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April 2021 Volume 17 Issue 1

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ON THE COVER

Model: Joshua Leonard

Bike Owner: Mickey Border

Bike:

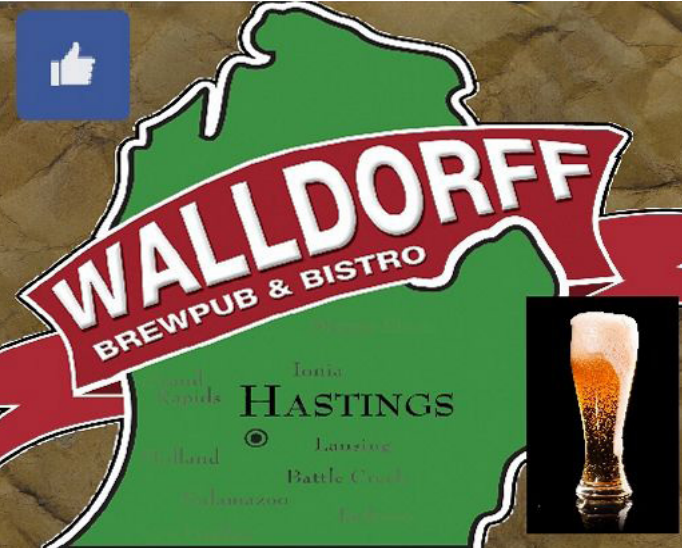

2006 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard

Photographer:

ken sanderson – k3 photography llc

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LETTER FROM THE OWNER *Hard to Say...*

Everything is changing more and more and in my opinion, well, not for the good. So as I sit in my office and compose this letter keep in mind it is currently mid-March. Here in Michigan we are only half open or half closed, depending on how you want to look at that. I have been to Florida about 3 times in the last couple months, one of those was for work and the others to get away from the cold and chaos that feels like our state has become. I know the majority of the people out there that I talk to feel the same way as I do, but to be careful to not step on any toes and squash any snowflakes I will not say too much more other than...gosh it sure was nice seeing the businesses fully open in Florida, the sun and people smiling! I can only hope that will be our state sooner than later.

As I worked on this month's issue it was so nice to see the events coming in and the ads for places that I hope to soon visit. The weather is warming up and the bikes are starting to get out more and more each day as spring arrives. Make sure as "Red" said in her Veteran's Corner article that you service your bikes before that first ride!

I am running a sale on Thunderwear (lol what I like to call Thunder Roads Merchandise), so please check out that ad in this issue! With most events cancelled last year we all could use the support so be sure to patronize the businesses listed in this issue. We have to look out for each other because I am not sure anyone else is at this point. Stay Strong! Respect one another's differences. Just because we do not agree doesn't entitle any of us to demand they be muted. We all have the right to speak our minds. Our veterans fought for us so we could be free. Let's try to remember that during these challenging times.

Don't miss a single issue of Thunder Roads Magazine of Michigan, subscribe today for only \$20 (6 issues) at ThunderRoadsMichigan.com or mail check / money order to PO Box 1782 in Midland, MI 48641-1782.

We still have a few 2020 Thunder Roads Michigan Wall Calendars available NOW ON SALE and with FREE SHIPPING as well, which you can also order at ThunderRoadsMichigan.com proceeds help to support Thunder Roads Magazine of Michigan. If you have a cool bike or car or would like to be considered as one of the models for the 2021-22 18 month wall calendar be sure to contact me via email by submitting a photo. Stay tuned as I hope to release that calendar early this summer.

Now for some "Mo" Advice:

Don't slam doors. You never know when you might want to go back.

