



# ROAR

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## Inside This Issue



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings Top Cats,

Many new things are coming up for us all to participate in and enjoy as Top Cats. And with the riding season starting up, now

is the time to ride our bikes and enjoy going nowhere (and sometimes somewhere). And that's a great thing!

Illinois State Trooper, Rich Kozik will be giving a presentation on the State of Illinois's motorcycle laws and some of their precepts on motorcycle safety at our next general meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Rich has spoken before to the club and is a dynamic and friendly speaker. He will be available to answer your questions as well. I checked and he WILL NOT be accepting requests to waive traffic tickets. You are on your own for those. But Rich is a fun guy and this should be a hoot. So plan to come and see this presentation on June 7<sup>th</sup> at our general meeting at EsKape.

Your Ride for Dreams Committee is moving forward with the Ride For Dreams, our charity ride that provides a yearly donation to the Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (N.I.S.R.A.). Activity has been ongoing "behind the scenes" for our Ride For Dreams charity on July 24<sup>th</sup>. The event includes lunch, a band, a raffle and is based this year at Woodstock Harley Davidson. Save the date for doing this ride! Better yet, see Terri Loden and offer your assistance to help. The biggest way we can all support the Ride For Dreams is to invite our riding friends that you know and from the motorcycling community to come and do the ride. Don't be bashful – invite motorcyclists you know to the ride! This is a sure way to contribute and to maximize our donation to help support NISRA in our local communities.

We started the season with the official Top Cats riding season with the Kickoff Ride and Aunt Millie's Breakfast Run. Much thanks to Larry Scalzitti and Tony Loden for leading these rides for the club. As road captains they stepped up and put together a ride. I challenge other road captains who have not yet lead a ride or planned for one to lead a ride. Designate a date on the calendar and put together a ride. Rides come in all sizes, shapes, colors, smells, etc. A ride can be small, large, single day or more. We could use more day rides. Weekends are available every month for the next three months. This isn't just doing your part but is about doing something I believe we all enjoy as road captains and that is crafting, planning and leading rides. So fire up the thinking cap, make up a ride and get your ride(s) on the calendar!

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## Upcoming Events

### JUNE

- 4 NISRA Fishing Derby Ride
- 7 General Meeting
- 14 Board Meeting
- 17-19 Little Sturgis
- 21 Franks and Fries

### JULY

- 2-4 Mississippi River Run
- 5 General Meeting
- 12 Board Meeting

## KAUTION KORNER

### Riding in the Rain

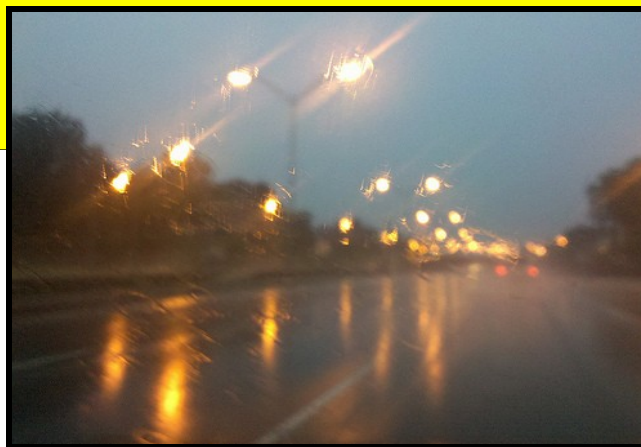
By: Thomas Malia

Unless you are part of the *I-only-ride-to-Lake-Geneva-for-quiche crowd* (and then only if it is sunny), it is highly likely you are going to encounter a rain storm on one or more of your rides (I could make a cheap crack here about these odds increasing dramatically if you ride with a certain senior and prolific Top Cat's Road Captain, but I will resist this temptation). Therefore all Top Cats should ensure that they have the right equipment and skill set to safely survive riding in the rain.

#### ***Equipment wise, the guidance is pretty straightforward:***

Ensure you have good rubber on your bike. Water escapes from under a tire by squishing out sideways along lateral grooves in the tread. As tires wear, these grooves are reduced in volume so the tire is able to shed less water, increasing the risk of hydroplaning. Proper inflation is also critical. An over-inflated tire has less traction because the tire is less able to conform to the pavement. An under-inflated tire tends to trap water ahead of the contact patch, again risking hydroplaning. Also keep in mind that cold tires provide less traction than warmed-up ones.

If riding in a rain storm causes you to become distracted due to getting cold or wet or if you are less noticeable to auto drivers around you, then what you are wearing becomes very much a safety issue. Therefore, have a good rain suit—one that does not leak (yes they exist)...one that adds to your visibility rather than detracts...never understood the logic of wearing a black rain suit. Rain suits deteriorate over time, so it is prudent to replace them periodically even though they appear to be in good shape. I suggest a two-piece suit in that putting on rain pants is at least 5 times more difficult than slipping on a rain jacket. Often when riding in light rain, I do not really care if my pants get somewhat wet and so I wear only the jacket part of my rain gear. If you do decide to don rain pants, remember to put your billfold (or your credit cards) someplace accessible in your jacket beforehand. On far too many occasions, I have pulled



into a gas station to quickly buy gas only to have to go through the major undertaking of retrieving my credit cards from under my rain pants.

Have a sweatshirt type garment readily available and consider putting it on before your rain suit. Riding in the rain-if warm-is very tolerable; riding while cold and damp quickly approaches the no-longer-fun category.

