



"A Hand for the Downed Rider"

The Helping Rider

A.I.M VANCOUVER

117~ Winter ~ 2014



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Ride like you are Invisible, Ride Defensively!



The Helping Rider

#117 ~ Winter~ 2013-14

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Free to all interested readers.

Advertisements are welcome.

Articles and letters to the editor are also welcome.

Disclaimer

We welcome your input, articles printed in the newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Association For Injured Motorcyclists

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Ten Ways to Keep Riding in Winter

The arrival of cold weather doesn't mean the departure of the desire to ride. Many motorcyclists in cooler climates refuse to retire their favorite motorcycle or scooter to the storage shed - and, thanks to today's broad range of gear choices, it's entirely possible to enjoy two wheels right into the winter months. Here are ten tips from the experts if you - and your bike - are on the road when temperatures dip.

- **Get Layered.** Layering will keep you insulated and warm. Start with a light base layer that's breathable - microfiber is a good choice. Your base layer should trap warm air next to your skin and wick away sweat. Make sure your top layer is made of tough, wind-proof material, such as leather or nylon. Be sure layering clothing hasn't restricted the movement you need to ride safely.

- **Trap Body Heat.** Keeping your hands and head warm is crucial - most body heat escapes there. To seal the gap between jacket and gloves, invest in gauntlet-style gloves. Consider wearing a silk or microfiber layer under your gloves as well. In addition, invest in a neck warmer or balaclava to prevent cold air from entering your helmet.

- **Don't Get Foggy.** Visor fogging can cause hazardous visibility problems during cold weather. Wear a half-mask inside your helmet over a wind-proof balaclava. This combo allows your breath to escape without causing condensation inside the visor.

- **Ride on Down Electric Avenue.** Longer trips often require additional protection, such as electric vests and gloves. These accessories use your bike's electrical system to provide heat. A vest, electric or regular, is essential to keeping the torso warm. A warm torso prevents frostbite by allowing the heart to focus on pumping blood to the hands and feet. Or, spring for the heated grip option available on many touring bikes.

- **Watch the Voltage.** Be sure your alternator can handle the addition of electric accessories, such as heated vests and gloves. Check your owner's manual to find out how much wattage your alternator generates and how much of that wattage is used to run lights and other electrical components. Then, subtract the wattage the electric gear needs to be sure you have the power necessary, and some to spare, when running the accessories.

- **Get Streamlined.** Direct chilly air away from your



Membership Application on Page 11 :)



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body by adding a functional, not just cosmetic, fairing. Your height and torso length will dictate the proper height of the fairing - if a stock product doesn't dispel the airflow correctly, have a fairing custom cut.


- **Don't Get Fooled.** Hypothermia is insidious. If you ignore early symptoms, like uncontrolled shivering and numb fingers or toes, slow reaction times or fuzzy thinking, you could get into trouble, fast. Wind chill adds to the danger, so make sure you stop frequently, enjoy a hot beverage and allow your body to warm up.

- **Practice Tire Smarts.** If you fit sticky race-type tires in the summer, be sure to switch back to ordinary street tires during colder months. They develop grip at lower temperatures and reach effective operating temperatures much more quickly.

- **Put Your Oil on a Diet.** Using thinner oil during the cold months will improve your bike's performance, especially during start-up, but check your owner's manual for recommendations. Some manufacturers recommend only one weight of oil, no matter what the temperature.

<http://www.motorcycle-usa.com/2/447/Motorcycle-Article/Ten-Ways-to-Keep-Riding-in-Winter.aspx>

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I hope everyone had a great riding season and got to do all of the events that you wanted to do.

For AIM, it was a busy time between events, meetings and visitations. We would like to give a Special Thanks to the Co-ordinators of events who invited AIM to attend with some making donations to AIM.

Also a "Big Thanks" to all the volunteers; Executive, Members and Non-Members, who took time out to do visitations, help out at Show & Shines and other events. Without all of you this could not happen. Many thanks to the past Executives and Volunteers. Wishing you all the best.

