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COMPETITION
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ON THE COVER

2023 WYLD STALLIONS

WINNER: ZACK JONES

'78 Low Rider

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LETTER FROM OWNERS

February is the month when absolutely nothing and everything is happening.

Starting on the 2nd. We'll base our spring and summer hopes on whether Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow or not. FYI, I had to look up what it means if he does see his shadow because I can never keep it straight. Yes, it would mean only 6 more weeks of winter. However, that would estimate winter would be over 4 days before the first day of spring on March 19th. Exciting right?!

February 11th. Most will have the highest of hopes ... well, not all of us I guess, but most hope to be cheering on the Detroit Lions in Super Bowl LVIII. That's Super Bowl number 58 for those wondering. Props to Aly for knowing her Roman Numerals and clearing that up for us ahead of time... again, I had to look it up. Go Lions!

February 13th will be Mardi Gras, and many will be looking forward to getting their party on down on the bayou. Looking back, those were some of the best episodes of COP's on TV... that's about as close as I personally prefer to get.

And then there is Valentines Day. If I have to remind all of you what day that falls on... you're already in trouble. Yeah, yeah, some of you don't "acknowledge" it because it's just another made up reason to get you to spend your hard-earned money on trifling things... I'm talking about chocolates and roses... what did you think I was talking about? - lol

Now, there are some other "official" and not so many dates in February that we could mention, but I think this one is kind of cool. Again, Aly for win on things happening this month... It's Leap Day on February 29th! Why is that exciting? Well, it was explained to me that every four years, some of you actually are able to celebrate your true birthdate. Yeah, she also let me in on the joke about those that are born on the 29th of February and getting people to guess how old they are. Silly, but fun. So, out of curiosity I had to look up if anyone famous was having a birthday this year and hear they are.



Ja Rule & Tony Robbins. They are the only two that I could recognize besides Superman, and he's not even a real person. Did you stick with me on this one?

Happy Valentines Day Aly!

~ RJ

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PATRIOT GUARD RIDERS STANDING FOR THOSE WHO STOOD FOR US



STORY BY: ALY

On Thursday December 21, 2023, I was invited to attend and witness a Patriot Guard mission at the MBS airport in Freeland, MI by a couple of good friends, Shane and his wife Sam. The purpose of this mission was a Help on the HomeFront (HOTH) by the Region 6 Patriot Guard Riders, where we would welcome our Troops home and to show respect to any Military members traveling during the Holiday Season. Shane had told me the story of how and why the Patriot Guard Riders was formed, but I didn't fully understand the impact they make until I attended this mission and witnessed the gratitude not only from the military member but also the family members waiting for their loved one to arrive home.

When I arrived with my granddaughter, we were greeted with a field of American Flags as we walked through the airport doors into the lobby. There were over 20 Patriot



Guard members all mingling, waiting for the next scheduled flight to land, and to disembark. As members of the Patriot Guard moved around the area, they would ask other persons waiting if they happened to be veterans themselves. If they met someone who was a military member, they would shake their hand, thank them for their service, announce to anyone listening their name and branch of service, and follow up with a cheer of "Hip-Hip-Hooray!" from all the Patriot members. As the flight arrival time drew near, all the members made their way to the exit gate and lined up on both sides, each member holding a flag, and making a receiving line for all the passengers to walk through. We all joined in singing Christmas carols until we could see passengers coming through the doors. Civilians were greeted with "Happy Holidays" and military members were greeted with a line of handshakes and the cheer of "Hip-Hip-Hooray!" After the last passenger passed through the line, the Patriot Guard members moved toward the buffet

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of food they had set up previously to relax until the next plane arrived. During that time, I had the opportunity to speak with John, who is the Patriot Guard Director of Region 6 in Michigan. While his wife Diane chased around and entertained my granddaughter, John reinforced the history and the purpose of why the Patriot Guard was formed. As I mentioned earlier, Shane had previously shared their origins with me, but after witnessing this mission the true impact of what they do finally sunk in. This mission at the airport was a fun, lighthearted, warm fuzzy mission. The true purpose and the reason the Patriot Guard exists is to honor fallen soldiers at funeral services all across the country, and to put a barrier of protection and support between the fallen soldier's family members and any protesters that intend to harass and disrupt the service. So now, the title "Patriot

Guard" makes perfect sense to me. They are Patriots, by definition - a person who vigorously supports their country. They were created to stand *guard* and give military family members the respect and privacy they deserve.

John emphasized to me many times; anyone can become a Patriot Guard. You don't have to be a veteran, you don't have to ride a motorcycle, you don't have to belong to any military groups or organizations, you just need to have a deep respect for your country and those that risk their lives to secure our nation's freedoms and liberties. For me, it was an honor to witness and to participate in this mission. If you would like more information regarding becoming a member of the Patriot Guard, you can visit www.patriotguard.org. The PGR is a national 501c3 Non-profit organization and they welcome anyone to join any of the 12 regional areas in the state.



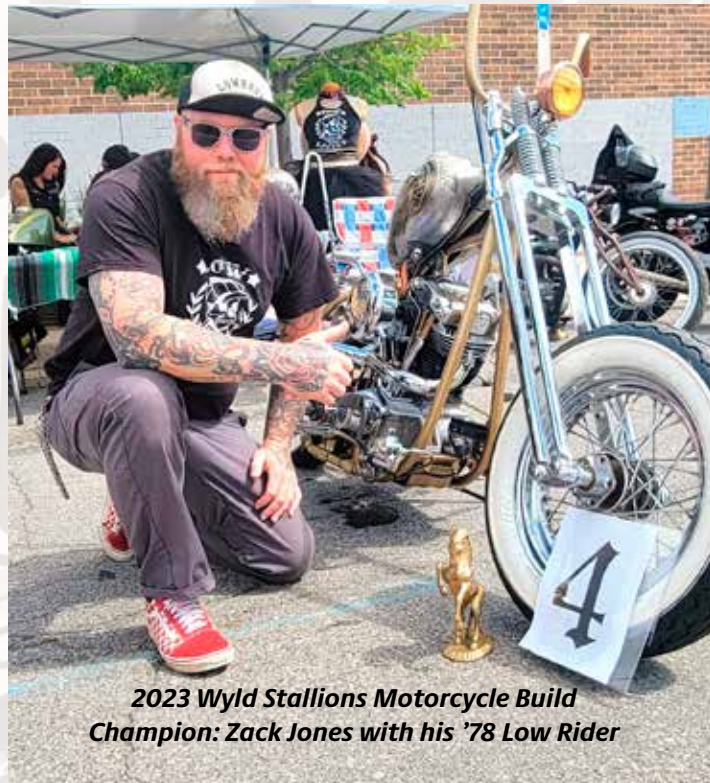
2024 WYLD STALLIONS MOTORCYCLE BUILD COMPETITION MEET THE BUILDERS!

