

KC Biker Bible

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Table of Contents

KC Biker Bible About the Author Introduction Biker Basics Biker 4-1-1 Motorcycle Safety	3 4 5 7 16 22
Great Rides	31
Types of Motorcycle Events Rallies Rides and Tours	43 44 44
The "Big Four" Motorcycle Events Daytona Beach Bike Week Myrtle Beach Bike Week Laconia Motorcycle Week Sturgis Motorcycle Rally	47 48 50 52 54
National Motorcycle Events	57
Motorcycle Events in Missouri and Kansas	63
Biker Bars Biker Magazines	69 75
The Biker's Dictionary	83
About RFFIC	107

KC BIKER BIBLE

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Roswold is a Kansas City based personal injury attorney. His law firm, Kansas City Accident Injury Attorneys, represents all kinds of accident victims including victims of motorcycle wrecks. James is an experienced litigator who chose to open a small law firm in order to provide accident victims with personal, one-onone representation. He writes articles, newsletters, and eBooks as a public service, and to further fulfill his passion of



educating accident victims, whether or not he represents them in court.

James Roswold founded Roswold Foundation for Injured Children in 2009. As an injury attorney, he understands that serious childhood injuries can have devastating physical, emotional, and financial consequences. He grew up witnessed to the tragic consequences of a catastrophic and lifelong injury to his sibling, which further inspired him to start this foundation in an effort to improve the quality of life for children suffering from injuries and their families.

INTRODUCTION

More than thirty years ago, a groundbreaking motorcycle safety research study was published by The University of Southern California. Howard Hurt was the leading researcher and, utilizing funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), he examined more than 900 Los Angeles area motorcycle crashes. His purpose was to gain perspective and knowledge so that information could be gleaned from the report in order to better educate the motorcycle riding public.

Since the report was first published, it has been used over and over in motorcycle safety courses across the country. The Hurt Report is still the go-to guide for bikers who want to learn how to stay safe on the road. Much of the data gathered in the study is the basis for what is known today about motorcycle safety.

In the majority of motorcycle crashes, another vehicle is involved. The Hurt Report sheds light on the greatest risks to motorcycle riders. The study reveals that other drivers are the prevailing risk to bikers. It is when these drivers, usually in passenger carrying vehicles, fail to see or otherwise detect motorcyclists that accidents happen.

The first half of this book examines the relationship between motorcyclists and other motorists, and what bikers can do to keep themselves safe on the road. In one of the most startling statistics, it was revealed that when motorcycle crashes involve multiple cars, 75 percent of the time the fault originates with another driver who failed to yield the right-of-way to a motorcyclist. And, contrary to popular notions, most motorcycle crashes do not occur on long trips over many miles, but in shorter stretches close to the biker's home. In other words, statistics show that a short trip for errands is more dangerous than a long cross-country getaway.

The KC Biker Bible is a compilation of tips, strategies, and information for Kansas City Bikers who want to stay safe on the road. Motorcycle riding is a treasured American tradition. Too often it is represented as inherently dangerous. However, it is not a foregone conclusion that motorcycle riding is unsafe. In fact, in many cases it is the other drivers on the road that make riding unsafe. In this book, you will learn ways to stay safe, have fun, and avoid turning a classic pastime into another tragic statistic.

The Kansas City Biker Bible is also a compilation of information to maximize your fun on and off the road, including great rides, motorcycle events, biker bars, and biker magazines. Additionally, you will find a host of biker resources including instruction, dealers, supplies, parts and accessories, performance racing equipment and service, and the biker's dictionary - Enjoy!

BIKER BASICS

What Should You Ride?

You know you want a bike, but you are not sure which of the many kinds of motorcycle would be a good fit. If you are looking for a fast moving bike that can reach speeds in no time, you may want something different than someone who wants to take a long leisurely tour across the West. Choosing a bike for recreation over basic transportation is going to change your options as well. Let's get started with some basics:

Scooters

These smaller vehicles almost look like the kid brother or sister to a normal sized motorcycle. Scooters are today's answer to skyrocketing gas prices, and many people choose them for running around town as they are not meant for long distances or major highway driving. Scooters come with small motors, usually beginning at 60cc and going up from there. A scooter has a small frame, small tires, and storage space that make it a perfect vehicle for puttering around town.

Street Bikes

Also called crotch rockets, these lightweight bikes are built for speed. Big engines ensure high speeds in a short amount of time, and the design causes most drivers to lean forward adding to the flying through the air feel of the vehicle. Street bikes are built for high speed. Most street bikes have foot pegs that cause the rider to rest their legs close to the body, this is helpful to keep the feet and legs further away from the ground; however, the design can actually cause drivers to grow fatigued at slower speeds. The leaning forward position places a lot of undo pressure on the wrists and arms when the bike is going slower. Crotch rockets reach speeds of 100 mph or faster with very little effort.

Cruisers

Most Americans learn to recognize a cruiser without even knowing what type of bike they are looking at. Industry giant Harley-Davidson has made this type of bike famous, with its high handle bars and forward foot pegs. Cruisers require less torque, making them easier for shifting and longer riding. Unlike street bikes, some riders begin to experience fatigue at higher speeds rather than low. Cruisers are great for exactly what their name implies, cruising around on a motorcycle for longer rides, or for short to moderate distances closer to home. These bikes are built for the rider though they lack a little of the creature comforts a touring machine offers.

Choppers usually fall under the cruiser category. Choppers are bikes that are customized with after-market parts, like "ape hanger" handle bars and uber-loud exhaust pipes. Choppers are serious motorcycle business; many chopper owners are the kinds of riders who take motorcycle riding on as an art form.

Other considerations

How tall are you? Your height will have a bearing on the actual bike you select to ride. Seat height is generally measured in millimeters or inches and refers to the distance between the lowest part of the seat (often called the saddle) and the ground when the bike is stood in an upright position. The motorcycle's spec sheet will tell you the exact measurement, but bikes are as different as people. You really need to experience the seat height for yourself to know if it will work for you. Try the actual bike you want to buy; models can vary from year to year. For example, a newer version of the exact model you already tried can have a lower saddle height than the same bike you tried out before. Be sure before you buy.

An easy way to determine if the height is right for you is to think of your inseam measurement and compare that to the saddle height. Ideally, when you sit on the seat you will be capable of standing the bike up while on your flat feet. Shorter riders can wear foot gear that will give them more height, but for safety and comfort it's advisable to simply start out with a bike that you can easily handle. Take the bike's weight into consideration also; a bike that weighs more than you can safely handle will make riding difficult. Some riders are tempted to modify the bike's suspension in order to change the height of the bike. This is usually not a good idea. Changing the bike's suspension can have an impact on the steering and road handling. Better to pick a bike that works from the start.

Essential Apparel

Biker gear serves two purposes. For one, part of its function is safety. Ever wonder why bikers and leather seem to be synonymous? Wearing leather is more than a fashion statement. Leather gear protects the rider from road rash in the event of a spill onto the concrete. Visiting biker and leather shops is just part of the whole biker experience; but it is a part that fills a very basic need.

So, if you are just staring out, what gear do you need? What is the most basic and what can wait for another day? Here are a few of the most essential elements of biker wear:

Helmets

For bikers who choose or are required by law to wear a helmet for protection, shopping for a helmet can be a somewhat tricky endeavor. Some helmets that look great in the bike shop are designed for looks and not for safety. If you decide to wear a helmet for safety, watch out for novelty helmets that look a lot like motorcycle safety helmets. Here's a quick way to tell the difference: You should see a sticker that indicates the helmet is DOT certified. This means that the helmet has passed the rigorous safety tests required by the Department of Transportation. Helmets without DOT certification are novelty helmets and sold for use as an accessory; they are not meant to protect against brain injury in the event of an accident.

There are a few basic types of helmets available:

• Half helmets or "brain buckets" are open faced and sit on just the top of the rider's head. Many novelty helmets are made in this style. Riders who swear by this style of helmet love the open air feel. Pair a brain bucket with goggles to

keep the wind, bugs, and debris out of your eyes.

- Open faced or three-quarter helmets cover more of the head while leaving the face open. The back and top of the head, the ears, and part of the face are protected. Some models come with an optional face shield or visor that protects against bugs and debris.
- Full face shield helmets keep the entire head covered by the helmet, including the chin. Full face helmets come with flip up visors that protect the eyes. Most are vented to allow air to flow freely. Some bikers dislike the restrictive feel of a full face helmet, especially in hot weather. Some models offer more airflow than others; be sure to try the helmet on for size before you make a purchase. Helmets come in different sizes and should fit snugly. Whatever type of helmet you choose, remember that a helmet that is too large will wobble and move on the rider's head in the wind.

Jackets or Coats

The Fonz may have made the leather jacket cool attire back in the 80's, but leather is more than just fashion savvy. Plain and simple, if you hit the pavement, you will be grateful for the protection leather offers. Jackets range from lightweight to heavy. Size and shape vary, but the function is the same. A jacket should fit well without too much give so that it doesn't shift around in the wind, but it should also offer freedom of movement. In other words, try it on before you leave the store. Move around in it to be sure that you have the free range of motion in your arms. Buy something that is not too bulky that it becomes uncomfortable.

Some motorcycle jackets come in vinyl or other material. These are great alternatives for rain gear and hot summer days, but nothing protects from road rash like leather.

Gloves

Leather is best when you buy a pair of motorcycle gloves. Gloves, like jackets, serve a dual purpose; they keep the hands warm

Page | 10

and protect from wind and debris. Leather gloves do more to keep your hands safe from road rash than any other material. Make sure the pair you choose fit snugly, but not too tight. Half or knuckle gloves are available for summer riding, but the best protection is a full glove that allows for maximum motion.

Boots

Experienced bikers know that footwear is extremely important. Heavy boots may seem counterintuitive on hot weather days, but a broken foot or ankle is not much fun either. The correct foot gear protects the ankle and fits snugly. Biker boots do not have to be heavy, but they should be sturdy and durable. A biker's feet spend a lot of time in contact with hard road surfaces. Minor mishaps on a motorcycle can turn into nasty injuries if the rider is not wearing good foot protection.

Pants, Vests, etc.

For serious bikers, the more leather gear, the better. If you want maximum protection, invest in leather from head to toe. Vests are a great option for warmer weather when you just can't bear the leather jacket. If you don't want to wear leather all day, go for a pair of removable leather chaps that fit over your jeans or pants.

Buying Used

Used motorcycle sales are big business. Many enthusiasts go the pre-owned route in order to save money or buy the classic machine of their dreams. But there are some precautions you should take before you sign over your money.

Used bikes that have been laid over or left to the elements are not a wise purchase. You simply can't know the extent of the wear and tear at first glance. Always begin your inspection by asking the seller if the bike has been in a wreck, even just laid down on the road, and how the bike was stored. Hopefully they will be upfront with you. As you visually insect the bike, look for clues that indicate whether the seller's comments match up with the condition of the bike. Red flags can mean he or she is hiding some very important details from you. Look over the frame. Check for obvious dents and cracks or any other visible evidence of frame damage. If you do see any frame damage, consider walking away – even a small fracture in the frame makes the bike worthy of the salvage yard. Some bike enthusiasts suggest going so far as to removing the seat to check for damage.

For a chain driven bike, check for signs of visual wear along the chain. Missing links or wear is a good sign that the chain is bad and the bike has been ridden hard. Look for signs of corrosion, run the full length of the chain by pushing the bike forward. Check the sprockets for missing teeth and signs of wear.

Lift the seat and check the battery connections for signs of corrosion. Battery terminals free of corrosion usually indicate a bike that has been well maintained. Corrosion and dirty connections are signs of a neglected bike.

You should sit on the bike to check the suspension. Check the brakes for fluid leakage and resistance when you apply them; you should feel firm resistance. Upon release the brake control should go back to its original position.

Maintenance Basics

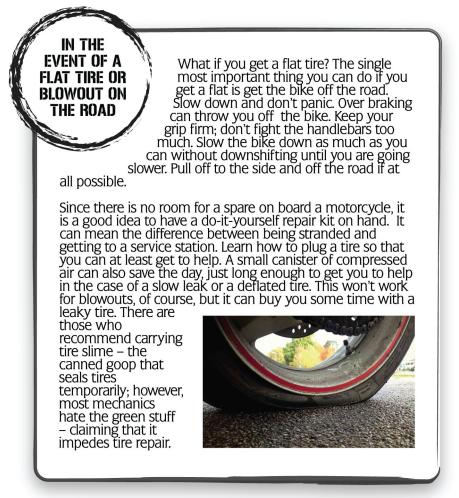
Motorcycle safety depends greatly on attention to bike maintenance. There is less room for mistakes on a motorcycle. Tires must be in good condition, they are the only thing between you and the road. Remember, a blow out on a car can be precarious, but a blow out on a motorcycle spells almost certain disaster. Working and well maintained parts are your best bet for safety.