Jody Mohowitsch
Jody Mo"

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READERS RIDES

Calvin LaMotte

Three years ago I decided one way to honor veterans would be to dedicate my 1997 Harley-Davidson Sportster to them through a custom paint job with the help of Cycle Works in Clare and artist Joe Pawlowski of Devildog Ink. Now I am a traveling memorial to Veterans. I did this for all veterans, not just for me and not just for Vietnam veterans. I own Cal's Painting, an interior and exterior painting company for houses. I am a dedicated rider and I participate in many fundraiser rides for veterans. I have escorted the Vietnam Wall that moves from Midland to Sanford as well. When I am riding my Harley it attracts a lot of attention everywhere I go people stop to look and take pictures. I plan to keep on riding it as long as I can, then I will give it to my grandson in Arizona if he wants it, if not, I will donate it to the Vietnam War Memorial.



FOR THE 1ST TIME EVER WE HAD A DEAD HEAT AND 2 COVERS WON FOR COVER OF THE YEAR 2020!! We are featuring Thunder Roads® Magazine Indiana this month and Thunder Roads® Pennsylvania in May. Congratulations Winners!

THUNDER ROADS® COVER OF THE YEAR 2020

Indiana Thunder Roads is honored to have made Cover of the year in our first year. We are proud to be part of this prestigious network of great Publishers that have helped form what we have created into our passion. Our house photographer, Michael Maxwell of Sweet Bokeh Photography, makes award winning covers look easy. Picking a gorgeous bike and model are the easy part, transforming the two into a work of art is a skillset that he has mastered. We are so incredibly grateful to partner with such a talented and amazing person that we can also call our friend. The model, Brittany Boden, Freebird, was working for one of our sponsors when we first targeted her to model. As you can see, she is beautiful, bold, and photogenic. She was easy to work with, as she is no stranger to modeling and this particular photo just stood out amongst the thousands, we have taken over dozens of photo shoots. We chose the prize bike sponsored by Street Dreams of Indianapolis for the cover to help promote our Hoosier Thunder Run program to be given away at the Whiskey and Wine Saloon end of the year rally. We also chose this location to feature in the magazine to tie the event together. We would like to thank all our advertisers, sponsors, supporters, and readers for their loyalty making Indiana Thunder Road the biggest and best biker magazine in the state. We appreciate all of you and look forward to an amazing year ahead.

— Rudy and Salina Vargas



HOW TO PICK UP A MOTORCYCLE



A demonstration by Harley-Davidson at the IMS shows how anyone can pick up a dropped bike.

Just about all of us have dropped a motorcycle onto its side at some point. We hate to admit it, as proven by a show of hands (or lack thereof) during a presentation at the Harley-Davidson booth at New York IMS. This presentation demonstrated that anyone, regardless of what they ride, could pick up a dropped motorcycle, and that anyone, no matter who you are, can do it.

The victim here is a Harley Sportster. While among the smallest bikes Harley makes, it's still bigger and heavier than many bikes. You'd have a hard time muscling one upright, unlike a Honda Grom. It was a great choice for this demonstration, being big enough to require the proper technique but not being too heavy, either. Don't worry, the entire area was carpeted to prevent damage to the bike, and all of its fluids were already drained to prevent a spill.

First, make sure the engine is switched off. This may seem obvious, but we're often a bit disoriented after a crash, and may not be thinking entirely clearly. If the bike has fallen on its right side, put the kickstand down. It'll look silly like you just put up an antenna on the dropped bike, but it'll save you if the bike tips too far the other way after you've picked it up. Similarly, make sure the bike is in gear so it won't roll away on you once it's back on its wheels. Either of these could drop the bike a second



time, which would make you look pretty silly.

Next, sit on the edge of the seat as far forward as you can. Grip the handlebar in your left hand and somewhere solid with your right, then

walk the bike backward. At no point do you actually lift with your arms or back. Brute strength is not required. You're levering the bike up, and using the strongest muscles in your body, your legs, to do it.



Keep walking the bike backward until both wheels have touched the ground. The bike will still be at quite an angle when this happens, so you're not done yet.