Finally have a good pair of rain proof gloves. These serve to not only keep you warm, but also to improve your grip on the wet and potentially slippery throttle and clutch and brake levers. Cabellas (or similar such stores) sell lined, rubberized hunting gloves that I find ideal for riding in the rain.

#### ***Skill wise, the key is to recognize particularly risky situations and to develop the skill set to properly deal with these situations.***

First get some local experience. You do not want to encounter rain for the first time while riding some narrow, curvy mountain road. The initial benefit to derive from such experience is to cultivate the mindset that riding in the rain does not need to be a dangerous or scary experience. While it does call for even more attention to road conditions and to traffic around you, with such experience you should ultimately be able to relax and to become comfortable in such a riding situation.

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## 15 Best Roads in America...

By: Tom Malia

*Reprinted with permission from the American Motorcyclist's Magazine*



*My favorite part of motorcycling is planning and executing rides that explore roads and parts of our country that I have not seen before. We are fortunate in the US to have numerous choices of fantastic and varied scenery, interesting roads and diverse man-made and natural attractions. I therefore found the*

*following article to be of particular interest. The article reflects the results of a member survey the **American Motorcyclist Association** recently completed to select the 15 best roads in America.*

### **15 Washington Route 129 and Oregon Route 3, Clarkston, Wash., to Enterprise, Ore.**

**Why it's great:** Running north from Enterprise, Ore., to Clarkston, Wash., in the western parts of those states, Route 129 strings together switchbacks, part of the Snake River, plateaus and views of the Wallowa and Blue Mountains. A stop for a sandwich at Bogann's Store, right where the route crosses the Grande Ronde River, is practically required.

**Comments:** "Rattlesnake grade, baby! Unbelievable switchbacks, gorgeous canyon, endless ribbons of traffic-free twisties."-- Michael Wittgraf

"Curves and elevation changes are out of this world, great vantage points, minimal traffic and good road surface. Just the best ride ever."--Charlie Leininger

**Our take:** Even better, on the north end, it hooks up with the Columbia River Gorge, and the roads along it--even the interstate highway stretches--offer up views that look like amazing murals.

### **14 Ohio Route 170, Calcutta to Poland**

**Why it's great:** We know what you're thinking, but you're wrong. While much of Ohio is flat, a good portion of it includes Appalachian foothills. And Route 170, in the northeastern part of the state, is right in the thick of them. Running through two counties next to the Pennsylvania border, Route 170 offers up plenty of twisties, a few switchbacks and an intense ride you didn't think you could find in the Midwest all between two international-sounding cities.

**Comments:** "Clean road. Consists of mostly sweepers and a few hairpins. The only downside is that it gets crowded during the early spring for some reason. This road gives you a Tail of the Dragon feel."--Bill Berger

"Awesome curves, but be careful. If the yellow road sign says 15, try 15".—Susan Newman

**Our take:** Ohio 170 is a super-great road, made even better by a number of incredible rides nearby, including Ohio Route 164, from Lisbon to Leesville, that can be as technical and twisty any in the country.



## 15 Best Roads..

Continued

### 13 *California Route 58, McKittrick to Santa Margarita*

**Why it's great:** If you ever wonder why so many motorcyclists love California, its roads like Route 58, which offers technical twists, great little towns full of oil-boom history, and great vistas that are green for the early spring and are trademark auburn the rest of the year.

**Comments:** "This road is 70 miles of Southern/Central California's best! It ranges from high desert petroleum fields, through gradually more technical mountain twisties and hairpins (with a nice stopping point at the top), then on to high plains grasslands with huge roller coaster dips, then rolling golden California hills dotted with trees accompanying fast sweepers which only get tighter as the miles click by, and concluding with another set of fantastic canyon curves. All in a remote setting, with amazing, smooth asphalt. I've been in 46 states and six Canadian provinces (on a bike) and this is one of the best!"--Kevin Redner

**Our take:** We can't top Kevin's words, but can offer up another great road nearby: Caliente Bodfish Road, from (no surprise here) Caliente to Bodfish. It's every bit as good, and even more remote. AMA member Steven Fletcher says: "It is part of a 100-mile loop starting in Lake Isabella, passing over the Piute Mountains and connecting with State Highways 58 and 178. Some good twisties, beautiful high elevation panoramic views, beautiful valleys, zero traffic, passes near the historic Tehachapi Loop, return to Lake Isabella on state Route 178 along the Kern River, which is one of the most beautiful rides in the state."

### 12 *U.S. Route 33, Harrisonburg, Va., to Seneca Rocks, W. Va.*

**Why it's great:** Climbing over the Eastern Continental Divide out of Harrisonburg to the rock-climbing mecca of Seneca Rocks, Route 33 mixes wide sweepers with tight switchbacks and incredible mountain valleys through the heart of the Monongahela National Forest, a region that earns West Virginia its reputation as the Colorado of the East.

**Comments:** "Here's what I'm talking about. This is a great road in excellent condition crossing the Allegheny Mountains."--Walter Halaja

"There are so many good roads off of this road, that you can--and I often do--spend days at a time in this area. West Virginia rocks!"-- Fred Weston



**Our take:** Whether it's the lack of people, the lack of industry or the lack of any cares whenever we ride in West Virginia, pretty much all of the state is full of great roads, and U.S. 33 in this area is one of the best. Nearby Elkins is a great place to hang out overnight.

