

The Siren

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA
4TH QUARTER ~ 2013

Many Thanks

Michael Nichelini, Vice President
Sergeant of Police
Vallejo Police Department

You may have heard by now that we did not have a quorum of active member at the convention in order to hold the annual meeting. As such, the Board of Directors remained in place at the end of the convention and no vote took place. So, you will find in this issue a ballot to be returned for voting on three new Directors as three have termed out.

I'd like to take the time to thank Mike Rores for his service as the President of MMOC. His leadership helped continue our mission of promoting traffic safety. I'd also like to thank William Loveless and Bob Lobach for their service over the last year.

By now you should have received your 2013-2014 membership card in the mail. We are confident that new system is in place and will run much smoother next year.

The Convention is over and a good time was had by all.....well, all that attended and that wasn't many. I do need to thank Rich Bailey and Bob Lobach for putting on a great Convention. Lot's of work goes into any event and especially the convention. They coordinated with the Lighthouse Lodge and put together some excursions for us to enjoy. Thanks Rich and Bob!

Speaking of hard work. I purposely left Cliff Heanes out of the previous paragraph because he deserves his own. You probably don't know, but

Cliff is basically holding this entire organization together. He is keeping track of all members, filling store orders, checks the PO Box, the voice mail messages and whatever else needs

to be done. The man is a machine. He did a fantastic job with the Convention and continues with all the other heavy lifting. When you see him, e-mail him or leave him a message, give him your thanks. He deserves it.

At the Convention, we kicked around many thoughts on why... How does an organization that used to have over 1,000 members and a full time staff end up with less than 25 active members at the Convention? I realize this is a common theme with many organizations. I just wish there was a fix. Location, dates, activities, notice, Facebook, Twitter? What? What is it? What can we do? We would love to hear from you. I am happy to report that one of our members has already done some extensive research for a Convention spot next year. We really appreciate the suggestions and the legwork. We hope to get the word out in the next Siren so more folks can clear their schedules and plan to attend the 85th Annual



Convention most likely held down south.

Speaking of thanks, I want to remind everyone that your Directors and Support Staff are volunteers and, are just that - volunteers. I'm probably the only one with a full time, full time job, but everyone else (other than Brown) has a pretty full plate. We spend many hours working on MMOC stuff. Making sure the mission and goals of the MMOC live on. It is not a glamorous job and we are not perfect. Moving the "home office" to Northern California was a bigger task than anticipated. Now that it is complete and the logistics settling in, we are confident that things will run smoother from here. We are working with new fund-raising plans which is always difficult and has had some "issues" in the past. Without it, however, we won't be able to last forever. Someday we may have to re-evaluate our mission. We may transition into more of a fraternal organization. There is an ad in every Siren for free traffic safety coloring books and we are looking into other items. I don't get any requests. I know many departments are getting rid of their Traffic Divisions and School Resource Officers.

Whatever the case, you can rest assured we have the well being of the organization and its members as our number one priority.

I'm always looking for photos and other interesting things to use in *The Siren*. If you have some cool shots of MMOC members, your motor units or whatever, send them to me at the email below and look for them in an future issue of *The Siren*.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, my "door" is always open. Feel free to leave me a message at (707) 948-6662 or send me an e-mail at mnichelini@mmoc.org.

Believe it or not the Holidays are quickly approaching. Take time to enjoy your family and a little time for yourself. Take time to remember those that made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom and safety. Take time to think about those that have to work and can't share these events with their families. And finally, say a little prayer for those members of the military that are a long way from home so we can all sleep better in ours.

Mike

Butterfly City

Cliff Heanes, Quartermaster & Membership
Retired Police Officer
Oakland Police Department

This year's 84th Annual Municipal Motorcycle Officers Convention was held in the beautiful and romantic city of Pacific Grove from September 9th through September 12th. Pacific Grove sits on the tip of the Monterey Peninsula sandwiched between the iconic cities of Carmel and Monterey. Pacific Grove is well known for its rocky coastline and scenic beauty as well as its many stately mansions, many of which have been turned into bed and breakfast inns. On the one side is the world famous Monterey Bay Aquarium and the shopping mecca of Cannery Row. On the other side is the wonderful city of Carmel with its quaint shops and restaurants.

