

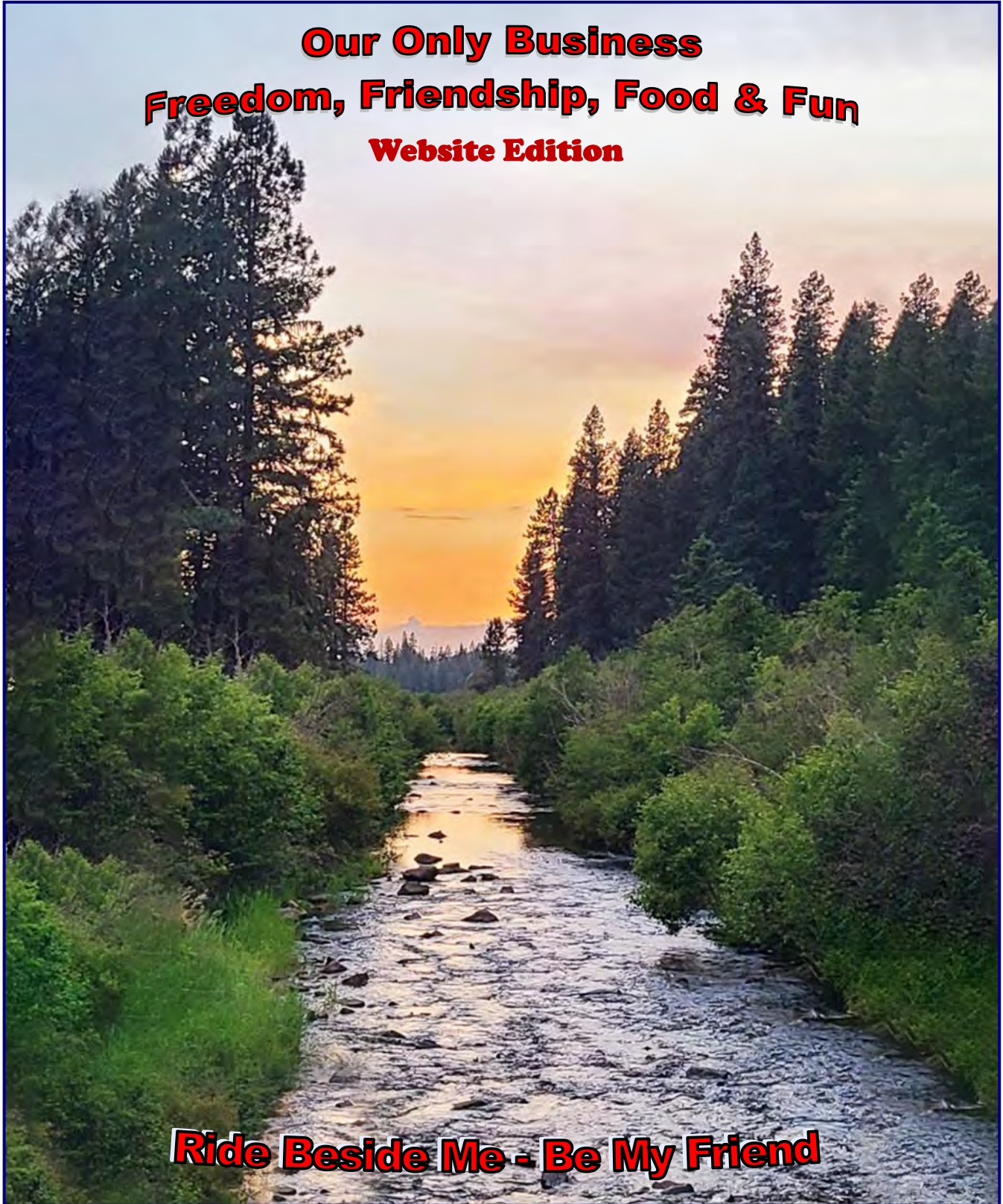


The WASH

UMCI Newsletter of Washington State



Our Only Business
Freedom, Friendship, Food & Fun
Website Edition



Ride Beside Me - Be My Friend



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The full edition is available for download [here](#).
Or request copy: route66@outlook.com

[International Website](#)

[Washington State Website](#)



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Announcements & Tid Bits

~~Was Cancelled for 2023~~
Now on **AGAIN!**

September 24, 2023

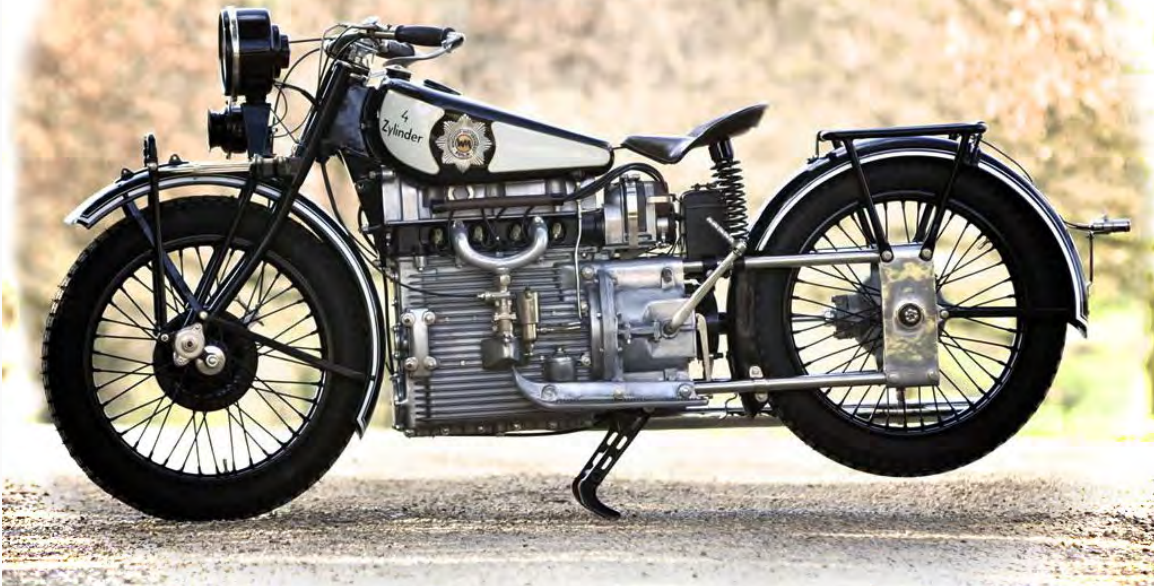
[40th Annual Oyster Run](#)

Free event • No official starting point • No time schedule • No required route

[Oyster Run - Motorcycle Run](#) - Anacortes WA

1928 Windhoff 750cc 4 cyl ohc

[Click for Info](#)



[More Windhoff Info](#)

[Seattle/Tacoma - Sedro Woolley Lunch Rides](#)

Cover Photo

The Palouse River at Laird Park Campground, Harvard ID.

