

# THE DAILY RIDER

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Issue

1

Summer 2000

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### Contents:

- ♦ Editorial
- ♦ Advocacy
- ♦ RTW Hero
- ♦ Help a Wrench
- ♦ Digest
- ♦ Everyday Ride
- ♦ Road Rage
- ♦ Technology
- ♦ Resources
- ♦ Be a RTW Shop
- ♦ Classified
- ♦ Coming Next



♦ Ride To Work Day

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## THE MISSION

*To advocate and support the increased use of motorcycles for transportation, and to provide information about transportation riding to motorcyclists and to the public.*

## EDITORIAL

Motorcycle riders are a minority. Commuting and transportation riders are a minority within a minority. Motorcycles will someday be more widely recognized as good solutions to many social, urban and environmental problems. In our technological era, increases in motorcycle use can become a benefit for everyone. Motorcycles are safe and fun...and riding everywhere is a social good. Everyday motorcycling and commuting has an enormous unrealized cultural potential. We want to carry these ideas forward and teach them to as many road users as we can. I start by choosing to ride to work...

This organization wants your help. Ride to Work is a new entity. If you can join us with a supporter's contribution (see inside), thanks. If you are interested in making a direct, working contribution please let us know.

for Ride to Work Day

## ADVOCACY

### An Overlooked Alternative?

In many parts of the country, particularly those with vibrant local economies, automotive 'gridlock' is rapidly becoming an unattractive fact of life. This is due to the greatly increased use of single-occupancy automobiles. Increases in automobile usage cannot be sustained without consequences, and this sentiment is beginning to have some resonance among the general public. An objective analysis of the potential benefits of increased use of motorcycles will reveal that they are an under-utilized solution, and that their value as a source of congestion relief is being largely ignored. Motorcycles are a legitimate part of the overall transportation mix, deserving of greater consideration in traffic planning procedures and by those responsible for all kinds of social policy decisions. Our current culture largely considers motorcycles "toys". This is an unfortunate hindrance to the status they deserve as a legitimate mode of personal transportation.

### The Advantages of Motorcycling:

#### Inexpensive

Integrating motorcycles into the existing transportation infrastructure is a relatively low-cost proposition, particularly compared to light rail, bus, and other 'mass transit' solutions.

### Gridlock and Traffic Congestion Relief

Motorcycles take far less space than four-wheeled vehicles when traveling on roads or when parked. In addition to having a smaller 'footprint' than an automobile, motorcycles are comparatively more nimble and maneuverable, and these attributes also speed traffic flow.

#### Clean

Motorcycles in all traffic conditions produce far less harmful pollutants than cars, SUV's or buses. They also help preserve the road infrastructure because their lighter weight places less stress on road surfaces.

#### Efficient

Motorcycles can provide gas mileage considerably in excess of that achieved by any other form of powered transport, particularly in stop-and-go traffic situations and at urban speeds.

#### Fun and Healthful

Motorcycles are fun to operate and leave riders alert and energized because of the more direct stimulation of riders' senses.

#### Safe (Yes!)

Higher statistical accident rates for riders are due to a greater incidence of excessive speed or impairment (DUI) among motorcyclists. Motorcycle riders are also younger and less risk-adverse than the general automobile driving population. These factors are not represented among transportation and commuting riders...whose accident rates are similar to the average rates for automobile users.

stuff we'd like to see happen  
(in no particular order)

### **Traffic and Urban Congestion Reform:**

The ability of motorcycles to take advantage of their narrowness to 'split' or 'filter' through heavy traffic is banned in many states, which results in more congestion than is necessary. (In many areas motorcycles are allowed to use HOV lanes, an encouraging sign of progressive thinking which should be universal.) Lane splitting should be defined as a congestion solution and made legal in all jurisdictions.

