



Since 2014

# Valley Riders

## May 2016



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## What's Happening



**Ride to Raymond:** We had 9 bikes and 10 members on the ride today. The 10 members included our latest member, who was invited by Jon. His name is Louis and he rides a bike just like Jon's but also has a very nice 1100 Gold Wing that he rides. We started our morning with some coffee and breakfast at Starbucks then headed for the old Raymond store. Ken had never been there so he was enjoying the antiquities it has to offer. We then rode in Coarsegold and had a burger at Robert's Frosty. Everyone said the food was really good. We headed back to Fresno after a great meal and good conversation. We were back in town by 2:00 p.m. It was a great ride.



**Monthly Social at Pieology:** Had a great time at Pieology tonight with good friends!



**Fresno Grizzly Game:** What a time we all had at the Grizzly game on opening day! It started with us having the opportunity to bring our bikes into the stadium to park. Butch got us great seats on the lower deck 3rd base line. Thanks to all attended and a special thanks to Butch for leading the group into the stadium.



**Monthly Meeting:** Many thanks to those who were able to make it to the meeting today. We had about 18 members there. It was really nice to see Jerry & Jamie Slater again. Jamie brought a quilt she had been working on for the last 6 years for their son who has served in the military. It was one of the most beautiful quilts I have seen. Many thanks to Jamie for sharing the quilt with us. Butch gave us the balance in our treasury of \$162. We spent \$139 on the Family Easter picnic. Our 50/50 raffle, which was won by Alan Larson today, added \$51 into the treasury for a total now of \$213. The game today was to guess how many chocolate kisses were in two different containers. The winner was John Cunningham, who got his choice of the containers, and the next closest was Diane Williams who walked out with the other container. Jerry and John talked about road gators, being mentally and physically prepared to get on the bike and making sure the bike is prepared. They also talked about riding in the upcoming summer heat. There was also a lot of talk about the great Grizzly opening game last night. Thanks for the tickets, Butch!



## Celebrations

**Birthdays:** May 6: **Randy Patrick**; May 27: **Trinette Wallace**; May 29: **Lynn Massingham**

**Anniversary:** May 2: **Gary & Diane Williams**; May 14: **Ken & Linda Stark**



# Safety



## Don't Let Road Gators Bite



Summer is prime season for car-eating road gators. It'll last well into September, according to a study by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration. These vicious beasts can lie in wait any time, especially on interstates where the speed limit is 70 or 75 mph. Most motorists notice "road gators" safely sunning themselves on highway shoulders. Road gators, says urbandictionary.com, are "bits of truck tires... (that) look like an alligator's back." "Bits" is a giant understatement. Road gators are treads that have separated from tires on heavy trucks, according to the study. These steel-reinforced "bits" can be 8 to 10 feet long and weigh 70 pounds or more, based on the size of many common truck tires. A road gator's bite can surpass that of a its namesake, slicing open oil pans, ripping off steering components, smashing through windshields and causing panicked drivers to swerve themselves into a crash, attempting to avoid the beasts. The good news is that passenger vehicle drivers have many tools to avoid road gators. Also, those who pull small trailers or drive recreational vehicles can easily avoid increasing the population of this invasive species.

### Don't Be a Gator Creator

Many are quick to blame retreaded (or recapped) truck tires as the cause for road gators. While research is mixed, recent studies say that up to 70 percent of full-sized road gators come from "virgin" truck tires, while a similar percentage of smaller rubber chunks are from retreads. Check out the gators on the shoulder. According to a truck tire engineer, you can tell the difference between a "tread (or belt) separation" and a failed recap: The edge of tread separation will look ragged, like torn fabric. A recap that has lost its bond to the tire has a smooth edge. Low tire pressure causes more than two-thirds of tire failures, according to the NHTSA study. The other top cause is damage from smacking curbs, potholes and road hazards. To help avoid creating baby road gators, the NHTSA suggests that drivers check tire pressure with a quality tire gauge before every trip, never exceed the weight limit of the vehicle or its tires, avoid road hazards and regularly inspect their tires for cuts or other damage. Driving any distance on a flat or severely underinflated tire can fatally damage the tire. For vehicles with tires in pairs—heavy trucks, motor homes, dualie pickups—continuing to drive with one flat tire will likely cause terminal damage to its mate: Tires are paired to expand load-carry capability, NOT for extended mobility. Driving with one of a pair failed is the root cause of most road gators, said a safety manager for a truck fleet at American Freightways. The reason summer months are prime road gator season is because heat can be a tire's biggest enemy, behind only a careless operator. Under inflation, high speeds and uneven highways can combine to increase

heat in a tire. Overheating breaks down the tire's internal components—both fabric and the bonds between different layers and types of rubber. Soon, another road gator will be born.

