

ABATE of GA's

# **Rolling Wheels of Freedom**

**The Official Newsletter**



**To preserve the freedom of the road by protecting the rights of all motorcycle riders through fair and reasonable legislation, education and public awareness.**

## **In This Issue...**

- Elections announcement
- February BOD Minutes
- Latest legislative update and tools
- MRF-AMA update
- Reaching Out to Young Riders
- It's Spring Swap Meet time!

# Contact Us

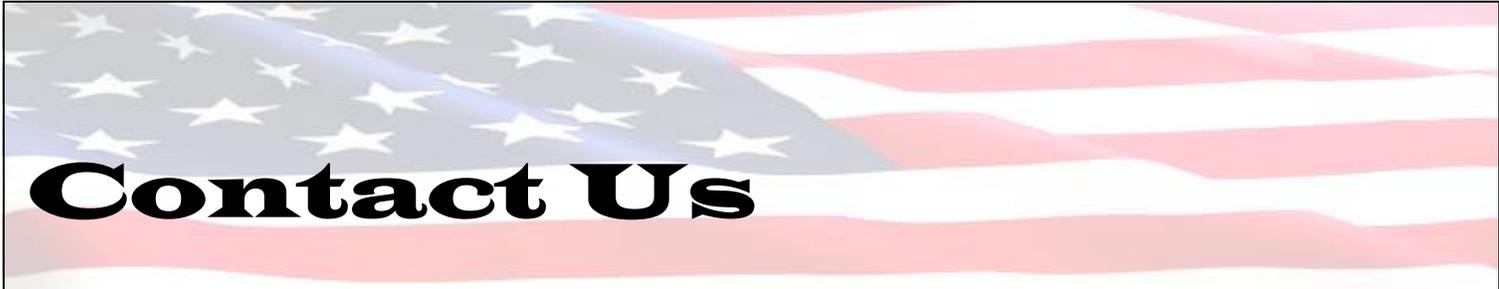
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## Executive Board

State Director	Position Open	<a href="mailto:state.director@abatega.org">state.director@abatega.org</a>
Treasurer	Mike Dominick	678-349-4504 <a href="mailto:treasurer@abatega.org">treasurer@abatega.org</a>
Secretary	Tim Farmer	770-881-7438 <a href="mailto:secretary@abatega.org">secretary@abatega.org</a>
Sergeant at Arms	Position Open	<a href="mailto:sgt.arms@abatega.org">sgt.arms@abatega.org</a>
Communications Director	Brian "Skinny Bob" Clifford	404-326-5671 <a href="mailto:communications.director@abatega.org">communications.director@abatega.org</a>
Activities Director	David Neal	678-770-9188 <a href="mailto:activities.director@abatega.org">activities.director@abatega.org</a>
Legislative Director	Wayne Overholt	478-954-1010 <a href="mailto:Legislative.director@abatega.org">Legislative.director@abatega.org</a>
Membership Director	Ann Crenshaw	229-924-7449 <a href="mailto:membership@abatega.org">membership@abatega.org</a>
Education Director	Position Open	<a href="mailto:Education.director@abatega.org">Education.director@abatega.org</a>

## State Appointees

Acting State Director	Brian "Skinny Bob" Clifford	404-326-5671 <a href="mailto:communications.director@abatega.org">communications.director@abatega.org</a>
Legal Advisor	Steve Murrin	404-221-0777 <a href="mailto:smurrin@murrinandwallace.com">smurrin@murrinandwallace.com</a>
Chaplain	Eric Shumans	912-269-3272



# Contact Us

## Board of Directors

D1 & 1W	Frank Chaney	706-694-8626	<a href="mailto:sgt.baldy@windstream.net">sgt.baldy@windstream.net</a>
D2	Anthony G Love	706-499-4672	<a href="mailto:alove@windstream.net">alove@windstream.net</a>
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# Contact Us

## **ATTENTION MEMBERS**

If you have had trouble with receiving your member card, a pin or a patch, a hotline has been set up to make sure your issue will be addressed as soon as possible.

Please call the Membership Hotline at 678-753-6018. All calls will be returned within 72 hours.

You may also send an email to [membership@abatega.org](mailto:membership@abatega.org).



# What is ABATE of GA?

**Our mission:** To preserve the freedom of the road by protecting the rights of all motorcycle riders through fair and reasonable legislation, education and public awareness.

ABATE stands for American Bikers Active Toward Education. We are composed of motorcyclists from all over the state, from all walks of life, who ride all makes of bikes. ABATE is not a club. It is a non-partisan, politically active organization working on motorcyclist's rights. We are affiliated with national rights groups like the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA), the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF) and the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM). Our focus is to keep motorcycle legislation in its proper perspective.

Uninformed legislators enact many motorcycle laws. ABATE's goal is to keep them informed of our collective position on legislation. Rider education and public awareness of motorcyclists are also goals of ABATE. We are not against the wearing of helmets, and we encourage all riders to ride safely. An informed and educated rider is a safer rider.

## Member Benefits

- Organized lobbying of state and federal legislators to make your views on motorcyclist rights known to your representatives
- Current information on all motorcycle related legislation and where your legislators stand on the issues that affect your motorcycling rights and freedoms
- Monthly newsletter with legislative updates, event dates and other useful information
- Membership card, patch, and one year pin for new members. Yearly pin for renewals.
- Admission discounts at ABATE events around the state, including Swap Meets
- Discounts at many motorcycle shops and dealers around the state
- Personal satisfaction of joining your fellow riders in promoting the great sport of motorcycling, by participation in a range of events around the state
- Spiritual consultation with the Christian Motorcycle Association for ride prayers, weddings, and visitation



# A Few Accomplishments

- Fought and stopped legislation introduced in the session of the Georgia General Assembly that would have made it illegal for kids age 10 and under to ride as passengers on motorcycles
- Established May as “Motorcycle Awareness” month through a proclamation signed by the Governor and through resolutions passed by the Senate and House each year
- Our successful lobbying efforts have:
  - Created the Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program (GMSP), our state’s rider education program that is available to all
  - Repeal of the Georgia law prohibiting use of speakers or headphones while riding a motorcycle
  - Increased funding for the Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program, in the amount of \$170,000 after the license tag rate was raised on all vehicles to \$20
  - Stopped proposed legislation that would have increased the size of motorcycle tags
  - Allowed handicapped tags for motorcycles without further enabling legislation, by bringing it to the attention of the Department of Revenue that the code section was written in such a way that it was already authorized
  - Created antique tags for motorcycles
  - Passed the “Frank-Lee” (ROW) bill to enhance penalties to those who cause death or serious injury to a motorcyclist by failing to yield the right of way
  - Created the “Tag/Title” bill SB-437 that allows for registration of kit/assembled bikes.
  - Increased maximum handlebar height from 15” to 25”
  - Defunded Georgia motorcycle-only checkpoints at the federal level
  - Allowed motorcycles to access the HOV-HOT lanes free of charge



## From the State Director...



### Back to Basics

I hope everyone is doing well. By now you all have heard that on February 6<sup>th</sup>, Ned Williams stepped down as State Director. We would like to thank Ned for his many years of service, stepping up when no one else would, to run this organization.

A few days later, the Executive Board unanimously appointed me to serve as Acting State Director until elections in August. The process for those elections is detailed in the Key Announcements section of the newsletter. I will continue to also serve in my role as Communications Director.

If you know me then you know how incredibly passionate I am about the mission of this organization and positive about its future. I believe my 13 years as a nonprofit fundraiser, my training in organizational and partnership development, and my knowledge of volunteerism will serve ABATE well. My 10 years with Habitat for Humanity International has taught me immensely and I am looking forward to the challenge ABATE will bring as Acting State Director. It will be a learning experience for all of us as we figure things out, so your understanding, patience and feedback will be greatly appreciated.

My theme for my time in office will be “**Back to the Basics**”. The focus will be on restoring, streamlining, and in some cases creating, the basic business processes we use to run our everyday organization – finance, membership, fundraising, communications, IT, etc. We will be cutting back on expenses wherever possible. Our organizational documents (constitution, bylaws, strategic plan, budget) are either seriously out of date or don’t exist. These documents will be created and refreshed. Also, we will be focusing on ways to reengage our membership, particularly younger riders and more effectively support the districts where they need it the most. For us to move forward, for ABATE GA to become truly mighty again, we must get these basic things in place and running smoothly. Additionally, we will continue to drive partnerships forward with organizations like GDOT, Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program, MSF, AMA, corporations, clubs and other riding groups. All of them are essential to our success. Innovative fundraising opportunities will be explored to increase revenue.

Wayne Overholt, our Legislative Director, is working his tail off down at the capital to get our bills through and I will continue to support him in any way I can. This of course goes for all of the Executive Board and Board of Directors. I’ve already had the pleasure of working with most of them. I’m looking forward to working with the others soon. I very much believe that you can only achieve your goals by helping others achieve theirs.

