

News For Thought



An elderly Ohio man who caused the death of a motorcyclist in a traffic accident two years ago has been indicted in another motorcycle crash that cost a woman her leg. Everett Hargrove, 75, of the Toledo area, was indicted recently for negligent assault in a September 9 crash in which Hargrove's vehicle collided with a motorcycle ridden by Nancy Hejl, 40. Hejl lost a leg as a result of the crash. Hargrove allegedly pulled out of a driveway into Hejl's path. He faces up to 60 days in jail if convicted. In August of 2001, Hargrove pulled out of a driveway and his vehicle collided with a motorcycle, killing rider Daniel Gfell of Toledo. Hargrove was convicted of vehicular homicide and received a suspended 10-day jail term as well as a three-month drivers license suspension. www.AMADirectlink.com.

Pennsylvania House Bill 2133, introduced by Representative Kerry A. Benninghoff (R-Bellefonte), proposes to amend Title 75 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes by adding a section 4310 to read, "Auxiliary lighting may be added to a motorcycle to protect the driver, including blue dot illumination, standard bulb running lights and various colors of valve stem caps, light-emitting diode (LED) pods and strips, light wire, neon tubes and strobe lights." Motorcyclists and safety experts know that additional lighting increases visibility of motorcycles to other motor vehicle operators. Many enthusiasts have decided that stock lighting on their motorcycles is not enough. The addition of after-market lighting boosts conspicuity, especially at night. Even during daylight hours, adding more lights may help other drivers more clearly identify motorcycles. www.AMADirectlink.com.

Kentucky Representative Don Pasley (D - Winchester) has introduced BR 1012 to enable the issuance of special military-related license plates for motorcycles. This requires proof that the person is associated (active, retired or veteran) with the US Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Kentucky National Guard, Merchant Marines (with service between December 7, 1941, and August 15, 1945), or Civil Air Patrol. Disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients, and recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor licensed under this will not be charged any registration fees. Bluegrass State riders in favor of this legislation need to contact their elected officials now to express their support.

Utah biker group put off plane after dispute

A confrontation on a Frontier Airlines flight left 21 bikers stuck in Denver with nothing but the leathers on their backs. Members of Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA) were returning to Salt Lake City on Sunday evening from a national convention in Texas when one of them confronted a couple disciplining their child, prior to takeoff. "There was . . . an escalating situation between a group of passengers [BACA], and it centered around a set of passengers disciplining their children and one set of passengers who didn't like it," said Joe Hodas, Frontier Airlines spokesman. Hodas said appropriate action was taken by the pilot, who deemed it necessary for the safety of the passengers to return to the gate around 10 p.m.

According to BACA member Darrell Sparti, a 49-year-old father of two children, he was sitting behind the parents when they began to discipline the youngest child, a 2-year-old girl who was tired, crying and cranky. Sparti says the mother began spanking the child. Then he heard the words "bruises," and "Daddy's belt." When the mother handed the girl to her father, Sparti says, the father placed his hand over the mouth of the child to muffle her screaming. Sparti says he intervened when the father struck the child with his hand and raised his hand again. "That's not appropriate," Sparti says he told the father. "You cannot do that to any child. Would you like to get off the plane and discuss it?"

The father, Sparti says, responded that he would discipline his child however he wanted. Sparti said the situation was "over and done with in less than 30 seconds." Most passengers didn't realize what had occurred and were bewildered and angry that the pilot taxied back to the gate. Once stopped in Denver, a flight attendant pointed out the 21 BACA members to police, who instructed them to leave the plane along with the couple and their two children -- and a couple who by coincidence were wearing Harley-Davidson T-shirts but were not members of BACA. "We felt we were discriminated against with what we were wearing," said Dennis Sortor, BACA's Wasatch Front chapter president. "I was told that the male attendant said to police that 'Bikers shouldn't be allowed on the plane.' " Sortor said "we were all guilty by association," including the couple wearing Harley T-shirts.

A lawyer who specializes in motorcycle rights has been asked to investigate, said Paul Dubois, BACA national public relations spokesman. Police plan no charges. "Members of BACA, in addition to the family, were removed from the plane," said Denver police Detective Virginia Lopez. "They were interviewed. No charges were filed." Frontier and Denver police declined to release the names or hometown of the couple. The BACA members refused Frontier's offer of another flight and returned to Salt Lake City on Monday aboard SkyWest.



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MIDWEST BIKER 2004 SWAPMEET SCHEDULE

MARCH 28 Riverside Ballroom
 Green Bay

APRIL 4 Waukesha Expo

JUNE 11-13 Crandon Speedway


SEPT. 16-19 Tomahawk Speedway

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• Drawing at 9:00 pm
 • \$10/person - \$15/couple



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