Greetings Top Cats

The worst weather is behind us (we hope anyway) and in a few weeks we can expect to have some opportunities to ride once again. Over the past several months you have heard and read many safety topics that relate to making sure your bike is as ready as you are. Before you hit the road for the first time, go back and review all that advice. Feel free to seek out one of our Safety committee or MSF members. Take advantage of all that experience and knowledge that comes with being a member of such a great club as Top Cats.

We have completed the yearly renewal process. The club has shrunk a little from its peak population of a few years ago. Some personal lifestyles have changed, several have moved away, and a few others never really connected. The good news is that those who have been the most active are still here and are still contributing. Smaller but stronger I guess. That said, we always have a need for new members who will share your passion for the club and the sport.

A hearty thanks to Amy Tober who took the time to create some world class first aid kits. Modeled after some kits we saw at the accident scene management class, these are much more affordable. It's nice to see ideas turn into action. Let's hope we never have to use them, but it's always best to be prepared.

Your Activities team has been working hard to schedule another season loaded with rides. Based on feedback from last year you can expect more rides that are shorter, similar to the brunch rides we did. There remain many open dates for you to reserve if you are interested in leading a ride. If you are a road captain and you haven't led a ride for a few years, now is the time to step up and use those skills once again. After all, what's the point of wearing the rocker if you are only going to be a follower?

Don't forget to book your hotel rooms for the Door County and Sturgis Rides.

Gary

Criteria for Earning Senior Road Captain Status

Be a Road Captain in good standing

Be formally nominated by an active Senior Road Captain in time for the annual Senior Road Captain review meeting

Superior Riding knowledge (rules of the road, protocol and traditions)

Superior ability and willingness to mentor new riders

Superior Riding skills and experience

Superior Leadership and Judgement

Superior Road Captain Planning and execution abilities

Exceptional Top Cat contributions, knowledge and experience that goes above and beyond normal expectations

Participate in other motorcycling commitments, motorcycling community recognition, activities, and contributions

Attain a two-thirds majority of all voting members in attendance at the annual Seniors Road Captain's meeting
OFFICERS and BOARD of DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandt</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>847-546-9771</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cgb002@comcast.net">cgb002@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunde</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>815-459-2488</td>
<td><a href="mailto:monger1@hotmail.com">monger1@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malia</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>847-381-6511</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmalia@cfalp.com">tmalia@cfalp.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zawila</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>847-970-9026</td>
<td><a href="mailto:keith.zawila@trustmarkins.com">keith.zawila@trustmarkins.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prettyman</td>
<td>Past Pres.</td>
<td>847-854-5929</td>
<td><a href="mailto:topcats2003@aol.com">topcats2003@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krepel</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>815 459-9345</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bikert72@sbcglobal.net">bikert72@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>847-657-9363</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adams2144@comcast.net">adams2144@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konsewicz</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>630-207-5500</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andy@konsewicz.com">andy@konsewicz.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>847-870-0957</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vethog@comcast.net">vethog@comcast.net</a></td>
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COMMITTEES

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<td>Adams</td>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>847-657-9363</td>
<td><a href="mailto:adams2144@comcast.net">adams2144@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkpatrick</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>847 854-4137</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wkirkpa177@aol.com">wkirkpa177@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaMonica</td>
<td>ROAR</td>
<td>847-446-6362</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jlamonica2@comcast.net">jlamonica2@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konsewicz</td>
<td>Webmaster</td>
<td>630-207-5500</td>
<td><a href="mailto:andy@konsewicz.com">andy@konsewicz.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandt</td>
<td>Activities/Hotline</td>
<td>847-546-9771</td>
<td><a href="mailto:meo1957@comcast.net">meo1957@comcast.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carmody</td>
<td>Mbrship/Products</td>
<td>312-498-1354</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Bcarmody@email.com">Bcarmody@email.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strickler</td>
<td>MSF</td>
<td>847-438-3162</td>
<td><a href="mailto:chameleonbiker@aol.com">chameleonbiker@aol.com</a></td>
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ACTIVITIES