Before each ride, every rider no matter how experienced should do a basic check to be sure the bike is safe to ride. Safety courses use a clever mnemonic term to help remind riders what to check. Be sure to run through T-CLOCS checklist, which stands for tires, controls, lights, oil, chassis and stands.

Tires

Check for pressure. Refer to the basic owner's manual for the right amount of pressure. Never skip this step. Some tires can appear to be properly inflated, but are underinflated. Tires that are too low cause the bike to handle improperly.

Check for tread wear and signs of weathering. Like all vehicle tires, low tread or balding tires handle poorly in some conditions, especially on wet or icy roads. Bald tires hydroplane easily. Check also for bulges and visible objects like nails and screws and other obvious punctures. Roll the bike forward to check all areas of the bike. Rims should be free of dents and dings.



Controls

This includes the throttle, clutch, levers, pedals, hoses, and cables. Make sure the cables are free of kinks and fraying and are in the right position, not interfering with other controls. Throttles should respond correctly to touch. It should snap closed and move without interference. Hoses should be examined for deterioration, kinks, and fraying.

Lights

The headlight should be functional, switching from high beam to low beam without problems. The lens should be free of cracks and breaks. Check turn signals for the same. The battery falls under this category as well; check the connections to be sure they are tight and secure and free of corrosion. Wiring should not be kinked or chafed and frayed.

Oil

Check engine oil levels. Check while the engine is warm, making sure the bike is sitting on level ground.

This is also the time to check the gear oil for shaft driven bikes, brake and clutch fluid levels, and coolant levels (check coolant only when cool). While you are at it, take a peek at the fuel gauge. Refer to the owner's manual for recommended levels, changes, and types of fluid to use in your bike. Inspect the bike for leaks in fluid lines, gaskets, hoses, and seals.

Chassis

Check the frame, chain or belt, suspension, and fasteners. Watch for peeling paint, cracks in mounts and bolts, over-tightened fasteners, broken or missing clips, bolts, and other fasteners. Be sure the rear and front wheels have the right amount of play. Check chains on chain driven bikes at the tightest points. Roll the bike forward and check in several places. If the chain has more than an inch of play at any point, it needs to be tightened. Make sure the teeth are not hooked or missing. Chains should be routinely tightened every 500 to 700 miles ridden. Lubricate the chain by spraying lubricant along all parts of the chain as the wheel is turning. Make sure you wipe off the excess with a rag. Too much left behind can mean a mess of your clothes as the bike throws off the extra lube when in motion.

Stands

Make sure side and center stands are free of cracks and dents. Stands should support the bike in an upright position without bending, and spring into place without hang-ups.

BIKER 4-1-1

Who's Riding

Thanks to early movies and television, motorcycle riders and enthusiasts have dealt for many years with stereotypes and unfair reputations. Bikers are neither all Hell's Angels nor are they societal misfits and criminals. Today, many motorcycle riders are doctors, lawyers, pastors, teachers, and suburban parents. The lure of the open road and the roar of a V-twin is heard by more than just the typical Hollywood stereotype.

As more segments of society accept the motorcycle lifestyle there are more bikes on the road. Motorcycle enthusiasts come from all walks of life. In a 2008 motorcycle demographic study conducted by the Motorcycle Institute Council, researchers found that the ratio of baby boomers on bikes to generation X and Y riders fell to 2 to 1 from 4 to 1 in a 2003 study. What that means is that the field of riders is expanding. Older riders are still riding, but their younger counterparts are catching on to the trend as well.

In that same study researchers found that more respondents identified their motorcycles as modes of transportation over merely recreational vehicles. More and more riders are turning to motorcycles as a means of travel, running errands or heading out to dinner on a weekend night rather than just for long-distance travel destinations (Caution: The Hurt Report states that these routine, close-to-home trips are where riders are more likely to be injured).

The bottom line is that more people from a varied population base climb behind the handle bars than ever before. Those people are not separating their motorcycle riding from their regular lives. Bikes are more frequently in traffic during rush hour, on the Interstate, and on rural country roads.

Women now make up almost a quarter of all motorcycle riders. That number has increased 12 percent since 2003 according to the Motorcycle Institute Council's report. In fact, the month of May is

Page | 16

designated "National Women Riders Month". What does all of this mean? It means that there are nearly six million women on the road behind a set of handle bars of their own or more simply put, riding is no longer an all-boys club.

Again, these statistics serve to blow the typical stereotypes right out of the water. They also illustrate a very important reality: motorcyclists are everywhere.

Education

Some might think the process from non-biker to biker is as simple as going from point A to point B. You want a bike. You purchase the bike you want. License and insure it, hop on and away you go.

But that is not at all how the process should go. Missing is an essential component: Learning how. For a motorcycle rider, taking safety classes should be a top priority.

Most states use curriculum from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF). Driver's manuals in 41 states are written by the MSF. Another 31 states use MSF testing materials. In addition, all but five states waive testing for the license once a new driver has completed an MSF training course.

The question is often raised, "Why do I need training? I grew up around bikes. I learned on a dirt bike..." But here are some hard facts: In the landmark study, The Hurt Report, researchers found that 92 percent of bikers in the accidents investigated had no formal training. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation had made the recommendation that all states require motorcycle training for issuance of a motorcycle driver's license.

An educated biker is a safe biker. In truth, there are situations that cross a biker's path that even the most experienced motorcyclist will be unable to avoid. But in many cases a little extra safety training does nothing but help a biker's chances. Think back to the statistics from the Hurt Report; if the overwhelming majority of bikers who crashed in the study had zero formal training, why not err on the side of caution and spend a Saturday or two in an MSF safety class? Really, what can it hurt? It can go a long way to help.

Starting out, the MSF's basic safety course called, "Basic Rider Course" should be the first thing you plan to participate in. Again, no matter how much experience you have had previously, the course is required in some states and is essential for any new rider. Even if you think you are a good enough rider without it, at least consider the fact that you may not be aware of all of the traffic laws for motorcycles. That alone is reason enough to sign up. If you have gone through safety classes before, there is no reason to take another one, right? Not so fast. Contrary to popular belief, motorcycle safety is not a "one and done" situation. MSF provides an Experienced Rider Course for bikers who have been at it for a long time. Why spend a Saturday afternoon taking a safety class? For one, some things may have changed since your first time around. You may have something new to learn. Secondly, laws change. Technology changes. New studies provide industry experts with better safety information. There is definitely something new to learn. Consider how much car technology alone has changed in the past decade. Even in the context with other vehicles there is always new safety information.

Continuing education is a great way to sharpen your skills. Face it, after a few years on the bike, skills can get rusty and habits can form which may need a little updating and correction. As an added incentive, some insurance companies actually offer discounts after riders take additional safety courses.

The Debate over Helmets

In a debate that is as probably as old as motorcycles themselves, most riders stand firmly on one side or the other of the question over helmets. Each year the controversy rages on. Some see the laws as an intrusion on their rights and freedoms, while others see the laws as a basic safety net that ensures all riders have the best chance for a safe return. Twenty states have strict helmet laws. Another 19 require helmets for riders under the age of 20.

The arguments against helmet laws claim a helmet actually inhibits the driver's peripheral vision. Others make the argument that the helmet makes riding uncomfortable; full face shield helmets can be hot in the summer time and bikers against helmets usually say that the heat is unbearable. This added heat can create a dangerous situation, citing the fact that too much heat can lead to a dizzy and disoriented driver. Still others think that the use of a helmet should be entirely a personal decision.

On the for-helmets side, the mantra is simple. "Helmets save lives". Using statistics to prove their point, helmet law supporters say that the data clearly shows that bikers who take a spill onto the pavement have a 37 percent better chance of survival than those who are not wearing a helmet. The Hurt Report concludes that wearing a motorcycle safety helmet significantly reduces the danger of serious head injury to bikers. Motorcycle riders rack up less than one percent of total miles traveled by riders in vehicles across the United States, but motorcycle deaths make up nearly 15 percent of all traffic deaths across the country.

Helmet law opponents cite individual freedom as a rallying cry against mandatory helmet laws, while supporters maintain that motorcycle crashes are not without far reaching consequences. The NHTSA estimates that helmet laws saved about 3 billion dollars in terms of medical costs and productivity in 2010 alone.

Still, regardless of the position any given rider takes, the debate is certainly not over and is likely to continue as long as there are motorcycles on the road.

From the Rear Seat

Many bikers are couple bikers. For the rider and the passenger, hitting the road together is a fantastic opportunity to see the countryside together in a unique fashion. Just as an educated driver is a safer driver, an educated passenger is a safer passenger. The passenger has a very real bearing on the safety of the ride; one bad movement on the passenger's part can shift the bike's weight and cause the driver to lay it over. Irresponsible movements on the passenger's part can even cause a severe wreck.

If you are riding along in the passenger seat, make sure that you come dressed for the ride. Wearing the right gear is as important for the passenger as it is for the driver. Good footwear provides the passenger protection to the feet and ankles. Sturdy boots are a good way to keep a solid grip on the footpegs.

Leather outerwear provides protection from the road. If the bike is laid over, leather can help protect the passenger from road rash as well. Full face shield helmets that carry a DOT certification offer great protection for passengers not just for drivers. Ride comfortably with rain gear in wet weather and cooler gear when the sun is beating down on you. For long trips, protect your face and eyes from wind and bugs.

As a passenger you will be mounting the bike after the driver is seated and has secured the bike in a standing position. Make sure the foot pegs are out (some fold in) and mount the bike quickly. Always ask the driver if he or she is ready; your added weight can shift the bike and cause damage and potential injuries even in a stationary position. Never approach the bike from the side with the exhaust pipes; always mount the bike from the other side or risk severe leg burns. If you are short, you can place one hand on the driver's shoulder if needed to steady yourself, place your right foot on the peg and swing the left leg over, and sit gently. If you can simply swing a leg over from a standing position, begin with your right leg and settle in gently.

Simply reverse the process to get off the bike.

As a passenger, you have a great responsibility to ride safely. Remember that motorcyclists lean into turns. You simply need to learn to lean with the driver. Here is a trick: keep your eyes on

Page | 20

the driver's head. If the driver leans left, match it. If the driver goes right, go right. If you happen to lean the opposite way the driver leans in a turn, you can cause an accident. Be prepared to hold steady in case the driver brakes hard causing the bike to stop suddenly. You can't prevent sliding forward in all situations, but sliding forcefully forward can cause the driver to shift forward as well. This can also cause an accident.

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

Conduct an informal poll among family and friends and you are likely to hear varying opinions about the safety of motorcycles. In fact, there is a prevailing misconception that motorcycles themselves are inherently dangerous. But is this really true?

Simply by the nature of the machine, an accident on a motorcycle is serious business. Motorcycles lack the structural protection that cars, trucks, and other passenger vehicles provide. But, does that mean motorcycles should not be on the road? Opinions may vary, but the truth is, motorcycles are on the road. As discussed previously, the demographic information shows that a growing number of people have made the decision to ride, and for that reason alone, the question of should is a bit of a moot point. Motorcycles are on the road, and motorcycle riders have as much right to safety and courtesy as any other drivers and passengers.

Starting out

So, now you know the type of bike you want to ride and you have an idea of the right size that will work for you. It's time for a little "rider tutorial". Here's what you need to do next:

Swing your leg over the bike for the first time. Sit in the seat and stand the bike up (leave the kickstand down just for now.) Familiarize yourself with the controls. How does the layout work for you? Can you reach the controls without any problems? Decide if you can handle the weight of the bike. Remember; think of the end of a long ride. If the weight pushes your strength, imagine what you are going to feel like at the end of a fatiguing ride.

The throttle and front brake controls will be on the right handle bar. To make the bike go faster, the throttle twists forward from the rider's body. The brake lever is squeezed in order to apply the front brakes. Can you handle the action smoothly? Apply the brake too hard and you may end up with a nasty injury when the bike flips after you lock up the front brakes. The rear brakes are

Page | 22

controlled with the right foot. Most of the time, the front brakes are the best way to stop the bike; rear brakes are best used at lower speeds. If you are looking at a chopper or custom model, make sure you consider fatigue here too. High handle bars or "ape hangers" can wear you out after a long ride; novice riders, especially, may want to start out with a more basic model.

The left hand controls the clutch. The clutch puts the bike in neutral, disengaging the transmission from the engine when it's time to change gears.