WYLD STALLIONS MOTORCYCLE BUILD
BY RJ, PUBLISHER OF THUNDER ROADS® MICHIGAN

Yup!.. it's happening again! Welcome to the 2024 Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build Competition hosted by build creator Derek Long. Last year's competition brought a lot of growing pains for the builders, that lead to Zack Jones from Gaines, Michigan taking home the beautiful Brass Stallion trophy AND being crowned Build Champion with his '78 Low Rider. The decision for the winner was voted on by the public at Owosso Vintage Motorcycle Days last August and it will be again. This year 9 builders hope to battle on the streets of Owosso where we'll find out if they have what it takes to stop Zack from a repeat and trotting home with the Brass Stallion in 2024. Best of luck to all the builders this year! We have a few return builders and a few new participants with their eyes on the prize. Make sure to follow the Wyld Stallions updates on their Facebook page and of course through upcoming issues of Thunder Roads® Michigan Magazine.

~ RJ

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2023 Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build
Champion: Zack Jones with his '78 Low Rider



RETURNING BUILDER DEREK LONG OWOSSO, MICHIGAN

Hello again! My name is Derek Long, I'm 38 years old and enjoying life with my wife and 2 boys. I am located in Mid-Michigan, and I am very happy to be taking this ride with y'all again. To the returning faces to the new ones, I tip my hat to all of you. Last year was a stressful and challenging blast, but I couldn't wait to do it all again! I am very thankful for all the support that I have received since I created the Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build Competition last year. For me, I have one goal this year, and that is to build a bitchin scoot and be able to grab onto the Wyld Stallions Brass Stallion trophy that slipped through my fingers in 2023. Zack Jones took home the well-deserved win and the trophy last year by the people's vote. It turned out to be a hands down win for him as he set the bar coming into this year. So, the goal is set and the build off is just beginning. I'm starting with some steel, a Harley-Davidson Evo motor from a Sportster, and the design in my head. From there make it work, make it sketchy and make it memorable. Let's do this thang!

RETURNING BUILDER NIC CARLIN ANGOLA, INDIANA



I'm 37 years old. I'm a father of 5, 2 biological kids and 3 bonus kids so free time is somewhat of a rare thing in my house. I have always been into custom cars and bikes, and I currently have in my stable a 1971 FLH I'm restoring, a 2006 Honda shadow I have chopped and customized, a 2018 FLHTK, a KP mini-150, and a 2007 V-Star. The V-Star I'm hoping to sell in order to purchase my competition build bike. I've been a "professional" welder since 2006 and spent the last year learning CNC machining. Last year's Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build Competition was an awesome experience and I'm really looking forward to having more competitors and seeing what all they come up with.

RETURNING BUILDER TERRY SCOTT OVID, MICHIGAN



I am a 52-year-old from Ovid, Michigan, and I have lived in the area most of my life. I am a former industrial education educator (shop teacher) and my wife Karen lovingly puts up with my crap - lol. I have been riding and working on motorcycles since I was 5.

I'm excited to be a part of the Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build again this year. Last year in 2023, I learned a lot and I'll be working toward a one-of-a-kind Triumph bobber to show off in August.

I currently have a custom CB 750 with a custom heel-toe shifter setup. Due to bad genes and life decisions, I lost use of my left ankle and foot. Recently, some wonderful friends hooked me up with a Hondamatic so I will be able to ride a lot more this season. The main goal for this year's build will be to build a bike fitting my needs and that I can ride safely. So, I'm thinking a right-hand jockey shift with left hand clutch should do the trick. I must share that my main influences are Ed Roth, Ron Finch, and Kenny Howard. AND as always be safe, be cool, and be excellent to each other.



RETURNING 2023 BUILD WINNER ZACK JONES GAINES, MICHIGAN

Hello everyone, Zack Jones here, last year's Wyld Stallions Motorcycle Build Champion. This year I'm going to do all I can to hang onto the ever so coveted Brass Stallion Trophy! Last year I used the

competition to build myself a personal chopper out of a '78 Low Rider that I had been wanting to build for years. This year I'm taking advantage of the opportunity again as an excuse to build my old lady Tanya a chopper to ride along with me. This year's build will be an Ironhead. I already have an old rigid frame from a past deal that had a '68 Ironhead in it at the time, but the cases were cracked. So, I picked up a '76, which is a cool year, as Harley did a commemorative bicentennial paint edition celebrating 200 years of the good ol' U.S. of A. It's going to be a lot of work, as I learned from last year's comp. I'm going to have Tanya make all the design decisions, like skins and stance. It'll be fun letting Tanya go nuts with the paint on her own bike! Can't wait to hit the ground running and get this build started!!! See y'all soon!!!



WYLD STALLIONS MOTORCYCLE BUILDERS



RETURNING BUILDER JON WYSONG FENWICK, MI

My name is Jon Wysong, I live in the middle of nowhere in Michigan also known as Fenwick. I will be working on a 1978 Harley-Davidson FXS. My starting point will be the frame that I hardtailed last season. It's a new year and with that a new opportunity to be a part of this competition. As far as a direction, I'm shooting for starvation levels of skinny on this bike build. Other than that, I'm just going to take it as it comes and work through whatever comes my way and look forward to making it to the finish in August.

BUILDER INTRO CHRIS DAVIDSEN GOSHEN, INDIANA

I'm 42, I own a small mill bike shop called Dirty Bones Customs in Goshen, Indiana. I've been building bikes and fabricating for the last 20 years. I'm married to a wonderful woman, and we have 5 children between us. Our family is deep in our faith, and we owe everything to Jesus. My grandpa and dad are both into motorcycles, so it just got passed down to me. I love building bobbers and the shop sold a record number of 20 bikes last year! I'm going to be building a 08 Suzuki boulevard 800.

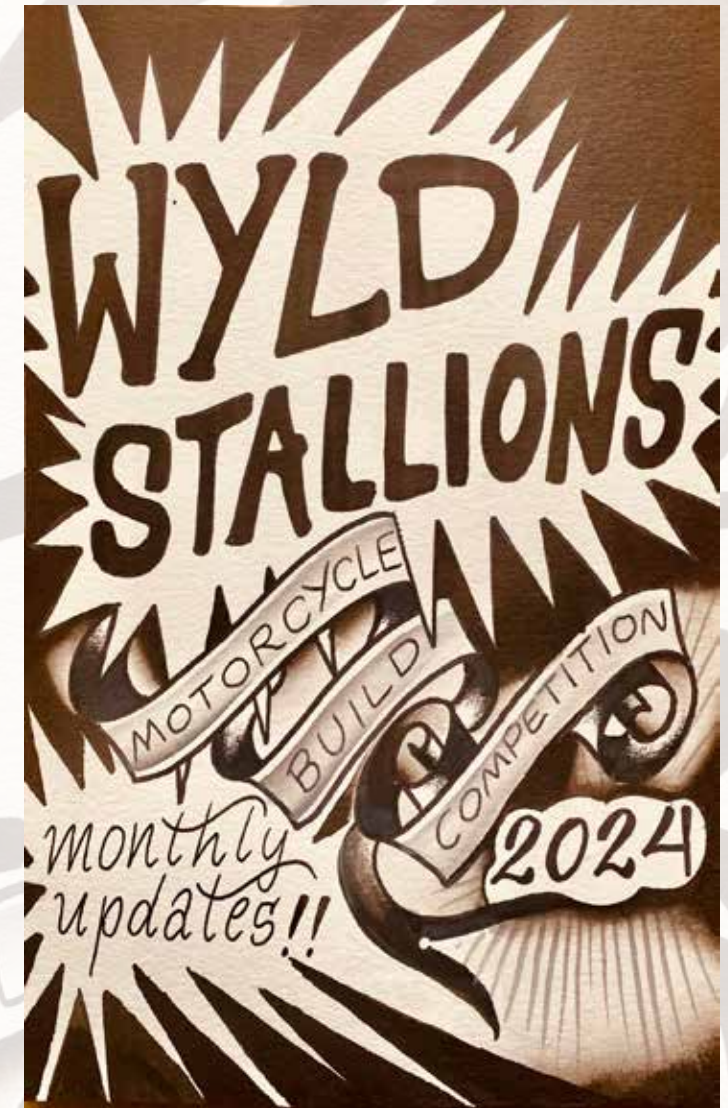


BUILDER INTRO JOSH BRUST SEDALIA, MISSOURI

Hello everyone, I'm Josh Brust and I'm a 31-year-old rider from Sedalia, Missouri. I've been raised on and around motorcycles since I was a young child. I'm a father of 4 with an amazing fiancé by my side. My building journey really kicked off a little over 4 years ago when I got sober and got away from alcohol. It's not only a way of life, but a way of freeing myself from all my demons and making me a better man for my family.



Building bikes is our way of bringing family together and loving the wind in our faces! I will be building a 1986 883 sportster that my father bought brand new from Yeager's Cycle in 1986. Now, 5 owners later I had the chance to buy it back and here we are today!



BUILDER INTRO FRANK GRIMES DEFIANCE, OH

I'm 33 years old, from Defiance, Ohio and I got into bikes seriously about 4 years ago when I got my first Big Twin Harley. I started building bikes after watching my dad build his '73 chopper from nothing but an old frame he found in a friend's barn. Once I realized this was something we could actually do, the sky was the limit. While I agree it would be a lot easier to start a build with a complete motorcycle, I really enjoy the challenge of building from basically nothing. The feeling of accomplishment is great knowing there isn't one bolt you haven't turned. For the competition, I will be starting with a '76 FX frame and most of an engine.



BUILDER INTRO MACK GODFREY FOWLerville, MI

My name is Mackenzie Godfrey aka Mack Blank, and I am a 38-year-old brother, son, husband, and stepfather who is from Fowlerville MI. Motorcycles have been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, but they didn't become a big presence in my life until The Great Biker Build Off series in the early 2000s. It lit a passion in me for 2 wheeled machines and I knew it would become a major part of my life. Now as an adult, I have been a motorcycle mechanic for the better part of a decade, and it's led me to also build custom bikes as a hobby. The Wyld Stallions Build Competition is giving me the opportunity to put my skills up against other people, which is something I have never done before. For the competition I will be building a 1985 Yamaha Virago with the goal of making it a 70s inspired narrow chopper.



Smoke N' GearZ

IS YOUR SCOOT A GARAGE ROT?

With home life, work, and the upcoming riding season ahead, I'll be continuing to share Smoke 'N Gearz with all of you, but I will be bi-monthly for now. With that being said, I missed you in January. So, Happy New Year and welcome to 2024!

To all the drifters and driftets waiting for our season to open back up with 60-degree days, it's been a pretty mild winter thus far with the exception of what the middle of January gave us. A few riders and I were out on the 1st of the year and in great spirits at 32 degrees with no snow and no ice on Detroit roads. Was it a cold ride—HELL YES. It was colder than a polar bear's toenails. However, it was something some of us have never been able to do before. I was in heated gear but not plugged in, to test my tolerance. My fingers were cold and locked in a position on my handlebars when I finally stopped for gas. Still, it was a great adventure for the 50-mile journey. I had purposely ridden down historic 8 Mile Rd. (east to west and back) for the world to see how crazy I was—lol—just kidding. Really, I just wanted to show my badge of honor and represent for us Bikers on day one of 2024. I'm guessing I may not have been the only crazy one -lol.



Sitting back in colder temps lately has given me much time to think and research. Goals for the year have been set. Due to being rear-ended in 2021, my last few years have been limited miles and visiting physical therapy and other services. This year, my personal goal is to put 15K miles on the odometer and when I knock out my last year's goal of running up the east coast to Maine, it will help. One of my immediate goals this year was to attend the PROC (MC PROFESSIONAL CONVENTION) in January that took place in Indianapolis, and I can proudly put a check mark next to that one. Something else I'm really looking forward to is seeing many of you at this year's Round-Up in July and August in Illinois.



So, some may be thinking, "what the heck is garage rot?" Well, this is what happens to your scooter when it is not ridden for a lengthy time. For instance, brake fluids start to breakdown, pistons may stick, piston rings could rust, tires start to go flat/dry-rot, rust could enter the gas from built up condensation, oil may leak from front forks, and/or critters might crawl into your exhaust or other places they decide. None of which a rider wants to deal with on the

day of breakout. Proper storage is the best thing to do. If you can, put your bike on a stand, dolly, or jack. Then, use a fuel stabilizer and a battery tender. I also recommend putting a coat of wax on that paint job. Lastly, find a way to plug your exhaust pipes!

A recent trip to a dealership and speaking with some mechanics, specifically Chris at Motor City Harley-Davidson in Farmington Hills, I got some tricks to the trade and even started considering changing the suspension of the front forks.

Everyone thinks of changing the rear, but not only is it for the comfort of the ride, it is a safety factor. The shocks you choose to use are up to you, and a debate for a different date. I can only suggest that one should check their fluid every few years. The weight of the oil, plus the brand of suspension determines if the ride is stiff and feels like a workout, or rides like a brand new 1973 Cadillac Fleetwood. Other notable items to check are wheel bearings and ways to reduce the infamous "death wobble." Check out this video on YouTube-Stefan's Garage. (<https://youtu.be/ZMkaxikamxo?si=5YU2zo1n oA57twyT>)



Along with keepin' your pride and joy up to par before ride time, something else to consider is planning what events you would like to attend? Is your bike ready? Are you ready? The following list are biker and civilian-friendly events. If you would like to attend an event, reach out to them via their social media pages. There may even be a flyer posted and an entry cost associated. In conclusion, follow MC protocol and have a freakin' blast!!