### **Insurance Reform:**

One method of encouraging motorcycle commuting would be to allow riders to add a motorcycle to an existing single automobile policy at a lower cost if the bike is to be used as everyday transportation and the insured car is the secondary source of mobility. The need to carry a bike on a separate policy not recognizing the motorcycles' everyday use discourages motorcycle commuting.

## **THE RIDERS DIGEST ISSUE 1**

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### **Motorcycle Service and Dealership Reform:**

The widely held view of bikes as 'toys' encourages predatory market behaviors by many motorcycle service and repair operations, especially in areas involving the cost and quality of common repair and maintenance services. Additionally, only a limited number of new bikes are available for sale that are optimized for everyday use. The number of motorcycles having convenient, integrated load-carrying capability or anti-theft alarms (etc...) is astonishingly few.

*In 1970, when more motorcycles were more 'universal' in design, 8% of all 20 year old men were riders. Today only 1% are. Ironically, motorcycling itself is more 'endangered' than many popular (and worthy) medical and social charities that are supported by rider fundraising efforts such as toy runs, parades and rides.*

### **Health Care Reform:**

Motorcyclists who ride to work regularly are less likely to view their bikes solely as recreational 'toys'... as devices to speed (sportbikes), or drink/socialize (cruisers). Motorcycle commuters also tend to be better and safer than recreational riders due to their everyday riding patterns. Their accident statistics are similar to auto drivers so there should be no basis for discrimination against riders from the viewpoint of healthcare professionals or employee health plans. Such discrimination discourages everyday riding and commuting. Education programs must be developed to reduce the bias against motorcycles by medical professionals and health care providers.

### **Police Enforcement Reform:**

Motorcycles are more nimble than cars and unfairly receive enforcement attention because they can occasionally appear to be doing something illegal or dangerous in the course of ordinary point-to-point riding.

Motorcycle friendly law enforcement personnel training should be developed and implemented to overcome this bias.

### **Employer Reform:**

Encouraging use of alternative transportation (including motorcycles) in the form of corporate subsidies greatly helps motorcycling in the overall transportation picture. Secure and convenient parking areas for motorcycles are a crucially important factor.

### **Road Infrastructure Reform:**

Because motorcycles are single-track vehicles, they are sensitive to poorly-maintained road surfaces. Uneven pavement transitions can prove hazardous, as can some popular methods of road repair, such as tar strips and temporary sheetmetal hole coverings. These are overtly more dangerous to two-wheeled vehicles, particularly during wet conditions. Traffic controls (stoplights) are often designed so that only a vehicle with the mass of an automobile will trigger them. This is an unfortunate example of motorcycles being marginalized despite being legitimate, licensed tax-paying road users. (Motorcycle compatible sensor systems are available at equivalent cost.) Road infrastructure planning needs to specifically include (and favor) motorcycles.

### **News Media Reform:**

Enlightening the news media with realistic and unhyped facts pertaining to the everyday usage of motorcycles as a form of transportation will help dispel biases that are widely held. Since automobiles became the dominant form of private transportation in the 1920's, motorcycle riding has been largely perceived as being undertaken primarily by risk takers and others living outside of social norms. This public perception has been shaped to no small degree by the commercial news media which tends to 'mine' motorcycling subcultures from a subjective

and sensationalizing viewpoint.

### **Sales Tax Reform:**

To reward the many beneficial effects of motorcycling, and to encourage their everyday use, a sales tax exemption on the purchase of all new motorcycles should be implemented in all jurisdictions.

### **Road Salt Use/Studded Tires:**

Because motorcycles are more susceptible to problems of weathering and corrosion from exposure to toxic environmental chemicals, less comprehensive and less aggressive (corrosive) methods of road de-icing should be developed. Current bans on studded tires should be lifted (motorcycle use only) to encourage extended seasonal riding. De-icing should be confined to hills, critical intersections and interstate highways.

### **Headphone/Earplug Laws:**

Wearing helmet-mounted earphones allows motorcyclists to listen to radio broadcasts and communicate with others. Deaf people are unrestricted as drivers and as motorcyclists (and do not have higher accident rates). Legislatures should retract any current laws banning the use of earphones/earplugs while operating a motorcycle.

