# THE KNIGHTLY NEWSLETTER Blue Knights © California VI



## **INSIDE THIS EDITION**

About the Club Officers & Staff President's message Meeting Minutes Safety Message: Watch your 6 Road Wisdom: Rain Riding Memory Lane Tom Slaughter Memorial Ride Summer Picnic Charities we support Christmas Party Upcoming Rides

# <section-header>

nothing about. Be kind. Always. (Ian MacLaren)

MEMBERSHIP MEETING DATE October 8, 2022

Inside this edition





Poker Chip drawing was held. Mike Harrison's name was drawn. Since Mike was present he won the \$20.

By being present at the monthly Blue Knight Chapter meeting you become eligible for the drawing. If you are present, you win the amount in the pot. If you are not present \$5 is added to the pot. Currently the amount is \$5.



# THE BLUE KNIGHTS





The Blue Knights® International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club, Inc., is an International fraternal organization comprised of law enforcement officers and their families who are also motorcycle enthusiasts.

Headquartered in Bangor, Maine, the Blue Knights® operates under an international constitution and bylaws within an organizational structure of an international board of directors and eleven regional conferences, each conference including a number of local chapters. The Blue Knights® promotes safe and responsible motorcycling and sponsors fund raising in support of numerous charities.

The inception of the Blue Knights® came in April 1974 when a Bangor Maine, police officer had the idea of forming a motorcycle club for people in law enforcement. Since then, the club has grown to become the foremost and largest international law enforcement motorcycle club. Today, there are over twenty thousand Blue Knights® worldwide in six hundred in six hundred chapters in the twenty-nine countries and one commonwealth.

# **OUR CHAPTER IN SAN DIEGO**

# **CALIFORNIA VI**



Chapter California VI was formed in 1987 by a group of seventeen San Diego area law enforcement officers, some retired and some on active duty. We have been chartered since January 1988, making us one of the oldest currently existing Blue Knights® chapters in California. Our members are full-time, part-time and retired law enforcement officers from local, county, state and federal levels.

We are presently one of the largest chapters in the Southwest Conference, with over 40 members on our rolls. Chapter California VI members strive to promote a positive image both of law enforcement and motorcycling. We are active in community service projects, and each year we donate to local charities.

Chapter meetings are held at 0900 on the second Saturday of the month at the Broken Yolk Restaurant, 1851 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach, CA. (Unless that is a holiday weekend) After the breakfast and one hour meeting, we go for a ride.

Persons interested in becoming a member may contact Vice President Ken Smith by email at: vice\_president@bk-cavi.org



# CALIFORNIA VI OFFICERS AND STAFF



PRESIDENT

John Lopotosky

**VICE-PRESIDENT** 

Ken Smith

SECRETARY

Shari Stegall

TREASURER

**Chuck Belletti** 

DIRECTORS

**Richard Bennett** 

**Mike Harrison** 

**Ray Juanengo** 

**Alan Wheeler** 

## **MORALE & WELFARE**

Tina Lopotosky

**Michelle Juanengo** 

IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT

**Grant Frye (Heaven 1)** 

WEBMASTER

**Stephen Roche** 

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** 

**Richard Bennett** 

**RIDE COORDINATOR** 

**Alan Wheeler** 

SAFETY OFFICER

**Richard Bennett** 

QUARTERMASTER

**Arturo Romero** 

PLEDGE: As a Blue Knight, I pledge to act with honor and pride to promote motorcycling and motorcycle safety by being an example of the safe use, operation and enjoyment of motorcycles. I will work at all times to improve the relationship between the motorcycling law enforcement community and the general public. The fraternal spirit will always guide me in relating to other Blue Knights®

# **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**

# John Lopotosky, President



## CHAPTER ELECTIONS – IT'S TIME TO STEP UP!



This month I'd like to chat a bit about our upcoming chapter elections. Per our procedures manual we hold elections every two years. Well, it's that time again. The board will start accepting nominations for all elected positions at the chapter picnic on Saturday, September

24<sup>th.</sup> The nomination period will end at the general membership meeting on October 8th.

