



**CHAPTER 186 Contra Costa, CA**  
Star Touring & Riding Association

**THE ROTATING WHEEL**

**MAY 2008**

**THE “PREZ SEZ”**

**WOW – WHAT A MONTH – AND THE FUN IS JUST STARTING – YAHOO!**

April started out with Dave McNamar leading us (29 bikes total) on a super, spirited ride through the sticks on the Lakeport Run. Our Chapter, along with (80) other STAR members within our region, welcomed Clearlake Chapter #442 into existence!  
**Thanks, Dave.**

Larry and several of our members rode over to the Lodi Open House Event on April 19<sup>th</sup> to celebrate that Chapter's first major event with their dealer.

Larry and Pauline lead our Chapter members up to Napa on April 26<sup>th</sup> to welcome those new Napa members to the STAR family – and what a membership drive they had – 40 new members signed up! Finally, for our first Sunday afternoon ride, on the 27<sup>th</sup>, it was a fabulous ride to Alice's Restaurant / Pescadero / Half Moon Bay that Perry led us on with 14 bikes on the ride.

Group Safety is a big topic with the officer team, and we are looking for additional Road Captains / Tailgunners. Please mark down May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9AM @ the Discovery Bay Starbucks. We will have coffee; discuss the roles of Road Captains/Tailgunners and how to put on a ride. We will then pre-ride the following weeks ride up Mt. Hamilton where everyone will get a chance to be a Road Captain for a while.

We are also trying some new ideas – some will work – some will not – some might need refining, but rest assured, rider safety is foremost on our

minds. Over the next couple of months, we are going to be working hard at improving our group riding skills, and I welcome all feedback from all of you to achieve this goal.

This also brings up our Motorcycle Skills / Training Day with the Sheriff's Department in Dublin on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Cost is \$150.00, but well worth it to refine some skills you already have, break old habits, and better learn how to handle our “big steeds”. This course is open to all – please let me know ASAP if you plan on attending.

Oh, did I mention the Chapter rides that are coming up? Please check the calendar – and website: Mt. Hamilton on the 12<sup>th</sup>, the Peruvian Paseo Horse event on the 18<sup>th</sup> hosted by Pauline, is our two “official” Chapter events. However, there will be other rides to fun and great locations. Sacramento's picnic on the 4<sup>th</sup> (already 14 bikes have signed up), the ride with 209 down to Big Sur, our own Memorial Day Weekend Ride – this year to Redding and partially hosted by the Redding Chapter May 24<sup>th</sup> through 26<sup>th</sup>. For those not able to make the Redding trip, please consider the STAR KNIGHTS ride on May 24<sup>th</sup> – this ride is for a very moving and worthwhile cause. **AND DON'T FORGET OUR REGIONAL HIGH SIERRA STAR B Q – June 6 – 8 in Reno!**

I would like to thank George for constantly updating the website to keep us informed.

As we precede through this year, please check out everything we are offering / suggesting. If you see a ride, and have some different ideas on how to do that ride / route, let us know. We want to have fun – yet challenge ourselves at the same time. Please make sure you are ready – as is your bike – to participate and **Share Times And Riding** with your friends.

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**BACK** to our returning member Bill Petaccio, and new members: Warren/Rimma Darmstead, Richard [Wolf] Hamilton and his wife Marsha Zaboy.

And last but not least

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!**

**Victor "Lone Eagle" Tibbs, President**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Check the website calendar for further information

- May 3<sup>rd</sup> Road Captain Training Day and Ride
- May 4<sup>th</sup> Picnic with Chapter 153 - Jamestown
- May 10<sup>th</sup> Mt. Hamilton [joint ride with Hayward Fault 103]
- May 17<sup>th</sup>: Joint ride with #209 down to Big Sur
- May 18<sup>th</sup> Peruvian Paso Horses
- May 24<sup>th</sup> Star Knights Vet Memorial Ride
- May 24-26 Chapter Weekend Ride - Redding
- May 31<sup>st</sup> Motorcycle Skills Training Day
  