Our new Executive for 2014 is in place, I look forward to working with them and all the Volunteers.

**Special offer only during Vancouver Bike Show,
January 24-25-26, 2014.**

Show us your current BCOOM Membership card and we will take \$5.00 off your new or renewal AIM membership. This offer is being reciprocated with BCOOM if you sign up or renew with them. So come on out, say hi, renew your memberships.

Dave Munro, President

**Pet
Lover
Show**

Was a big hit last year!

Bring the family and come on down

Some of the AIM volunteers will be there volunteering,

Hope to see you there!

Pet Lover show
Now expanded to double the show size!
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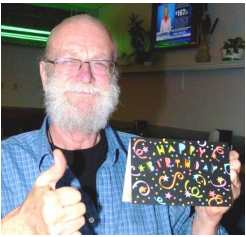
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"Why Volunteer" ?

The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love. - Hubert H. Humphrey

Certainly, friendship is what we provide to our downed riders; and we share their love of motorcycling. All of our Visitation Volunteers give the downed rider much needed friendship while in recovery. We listen to their problems and their plans for life. We can help them obtain legal counsel. We provide a list of benefits and resources they can tap into. We take them out for supper, or, when they are home but unable to get around, we can take them out to do their errands such as banking and shopping. We are there to help, but most important of all, we listen. A shoulder to lean on.

The greatest gift of life is friendship, and I have received it. - Hubert H. Humphrey

Our common bond is motorcycles and motorcycling. There is lots to talk about during a prolonged recovery. It means a lot to a downed rider that someone with a common interest will visit once a week to share time with them. Having a sense of humour helps.

Basically we are there to cheer them up and help them where we can. - Dave Munro

Thinking of volunteering? You may demand, "What do I get out of it?" Funny you ask that. We are all familiar with that 'feel good' sensation when we help someone, especially when they express gratitude, but we actually receive more than that. Recent studies reveal that there are physical benefits as well. Apparently, doing a good deed triggers the release of

serotonin, a monoamine neurotransmitter, which helps fight depression and supports positive emotions. This, in turn, can improve mood and social functioning of healthy people, and can have a positive effect on one's health. Charles Dickens understood this and when the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge started giving he became happier and happier.

Altruism: feelings and behaviour that show a desire to help other people and a lack of selfishness. - Merriam-Webster Dictionary

"What if I want to volunteer to help out but do not want to go and visit in the hospital?" There are lots of jobs that we need help with, all of which help the injured rider. We need people to help us at our booth at the various motorcycle events throughout the year. At the table we sell memberships, accept donations, and explain to people who we are and what we do. We also have Directors' positions on our Board of Directors that need filling. You can come to our monthly meetings held every 3rd Thursday @ 7:00 pm @ the ABC Restaurant, 101 - 15373 Fraser Highway, Surrey, BC. All these jobs are just as important as the hospital Visitations, as without them the Visitations could not be performed. There are many ways to help out.

The timeless adage, often touted as a biker creed, as trite as it is, still stands: What goes around comes around. I'm sure that at some time in your motorcycling history someone once helped you out of a tight spot. Now is your chance to pay it forward.

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another." - Charles Dickens

Gary Richardson, Visitation Director

Motorcycle Winter Storage Tips: Before and After

For some bikers winter can be quite disturbing, as it prevents them from enjoying the pleasure of two wheels for a couple of months. That's because unless the motorcycle is not snow-modified, they have to put it away and replace it with some other means of transportation that are less satisfactory for the adrenaline junkies out there.

So you get to the point when your a\$\$ starts to freeze... literally. Nobody likes it, but then again, there's no need to push your limits... nor your motorcycle's. Once you decide you're going to put your beloved motorcycle away for winter, there are some steps you should consider first. Motorcycles are made to run not to stay inactive, so it's better to get these things done if you want to be back on the road as soon as the white nightmare is over.

