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As confederation treasurer, "Patches" said his job was to "make sure all the committees are doing the right thing." That is, keeping within a \$5,000 party budget. After paying for expenses, said Patches, a member of the Messengers Motorcycle Club, known as a "clean and sober" club, "We'll have the legal means to protect ourselves."

"We're serious about bikers rights," he said. The confederation is "neutral ground."

At regular meetings at which two representatives per club have one vote, Norristown attorney Boyd Spencer regularly updates them about state and federal legislation, including the Patriot Act. Spencer said the law "targets three or more people with a common handshake, common purpose and common attire."

Spencer is a member of the national network of biker-rights lawyers in Aid to Injured Motorcyclists, or AIM, founded in 1982 by California attorney Richard M. Lester, who started the national confederation and similar groups.

On legislative issues, the local confederation supports the Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE) of Pennsylvania, the main biker lobby; and Pennsylvania Coalition of Motorcyclists (PCOM), which monitors legislation.

The confederation supported member Warlocks and the Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA), both of whom sued police for allegedly harassing bikers in separate Toys for Tots Runs in Philadelphia and Delaware County in 2002. The Warlocks obtained a consent decree from the Philly cops and BACA, an out-of-court settlement from Darby Borough.

"Everybody is getting along together as a group and becoming more political," said "Rabbit," of Men of Honor. "It's good to see as many [clubs] agree on one thing."

At their latest confederation meeting, held in the middle of the summer when most organizations don't meet, the confederation drew more than 40 members.

Amid the banter, the president introduced "Q" as a nurse and a minister: "He can bury ya and marry ya."

For \$200, which would go to the confederation, he added, bikers could get married or renew their vows at the Summer Sizzler.

"Boyd will do the divorce," joked the president, referring to AIM lawyer Boyd Spencer.

Later, Q identified himself as Steve Stoyke, 54, a member of Association of Recovering Motorcyclists, or ARM, who rode five hours on his Harley from Frederick, Md., to support the confederation. "To do a wedding, we line bikes up on either side," said Stoyke. "You can do a traditional wedding, or we can read from the Harley Repair Manual."

The minister asks the groom: "Do you promise to keep her cables greased and tires balanced?"

And he asks the bride: "Do you promise to keep his gas filter cleared, change his oil and bring him in for maintenance?"

"This is America's last subculture," added Stoyke. "That's what keeps our country great."

Evel Knievel Battling Health Problems

BUTTE, Mont. (AP) - Former daredevil Evel Knievel says health problems are now his biggest hurdle _ to the extent that even his wife Krystal is wary to ride on his motorcycle.

"I hate to be Evel Knievel and told by my wife she doesn't want to get on a motorcycle with me," he says.

Knievel, 66, will ride Friday at the fourth annual "Evel Knievel Days" in Montana. Since his wife won't join him, though, Knievel says he may have a blowup doll on the bike with him: "A naked blowup doll."

Knievel says he has been diagnosed with an incurable lung disease and has diabetes and hepatitis. He has constant pain from having steel plates in his back and screws in his ankle, the result of bone-breaking crashes during motorcycle jumps.

But the stuntman says he still loves to ride the motorcycles that made him an icon. However, on a recent outing on a new fuel-injected road machine he had to flag down a passing motorist to help him turn the bike around on a two-lane highway.

Knievel became famous in the 1970s for riding his motorcycle over everything from vehicles to alligators while wearing a red, white and blue jumpsuit. He retired from jumping more than 20 years ago.



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