Here is how it basically works: With the left hand, release the clutch. Using the left foot, shift to the next gear. Then engage the clutch once more with the left hand.

Shifting gears on a bike is a whole different ballgame than shifting gears in a car with a manual transmission. Most bikes use the "one down, five up" pattern. Essentially, that means that the gears are in the following order: 6th gear; 5th gear; 4th gear; 3rd gear; 2nd gear; neutral; 1st gear.

The process becomes second nature to experienced riders. With practice, controlling the bike gets much easier. Take care not to overdo the throttle while you shift; smoother shifting comes with practice, but remember the controls respond to the slightest touch. Go easy.

Getting Around Safely

Motorcycle safety awareness is part of every safe return home. According to the breakthrough Hurt Report, the dominating factor in most motorcycle wrecks is the failure of passenger vehicle drivers to see or hear motorcycles in traffic. This means that for every motorcyclist on the road, safety is not a passive issue. It demands constant attention and vigilance. Safety is very much in the hands of the biker.

Motorcycles and substance abuse do not mix. According to the NHTSA, individuals who combine alcohol and/or drugs with

motorcycle riding are 5x more likely to be involved in a fatal collision. It's that simple. It is too easy to think that just a little bit of alcohol will not affect your ability to ride safely, but the truth of the matter is that safe riding requires constant vigilance – even one drink can impair the most seasoned motorcycle rider.

The Science Behind Turning, Swerving and Steering

Learning to ride safely begins with learning to ride well. Whether you are brand new to the motorcycle community or a seasoned rider, knowing how to properly brake, turn, and steer can save your life.

There is an art to steering a motorcycle. When you steer into the turn, turning wildly can cost you dearly. There is a right way to make a turn. Here are a few tips to make turning safe:

- Take it easy going into a turn. Go easy on the throttle.
- Follow the outside line of the turn; take it gently. Taking the turn too tightly can cause you to lay the bike over.
- Keep a steady speed. This is part of the art of making a turn, and takes experience to master. While goosing the throttle going into the turn can cause excess speed and therefore an accident, there is a point coming out of the turn where it is necessary to increase speed. Again, this is tough to explain and generally comes through experience. Maintaining the correct speed will help keep the motorcycle upright.
- Making a turn involves a three-part process. You must lean into the turn to make it safe, but the process may be a bit of a surprise to non-motorcyclists (or those new to the sport). To begin, as you approach the turn, steer slightly in the opposite direction of the turn. (This requires careful experience and training. Like braking and steering in general, it becomes second nature to an experienced biker.) Next, steer into the turn, leaning your body along with the bike. And finally, once

the turn is complete, square up the handle bars with the new direction smoothly. Sudden jerking movements should not be a part of this process. Take it slowly until you become accustomed to the process.

- It may sound simple, but there is a lot more to braking than simply squeezing the brake lever. Each bike handles differently. Riders must know the individual personality of their own bike, and each bike they ride. The distribution of the rider's weight on the bike, whether or not the biker has a passenger, and weather conditions all determine how much space you need to stop safely. Learn how much space your bike needs to come to a complete stop. Learn to judge the distance and make it a point to keep enough space everywhere you go.
- Find an out-of-the-way place to practice braking. Braking too hard can cause a wreck. Learn the way the brakes respond so that in an emergency you do not over brake which can cause you to lose control.

Become Your Own Safety Advocate

If you are seen, you are safer. Motorcycles are hard to see, especially by other drivers in larger vehicles. Of the motorcycle accidents in the Hurt Report, seventy-five percent involved the motorcycle and another vehicle. When there is an accident, it is the biker who is most likely to get hurt. Automobile drivers and their passengers have a protective shell around them, where a biker is left to the whim of the road.

The single best weapon in a biker's safety arsenal is his or her own vigilance. Owning a motorcycle means becoming your own safety advocate. Complacency is enemy number one. **Here are a few safety tips to remember each time (and every time) you power up the bike:**

1. Act like each time on the road is the first time. Bikers know too well that old familiar roads carry new dangers every day.

Road debris, new road kill, rocks and other things in the road may be there today even if they were not there the last time you traveled down that same road. Look vigilantly with fresh eyes. Don't expect the same old highway to be the same highway every day.

- 2. Check your attitude. Make your personal safety your own concern. If your habit is to be a passive driver, become an active one. Assume that every vehicle on the road around you, from other bikers to the largest trucks, cannot see you. Never take it for granted that they do. Don't leave your own safety up to the other drivers.
- 3. Obey the speed limit. You never know what is around the next bend in the road, or who may pop out next from a side road. If your speed is already excessive, your chance of braking and stopping successfully is considerably lessened.
- Obey all other traffic laws. Do not weave in and out of traffic. On a two lane road with one lane in each direction, stay as far away from the center line as possible. Give yourself room – plenty of room – to make unexpected stops.
- 5. Drive as if danger lurks around every corner (as it truly does for someone on a motorcycle). Make sure you can see the side view mirrors of the driver ahead of you this will ensure that you are not driving in the other driver's blind spot.

Intersection Dangers

Intersections seem to be among the worst places for a car and motorcycle meet-up. Too many drivers look both ways and turn, but fail to look one more time for oncoming bikes, and the result is often tragic. Motorcycles are often hard to see and they seem to come out of nowhere. More fatal accidents happen in this way than in any other situation. The mantra that should stick in the head of every driver is catchy and packed with life-saving wisdom: Look twice, save a life! Single motorcycle accidents are not as common as motorcycle and passenger vehicle accidents. Of the accidents that do involve one motorcycle alone, two-thirds were attributed to driver error. The most common mistakes were wipe-outs from braking too hard or going to fast into a curve. But again, these were from just one quarter of the total accidents.

Remember, the single best weapon in a biker's safety arsenal is his or her own vigilance. Owning a motorcycle means becoming your own safety advocate. Complacency is enemy number one.

Sharing the Road with Truckers

Big trucks and motorcycles are a bad combination when one or both drivers are not paying adequate attention. Large commercial trucks have some things working against them and the other drivers on the road. For one, semi-truckers have 80,000 pounds riding behind them. Because of the size and shape of their trailers, the wind is constantly making that load harder to control. Truckers also deal with blind spots that can make it tough to see a smaller vehicle, let alone a motorcycle. Trucks are loud enough on their own, and on a busy road it may not be possible to hear a bike coming.

Motorcyclists must proceed around large trucks with caution – being sure to stay clear of the trucker's blind spots, except briefly while passing. Generally, if you can see a truck driver's mirrors, they can see you. But if you are where you cannot see the side view mirrors they may have no clue that you are on the road anywhere near them. Never follow too closely to a large truck; riding too close behind the back of the truck is one place you are sure not to be seen on a bike.

Give truckers room, too. Large trucks carry so much weight that it is not possible to stop or turn on a dime. Never crowd a truck; give them the wide berth they need to complete turns. Swerving around to get ahead is likely to get the biker and possibly others killed.

Road Debris and other Dangers

A motorcycle driver quickly learns that anything on the road is a potential hazard. Potholes, shredded tires, wet roads, and even gravel can cause accidents. A biker's eyes are always watching for the next thing that could cause an accident; this is why bikers riding with a group will often point downward in the road to inform others when they spot potential dangers.

One of the best ways to stay safe is to maintain proper speed; don't go into curves at a high rate of speed. Just a little gravel on a turn is enough to send a bike going too fast into an outof-control spin. Turn into curves but don't take them too wide. Following other vehicles, especially trucks, too closely won't give you enough time to swerve if something falls off of the vehicle. Give yourself enough room to get around unexpected debris in the road.

Get to know the roads you wish to travel. Remember that some rural highways, while providing the most exhilarating vistas to the sight-seeing motorcyclist, may also present the worst road surface conditions. Transportation agencies prioritize their road repairs, and roads with less traffic usually fall lower on the list. Keep this in mind when you map out a route. Ask locals about the road, or if time allows, tour it in another vehicle so that you get a feel for what to expect. If it looks like a mess, it might be better to avoid it altogether.

How to be Safe

The following is advice given to motorcycle drivers by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, but it is advice that should go to everyone on the road including bikers. In this example of safe driving, the mnemonic device SEE is implemented to help all drivers remember the bottom line; seeing motorcycles is the key to safety for all on the road. Whether you are the motorcyclist himself who needs to be seen or the driver of another vehicle who has the responsibility to look, safety is a choice for everyone. **SEE** stands for **Search, Evaluate, Execute.**

SEARCH You must make looking around you a habit. Develop

Page | 28

a "search pattern" taking in the sights routinely. Look in your mirrors, to the left and the right and again to the left. Move your head to look for objects in your blind spot. Watch out for hazards on the road. Always know where other vehicles are on the road.

Intersections pose a serious danger to motorcyclists. Drivers of other vehicles should look to the right and to the left when you enter an intersection, then look again. Motorcycle crashes happen too often when one comes out of the blue after a driver thought they had looked thoroughly. Look again and avoid a tragedy.

EVALUATE This is the next step after you have taken in the information around you. What is the appropriate action? Take the time to think through your course of action. For the passenger car driver, it may mean the difference between getting there a few seconds faster and seeing an oncoming bike. For the biker, taking the extra moment to consider the right actions based on the information collected in the search portion can determine the outcome of a potentially lethal situation.

EXECUTE This is the part of the formula where the rubber meets to road, so to speak. You've looked at your surroundings. You've taken a moment to consciously consider your next course of action; now it is time to make a move. Follow through. The truth of it, for the driver and the biker, following SEE is basically a procedure that forces you to think through your actions before reaching this last step.

Conclusion

It is a great American pastime – straddling a motorcycle and heading out on the open road. Idealized in film and song, the biker experience is a gratifying way of life for many. While a passport to freedom, riding requires constant vigilance on the part of the motorcyclist. It is an awesome responsibility, and one that should never get set aside in the name of complacency. Return to training as often as you can. Each time you get a new ride, approach it as if you are just starting out for the first time. **Keep safe, keep upright, and keep riding.**

GREAT RIDES

It has been said that taking a scenic trip by car pales in comparison to seeing the great outdoors from the vantage point a motorcycle can offer. Ask anyone who has traveled the same route in a car and then on a bike and the answers may vary, but you are likely to receive an enthusiastic affirmation that the great highways and byways of America never looked more different.

Touring is one aspect of the biker's life that most riders can agree upon, no matter how diverse they are in other ways. Cruising through scenic countryside on a motorcycle is a sensory experience that has to be witnessed firsthand in order to grasp an appreciation for it. In a car, you are surrounded and secluded; in many ways traveling in a vehicle shuts you off from the smell and the sounds of the outdoors. Travel via motorcycle just once, and you will understand what it is like to feel the change in the air as dawn breaks and the sun begins to rise. True, in a car you can see the sun come up, but to be on the back of a motorcycle, you become a part of it.

For Kansas City area bikers, living in such a central location puts some of the country's best rides within reach in just a day or two. The following guide will help you plan a route that works for you, whether you plan a day trip or a week long journey.

Ozark Mountains in Eureka Springs, Arkansas

See the Ozark Mountains in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Head south out of Kansas City, Missouri on 71 Highway for a breathtaking tour of the Missouri's scenic interior. Plan a rest stop in Neosho, a small southern Missouri city hailed by locals as one of the gateways to Ozark Country. By the time you have ridden the 150 miles to Neosho, the green hills will be in full view and you will begin to appreciate the reasons this trip is one of the best the mid-south has to offer. Here the route takes up Missouri 86 heading east before turning to the south. Follow Missouri 86 clear to the Arkansas state line when the route changes to Arkansas 23 and heading south, leads all the way to Eureka Springs.



Once you get deep into southern Missouri the road begins to really twist and turn in that thrilling way that motorcycle riders love. As you cross over into Arkansas, the beauty of the Ozark Mountains really comes into view. In one moment you will top a hill and see the world open up into a breathtaking and scenic vista, open, verdant and inspiring. The great news is that there are several routes around Eureka Springs to choose from. Plan to spend a few nights in one of the resort town's cozy bed and breakfasts for a chance to really get to know the area.

The calendar does not determine the optimal time to visit Eureka Springs; each season brings its own unique beauty. From vibrant fall colors to the golden light on a summer's night, a trip through northern Arkansas is a getaway well worth your time.



The Great River Road

Somewhere between the upper Midwest and the Deep South there is an incredible stretch of road that motorcycle riders have traveled for many years. If you have not seen The Great River Road with your own eyes, make plans to take the trip soon.