Photo by Heather Parsley.



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2023 INTERNATIONAL REPS COMMENTS!!!! MY HONEST OPINION GREAT RALLY!!!!

It's in the books, the 2023 International is over and it was a success. Although it was really hot, I think everyone had a good time. Monday was registration and thanks to George and Willie Penner, registration went great. Thank you very much, it takes a lot off my mind. We had 39 members camping and 43 for our banquet meal.

Tuesday, the 18th was a "ride on your own" day. It was pretty hot so not too many took off, plus the wind raised its ugly head. Tuesday night we had an Ice cream social that was really appreciated, it was so darned hot. As usual, everyone was in bed by 9:30 (real rowdy bunch, for sure).

Wednesday, the 19th, was again, ride or go wherever you wanted. A lot of people took off to Leavenworth or just visited the sights in Cashmere, where the museum, Aplets and Cotlets Candy Factory were a real popular destination.

Randy and I planned a poker run about 3 weeks before the rally. It was held Wednesday morning. About 25 members went on the poker ride. It was about 65 miles round trip. \$50.00 for high hand and \$25.00 for low. I of course got nothing but a good ride. I lead a ride over Badger Mountain to Waterville, then down McNeal Canyon to Lone Pine for lunch, then back to the fairgrounds. All those on the ride seemed to have had a great time and I didn't even get lost one time. Of course, I was born and raised in Waterville so that helped a lot.

Wednesday night, Randy and Lynn Schaal made Enchilada casserole for everyone. The club purchased all the groceries and they did the cooking. It was really great food. Randy was the cook and did a great job, go figure, he can do something good. But thanks for doing that, everyone appreciated the effort. I must say, they came up from Arizona to help with the International and it is so appreciated.

Thursday was the last day of the rally. Everyone just kind of hung out at camp. It was 100 plus that day, but fortunately we had an air-conditioned building to slip into. A lot of members ended up playing cards or just sitting and enjoying each other's company.

We had our Rep's meeting at 3:00 PM and had a great session with great attendance and membership participation. I will complete the minutes shortly. I felt it was a great meeting and good input.



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We adjourned the meeting around 5:30 and got ready for our banquet. Classic Grill'n out of Othello catered our event and they did a fantastic job. I don't think anyone left hungry. They catered our Spring Banquet and it was equally as good.

We had our door prize drawings and I want to thank you all for bringing so many great door prizes. It was a lot of fun and thank you to Mary Nordby and Randy Schaal for running prizes for me, helped a lot.

We had our 50/50 drawing and we gave all of the money back on the last night which was really appreciated. I want to thank Carol for selling 50/50 tickets all three nights. That was a great big help and I think she really kind of enjoyed doing it.

The numbers were down, but I think everyone had a good time. When I looked around, everyone was either getting ready to go for a ride or just really enjoying each other's company, and that's what it's all about.

I hope that any one that took pictures please share them on the UMCI home page or get them to David Fitzgerald, he can work magic with pictures we are so lucky to have David and Susan, sure missed them at the Rally.

Thanks for letting us call you a friend, it is our pleasure!

Kevin and Kevi



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INTERNATIONAL 2023 REP'S MEETING MINUTES!!

Thursday, July 20th, Cashmere County Fairgrounds, the Reps meeting was called to order by Kevin Besel, International Rep, at 3pm.

Kevin reported that Washington State was still going. David Fitzgerald is doing a good job with the Seattle area, not too many new members, but financially holding their own. Charlie Crane was representing Spokane Area and said they showed no growth, but still had active members and riders. They're holding their own financially. George Penner reported he is talking to everyone that he runs into on motorcycle and hands out cards but no growth.

Oregon has no State Rep at the present time. Gary and Wanda Shearer have stepped down. Kevin said he understood completely and thanked Gary and Wanda for all of the years they have helped this organization. Gary turned over all club money and minutes etc. to the International Rep (Kevin).

Zack, the Southern Oregon Rep, said he had about 12 to 14 at times for breakfast, not too many riders, but still plugging along. He said Rick Foley, at Grants Pass, had active riders but not too many new members. Current leadership is tired, someone needs to step up with new ideas and get up and go.

Rick Killebrew, Idaho State Rep, said they have usually 35 for breakfast and financially very strong. Rick has a hard job but he is ready for the challenge. He will do a great job. Rick said he has started using an app called *Meetup*. It basically hooks you up with other people with similar interests. He said he had 57 members he communicates with. Rick said if you got one new UMCI member time well spent. Go get them Rick.

Canada was represented by Anne. She said about 5 for breakfast in Calgary, only Marg is left. Medicine hat is still active and they have 20-30 for breakfast. Not interested in doing the International at this time. Great to see all of the Canadians for sure.

Kevin thanked all the reps for their hard work and for staying with it. From this meeting, conclusions were made mostly by Kevin.

1. **Large problem attracting new members, younger people don't belong to clubs** and usually when they do join, they don't want to get to involved.
2. **Our membership now is getting older** and a lot have quit riding, but still enjoy getting together and seeing old friends. One of the points in our motto is friendship.
3. Kevin noted that these two large problems have been with the club for as long as he has been in the club and will probably be with us a long time to come.



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Several great ideas came out in discussion, great input from all members.

1. Take your newsletter and see if your local bike shops will let you leave a copy so others could read what you are doing in your areas.
2. Hand out cards with your name, time and dates of your breakfast meetings. Kevin said Dan Magee will print cards and will send some to each rep to hand out.
3. Come up with a one-page handout with all areas represented. Pending rallies and events coming up would be easier to promote. It would be easier for people to get a good idea as to what the UMCI does. Will take some real communication to get this done but would be a great tool.
4. We should all look into the *Meetup*, app that Rick mentioned. It can't hurt and what a connection to other riders, might be a great tool for all areas. Ricks email is listed in the Idaho newsletter if you have any questions.

Ben Altman wanted us to be sure that in the quest for new blood that we don't forget our current members and make sure we are doing the types of things that still keeps them in the group. I totally agree with that.

We had some general discussion and more great ideas and I was happy to come away with the feeling that we all want the club to continue and will work to make sure that happens.

