



## News & Notes

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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News & Notes is a monthly publication compiled and edited by the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Government Relations Department. Designed to inform motorcyclists of 'rights'-related issues and events around the world, News and Notes welcomes your input. Suggestions and contributions can be sent to Sheila Andrews, AMA Legislative Assistant, by e-mail at [sandrews@ama-cycle.org](mailto:sandrews@ama-cycle.org).

**The AMA will celebrate its 85th anniversary year** in 2009 with a number of activities and events, culminating with **AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days, July 24-26**, at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in Lexington, Ohio. AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days, the proceeds of which benefit the AMA's Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum, has grown to become America's grandest celebration of motorcycling heritage, and features numerous activities inspired by all eras. In addition to activities tied to the AMA's 85th anniversary, the weekend will be loaded with highlights, including the world's largest motorcycle swap meet, demo rides of current production bikes, motorcycling seminars, bike shows, stunt shows, the new product Manufacturers' Midway, club corrals that feature both marque and regional clubs, and guided rides through the rolling Ohio countryside.

Go to: <http://www.motorcyclemuseum.org/85thParade.asp> for the full release.

**Harley-Davidson and Buell** will once again be **presenting sponsors of the 2009 AMA International Women & Motorcycling Conference** in Keystone, Colorado. The AMA reports that it has seen an increase in attendance at the Women and Motorcycling Conference over the years, and anticipates that it will double at the 2009 event with more than 2,200 participants. The conference will have workshops and an opportunity to test-ride new bikes, shop for gear and attend a number of events.

Source: <http://www.womenandmotorcycling.com/womenc/index.asp>

**Florida: The State Supreme Court**, in a ruling that allows a liability lawsuit to proceed, found that a waiver signed by a child's parent is unenforceable. The ruling may endanger participation by minors in many forms of commercial activities, including motorsports. For most purposes, Florida law defines children as anyone under 18. The entire ruling can be viewed at: <http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/decisions/2008/sc07-1739.pdf>

**Lone Pine, Calif: A current Inyo County Wilderness** proposal is facing local opposition. At a recently held Board of Supervisors meeting, local residents voiced their strong opposition to five new Wilderness designations being considered for Southern Inyo County. The meeting was held in reference to a request from the California Wilderness Coalition to Senator Dianne Feinstein to add these additional areas. It was noted by numerous speakers that Inyo County is already the site of 28 percent of the designated Wilderness areas statewide. Many speakers also expressed concerns about the struggling local mining industry, as well as

the potential loss of historically enjoyed motorized recreation opportunities.

There were no representatives from the California Wilderness Coalition or Senator Feinstein's office in attendance at the meeting, and not a single speaker was in favor of the proposal.

*Source: Inyo Register: <http://www.inyoregister.com/content/view/120553/1/>*

**New York City, N.Y: The City Council has once again** delayed final approval of a bill that would require motorcycles, and no other motor vehicles, to have stock exhaust systems. The AMA expressed disappointment that the measure languished in the Council for two years and then, in a surprise move, was revived just a week before the scheduled final vote, before once again being delayed. If passed, motorcyclists caught without an EPA-stamped exhaust system would face fines of up to \$1,000 for a first offense and temporary forfeiture of the motorcycle until the fine is paid. A second offense would result in a fine of up to \$2,500 and permanent forfeiture of the motorcycle. AMA staff recently spoke with the council's Policy staff to reinforce rider concerns and to explore alternatives to the measure. To see the full text of the measure, go to <http://tinyurl.com/6mo2yo>.

*Source: <http://www.amadirectlink.com/news/2008/nycbillissue.asp>*

**San Diego, Calif: The 2009 San Diego Off Road SuperShow has been cancelled.** After presenting successful shows in 2007 and 2008 the Off-Road Business Association (ORBA) has announced the cancellation of their 2009 event, which was to be held at the Del Mar Fairgrounds on February 7 and 8. Citing the unprecedented global economic downturn, ORBA stated that it is in the best interest of its members and the off-road industry as a whole to cancel the event, and apologized for any inconvenience that the cancellation may cause.

*Source: <http://www.orba.biz/>*

**Santa Cruz, Calif:** A long running lawsuit challenging the legality of the California helmet law has been dismissed. The lawsuit, originally filed on November 9, 2006, (Case No. CV 155682), was last heard on May 19-20, 2008 in the Santa Cruz Superior Court. After hearing evidence Judge Robert Atack ruled in favor of the California Highway Patrol (CHP). According to ABATE of California, Inc. Executive Director Tim Tennimon, Sr., "The case was dismissed. There is no further avenue of appeal on this lawsuit. It is finished."

**Suffolk County, N.Y.:** A Suffolk County legislator is asking his colleagues to reject a \$25,500 motorcycle safety grant because the money would be used for checkpoints. Legislator Jack Eddington said the grant should only be accepted if the money could be used for something other than checkpoints. Eddington, who rides a Honda Shadow, believes the checkpoints are a form of harassment. The grant comes from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.

*Source: <http://www.newsday.com/services/newspaper/printedition/thursday/news/ny-k5960428dec11,0,4657737.story>*

**Hollister, Calif:** The Bureau of Land Management's Hollister field office, which has been in operation

since the 1980's and now manages 284,000 acres of public land, recently announced it would be moving its operational base to Marina in the coming years. More than 30 employees, many of whom live in Hollister, will be affected by the relocation, though it could take up to three years before the move is made. Hollister Field Manager Rick Cooper said the planned move, which is necessitated by a need for more space and a desire to move operations closer to 7,200 acres of BLM land at the former Fort Ord, still needs to be approved by the agency's national operations center in Denver, CO.