My work style is very much based in collaboration. Working together to solve a problem, seeking feedback from others and actually listening to people. We all bring a unique insight to problems and it’s important to include those in problem-solving. I say this to invite anyone who wishes to contact me to do so, and provide feedback or discuss ideas or if even if they just have questions.

I am looking forward to a positive period of growth coming up as we roll down this road together! God bless!

Sincerely

Brian “Skinny Bob” Clifford



# Chaplain's Corner...

God's mighty power is strong and unstoppable and it can accomplish so much more in our lives than we could ever hope or imagine. *Ephesians 3:20* says, "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen"

Are there areas in your life that you need God's mighty power to be working within you? Do you struggle with alcohol, drug or pornography addictions or habits that are sins you just can't seem to beat? Or do you maybe struggle with feelings of depression or anger maybe from some things that have happened in the past? God can heal your broken heart and help you with whatever your addictions may be. I know because he did it for me, and if he would do it for me I know that he will do it for you as well. I had suffered with most of these addictions and behaviors myself for most of my life but with God's help I was able to beat the drug and alcohol addictions and next month will be 29 years of being clean and sober for me. God has faithfully restored me spirit, soul and body and has also redeemed and restored my relationships as well. And now he even uses one of the things that I'm most passionate about which is of course, riding motorcycles to tell others about the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I think sometimes people are reluctant about asking Jesus into their hearts because they're afraid they'll have to give up doing all the things they love but his ways are the highest and best for our lives and whatever he asks us to give up will always be for our own good and the good of others. And if you will allow him he will use all of your gifts/talents and passions to mold you and shape you into being a person far beyond anything you could have ever hoped or imagined to be.

So, if you desire for God to help you with your struggles then all you need to do is place your life, your problems and your needs in front of him and ask his power to work in you. The power working in you is greater than anything you can ever face in this world. And I pray for each of you that you will fulfill every plan and purpose that God has for your lives and that you will be used mightily for his Kingdom purposes and to further advance the Kingdom of God.

Eric Shumans  
CMA Georgia State Coordinator



# The Christian Motorcyclists Association

## ABATE of GA's Spiritual Leadership

<u>ABATE Districts</u>		<u>CMA Chapter Presidents</u>	
<b>District 1:</b>	<b>Dalton Ellijay Lafayette</b>	<b>Robert Bearden David McDaniel Phil McGuire</b>	<b>706-581-2007 706-669-0388 706-331-7283</b>
<b>District 2:</b>	<b>Blairsville Cleveland Gainesville</b>	<b>Tom Boyland Kayse Niehoff Dan Montgomery</b>	<b>239-961-2987 478-258-3596 678-513-3763</b>
<b>District 3:</b>	<b>Carrollton Cartersville Rome</b>	<b>Paul Holder Billy Doster Sky Atkins</b>	<b>404-247-3854 678-221-8730 706-331-5529</b>
<b>District 4:</b>	<b>Duluth Lawrenceville Marietta</b>	<b>Monte Wyrick Ricky Berry Lee Brooks</b>	<b>678-485-5962 404-432-7381 770-309-3618</b>
<b>District 5:</b>	<b>Athens Conyers Loganville</b>	<b>Tracy Allen Keith Fowler John Adams</b>	<b>706-338-0655 706-816-5113 678-643-4895</b>
<b>District 6:</b>	<b>Griffin Newnan</b>	<b>Tom Spivey Sam Connor</b>	<b>770-358-2068 770-301-1937</b>
<b>District 7:</b>	<b>Warner Robbins</b>	<b>Bill Gragg</b>	<b>678-423-4330</b>
<b>District 8:</b>	<b>Augusta</b>	<b>Jimmy Goldman</b>	<b>803-507-4526</b>
<b>District 9</b>	<b>Columbus</b>	<b>Todd Newkirk</b>	<b>706-988-6574</b>
<b>District 11</b>	<b>Savannah Statesboro</b>	<b>Jim Williams Harold Piet</b>	<b>912-349-1496 912-515-9050</b>
<b>District 15</b>	<b>Brunswick Jesup St. Mary's</b>	<b>Ricky Harper Larry Madray Curt Johnson</b>	<b>912-778-4759 912-586-2384 912-674-3253</b>



# Key Announcements

## Upcoming Elections

**ABATE of Georgia's Executive Board would like to announce that we are seeking nominations for two state positions: State Director and Sergeant at Arms. All nominations must be submitted in writing to [eboard@abatega.org](mailto:eboard@abatega.org) by midnight May 5th. To run for State Director, a candidate must have been a member of ABATE of GA for two years. Only one year is required for the SAA position.**

**Nominees will be announced at the next BOD meeting May 6th. All nominees who wish to accept their nominations will announce their candidacy at the next BOD May 6th. Following that, candidates' names will be published in the June and July newsletters. They will run their campaigns until the next BOD on August 5th. Elections will be held during the August BOD meeting. If you have any questions, please contact an Executive Board member.**

**Here are the job descriptions for each position:**

**State Director:** To preside at all Executive and Board of Directors' meetings of the organization or to designate another State Officer to preside in their absence. To have general supervision of the affairs of the organization. To appoint persons to committees to handle special events, functions, happenings, etc. To represent the organization on proper occasions and business contracts subject to consultation with other State Officers. To work, aid, and assist other workers of ABATE and other motorcycling functions. To represent ABATE of Georgia at other State and National functions, to maintain contact with other ABATE of Georgia officers and to maintain contact with other motorcycle organizations and clubs on the State and National level. To ensure each State Officer is fulfilling the duties of their office and make assistance available to any not doing so. To help the State Activities Director coordinate all dates for State and \*\*District and/or Chapter events. To supervise \*District and/or Chapter Officers, and intervene only in cases of impropriety or dispute and failure to report to the State to stay in contact with District and/or Chapter Coordinators and to randomly attend \*District and/or Chapter meetings.

**State Sgt. at Arms:** To ensure that all Executive Board, Board of Directors and special called State meetings are run per the Constitution and Bylaws of ABATE of Georgia or Roberts Rules of Order. When necessary the Sgt. at Arms, in consultation with the State Director, shall procure the interpretation of Roberts Rules of Order. It shall also be the responsibility of the Sgt. at Arms to ask for the removal of any persons violating the above referenced rules. To staff security at State Events. To recruit District and Chapter Sgt. at Arms as needed to work State Events. May appoint, with consent of the Executive Board, temporary assistant Sgt. At Arms.



# Key Announcements

## Committee Members Needed

Committee work is an essential part of our organization. Participation is a chance to make a difference in how we are managed day-to-day and the direction we are heading. The Executive Board is seeking members to help with the following committees:

### Budget Committee

Purpose: To set and monitor the budget of the organization

Members: State Director, State Treasurer and up to two members

Time commitment: There will be some longer budgeting sessions at the beginning, but once the budget is set for the current and next fiscal years, demand on your time will be minimal.

### Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Purpose: To update the foundational documents of the organization. Required to be updated by law every two years. They haven't been updated since 2012. These documents define who we are, how we are structured and the rules we follow. The committee will draft the documents based on board feedback and submit to the board and members for review.

Members: State Director and up to three other members

Time commitment: Roughly 1-3 hours per week with occasional day-long drafting sessions. As this is such a critical committee and we need to get this done asap, time commitment will be higher here. More so in the beginning, will taper off as we progress.

### Activities-Fundraising Committee

Purpose: Help create, plan and implement statewide activities to raise money for and awareness of our mission. We need to grow, but if people don't know who we are and we're broke, that isn't going to happen.

Members: Activities Director, Membership Director, and up to three other members

Time commitment: At least 1 hour every two weeks, will increase as we get closer to events.

**\*\*Contact Skinny Bob at [State.Director@abatega.org](mailto:State.Director@abatega.org) if you are interested.**



# Board of Directors Updates

## Board of Directors Minutes (Summarized)

Meeting Date: Feb 3, 2017

Location: AP's Hideaway, Macon, Georgia

Commenced 11:19am at the direction of Harry Jones who Acted at Sergeant At Arms. Paul Kerr led us in a prayer. Motion passed for all cell phones to be turned off, or turned to vibrate. Any that ring will insure that the owner will be fined one dollar (\$1.00) to be donated to the general treasury.

Districts 2, 4E, 4W, 5 N, 6, 6-2, 7, 9, 11 reported up-to-date with insurance payments. District 3 has not yet fully re-established. District 13 having trouble establishing a checking account. Moved to allow those districts not in compliance today to have a vote today. Carried by an 8-1 vote.

The minutes taken by an attendee of the November 2016 BOD were read and accepted.

Dec 11 conference call was made to all DC's. Purpose was to vote on action to temporarily stop printing and mailing the newsletters. It carried. (\*\*State Director note: Newsletters will be available on the website and Facebook.)

Membership: We have dropped to somewhere around 500 members from 1,200 four years ago. We are signing up new people, but not retaining the ones we already have. People are not attending meetings. Not getting information. Trying to contact state office with complaints. Computer is down frequently due to interruption in signal from Comcast and other internal issues. Membership Director can't access the computer to update database and print cards. (\*\*State Director note: The computer issues have been resolved. We will be catching up asap.)

