



# DAILY PLANET

Official Newsletter of

## The San Francisco Northstars Motorcycle Club

Volume 34, Issue 5

July / August 2007

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- AUG 23-26 **WETLEATHER's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual GREAT PACIFIC NORTHWEST DRYSIDE GATHER!**
- AUG 29 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- SEPT 1 **TOMALES BAY MEMORIAL BAKERY RIDE FOR CRAIG** – Meet 8:00AM at the park n' ride off Lucas Valley Road and Hwy 101. Clutches out 8:30AM.
- SEPT 16 **SOUTHBAY DAY RIDE** (*Josh – Details will be posted via email*)
- SEPT 23 **DIRT OR DUAL-SPORT DAY RIDE** (*Catfish*)
- SEPT 26 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- OCT 13-14 **YOSEMITE CAMPING AND AWHANEE BRUNCH**
- OCT 31 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- NOV 4 **PRESIDENT'S RIDE – SCOOT AND SHOOT**
- NOV 17-18 **MOJAVE DESERT CAMPING RIDE** (or an alternative dirty location, TBD – *Catfish*)
- NOV 28 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.

*Club Meetings are held the last Wednesday of the month at 7:30 PM @ the San Francisco Brewing Company – 155 Columbus Avenue San Francisco California*

### Craig Hightower, R.I.P.

*by Craig's Girls*

Craig Hightower was more than a motorcycle enthusiast. He had a true passion for riding as evidenced by the mileage summary he kept on his website <http://www.backroadsboogie.com>. Last updated in December of 2006, total miles ridden were 377,392; and that only includes the bikes he owned, not the various magazine test bikes, borrowed bikes, and rented bikes that he had ridden. He was an AFM racer for six years, and one of the most skilled motorcyclists out there. He balanced safety, fun, skill, and excitement.

Craigum's spirit and zest for life and adventure was something most were in awe of. If he wasn't busy working full time for the FAA as a technician

supervisor, he was off gallivanting in far away places either by motorcycle, kayak, bicycle, car, or on foot. We all marveled at the frequency that Craig spent taking vacations. "Is Craig on a trip AGAIN?," we all would ask several times a year. If not traveling in Costa Rica or Baja, he might be kayaking the American River, paddling for breast cancer survivors, bicycling for AIDS research and hospice, or attending a benefit dinner for the homeless. Craig was also



Craig beams on his full moon ride, July 28, 2007 - Photo by Gordon Marshall

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East Oakland Moto Bros (EOMB) anchored a plaque into the crash site wall as a tribute to Craig

known to host many BBQs at his house in Alameda or surprise you at home with lots of chocolate, red wine, good stories, and if you were really lucky, homemade turtle brownies. It was that energy, drive, and sense of adventure that made Craig a

phenomenon.

He always helped out friends in need, and

served as a mentor for many new riders. He encouraged the mechanic in everyone, especially beginners. Craig offered many a friend the opportunity to work in his garage on anything from changing out a clutch or fouled plug, or swapping out a wheel. It was clear that Mr. and Mrs. Hightower raised a thoughtful, kind, respectful man.

The day we learned of the accident, it felt as though a huge hole had opened up in the atmosphere, the universe, our hearts and souls. Overcome with grief and sadness, his girlfriend, Laurel couldn't help but think of the part in a Superman movie where Lois Lane had died and Superman couldn't save her. In agony and anger he shot into the air and spun the world backwards, reversing time and enabling him to bring her back. We all wish we had that power.



One of many Mexico moto trips for Craig

I think that Craig would want his death to serve a purpose for other riders. As motorcyclists, we all know there is risk involved, but this is a reminder to us all that it's possible for

even the best of us to meet a tragic end.

I believe Craig is on yet another adventure full of endless sweeping curves, rocky roads, flowing water, and steaming hot springs. Ride in peace, my friend.

Postscript: We'd like to express appreciation for the support that many of the local motorcycle clubs have given to Craig's family, friends, and to the SF Northstars during this time. Thank you to the Motogirlies, East Bay Dinner Group, EOMB, OMC, and SFMC, among others. ♦

Having lost a few motorcycles in a garage fire, Craig's sense of humor shines through after he refurbishes the charred SV, adding some flame flare to its facelift



### CLUB MEETING MINUTES: WEDNESDAY JULY 25<sup>TH</sup> 2007

**The Meeting Opened** with eight members (once dues were paid by Jim Carnes). In attendance were Craig, Alan, Laurel, Gino, Glen, Doug, Jim, and Josh. Notes from the June meeting were reviewed and Glen was thanked for filling in for the word steward at that meeting (as well as other meetings – thank you Glen!).

**Old Business:** Gino is being added to the signature card for the SF Northstars bank account (Alan remains our Treasurer).

**New Business:** Craig visited Paula on a recent trip to Seattle and helped celebrate her #5<sup>th</sup> Birthday! Kari is in Europe for three weeks hanging around the British Isles. Glen is planning a possible morning ride on the way to Oakland Motorcycle Club's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party on August 18<sup>th</sup>. Craig discussed the pre set up tents available for the upcoming Yosemite camping ride. Laurel discussed campsites near Burney Falls along Hwy 5 near Redding. Upcoming club rides also include Josh's South Bay Ride in September, and the President's Shoot and Scoot in November. Jim is heading to Central America in November for a 2-month trip. He's interested in meeting up with folks along the way – so contact him if you'll be in the area around that time. Craig and Laurel will be in Costa Rica for three weeks on KTMs around Christmas. Laurel's neighbor is looking for a nice used bike in the 4-6k range. Glen shared photos taken at the Moto GP in July.

**New Bikes:** Jim has a new KLR (tractor), and loves it! Rumor is that Tony has a new GSXR 750 for the track. Still waiting to see someone's newish FZ1. Jim has his eyes open for a Yamaha TDR250.

