

## APATHY PROHIBITED

There appears to be a theme in this issue of Hoosier Motorcyclist. You saw it on the cover and you're reading it here. APATHY PROHIBITED is ABATE of Indiana's mantra this year. As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we've gotta wonder if apathy will allow us to make it to 60.

So, what do we really mean by APATHY PROHIBITED? What is apathy and why don't we want it? Apathy is defined by Merriam-Webster as, "a lack of feeling or emotion; a lack of interest or concern". Webster's further explains that "Apathy, impassivity, and indifference all denote a lack of responsiveness to something that might normally excite interest or emotion. Apathy suggests a puzzling or deplorable inertness or lack of passion, as in "the problem of continued voter apathy." "

The simple definition is apathy is feeling or doing nothing about things you should be concerned by. Apathy is often brought on by frustration. If you've been going to the city council for three years requesting a stop sign at the intersection of First Street and Main Street, it is difficult to remain engaged, much less excited, when you've been basically ignored for the last three years.

Major corporations, and sometimes governments, use this as a strategy. They can afford (financially and otherwise) to "wait out" little guys like you and me. They count on people getting frustrated and giving up.

If that doesn't explain why we don't want apathy, I'm not sure that I know a better way to convince people. Apathy becomes contagious. If somebody already worked hard and couldn't get anything done, why should you waste your time? It's pretty easy to feel that way. That is the epitome of apathy.

Historically, since the 1960's and definitely since June 25, 1975 (ABATE of Indiana's founding), bikers have been anything but apathetic. Passion is something we've always had. Passion about our ride, our lifestyle, our freedom. Motorcyclists have never hesitated to let people see just how passionate we are. We have taken on, and won, battles that we shouldn't have even been able to start. That's not because we have great resources like a lot of money or a large number of people. It's because bikers have passion. We believe, and we are willing to fight for those things we believe in.

Over the last few years, we have experienced some apathy within our community. We don't have as many members; we don't have as many people attend meetings or events and we don't have as many "activists". Grassroots lobbyists are people who don't get paid to educate lawmakers, they do it because they believe in the cause and are... yup, you guessed it, PASSIONATE.

The motorcycle rights movement (which started State Motorcyclists' Rights Organizations) has never had huge numbers. But we need enough people so that legislators feel compelled to listen. It may not take a million people to get that stop sign on the corner, but it can be nearly impossible for one person to get it accomplished alone.

What one person can do is educate and motivate people so that the group becomes larger and gains a louder voice. What one person can also do is spread apathy to epidemic proportions. Which one of those people do you want to be? We need you to be educated, active and be a catalyst of energy, activism and passion. Inform everyone you contact and invite them to get on board.

We are not fearmongering; we are letting you know that the future of motorcycling and our chosen lifestyle are in danger. We MUST be vigilant in promoting, protecting and preserving motorcycling for future generations.

Ride Safe, Ride Free,  
Jay Jackson