



Valley Riders

February 2015



Volume 2

Number 2



What's Happening



At the beginning of each New Year, we take the time to remember a few folks that have passed on and are no longer riding with us with the [Annual Frozen Bun Run to Avila Beach](#) We also ate at [Fat Cats Cafe](#). The weather was a cool 37 degrees and clear when riding. The weather was nice and clear on the coast. The food was really good, especially the clam chowder. For those who could not make it, we had a blast.



Our monthly social in January was at Tsing Tao Restaurant. This Chinese restaurant is always a favorite to eat at.



There were 24 members and 3 visitors that attended **January's meeting** at Yosemite Falls Cafe. The visitors were Don Bezzerides, Steve Valentine and Shauna Wright. Welcome to the group and we hope you enjoy riding with us throughout the year. Tentatively, the **First Aid /CPR class** will be on March 7 administered by Josh Slater. More information to follow at February's monthly meeting. The **50/50 raffle** winner was Sindi McGuire who took home \$40. Some of the members went to **Classic Billiards** to shoot some pool after the meeting. All had a great time.



We had a great ride through the foothills around Hensley Lake, Raymond, Coarsegold and then to Oakhurst for lunch at El Cid's. We had 11 bikes and 12 members. That included 2 new members, Blayn and Jamaliah on a great looking charcoal grey Harley. Wayne also joined us for the first time on his Harley. It started off a little foggy but the sun came out and all was well. The food at El Cid's was wonderful. Stan said his mouth was watering for the great albondigas soup and he wasn't disappointed. Jerry became a happy camper at lunch because he won the ride pot of \$20. We went down past Bass Lake on the way home and returned to Starbucks for some further conversation. It was there that we met Jack and Ann (also new members) They are looking for a Goldwing, but we let them know that while they look they can still hang out and have a great time with everyone.



Celebrations



Birthdays: **Kathy Tanner** February 18th
Bob Felker February 23rd



Safety



I have included some helpful safety articles to keep in mind while riding alone or in a group. These topics were discussed at January's meeting.

Tips on Riding in the Rain

The best advice you'll hear regarding riding in the rain is don't do it. Bad weather and wet roads raise motorcycle riding to a whole nother level of complexity and—let's not pussyfoot around it—danger. Now, having said that, there is another side to this. That is, riding in the rain can be an enjoyable, rewarding experience. While you might not actively seek out this kind of fun, you can't always be sure that a trip that starts with sunny skies will end that way. So, like it or not, let's deal with riding in the rain. The keys to doing it safely and enjoyably are in the management of three highly variable factors: traction, visibility, and comfort.

Traction: One of the most overlooked improvements in the world of motorcycles over the years is the performance and quality of the tires on which we depend. Today's touring tires are marvels at accommodating all the various surface, high-mileage, intense-heat, and wet-road conditions that we're continually up against. Despite all this, they still can't give you the same degree of traction and confidence on a wet road as they can on a dry one. How you deal with this difference will determine your success in the wet. Rule number one is, simply, slow down. Generally, your braking distance is increased in the wet. A lower speed will help offset this, plus it reduces your lean angle in turns, which is where wet-road problems often pop up. Which leads to rule number two: keep it upright. Now don't get silly on me here. I'm not saying that you slow to the point where turns are taken at a parade pace, but keep in mind the more upright you are, the more weight that is applied perpendicular to mother road, thus increasing the amount of traction available to you. Avoid last-second turns, unnecessary swerves and rude imitations of bad road racers as these will do nothing but impress the EMT with your stupidity. Rule number three in wrestling with the wet is, read the road. The worst rains of the season are the first ones. As the oily scum has yet to have been washed off, the surface can be particularly treacherous, all the more so at stop signs, tollbooths and in parking lots as these locations are often large drip pans for leaky cars. Subsequent rains serve to wash the surface a bit affording improved traction, but rules number one and number two still apply. Watch carefully for standing water, those nasty pools that can lead to hydroplaning, which occurs when a layer of water sandwiches between your front tire and the road, resulting in zero traction. Reducing your speed reduces this possibility. (Are we noticing a thread here? Slower is better in the wet.) Rain also has the bad habit of spreading gravel and dirt around where you least enjoy it; watch for this stuff, particularly in rural areas. The best strategy is to assume that every turn is dirty, and ride accordingly.

Visibility: If the rain you're riding in is overpowering the windshield wipers of passing cars and causing bow waves to form, stop, as the only view you'll have is a much distorted one through a sheet of water. Get safely off the road and wait it out. The "enjoyable, rewarding experience" I wrote of earlier does not apply here as these conditions are just too dangerous on a motorcycle. The most common visibility problem is one of a fogged face shield and/or glasses.