Getting Ready for Hibernation

You should first think of the location. Well, your living room is out of the question. You need a place without windows, away from the ultraviolet light. Moreover, if the storage area is in the sunlight it can promote condensation when the sun goes down. We recommend a dry, well-ventilated garage. Once you find a location that fits the aforementioned description, you can start preparing the engine, exhaust and battery for the winter storage.

First, you have to change the engine oil. You'll need to warm the engine to its normal operating temperature, as it will help you drain the oil faster and more thoroughly. Next step is to fill the tank with fresh fuel, but make sure you don't overfill. It is recommended to add winterizing fuel conditioner. After you have performed the oil change, restart the engine to re-circulate the new oil.

Most importantly, don't forget to remove the battery for the storage period. However, battery charging should be made at least every two weeks using a charger that has an output of 10% of the battery ampere hour rating, since a higher charge will cause the battery to overheat. If you are able to start and run the bike once a month (in cases when it is not stored indoors), you may want to leave the battery in the bike and just disconnect the negative cable end.

The next step is to wax and polish all painted parts and spray the chrome ones to prevent them from corroding or against rust and moisture. You should also remember to lubricate the chain and service fluids, if necessary, and unload the suspension. Next, check both tires with the air pressure gauge to make sure each tire is properly inflated to the recommended pressure level. The last thing you'll have to do is cover your motorcycle with a specially designed bike cover, made of slightly porous material that allows it to breath and protects it from moisture.

Meanwhile, once you have your bike stored for winter, you could use the spare time to take care of your protective gear and to enjoy some fun winter activities, such as practicing your snowmobile skills.

The Wake Up Call

The first warm day of spring comes so this means the winter nap is over for your motorcycle. Well, if you followed the instructions we gave you it means you won't have too much trouble getting back on the road as fast as possible.

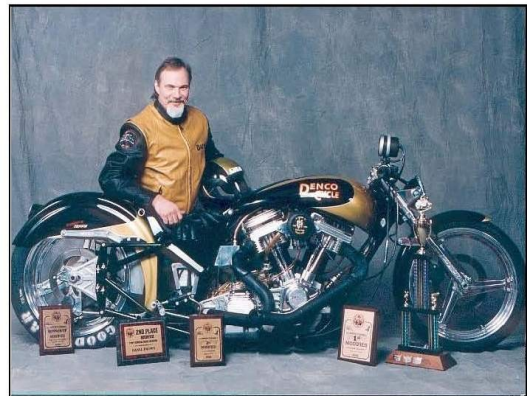
The first logical step is to remove the cover and reinstall the battery. Then, recheck all fluid levels and turn on the engine. Though you made sure it was kept safe, you should still check for cracked tires or leaking oil. Set the tire pressures back to riding specs and your motorcycle is ready for a new season.

On the other hand, you might be a bit rusty and your riding skills could also need to be refreshed. Due to the sand or salt deposits on the edge of the road, try and ride extra carefully until you're up to speed.

Ride safely! <http://www.autoevolution.com/news/motorcycle-winter-storage-tips-before-and-after-15960.html>

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JOSH WOOD

Relentless: Walking Against All Odds

It is not a miracle that Josh Wood walks with less than 5% use of his spinal cord; it is his persistent training, hard work, and positive visualization techniques that allowed him to recently throw his walking stick away forever.

Relentless: Walking Against All Odds is the riveting first-hand account of Josh Wood's struggle to regain mobility in his arms, hands and legs after a terrible snowboarding accident turned the then 18-year-old into a medical quadriplegic. Doctors told him that with less than 5% use of his spinal cord, he would never walk again. Josh's journey is a testament to the depth of the human will—and to what we can achieve when we never give up. As a result of his dedication, perseverance and determination, the young Australian not only walks again, but also snowboards and rides a motorbike once more.

Josh Wood's Story

From the moment Josh could move he was active and he threw himself into a life of action sports. Graduating from high school, Josh decided to pursue his dreams of becoming a professional snowboarder. That dream came to a crashing halt when an aerial snowboard jump Josh attempted to execute across an asphalt road, went terribly wrong.