Slide your posterior onto the seat, readjust your right hand if you need to change your grip, and then keep pushing with your legs. In the case of a taller bike, you may need to slide your butt off the seat to the near side, which you can then use to keep pushing the bike up. Keep walking backward with a firm grip on the bike, and before you know it, it will be back in its upright locked position.

You may have noticed that the person presenting this demonstration is an average-sized woman, not a big tough manly man. She doesn't have the strength to lift the bike, but could not only pick it up using this technique, but she also did it with so little effort that she could narrate the entire process. Then, just to drive the point home, she gently laid the Sportster back down, chose the smallest woman she could find in the audience, and then talked her through picking it up. Although she was small, she had no trouble levering the bike back onto its kickstand. The message here was absolutely not "women are bad bikers, here's what to do when you crash." On the contrary, it was a very positive, empowering presentation. Perhaps after seeing this, woman riders will feel more confident heading out for a ride alone, without worrying that they won't be able to recover from dropping their bike themselves. Who needs a man, anyway? But the technique will work for anyone. I'll certainly be keeping it in mind for the next time my bike takes an unexpected spill.

Article by Justin Hughes
Courtesy of Rideapart.com

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VETERANS CORNER



Welcome Fellow Veterans and Bikers to 2021

Well as we all get ready for 2021 riding, remember there will be many events that you will need to prepare for and schedule in advance. Also, remember there will be events that will help out many organizations, those will be just as important as the ones you do just for yourself. As I am preparing for the season, I initially was considering taking my bike down to this event but reconsidered due to the extreme temperatures we had for a couple of weeks, so I ended up flying. It was a nice flight with a layover in Chicago, but it enlightened me to see the continual aftermath of the effects of "COVID-19" and what it has done to our country. I saw several businesses closed and people that would be normally smiling and talking all covered up with their masks. Don't get me wrong, the mask can be a deterrent for someone that is sick, but I am not a 100% believer of the mask. I think we should open up our schools and businesses, and take care of our veterans before we open our borders! 2020 was a very trying year for everyone, so hopefully 2021 would be a better one.

With that said, I had the opportunity to go to an event in Florida for a remembrance of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, which started on August 2, 1990 and ended on April 12, 1991 with the signing of a treaty 12 March 1991, U.S. troops left their homes and 12 years later (2003) the troops returned. History was repeated in the fateful month of March. With two wars Afghanistan & Iraq. I pondered several times about this this weekend because I am a Desert Storm/OEF/OIF veteran. Going to an event that changed so many lives, what I found is that no matter how long or if you just meet up with some of your brothers and sisters, it's all about the camaraderie. It was an amazing and very moving ceremony commemorating and remembering the 30th Anniversary of Desert Shield/Desert Storm, but it was so much more than that; It was a dedication of a Memorial for the Gold Star families along with the Naval Aircrewman Memorial. It was history of servicemen and women that gave the ultimate sacrifice for this great country. This all took place at Cecil Field POW MIA Memorial in Jacksonville, Florida.

It was a nice drive from St Mary's, GA., where I was staying with some friends. Afterwards, we got to thank our brother and sister veterans for their service, which I truly enjoyed. It was an honor that we as Desert Storm veterans have bestowed to do since the Vietnam Veterans never got a proper Welcome Home. So, let me say it! "Welcome Home" and thank you for your service! With all that is going on in our country it actually felt like a normal day. Well, as normal as it can be on this day. My Desert Storm brothers and sisters that came to the

event gathered together and had a wonderful time with great food (a seafood boil) and great conversation. We then got together a couple more times to go see some of the local area attractions, sea turtles, along with other VFW's, etc. It was an amazing trip. I hope to do more this year to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Desert Storm. They have cancelled the one in May that we have been going to for 5 plus years now.

The trip to D.C. was always one of my favorite places to see, but with everything going on in this country we find ourselves more frustrated than usual. Remember to have patience and plan your rides this year. So, if you are ever in your travels and find a Gold or Blue Star Memorial please take a moment to remember that not only did we lose a brother or sister of arms, but someone out there lost a father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter and they feel the loss also, they served unnoticed with them. Well, we did have a ride "Run to the Wall" scheduled, but like everything it was cancelled.