Beginning in Minnesota and winding down to New Orleans, this great tour showcases some of the best scenery this great land has to offer. The trip begins on the northern side of Minnesota at the headwaters of the Mississippi (and not far from where I grew up). Make sure you have



a map of the trip; the tour traverses many different roads and routes as it winds down through Illinois, skirts the eastern border of the Show-Me state, and twists and winds through Arkansas and Tennessee until it ends up down south.

Kansas City riders can pick up the trail by taking I-70 to St. Louis and then heading south as the trail winds down along the Mississippi River. If you have the time, make plans to start at the beginning up in Minnesota. You may need to set aside a couple of weeks to make the trip, but you will not regret a minute of it.

The great thing about a Great River Road tour is the up close and personal view you will have of America in all of its varieties. Northern roads give way to the plains and then meld into the deep hills and valleys of the mid-south through Tennessee and Arkansas until you find yourself deep in Bayou Country. The stops along the way are incredible as well. Spend the night in St. Louis, tour Graceland, and wind up in New Orleans French Quarter all within a matter of days.

Page | 34

Deals Gap in the Great Smokey Mountains

If you are a rider and you love the thrill of a curvy mountain road, then you have not lived until you have taken on Deals Gap in the Great Smokey Mountains. This scenic road is the stuff of legends, boasting over 300 curves in an 11 mile stretch. This is a challenge for seasoned riders with good brakes. Head east out of Kansas City on I-70 for the 700 plus mile trip to experience this and the rest of the Great Smokey Mountains. Follow I-70 through Columbia and St. Louis where the route begins a southerly dip into Tennessee. Your destination is a breathtaking ride between Maryville, Tennessee and Robbinsville, North Carolina.

Be sure to take in Shady Valley near Bristol, Tennessee. Like Deals Gap, this is another road that seems to have been made just for the touring biker with dips and hills and curvy twists and breathtaking visuals. The area is filled with biker friendly residents and businesses so plan to spend some time as a tourist and take in the local flavor.



Sturgis, South Dakota

Anyone who has ever straddled a motorcycle knows that Sturgis, South Dakota is the Motorcycle Mecca for serious bikers. Getting there from Kansas City is a challenging and exhilarating ride. If you crave the company and camaraderie of like-minded motorcycle lovers, then a trip to Sturgis at least once in your life is something of a necessity.

The journey from the Midwest is long and requires planning and several days of vacation. Start out heading north out of the city towards St. Joseph where the route begins to head west. Your trip will take you right through the heart of the Heartland. As you head further north, the road takes on a new and breathtaking flavor. Take your time to take it all in, like Devil's Tower in Wyoming's Thunder Basin and Mount Rushmore in South Dakota.



Once you make it to Sturgis you can plan to spend several days just hanging out in perhaps the most biker friendly place in all of the US. There is a motorcycle history museum to visit, not to

mention the world's greatest motorcycle rally. This year is the 72nd annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, a week-long event set for August 6-12, 2012.

Texas Hill Country

Texas is known for a lot of things, from ten gallon hats and oil rigs to rattlesnakes and cowboy boots, the Lonestar State has a reputation that's just about as wide open as the Texas sky. Still, many people consider Texas Hill Country a bit of a well-kept secret.

If you are looking for a great ride with a lot of variety between the ditches, then riding the roads north of San Antonio toward Austin and on west could be your motorcycle nirvana. The great thing is there are so many smaller routes to take that with



a little spare time, you could spend many days and never see the same thing twice. The only down side is this country is remote and sparse, so top off that tank as often as you can. Don't count on a great cell phone signal on these country roads, either. No



matter which way you go, be sure to go with plenty of planning ahead of time.

If you plan to ride to Texas Hill Country on your bike, the most direct route is Interstate 35 southwest out of Kansas City and through Wichita. Continue south down through Oklahoma City and on into Fort Worth. Austin is south of the Fort Worth area on I-35, but this is where you will want to take up with the back roads along one of the many riding routes in the area.

One of the best places to start is Highway 16 north out of San Antonio. You are apt to find a little bit of everything on this ride, not to mention good access to a few more of the best Hill Country rides. Highway 16 is known for its turns and twists and stunning vistas. Be warned, some of the area south of Kerrville is challenging and may not be a great fit for a motorcycle novice. There are plenty of biker friendly stops along the way; make time for some sightseeing and time to rub elbows with the locals.

Ohio Amish Country

Ohio Amish Country may seem like an odd place to plan a motorcycle tour, but you will not be disappointed in this tour. If you have a few days, try out the route that begins in Cleveland and takes you all the way to the site of the Flight 93 Memorial outside of Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The route turns back to the west from there and then north back into Cleveland. Not only will you see some of the prettiest and most serene landscapes in the Midwest, but you will have the experience of riding open air close to the place where dozens of American heroes are memorialized in a Pennsylvania field.

Be sure to make time for the Amish Country Byway on your trip. The Byway runs east of Cleveland in an odd circle around Millersburg. Plan to spend time off the bike for this run; you will be in authentic Amish country surrounded by farms and local merchants. One



word of warning, you will be sharing the road with buggies and agriculture equipment. Plan to slow down and take in the world of yesterday. Some of the routes on the Amish Country Byway are narrow and winding so use extra caution.

Be a good tourist and remember not to photograph the Amish or Mennonites in the area. Be sure to sample plenty of their home cooking and simpler lifestyle by touring country shops and other points of interest.

San Juan Skyway

Scenic Colorado comes alive along the 233 mile San Juan Skyway an area which is also known as "the road in the sky". This 233 mile loop in the southwestern corner of the state is a challenging tour and with elevations as high as 14,000 feet above sea level,



not ideal for newbies. The hills roll along over mountain passes and rivers. The scenery itself is worth the trip. Depending on the time of the year, you will be treated to more than just beautiful mountains and valleys; in the summer the wildflowers bloom in meadows along the route and in the fall the autumn leaves paint a vibrant and breathtaking natural masterpiece. For the tourist in you there are quaint towns and historic Native American ruins. From Kansas City, you can trailer your bike over 1-70 west to the Denver area and, continuing west and then south, ride the 225 miles to Clifton, CO where you will pick up US Highway 50 East. Follow US 50 East until it merges into US 550 just south of the Ridgeway State Park. Continue another twenty miles or so until you pull into Ridgway, turning west on State Highway 62, and you are now on the San Juan Skyway Route. The San Juan Skyway itself can be ridden in a day's time, but you may want to make the trip a two-day long venture in order to see all there is to see without rushing past some of the best mountain scenery in the Rockies.

Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina

Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina is a bit far away from Kansas City, but if you want to travel through the verdant hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains this trip is worth the time. In fact, the Blue ridge Parkway is one of the most traveled routes each year; hundreds of thousands of people make their way to the area annually.

If you ride the Parkway from beginning to end, it is a near 500 mile adventure best traveled over the course of two or even three days. Beginning on the south end in North Carolina from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Parkway runs northward until it ends in Virginia at the Shenandoah National Park.



Depending on the time of year that you make the journey, you will be greeted by the greenest landscapes in the world. Mountain views give way to deep green valleys. In the early morning



you can see the mist rising up into the mountains out of the valleys. You just might have to pull off the road and simply look. Thankfully there are ample lookouts and places to pull off and take in the view. Don't plan to be in much of a hurry; the speed limit averages 45 miles per hour along this scenic route. The Blue Ridge Mountains are old and rounded on top and the forests seem to go on forever.

Plan to do some welcome leg-stretching on top of Grandfather Mountain where you can take a short hike and see the Flat Rock vista, the best place to take in the valley down below. Along the Parkway itself you will have the chance to stop and take in art museums, local tourist destinations, and even a little Native American culture and history at the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina.

Pacific Coast Highway

Considered the pinnacle of motorcycle tour routes, the Pacific Coast Highway is a 123 mile route that begins in Monterey, California and ends at Moro Bay in the central part of the state. As the name denotes the tour runs along the California Coast and offers riders thrilling mountain views and seaside vistas. This is not a fast journey; it is most enjoyed and most safely ridden at a slow and leisurely pace.



As you ride along you will find yourself unsure where to look the most, to one side you see the mountain ridges and forest loom high above; on the other side are the beaches and coves and seascapes. Riding over turns and twists and sharp drops is just part of the exhilarating charm of the ride.

One of the tour highlights is found along the coastline at Big Sur. Get ready for high forests and mountain peaks and craggy rocks that take a beating from the Pacific tide. The scenery is more than breathtaking along this stretch of the Pacific Coast Highway; some call this the most beautiful stretch of road in the Lower Forty-eight.

TYPES OF MOTORCYCLE EVENTS

For diehard motorcycle enthusiasts, nothing compares to a large group of motorcycle riders in a picturesque setting for a weeklong event full of great looking bikes, the latest and greatest motorcycle news and innovations, and activities specifically for bikers. But the best part of any motorcycle event is the sense of community shared by those who really get what the biker lifestyle is all about. These are the people who understand the sense of camaraderie and community communicated in something as simple as the biker wave.

Opportunities for get-togethers with other motorcyclists occur all over the country at different times of the year. These events range from large national annual rallies and celebrations to local rides and tours. Just about everywhere you look, there is an event tailored to bikers. Rallies, rides and tours; what does each event look like? Below is a brief explanation of the various events bikers have to look forward to:

Rallies

Most people have heard of some of the larger rallies like Sturgis and Daytona Beach Bike Week, but some may not know that motorcycle rallies can be found all over the map. A rally is essentially a really big gathering of bikers, vendors, and industry representatives for a several-days-long convention. Rallies are planned events that feature multiple activities, including: races, organized rides, bike shows and in some cases, major new product unveilings. Rallies can last from a few days to over a week in some places. Rally-goers often make getting there part of the event, spending weeks preparing, traveling, participating, and then going home.

Rides and Tours

Organized rides vary from just a few miles to several hundred miles. Motorcyclists generally gather at an appointed place and time, typically designated by the ride sponsor, and then set out following a specific and predetermined route. Stops along the way at points of interest are common; some rides include a tour or a stop at an eating establishment of particular interest. Many organized rides are designed to benefit specific charities or non-profit organizations.

Many of these rides are organized as poker runs; participants make various stops along the way gathering face cards to reveal at the final stop. Winning hands are usually eligible for money or prizes. Dice runs are similar and also common. Like other rides, these game rides are most often organized as benefit rides.

Bike manufacturers and other vendors will organize tours and rides featuring the latest motorcycle models or gear. Sponsored vendor tours are often planned events coinciding with rallies or larger bike events. Organized rides spring from these events, too.



THE BIG FOUR MOTORCYCLE EVENTS

Daytona Beach Bike Week

Daytona Beach, Florida February/March

A motorcycle race held in late January of 1938 on the beach at Daytona Beach, Florida began a tradition that has evolved into an annual event drawing thousands of bikers and motorcycle enthusiasts from across the country. While plenty of tourists flock to the legendary white sand beaches for rest and relaxation, thousands more make the journey to Daytona Beach just to hear the thunder roll as the bikers ride into town.

The gathering that began in 1938 with the first Daytona 200 bike race was run over Daytona Beach and then out onto local roads that form the more than 3 miles of raceway. Bikers gathered for the race and over the years the rally became one of the biggest annual motorcycle events in the United States.



Rationing during World War II caused the original event to discontinue in 1942, but later races started up again. Since the early 1960s the race has been run at Daytona Speedway, and the biker rally grows with each passing year.

Bikers gather to shop local vendors' wares and visit and ogle over each other's rides. Warm weather and ocean breezes bring out the bikers in droves and the organizers of the event provide numerous events to make sure each trip is a memorable one. Bike shows, swap meets, organized rides, and bikini contests sponsored by local area bars and bike shops, are a huge draw for the crowds.

Daytona Beach Bike Week is held each spring, drawing in thousands of leather clad visitors to the beach. While today's locals welcome the bikers with open arms, years ago tensions over bike week resulted in run-ins between the biker crowd and local law enforcement.

Daytona Beach is also the site of another yearly bike event each fall. "Biketoberfest" is held during the month of October. Although a shorter event than its weeklong cousin, "Biketoberfest" is a true crowd pleaser – jam packed with events of all kinds, stuffed into a 4-day weekend.

Visitors to Daytona Beach Bike Week or "Biketoberfest" interested in taking in a little bit of local scenery should check out "The Loop", one of the most scenic rides in the state. The Loop stretches 22+ miles long and takes riders through scenic forests and along breathtaking waterway vistas. It begins on John Anderson Drive at Ormond Beach and heads north, turning west at Highbridge Road. The journey takes riders on the famed Intercoastal Waterway over Halifax River. After the bridge the ride turns back west several miles on Old Dixie Road until a final turn back south ends up back at Ormond Beach.

