

**Some thoughts by ABATE of Wisconsin former P.R. Guy  
Our Legacy & The Future**

Dean Bartosh

Over the last year or so, ABATE of Wisconsin has been making a concerted effort to reach out to riders of age, race and bike types that haven't typically been ABATE members in the past. It's not that the organization doesn't appreciate all the time and efforts put forth over the last 40 years - quite the contrary. It's because of our current and past members that our organization has grown into the nationally respected motorcycle rights organization that it is. But let's face it folks. We aren't getting any younger. And in order for all the great work that ABATE of Wisconsin accomplishes to continue long into the future, the next generation of leaders must be brought into the fold and groomed to take over the fight for freedom.

One of our greatest strengths as an organization is the membership that we currently have. We have a lot of deeply dedicated individuals who have spent a lot of time (and in some cases years!) fighting the good fight to secure our freedoms of the road. We've spent time away from our families to go to conferences to share information on how to build a better organization and more effectively fight for our freedoms.

We've taken time away from our jobs to go lobby at the Madison Capitol and meet with our legislators so the laws and regulations are motorcycle friendly. And in our spare time on the weekends we hold local meetings, Awareness Rallies and fund raisers so we can get out our message and fund our future endeavors. The dedication of our members is staggering and what we've been able to accomplish over the years is incredible - but will it all be for nothing if we have nobody to hand that down to? Will the race be over if there's no one to pass the baton to? It's up to us to make sure that doesn't happen and that the great works ABATE of Wisconsin is known for continues for as long as it's necessary.

I realize that sometimes the thought of "change" is scary for some folks. And relinquishing power or authority is downright terrifying for others. But that's what we must do in order for our organization to survive. We must continue to look for ways to bring in new blood and make them feel welcome enough to want to stick around for the next 40 years. Take someone new under your wing and explain the rights that we fight for so they "get it". Talk to them about why you continue to be a member and what ABATE of Wisconsin means to you. Don't try to sell them a membership - Give them a vision of the future. Give them a purpose and the membership will follow. I firmly believe that there a lot folks out there who are looking for purpose in their lives. Give it to them. Let them know of the importance of what we do and how they can be a part of it. Everyone likes to feel important. Everyone likes to feel like they matter.

It is our duty as the senior ABATE members to ensure the continuation of our organization before it becomes too late. We can't wait until the organization is in trouble before we sound the alarm. We must act now. Sure we've made a lot of strides over the past year or so by attracting new younger members. Now we have to work on not only keeping them but making sure they flourish and are ready to take on the task of leading the charge someday. I know it's not easy to let go of something that you love and hold so dear - but we need to loosen our grip a bit so we don't strangle the organization. Let someone else hop in the driver's seat and then teach them how to drive. And then be prepared to hand over the keys some day

We have spent a lot time and effort building a top notch organization that we can be proud of and that knows how to get the job done. But now is the time to be training the next generation - to not only carry on our legacy but build for the future. Make the future of ABATE of Wisconsin bright - Build a future leader.



**Insurer Claims Motorcyclists Are Their Own Worst Enemy**

According to Progressive Insurance, single-vehicle mishaps accounted for more motorcycle-related claims last year than any other event. The insurer processed 3.5 times more of such claims than for rear-end crashes, the next-most common motorcycle incident. Excess speed is the most common rider-related factor in fatal motorcycle accidents. Riding while intoxicated on alcohol or controlled substances is another leading cause of motorcycle accidents where another vehicle is not involved.

**Georgia Governor Vetoes "Dead Red" Bill**

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal has vetoed a bill passed by the state legislature that would have allowed cyclists, both bicyclists and motorcyclists, to ride through unresponsive red lights, sometimes referred to as "dead red" legislation.

On May 12, 2015 the governor nixed Senate Bill 76: "Motorcycle Mobility Safety Act" relating to the safe operation of a motorcycle; inoperative traffic-control signal, issuing the following veto message:

"While I am sympathetic to the concerns and causes of motorcyclists and bicyclists, this legislation does not provide an adequate solution and presents a confusing exception to motorists. Furthermore, Senate Bill 76 would eliminate the current 15-inch height restriction placed on motorcycle handlebars. Motorcycles equipped with handlebars more than 15 inches in height pose a safety hazard due to the increased difficulty in steering and decreased control. In 2014, crashes involving motorcycles and bicycles accounted for 13 percent of the fatalities on Georgia roads, and I do not see how this legislation will enhance roadway safety. Therefore, in the interest of providing the necessary roadway safety Georgians deserve, I hereby VETO Senate Bill 76."

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