SHARON K. HARVEY
(RET) TSGT, USA/USAF "RED"

As we prepare for this riding season remember to check out your bike and service it before your first ride. This year let's see you all out there enjoying yourselves and have patience, and enjoy the ride. Wind therapy is just that - therapy. So, get up to speed, check out everything, enjoy the adventure.

Be Safe!

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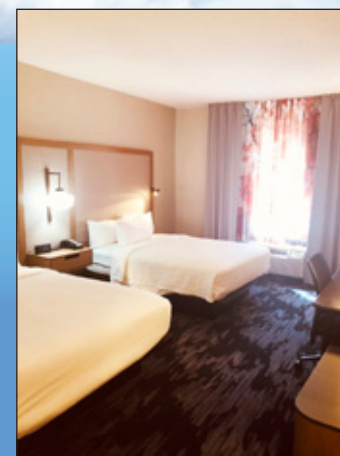
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After 10 years a Kentucky woman had been noticing for some time now that their daughter just did not look like either herself or her husband. She sent off for one of those home DNA kits and sure enough, the daughter did not have any DNA from either her or her hubby. She shared this shocking news with "Rocks" her husband, whom got his nickname from his mom & dad who always shook their head and swore he was dumber than a box of rocks. "Rocks" scratched his head and said, "You really don't remember do you? When we had just left the hospital with our new baby girl she took a huge chit and we were gagging and you said "Take her back in there and change her." "So, that's what I done. I went inside and got a clean one and left the dirty one there."

My new girlfriend got upset because she thinks that I don't like her cooking. To prove her wrong I had another slice of gravy.

Hugh Hefner became a multi-millionaire staying home in his pajamas. Raise your hand if any of you are having the same result.

Cop: Do you know how fast you were going?
Me: I kinda' feel like that's your job.

When I get to work, the first thing I do is hide. I was always taught a good worker is hard to find.

Funny how you can walk around WallyWorld eating grapes and nobody will bother you. But as soon as you pop open a beer, here comes Security.

If you get a home loan at a bank you'll pay on it for 30 years.
If you rob a bank and hide the money, you're out in 10 years.
Follow me for more financial advice.

To the rude woman who flipped me off when I honked at you.
Never mind, your phone probably isn't on top of your car anymore.

It's so weird to think people who are 5 feet tall are only 5 Subways long. Food for thought.

A family is at the dinner table. The young son asks the Father, "Daddy, how many kinds of boobs are there?" The Father, quite surprised, answers, "Well son, a woman goes through three stages. In her 20's her breasts are like round, firm melons. In her 30's and 40's they are like pears, still nice but hanging a bit. After 50, they are like onions." "Onions?" the son asks. "Yes son. When you see them they make you want to cry."

This really upset Momma and the boy's twin sister. "Momma, how many kinds of willie's are there?" Momma smiles and winks at her daughter. "Well my sweet girl, a man also goes through three stages. In his 20's his willy is like an oak tree, mighty and hard. In his 30's and 40's it's like a birch branch, flexible but reliable. After his 50's it's like a Christmas tree." "A Christmas tree?" the daughter asks. "Yes, dead from the root up and the balls are just for decoration."

Who agrees with me that Liquor Stores need to start a Rewards Program cause' I know me and all my buddies are due for a free 5th!

Passenger taps his taxi driver on the shoulder. The driver chits himself, swerves and nearly hits a bus and stops inches from a shop window. "Damn dude, you're a bit jumpy aren't you? All I did was tap you on the shoulder!" "Sorry" says the cabbie. "It's my first day and I've been driving a damn hearse for the last 20 years!"