The impact of crashing to the ground changed Josh's destiny in a split second, instantly becoming a quadriplegic at C5, C6, C7 and T1. The medical team's prognosis was - "Josh would never get out of bed, so catastrophic was his cord damage, he had less than 3% chance of any recovery."

From this point is where Josh started to live, breathe and be his message that he would ultimately share with the world. Well over a decade later, wherever he goes, Josh brings his message and inspires scores of people in similar situations as well as everyday people from all walks of life facing



challenges on many levels. Josh Wood is a published author, motivational speaker, inspirational candidate for self-healing and a man with a simple message for the world- Never Give Up!

Praise for Josh Wood

Josh Wood is a powerful inspirational speaker who tells his terrifying story with blunt honesty, candour, and not a shred of self pity.

-Julie Bennett, Principal at 64 Media, NSW Australia

Josh Wood is an inspiration to everyone who is fortunate enough to hear his story of when

apparent irrevocable tragedy meets with unparalleled will and determination. He is a passionate,

humble, yet entertaining young man whose message will leave you, your clients and/or your staff

with invaluable insights into what can be achieved when the human

spirit refuses to surrender.

-Gus Smarrini, Practice Development Manager, MLC Australia

For media inquires contact communications@influencepublishing.com

or 778-323-1817 For more information on Josh Wood please visit his website at www.joshwood.com.au,

his Facebook page at Relentless-walking-against-all-odds, and his Twitter account at @woody_

Never
say
Never



**Biker angel be my guide
As i climb upon my scoot to ride
Let your halo light the way
And keep me safe from harm today
Let your wings provide me wind and air
And send it coursing through my hair
Find me a peaceful sunny place
And let it shine upon my face
Keep the clouds and rain at bay
And keep me dry throughout the day
Watch over my brothers who ride with me
Keep them safe and close to thee
Keep my wheels upon the ground
So i'll return here safe and sound
But should disaster be my fate
Guide me through to Heaven's gate
If i must join my fallen brethren
Please show me the way to Biker Heaven**

- 2000 Paula M. Wiles
(aka. Stella)



**NEVER RIDE FASTER THAN
YOUR GUARDIAN ANGEL CAN FLY**

New Bikes

With all new bikes, there are certain things you should check carefully. It's just possible that you care more about your life than the 17 year old who assembled your bike while listening to heavy metal at 112dB. Generally, your bike was shipped from the factory in a crate, and the dealer was responsible for attaching the front wheel and handlebars, adding battery acid and engine oil, and attaching various windshield and fairing parts. There's a [checklist here](#) that you can print out and use as a guide. My latest bike (3/04) had loose pinch bolts on the lower triple clamps and loose bolts on the rear brake caliper. The front tire was low on air. Of course, the controls were all adjusted for someone 5'3" tall with 50" long arms. Apparently Orang-Utangs buy a lot of motorcycles. As new bikes go, this one was in pretty decent shape - I've seen much worse. I recommend you check the following:

Front End

Front tire mounting direction - check that the arrow on the sidewall points the right way.
Front tire air pressure - 38 psi is a good starting point for a street bike, 32psi for a dual sport.
Front axle bolts tight - this is a part of your bike you want to stay attached.
Front brake caliper bolts tight - brakes are a good thing to have and keep.
Front rim true - Hold a pencil up against the fork leg, point barely touching the front rim, and spin the front tire.
No visible cracks or dents in rim
Front brake rotors clean and true - no oil or scum on rotors. Hold your pencil against the fork leg, point barely touching the brake rotor, and spin the front tire.
No loose spokes - tap each spoke with something metallic. They should each ring a bit, not thud, with a similar tone.
No fore/aft movement in front wheel - grab the rim and pull forwards.
No side to side movement in front wheel - grab the rim and pull side to side.
Fork legs pinch bolts tight - we don't want the forks sliding up in the triple clamps when we hit a bump.
Steering is free lock to lock - nothing binds, nothing gets pinched.
Steering stem top bolt tight.
Handlebar bolts tight. No movement of handlebars when you push or pull.
Forks more freely - sit on the bike, lock the front brake and push down on the handlebars.
Forks adjusted identically - same pre-load, same damping on each leg.

