Charlotte, MI. 2 pm, food, drinks, live music by Homespun from 6 pm-?, everyone welcome. For more info call 517-983-9327

May 18
11th Annual Biker Blessing & Cancer Ride
Merriman Rd Baptist Church, Garden City, MI. Starts 10 am, blessing 1 pm, ride to follow, \$20 rider/ \$25 w/pas-senger, free food, music, bike show, door prizes & more. For more info go to www.mrbcfairriders.com (See add this issue).

May 24-27
24th Annual Hudson Leather Memorial Weekend Motorcycle Rally & Blessing

Hudson Leather Outlet, Pioneer, OH. Live bands, blessing, vendors, bike show-all makes/models, music, food, storewide sale. For more info call 419-485-8531 (See ad & coupon this issue)

May 25-26
Bubba's 19th Annual Memorial Weekend Classic
804 S. Huron, Linwood, MI. 2 days, sat charity bike show, regis 10 am-noon, sun charity poker run, regis 10 am- noon, proceeds to Camp Fish Tales. For more info call 989-697-5525

JUNE

June 2
Blessed in Hell
Hell Creek Ranch, Pinckney/Hell, MI. gates open 10:30 am sharp, \$10 per bike, 4 blessings, ride in bike show, over 20 vendors, food vendors, live band. For more info go to Hellcreekranch.com (See ad this issue).

June 8-9
24th Annual Vintage Motorcycle Show / 2 Day Swap Meet
Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, MI. Sat swap only, Sun show & swap. To regis or for more info go to gilmorecarmuseum.org (See ad this issue).

June 15
Just One More for Ty
Downtown Gladwin, MI. Motorcycle parade starts at noon, ends at Sage Township Hall 1831 Pratt Lake Rd, Gladwin,

MI. All bikes welcome, fish fry & luncheon/drinks at Sage Hall. For more info call/text Lacey 989-329-5612

June 15
Justin Beutel Memorial Run
American Legion Post 443, Sanford, MI. Regis 11 am, kickstands up noon, dinner 5 pm, music, silent auction, event goes to 9 pm. For more info go to Justin Beutel Memorial Run on Facebook.

June 22
19th Annual Great Lakes H-D Street Party
Great Lakes H-D, Bay City, MI. Noon- 6 pm, entertainment, adult beverages & more. For more info call 989-686-0400 (See ad this issue).

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To get your event listed in Thunder Roads Magazine and on our web site, send the information to:

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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.

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Wild and Three



Hi! I'm Barb Wilson, the newest member of the Thunder Roads Michigan family. My hubby Big Guy and I are the proud new owners of a 2017 HD Tri Glide Ultra, in Vivid Black/107 c.i.d.

Big Guy has been riding cycles since the 1970s. He's owned several motorcycles and even a few snowmobiles and boats along the way; his newest goal is to convince me that wind therapy is a necessity in my life.

When we began discussing purchasing a motorcycle, I supported him completely, but I did put my foot down on a couple of issues. One, I wanted some creature comforts—among other things, lots of seat padding. As I explained to him, "I know what those roads are like, and my behind is already cracked; it doesn't need to be broken." In addition, I bought several dead cows' worth of leather—in the form of vests, chaps, jackets, and gloves—to block chilly Michigan breezes and extend the riding season; sturdy helmets, complete with visors; and a well-made pair of comfortable boots. And of course, some really cute T-shirts full of bling were included in my shopping trip.

Second issue: when I'm cold or need a bio break, we STOP. No discussion, no arguments; as soon as the next available restroom-equipped facility appears on the side of the highway, we are aiming toward it in a straight line.

The purpose of my column is to share my trike adventures, and focus on the rides and people we meet along the way. Look for us at a bike event near you—and don't be afraid to come up and introduce yourself!

RIDE ON!