March - May 2007

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<td>General Meeting</td>
<td>Durty Nellies</td>
<td>Palatine</td>
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<td>Mar 18</td>
<td>Road Cpt Conf</td>
<td>Clubhouse Tavern</td>
<td>Buffalo Grove</td>
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<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
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<td>Palatine</td>
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<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>Long Distance Ride</td>
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<td>Palatine</td>
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<td>May 06</td>
<td>G.R.A.S.S Class</td>
<td>Clubhouse Tavern</td>
<td>Buffalo Grove</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 08</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td>Durty Nellies</td>
<td>Palatine</td>
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<td>May 13</td>
<td>Brunch Ride</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 18</td>
<td>Ride 2 Work Day</td>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>Nationwide</td>
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Call the hotline (847) 622-3501 for updates and check the web site at: www.topcats.org
Criteria for Leading a Ride and Earning a Road Captain Rocker

Be a member in good standing for one (1) year and attend an initial GRASS class

Attend the Road Captain Module of GRASS on how to plan and execute a Group ride

Take the initiative to plan and execute a successful Top Cats’ ride

Select a Senior Road Captain to assist

During the planning process, pre-ride the route with assistants and tail gunner, when possible, until all are familiar with the route

Successfully conduct the pre-ride safety meeting, including:
- Route briefing
- Two spot
- Assistant RCs
- Tail gunner
- Safety briefing
- Special considerations/ instructions
- Hand signal review (as necessary)
- Expected weather
- Group riding reminders
- Guest reminders

Successfully lead the ride

Have a Senior Road Captain attend your ride to evaluate the successful completion of requirements, critique the ride and recommend the attainment of Road Captain status.

Annual Criteria for Retaining Active Road Captain Status

Remain an active member in good standing

Attend the Road Captain Module of GRASS each year

Assist a road captain or a Senior Road Captain with, or lead, a ride each year

Continuously set the example of a skilled, safe rider.

OFFICIAL TOP CAT RIDES
Top Cat rides are typically led by a currently qualified Senior Road Captain, a Road Captain, or a road captain candidate under the supervision of a qualified Senior Road Captain.

Annual Criteria for Retaining Senior Road Captain Status

Remain an active member in good standing

Teach a GRASS class each year

Mentor a road captain or a road captain candidate each year or lead a ride

Continuously set the example of a skilled, safe rider

Present a Safety Tip at a general meeting per year

Write a Kaution Korner for ROAR per year

Attend one of the following every three years:
- Experienced Riders’ Course
- CPR Certification Course
- Accident Scene Management Course
- Any certified motorcycle safety course
The 13 February Board Meeting was cancelled due to miserable, terrible, horrible, stupid and idiotic friggin' inclement weather. The next Board meeting will be 13 March, as scheduled.

TopCats General Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2007
By Keith Zawila

Vice-President John Lunde called the meeting to order at 7:48 pm at Durty Nellie's (due to the inclement weather, we delayed the start of the meeting to allow more members to arrive).

We welcomed the following guests: Fred Radke (guest of Bard Boand).

John announced the Board of Directors, at their January meeting, decided to fill Tom Malia's vacant Director's office, by electing Greg Smith to serve out the remainder of the term.

John offered his thanks to Andy Konsewicz and Mark Heller for their work in getting the website up and running again.

Tom Malia (Treasurer)

As of year end, we have approx. $1,200 in our Charity Ride account, and approx. $5,600 in our Operating Account.

Lynn Adams (Director)

Announced the raffle tickets for this year's Charity ride are available. Ric Case and Merrily Arguello are handling ticket distribution, so if you didn't pick them up at the meeting, please contact Ric or Merrily. The tickets are $10, and come in a book of 10. Watch the activities calendar for events to help sell raffle tickets. Lynn presented the new look for the flyers, posters, and brochures.

Muriel Brandt will be working with Top Cats members to manage the process of materials distributed to dealers. Registration has begun, so please sign up for the ride as soon as you can. Please help to make this another successful event.