I have been honored to serve as your chapter president for the past two years. I will, however, not be seeking another term. I have held one office or another for over twenty years. I've had the pleasure of serving on the chapter, conference, and international levels of this great organization. Per our procedures, I will be assuming the position of Immediate-Past-President on the chapter board of directors.

I want to encourage each eligible member to consider running for an office. It's great experience and after all, this is your club, so why not have a hand in shaping its future?

There are a few ways to be nominated. You can speak to a member asking if they would like to run for a particular office. If they agree you can nominate them. You can also self-nominate if you are interested in running for a particular office. Nominations will be accepted at the next wo chapter meetings, or you may send an email to the chapter president at blueknightscavi@gmail.com

#### **OFFICERS AND REQUIREMENTS**

Chapter Officers shall be the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past President, and Directors. Only Regular members may hold the offices of President and Vice President of a chapter. Associate members may hold the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and of a director provided that there are no Regular members desiring to hold those positions. A single person may hold both the Secretary and Treasurer's offices. Associate and Honorary members may hold Staff positions on the Board provided that there are no Regular members desiring to hold those positions. The President and Board may establish other positions to be held by chapter members for the conduct of chapter business.

Members wanting to run for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer or Director must have been a Blue Knight member in good standing for a minimum of one (1) year. If a member transferred into the chapter from another chapter in good standing, their time in the previous chapter will count as part of the one (1) year requirement.

The business and property of the chapter shall be managed and controlled by a Board of

Directors who shall be elected bi-annually by the chapter members to hold office until the election or qualification of their respective successors. The Board of Directors shall consist of Chapter President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President, as well as three (3) additional Directors, or if the Secretary and Treasurer are held as one office then four (4) additional directors, who must be elected by the Regular membership of the chapter at the general membership held in November of even numbered years.

The Board of Directors are the voting members at Chapter Board meetings. The President does not vote unless required as the casting (tie-breaking) vote.

As a requirement to running for elected office any member elected to the Board of Directors must be a member in good standing with the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) by October of the election year and maintain membership for the term of office to which elected.

## September 24, 2022 MINUTES

Meeting held at the annual chapter picnic hosted by Alan and Betsy Wheeler

**Call to Order**: Chapter President John Lopotosky at 1500 Hours Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence for Members of Heaven I

Recognition of Fallen Chapter Members

#### **Blue Knights Pledge**

"As a Blue Knight, I pledge to act with honor and pride to promote motorcycling and motorcycle safety by being an example of the safe use, operation and enjoyment of motorcycles. I will work at all times to improve the relationship between the motorcycling law enforcement community and the general public. The fraternal spirit will always guide me in relating to other Blue Knights."

#### President John Lopotosky

- 1. New SWC Coins
- 2. Elections for 2023/2024 Officers
- 3. Christmas Party List and Payment
- 4. 2023 Membership Renewals
- 5. Nominations for Blue Knights and Lady/Lord of the Year
- 6. Upcoming Events
  - A. November Knights/Glendale AZ November 18-20, 2022
  - B. 2023 SWC Las Vegas May 7-11, 2023 Vice

#### President Ken Smith (Excused)

#### Treasurer Chuck Belletti (Excused)

1. Financial Status

Secretary Shari Stegall (Excused)

#### **Chapter Directors:**

#### **Ray Juanengo**

1. Vulcan Riders Ride

#### Alan Wheeler (Ride Coordinator)

1. Volunteers for Ride Leader Staff Position

#### Richard Bennett (Safety Officer) (Excused)

1. Newsletter Articles

#### Mike Harrison

Arturo Romero - Quarter Master

#### Morale and Welfare (Sunshine) Coordinator Michelle Juanengo/Tina Lopotosky

1. Please notify Tina and Michelle if anyone is sick/ill/ hospitalized/in need of assistance.

#### Good of the order

Poker Chip Drawing: Won by Mike Harrison Raffle prizes

Motion to Adjourn by: Bill Craw Seconded by: Alex Cross

Next Meeting:

0900 Hours, October 8, 2022 Broken Yolk



# Safety Message Watch Your Six

Danger from behind



Richard Bennett, Safety Officer

If you have been a motorcycle rider for a while, it is no secret that other drivers don't always pay attention. Distractions seem to be increasing every day, as drivers are adding more attention-grabbing gadgets to their vehicles. As riders, we are not exempt from our own distractions. GPS, music, telephone calls, and other blue tooth devices are becoming more common on motorcycles, too.

