

VIRGINIA RIDER

Serving the Riders of Virginia & West Virginia

Magazine™

BULL RUN HARLEY-DAVIDSON'S *Inaugural*

BLESSING

of the

Bikes



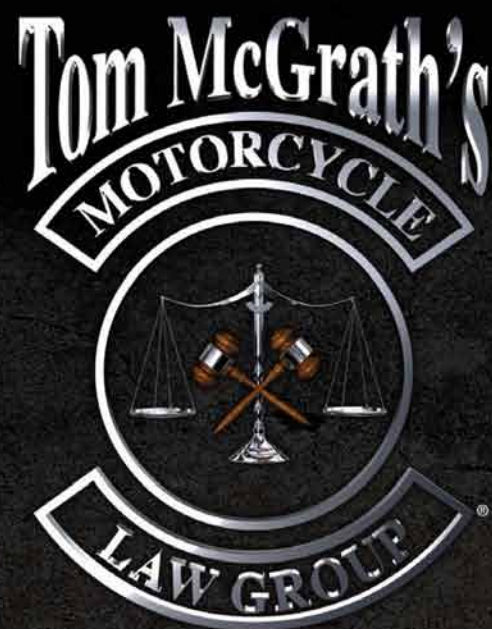
FREE



Manassas, VA
Food * Refreshments * Live Music
See inside for details

MARCH 2020
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2020

4th Annual

**SOUTH CENTRAL
BIKE FEST**

JUNE

11-13

2020



**CHASE CITY
VIRGINIA**

Vendors - Games - Live Music - Great Food!

Charity event to benefit The Barksdale Cancer Foundation and
The Mecklenburg County Cancer Association

Vendors and Sponsors Wanted!

Contact Lee Brankley - 434-210-1503 - Also find us on facebook!





from the editor's desk

Welcome back friends! If you're just joining us for the first time, we're happy to have you with us as we all enjoy the common bond of doing life on 2, 3 or 4 wheels. We'd love for you to be a part of Virginia Rider in any way that you can... * Share your pictures with us for the SHOTZ pages – send as many and as often as you'd like *If you'd like to have you and your bike featured in the "MY RIDE" section, we'd love to have you *If you have a pooch that rides, contact us to be in the Ruff Riders page *If you have a story with pictures about an adventure that you've been on in the beautiful states of Virginia or West Virginia *Let us know about your favorite places to ride, eat/drink, stay or play *If you know of any events that have not made it into our calendar, please let us know so that we can get them listed *If you have any suggestions of topics that you'd like us to cover or have featured each month in the magazine *Funny, weird, crazy, jaw-dropping pictures of anything on 2, 3 or 4 wheels...we'd love to share them! Just email us at "virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com" anytime. We'd love for you to be a part of our Facebook page and Instagram so please give us a Like and a Follow at @virginiaridermagazine.

In the coming weeks we'll be kicking off the ride season with some Fun contests for riders to take pictures at various places for chances to win VISA Gift Cards and prizes. You have to be connected with us on our Facebook and/or Instagram pages to participate. Details will be posted on our social media pages soon so keep your eyes on us!

Things have gotten pretty crazy over the past month with the Coronavirus worldwide outbreak. With it hitting the U.S. and with cases popping up in VA and WV daily, it's been absolutely nuts with all the closings and cancellations on just about everything. We don't have any word of motorcycle events that are listed in our calendar being cancelled but we'll keep you posted if any do come in. Just keep yourselves safe with common sense, keep washing your hands, use hand sanitizers, open your windows and as you probably heard as a kid growing up, "keep your hands away from your face" ha ha.

With the arrival of extra daylight hours and the fresh clean air of spring, we wish you all great riding in the weeks ahead. We'll see you next month!

Be safe and Stay awesome,

Kelly

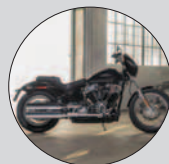
IN THIS ISSUE



Okinawa Joe's isn't a bar in the South Pacific, but a vintage motorcycle shop that John Peterson found while surfing the internet for bike parts. John Garasimowicz, the owner, combined his love of Japanese culture, a statue and motorcycles to come up with the name on this edition of **BIKE SAVERS**.



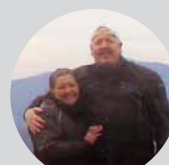
If you've ever taken kids on a long trip, you've probably heard the question "are we there yet?" For riders at the tail end of winter, the question is "Is it Spring yet?" Jennifer tackles that in this month's **MAKING TRAX**.



If you're a **HARLEY-DAVIDSON SOFTAIL** fan, we have good news. H-D is offering several different custom packages for the 2020 models that will let you choose just the right look for your new Softail. All feature the Milwaukee Eight 107 engine.



RUFF RIDERS features 12 year old bulldog Sidecar Savannah. According to her owner, Todd Hoover, Nothing makes people say "Oh how cute!" faster than seeing a dog in a sidecar. We couldn't agree more!



GREAT PLACES TO RIDE are ones you've heard about and just have to go, or you've been and just have to go back. Marc says that Damascus Old Mill Inn "is one such place, where the journey and destination magically combined to create one of our most fondly memorable rides."



In **SHOTZ**, our monthly pictorial, we'll feature your pics of rides, bikes, friends and anything else relating to bikes that you'd like to share with us. Send 'em in!



What do a mother of three working on her college degree, two homeless men, a smile and McDonalds have in common? You can find out in this month's **LIGHTHOUSE**.



Digging In The Dirt is not only a Peter Gabriel song, but something **GOOD FOR YOU** recommends for good health. Why? Antidepressant microbes in soil cause cytokine levels to rise, which results in the production of higher levels of serotonin, which makes you happier. Who knew?

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ON OUR COVER:

Save the date for Bull Run Harley-Davidson's first Blessing Of The Bikes, to be held April 11, 2020. Food, fun and live music!



SUICIDE OR SAFE SIDE... WHICH ARE YOU ON?



HELMET - considered the most important piece of protection a rider can use. An approved helmet protects against head injuries, cold weather and flying objects.

REFLECTIVE VEST - makes you more visible during hours of darkness.

JACKET/LONG SLEEVED SHIRT - jackets or long-sleeved shirts can help reduce or prevent abrasion injuries.

GLOVES - well-padded gloves protect your palms, knuckles, and fingers.

PANTS - long-sleeved pants help resist abrasion and can protect against sunburn, windburn or hypothermia.

BOOTS - boots provide protection against foot and ankle injuries.

Check your tire condition
and pressure regularly.

They're your connection to the road.
Don't assume they're ok.

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ONGOING EVENTS:

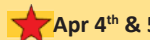
First Saturday of every month: CHILI DOG SOCIAL - Come join us the 1st Saturday of every month 11am to 1pm! Free Chili Dogs with all the fixins! At Tidewater Motorcycles, 4324 Godwin Blvd, Suffolk, VA 23434. (757) 255-4200. www.tidewatermotorcycles.com



Mar 28th

USMVMC Virginia State Chapter's 1st Annual Veterans Suicide Awareness Ride - Yorktown, VA

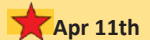
9 AM – 2 PM. Ride. Live Music. Demo Rides. Food Trucks & Vendors. US Military Vets MC VA 1 is proud to announce the 1st Annual Veterans Suicide Awareness Ride. Join us 28 March for a 22 mile ride through the Colonial Parkway followed by a car and motorcycle show hosted by Hampton Roads Harley-Davidson. Registration starts at 0900. First bike out at 1000. \$10 per rider. \$10 per passenger – Cash Only. At Hampton Roads Harley-Davidson, 6450 George Washington Memorial Hwy, Yorktown, Virginia 23692. POC: Shaky, USMVMC VA 1 Vice President (401) 663-1577. All Proceeds benefit Operation First Response.



