

CANYON CARVING WITH CURVES ON CHROME

The Ann Arbor based chapter of
Women On Wheels®

www.curvesonchrome.com

Director's Update by Julie - Co-Chapter Director

Rusty Riders.

This is the time of the year when we are very anxious to get our bikes out of storage and onto the road. However, like most riders living in Michigan, our bikes have been nice and cozy in storage and we've become rusty riders. Smart riders know that even being out of the saddle a couple of weeks can make you rusty. So it's good to remember that the beginning of the riding season is when we need to be most careful.

Riding a motorcycle is not like riding a bike. In order to ride a motorcycle safely you must ride consistently and most importantly you must PRACTICE.

The more you ride, the better you get. The less you ride, the rustier you get. Remember, it takes a bit of time to re-acclimate yourself to your motorcycle and riding in traffic.

So if you have been out of the saddle for a bit of time. Take it easy and get re-acquainted with your motorcycle.

Remember:

- No matter how experienced you think you may be on your motorcycle, practice makes perfect.
- Assume that cagers do not see you!
- Keep you motorcycle in gear when stopped, and always monitor your rear view mirrors for someone who looks like they are going to rear end you.
- Always cover your brake when going through intersections. Assume that someone will turn left in front of you or blow through a red light

Looks like we're almost through another Michigan winter, let's get ready to ride!

HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY!

MARCH EVENTS:

- **March 8th 11:00 am New Member Meeting at Caribou Coffee in Livonia**
- **March 9th Chapter Meeting 6:30 pm at Classic Cup Coffee in Ann Arbor**
- **March 28th Game Night 5:00 pm**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **April 5 – Noon - Group Riding Lesson**
- **April 13 – 6:30 Chapter Meeting – Saline**
- **April 18 – 10:00 - Group Riding Lesson**
- **April 18 – 1:00 - New Member Meeting-Milan**
- **April 19 – Advanced Bystander Assistance Class**
- **April 23 – Dinner Run**
- **April 25 – Vermontville Maple Syrup Festival**
- **April 26 - New Member Meeting - Jackson**

New Member Shout Out:

CCC is really excited to welcome:
Terri



Do you know what T-CLOCK stands for?

This is something that should be done before each ride.

T-CLOCK - An acronym used by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation to remember the key points of the pre-ride inspection (Tires, Controls, Lights & Electronics, Oils, Chassis & Chain, Kickstand).

Motorcycle Lingo: Countersteering

At speed a motorcycle is controlled by turning the handlebars away from direction you want to turn. It is summarized in push the right handgrip forward to turn right, push the left handgrip forward to turn left.

Motorcycle steering is accomplished by leaning and turning your front wheel to the left will make the bike lean (and turn) right and vice versa.

Announcements:

- If you have any articles or additions to the newsletter, please send them to newsletter@curvesonchrome.com.
- Thanks to Pat R for a great story for last month's newsletter. You always have great stories and memories!!!
- The executive committee has completed the draft of the Chapter by-laws. We will be reviewing these over the next few months at our regular meetings. Please review them prior to the meeting to assist in keeping the meetings at an acceptable length. We will review Article I at the March meeting. Each section must be approved by 40 percent of the full members who are in good standing.
- Several Members gathered for an hour of fun at Wayside Whirlyball in Ann Arbor. Look for photos to be posted. Thanks to Diane for coordinating this event.

RAIN RIDING – STAYING UPRIGHT AND WATERTIGHT

By: Reg Kittrelle

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 imitation 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 reason 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 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 very 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 faceshield 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 worse 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 faceshield 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 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 these 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.

CCC Photos of the month:

