

More News for Thought

CAMPBELL ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

It is with heavy heart that NCOM relays the March 3rd announcement that U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell will not seek re-election for health reasons. Campbell is a longtime member of the NCOM Legislative Task Force and has been a champion for bikers' rights for many years, having been actively involved in every piece of motorcycle legislation passed by Congress since the eighties. He was elected to serve as a Democrat in the Colorado House starting in 1982, serving two terms before being elected to Congress. After serving in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1987 to 1992, Campbell won the Senate seat he now holds. He switched to the Republican Party in 1995, and was re-elected in 1998 by nearly two-thirds of the vote.

Born April 13, 1933, in Auburn, Calif., Campbell is one of two children of May Vierra, a Portuguese immigrant, and Albert Campbell, a member of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Tribe. The senator is one of 44 chiefs of that tribe, and one of only eight Native American Indians ever to serve in Congress. He is a renowned jewelry designer whose Nighthorse signature pieces are prized by collectors of fine native jewelry. Campbell served in the U.S. Air Force from 1951-53, and fought in the Korean War as an airman second class. He graduated from San Jose University in 1957 with a degree in physical education and fine arts, and later attended Meiji University in Tokyo in 1960 as a special research student. In 1964, Campbell competed in the Olympic Games as captain of the U.S. Judo Team. Motorcycle enthusiasts everywhere will remember Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell as more than their legislative warrior, but as a fellow biker who rode his Harley to work in the Nation's Capital, to events, and throughout Colorado, including the Four Corners Iron Horse Rally which he founded. Thanks for everything, Ben, best wishes and we'll see ya down the road?

AMA ANNOUNCES 'JUSTICE FOR ALL,' TARGETS LIGHT SENTENCES

PICKERINGTON, OHIO -- The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) has announced "Justice for All," a new nationwide initiative that will focus on inadequate sentencing of drivers who seriously injure or kill motorcyclists. "Justice for All" will advocate legislation establishing tougher penalties when traffic offenses or criminal actions by other motorists result in a motorcyclist's death or serious injury, a move that also would benefit other vulnerable road users such as bicyclists and pedestrians. The program will include cooperation with state and local motorcycling organizations, efforts by AMA Community Councils, and a variety of opportunities for individual motorcyclists and other concerned citizens to become involved. "Justice for All" also will feature events that coincide with the 2004 Black Hills Rally in Sturgis, South Dakota.

In late January, after former U.S. Rep. Bill Janklow received just 100 days in a South Dakota county jail for second-degree manslaughter related to a traffic crash that claimed a motorcyclist's life, the AMA expressed its disappointment in the sentence, not only because it represented an inadequate penalty for that crime, but because it's an example of injustice that occurs in courtrooms all over the country.

"We believe it's important to take constructive action that reaches far beyond the borders of South Dakota," said Edward Moreland, Vice President of AMA Government Relations. "Instead of directing our energy toward something that's already happened, we urge all motorcyclists to work with us to change the way the justice system sentences drivers who kill motorcyclists, and to prevent similar tragedies and injustices in states and communities nationwide." More details about "Justice for All" will be announced soon on the AMA's website, AMADirectlink.com, and in American Motorcyclist magazine. For more information on becoming involved in "Justice for All" and other issues affecting American motorcyclists, contact Sean Maher, AMA Director of State Affairs, at smaher@ama-cycle.org, or Terry Lee Cook, AMA Government Relations Specialist, at tcook@ama-cycle.org.

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