I spoke to each Rep and inquired if there was anything I could do to help them. One of the topics we discussed was the By-Laws and I came to the conclusion that our by-laws are so simple the only thing that might be changed would be the age limit, otherwise the by-laws will remain as is.

I walk away from this years International recharged and happy that we are a part of this group. We will continue on. I just want to thank all of those that came to the rally and hope that all of you had a good time.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 P.M. but not before I got a chance to harp on wearing your vest or patches on your hat or clothes. People do ask what the UMCI is all about when they see our colors.

Minutes are respectfully submitted by Kevin and Kevi Besel

DISCLAIMER: MINUTES ARE AS SUBMITTED AND WRITTEN AS WELL AS WE CAN REMEMBER. I AM SURE SOME THINGS WERE MISSED BUT AS ACCURATE AS WE COULD GET THEM.



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2023 Events On The Horizon Washington, Oregon & Idaho

Apr 29-30, Spring Banquet - Othello Senior Center, Othello WA

Kevin Besel, kbesel52@gmail.com - Registration attached!

Apr-May? North Cascade Highway Opening Campout - Date TBA

Duane Wood, 360-766-6603, See Flyer for Info *Fun, short notice excursion...*

Jun 2-5, North Cascade Campout - [Loup Loup Campground](#), Twisp WA

Dennis Parsley, 360-672-1901 - No Resv, FCFS, ([map](#)) ([Google Earth](#))

Jun 11-17, Idaho Panhandle Tour 2023 - Includes Idaho State Rally

Daniel Magee, 403 878-5859 - [Panhandle Tour Information](#)

Jun 13-15, Idaho State Rally - Clearwater River KOA, Kamiah ID

Larry Phelps, ljphelps1951@gmail.com - See Flyer for information

Jun 20-23, Farragut State Park (Snowberry Campground), Athol ID

David Fitzgerald, 206-300-5034 - [Reservations](#) (Non-Idaho Residents = \$\$\$)

Jun 26-29, Laird Park Campout - [Laird Park Campground](#), Harvard ID

1101 Palouse River Rd ([map](#)), David Fitzgerald, 206-300-5034 (Please RSVP)

Jul 17-20, International - Chelan County Fairgrounds, Cashmere WA

Kevin Besel, kbesel52@gmail.com - See Registration - Complete ASAP

Aug 7-11, Silver Falls Campout - [Silver Falls State Park](#), OR

David Fitzgerald, 206-300-5034 - Popular; [Register ASAP](#) for best selection

Aug 8-10, Clyde Holiday - [Clyde Holiday State Park](#), Mount Vernon OR

Dick Hohstadt, 541-786-0230, Reservations Required, [See Info](#)

Aug 23-27, Coos Bay Campout - [Coos County Fair Grounds](#), Myrtle Pt, OR

Chris Williams, 541-404-5286 or ebecknesr@gmail.com, See Registration Form

Aug 25-28, Lost Resort, Cabins & Campground ([map](#)), Ozette WA

David Fitzgerald, route66@outlook.com, No Resv, [Info](#)

Sep 1-4, Tygh Valley, Wasco County Fairgrounds ([map](#)), Tygh Valley OR

Ben Altman, 541-993-9015 - Reservations not required



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37th Annual UMCI Coos Bay Camp Out Coos County Fairgrounds, Myrtle Point, Oregon August 23-27, 2023

WEDNESDAY – Camp setup; self-guided tours.
 THURSDAY - On-site registration; self-guided tours; **bring a can of chili!**; 50/50.
 FRIDAY – Self-guided tours; hot dog and chili dinner; 50/50.
 SATURDAY – 8 am: No host \$5 Pancakes & Eggs Breakfast (at fairgrounds)
 9 am: Poker run; 6 pm: No host \$25 Seafood Dinner (at fairgrounds).
 8 pm: Official meeting; 50/50 and **door prize** drawings.
 SUNDAY – 8 am breakfast at Kozy Kitchen; breakdown camp. See you next year!!!!

RIDER 1 _____ AGE _____ YEARS ATTENDED _____
 RIDER 2 _____ AGE _____ YEARS ATTENDED _____
 ADDRESS _____
 PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

<u>Fees</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration per person	\$7		
Campsite at fairground \$35 per night	\$35		
Poker Run per person (optional)	\$5		
Dinner per person (optional) Sign up by Thursday night	\$25		
Grand Total of Fees			

Make checks payable to Chris Williams and mail to 721 7th Street, Myrtle Point, OR 97458
 Questions or comments call Chris at 541-404-5286 or send an e-mail to ebecknesr@gmail.com.

THE UNDERSIGNED DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT I/WE WILL NOT HOLD THE OREGON UMCI RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOSS, DAMAGE OR INJURY THAT MAY OCCUR WHILE AT THIS CAMP OUT.

 Signature, Rider 1 Date Signature, Rider 2 Date



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Laird Park Campout Photos

June 26 - 29th

Page 1 of 3



by Rich Aldrich



by Heather Parsley



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Laird Park Campout Photos

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by Heather Parsley



by Rich Aldrich



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Laird Park Campout Photos

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by Rich Aldrich



by Heather Parsley

Additional Reflections

Ned Akerman



December 31, 1922 - May 29, 2023

Hi David, this is Marty Akerman, Ned's son, writing to you from Ned's email account. I just saw your email about his recent passing, and your call for stories and photos. I'm too late for your June 18th deadline, but I do have a ton of stuff if you're still interested. I attached something that he wrote about how he got interested in motorcycles. By my count, he had nine different bikes in his lifetime. I actually taught him to ride when I was 16 when I had a Honda 305. I don't ride any more, and sold my two Harleys about a year ago now. It was hard for me to do, so I understand why Dad still had a bike at the end. It was a Harley Road King with sidecar. He couldn't drive any more, but he had a friend who would come out and give him rides in the sidecar now and then. I gave it to my son-in-law in Spokane and transported it out there about two weeks ago.

Marty Akerman





March 21, 1990

NED AKERMAN

My interest in motorcycles started at an early age. My first recollection was of an exciting two-wheeled machine roaring past our house in a cloud of dust. I wasn't in school yet; I don't think I even knew the word, motorcycle. But I knew it was something that had a fascinating attraction.