When we stop at signal lights, we tend to shift our attention to these distractions, or talk with fellow riders; it is a natural pause that we take advantage of. And therein lies the danger.



Those distracted, impaired or otherwise non compos mentus car drivers are coming up behind you. Will you see them, or be looking at your own distractions?

Rear-end collisions are all too common in daily traffic. Car versus car is bad enough, but car versus motorcycle can be deadly. Here are some ways you can avoid being hit from behind.

The most obvious is to pay attention to your "six"; that area immediately

behind you. Frequent checking will tell you the level of threat by other drivers. Good rear view mirror vision is important. I have added two extra mirrors for full rear visibility. If you have "blind spots", you have danger spots.

Former Blue Knight California VI Safety Officer **Rob Doty** gave a presentation at one of our Southwest Conferences. He recommended increasing our visibility with bright or reflective clothing, and adding extra rear lights that flash when braking to help get other drivers' attention. Good advice, but there are other prevention methods we can do.

The most obvious is to maintain situational awareness. Avoid being too distracted by electronic devices or other riders. Know your position in surrounding traffic. Pay attention.

The majority of motorcycle rear-end collisions occur at signal lights. Knowing this will help you avoid being a victim. A little planning on your part will keep you safer. Here are my recommendations.

- Position yourself in one "wheel track" of any car ahead of you. Left is best, but when with others, right will do.
- Stay back from the vehicle ahead by at least ½ car length. You may need the space for quick maneuvering.
- Identify an escape route. Most likely around the vehicle ahead of you.
- Watch your mirrors! Monitor rear-approaching traffic.
- When you see traffic approaching, work your brake lights. Flash them several times, then keep watching.
- Have your motorcycle in gear and ready to instantly move into the escape route.
- If a collision appears imminent, quickly move into the escape route. (Apologies to the car driver ahead of you.)

If you would like more information on this technique, **Bud Overby**, International Blue Knight Safety Officer recommends a video on the subject. This info was forwarded to us by **Martin Cuesta**, Southwest Conference Chairman, and is available on YouTube: **Motorcycle skills to avoid being rear-ended – Don't get trapped.** 



Also, Google "Many LED motorcycle tail lights".

At the end of the day, it is better to have avoided a rear-end collision, than to say "I didn't see it coming."



# **ROAD WISDOM**

# **Riders on the Storm**

By Richard Bennett



I don't remember when I first got caught in the rain on a motorcycle, but I can tell you I was nervous about the experience. Most motorcycle riders who encounter rain and wet pavement for the first time know the feeling of just wanting to survive and get to their destination safely.

Riding a motorcycle in the rain is one of the skills that is not taught in the basic Motorcycle Safety Foundation course. In fact, it wasn't taught in the Police Motorcycle Officer training or the Advanced MSF training either. It is one of those things that become a learn-as-you-go experience.

As the Southwest Conference Safety Officer, I was asked by a member of my Blue Knights Chapter to write something on this topic. I hope to give you information that will not only let you survive riding in the rain, but give you confidence to get you through any type of rain storm. If you have been riding long enough to feel comfortable on your motorcycle, you are ready to ride in the rain.



Once you master the techniques of riding in the rain, you will be able to travel most anywhere with confidence. Here are some subjects to help you get there.

### Dress for rain

Always have rain gear with you, especially during the rainy months.



On a group ride through the Salton Sea area, unexpected rain showers caught us in the open. Of the four riders in the group, I was the only one with rain gear. We stopped briefly at a gas station where I donned my riding suit, and then the group elected to ride on. Needless to say, the other riders were wet, cold and uncomfortable riding in the rain. It was a lesson that was learned the hard way, but no one in that group ever left home without rain gear again.

Experienced riders learn to read the weather pretty accurately. Dark clouds ahead usually mean you should be wearing your rain gear. After it starts raining, and your clothes are wet, stopping to put on rain gear is an exercise in futility. Be prepared, and suit up early.