The cause of this is, simply, the difference in temperature between the outside air and the inside of your helmet. Your body is a 98-degree heater. Ride in, say, 45-degree weather and that 53-degree difference can mean instant fog. Usually this problem is at its worst when you first start off because the air is still. Get moving and the airflow will usually dissipate the fog. However, that time between still and moving can be dangerous. Combat this problem by using any of the various anti-fog solutions on the market (be sure to also treat the lenses of your glasses), leaving your face shield slightly open until you're moving, and waiting till the last moment to put on your helmet. Once the rain has stopped it doesn't always mean that the problems have disappeared. Wheel spray from cars and trucks can make it seem to be raining as hard as ever. Continue to keep your distance from other vehicles, and watch for those large puddles that offer up mini-tsunamis.

Comfort: Anything that distracts you is potentially dangerous. In rain conditions that distraction often takes the form of a trickle of cold water that leaks past your collar, chilling your whole body. Make sure that your rain gear fits properly and is in good shape. Cold is a huge distraction and, carried to its extreme, can cause hypothermia that dulls the senses and slows your reaction time. Finding the right combination of rain gear, including a warm jacket and proper pants, boots and gloves can be a hit-or-miss process that requires a bit of experience. Finding out that you've made a wardrobe mistake when the rain starts to fall is not fun. Road test your full cold/wet weather gear for fit and comfort in the sun. Part of this test is to have someone turn the hose on you (from above, simulating rain) to check for clothing leaks. The sweat you work up will be worth it. Properly managing these three factors allows you to concentrate on the road and appreciate the fact that you've added another skill set to your riding. That's when it really becomes an enjoyable, rewarding experience.

Pro Tips:

1. Choose a rain suit that incorporates a breathable membrane such as Gore-Tex, Reissa, Hipora or similar material.
2. Pack your rain suit on top, not at the bottom of your saddlebag.
3. Watch windshield wipers of oncoming cars to see if it's raining ahead.
4. Put your rain gear on before the rain starts.
5. Wear bright colors for increased visibility to others.
6. Transfer wallet, keys, and other essentials to waterproof outside pockets.
7. Your windshield should be low enough to look over, not just through.
8. Use four-way flashers in heavy rain or fog.
9. Increase your following distance, and watch for tailgaters.
10. Avoid standing water as it can hide potholes and debris.
11. Check tire pressures periodically. Underinflated tires are more likely to hydroplane.
12. Tap rear brake in advance of normal braking distance to alert followers.
13. Gently apply brakes periodically to wipe rotors of water/mud/debris.
14. Watch out for painted lines, arrows, etc. as they can be particularly slippery.
15. After the ride, don't pack your rain gear away until after it's dry.

Tips on Riding in the Fog

Riding a two-wheeler in fog needs extra care and alertness. Here are some tips to help you stay safe under foggy conditions. Fog is one of the most difficult situations a rider can encounter. Coupled with rain and darkness, fog takes on a highly lethal combination. Ideally, riding in fog should be avoided completely. Ideally, that is! In real-world circumstances, you may run into a fog midway into your journey and without prior warning. Here are a few tips to help you ride through fog safely.

Avoid: If you are planning a ride to the hills or know beforehand that you are going to face foggy conditions, simply resist the thought of riding.

Speed: If you've already begun your journey and ridden into foggy conditions, slow down to the minimum speed for better control during sudden braking. Also, avoid abrupt inputs to the brake or steering and use engine braking as much as you can.

Distance: Maintain adequate distance between you and the motorist in front to prevent collisions caused by abrupt braking by the driver ahead.

Make Yourself Visible: Wear riding jackets with reflective materials or bright colored jackets to help other motorists spot you.

Guide Line: Use the white line on the left hand side of the road as your reference and maintain a certain distance from it so if someone tries to overtake you from behind you have sufficient space for yourself.

Headlights: Always ride in fog with low beam. Many riders commit the mistake of using high-beam, because it causes flaring off of the water molecules and further reduces visibility. Before starting the ride, wipe the headlights using a cloth so the beam spread is long and clear.

Visor: Always clean your visor before you begin riding in fog. Also spray a defogging agent (sold online) on the visor so that accumulation of moisture doesn't hinder your vision.

Tank Up: Check whether you have adequate fuel for the journey. You may miss a fuel-pump due to the limited visibility and being stranded on the road can be unpleasant, especially if it's foggy.

Be Alert: Check your mirrors periodically for fast approaching vehicles from behind and be ready to take evasive action if required.

Brake Lights: Gently tap your brake lights in frequent intervals so the motorist behind are alerted of your presence.

Emergency Stop: If forced to stop due to reduced visibility or a mechanical problem park your bike as far as you can from the road.



Rides



Saturday, February 28th: **Three Rivers Ride** leaving at 9:00 am



Next Get Together



Friday Night Coffee and Conversation: **Starbuck's in Riverpark** (near the circle) at 7:00 pm

Thursday Social: Thursday, February 12th: **Old Spaghetti Factory** 1610 E Shaw Ave Fresno at 6:30 pm

Monthly Meeting: Saturday, February 21st: **Yosemite Falls Cafe** 4278 W Ashlan Ave Fresno at 8:30 am then a ride to **Hilmar Cheese Factory**



Valley Riders

www.thevalleyriders.com



Reno Rendezvous Thursday June 18 – Sunday June 21
Grand Sierra Resort and Casino Reno NV

<http://renorendezvous.org>