Greg Smith (Director)

Updated us on activities. We currently have 13 planned. Some upcoming events include Dinner & Show Night (March 10), Mini-Golf Classic (March 25), Annual Kick-Off Ride (April 15), Long Distance Ride (April 22), Brunch Ride (May 13), Door County (June 1). Please check the schedule / website for additional information on these activities.

Greg introduced Randy Braun who informed us about the July 13 - July 30 HOG Posse ride. This ride goes from Wilmington, Delaware to Portland, Oregon. Randy will be leaving a couple of days prior to July 13th to meet up with this ride. If you are a HOG member, and are interested, please contact Randy.

Greg introduced Bard Boand who provided an update on this year's Sturgis ride. The ride begins August 1 and proceeds to Mankato, MN stopping at the Holiday Inn (507-345-1234, $69 rooms). Our next stop will be in Pierre, SD at the Kelly Inn (605-224-4140, $57/single, $61/double). We then arrive in Rapid City for our stay at the Alex Johnson (800-888-ALEX, $190/day). If you're interested in going, please make you reservations and contact Bard for additional information.

Greg introduced Don Schaffer who mentioned a possible 'track' day at Autobahn North like we had last year. If interested, please contact Don.

John LaMonica (ROAR)

John encouraged everyone to share their experiences of trips, rides, and pictures with articles we can include in each month's publication to go along with the regular items we publish. Please forward any items you have to John before the 15th of the month.

Keith Zawila (Secretary)

Mentioned course schedules are being published for
beginners and experienced rider classes. You can check these by simply doing a 'Google' search on "NIU MSF". This returns the NIU website. You can review the upcoming course offerings here, and be able to review all of the other State programs thru links to them from this site.

Introduced Wayne Kirkpatrick. Wayne updated us on the recent Senior Road Captain meeting. 5 Senior Road Captains did not fulfill their annual requirements and lost their 'active' status. 3 new Senior Road Captains were elected: Gary Brandt, Don Shaffer, and Tom Malia. Wayne also recognized Dennis Dougherty, who became a Road Captain last fall (but we hadn't seem him since then).

Wayne reminded everyone of our 2 Safety Committee sub-committees: GRASS (Ric Case) and Road Captains (Don Shaffer). If you need any information, please contact these Chairpersons.

Ric Case reminded us of the upcoming GRASS class (2/25) at the ClubHouse (Connie's renamed).

Don Shaffer encouraged everyone to help plan and execute rides. If you need a mentor for your ride, please contact Don. He also reminded everyone about the upcoming "all" Road Captains meeting, planned for March 18, from 9 to 11, at the ClubHouse.

Wayne provided a safety tip. What is your stopping distance at 60 mph? How much gas do you have left when you hit reserve? How much air do you need in your rear tire if you're carrying a passenger? What's your bike's maximum weight with a passenger and luggage? Where are your spare fuses located on your bike, if you even have any? The answers to these can be found in your Owner's Manual….not a bad resource to check from time to time.

Comments were taken from the floor.

Amy Tober announced Medical Kits are available for Top Cat members for $35. These kits were assembled based on information learned from the recent Accident Management Class. And, at a greatly reduced price. If you're interested, please contact the Membership folks.
I suppose that any well functioning group is composed of a good balance of chiefs and indians. Too many of one category or the other results in either a quiet, do nothing until told to (Indians) group or a boisterous, talk about it or create a committee (Chiefs) group. Neither of which gets a damn thing done.

Leaders in industry, in the community or in life don’t walk around with a sign that says “Leader” any more than followers wear a similar sign. Good leaders get off their butt, take the initiative, and attract good followers. Therein lies the secret to a successful organization.

In our riding community, road captains are typically the leaders and the rest of us have great times just following them. Unique to our culture however, is that our charismatic, confident, experienced, and dynamic leaders often, not always but most often, wear a little rocker under their Top Cats patch that says Road Captain.

With our riding season about 30 days away, depending on how warm your riding gear is, we have a lot of opportunities for leaders to surface and lead some great local rides.

An often - heard comment lately has been along the lines of “Gee, I’d like to lead a ride and earn my Road Captain rocker but I just don’t know where to ride to.” That, sports fans, is simply another way of saying “I’m a follower, not a leader.”