I was an avid reader, and went to the library frequently, always looking for adventure stories. One series of books I read, I must have been in about the sixth grade, had to do with two groups of boys, the good kids and the bad kids. The two gangs, independently, decided they should have motorcycles. So they used various means to earn the money, honestly on the one hand, borderline crooked on the other. I followed these boys on their adventures, in my mind becoming one of them. They were always leaving on a trip, looking down the road at the next curve. My mind was made up; some day I would have one of those thumping, vibrating monsters.

But circumstances dictated that my dream would not be realized for many years. My parents divorced, so there was no money for any but the necessities. Even a paper route and delivering milk for the local dairy brought in barely enough money for school clothes.

I left home at sixteen, spending a few months in a Civilian Conservation Corps camp, then hitch-hiking and riding freights to San Francisco. Because my dad was in Honolulu, I figured that was the place to go. He scraped up the money for a ticket on the liner Matsonia, and there I was, in beautiful Hawaii. But there was no work there for an unskilled kid.

My sense of adventure once more asserted itself, and I searched the waterfront and the boat yards, looking for a sailboat heading east. I finally found a man leaving for the Columbia River who needed an experienced sailor. Fortunately, for me not for him, he couldn't find anyone, so he agreed I could come, lending a hand as needed and learning to sail while on the job. I had no idea how small a 30 foot sailboat could feel when you're thousands of miles from land. But through gales and boring calms we made it six weeks later to Astoria, Oregon. His sister met us at the dock. It wasn't exactly love at first sight, but five years later, I married her.

The delay between first meeting and the marriage vows was World War II. I got a job in Portland as an apprentice ironworker and started going with my future wife. Then the Draft Board beckoned. Rather than being drafted, I enlisted in the Navy, so my motorcycle plans slid another four years into the future.

I spent the war at various repair bases in New Guinea. I scrounged a one-cylinder engine, two bomb-carrier wheels, and

built a motor scooter. The tires were slicks, and with rain every afternoon, riding in that gumbo was truly an exciting experience. It had no brakes, stopping on compression and foot dragging. The throttle stuck wide open one day while going down a steep hill with a 90-degree curve at the bottom. Did you ever stop an engine by grabbing the spark plug? I don't recommend it.

After the war came the familiar story. Marriage, then my first son, college while working part time. No time or money for non-essentials. After college, buying a house, another son. My dream was fading.

Then a job as an engineer in Arabia. Good money. Maybe now it would happen. But a friend had a bike. From him I learned that a lone American on a motorcycle was fair game for the local police, with attendant fines and the possibility of jail.

Back to the States, to Seattle. My younger son, now sixteen, who evidently inherited my love of motorcycles, convinced his mother that he should buy a bike with money he'd saved. I needed no convincing, and finally there was a motorcycle in the family. But my son didn't really want me to ride his pride and joy. At last my time had come.

I bought a used Honda 450, and became familiar with every back road in the area. Touring wasn't really in my mind until one day I met a young man on a bike like mine who had just returned from a trip up the Alcan Highway. The seed was planted.

My wife's first trip was two blocks long, to the school driveway and back. Then three miles to visit my older son. A day trip to a park for a picnic. Then a bigger bike, a 750, from which we learned how to fall because the CG was too high for my short stature. My older son got a BMW and we took family day trips with wives and girl friend.

It was time to advance to overnight trips so I bought a 1976 Moto Guzzi Convert with trunk and saddle bags. We looked like something out of The Grapes of Wrath with all our gear piled high. We toured all over the state of Washington and Vancouver Island. But my wife said we needed more than a one-burner stove, and our tent was too small.

On to a Honda 1100 cc Interstate and a small trailer that I built. Our first long trip was to British Columbia and Alberta, Canada. At the campground near Jasper the bears wandered through the camp all night and everyone rattled cans of rocks to scare them away. One swatted my trailer, leaving a big paw print, and bit our plastic water jug.

The next summer, with two other couples, we rode to Spearfish, South Dakota to see the Passion Play and to visit Mount Rushmore. We camped in Spearfish beside a stream. During the night there was a terrific splashing. We didn't look out of the tent to see

what caused it, but the next morning there were large footprints spaced about six feet apart along the walk bordering the stream. From that moment, we believe that Big Foot exists.

Each year we make several short trips to British Columbia, or just to eastern Washington. In 1984 I retired, and with a new Aspencade, toured to Hannibal, Missouri for a rally. Three other bikes were with us so it was a problem in logistics when it came to finding a place to camp or even to buy gas. We left Hannibal by ourselves, taking the southern route through Texas, and stopping at Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico where I learned one of the advantages of aging. I acquired a Golden Age Passport. So I toured the cave free. We stopped for a few hours in Laughlin, Nevada where my wife made a down payment on one of the casinos. It was now mid October, just a little late to be crossing the Siskiyou Mountains in northern California. But we had no problems although there was ice in the puddles along the side of the road. It was, except for the cold winds of Kansas and dropping the bike twice in Durant, Oklahoma because of sand on the corners, a totally enjoyable trip. No damage to us or the bike, by the way. I do recall a caustic wifely comment about "Twice in the same town, in the space of a half hour!"

More short trips, to California, to B.C., to Oregon. Then in April 1986 we headed down the California coast; destination Kissimee, Florida for a rally. We followed the Rio Grande, dropped down into Mexico, through Big Bend National Park, the French Quarter in New Orleans, on to the rally, and then, "as long as we're this far," we went to Key West. A truly beautiful ride. The high point in Key West is only 18 feet above sea level. Waves break over the road at the end of the highway. We took a glass-bottom boat trip to view a coral reef, toured Cape Canaveral on our way north. Almost drowned on the Blue Ridge Parkway. I never knew it could rain that hard! On to Kitty Hawk where manned flight began. Not much to see but I thought it one of the most interesting points of the trip.

But our great trip took a bad turn in West Virginia. We slipped and went down on a curve. Thankfully we weren't going too fast. I suffered a badly bruised hip, but the end of the kick stand penetrated my wife's ankle. After several hours in the emergency room of the local hospital, we taxied to a motel to recuperate. I retrieved the bike and trailer from the shop where it had been taken. It was deemed rideable although badly beat up and leaning badly to the left. After two days of rest I put my wife, with her cast and crutches, on a plane for Seattle. I headed for home with my fingers crossed. But I worried for naught. There were no more problems although I made the last 780 miles non-stop. Another six week trip. This time 10000 miles, with mostly pleasant memories.