### 11 *Natchez Trace, from Natchez, Miss., to Nashville, Tenn.*

**Why it's great:** Stringing together the Cumberland, Tenn., and Mississippi rivers along 440 miles of winding, historical road, the Natchez Trace offers a laid-back experience along a closed-access road in the highland South. Unique among well-known motorcycling roads, the emphasis here is less on curves and technical turns, and more on a smooth, easy cruise, with no cross traffic for much of its length.

**Comments:** "Great scenery, hills and curves, no commercial traffic, historical, and, at 444 miles, a pleasant multi-day experience if you want it to be. On the other hand, almost any road I'm riding on is the best road--at that moment!"-- Bettina Jones

"It's long, has remarkable towns to adventure

right off of it, and very scenic."--Eric Lentz

**Our thoughts:** Following the Trace in either direction is a uniquely different experience. Heading northeast, it's an instant departure from bustling southern cities, and a low climb into the heart of the Tennessee hills. The other way, it's a slow ride down from the mountains. Its best feature is that part of the original roadway, which grew from Native American trading paths, is still visible along the route--and some segments are on the National Register of Historic Places.

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## **I 0 Angeles Crest Highway, California Route 2**

**Why it's great:** Angeles Crest is among the best-known and most-photographed motorcycle roads in the country, mainly because of its proximity to greater Los Angeles and the many motorcycle magazines that use it for testing and as a photo backdrop. Running more than 60 miles from Foothill Boulevard in Los Angeles to Wrightwood, it climbs into the San Gabriel Mountains and the Angeles National Forest, reaching above 7,000 feet. The road is subject to the occasional closure from rockslides and can get heavily fogged in, but it's a spectacular way to arrive into, or escape, from Los Angeles.

**Comments:** "The road follows the contours of the San Gabriel Mountains for more than 50 miles and has a 7,000-foot elevation gain minutes from Los Angeles with endless sweepers, switchbacks and straights. Newcomb's Ranch offers a respite and food catering to motorcyclists. A ribbon of heaven here on earth."--Chris Phillips

"I wind up riding this road at least once a month, and often more, when I need to leave the LA. feeling behind. A ride up the mountains and a stop at Newcomb's Ranch--they're talking about closing it, so move fast--always puts the world back into perspective."- Kevin Rent

**Our take:** When you're on Angeles Crest, it's extremely hard to believe that 9.8 million people are crammed between you and the Pacific Ocean in one of the most heavily populated cities in the country. But ride it during the week, out of the commuting window, and you'll often find yourself completely alone with great views of mountains and the occasional glimpses of the Los Angeles Basin and all those poor souls hard at work while you're riding.

## **9 U.S. Route 12, Lolo Pass, Idaho and Montana**

**Why it's great:** You can get further north in Idaho than U.S. Route 12, but you really have to work at it. Rolling over 174 miles from Lewiston, Idaho, across the Snake River and up to the Montana state line at Lolo Pass, Route 12 is known as the Northwest Passage Scenic Byway because it roughly follows the route that Lewis and Clark pioneered back in the day. Full of valley sweepers, high-mountain passes and incredible views, it's an easier, but no-less-spectacular, route today.

**Comments:** "Beautiful scenery, good road surface, little traffic."--Jeff Vanden Boogart

"Lolo pass is just plain awesome. Beautiful area, great curves, and it's between Montana and Idaho."--Dan Jacobs

**Our thoughts:** There's something about the northern reaches of the Rockies in the American West that make them unlike anywhere else, from the harsher summer light

during the long days, to the amazing, jagged mountains that scrape the sky. Route 12 offers all of that up by the tankful.

## **8 Route 36, California**

**Why it's great:** Stretching 248 miles from near the Pacific Ocean in Humboldt County to Susanville in Lassen County, California Route 36 climbs and weaves through mountain ranges to become part of the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway, which passes by the incredible Lassen Volcanic National Park. Fast sweepers alternating with technical turns, with very few stops or cross traffic for much of the route.

**Comments:** "If you're not from here, or from only a few other places in the country where you'll see volcanic cones (mountains), you don't know what you're missing. Lassen Peak is pretty incredible."--Jeff York

"It's 140 miles of twisty bliss between Fortuna and Red Bluff."--Chris Daniels

**Our take:** Northern California is one of the greatest places to ride a motorcycle anywhere on the planet. Remote little towns, laid-back attitude, and, in the case of the heart of California Route 36, windswept volcanic landscapes are the norm. The feel is more like Oregon than Southern California. It's hard to believe you're only a short ride from big cities like Sacramento and San Francisco.

## **7 Cherohala Skyway, North Carolina and Tennessee**

**Why it's great:** If Colorado Route 550 is known as the Million Dollar Highway, the Cherohala Skyway could be considered the 100 Million Dollar Highway, given how much it cost to build. This 43-mile route runs from Tellico Plains, Tenn., to Robbinsville, N.C. Vistas, overlooks, switchbacks and scenic pullouts abound along its 4,000 feet of elevation gain to its high point more than a mile up.

**Comments:** "Fantastic views, good pavement, decent speed limit. The curves are not as tight as they are on nearby U.S. 129, so it's a more relaxing ride. Nice and cool in the summer."--Troy Jackson

"This is a well-kept mountain road that winds up to almost 5,400 feet with unbeatable views. This alone makes it one of my favorite motorcycling roads, but when combined with its close proximity to the infamous Deal's Gap, the lower section of the Blue Ridge Parkway, numerous other extraordinary roads and the area's general hospitality towards motorcyclists, this road becomes my favorite road in my favorite riding playground."--Rick Scott

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## 15 Best Roads..

Continued

"This road has it all. Beautiful vistas, great sweeping curves, outstanding elevation changes, and no side roads. It is the perfect motorcycle road!"-- Rodney Bryant

"This mile-high ride provides incredible views of unspoiled Tennessee wilderness with wonderful sweeping curves and is a pleasant break from the heat in the summertime."-Ellen Flanagan

**Our take:** "Follow the advice above and combine the Cherohala Skyway with nearby U.S. 129 (Road No. 3 on this list) and you can do a 150-mile day that rivals anything east of the Mississippi. Be sure to stop and get some boiled peanuts or apple cider (depending on what time of year you're riding) at one of the many roadside stands.

### 6 *Going to the Sun Road, Glacier National Park, Montana*

**Why it's great:** Built in 1932 as the only road through the heart of Glacier National Park in Montana, the Going to the Sun Road stretches for 53 miles and crosses the Continental Divide at Logan Pass. Another road that's almost always closed in winter, the asphalt over the 6,646-foot Logan Pass can see more than 80 feet of snow in the colder months. But from June through December, it's one of the best ride's you'll find.

**Comments:** "Exceptional beauty and grandeur."-- Thomas Culbertson

"First of all, it is breathtaking, then the curves. If you don't like it one way, you can come back the other way and see what you missed. From St. Mary's Lake to Lake McDonald. It's just a nice cruise."--Neal Emrick

"Don't let the seemingly ever present cold weather spoil this incredible ride-bring plenty of warm weather

gear no matter what time of year".— Tom Malia

**Our take:** With ridiculous amounts of snow that have taken out pretty much every protective road barrier along the route, this is one scenic road that demands every bit of your attention--and makes it a true must-ride.



### 5 *California Highway 1, Pacific Coast Highway*

**Why it's great:** We're pretty sure there's a law somewhere that says you can't do a "Best Road" list without including the Pacific Coast Highway, and this 655-mile road should be a must-do for every motorcyclist in the country. Stretching from Dana Point in Orange County to near Leggett in Mendocino County, the road offers achingly beautiful views of the Pacific Ocean, dramatic, cliff-hugging curves and throwback small towns, especially in Northern California.

**Comments:** "Hundreds of miles of gorgeous coastal scenery, curves that seem to go on endlessly followed by brief straight portions, and unforgettable small towns. Even the urban portions are amazing."--Mark Janes

"Twisty, curvy, edge-of-the-landmass road, well paved, with periodic hill slides. Gorgeous view of the great Pacific Ocean."--Marck Aguiar

"Beautiful sweeping curves, unbelievable scenery. Beautiful ocean views, blended with mountains. Basically, the area from Santa Barbara to San Francisco is amazing."-- Don Porter

**Our take:** If you can only ride one road in California, this is the one. From the urban sprawl of the Los Angeles area to the laid-back cool of Big Sur, across the Golden Gate Bridge and north to areas so remote you'd swear they shouldn't exist in California, it's worth the ride. Be prepared for any kind of weather, including cold and fog, even in the height of summer. It really is a different place.

### 4 *Highway 550, from Ouray to Durango, Colorado*

**Why it's great:** They don't call the heart of this stretch of U.S. 550 "The Million Dollar Highway" for nothing. Though so named for the precious metals that poured out of the region during its mining heyday, the moniker could just as easily describe the views. Sprinkled with sheer drop-offs, hairpin turns, a general lack of guardrails and a healthy dose of RV traffic, it makes for a challenging and rewarding ride.

**Comments:** "Wow! Waterfalls, rivers, hairpin turns, over and through 12,000-foot mountains, gorges and valleys. We started this ride in sunshine in Ouray, then got into rain, and, as the road reached the high altitudes, snow! At one point, my wife, as passenger, was reaching around to wipe my face shield so I could see. At Silverton, we ran to the ski shop to buy dry socks and better rain/snow gear."--Terry Adreon

**Our take:** There are a dozen or so routes in Colorado that are amazing. This stretch is the best of the lot.





## 3 *U.S., 129 "The Tail of the Dragon"--on the North Carolina-Tennessee border*

**Why it's great:** Probably the best-known curvy road in the East, U.S., 129 may run for more than 580 miles through four states, but for curve addicts, only the stretch that runs from one side of the Tennessee-North Carolina border to the other really matters. There are a claimed 318 curves in 11 miles on that stretch, and several businesses have cropped up in the area that caters specifically to the thousands of motorcyclists who make pilgrimages to the road.

**Comments:** "The speed limit may only be 35 mph, but with curves this tight, that's all you really need to go."--Bill Rawls

"The overlook at the top offers a great view of the Calderwood Lake on one side, and about a hundred motorcyclists at any given time parked on the other."--Susan Ragus

"Really, if you have to ask..."--Chuck Rowland

**Our take:** The Dragon really has grown from a locals-only hangout 10 or 15 years ago to one of the country's premier motorcycling meccas. It can be a little crazy on weekends, and that's part of the attraction for a lot of people. For the rest, it's awesome on a Tuesday or Wednesday.

## 2 *Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina*

**Why it's great:** No list of motorcycling roads is complete without this one, which connects to Skyline Drive in Virginia and runs for a combined 570-plus miles of steep Eastern mountains, switchbacks, high valleys, quaint towns and controlled-access bliss. From its start at the south end at Great Smoky Mountains National Park to its end at the Virginia border, the road is one of the best--and longest--asphalt experiences available, with tons of local history thrown in. The Skyline Drive portion in Virginia has a 35-mph speed limit, and a daily use fee.