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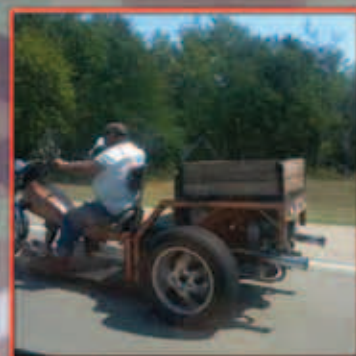
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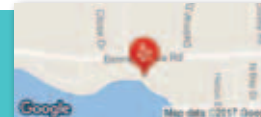


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Jody "Mo's" THUNDER FUN

Inspiration

The mind of man is capable of anything- because everything is in it, all the past as well as all the future. ~ Joseph Conrad

The right man is the one who seizes the moment.
~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Opportunities are seldom labeled. ~ John Shedd

All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. ~ Voltaire

Two men look out through the same bars: one sees mud and one the stars. ~ Frederick Langbridge

Motorcycle Quotes & Sayings Every Biker Should Read

Midnight bugs taste best. ~ Author Unknown

I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.
~ Emo Phillips

If you can still hear your fears, shift a gear. ~ Author Unknown

My prince charming doesn't ride a horse... he rides wheelies.
~ Anonymous

*If you want to be happy for a day, drink.
If you want to be happy for a year, marry.
If you want to be happy for a lifetime, ride a motorcycle.*
~ Anonymous

Did You Know

Mrs. Sally Halterman, from Washington D.C., was the first woman to be issued a license to ride a motorcycle in the year 1937.

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Biker Preacher's Corner

I'm so excited to be writing the Biker Preacher's Corner again! I know we (Thunder Roads of Michigan) took the winter off – but this only means one thing - RIDING SEASON IS ALMOST HERE!!

This month I want to write about something that I've had to deal with over the last few years, and I know many have also dealt with: depression. Yes, even I, a pastor, have struggled with this - the ups and downs of ministry, people coming and going, "brothers" leaving me high and dry, financial problems, people gossiping about me and slandering my good name. You know, that stuff really got me down. In fact, it got so bad that I almost quit. But I didn't and I'm here to tell you that **Jesus set me free!**

Come on, let's be honest here, many quietly suffer with the curse of depression. Every day we see several TV commercials about different types of medication that are designed to treat different types of depression. Most of these meds have long lists of side effects, everything from loss of appetite to suicide. Many self-medicate by using dope, other drugs and alcohol to cover their pain. But these will only make things worse – these only dull the pain, but the problems are still there.

With all that I went through, here's the verse that set me free and once I caught it, my world flipped upright!

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise—dwell on these things." (HCSB)

Let me just say that depression is a lie because it comes from the father of lies – Satan. You know that ol' snake! We can get so caught up in the fears and troubles of life – tied up in knots with all the worries, discouragement and the what-ifs that we lose sight of all the good things in life and most importantly, HOPE.

So, then the choice is ours to make. To stay broke, busted and disgusted or to drop that crap and dwell on, think about, the good stuff going on in our lives. Think about those in your life that love you... your brothers and sisters who have your back and most importantly – Christ Jesus!

Once we start to dwell on what Philippians 4:8 says, all the upright and good stuff in our lives, we start to feel better and then we start to speak life over ourselves and others.

Proverbs 18:21 (HCSB) 21 Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

My friends, look to Jesus Christ! He truly is the only one who can set you free from depressions, sin and death because as John 8:36 says: "Whom the Son sets free is free indeed."

Much love and respect,

Apostle Brian "BMAN" McKay
 Senior Pastor, National President & Founder
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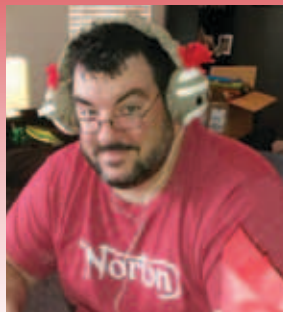
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MIDLIFE CRISIS

PART I OF II

BY Ben Schanz



I feel that a machine can have a soul. Not the same kind of soul that you or I do as humans. Our souls are what makes us human. Soul is defined by Merriam-Webster several ways. The first definition: the immaterial essence, animating principle, or actuating cause of individual life. Wow! That is a pretty powerful definition. “The animating principle.” Think about that for a moment. It is all the little things, the intangible things, that make you, you. One could spend an entire lifetime sorting out what their animating principle is. Some people do, while others only feel the need to sort that out from time to time. Most people, I believe, never do.

Another definition of soul: “the quality that arouses emotion or sentiment.” That is the soul I believe a machine can have. Not all machines possess this. Your toaster, as good as it makes toast, doesn’t. A car—or in my case, a motorcycle—does. I became the owner of a 1977 Harley-Davidson XLCH Sportster around the year 2000. It was built when AMF (American Machine and Foundry) still owned Harley-Davidson and it still has the original gas tank with the AMF logo as part of the Harley-Davidson logo.