Activities: Only 7 districts are doing activities. Go to Bike Nights or other places bikers gather. Go to things being held in other districts. Should include Can Am and Slingshot machines in recruiting. A question was raised - Is it true that there is a steady decline in attendance at state events? The answer was Yes.

Legislative: There is now a bill HB38 in the legislature that while not defining a motorcycle, does state that if a machine has handlebars for directional control, it is motorcycle. If it has a steering wheel for directional control, it is no longer a motorcycle. But, a helmet is required to be worn. At this time, we have 3 representatives sponsoring bills. These include: Increased penalties for distracted drivers (sponsored by Karen Mathias; headphone/earbud use to be legal (sponsored by David Clark); Lane filtering (sponsored by Matt Gurtler). No one wants to touch a Red-light bill. The cross-over date is 30 March. Wayne wanted to know if there was any interest in a Legislative Bootcamp, where members learn the process by which legislation is passed. Gentle schmoozing and relationship building is the key, but there's a right way to do it. There are Legislative Luncheons on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.

Communications: Brian Clifford reported that we have about 6,777 likes on FB page. Brian should be made either admin or editor on district FB pages to post directly. ABATE of Georgia is going to be 40 years old on 17 October 2017. Should we have a party?

District 3 now has the required number of officers to be a district. Wayne Nunez is DC. Dave Woodruffe is proxy. Treasurer is Cindy Woodruffe. Membership is Donna Nunez. Sgt at Arms is Dave Woodruffe. The motion to restart District 3 was carried by unanimous show of hands.

Junkyard: Sideways in Savannah was not so good as last year, as Chatham County was evacuated due to hurricanes and flooding. The event broke even, however. The 2017 event is being planned for 11 November.

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## **Board of Directors Minutes (Summarized)**

Brian Clifford reported no progress on updating the Constitution and Bylaws. Steve Murrin printed Legislative Packets handed out at Great American Motorcycle Show. They only have the 2017 agenda in them.

Chili Day was 3 weeks ago. David Neal and Brian Clifford cooked about 40 gallons of chili. Leftovers were donated to the Fire Department. Legislators and staff showed up.

Great American Motorcycle Show did very well. Vendors had mixed reviews, but more passes were handed out. We had a corner booth and handed out many legislative packets (which included membership applications); sold 120 raffle tickets. The 2017 raffle bike was at the back of the booth space. We had signs on the back wall stating our legislative aims; only one person asked why we are not pushing an anti-helmet bill.

State Spring Swap Meet: We are not going back to Griffin Fair Grounds, aka the Mud Bowl. We have the Blue Lot at the Atlanta Motor Speedway. With 20 plus showers, actual rest room facilities for both men and women, paved parking and no mud! AMS has its own food vendors, but David Neal was able to work a deal so we have some food vendors who have supported us for years. AMS will have the beer sales, though. How many vendors do we need? Because we charge \$40 for the entire weekend, we would need 120 vendors to break even. At this point, we have only 3 paid vendors. If you can think of any more who might be interested, please pass the information to David Neal so he can contact them. Raffle items for this year:

- 1) 2000 HD 1200 Custom – modified machine
- 2) Fat-tired minibike (ideal for campground running)
- 3) 55" Polaroid TV (for which David paid 325, not its asking price of 800)
- 4) One Drone

We need more vendors. Districts should get their vendor lists to David Neal so he can contact them all. Garage 71 has said they would charge us half-price (\$400) for the event. David has yet to see anything in writing for last year. And has as yet not received a receipt for what he had paid last year.

North Georgia Swap Meet: Scheduled for 30 September and 1 October in Helen.

State Anniversary party: Maybe 21 October. Indian Springs has been suggested. And a party/picnic/cookout has been suggested. More planning is needed.

ABATE Membership trifold: A new one has been created and updated. Amy Adams from D13 has been working on them. She handed out samples. We need a sponsor to print them, or a grant to pay for the printing. Randy Snyder from D4W said he has printing contacts whom he could contact for prices when we have an idea how many we would need. Ned Williams offered that lawyers often are willing to offer funding when they have space for their logos.

Survey 2017: Brian reported that 109 surveys were completed. Members are not happy on many levels. Of those responding, 38% have been members for more than 10 years; 19% for 1 year. Motorcycle type – 99% are cruisers/trikes/touring machines. How satisfied are you overall? More than 62% reported somewhat dissatisfied to very dissatisfied. How likely are you to recommend ABATE to others? About 50%. How likely are you to renew your membership? 65%. Newsletter: how valuable is it to you? Very 26%. Over 70% read it in print. Prefer in print or online? Both. Most common comment on newsletter: Grammar and editing could be improved. How did you learn about ABATE? Friends, previous contact. Do you value the district meetings? 83% said yes. Are they effective? 80% positive (but each DC could know more about what is going on.)

Clear majority of respondents were upset with the way the organization is run at the state level. Most members feel they are not being heard at the state level. Many suggested a change at the state level leadership. Website could be changed and updated. Other said stop supporting legislation which cannot be won. Better leadership from the Executive Board was suggested. Also, individual contact with more members. Maybe an organizational name change to indicate that we are a motorcycle rights group (and not just a group of old white men, riding Harley Davidson motorcycles, who drink beer and party.)

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## **Board of Directors Minutes (Summarized)**

The overall theme of most of the comments was that the membership feels it is not being heard nor is communication coming from the State Office. When ideas are offered, people feel they (and the ideas) are being ignored. And this breeds distrust. Of the surveys turned in, 67% were members, 22 % were district officers.

A motion was made for a Vote of Confidence on the performance of the State Director. After being seconded, discussion followed. It would be a non-binding vote, per Roberts Rules of Order. If the motion is carried, other steps will need to be taken. Vote of NO CONFIDENCE in the performance of the State Director - 9 votes. Vote FOR CONFIDENCE in the performance of the State Director - 2 votes. Abstain from vote - 1 vote.  
Result: 9 – 2 – 1 vote in a vote of No Confidence in the performance of the State Director. A motion was made asking the State Director to step down.

### District Reports:

- District 2 is trying to raise numbers. Has ads in papers. Has 7 people at meetings, would like 20.
- District 3: meeting on 26 February at Semper Fi in Woodstock at 2 PM.
- District 4E: May 20 at Tannery Row, 554 Main Street in Buford will be a District Party. Cost is \$5 for non-members, free to members.
- District 4W: Nothing to report.
- District 5: Been taking destination rides such as the "Meat Up and Pig Out". See the FB page for details. Hold special events at district meetings such as Biker First Aid. In November, sponsored an event where people spoke about the problems distracted drivers. One of the speakers was a caretaker of a 5-year old whose mother got rear-ended and killed by a distracted driver.
- District 5N: Planning a "Presidents Ride". There are 10 cities in Georgia named for presidents. The idea is to have riders travel to each city and earn points/pins. In March, they are having a poker run. They are involved with Cycle World. American Legion Post in Statham (First Saturday in October), and Memorial Day ride
- District 6: Cherry Blossom Ride is always a great success. Found bumper stickers and patches to be good money makers. Coozies not so much. Burnout of officers is a problem (actual rotation of officers might help). Place for meetings (choices are needed). Another group ride is being considered. They would like to form a public group forum on FB. Suggested posting flyers as PDF files.
- District 6-2: Now have 47 active members. Meeting at Twilight Bar and Grill. Actively working with Coweta Area Motorcyclists.
- District 7: 18 March will be the Chili Cookoff/Challenge to be held at AP's Hidden Hideaway.
- District 9: Now have 35 members. Biggest problem - no one has cards/pins/patches. They need assistance in getting them. They work with and support CAM (Columbus Area Motorcyclists)
- District 11: They have had trouble with officers having severe illnesses. They are going to make up temporary membership cards until new members get ones from the state. Hurricane and tropical depression hurt their events. Their Toy Run only had 400-500 bikes but they raised a lot of money. Frosty Balls ride had about 170-180 people from many clubs. District brought a check for \$4,700. The annual calendar sales went well (major fund raiser). D 11 got connected to a DUI school, which will allow them to talk about motorcycle safety to students. They have been invited onto Fort Stewart to do the same. The Indian Dealership will perform a Safety Check at no charge if you ride in. The 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of June is joining with the Outlaws on a Poker Run.
- District 13: Christmas Parades are always a good idea. Rode in many for the visibility. Still waiting for information to get checking account. 4<sup>th</sup> weekend of March a Poker Run is planned. D13 goes to as many other district meetings as they can. Have a number of Valdosta riders as members.

MRF Report: RPM act discussed. The EPA thinks it can govern all motorsports – MRF knows that is outrageous. One the motorcycle council only one seat of 10 will go to those who represent motorcyclists. Follow the MRF newsletter. Ethanol – working to require separate pumps so it won't harm our engines. Black boxes on motorcycles - MRF wants the owner of the box to determine its operation. Meeting of the Minds will be in Williamsburg, VA on 21- 25 September.

***Continued next page...***

Open Forum: Question was asked: What does state insurance cover? Director and officer general liability. Covers every valid member working at an ABATE function. Does not general public, we need waivers signed.