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SOUL DEVILS MC DETROIT - 3 rd WEEK IN OCT '24	NEXT LEVEL CHICAGO, IL - 8/8-11/24
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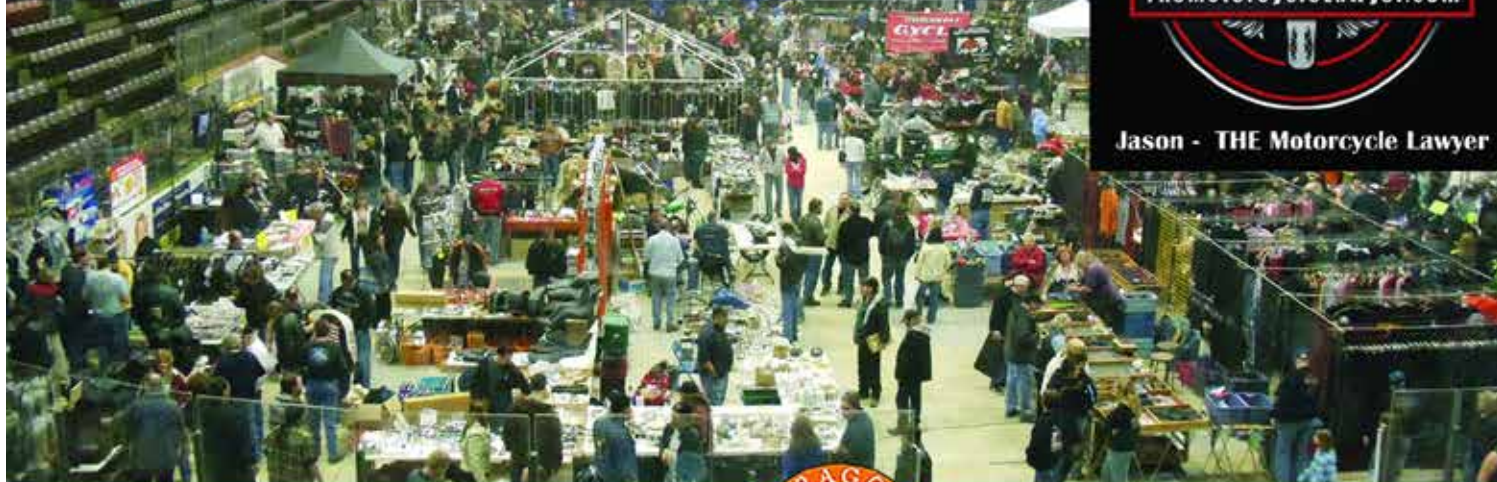
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HERE IS SOME LEGAL ADVICE FROM JASON-THE MOTORCYCLE LAWYER ON MANY DIFFERENT SUBJECTS.

Using Ride-Sharing: Never allow an Uber or Lyft driver to drive you anywhere unless the ride is active on the rideshare app. Drivers for Uber, Lyft and other ride-sharing companies are required to have at least \$1 million worth of bodily injury coverage. However, the \$1 million coverage only applies if there is an active ride on their app.

Some drivers will offer to drive you for cash. They want the cash, and they don't want to share it with Uber. Don't allow it. This is for both safety reasons and insurance coverage.

I read about a case where the passenger wanted to stop at a store near his final destination. The driver went to that final destination and logged the ride off in the app. Then, as a courtesy, took the passenger to the store 3 blocks away where they were in a serious crash. The result was that the million-dollar bodily injury policy did not apply because it was not an active ride.

Only Own Your Vehicle: In Michigan the owner of a motor vehicle or motorcycle is 100% responsible for the negligence of the driver of the car he or she owns. Stated another way, if a husband and wife are listed on the registration as both being the owners of a car and the wife runs a stop sign, severely injuring someone, both the husband and wife will be sued and both are responsible for all the personal injury damages.

This is why I advise that the husband alone be on the registration and title of the vehicle he primarily drives and the wife be listed solely on the registration and title for the vehicle she primarily drives. That way, only the driver of that car will be sued. This is especially true because a husband and wife typically own their home together. If only one spouse is sued and the worst should happen - a judgment for over their policy limits is obtained - the house cannot be taken to satisfy the judgment. If both spouses were sued, then the house would be subject to the judgment.

Riding and Deer and Dogs: Animals are no joke—they can be a major hazard for motorcyclists. I have handled many cases involving them and injured riders. With a dog, we often are successful for motorcycle operators and passengers by pursuing action against the dog owner's home-owner's insurance policy.

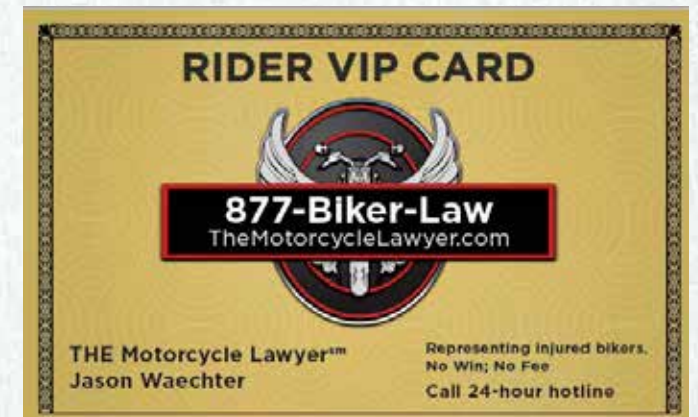
With deer, the only claim can be for a passenger against the motorcycle operator's insurance policy. I call these "friendly claims." If you're riding and see a deer or a dog, slow way down and assume the animal will dart into your path. The Michigan Motorcycle Operator Manual even says to stop, "...then wait until the animal leaves or move past the animal at a walking speed."

Never Brandish a Firearm: Many motorcyclists carry a firearm, especially after the legal requirements for obtaining a Concealed Pistol License were lowered. However, even with a CPL, brandishing a firearm is illegal. Brandishing a firearm means pointing, waving, or displaying a firearm with the intent to cause fear in another person. This has been in the forefront of my mind since I learned that a friend of mine, a fellow lawyer, was recently charged with this.

Imagine the scenarios that many people may think are okay to do: a road rage incident where one driver is doing all kinds of crazy aggressive things, so the other driver pulls out his pistol and points it to the sky, as a warning. That driver would likely be charged with brandishing a firearm. My advice is to never show your firearm unless you are in a situation where you would be allowed to actually use it.

Road Defect Crashes: If you or someone you are riding with goes down because of a pothole, road construction, negligence, or other road defect, take at least 50 photographs of the defect, the roadway and signage leading up to it and the surrounding area. We often get calls after this kind of wreck and the city, county, or state will go out and fix the hazard within hours of the crash. Without photographs of the cause of the crash, it becomes a very difficult case.

Just a few random subjects that have come across my desk this month. Until next time--



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CHARLIE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER: THE ROAD OF COMPROMISE — A RIDER'S JOURNEY IN FAITH

Greetings to all the riders of the open road, to the enthusiasts of the roar of engines, the lovers of the wind against their face, and to the souls who find freedom on two wheels. I hope this message finds you in good spirits. Today, I'd like to share some thoughts on a subject that often rides with us on our journeys — compromise.

In the Christian faith, compromise is an idea that carries significant weight. As riders, we are no strangers to it. The decisions we make — from the paths we choose, the gear we wear, to the way we handle our bikes — often reflect compromise. Yet, the real journey of compromise isn't just on the tarmac; it's in our souls.

You see, life presents us with crossroads at every turn. Some paths might be straight, while others twist and curve. These moments mirror the choices Jesus faced, and how he chose the path of love, understanding, and sacrifice, even when it seemed challenging.