Controls

If you have an adjustable seat, pick a position for it.
Adjust the handlebars to suit you
Adjust the brake and clutch lever height. When you're sitting on the bike with your arms in their relaxed normal position, put your fingers out at their natural angle, just a tiny bit below level with the tops of your hands. Now, your fingertips should be very lightly resting on the levers.
If you have a street bike, tighten up the clutch and brake levers. If you will ever go off-road, leave the levers just a little bit loose so that they can rotate in a fall instead of break.
Adjust your mirrors

By Mark Lawrence

Adjust the throttle cable so that there is almost no free play in your throttle. Ride around a bit, make sure your shift lever is adjusted correctly. When you move your toe under the shift lever, you should have to move your toes downwards just a little bit to get it underneath. Your foot should be in contact with the shift lever as soon as you have your foot under it - if you have to pull up at all to touch your shift lever, it's too high. When adjusted correctly, the shift lever is about at a level with the center of your toes when your feet are in their relaxed position.

Adjust your rear brake lever so that when you move your foot over, it barely touches the brake lever. You should not have to move your foot downwards to contact the rear brake.

Middle

Coolant level correct. The radiator overflow bottle will have high and low level marks.
Oil level visible when cold - bike on the center stand, site glass or dip stick shows between high and low marks.
Oil level correct when warm - bike on the center stand, site glass or dip stick shows between high and low marks.
Dipstick or oil fill cover tight.
Brake and clutch levers work easily.
Clutch and front brake fluid levels - check site glass on the handlebar reservoirs.
Rear brake fluid level - check site glass on the reservoir.
Body panels have all fasteners.
Radiator fan spins freely.
Throttle snaps shut.
Mufflers attached securely - pull on them, there should be no movement.
Warm idle 1000 - 1200 rpm. Too slow is hard on your crankshaft bearings, too fast is hard on your brain.

Rear End

Rear tire mounting direction - check that the arrow on the sidewall points the right way.
Rear tire air pressure - 38psi is a good starting point.
Rear axle bolt tight
No visible cracks or dents in rim
Rear rim true - bike on center stand, hold a pencil against the swing arm, point barely touching the rim, and spin the wheel.
Rear brake rotor clean and true - no oil or scum on rotor. Hold your pencil against the swing arm, point barely touching the rotor, and spin the wheel.
No loose spokes - tap each spoke with something metallic. They should each ring a bit, not thud, with a similar tone.
No fore/aft movement in rear wheel - grab the wheel and tug on it.
No side to side movement in rear wheel - grab the wheel and tug on it.
Rear brake caliper bolts tight
Chain slack 1¼" at the loosest point with no one on the bike.
Rear shocks move freely - sit on the bike and bounce.
Rear wheel aligned with front - put 15' of string around the front tire, and pull the two ends back to the back of the rear tire. Touch the string to the widest points on the back of the rear tire, and look at the string where it hits



Amputee Woman Biker Captures Success in Rugged Rally

By Miki Fairley

Content provided by *The O&P EDGE*

http://www.oandp.com/articles/2004-11_06.asp

I rode, I crashed, and I rode a bunch more, just like all the other riders. At no time was my amputation a handicap. My prosthesis really did let me ride and participate to the limit of my abilities! I had such an amazing adventure, and I am so glad that I did it!

This is Angie Washo's enthusiastic summary of her participation in the AlCan 5000 Rally in August. Angie was not only the first woman--but also the first amputee--to compete in the rugged 3,500-mile, nine-day course. The rally, which departed from Kirkland, Washington, August 18, took riders through British Columbia, the Yukon territories of Canada, and on to Alaska. The bikers encountered thick fog, rain, mud, dirt, gravel, 14-percent downgrades, and hairpin switchbacks--not to mention moose, buffalo, bears, cattle, trucks, and many campers.

