

# News For Thought



## Seasoned bikers cruise local streets in annual rally

Tallahassee Democrat, FL - Lou and Judith Batory rode four days from Michigan to get here for this week's Retreads International Motorcycle Club rally. She's 88, by the way. He's 97.

Retreads is a motorcycle club for people 40 and older. It has annual rallies in various cities. This year's rally, from Tuesday through today, has been in Tallahassee. "This is a social gathering, more like a family reunion," said Tallahasseean Jack Schardine, rally organizer. "This is a very durable, well-seasoned group of cyclists who just like being together."

The event drew about 100 people from a range of states and ages. "I began riding when I was 18 in school in London, England. If you take 18 from 97," Lou Batory said with a smile, "that gives you an idea of how long I've been riding."

Rally participants are touring our canopy roads, the coast and other sites. "They really appreciated the new Capitol and the panoramic view of Tallahassee from the 22nd floor," Schardine said. "Everyone kept commenting on the hills especially. A lot of people didn't realize that Florida had such varying landscape."

Kay Mosley, a regional Retreads officer, said the rallies are "a way for people who are older to get together and share common interests. It so happens that we all like motorcycles."

The rallies give the Batorys an excuse to hit the road, despite the occasional bad-weather trip.

"If you want all the comforts of home," Lou said, "stay home." Photo gallery Why 'retreads'?

According to the Web site [www.retreads.org](http://www.retreads.org), it comes from the name of tires initially used during World War II. Retreading (putting new treads on used tires) let many civilians continue to use their vehicles when their tires wore out - because new tires were tough to find during those rationing years.

"Similarly," the Web site states, "many of us began our motorcycling years back when we were young. ... Once the children were well on their own, and free time and more money were available, our thoughts of motorcycles returned and we were itching to get back on."

## Texas gives Green Light to Traffic Sensors

During a discussion at the recent NCOM Convention regarding the spate of states enacting laws that allow riders to proceed through red lights that fail to cycle, Sputnik of the Texas Motorcycle Rights Association (TMRA-II) and member of the National Coalition of Motorcyclists Legislative Task Force (NCOM-LTF) told the audience that "In Texas we decided that instead of giving bikers a legal way to proceed through a non-functioning traffic light, we'd require the state to make 'em work correctly."

True to his word, HB 1279; "relating to the requirement that a detector for certain traffic-actuated electric traffic-control devices register the presence of a motorcycle," was passed and signed into law by Governor Rick Perry on May 25, 2007. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## Three Wheels to the Wind

The Wilmington, Delaware News Journal tells us that Delaware legislation pending would extend their vehicle laws to a new type of vehicle. Without the change, operators of two brands of 3-wheeled high-performance scooters wouldn't need motorcycle endorsements.

The House and Senate have approved slightly differing versions of a bill to close that loophole. The new machines are really something. Look 'em up online: The Italian Piaggio MP-3, and the T-Rex from Canada. Both run two wheels in FRONT! The Piaggio's front wheels will go in to a lean, just like your 2-wheeler.

## Colorado Enacts Helmet Law for Young Riders

While 30 states currently allow most adults the freedom to choose when and where to wear a helmet, only three of those states have no helmet requirement for any rider; Colorado, Iowa and Illinois.

Colorado has not had a helmet restriction since 1977, but now Colorado's legislature has passed House Bill 1117 to require helmets for any rider under 18. The Kiddie Helmet Law was signed by Governor Bill Ritter on June 1, and the new law will go into effect on July 1, 2007.

This bill targets minors only, and adults 18 and older will still have freedom of choice. HB 1117 creates penalties of \$25 to \$110 for riders or passengers under 18 who fail to wear a motorcycle helmet, of which \$10 would go to the Colorado traumatic brain injury trust fund.

"HB 1117 'fixes' little-to-nothing," said Terry Howard, State Coordinator of ABATE of Colorado, "it is a solution in search of a problem." [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## Weird News: Terror Scare Entraps Motorcyclist

Six motorcyclists, including five students, were on a fun ride after dinner in Calcutta, India, when they were hauled off to the police station and interrogated overnight as suspected terrorists.

Their crime: stopping their motorcycles in front of the American Center as one of them received a call on his cellphone. The sight of the six, on three motorcycles, was enough for the cops manning the "high-security" address to suspect them to be terrorists. Fearing an attack -- with memories of the January 2002 strike at the site and other recent terror bombings fresh in their minds -- the guards called a police patrol team that rushed to the spot. It took a whole night's grilling for the police to realize that the six were anything but terrorists, and they were released the next morning.

Upendra Mishra, a second-year MBA student, said that he and his friends were on their way back home after dinner at McDonald's, and were in front of the American Center around 10.15pm when Sandip Arora, also doing his MBA, got a call on his cellphone. "Sandip stopped his bike and took the call. We, too, stopped. Suddenly, a police team rushed to the spot and we were taken to Shakespeare Sarani police station. We told the officers that we were students, but they would not listen to us," Upendra added.

Deputy commissioner (south) Ajoy Kumar said: "They were talking over cellphones in front of the American Center. It was very suspicious. As a precautionary measure, they were all examined." An officer of the police station added: "We thought they had planted bombs nearby and were talking on the phone to trigger a blast, just as what happened in Hyderabad." [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

## NHTSA's Summary of Novelty Helmet Performance Testing

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) tested seven popular "novelty" helmets to determine how they compare to properly certified helmets. The novelty helmets all performed significantly worse, based on their lack of ability to absorb impact energy during a motorcycle crash. Novelty helmets, in general, had very little, if any, impact-absorbing capability. Computer simulations of head impact attenuation tests show a 100-percent probability of brain injuries and/or skull fracture for the person involved in a crash while wearing a novelty helmet. Full Story >> <http://tinyurl.com/ytwj7a>

## Helmet Free for a Fee

Following on the heels of Governor Jennifer Granholm's veto of a helmet law repeal bill passed by the Michigan legislature last year, a new piece of legislation has been introduced that puts a price on freedom by allowing riders to opt out of the state's helmet requirement by paying a fee.

House Bill 4749 was recently introduced by State Rep. Barbarah Farrah (D-Southgate), and sponsored by no fewer than 60 representatives, that would allow motorcyclists the opportunity to buy their freedom for \$100 per year or \$200 for a three-year no-helmet permit. Supporters argue that the measure could ring up more than \$25 million for the cash strapped state. Motorcyclists could circumvent the mandatory helmet law, under the new bill, if they are 21 or older, have been licensed to operate a motorcycle for at least two years, complete a motorcycle safety course, have insurance or security of \$20,000 for first-party medical benefits in the event of an accident, and purchase an endorsement for their license plate and license.

ABATE of Michigan, a group that has sought to have the 38-year-old mandatory helmet law repealed, has even claimed that the helmet law costs the state about \$1.2 billion a year in tourism because cyclists go elsewhere to ride helmet-free.

Michigan is the only Great Lakes state with a helmet law, said Jim Rhoades, legislative director for ABATE, and out-of-state riders won't visit because of the state's current universal helmet mandate. "This helmet bill would be the strictest law that would allow adult choice," Rhoades said. [www.ON-A-BIKE.com](http://www.ON-A-BIKE.com)

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**ABATE OF WISCONSIN INC.**  
A BROTHERHOOD AGAINST TOTALITARIAN ENACTMENTS.

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LEGISLATION - EDUCATION - SAFETY

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.