

News For Thought



Idaho motorcycle activists win passage of traffic signal law

Beginning July 1, Idaho motorcyclists will be able to proceed through intersections when traffic signals do not recognize the presence of a motorcycle. Idaho motorcyclists, led by Tim Herzog and the other members of ABATE of North Idaho, won near unanimous support for the bill in the Idaho legislature and it was signed into law by Gov. Dirk Kempthorne. Kempthorne, an enthusiastic motorcyclist himself, was recently nominated by President Bush to be Interior Secretary. The law addresses the problem of traffic light sensors that are not properly calibrated to detect motorcycles, leaving a rider waiting endlessly for a green light. The law allows riders to proceed



through the intersection with caution when that happens. Similar laws have also been passed in Minnesota, Tennessee and Arkansas. www.amadirectlink.com/news © 2006, American Motorcyclist Association

Abate Of Louisiana Official Press Release

HB 985 went to the House Transportation Committee on 4/18/06. This Bill in it's original form would have banned children under the age of 5 from riding on a motorcycle. Abate Of Louisiana was there to oppose this Bill on the basis it took away our parental rights and was not equally applied to all forms of recreational activity comparable to motorcycling. Part of our testimony was going to be "Where will it stop? The next thing you know 5 will not be enough so lets make it 7. Then a few years later, well 7 is still too young so lets make it 10. How long before it becomes 18 or even 21?" Before our people could even get up to testify against this Bill an amendment was made and passed to increase the age to 8! So I guess the question remains, where will it all end. Will the age be increased to 10 or even 12? Then how long will it be before it becomes 18 or even 21 like the legal drinking age?

We have to stop this NOW! If we allow legislation such as this to pass how long will it be before we are legislated off the very highways we enjoy so dearly. We had previously misidentified the Representative who is sponsoring this Legislation, the Author's name is Representative Damon J. Baldone Democrat - District 53. His statement is this Bill was due to calls he received concerning a mother carrying her infant child in a papoose (ask a woman) and riding the baby on a motorcycle. There is already a law concerning that and we agree with it so this Bill is unnecessary.

Our next chance to challenge this Bill will be in the Senate Transportation Committee. In the meantime Representative M.J. "Mert" Smiley Republican- District 88, who made a valiant effort to fight this Bill in the House Transportation Committee, will attempt to get the Bill killed on the House floor.

Motorcyclists from within Louisiana and outside of Louisiana need to contact him if we don't want to face these types of restrictions, we need to act now before it's too late! Tell Representative Baldone you oppose this measure and want him to kill it! His e-mail address is: larep053@legis.state.la.us His phone number is: (985) 876-8872. James "Poet" Sisco. A.B.A.T.E. Of Louisiana, Inc

English Bikers say Bureaucrats are forcing them off the road

A Reading motorcycle group has declared "total war" on proposed Euro laws which they claim are trying to drive them off the road. The European Commission in Brussels has ruled that motorcyclists should be 19 - instead the current 17-year-old minimum - to ride machines over 125cc. The age for direct access tests, which enable riders to skip a two-year probationary period to ride machines of any power, will also rise from 21 to 24. And to progress to a larger motorcycle category, riders will be required to take either a minimum number of hours training or a practical test. Ian Newnham, of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) in Reading, said: "This is total war. The EU has rammed through the directive in a way that shows contempt for motorcyclists' views. They want bikes off the road.

"The safety bureaucrats have become target obsessed, setting accident reduction targets using statistics that are baloney.

"They have totally lost a sense of balance between riders' reasonable expectations for mobility and the prevention of accidents." Newnham called on the European Parliament to throw the directive out and said: "We have to be more determined to preserve biking than they are to destroy it." www.aimncom.com

Bush New Chief of Staff is a Harley Man

The favorite ride of the president's new chief of staff is a Harley Fat Boy, and to appreciate how much of an insider Joshua Bolten has become in the Bush administration, suffice it to say that Bolten keeps a spare hog at President Bush's Texas ranch. "I've ridden motorcycles for a long time. It's not just a midlife crisis," Bolten told the cable network C-SPAN in an interview last year. "The one that I ride most now, the one that's really close to my heart, is the Harley-Davidson Fat Boy, a 2003 anniversary edition."

Bolten, 51, crafted campaign policy for the president and served as deputy chief of staff before becoming director of the Office of Management and Budget in June 2003. That entailed frequent travel with Bush, which led to Bolten leaving a motorcycle at the Prairie Chapel Ranch near Crawford, Texas. In his OMB office, he displays a motorcycle gas tank commemorating the 100th anniversary of Harley-Davidson. During the 2000 campaign, he formed Bikers for Bush. Bolten, who has never married, gained particular notoriety when he gave a motorcycle ride at one of the group's rallies to actress Bo Derek.

"You need to clear your mind of everything else," Bolten has said of biking, "because if you're not concentrating properly when you're riding a motorcycle, you're putting your life in danger."

That focus is useful for a chief of staff who literally holds other people's lives in his hands. Holding one of Washington's most powerful jobs, Bolten will be managing a flow of daily briefings for the president on everything from national security to natural calamity.

The Bush administration considers Bolten "well-respected" inside and outside the administration, with White House spokesman Scott McClellan saying: "The president believes he was the best person for the job."

One of his personal effects he relocated from his grand Eisenhower Executive Office Building quarters to a less-spacious but more prestigious corner perch in the West Wing only steps from the Oval Office, was a motorcycle-shaped menorah. www.aimncom.com

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Weird News: Owner gets back bike stolen in 1971

Authorities recovered a motorcycle that was stolen in 1971 and plan to return it to its original owner. The 1970 Yamaha was about to be shipped overseas to a Finnish man who bought it for \$1,725 on eBay in September, authorities said Monday. During the shipping process, the vehicle identification number turned up in the database of the National Insurance Crime Bureau. Long Beach police still had the theft report and tracked down the original owner, Phillip McKeen, who lives in New England. Police officials plan to return the 360cc bike to McKeen.

"Incredible," said McKeen, an American Airlines pilot. "It's as if a friend you hadn't seen for 30 years walked back into your life but hadn't aged a day." The 35-year-old bike has just 9,380 miles on the odometer. Neither the Finnish buyer nor the seller, a Visalia resident, were suspected of wrongdoing, authorities said.

A similar case unfolded in January when a Corvette that had been stolen in 1969 was recovered as it was about to be shipped to Sweden through the Port of Los Angeles, said Mike Fleming of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. www.aimncom.com



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