Visit www.officialbikeweek.com for the latest event schedule and more information.

Myrtle Beach Bike Week

Myrtle Beach Area, South Carolina May

Myrtle Beach is known worldwide as a beautiful southern travel destination. But since 1940 Myrtle Beach has also hosted an annual motorcycle event drawing hundreds of thousands of participants from across the country. Myrtle Beach Bike Week

is referred to by some as Harley Bike Week, for the Harley-Davidson enthusiasts who make Myrtle Beach one of their favorite annual rallies.

As many as 200,000 people flock to the event each May. The rally is actually held outside the city of Myrtle Beach. Myrtle Beach itself outlawed motorcycle events within the city



limits in response to a controversy involving claims of unfair treatment and discrimination. The rally takes place on "The Grand Strand" just outside of Myrtle Beach city proper.

Another famous bike rally in the same area grew out of the history of the area. During the 1960s and 1970s, African American bikers gathered together in the Atlantic Beach area, which was the only place they were permitted in light of the area's rules on racial segregation. In 1980, Black Bike Week was founded and has since become the single largest African American motorcycle rally with an annual draw of about 400,000 bikers. The event is held on Memorial Day weekend in Myrtle Beach each year. Controversy has surrounded the event, including claims of racism levied against local businesses. In 2006 the NAACP settled with the city of Myrtle Beach over claims of racism, citing

extra tough crackdowns on the Black Bike Week goers versus regular Myrtle Bike Week attendees. The group claimed that the African American bikers were singled out and harassed by law enforcement and local officials, over and above the amount of attention paid to the mostly white bike rally.

Visitors to Myrtle Beach Bike Week can take advantage of one of several wonderful rides in the area, each a showcase of the beauty of nature's bounty. First up is a tour known to locals as The Loop. The ride is about 150 miles long, beginning at the north end of Grand Strand, heading south on Highway 17. The ride goes through Springmaid Beach before hitting Murrells Inlet, then to Highway 701 and north back towards Myrtle Beach. Along the way riders will be treated to stops and fantastic photo opportunities, including breathtaking waterfront vistas.

The State Line Tour leaves out heading north on Highway 17 almost to the North Carolina state line. Take a right going east on Highway 179 and follow it down through Calabash, North Carolina until it changes to Shoreline Drive West. Stay on it until you reach Highway 904. From there the route goes back up to Highway 179 via Causeway through the town of Shallotte, South Carolina. The route ends up back on Highway 17 at Myrtle Beach.

The granddaddy of all Myrtle Beach trips is a combination of the two routes called The Carolinas Loop Ride beginning and ending at the Harley-Davidson dealer in Shallotte.

Check out www.myrtlebeachbikeweek.com for the latest event schedule and more information.

Laconia Motorcycle Week

Laconia, New Hampshire June

Laconia Motorcycle Week is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, motorcycle rallies in the United States. If you ask one of the locals, they will tell you this motorcycle rally set the standard for the rest. Dating back to 1923, the event began as many motorcycle rallies do with the running of a race and evolved into an annual destination for motorcyclists. In this case the event was the Loudon Classic

which was first held in 1923 in Laconia, New Hampshire.

While the race is credited with the beginning of the rally, bikers actually began congregating in the area as early as 1916. Later, the racing event was formed and the American Motorcycle Association (AMA) began to recognize Laconia as an event along the famed Gypsy Tour bike ride.

Laconia is close to the beach and bikers seem to be drawn



to the natural beauty that makes for splendid riding country, but the yearly event has not always been as peaceful as the New England countryside. In 1965 two rival gangs stirred up quite a bit of trouble for the town of Laconia. A riot ensued and the once friendly locals soured on the event. Stricter laws were imposed and the event was shortened from a full week to just three days. After that, the numbers to the annual motorcycle week began to decline. A resurgence of interest in the early 1990s caused a bit of a revitalization to Laconia Motorcycle Week. An official event was formed and local businesses and town officials worked together with motorcycle clubs to host Laconia Motorcycle Week, which is now a nine day long motorcycle rally. The event is held every June, typically starting the week before and then ending on Father's Day.

Today the rally offers bikers a cornucopia of events and activities, ranging from the annual Harley-Davidson Road



Tour and new product demonstrations at Laconia Harley-Davidson, to a plethora of charity benefit rides that will take riders over miles of picturesque New Hampshire countryside, mixed with a variety of live music festivals. There is something for everyone in Laconia.

For rally details, dates and events check them out at www.laconiamcweek.com.

Sturgis Motorcycle Rally

Sturgis, South Dakota August

Before the summer winds to a close, nearly half a million visitors make the pilgrimage to a small South Dakota town for a week long motorcycle rally that is thought to be the largest and best biker rally in the world. Any other week of the year, a visitor to Sturgis, South Dakota would have no idea that for the first week of every August, this sleepy town of 7000 souls comes alive and bursting at the seams with bikers and biker enthusiasts who come looking for rallies, races, and some well-deserved rest and relaxation; biker style.



Sturgis is a small town in the Black Hills – steeped in western history. The Sturgis Motorcycle Rally began in 1938 and has been going strong since that first race featured a few contestants and a small group of onlookers. The event, which was originally known as the Black Hills Classic, was created by an Indian motorcycle salesman named Clarence Hoel who had created a motorcycle club called the Jackpine Gypsies. The club still operates today and

owns the motorcycle racetrack and several other biker hangouts.

When Sturgis started the focus was on races, stunts, and hill climbs, not to mention camaraderie and association among bikers from across the globe. While each of those elements is still a big part of the draw to the rally, Sturgis has become synonymous with everything in the motorcycle world. Often called "Motorcycle City", Sturgis draws vendors and industry big shots to its yearly gathering. Motorcycle giants Victory and Harley-Davidson choose the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally to unveil their latest bike models. Organized rides, bike shows, concerts and races are just some of the events in store for the visiting motorcyclists.

Sturgis itself sits just off Interstate 90 surrounded by history and tourist attractions. The Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame is just one of such places well worth your while to visit. The museum opened in 2001 and showcases much of the event's history as well as the history of motorcycling in general with unique collections of rare and vintage bikes and biker memorabilia. Open seven days a week, the museum also "honors the men and women who have dedicated much of their lives to improving, promoting and advancing our great sport and lifestyle" most would agree – it's worth the extra time it takes to tour.

Sturgis has become something of a Mecca to bikers; it is the one trip that if you are going to take a road trip sometime in your lifetime, a trip to Sturgis is the one to take. Visitors should know a few of the local laws to make the visit positive and not full of bad memories and unfortunate incarcerations. There is no adult helmet law, but eye protection is required. Clear glasses or goggles are required after the sun sets. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited and the accompanying laws strictly enforced. No public nudity is allowed; passengers must have their own foot pegs and ride behind the driver. Bikes left on the street after 2 a.m. will be towed away.

Visit www.sturgismotorcyclerally.com for the latest news and event schedules for the rally.

NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE EVENTS

MARCH

Arizona Bike Week

Scottsdale, Arizona March and/or April www.azbikeweek.com

APRIL

Laughlin River Run Laughlin, Nevada www.laughlinriverrun.com

Leesburg Bikefest

Leesburg, Florida www.leesburgbikefest.com

Thunder Beach Spring Rally

Panama City, Florida April/May & September/October www.thunderbeachproductions.com

MAY

All Harley Gulfport Memorial Day Blowout Rally

Gulfport, Mississippi www.gulfportmemorialdayblowout.com

AspenCash Motorcycle Rally

Ruidoso, New Mexico www.motorcyclerally.com

Black Bike Week/Atlantic Beach Bike Fest Rally

Myrtle Beach Area, South Carolina www.blackbikeweek.us – or – www.myrtlebeachbikeweek.com

Red River Memorial Day Run Rally

Red River, New Mexico For more information visit the "Events Calendar" page at: www.redrivernewmex.com

Rolling Thunder XXIII Ride for the Wall Rally

Washington DC www.rollingthundermotorcyclerally.com

JUNE Americade

Lake George, New York www.americade.com

Big Bear Choppers Ride the Mountain

Big Bear, California www.bigbearchoppers.com/ride/

Harley Rendezvous Classic Rally

Pattersonville, New York www.harleyrendezvous.com

J&P Cycles Open House Show

Anamosa, Iowa www.jpcycles.com/openhouse

Sparks America Rally

Sparks, Oklahoma www.sparksamericacampgrounds.com

Ohio Bike Week Rally

Sandusky, Ohio www.ohiobikeweek.com

Republic of Texas (ROT) Rally

Austin, Texas www.rotrally.com

Thunder in the Valley Rally

Johnstown, Pennsylvania www.visitjohnstownpa.com

Honda Wing Ding GWRRA Rally

Des Moines, Iowa June /July www.wing-ding.org

JULY

The ABATE Boogie/Bean Blossom Boogie

Springville, Indiana www.abateofindiana.org

AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days

Lexington, Ohio For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.americanmotorcyclist.com

Beartooth Rally and the Iron Horse Rodeo

Red Lodge, Montana www.beartoothrally.com

Carlisle Summer Bike Fest Rally

Carlisle, Pennsylvania For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.carsatcarlisle.com

LA Calendar Motorcycle Show

Long Beach, California www.fastdates.com/BIKESHOW.HTM

Easyriders Motorcycle Rodeo Tour

Various Locations Summer & Fall www.easyridersevents.com

AUGUST

Salute to American Veterans Rally

Cripple Creek, Colorado www.theveteransrally.org

Cycle World International Motorcycle Shows

Various Locations around the United States Fall & Winter www.motorcycleshows.com

Milwaukee Rally

Milwaukee, Wisconsin August/September www.milwaukeerally.com

SEPTEMBER

Delmarva Bike Week Ocean City, Maryland www.delmarvabikeweek.com

Golden Aspen Motorcycle Rally

Ruidoso, New Mexico www.motorcyclerally.com

Phil Peterson's Key West Poker Run

Key West, Florida www.petersonsharley.com

Street Vibrations Motorcycle Festival

Reno, Nevada For more information visit the "Motorcycle Events" page at: www.road-shows.com

Bikes Blues and Barbeque Rally

Fayetteville, Arkansas September/October www.bikesbluesandbbq.org

Las Vegas BikeFest

Las Vegas, Nevada September/October www.lasvegasbikefest.com

Oyster Run Ride

Anacortes, Washington www.oysterrun.org

Roar to the Shore Rally

Wildwood, New Jersey www.roartotheshoreonline.com

Trail of Tears Motorcycle Ride

Chattanooga, TN to Florence, AL September www.trailoftears-remembrance.org

OCTOBER

Biketoberfest Rally

Daytona Beach, Florida www.biketoberfest.org

Love Ride

Glendale, California www.loveride.org

South Padre Island (SPI) Bike Fest

South Padre Island, Texas www.spibikefest.com

Hogs on the High Seas Cruise

Western Caribbean October/November www.highseasrally.com

NOVEMBER

Lone Star Rally Galveston, Texas

www.lonestarrally.com

MOTORCYCLE EVENTS IN MISSOURI AND KANSAS

APRIL

Blessing of the Bikes Event

Tonganoxie, KS www.kansas.bacaworld.org

Wings of the Ozarks

Hollister, MO April/May www.wingsoftheozarks.com

Jeff Williams Motorcycle Swap Meet

Kansas City, MO Spring-Fall www.jwswapmeet.com

MAY

Wallis Transport Relay For Life Poker Run

Cuba, MO For more information visit the "Commitment to Community" page at: www.wallisco.com

SEMO Run What Ya Brung Field Events Rally

Lesterville, MO www.semofieldevents.com Oldest Missouri Rally, over 30 years old

Ride for Research

Lake of the Ozarks, MO www.ride4research.com

Auto Fest and Motorcycle Show

Warrenton, MO www.bikerplaza.com/event-Auto-Fest.html

Mid America Freedom Rally

Buckhorn, MO www.midamericafreedomrally.com

Cruisin for the Cure

Wichita, KS For more information visit the "Dice Run" page at: www.scrc277.com

Thunder On The Smoky Rally

Marquette, KS www.ksmotorcyclemuseum.org

Branson Motorcycle Rally

Branson, MO May/June www.bransonmotorcyclerally.com

Kansas State HOG Rally

Liberal, KS May/June www.ksstatehogrally.com

JUNE

I Believe in Angels with Autism Motorcycle Poker Run Bolivar, MO For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.motorcyclemonster.com

Ride for Ryan

St. Joseph, MO www.rideforryan.com

Spring Fling

Chillicothe, MO For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.forr8.net