Out of 15 starting riders, Angie finished in eighth place overall--and second in the under-700cc category! She rides a Suzuki DRZ400S. Her husband Brad was first in that category and sixth overall. Angie's class--the "Seat of the Pants" class, as she calls it--can have only stock bike parts and a GPS unit, no computers. "The 'Whiz Bang' class can have all sorts of navigational computers and electronics," she explains.

A long-time motorcycle enthusiast, Angie, who lives in Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida, lost her left leg about two years ago after being struck on her motorcycle by a hit-and-run drunk driver. She wears a Gold Medal foot, a custom-fit, state-of-the-art carbon fiber prosthetic foot made by Otto Bock HealthCare, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Angie's GPS stopped working early in the race, but she was able to repair it. "The time-speed-distance (TSD) sections rely on our knowing exactly where we are, exactly how fast we are going, and exactly what time it is," she explains. "I spent all day wondering where I was, where I was going, and when I might get there, but it was still fantastic fun!"

On the first day, as she headed down a steep grade, she came around a tight bend and almost crashed into a huge steer standing in the middle of the road. On the second day, "Wildlife came running out from every direction. Moose look really goofy when they gallop!"

On the fourth day, Angie was exhilarated. "I was excited, because my clock was right, my GPS was working, and I had a formula for my speedometer." Then she fell at the start. "No big deal--just a slow-motion clunk over in the street, really more ego-bruising than anything else."

Heart-Stopping Off-Road 'Tour'

That night the riders stopped in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, and were heading to Skagway, Alaska, the next day. That ride would include about five hours of "technical" off-road. Angie's online Daily Journal details the experience: "Wow! I can't believe what we

did today! We rode up and we rode down--it felt like straight up and down!

Jamie Gleason of Arcticmoto.com led us on a 'tour' of the back-country between Whitehorse and Skagway. I have to admit that I was scared out of my wits before we started. I imagined that I would be the only one to crash; I would hold up the group; and I might even get hurt. It didn't make it any easier when we started out on a nearly vertical slope of loose rocks and boulders. Then I watched as BMWs and KTMs crashed and flopped over. Not a good start!"

However, the bikers helped one another through, and the whole group reassured Angie. "I also had some wonderful advice, which may just be the answer to life, the universe, and everything." Another biker told her, "Keep your feet on the pegs, your butt in the air, and your eyes on the prize."

"This got me through the rest of the very challenging ride," Angie says. In fact, she got a bit overconfident and "launched myself into the woods at about 30 mph after hitting a log in the trail." Both Angie and her bike got up and kept going.'

Day six was a long one. The group rode over 500 miles, much of it on gravel at high speeds. "A couple of the riders got to meet the Mounties up close and personal while they got their speeding tickets, but Brad and I just chugged along."

We Made It!

When they reached that night's hotel, Angie says, "I didn't care that there was no Internet access, no decent restaurant nearby, and no laundry...All I wanted to do was shower and sleep."

On day eight, the group was originally supposed to be relaxing on a ferry and watching the coastline and glaciers slip by while their bikes were secured below decks, but the reservations didn't make it. So the group rode the extra miles, to the finish. "We made it!" Angie said in her journal. "Unbelievably the last day was the best! We rode through beautiful country today!" Other scenery along the way was spectacular also, but often the riders were going too fast and too hard to really see it, she says.

Besides biking, she is a professional SCUBA diving instructor and snowboards, wakeboards, in-line skates, and spear fishes.

Is Angie looking forward to more adventures? "Absolutely," says Angie, "I have found out that there is a whole series of dual-sport races all over the country--the season is just starting!"