Apr 4th & 5th

Shenandoah Valley Motorcycle Expo – Woodstock, VA

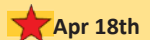
Saturday 9am to 7pm; Sunday 10am to 3pm. Largest Inside Motorcycle Event in the Valley. Motorcycle Show. Motorcycles from Mild to Wild. Swap Meet. Live Bands. Cream Corn Wrestling Sat. at 1pm. Bikini Contest Sat. at 3:30pm; Tattoo Contest Sun at 2:30pm. Shenandoah County Fairgrounds, Woodstock, VA. Gate admission \$10/Day or \$15/Weekend Pass. Bike entry & vendor forms available at jwwmotorsports.com. For more info: (540) 533-7913 or email jwilkins@jwwmotorsports.com. Show committee and promoter are not responsible for accidents or injuries.



Apr 11th

Bull Run Harley-Davidson's Inaugural Blessing of the Bikes – Manassas, VA

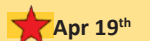
Join us on Saturday, 11am to 4pm. Bike Blessings provided by Patriots for Christ beginning at 11am, Food & refreshments 12noon 'til 2pm and live music provided by DK Wolf band 1pm-4pm. Bull Run Harley-Davidson, 9321 Center St, Manassas, Virginia 20110. (703) 369-7077, bullrunhd@lindsaycars.com



Apr 18th

CVMA 27-7's 1st Annual Spring Poker Run – Fredericksburg, VA

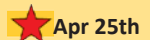
Registration and start point – Old Dominion Harley-Davidson. Registration at 0900. First bike out 1000. Last bike out 1200. End Point Montross Brewery, Montross VA. Riders - \$20. Passengers - \$10. Extra hand - \$5. Raffles, 50/50, Vendors. Benefiting Semper K9 Assistance Dogs, www.semperk9.org. This is a CVMA sanctioned event. For more information www.cvma27-7.org / cvma.27.7.pro@gmail.com



Apr 19th

1st Annual MC, SC, CC Family Day & Blessing in the 804 – Hopewell, VA

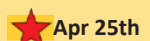
1pm to 5pm. Presented by Mz Sable Entertainment LLC. At 2:15pm Rev. Robin Robinson-Tyler will lead the Blessing. Car Club Ride Out at 5pm departing the park. Ride out will ensure that left over food will be delivered to the homeless. Bring your family, tents and coolers FREE FOOD! Let's fellowship and break bread together. Bring the kids. Kids activities. Adult games: Spades, Dominoes, Sack race, plank ride and one legged race. Crystal Lake Park, 3502 River Rd., Hopewell, VA 23860. Rain date: Sunday April 26th.



Apr 25th

Ride for Lainey – Danville, VA

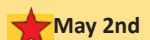
Sponsored by F.O.E. #4420 Eagle Riders. Registration starts at 9am. KSU 10:30am. Leave from the VFW Post 647, 58 W (275 VFW Dr), Danville, VA. Ride returns to F.O.E. (58E Sutherlin, VA) for a hotdog lunch included in rider fee. All modes of transportation welcome! All proceeds benefit The Lainey Project to help prevent bullying and raise awareness for anxiety, depression and suicide prevention. For more info contact Que Motley, 434-250-1617



Apr 25th

Annual Veterans Benefit Ride & Poker Run - Ashland, VA

Presented by CVMA 27-3 & Richmond Harley-Davidson. \$1000 Best Hand. \$500 Worst Hand. Start and finish at Richmond Harley-Davidson, 12200 Harley Club Dr., Ashland, VA. \$25 Rider * \$10 Extra Hand. Kickstands up at 11:30am. Pre-registration tickets on sale www.combatvet27-3.org.



May 2nd Salty Dawgs 14th Annual Poker Run - Virginia Beach, VA

Hosted by Salty Dawgs MC. Come out and enjoy our 14th annual Poker Run for the Fisher House of Portsmouth. AJ Gators Aragona, 401 N Witchduck Rd, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23462. This year's event will be bigger and better than last years.



May 3rd

4th Annual Bike Display & Lunch – Henrico, VA

Display your favorite ride... New, Old, Antique or Classic, American, British, European or Asian. All Are Welcome. This isn't a Bike Show... There aren't any judges or trophies. Just enthusiasts coming to look, eat & have a good time!!! Free lunch will be served at 12:30 PM until it's all gone... Rain or Shine Event. 10 AM – 3 PM. Osborne Landing Park, 9530 Osborne Turnpike Henrico, VA 23231. Presented by the Virginia British Motorcycle Club. Information? Call Chuck @ 804/749-3118



May 17th

Ride For Reason - Winchester, VA

Don't miss this charity motorcycle ride for children with cancer! speciallove.org. START: Grove's Harley-Davidson, 140 Independence Rd., Winchester, VA 22602. STOP: Stephens City Fire Department, 5346 Mulberry St., Stephens City, VA 22655. END: Backseat Bar and Grill, 104 Full House Dr., Winchester, VA 22603. *Loudest Bike Contest! – Entry \$10....Prize \$50 * 50/50 Drawing, Raffle Prizes, Food for purchase. \$10 Person. Registration 9:00am to 10:30am. Kickstands up at 11:00am. Rain Date June 7th For more information contact Steve Hyson (540) 550-1600



Jun 6th

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Chapter 27-1's Annual Ride To Remember Poker Run – Portsmouth, VA

Start at Bayside Harley-Davidson, 2211 Frederick Blvd, Portsmouth, VA. Registration 8am to 10am. \$10 per Rider / \$5 per Passenger. All proceeds benefit Santa Boots – Supporting Veterans and their families during the holidays. 2, 3, or 4 wheels! All are welcome! Route goes through Portsmouth, Suffolk, Wakefield, Jamestown, and Yorktown. ** 1911 Pistol Raffle – See CVMA 27-1 Members to purchase tickets. **



Jun 11th - 13th

4th Annual South Central Bike Fest – Chase City, VA

Vendors, Games, Live Music, Great Food! Charity event to benefit the Barksdale Cancer Foundation and the Mecklenburg County Cancer Association. Vendors & Sponsors Wanted! Contact Lee Brankley (434) 210-1503. Also find us on Facebook!



Jun 13th

2nd Annual Car, Bike, Truck & Rat Rod Show – Fredericksburg, VA

Presented by The Hogs & Heroes Foundation Chapter VA-1. Location: Classic Iron, 4907 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Fredericksburg, VA 22408. Portion of the proceeds to benefit Valor Ranch. "Valor Ranch is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the service of active duty military members recovering from injuries sustained in the line of duty." Registration \$25. Pre-registration \$20. All ticket sales are final. Rain or Shine. Event registration 9am to noon. Raffles * Live DJ * Tropies for 1st, 2nd, 3rd (for each class) * Best in Show \$250 * Vendors * Free to spectators. To pre-register for event, please visit: www.facebook.com/HHFVA1



Jun 13th & 14th

Augusta Bike Rally & Rodeo – Fishersville, VA

Motorcycle games and fun! Food trucks, Beer Garden and much more! RV camping and dry camping available! Fun for the whole family! Live music featuring Blood Brothers Band. Visit <https://www.augustaexpo.com/bike-rodeo> for ticket prices & more details.