Stumpy's Memorial Veteran Poker Run

Warrensburg, MO June/July For more information visit the "Rallies, Rides & Events" page at: www.lets-ride.com

Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation Ride for Kids

Cottleville, MO & Overland Park, KS Summer For more information visit the "Ride for Kids" page at: www.pbtfus.org

JULY

Spirit of the Midwest Rides for Guides

Hazelwood, MO www.spiritofthemidwest.org

Grand River Rally

Urich, MO www.grandriverrally.com

AUGUST

Deadend Rally

Peru, KS For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.motorcyclemonster.com

Thunder on the Plains Motorcycle Rally

Dodge City, KS www.thunderontheplains.com

Dreamcatchers Special Needs Hope Fund Poker Run

Topeka, KS For more information check out: www.cyclefish.com/event/17221

SEPTEMBER

Kansas City Bikers For Babies Ride

Kansas City, MO Benefits March of Dimes and its mission of healthy babies. Check them out at www.bikersforbabieskc.org

Life Support Ride

Balwin City, KS Poker run benefiting suicide prevention. For more information: www.headquarterscounselingcenter.org/events/events.php

Give the Kids The World Poker Run

Wichita, KS For more information, check out the information on this page about the even www.cyclefish.com/event/18211/

Missouri HOG State Rally

Columbia, MO www.mostatehogrally.com

Ride for the Red

Wichita, KS www.kansasrideforthered.org

Rock & Roll Riders Rally

Shawnee, KS For more information visit the "Events" page at: www.rffic.org

OCTOBER

Ride for Education - "The Sequel"

Leon, KS David "Choke" Kohl's Memorial ride for educaion. For more information go to www.choke22.com

BIKER BARS

If you are going to hit the road on a steel horse in Kansas City, you might find yourself in search of a place that welcomes the brotherhood of leather and chrome. The good news is that Kansas City has a host of biker friendly establishments. Here are just a few:

Jerry's Bait Shop in Lenexa, Kansas caters to everyone who walks through the door, including bikers. Both locations (there's one in Lee's Summit too) feature a full menu anchored by their award winning pizzas. There is a full bar and live music most nights, not just on the weekends.

13412 Santa Fe Drive Lenexa, KS 66215 (913) 894-9676

302 SW Main Street Lee's Summit, MO 64063 (816) 525-1871

Knuckleheads Saloon is considered the blues destination in Kansas City. Knuckleheads holds the title for Best Blues Bar in Kansas City since 2008. The unique location next to F.O.G. Cycles makes this an especially biker friendly establishment. One Kansas City reviewer says that the bar's annual two-day street party rivals a get together at Sturgis.

2715 Rochester Kansas City, MO 64120 (816) 483-1456

Tool Shed Lounge holds bike nights on Fridays and rides on Sundays. Great cold beer and a biker friendly staff make this a fun destination for Kansas City bikers. Three pool tables inside make it a great place to come in and cool off during the Kansas City summer.

14940 East 40 Highway Kansas City, MO 64136 (816) 373-1747

Free State Brewery in Lawrence, Kansas is a real beer brewery that welcomes bikers from all around. The restaurant serves the best fish and chips in town alongside their signature brews and daily specials. Free State is a great rest stop for bikers making the rounds back to the city. Open Monday to Saturday from 11 a.m. until midnight and on Sundays from noon until 11 p.m.

636 Massachusetts Street Lawrence, KS 66044 (785) 843-4555

Paddy O'Quigley's is the real deal, an honest to goodness Irish pub that welcomes bikers to its weekly bike night. The bar and restaurant features authentic Irish grub and beer, a great atmosphere and entertainment. The bar's motto says it all: "Take a seat. Have a wheat".

5317 W 151st Street Leawood, KS 66224 (913) 601-3511

Longbranch Steakhouse has three things every biker wants: great food, cold beer, and live entertainment. This biker friendly establishment is taking part in a concert series for Kansas City bikers that benefits Heart to Heart International's Care Kit Campaign. This year bikers can enter to win a new Harley at the July 14 concert. Could a major Kansas City Biker Rally be coming in the near future? Organizers hope so. Come out and support the cause and enjoy the live music and fun. Longbranch Steakhouse is busy all season long with live music and drink specials.

8600 Marshall Drive Lenexa, KS 66214 (913) 894-5334 **Brass Rail** is a Restaurant, Sports Bar, and Pool Hall in the Northland that has been locally owned and operated since 2004. Their "Handlebars and Hotrods" starts in May and goes all summer long. This is a bike night every Sunday from 2pm-10pm. Bikers can enjoy participant only food and drink specials.

4940 NE 81st Street Kansas City, MO 64119 (816) 468-6100

The Bar offers Bike Nights every Thursday starting in April. They have a huge parking lot with a large patio overlooking the lot. They offer food and drink special every day.

428 SW Ward Road Lee's Summit, MO 64081 (816) 525-9370

Russo's Pizza & Pub is open every day of the week and all day on Sundays. They offer a Bike Night every Wednesday night with ice cold beer served inside and outside in their parking lot roped off specifically for bikers. Happy hour runs all night on Bike Nights as well as food specials with some of the best pizza in town.

9324 State Route 7 Lee's Summit, MO 64064 (816) 578-4943

One Block South is far one of the biggest biker destinations in the Kansas City area offering something for everyone. One Block South is not just one but three major attractions all under one roof - Fuel American Bar, Kanza Hall, and Red 8. Located in Rosana Square in Overland Park, One Block South redefines Kansas City night life.

7300 W 119th St. Overland Park, KS 66213 (913) 451-0444

- **Fuel American Bar** is described as a sports party bar with live music and great food. Fuel has a spacious outdoor patio for outdoor revelers. Ten huge plasmas televisions and two big screens give sports lovers a view like they were at the game! Check out the American Icon Burger and Road Fuel Natchos at our next Happy Hour! Come for lunch and stay for the party! Open 10:40 a.m. until 2 a.m. seven days a week!
- **Kanza Hall** is a little bit country, and a little bit rock and roll! This gorgeous venue is considered the place for live music in Kansas City. Kanza Hall is 10,000 square feet of rockin' space for your favorite country and classic rock groups. Come out Wednesdays for live DJs and great tunes! Kanza Hall opens up to the outdoor patio shared by its sister bar, Fuel American Bar and Grill. Open Wednesday through Saturday from 5:55 p.m. until 2 a.m.
- **Red 8** just might be your thing if you get into a good game of billiards in a one of a kind atmosphere. Located in the same venue as Fuel and Kanza Hall, Red 8 offers a little something different that the pool hall down tht road. Come and check it out for yourself!

Tonahill's South is a great place for the old school crowd. The bar is located in Independence west of Sterling and Truman Road.

10817 E. Truman Road Independence, MO 64052 (816) 252-2560

Antionette's Bar and Grill has a friendly atmosphere and special Tuesday Bike Nights which make it a great place to hang out. Live music on Friday and Saturday nights and Wednesday is karaoke night.

4545 N. Brighton Kansas City, MO 64117 (816)452-1011 **Midway Bar and Grill** has Biker Days on Sundays and is one of the best biker bars in the area. This little gem is located away from downtown traffic, but still boasts a biker friendly environment. Great destination after a long ride.

27906 NE Colbern Road Lee's Summit, MO 64086 (816)-578-5651

East Pine Pub is a favorite with locals. This little destination is just about an hour east of Kansas City in Warrensburg. Local bikers love the outdoor patio area and the biker friendly atmosphere in one of West-Central Missouri's best kept secrets.

133 East Pine Street Warrensburg, MO 64093 (660)-747-8998

BIKER MAGAZINES

The Biking Life Magazine thebikinglife.com youtube.com/user/bikinglife

The Biking Life Magazine has been producing an annual DVD since 2006. They also have a youtube channel that "serves as an outlet for viewers around the world to glimpse the heartland of America and the bikers that make it what it is".

Full Throttle USA

fullthrottleusa.com

Full Throttle Magazine is the publication for bikers in the Southland. Full Throttle offers motorcyclists from Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and the Florida Panhandle the latest information on regional and national news and events. Each monthly issue arrives in your mailbox filled with tips and tricks, the latest on local and national motorcycle legislation, and compelling feature articles all about the southern biker lifestyle.

Motorcycle Classics

motorcycleclassics.com

Motorcycle Classics is one of America's top magazines for classic bike enthusiasts. The bi-monthly publication features stunning photography of rare and classic bikes and informative articles for sage collectors and newcomers alike. Each issue of Motorcycle Classics that arrives in the mail becomes a bit of a classic itself.









Chromed Out Motorcycle Magazine chromedoutmag.com

Chromed Out is all about custom motorcycles and the riders who love them. Published quarterly, each issue is filled with the latest technology news, informative and interesting articles featuring custom machines, and custom part reviews. Check out Chromed Out for information on rides and rallies.

Wide Open Motorcycle Magazine

wideopenmag.net

Motorcycle enthusiasts from across the nation's midsection need to look no further than Wide Open Magazine for the latest news customized for bikers from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming, Illinois, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Based in Missouri's Ozark Mountains, Wide Open is a quarterly publication that gives readers the latest news for Midwest riders, including sections for Ladies Who Ride, hot rods and classic cars, local rally and ride information, family friendly events around the region, as well as technology news and reviews.

Cycle Connections Online Magazine

cycleconnections.com

Cycle Connections is an interactive online resource for the latest ride info, product information, news and articles for and about bikers. The interactive format makes this all-online publication a bit different; users can







post their own event information. Information is updated regularly so readers don't have to wait a month for the next issue to show up in the mailbox. It's all right there, online, anytime!

Long Riders Magazine

longridersmagazine.com

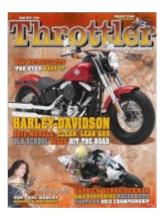
Whether you ride a cruiser, dirt bike, sportbike, or just love motorcycles, Long Riders Magazine is a digital source for everything you need! From how-to videos and feature articles to photos and video from the latest rallies and events, there is something for everyone in this monthly magazine. A CD version is also available for home delivery; check out the website for more information.



Throttler Motorcycle Magazine

throttlermagazine.com

Never boring, Throttler Magazine is for motorcycle enthusiasts who want informative and unbiased articles about the biker lifestyle and the latest news. Six summer issues, published April through August, cover Harley-Davidson, motocross, cruisers and sportbikes. This is the magazine written for those who love to ride and love the lifestyle. Each issue features a section written for and about women.



Midwest Motorcyclist

midwestmotorcyclist.com

This free monthly publication features a Q & A section that tackles everything from safety issues to riding technology and touring. Midwest Motorcyclists offers readers updated overviews of laws, products reviews, motorcycle events and feature stories. Check out their website for Biker Bootcamp, a feature that gives readers basic information and the best strategies for a successful ride. Product reviews, event schedules, and information about bikes of every make and model make this magazine essential reading material.



Cycle USA

cycleusa.com

Cycle USA is published 10 months out of the year and features the latest motorcycle news and information, coverage of local and regional events, and rally information. Check them out at cycleusa.com.

Quick Throttle Magazine

quickthrottle.com

This free monthly magazine is geared toward riders in the west. Quick Throttle features comprehensive coverage of larger national rides and events as well as a large directory of bike nights and events closer to home. The magazine publishes an edition specific to each of the regions it covers, including California, the Northwest,





the Rockies, the Southwest, and the Midwest. Each edition is full of news and events, feature articles, and closeto-home coverage.

Sport Rider Magazine

sportrider.com

Sports Rider Magazine covers the latest in the world of sportsbikes in 10 monthly issues that features stories about racing from across the globe. Racing updates, the latest trends, industry news and announcements fill the pages of this periodical focused on sportsbike lovers. Real roadtests make this magazine a trusted source for the best new bikes, gear and accessories. The informative website has a how-to video library and forums for readers.



Motorcycle Cruiser Magazine

motorcyclecruiser.com

Motorcycle Cruiser Magazine is a monthly publication that boasts one of the best buyer's guides in the business. The comprehensive guide is chock full of pricing information, reviews, photographs for bikes, parts and accessories. The road test section features a specific engineto-engine comparison review. The magazine is all about the latest news, ride information and technology updates for cruisers, customs bikes, and choppers.



Cycle World

cycleworld.com

With something for everyone, Cycle World publishes news and reviews for motorcyclists of all types. From sportsbikes to custom cruisers to scooters, there is something for everyone. Sections even cover dual sport adventure features, touring, off-road riding, and motocross. A unique website section features "Bikes with Soul and Character". Peruse this section for information and beautiful images of some of the most stunning bikes available.



