



# ROAR

January, 2026

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### Upcoming Events

#### JANUARY

- 6 GENERAL MEETING
- 13 BOARD MEETING
- 15 CLASSIC MOVIE AND CHICAGO HOT DOGS!

#### FEBRUARY

- 3 GENERAL MEETING
- 10 BOARD MEETING
- 15 AWARDS BANQUET



The Official  
Publication  
Of Top Cats  
Illinois

Talk to Greg Smith and Jim Wiseman and get your ideas on the calendar!





# ROAR

## PRESIDENT'S POINT

And Now a Word from your President...



### HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

I hope you and your family/significant others had great holidays, with Santa bringing you what you wanted, and you all kicked off the new year with a bang.

The weather on Christmas day was pretty good and I almost pulled the trigger and went for a ride. Decided to stay off the roads and avoid the residual salt that was still lingering around here. Noelle and I always look forward to December 21st, as the winter solstice flips the day/night switch and the days stop getting shorter and are now getting longer... Spring is not that far off.... Vroom vroom...

I wanted to pass on some holiday cheer and well wishes sent out to the Top Cats from a couple of our biggest supporters. First from NISRA, they send a big **THANK YOU** for supporting their work throughout the year and wish us all a happy and healthy new year.

Second, from the Alex Johnson (AJ) Hotel in Rapid City, which the Top Cats have been staying in for nearly 30 years. Along with holiday cheer, they send a big **THANK YOU** for being such loyal guests and look forward to seeing us again in 2026 and for another 30 years. They also said to stay out of trouble... can't guarantee that....

Speaking of the AJ, Bard (and Wayne) have been working with them on Sturgis arrangements for 2026. Keep on the lookout for announcements and get rooms booked ASAP. In addition, and if he is planning to, Wayne will likely have Front Range Ride (FRR) info out soon. Both of these iconic club rides are scheduled around the last week of July and first 2 weeks of August, so block that time now if you are interested.

#### **Activities from December ...**

**Dec 7)** Ted's Toys for Tots - Ted. Ted had the best intention to get this ride in, but the poor weather that day impacted attendance (only Ted and I were planning to go), so the ride was scrapped. We even opted not to go for breakfast considering the conditions outside... Well, not all was lost, as Ted still collected gifts which made their way to area homes, making Christmas even brighter for many families. Thanks to Ted and all that donated.

#### **Activities for January...**

**Jan 18)** Classic Movie & Chicago Dogs Night - Smith. Greg and Jane (likely mostly Jane) are planning a great get together at the Keller Williams office in Barrington featuring a classic movie and Chicago style hot dogs. Yum!! Sounds like a great time.

#### **Preview for February and March and beyond...**

**Feb 15)** Annual Top Cats award dinner - The awards committee team. This is our annual event remembering our past riding season adventures and giving thanks to members who have strived to make our club what it is today. Again a Big thanks to The Smiths and DeLords for checking into new venue options for us. This year we will be having our event at the Grand Victoria Casino in Elgin which looks like a very nice venue with great food. Details will be on the Top Cat calendar and sent in a blast along with cost and RSVP details. I'm looking forward to it.

**Mar 1)** G.R.A.S.S. (Group Riding and Safety Seminar) – Mike Bradbury.

**AND**, there is more to come... Rides for 2026 are being planned now. Mike has scheduled the S/RC committee meeting for February where more rides will be added to the calendar so keep checking it out.

**\*\*\*Check the Top Cat calendar for more details for these events.**

#### **SAVE THE DATE(S) NOW:**

**AND... STILL always room on the calendar...** Let's get a few more rides or other activities together and let's go! Don't need to be complex. **KISS...**

**\*\*\*See the club's calendar for more details about these and other events...**

And as usual, watch for blasts and check the Top Cats event calendar regularly and by all means **SAVE THE CLUB ACTIVITY DATES FIRST!**

Make sure to send any activity or ride ideas to Greg Smith, Jim Wiseman and I, so they can get it on the calendar and get the word out to the club.

Feel free to reach out to me anytime via my email: [gene.rigsby@gmail.com](mailto:gene.rigsby@gmail.com), or phone, 847-770-9425.

Looking forward to seeing you there.... Gene "Lucky" Rigsby





## KAUTION KORNER

### How to 'Read' the Pavement

By: Traveler



In our motorcycling community we quickly learn how to read. We learn how to read gauges, warning lights, the GPS, tire pressure, etc.

However, one of the most critical things to learn to read is the road surface. The type of pavement significantly affects a motorcycle's handling, comfort, and safety. Because a motorcycle has only two wheels and a smaller tire contact patch than a car, riders are more vulnerable to changes in road surface texture, traction, and condition.

Road surfaces have many different characteristics each of which require different riding techniques and precautions.



Grooved pavement: Found most often on concrete surfaces, these parallel grooves are cut into the road to prevent hydroplaning.

When a motorcycle rides on these grooves, it creates a "wandering" or "snaking" sensation. **To handle this, riders should relax their grip on the handlebars and maintain a steady speed and body position, allowing the bike to correct itself.**

#### Asphalt vs. concrete:

Asphalt: Newer asphalt is rough and often provides more grip than older, smoother pavement. However, fresh asphalt can have excess oil on the surface, making it slick, especially when



wet. Very hot asphalt can also become soft enough for a kickstand to sink into it. **Ride new asphalt like you would wet pavement, slow and easy.**

Concrete: Concrete surfaces can sometimes offer less traction than asphalt and can be rougher

or have more expansion joints, cracks and holes from broken concrete. **Look far ahead to give yourself**

**enough time to swerve, slow down and safely encounter damaged concrete.**



Rough or uneven pavement: Potholes, cracks, and bumps can cause a motorcycle to lose traction and stability. **It's best to slow down and, if possible, approach these hazards at a 90-degree angle to minimize impact.**

"Tar snakes or Road Gators": These are the black tar or sealant patches used to repair cracks in asphalt. When the road is hot, these patches can soften and become very slippery, posing a risk to a motorcycle's traction, especially when cornering. **Try to choose your line through a curve to avoid Road Gators. Typically, however, hitting a Road Gator only causes minor loss of traction and disruption to the stability of the bike.**



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# ROAR

KK, Continued...