Jun 20th

Rumble For Rescues Car/Truck/Motorcycle Show – Smithfield, VA

Presented by Blue Sky Distillery and Daniels Performance Group (Net proceeds to benefit Dogs Deserve Better) 10:00AM to 3:00PM Rain or Shine. Activities include: - Rescue dogs available for adoption - Free Distillery Tours & Tastings – 50/50 Raffle (Proceeds benefit Dogs) – Food & Music – K9 & Obedience Demo. Registrant info: - Onsite Registration from 8:00am to 10:00am - \$20 entry fee for participating Cars, Trucks & Motorcycles – Awards presented at 2:30pm. Location: Daniels Performance Group, 20128 Isle of Wight Industrial Park (IWIP) Road, Smithfield, VA. Contacts: Blue Sky Distillery - Email info@BlueSkyDistillery.com, www.BlueSkyDistillery.com, (757) 746-8342 * Daniels Performance Group, Email: DPG1403@gmail.com, (757) 356-1156



Jun 20th

5th Annual Ride to Fight Suicide – Harrisonburg, VA

9am to 3pm - Hosted at Blue Ridge Powersports, 20 Heritage Dr, Harrisonburg, VA. Registration 8:00am. Bikes out at 9:00am. \$20 Bike entry fee. \$5 Passenger fee. Raffle * Silent Auction * 50/50 * Food * Drink. Live Music 11am to 3pm with the Bend Kunkle Band & Core Band. All Proceeds benefit Mission 22 - American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. For more information call 540-849-6209

To have your event listed in our event calendar here & online, send us an email with your event & your flyer if you have one. Events received by the 15th will be in the next month's magazine.



EVENTS

STOPPING VEHICLES; HANDLEBARS

Every state has their own statutes and laws regarding the operation and maintenance of motorcycles. Knowing these statutes not only allows you to avoid needless charges, it helps you to know when your rights have been violated.

In the spotlight for March:

VIRGINIA



Stopping vehicles for inspection or to secure information (§ 46.2-103)

Comment: This Statute removes the authority of law enforcement to conduct safety checkpoints for motorcycles only.

Except as prohibited by § 19.2-59, on his request or signal, any law-enforcement officer who is in uniform or displays his badge or other sign of authority may:

1. Stop any motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer to inspect its equipment, operation, manufacturer's serial or engine number; or
2. Stop any property-carrying motor vehicle, trailer, or semi-trailer to inspect its contents or load or to obtain other necessary information.

Nothing in this section, however, shall be construed to authorize the establishment on any highway of police check-points where the only vehicles subject to inspection are motorcycles.



WEST VIRGINIA



Handlebar height (§ 17C-15-44(c))

No person shall operate a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle or moped on which the handlebars or grips are more than fifteen inches higher than the uppermost part of the operator's seat when the seat is not depressed in any manner.

At The Motorcycle Law GroupSM they keep up with new and existing statutes affecting motorcyclists in Virginia. If you have a question about any specific motorcycle law or feel that your rights have been violated, call them at 1-800-321-8968 and speak with their attorneys who practice in Virginia and are familiar with current Virginia motorcycle laws. Visit motorcyclelawgroup.com/motorcycle-statutes for links to all Virginia Motorcycle Statutes.

★ Jul 16th, 17th, & 18th

Virginia Legacy Run - Gloucester to Strasburg, VA

Sponsored by the American Legion Riders. Registration has started for the 2020 Virginia Legacy Run. This is part of the National Legacy Scholarship Ride to raise college scholarship money for the sons and daughters of service personnel nationwide either killed or over 50% disabled while on active duty since 9-11. You do not need to be a motorcycle rider to participate or support this effort. We have needs for folks to help with pulling trailers, medical support teams, breakdown trailer support, advance teams, media relations, and lots of other opportunities to assist. You can also purchase coins and t-shirts, or just donate to help us reach our goals for this important fundraising activity. The route will be a two day ride around the state of Virginia visiting numerous American Legion Posts. This year the route will start at Gloucester, VA and end at the Virginia Riders Rally in Strasburg, VA on Saturday. Complete route details and Posts to be visited will be announced in the near future, but now is the time to start planning your participation. There will be lots of fun and camaraderie for all, definitely an event that will be remembered fondly for many years to come. Eligibility requirements: Members must be legally registered motorcycle owners or be the legally registered owner's spouse within the state of registration. All operators must be properly licensed and insured per state laws. All members must obey motor-vehicle laws in the state in which they are operating a motorcycle or riding as a passenger. For more information or to register visit: <https://valegion.org/2020-virginia-legacy-run>

★ Jul 17

11th Anniversary Thunder N KVA In Memory of Tommy Brown – Dugspur, VA

Bands, Bike Games, Bike Show, Miss KVA, Mechanical Bull, Vendors & Much More! 1 Day Pass \$25. Weekend Pass \$35. Primitive camping \$10 a day. Must be 21 to enter gates.

★ Aug 21st – 23rd

Mountain Valley Motorcycle Rally - Franklin, WV

Sponsored by Southern Cruisers Riding Club-Virginia. Thorn Spring Park, 42 Allstar Dr., Franklin, WV 26807. Enjoy a fun filled weekend of fellowship and riding the pristine mountains and valleys in the Potomac Highlands of WVA & VA. Stay in one of the cabins at "Thorn Springs Park" or bring your camper or tent. This event is open to the public. Everyone welcomed! Pre-registration is encouraged. Pre-register - \$40 per person. At the gate - \$50 per person (includes single bed in cabin). Non camper day pass \$10 per day. Food & beverages on site. 50/50 drawing & gun raffle. For more info & flyer visit: <https://www.facebook.com/events/225260601839848/>

★ Sept 12th

7th Annual Freedom Ride - Romney, WV

Registration 8:30am at Romney Cycle in Romney, WV. Breakfast - Coffee & Donuts. Kickstand up at 10:00am. \$20 singles. \$30 doubles. Free Pin with registration. Drawings at each top. You can pre-register at our website: <http://hampshirecounty.wix.com/veteransfoundation>. All proceeds to benefit Hampshire County Veterans Foundation.

★ Sept 13th

Red Knights 9/11 Ride – Prince George, VA

Join the Red Knights Chapter 8 for 80+ scenic miles while remembering those we lost on 9/1. Registration starts at 7:30am at Prince George FD Company 1, 6500 Courthouse Road, Prince George, VA 23875. Blessing of the Bikes and Safety Brief prior to. Kickstands up at 9:11 am. Ends at Namozine VFD. Registration before the event is encouraged at www.RedKnightsVA8.com. Prior to 9/6/20, Driver is \$20. Passenger is \$10. After or on-site Driver \$25 & Passenger \$15. Part of the proceeds will be going to help those in our community. See our website for more information & to register.

★ Oct 17th

Ride for the Warriors XIII Selfie Ride - York, JCC & New Kent Counties in VA

Presented by MIAP Missing In America Project and BIAMC Brothers In Arms MC. Save The Date! More Info To Come! A fun self-paced 90+ mile ride through York, JCC & New Kent Counties country roads. Great Ride Route. Take a Selfie at every stop to earn extra prize tickets. Rain or Shine. Rider \$15, Passenger \$5. Registration: 0810 to 0920. First Bike Out: 0900. Last Bike Out: 0945. Last Bike In: 1420. Drawings: 1500. Lots of Door Prizes. 50/50 Raffle Prizes.. 100% Proceeds go to Missing In America Project. For more info contact: BIAMC.yorktown@gmail.com.