It doesn’t take decades of saddle time to get the experience to find a great riding route and put together a super ride. Remember, in motorcycling, it’s the journey, not the destination. When the two are equally fun, the result is a great ride and a super experience.

How do you find a good route? Spend a day riding in any direction at all and you have a good chance of discovering a great route and a neat destination. Ride northeast about 40 miles and you’ll find a little - known, very unique, biker bar / restaurant called Spokes. Ride northwest 60 miles and you’ll find a motorcycle dealership with its own restaurant. Ride ten more miles and you’re at a great little motorcycle museum. 40 miles north of here is a castle - like convent with (No Bull!) a biker bar at the base of the mountain. Head south for a half - day ride and you end up at the Wheels of Time Museum or the Tower State Park observation tower. The opportunities for an exciting ride are, literally, in every direction you look.

Elsewhere in this issue is a short article on how to lead a ride and how to earn a road captain rocker. The first step toward leading a ride is to go read that article. The second step is just as easy, ask for help. No one leads a ride alone. Ask any road captain, any Senior Road Captain, any member of the Activities or Safety Committees or any member of the Board and they will be glad to link you up with someone to assist you with ride ideas, planning, and execution.

You will discover that it really is just as easy to be a Chief as it is to be an Indian...
Kaution Korner

By Ric “Clutch” Case

NOW is a good time to assess where you are with your riding skill, your equipment, your motorcycle, and your physical condition.

Are you physically ready for the new riding season? If not, now is a good time to start or expand any physical fitness workout program (yes, I include myself in that recommendation).

Are you comfortable with your riding skills? I hope everyone said no because we can ALL work on improving our knowledge and skills. There will be lots of discussion at our next meeting about abilities and motorcycle education. Plan to attend one of our GRASS classes, even just as a refresher. The CPR class is also available to you if you are interested. Depending on which category you fit into, there is a beginner and an experienced rider class from MSE And there are numerous other advanced and sophisticated courses available and worth looking into from vendors, private instructors, and schools.

Do you have ALL the riding gear necessary for the approaching riding season? What condition is your existing equipment and clothing in? Does any of it need to be replaced? Think about last year’s riding season. Was there anything that was missing from your equipment that would have been beneficial to have with you? Is anything starting to wear and needs to be replaced? With the Holidays behind us, many vendors are offering good incentives to purchase equipment during this off season.

What about that motorcycle? Were there any adjustments you thought about making and never made? Handlebars, foot controls, throttle, brake, and clutch levers all adjusted to your complete satisfaction? Did you think about making any engine or power/drive train adjustments and just never get around to doing it? If you’re a do it yourselfer, now is a good time think about it and do it. If you rely on your dealership to do these things many of them offer very good incentives to have it done now during there slow season. Ride Free (safely)

Top Cats 2007 Door County Ride

By Gary Brandt

It's been quite awhile since the Top Cats have visited Door County. We have been able to reserve a block of rooms at the Wagon Trail Resort for a two night event. We will leave on Friday morning, June 1st and return on Sunday, June 3rd. The ride will start at the Shell Station at the corner of Rt120 and Rt45 in Grayslake.

There are several room prices available for the Top Cats. A wood side room is $89 a night, a lakeside balcony room us $109 a night and a balcony room is $129. You can call 1-800 999-2466 for reservations. Remember to mention the Top Cats account # 1272. There is no internet method to use. We have until 4/16 to reserve the rooms or until none are available. They do have a web site www.wagontrail.com.

There are limited rooms at each price so book early. This ride is expected to be a sell out.

More information on the ride can be found on out web site, www.topcats.org.

ATTENTION ALL ROAD CAPTAINS!!!!!!

By Safety Committee

The Annual Top Cats’ Road Captain Conference will be held on 18 March from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM at The Clubhouse and Tavern (GRASS Classroom) in Buffalo Grove. This meeting is for all road captains and will address our 2007 Safety Goals, GRASS class schedule, road captain re-qualification, and 2007 Group Ride opportunities. Put it on your calendar now and plan on giving the Club a few hours of your time on 18 March to help improve our Club activities and our Safety environment.