In 1987 we followed Highway 2 across the top of the United States to Michigan. The main reason for the trip was because we'd never been that way before. We took time to tour the Harley engine plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and to visit my old home town in

Illinois. We spent very little time on Interstate highways, but some of those back roads are showing their age. We met a wonderful couple in Laurel, Nebraska who showed us where to camp, brought us cake, took us to their home, and generally treated us royally. Experiences like this make memorable trips. We met a museum curator in another small Nebraska town who had just gotten married and was going to move to Salem, Oregon, his wife's home town. He was 75 years old, and I can't ever remember seeing a happier man. We met another newlywed couple on their first motorcycle tour. They asked for advice. Our response: Take time to really see every area you come to. You may never pass that way again. Learn to relax and enjoy each moment.

Our last lengthy tour was through Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico visiting National Parks and Anasazi ruins. Into Colorado to Mesa Verde where we burned rubber to avoid hitting two deer that bounded across the road. I swear they were close enough to touch. If you get to Durango, get a free city bus ticket and tour the town. The running commentary by the driver is a history lesson combined with anecdotes of past and present citizens. We spent a week in Las Vegas, New Mexico at Highlands University in an Elder-hostel program. We dug for artifacts and attended dances at a pueblo. We remember John, who took care of our every whim. I remember him best because he just happened to have a small battery charger when I needed a little boost one morning. My wife remembers him because he was such an exuberant dancer.

In all the miles we've covered and all the places we've seen, the most memorable bits are the people we've met. Invariably friendly. Always helpful. The lady in Wyoming who gave us home-grown tomatoes. The motorhome lady with seven small dogs who gave us coffee one rainy morning. The KOA manager who let us use the restrooms even though we weren't staying. The motel manager who let us set up our tent in his back yard. Each of these people, and many more, have a road leading to them and a road leading away from them, but they are the bright, shining highlights.

30

I do go on, don't I? But you started it; you asked me about motorcycles.

Ned Akerman

19908 Marine View Drive SW
Seattle, WA 98166

Ned Akerman's Seafaring Adventure

It was April, 1940. I was eighteen years old, and had come to Honolulu on the steamship Mariposa to visit my dad, who had ended up there after divorcing my mother several years previously. It was my intent to find a job and stay there, but times were hard, and there were no jobs available for an unskilled young man. So my father purchased a ticket for me to return, by steamer, to the mainland. But I had no money, so I would end up on the west coast flat broke, and no place to go.

Having an adventuresome nature, I decided if I could find a cheaper way to return to the States, I could cash in the ticket and have that money to hold me till I found work. For some reason, I started looking around in the harbor and boat yards, not really knowing what I was looking for. I asked everyone I saw if they knew how I could get back. I met a Swedish man with a sailboat who was going to leave for Los Angeles in about a month. But I couldn't wait, so continued looking.

Then I met another man who was leaving for the Columbia River in a few days, but he wanted an experienced person to help him handle the boat. He was working on his 30 foot ketch-rigged sailboat, so while chatting with him, I helped him scrub the bottom. To show his appreciation, he invited me to go for a sail with him and some friends the next day. I had never been on a sailboat before, and I didn't even know where the Columbia River was! But I enjoyed the sail, and he even let me steer a little bit. He said he was sorry, but he still wanted an experienced sailor.

Two days later I went to the boat yard, and his boat was still there, bobbing gracefully in the water. The skipper, whose name was Harold Oakes, still hadn't found a sailor, so reluctantly, he said to show up the next morning to help load supplies, and he would take me with him. At least I would provide someone to talk to on the voyage.

The next day we loaded lots of canned food, and many gallon cans of fresh water to supplement the small amount carried in the boat's tank. Harold told me that his friend, Ralph Mesick, would come with us for the overnight trip to the island of Kauai. We set sail about 3:00 pm, and the water immediately got very rough. Never having been on a small boat before, I was afraid the motion would make me seasick, but I seemed to be doing OK. Harold, however, became very ill, and Ralph wasn't feeling very well either, so I was given a course to steer, and they went below to try to get over their sickness.

We arrived in Lehu, Kauai, the next morning, and spent the next day checking the boat's compass. The next morning, July 6, I think, Harold and I sailed off, leaving Ralph to fly back to Honolulu. Because of the prevailing winds, we couldn't sail directly for our destination. Instead we set a course that was almost due north, and would continue on this tack until we picked up favorable winds that would push us eastward.

The winds were brisk, but not too strong. Harold rigged up a device to hold the boat on course, and we could lie around the deck, or in a bunk, getting some rest. We were both below one night, and I guess we both fell asleep. We didn't have to post a watch, because we were far from the shipping lanes. We awoke to a fearsome roaring, and the boat was pitching and rolling violently. The wind was blowing at least 50 knots, and we had all the sails up. We both dashed topsides, and started lowering sails, hoping the wind wouldn't rip them to shreds before we got them furled. We rigged a sea anchor in order to head the boat into the wind, and finally got all sails down without any mishaps. The waves at this point were higher than the mast, which was 30 feet high. When everything was under control, we checked the speed

with the taffrail log, a device for calculating speed, and we were travelling nine knots, and there was not one square inch of sail up.

After three days the storm abated, and we hoisted some sail, and got back on course. And wouldn't you know it, after that storm, the winds became very calm, and we sat and didn't move for another three days. In fact, one day we were nine miles back from where we were the day before. The sea was like glass, not a ripple, not a swell, and not a sound of any kind other than the creaking of the rigging. During lulls like this, I read navigation books. Harold took sights, with the sextant, to determine our position, and he taught me how to work up the sights and plot our position on the chart.

It was during this calm spell that Harold harpooned a small shark, about four feet long. He wanted to skin it and dry it for sharkskin leather. Shortly after we had this small shark aboard, we looked over the side and there was a very large shark, swimming around the boat. Evidently the small one's mother. We didn't even consider harpooning that one.

After sailing north for about three weeks, almost up to the Bering Sea, the winds began to change, and we gradually altered our course to head east. We encountered more storms, but nothing to compare to that first one. We were nearing the coast so Harold used the radio to try to reach someone who would relay a message to his folks in Portland. He made contact with a fish boat, and the skipper said he would contact the Oakes family. Right after the contact, the radio went dead, so we had no way of knowing if there would be anyone to meet us when we got in.

After six weeks at sea, and over 4000 miles, we tied to a pier in Warrenton, Oregon, near Astoria. I got off the boat to take a walk, and immediately started feeling seasick. I couldn't stand the steadiness of the pier after the motion of the boat. And Harold's sister, Esther, had gotten the fish boat's message, and she was there to meet us. She was the first person, other than Harold I had seen in six weeks. It didn't happen right away, but eventually I married Esther.