BIKE SAVERS

with John Peterson



OKINAWA JOE'S

I was tripping around the internet a few weeks ago looking for vintage motorcycle parts and came across this place:



Okinawa Joes Vintage Motorcycles in Harrisonburg, Virginia

Intrigued, and really excited to find someone actually devoting time and energy to the preservation of these old machines, I set up a time to speak with owner and fellow Bike Saver, John Garasimowicz, about his shop and how it came to be.



Okinawa Joe's John Garasimowicz

Q: Why 'Okinawa Joes'?

John: "I'm a spiritual person; I meditate, I love the things all spiritual; Okinawa Joe is based on a statue my girlfriend's father brought back from Okinawa, and I kiddingly referred to him as Okinawa Joe; when the idea came up for the business I said it combined the aspects of the things I love - the Buddhist monk, motorcycles, Japan - it all fit together, and Okinawa Joe's was born."

John says he does what he does because he loves it. He's been doing this since the 70's and it just went on from there. "It became more than a hobby, it became an obsession, finding old bikes and restoring them. After twenty-nine years of teaching, I decided to do what I really wanted to do and that was to start a shop and preserve these bikes."

In addition to housing a great selection of vintage rides, Okinawa Joe's also has something I had never seen in the flesh: Two - count 'em TWO - 1981 Honda CBX 1000 SuperSports, one of which was John's original ride purchased in the 1980's, and another one found in Richmond, VA., which he restored and was up for sale at the time of this interview.



Okinawa Joe's 1981 Honda CBX 1000 SuperSport

John says he doesn't repair vintage bikes per se, he restores the vintage rides to resell, but will restore your bike if you wish to have that service done. John also takes bikes on consignment, listing them on sites such as CycleTrader and featuring your ride in his showroom after reaching an agreed-upon price, minus ten percent.

John says he does what he does because he loves it. He's been doing this since the 70's and it just went on from there.

"It became more than a hobby, it became an obsession - finding old bikes and restoring them. After twenty-nine years of teaching, I decided to do what I really wanted to do and that was to start a shop and preserve these bikes."



Just a few of the vintage bikes to be found at Okinawa Joe's

John seems to have his work cut out for him. Besides the beautiful bikes on the floor, John also has several more in the works and on the table, including a 1973 Yamaha TX500, 1980 Suzuki GS550E, 1982 Honda Magna, a Kawasaki H1, a ready-to-roll Honda CB750-F SuperSport and others, all readying for the trip from the past to the present.

Spring is almost upon us, and if you're looking for a classic ride to get your knees in the breeze, come find your piece of history at Okinawa Joes, 690 North Main Street in Harrisonburg, Virginia. 540-705-4199.

FIFTH ANNUAL RIDE TO FIGHT SUICIDE

HOSTED AT BLUE RIDGE POWERSPORTS
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

REGISTRATION: 8:00AM
BIKES OUT: 9:00AM

&

\$20 BIKE ENTRY FEE
\$5 PASSENGER FEE

RAFFLE / SILENT AUCTION / 50/50 / FOOD / DRINK

BEND KUNKLE
BAND

LIVE MUSIC - 11AM-3PM

CORE
BAND

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT

AMERICAN FOUNDATION
for Suicide Prevention

MISSION
22

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CALL 540-849-6209

JUNE 20, 2020 | 9AM-3PM

BULL RUN HARLEY-DAVIDSON'S Inaugural

BLESSING of the Bikes

APRIL 11, 2020 11AM-4PM

BIKE BLESSINGS PROVIDED BY PATRIOTS FOR CHRIST BEGINNING AT 11AM, FOOD AND REFRESHMENTS 12NOON 'TIL 2PM AND LIVE MUSIC PROVIDED BY DK WOLF BAND 1PM-4PM

Bull Run Harley-Davidson * 9321 Center St, Manassas * Virginia * 20110
(703) 369-7077 * bullrunhd@lindsaycars.com



GREAT PLACES TO RIDE

DAMASCUS OLD MILL INN

with Marc Ritchie and Rose Grant

As riders, we are always looking for that special place: a place we've never been, that only takes one picture, and we know, "We must go!" This is one such place, where the journey and destination magically combined to create one of our most fondly memorable rides. Please enjoy!

Rose and I had reservations at The Damascus Old Mill Inn, over 250 miles away in southwest Virginia. I got the idea from a post my editor Kelly shared, showing the view of the establishment from across a creek in Damascus, VA. It was touted as one of twenty two Virginia small towns you're going to love. Looking back, it was a very prophetic post.

We grabbed the highway gear on one of our favorite roads, Rt. 84, after fueling up with breakfast at High's in Monterey. Paradise Lost from Symphony X shuffled over the audio system as we enjoyed a spirited ride watching the mountains appearing to play their geographic shell game, while weaving between them. Heading over the mountain into West Virginia, the turns were still a little chunky. We got to test our brakes coming over a hill with a pickup truck stopped in the road. Only after we downshifted into third gear, did he decide it was probably best to pull off to the side so he could talk to his buddies: speed limit 55 and all... I'll add that to my list of avoidable hazards in the country, right next to loose livestock.

We continued south on 92, another favorite road of mine. For the next dozen or so miles, it was a no cruise control zone. The speedo rarely took a break as it constantly changed with throttle, brakes, clutch and shifter. It's a very technical road, with countless turns in an eclectic set of radii, whatever that means. It's just a fun road, but nothing compared to what lay ahead.



The day was warming up and we were starting to baste just a tad, so we stopped for lunch at the Korner Kafe in Union. I couldn't resist ordering the meatloaf with two sides of mashed potatoes and gravy. The meal was very satisfying. I had to walk to a bank when my credit card was handed back to me, because they didn't take plastic. Fat dumb and happy had taken on a whole new meaning, especially after noticing the sign on the door.

We wore our new Joe Rocket Alter Ego jackets for this trip. It was the first time this year, we didn't need "The Juice." Rose and I stowed our outer shells and continued on in full mesh-mode towards Tazewell. I must admit. I had no idea that we were being GPS'd towards one of the most storied motorcycle roads in the region. Our darling app lady, Miss Google, prompted us to turn left on Buchanan Highway, otherwise known as Rt. 16, otherwise known as "Back of the Dragon."

The countryside was unique. Right out of the shoot, the approaching ridgeline had a distinct feature whose lines seemed to mimic the talons of a large bird of prey, or perhaps something like a dragon. Any pictures would not give it justice. We seemed lured to stop at some of the overlooks, but the ride was too intriguing to bite. Gliding down the other side, Shenny was pocketing the apexes like she had been on this road before. No one in front to slow us down, and no



one behind trying to push, it was a slice of heaven, and freedom rediscovered. We felt as if we were standing still and the world was moving beneath us. We turned when Miss Google directed us for a more direct route. But we rode the whole gambit on the return leg the next day. It was one of the most intense roads I've ever been on, better than 129 imho.

We arrived at our destination slightly after 4 PM. Our friendly innkeepers gave me a tour of the inn and showed me our room after check-inn. We brought up our gear, opened the French doors, and stepped out onto the balcony overlooking the dam and waterfall. It was everything I had hoped it would be. We knew their restaurant would be closed, so we had a really good dinner in town where we scored some "provisions," and returned to our enchanted oasis.