The Bike and the Bible

All bikers, whether it's Harley, or not, bikers alike understand the beauty of customization. We mold our bikes to our personality, preferences, and style. Similarly, our walk with God is about shaping our lives according to His teachings. However, we're also faced with worldly temptations, which can lead to spiritual customizations that may not align with the Bible's blueprint. This is where the concept of compromise becomes essential.

You might wonder, "Why shouldn't I customize my faith like I do with my bike?" The answer lies in understanding the difference between personalizing your walk with God and altering the essence of His teachings.

The Roads We Choose

In your riding adventures, you might've encountered roads that seemed alluring at first but later turned out to be treacherous. The Bible speaks of the wide and narrow paths, where the broader road often seems more appealing but leads to destruction. The narrower one, although challenging, guides us to salvation.

Compromise in faith is much like choosing the wider road because it seems more comfortable. However, the genuine essence of Christianity calls us to challenge ourselves, to not settle for the easy route, but to aspire for spiritual growth, even if the journey is tough.

The Harmony in Compromise

Now, while it's crucial to be wary of compromising our core beliefs, there's a flip side to consider. As bikers,

we often ride in groups, and we know the importance of harmony. The journey becomes smoother when we respect each other's choices, even if we don't always agree. Similarly, in our spiritual walk, finding a balance between staying true to our beliefs and respecting others' choices is essential. This kind of compromise doesn't weaken our faith; instead, it strengthens our bond with fellow believers and humanity as a whole.

Fueling Our Faith

A motorcycle cannot run without fuel. Similarly, our faith needs constant nourishing. Compromise can either dilute our faith or enrich it, depending on how we approach it. Surrounding ourselves with positive influences, like fellow believers, scriptures, and prayer, can provide the right kind of fuel to ensure that when we do compromise, it's in ways that align with God's will.

In conclusion, the road of life, much like the open highway, offers us countless choices. Compromise, in its essence, isn't negative. It's about finding the balance between our personal desires and the grander plan God has for us. As riders, the wind, the road, and the roar of the engine often teach us lessons that words cannot. As we ride, let's remember to embrace compromise but to ensure it brings us closer to God and not farther away.



Until our next journey in Chaplain's Corner, ride safe, and may God's blessings guide you on every road you choose.

Yours in faith and fellowship,
Chaplain Charlie!

Chaplain Dean Titus (Charlie)
Sanford American
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WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

-ST. CLAIR COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Although I've never had the privilege of serving our great country, some of my closest friends and family have. The raw emotion that seeps from them can be overwhelming, especially when they are with their fellow brothers and sisters who served! They have separately, but together been through experiences that I can never hope to understand, but deeply respect.

Lisa Fountain, (a resident of St. Clair County, A daughter of the American Revolution as well as a member of the Civil Air Patrol) had the opportunity to attend a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery around 17+ years ago. She says her visit to Arlington sent an electrifying surge of emotions into her and it's powering her efforts to bring her emotional experience back to her hometown. Lisa said, "The experience was so completely humbling she just had to find a way to bring it home."

During the National Wreaths Across America Day on December 16, 2023, more than 2 million wreaths were placed at national, local, and veteran cemeteries across our nation. Of all the military ceremonies I've had the privilege of observing, national wreath day falls into a category of its own and sadly I feel it is one of the most overlooked. This is the only ceremony that I know of that honors our fallen veterans that has zero government funding and let me tell you it is thriving!

This was started in 1992 when a surplus of wreaths were donated to Arlington National Cemetery by the Worcester Wreath Company. Then BAM!! Along with the support of communities and volunteer veteran



organizations, it caught on like wildfire and quickly became a national project! Wreaths Across America was born! Every year thousands of volunteers flood the grounds of over 150 cemeteries holding wreaths (still produced from the Worcester wreath company and created from a lot of balsam pine trees grown specifically for this cause) where at every grave they take a moment to place a Remembrance wreath, speak the soldier's name aloud and give thanks.

For some it's an emotional time to visit their past and for others it can be an annual labor of love, or a family tradition. For me, it's a chance to spend time with some of my favorite people and plus, I get to support, record, and spread the word about our little community and the amazing people in it!

Last fall the Honor Guard of St. Clair County was kind enough to adopt me for the day and brought me in with open arms to record a flag retirement ceremony. I found it completely humbling that over the holidays they thought of inviting me once again for National Wreath Day in December to participate and to photograph the day. So, from the shadows I did my best to catch the special moments as they paid patronage to their fallen brothers and sisters! To me, no honor could be as great as being requested to record and share the unfiltered emotion that I was entrusted with and to show them support.

Taking part in the wreath placement, it was great to see some familiar faces of not only the Honor Guard, but also the Boy Scout Troop of Marysville, members of the VFW Post, and of course members of the Port Huron Motorcycle Club. It's always amazing to see different groups in the community coming together and seeing the joy they bring while supporting and sharing traditions with the next generation. It was great to see the young people taking it all in and appreciating the moment for what it meant. I mean WOW!!! I'm not sure I could pick the right words if such words existed!

This was the 16th year for the wreath laying at the Allied Veteran Cemetery of St. Clair County and it doesn't look like it's going to slow down any time soon! This year huge strides were made to incorporate the help of the youth of the community. Being able to help present and place wreaths was a tremendous experience for them as they beamed with pride, honor, and grace at the same time. It is truly a humbling experience and I know this is something they will always remember, respect, and that will reinforce their willingness to support for many years to come!!

CONTINUED...



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I'd like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday season, and I hope everyone got a chance to experience something as heartwarming to them as this was for me!!

If you would like more information on how to help support Wreaths Across America by purchasing a wreath, making a donation, or by volunteering, you can follow this link: <https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/42469/Overview/?relatedId=0>

Story by Erin Fay/Madcap Imaging Contributor/Photographer to Thunder Roads® Magazine of Michigan



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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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				LEAP DAY		

READERS RIDES

Exit 9

Smoke - Detroit, MI



MY BIKE, AKA EXIT 9

My 2011 Harley-Davidson Road Glide has been redone from the front tire to the rear. I purchased it as a stock FLTRX (Road Glide Custom) with 8,000 miles on the odometer. Now, it has a 23" x 16" set up which makes it sit like a Cane Corso. The original factory color was a canvas of Sedona Orange and now has a mix of Amber Whiskey and bursts of abstract art. The motor was a factory 103, now I would have to murk ya if I told ya. Legend REVO-A shocks in the rear with everything new in the primary chest. 4.5" stretched bags with a 6-gallon tank. The Twin Cam engine is coupled with the sound that a D&D Fat Cat exhaust can only provide. The sound system does not come close to the sound of the pipes

but does push out the tunes by Rockford Fosgate. The bars are 18" and the forks have been accentuated with a 7-degree bolt-on rake. The Dakota Digital Gauges set the dashboard off along with the water-resistant radio. Once upon a time made for cross country, now the bike is currently being retired to the Midwest with 37,485 miles.