Slippery surfaces: This category includes a variety of road conditions that reduce traction:

Wet pavement: Rain, especially at the start of a shower, mixes with oil and road grime to create a very slippery film. **Slow down, increase your following distance or pull off until the rain cleans the surface.**



Loose gravel or sand: Found most often on road shoulders, construction zones, or unpaved driveways, loose gravel drastically

reduces tire grip and can cause the wheels to slide out, particularly when turning. **Look far ahead to be able to slow down and adjust your cornering approach before you hit the sand . gravel.**

Road construction: Milled surfaces, where old pavement has been ground down, create uneven and unpredictably deep grooves that can severely



impact handling. Riders should reduce speed and stay alert in these areas. **As with any raised surface, avoid it if possible. Approach it at 90 degrees if not.**

Metal surfaces: Manhole covers, steel bridge gratings, and railroad tracks become extremely slippery when wet. **Approach them as close to a 90 degree angle as possible and do not brake or accelerate on them.**



## Tips for riding on different pavements

- \* **Stay relaxed:** A tense grip on the handlebars makes it harder for the bike to naturally absorb and correct for surface imperfections. A relaxed grip allows the bike to move freely.
- \* **Maintain a steady pace:** Sudden braking or accelerating can cause the tires to lose traction on less-than-ideal surfaces. Smooth, gradual inputs are safer.
- \* **Look ahead:** Continuously scanning the road for surface changes allows you to read the surface, anticipate hazards and adjust your speed and path proactively.
- \* **Adjust tire choice:** Typically, the original tires on cruisers are made with a universal traction compound. Choose your replacement tires based on your most common style of riding. A good rule to follow is that softer tire compound gives you better traction but less tire life. Harder compound gives you more tire mileage yet slightly less traction. The rule of thumb is that cruisers, under normal riding conditions, will get about 20,000 miles out of a front tire and 10,000 miles from a rear tire. Today's tire manufacturers offer many different tire compounds from extremely soft "Sticky" tires to multi compound hard in the center to soft on the sides. The key is knowing what your riding style is.

One final recommendation on reading....Read every safety article and Kaution Korner you can find before each riding season. Not only will it make you safer but it will also make the riders around you safer.





## Oil Spots

By Traveler



### The Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club



When you hear “motorcycle club,” certain images might spring to mind. But the National Association of Buffalo Soldiers and Troopers Motorcycle Club (NABSTMC) shatters stereotypes. Founded on deep historical reverence and a powerful commitment to serve the community, this organization offers far more than just group rides.

Here are a few facts about this unique American institution:

#### Founded by a Police Officer

Forget outlaw origins. The NABSTMC was established in Chicago in 1993 by Kenneth “Dream Maker” Thomas, who was a Chicago police officer at the time. His vision was to create a “modern progressive motorcycle club” that promotes a positive image respected by the community and nationwide.

#### Honoring Forgotten Cavalry

The club’s name is a direct tribute to the historic 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments (and later the 24th and 25th Infantry) of the US Army – the famed Buffalo Soldiers. These were all-Black regiments formed after the Civil War, known for their bravery and resilience, facing discrimination on the Western frontier. The name “Buffalo Soldiers” is believed to have originated from Native American tribes.

#### “Iron Horses” Symbolize History

Members don’t just ride motorcycles; they ride “Iron Horses.” This powerful term directly links their modern machines to the literal horses ridden by the origi-

nal Buffalo Soldiers cavalrymen, symbolizing a continuation of their mounted tradition and spirit.

#### Massive National (and Global) Reach

From its Chicago “Mother Chapter,” the NABSTMC has exploded in size. Today, it boasts over 110 chapters across at least 35 US states, organized into five “Frontiers,” and includes international chapters in places like South Korea. It’s one of the largest Black motorcycle clubs in the US, with over 5,000 members.

#### True Inclusivity is Core

While founded to honor African American military history and promote a positive image, the NABSTMC welcomes members of all races, genders, and backgrounds. Their official stance is non-discrimination based on race, gender, politics, or religion. White members are explicitly not restricted.



#### Women are Full Patched Members (and Leaders)

Breaking the mold of many traditional MCs, the NABSTMC welcomes women as full, patched members, not associates or auxiliaries. They are recognized as accomplished riders and hold leadership positions. This inclusivity honors figures like Cathay Williams, the only documented woman to serve in the original Buffalo Soldier regiments.

#### Charity is Their Engine

Community service isn’t an afterthought; it’s central to their mission. They operate as a non-profit, raising significant funds. A major focus is education: the national organization alone awarded \$55,000 in scholarships in 2021 and planned \$57,500 for 2024. Chapters also feed the homeless, support senior homes, run disaster relief, and build homes for families.

#### Teaching History & Mentoring Youth

Club members actively work to keep the Buffalo Soldiers legacy alive. They conduct school visits and youth events, using stories like Medal of Honor recipient Lt. William McBryar’s to educate and inspire young people, particularly within communities of color.

(Continued on pg 6)



Oil Spots, continued...

They also mentor youth in life skills and citizenship and even run programs like gun safety education.

### Safety Advocacy on the Road

Promoting motorcycle safety is a key goal. Many chapters, like Toledo, OH, hold annual spring safety seminars, often partnering with state agencies (like Motorcycle Ohio). They emphasize pre-ride checks and proper gear (especially helmets) and advocate for courteous sharing of the road by *all* drivers.

### Actively Reshaping the Biker Image

A core founding goal was to promote a positive and respected image. Decades later, evidence shows they've succeeded. They explicitly distance themselves from the "1%" outlaw label ("we are not a 1% club and we claim no territory"). Their consistent community service, historical education, and lawful conduct have earned them praise from city councils, local news, and the National Park Service as a force for good, fundamentally changing perceptions of what a motorcycle club can be.

The Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club proves that the roar of an engine can harmonize powerfully with the call of history and the duty of service. They ride not just for the open road but to honor a legacy and uplift their communities, truly embodying the spirit of "We Can, We Will."

## Flying Motorcycles?



**The Sky's the Limit—  
at What Cost?**

**The Volonaut Airbike.** This

jet-powered beast promises to turn asphalt daydreams into airborne reality, skimming landscapes at a claimed 124 mph with no visible propellers.

### **What Does a Flying Motorcycle Cost**

Volonaut hasn't announced an official price. A May 2025 report from a source suggests it could start near \$120,000. That number raises eyebrows. In the emerging flying bike market, here's how it compares:

- ◇ Jetson One sells for \$128,000 (up from \$92,000). It requires no license under FAA Part 103 Ultralight rules but is capped at 63 mph.

- ◇ Aerwins XTURISMO, a hybrid hoverbike, lists around \$777,000 and isn't yet legal for consumer use anywhere.

- ◇ Jetpack backpack units run close to \$300,000.

- ◇ Suddenly, \$120,000 seems almost reasonable..

### **Features Justifying the Price**

Volonaut claims a truly vertical takeoff and landing, powered by a "proprietary" jet system. Instead of exposed rotors, the craft's hidden jet nozzles promise cleaner lines and tighter turns. If the company's 124 mph top speed holds up, this could outpace many other eVTOLs on the market.

Onboard stability and control come courtesy of an advanced flight computer. Volonaut says its proprietary stabilization system allows the bike to hover automatically. Riders won't need complicated joystick inputs. In theory, piloting the bike could feel as natural as leaning into a turn on a motorcycle.

### **Public reaction has been mixed**

Volonaut looks like the Star Wars speeder bike finally come to life. Still, excitement often comes with a side of skepticism. Critics ask, "What happens if the jet quits midair?" Without spinning rotors or a built-in glide feature, an engine failure could spell disaster.

Noise levels are rumored to be deafening—imagine a rock concert on a motorcycle. Range estimates clash wildly, too: enthusiasts whisper of two to three minutes of flight while sales pitches tout up to 40 km "per charge." And how likely is it that this machine will ever cruise through city streets without drawing police attention for noise violations? For now, many wonder if Volonaut is more of an extreme toy than a genuine transport revolution.