We sat on our rocking chairs watching the birds and ducks wander in their weightless world all the while aware of the constant roar of the water cascading over the dam on Laurel Creek. An occasional fish would appear leaping out of the water downstream, trying to soar over the obstacle, but to no avail. This would be our universe for the next few hours as we watched the sunset. An ample supply of Blue Moon wasn't hurting matters either. Decades of sensory overload were seemingly erased, as we found ourselves lost and immersed in our timeless escape. It was pure perfection.

We left the door cracked, so we could hear the water while we slept. It really sucked having to leave in the morning. It was one of those 24 hour spans that, if we could, we would rewind and press play, over and over again. Rose and I have gotten to ride to so many places, and overnights have been some of the most enjoyable experiences. This one ranks right up there in the "fond memory and can't wait to do it again" category, especially when their restaurant and bar are open. I recently watched a concert DVD and noticed a sign from a fan displayed in the audience. It read, "Thank you universe! I'm alive and Rush is not a dream!" I feel the same way about MOTORCYCLES!

Cheers and thanks for reading!!
Marc Ritchie
Photos: Rose Grant





Mc Donald's Breakfast

I am a mother of three (ages 14, 12, 3) and have recently completed my college degree. The last class I had to take was Sociology. The teacher was absolutely inspiring with the qualities that I wish every human being had been graced with.

Her last project of the term was called "Smile." The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions. I am a very friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway, so, I thought this would be a piece of cake.

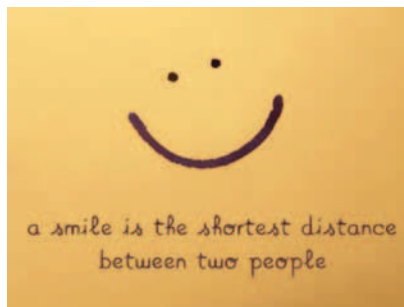
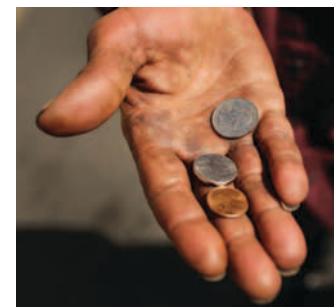
Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son, and I went out to McDonald's one crisp March morning. It was just our way of sharing special playtime with our son. We were standing in line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did.

I did not move an inch. An overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved. As I turned around, I smelled a horrible "dirty body" smell, and there standing behind me were two poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short gentleman close to me, he was "smiling". His beautiful sky blue eyes were full of God's Light as he searched for acceptance. He said, "Good day" as he counted the few coins he had been clutching.

The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally challenged and the blue-eyed gentleman was his salvation. I held my tears as I stood there with them. The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted.

He said, "Coffee is all Miss" because that was all they could afford. If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm.

Then I really felt it - the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray.



I then walked around the corner to the table that the men had chosen as a resting spot. I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "Thank you." I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, "I did not do this for you. God is here working through me to give you hope."

I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, "That is why God gave you to me, Honey, to give me hope." We held hands for a moment and at that time, we knew that only because of the Grace that we had been given were we able to



give. That day showed me the pure Light of God's sweet love.

I returned to college, on the last evening of class, with this story in hand. I turned in "my project" and the instructor read it. Then she looked up at me and said, "Can I share this?" I slowly nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we as human beings and being part of God share this need to heal people and to be healed. In my own way, I had touched the people at McDonald's, my husband, son, instructor, and every soul that shared the classroom on the last night I spent as a college student. I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I would ever learn: UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

Much love and compassion is sent to each and every person who may read this and learn how to LOVE PEOPLE AND USE THINGS - NOT LOVE THINGS AND USE PEOPLE.

To handle yourself, use your head.

To handle others, use your heart.

God gives every bird its food, but He does not throw it into its nest.

Love one another just as I have loved you. - John 13:34

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First Look

2020 HARLEY-DAVIDSON SOFTAIL STANDARD

February 24, 2020

Aiming at both budget-minded big-inch cruiser fans, as well as serious customizers, the new 2020 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard is all about presenting buyers with a basic motorcycle at an attractive price—\$13,599 MSRP. Although it's easy to call the Softail Standard a stripped-down model, it's fully rideable and looking good right off the showroom floor. Let's dive into this new, least-expensive 2020 Softail.

You get Milwaukee-Eight 107 powerplant with distinct visual touches. This motor is no slouch, putting out 110 ft-lbs of torque at 3000 rpm. The 107 is a mix of black paint along with polished pieces, with the rocker, primary, and timer covers all getting the semi-shiny treatment. The 3.5-gallon tank isn't exactly a peanut, but it shows off the motor nicely. **Chrome and black are the highlights of the day on the 2020 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard.** The Vivid Black frame, fuel tank, air-cleaner cover, and short fenders, are contrasted by chrome rims, exhausts, mirrors, headlight bezel, turn signals, and mini-ape handlebars and riser bar clamp (which incorporates a tiny digital dash). Throw in polishing for the triple clamps and clear-coated fork legs, and you have a striking bobber-style motorcycle. **The solo seat height is approachable, and the suspension is not minimalist.** You get the Showa Dual Bending Valve fork with 5.1 inches of travel, as well as the latest Softail back end with 3.4 inches of wheel travel controlled by the emulsion shock. That matches up well with a 26.8-inch seat height. **The 19-/16-inch wheel combo goes perfectly with the mini-apes and mid-controls.** Harley-Davidson Series Dunlop D401s are mounted on the chrome steel rims with wire-spoke wheels. The disc is standard 300mm/292mm mix, with ABS as an option.

Harley-Davidson Genuine Motor Parts and Accessories is offering four custom packages to get you started on personalizing your 2020 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard:

Day Tripper Custom Package: Perfect for those who want to go two-up, you get a pillion, 21-inch sissy bar (detachable), and passenger pegs. To make room for the passenger's legs, this package moves the rider's foot controls forward. There's also a Single-Sided Swingarm Bag so you can keep your pockets empty. Day Tripper Custom Package Price: \$1050 MSRP. **Performance Custom Package:** A 50-state-legal brew, you get a Screamin' Eagle Stage II Torque kit (improved throttle response), Screamin' Eagle Breather Performance Air Cleaner, Screamin' Eagle Cannon mufflers (with bassier tone), plus a Screamin' Eagle Pro Street Tuner to make it all run perfectly together. If the dealer installs the kit, your factory warranty remains fully intact. Performance Custom Package Price: \$1300 MSRP. **Coastal Custom Package:** Featuring West Coast styling and performance touches, this adds a quarter fairing, Moto Bar black-anodized handlebar with a 5.5-inch riser, accommodations for a passenger, and wide footpegs from H-D's 80Grit Collection. Coastal Custom Package Price: \$1600 MSRP.

Touring Custom Package: You can take it with you, as this package has Detachables saddlebags and 14-inch windshield. You don't have to leave your significant other behind, as this grouping comes with a Sundowner seat for two, passenger pegs, and a 14.5-inch sissy bar. The Touring Custom Package is convertible, as the bags, windshield, and sissy bar are all easily detachable. Touring Custom Package Price: \$1700 MSRP.

Although the 2020 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard is just one low-priced model, it's actually five models between \$13,599 and \$15,299.