MY BACKSTORY

Exit 9, a life saver and defibrillator between my legs. I purchased my 2nd hog and 5th bike in February 2018 as a Valentines Day gift to myself. It was bone stock when I took possession and treated me well. However, I needed to add some pazazz to it. Over the next year, it was toured into several states. Completing the season with only doing engine work and adding a few knick-knacks here and there. Then came May 5, 2019,

when I went down on the bike and caused 73% total damage to it with no clue of what was to come. From that day, I was 0-1 with the pavement, but it made me a better rider and gave me the ambition to rebuild my hog. Now, in 2023 it has been across the USA, won several bike trophies for best touring bike and for longest distance at a few annuals. The set up makes it comfortable with the



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18" pullbacks. I've ridden from Jacksonville, FL to Detroit, MI with 18.5 hours of saddle time on the Corbin seat/backrest. I was inspired to paint this bike as a 1 off for the love I have for graffiti. It is a conversation piece as most wonder how I came up with the concept for the paint scheme. Therefore, this bike in some ways saved my life and the freedom of artistic expression.



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I REMEMBER THE WINTER SNOWSTORM OF 1967

STORY BY, RANGER RICK

Winter snow is finally coming, and I can't help but remember the winter of 1967. I was staying in downtown Detroit with two of my brothers. It was the last winter before going into the Army. We were working on building a hard tail chopper after we came home from our day jobs, welding or painting one part or another. Six inch over springer front end with a nineteen-inch wheel and a fifteen-inch rim in the rear. A sportster tank over a Harley twelve-hundred motor. All the paint was done in a candy apple red. With very heavy silver metal flake. Very old school paint on a modern chopper. This was David's bike, his money, and our help. We worked on it almost every day and then we would proceed in the repetition of our usual nighttime activities. Get to the bar by eight. Eat a burger and drink beer. Around eleven or twelve, if we had played enough pool, it was time to head home or to a different bar. Usually, at two in the morning, we'd stop at a diner before going home and of course all we talked about was bikes. We had to work in Birmingham in the morning, so it would be an early rise, but we were young and full of stupid, so it was what we did. We had a friend named Tom, who was our welder, so he usually came along with us. We didn't mind. He helped pay for gas and beer.

There were reports of a big storm coming and it was already snowing hard as we went into the bar, but when we came out the side streets were a mess. There must have been six or eight inches at least when we all piled into my brother's car cold and wet. One problem, we cleaned off the car, but the road was slick. We had to get out and push the car to get it going. We couldn't leave it. During snowstorms you would get a ticket, buried by the plow, or both if you parked on the street during the emergency parking ordinances. Neighborhood bars on side streets only left room for curb parking and one lane down the center. If you met someone coming the other way, someone had to back up. Back in those days there was really bad snow, even in the city. Good times, really. We were too young to buy beer, and nobody cared. We had the world by the tail and were having the time of our lives.

The next summer, my brother David and I would join the Army. The bike was done and Mark who was deferred 4F, would take care of our bikes while we were gone. Our buddy Tom had moved with his mom to

the suburbs somewhere. Mark was there waiting for us after we took our physical and when we'd come home on leave. The bikes would be all gassed up and ready to ride. Mark was kind of a cornerstone for

David and I. He was a pretty tough guy and didn't take anything from the neighborhood hoodlums. We had to take him to the hospital to get sewed up at least a couple of times when he'd get in a fight with someone who had a knife. David was killed in action late in 1969, and I was sent home with him. The Vietnam War was going on strong, and we drew short straws. Hell, it seemed like just about everyone I knew drew short straws. Bob Hope was visiting troops, and everything back home seemed to change. Veterans were not popular among those my age. Especially on a bike. The music changed while we were in, but we still had a shock when we returned. Even riding to the bar was different. Just Mark and me. Just not the same.

Mark and I continued for a while, but it felt like we were from different worlds. I saw how hard losing David had hit Mark. Mark ended up taking David's chopper and rode it for a while before he had passed it on to a younger brother. Mom wasn't thrilled about another son riding but she must have known it was inevitable. I mean my father rode, so we were all going to ride. Deciding to leave Detroit, I rode back home to Iowa to be with my father on the farm. A couple of my younger siblings stayed in the Detroit area with my mother. Mom and dad had separated, and dad went back to Iowa. Back home on the farm, I was able to get my bearings a little better. Small towns appreciate veterans differently. Over time, I went back and forth between Muscatine Iowa and Royal Oak Michigan. Winters were different between Muscatine and Royal Oak. Muscatine had a lot of high wind when the Northerns blew down and everything turned to ice. The north side of Detroit still had a lot of snow, but I didn't go back into downtown Detroit much after that. Times had

changed along with the weather. I can remember a lot more snow back then and running around the streets with two of my brothers. We'd push through winter and then ride our bikes together all summer until the snow returned once again. We just took it all for granted. Those were different times. I will always remember the snowstorm of 1967, but it was April of 1968 when spring presented a last ride with David and his red chopper. He was so proud of his bike and for good reason, it was an awesome looking bike. Then we both went into the Army. I remember that red chopper and the winter snowstorm of 1967.



Residents try and dig out cars after the Blizzard of 1967





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HOT RODS TOPICS



February - time to start planning for the New Year if you haven't already. We'll be getting together with our members, having something to eat, and getting ideas on ways to raise funding for all the organizations we are proud to support. Our last order of benches from OCC Outdoors just arrived and we can't wait to get them delivered. The response we have received from the schools we have donated benches to has really lit a fire in our souls to contact as many schools as you can and help with their mental health programs. That's why it's so important to have fund raisers to support this special need for all the local schools in our communities!

Denise and I just got back from the great state of Texas and when someone tells you things are bigger in Texas, you surely can believe it! The people there are very friendly and aren't afraid to go out of their way to help you. They are still riding their motorcycles down there and you see a lot of custom bikes and of course antique cars in San Antonio. Although, it was sad to hear the same stories of motorcyclists not being respected on the road in Texas just like here at home. Several individuals saw our logo and took the time to share their stories and individual experiences of a loved one being involved in an accident. Never stop spreading the message "Be Aware - Motorcycles are Everywhere!"

Our next big benefit will be for the Lenawee Foster Care / Childrens Protective Services in April, and we will be reaching out for help gathering products that are on their "wish list."

For those of you in our region, don't forget about Hope Clinic in Ypsilanti. They offer free services from medical care, dental care, behavioral health, adult eye exams, baby care and groceries in their food pantry 6 days a week. Please start the New Year out the right way by being kind and generous. There are so many needy families and organizations that could use your help. I truly believe you will be blessed by God and good things will come your way. A great way to start would be to join our Foundation and help support so many worthwhile causes all while having fun and meeting some amazing people. You can check us out on Facebook page, reach out to us at hotrds.motorcycle.awareness@gmail.com, or come to one of our meetings. We meet the 2nd Sunday of the month at 4pm at the American Legion Post 268 in Milan. It would be great to hear from you or better yet, meet you in person!

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ABATE OF MICHIGAN

JOIN US!