### **Don't expect the Volonaut Airbike to replace your Daily Commuter**

The Airbike fits into the ultra-niche luxury market. It's more suited to high-net-worth individuals, collectors, and thrill-seekers looking to fly in remote or controlled environments.

Some marketing claims suggest the Airbike could "reduce urban traffic by 40%." But given the realities, such projections feel far-fetched. This isn't mass mobility—it's a high-adrenaline experience machine.

Until Volonaut breaks its silence on price, specs, and a concrete regulatory path, the Airbike remains a clouded dream.

(Continued on page 7)



Oil Spots,  
continued...



## Tennessee Motorcycles and Music Revival

Scheduled for May 15–18, 2025, the Tennessee Motorcycles and Music Revival (TMMR) promises twisty roads, camping under the stars, and a community of riders united by two passions: motorcycles and music. But to make the most of TMMR, you'll need more than a full tank of gas. Here's how to plan an unforgettable group ride to Tennessee's ultimate biker bash.

### Essentials for the Road and Ranch

Packing for TMMR is a balancing act: You need gear for riding, camping, and impromptu concerts. Here's the breakdown:

#### Non-Negotiables

- **Riding Gear:** Helmet, armored jacket/pants, waterproof boots, and two glove pairs (lightweight + insulated).
- **Tools:** Tire repair kit, portable jump starter, zip ties, duct tape (the "Red Green Show" of roadside fixes).
- **Camping Basics:** Lightweight tent, sleeping bag rated for Tennessee's fickle spring nights, and a headlamp.
- **Tip:** Pack base layers...Moisture-wicking fabric keeps you dry; thermal layers combat chilly mornings.
- **Leave Room for Fun**
- **Earplugs** (for protecting hearing during concerts).
- **A compact camp chair**—because standing for four days isn't a flex.
- **Cash for on-site BBQ and merch** (ATMs are scarce).
- **Tip:** Overpacking kills handling. Use saddlebags for bulk and tank bags for quick-access items (phones, snacks).

### Ride Tennessee's Twisting Treasures

TMMR's location in Hurricane Mills puts you minutes from iconic rides:

### Natchez Trace Parkway

A 444-mile gem with zero commercial traffic, smooth pavement, and views of forests and farmland. The northern section near Nashville is a 1-hour ride from the Ranch. Stop at the double-arched Natchez Trace Bridge or grab biscuits at Loveless Cafe.

#### Local Loops

TN-13 and nearby state routes offer winding rural roads through rolling hills. For adrenaline junkies, the Tail of the Dragon (318 curves in 11 miles) is a 4-hour haul east—worth it for a pre/post-TMMR detour.

Tennessee's cell-service dead zones.

Download GPX routes from forums like Adventure Rider or TMMR's Facebook group.

### Camping and Glamping

Loretta Lynn's Ranch offers camping tiers:

- **Primitive Tent Sites:** Cheap, social, and close to the creek.
- **RV Hookups:** Stagecoach Hill's full-service spots sell out fast—book early.
- **Glamping:** The Pop-Up BNB sets up pre-pitched tents with beds (no sleeping bag required).

#### Rules to Live By:

- **Generators:** Inverter-only after 11 PM.
- **Pets:** Allowed but leashed—no bar areas.
- **"No Colors":** Leave club patches at home.

**Tip:** Arrive early. "Gates open Monday—snag a shaded tent spot or level RV site before the crowds hit Thursday."

### Smooth Sailing at Check-In

- **Tixr Tickets:** Download passes beforehand—cell service is spotty at the gate.
- **Gate Strategy:** Arrive Mon-Wed to avoid lines. Staff scan tickets, issue wristbands, and direct you to camping zones.
- **On-Site Transport:** Walk or ride your bike—golf carts require a pricey Pit Pass.

**TMMR isn't about perfection—it's about the journey. Chat with strangers at Honky Tonk Central's fire pit, dance to live bluegrass, and let the Tennessee hills remind you why you ride.**

### Overloading Risks

Your rear shock might snap after hitting a pothole. This isn't fiction—overloading saddlebags isn't just inconvenient, it's dangerous.

(Continued on pg. 8)



## Oil Spots, Continued



As motorcycle touring surges riders are stuffing saddlebags with gear like never before. Overloading isn't just a handling nuisance—it's a safety crisis in slow motion.

### The Physics of Overloaded Bikes

Every motorcycle has a Gross Vehicle Weight

Rating (GVWR)—the max weight it can safely carry, including riders, fuel, and gear. Exceed this, and you're essentially turning your bike into a physics experiment gone wrong.

- **The 20% Rule:** Engineers warn that adding more than 20% of your bike's weight destabilizes handling. A loaded Harley Heritage Classic weighs ~750 lbs—add 150+ lbs of gear, and you're flirting with disaster.
- **Center of Gravity Shifts:** Heavy saddlebags raise your bike's balance point, making it tippy. Overloaded bags can cause unpredictable sway on mountain passes.
- **Component Stress:** Overloading strain frames, suspensions, and tires. A BMW R 1250 GS owner shared how frequent heavy loads led to \$1,200 in suspension repairs.

### Real-World Horror Stories

#### **Case 1: The Pothole That Broke the Shock's Back**

A rider loaded his Kawasaki Versys with 40 lbs per saddlebag (double the recommended limit). When they hit a dip at speed, the rear shock failed catastrophically. Manufacturer weight limits exist for worst-case scenarios—not just smooth highways.

#### **Case 2: The Great Saddlebag Detachment of 2015**

Harley-Davidson recalled 185,000 bikes after faulty saddlebag mounts caused bags to fly off mid-ride. While fixed now, it highlights how even OEM systems have limits. Aftermarket racks? They're only as good as their weakest bolt.

#### **Case 3: The Wobble That Went Viral**

YouTube is packed with "death wobble" videos in which overloaded bikes shake violently. Michelin's research confirms heavy rear loads lighten the front tire, reducing steering control by up to 30%.

### Rules for Safe Packing

#### **Weigh Everything**

GVWR math: (Bike weight + rider + passenger) – GVWR = your cargo limit. Example: A 500-lb Honda CB500X with a 180-lb rider has just 120 lbs for gear

#### **Pack Like a Master**

1. *Heavy items low:* Tools/fuel at bag bottoms
  2. *Bulky items high:* Sleeping bags on top
- Balance side-to-side:* A 2-lb difference can cause dangerous pulls  
*Tip:* Nelson Rigg's Hurricane bags have internal dividers to prevent gear shifts.

#### **Upgrade Your Gear (Smartly)**

- For minimalists: Giant Loop Coyote (16L, Dyneema-reinforced)
- Touring junkies: Harley's 2025 hard cases (lockable, 10kg/side limit)
- Budget pick: Viking Bags Shock Cutaway (slim profile prevents exhaust melt)

#### **Adjust Your Bike**

- Increase tire pressure to manufacturer's "loaded" specs
- Stiffen suspension preload (check your manual)
- Install subframe reinforcement kits if carrying >50 lbs regularly

**Practice Loaded Riding:** Empty parking lots are your friend. Test:

- Emergency stops from 30 mph
- Slow-speed U-turns
- Swerving around imaginary roadkill

### The Legal Trap Nobody Talks About

Exceeding GVWR isn't just risky—it's illegal. In 2024, UK authorities fined riders £5,000 for overloading. While U.S. enforcement is rare, insurers like Progressive can deny claims if overloads contributed to crashes.