**Comments:** "Great scenery, long sweeping curves, and hundreds of uninterrupted miles with few intersections!"--Ahmet Akaydin

"It's 469 miles of road heaven!"--Anthony Verno

"Miles of curvy road without a single stop sign or a traffic light."--Susan Wilson

"As long as you are riding outside the peak summer season (a.k.a., RV ramble season), this road is quiet, remote in many spots, and offers some rowdy twists, even at the posted speed limits."--Ken Bailey

"No commercial traffic, not much local traffic, beautiful scenery, sweeping curves, camping locations and lodges along the route."--Troy Wehrle

"This is *the* motorcycling road in America due to its curves and scenery!"--Greg Wyland

**Our take:** The Blue Ridge Parkway is the most visited spot in the National Park system, and it can sometimes show it. It's best enjoyed during the week while school is in session, when you can often ride all morning and see only a handful of cars. Southern hospitality--and the occasional tourist-trap kind of stop--rule. Don't miss the run up Mount Mitchell, the highest point east of the Mississippi.

## 1 *Beartooth Highway, Montana and Wyoming*

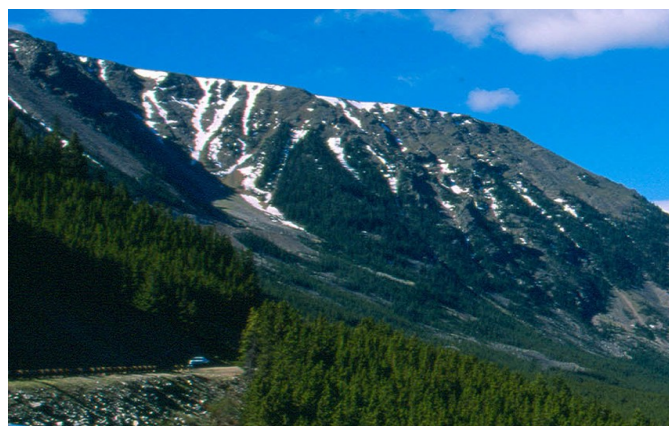
**Why it's great:** This stretch of U.S. Highway 21 between Red Lodge and Cooke City, Mont., zigzags across the Montana-Wyoming border through a series of steep switchbacks, rising from about 5,000 feet to 10,947 feet at Beartooth Pass. It's so high that it's often closed in winter due to snow, but in the summer months offers the best motorcycling in the country.

**Comments:** "One of the most scenic rides in the United States, the route features breathtaking views of the Absaroka and Beartooth Mountains, and open, high alpine plateaus dotted with countless glacial lakes, forested valleys, waterfalls and wildlife. The Beartooth All-American Road provides easy access to Yellowstone National Park at its northeast entrance. Pass elevation is 10,947 feet!"--Les Hedquist

"Great curves, spectacular scenery. Cooke City and Red Lodge are great western towns with their own flavor."--Jeff Clark

"Awesome corners and low traffic, beautiful scenery and new pavement on a large portion of the Beartooth Pass make this ride better than ever!"--Darrell Riley

**Our thoughts:** Frankly, we thought that a few of the more well-known roads lower on this list would have taken the top spot, but that's the beauty of asking for your opinions. Hats off to voters for making the Beartooth Highway the AMA 2011 No. 1 motorcycling road in America!



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## TOPCATS ACTIVITIES

***YOUR SOURCE FOR UPCOMING ENTERTAINMENT AND EVENTS***

***BY TONY LODEN***

Well here we are entering June and it seems like March...

The Farmers Almanac tells us that April and May were supposed to be cooler and drier than normal and our upcoming summer temperatures will be near normal, on average, with below-normal rainfall. The hottest periods will be in mid- to late June and early and mid-July. Well they blew the April/May part of that forecast; let's hope they get back on track for the rest of the summer season.

There is not much new to report in the way of scheduled rides this month. Here is a look ahead to some of the upcoming events from the June Calendar...

**Saturday, June 4th**

**8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

### **NISRA Fishing Derby Ride (DeRango)**

Join Joan DeRango for the annual NISRA Fishing Derby. Meet for breakfast at 8:00 a.m. at the Lakeside Inn (used to be O'Train's) on Main Street in Wauconda before heading out (Kickstands up at 9:15) on a short ride into Kenosha County ending at the Lindy's Landing pier in Wauconda, IL. Top Cats will help set up and serve lunch to the kids.

**Friday, June 17<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday  
June 19th**

**Kickstands Up 8:30 a.m.**

### **Annual Ride to Little Sturgis (Brandt)**

Enjoy the best attended, continuous, overnight ride on the calendar!!!! Ride leaves Friday June 17th from the McDonalds on the corner of RT14 and Rt176 in Crystal Lake. Kickstands up at 8:30am and return on Sunday June 19th. The Top Cats have 12 rooms set aside at the Radisson in downtown Davenport. This year we will return to J&P Cycles and visit the all new Motorcycle Museum in Anamosa on Saturday and return in plenty of time to enjoy the rally. Don't miss a fun filled weekend. You can call and still reserve your rooms now at 563-322-2200. Make sure you mention the Top Cats.





Calendar Continued!... June is a busy month so please make a point of marking the dates so you do not miss the action!!

- **Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>**

**6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

## **Franks and Fries (Scalzitti)**

Gene & Jude's - 2720 River Road, River Forest, IL. Here's another chance to meet up with your motorcycling buddies in a different social setting. Eating starts whenever you get hungry and conversations last until you're talked out. Open to all members and guests.