Once you have rain protection, you will be much more comfortable. A comfortable rider will be able to concentrate on the task at hand rather than ruminate about how cold and wet the day is. That is especially true for your lady passenger; she will endure the adventure better if she, too, is dressed for the wet weather. You will appreciate the difference at the end of the ride.

Here is a short list of what you need for you and your passenger:

High quality rain suit. You get what you pay for, and when you need it, you will be glad you invested the money.
 Waterproof boots that are tall enough that water doesn't seep in from above.



• Waterproof gloves, or at the least, covers that slip over your gloves.

At the risk of offending the minimal helmet crowd, I also recommend a full-face helmet, or a helmet with a full-face shield. Rain drops that hit your face at highway speed feel like bullet strikes. Get a full-face helmet and protect yourself from stings. Besides, your friends will never know it is you inside there.

After you have proper rain gear, it becomes a matter of using common sense and being aware of the hazards around you.

### **15 Minutes of Danger**

The first rain of the season is hazardous, and the first 15 minutes the *most* hazardous.

There are places in the U.S. that get a lot of rain much of the year. Those locations don't need much time to stabilize the wet road surface. But, if you are in a location that enjoys dry seasons, that is when cars, and trucks deposit a lot of crud on the same roadway you will ride upon. You need to allow some time for the crud to wash away.

No worries, Mate. At the first sign of rain drops, you will probably want to stop and don the rain gear you paid top bucks for. Use the first 15 minutes to find a safe place to stop, preferably a service station, or something with an overhang. Walk inside, grab a cup of something and take your time drinking it. Then pull out your rain gear, and impress the by-standers with how nice and dry you look.

By now the mud, oil and transmission fluid should be draining down the culverts on the way to pollute lakes, streams and the ocean. Your road will be washed clean and ready for you to continue on your way. It has been estimated by veteran riders that clean wet pavement has 80% of the traction of dry pavement. I can vouch for that; I rode the Alps in rain and never had an incident with slippery curves. With some normal attention to the road surface, you should be good to go.

### Surface Hazards

While clean, wet roads give you good traction, there are still slippery spots to avoid.

- Painted lines. Crosswalks, words painted in the lane, directional arrows, etc.
- Surface textures. Transitioning from roadway to private drives; watch for slick concrete.
- Steel. Manhole covers, plates covering construction and rail road tracks.
- Oil slicks. Watch for rainbow colored water.
- Water puddles. Pot holes fill with water, and can be deeper than expected.



Now that you are alert to these additional hazards, you can navigate them with a little common sense.

#### **Smoothness**

The best motorcycle riders in the world have perfected smoothness.

Practice smooth riding techniques before you get caught in the rain. Smooth transition between motorcycle controls lessens the risk of unexpected motorcycle dynamics.

When you ride, work on your use of controls. A smooth start and "seamless" run through the gears should be your first drill. When I have a passenger, I try to go through the gears with only the engine sound betraying the shifting. The closer you get to a turbine feel, the smoother your gear usage. The same should be done for down-shifting. Practice, practice, practice!

Next is the transition from power to brakes and back to power. Ever wonder how the "Pros" get through those turns so quickly and effortlessly? It is smoothness. Your motorcycle has many dynamics, which change when you accelerate, brake, lean and stop. You may not feel it, but the chassis is shifting and the tire



contact patches are transitioning. You want these transitions to be as smooth as possible, especially in the rain.

### Pick Your Spot

OK, we are now dressed in proper rain gear, we know surface hazards and we ride smoothly. Now some words about lane positioning.

Motorcycle riders have the advantage of being able to use the entire 12-foot width of the lane, six inches at a time. That is about how much your tire footprint is on the pavement.

In Police Motorcycle Officer training, we learned to position ourselves in the left wheel track of the vehicle ahead. This gives the car driver a clear view of you in two mirrors, and you have the rest of the lane for cushion. This works especially well in rainy weather.