- June 6-8 High Sierra BBQ – STAR Regional Event
- June 14<sup>th</sup>: Air Show at Columbia State Park
- June 21<sup>st</sup> Modesto Chapter's Charity Poker Run
- June 22<sup>nd</sup> Old River Road, Downtown Sacramento [joint ride with Hayward Fault #103]
- June 26 Chapter Meeting
- June 28<sup>th</sup> Blessing of the Bikes
  
- July 12<sup>th</sup> Holli-STAR Rally
- July 20<sup>th</sup> Scandia Family Fun Center
  
- August 9<sup>th</sup> Competche [Ukiah]
- August 24<sup>th</sup> Chapter Ride TBD
- August 28<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting
  
- September 13 Santa Cruz
- September 14<sup>th</sup> RIP's "BAD" RIDE
- September 21<sup>st</sup> Chapter Ride TBD
  
- October 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter Ride TBD
- October 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter Meeting – Officer Nominations
- October 26<sup>th</sup> Chocolate Ride
  
- November 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter Ride - TBD
- November 15<sup>th</sup> USS Alameda [joint ride with Monterey Bay Chapter #161]
- November 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter Ride - TBD
  
- December 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter Christmas Party – Officer Elections

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 Chapter Sanctioned events are set out in blue  
 Chapter Meetings – red  
 Chapter Supported Events - Black

## AND THE MEMBERS SAID ...

This is your section to share with other Chapter members Ride Reports, etc.

### YOU WANT TO RIDE WHERE THIS WEEKEND?

Last month, the fearless leader wrote about checking your bike over. Well, we all do that, don't we? I get it serviced periodically, check the nuts and screws, clean the windshield, check the tires, everything should be great. Not a problem – right?

I went with the Chapter on the Merced Support the Vet's Run, and on the way back, decided to hop off Hwy 5 with Cecil to go play on the twisties back home. Sounded like a fun thing to do – until pulling of the freeway onto the off-ramp, I noticed "I HAD NO REAR BRAKE?!?!?!". Being the mechanically inclined genius that I am, I determined that that was not a good thing – and told Cecil we should probably stay on the highway and get somewhere to "diagnose" the problem. Pulling into Livermore, under the bike I went. Everything looked OK – still no rear brake. Hmmm

A call was then placed to our Chapter's real mechanical genius who said, "Hmm you got a problem – swing by and I'll take a look at it". Pulling in to the now famous "other part-time home" for this particular motorcycle, we pulled off the saddle bags and noticed that I no longer had any rear brake pads – then noticed the rotor was shot as a result, and on and on. "How could that be – didn't you hear anything grinding, or better yet burning?" Well, um no I didn't I said. But what to do – I'm leaving on a 1000 + mile trip next week. Well, we ran down, bought the last set of brake pads at the parts store, came back and installed them. "This should last you for the trip".

When I got home, I got nervous, so on Sunday I ordered the pads/rotors/ bolts etc and had to have them fed-ex'd out here so I could make my trip (very expensive – don't try this yourself). While at the house, I found my Owners Manual – wondering what it says about regular maintenance, I said. YIKES! I found there were just a "few things" I hadn't gotten around to doing as part of the ONGOING preventative maintenance suggested by the manufacturer. Hey, I thought, the bike is

running good – everything should be good.  
**WRONG!**

So, folks, by now you probably have guessed who wrote this. I am not a comic – and this was an ill attempt at some humor. I would like to thank Dan for bailing me out – and reminding me that there is much more than oil and air in the tires that makes a motorcycle operable, to lay off the back brake so much, and start using the front brakes.

Take care of your pride and joy, and it will take care of you.

Lone Eagle

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## **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Southwest STAR BBQ – San Diego**

March 28 – 30, 2008.