**Ride Reports:** Laurel and Lisa rode 1453 miles in four days to Crater Lake from June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Descriptions included "spectacular", "stunning", "what happens at Crater Lake... stays at C.L."? Doug took a two-week ride with Ken O'Dell through Panguitch Utah to see Zion and Arches National Park and on to Durango, Colorado for the Top of Rockies rally. They rode 3,200 miles with 550 miles in the last two days.

## Full Moon Ride

The Full Moon ride was a real hoot last night. Awesome weather, clear roads, only one nasty LEO who wouldn't let us park up top of the mountain and one dead SV battery. Whups!

Yeah, that sucked but hey, got to run up and down Mines three times last night! Fun!

Thanks to all for sharing the evening!

Cheers!  
Craig

## The Cache Creek Adventure Ride! June 26, 2007

Saturday morning was nice & cool as I headed towards the Benicia bridge on the Caponord. About half-span it became obvious that the NASCAR fans were already backing up in the left lanes at the toll plaza. Soooooo glad we were heading the other way.

Denny's **Extreme Grand Slam** (for \$5.99!) was the Northstars Breakfast of Choice™ this mornin' (4 of 5). It was good to see Jim Carnes & his new green KLR650. Scott & Julie Yerigan were on their KLRs, but told us more adventurous tales about dual-sportin' KTMs & DRZs. WOW, what a trip! Airon Green arrived later on his Cagiva Grand Canyon and ate breakfast with mere seconds to spare.

At the rider's meeting, we were joined by Steve Hursh (KLR650), his friend Jody (DL650), Chris Cork (DR650), and Glen Coddington (DL650). I handed out the ride map and discussed our day.



With only minor amounts of traffic, we curved our way north on Suisun Valley, Wooden Valley, CA121, CA128, and Berryessa-Knoxville Roads. We stopped at the Pope Canyon Road intersection for a short break.

Next came upper Berryessa-Knoxville Road with its narrow, gnarly twisties. Shame all the water crossing were bone dry, but you could run them fast enough to kinda leap in and out of them with some air time. Wheee! At Reiff Road, we turned east and followed this gravel road over a ridge towards Davis Creek Reservoir.

Reiff Road becomes Rayhouse Road at the county line. The backside of the first ridge to the reservoir had deep, graded gravel in places.

The reservoir was nice, but on private land and completely fenced in. :( Next we rode up the second ridge.

We turned left at top of the ridge towards Langs Peak. This was a much nicer road than I was anticipating. The views from the top of the ridge were great.



Jim likes riding his new green tractor!

Next was down the east side of the ridge to Cache Creek. Many hiking trails are in this area. Shame its not an OHV area too!

Walking down to the creek, those withOUT footwear discovered just how HOT the gray sand gets. You could hear their screams in the parking lot! The creek was refreshingly cool though.

After lunch and a cool soak in the creek, we loaded up and headed home the same way we came. Well, most of us anyway.

It was a nice afternoon. Until we got

down to Lake Berryessa traffic heading home the same we were. It was still a FUN ride! Thanks everyone for coming along.  
Catfish ...

## Upcoming YOSEMITE CAMPING and Awhanee Brunch – October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2007

Make your reservations for Saturday night at the Evergreen Lodge ([www.evergreenlodge.com](http://www.evergreenlodge.com)). Stay in a cabin or camp a la songdog style where they set everything up for you (or bring your own gear). RSVP to Kari – currently in are Kari, Laurel, Lisa, Ben, Doug +1, and Gino +1.

## CLUB MEETING MINUTES: WEDNESDAY JUNE 27<sup>TH</sup> 2007 (by Glen)

June 27th S.F Northstar meeting had a rather small attendance of Doug, Allan, Gino & Glen. Our Prez was absent (Seattle?). Glen asked Allan if that was his 1098. He said no, they agreed he should be invited to the meeting. Joining the meeting Leon is a S.F. Resident, but he's from Australia. He's eager to find some good roads here (came to the right place). Moto GP's coming up, who's leading and what's the ride down to be? Word is San Jose BMW has some tix. Leon's going to corner marshal and hopefully Glen's gonna shoot pic's for UM (count these two out for the ride down early start). You all can print fliers out for Craigs full moon ride July 28 and have them put up at your favorite shops, to get the word out to friends. Glen's going to talk to the Oakland Motorcycle club about their 100th Anniversary party on August 18. Will see if its possible to squeeze a ride or breakfast in on the way (and shoot pics). Mark your calendar July 18 is Ride to work day, ride to work.org. Wade Boyd managed to get in the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Isle of Mann Races running an '03 ZX6 Kawasaki. He completed his 4-lap race and received his finisher medal. Another bit of history - Allan's S.F Brewing is 21 years old and the bar is 100! Gino's getting his name added to the Northstar account signature card in case Allan's not around. RIDES: we had Catfish's Tri Sport Ride to Cache Creek. Well attended by Jim, Julie, Scott, Catfish, Glen, Steve, Arion, Jody & Chris. Great weather, paved roads past Berryessa, then dirt on Reiff Rd. A great ridge road dropped riders down to the river for a dip. Shared the water with Kayak's and tubers. Likely the only mishap was Glen dropping the V-Strom in the dirt (low speed minimal damage). He made it a two-day event, staying overnight near Ukiah and dropping down to Boonville, then took Fish Rock Rd (dirt and pavement), had a good meal in Gualala, and a sunset ride back down Hwy 1. Doug amazingly didn't outride us in June, but has a Colorado ride in July. NEW BIKES: No one at the meeting with a new ride though Doug's is doing much better than his '07 GS. Rumor has it *someone* has a newish FZ1 and there were a couple of new 08 KLRs on the Tri Sport Ride.