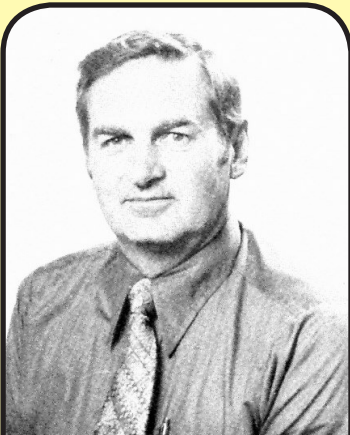
This venue is very familiar to many MMOC members as the site for the Annual Pacific Grove Police Motorcycle Competition that ran in conjunction with the City's Good Old Days Celebration. The competition was the idea of Pacific Grove's then Chief Tom Maudlin and Officers Richard Cox and Craig Mosher and began in April 1987. It continued every year until 2007 at which time the City could no longer afford to support the event. The trophy is currently housed at the Vallejo Police Department won by our very own Vice President, Mike Nichelini, and his partner Sergeant Kevin Hamrick.

The competition was preceded by a white glove and cotton swab inspection of the competing motorcycles and officers conducted by the United States Marine Corps. This was followed by the event in which a pair of officers from a specific department would ride synchronized through a long coned course side by side. They were judged by their accuracy through the course, their synchronization with each other and their time. Every year the course changed and was only revealed to the riders the day before the competition.

In Memory *R.H. "Dick" Smith* *1931 - 2013*

R. H. "Dick" Smith, Retired Police Lt. Passed away July 16, 2013.

Dick was a gentle man but stood his ground when need be. Dick joined the Pasadena Police Department on September 13, 1954 retiring on June 20, 1980 working almost every detail you could imagine. R. H., as he was called, had two favorites though, being part of the Motor Squad and being a Team leader on a special team called the North East Regional Burglary Investigative Team, or as it was called "Nerbit".



LT. RICHARD H. SMITH
NERBIT



Dick joined MMOC on March 20, 1958 as a riding Lieutenant, 3M10, and was of "Active" status in the organization. In 1988 he was nominated for a place on the MMOC Board of Directors and he gladly assumed the duties becoming an intricate part of MMOC handling many issues and working hand in hand with the then office manager "Pinky" Meredith (retired L. A. P. D.). In 1970 Dick was raised to the position of President and ran a tight ship in his mild mannered way.

Dick will be sorely missed but remembered for his dedication to duty and his loyalty to those he worked with and supervised throughout his tenure. R. H. "Dick" Smith will not be forgotten.



Before helicopters were commonplace, the Police Department deployed fixed-wing aircraft to patrol the coast and the skies above Oakland. Since the aircraft had to land at the fledgling Oakland Airport far from City Hall, their reports were delivered to Police Headquarters by a motor officer. Note the "soft cap" and CHP style uniform that was common for municipal traffic officers prior to World War II, even when their patrol "brothers" wore OPD blue.

OFFICIAL BALLOT



Please use this sheet as your official ballot for the director positions for the 2013-2014 year. There are three (3) open director seats. You may also use the space provided to nominate and vote for other members. Place a check mark in the box next to the names of the listed candidates or write in of your choice.

Only mark three (3) boxes.

Voting is restricted to ACTIVE MMOC members only. Associate and Honorary members do not vote.

☐ **Matthew Greb** - Retired Oakland PD - Matt worked various assignments within the police department but spent most of his career in the Traffic Division working as a solo motor in Enforcement, Taxi and Commercial units. Matt currently teaches various motorcycle classes at the Alameda County Sheriffs Office.

☐ **Bill Focha** - Former Oakland PD and Retired Sonoma County SO - Billy worked various assignments within the Oakland Police Department and the Sonoma County Sheriffs Office. Billy spent many years working solo motors at OPD and was a fatal accident investigation team. Billy was THE motorman for the Town of Windsor for many years and served as the President of the Sonoma DSA. Billy currently owns and operated North Coast Truck Inspections.

☐ **Mark Murray** - Retired San Leandro PD - Mark is a Past President of MMOC and retired motor officer from the City of San Leandro. Mark worked commercial vehicle enforcement and was a fatal collision investigator.

☐ Write in Candidate _____

☐ Write in Candidate _____

☐ Write in Candidate _____

Mail your completed ballots to:

MMOC
PO Box 531
San Lorenzo, CA 94580

Ballots will be separated from their envelopes and then counted by two different staff members.

