

The Eagle Times

Colorado FreeWheelers

April, 2011

NEXT MEETING
Thursday, April 21, 2011
Fay Myers Motorcycle World
7:00 pm

www.cofreewheelers.org/

Thumper's Corner

Pat McCombs



The club's riding season is very close my friends. The landscape is greening up, trees are budding out, the baseball season has started, and motorcycle tire sales are in high demand. Folks are getting that fever to swing their legs over those iron horses to hit the blacktop.

For a number of us who are not fair weather riders, the riding season never ends. And although we had some snow in the early part of the year, has turned out to be a great open ride winter for the club members. We have been able to catch some Saturday & Sunday rides along the way, and a little something new this year with Monday rides. This writer has been on three of the Monday rides, which have turned into a total blast. What really surprises me about the Monday rides, is the wonderful turn outs for these. I for one, hope these continue in the future. Heck! on one we had nineteen bikes hit the road.

One club member who really deserves a huge slap on the back this winter is Bob "Knight Rider" Norton. Not sure why, but the KnightRider has led about 95% of the winter rides so far. He has really put some "WOW" routes together, that have been fun to be part of. Keep up the good work, my friend.

On February 10th, 2011, three of the Colorado Freewheelers took in the monthly meeting of the RMVTA M/C. Pete Chronis, John Boddy, and this writer had gone to pitch the club's idea on some sort of a fund raiser to help Cliff Eudy's widow, Nedra. We had discussed this project at our meeting in January. Our very SPECIAL THANKS, to all of the RMVTA members who were in attendance that evening. They really made us feel relaxed, and were very receptive to the plan we had brought with us that evening. The 100% vote was just awesome!!

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Head & Eyes Up

Bob Norton



GROUP RIDING 101

One of the most enjoyable aspects of motorcycle riding is when you are sharing the experience with others. It's hard to beat the feeling of riding with a bunch of your best buds on a long trip

or just a day's outing.

That said, you need to understand some of the dynamics of good, safe and enjoyable group riding. To be a good "group rider" you should first be a good "individual rider". Your skills and confidence level should be such; that you feel comfortable riding at speed in close proximity to other bikes. You should be able to quickly access the skill level of others in your group, thereby giving you the understanding of where to position yourself in the group. Some group leaders may assign riding positions to new or first time group riders. If you determine that the riding style of the person in front or behind you makes you uncomfortable, you might consider either pointing out to the other riders just what you are not comfortable with, or simply change your position within the group. There is absolutely nothing wrong with diplomatically acknowledging your comfort and/or discomfort level to the group leader, and possibly others in the group. After all, everyone participating in the ride, is there to experience a pleasurable and safe group ride.

Now I want you to try to put yourself in the position I often find myself. That would be leader of the group. Understand that most people are perfectly happy to relinquish the duty of group leader to someone else for various reasons. Some might feel that their skill level is not up to what they think a group leader's skill level should be. Oth-

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Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Pete O'Chronis. We began, as usual with the Pledge of Allegiance. Visitor tonight was George O'Christopher.

The Secretary's report was accepted as printed in the newsletter. The Treasurer's report showed \$81.33 cash on hand, \$39.00 in the Christmas Fund, and \$1,837.61 in checking for a total of \$1,957.94.

Ride Committee chair Don O'Lyle reported that he still leads in club miles for 2011. Total club ride miles for 2011 is already at 22,668. We are a tad over 4 million miles as a club since the records have been kept.

Don went over the upcoming rides noting there are still plenty of open dates. Some members took a ride down to Bent's Old Fort last Monday.

Safety Committee chair Bob O'Norton posed the question of where to park your bike in a parking place. You should park as shallow in the space as you can without actually sticking out beyond the backs of cars. The sooner someone sees your bike, the less likely they will run over it. Pete answered the question correctly.

Bill O'Gillespie outlined the Rider of the Year program for the visitors. The committee to review the program has not yet met.

Deadline for 1000-IN-24 route submissions has been extended until the April meeting. MERA, the Motorcycle Endurance Riders Association has graciously offered to supply all 1000-IN-24 riders who complete the route in 24 hours or less with a certificate of accomplishment and a MERA license plate backer at no cost. Iron Butt certifications for Saddle Sore certificates will also be available, but at the regular Iron Butt Association fee.

Old Business: Pat McCombs was absent, so there was no report on the progress for the proposed bake/craft sale to benefit some folks in need. Pete will contact Pat to see if plans have been made. One option would be to make the April sale the charity fundraiser and the October sale for the club treasury. Members present agreed to that notion.

Don is waiting to see if Kermit's reopens after their fire before seeing about the club brick idea.

Don said he had been contacted by "Moto Direct" for some sort of partnership or sponsorship discount. He will get more info and give a report at the April meeting.

Missing Link: Don McKee was nominated by Pete for running out of gas while towing from Florida to Colorado. The vote was unanimous.

Pete won the 50/50 for \$22.00, donated it to the Christmas fund and the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Submitted by Bill Gillespie, secretary

Ride Smart

ers may feel that they just don't know of any interesting places to go and some are just content to follow along and that's OK too. Personally, I very much enjoy being the group leader because when I lead, I know I'm going to like where I go, and how I get there. Now, I challenge you. Try stepping up and leading a ride now and then. I'm as good a tail gunner, as I am a leader. Riding as a leader, will also serve to make you an overall better rider.

