

Motorcycle Awareness Program

going strong twenty years and counting

ABATE of Arizona has a program that reaches out to student drivers in five East Valley high schools, encouraging them to Look Out For Motorcycles. The Motorcycle Awareness Program (M.A.P.) is an educational program aimed at the target audience of high school students in driver's education classes. It was originally started up by Sporty Jim and later fine-tuned by Jean Cooper to a PowerPoint and video presentation. East Valley Chapter members Joe Silk and Jim Silk have been showing students how to 'Share The Road' twice a year. Their PowerPoint show helps students to see what a motorcycle is doing in today's traffic and alerts students to another form of transportation vehicle.

Photos of who, what, and where motorcycles can be found are in their presentation, as well as a video put out by the MRF {Motorcycle Riders Foundation} of sharing the road. The students then take a short quiz on what was shown. Presenters verbally go through the 10 question quiz with them, giving examples of real life experiences that relate to each question throughout.

{ed: From the way Jim explained it to me, it seems like portions of the presentation are intended to 'personalize' the motorcyclists to the students... talking about different riders & their experiences [who], [what] their reasons are for riding, and the numerous situations [where] they might, as drivers, interact with bikes on the roadways. Now, thanks to this class, rather than seeing a motorcycle as just another vehicle on the road these young drivers are more likely to see a motorcyclist – a person, going about his or her day.}

Part of the presentation includes going outdoors to witness a few motorcycle 'ride

bys' and having the students guess its speed. This helps demonstrate how hard it is to judge the speed of a motorcycle. The 'narrow profile' of a motorcycle coming at you is discussed, including how easily it can be hidden by small objects or possibly even ignored due to larger vehicles around it.

The lecture ends with a brief demonstration on how a rider operates the bike.

Many motorcycle riders have assisted over the years in helping do this presentation and a big thank you goes out to Richard Dalton, Nolan Steed, Tim Zennick, Dawn Parker, Mary K and Smiley, Greg "Troll" Hughes, "Pops" from the Huns MC, Ron Carroll from Gold Wing Riders, and Joe Hoodak for his help, among many others. Without a motorcycle rider doing these demonstration rides, the class would not be a success. It is a small part, but a huge difference to make the student drivers of Arizona aware of bikers.

The goal is to expand this MAP program state-wide, ideally with at least one volunteer instructor in each ABATE Chapter. There are currently 'certified presenters' teaching in Tucson, Kingman, Lake

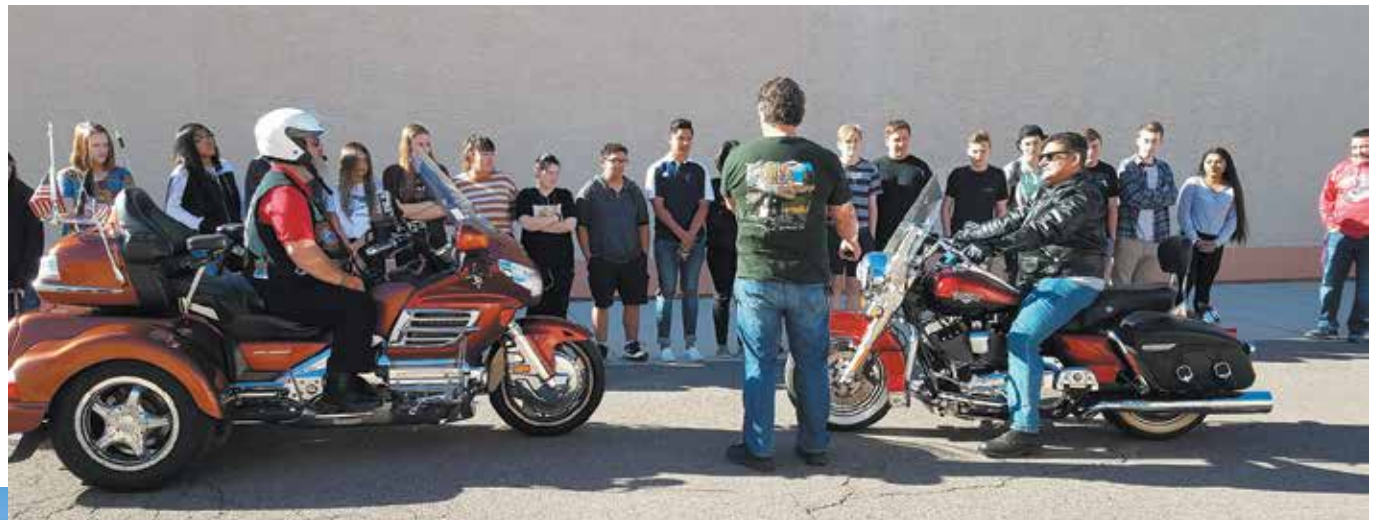
Havasu, Phoenix/Metro, and soon to be Payson. The purpose is to spread the word about safe motorcycling and promote a positive image of motorcyclists. What better way than to speak to the future drivers of our state? The students will hopefully be better equipped car and truck drivers and also be more aware and watch out for us.

Although most of these classes are for High School students, the MAP has also been presented to Senior Groups and even an engineering company to help them meet their safety education requirements. {The man in charge was a rider and had heard of the program from his teenage son. Cool.}

If you are interested in learning more about the MAP program, either to assist the existing classes or to get the program implemented in your area, contact Jim Silk at the contact information below.

Jim Silk

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MAP photos by: Ron Carroll, Lumpy Lumpkins, & Connie Award