To Do List: 1. Buy 4 Pigs.
2. Paint 1, 2, 3 & 5 on their backs.
3. Release them in my local WallyWorld.
4. Sit back and watch Security desperately search for number 4. Ahh! good times.

A trucker's wife sees 3 parrots for sale; \$175. \$125. and \$25. She asks why the last one is so cheap. The pet store owner said it used to live in a whore house. The woman laughs and buys it. She gets home and the parrot says, "Wow! A new whore house!" The woman laughs. When her 2 daughters come home the parrot says, "Dang!! 2 new gals!" They all laugh. When her husband walks through the door the parrot perks up and yells out, "Hey Tom! Glad you found the new spot!"

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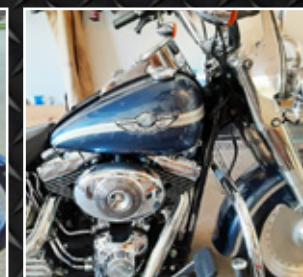
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HOT ROD'S TOPICS

Hello Everyone,

This is a very exciting time for me right now, especially since we are going through such a turbulent time with Covid-19, politics, crappy weather, death, and uncertainty about the future, "but" there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Summer is coming, getting the Covid-19 under control and kicking its ass and friendships that are being rekindled like an ember in a fire. Just start up a conversation with those you haven't seen in a long time and watch the sparks fly. I am so looking forward to my new venture called Hot Rod's Motorcycle Awareness and Suicide Prevention Foundation. A 501(c) (3) Organization that can help to protect bikers and make the public aware that we are out there in great numbers doing charity rides and helping other organizations survive by donating to their cause. Especially one that is close to our members' hearts that have lost someone to suicide in their circle of family and friends. I will try to put events in my articles as I find out more specifics – what they are for and their purpose.

I would like to let everyone to know that I ride with the Eternal Knights Masonic Riding Association in New Boston, whose fundraising priorities are for the VA Homeless Shelter and Charitable Relief and Community Services. What a great bunch of guys and gals who I appreciate as much as one can!

My true love and friends are those that are part of Hot Rod's Motorcycle Awareness and Suicide Prevention Foundation. Without them by my side there would not be

this much excitement in my life right now. For those of you that know me, you know I will not 'yank your chain' when I recommend someone to you. You know that I must truly believe in them and that they will be by your side. One such person is Jason Waechter - The Motorcycle Lawyer, who I would trust my reputation on. He is extremely trustworthy and truly does care! Another one is Thunder Road Magazine and "Jody Mo" who gets the word out through her magazine and influence, which is exactly why it's the right place to promote your biker friendly organization, event or business. If you know someone who wants to advertise in her magazine please call her. We need it for the biking world!

There really is a lot to be thankful for. There is no need for anger, hatred and discrimination. Take a person for the way they treat you and respect you. Judging people without knowing them personally isn't fair! When you get older you actually do get wiser and appreciate every positive and beautiful moment!

May the road rise to meet you and the wind always be at your back,
Hot Rod

If you would like to learn more or become a part of Hot Rod's Motorcycle Awareness and Suicide Prevention Foundation please email me at: HotRodBeaton@gmail.com

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Biker Preacher's Corner

Hello, My brothers and sisters!! I pray that everyone is doing well, has had a good winter (as best winter can be anyway) and are ready for this new season of riding and the freedom of the open road!!

With the Covid scare that still effecting many people's lives in one way or another. I'd like to talk about the hope that we have in Christ Jesus and why we should not fear this plan-demic but have faith in the one who protects and heals us – Jesus.

Psalm 91:1 says, **"The one who lives under the protection of the Most High dwells in the shadow of the Almighty."** (HCSB)

Let me put this in a more personal way for you – when we live, meaning have a relationship with God through Christ Jesus, we live under His protections as we dwell, meaning to live, with Him. I've said it so many times – it seems like no one is listening, but I'm going to keep saying it. God is only found in Relationship with Jesus, not religion, and as sons and daughters of God we find our peace knowing that our Heavenly Fathers has got us covered.