Rider Magazine

ridermagazine.com

Rider Magazine has covered the latest news from the motorcycles world since the 1970s. The monthly magazine covers the latest tech reviews, ride info, and road tests for motorcycles of every sort. Rider Magazine reviews guided motorcycle tours from all over the world.



Hot Bike Magazine

hotbikeweb.com

Hot Bike is a monthly magazine for the custom bike enthusiast. This magazine is considered the go-to place for V-Twins and custom bikes. Latest news, tips, and bike and product reviews fill the pages alongside features of the best custom choppers from across the country. The online version boasts a large directory of hundreds of bikes and products.

RoadBike Magazine

roadbikemag.com

RoadBike Magazine is the magazine for motorcycle touring enthusiasts. Ten monthly issues feature the latest touring bikes and cruisers, product reviews and tips, and gear information. The magazine reviews the best rides from the US and across the world. Road Bike Magazine publishes stories and pictures from its readers, giving you the real-world view of some of the best rides in the world.





THE BIKER'S DICTIONARY

Apes or Ape Hangers Handlebars that are extremely high and which often cause the rider's hands to rest above his or her head.

B

Back Door The last (and most experienced) biker within a group ride.

Back Warmer A girl who is riding on the back of your motorcycle.

Bagger A motorcycle that is equipped with saddlebags and other tourist-needing amenities.

Bar Hopper Bike The cool customs and pristine bikes that only come out of the garage on weekend nights during the summer... and only if it's nice out (never in the rain) to prowl from bar to bar.

Barn Disease When a bike has been idle for a few years and the battery has died, the calipers have seized, and the carbs are filled with varnish sludge.

Barn Queen A motorcycle that has been stored in a barn or other outbuilding for many years.

Barrels Another term for engine cylinders or jugs.

Bash plate A protective plate fitted under the engines of offroad machines to prevent damage caused by grounding.

Beer Cans The can-shaped covers on Harley FL front forks.

Belly-Shover Racer.

Bible Repair manual.

Big Dog Rider An experienced and aggressive motorcyclist known for feats of daring and skill, such as riding at high speeds on public roads, without apparent fear of accident or arrest.

Big Slab Interstate highway.

Binned it To crash a motorcycle.

Bitch Pad Passenger seat.

Blackie A dark streak of rubber left on the asphalt when a motorcycle drills away from a stop.

Blip Quick throttle burst.

Blown or Blower Bike A bike that is supercharged.

Blue Hairs Elderly cage drivers.

Bologna (Baloney) Skin Tire tube.

Boots Tires.

Bone Yard Salvage yard for used bikes and parts; most indie shops also have their own bone yards next to the shop.

Bottom Out When the suspension runs out of room to travel and hits the internal stops.

Brain Bucket Slang term for a helmet.

Brick Slang term for a very hard stock seat.

Bubble Gum Machine Law ahead, usually patting the top of one's helmet warns those behind you that a cop is ahead.

Buckhorns A style of handlebar that comes up higher and sweeps toward the rider.

Burnout Spinning the rear wheel while holding the front brake causing the bike to stay in one place.

Bus Stop A slow first gear corner.

C

Cage Whether a car, truck, or van, the sworn enemy of motorcyclists is the automobile. The name "cage" stems from the idea of being cooped up inside a closed shell, usually with no contact with the outside air.

California Roll Coming to a stop sign without actually stopping, but proceeding through at a slow rate of speed.

Canyon Bites Serious accidents that occur while riding fast on twisting roads, which are often found in canyons of mountainous areas.

Can The muffler of the exhaust system (just the muffler and not the headers).

Caning it or Thrashing it Self-explanatory terms for taking the bike for 'a blast'.

Carving Refers to hard fast cornering on roads with many curves, stems from laying the bike down to a nearly horizontal position and "carving" a line through the road like a knife.

Casing It Coming up short on a double or triple jump, and landing on the top of the last jump instead of clearing it. Casing refers to landing on the frame rails and engine cases.

Catwalk Riding a motorcycle on only the rear wheel, more commonly known as a wheelie.

Chase Vehicle A van or truck that follows a pack of riders to assist or haul any bikes that might break down.

Checkbook Biker A person who goes to the dealership and writes a check for a new bike and new gear.

Cherry Juice Tranny fluid.

Cherry Tops Cop cars.

Chicken Strips The tread left on sidewalls by a sport bike. Chicken strip sizes are often how bikers size up one another.

Closing the Door The last rider in a group moves into the lane that is about to be lost, preventing a vehicle from trying to pass the group.

Clutching it Up Using the clutch to cause the bike to perform a wheelie.

Clyde Cage driver, usually the one that cuts you off.

Corn Snakes Dried cornstalks that blow across roads and streets, especially during harvest time.

Coupon Traffic ticket.

Crack It Turning up the throttle.

Crash Padding A motorcyclist's protective clothing, especially gear and helmets that are abrasion resistant and impact absorbing.

Cruiser Laidback street bikes with chrome and boulevard styling.

Crushers Cool sunglasses or shades.

D

Death Grip How a first time user rider grabs the handlebars.

Ding A nick or scratch in the paint.

Dive Tendency of the front suspension to compress during hard braking.

Dope Highly combustible alcohol/methanol-based fuel mixture.

Doughnut Rider who performs a burn out and carefully moves the motorcycle in a 360-degree circle, thus leaving a circular mark of rubber on the road surface.

Donor Cycle Firefighter Term for sport bikes.

Do-Rag Cloth coverings that are used to cover the rider's hair and forehead.

Duck Walking Sitting on the bike and pushing it with your legs and feet – paddling the bike along to make it move.

Dynamite Slang for instantly applying a system to full force (e.g. I dynamited my brakes).

E

Eat Asphalt To crash.

Eighty Six (86) To cut someone off.

Farkles/Farkle Things that can be added to your bike that make it more useful, versatile, or attractive.

Farklitis The strong desire to continue purchasing new accessories for your motorcycle even though the accessories are not adding functionality.

Fender Fluff Nice lookin' babe on the back.

Fiddly-bits Those chrome do-dads all over saddlebags and seats.

Fishtail Rear wheel swinging from side to side.

Fishtails or Fishtail Muffler The exhaust tip or the end of a muffler which looks like a fishtail from the side.

Flame and Crook Fire and theft insurance.

Flickable The agility of a motorcycle, or how quickly a rider can "flick" the bike from side to side in turns.

Flogging it Getting on the throttle hard and shifting through gears.

Fluid Exchange Stopping for gas and to take a leak.

Flying Colors Riding while wearing the club/organization's colors.

Fog Line The edge of the pavement.

Foot Paddling Sitting on and walking a motorcycle without power.

Footprint Contact patch of the tire with the road surface.

Foot Skids A rider's boots that are extended to the ground while the bike is in motion.

Frankenbike A motorcycle made up of or built from many different makes/models/years.

Free Rider Someone who shares the same ideas as a gang but doesn't belong to one.

Frisco Pegs Railroad spike highway pegs.

Front Door Leader of a group ride. **FTW** Acronym for "Forever Two Wheels."

FUBAR "F**ked Up Beyond All Repair."

Full Chat Riding at top speed for the rider's skill level and road conditions.

G

Garbage Wagon A scornful term used by some outlaw bikers to describe touring bikes.

Gas Surprise Running out of gas and about to switch to reserve, only to find you were already on reserve and therefore have no gas.

GBIS "Gorgeous, But It's Slow."

GBNF "Gone But Not Forgotten."

GearHead (Gearhead) A person with a strong interest to all things mechanical.

Get Off To crash or eat asphalt.

Giggle Gas Nitrous oxide.

Ginmill Bar.

Goggle The Horizon To tell another biker to keep their chin up, as in "see you later."

Grabbing a Handful Applying brakes or excessively twisting the

throttle.

Greenpeace When a cage in front of you, covered with environmentalist stickers, spews black smoke into your face.

Green track A new track with little or no rubber laid down, which can be slippery.

Gremlin A mythical creature that is blamed for a problem when the defect or cause cannot be immediately determined or is unknown.

Gumball What's left of a rear tire after a prolonged burn out. Can also refer to the bits of rubber piled up behind that same tire.

H.

H.O.G.® "Harley Owners Group" - Also relates to the larger Harley models (also called "big twins").

Hacker A sidecar driver or enthusiast.

HairDryer Turbocharger.

Hammer Down To open the throttle fully or accelerate rapidly.

Handle Street name, club member's name.

Hanging it Out Riding aggressively, increasing the possibility of injury.

HARDLY-Davidson Derogatory term for a Harley-looking motorcycle that is not actually a Harley-Davidson brand.

Hard Core Dedicated biker, usually a clubber but can sometimes refer to a racer.

Hard Tail A rigid motorcycle frame with no shock-absorbing device on the rear.

Head shake When handlebars shake back and forth due to improper set-up or bumps.

Heat Law enforcement officer, also known as "The Man".

Helmet Head The condition of your hair after you remove a helmet.

Helmet-Jinx The bad luck a biker gets when someone mentions he or she should wear a helmet.

High Siding Wrecking a bike by flipping it over.

Hippie Biker (AKA Citizen Bikers) Soft-core biker.

Hole Shot In racing, the drive from a standing start up to racing speed. Generally, the rider who makes the strongest start is said to have gotten the hole shot.

Hooligan A motorcyclist known for his/her reckless disregard of public and personal safety.

Hooligan Bike Type of motorcycle that has been stripped of all unnecessary parts and accessories so they can have a higher power-to-weight ratio.

Hoon Term for a rider that is riding hard and spiritedly.

Hoops Tires.

Hosed Worn or broken beyond repair.

Idiot Light(s) Control panel indicator light(s) that warns of a problem.

Insta-Biker Anyone who goes down to a local bike shop and buys a bike, gear, and fake tattoos so they can hang with their new bros (also Poser or Poseur).

J

Jack up When a club member sets a non-club member straight.

Jesus Clip A small "E" clip that holds the handlebar switches together; when you drop it you might say "Oh Jesus," because you know you will never find it.

Jukebox Any overdressed bike.

K

Kawayamahondaharleyzuki Any bike built with parts that are found along the way.

Keep the Dirty Side Down Ride safe; don't lay the bike down.

Kicking Tires Slang term for standing around motorcycles and talking about them.

Knucklebuster Open-end wrench.

Knuck/Knucklehead Harley-Davidson's first overhead valve Big Twin.

Lane Stealer A cage driver that passes motorcycles in no passing zones.

Lane-splitting Riding between lanes of traffic on a freeway.

Lay it Down/Laid it Down/Laying the Bike Down A crash where you slide down on one side of the bike.

Lazy Foot Shifting gears too lightly/timidly and rather than shifting up a gear, you get a false neutral.

Leather Another definition of a poser or wannabe.

Lid Helmet.

Light the fire Starting the engine.

Limb Male biker.

Lone Wolf Biker Someone who lives the bike lifestyle but chooses not to ride with a club.

Loner An individual who shares the same values and enjoys the same lifestyle as outlaw gang members, but who prefers to keep a degree of freedom of choice by not formally belonging to one specific club.

Love Nudges Also known as swapping paint. Two riders bump in to each other while racing.

Lump Engine.

Μ

Mad Max A circular burnout made by spinning the rear tire and then rotating the bike 360 degrees with the locked front wheel as the axis.

Mill Engine.

Minger Wheelie.

Monkey Butt What you get after riding your dirt bike all day – soreness from an uncomfortable riding position.

Mono Wheelie.

NBD "Never Been Dropped" – found in used motorcycle advertisements, usually for bikes that HAVE been dropped.

Newbie A person who is new to the sport of motorcycling.

Nipple Surfing Refers to sliding across the ground face down after falling off a motorcycle. Also see Superman.

Nod Tipping of the head to acknowledge oncoming bikers.

Nut Cracker Slang for a motorcycle fuel tank cap hinged closest to the front of the bike, so named for the tendency of the cap to flip open in a collision while the rider slides up the tank.

Old Lady Wife or steady girlfriend of a club member.

On the Gas When a rider is going very fast.

On the Pipe When a rider or bike is going very fast.

On Rails Expression when a motorcycle holds a corner extremely well at speed.

One-way SOB Selfish, takes but does not give in return.

Organ Donor A biker who doesn't wear a helmet.

Orphan Bikes Rare bikes that are no longer in production.

OTB Over the bars, as in a crash.

P

P-Pad (Pillion Pad) The passenger seat. A small seat attached to the rear fender to provide passenger seating.

Parked It Going slower in a race than conditions allow.

Patch Holder A club biker.

Pavement Surfing (PS) Being thrown from your bike and skidding along the highway.