It's 4:00 a.m., alarms everywhere going off – didn't want to be late leaving the house for a fabulous ride to San Diego for the South West STAR BQ – 10<sup>th</sup> Annual no less. With the dogs and wife looking at me like I'm crazy, I hopped on the bike at 5:00 a.m. to meet Tony Tavers, Dave Lance and Tony Bacay from South Stockton and Janet "Sonshine" Sturkey from Sacramento #153 in Manteca at 6:00 a.m. for breakfast. We had decided kickstands up around 7:00 a.m. to start the ride down south, trying to beat some L.A. traffic.

Stopping in Visalia at the Harley Dealership to pick up Tony T's wife – Olivia – some of us chose to warm up and do a little Harley shopping. Yours truly found a flat red Road Glide that was gorgeous – unfortunately not in this year's budget – LOL. After a 20 minute stop off, we resumed our trek down Hwy 99, stopping at the Grapevine for lunch. All I kept thinking was how beautiful a day it was for a ride, and missed the Chapter members not being around.

Getting into Los Angeles, and dealing with that traffic, now is another story. Fortunately, Tony T knew the highway system, and soon we were heading down car pool lanes, onto 405, cutting across the freeway to hit another off ramp and more car pool lanes; I don't know how he remembered the route. Around 6:45 p.m., we pulled into the Sheraton where about 200 bikes have already pulled in for the night. What a sight – everyone just hanging around, swapping stories, having a great time. After checking in, some

dinner, a meet and eat at the bar which had been reserved just for STAR, time to think of the fun for the next day.

The organizing committee had done an excellent job – two great poker rides had been created – one to the coast, and one inland. Unfortunately, yours truly had an appointment to have some "work" done on his bike, and I was able to spend the day with the vendors, meeting many of the dignitaries of STAR International, and "resting". After an exhilarating "Show and Shine", a bike skills and games contest, it was time for the 360 of us to all retreat for the banquet, share in the awards, and have the opportunity to hear "Shark" lead the auction for some fabulous prizes. Shark came out from Iowa to do this, and he definitely has a knack for getting the crowd fired up and inspired.

Later in the evening, unfortunately, it started to drizzle with reports of rain in the morning. I got special permission to park my bike right at the front door to the hotel, off to sleep, hoping for no rain, but then, hey – I need to try out the rain suit some time ...right? Just was hoping my new "repairs" were going to be dry enough.

Sam had volunteered to lead the group back home on Sunday, and he notified all of us of the 6:30 a.m. kickstands up – ouch [after his coffee though]. Nevertheless, there we assembled – DANG - IN THE RAIN – to head back home. After carefully navigating us for an hour-and-a-half in the rain, we decided to pull into a Denny's for breakfast to try to let the rain pass us. It did.

Heading up over the Grapevine, the winds kicked in and it was all we could do to hold onto the bikes. In Gorman, Laurie from South Stockton had had enough, and decided she would put the bike on Joe and Janet Brown's trailer, our chase vehicle – only to find out the trailer had a flat tire and had come off the rim. Ever try getting a tire fixed in Gorman on a Sunday???? Not a good idea. After an hour, Janet and I said goodbye to Sam/Shaua, Steve/Dallas, Joe/Janet and Laurie – and came home. The ride from Visalia to home seemed to take forever – as if we were on a treadmill – but home I got around 7:45 p.m. What a weekend!!!

As I reflect back on the event, it was a great weekend. I wish it would have been a two-day rally like our High Sierra BBQ, but I guess the "one" day

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rally has been South West regions tradition (for 10 years). I really missed (by my own choice) not going on one of the two poker runs. However, I truly enjoyed the camaraderie, newly made friends from the L.A. area, as well as members from Arizona and Nevada. Where it was about the ride, it was about – for me anyway – spending time and finally putting faces to the names of the people I have come to know and become friends with from the Cruiser Café.

Special thanks again go out to Tony and Sam for getting us there and back safely. Next year's Southwest BBQ is in Vegas, the following year it is in Phoenix, and then I think it comes back to that L.A. area somewhere, as a friend of mine will be hosting it. Sounds like some fun riding might need to get on the calendar – yahoo!