### **Gator-Dodging Techniques**

Here's what passenger vehicle drivers can do to avoid road gators.

1. Look far ahead and notice what you see. Increasingly larger bits of rubber laying on the freeway may mean a truck tire just shed its tread and a road gator may be in your lane. A big rig sitting alongside the road a half-mile ahead is an extra hint.
2. If you notice a rash of brake lights and swerving cars ahead, slow down.
3. If you find a road gator in your lane, reduce your speed radically before attempting an evasive maneuver. Swerving at highway speeds to avoid road debris causes as many as 25,000 accidents yearly, the NHTSA study says.
4. Hitting a road gator may spoil your day, but panicked, aggressive steering can be a lot worse. Keeping control of your car is key.
5. Never lollygag alongside a big rig. This is especially true if you hear the birthing cries of a road gator. An uneven howl or continuous "whap-whap-whap" may mean a tire is soon to shed its tread.
6. The shoulder may be your friend. If you need to swerve around a road gator, the shoulders of many interstates offer adequate traction if — and this is a big "IF" — you can keep two tires in the traffic lane. If you spot a road gator, keep calm and smoothly drive toward the shoulder. The shoulder may be dirty and slippery — and it's where old road gators live — so make a slow, smooth turn back onto the freeway. Also — you don't need to miss a road gator by 3 feet; 3 inches are plenty, so don't swerve more than you need to. A little cautious steering goes a very long way at highway speeds/

### **Riding Safety: Motorcycle Riding in the Heat Means Staying Hydrated**



With the skyrocketing temperatures of summer now upon much of the country, motorcycle riders need to take a little extra care to keep their mind and body tuned-up to deal with the heat. One easily preventable and often overlooked motorcycle safety hazard on the road is dehydration.

#### **What is dehydration?**

In simple terms, dehydration is using more water than your body is taking in. This means you don't need to be running a marathon for dehydration to set in. The act of riding your motorcycle in the heat can be a cause. Spending hours in the saddle under the hot sun without replenishing your fluids can be a recipe for disaster.

### **What are some of the symptoms of dehydration?**

- Headache
- Weakness
- Dry Mouth
- Increased Thirst

Do you feel a little “off”? Listen to your body. The dizziness or sluggishness a motorcycle rider may experience as a result of not taking in enough fluids can have dire consequences.

### **Hot Weather Motorcycle Riding – Be Prepared**

Often, your body may be experiencing mild dehydration before common symptoms begin to appear. With a small amount of extra planning before you get on your bike, you can keep your body strong and your mind sharp for the duration of your ride.

### **Hot Weather Motorcycle Riding Gear – Hydration Pack**

Most sporting good and department stores carry hydration packs that can be worn on your person. They consist of a refillable bladder inside of a narrow backpack style bag. The bladder has a long straw tube that can even be used while you are riding. TIP: Filling your hydration pack first with ice, and then filling it the rest of the way with water keeps it cooler longer.

### **Reusable Water Bottles**

A thermos or reusable water bottle tucked in your tankbag or luggage could be just what the doctor ordered. In addition to replenishing your fluids, having to stop to take it out and drink from it can give your body a few moments to rest. Pick a nice, shady spot and enjoy the scenery while you recharge your battery.

### **What to Drink**

Water is the best option for keeping your body hydrated. A sports drink is also a good choice. Alcoholic beverages like wine and beer as well as caffeinated beverages like soda, coffee and teas are diuretics and actually encourage fluid loss. They should be avoided to keep your motor running in tiptop shape.

### **Ride Smart, Ride Safe!**

Don't leave your personal safety to chance during the dog days of summer. Leave home prepared with something to drink along the way.



## Rides



**Saturday, May 7: Estrella War Bird Museum** Leaving Brooks Ranch at 9:00 am



# Next Get Together



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

**Monthly Dinner Social: Thursday, May 12:** **Ha Ha Sushi** 6721 N Milburn Ave  
(Herndon / Milburn) at 6:30 pm

**Monthly Meeting: Saturday, May 21:** **Yosemite Falls Cafe** 4278 W Ashlan Ave Fresno  
(Ashlan/Hwy 99) 8:30 am



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[www.thevalleyriders.com](http://www.thevalleyriders.com)