Statement was made that we need to pay annual incorporation fees to the Secretary of State's office.

District 11 says they will have raffle tickets for their bike build at the next BOD meeting. Suggestion was made to wear appropriate clothing to the capital to present a positive image. Question was raised about the Swap Meet idea in Elko at S and E Cycles.

Legislative Director said he will issue a call to action when our bills are dropped. Will send information on fax and phone numbers. Said phone calls work. Emails and faxes don't. When calling legislators, he asked that we be polite and request they favorably consider our bills. Keep it brief.

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ann F. Turner, Secretary Pro-Tem

## **BOD Meeting Dates** (2017-2018)

ABATE GA Board meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month every three months.

**May 6, 2017**

**August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018**

**May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**\*\*All District Officers and members are invited and encouraged to attend and observe the BOD meetings. If you wish to address the BOD, please contact Skinny Bob to get on the agenda. Otherwise, you will be given an opportunity to speak in Open Forum.**

### **Help keep motorcycles off the endangered species list.**

- According to NHTSA, in 2013 there were 2,182 multi-vehicle crashes involving a motorcycle. In 42% of these crashes, the other vehicle was turning left in front of a motorcycle either going straight, passing, or overtaking another vehicle.

- Roughly 40% of a vehicle's outer perimeter zone is hidden by blind spots, which are caused by improper adjustment or lack of side mirror usage.

- Motorcyclists can easily be hidden in a vehicle's blind spot. Always check mirrors and blind spots, TWICE, before signaling your intentions and changing lanes.

**LOOK TWICE - SAVE A LIFE**

**Motorcycles are  
EVERYWHERE!**



**Want to ride?**

**Ride Safe - Ride Smart!**

**REGISTER TODAY**  
for a Motorcycle Training Course near you.

[www.dds.ga.gov](http://www.dds.ga.gov)

# Legislative Update



## 2017 – 2018 Legislative Session

### **HB136: Distracted Driving - “Handsfree Bill”**

Makes holding a phone in your hand illegal as a method to reduce distracted driving accidents. Although this bill never made it out of House committee, Wayne Overholt, our Legislative Director is attempting to get it through the Senate by attaching it to another bill.

### **HB401: “Earbud Bill”**

Allows use of headphones or earbuds for any purpose on a motorcycle. It is currently illegal to use them for any purpose other than communication. Our Legislative Director reports that the bill has been attached to another Senate bill and is headed to committee.

### **HB490: “Lane Filtering”**

Makes safe, lane filtering legal. This is different from lane splitting. Lane filtering is moving between cars at low speeds or while stopped. The bill has been given a number, but has yet to be assigned to a committee. ABATE intends to continue pushing this through next year.

# Legislative Agenda



ABATE of Georgia, Inc.  
Legislative/Government Relations  
2017-2018 Agenda

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1. End motorcycle profiling.
2. Tougher penalties if you kill a motorcyclist.
3. Increased prosecution for distracted drivers.
4. Use headsets for music on your bike.
5. Move safely through inoperative red lights.
6. Helmet use is rider choice.
7. Legalize lane filtering.
8. More ethanol-free gas.
9. Greater motorcycle use on public roads.
10. Safety and development plans include motorcycles.
11. Safer roadway repair and design strategies.
12. Lower cost for rider License-Waiver Courses.
13. Monitor organizations that oppose ABATE.
14. Support the MRF, the AMA and other SMRO's.



# Legislative Tools

**Phone calls are a powerful tool, but letter writing sends an even stronger message. Below is a template members can use to write their legislators to encourage action - from "Contacting Your Elected Officials"**

(Month) (Day) (Year)

(Get address from person's website)

The Honorable (First name) (Last name)

Address

Atlanta, GA (Zip Code)

RE: (state the topic or include the bill number and subject if you are writing to support or oppose a particular legislative bill)

Dear (Representative/Senator) (Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a concerned motorcyclist who resides in your district.

(If the bill concerns motorcyclist; or change it to citizen)

(State why you support or oppose the bill, or any other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.)

(Include a personal story. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family member and your community.)

(Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response.)

Sincerely,

SIGN YOUR NAME

Print your name

Street address

City, state, zip code

Phone Number

Member or ABATE of Georgia, Inc.

(Include your Voter Registration number if you have it)



# District Meeting Notes

**D1** Our meeting was brought to order by interim D1 Coordinator Frank Chaney. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bryan Youell. Dennis Warren led us in prayer. 18 were in attendance.

Membership Director Lindi Bryant was back with us, after having knee surgery last month. She said D1 had 48 members + 4 renewals tonight. Karen & Carey Young and Whiskers & Melissa Greig, thank you for your continued support!

Our interim Treasurer, David Byers, sent word that we have money and are in good standing with the state. Dennis Warren agreed to take over the Treasurer's position next month (again) after he and Deb have a vacation. Bless you Dennis!!!

Tami Culver (me) shared some news on the Legislative front concerning Ethanol announcements reported by the AMA. Not good news. Looks as if we are in for steady increased ethanol amounts, if we don't get serious about letting our legislators know that we don't support this! Also, the Georgia Motorcycle Safety Program received a thumbs up for their work in promoting motorcycle awareness in the state of Georgia.

Robert from the Chatsworth Freedom Seekers attended with information about their upcoming Bunny Run on April 8. This is also the date for our ABATE D1 Poker Run. In order to support their ride, we will start our Poker Run after the Bunny Run. The Bunny Run will meet at Mountain Creek HD with KSU @11:30 to ride to Chatsworth American Legion to deliver Easter Baskets and goodies to local children. After the Easter Egg Hunt, our Poker Run will get underway. FBO @1:00, LBO @2:00. Please join us for a fun-filled day!

Robert also invited us to attend their Friday night bike nights at the clubhouse in north Murray County, and to bring membership applications to leave with them. Frank promptly handed him some. It would be great for some of our members to go and talk to their members and guests about the importance of supporting ABATE. Thank you, Robert!

Johnny Conyers attended our meeting and invited us to join the Mountain Creek HOG chapter for their upcoming rides. He passed out a schedule so that we will be informed. Thanks Johnny. Frank shared the BOD's meeting minutes with us. We went over them and a great deal of discussion ensued. It seems we have a new acting ABATE State Director, appointed to serve until the next election. Brian Clifford, welcome and the best of luck to you! You have been doing a great job for us in communications, so we expect that you will also bring energy and a positive light to this position. Ned Williams, thank you for the time and energy you devoted to ABATE of Georgia for the past several years. D1 appreciates your efforts.

Our Secretary, Rosie Keener was out tonight to be with her Mother as she prepared for medical tests. We hope all went well for her.

Please attend a meeting and/or check out the ABATE Georgia Facebook page to stay informed, as we should have a lot of activity, soon. The Swap Meet is coming up, first weekend in April. We have 4 bills being sponsored and will have more info coming soon. We will be asking for people to make phone calls to support the bills. Takes mere minutes and is pretty painless!!!

Until we meet again.....Ride safe. Be free. Much love, Tami Culver, sitting in for Rosie!!

P.S. Our District is still in need of a Coordinator, Activities Director, Sgt. At Arms (even though Whiskers agreed to continue to help when he can, we need someone else for the Sgt. At Arms position) and a Legislative Director. Please consider helping out to keep our District alive!



# District Meeting Notes

**D5** Member meeting called to order at 3:30pm at Hot Rods in Social Circle. 14 members in attendance. We discussed Spring Swap Meet participation and raffle ticket sales. We need volunteers for the D5 Hot Wing Contest coming this summer. Our “Meat Up and Pig Out” rides have been growing steadily. We will be doing a Cruise-In with Hot Rod's in Social Circle – dtes TBD. We will be partnering with D5N, specifically on the Presidents Ride. D5 would like to schedule events at Juggernaut Cycles and Margaritas in Auburn, GA in partnership with D5N. Open forum discussion identified need for Road Captains, and others. Two members expressed interest in becoming Road Captains, if training could be provided. Meeting called to closure at 4:25pm.

**D6-2** Meeting started at HJ Wings and Things then transferred to Twilight bar and grille. This was due to HJ Wings and things not reserving the room for us, as it had been done for some time. The room was being used by a high school party.

#### Sergeant at Arms

Brad was out so Steve called the meeting to order late, at 7:30PM. This was due to moving the meeting from 1 meeting place to another. We pledged allegiance to the flag and Ralph led us in prayer.

#### Secretary

Forrest read the minutes from the January meeting which was approved and accepted by the membership.

#### Treasury

Ralph gave the treasurer's report as of 01/31/16. The Treasurers report was approved and accepted by the membership.

#### Legislative

- Reb had asked for as many as possible to go to the capital building last month. Kevin Brooks did go.
- Reb brought up the 4 bills that were up during this legislative session;
- Bill for harsher penalties for injuring or killing a motorcyclist.
- Bill to legalize headsets being used on a motorcycle
- Bill to harsher penalties for distracted driving.
- Bill to legalize lane filtering.
- Also at the federal level, calling for scientific research on E15 fuel and what effects it has on smaller engines such as motorcycles.
- Reb said we should be proud that last year we got the “Red Light” bill all the way to the governor's desk.
- Reb commended Bill Clifford with the state for doing a hell of a job.
- Reb mentioned that the United States VP rides a Road Glide and that he and President Trump had met with leaders of Harley Davidson.