"We've seen cases where detached luggage caused multi-car pileups," notes a Law Tigers attorney. "Riders get sued for negligence if their gear becomes a projectile."

Overloading saddlebags is like playing Russian roulette with physics. Whether you're commuting or crossing continents, respect your bike's limits.

Your bike's not a pickup truck. Pack light, pack tight, and live to ride another day.

(Continued on page 9)



Oil Spots, Continued

## Beginner-Friendly Motorcycles



If you're new to two wheels — or buying for someone who is — pick a bike that builds confidence. These five models maintain a low seat height, manageable weight, and forgiving throttle behavior.

**Quick checklist before you test-ride:** can you flat-foot one side? Can you walk the bike slowly beside you? How calm is the throttle at 5–15 mph? Try a slow U-turn and an emergency stop. If those feel ok, you're already ahead.

### **1. Honda Rebel 500 — best beginner cruiser**

**Specs:** 27.2" seat · ~421 lb · 471cc parallel-twin

The Rebel's seat is the lowest here, and seats matter. Lower seat = easier reach to pavement and faster confidence. The power delivery is smooth. The Rebel's low center of gravity shines in parking-lot practice.



### **2. Kawasaki Ninja 400 — best sport-bike starter**

**Specs:** 30.9" seat · ~366 lb · 399cc parallel-twin  
Light chassis, friendly power band, and sport-



bike looks. Shorter riders will find that the narrow seat helps them reach the ground. It's a "pivotal motorcycle" for beginners. Check seat comfort for longer rides and verify any clutch-spring updates on used models.

### **3. Yamaha MT-03 — best urban friendly pick**

**Specs:** 30.7" seat · ~368 lb · 321cc twin

Upright bars, light-weight, predictable throttle. That combo equals less fatigue and better city control. It's "very forgiving" and ideal for stop-and-go traffic. Try real-world city starts and slow clutch control — the MT-03 is designed for that environment.



### **4. Yamaha YZF-R3 — best for sporty progression**

**Specs:** 30.7" seat · ~373 lb · 321cc twin  
Sport-bike feel with less aggressive ergonomics

than higher-displacement supersports. It's a proven track platform, so you can learn cornering lines and still commute comfortably on weekends. Test highway comfort — the R3 wants revs at speed, so make sure the seating position suits your lower back on longer runs.

### **5. Kawasaki Z400 — best naked-city option**

**Specs:** 30.9" seat · ~370 lb · 399cc parallel-twin

Featuring the same strong engine as the Ninja 400, but with upright bars and wider grips. That makes low-speed balance and traffic filtering easier. Owners call it "flickable and easy to maneuver." Consider a softer seat if you plan on taking long commutes; aftermarket pads are commonly available and inexpensive.



### **Dealership test checklist (do these before you sign):**

1. Sit and flat-foot test.
2. Walk the bike off the stand to feel curb weight.
3. Practice low-speed clutch control and U-turns.
4. Check ABS feel if equipped.
5. Sit with both feet on the ground and test the side-stand reach.

Safe riding is how the bike fits your body and your life. These five models are consistently recommended by riders for a reason: they're forgiving, light enough to manage, and engineered to build skill. If you're buying, take two close contenders to the lot. Sit, walk, and ride. Then pick the one that gets you smiling at the first stoplight.

## GPS Hideouts to Protect Your Motorcycle From Theft



Thieves are relentless, and they've seen it all, but a tracker is only as good as its hiding spot.

(Continued on page 10)



## Why GPS Trackers Fail (And How to Fix It)

GPS trackers are great—until a thief rips yours out in 30 seconds. Outsmart them with stealth. Thieves spend less than two minutes searching for trackers, so your job is to make it impossible for them to find yours.

### Before diving into hiding spots, look at some basics:

1. **Accessibility vs. Discretion:** You need occasional access for maintenance, but thieves shouldn't spot it during a search.
2. **Weather Resistance:** Trackers exposed to rain or heat can fail. Get waterproof models or add silicone sleeves.
3. **Signal Strength:** Avoid metal-heavy areas (like near the fuel tank) that block GPS signals.
4. **Power Source:** Hardwired trackers draw from your bike's battery, while battery-powered ones need frequent charging. Choose based on your riding habits.

### Hiding Spots for GPS Trackers

1. **Inside the Handlebar Ends**  
Why it works: Hollow handlebars are perfect for mini trackers like the MoniMoto. Use epoxy to secure it inside the grip. Thieves rarely dismantle handlebars. Just ensure the tracker's antenna faces upward for signal clarity.
2. **Under the Fuel Tank**  
Stealth Level: High. Requires lifting the tank, which most thieves won't attempt mid-theft. Use heat-resistant adhesive to protect the tracker from engine heat.
3. **Behind the Headlight Housing**  
Ideal for bikes with bulky headlights like, Harleys. Zip-tie the tracker to the frame behind the light. Easy access for maintenance without compromising stealth.
4. **Inside a Fake Bolt**  
Modify a chrome bolt cap to hold a micro-tracker. Amazon sells waterproof bolt cases for \$10–20. Drawback is it's limited to small trackers like Apple AirTags.
5. **Under the Fender or Chain Guard**  
Why Thieves Miss It: Grime and Inaccessibility Deter Casual Searches. Waterproof the tracker—this spot is exposed to road debris.
6. **Inside the Tail Light Assembly**  
Perfect For: Sport bikes with integrated tail sections. Remove the tail light, nestle the

7. **Inside the Airbox**  
Rarely inspected. Cruisers often have ample airbox space. Ensure the tracker isn't choked by airflow restrictions.
8. **Battery Compartment (With a Twist)**  
Hide the tracker in a dummy battery case. Shield it from electrical interference with a Faraday pouch.
9. **Under the Seat**  
Thieves check here first. Place a decoy tracker (like an old phone) under the seat and hide the real one elsewhere.
10. **Inside the Fairings**  
Remove a fairing panel, secure the tracker with industrial Velcro, and reattach. Ensure the plastic fairing doesn't block GPS signals.

### Installation Tips

1. **Waterproof Like Your Life Depends on It:** Use silicone sealant or waterproof cases.
2. **Test Signal Strength Post-Installation:** Take a short ride and verify real-time tracking on your phone. Adjust placement if updates lag.
3. **Anti-Tamper Hacks:**
  - ✦ Use tamper-proof screws for panels.
  - ✦ Hide wiring along factory cable routes to avoid suspicion.
4. **Battery Life:**  
For wired trackers, connect to a switched power source (active only when the bike is on) to prevent battery drain.

In 2023, a guy recovered his stolen Yamaha MT-07 after police traced a tracker hidden inside the exhaust baffle. Thieves had removed the seat, battery, and fairings but missed the exhaust. Creativity beats convenience.