That voyage gave me a love of the sea that I have never fully gotten over. For many years I wanted a sail boat, but never got one. However, I have owned several power boats, so have spent a little time on the water since that memorable voyage, but no trip can ever compare to that first adventure upon the briny.



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Split Decision: Are Lane Splitting and Lane Filtering Safe?

by Eric Trow

As part of the Stayin' Safe advanced rider training program – a method that leads a small group of experienced motorcyclists on road tours and delivers real-time, real-world coaching via in-helmet communications – I'm often asked by participants to address specific aspects of road riding unique to the region where a training tour is being conducted. As part of our Southern California training tours, I've been routinely asked if I would be teaching techniques for safe lane splitting.

Although it is intriguing to consider, I always decline. While I agree it would be a valuable teaching opportunity for that riding environment, I also realize it would be impractical with a group of riders since traffic dynamics change rapidly – as would recommended tactics depending on the bike and the circumstances. But perhaps the bigger challenge would be to get consensus among the riders to do it in the first place. Even if all participants are from California (and they rarely are), there are always distinct and deeply polarized views about lane splitting. Riders are adamantly for it or against it.

The term "lane splitting" gets tossed around outside of California more often these days as several other states – including Utah, Montana, Arizona, and Hawaii – have legalized some form of the practice, while others are considering it. As lane splitting becomes more widespread, the volume of polarized opinions is expanding as well.



Photos by Kevin Wing | Illustrations by Hector Cademartori



Lane splitting allows motorcyclists to move efficiently through gridlocked traffic while avoiding the risk of a rear-end collision.



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But maybe I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's start by defining what lane splitting is. For starters, it's not a universal term. "Splitting" is one type of lane sharing motorcyclists have been doing for years on California freeways, but there are other forms (and terms) we should know.

What is Lane Sharing?

In the broadest sense, lane sharing, lane splitting, lane filtering, white lining, and a handful of other terms are used to describe the act of advancing a motorcycle through slow or stopped traffic on a multilane road (all heading the same direction, of course) by riding between lanes at a slightly higher speed than the flow of other vehicles. That's it, in a congested traffic nutshell.



Riding within 10 mph of traffic flow and actively scanning the scene ahead for potential threats, the rider safely advances between lanes.

Are We Lane Splitting or Lane Filtering?

While "lane splitting" is a term used broadly to describe riding between lanes of traffic, there are distinctions between lane splitting and lane filtering.

When riding on a multilane highway such as a limited-access freeway, a motorcyclist might "split" the lanes and ride between two lines of vehicles if the traffic has slowed or come to a stop due to congestion. That's what's specifically referred to as lane splitting.

When riding in multiple lanes of traffic where there are intersections and traffic signals, a rider might move forward or "filter" between rows of vehicles stopped at a light, enabling the rider to move to the front of the line. This is lane filtering.

Why Do It?

The primary argument for lane splitting and lane filtering is that they are deemed safer practices that reduce opportunities for motorcyclists to be rear-ended in high-volume, stop-and-go traffic.



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Frankly, that’s a pretty strong argument since busy roadways are a high-risk environment for motorcyclists – perhaps even more so as increasingly distracted drivers are putting riders at higher risk.



Lane splitting is also claimed to give riders a better view through traffic as well as improved mobility. It’s contended that it allows riders to see farther ahead, actively separate themselves from threats, and strategically place their bikes in pockets of less congestion.

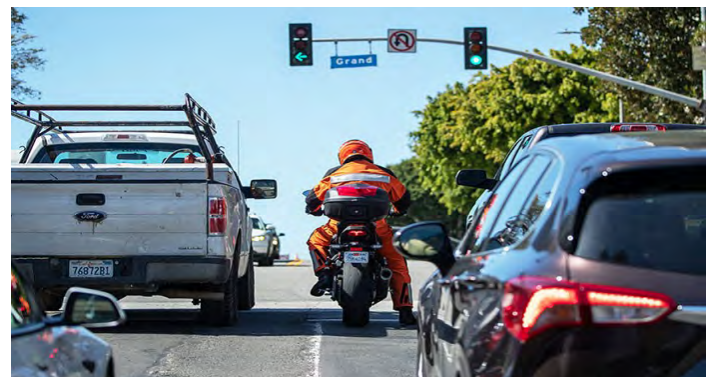
Lane splitting has been touted as helping to reduce fuel consumption and emissions by minimizing the time motorcycles sit in slow or stopped traffic. It also helps reduce traffic congestion because there are fewer vehicles sitting single-file in traffic lanes.

With traffic stopped for a red light, the rider slowly filters to the front of the line.

Does Lane Splitting Reduce Risk?

Yes and no. [*Motorcycle Lane-splitting and Safety in California*](#), a 2015 study conducted by the Safe Transportation Research & Education Center at the University of California Berkeley, took a good long look into the matter to “increase our understanding of collisions involving lane-splitting motorcyclists and of how lane splitting impacts collision injuries.”

The study found that lane splitting appears to reduce certain types of crashes, specifically rear-end collisions. That’s great news. Lane-splitting riders were less than half as likely to be rear-ended than their non-lane-splitting brethren (2.6% vs. 4.6%). Those figures would look even better if some of those riders involved in a collision hadn’t been rear-ended by fellow riders who were following too closely (thanks, bud).



When the light turns green, the rider must quickly scan left and right before proceeding.



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With fewer rear-end collisions, the analysis also showed that lane-splitting motorcyclists involved in a collision were injured less frequently than non-lane-splitters. They were half as likely to suffer a head injury (9% vs. 17%) and about a third less likely to sustain a torso injury (19% vs. 29%). Although fatalities are rare, even those were reduced by more than half (1.2% vs. 3.0%). Again, good news.

But with the good comes the bad (doesn't it always?).

Lane splitting doesn't eliminate crashes. Lane-sharing riders just crash differently and not as badly (provided speed is kept to a minimum).



Wide handlebars, wide vehicles, and tightly spaced lanes can make filtering a challenge. Choose judgment over impatience when deciding whether to proceed.

from both sides (but less so front and rear) since there is less space to maneuver left or right – and therefore less time to react – if a driver makes a sudden move.

The highest risk for any motorcyclist lane splitting in freeway traffic is other vehicles changing lanes. In suburban and city environments, lane filtering riders can find themselves among vehicles unexpectedly maneuvering into or out of traffic.

As a result, while lane splitting may reduce the likelihood of the rider being rear-ended, they are more than twice as likely to rear-end other vehicles (38% of lane-splitting riders vs. 16% of non-lane-splitting riders). That one's on us.