### **Parking Reform:**

Motorcycles use less parking space than conventional vehicles and should be rewarded with enhanced parking rights. Motorcycles should receive free parking at all semi-private, airport and municipal ramps. For air traveling motorcyclists, secure long term indoor motorcycle parking areas and gear storage lockers should be available at all 'hub' airports. There should be free parking at all parking meters and in all public ramps (as well as allowing bikes IN all public and private ramps...as opposed to the bans that presently exist in many locales.)

# RIDE TO WORK DAY

The annual nationwide Ride to Work Day is the third Wednesday in July. (every year) *Riding your motorcycle to work on this day will demonstrate:*

- A) The number of motorcyclists to the general public and to politicians.
- B) That motorcyclists are from all occupations and all walks of life.
- C) That motorcyclists can reduce traffic congestion in large cities.
- D) That motorcycles are for **transportation** as well as recreation.

We can change public attitudes about motorcycling in ways that will *benefit everyone*. Please tell your friends.

## RIDING/READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

*The City After The Automobile*  
by Moshe Safdie with Wendy Kohn  
New Republic Book/Basic Books a division  
of Harper Collins Publishers

*The Geography of Nowhere/ The Rise And  
Decline of America's Man Made Landscape*  
by James Howard Kunstler  
Simon & Schuster

*Asphalt Nation/ How The Automobile Took  
Over America And How We Can Take It  
Back*  
by Jane Holtze Kay

*Uneasy Rider/ The Interstate Way Of  
Knowledge*  
by Mike Bryan  
Knopf

*Sustainability And Cities/ Overcoming  
Automobile Dependence*  
by Peter Newman & Jeffery Kenworthy  
Island Press

*Getting There/ The Epic Struggle Between  
Road And Rail In The American Century*  
by Stephen B.Goddard  
University of Chicago Press

*Beyond The Car/ Essays On The Auto  
Culture*  
by Sue Zielinski & Gorden Laird, Editors  
Steel Rail Press

*Killed By Automobile/ Death In The Streets  
Of New York City*  
by Charles Komanoff & and members of  
Right Of Way

*Frontiers Of Sustainability/ Environmentally  
Sound Agriculture, Forestry, Transportation,  
And Power Production*  
by Roger, Daryl Ditz, Paul Faeth, Nels  
Johnson, Keith Kozloff and James  
J.Mackenzie  
Island Press

*An Empire Wilderness/ Travels Into  
America's Future*  
by Robert D.Kaplan  
Random House

*Fortress America/ Gated Communities In The  
United States*  
by Edward J.Blakely & Mary Gail Snyder  
Brookings Institution Press

*Americans On The Road/ From Autocamp To  
Motel 1910-1945*  
by Warren James Belasco  
Johns Hopkins University Press

*American Autobahn/ The Road To An  
Interstate Freeway With No Speedlimit*  
by Mark Rask  
Vanguard Non-Fiction Books

*Divided Highways/ Building The Interstate  
Highways, Transforming American Life*  
by Tom Lewis  
Viking Press

## STREET HERO

### A Rider Award

This award will recognize and profile a person who exemplifies the mission of Ride To Work. Applications and nominations can be made to our address or website.

## HELP A WRENCH

### Mechanic Scholarship

#### Programs:

Contribute to a separate scholarship fund for motorcycle mechanics. One scholarship to an accredited training program will be announced when enough funds have been raised. As the fund grows more scholarships will be made available. You'll get a receipt.

## DIGEST/CLIPS

Excerpted from *Rider Magazine*  
Aug. 2000

by *Clement Salvadori*

To subscribe call 800 678 2279

"Going to work, whether at a factory, an office or a retail shop, happens 10 times a week...if you count the going-home part. Let us say your commute is 20 miles each way, 200 miles a week, 50 weeks a year, for a grand total of 10,000 miles.