#### Membership

Devina said there were 5 officers, 11 members and 3 guests for a total of 19 people attending tonight. Also the district membership total was at 47. There were 4 members past due for renewal this month.

A discussion concerning importance of notifying people when their membership was ready for renewal. Someone had an idea for post cards to be printed and mailed to these members. Ralph said that would be fundable from the treasury.

## D6-2 cont...

### Old business

Jeff brought up that we had voted to join CAM and it had had its first official kick-off meeting January 19<sup>th</sup>. CAM had also planned its first function which was a benefit planned for 02/12/2017 from 1:00 to 6:00 here at Twilight. Jeff said that D6-2 had sent in more surveys than any other district in the state.

### New business

- Jeff mentioned the state BOD meeting was this Saturday. He said the state was to amend by-laws this weekend. Brian at the state had wanted suggestions for amendments by-law changes and asked for input from each district.
- Reb said something needed to be done to improve 2 way communications between district officers and the state.
- Reb went on further to say communication needed improvement in the district. Reb suggested a roster for members.
- Forrest mentioned the sign in sheet having current email addresses could improve communication.
- Jeff is to modify the sign in sheet to include current email addresses.
- Someone mentioned a phone number list.
- Lloyd mentioned everybody may not want their phone numbers given out.
- Karen suggested some new software for smart phones that would not show phone numbers on group text messages
- Forrest suggested something to take to the BOD meeting; Autonomous cars may not sense smaller vehicles such as motorcycles. Forrest has worked at a new car dealer several years and knew that when the systems were first released the manufacturers technical assistance people stated they couldn't guarantee they would sense motorcycles. The systems have probably been improved since then but it would be a good thing to mention at the BOD meeting.
- The sponsor of the month had been HJ wings and things and due to events of tonight we should change that. Reb mentioned that Jere's Cyclecraft had been the longest and most dependable supporter and recommended he be our standing supporter of the month. Reb also mentioned Jere's open house in June. Jere had always encouraged us to set up a tent and membership table at this event. Also that we should all try to support him.

### Activities

- The CAM event planned 2/12/17 was to benefit the Dillard family whose house had burned. There was a chili cook-off planned as well as several other activities. Jeff encouraged as many ABATE members as possible to attend. ABATE should set up a membership tent and table here for this event.
- Southern Cruisers had an event planned for April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This will be at Brian's Sports Bar and will benefit St Jude Children's Hospital.
- ABATE Spring Swap Meet has been moved to Atlanta Motor Speedway and is the first weekend in April.
- Steve asked if we could have our own district swap meet here in Coweta County.
- The question was raised about a swap meet at the County Fairgrounds but that may be too expensive for a district swap meet. Someone else suggested having it at Twilight Bar and Grille. There is plenty of room in the parking lot. Vendors would just have to set up tents.
- Jeff said the owner was willing to work with us in any way he could.
- Forrest talked about the importance of an event to help fund the state. He mentioned the Cherry Blossom Ride and Sideways in Savannah being successful because they had been doing both events several years and they kept growing.
- Smurf said he had been doing fund raisers her in the county several years and had been successful. He volunteered to help in any way he could to help plan the event. He urged that an event needed several months lead time in order to be successful.
- Door Prizes were not given out this meeting nor was a 50/50 drawing held.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

**D11** Meeting convened February 12, 2017 at the Twilight Bar & Grill in Bloomingdale, GA. Attended by 28 members. Meeting called to order at 3:05 PM by Ricky "Possum" Lynn, Sgt at Arms.

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Jimbop Roberson. Devotion/Blessing done by Jim Williams of CMA. Reading of the minutes were waived.

#### Officer Reports

**Treasurer:** We gave the State almost \$5,000 at the BOD meeting in Macon last week. We paid \$620 for our insurance for the year, and overages. We have about \$7,000 in the bank with some outstanding accounts payable from the calendars and Frosty Balls. We made \$3,525 on Frosty Balls. We have raffle tickets for the Spring Swap Meet for sale \$10 each or three for \$25. If you would be interested in selling some please see me. Last day to turn in the money is 3/25/17.

**Membership:** Due to my health issues, I will no longer be able to serve as Membership Director. I am asking that someone take over my duties. There was a nomination for Sally Mitchell, she accepted, it was voted on and passed.

**Legislation/Webmaster:** Our Lobbyist are doing well. We have four bills in Legislative. We would like to support the following representatives that are supporting us:

- Dave Clark is supporting the bill for increased fines for killing/seriously injuring a motorcyclist.
- Karen Mathiak is supporting increased fines for distracted driving.
- Allen Powell is supporting removal of Motorcycle endorsement requirement for Sling Shot vehicles such as Elio or other cars classed as a motorcycle with full metal and steering wheel.

**Sgt. At Arms:** I need some help, who will step up and be Road Captain? Breezy volunteered.

**Secretary:** Secretary will be out for several months while she takes care of her husband Robin following another surgery on his leg. I Pat Hardin will fill in until she can resume her duties.

**Activities Director:** Frosty Balls Run had a good turnout. Next meeting is 03/14/17

**Old Business:** The end of the Frosty Balls Run was changed at the last minute due to a liquor license issue at the Brass Rail. The Effingham Wingmen offered their clubhouse at the last minute and we want to thank them for the hospitality. We are still planning a run with the Outlaws/Black Pistons on the third weekend in June. The USMV are having a biker appreciation day and we would like to support them so stop by if you can.

**New Business:** The state leadership will have some changes coming soon. There was a survey a couple weeks ago and the ratings came back poor about confidence in the current leadership. There was a discussion about it at the BOD meeting and it was floored. The following morning there was a resignation by the current State Director Ned Williams. It is possible that Brian Clifford Elliott will step in as State Director. He has been a part of Habitat for Humanity for over 10 years. We look forward to his enthusiasm and direction. He mentioned that he knows of a grant that we can get to help support ABATE and its agenda.

We are planning to host a State Meet next March in conjunction with bike races at the same time we used to have the Run to the Sun. It will be at OSP which has a new General Manager from the Golden Isles Speedway. They are planning some major renovation at the track changing it to a 3/8 mile track and moving the pit area to the field you see as come into the gate. We are able to rent the track for a bargain price and Bounty Hunter will play for half of what they normally charge. We will need about 20 volunteers to man the event to include gates, security etc.

**Open Floor:** Chopper Cox of Incountry Vets announced the Honor Flight Run on 4/1/17. Sign in at 9:00 am at Indian motorcycle. Ending at VFW with a raffle and auction. Bootstrap of USMV announced Sgt. Almond Run on 4/1/17 beginning at the Bloomingdale war memorial at 9:00 AM. He also stated the benefit/campout for homeless vets turned out very well with 6 truckloads of food and clothes donated and distributed. Dutt of Southern Customs announced his lease has expired and the owner has acquired the land surrounding his place and they plan to develop it so he will either be moving to the old Spanky's in Pooler or retiring. He has a great deal going on for bikes and hot rods right now. Meeting was adjourned at 4:20 PM

# MRF – AMA Updates



## NEWS FROM THE HILL

### Changes Coming to Ethanol/RFS?

Rumors flew in D.C. this week when Carl Icahn, a Trump administration suggested that an Executive Order changing the Renewable Fuel Standard is on the way. The Renewable Fuel Standard or "RFS" is the law passed several years ago, that dictates how much ethanol should be used in the nation's fuel supply.

Apparently, White House policy staff are actively discussing what to do with the issue. However, activity on a legislative proposal is picking up steam in Congress and now has many wondering if an Executive Order could blow up an attempt at an RFS reform bill. Reps. John Shimkus (R-Ill.), Bill Flores (R-Texas), and Peter Welch (D-Vt.) have been hosting conversations on broad changes to the RFS, but a memo from the White House directing EPA to change the program could "torpedo" the process, a legislative aide said. The Congressmen had introduced a similar reform bill last Congress which would have capped the amount of ethanol in the fuel supply. The three lawmakers and their aides plan to keep talking over the next few weeks, and then put the word out to other House members who may be interested in working on the bill. They hope to introduce a bill after the August recess and get passed out of the House with a wide margin by the end of the year.

### RPM Act Support Continue to Grow

This week Sen. Bill Nelson (FL) cosponsored S. 203; this bill would ensure that any attempt by the EPA to regulate racecars or racing bikes is thwarted after confusion last year when the EPA suggested they had this authority under the Clean Air Act. As a result of Nelson's sponsorship, all five Democrat cosponsors from last year have now rejoined the effort. Our immediate focus is on securing three more Senate Democrat cosponsors to demonstrate that the bill is able to garner the 60 votes needed to overcome a filibuster. Over in the House, The RPM Act broke the "100" cosponsor mark and continues to gain momentum. Below are current cosponsor totals for the House and Senate bills:

- HR 350: Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC) & 103 cosponsors (11 Democrats)
- S. 203: Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC) & 25 cosponsors (5 Democrats)

To ask your elected official to become a co-sponsor, visit <http://mrf.org/federal-legislative-issues/> for a pre-drafted letter asking for their support. All it takes is 2 minutes!

