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 &
SWAPMEET
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NCOM CONVENTION RAISES THE BAR

"Large & In Charge" was the theme of the 23rd annual NCOM Convention in Houston, Texas, and in living up to the hype it drew 1,640 attendees from across the country making it the largest gathering of bikers' rights activists in the world! Held Mother's Day weekend, May 8-11, 2008, this annual gathering featured meetings, seminars and group discussions focusing on safety issues, legal rights, legislative efforts and litigation techniques to benefit our right to ride and Freedom of the Road.

Following the AIM Chief of Staffs meetings on Wednesday and an NCOM Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, the Convention kicked off Friday morning with the NCOM Legislative Task Force meeting and the AIM Attorney Conference. Afternoon seminars included "Lobbying 101" and "New and Successful Programs in Bikerland". Special Meetings were convened for "SMRO Presidents," "Christian Unity Conference," "Women in Motorcycling," "Black Clubs and Minority Outreach," and "Clean and Sober Roundtable."

The Confederation of Clubs General Patch Holder Meeting on Friday evening was the best attended to date, and featured representatives of over 50 COC's from throughout North America.

This year's agenda was packed with interesting and thought-provoking sessions, including "Global Changes in the Laws Affecting Motorcyclists", "Brothers Behind Bars", "Defenders - A New Political Action Group", a meeting of the American Biker Party and Slider Gilmore's always informative and entertaining "The Golden Hour" seminar teaching bikers how to save each others' lives.

Topping off the weekend's festivities was the traditional Silver Spoke Awards Banquet, recognizing the achievements and accomplishments of our fellow riders. South Dakota State Senator Jim "Putt" Putnam entertained the crowd as the dinner speaker during the Silver Spoke Awards ceremony on Saturday evening with his homespun humor. This year's Silver Spokes were awarded to: GOVERNMENT: Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Seamus McCaffery; MEDIA: Bill & Darlene Bish, publishers of Ridin' On Motorcycle Magazine; LEGAL: Texas A.I.M. Attorney William Smith; ENTERTAINMENT: Musician Jimmy Vaughn, who ignited the crowd with his new song about Freedom; SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Laura Reid, NCOM Board Secretary; and the RON ROLOFF LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD was presented to longtime freedom fighter Dave Breakiron of ABATE of Delaware.

Many thanks to ABATE of Texas, the Texas Motorcycle Rights Association (TMRA-II) and the Texas Confederations of Clubs for hosting this record-setting event. Thanks also go out to the Texas Confederations of Clubs and Soldiers for Jesus M/C for hosting Hospitality Suites during non-meeting times throughout the weekend.

The 2008 NCOM Convention was dedicated to the memory of Waldo Stuart, Longview Tom and Michael "Twanger" Hays.

Make plans now to attend next year's 24th Annual NCOM Convention next Mother's Day weekend, May 7-10, 2009, in Reno, Nevada. For further information, contact NCOM at (800) 525-5355.

Story & Pictures by Bill Bish
www.ridinin.com



NCOM Board Meeting



NCOM COC Meeting



AIM Attorneys



Legislative Task Force



Opening Ceremonies



Women's Meeting



Spoke Award Winners