BY MERRY GARRETT

Hello all! Let's share a beautiful thought together. Spring is less than two months away! And after the 16 inches of snow, wind, drifts, and a collapsed carport I personally had in January... I'm sure looking forward to it. However, it's Michigan so we must expect weather to change daily.

Watch for an ABATE OF MICHIGAN seminar recap in next month's issue of Thunder Roads Michigan Magazine. I tried for this month, but it just wasn't possible.

So, I'd like to ask a few rhetorical questions about "freedom" and your "rights" as a motorcyclist right here in Michigan. I encourage you to think about them in your own personal way and ponder the choices that are being made for you as a motorcyclist.

What is freedom to you?

Are you happy with the version of freedom you are experiencing?

How about the freedom to be comfortable with your insurance policy?

Or, to simply have the freedom to choose the gasoline you need for your motorcycle?

How about the freedom and simple right to share the road equally, safely, and not have to worry about distracted drivers not seeing you?

Well, let me tell you there are those in Lansing that have worked and are still working to take many of these freedoms away from every motorcyclist in Michigan. It doesn't matter if you ride a Harley, Indian, Honda, or even a dirt bike or ATV on the roads or trails. Heck, maybe you "used to ride" but don't anymore. We can still support those that do and are still loving to ride. The choices being made for you even include your boats! So, if you enjoy these freedoms then mark your calendars right now for June 4, 2024, in Lansing. Join ABATE OF MICHIGAN for our annual Freedom Rally!!! We'll be sharing the flyer with more information soon and WE WANT YOU TO COME ALONG! The simple truth is that YOU are one of us and someone out there loves you. If something were to happen to you, their lives would never be the same. We all have things we are fighting for, and our freedoms are a never-ending battle. As free men and women citizens,

soldiers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, blue collar workers, dentist, and retired folks... we would love for you to join us in ABATE. Even if you don't ride any longer or never have, join us in the fight! Take out your phone and scan the QR code at the end of this article ... it's that easy.

Now, it might surprise you, but ABATE is not the organization that "doesn't want a helmet law" or "don't want helmets". Most think of us as this, but we are so much more. There is a helmet law and it's currently a choice in our state. ABATE is so much more. We are Freedom fighters!!! Don't agree?... That's okay because that IS freedom. Attend a meeting, stop at an event, go for a ride with us and meet some members. We are all over the United States. The same can be said for the MRF, AMA, and many other motorcycle rights groups. It is not a costly thing to join. Email me, I'll be happy to correspond with you and guide you in the easiest direction to join.

I hope to meet a lot of you readers this season out on these Thunder Roads of Michigan. Just look for the little sweet old lady - Lmao... and sit and talk a spell. Until then, peace to you all. Patiently waiting for spring to bring me some sun on my face and wind in my hair.



Peace and love,
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SHOUT OUT TO ALL THE DETROIT LIONS FANS!

SHOUT OUT to all the Detroit Lions fans out there! Past and present. Congratulations on a great season! Here's a throwback cover from March 2015 with Herman Moore on Michigan's #1 Biker Magazine. Go Lions!



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BULLET POINTS

BY GREG DENAY, AKA JOHNNY

Happy February all! This is the month where I get doubly screwed, as Valentine's Day is also my wife's, Stabby's, Birthday. So, happy Birthday my love!

With that out of the way, I do have some bad news for you as well. The price of ammo is going to go up. Vista Outdoor, the parent company of Remington, Alliant Powder, CCI, Federal, SEVI-Shot and Speer, sent a letter to their customers that they will substantially increase its ammunition prices due to "an anticipated global shortage of gunpowder." According to Vice President of Sales, Sporting Products Brett Nelson, "Due to world events our suppliers have notified us of unprecedented demand for and an anticipated global shortage of gunpowder, and thus has increased our prices substantially. We must therefore raise our pricing to help offset those increases." Well, that sucks! Didn't we just go through this in 2020 and 2021? What is "increased our prices substantially" you ask? Well:

- Shotshell 1-7 percent
- Rifle 1-7 percent
- Handgun 1-5 percent
- 22LR/Shorts 1-5 percent
- WMR/HMR 1-7 percent
- Primers 5 percent
- Alliant Powder 10 percent (limited availability)

That may not seem like much on paper, but I assure you that it is. Especially in these hard financial times (I get a double dose of financial bad news this month - hurray birthdays). But that shouldn't mean that I give you a double dose of bad news. So here is a bit of good news! Some sane people in our state government want to make it available for schools to teach firearm and hunter safety. House Bill 5334 and Senate Bill 664 have been introduced in the Michigan House of Representatives.

It states, "By not later than June 1, 2025, the department, in consultation with the department of natural resources, shall adopt and make available to schools a model program of firearm safety instruction

for students in grades 6 to 12. The instruction must be not less than 8 hours in duration, must comply with the requirements of the safe handling course provided by the department of natural resources, and must be taught by an individual who has been certified as a hunter education instructor by the department of natural resources." According to the bill, no firearms or ammunition will be allowed in the schools. So, I'm assuming then, that they would have to teach this off-site, because they would teach: "proper usage and handling of firearms, safe cleaning and maintenance of firearms, and safe hunting practices." Schools may provide this instruction as an extracurricular or "part of an existing course for the purpose of teaching self-expression and enjoyment of recreational activity." Also, any student who completes this course is considered to have completed the full hunter safety course.

If I may opine on this for a minute, I would've loved to have this in my school back then. You see, most of the time it's the dad teaching the child how to properly handle a firearm, how to hunt and learning to love both the sports of shooting and hunting. In his younger days, my dad loved to hunt, but I only knew of this from stories he would tell and that was all I got, stories. He had lost his passion, and his ability to hunt when I was 6 years old with a debilitating back injury. I never got instructions on how to properly handle a firearm or the finer points of going on a hunt from him. I learned these things on my own much later in life. So, anything having to do with teaching a child (or adult for that matter) firearm and hunter safety, I am 100 percent behind.

I'll be keeping my eye on this one to see if it gains any traction now that the Legislature has come back into session. Also, I will be calling my local Representative to urge him to keep pushing for the bills that I previously mentioned to go through. If you are in favor of this type of education (which I hope you are) I ask that you do the same. Also, if you feel the urge to get Stabby a birthday present, she's been eyeing up the Glock 48. Until next time, stay safe and vote accordingly.

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Operation Injured Soldiers

Whether you're a US veteran or not, you can join the OIS Riders. The foundation of Operation Injured Soldiers is based off being a 501-3C charity and provides recreational therapy for veterans free of charge. Recreational therapy is a great tool to help veterans who suffer from physical and emotional injuries. It's a way for them to get back to what they used to enjoy doing, and to do it with those who can relate to them. OIS Riders are ambassadors for this organization that help support the charity in a variety of ways, to continue helping these veterans. Fundraising, putting on events, being a person of contact for a veteran at an event are a few of these roles.

