

News For Thought



LA-DI-F***ING-DA

A routine traffic stop last June 15 near Gate City, Virginia turned into a free speech issue when motorcyclist Roy Lynn Greene was pulled over for loud exhaust and the trooper noticed his leather jacket. "While he had the gentleman pulled over, he noticed these two patches that were on his leather jacket that contained the 'F' word on both of them," said Commonwealth's Attorney Marcus McClung. "He was riding his motorcycle on a public road on a Sunday, and those words were in plain view of everyone, including children. People coming out of church don't need to see that," McClung said. In addition to the noise violation, Greene was issued a citation under the Code of Virginia, Section 18.2374, which is classified as possession of obscene material in a public place, a Class 1 misdemeanor. The case has already been before the judge in general district court and was appealed by the Commonwealth to circuit court, contending that this is a violation of community standards. "I believe that the statements on the patches were obscene and the arresting officer acted accordingly in charging the defendant," said McClung. "I thought (this case) was separate from the other cases that the Supreme Court has ruled upon. They have agreed that statements like 'f*** the war' are appropriate because they have some social value. My argument was that the items, or the patches, were obscene by the community of Scott County and have absolutely no social value. The phrase 'la-di-f***ing-da' has no social value that I see. Whether or not the judge agrees with that, I don't know." Circuit Judge Birg Sergent is expected to render a decision in an appeal made by McClung in the case next month. Greene faces possible jail time and up to \$2,500 in fines if McClung's appeal is approved.

HELMET SAVES MAN FROM GUNSHOT

This newsbit from Dixie Rider may be evidence that wearing a helmet can save your life, at least if you're being shot at. According to a Channel 13 Eyewitness News broadcast in Houston, Texas, an unidentified man was saved when he was shot by his girlfriend, because he was still wearing his motorcycle helmet. According to the TV news report, the couple had been riding together earlier in the evening, and an argument erupted when they arrived home around midnight. Police say the girlfriend then shot the male in the head, but his full-face helmet protected him from serious injury. The female then barricaded herself in a nearby apartment until police hostage negotiation teams were able to convince her to surrender. She was charged with aggravated assault.

FLYIN' HIGH A Harley-Davidson flag now flies above Mt. Everest in Nepal, over 29,000 feet high in the Himalayan mountains, as Hiroyuki Okouchi, an employee of the Tanashi Harley-Davidson dealership in Tokyo, Japan, carried the flag to the top of the peak to help commemorate the Motor Company's 100th anniversary.

Oregon Motorcyclists can now use three headlights on their motorcycles whereas in the past, two was the maximum allowed. They will also be able to use auxiliary lights, either fog lights or driving lights, at all times if the auxiliary lights are no brighter than the headlight and the auxiliary lights are aimed correctly. All other vehicles in Oregon must turn off their auxiliary lights during times when the law requires drivers to dim their high beam headlights. Finally Oregon riders may use an intermittent pulsing or flashing brake light, as long as the flashing does not interfere with the rear turn signal function. With the help of legislators that are motorcyclists themselves, these new options were passed and signed by Governor Kulungoski.

SUSPICIOUS BIKER JACKET SPARKS ALARM As the United States raised its terrorism threat level to orange alert, the second-highest of five color-coded levels of alert, a female passenger was removed from a Paris-to-Cincinnati flight just before take off from France because of suspicious looking wires poking out of her leather motorcycle jacket. As it turned out, the biker jacket was designed to heat up like an electric blanket to keep the wearer warm while riding, said security officials, who later

determined the woman was not a security threat. However, as a precaution, Delta Flight 43 was kept about a mile away from the terminal at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport after it landed in a secured cargo area used for Air Force One during presidential visits, and U.S. officials re-screened passengers and baggage.



TEXAS COP FIRED FOR TACKLING MOTORCYCLIST

A police officer who was videotaped tackling a motorcyclist off his bike after a high-speed chase has been sentenced to two years' probation, fined \$600 and ordered to undergo anger management counseling. A patrol car videotape of the Sept. 6 chase shows Garland police officer Glen Shaw running up to a seated Randall James Ling, then knocking him off his parked motorcycle before falling out of the camera's view. Shaw, who along with two other officers was fired Jan. 14 after an investigation by the Texas Rangers, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor assault charge. Shaw also permanently gave up his Texas peace officer's license as part of the plea deal, Pat Batchelor of the Dallas County district attorney's office told The Dallas Morning News. Garland Police Chief Mitch Bates said he hoped the firings would protect his department's integrity. The two other officers, William Mott and Demarcus Banda, were fired for making "untruthful" reports about the case, Bates said. The motorcyclist, Ling, was indicted on a felony for fleeing authorities.

AirWear, Ltd. (www.airvest.com) has contracted with Direct Impact Inc. (www.dirimpact.com) to market and provide distribution for its AirVest(TM) products, AirWear's patented line of inflatable motorcycle safety vests that protect a rider's upper body and vital organs in the event of a crash. They cite the latest available figures from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), that crashes involving motorcycles account for 7.6 percent of total traffic fatalities on America's roadways. In addition, motorcyclists are about 26 times as likely to die in a crash as someone riding in a passenger car, and are 5 times as likely to be injured and "Personal protection is the best weapon against injury when a crash does occur," in their sales pitch.



ROLLING THUNDER XVII

Run to the wall 2004

Milwaukee to Washington DC
May 27th, 2004



"WE WILL NEVER FORGET"

At 8:00 a.m. on Thursday May 27th, Veterans and their supporters will meet at the Law offices of Eisenberg, Weigel, Carlson, Blau & Clemens, S.C. on the corner of 23rd and Wells St. in Milwaukee. Most will be riding motorcycles on a pilgrimage across the Heartland of America to create a groundswell of support for all of America's Prisoners of War and Missing in Action.

The group will travel 900 miles to unite with "Rolling Thunder", ride to the Pentagon, and parade to the "Viet Nam Veterans Memorial" in Washington D.C. There were at least 500,000 Bikers last year, and we are hoping for more this year. Anyone can join our pilgrimage anywhere along the way, you can ride 2 miles, 10 miles, 100 miles or all the way, or just show up to show your support. We plan to show the world what a Grassroots effort really does.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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