Victor Tibbs  
President

[*Editor's Note: to check out some of the photos of the SW STAR-B-Q, here's the link that will get you there*]  
<http://picasaweb.google.com/jrawlinson07/10thAnnualSWStarBQ>

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## **CLEARLAKE CHAPTER SANCTIONED RIDE**

**Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

*Ride Report by Warren Darmstead*

I have to tell you that 5:00 a.m. has never been set on my alarm clock prior to this past Saturday. As a matter of fact I didn't think it was possible to set the alarm that far back. Because of this I was a bit "on the fence" about this early start in "PH" even though the ride sounded great. The matter was settled, of course, when Rimma told me we were going and she set the alarm clock. I was amazed there is such a time as 5:00 a.m.

Firing up the iron horse about 6:00 a.m. we arrived 45 minutes later at location #1 ready to ride. Larry was the only one there but within 30 minutes the lot began to fill up. Before we left "PH", Jerry stopped by to say hello but wasn't well enough after his surgery to go with us. It was a bit sad to see him wave goodbye to us as we headed out.

When we came down the hill on Jamieson Canyon we picked up Pauline and some #315 (Solano)

members as well as Dale and Spiderman. Our numbers are growing.

On toward Lower Lake with Dave in the lead, we made a short stop at Perry's Deli to pick up #455 (Napa) and take a much needed potty break.

For those of you who don't know, I get a very bad headache when a potty break is needed. It usually comes from the rear of the bike and is caused by a rather hard slap to the back of my helmet given by my passenger. After four or five such slaps I begin to get the idea and a head ache.

What a beautiful morning. The temp is just right and the scenery Dave has picked is amazing. Several times I wanted the rear seat just to look around more, over Cobb Mountain with deer and wild turkeys popping out now and then.

When we pulled into Hillside Honda/Yamaha for the signing we had about 28 bikes in our group alone. What a show. The crowd included #186, #159 (Redwood Empire), #153 (Sacramento), #102 (South Stockton) #395 (Chico), #302 (Redding), #315 (Solano), and #445 (Napa) all represented.

Our very own Dominic won the 50/50 and quickly donated half of his winnings back to the Kevin Self Memorial Fund (#108 AZ rider who was killed in an accident).

Getting pretty hungry we got back on the road to Lakeport and went around the lake stopping for lunch at the Lower Lake (Fosters/Kentucky Fried). While Rimma and I were eating, two bike riders came in and asked which way we were going after lunch? I told them I had no idea. They then went on to add "don't go down the road to the **left** up here, lots of pot holes and creeks to cross." Wow, the wilderness and Deliverance came to mind. I assured them we "pre-ride" and always know where we are going. This also calmed Rimma down a little until Dave announced we were indeed turning **left**!

In the shade of the nearby trees we voted in two new members Mike Zachry and Joe Smart.

The "left turn" was Knoxville Rd. and it was even more beautiful than what had come before, with every turn more beauty. I loved it.

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It seems our tail gunner picked up two motorcycle police officers rather suddenly behind him who announced their presence with a short burst of the siren. The Hawk almost had his wings clipped.

Stopping at Turtle Rock for a break, and egg rolls we said goodbye to Napa chapter and headed for home. For those of us who followed "Lone Eagle" all the way to Cordellia there was free ice cream at Denny's Restaurant.

What a DAY! Dave ... that was a **great** ride! Thanks, but does anyone have an aspirin for my "potty headache"? It still hurt this morning.