In 1969, AMF bought the nearly-bankrupt Harley-Davidson Motor Company. An AMF bike is looked at by many Harley faithful as a black mark on the Harley name, as the quality of bikes built during the AMF years declined to the point that it nearly caused AMF to file bankruptcy. In 1981, Willie G. Davidson, grandson of co-founder William A. Davidson, and a group of investors bought the company from AMF. Although the AMF years are commonly seen as the dark years, I proudly display that AMF logo. I don’t see it as a black mark at all; in fact, I see it as a battle wound and a reminder of survival.

At the time of this writing, the bike is forty-one years old. It was born the same year that I was, so that starts to develop part of the sentiment I hold for this bike and is the part of the core of its soul. The bike still has its original gas tank and fenders. The paint is smoke gray with a pink block-letter Harley-Davidson and AMF logo on the tank with black inside the letters and white outline. The paint cleans up well, although it does show its age in some areas. It appears very much as it did when the original owner took delivery back in 1977. I am the bike’s fourth owner and I am the one who got to bring it back to life, with the help of some very smart and talented friends (you know who you are and I am eternally grateful). I know two of the three previous owners. I feel that they contributed to the soul of the bike in their own ways. My former roommate owned it for a couple years. He rode it fast and hard and the bike really seemed to fit him well as they both were a little rough around the edges. As it happened, he got the last couple good years out of the engine before it needed an overhaul. The owner previous to him rode the thing since it was nearly new and how he rode it, earned the bike some notoriety with some local bikers. He is a friend of a friend’s father we all call Pops. I have heard Pops tell stories about

Ron doing donuts in his front lawn, riding wheelies down the street and doing smoky burnouts when leaving. Some of these stories were confirmed one day while I was having a drink at a local bar. Two old bikers flung the door open and one asked, “Who rides that gray AMF out front?”

I stood up and said, “I do. Why, is it on its side?” I was ready to defend my bike, and myself against these guys, or whomever else I needed to. The bar where we all were was in a part of town that had seen better days, so someone walking by might just knock it over, or two old bikers might cause some trouble because they still have animosity towards AMF.

“No. Who did you get that bike from?” one of them asked.

I had a good idea now where this conversation was heading, so I replied, “Not who you think I did, but I bought it from the guy that he sold it to.”

They looked at each other and smiled. One of them said to the other, “I told you that was Ron’s sporty.” He looked at me and asked, “Have you heard any stories about what that crazy son-of-a-b*tch used to do on that thing?”

I replied, “Some.”

They sat down at the bar to my right and one asked, “Have you heard this one?” That started a conversation where the two of them relived some memories by telling me stories about Ron drag-racing, running from the law, doing wheelies, burnouts and a broken leg, all on my bike. The conversation lasted an hour or so. These two bikers—whom I’d never met, and have never seen since—testified about the soul of my machine before I really knew it even had one.

“The quality that arouses emotion and sentiment.” When I bought the bike, I had a pretty good understanding of the first part of that statement. Riding a motorcycle evokes a certain feeling that is not easy to describe. You hear motorcyclists often talk about the freedom that a motorcycle provides. Riding definitely provides a sense of freedom, but it is a funny feeling. You are still confined by the rules of the road. You stop at red, go at green and obey speed limits (mostly).

I think the freedom is from the confines of the two- or four-doors of a passenger compartment in a car or truck. I feel that maybe what most people mean by “freedom” is control or, better yet, connection. In a conventional passenger car or truck, you sit behind the engine and transmission and you manipulate them through a series of devices. You turn a steering wheel and through a series of gears, motors and pumps, the wheels of the vehicle turn. You press a brake pedal and a booster amplifies your pedal input to supply



the force to slow and stop your vehicle. You lose the raw and visceral sense of control driving a car that you still have when you ride a motorcycle. You sit on the engine. You straddle it. On a motorcycle, you basically sit right on the engine and transmission and almost manipulate them directly. In my case, a cable connects me to the engine and a couple levers to the transmission and

brakes. To turn, you lean the whole bike into the turn. You have ultimate control over the machine and that is what I feel is one of the largest draws about riding a motorcycle.