Gene and Jude's recently was awarded the title "Best Hot Dog Joint In America" by Serious Eats and food celeb Rachael Ray. Read about it here - <http://www.serious eats.com/2011/01/the-rachael-ray-hot-dog-bracket-and-our-part.html> - come on out to taste the best there is!

- **Saturday, July 2nd thru  
Monday, July 4th**

## **Mississippi River Run (Bradbury)**

Starting from the corner of Rt14 and Rt176 in Crystal Lake, IL - Time TBD

Take a 3 day journey that starts on day one with a ride that goes through 4 different states and takes us on one of America's scenic byways, the Great River Road also known as the Mississippi River. This weekend of rides will see us riding on a beautiful summer weekend (weather permitting) that will include some of the most scenic 'biker' style roads in 4 states.

- **Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Thru**

**Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>**

## **STURGIS 2011**

Top Cats member Bard Boand will be leading this ride to the Alex Johnson in downtown Rapid City for our annual Sturgis trip. If you are planning on going, check the website calendar for more information.

Also don't forget the monthly General Meetings on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at eSkape Entertainment Center, located at 350 McHenry Road in, Buffalo Grove, IL.

Remember to check the web site – [www.topcats.org](http://www.topcats.org) for more activities information. And as always, call me on 847 652-6617 or e-mail me at: [tcatsrsvp@comcast.net](mailto:tcatsrsvp@comcast.net) with your questions or ideas.

Ride Safe!!!

*Tony*

## Memorial Day, 2011

### *The Morning Sun... And Another New Day*

#### *My 'Rolling Thunder' Experience*

*By: Mary Walters*

The sun was just emerging over the skyline of Washington D.C. and the street lights were turning off, section by section as the sun glowed brighter. Motorcycles could be heard coming in from all directions and moving toward the parking lot of the Pentagon. A new day...

As the bikers lined up, activities began. The grills fired up, the vendors lifted their canopies, and the people started talking. So many stories, so many lives, so much to remember... and for those of us in the lot... so much to be thankful for! We were here! The clouds were looming—but not with the threat of rain—they brought protection from the sun. An appropriate metaphor for what this day will bring... Memories of those who have also provided protection so that we can be telling our stories of family, rides and successes. So much to be thankful for on this new day.

The morning hours passed and the crowds grew. People from every walk of life. Mechanics, Laborers, Doctors, Lawyers, Businessmen. Mom's, Dad's Grandma's and Grandpa's. Working and Unemployed. Retired and Physically Challenged. Black, White, Asian, European and Native American. Where, but in America, can you see so many people from such a variety of backgrounds, filled with NATIONAL pride? ***All in one place, all coming to remember the sacrifices that have been made so that we can continue to live very exceptional lives and to have many new days.***

Some in the parking lot had helped to keep the ideas of a Nazi Germany at bay—fighting valiantly without knowing the outcomes. Outcomes we know today have brought growth and development in place of selfish gain. There were those who went to Korea and Vietnam in order to allow the peoples of those areas to choose their own future. Stories of challenges, successes and defeats that would create the world we know today. Again, time has given perspective and insights that were not fully known or understood then... But in this new day, in this place... The Capital of America, the day dawns and is filled with the realities and promises of *choice and freedom*. It is also filled with memories of the sacrifices.

As the song, *Proud to be an American*, played in the background, Bikers moved through the streets of Washington D.C. The event is held to remind our Nation's Leaders that there are still 88,000 Service Men and Women who have not returned home. For twenty-four years, the ride has been organized by ***Rolling Thunder***, a national organization committed to remembering these men and women and working to return them to their homeland, America. It is an honorable quest, done with pride and passion. An inspiration to the many who rode and also to the many more who lined the streets.

These lost lives and the many other sacrifices made by families and friends, were remembered on this new day. The images of the faces were a testimony to our humanness; to our desire to be better, work harder, and develop our passions; to give and take the opportunities we have and make them count; and to build a strong America. This, and more, was written in the faces of all the 'demonstrators' and supporters on the street. It is an honorable way to remember, to give testimony to the courage and devotion of these past Heroes, and to continue to create a strong legacy to honor our Heroes' stories.

My hope is that these ideas and passions will continue to be seen and to be spread - to encourage us to dream big and make the most of each ***new day!*** To honor the sacrifices made. To take the challenges in each day and turn them into something worthy and principled. Something that will make a better world. I know that it has had that effect on me.... And will for many new days to come.



## The History of Memorial Day

**Memorial Day** is a observed on the last Monday of May. Formerly known as **Decoration Day**, which was first recorded to have been observed by Freedmen (freed enslaved southern blacks) in Charleston, South Carolina in 1865, at the Washington Race Course, to remember the fallen Union soldiers of the Civil War. The recognition of the fallen victims was then enacted under the name Memorial Day by an organization of Union veterans — the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)— to honor Union soldiers of the American Civil War. Over time, it was extended after World War I to honor all Americans who have died in all wars. Now known as Memorial Day, it is a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces.







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## 15 Best Roads... Final Thoughts...