While lane splitting and lane filtering can help a rider escape certain significant threats, it does introduce new ones. For example, there's a smaller safety bubble. You'll recall learning in your Motorcycle Safety Foundation or Total Control training course (you took one of those, right?) how important it is to maintain a safety cushion around your motorcycle. Riding between lanes puts motorcyclists significantly closer to other vehicles than they would be otherwise. That can make the rider more vulnerable



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Beyond the known hazards of riding too fast (surely you've heard, "speed kills"), the risk and severity of injury grows when there is an increase in the speed of the motorcycle compared to the pace of surrounding traffic – what's known as "speed differential." That speed difference between bike and traffic can play a significant role in causing a collision while lane splitting or filtering.

Perhaps the Greatest Challenge of All...

For the rider who is weighing the pros and cons of lane sharing, a serious consideration should be the low public awareness of lane splitting and the attitudes of other drivers.

Another U.C. Berkeley study from 2014 probed the minds of California drivers and motorcyclists. Even in California, where lane splitting and filtering have been common practices for decades, roughly half of all California drivers either believed that lane splitting was illegal (it wasn't) or they were unsure about its legality. Such perceptions can contribute to negative attitudes about the practice. That study revealed 61% of non-motorcyclists in the Golden State disapproved of lane splitting.



Do drivers believe lane splitters are unwilling to play by the same rules others must adhere to, or that they are just acting as renegades?

The driver on his cell phone is hugging the center line and unaware of the approaching motorcycle, so the rider adjusts his position as he filters

I became particularly curious about the behavior of drivers and the potential impact (figuratively and literally) on motorcyclists as they consider the practice of lane sharing, especially in states where the concept has recently been introduced.

When it comes to driver behavior, I believe there are few better go-to resources than Tom Vanderbilt's fantastic, well-researched book, [Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do \(and What It Says About Us\)](#). The author addresses the physical, psychological, and sociological aspects of traffic and how drivers, as human beings, interact with each other. I reached out to Vanderbilt to get his take on the potential challenges associated with introducing a practice like lane sharing into the general traffic environment.



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“I am well aware of a dynamic that I am sure affects motorcyclists a lot, which I’ll call an ‘empathy imbalance,’” he said, defining the term as the phenomenon whereby people who drive cars may be unable to relate to motorcyclists since most car drivers don’t ride motorcycles and are unfamiliar with – and therefore unable to empathize with – the two-wheeled mode of transportation.

“So often drivers simply don’t understand the motives or behavior of the other mode,” Vanderbilt continued, “and they often translate their own confusion to some failing on the part of the other user. What might seem like rational or safe behavior on the part of a motorcyclist may seem reckless or like ‘cheating’ to a driver, who simply sees some ‘other’ they don’t fully understand.”

Vanderbilt’s advice? “Don’t think that your view of what is ‘commonsense behavior’ is shared by everyone around you.” In other words, until the practice is more common and drivers see enough people doing it – to a point where it no longer seems like strange and rebellious behavior – we should assume that lane splitting will be out of the norm for other motorists and may be viewed as unacceptable traffic behavior.

The “empathy imbalance” is a compelling way to capture the mindset gap that exists out on the roadway and how that imbalance could be a chasm the size of the Grand Canyon in states where neither lane splitting nor lane filtering have ever been routine behavior. When it comes to lane sharing, especially where the practice is just being introduced, that empathy imbalance may be the greatest threat of all to motorcyclists.



Stopped between lanes, the rider is in a tactical-ready stance, with the bike in gear and ready to go when the light changes.

Sidebar: What do Lane Splitters Look Like?

While some folks might expect lane splitters and filterers to be wild-haired outlaw rebels without causes, research paints a different picture.



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Contrary to the ruffian image, research reveals that lane splitters tend to be:

- Regular commuters riding during weekday commuting hours
- Wearing proper riding gear, including full-face helmets
- Riding solo and riding sober
- Splitting lanes only when traffic is at 30 mph or below

Can Lane Sharing Be Done Safely?

According to the U.C. Berkeley study, lane splitting and lane filtering appear to be relatively safe strategies and practices provided they are done in traffic traveling at 50 mph or less and motorcyclists stay within 15 mph of that traffic. Lower traffic speeds and a smaller speed differential between the bike and surrounding vehicles make it even safer.

The Motorcycle Industry Council (MIC), American Motorcyclist Association (AMA), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) all align in support of lane sharing as a safe strategy. The American Automobile Association (AAA), on the other hand, opposes the practice.

Beyond these authorities, I turned to another trusted source in California, my friend and fellow motorcycle proficiency expert Lee Parks. Among his many credentials, Parks owns and operates Total Control Training Inc. and authored the best-selling book *Total Control: High Performance Street Riding Techniques*. He also runs the rider training program for California and several other states. I asked Parks for his take on lane splitting.

“Having moved here in 1992, I can’t imagine living in another state that didn’t have lane splitting,” he said.



Avoid filtering beside large trucks and buses. This rider paused in a safer spot to avoid blind spots and the potential of the bus swinging wide.



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“It’s safer, saves time, reduces the chances of getting rear-ended by other road users, and reduces the travel time for everyone by taking riders out of the long lines of traffic.” Parks shared how, for him, a two-hour commute by car became a manageable 45-minute ride by motorcycle.

Is lane splitting for everyone? Parks and I share the same opinion, but he articulates it better: “It’s good for any experienced rider who has excellent situational awareness. Lane splitting is not for the faint of heart, nor those new to riding. It requires an extreme amount of focus and attention to be safe, and all riding functions must already be in your muscle memory so they don’t take away from your awareness.

“I’d add that lane splitting is only safely manageable for someone who is not impaired in any way. This includes drinking, drugs, fatigue, or being mentally distracted.”

Whether you’re new to the practice or have been lane splitting or filtering for years, here are things you can do to improve your odds while improving your position in traffic.

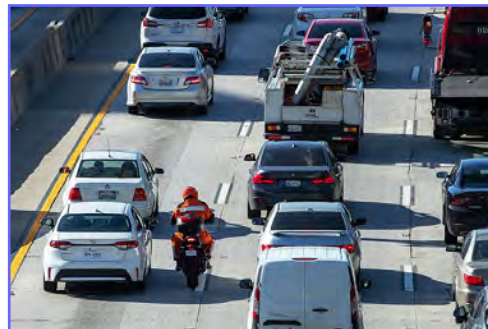
First, stick to these two speed factors when lane sharing:

1. **Traffic speed is slow or stopped.** The faster traffic is moving, the greater the risk of incident and injury. Choose to filter past other vehicles only when traffic is moving below 50 mph, and the slower the safer.