### **OTHER COMMENTS:**

*[From Bill Petaccio] "I had a great time riding with the group today. It was amazing to see how many Star Riders drove all the way to Lakeport for the signing of their Charter. I think Dave is a fantastic Ride Captain and I hope he volunteers for this duty again.*

*I've given this some thought, and for the two plus years I have been a member of the 186th, this was my favorite ride!"*



**"Oh man, I coulda had a V-8"**  
[No, the ride wasn't THAT bad!]

*[Editor's Note" Dominic took over 86 photos of this ride; they will be available on the website very soon; there are 12 photos from our other Paparazzi on line for your viewing enjoyment]*

## **Shawnathan Toy Run**

**Sunday, April 13, 2008**

Some of you might remember an e-mail that I had sent out towards the end of March, that I was going to participate in this toy run, and those who chose and/or wanted to, could bring me a stuffed animal to take on this ride. I am pleased to report that the Shawnathan Toy Run was a huge success! I would like to thank those who contributed a toy(s) for me to donate. For all of us who attended this run - and there were about 150 bikes from various clubs/associations, we all felt a great sense of pride.

The sheer volume of toys donated today alone left me a tad misty eyed. I would estimate that the area that which was roped off for the donated stuffed animals was about 25 feet long, 6 feet wide, and a good 4 feet high. Many groups came together today to support a common cause, offering love and support for these children in need.

As a Shriner, I am well aware of the good the Shriner's Hospital does for children, and very well aware of the several other great organizations that serve people - young and adult. However, having a tour of the hospital, and hearing the medical breakthroughs the doctor's / therapist's etc provide, blew me away. Their research, and rehabilitation facilities, are second to none and often copied by other noted institutions such as John Hopkins. Children, and families of those children, some of whom come from half way around the world, receive free medical care and lodging while they are at this and other Shriner facilities. This ride meant a lot to me.

Again, I would like to thank you all so very much.

Victor Tibbs  
President

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## **NAPA STAR CHAPTER #445**

### **CHARTER SIGNING**

**Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

*By Pauline Carlton*

I elected to write this ride report, because Larry was the Ride Captain, Cecil was tailgunning, Dominic is the Paparazzi. I couldn't ask our guest, Richard Wolf Hamilton, and I'd already used up my favor in asking Warren/Rimma to write up the Ride Report for the Clearlake STAR Chapter Charter's signing just a few weeks ago. [see above]

I'm only waiting about 15 minutes for the group to pick me up in American Canyon, when they rolled in. However, Paula was supposed to meet me

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here, riding in from Petaluma, and she's not here yet. Waiting another 15 minutes or so, Larry asks me to take the group into Napa Yamaha; he'll wait for Paula ... who's just a short distance from us at the local Shell gas station just off the Hwy 29 off-ramp getting into some guy's face because he's picking on someone smaller and much older. [GO PAULA!!! ☺]

Fortunately the traffic cooperates and we're making a left into the parking lot of Yamaha of Napa only some 20 minutes later to find that the parking lot is already crowded with motorcycles. I see #209, Santa Clara County, #315's President, Ken Reeder [aka "Spiderman"] as I dismount off the bike. All in all though, over 8 Chapter were represented today: Clearlake, Sacramento, 4 members rode down from Chico, Redwood Empire [#159], the PIT CREW [former members of the Redwood Empire group who have formed their own riding club], South Stockton and Lodi.

**40 people** signed the new Napa STAR Chapter #445 Charter. This is a GREAT beginning for a new group, isn't it? After the signing, the raffle got Dominic a bottle of wine, a new coffee mug to go with those cookies that came in the same box, and after winning the 50/50 of some \$160, he donated \$60 back into the *Kevin Self Fund*.

Dominic has things to do; Rimma is cracking the whip needing some man help hanging shelves from Warren at home, Cecil just wants to ride. Larry and Paula and I decide, however, that Cold Stone is sounding awfully good right about now: it's really hot. A call to Dale with an invitation to meet us there [he never passes up good ice cream ☺], and a trip to the Renegade Classic Outlets in Vallejo for a shopping trip afterwards, before heading home.

[Oh, I need to let you all know too: Larry paid for the ice cream – a tradition that Lone Eagle has started earlier this year on a previous Chapter ride by paying for everyone's ice cream they ordered that day]

**40** new Napa STAR Chapter members? I can still see Dave, the owner of Yamaha of Napa, shaking his head in disbelief. This turnout was more than even he expected. But then ... maybe it was a combination of the great BBQ he put out, or the live band? Or, maybe it's just it's the STAR way.