Since my husband is the President of the OIS Riders, I've donated much of my time alongside of him doing a lot of the things mentioned above. I continue to volunteer in different ways and fill in where I can, just donating your time can make a huge impact. I've helped with setting up tables to gradually find myself doing more, like being available to speak with veterans that attend the events and listen to their experiences. The stories I have heard are amazing and heartwarming and I too eventually became an OIS Rider. The most rewarding feeling can come from being a volunteer for this organization and seeing firsthand the positive influence it has on a veteran and their family. It's very uplifting and in today's time, it's so great to be part of something so positive.

In 2006 I started out riding my own 2006 ultra-low Sportster to events, which I really enjoyed. But as time went by, the number of events grew, and they seemed to take us further in distance. If you have ever ridden a sporty then you know it's fun, but not a long-distance driver... it's a good thing the tank is small because just about the time you need gas you also need a break from it! Then some time ago at a snowmobile event with some veterans, I got talking with a veteran who also rides motorcycles. He said that he had gotten a Trike and that he just loved it. He went on about how comfortable it was, and how relaxing. It sounded just like what I needed! Some time went by and then the Harley-Davidson RG3 came out. It's a Trike with a beautiful Road Glide fairing that has all the goodies like cruise control, Bluetooth radio, and navigation system. Before I knew it, my husband was sending me photos of one and I was taking a test ride. Yep, you know what happened next... I bought it! I knew immediately that the future days of riding and doing more charity events were going to be a lot more fun! This was a change for me, so I thought of the veteran that recommended a trike to me and gave him a call to see if he could give me some pointers on riding it. Let me tell you, Trikes are a totally different ride than two wheels. That little test ride in the parking lot was fun, but nothing like going down the road. Luckily, I was able to go for a ride with him and his wife and we had so much fun riding together! I was bummed when the day was over because I just wasn't ready to be done. I was used to being tired from riding the Sporty, but not my Trike! This year is going to be A LOT of fun and I am really looking forward to more charity events!



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JOKER'S WILD

When I was 13, I hoped that one day I would have a girlfriend with big boobs.

When I was 16 I got a girlfriend with big boobs, but there was no passion, so I decided I needed a passionate girl with a zest for life. In college I dated a passionate girl, but she was too emotional. Everything was an emergency; she was a drama queen, cried all the time and threatened suicide. So I decided I needed a girl with stability.

When I was 25 I found a very stable girl but she was boring. She was totally predictable and never got excited about anything. Life became so dull that I decided that I needed a girl with some excitement.

When I was 28 I found an exciting girl, but I couldn't keep up with her. She rushed from one thing to another, never settling on anything. She did mad impetuous things and made me miserable as often as happy. She was great fun initially and very energetic, but directionless.

So I decided to find a girl with some real ambition.

When I turned 30, I found a smart ambitious girl with her feet planted firmly on the ground, so I married her. She was so ambitious that she divorced me and took everything I owned.

I am older and much wiser now, and I am just yet again, simply looking for a girl with big boobs.

A Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper, Guido, has cheated him out of \$5 million dollars. His bookkeeper is deaf. That was the reason he got the job in the first place. It was assumed that Guido would hear nothing, so he would never have to testify in court.

When the Godfather goes to confront Guido about his missing \$5 million, he brings along his lawyer who happens to know sign language.

The Godfather tells the lawyer, "Ask him where the money is!" The lawyer, using sign language, asks Guido, "Where's the money?" Guido signs back, "I don't know what you are talking about." The lawyer tells the Godfather, "He says he doesn't know what you're talking about."

The Godfather pulls out a 38, puts it to Guido's head and says, "Ask him again and if he doesn't tell me, I'll kill him!" The lawyer signs to Guido, "He'll kill you if you don't tell him." Guido trembles and signs, "OK, OK! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed at my cousin Bruno's house." The Godfather asks the lawyer, "What did he say?" The lawyer replies, "He says screw you, you don't have the balls to pull the trigger."

Had a prob with my computer yesterday, so I called Lil' Joey, my girlfriend's son, next door. Lil' Joey clicked a couple of buttons and solved my dilemma. As he was leaving, I called after him, "So, what was wrong?" He yelled back, "It was an ID ten T error." I didn't want to appear clueless, but still asked him, "An ID ten T error? What's that about?" Lil' Joey grinned and said, "Write it down so you don't forget and maybe you won't have to call my Mom to make me come over here and assist." So I wrote it down.... "ID10T"

Am just more than confused how a Mortuary can raise its' funeral prices and blame it on the cost of living ??

Lost my job at Boeing today - told them, as one door closes another opens. They said that's why they were letting me go.

Me: Gotta' say, ate quite a bit over the holidays, which began with Thanksgiving, and don't think I gained too much at all. My Phone: Face Not Recognized - Try Again

Every time I see a crackhead on a bicycle I yell "Hey! that's my bike!" just to see how fast they can pedal. You'd be surprised!

Hubby being cute - I found a great site to order sausage online I'll send you a link.

Dawn commercials be washing everything BUT dishes! I do not have a greasy duck.

(*lucky spellcheck is strong @ beginnin

Some of y'all never had to push your own car then jump in and pop the clutch and it shows!

HR: You can't call employees "foreskin".
Me: But they disappear when things get hard.
HR: Still can't.

Happy Valentine's Day!
**all you sexy, fun-loving, Bikers -
the world is a much more exciting place with
YOU in it! (everybody smooch!)**

Just For Fun

4		6		2				
	8		4				9	3
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2	6				8		7	
				3		1		9

EVENTS



FEBRUARY 2024

February 1

-55th Annual I-500 Snowmobile Race
Sault Ste Marie, MI
www.i-500.com

February 2

-55th Annual I-500 Snowmobile Race
Sault Ste Marie, MI
www.i-500.com

February 3

-55th Annual I-500 Snowmobile Race
Sault Ste Marie, MI
www.i-500.com

-Monster Energy AMA Supercross Championship
Ford Field
2000 Brush St.
Detroit, MI
Check out Facebook for details

February 4

-AMA D-14 Ice Racing
Miltner Beach Park
Lake City, MI
State Championship Series
7:00am-4:30pm
www.d14ice.com

February 10

-Big Bend Racing
513 Conrad Rd.
Standish, MI
Check out Facebook for details

February 11

-AMA D-14 Ice Racing
Port Huron Motorcycle Club
3376 Griswold Rd.
Port Huron, MI
State Championship Series
7:00am-4:30pm
www.d14ice.com

February 17

-AMA Ice Race Oval Grand Championships
Leisure Lake Family Campground
505 S Warner Rd.
Sumner, MI
6:00am-5:30pm
www.d14ice.com

February 18

-AMA Ice Race Oval Grand Championships
Leisure Lake Family Campground
505 S Warner Rd.
Sumner, MI
6:00am-5:30pm
www.d14ice.com

-Xtreme International Ice Racing XiIR
Dow Event Center
303 Johnson St.
Saginaw, MI
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February 25

-AMA D-14 Ice Racing
Owosso Motorsport Park
2504 W M21
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7:00am-4:30pm
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Dort Financial Ctr.
3501 Lapeer Rd.
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-Sirens M/C Swap Meet
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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. Thunder Roads® Michigan is Not responsible for errors or omissions.

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