Another reason I feel people ride motorcycles is speed. They are fast. With the high power-to-weight ratio that most motorcycles have, when you twist the throttle, they go like hell. There is also an element of danger. Outside of a leather jacket, boots, gloves and a helmet, you are vastly unprotected from the elements. If it rains, you get wet. You are also unprotected from a potential disaster. There is inherent risk involved with riding a motorcycle and maybe being close to that edge is what does it for people. Or maybe the sensation of being viewed as an outlaw? I’d imagine it is different for everyone.

All of those elements—freedom, control, speed, danger, the image—they all arouse emotion and that contributes to the soul of the machine. I know there are more, but those are the ones that I relate to. What about that second part of the definition, though? What about the “sentiment” part? There are a lot of things about my bike that do that for me. As I mentioned earlier, it was built the same year I was born. I also mentioned that my former roommate got the last few good years out of it before it needed an overhaul. I don’t say that to spite him; in fact, I’m kind of glad that I needed to take it down to build it back up. Anyone that knows anything about an old Harley engine is that they do require more “attention” than your newer engines. They run hot, leak oil and need adjusting. Eventually they will need new piston rings and other top-end work. I bought the bike at the end of the previous overhaul’s life cycle. Because of that, I have a much more in-depth and detailed knowledge of the engine and the bike as a whole than I feel I would if I bought something newer. During this learning process I leaned on friends with much more mechanical knowledge and ability than I to teach me how to do things and why. I strengthened many of those friendships as a result.

Part II continued in next month’s issue

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Bullet Points

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There's an old adage that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. That may be true but in certain cases, but it can also be disrespectful when what is being imitated goes beyond the superficial.

There was a time many years ago when Harley-Davidson sold their products on the basis that they were either fun, useful, practical, or a less expensive form of transportation. Over the last 30 to 40 years, the marketing for The Motor Company changed from utility and recreation to selling an image; the "biker" image. Whether or not this marketing strategy will continue to be viable into the future is a subject to debate at another time. In the present, we need to look into how the "biker" image came to be and why some folks might find it a bit disrespectful to imitate certain aspects of it.

The image that is so pervasive in society today for those that own and ride Harley-Davidson or similar style motorcycles, is one that at one point in time was considered "dirty" or "uncivilized." Believe it or not, folks used to dress up to go anywhere in public and did so even on motorcycles. However, over the years, this all changed.

We have all heard or know the well-worn story about how returning veterans from WWII began to buy and ride motorcycles for the adrenaline and camaraderie they missed from their time in combat or similar stressful situations. We all know or have heard how this evolved (or devolved depending upon your perspective) into the much publicized (and mostly made up) situations such as Hollister, which created the "outlaw" moniker, but even then, polite society (which was in the majority) still considered this type of enthusiasm and behavior as abhorrent; certainly not something most would want to emulate.

Fast forward another 10 years or so and now you have veterans returning from a different war with different societal viewpoints. Add to this a counter-cultural revolution and you have the beginning and making of the image that so many want to emulate today. Rugged individuals who wanted to live by their own rules or not conform to the norms of polite society, many of whom (but certainly not all) formed associations that we now know as clubs. The

"image" grew mostly from the practical effects of the lifestyle led by these pioneers. Mostly living on the road, clean cloths and haircuts were luxuries and besides, no one wanted to look like the squares anyway. How things have changed where today, the squares want to look and act like those they once vilified and, in many respects, still do, but I digress.

It is important to understand though, that even though these men were rugged individualists, most had certain commonalities they wanted the world to see. For those who had formed or continued older clubs, they wanted the world to know what they were part of and what they were about. Even though they might be a bit dirty or unkempt, they were still part of something that was bigger than just themselves – they had a brotherhood where they could depend upon each other and if nothing else, share their conditions. Their vestment of belonging to this brotherhood for the most part was their vest, which mostly arose from jackets with the sleeves cut (or worn) off. For some of you who may not know, this is where the term "cut" came from.

Over the years, times changed and even the staunchest individualists found themselves having to conform but the traditions bought and paid for in blood, sweat and treasure, live on as is quite evident from the proliferation of the "image." For those who remained and continue to be in the clubs these men formed, fought and sometimes died for, the most important item in their wardrobe is their vest (note short for vestment) or cut. Everything on these vests for a member of a club, especially a 1%er club, has a meaning tying back to the hard-earned traditions bought and paid for by those that came before them. Everything on a 1%er cut is something that the member wearing it has earned; nothing is given.