During heavy rain, the tires on the vehicle ahead of you will cut through the surface water and leave a brief "path" for your motorcycle tires. This small change will create additional traction, and therefore more control for you. Don't get too close, because in an emergency, you may have to stop before imprinting the cars' trunk lid.

When there is no traffic ahead of you, remember the slickest part of the lane is usually the center. On highways where thousands of vehicles an hour travel in your lane, there is bound to be some residual oil or transmission fluid still percolating from the pavement. Ride in one wheel track or the other; there will be water, but it will be cleaner and more cohesive than in the

center.

Speaking of traction, you did replace those worn tires, didn't you? I know that pound for pound motorcycle tires are far more expensive than those you have on your minivan. Keep in mind that those two six-inch contact patches are your connection with mother earth. If the tread is worn, the rain-wicking properties of your tires are diminished. When the water is not efficiently displaced, the traction is reduced. While hydroplaning on a motorcycle is uncommon, worn tires will get you into the unwanted minority. Don't take chances; spend the money and keep your tires in top condition.

## <u>Visibility</u>

"See and be seen" is a motto that veteran riders follow.

Riding in the rain increases the importance of visibility, both for you and those around you. Your visibility will be diminished in the rain.

The most challenging time I ever had with visibility in the rain happened in southern Louisiana. My wife and I were returning to our hotel from a day ride when darkness fell. Soon after, a hard rain began. Rain covered my windshield and my helmet face shield. My breath fogged my face shield, and on-coming headlights made everything white and blurry. It was a nervous time.

Since that time, I have learned some tricks that help in extreme circumstances. Having gloves with a squeegee or a chamois insert will help wipe away the surface water from the face shield. Anti-fogging compounds are on the market, and I use Rain X on both sides of the face shield. This helps keep the water flowing off instead of sticking in front of my eyes. The same stuff can be used on your windshield too. Buy some, and keep it handy. You can thank me later.

Now for the more obvious "visibility" topic: be seen by other drivers.

I know I am a little "paranoid" about being "invisible" on my motorcycle. During my Motorcycle Officer days, it was never a concern; people looked for me and avoided me when they could. Now I ride a maroon motorcycle with a gray riding suit. Here are some tips to be more visible at any time, and especially in the rain.

- Add running lights to your motorcycle both front and rear. If you can afford it, high intensity or LED headlights really get attention.
- Add reflective tape to the back and sides of your motorcycle. I even put some on the *underside* of my saddle bags in the event it ends up on its side in the dark.
- Wear a bright, reflective vest.

Now, even with a maroon motorcycle, I am very visible to other traffic. You can be too.

If you have never ridden in the rain, I hope this will give you the confidence to try it. Once you experience riding in the rain, you will be a better rider on sunny days, too. And you can swap stories with other riders as you don your rain gear and sip coffee under the service station overhang.



# **Memory Lane**

**Those were the days...** (We thought they'd never end)



Our Blue Knight Chapter is 35 years old. Lots of roads have passed beneath us in those years. Friends made and, sadly, lost. Events attended. Rides shared; memories made along the way.

Do you have an old photo of a Blue Knight event? Rides with brother and sister Knights? Any picture of history frozen in time? You should share those moments.

I would like to start a "Memory Lane" segment in the Knightly News. With enough contributions from our members, this could be a monthly event.

If you like the idea, please send your photos to me. Captions would be appreciated, although I can create a category called "Who can tell us about this photo?"

Our chapter is healthy because of our member participation, so dig through those photos on your computer. Or maybe an old-fashioned photo album. What ever the source, send to me at: <u>electrotalk2610@outlook.com</u>

"What you are is what you were when." (Morris Massey)



Jack Kaylor, Jim Harkins, Don Hansen, Cameron Nouriani, Richard Bennett 2002?



# Blue Knights Remember Tom Slaughter



By Ray Juanengo, Director Photos by Ray Juanengo

In March of 2019, Blue Knights California VI suffered a tremendous loss when Director Tom Slaughter passed away. Tom wasn't just a great Blue Knight and example of the "Friend you haven't yet met", he was also a Vietnam Veteran. On Saturday, September 17th, 2022, the Vietnam Veterans of America held a ride to honor Tom.