A GPS tracker isn't a "set and forget" solution—it's part of a layered defense. Combine it with a heavy chain lock, motion sensor lights, and common sense





## Five fun Facts about Motorcycling!

Submitted by Mary Kirkpatrick

Taken from: [Fun Facts Every Motorcyclist Should Know - Ride Vision](#)

### 1. Fun Fact 1: The First Motorcycle Was Made of WOOD!



**Pictured:** An 1885 Reitwagen at the Stuttgart Mercedes Benz Museum  
While many speculate over which 2-wheeled machine of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the first “true” motorcycle, most consider the “Reitwagen” (“Riding Car”) of 1885 to be the origin of modern motorcycles. Made by German inventors Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach, this single-cylinder primitive bike is considered one of the world’s first petroleum-powered transportation devices. Essentially a motorized bicycle with the pedals removed, the Reitwagen not only uses a wooden frame, but also wooden forks and wheels as well!

### 2. Fun Fact 2: Diesel Motorcycles Exist

**Image Credit:** [royalenfields.com](#)



This fun fact might be more of a painful one for petrol purists, but it’s true! The Royal Enfield Taurus is one example of a commercially produced diesel-powered motorcycle. Weighing in at 432lbs with a top speed of 65km/h, the Taurus might not be built for performance, yet the impressive mileage capacity, strong power to weight ration, rugged durability, and widely loved oddity of this 90’s motorcycle has given it a cult-like following among enthusiasts and collectors.

### 3. The Best-Selling Motorcycle Ever is NOT What You’d Expect...

**Pictured:** Honda Super Cub 110

Admittedly we’re wading into controversial waters here, but this fun motorcycle fact is actually arguably a scooter one. Clocking in at a respectable cc range of 49-125, the Honda Super Cub (or Honda Cub) is a worldwide favorite that has been in *non-stop production since 1958*. Celebrating an astonishing 100 million units produced in 2018, the iconic Honda model isn’t just the best-selling motorcycle/scooter ever, it’s the best-selling *vehicle* of all time!



### 4. The Harley “Hog” Came from Racing

**Image Credit:** [Wikimedia Commons](#)



Most riders around the world are familiar with the iconic Harley-Davidson term “hog” when referring to a motorcycle. However few riders know that this name actually came from Harley’s 1900’s racing team, the “Wrecking Crew.” The team allegedly had a small pig as a mascot, which one of the riders would place on the tank of their bike whenever it came time to do a victory lap. Legend has it that this is why the motorcycles themselves became known as “hogs” over time. In 1983, the “Harley Owners Group” or “HOG” was officially founded.

### 5. Yamaha’s Musical Beginnings

**Image Credit:** [global.yamaha-motor.com](#)

Sweet muffler music isn’t the only thing this brand giant makes, Yamaha, one of the best-known motorcycle and scooter producers in the world initially began as a piano manufacturer in 1887. However, the switch from music to motorcycles makes more sense than you might think when you look at who, and when, the company was making this pivotal shift...

In 1955, after WWII the company’s then-president Genichi Kawakami believed that in order to rebuild the country needed transportation more than pianos. Thus, Yamaha’s first motorcycle was created — the 125cc YA-1. Today Yamaha produces everything from motorcycles to swimming pools and wheelchairs (and still, high-quality pianos!).



And there you have it! 5 fast and fun motorcycle facts that are sure to impress, or at least surprise, your friends!

## What Does “1%” Mean in MC Subcultures?

Submitted By Traveler



You’ve seen the diamond patch, stitched defiantly onto a worn vest. You’ve heard the stories, seen the Hollywood portrayals. The “1%” symbol in motorcycle culture is instantly recognizable, radiating rebellion, danger, and brotherhood. But what does it *truly* signify? The truth is far more complex than the outlaw myth suggests.



The story starts at the infamous 1947 Hollister Gypsy Tour rally. While local papers reported manageable rowdiness, a single,

likely staged, LIFE magazine photo depicting a drunken rider amidst beer bottles ignited a national panic about “outlaw bikers.”

The legend claims the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA), desperate to salvage its image, declared “99% of motorcyclists are law-abiding citizens, implying the last one percent were outlaws.”

The AMA has consistently denied ever making that exact statement. Research suggests the “1%” label might have emerged later, possibly from a 1948 Riverside County Sheriff’s report or a 1960s AMA PR campaign. Regardless of its precise origin, the narrative took hold.

Crucially, certain clubs – feeling alienated or defiant –

didn’t shy away. They embraced the “1%er” label as a badge of honor. It became a potent symbol of non-conformity, a defiant middle finger to the AMA and mainstream society. Clubs like the Hells Angels and Outlaws adopted the diamond patch, hardening a collective identity rooted in rebellion.

### So...What Does “1%er” Truly Signify?

At its core, claiming the “1%” signifies an “outlaw” status – a deliberate rejection of mainstream societal rules and AMA sanctioning. Members often fiercely distinguish this from inherent “criminality,” arguing that the club itself isn’t criminal, even if individuals within it commit crimes.

However, law enforcement globally paints a different picture. Agencies like the FBI and DOJ classify major 1%er clubs (Pagans, Hells Angels, Outlaws, and Bandidos – the “Big Four,” plus others like Mongols and Vagos) as Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs), which are considered sophisticated criminal enterprises.

Evidence links them to organized crime: drug trafficking, violent crimes (murder, assault, extortion), weapons offenses, theft, and prostitution. Recent indictments (like the Bandidos RICO case in Houston) highlight ongoing, violent criminal operations. While not *every* member may be a hardened criminal, the association is undeniable and deeply ingrained in their public reputation and law enforcement focus.

### The Sacred Code of the Cut

For 1%ers, the patch isn’t bought; it’s blood, sweat, and time earned. The journey is grueling: Outlaw clubs are typically distinguished by their coveted three – patch back patch colors; top rocker – club name, club emblem, bottom rocker territory they claim.

**Hangaround:** Associating with the club, proving interest.

**Prospect:** A demanding probationary period (months to years). Prospects do menial chores, provide security, run errands for full members, learn club rules, and demonstrate unwavering loyalty. They might wear partial patches but *never* the full colors or diamond.

**Patched In:** Only after a unanimous vote by full members does a prospect earn their “colors” – the coveted three-piece back – often in a formal initiation. The 1% diamond may be awarded then or later for specific deeds.

(Continued on page 13)



## “1%” Continued

This vest and its patches are sacred club property, not the member’s. Disrespecting them – or worse, an *outsider* wearing them – is a grave offense, potentially leading to violent confrontation. Leaving the club? You surrender your colors. Membership is a lifetime commitment, demanding absolute priority over job and family, governed by strict bylaws and a paramilitary hierarchy (President, VP, Sgt. at Arms).

### Brotherhood, Fear, and Debate

Insiders often emphasize the brotherhood, loyalty, and sense of family found within the club. Many stress they avoid trouble with the public if shown respect.

Outsiders share stories of fear, intimidation, and unpredictable aggression, especially concerning disrespect to patches.”

The mantra “clubs don’t commit crimes, people in them do” is common, highlighting the tension between self-perception and external reality. Many also criticize media portrayals (like *Sons of Anarchy*) for unrealistic romanticism.

### Navigating the Encounter

Public perception is heavily shaped by media sensationalism (from *The Wild One* to modern crime headlines) and law enforcement warnings, creating a mix of fear and fascination. Safety advice from seasoned riders and forums is remarkably consistent:

Respect is Paramount: Maintain a calm, respectful demeanor. Avoid confrontation.