## KEEP THE SHINY SIDE UP!!

### Safety Tips/Tech Talk

This is your section to share "techie" stuff

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#### Larry's Safety Tips:

- Watch for cars
  - Don't tailgate [cars or other motorcycles]
  - "Object Fixation" - don't focus on the object – focus on where you want to go.
  - Did you check your tires before you rode?
  - Did you check your horn?
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## Before You Dismount

### Six things to do

By: James R. Davis

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We all have our own unique way of doing things. Some people, for example, do exactly two things before they dismount their bikes: they turn off their ignition switch and they put down their side stand. Given a little thought about it, however, I think there are a few more details to attend to (however 'uniquely') before we dismount our motorcycles, and if we make a habit of doing them we can avoid some major trouble for ourselves.

- Use your engine cutoff switch to shut off your engine

Some people seem to think that switch is there for use only in an emergency. Not true. The reason you use the engine cutoff switch rather than the ignition switch to shut off your engine is because you do not have to take your hand off the grip in order to do so. Further, if you make a habit of doing so you will build 'muscle memory' as to where it is so that you can quickly and unerringly find it in the event of an emergency.

- Turn your ignition switch off

Obviously, unless you do this your lighting system is still on and your battery is discharging. By the way, it is good form to get into the habit of using your LEFT hand to turn off the switch (if possible) so that you can keep your front brake lever activated.

- Turn your fuel valve (if you have one) to the OFF position

A stuck needle valve in one of your carbs can allow a great deal of gasoline to leak past it. If a needle valve should happen to stick while your motorcycle is left in your garage overnight, that leaking gasoline can cost you your house and your life.

When you start your motorcycle you should always turn your fuel valve to the RUN/ON position. Thus, by making it a habit of turning the valve off at night you also eliminate the risk of having left it in the reserve position (had it been there when you last dismantled) and running out of gasoline on the road somewhere.

- Put your side stand down - and confirm that it is locked in place

After leaning the bike onto the side stand you have insured that it is stable from side to side before you try to dismount. (Your bike should be in first gear and you should push the bike forward until all the play in your gears is gone before leaning the bike onto the side stand.)

- Turn your handlebars full-lock left

A motorcycle is several times more resistant to movement when the front wheel is not pointing straight ahead. Even a gentle nudge from behind can cause a motorcycle that is on its side stand to roll forward unless the front wheel is not pointing straight ahead.

- Squeeze the front brake lever

If you build these six steps into a habit that you always perform before dismounting, you are serious about ALL aspects of motorcycle safety.

**THE RIDE IS NOT OVER UNTIL  
YOU ARE SAFELY DISMOUNTED.**



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by Bob Bridges

Well here we are on May 1<sup>st</sup> enjoying a beautiful spring with a great group of people, a few great rides behind us and many more to look forward to. As I ponder how much I enjoy being part of this Chapter and the fun I have getting together for our rides, I realize how much we owe the veterans of this great country. Without them and their sacrifice we may not have been able to assemble in groups or travel across the back roads of this great land without permission or speak out our opinions at the Chapter Meetings. What the Veterans have given us is the feeling that these things are an expected, normal, everyday part of life that we can count on without question. Freedom, what a glorious feeling that is and I just want to enjoy that feeling each and every time we ride together.

Thanks to all you veterans!

For any current or new members that want to become a Star Vet, go to the National Web Site [www.startouring.org](http://www.startouring.org) to get the Star Vet Application (DD Form 214 required) as well as the form to get Star Vet Patches. I'll have a hard copy of the Star Vet Application and Patch Form on our rides.

**HAPPY HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**



[Editor's Note: From the responses that I received]

9<sup>th</sup> – Mike Zachry

**REMEMBER:**

**It's not the destination that counts. It is the journey and the people that you meet along the way that is important.**

– Author Unknown --

20<sup>th</sup> – Bill Petaccio