## EXECUTIVE & REGULATORY UPDATES – More Toll Roads a Possibility and Materials to Help Fight Distracted Driving

### Toll Roads to Pay for Infrastructure Improvements?

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao this past week raised the prospect that needed infrastructure improvements may be funded to some extent by imposing tolls on more of the nation's roads and bridges.

It was unclear whether she intends to expand tolling on the U.S. interstate system. The concept of granting massive tax credits to lure private infrastructure investment was the centerpiece of President Trump's campaign promise to raise \$1 trillion for roads and bridges. The MRF is an active member of the Alliance for Toll Free Interstates and is working with the coalition to encourage lawmakers to not turn existing roadways and interstates into toll roads to fund any infrastructure plan. The coalition has met with lawmakers from the Committees of jurisdiction and also sent letters to key Members of Congress urging them to not view tolls as the solution to paying for any infrastructure improvements.

### **New Materials to Help End Distracted Driving Available**

Motorcyclists know firsthand that distracted driving is one of the fastest growing safety issues on the roads today. Distracted drivers aren't just a threat to themselves: they are a danger to everyone else on the road. There is currently a national distracted driving effort initiated by the Department of Transportation which is focused on ways to change the behavior of drivers through legislation, enforcement, public awareness, and education. The Products for Enforcement Action Kit (PEAK) aims to help others join the fight against texting and driving, a growing epidemic that took 3,154 lives in 2013 alone. This toolkit helps to alert the public to prepare for maximum high-visibility texting-ban enforcement. There will also be a paid media advertising campaign on stopping distracted driving which will run nationally April 3-10, 2017.

Click here to get more information including fact sheets on distracted driving as well as news releases and talking points for your own use and your organization's use. <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/distracted-driving/u-drive-u-text-u-pay/peak-enforcement-kit>

### **Lawmakers Respond to Motorcyclists' Concerns Over Lack of Representation on Motorcyclist Advisory Council**

When last year's highway bill passed into law, motorcyclists worked hard to re-establish the Motorcyclist Advisory Council or 'MAC'. By design, the MAC was created to coordinate with and counsel the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on infrastructure issues that affect motorcyclists. So, it came as shock when the FHWA announced in January they would only dedicate one seat out of a possible ten for a motorcyclist on the Council. Instead the other nine seats were to represent experts in road design, construction, safety and engineering.

Riders from across the nation quickly sounded the alarms calling on their elected officials to correct what was viewed by many as not only a misstep by the Agency, but a sharp turn away from the congressional intent behind the statute of the highway bill itself. Officials in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate agreed.

Approximately one month after the announcement about the composition of the MAC was issued, letters were sent to the newly confirmed Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao asking her to ensure that a balanced makeup of the MAC be guaranteed to address motorcyclists' concerns. The bipartisan Senate letter, led by Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) included a total of ten signatories including that of John Thune (R-SD), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation which has jurisdiction over transportation-related matters.

The U.S. House of Representatives issued its own letter to Secretary Chao outlining its concerns with actions by the FHWA, asking the Secretary to go as far as to delay future activity of the MAC until a fair and balanced composition could be reached. The House letter, led by Representatives' Tim Walberg (R-MI), Mark Pocan (D-WI), Mike Burgess (R-TX) Donald Norcross (D-NJ) stated,

"It is critical to allow motorcyclists to have a strong voice on this Council. These are the individuals who have experience and can provide a motorcyclist's insights on the challenges and benefits of our roadways. Depending on where they live, riders have unique experiences and are differently impacted by roadway and barrier design, and construction, among others."

In total, over thirty-five lawmakers signed onto the letters representing sixteen different states. Still, other lawmakers including Representatives' Ted Budd (R-NC) and Mark Sanford (R-SC) called the Federal Highway Administration directly speaking with Michael Griffith, Director of the Office of Safety Technologies within the Agency and the contact for the MAC according to the Federal Register notice. Both registered their opposition on the composition of the Council though reported the response from Griffith was "limited."

The Federal Highway Administration is accepting nominations to the MAC through February 23. It is unclear as to whether they will look to increase the number of motorcyclists on the Council despite the concerns expressed from various lawmakers and the motorcycle community at-large.

Leading the charge on the issue is the Motorcycle Riders Foundation, the Washington, DC-based organization for states' motorcyclists' rights organizations as well as motorcycle clubs and individual riders. President of the Board of Directors Kirk 'Hardtail' Willard explained the impetus for the organization's strong stance on this issue, "Motorcyclists deserve robust representation on bodies handling issues that affect their community. It's a scary world for riders when this all-important dialogue between the federal government and the motorcycling community may very well take place among bureaucrats who have never swung a leg over a motorcycle."

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### **American Motorcyclist Association calls motorcycle tariff 'cynical approach to trade policy'**



PICKERINGTON, Ohio – Including motorcycles in a trade dispute over U.S.-raised beef products reflects “a cynical approach to trade policy to look for the largest grassroots reaction you can find to pressure European governments,” the American Motorcyclist Association told a federal agency.

“This is a highly inappropriate use of the motorcycle community,” AMA President and CEO Rob Dingman told the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative in a letter responding to questions and comments made during a Feb. 15 hearing in Washington, D.C. “It appears that to this committee, motorcyclists are simply pawns in a game of international chess.”

Accompanying the letter was a petition containing **6,579** signatures of motorcyclists opposing the proposed tariff.

The USTR proposed a 100 percent tariff on 51cc to 500cc motorcycles imported from the European Union. Motorcycles are recommended for a tariff alongside other products as part of a dispute with the European Union over the amount of U.S.-raised beef EU countries accept. The dispute originated over the U.S. beef industry's use of hormones.

The tariff would affect motorcycles with engines displacing 51cc to 500cc from Aprilia, Beta, BMW, Ducati, Fantic, Gas Gas, Husqvarna, KTM, Montesa, Piaggio, Scorpa, Sherco, TM and Vespa.

Dingman's rebuttal letter reiterated his comments made during the February meeting after William L. Busis, chair of the USTR Section 301 Committee explained why his office included motorcycles in the tariff proposal. When Dingman and motorcycle-industry representatives challenged the USTR's proposal, Busis responded that the agency hoped American motorcyclists would reach out to their European counterparts “and suggest to them maybe they could talk to their government, who could then talk to the commission, and then maybe we could resolve this dispute.”

“In reality, this committee is playing with peoples' lives and livelihoods,” Dingman wrote in his rebuttal. “The negative effects of the proposed trade sanctions would cause dramatic and possibly irreparable harm to the motorcycle industry and spread through the aftermarket equipment sector, recreation equipment sales, the sports entertainment industry and further down the line.

“But those who will suffer the most from this proposed tariff are the Americans who use small displacement motorcycles and scooters for outdoor recreation and urban riding,” Dingman continued. “These are products that are not offered by American manufacturers.”

“Instead of viewing the American motorcycling community as pawns with an imagined grassroots reach far beyond our shores, the committee needs to grasp the significant hardships this tariff will cause to hardworking, everyday tax-paying Americans,” Dingman concluded.

Dingman met personally with the president of the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme in Geneva, Switzerland, and asked him to weigh in on this issue. In a subsequent letter to the USTR that Dingman included as part of his testimony, FIM President Vito Ippolito asks that motorcycles be removed from the tariff list. The AMA also objects to threatening a tariff on nonagricultural products to create leverage in a purely agricultural trade dispute.

Before the February hearing, opponents sent more than 10,300 emails to Congress on this issue, posted more than 9,400 comments to Regulations.gov, and sent nearly 5,300 emails to President Donald Trump. Of the comments sent via Regulations.gov, 82 percent came from the AMA.

## ASK THE MSF

### RIDING SLOWER THAN TRAFFIC

**Q: If I am riding at a slower pace than other road users, what is the best thing to do when faster traffic builds up behind me?**

**A: Speed differential, whether you are riding faster or slower than the traffic flow, even if you are within the speed limit, is a potentially hazardous situation. It can inhibit smooth traffic flow, make merging and changing lanes more difficult for all motorists and increase the chance of road rage.**

If you consistently ride more slowly than other road users, first consider your routes carefully. Avoid major thoroughfares and highways if less-traveled or lower-speed routes are available.

If you must share the road with faster traffic, use the right-most lane and check your rear-view mirrors more frequently.

However, do not let the traffic behind you distract you from important factors ahead.

If there is only one lane in your direction, periodically pull off to the side of the road (when safe and legal) or into a parking area to allow vehicles clustered behind you to pass.

If you are traveling a lot slower than others, encourage vehicles to pass while you are riding within marked passing zones by moving to the right side of your lane and giving a clearly communicated hand signal.