Now we get mathematical. If your Dodge Caravan is delivering a snappy 16 mpg, that means you have pumped 625 gallons into the tank. At \$2 a gallon, that equals \$1,250. If your bike is getting 40 mpg, that means 250 gallons, or \$500.

By the way, AAA figures the average cost of driving a mile in your sedan is up to 45 cents-figuring in not only fuel, but insurance, depreciation and all the rest. As opposed to that Kawasaki KZ550 you just picked up for the proverbial song...Let us not go there.

Riding to work not only saves you a pleasing sum of money, but also decreases the amount of gas you use. Which may not please the shareholders of Occidental Petroleum, but certainly appeals to the economic (and environmental) health of this great nation".

## SUPPORT

Receive the 'Daily Rider' plus:

\$25 **Rider** pin, sticker, T shirt

\$50 **Supporter**...as above + button

\$75 **Advocate**...as above + button + bandanna

\$100 **Contributor**...as above + button + bandanna + mug

\$150 **Serious Contributor**...as above + button + bandanna + mug + notecube

\$250 **Believer**...as above + button + bandanna + mug + notecube + wall clock

\$500 **True Believer**...as above + button + bandanna + mug + notecube + wall clock + sweatshirt

\$1000 **Ridin' Fool**...as above + button + bandanna + mug + notecube + wall clock + sweatshirt + an unbelievable sense of well being

Ride To Work, Inc.

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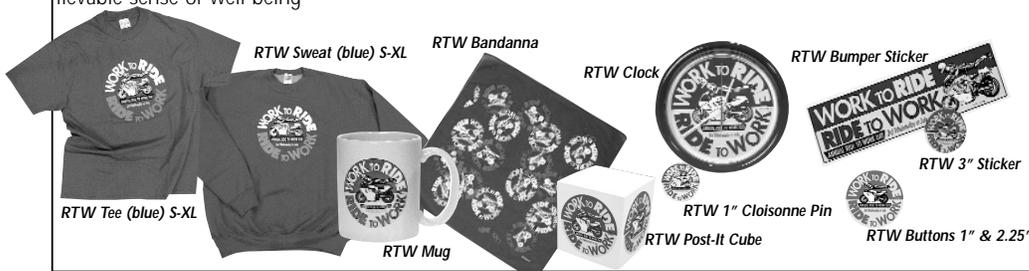
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## EVERYDAY RIDES

Visualize Your  
Scoot Here!  
(but a bigger photo)

### What Daily Riders Ride

Bikes that have been adapted for everyday riding and commuting are not often showcased in newsstand publications. Whether you ride an old CB 350 with a milkcrate on the back or a Hayabusa with an integrated alarm system, we want to know about your everyday ride and what you have done to make it more usable and practical, as well as what makes it a good or not-so-good daily rider. Send us a description and a decent photo and we'll see what we can do to get it in here.

## ROAD RAGE

Everyday riders are sometimes abused or even killed by other motorists. These jerks yell, shout, crowd, shoot, throw stuff or otherwise attack motorcycle riders, bicyclists and pedestrians. *They are criminals.* We support increased fines, penalties, better laws, stronger enforcement of existing laws, and more measures to make roads safe for all road users. Smaller and lighter forms of personal transport should be actively encouraged by leaders and authorities. The individual use of heavier, larger private vehicles should be discouraged. Send us your stories about road abuse and road rage and we will include them here.