The Call of the Sea

Rich Bailey, Director
Retired Police Officer
San Jose Police Department



We survived another great convention in MONTEREY!! On Sunday, everyone began to arrive and join up in the hospitality suite above the pool. Your outgoing officers met for a board meeting and then everyone convened for a nice dinner at the beautiful Whaling Station Restaurant on Main Street just up from the Monterey Bay Aquarium. The restaurant is famous for their choice steaks including a porter house priced over \$100!!! I don't think any of us have met a cow that was worth spending that type of money!

On Monday, we opened the convention with registration and then having a nicely prepared "Taco Bar" buffet as our luncheon. Afterwards we gathered together for the annual meeting which, by the way did not have enough members attending to form a quorum. So your board resorted to open discussion. That evening, we talked Billy into taking us down to Fisherman's Wharf across from the Custom House and let us off to window shop and grab some famous clam chowder. One group of us actually formed a table of 6 to eat a delicious meal at the world famous Fisherman's Grotto.

On Tuesday, MMOC members piled into Billy's van again for a morning tour of 17 Mile Drive. We cruised past Spyglass Hill and Pebble Beach Golf course. We enjoyed breathtaking views of the Pebble Beach coastline including the Lone Cypress tree before returning to Lighthouse Lodge.

At noon time, we boarded the bus again for a shopping trip to Carmel and lunch at Clint Eastwood's former eatery, The Hogsbreath Inn. ONLY LaRene Hodson came back with a unique Christmas ornament inscribed with the letters "MMOC" and "2013" to commemorate her visit.

With the evening upon us, we all gathered for a tasty pizza at Monterey's "Giovanni's Pizza" place on Foam Street. This place was recommended by our very own Past President Dick Tush, who unfortunately could not enjoy it with us due to unexpected eye surgery. Everyone raved about their pizza.

After pizza and beverages, we returned to Lighthouse Lodge and retired to the Hospitality Room above the pool. A group engaged in a fast and furious game of dice in "Left, Right, Center." We almost had to call the local police to quiet the group down as they were having so much fun!

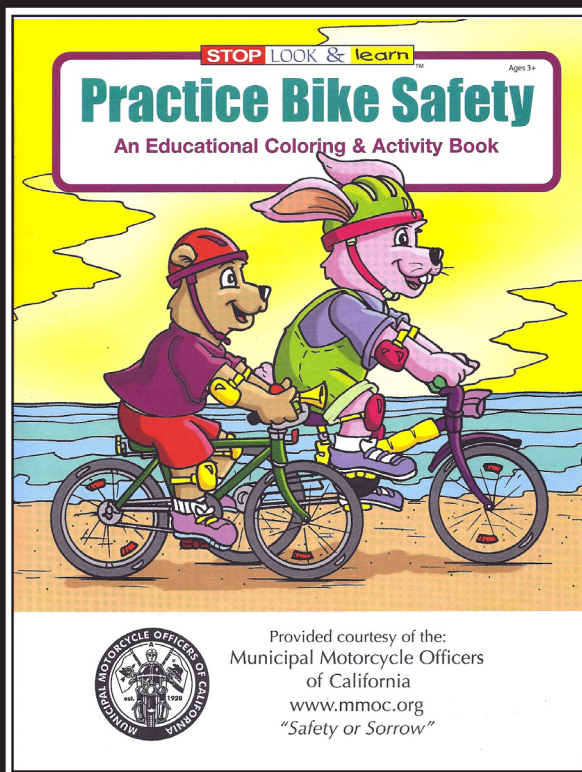
Next day we toured again and Billy took some members down to Cannery Row and to the Aquarium. There was also a trip out to Pt. Lobos for some whale watching as the Blue Whales and Humpbacks are visiting the Monterey Bay area. Others remained behind and enjoyed a relaxing day before dressing for the evening dinner. The banquet was set up in the Cypress Room and dinner featured Prime Rib and Salmon, music and dancing.

On Thursday, everyone said their "Good-byes" and headed out, ending a great and exciting convention.