Photography by Clutch Studios



ENGINE

- Type: Milwaukee-Eight 107 V-twin
- Displacement: 107ci
- Bore x stroke: 3.937" x 4.374"
- Maximum torque: 110 ft-lbs @ 3000 rpm
- Compression ratio: 10.0:1
- Valve train: Single cam; 4 vpc
- Exhaust: 2-into-2; catalyst in muffler
- Cooling: Air and oil
- Transmission: 6-speed
- Primary drive: Chain
- Final drive: Belt

CHASSIS

- Front suspension; travel: Non-adjustable Showa Dual Bending Valve fork; 5.1 inches
- Rear suspension; travel: Spring-preload adjustable shock; 3.4 inches
- Wheels: Wire-spoke w/ steel rim
- Tires: Dunlop D401 Harley-Davidson Series
- Front tire: 100/90 x 19
- Rear tire: 150/80 x 16
- Front brakes: 300mm disc w/ fixed 4-piston caliper
- Rear brake: 292mm disc w/ floating 2-piston caliper
- ABS: Optional (\$795)



DIMENSIONS and CAPACITIES

- Wheelbase: 64.2 inches
- Rake: 30 degrees
- Trail: 6.2 inches
- Seat height: 26.8 inches
- Fuel capacity: 3.5 gallons
- Estimated fuel consumption: 47 mpg
- Curb weight: 655 pounds
- Color: Vivid Black



2020 Harley-Davidson Softail Standard Price: \$13,599 MSRP

Source: <https://ultimatemotorcycling.com/2020/02/24/2020-harley-davidson-softail-standard-first-look-6-fast-facts/>





Email your "SHOTZ" to virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com



HIT THE DIRT!

motocross bug bites early. And still for others, it develops later on as part of a new, emerging interest. Children of all ages and from all walks of life find themselves drawn toward motocross. Like most sports, motocross can be enjoyed as a spectator or a competitor. Kids of all levels and involvement in motocross can benefit from it. Whether they're a motocross enthusiast, a dirt bike rider or someone who already races – or all three, there's no doubt that this sport is a great positive influencer.

As an Enthusiast

It provides exhilarating, non-violent entertainment. Many children – especially boys – are naturally drawn toward entertainment that provides thrills and excitement. For most movies and video games, this means a series of violent (and sometimes downright disturbing) images. While motocross is inherently dangerous, it is extremely non-violent, even compared to other sports. Direct physical contact on the track between competitors is avoided on every occasion.

It allows them to see their heroes up close. The roots of motocross are out in the open, on outdoor tracks spread over a good distance. Motocross proper is still raced in this same format. Because tracks are relatively long, spectators are often able to watch the race right from the sidelines. (Supercross and arenacross are the exceptions since they occur in stadiums.)

It reinforces the importance of good health. Motocross is a physically demanding sport. As such, it requires racers to maintain optimum health at all times. Unlike most sports which require obvious physical effort, motocross appears deceptively easy to the uninitiated. When children discover how physically demanding it can be and the lengths racers go to in order to stay in the best shape possible, they better realize how important good health really is – even for those activities which may not appear to require it.

It emphasizes the significance of safety equipment and precautions. Because motocross is dangerous, all professional racers utilize safety equipment and precautions. Even at the most amateur of races, no competitor is on the track without at least a helmet, goggles and boots. This is an important lesson that has implications in all aspects of everyday life. The risk isn't worth it. Plus professional motocross makes safety look cool.

It reinforces the importance of positive relationships. As kids start following the careers of individual riders instead, they learn that all the big names have large sponsorships. While racers initially get sponsorships because of skill, keeping them involves a great deal of maintaining positive relationships. Pro racers can end their career by burning one bridge too many. **It emphasizes the value of being grateful.** Most professional riders recognize that they are where they are in part due to the help of others. Many are paid to publicly acknowledge sponsors, but most offer genuine words of gratitude to their backers (financial or otherwise) during interviews. **It helps them make friends.** Motocross is popular enough that there are fans everywhere. However, it is still small enough that the general population simply isn't very interested. Motocross enthusiasts tend to forge friendships faster than followers of other sports because there aren't as many children who share those same interests.

It gets them interested in reading. Because motocross hasn't reached a high level of penetration in television and film, youngsters need to read to feed their passion. There is plenty of great material available online or in print. While some motocross magazines are written purely with an adult audience in mind, others are appropriate for all ages.

As a Rider

It reinforces the importance of taking safety seriously. If a rider doesn't take safety seriously, it can end their riding really quick. This focus on safety will extend to other facets of their life as well.

It encourages a healthy lifestyle. Riding a dirt bike takes place outside and

requires a good deal of physical exertion. This helps kids achieve a healthy lifestyle. It's a much better choice than many of their indoor counterparts make.

It reinforces the importance of good posture. Posture really does make a difference in riding ability, and once kids realize that, they want to maintain the best posture possible. This choice, while made simply to improve performance on the bike, can help become a healthy habit off of it too.

It teaches the value of practice. As with all performance-related objectives, skill on a dirt bike only comes with practice. A child's passion for motocross can keep them practicing longer than they would on other tasks, but the satisfaction of achievement will reinforce the positive value of practice in other aspects of their life as well.

It promotes a strong work ethic. Riding a dirt bike can only occur in specific locations (off-road locations which usually need to be traveled to) and for a limited amount of time (based on the amount of gas available on any particular excursion). Because of this, a youngster is given adequate reason to work hard to improve with the time they have. This is unlike activities which they may participate in at any time or for as long as they want.

It helps them learn how to operate multiple controls simultaneously. Dirt bikes have throttles, front brakes, rear brakes, clutches and handlebars. In order to ride one, kids have to manage all of the controls while they steer at the same time – and keep the bike upright through proper balance. For beginners, it isn't easy, but operating multiple controls simultaneously is a skill that they can use in other facets of their lives as well.

It teaches important driving skills. Few people ride motorcycles, but nearly everyone learns how to drive when they're at licensable age. By learning how to ride a dirt bike while young, kids have a driving advantage over their peers later on. While it's true that driving a dirt bike and driving an automobile are quite different, many skills are the same or at least transferrable – speed judgment for nearby vehicles, peripheral awareness, responsiveness to unexpected obstacles, etc.

It helps them understand how a clutch works. Let's face it – many adults don't know how to use a clutch. While a manual transmission in a car and a dirt bike have differences, the concept is the same. Knowing how to use a clutch on a bike will transfer when it comes time to learning in a car.

It teaches them to work for what they want. Motocross is a sport that has a relatively high cost of entry. Instead of purchasing a \$20 basketball, people who want to participate in motocross must be able to afford a dirt bike that costs at least several hundred dollars used. This doesn't even include any performance enhancing accessories or any riding gear. This means that if they really want to pursue riding, they need to work for what they want (even if the costs are subsidized to a degree by their parents).

It helps them learn how to exercise patience. Along the lines of the last point, most kids have to patiently wait until they or their parents can afford to upgrade parts or gear (or get a bike at all).

It teaches the significance of regular maintenance. Regular maintenance is key to keeping a dirt bike running properly. This helps kids learn how crucial it is to take care of what they have. This is an important habit that will carry over into their adult life when they own a car or a home.

It helps them learn basic maintenance at an early age. Not only can kids learn the value of maintenance, they can also learn how to perform it as well. Of course, most things are best left for the adults, but kids can safely check tire pressure, tighten spokes, clean an air filter (depending on the cleaning fluid used) and more. Performing mechanical work also helps children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

It teaches mechanical skills from fixing the bike. A dirt bike is first and foremost a machine. Kids who learn basic mechanical repairs alongside their parents build a foundation of mechanical skills (and basic mechanical logic) that will translate into other areas of their life.