Pinched Picked up by the police.

Pin It To open the throttle wide open.

Pisspot An old-fashioned open faced helmet, usually favored by owners of vintage British motorbikes.

Plastic Bikers (similar to RUBs) Refers to new riders who have gone to their local motorcycle shop, pulled out their plastic credit cards and bought everything brand new – a mega bike and all the gear.

Play the Clutch Use of partially engaged clutch.

PLP Acronym for "Parking Lot Practice."

PMS "Parked Motorcycle Syndrome" – A condition suffered by riders when they cannot ride their motorcycle.

Poker Run A motorcycle run in which there are several stops in between (usually five total). At these stops riders go in to the checkpoint and draw a playing card and play a poker hand at the end of the run.

Poser A wannabe biker.

Pour on the coals To accelerate hard.

Power Plant The motorcycle engine.

Power Ranger A derogatory term typically applied to owners of sportbikes.

Power Shower Riding in the rain with anything other then a full-face helmet.

Power wheelie Using the engine's power to bring up the front wheel into a wheelie during acceleration.

Protein Facial What you get on the highway without a windshield.

PUB "Poor Urban Biker" – Generally used as a comeback by bikers who are accused of being RUBs.

Pucker factor Refers to a very close call.

Pull Ability to accelerate.

Purple Hooters Topless female rider in cold weather.

Purring Referring to a smooth running engine.

R

Rainbows Oil on the street.

Rat Bike A cosmetically challenged bike.

Retard To set back the ignition timing before the piston reaches TDC (top dead center).

Rice Burner Slang for a Japanese-made motorcycle, also Rice Grinder.

Ride Captain The leader of a group ride.

Ride Lieutenant The last (and most experienced) rider in a group ride.

Riding Two Up Carrying a passenger on your bike.

Rippin' it Up A term used to describe generally fast, skillful, and/ or aggressive riding.

Road Gator 18-wheel tire pieces.

Road Rash A wipeout that scrapes off skin. Marks left behind on a biker's body after falling down while riding.

Rolling Basket Basket case bike, fairly intact but does not run; needs work.

Rolling on the Throttle Giving the bike more power by giving it more gas to accelerate.

Roost The spray of dirt off the rear wheel of a motocross motorcycle.

RUB "Rich Urban Biker."

Run Riding for a particular function or purpose.

S

Safety Nazi A person obsessive about always wearing full kit, riding sensibly and obeying the speed limits.

Scoot Slang term for a motorcycle.

Screamin' Night Hog A biker who prefers to ride at night.

Sharing When a cage driver passes a biker in their lane or otherwise tries to share the lane.

Shimmy Another term for high speed wobble.

Shiny Side Up Keep the shiny side up. Drive safe, don't lay the bike down, a friendly parting expression.

Shooters on Scooters Motorcycle cop.

Short-Legging A situation where a rider attempts to put down a foot on pavement or solid ground when stopping a motorcycle, but finds that no pavement exists where it was expected.

Shotgun Pipes Style of exhaust that has two pipes ending straight and together, giving the appearance of a double barreled shotgun.

Showed Him My Wheel Riding behind someone so close that he or she saw your wheel beside them.

Silverhair Hiway Patrol (SHIP) Blue hairs that attempt to enforce a maximum speed limit of 35mph, no matter what the posted limit is.

SIPDE Scan, identify, predict, decide, execute.

Sissy Bar The backrest behind the passenger's portion of the saddle.

Sit on the Gas When you sit on the gas tank with hands on the throttle and brakes, at a stop or while moving.

Skid Lid Slang term for a helmet.

Skiing A type of stunt where a rider jumps off the rear of the moving motorcycle, grabs the pillion grab rail and skis on the road surface.

Skin New paint job.

Slabbing it Taking the Interstate highway.

Slam or Slammer 1. Jockey shift. 2. To lower a bike's suspension (or in extreme cases remove it entirely).

Slick Tread-less tire.

Slick Plastic Arrows Directional traffic control arrows made of smooth white plastic that are glued to the road surface.

Slinky Riders Riders in a group ride who consistently fail to maintain interval with the bike to their front; a severe hazard to others.

Slip The Clutch To play with or fan one's clutch in order to prevent the engine from stalling or spinning the rear tire from the start line.

Slow Ride A competition where bikers ride as slow as possible, as last to cross the finish line wins.

Snakes/(Road Snakes) The serpentine tar strips used to fill cracks on a racetrack or on a highway/road.

Soft Tail Refers to a mono-shock swing arm bike, has the rigid or hard tail styling, yet full rear suspension capabilities.

Software What your back warmer presses into your back.

Solid Standup, good people; one who is trustworthy.

Sparkin' or Sparking the Pavement When a rider leans a bike over far enough to drag the bottom and causes sparks to fly at night from rubbing the pavement.

Speed Wobble Also see wobble - A sudden instability of a motorcycle at speed in which the front end of the bike darts from side to side uncontrollably.

Springer A motorcycle that is designed with large springs on the front forks to dampen and absorb road shock.

Squat The rear suspension of the motorcycle seems to bottom out due to hard acceleration.

Squirrelly handling A slang term for a feeling of less than full control on a motorcycle. Loose handling.

Stand up When you raise your body or 'stand' while riding your bike.

Standing on brakes Strongly applying the brakes, usually in a panic stop. Using both front and rear brakes very aggressively to stop quickly.

State Patrol Formation Staggered group riding formation - L-R-L-R-L-R...

Statey State cop.

Static Harassment by law enforcement.

Stitching a line Meaning to get by traffic quickly and safely.

Stay Vertical Stay upright, don't crash.

Stewartized When some bikers take great pains and expense to color coordinate their bike colors, leathers, helmet, boots, gloves. Named after Martha Stewart.

Sticky Hoops or Boots Tires made of a soft compound that maximizes grip, usually at the expense of tire's longevity.

Stoppie The art of stopping a motorcycle and having the rear wheel lift off the ground, the reverse of a wheelie.

Stoppers Brakes.

Straight-shooter Tells it like it is, no B.S., talks the truth, speaks his or her mind.

Stubby A muffler which has been deliberately cut down to a shorter length, typically to increase the noise of the exhaust system.

Stuck Sudden engine seizure.

Suck to the Bulls Talking friendly with law enforcement (best way to talk to them).

Superman Refers to flying through the air (chest down) after coming off a motorcycle. Also see Nipple Surfing.

Swapping Paint When two riders bump in to one another while racing. Also known as Love Nudges.

Sweep The last (and most experienced) rider in a group ride.

Sweeper A broad high-speed turn.

Swoop To take a road trip, as in, "I took a swoop over to any town" or "Let's go swoop to any town".

Т

Tagged As in "Tag you're it". Old term for finding out there is a cop or narc undercover in your bar or club.

Tang The part of the side stand that sticks out, intended for you to put your toe on to lower the side stand while seated on the bike.

Tar Snake An uneven, slippery patch in a road crack.

T-Bone Common crash condition where a car turns in front of a

motorcycle and the connecting vehicles are perpendicular.

The Big Road The Interstate.

The Ton 100mph.

The Double (aka "The Double T" or "Double Ton") – meaning 200mph.

Thrashing it or Caning it Self-explanatory terms for taking the bike for a blast.

Too Late Light Oil pressure warning light.

Totaled Any vehicle that is in an accident. A vehicle that has been demolished in a crash to the point the insurance company determines it is not worth the cost of repairing.

Trailer Twinkie Any person who is physically able but would rather trailer or haul their bike than ride it.

Trick Cool - "That dude's bike is trick."

Trike A three-wheeled motorcycle with no sidecar. Can either be one wheel in front, two in the back (a trike), or two wheels in front and one in back (reverse trike).

True Blue A biker who travels long distances or takes long bike trips.

Trumpet Slang for a Triumph motorcycle. Can also mean a trumpet-shaped exhaust pipe.

T-Shirt Biker Someone who has the leather jacket, chain drive wallet, T-shirts and all, but no bike.

Tune Up When a senior club member sets a junior club member straight.

Twisties Section of road with many turns; or, a road or racetrack with many curves.

Twisting the Wick Speeding up, to roll on the throttle.

Two Tons 200 mph.

Two-Up A term for carrying a passenger on your motorcycle.

Two-way Street Even Steven. When both parties entitled to and receiving the same treatment.

U

Urban Tumbleweed Plastic grocery bags/sacks that either fly up onto a hot exhaust or into your face.

V

Vintage/Classic A motorcycle 20 years of age or older.

W

WHORE Acronym for "We Haul Our Rides Everywhere."

Wannabe A person who wants to be a biker.

War-Horse Well-ridden, road-worn bike (usually a chop).

War Wagon A vehicle used to transport the club's arsenal during an outing when trouble is expected from other clubs.

Warp Speed Any speed that is obviously in excess of the posted speed limit. Warp 12 would hint at 120 mph, without admitting the actual speed.

Wash Out Where the front wheel looses grip and slides out to one side.

Wattleshedo Term that asks the top speed of a machine, as in, "What will she do?"

Wave (The Wave) Raising a hand to greet a motorcyclist traveling in the opposite direction.

Waxer Someone who would rather wax his bike than ride it.

Waybackmachine Any street driven, over motored, road rocket that makes most fast vehicles seem to move backward.

Weekend Warrior 1. Insta-biker types. 2. Someone who only rides his or her motorcycle on the weekends.

Went Down Crashed. Can be any type of accident at any speed.

WFO "Wide F^{***}ing Open" – refers to the throttle.

Wheelie Running the motorcycle on the rear wheel only.

Win it or Bin it A racer's attitude when he/she is so committed to victory that they will either win the race or crash while trying.

Wishbone One-piece handlebar and riser, styled like a drag bar but has a clean appearance.

White Lining Driving on the broken white line that separates traffic lanes.

Wind Triangle A wind triangle is a simple triangular-shaped piece of cloth or leather worn around the neck for protection.

Wind Walker Anybody who rides, helps, and is friendly to all other motorcycle jockeys.

Wing Commander Police term for sports bike rider, as in missed the runway.

Wobble Potentially dangerous unexpected side-to-side movement of the front or rear wheel at speed.

WOT "Wide Open Throttle."

Wrenching Performing the maintenance and repair of a motorcycle.

WTF expression – "What The F^{*} * k?!"

Yard Shark Dogs that come out of nowhere and try to bite your tires. Caution: Can cause motorcycle crashes; handle this type of situation with care.

About Roswold Foundation for Injured Children

Mission Statement

Roswold Foundation for Injured Children, Inc. ("RFFIC") was formed in 2009. RFFIC is a non-profit foundation dedicated to providing assistance to children struggling with the lifelong and devastating affects of a serious injury and assisting families who are struggling with the difficulties of raising seriously injured children.

Our Vision

RFFIC's vision is to contribute to a life of hope, social interaction, and happiness for children suffering from severe injuries and their families and to prevent future childhood injuries. It is important to make a difference in the lives of injured children in the Kansas City community by assisting them in every way possible to reach their greatest potential and to provide injured children and their families with support on the road to recovery.

What We Do

Roswold Foundation for Injured Children was established to:

- Raise funds to offer programs and activities to injured children.
- Provide assistance to local Kansas City hospitals and support groups treating injured children.
- Fulfill Children's Mercy Hospital Wish List items.
- Organize child safety awareness events.
- Provide child safety classes to parents to prevent childhood injuries.
- Provide safety resources to families in need to help prevent childhood injuries.

ROSWOLD FOUNDATION FOR INJURED CHILDREN

GET INVOLVED! VOLUNTEER

We are always looking for enthusiastic volunteers. Volunteer opportunities may include spending one-on-one time with an injured child, organizing and running fundraising events, or planning curriculum materials, as well as teaching child safety awareness and injury prevention classes.

FUNDRAISE

If you have experience working as a fundraising committee member and are interested in volunteering your talents, please do not hesitate to contact us. Business owners interested in sponsoring RFFIC for any upcoming event are also encouraged to contact us.

DONATE

We graciously accept monetary donations both big and small through our secure PayPal account acceptable through our website. Every dollar donated will help grow the foundation by supporting the development of programs, activities, and events to help improve the lives of injured children and their families.

BUILDING BRIGHTER TOMORROWS



The KC Biker Band Rocks For Injured Children!

Whenever you see the KC Biker Band, you are sure to have a rocking time for the benefit of injured children throughout the KC Metro Area!

Bars, Benefits, Charity Events, Festivals, and Private Parties! The KC Biker Band has seen a million faces and rocked them all!

The KC Biker Band is amazingly affordable! And best of all ...

All proceeds go to Roswold Foundation For Injured Children!

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