84th Annual Convention
Pacific Grove, CA



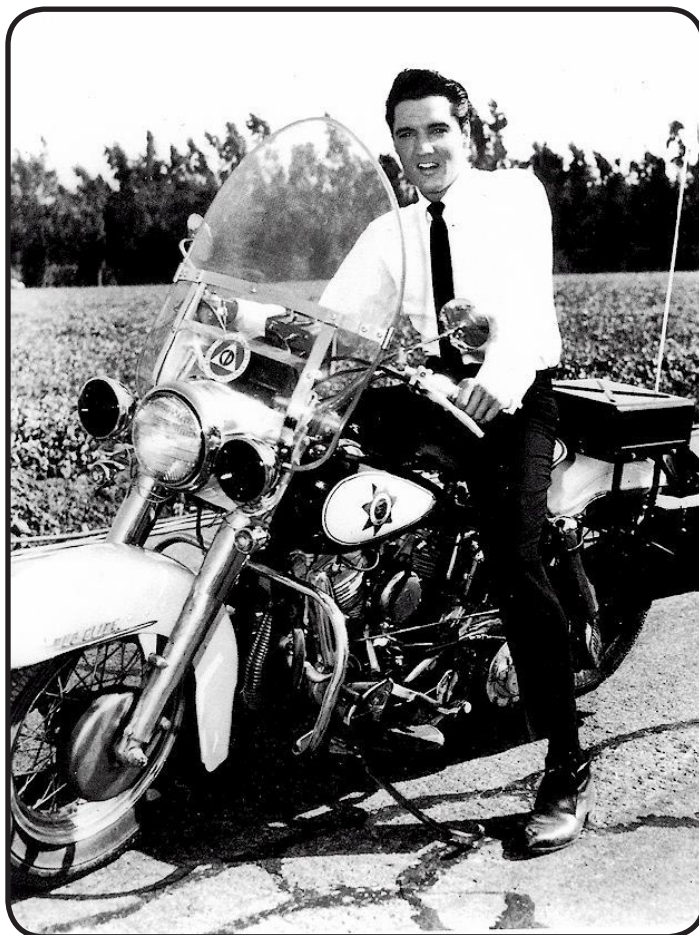
MMOC Bicycle Safety Coloring Books

We still have bicycle safety coloring books available for kids. If your Department has a use for some coloring books to use for making presentations to schools let us know.

Contact Michael Nichelini
mnichelini@mmoc.org
(707) 948-MMOC



Ridin' With the King



This picture of Elvis was in the Guinness Book of World Records in the early 1970's with a reference to how many records Elvis has sold. The officer involved related the following:

He was a car officer working the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles and observed a car parked on the street with a large crowd around it. He stopped and observed an occupant in the parked car and approached him. It was Elvis and he explained that his car broke down and he was very uncomfortable with the crowd and would not exit his vehicle. The Officer escorted Elvis to his patrol car and called a tow truck for Elvis' vehicle. After the vehicle was towed the officer drove Elvis to his Los Angeles estate.

Elvis was enormously grateful and wanted to give the officer a reward for rescuing him, but the officer refused. Ultimately Elvis went to the West LA CHP office and presented the Captain with a generous check for the Widows and Orphans Fund with the stipulation that the donation would remain anonymous.

At some point after the Elvis rescue, the Officer, now a Motor Officer, was issued a new CHP Harley Davidson. Knowing Elvis' fondness for Harleys, he rode to Elvis' estate to show off his new ride. Elvis climbed on and someone at his estate snapped the picture.

Swan Song

Dennis HOS Brown, Touring Executive Ride Director
Retired Police Officer
Oakland Police Department

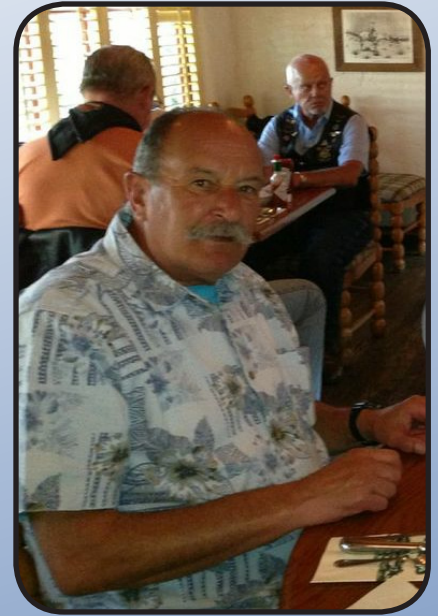
Your Mileage May Vary

As the crow flies, Gilroy to Bakersfield: 157.5 miles. Same debarkation and terminus points via freeway and primary roads: 216 miles. The scenic, memorable and no-doze MMOC road-path: 371 miles.