## TECHNOLOGY

*Commuting riders should have available emergency remedies or backup plans to use in cases of mechanical trouble. From knowing how to reach towing services to having a friend with a trailer, to being able to make emergency repairs by the side of the road, having a 'plan B' can make everyday riding a lot more secure. Each issue will cover a different aspect of everyday preparedness here.*

### Flat Tires

It is not too difficult to fix a tire on the side of the road but it can take an hour (or more) of dirty, sweaty work if you do not have much practice. To be able to do so, you must carry a flat repair kit. You should have one with both plugs and patches so you can fix innertubes or tubeless tires. You will also need to have an airpump, some CO2 inflators, an aerosol emergency inflation can or all three. You will need to know how to break the bead on tubeless tires, and how to use tire irons and patch materials. If you do not regularly change your own tires at home, you may not want to try it for the first time on the side of the road... but if you do, be sure to move yourself and your bike completely clear of the traffic stream. This type of emergency repair is especially risky on the side of busy limited access highways. (It's not as dangerous to fix a tire on the sides of residential streets and rural highways.) All of the tools, patches, spare tube, etc... can be carried in a small bag (made of strong leather or cordura nylon) tied to the rear fender behind the saddle, carried in saddle bags/fairing pockets, or attached to your bike's frame. Protect the inner tube from abrasion damage. Re-inspect the contents of the kit at least once a year. (If a can of tire-inflate aerosol gets a vibration caused pinhole, it will make you think your bike is on fire as a giant, thick cloud of white smoke issues violently from the container.) Specific techniques for wheel and tire removal may be covered in your bike's owners manual. You can also find additional specific tire repair information on the internet, and in guidebooks and magazines about motorcycling. If you'd like to write a detailed 'how to' for changing tires, please contact us. It could become available as a brochure/guide in the RideTo Work library.

*Next time: Personal "Bat Cave" garage setups.*

## RESOURCES

### AMA - American Motorcyclist Association

1315 Yarmouth Drive  
PO Box 6114  
Pickerington, OH 43147  
Phone: (614) 856-1900  
Fax: (614) 856-1920  
[www.ama-cycle.org](http://www.ama-cycle.org)

### MRF - Motorcycle Riders Foundation

Box 1808  
Washington, DC 20013-1808  
Phone: (202) 546-0983  
Fax: (202) 546-0986  
[www.mrf.org](http://www.mrf.org)

### MSF - Motorcycle Safety Foundation

2 Jenner Street  
Suite 150  
Irvine, CA 92718-3800  
Phone: (949) 727-3227  
Fax: (949) 727-4217  
[www.msfc-usa.org](http://www.msfc-usa.org)

### MIC Motorcycle Industry Council

Government Relations Office  
1235 Jefferson Davis Hwy  
Suite 60  
Arlington, VA 22202  
Phone: (703) 416-0444  
Fax: (703) 416-2269

### NMA National Motorists Association

402 W 2nd St  
Waunakee, WI 53597  
Phone: (608) 849-6000  
Fax: (608) 849-8697  
[www.motorist.org](http://www.motorist.org)

### Congressman Bud Shuster

*(chairman, House committee on transportation and infrastructure)*  
2188 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-2431  
Fax: (202) 225-2486

## CLASSIFIED

Well, we don't have any classifieds just yet. But this is where you're gonna find 'em. What kind of stuff should be here? (If anything?) Let us know.

## How to Become A RTW Shop

By making a \$1000 contribution or by the recommendation of 3 RTW riders.

**You Must Pledge To Provide:** 2 hr tire changes (tires in stock) and 2 hr oil changes and 1 day tune ups.

RTW Shop Recognition can be rescinded on 3rd report of non-compliance with this pledge.

**RTW Shops Receive:** Wall plaque and stickers for your business entrances.

## COMING NEXT

Additional content such as: **Political News, Interviews** with everyday commuters, daily riders, lawmakers, planners, visionaries, and troublemakers. **International**, a look at what's happening with related transportation issues around the world. **Rider/Writer**, features written specifically for publication here, (send us something). **Letters**, (write it down and send it). **Book Reviews** of Relevant Literature, some **Humor** to offset the **Law and Politics** stuff that will probably find its way here. We also hope to create brief **Urban Guides** for motorcyclists covering our 15 biggest cities, featuring an overview of parking and other matters of interest to the everyday commuter/rider. If you would like to earn a pittance and some recognition, this plan... And your ideas for doing it... Are flexible. So let us know.