Psalm 91:6–7 goes on to say **"the plague [pandemic, disease] that stalks in darkness, or the pestilence that ravages at noon. ⁷ Though a thousand fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, the pestilence will not reach you."** (HCSB)

To be honest it saddens me to see so many running around in total fear and terror – when the cure too this man-made CCP Virus is Jesus and before I start getting hate mail from this – I've had the Covid as well and like 99.5% of people who get it, I recovered just fine. The worst part of this virus was losing my taste during thanksgiving. What a drag!! LOL!

The Apostle Peter reminds us of what Isaiah 53:5 says – even if we do get sick. When we put our faith in Jesus and declare life (His Word) we are healed by Christ Jesus' Stripes.

1 Peter 2:24 (HCSB) ²⁴ He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; you have been healed by His wounds.

Be encouraged my friends – Look too Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith. He is our Big Brother, our protector and or healer! If you're not there yet wear your mask but don't get mad at people, like me, who don't. God loves you Bikers and so do I.

Much Love, Honor & Respect,

Apostle Brian "BMAN" McKay
Senior Pastor, National President & Founder
Victory Biker Church International
apostlebman@victorybikerchurch.org
www.victorybikerchurch.org



EVENTS



****Don't forget to email your events to Editor@ThunderRoadsMichigan.com Bike Nights are listed in their ads. Bold events indicate Advertiser/Supporter of Thunder Roads MI-please patronize our advertisers. To help you make decisions about large events during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, go to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for health guidelines and be sure to contact the event to make sure it has not been cancelled.**

April

April 30- May 2
69th Annual Detroit Autorama
Cobo Hall, Detroit, MI, \$22 pp, 6-12 \$8,
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vehicles, 30th Noon - 10 pm, 1st - 9 am -
10 pm, 2nd - 10 am - 7 pm. For more info
go to: <https://autorama.com/attend/detroit/>

May

May 2
21st Annual Blessing of the Bikers
Church of the Living Word, Ovid, MI.
Hog roast all you can eat \$5, charity
ride, ride in bike show regis by noon,
50/50, no pets. For more info go to
COTLW.org (See ad this issue).

May 8
Blessing of the Bikes
American Legion Post 141, Howell,
MI. 11 am- 4 pm, \$5 donation, group
blessings every hour on the hour, lunch
& soft drinks avail for purchase, all
bikes welcome. For more info call
Ranger Rick 517-803-7650 (See ad this
issue).

June

June 5
Great Lakes Burn Camp (GLBC) Flint
Axemen ~ MI 6 Fun Run
Meet at Scooters Bar & Grill, Flint, MI.
Regis 10am ~ All Bikes out by Noon, \$10
per bike/ \$5 passenger. For more info
call Halsey at 517-861-0457 (See full
page ad this issue).

June 6
Blessed in Hell
Hell Creek Ranch, Hell, MI. Gates
open 10:30, \$10 per bike, bike show,
live band, 4 blessings; 11:30, 12:30,
1:30, 2:30, over 20 vendors, food
vendors/ live band. For more info go to
HellCreekRanch.com (See ad this issue)

June 11-12
1st Annual Mackinaw City
Motorcycle Rally
All bikes welcome, vendors, beer tent,
poker run, bike show, live music &
more. Details to come. Go to www.mackinawcity.com for more info

June 11-13
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Sturgeon Valley Campground,
Wolverine, MI. ABATE members only
(you may join at event), \$15 in advance,
\$25 at gate, 50/50, camping, food, music,
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269-435-2058

June 12-20
98th Annual Laconia Motorcycle Week
Laconia, New Hampshire. For more info
go to laconiamcweek.com

June 18-20
3rd Annual Michihistrigan Rendezvous
Upper Peninsula Motorcycle Rally, Gould
City, MI. Facebook for more info

June 12
Great Lakes Burn Camp (GLBC)
Nozzlemen M/C Ride
More Details in May issue. Food, Music
& 50/50 Raffle Drawing. For more info
call Michael Moore 734-386-9292 (See
full page ad this issue).