# Reaching Out to Young Riders

**How to reach out to young riders is a question on everyone's mind. Below is some insight from a young rider Charlie Boone from CBA/ABATE of NC.**

Recruiting younger members into state motorcyclist rights organizations (SMRO's) across the country is a serious challenge that I feel very passionately about. I would like to share my advice on the matter, but keep in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and different groups will require different approaches. If one of these tactics doesn't suit the needs of your organization, try another one. No matter what you do, it will require a dedicated effort, so don't give up. It takes a lot of dedication from each member to keep an SMRO going, but one thing that young people and older people have in common is that they really don't like to work in their off time. So, take a moment to look at your organization from an outsider's point-of-view: do they see your members enjoying themselves, having fun, and participating in something that makes them happy, or do they just see a schedule full of meetings, payments, and work?

I see this issue a lot at events, where the only members of an SMRO that non-members are exposed to are the ones working the booth. It's hard to ask someone to pay for a membership to an organization that they will just stick them behind a booth all day at an event that they would otherwise have the freedom to enjoy.

So, when attending any kind of event, put a few members behind the booth and a few out and about, mingling and having fun. Rotating them throughout the day will also help keep your members genuinely relaxed and happy, which looks good and feels better.

In the same vein, SMROs should try to occasionally get together in patches or SMRO shirts at popular motorcycle spots and just enjoy themselves—no meetings, no business, no responsibilities. If people consistently see members relaxing at their local biker bars, shops, and rides, they will want to join and hang out, and once you get them involved in the friendship and fun, it's easier to get them involved in the issues.

Social media is an ever-growing way to attract members. Many individuals are hesitant to have a Facebook page or Twitter account because of the privacy risks, but as long as you go about it responsibly and safely, it can be a game-changer.

A suggestion by Skinny Bob from ABATE of Georgia is to join online groups for local motorcyclists and try to be active. If you build up a good enough reputation, members of that online group will start to look to you and your organization when they have questions or issues, which will lead to more members. These groups can also be a good place to promote your rides and events.

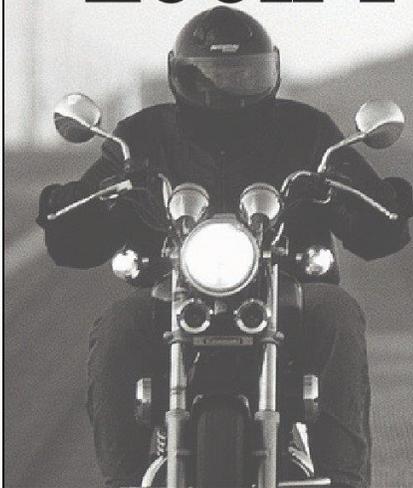
"For me, it's about going to where they are," Skinny Bob said to me. "They won't come to you. They don't want to hang out with a bunch of old guys riding cruisers, so we have to get creative. Find out where they are and go there. Recruit a young person to be your 'rep.'"

The bottom line is that too many SMRO's display much work and not enough fun, and that doesn't look good to any potential members—younger or older. I know it's not always easy with our busy lives to get out and just enjoy ourselves, but if that's what will help us recruit the next generation of members, then we should let loose and have fun like the future of our organizations depends on it.

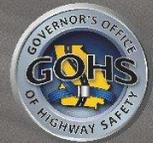
- J.T. Boone CBA/ABATE of NC, MRF member. and young activist scholarship winner

# LOOK TWICE - SAVE A LIFE

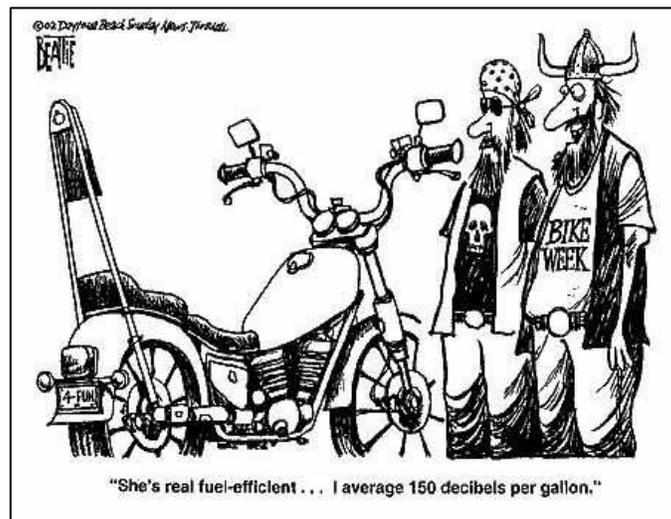
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## Always Time To Laugh...



# Stay sober!

# Ride safe!



A black and white advertisement for motorcycle safety. The central image is a close-up of a person's face wearing a black motorcycle helmet. The helmet's visor is replaced by a glass of beer with a thick head of foam. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'DDS GEORGIA MOTORCYCLE SAFETY PROGRAM'. In the top right corner, there is a circular seal for the 'GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY' with 'GOHS' in the center. At the bottom center, there is a logo for 'DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER' featuring a police officer's hat. Below the helmet, the text reads: 'There's no way to hide it. If you ride impaired, you will get busted.'

# What's Happening?

ABATE OF GEORGIA



## SWAP MEET & RALLY

April 1-2, 2017



1500 Tara Pl,  
Hampton, GA 30228

Gates open at 9 am to 10 pm daily

Daily Admission - \$10

### Camping

\$15 per spot for up 2 people  
\$5 each additional person

Roadhouse Atlanta concert  
Saturday 6:00pm

Events Raffle Prizes  
Bike Show Vendors

Ride around the track TBD

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We need **volunteers and vendors!** Contact

David Neal at 678-770-9188 or  
[activites.director@abatega.org](mailto:activites.director@abatega.org)

# What's Happening?

## District 1

ABATE DISTRICT 1



26TH ANNUAL  
POKER - RUN

APRIL 8, 2017

1ST Bike out 1:00 PM

American Legion Chatsworth Ga

Last Bike in 4:00 PM

\$10.00 PER HAND OR 3 HANDS FOR \$20.00.

GOOD FOLKS AND FUN, FUN, FUN!!

INFO: TAMI 706-980-0574

# What's Happening?

## District 3



40th  
Anniversary

### DISTRICT 3 Open Meeting

WHEN: March 26, 2017  
TIME: 2:00pm— 4:00pm  
PLACE: *ON THE BAYOU*

7080 New Calhoun Hwy, Rome GA

Fun — Prizes— 50/50 Raffle

### “NOTICE”

On The Bayou is a unique restaurant, all food is prepared fresh to order. You can pre-order prior to arriving, or you may arrive early to order.

**Remember it is a BYOB,**  
so make sure

You bring your favorite drink of choice.

Menu is posted on D3 FB page

“Ride pending after meeting, be ready to ride”



#### MISSION STATEMENT

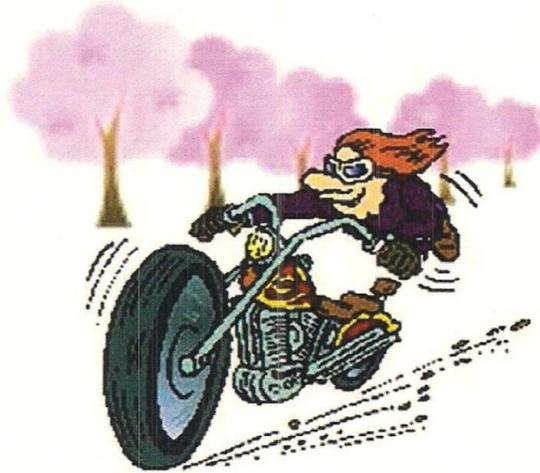
“ To preserve the freedom of the road, by protecting the rights of all motorcycle riders through fair and reasonable legislation , education and public awareness

# What's Happening?

## District 6

### *Cherry Blossom Run*

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017



The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Cherry Blossom Run, registration is at The Grove Bar & Grill, 4681 Bill Gardner Parkway, Locust Grove at 9 AM. Free coffee & doughnuts during registration while they last. Police escorted ride on back roads to Macon's Cherry Blossom Festival. Event T-shirts available, plus door prizes & raffle. \$10 per bike, \$5 per passenger. Ride departs at 10:45 AM. Call 770-490-2330 for more info. Open to all riders.

# What's Happening?

## District 7

### ABATE OF GA – DISTRICT 7 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual CHILI COOK-OFF

Who doesn't love a good bowl of chili? Let's show off your chili makin' skills, and bond over good food. Get your favorite recipe ready, your team together or you can enter as a individual. Entry fee for contest is \$20.00, you can do a team or individual (1 pot of Chili per entry fee).



