



Historic Downtown Savanna, IL is Biker Friendly

Located along the bluffs and banks of the Mississippi River about 60 miles north of the Quad Cities on Hwy 84 also known as the Great River Road. Savanna with its slogan of "A Sportsman Paradise" is a charming old river town. Many homes and buildings date back to the mid 1800's. Most are showing their age while a few have been restored to the former glory in which they were built so long ago. Savanna is surrounded with natural beauty that will be hard to forget. Just to the north are the Mississippi Palisades Park and the famous Indian Head rock formation. In town Marquette Park is right on the Mississippi River. Savanna's location makes it a great starting point to travel the surrounding area. With several great camping grounds and motels finding a place to stay over night is easy.

Savanna has a long history connected with transportation, from the early riverboat days to the time of the railroad and now with motorcycles. Motorcycles have long been in and around Savanna, but now the riders are also from distant cities in all directions. What makes Savanna such an attraction to motorcyclists? Is it just a place to pass through or might there be more? Could it be the location? Some would say all the miles of roads you can spend an hour riding, and being able to stop along the way at so many other small towns. Then there is the historic Downtown Main Street with close to a dozen, and growing, motorcycle friendly establishments all within walking distance of each other. The relaxed setting of Cap'n Walts Speakeasy Garage complete with a beer garden out front. The newly remodeled Whiskey River with all the NASCAR action covered. You have to go down under Main Street to get to McCool's. If you feel the need to express yourself in song then C J's is the place with karaoke also a full menu. Next door to C J's is the local VFW. Open late during the weekends is the Townhouse Restaurant home of the Biker Breakfast Special. Not to be missed is The Iron Horse Social Club



with 35 vintage motorcycles and cases and cases of memorabilia. Up stairs is the motorcycle themed wedding chapel, the perfect place to hold your Biker Wedding. Opening soon is Hog Dogs a bar & grill with a motorcycle mall featuring dozens of display cases and areas

for vendors of all kinds. Other businesses include a movie theater, beauty parlors, hardware, several good restaurants and a country radio station. On the outskirts of town there are a couple more biker friendly establishments. The Downtown of Savanna is the heart of the city. But it seems that City Hall has forgotten this. Like so many other cities have done that, are now scrambling to reclaim the downtowns they had given up on. The city had gotten the Wal-Mart bug. The give & help to something new and fresh, while forgetting its heart. It has done more for some businesses away from its Downtown and not made it easy for those trying to keep the downtown alive, forgetting its heart the very center of the city. The downtown can regain all of its charm and beauty, but only with City Hall wanting it to do so and the work of everyone on Main Street. Savanna must remember its roots as a HUB of transportation. A place to where people and things traveled to and from. The motorcycles will always go through Savanna that will never change. Getting them to stay depends on how Savanna treats them. But some of Savanna's Downtown business owners are now working together now to start a weekend kick off bike party. If more of the local businesses, with or without City Hall, would work together Savanna would have all the things needed to become a real destination not just another stop along the way to some where else.

As always Ride Safe
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Freedom's Thunder

FORT SILL--For the second year in a row, motorcyclists revved up their engines, put on their helmets and hit the dusty trail all in the name of safety on Fort Sill. 750 riders were expected for the second annual Freedom's Thunder Motorcycle Safety Rally. The rally was organized last year after a series of motorcycle accidents involving Fort Sill personnel.

"This was an 'out of the box' response to a growing problem," said Colonel John Tanzi, a co-organizer of the event. "I want to say because of this, and I think it's because of this rally our numbers have significantly decreased when it comes to motorcycle accidents and deaths."

Last year 48 soldiers were killed in motorcycle accidents, and over the last two years the number of incidents involving Department of Defense (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps) personnel has increased sharply.

"The Army had 48 motorcycle fatalities last year," said Jim Patton in a DoD press release. Patton works in the Army's Environment, Safety and Occupational Health Office. "That was a huge wake-up call for us to get the word out on increased safety before the riding season picks up."

Colonel Tanzi said Tuesday that the Freedom's Thunder Rally idea had been picked up by the Army for use Army-wide. He estimated approximately 70-80 installations are now running similar safety rallies. "I'd like to think that it's had an impact," Tanzi said.

So far, the number of motorcycle related deaths in the Army is on pace to fall short of last year's 48 deaths.

"You can get out there and really forget everything on your mind," said Raymond Brown, who rode in this year's rally. "Forget everything on your mind other than safety. You have to keep safety awareness at all times." WARRIORS ROCK!!!!

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Biker Party gains momentum with 2nd convention

By Shenandoah Sowash- Journal staff/ ssowash@gannett.com
Nadine Janik-Emons is a mother of two young children, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and a small business owner. She is also an avid biker and board member for the American Biker Party, a growing political party.

"What we're about is simple: giving the rights back to the people," Janik-Emons said. On Saturday, the American Biker Party held its second annual convention at the Country Springs Hotel Conference & Convention Center.

One may not think of bikers as being politically active, but according to Janik-Emons, this is a misconception. "A lot of bikers are veterans, and veterans vote," she said. The convention featured speakers state Rep. Marlin Schneider, D-Wisconsin Rapids, and Dave Zien, former state senator and recent National Motorcycle Hall of Fame inductee.

"This may be the only time in your lifetime that a biker is running for president," Zien said, waving his arms ferociously from behind the lectern. Zien referenced former Wisconsin governor and presidential hopeful Tommy Thompson.

Audience members asked questions on issues ranging from rising gas prices to the treatment of veterans returning from Iraq.

"Let your politicians know the issues that are important to you because this country needs leadership," Zien said.

The American Biker Party emphasizes civil rights, the repeal of the Patriot Act, and support for military veterans and their families.

"Last year, we had less people and no speakers. This year, we have about 50 people and two speakers. Eventually, we're hoping to go nationwide," Janik-Emons said.

THE MOTORCYCLE ISSUE EXPERTS



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ABATE of Wisconsin, Inc. is a motorcycle rights and safety organization (not a club) dedicated to the "Freedom of the Road." ABATE of Wisconsin's goal is to give the motorcyclists of Wisconsin a strong, united voice with regard to their future, their way of life, their safety and their legal rights as motorcyclist and citizens. ABATE of Wisconsin is open to anyone interested in supporting our principles and ideas, regardless of age, sex, way of life or type of motorcycle used.