June 26
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(GLBC) BKMC 37 Burn Run
Richland Township Fire Station, 8755
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Drinks, Music
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(See full page ad this issue).

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RIDING REDUCES STRESS



STUDY PROVES THAT RIDING A MOTORCYCLE REDUCES STRESS

By Laura Thomson
Article courtesy of Visordown.com

We knew it!

It's the age old remedy to a bad day, going for a ride. And now a study from the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behaviour, at the University of California, Los Angeles, has proven that riding is, in fact, very good for your mental health.

The study, which was funded by Harley-Davidson America, saw three UCLA researchers use electroencephalogram equipment to record the brain activity and hormone levels of more than 50 motorcyclists before, during and after riding a bike, while driving a car and resting.

And unsurprisingly, the results revealed a number of potential mental and physical benefits of riding, including decreased levels of cortisol, a hormonal marker of stress.

The bike ride resulted in a 28% decrease in biomarkers of stress, while riding a motorcycle for 20 minutes increased participants' heart rates by 11% and adrenaline levels by 27%, which is similar to light exercise.

Equally, changes in the riders' brain activity suggested an increase in alertness similar to drinking a cup of coffee, while sensory focus was enhanced meaning that riders were more alert.

Harley-Davidson plans on using the study's findings to help sell motorcycles.

"We're leveraging the latest technologies as we shift our focus from exclusively motorcycles to growing ridership, so it only made sense to tap technology to explore the impact of riding itself," said Heather Malenshek, Harley USA's senior vice president of marketing.

"We knew riders had reported that motorcycles gave them peace of mind, but no one had really rigorously quantified it before," one of the researchers, neuroscientist Don Vaughn, added.

"When I measured it, these were just the facts I observed," he said.

The male and female participants came from a wide age spectrum, with varying levels of riding experience. While engaging in the surveyed activities they wore a tight cap fitted with electrodes, which could take up to 40 minutes to adjust and make sure the electrodes had a solid connection.

In the tests, they rode for about 20 minutes on somewhat rural roads, in two locations, where traffic wasn't too busy.

However, the researchers added, while the riding reduction in hormonal biomarkers was notable, you could probably get a similar stress reduction in other ways, such as going for a morning jog or playing a round of golf.

"It's not going to completely alter your perception of reality, but it's significant," added Vaughn, who is not a motorcyclist.

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Jody "Mo's" THUNDER FUN

Inspiration

Hitch your wagon to a star. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Leave no stone unturned. —Euripides

Little strokes fell great oaks. —Benjamin Franklin

We must dare to think "unthinkable" thoughts. We must learn to explore all the options and possibilities that confront us in a complex and rapidly changing world.
—William Fulbright

Somebody said that it couldn't be done, but he with a chuckle replied, that maybe it couldn't, but he would be one who wouldn't say so till he'd tried. —Edgar A. Guest

Motorcycle Quotes & Sayings

"Thin leather looks good in the bar, but it won't save your butt from "road rash" if you go down."
-Anonymous

"The only good view of a thunderstorm is in your rearview mirror." -Anonymous

"Sometimes it takes a whole tankful of fuel before you can think straight." -Anonymous

"I don't ride bitch and I don't let bitches ride." -Jody Mo at 21 yrs old said to 2 guys in Deadwood, SD while on her 1989 H-D FLH Police Special.