As a Racer

It strengthens parent-child relationships because it requires dedication from both. At the racing level, kids need additional support from their parents. This involves simple aspects like transportation to races, but it also involves emotional support as well. It's not just up to the dedication of the racer – the parents need to be dedicated as well.

It helps them learn how to respond appropriately to authority figures. A race – like any organization – requires someone to be in charge. That person is not a parent, nor is it someone that the child is (or will become) familiar with like a teacher. Instead, it is someone who was previously a stranger, will have



little personal connection with the child for the day, and will exit the child's life as quickly as they entered it. This is not something many children are accustomed to, but they need to act appropriately if they want to race.

It teaches personal responsibility. Unlike many sports, motocross all comes down to the individual. Because there is no team, there is no one else they can blame for poor results if they don't fulfill their responsibility.

It helps them understand the significance of team effort. Despite the race itself being a solo endeavor, it takes a team effort to pull it all off. From family and friends to riding coaches, there are many who participate and support the racer. Quite simply, they just can't do it on their own.

It teaches how essential goal setting and preparation are for achievement. The performance and results of each race provide important experience and motivation to set goals for the next time. Kids who race in motocross learn that if they want to see good results, they need to set goals and adequately prepare. For example, many racers time their laps on practice days and consistently set goals to shave seconds of their lap times.

It reinforces the value of playing fair and obeying rules. As with any game or sport, motocross has rules. In fact, each track may have a unique set of rules. Children must learn that for everyone to participate and have fun, all must obey the rules.

It reinforces the value of community. Motocross communities are usually a fairly tightknit bunch, and families that attend multiple races often start getting to know one another. Kids who participate in racing meet other children with similar goals and aspirations as their own. They learn the value of encouraging and supporting each other even though they might be competitors on the track.

It helps them learn how to accept losing with dignity. Unlike other sports or situations where there is a single winning side and a single losing side, everyone except for first place faces a degree of loss. Since children can watch others who are experiencing the same bitter feeling of defeat as they are, they can learn how to accept it in an appropriate manner and with dignity. Since many of the competitors get to know each other, it's easier for children to congratulate those who beat them in a race. With the right support and encouragement from their parents, they can discover that racing (and competition in general) is about having fun, not winning.

It helps them learn how to accept winning with grace. No one wins their first race, but hopefully all children eventually get to feel the thrill of placing well. Since they have probably lost multiple times previously – and since they likely know a few of the racers that they beat – they can understand the importance of accepting a win with both excitement and grace.

It devalues the concept of "having it all." Except for the most elite riders on the professional level, no motocross racer has every part, accessory or tune-up that they would like to enhance their bike's performance. In motocross, kids have no choice but to accept that they can't have it all, and there is always someone else at the track who has a better bike. Motocross teaches them that they should give it their best anyways and that they still have a shot due to their personal dedication.

It reinforces the importance of dedication and the human spirit. In line with the previous point, kids who race motocross discover that their personal dedication and willingness to give it their all is ultimately more important than their bike or anything else. Motocross is a sport where the underdog really can win if they have enough heart.

It emphasizes the importance of personal focus. With most sports, the emphasis is all placed on beating the other team. In motocross, competitors in the same class are all out at the same time, but everyone is really having the same battle with a single opponent: the track. When it all comes down to it, kids who race learn that in order to be at their most competitive level, they must block out the chaos around them and just do their personal best on the part of the track they're on.

Motocross is an excellent passion for kids to nurture and excel at. It provides a proving ground to build essential life skills and experience that kids will be able to draw on throughout their school years and long after they're adults. The same skills and values that motocross teaches will come in handy everywhere from social settings to the workplace.

Source: <https://www.rockymountainatvmc.com>



foto: Grzegorz Blaut



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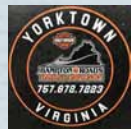
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MAKING TRAX

With Jennifer Traxler

HAS SPRING SPRUNG?

It seems like just yesterday I was letting all of our readers know how to winter their bikes properly. But, holy moly, that was two months ago! This winter has been a warm one! Heck, it was 67 degrees in early February in Waynesboro! So I went for a ride up Skyline Drive. Gosh it felt great to get out and get some sunshine and fresh air. I'm sure many of you have been taking advantage of these small bursts of unseasonably warm weather as well. But let's not let another riding season start without taking the proper precautions. It is our duty to be a safe and responsible motorcyclist. We owe it to ourselves and the people we love. Let's go over some things to watch out for and keep in mind when getting ready for a new riding season.

Spring is an excellent time of year to examine your helmet(s). Read all the labels on the inside of your helmet. If you're anything like me, you might need a magnifying glass. The labels should contain the month, as well as the year and location of the manufacturer. The industry standard recommendation for the length of usability for a helmet is FIVE YEARS from the date of manufacturing. I'm going to go on record and recommend when it comes to your helmet that you replace it every five years, no matter what. You only have one head! Don't take a risk on old or damaged equipment. The durability of your helmet could very well save your life. And don't stick old helmets in the garage for passengers to use either! You assume their risk when they ride, so don't put them in potentially diminished safety gear. It should go without saying, but if you've been down on your helmet, it should be replaced immediately. If you're going to splurge on any one thing in your gear closet, it should be your helmet. But do me a favor and don't leave it just anywhere. Would you leave something as expensive as a high tech cell phone just laying around?

We owe it to ourselves and everyone who loves us to be sure that our skill level remains adequate and we are qualified to ride.

The amount of risks we take should not exceed our skill level. We all learned that if we took the MSF course. Of the many things I learned in that class, that lesson stuck with me the most. We should be sure that we are still capable of handling the weight and power of our motorcycles. As a salesperson I help more than a couple people every month who are downsizing to a more manageable bike. It's a very smart and humble thing to do. It might very well keep you alive in a panicky situation. If you are aging, have a chronic illness, or both, now might be a perfect time to do the responsible thing and downsize or think about getting a convertible car. Spring is the best time of year to sell your bike, while the demand is high. Don't wait until November to sell, because you won't get as much interest or money. Nobody who cares about you will think any less of you if you make the decision to downsize or stop riding if it's the safest choice FOR YOU. I already know someday I'll trade my Kawasaki for a Miata!

If you didn't already service your bike or take it for its annual state inspection for the year, spring is the perfect time of year to get it done. It insures your bike will be capable of performing optimally and operating legally for the riding season. Now is also a great time of year to check on your registration and insurance. If you need to make any changes to your insurance or order a personalized license plate, there is no time like the present! Make sure you have all the current information on your bike or in your wallet. Following the maintenance schedule in the owner's manual, make sure all your recommended services are up-to-date. If your bike is hard to start or if your battery is over five years old, now is the perfect time to get a new one. Replacing it now in the comfort of your garage is far better than being stranded somewhere with a dead battery. I'll recommend again that everyone log in to the Virginia DMV website (dmvnow.com) to update their emergency contact information. If the worst should happen, your emergency contact will be notified right away.