Buried deep within a chasm in central California lies a winding ribbon of asphalt roadway encapsulated by the heavenly Los Padres National Forest mountain range on the west and beautiful and pastoral oak-studded pastures and rich-soil farmland on the east. Mere miles from the Pacific Ocean's cooling salt air breeze, our 24 motors and lone chase vehicle are meandering through this hidden metropolis of ranchettes and bazillion dollar estates which begins in Monterey and terminates in Greenfield, just north of King City. We accessed this wonderment of Laureles Grade Rd. (G20) and Carmel Valley Rd. (G16) after a leisurely ride from our overnight stay in Gilroy, the meet and greet point where riders from 4 states converged. This day we're in solitude on a path seldom traveled and almost designed for single-track travel. We've all seen wealth, yet rarely in such a bucolic setting. As we merge back onto U.S. 101 we have an 11 mile sprint to our lunch stop at the excellent Mediterranean themed Stravaganza Grill, 611 Canal Street in King City. Within 15 minutes, our two groups of riders were one, and with 114 miles in the log book, lunch time.

Let's take a gander at the suspect leather-clad ensemble sitting round-robin with kissers aglow from sensory and palate overload: From Broadmoor PD, returning Queen Bee Mary Ann Mann; Pasadena PD's verbose Past President of MMOC Terry Blumenthal, San Jose PD's cackling Paul Salerno and Jerry and Robbie Albericci; Contra Costa County S.O.'s Herman Rellar; from San Francisco Doug Foss with Anna, Al Luenow and Ed Callejas; current President of MMOC Alameda County S.O.'s Mike Rores and wife Jeanie; representing LAPD is Herr Baron Latzsch and the Williams clan of father CK, sons Ken with wife Gwen and Ryan and his lovely chase vehicle driving wife Cam. Bakersfield was represented by Steve Armbruster and Chris Norman. Rhoda and yours truly along with Cliff Heanes and wife Mickie tried to represent Oakland PD along with Cliff's Honorary brother Jeff and Honorary gourmet sausage company owner Nick Nicosia, who has so aptly supplied our annual Cioppino Feed for years. Another welcome addition to our ride this year is Huron PD Sgt. Chuck Rabaut and wife Theresa and San Jose Airport aviation company owner Doug Bensing. Pilot and Photographer extraordinaire Phil Ponzo returned once again to capture each of our missteps and tomfoolery on Kodachrome 400.

An unseasonably cool 90 degree afternoon is refreshing as we once again mount up and seek the remote sweeping turns of G14 (Jolon Rd., Interlake Rd., Nacimiento Lake Dr., Godfrey Rd., etc.) through Fort Hunter Liggett then onto the more challenging series of on-camber, undulating roller coaster switchbacks skirting Lake Nacimiento. Perfect tarmac and numerous elevation changes in pastoral countryside give way to our merge into rustic Paso Robles for a short freeway trek to the new and excellent Holiday Inn Express @ Atascadero and night number two. We've just completed 191 road miles of extraordinarily scenic back country which shall provide hours of discussion, you know, like mine's faster than yours, mine's bigger than yours, why such a fast pace, etc., etc. ad nauseam! The women are giddy over a two-plus hour indoor wine and cheese tasting party; therefore, we of the male persuasion are too, as we bake poolside telling war



stories and lies.

At our requisite morning riders' meeting in sunny 65 degree weather, we discuss our route to Bakersfield and the remote possibility of having to don a cool-vest later if temperatures rise drastically inland. For now, we're off to the coast via beautiful fog shrouded Ca. 41 over the summit at Devil's Gap and then break out 16 miles later into Morro Bay. Socked in and mere feet from the Pacific Ocean with temps hovering in the low 50's, we traveled through their verdant state park to Los Osos Road and back to US 101.