"I'm not looking for Trouble, I am Trouble." -Jody Mo

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BULLET POINTS

SPEAKING PLAINLY

BY RICK WYATT



George Bernard Shaw wrote that “England and America are two countries separated by a common language.” A quote revived by George C. Scott in the movie “PATTON”. The point is that language, even a common one, evolves over time with use and abuse. Plain speaking though is an art exercised by individuals striving to achieve clarity of message, whether written or spoken, between themselves and their audience. Speaking plainly is the power within our founding documents, the **Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights and Federalist Papers** all expressing clearly and unequivocally the mind and intent of the 12 men who had the vision to express a vision of government of the people living in a freedom that can only be a gift from God. Wordsmiths like Jefferson, Madison, Mason, Jay and Hamilton crafted the petition for our freedom, then a blueprint for government centered on the rights of men supreme to the power of the state. The minutes of the sessions of the Continental Congress reflect that debate was vigorous and often loud but always in the common language of freedom.

The patriots already had a reputation for plain speaking that drove the British and their sympathizers the Tories wild. Men such as Thomas Paine were referred to as pamphleteers because they published fliers and small booklets in clandestine print shops for the sole purpose of exposing British hypocrisy and abuse. Paine's publication “**Common Sense**” openly advocated American independence and won acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic for its straight-forward way of exposing the abuses of the British and their lackies. If caught the punishment for publishing or distributing pamphlets was death!

The hallmark of plain speaking is truth simply stated, therefore it unites more than divides, comforts more than hurts and most of all clarifies more than confuses. Few people know of Edward Everett who on November 19, 1863, railed on for two hours at a dedication ceremony for a cemetery yet all he said became dust in the wind when the next speaker in 272 words spoke to and of the soul of a weary nation divided by civil war. Abraham Lincoln scrawled the Gettysburg Address on a scrap of paper to collect his thoughts, but the notes never left his pocket as he spoke because what was said is who he was and what he believed. Belief is the essence of plainly speaking, truth and simplicity opens eyes and touches hearts when people are willing to listen.

Plain speaking occurs when you drop high minded attitudes, curb elitist tendencies, closet hyperbolic flourishes, put away the thesaurus and just speak (or write) from the heart. When Winston Churchill walked the streets of London following Nazi bombing raids, he did not need notes to speak to the hearts and minds of people, he

met them where they were at. FDR's fireside chats were intended to calm and reassure America in the depths of the depression and then when we moved into the second world war. His best chats were when he went off script or lost his place and had to speak from his heart. John Kennedy and Martin Luther King delivered best known addresses were delivered with little to no reliance on prepared notes and it was their passions touch hearts and souls.

When you believe what you believe plain speaking is natural because such conviction it is rooted in fundamental truth, and that scares the hell out of some people. In the world of politics there are very few plain speakers; more over too many politicians only have two moving parts, their mouth and their ass, and those are interchangeable. When you watch a politician, or for that matter a political pundit, with their face buried in notes while their body language feigns passion rest assured, they have a Yugo they want to sell somebody. Watch a news conference with obviously planted questions from pre-selected reporters and scripted answers read from a teleprompter or note cards recognize it for the snake oils show it really is.

In the last forty years the United States has had exactly two plain speakers sit in the White House, Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump; bet I just pissed a whole bunch of people off. But presidents do not get a passionate following of tens of millions of people unless he (or she) plainly speaks to the hearts and minds of the people. Neither was afraid to face the wrath of media because both accepted the notion that everybody is entitled to their own opinion and respected the individual right to express it. Yes, they both could be blunt and often lacked polish or tact, but that is called being real, and with real people and you always knew exactly where they stand.

Plain speakers talk to people instead of at them or over them, not hide an agenda in empty rhetoric or use lighting, reverberators or foolish props to create a phony atmosphere of authority. The most important attribute of people who speak plainly is listening, not to just the words but for the meaning of what is being said and accept that everybody is entitled to their own opinion. I spend a lot of time expressing my opinion, but that is my right just as your opinion is your right and I will defend your right to express that opinion however and whenever you wish. Part of the reason this country is so badly divided now is because difference of opinion is viewed as offensive, therefore intolerable. Plain speakers tend to have thick skins to repel the abuse they face. I have gotten rather leathery myself I will stand and evangelize America's first freedoms! Amen!

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