*As with any “bests” list, there is likely to be disagreement as to the respective rankings and the exclusion of someone’s favorite road(s). You certainly ought not get too focused on the relative rankings with the expectation that #1 is dramatically better than #15. I do not think that is the case---the rankings are in the eye of the beholder- and of course your enjoyment of any particular route is very much a function of the weather, how your bike is running, your mental state, etc. on the day that you ride. The addition I would be most adamant about would be the Chief Joseph Scenic Highway (State Hwy 296- a spectacular 46 mile drive from Cody, Wyoming to Cooke City, Montana). If you are going to ride the #1 rated road-the Beartooth Highway- then you MUST include a ride on the Chief Joseph, which is equally spectacular and in the same “neighborhood”.*



Chief Joseph's  
Scenic Highway

a

*As you make your summer riding plans, keep this list in mind..see how many you can conquer. (By the time this article appears in ROAR, I will have bagged 10-9 on a motorcycle and 1 in a car). Finally, perhaps we should have a column in ROAR for our members to submit reports on their experiences on these roads, or to suggested enhancements to the routes mentioned or to propose new additions to this list.*

*Submitted by Tom Malia*



Beartooth Highway

President’s Message Continued .

As I write this I am planning my pre-ride this Memorial Day weekend for the Mississippi River Run on July 4th. My only regret is I won’t have my club buddies with me but I am excited to show everyone some of the great biking roads I am expecting to find in the Coulee Region of Wisconsin. I can hardly wait!

Ride Safe!  
Your President,  
Michael “Motorcycle” Bradbury



## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

**MAY 3RD, 2011**

**ESKAPE ENTERTAINMENT, 350 MCHENRY RD, BUFFALO GROVE, IL**

Submitted by Muriel Brandt: Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by President Mike Bradbury

### **Opening**

The membership was asked to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mike talked about the community service award that was given to Top Cats from NISRA.

Mike asked for volunteers to chair a club picnic and a progressive dinner ride.

### **Vice President-Wayne Kirkpatrick**

Wayne talked about the color and patch traditions of the club. He explained the meaning of the 3 patches worn on the rear of the vests by some of the more infamous, gang related type clubs. The Top Cats in order to avoid any resemblance to such clubs, decided to only use a front patch on their vests.

The black and white lion emblem was designed for general members and in the year 2000, Wayne (as President) came up with the black and gold color lion emblem for those members who have served on the Board. This was a symbol of their extra efforts and it helped guests and new members to recognize the Board for questions, etc.

Another club tradition is the 2 spot which is reserved for the President or Vice President or the most senior officer present on a ride.

### **Membership-Greg Smith/Jeff Tietz**

Jeff introduced new member Dan Daczewitz.

### **Treasurer-Stewart Johnson**

Stewart gave an update on the financial status of the club. He mentioned we were in good financial shape.

### **Safety/GRASS/Road Captains- Don Schaffer/Ric Case/Gary Brandt**

Gary presented Larry Scalzitti with a Senior Road Captain rocker.

Next G.R.A.S.S. class will be May 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am. Don will be leading a lunch ride following the class.

The safety tip was given by Vice President Wayne Kirkpatrick. Wayne's tip was practice, practice, practice. He suggested while riding solo to practice swerving and applying your brakes hard so you would know how your bike would react. You could learn how to handle your bike in these emergency situations. Also he suggested trying riding with one eye covered or with one hand in case a situation would come up where you needed to do that.

Larry Scalzitti mentioned that people could take an experienced riders course that would sharpen your riding skills.





## ROAR-Website-Mary Walters

Mary reported that the ROAR was finished and available on-line. Mary asked for help publishing or collecting articles for ROAR.

## Activities-Larry Scalzitti/Tony Loden

Tony went over the upcoming rides in May and June, including the Epic Memorial Ride, in which the Top Cats Road Captains will be helping. Check the website for details.

Wayne also talked about Sturgis; reservations must be made by 6/1/11. He asked to let him know if you are planning on going so return home options can be figured out.

Wayne Kirkpatrick asked if anyone was interested in joining with Rolling Thunder for Memorial Day in Washington D.C.

## Ride for Dreams Update

Mary spoke about how plans were coming along for the July 24<sup>th</sup> charity event. She also spoke about the new start and finish for the charity ride this year which will be at Woodstock Harley Davidson. There will also be a stop at the Tree House in Barrington where there will be activities for NISRA families.

Tony showed the banner that was purchased for the charity event.

## Old/New Business

Bill Yates passed out and flyers about the May 22<sup>nd</sup> ride with The Blue Knights.

This month's 50/50 was won by Joan Derango

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm



## Remember:



July 24th, 2011

Contact Terri Loden for more information!

Terber06@Comcast.net



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

### MAY 10TH, 2011

ESCAPE ENTERTAINMENT, 350 MCHENRY RD, BUFFALO GROVE, IL

Submitted by Muriel Brandt

**Present:** Mike Bradbury, Gary Brandt, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Muriel Brandt, Larry Scalzitti, Greg Smith, and Stewart Johnson

**Absent:** Carl Marcyan and Mary Walters

**Guest:** Randy Braun (RB Target Insurance)

Meeting was called to order at 7:34pm by Mike Bradbury, Top Cats President

Mike asked Randy Braun to explain the Top Cat insurance policies and what is covered.

Randy talked about the commercial and general liability policy, which covers claims from meetings, normal activities and includes the Ride for Dreams. There is also Director and Officer Liability in case they were to be sued for decisions or other issues.

#### **Vice President Report-Wayne Kirkpatrick**

Wayne reviewed the Epic Memorial Ride which was held on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Top Cats played a key role in the planning and execution of the ride by assisting with traffic control. The turnout was good despite the bad weather. Our new Top Cat tent was used at the park after the ride to hand out the flyers.

#### **Membership-Greg Smith**

Greg reported there were no new applications for membership at this time.