**When:** March 18, 2017 (Rain date is March 25, 2016)

**Where:** AP's Hidden Hideaway

**Time:** 12 pm to 4pm

**Judging ends at 2:30 pm. Prizes given out at 3:30pm.**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$100.00**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$75.00**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$50.00**
- People's Choice - \$75.00**



\* Drinks and Hot dogs will be sold by AP's Hidden Hideaway

*You taste'em, you judge 'em  
Ticket price \$5.00, come eat Chili and pick a winner.*



Questions Contact: Wayne Overholt 478-954-1010

# Out and About



## D5 and D11



# Remember When?



Featuring **D1**



# It's Swap Meet Time!

**ABATE OF GEORGIA**

**SWAP MEET & RALLY**  
April 1-2, 2017

**ATLANTA MOTOR SPEEDWAY** 1500 Tara Pl, Hampton, GA 30228  
Gates open at 9 am to 10 pm daily  
Daily Admission - \$10

**Camping**  
\$15 per spot for up to 2 people  
\$5 each additional person

**Events**  
Bike Show  
Raffle Prizes  
Vendors  
Ride around the track TBD

**Sponsored By:**  
ROCKCITY, FULLTHROTTLE, Minuteman Press

**ALL BIKERS WELCOME**

For more info call David Neal 678-729-9188 or email activities.director@abatega.com

**SAT APRIL 1st 6PM**

**Atlanta  
Motorspeedway**

**Ride the track**

**Now with  
Roadhouse!**



# Win This Harley!

**Don't forget to sell those raffle tickets! Most sold gets a trophy!  
See our DC for more info.**



## 2000 Harley Davidson Sportster Custom

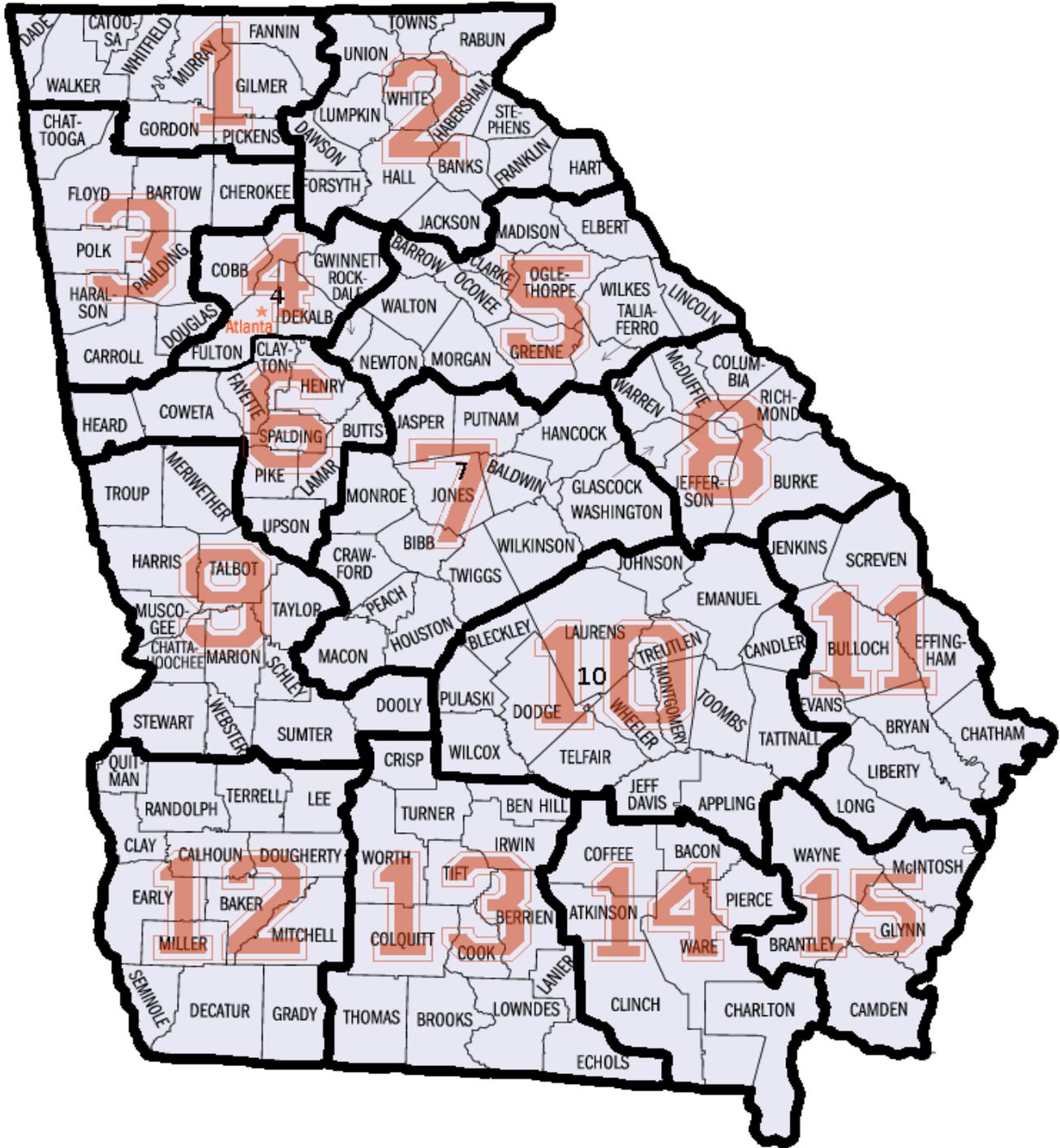
<b>SWAP MEET RAFFLE</b>		<b>ABATE OF GEORGIA</b>	<b>SWAP MEET RAFFLE</b>
<b>TICKETS \$10.00</b> (3 Tickets for \$25.00)	Drawing to be held on 04/02/2017 Do not have to present to win	<b>ABATE OF GEORGIA</b>	
 1 2000 Harley-Davidson 1200 Sportster Custom	 3 Polaroid's 55in LED TV is 1080p has 3 HDMI, 1 VGA, 1 USB, all in a space saving compact design.	Name: _____	
 2 Coleman CT200U Trail200 Gas-Powered Mini Bike	 4 Witoy's V686 2.4G Mini Drones quadcopter with camera	Address: _____	
Prizes must be claimed within 30 days. We can make arrangements to deliver to closest district.		Phone: _____	
		Email: _____	
		0608	0608

# When Do You Meet?

- D1 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 7:30p  
Logan Roadhouse, Dalton
- D1W 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 6:30p  
Dari Dip, Lafayette
- D2 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, 2p  
J.W. Reed's, Cleveland
- D3 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, 2p  
Location varies, see web or FB
- D4E 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 7p  
Confetti's, Norcross
- D4W 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 7:30p  
Mazzy's, Marietta
- D5 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday, 3p  
Location varies, see web or FB
- D5N 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 7p  
Cycle World, Athens
- D6 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 7p  
The Grove, Locust Grove
- D6-2 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, 7p  
Twilight Bar and Grill, Newnan
- D7 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, 2p  
AP's Hideaway, Macon
- D9 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 7p  
Buffalo Wild Wings, Columbus
- D11 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, 3p  
Twilight Bar and Grille, Bloomingdale
- D13 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, 2p  
Crime and Punishment Museum, Ashburn
- D15 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday, 7p  
Location varies, see web or FB



# What District Am I In?



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AIM-3260



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Powersports Plus  
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(229) 432-2015 [www.powersportsplus.com](http://www.powersportsplus.com)

Mountain Motorsports  
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Any business that wishes to offer a discount on goods or services to members may have a listing in the monthly newsletter in the Supporter section. This listing will show business name, address, phone number, web site, district number and discount amount offered. No Logos or other info. The cost to be listed is \$25.00 per year. The Business Support member will receive an ABATE membership Easel and 2 Decals showing they offer a discount along with one full year of being listed. Any Business that is owned by an ABATE of Georgia member will receive this for \$15.00

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Any business that wishes to be a Sponsor and offer a discount on goods or services to members may have a listing in the monthly newsletter in the Sponsor Section. This listing will show the business name, address, phone number, web site, district number and discount amount offered in large bold type. No Logos etc. The cost for this is \$100.00 per year. The Sponsor will receive an ABATE membership easel, 2 decals showing membership, a discount of 5% on any additional advertising in the newsletter. Any business owned by an ABATE of Georgia member will receive this for \$75.00. An individual or Business that provides more than \$100.00 in goods or services to ABATE of Georgia will be listed in an Honor Roll section.



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ABATE OF GEORGIA



# SWAP MEET & RALLY

**April 1-2, 2017**



1500 Tara Pl,  
Hampton, GA 30228

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Roadhouse Atlanta concert  
Saturday 6:00pm

Events  
Bike Show

Raffle Prizes  
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**Ride around the track** TBD

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## STOP IMPAIRED RIDING

- In 2014, motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes had higher percentages of alcohol impairment than any other type of driver.
- The highest percentage of fatally injured, alcohol-impaired riders was between the ages of 35 to 39.
- Most alcohol related accidents occur between midnight and 3 am.



### What can YOU do?

- Always wear a DOT-approved helmet and protective clothing. Never ride while distracted. Be properly licensed. Don't speed. Ride SOBER.
- Designate a sober rider/driver *before* you have any alcohol.

[www.dds.ga.gov](http://www.dds.ga.gov)