CHECK THE ATTITUDE

I read the article about Charles Umbenhauer twice, and must say I appreciate his hard and fruitful work. His efforts have resulted in some very positive changes to Pennsylvania’s motor laws. But in my two readings of the article, including Charles’ tips to protect our right to ride, I couldn’t find anything about how to avoid losing our rights in the first place.

We bikers continue to be our own worst enemy. Look at half the riders on the road and you see scowling, menacing-looking people, bad-to-the-bone riders of very loud motorcycles.

I’ve got no problem with large, hairy and tattooed—I’m a little hairy myself, and when you add the scowl and the messages you find on stickers on many of the bikes, you really can’t blame people for believing that bikers are somewhat unevolved.

My advice consists of three words: Grow Up, Bikers. When we have a lot fewer of these peer-pressured, look-alike, ultra-bad posers disturbing the peace and demanding their rights, we’ll have a lot fewer places like Myrtle Beach that quickly and wisely hide the welcome sign when they hear us coming.

And the AMA will have a lot less to tret about.

Craig Ditman
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REFORMED ON SOUND

As a former member of the “obnoxious pipes” club, I appreciate the efforts of people like Chris Real and the AMA on educating riders on how their exhaust pipe choices reflect on all motorcyclists (Protecting the Ride, August issue). I wasn’t truly aware of how loud the pipes were on my ST1300 until I sold it, and the buyer rode it away—at full throttle. I was mortified.

Having changed my ways, you can imagine my dismay when minutes after reading the August issue of American Motorcyclist, I read in the August issue of Motorcycle Consumer News that the Oakland, California, Police Department had retrofitted its fleet of Harley-Davidsons with louder pipes...

Not only is this going in the opposite direction in regard to sound and being good citizens, but it’s an incredible waste of taxpayers’ money. The bureaucrat who approved that expenditure should be relieved of his/her duties, and the officers who requested these pipes educated on how “loud pipes most definitely do not save lives.”

Gary Christopher
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SAVE SPACE, GET TICKET

I’m interested to learn the verdict for Valeriano Diviacci, who was ticketed in Boston for not parking his motorcycle parallel to the curb...

Common sense would tell anyone that putting two, three or four motorcycles in a single space conserves precious parking availability, making more room for everyone. It’s a win-win solution for all. Some places prohibit backing into parking spaces, even though backing in is easier and safer for motorcycles under certain circumstances. It also is impossible to know what the specific parking laws are as we ride from town to town. The last time I was in Chicago, I saw that all the motorcycles were parked perpendicular to the curb, and most shared their spaces with cars. If I did that here in south Florida, I would get a ticket.

It’s time we address all these issues from a nationwide standpoint. Motorcycles save gasoline and space. We should be rewarded, not punished.

Mike Gluckman
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We couldn’t agree with you more, Mike. That’s why we continue to weigh in on issues like this when we can.