So, while it may be flattering that you grow a killer goatee and dress up with wallet chains and biker boots, most club members are going to be a bit irritated, and may let you hear about it, if you put things on a vest that represents or even imitates something that they, and especially those that came before them, earned. Harley-Davidson may have sold you on that image and good on them, but you can't buy what someone else has earned and if nothing else, you should respect that.

The Unknown Biker

Courtesy of Thunder Roads Iowa



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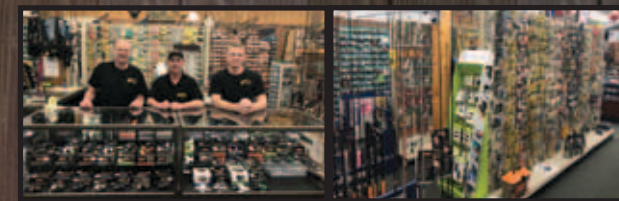
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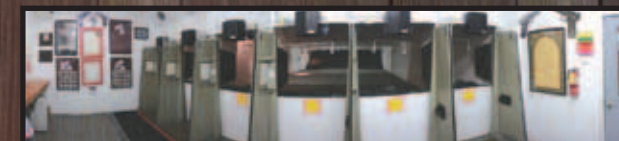
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IN THE SHOP WITH RON

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Before we get started this month, I would like to welcome everyone back to THUNDER ROADS of MICHIGAN. It has been a long strange winter here in our great state but hopefully spring has indeed finally sprung.

When you folks have a chance, give a shout out to Jody Mo; she faced a difficult decision to print the magazine only during the riding season. Whenever you can, please patronize the businesses and service providers that advertise in this (FREE) magazine. After all, they are the ones that make it possible.

Getting ready to ride for the upcoming season is very exciting but let's not get so excited we forget to go over our bikes to insure our riding season is as safe and trouble-free as possible. The riding season here in Michigan is already too short—you don't want to miss any of it because of something that could have been prevented with normal maintenance and/or service procedures.

I prefer to change the engine, transmission, and primary oil every spring, regardless of mileage. If you prefer to wait until mileage dictates that it is time for normal service, that is a decision for each rider. For purposes of this article, we will skip the oil change. Before starting the motorcycle, make sure the battery is fully charged. Check the connections at the battery for tightness and make sure they are not corroded or frayed.



Give the entire motorcycle a thorough visual inspection. Look for anything that looks out of place. Check for loose or missing bolts, any signs of rodent activity, or any leaks that may have developed during storage. If all looks well, start the engine and let it run until it is up to normal operating temperature. While the bike is warming up, check for any oil leaks. I always put a clean piece of cardboard on the floor under my bike; this saves the question of rather or not that spot was already on the floor.



Now is a good time to check all lights, turn signals, brake lights (front and rear), high- and low-beam on headlight, and four-way flashers, if so equipped. Check the horn. At this point, I shut off the engine. While it is cooling down, check the air filter, and service or replace as necessary. With the air filter off, it's a good opportunity to look things over in the carb/throttle body area. Check all hoses and wiring for any cracking, splitting, dry rot, etc. This is a good time to lubricate throttle cables and/or any linkage, if necessary.

Next, start looking at everything from the tires to the tips of the grips. Check tires for proper air pressure, tread depth, bulges, etc. Look closely at the sidewalls for any signs of cracking, splitting or checking.



If your wheels are spoked, check for loose or missing ones. Check mag and aluminum wheels also, as potholes have a way taking their toll. Make sure you check brakes, both front and rear. Lift wheel off ground and turn wheel while applying brake, and listen for any grinding noise. Check for any binding or tight spots and verify that pads release. Check pad thickness. Check drivebelt or chain for excessive wear, alignment and proper tension, look at drive pulleys or sprockets to make sure there are no worn or missing teeth and nothing is bent. Check the front fork tubes for rust or corrosion. Look at seals and dust covers for rips, tears, or leaks. Turn the handle

By Ron Johnson

bars from full right to full left (preferably with wheel off the ground) check for any rough or binding feeling in the steering head bearings; make sure cables are not restricting movement. Look over rear shocks as well for leaks or worn bushings.



Think back to the last couple of rides of last season. Was there anything going on that you were going to "take care of in the off season" that may have slipped your mind?

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