On the Road: Give groups ample space. Don’t cut into their formation. Pass only if signaled by a “tail gunner.” A nod or wave is appreciated.

In Public: Mind your own business. Never touch a bike or a member’s cut/patches. This is a cardinal sin.

Patches: NEVER wear 1%er patches or any MC patches if you’re not a legitimate member. This is asking for serious trouble.

### More Than a Label

That diamond patch isn’t just cloth and thread; it’s a declaration. Understanding its weight makes every encounter on the road a little clearer. In a world where the patch is sacred, respect is demanded, and the line between “outlaw” freedom and criminal enterprise is often perilously thin. It signifies a lifetime commitment to a culture with its own laws, hierarchies, and values.

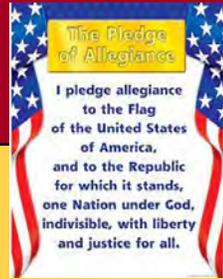
Where do you want to go this summer?

What roads do you want to travel?

Plan now... and share it with your Top Cat friends!

2026... Let’s Go!





## General Membership Meeting Minutes December 2nd, 2025

Respectfully Submitted  
by: Mary Kirkpatrick  
for Jane Smith

### President's Section: Gene Rigs- Meeting called to order at 7:00

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Guests – Don Kirkpatrick
- Announcements – None

### Vice President: Bozenna Haszlkiewicz

- No words of wisdom except be careful of cold, ice and snow.

### Past President: Wayne Kirkpatrick

- Voting for 2026 Board members will take place this evening. We will be using a written ballot, so we have a physical record.

### Safety: Mike Bradbury

#### Kaution Korner

- Illinois has the most stringent qualifications for motorcycle driver's license requirements. This is changing now to be consistent with other states. There are four DMV facilities in IL that cater to senior citizens.
- Efforts are being made to bring back the MSF 2-day classes and then receive a license at the end of the training course. These classes were shut down several years ago when a woman was killed at a training class.

No safety tip tonight. Mike will make a new schedule for 2026.

### Membership and Products: Ted Makarewicz

- Ted indicated we had an inquiry about membership, but after talking with the person they seemed more interested in making business relationships than joining the club to ride.
- Ted will take orders tonight for TC hats for \$20 + \$5 for initials. Will take orders until the end of December.

### Activities: Greg Smith

#### Recent Activities:

- November 22 – NISRA Fashion Show. Jim Wiseman indicated it was a great success. Best show yet. Next year, save the date for the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

#### Future Activities

- December 7 – Toys 4 Tots (Ted) This is a weather dependent event. Predictions are for snow and cold. Will meet at 9:00 at The Breakfast Club, have breakfast and then proceed to the toy drop-off in Chicago.
- January 18 – Hot Dog/Movie Night (Greg). We will meet at the Barrington Keller Williams office for some Chicago dogs and a classic movie with our fellow TC members. Watch for blast on more details.

by  
p.m.

- February 15 – Top Cats Annual Awards Banquet. New location this year at Grand Victoria Casino in Elgin. Dinner will be under \$40/person. More info to come in the new year.
- March 1 – GRASS Class at Keller Williams, Barrington. Feel free to invite non members to join us. The more motorcyclists know about riding, the better for all.
- August 3-10 – Sturgis Motorcycle Rally (Wayne & Bard). Save the dates if you're thinking about joining the group to Sturgis next year. Rooms have been reserved for our group. See article in December ROAR.

### Charity: Mary Kirkpatrick

- Nothing for now.

### 50/50 Raffle: Andy Haszlkiewicz

- No raffle tonight.

### Other:

- Ballots were tallied from this evening's voting. The 2026 Board members will be:
  - \* President: Gene Rigsby
  - \* Vice President: Bozenna Haszlkiewicz
  - \* Treasurer: Karin Toth
  - \* Secretary: Jane Smith
  - \* Director (Charity): Mary Kirkpatrick
  - \* Director (Safety): Mike Bradbury
  - \* Director (Membership): Ted Makarewicz
  - \* Director (Activities): Greg Smith

*A special thank you and farewell to Don and Cindy DeLor-do. Thank you for their service throughout the years as volunteers and Treasurer. They were presented with a pin and TC coin. They will be missed.*

Meeting was adjourned by Gene at 7:50 p.m.





## BOARD MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 9TH, 2025

Respectfully Submitted  
by: Jane Smith

### President's Section: Gene Riggsby

- The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. All Board members were present.

### Vice President: Bozenna Hasztrakiewicz

- \* Mike has looked into a possible picnic site to hold a 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary picnic at the Moraine Hills State Park in McHenry, at the Whitetail Picnic site. It has its own road to the site, own parking area, shelter and restroom on site. We can rent it for \$50. Mike suggested these dates as possibilities: 6/27, 7/11, and 7/18. After discussion, the 7/11 date was chosen. Mike will reserve this date with the park, and we can discuss food possibilities at a later date.
- \* Wayne has done a mock-up for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary patch and will forward this on to Bozenna.

### Past President: Wayne Kirkpatrick

- Elections to fill expiring Board terms were held at the December General Meeting. There were 16 members eligible to vote and 12 of these members were in attendance to vote.
- Welcome to the newest Board member, Karin Toth, who will be the new Treasurer for 2026.

### Treasurer: Don DeLordo/ Karin Toth

- Don has forwarded to Karin all the electronic financial files so she should have all the club's most current information and past years he has served as Treasurer.
- Looking for someone to take the post office box key to pick up mail occasionally. Wayne has 1 key now, but we need another volunteer to also help pick up mail. There should be an invoice coming for the rental of the PO box that needs to be paid before the end of the year.

### Activities: Greg Smith

#### Recent Events:

- November 22 – NISRA Lunch and Fashion Show. Good show. TC had a table of 10 that attended.
- December 7 - Toys 4 Tots (Ted). Scheduled breakfast and delivery of toys to parade route was cancelled due to cold, snowy weather.

#### Future Activities:

- January 18 – Chicago Dogs and Movie (Greg). Planning an afternoon enjoying some hot dogs, popcorn, and a movie at the Keller Williams office in Barrington.
- February 15 – 2026 Awards Banquet. Grand Victoria Casino in Elgin has been selected for the 2025 Awards Banquet. The price will be about \$38.00/per person. Menu choices were sent to the Board for their selections, and the final choices (3 entrees) will be decided on before sending out the invitations to club members.
- March 21 – Harley Davidson Museum and Lunch

(Wayne). Save the date. Details will be forthcoming.

- Ted suggested a chili cookoff. He will organize and look into using the Wauconda American Legion as a location.
- Mary indicated that Karin and Patrick had put together a multi-day ride for next summer in The Dells area. Suggestions of other places to see in the area are welcome. She will mentor them and develop a route.
- Lots of room on the calendar to schedule more activities for 2026. Keep ideas coming.

### Safety/RC: Mike Bradbury

- A GRASS class has been scheduled for March 1, 2026, at the Keller Williams office in Barrington. He has 3 trainers committed – looking for 1 more. Rolling Thunder members will be joining us also. Mike will bring flyers to next General Meeting to pass out at WSHD and Windy City dealers.
- Mike will schedule a Road Captain's meeting for February 22.
- Mike has enough Road Captains to do the Safety tips for the first part of the year. He will make up a schedule to cover the rest of the year.