The ride originated out of San Diego Harley Davidson and took the participants through a scenic ride of North County San Diego up to Double Peaks Park in San Marcos. In attendance were BK CA VI members Ken Smith, Alan Wheeler, his wife Betsy, Arturo Romero, Brian Sutliff and I.

Blue Knights from Arizona X also attended the ride, having spent the evening prior in San Diego. Thank you to AZ X President Juan Arvizu, Jerry Gilmore and Jason Jung for helping to honor Tom.



Stephen Roche and Ken Smith



Vice President Ken Smith



Blue Knight California VI Riders

After a brief stop and photo opportunity, the group rallied again and took the ride back to San Diego Harley Davidson. There, we broke bread and remembered our friend Tom.



This years BK Summer picnic had issues from the start. Post Tropical Storm 'Kay' decided to land in San Diego on September 9th, one day prior to our planned picnic date. Without fear, our Knights resiliency was tested and proved to be well intact. Our rescheduled picnic proved to be a big success or its newly minted day of September 24. Fair skies and onshore winds—a San Diego staple—added to the fine day.

The quantity of food was overwhelming. The pool was warm, yet refreshing. Ample raffle gifts made their way into many a hand. And, Betsy's whiskey sours were enjoyed by numerous adults.

Twenty three Knights and family members truly enjoyed each others camaraderie and fellowship. Nothing is better than good friends enjoying a Summer picnic BBQ.



The members of Blue Knights California VI - San Diego, are honored to support the following charities. Donations are encouraged.





https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/

https://nextstepservicedogs.org/



https://thewishesgrantedfoundation.com/



# FINAL HONOR Horse-Drawn Funeral Carriage At Miramar National Cemetery

https://www.finalhonor.net/

# Blue Knights, California VI Chrístmas Party & Offícer Installment

# Saturday, December 3, 2022

# Embassy Suites, 4550 La Jolla Village Dr., San Diego



# Submit your Blue Knight articles to the Knightly News

The Knightly News is published monthly by Blue Knights California VI. All members are encouraged to submit articles. Articles deemed appropriate include but are not limited to: articles regarding motorcycle-oriented stories, personal travel, police functions or informational / technical topics.

As a reminder, any submissions of re-printed articles must clearly give credit to the original author. Copyrighted material must have permission of the author to be eligible. This can be remedied by writing up an outline of the article and by referencing the original author.

Articles that are deemed inappropriate for publication include and are not limited to: articles regarding controversial, personal choices, religious positions or advocacy for questionable action. Questions about material that does not fall clearly within the guidelines will be brought to the attention of the Chapter President by the Editor, for a decision of appropriateness. If necessary, the Board may review the article and make a decision to publish or not to publish.

Submit articles to Editor: <u>electrotalk2610@outlook.com</u> DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES SUNDAY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIP MEETING

# **UPCOMING RIDES**



# September 23-24, 2022

## **Terry Bennett Memorial Police Training and Competition**

Crown Point Park, 3600 Crown Point Drive, San Diego

Admission is free

www.sandiegocountymotors,org

# October 7-9, 2022

## **Bike Fest San Bernardino, CA**

www.socalbikefest.com

# October 29, 2022

Blue Knights CA X Poker Run

225 Wake Ave., El Centro, CA

www.blueknightsca-x.org

# November 20, 2022

## 9<sup>th</sup> Annual San Diego Toys for Tots Event

https://www.sandiegotoysfortotsevent.com/





ADMISSION IS FREE September 23-24, 2022

Proceeds to benefit WIXIM Chaplain Services (Providing spiritual and emotional support to law enforcement officers, employees, and citizens they contact)

Come witch highly skilled Police Motorcycle Officers from Unsupriou the examinetime. Unliked Extreme in they feel that a kills in a spinical conjugation. Officer briefles and ferryis, and the general public care initial and encouraged to a lateral. The location for this years' event is Crown Point Park Located at 3600 Cream Point Dirk on the Cip of San Delap.

Located at 3600 Crown Point Drive in the City of San Diego For mule in burstlen, or to meke a donation, visit www.sandiegocountymotors.org or e-mail sandiegocometitomati.com