Within 60 miles of departure it's time to top off several bikes in the coastal berg of Nipomo before an inland jaunt of 90 miles to lunch. Standing within spitting distance of me, and gas nozzle in hand, someone who failed listening comprehension 101 has chattering teeth while wearing his mesh-tex jacket and water soaked cool-vest which has naturally gravity flowed to his crown jewels. Hypothermia and shrinkage aside, I assured Herr Foss he'll begin to blow dry in the next hour-and-one-half as we now tackle the warmer climes of Ca. 166 and then Ca. 119 into Taft! This beautifully winding road that once again wends its way over the Los Padres National Forest and through the Carrizo Plain National Monument is a contradiction unto itself. No cars, no services, no residences, no trees, a lot of nothing, and hundreds of square miles of scrub brush in dry creek beds; yet an adventuresome-motorcyclist's delight! Polar opposites of fresh grassy aromas



and petroleum distillates compliment one sense, the long and winding ascent to the 3,000 foot summit and corresponding steep, short and high G-load descent into Taft tickles other fancies. Now to placate our palates: Jo's Family Restaurant in Taft was a wonderful find thanks to Google. Serving this oilfield community of blue-collar workers until 1400 hrs. daily, a simple phone call 48 hours in advance had our group of 31 seated in a huge back room with multiple waitresses serving two long tables of hungry riders' delicious Mexican and American dishes. There was love in the air too. Cliff Heanes "Touring" group spewed accolades of route choice and serene pace while some of my "Sport Touring" flock waxed eloquent of minimal traffic, steep lean angles and great line-of-sight on sinewy Ca.

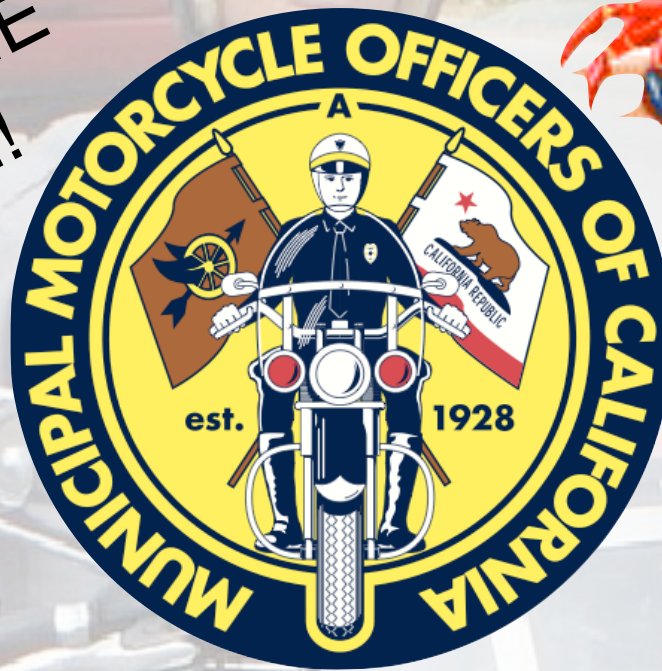


166. Ed Callejas thanked me profusely for our choice of cuisine, too. "Great Mexican food in the middle of nowhere", Si Señor. All too soon it was time to vacate our air conditioned bliss en masse and ride the last 36 miles to Bakersfield in uncommonly cool 95 degree weather. A nice respite from the seasonal norm of 105+, it's OK to don your cool-vest now, Doug! Oh, I forgot, it's already on.

An early arrival into Bakersfield finds us poolside (where else?) at the Best Western Crystal Palace where one and all congregate to unwind after two days on the road. Within minutes of the first verbal salvos, out of the lobby came LAPD's J.J. and Julie Leonard, a very pleasant surprise! You see, J.J. had been under the weather for a few months and a couple weeks before we left, he made the command decision to not push it and wait 'till next year. Then, to cement the issue, a week later Baron Laetzsch called him to see how he's doing and break the news he's got to cancel at the 11th hour too due to total brake failure on his GL1500 that requires parts from the fatherland. With that, JJ said to drive from Show Low, Arizona, pick up his Harley and ride it! It truly pays to have a class-act friend and generous former Motor partner.forgo the ride but show up in a cage to share in the camaraderie! Now we had an L.A. trio entertaining with fables of decades past and 20 or more other talking heads competing for bragging rights. Most of the women sought refuge in the expansive pool, far removed from the manly B.S. that could have backed-up the

**MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA
PRESENTS**

**SAVE THE
DATE!**



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MARCH 8, 2014

**SAN JOSE POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION HALL
1151 North 4th Street ~ San Jose, CA**

**Tickets: \$45 per person ~ \$50 per person after March 1st
Hosted cocktails, Cioppino, Pasta, Salad & Bread**



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**1355 North 4th Street ~ San Jose, CA
(800) 453-5340 or www.clarionsj.com**

**Room rate \$89.00 if booked by February 22, 2014
Mention MMOC**

See our website for updates: www.mmoc.org

most modern of sewage treatment plants!

All too soon it was time to sashay next door to the Buck Owens Crystal Palace, stomp our feet to live country music and partake of God's own seared beef. And while the most intelligent of our flock ordered lamb chops and rare beef, a few twits were later overheard grumbling about the fresh fish entrees they ordered. Hellooooooooooooo, a geography lesson: Last time I checked, Bakerspatch is in the middle the central valley's largest cattle and sheep raising region, faaaaaar removed from a deep sea port or large fresh water lake, and, if it had such a body of water, the radioactive minnows and crustaceans would taste like oil! Sleep on it!

For our last day of riding on this excellent adventure, we have a short 45 mile trip up to Lake Isabella via Ca. 178 which follows the beautiful Kern River through a massive granite-rock sheer- wall canyon. Climbing some 2500 feet, we are in a procession behind one of Kern Counties Finest as he heads out to his beat like a heat seeking Scud missile in search of a Taliban owned Krispy Kreme franchise. No grumbling, we're on his terms as he safely adds 5-10 over for our scenic ride. Coffee and Breakfast at Nelda's Diner helped dissipate the cobwebs and prepare for our return trip. We've just ridden Ca.178 as I had last done in the 1970s; why not venture to Ca. 155 at Wofford Heights and set passage west for a new challenge? AAA's topographical view shows a slightly squiggly course for 50 miles to Ca.65 and then a straight 27 mile sprint through the Oildale District back to the hotel.

DO NOT BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU SEE ON A FREAKING AAA MAP! From Wofford Heights, the next 25 miles carves an insane gnarly path up and down and sideways and sometimes backwards along canyon walls, pastures and farm fields filled with free-range killer cows and suicidal horses that sculpt steamy meadow muffins and barn biscuits on the roadway capable of sucking the boot off your foot if you dab wrong, Homer! Elevation changes of 2,000+ feet several times, no straight section of tarmac more than 200 feet long and continuous blind switchback corners ensure great upper torso, cardiovascular and respiratory exercises coupled with migraines of the highest order! The last 20 or so miles before terminating into the Porterville Highway were a God-send. Fresh asphalt, two 14+ foot lanes and gentle, rolling and sweeping line-of-sight turns were the norm. Where it took us an hour to get to Lake Isabella, this ridiculous misnomer of a California "Highway" required almost 3 to get back! At the hotel lobby, I received several West Oakland single-digit, middle-finger salutes from grumbling riders not feeling the love! And, as Chris Norman parked his K1200 brick-motor BMW, the rear tire rubber valve stem blew off.....the only casualty of our 3 days on the road.....an instant flat!



Anger management issues aside, beers flowed, barbs were exchanged and a discussion ensued on locations for next year's ride at, where else, water's edge. Later, we sashayed 300 feet south to an excellent hole-in-the-wall Mexican restaurant for margaritas and authentic cuisine. Kudos were heaped on Cliff Heanes for once again ably spearheading the "Touring" segment of riders, thereby allowing this geriatric scribe to drag the more adventurous of us within the "Sport Touring" group into spirited tomfoolery! On this year's ride, we sought out ribbons of asphalt with a yellow striped serpent snaking through hill and dale back roads. Four hundred and ninety three miles in our geographically compact riding area are testament to the discoveries that await those who live for the ride, as opposed to the destination. Meander off the freeway as we did, and damn near anywhere in America you'll find challenging roads, scenic roads, fast and slow roads, mountainous roads that dip from the heavens above to valleys below and even "no roads" with a State "Highway" designation. To all the participants, thanks for a wonderful ride and your colorful banter, and to the readers of this tome.....no farm animals were violated during the course of this fable.

Your mileage may vary.....

Municipal Motorcycle Officers of California

PO Box 531
San Lorenzo, CA 94580
(707) 948-MMOC
www.mmoc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Cioppino Feed
March 8, 2014
San Jose, CA