### Membership/Products: Ted Makarewicz

- How do we get more members in the club to participate in club meetings and activities? Personally reach out to those we haven't seen lately and find out how they are, what's going on in their lives, etc. Give them that personal touch.
- Jane inquired if anyone had heard whether Bard or Mark Sullivan would be continuing their membership in 2026. Wayne said he would check with Bard and Mike will check with Mark.
- Ted mentioned the TC hats with initials will be ordered this month for those who have ordered and paid.

### Charity: Mary Kirkpatrick

- After a discussion of dates for 2026 Charity event, we decided to go back to a Saturday and chose June 13. Mary will check with Volo and WSHD to make sure this date will work for everyone.
- Sandra will design a Save the Date flyer for the event once the date is confirmed.
- It was suggested that we look into other fund-raising ideas such as a meat raffle or a Queen of Hearts raffle as additional ways to raise money for our charity.

### Secretary: Jane Smith

- Suggested that the ROAR be updated in 2026 with current member pictures.

**Meeting adjourned by Gene at 8:00 p.m.**

## New Year's Resolutions for Bikers!

By: Traveler



Every type of motorcycle rider can benefit from these resolutions. Motorcycling resolutions range from the practical (find the right insurance policy) to the adventurous (plan a cross-country road trip).

All New Year's resolutions are goals like; go to the gym more, stop smoking, start jogging, be kinder, etc. In our sport, we have resolutions that will make you a safer, more skilled, rider.

### 1. Get A Motorcycle License

If your New Year's goal is to learn to ride, the best place to begin is researching how to get a motorcycle license. Start by understanding what your local jurisdiction requires for a motorcycle license.

### 2. Buy A Motorcycle

Commit to 2026 being the year you finally purchase the new-to-you motorcycle you've been drooling over since childhood, the factory-fresh showroom model, or a basic certified pre-owned as your first bike..

### 3. Check Motorcycle Insurance

Motorcycle insurance is one thing every rider needs to legally ride on the streets. So why not take the off-season (unless you are a diehard winter rider) to get the right insurance\_for your bike? You can save money on a policy and ensure you're covered in an unforeseen mishap. With the right insurance, you'll be back on the road as soon as possible without paying high out-of-pocket costs.

### 4. Take (Or Retake) A Rider's Safety Course

Motorcycle Safety Courses teach the foundations for better riding techniques. The introductory courses are perfect for prospective and new riders with only a few miles under their belt. If you've never been on a motorcycle before, this is your chance to try one out. A bonus is that a passing grade allows you to skip the road test when getting your "M" endorsement in most states.

For motorcycle veterans, advanced courses teach (or re-teach) more technical fundamentals. Check out a Harley-Davidson® Riding Academy or the Motorcycle Safety Foundation website to see what's available in our area and, attend a Group Riding and Safety Seminar (GRASS). The best part? If you were wondering how to lower your motorcycle insurance in 2026, completing a training or safety class may qualify you for a discount.

### 5. Practice Your Fundamentals

Even though you've been riding for a long time, you can still brush up on some slow-speed fundamentals. Go to an empty parking lot for ten minutes once a week to practice counter-steering swerves, smooth throttle control, perfecting your feel of your friction zone, and stopping quickly. If you have any cones or marking devices, set up a course for yourself to weave, dodge, and practice measured figure 8s. This type of practice is like exercise; you're building muscle memory that will be useful in all situations. Also, check with a dealership that has a course already set up for you to use when they aren't using it for teaching.

### 6. Choose A Weak Point And Work On It

No one is perfect. Everyone has weak points that we can improve on with regular practice.

For 2026, why not perfect one of the weaker areas of your riding? It does not have to be about your riding technique. It could be maintenance-related, such as checking your tire pressure before you ride or forgetting to change your oil on schedule. Better yet, consider taking a refresher GRASS seminar to improve your riding game.

### 7. Physical Fitness for Riding

Fitness is a New Year's goal for many riders. Training with an end purpose in mind may be just the motivation you need to get into a lifelong routine. Whether it's stamina on long rides, handling tight turns, or reacting to unexpected situations, a strong, flexible, and well-conditioned body is key to safety and comfort. Making physical fitness a priority in 2026 can lead to a noticeable improvement in your riding performance. Focus on enhancing your endurance and strength with exercises that improve core stability, flexibility, and leg strength. These will improve your riding skills and reduce injury and fatigue on long rides.

### 8. Pre-Ride Safety Routines

Before every ride, get in the habit of running through a quick checklist. A one-minute scan of your tires, brakes, lights, and fluids can catch issues before they become real problems.

### 9. Upgrade Your Safety Gear

Whether you are ATGATT (all the gear all the time) or just pop on a helmet, it's essential not to skimp on your motorcycle gear—it can save your life. Investing in the best equipment you can afford is worth it because you never know when you'll need it. Breakthroughs in technology mean that armor from makers like D30 and SAS-TEC is ultra-light, ultra-strong, and fits under regular clothing. Helmets, too, are getting lighter and stronger every year. Wearable airbags are available to the public (not just for MotoGP riders!). The average motorcycle helmet can be safe for up to five years of use provided it has not been dropped on the ground, involved in an accident, or cared for improperly. Bottom line: your helmet is designed to absorb an impact once. Once that happens, it's time to purchase a new one.

(Continued on page 17)



## Resolutions, Continued...

### 10. Comprehensive Maintenance Check

Too often, riders neglect this crucial step because they just want to ride. We've all been guilty of it, which is why it makes our New Year's resolution list for 2026. Checking your owner's manual is a significant first step to see what maintenance your bike needs. Here are a few of the things we also check when preparing for motorcycle riding season:

- Adjust mirrors to proper riding positions.
- Check the oil level. Add oil if necessary.
- Check controls to make sure they operate properly. Operate the front and rear brakes, throttle, clutch and shifter. All controls should operate freely without binding.
- Check steering for proper operation by turning the handlebars through the full operating range. Handlebars should turn smoothly without binding.
- Check tire condition, pressure and motorcycle loading. Incorrect pressure and excessive loading can lead to tire or wheel failure, and can affect handling and stability.
- Check all electrical equipment and switches including the headlamp, stop lamp, turn signals and horn for proper operation.
- Check for any fuel, oil or hydraulic fluid leaks.
- Visually check drive belt for wear or damage.
- Service your motorcycle as recommended in your owner's manual.

### 11. Learn To Use Hand Signals

Effective communication with other road users is critical when you're on a motorcycle, and the proper use of hand signals is not something to overlook when you're on two wheels. Adhering to recommended hand signal protocols will elevate visibility, minimize misunderstandings, and contribute to a safer ride. A GRASS class or even a refresher GRASS class helps this issue.

### 12. Pack an Emergency Kit

Build a small emergency kit to stash in your saddlebags. Toss in a multi-tool, first aid supplies, a printed insurance card, and a phone charger. ALWAYS check your First Aid kit for expiration dates.