Greg asked the Board if member Mano Gawat needed to submit a new application if he was out of the country when the deadline was up for paying his yearly dues. Mike Bradbury motioned to keep his last application and accept his dues for upcoming year. Larry Scalzitti seconded the motion. The Board approved him as a Regular member per the bylaws.

Jeff Tietz will be updating the roster for the website.

#### **Safety-Gary Brandt**

- Gary reported the next G.R.A.S.S. class will be Sat. 5/14/11 with a lunch ride following weather permitting.
- Gary thanked Larry for making a list of safety articles from 2008 to date. Senior Road Captains can look at this and make sure they don't repeat the same topic when writing a new article or doing a safety tip at a general meeting.

(Continued on page 17)



## **Activities-Larry Scalzitti**

Larry said he will send an email to the Road Captains regarding open dates on the calendar.

Larry also talked about some of the upcoming rides.

The Board was updated on the progress for this years Ride for Dreams.

Mike talked about getting someone to volunteer to chair a picnic or progressive dinner ride this year.

## **ROAR/Website-Mary Walters**

Mike talked about getting help for Mary with the ROAR. Having an associate publisher and help with getting more articles.

Our new on-line payment was verified by Google and will be available for pre-registration for the Ride for Dreams.

## **Old /New business**

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

## ***WANTED***

**Co-Editor (or Publisher) wanted to work on the ROAR.**

**Get to know all of your Top Cat Riders! Fun and Excitement!**

**No experience needed... Just a love of passing on information and creating interesting and informative communication for your fellow Top Cat Members!**

## **Birthdays for June**

Please send your special dates so that we can remember you!

Roar@TopCats.org

## **Anniversaries for June!**

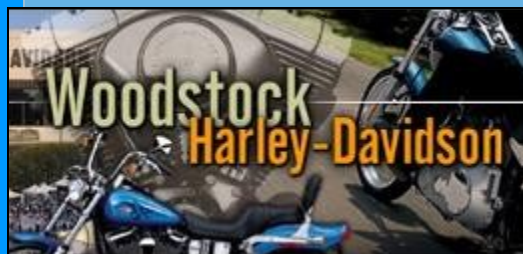
**Kathie & Mike Bradbury  
June 10th**



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## Membership Has Its Privileges!

All suppliers and vendors who support the Top Cats by providing discounts to Top Cats members will be listed in ROAR.

## HELP WANTED WEBSITE EDITOR

The Top Cats Board of Directors is looking for an enterprising and creative individual to assume responsibility for coordinating the content on our soon-to-be upgraded website. No 'technical' website experience is required.

The primary responsibility will be to work with the webmaster and various individuals who 'own' certain areas of the website to ensure our content is fresh and inviting as well as come up with ideas for additional content and enhancements to the site to bring more value to our members.

For more information contact any board member or

Dennis P (Wombat) Dougherty at

wombat@dpdougherty.com

## WANTED



## Top Cats Historian

The Top Cats Board is looking for a member to become official historian for the club.

Over the next year we want to create a written and oral history of our club that we can share with existing, new, and potential members.

The club turns 15 in 2010. Many of our legacy members have or will be moving on. We want to capture their and others' stories of our humble beginnings as well as favorite tales of the road.

If you have an interest in becoming Top Cats Historian or being a part of this activity please contact Dennis P. (Wombat) Dougherty at [wombat@dpdougherty.com](mailto:wombat@dpdougherty.com)



## RIDES & EVENTS

Date	Ride/Event	Location	Destination	Time	Leader
Saturday, June 4th	NISRA Fishing Derby Ride	Lakeside Inn Wauconda	Lindy's Landing Wauconda	8 am	DeRango
Tuesday, June 7th	General Meeting	Buffalo Grove	EsKape	7:30 am	Bradbury
Tuesday, June 14th	Board Meeting	Buffalo Grove	EsKape	7:30	Bradbury
Friday, June 17– 19	Little Sturgis	Mc D's at 14 /176 Crystal Lake	Davenport, IA	8:30 am	Brandt
Tuesday, Just 21st	Franks and Fries	Gene & Jude's	River Forest	6:30 pm	Scalziti
Saturday, July 2nd	Mississippi River Run	Mc D's at 14 /176 Crystal Lake	4 States on the Mississippi	TBD	Bradbury
Tuesday, July 5th	General Meeting	Buffalo Grove	EsKape	7:30	Bradbury
Tuesday, July 12th	Board Meeting	Buffalo Grove	EsKape	7:30	Bradbury
Wednesday, Aug 3rd – 10th	Sturgis	Check Website for Details	Sturgis, SD	7am	Boand

### FREE ADVERTISING in ROAR for TOP CATS Business Owners

#### **Attention all Top Cats business owners!**

As part of our ongoing philosophy to support our members and goal to provide a more value-rich publication, we are now offering free advertising space in ROAR for Top Cats business owners.

Each business owner can submit advertising content and graphics up to 2 X 3.5 inches (Business Card size) for their company.

We will run the ad for 3 months after which you will need to resubmit it.

This offer is for Top Cats business owners only. We are not accepting advertising for other businesses at this time.



**TOP CATS OF ILLINOIS** is a group of motorcycle enthusiasts with similar interests. Members consist of responsible Leaders, Presidents, Chairmen, Owners, Proprietors, Partners, principals, CEO's, and other 'Top Cats' of large, medium and small organizations, institutions, and companies.

For more information about the Top Cats visit our website at **[www.TOPCATS.org](http://www.TOPCATS.org)**

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				<b>Motorcycle Community</b>	Michael Bradbury bradbundy@comcast.net

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