

March 5, 1991

Dear North Idaho Abate Members:

This past weekend, I had the pleasure and enlightening experience of attending the B.E.S.T. of the West educational seminar and training conference for "Bikers" with Willie and Tim in Salt Lake City.

Willie, Tim and I divided the workshops so that between the three of us, we covered them all.

The three that I covered are as follows. 1. Women in Motorcycle Rights 2. Public and Media Relations. 3. Building a Network (Tim also attended this one)

These workshops were held Saturday afternoon after the morning was consumed by presentations from Mr. Jim Baker Abate of Utah, Mr. Gus "Pappy" Haag of the Motorcycle Riders Foundation, Mr. Wayne Curtin Abate of Minnesota & MRF, Mr. Lou Decarolis of National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, Mr. Alan Isley of the Motorcycle Industry Council and Motorcycle Safety Foundation, Mr. Bill Bish Abate of California.

Although all of these speakers made good presentations and speeches, it became very clear to me, that in some cases, these organizations have agendas that are opposite to ours. I do however think it's good that we are all talking instead of fighting. What I gleaned from all of these presentations is, we of Abate must Never give up.

We of Abate, the MRF, and BAM must stay active, we need more and active members. Just because the proposed helmet law has been withdrawn in Idaho doesn't mean we can set back. It is going to "pop up" again both here and even worse, in Washington, D.C. We must be ready to move immediately when needed! This brings me back to the workshops I attended. 1. Women in Motorcycle Rights (Pappy Haag). Pappy made the point that many of the people we must deal with (make presentations to, speeches before and "sell " our views too) are much less intimidated by, and attentive to, a lady in business type dress, than one of us males in our typical biker attire. (i.e. levis, leathers, and beard) Women are usually much more articulate and mindful of details than men also. One of the possible pitfalls of a successful woman however, is stepping on her "significant others" ego. So lighten up you guys, if we have got some gals in this organization that can further our cause (and I know we do) lets let em be successful!

2. Public and Media Relations (Mr. Bill Bish). This is one of the areas where ladies do well. It was quite evident during Bill's morning presentation that he possesses quite an ability to motivate people but he cautioned that sometimes too much 'push' on Media people might actually drive them away. We need to inform them in a polite way of what our cause is, where and when the event is (if there is one)" and what we want to accomplish. Although all of us hold our First Amendment' Rights dear, we must remember that anything we put into print will not only be read by the membership but in many cases the opposition, let's not give them any ammunition for their stereotype "Biker".

Press Releases should headline the event and trail out the less important news of the event near the end, because as they are edited, if necessary it will be from the end.

3. Building a Network: This was a large group workshop. The group was divided into 6 smaller groups with each one having a subject to deal with. It showed how "Brainstorming." within a group can identify a problem, work out direction and problem solving. It really works and very aptly proved that we must communicate not only with the opposition but even more so among ourselves.

In summary I would say that I'm more than glad to have attended this meeting. I would strongly suggest that all Motorcycle Freedom Fighters join the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (\$20.00 HRF, Inc., P.O. Box 11153, Minneapolis, MN 55411) Pappy Haag, Wayne Curtin and their associates in the MRF are working full time to protect our rights not only for Helmet Laws but all rights affecting Motorcyclists. As Pappy so eloquently pointed out, helmets are only the "Tip of the Iceberg". This country and probably all of civilization was founded by "Risk Takers" and those (the Ralph Naders, "Iotola" Claybrooks, etc. etc. ) who are now trying to develop a risk free society are going to do it at the expense of our freedoms. Don't let them succeed!!!

Ride often and safe.

Bob Smith

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