### 13. Set a Mileage Goal

Maybe you simply need to install saddlebags to take along your work clothes on a daily ride to work. It may be time to upgrade to a new bike better suited to your commute. If you want to increase your riding time, set a realistic mileage goal for the year. Track your miles, either through your motorcycle's odometer or a mobile app, and mark small milestones. This can help motivate you to spend more time doing what you love. Often, small changes are the ticket to more miles.

### 14. Plan A Trip

Getting out for an overnight trip will change your thoughts about your motorcycle. The challenge of riding long dis-

tances is a great way to put your skills to the test. Try riding one of America's famous roads alone or with friends. You can hear the Front Range Ride, Sturgis, the Tail of the Dragon, and any Top Cats' Overnighter calling - just make sure you know what to pack for a motorcycle trip.

### 15. Attend A Bike Rally

Even if you go alone, you'll likely leave with new friends. Rallies are places where people gather and talk about their bikes, share food and drink, and have a good time doing what they love. If Daytona and Sturgis aren't quite your scene, try one of the many Top Cats rides for 2026.

### 16. Share Your Love Of Riding

When you truly love something, it's easy to want to share it. Make 2026 the year you help others discover the joys of riding and invite friends to join Top Cats. Get your significant other riding gear so they can come with you, or encourage a friend to learn how to ride. Make sure to review your insurance policy to determine if someone else can ride your motorcycle. If you feel passionate about motorcycle riding, consider training to teach a rider safety course. You'll help a new generation of riders develop crucial skills for the road.

### 17. Document Your Rides

Capture the journey or track your ride! Documenting your rides, whether through a journal, blog, or photography, can enhance your connection to the experience. Looking back on where you've been at year's end and what you've encountered along the way can be inspiring and might even encourage you to take on more riding adventures.

### 18. Discover New Routes

Explore new roads and routes. Breaking out of your usual riding routine and experimenting with fresh routes can renew your passion for riding, test your skills, and introduce you to breathtaking scenery, new communities, and unique road conditions. Lead a ride as a Top Cats Road Captain or simply recommend a route to a Top Cats Road Captain. To keep things exciting, set a goal to find at least one new route every quarter.

### 19. Add an Anti-Theft Device

Start by adding an anti-theft device like a disc lock or GPS tracker. It adds peace of mind and may even help lower your insurance rate.

### 20. Build a Post-Incident Action Plan

Create a plan for handling an insurance incident. Know what photos to take, who to call, and how to file a claim.

### 21. Go Digital with Documents

Add such documents to your phone as; drivers license, registration, insurance, NOK, medical info. It's easy to access in a pinch. Keep digital copies on your phone and hard copies to your saddlebag.

Typical New Years Resolutions are promises to yourself. Motorcycle related resolutions are promises to you, your co rider and to your fellow riders. Happy New Year!



## Distinguished and Steadfast Board of Directors Election Results! 2026

The 2026 Board will be  
as follows:

President, Gene Rigsby

Vice President,  
Bozenna Haszlakiewicz

Treasurer, Karin Toth

Secretary, Jane Smith

Director-Safety,  
Mike Bradbury

Director-Charity  
Mary Kirkpatrick

Director-Membership  
Ted Makarewicz

Director-Activities  
Greg Smith  
2026

*congratulations*



## January Birthdays and Anniversaries!

- 1 Wayne Kirkpatrick
- 2 Noelle Rigsby
- 11 Jim Wiseman
- 15 Jim Chevalier

Happy Days to our Top Cats Celebrities  
for January!!

Let us know your special dates so  
that we can celebrate with you!

No January  
Anniversaries  
(That we know of...)



*Top Cats Buy, Sell, Trade....  
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good quality at fair prices!*

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Put your items here and get the  
word  
out that  
you have  
stuff to  
sell!





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Standard of Excellence  
**WE ACCEPT ALL INSURANCES**

**GM: PATRICK  
MANAGER KARIN**

Let's support our New Members!  
Talk to Patrick and Karin for any  
work you may need done on your  
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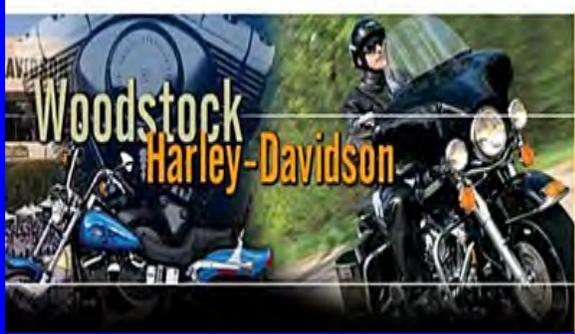


*We will need a new picture for 2026!  
Come ready to be photographed, to  
network with one another....*

*And Be Thankful!*



## Support the TOP CATS Patrons



Woodstock HD and Staff Support our Top Cat's Ride for Dreams!

### Membership Has Its Privileges!

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

**Sign-up your favorite merchant today!**

GRASS Classes are held at the Keller -Williams Offices!

Thanks, Greg for supporting our Top Cat's Safety Class!



**Greg Smith**

**Keller - Williams Success Realty**

**600 Hart Rd.  
Suite 105  
Barrington, IL  
60010**

**847.870.0957**

**Have one of our own Top Cats work with you to buy or sell your home!**

### [Knight Performance \(Harleys only\)](#)

Contact: **Eric Knight**

304 N. Johnson St

Harvard, IL 60033

[ericknight1@hotmail.com](mailto:ericknight1@hotmail.com)

(815) 770-0302

### [TAK MC \(Primarily Harleys\)](#)

Contact: **Tim Harwood**

28841 N. Darrell Road

McHenry, IL 60051

[timharwood11@yahoo.com](mailto:timharwood11@yahoo.com)

(708) 525-6316

### [WAR Performance \(All makes plus dyno and storage\)](#)

Contact: **Mike Witt**

120 Grant Highway

Marengo, IL 60152

NISRA Families have so many wonderful opportunities because of the NISRA staff... Can we find ways to continue to help them?





## RIDES & EVENTS

Date	Ride/Event	Location	Destination	Time	Leader
Tuesday, January 6	General Meeting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 pm	Rigsby
Tuesday, January 13th	Board Meeting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 pm	Rigsby
Sunday, January 18th	Movie and Hot Dogs!	Barrington	Keller Williams 500 Hart Dr	4:00 pm	G. Smith
Tuesday, February 3rd	General Meeting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00 pm	Rigsby
Tuesday, February 10th	Board Meeting	Palatine	Alley 64	7:00pm	Rigsby
Sunday, February 15th	TC Banquet	Grand Victoria Casino	Elgin	4:30 pm	Smith/DeLordo
Ideas?	Talk to	Greg or Jim	And get them	On the	Calendar!

All ride and event information along with the Photo Gallery can be found at [www.TopCats.org](http://www.TopCats.org).



### Barrington Library

#### Location and Hours

505 N. Northwest Highway  
Barrington, IL 60010

847-382-1300

[balibrary.org](http://balibrary.org)

See the Top Cats Archive

## 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.

Submit your ad along with contact information to the ROAR editors at [ROAR@TOPCATS.org](mailto:ROAR@TOPCATS.org)



# ROAR



**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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