The process to prepare your bike for the riding season is very much like preparing to store it for winter, but in reverse! Before you take your bike anywhere, inspect every square inch of it for

leaks, rubbing, corrosion, burned out bulbs or cracked lenses. Places to check for leaks on your bike include radiator, oil filter, and fork seals. If you have any grease fittings now is a great time to hit them with some fresh grease, especially if you have been riding over the winter. Although the factory service manual is the ultimate authority on what your bike needs, it's not a bad idea to change your oil annually, whether you've reached the prescribed mileage or not. Other fluids, like coolant and brake fluid, probably could use a change every two years at minimum. Be sure to burn through whatever gas is in your tank before attempting to replace a fuel filter. Lubing your throttle and clutch cable is something you should consider, especially if you have an older bike or if you haven't done it in a long while (or ever). Remember that just because you have tread on your tires doesn't mean they are roadworthy. The integrity of the rubber is just as important as the amount of tread left. Having a blowout because your tires were dry rotted could land you in a very dangerous situation so please, if your tires are more than a couple years old check them very carefully before you start your riding season.

Check your chain and sprocket for excessive wear or play in the chain, and any corrosion or broken teeth. If anything is amiss you should replace both. Chain and sprocket should always be replaced together. You want your chain to have no more than an inch of sag when you lift it with the toe of your boot, but also you don't want it to be taut. There is a "sweet spot" and it's important for your safety to stay within it. If everything looks good upon inspection, just go ahead and give it a thorough clean and lube. If you have a belt drive, check your manual or local service department to find out the recommendations regarding replacement schedule. If your belt is loose, go ahead and tighten it up. And if you are shaft driven, check your shaft gear oil and if necessary,

go ahead and add some. As with anything I recommend, if you aren't comfortable doing it yourself, bring it to your local service department or motorcycle mechanic. Your brakes are a safety issue, and should be inspected regularly, but especially at the beginning of the riding season. And there's more to it than the pads and shoes! As much as we'd like them to, rotors and drums don't last forever. As mentioned earlier, grease what needs to be greased, including the slide pins in your brake system. Your wheel bearings and steering head bearings should be inspected for their integrity and replaced if needed. Pull out your air filter and inspect it every few months, more often if you ride in the dirt. This is literally the lungs of your motor, so making sure that it's clean will insure a optimally running motorcycle. Last but certainly not least, check all the fasteners on your bike. Inspect every nut, bolt, and clamp. Tighten anything down that may have vibrated loose. Check your shift linkage, axle nuts, handlebar clamps, and the list goes on.

In the beginning of the riding season there are many hazards on the road itself to be extra vigilant about. People in cars have gotten used to, over the winter, not seeing as many (or any) motorcycles on the road. As cautious as we all should be around cars, be extra careful in the spring and drive very defensively. Give other vehicles plenty of space and do your best to make yourself visible. This is the reason I wear a high-viz jacket and helmet! If someone can't see me on the road, they shouldn't be on the road at all.

Another thing to keep in mind is that every spring there will be a surge of new riders (yay!) testing their limits in their first season on their first bike. Let's welcome them, offer pointers if they are being unsafe and encourage them when they are riding well! Spring is usually road construction season. Road construction brings with it a host of potentially dangerous situations, like loose gravel, uneven

or no pavement, detours down roads with unknown conditions, and cars whose driver is lost, confused, or frustrated and aggressive. Be sure to use your map app in your smartphone or open up a map website for directions and road construction information before you even leave. This could save you a lot of grief. Even on warm days in spring there can be ice on the road. It is more common at night, in shady or low-lying places and on or near bridges. In the early Spring salt and sand are also more common on the road and can accumulate in areas where traction is crucial. New potholes may have formed in the weeks since you rode your motorcycle last, so keep an eye out and rely on your MSF training if you encounter any unsafe road conditions. I know we all take issue with people blowing their grass clippings out into the road. That brazen disregard for the safety of not only motorcyclists, but bicyclists as well, starts up in the spring. I have actually stopped and confronted many people who are breaking the law in his way. Some are apologetic and others are downright rude. I even had a man threaten me once! I had to leave the situation (carefully, because I couldn't even see the pavement, the grass clippings were so thick) and call the police. With all that said, welcome to the 2020 riding season! Be safe and have fun!



Good For You

We all know that a good motorcycle ride releases those “feel good” hormones called endorphins that improve our mood, increase pleasure and minimize pain. But when you’re not riding and you need a healthy way to get rid of a bad mood or the blue, just get down and dirty. Yes, we mean playing with dirt! Soil microbes have been found to have similar effects on the brain and are without side effects and chemical dependency potential. Learn how to harness the natural antidepressant in soil and make yourself happier and healthier. Read on to see how dirt makes you happy. Natural remedies have been around for untold centuries. These natural remedies included cures for almost any physical ailment as well as mental and emotional afflictions. Ancient healers may not have known why something worked but simply that it did. Modern scientists have unraveled the why of many medicinal plants and practices but only recently are they finding remedies that were previously unknown and yet, still a part of the natural life cycle. Soil microbes and human health now have a positive link which has been studied and found to be verifiable.

Soil Microbes and Human Health

Did you know that there’s a natural antidepressant in soil? It’s true. Mycobacterium vaccae is the substance under study and has indeed been found to mirror the effect on neurons that drugs like Prozac provide. The bacterium is found in soil and may stimulate serotonin production, which makes you relaxed and happier. Studies were conducted on cancer patients and they reported a better quality of life and less stress. Lack of serotonin has been linked to depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder and bipolar problems. The bacterium appears to be a natural antidepressant in soil and has no adverse health effects. These antidepressant microbes in soil may be as easy to use as just playing in the dirt. Most avid gardeners will tell you that their landscape is their “happy place” and the actual physical act of gardening is a stress reducer and mood lifter. The fact that there is some science behind it adds additional credibility to these garden addicts’ claims. The presence of a soil bacteria antidepressant is not a surprise to many of us who have experienced the phenomenon ourselves. Backing it up with science is fascinating, but not shocking, to the happy gardener. Mycobacterium antidepressant microbes in soil are also being investigated for improving cognitive function, Crohn’s disease and even rheumatoid arthritis.

How Dirt Makes You Happy

Antidepressant microbes in soil cause cytokine levels to rise, which results in the production of higher levels of serotonin. The bacterium was tested both by injection and ingestion on rats and the results were increased cognitive ability, lower stress and better concentration to tasks than a control group. Gardeners inhale the bacteria, have topical contact with it and get it into their bloodstreams when there is a cut or other pathway for infection. The natural effects of the soil bacteria antidepressant can be felt for up to 3 weeks if the experiments with rats are any indication. So get out and play in the dirt and improve your mood and your life.

Getting “Dirt”y Makes You Happy

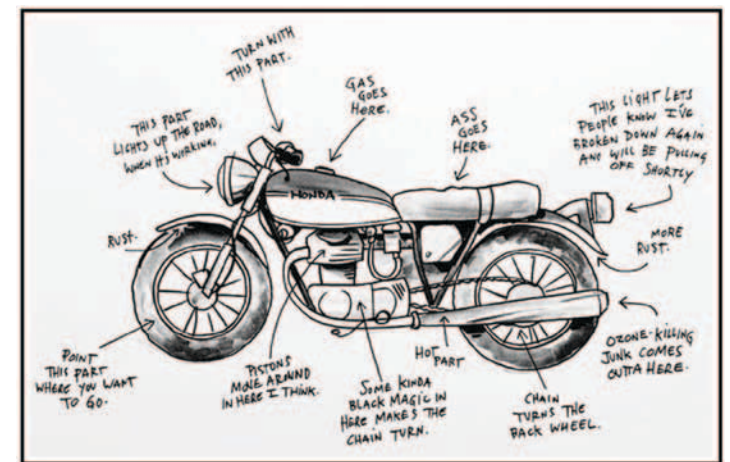


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