Source: <http://www.pinnaclenews.com/news/contentview.asp?c=251689>

**New Hampshire: House Bill 95**, introduced by Rep. Judith Day (D-North Hampton), would prohibit all motorcycle exhaust system modifications and the use of after-market equipment, and require all motorcycles to be equipped with tachometers. It would also lower the permissible sound level for all motorcycles to 95 dB(A) measured 20 inches from the exhaust system at a 45 degree angle. Fines for violations would also be increased.

Source: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2009/HB0095.html>

**North Carolina:** A new North Carolina license tag is set to go into production for motorcycle riders who want to help fund the non-profit Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation (BRPF). Supporters of the proposal have nearly reached the required minimum threshold of 300 bike owners who have committed to buying the special Blue Ridge Parkway plate. BRPF Director Houck Medford said a similar tag for cars has raised about \$500,000 from the sale of more than 27,000 Blue Ridge Parkway tags.

Source: <http://www.wral.com/news/state/story/4183035/>

**Asheville, N.C:** The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation's (PBTF) Ride for Kids® program broke all of its previous fundraising records for childhood brain tumor research in 2008, bringing in more than \$5.2 million during its 25th anniversary year. The nation's top group was Team Tyler, powered by American Collectors Insurance, which brought \$64,355 to the Philadelphia Ride for Kids.

The PBTF has funded more than 50 research institutions around the world, including its own prestigious PBTF Institute programs. All makes and brands of motorcycles are welcome at the Ride for Kids. Events will take place in 39 cities in 2009, including new events in Jacksonville, Fla., Indianapolis and Middle Tennessee (Franklin). More information is available at <http://www.rideforkids.org/>.

**Knoxville, Tenn:** American Honda recently announced that it has cancelled the 2009 Honda Hoot motorcycle rally. This June would have marked the 16th annual Honda Hoot, which moved to Knoxville from Asheville, North Carolina, in 2001. Honda cited the current economic crunch for its decision to cancel the annual motorcycle rally, which has attracted over 15,000 motorcycle enthusiasts to the event in recent years, and an estimated quarter of a million visitors during the past 15 years.

Source: [http://hrca.honda.com/Articles/Article.aspx?xml=Articles/News/Hot\\_News\\_Article\\_50057.xml](http://hrca.honda.com/Articles/Article.aspx?xml=Articles/News/Hot_News_Article_50057.xml)

**Motorists' changing habits spur call for gas tax increases** to pay for construction, public transportation and other programs. With motorists driving less and increased fuel efficiency among many newer vehicles, fuel taxes are not raising enough revenue to keep pace according to a new report. As a result a federal commission that oversees financing for transportation is talking about increasing the federal fuel tax rate by up to 50 percent unless the government can devise other ways to raise these funds.

The National Commission on Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing is the second group to call for increasing the current 18.4 cents per gallon federal tax on gasoline and the 24.4 cents per gallon tax on diesel. The commission will also recommend that states raise their individual fuel taxes and make greater use of tolls and other fees for rush hour drivers. According to the draft of the financing commission's recommendations, the nation needs to move to a new system that taxes motorists according to how much they use roads.

A study by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies estimated that the annual gap between revenues and the investment needed to improve highway and transit systems was about \$105 billion in 2007, and will increase to \$134 billion in 2017 under current trends.

*Source: <http://financecommission.dot.gov/index.htm>*

**Motorcycle Satisfaction Jumps To New High.** A recent survey suggests that if you rode a motorcycle in 2008, chances are you loved the experience. The J.D. Power and Associates' 2008 Motorcycle Competitive Information Study shows overall satisfaction with the motorcycle ownership experience has increased for a sixth consecutive year to a record-high level. Overall motorcycle ownership satisfaction averaged 814 points on a 1,000-point scale in 2008, up 5 points from 2007.

Now in its 11th year, the study measures owner satisfaction with new motorcycles by examining five major components of the overall ownership experience: product, quality, cost of ownership, sales and service. The study also found that the industry continues to struggle with attracting younger, first-time motorcycle buyers.

*Source: <http://www.wdsu.com/automotive/18343685/detail.html>*

**Number of Women Riders is Up.** Preliminary data collected by the ongoing 2008 Motorcycle Industry Council Owner Survey suggests that a greater percentage of women are taking to two-wheeling. Through the first three quarters of 2008, the survey found a 29 percent increase in the percentage of female owners, compared to 2003. That last survey found that 9.6 percent of owners were women. Over the first nine months of 2008, the number had grown to 12.4 percent.

*Source: <http://www.womenridersnow.com/>*

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AMA Government Relations *News & Notes* is a monthly service compiled and edited by the AMA Government Relations Staff to keep motorcyclists informed of happenings around the world. We welcome your news & views. Please submit all material to Sheila Andrews, Legislative Assistant, 101 Constitution Ave., NW Suite 800W, Washington, DC 20001; fax (202) 742-4304 or e-mail to [sandrews@ama-cycle.org](mailto:sandrews@ama-cycle.org).