All good group rides should begin with a group meeting. Topics of coverage should include: destination, route overview, purposed stops, riding position assignment, riding rules of the road, buddy assignment and anything else deemed necessary to make the ride as pleasurable and safe as possible. The group leader should allow group members to ask questions. The whole process should take only a few minutes. If done properly it should give each group member a sense of security, in knowing the basic plan of attack, and the fact that there is one. Each member of the group should feel comfortable in knowing that no one is being asked to ride above their skill (comfort) level and that no one will be left behind.

Once the group ride begins the riding dynamics of the group become very important for the overall safety of each member of the group. The group should usually ride in a staggered formation with at least two full bike lengths between you and the bike directly in front of you. This puts one bike length between you and the bike to your left or right. Exceptions to this may be when riding in the twisties. In this situation, single file and increased distance between bikes should take precedence. There is no doubt that this type of riding requires greater concentration, than riding alone. When the proper dynamics of group riding are followed, it is a beautiful thing to be a part of. Good group riding dynamics only improve, the more frequently the same members of a group, ride together, become more comfortable, accustom and confident with each others individual riding skills.

Group members should strive to keep pace. Group members that are not comfortable riding at least 5 mph over the posted speed limits should consider riding near the back of the pack. What happens if a reasonable cohesion is not maintained? The group begins to experience, what I call "Rubber Banding". Rubber Banding means the leader is trying to maintain a consistent pace (around 5 mph over the posted limit) but members of the group continually fall off the pace, causing gaps in the formation. This results in frustrations, which can turn people off to the concept of group riding. The group member's who fell out of pace, and in order to close the gap, end up riding faster than the group leader, by a considerable amount speed just to catch up. The misconception that the group leader is riding "too fast", is possibly the single biggest complaint of new riders to group riding. The group leader is all too often accused of riding too fast, when he or she may indeed be maintaining a very reasonable 5 mph over the posted speed limit pace.

Two-way radio communications in a riding group can be both fun and very beneficial. Ideally at least the group leader and the designated tail gunner should have two-way communications between them. The tail gunner rides herd over the group from the rear and keeps the leader abreast of the needs of individual riders. If there are other members in the group that have radio's, try to disburse them evenly throughout the group and assign them to someone the does not have a radio. Keep in mind, primary communication's regarding the group's safety, specific instructions/directions, should be carried out by the group leader or tail gunner. There is something to be said for; "too many cooks" spoiling the broth. When instructions and direction are being given, the last thing you need is for everyone talking at the same time. Don't forget to use hand signals when two-way radio communication is not an option.

Ride Smart, Ride Safe & Keep Your Head & Eyes Up!

Next month's topic: Group Riding Safety!

Bob (Knight Rider) Norton

Thumper's Corner

On April 21st, which is a Thursday night at 7:00 P.M. both clubs are hoping to pull off a very successful evening at Fay Myers Motorcycle World. We have put a plan in action to do a Bake Sale-Fund Raiser for Nedra Eudy. Both clubs have had a great deal of input to this event, and we are all hopeful for an excellent turnout. If you have something that you feel will auction off well, bring it with you that evening. As members, try to be

creative in doing some fund raising for this event. As an example, I sent out eighty emails to folks outside of the Motorcycling Community. Explained in detail what we were going to try to accomplish at this fund raiser. The response so far as be wonderful. I may be able to bid on a chocolate pie for \$500.00.

Now you might say "Oh my God" another bake sale. No! It's a Bake Sale-Fund Raiser that has meaning to help someone in need, and close to us all. One might say. "I can't

afford another \$25.00 or \$50.00 for something like this." This writer would say to that, we blow more than that on fuel riding all over the place. We learned a long time ago in the Free-wheelers, that we can not save the world, but we have sure won a lot of small battles, and made life just a little bit easier for many people.

Remember!! Let's ride safe out there, nobody is watching out for us but ourselves.

Upcoming Rides

RMVTA Highway Cleanup

Sunday, May 1 9:00am
Leave from: Country Buffet, 301 Englewood Parkway
Approx: 100 miles
Ride Leader: Floyd Thorne

This is RMVTA's annual cleanup of a stretch of Parker Road. Colorado Freewheelers are encouraged to join the activity.

Fay Myers Open House

Saturday, May 14 9:00am
Location: Fay Myers M/C World, 9700 E Arapahoe Rd

This is becoming an annual right of spring at Fay Myers where we get to promote our club and rides. In the past they have had both street and freestyle motorcycle stunt riders entertaining the crowds and a free lunch. All members are welcome to come by, sit in the booth for a while and help promote the club.

Wet Mountain Valley Ride

Sunday, May 15 8:30 am
Leave from: Country Buffet, 301 Englewood Parkway
Approx: 350 miles
Ride Leader: Bill (Wing Commander) Gillespie

The Wet Mountain Valley lies in southern Colorado South of the Arkansas River. Bordered by the Wet Mountains to the East, and the Sangre de Cristo Range to the West, a ride there this time of year should offer some very scenic views of the snow covered Sangres.

Run for the Wall

Saturday, May 22 8:00 am
Leave from: Country Buffet, 301 Englewood Parkway
Approx: 500 miles
Ride leader: TBD

This year we will be joining the Run for the Wall riders as they pass through Colorado on their way to Washington DC. The riders will be passing through Trinidad at around 11 a.m. on their way to La Junta for a lunch stop, so we should be able to meet them there and ride at the tail of the group at least as far as Limon were they will be staying for the night..

Wild West Festival

Saturday, May 22 10:00 am
Leave from: Country Buffet, 301 Englewood Parkway
Approx: 400 miles
Ride leader: Pat "Thumper" McCombs

Get a touch of the old West as we ride to Pueblo for a taste of broncs, bulls, goat ropers and steer wrestlers.