

News For Thought

Diesel Bike: There has been research for years on diesel aircraft engines. Why not diesel engines for motorcycles? Seems like a no-brainer to me. Motorcycles have been evolving for nearly a century. There is even electric technology. Think about it, you would never have fouled plugs and you could still have those loud pipes some folks like so much, plus the advantage of even BETTER fuel economy. Diesel fumes stink a little but what the hey! People will know we were there because their noses know! Emissions are LOWER than gas engines, too. www.aimncom.com/Gunny

Harley helps the blind to see:

A student at Penn State Behrend College in Erie, PA has developed a process that may help the blind to "see" digital photographs. Using a process developed by Harley-Davidson called "rapid prototyping," 27-year old Jason Donnell hopes to produce 3-D images that a blind person could run their fingers across and "feel" the image, in much the same manner as Braille is used to read.

"With a Word document, you output to a printer," explains Donnell. "With rapid prototyping, the output is to a machine that uses a special type of paper, wax or plastic. So, for example, if Harley-Davidson has something they want to include on a bike, but is not too sure about, they can input the information and it will produce an exact size copy of the item."

After a lot of hours writing and re-writing, Donnell has his program, but the results so far have been mixed. Because of the short time frame of the college project, he was only able to produce and test three examples.

"The test on a simple picture of a playing card were pretty good," Donnell told the Valley News Dispatch, "but the pictures of a tree and a ghost town were very tough and showed the need for more work." www.aimncom.com/BillBish

In the wake of the base closures nationally, 150 bikers who love freedom turned out for a protest ride over to Ellsworth Air Force Base. Their message: Don't close bases! We have too much going on in the world right now, and we JUST might NEED 'EM! There were an estimated 11,000 folks there for the hearing, and that could determine

whether Ellsworth remains open. They say the six-decade-old base is essential to our future national security. Boy, a whole lot of us agree there, 'course yer readin' the slightly biased pearls of an old Gunnery Sgt from USMC, but I think MOST folks would agree with me. www.aimncom.com/Gunny

Inventor Promotes Car Helmets for kids:

Michael Fleming, an amateur inventor and full-time Houston attorney, has filed a patent application for a new safety device for kids. It's called the Automobile Helmet. "The time has come for a helmet that protects children in autos," Fleming told the Chicago Tribune. Fleming cited government statistics that 2,500 children are killed and 294,000 injured annually in vehicle accidents. But how do parents convince their kids to not only belt up, but helmet up as well? Fleming thinks he has the answer: loading the helmet with electronics. "By building a helmet that allows a child to listen to music, watch a DVD movie or play a handheld game, I'm hoping they'll want to wear a helmet without complaint." www.Aimncom.com/BillBish

New York amends handlebar height law:

Governor George E. Pataki has signed into law a handlebar height bill that will allow motorcyclists to adjust the height of their handlebars up to shoulder level, eliminating the 15" above the seat standard that has been the law since the late sixties. www.Aimncom.com/BillBish

Stateline ID: Remember the recent kidnapping of Shasta Groeneg and the murder of her family? Bet you didn't see it on TV, but BIKERS played a big role. More than 500 Harley-Davidson and other motorcycle riders came to empty their pockets on behalf of the biker's daughter who survived the horrific abduction, The six hour benefit drew more than a 1000 people who donated cash at the front door of Cruiser's Bar & Grill, a biker hangout in this town just east of the Washington state line. Total receipts were not announced.. "You say bikers and people think of gangs, but these people are the best people in the world," Groene said. "These people step up for anything and everything." And you and I know it, don't we? www.aimncom.com/Gunny

A Kiwi set the world SIDE-HACK speed record. New Zealander Glenn Hayward, driving a 1000cc machine dubbed the Flying Kiwi, shattered the 19-year-old world speed record for motorcycle and sidecar on a straight stretch of highway on New Zealand's South Island. Riding with a 60 kilogram (132-pound) weight in the sidecar, Hayward reached a two-run average of 272 kph (170 mph), eclipsing the previous record of 222 kph (139 mph). A representative of the International Motorcycling Federation observed the record attempt, making it official. Y 'wouldn't find ME at half that speed with a sidecar! Riding those things takes some special talent! www.aimncom.com/Gunny

Thurston County residents who have to raise their voices to be heard over the noise of a neighbor's dirt bike or motorcycle now have recourse. A county ordinance makes motorized vehicle noise illegal when it reaches 55 decibels on a neighbor's property -- about the same level as a conversation. The ordinance covers ALL noise not just ORV (dirt bikes). The boom boxes in cars and carried on teen shoulders are part of it. Now THAT we can live without, but just the vehicle's OWN noise is a little different. Folks, have some kindness on your throttle and we can avoid more laws like this one! www.aimncom.com/Gunny

Drinking Bikers still Dying

In 2003, more riders were killed in crashes who had .08 or more alcohol than any OTHER type of vehicle driver in fatal crashes. Like, THIRTY PERCENT of all fatally injured bikers had BAC levels at .08 or higher. NOT riding after drinking might have saved 33 PEOPLE out of every hundred killed. Another 7 percent had lower BAC's, from .01 to .07. But, GET THIS: In SINGLE VEHICLE bike crashes, a whopping 44 percent of riders killed were DRUNK, with blood alcohol readings of .08 or more.

PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND RIDE. Just PARK the bike if yer gonna drink. www.aimncom.com/Gunny