2. **Your speed is within 10-15 mph of traffic.** A small speed differential is safer. By keeping your own speed close to that of traffic, you buy critical time and space to respond to emerging threats. Work the physics in your favor!

Apply these techniques each time you move between lanes:

- Look farther ahead, widen your view, and anticipate vehicles changing lanes.
- Be “tactical ready,” poised to smoothly slow down or maneuver as necessary.
- Stay to the left-most lanes on highways when lane splitting (between lanes #1 and #2).
- Don’t linger in blind spots.
- Beware of gaps that might invite other vehicles to change lanes just as you arrive.
- Avoid splitting lanes near entrance and exit ramps (it’s illegal in California).
- If riding with others, keep a safe distance between bikes to avoid rear-ending your buddy (or being rear-ended).



Lane-splitting riders must stay vigilant, especially when approaching gaps in traffic where a vehicle can suddenly change lanes.



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Of course, there is still the concern of other drivers and their response to lane-sharing motorcyclists, especially in states where the practice is not the norm. Until it is, riders should anticipate pushback from other motorists. Perhaps the best way to minimize that is to promote goodwill by being respectful, courteous, and empathetic to the other drivers who remain stuck in traffic (we've all been there).

Should You Do It?

It's a personal choice – don't ever let someone else force a lane-splitting decision for you. If you are still on the fence, here's a little more filtering food for thought:

Not all motorcycles are created equal. While lane sharing is practiced by riders of all types, it is easier on a narrower, lighter machine. Remember, the wider your bike, the less space cushion you have as you filter between rows of cars, SUVs, trucks, and buses.

Not all riders are created equal. Experience riding in heavy traffic, ability to maneuver a motorcycle confidently at very slow speed, and maintaining a calm mind to avoid panic are important aspects of riding a motorcycle between lanes of congested traffic. Make an honest assessment of your own riding proficiency before attempting to split lanes.

Motivation matters. Lane sharing can be a valuable safety strategy to avoid rear-end collisions, and it can make commuting more efficient for all. But if your motivation is driven by impatience, resentment of other drivers who are holding up your progress, or simply because it seems that splitting might be an adrenaline rush, it may not be the best choice for you (it doesn't do much to help driver attitudes toward the rest of us either).

Where is Lane Splitting and Lane Filtering Legal?

Even if you are willing, lane sharing is still only a legal practice in a handful of states – and to varying degrees. Lane splitting on multilane highways? That's still only legal in California. Yep, that's it. Lane filtering in stopped traffic can now be done to some extent in Arizona, Hawaii, Montana, and Utah, but each state has distinct restrictions (see sidebar below).

If you're the gambling type, the states of Delaware and Arkansas don't have legal language that expressly prohibits lane splitting and filtering, but they do have an abundance of law enforcement officers who are authorized to interpret what a "safe and legal" practice is on a case-by-case basis.

Lee Parks said he believes the challenge in new states will be educating the car drivers more so than the riders.

"It will require a lot of public service announcements and driver education to make it as accepted and ubiquitous as it is in California," he said. "The successes and failures of those states will help drive policy for new ones to adopt one of my favorite benefits of riding in California."



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A summary of current state laws specific to lane splitting and lane filtering

California: The only state where lane splitting and lane filtering on multilane roadways are both legal practices.

Arizona: Motorcyclists may ride between lanes of stopped traffic at a red light on a multilane roadway where the speed limit is 45 mph or less and the rider is traveling no more than 15 mph. No passing on median or shoulder.

Hawaii: Riders are permitted to use the shoulder of the road to pass stopped traffic on roads with at least two lanes in each direction and a shoulder wide enough to accommodate the rider.

Montana: Riders may filter between lanes to overtake stopped or slow vehicles traveling no more than 10 mph provided that the motorcyclist stays within 10 mph of surrounding traffic and does not exceed 20 mph.

Utah: Motorcyclists may travel between lanes of stopped traffic (not slow-moving traffic) on a multilane road having a speed limit of 45 mph or less. Motorcyclists may not exceed 15 mph and may not use the shoulder or bike lanes.



My Take?

Beyond being asked by Stayin' Safe training tour participants if I would be teaching real-world tips and techniques for safer lane splitting and lane filtering, I'm most often asked for my professional opinion on the practice. "It's great," I say, followed by, "and it's not." Practiced responsibly, it can be an effective way to avoid collisions and severe injury. When practiced irresponsibly, it can be perilous for the rider and, at a minimum, harmful to driver/rider relations.

Even after examining the data, hearing the opinions of experts, and weighing the significant pros and cons presented here, a consensus may remain elusive. When it comes to splitting lanes and filtering through traffic, it might always be a split decision among riders. Fortunately, we all have the personal option to do it or not do it. As for me, I split lanes where it is legal to do so, provided the environment, my equipment, and my state of mind are suited for it.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have an appointment and traffic is heavy, so I think I'd better split.



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Was ~~\$2500~~, Now \$1500**



Contact: Gary Shearer

503-508-2104 • backroad-rider@comcast.net

Oregon Listing



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For Sale

2001 Goldwing • Great Shape • 45,000 miles • \$6100



Contact: Patrick McManus @ 206-355-1924



For Sale

AKRAPOVIČ Exhaust System for CAN-AM

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Contact Denny at: 541-817-3175
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**1995 Honda Goldwing GL 1500 Interstate • 54,000 miles
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1995 Kwik Kamp with Queen Bed • \$2500



**Contact Lucy Johnson at: 509-269-4648
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For Sale

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Sidecar mounted on bike was ~~\$10,000~~

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Call Dave at: 208-210-8088 OR 208-627-8945

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Columbia Basin Area, 2 nd Sun.	9:00am, Bob’s Restaurant, 1807 E. Kittlestone, Moses Lake
Inland Northwest Area, 1 st Sat.	8:30am, Denny’s Restaurant, 6 N Pines Rd, Spokane
Okanogan Area, 1 st Sat.	8:30am, Cariboo, 233 Queen Street, Okanogan
Seattle/Puget Sound, 1st Sat.	9:00am, Big Lake Bar & Grill, 18247 Hwy 9, Mount Vernon
Sedro Woolley Area, 1st Sat.	9:00am, Big Lake Bar & Grill, 18247 Hwy 9, Mount Vernon

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