Continues next page



The Helping Rider's Recovery Journal



The Helping Rider's
RECOVERY JOURNAL
Second Edition

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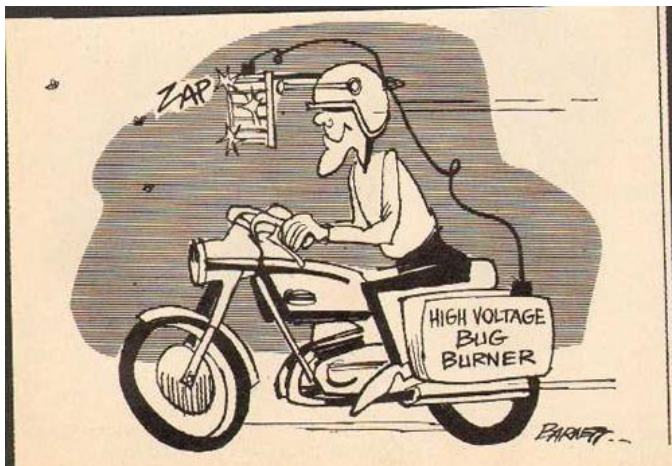
"A Hand For The Downed Rider"

This is the A.I.M. Recovery Journal which is provided to each downed rider in hospital. It contains information about Income Tax Issues, Benefits, and Resources. Additional information regards how to choose a lawyer, legal resources, your Rights, patients' Rights, ICBC claims process, license recovery (car - Class 5, and motorcycle - Class 6), and motorcycle modifications for handicap. At the end of the Recovery Journal are three articles, written by lawyers, explaining how the ICBC insurance system works: coverage, claims, and motorcycle claims.

To read this Journal go to: <http://www.aimvancouver.com/benefits/>

Thank you to all the Sponsors for your support, and Gary Richardson for his mega hours of research and putting it together, making this Journal special!

Psst, When a rider/passenger go down, Please inform AIM, their names and location or contact number so that we may visit, give them a copy of the journal (which is very informative) and answer any questions.



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Awards and Thanks



Awards were made during a celebratory banquet. Besides finishing first and second in their class, Angie and Brad also received the Northern Lights award, which was a motivational category. "The awards were small versions of a primitive northern rock sculpture called Inuksuks, which were left by ancient hunters to mark that other humans had passed along lonely trails--a fitting memento of this adventure," Angie explains.

"I couldn't have gotten here without the help of so many people," Angie says. "Jan and Joe Saunders spent so many hours working on the design for my leg. The leg held up completely." Jan Saunders, CPO, and his son Joe, LOF, operate Saunders Prosthetics & Orthotics Inc., Kissimmee and Lady Lake, Florida. The family business also includes Jan's daughter Alison, a licensed orthotic fitter's assistant, and her fiancé Bruno Santos, also a licensed orthotic fitter's assistant. Angie also appreciated her prosthesis: "The foot from Otto Bock really is lightweight and responsive; it lets me ride

and walk without thinking about it," Angie adds.

Angie is a star patient, says Jan Saunders. "In 32 years, I've fit about 16,000 prosthetic legs and arms--and she is one of the most amazing patients I've ever had. She doesn't know the meaning of the word disability.' Whatever she wants to do, she does!" Saunders appreciates being in a family business, because it gives him the freedom to design and make exactly what he feels his patients need, he notes.

Others have helped too, Angie says. "I can stand up on the pegs and shift the bike around, partly because Chris at UnderGlass welded steel blocks to the peg for me and lengthened my shift lever." Also helping were her Tech-4 boots from Alpine Star and the Schuberth Concept helmet from BMW of Orlando, which "saved my head when I launched through the bushes." BajaDesigns helped provide larger gas tanks. Also helping was Sun State Fun Sports.

Angie is a Motorcycle Safety Foundation instructor and operates Florida Motorcycle Training of Lake County Inc., Eustis. of

RUNNING FROM THE REAPER

A few years ago I was discussing accidents with an experienced motorcycle Sergeant. We were looking at the main causes of accidents and fatalities over the last few decades in BC.

Due to driver and rider education the typical left turner hitting the motorcycle has declined significantly, and younger riders crash stats have been greatly reduced, once again rider helping out. Over thirty years ago some 900 riders perished in Canada, that figure now is below 200 most years. Pinpointing exact factors for crashes and injuries is very difficult as many accidents are not officially reported and the basic police accident form is not as detailed as it could be.

For example the type or model of bike is not recorded, just the engine size ie Honda 750. This makes it difficult if not impossible to make a data base on which types of machines are more likely to crash or kill their operators. Much easier with autos as most experts for example agree Volvos are much safer than Corvettes or Mustangs. (I was told by the Volvo club that for nearly 15 years no one died in a Volvo crash in all of Canada !!)

Such stats in Canada don't exist for motorcycles so we can only speculate on the role the type of machine has in accident stats. Many assume cruisers and touring bikes are much safer than sport bikes but it is only speculation yet to be proven here.

The Sergeant explained often no single factor causes an accident, rather a combination of things conspire together. He recalled a bad late nite crash just off River Road in North Delta as a

perfect example. The rider had lost control in a corner and ended up sliding under a Chevy Sprint where his bad luck continued as his now flaming bike slid after him and pinned the unfortunate man under the Sprint where he perished.

An extensive examination revealed multiple causes for this accident. Each factor was not deadly alone, but in combination they proved unforgiving.

The rider was speeding 20 to 40 km over the limit
The rider had been consuming alcohol for several hours prior to the crash. The bike had a cracked frame

The rear tire had less than 20lb of air in it

The moral of this crash; you can bend and even brake a rule or two regarding safe riding, you can speed abit at times, you can have a few beers occasionally and still get home safe, but you're rolling the dice with the Grim Reaper if you ignore safety and maintenance repeatedly.

Craig W Heale



"The Visitation"

"The path to our destination is not always a straight one. We go down the wrong road, we get lost, we turn back. Maybe it doesn't matter which road we embark on. Maybe what matters is that we embark."
- Barbara Hall

I am often asked, "How can you stand going into the hospital over and over again to see downed riders? Doesn't that get depressing to repeatedly see someone all banged up?"

The truth is the opposite. I enjoy visiting injured motorcyclists. True, I don't like seeing someone in pain, covered with bandages and with tubes coming out of them, but I am meeting someone new, learning their life story, and I can bring a little joy into their day. The real reward, though, is seeing them get back to living their life and knowing that I had a small part in it.

... *Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

- Robert Frost, The Road Not Taken; excerpt from last verse.

In his poem *The Road Not Taken* Robert Frost comes to a fork in the road and chooses the one less travelled, realizing that this has made all the difference in his life. Our downed riders often do not have a choice. The challenging road less traveled is thrust upon them. But they invariably meet the challenge and often end up better for it.

The most important journey, however, is the one within. I am always amazed at the tenacity of the human spirit, rising to the challenge, and find it rewarding to see the rider reach inside and tap an inner strength they did not know they had. Many come out of the experience much stronger. They take charge of their new life and the challenges it presents.

Other Visitation Volunteers tell me they find the same rewards. If you are so inclined, you will find that visiting downed riders adds a new dimension to your life. If you are interested, talk to us. We can always use more Visitation Volunteers and we will provide the training. You, too, can help a downed rider.

"A journey, I reflected, is of no merit unless it has tested you."

- Tahir Shah, In Search of King Solomon's Mines

- Gary Richardson, Visitation Director.

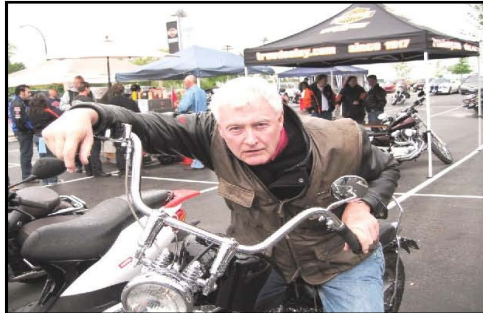
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Grizzled Old
Biker**

Some people
try to turn back
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Odometers.

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want People to
know 'why' I
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Vancouver and Fraser Valley Toy Runs 2013

