



DAILY PLANET

Official Newsletter of

The San Francisco Northstars Motorcycle Club

Volume 34, Issue 6

September / October 2007

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- OCT 20 **CRAIG HIGHTOWER MEMORIAL SERVICES 1:00PM – 4:00PM (Program starts at 2:00PM)**
Richmond Yacht Club, 351
Brickyard Cove Road, Point
Richmond, CA
- OCT 31 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- NOV 4 **PRESIDENT’S RIDE – SCOOT AND SHOOT DUAL-SPORT RIDE (Laurel)**
- NOV 16-18 **INTERNATIONAL MOTORCYCLE SHOW (FRI 4:00 – 9:00 PM)** – San Mateo County Event Center, 2495 Delaware Street, San Mateo, CA
- NOV 18 **HOLLISTER HILLS OHV DIRT & DUAL SPORT RIDE (Catfish)**
- NOV 28 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- DEC 7-9 **1ST ANNUAL BRP/SRMC SAVE CLEAR CREEK FUN RIDE! Dirt & Dual Sport Ride (Camping Fri & Sat nights)**
- DEC 12 **CLUB MEETING** – S.F. Brewing Co.
- DEC 26-JAN 1 **MOJAVE DESERT CAMPING RIDE**
1ST ANNUAL BRP/SRMC SAVE CLEAR CREEK FUN RIDE! Annual holiday trek to the Mojave desert & mountains (Catfish)

CLUB MEETING MINUTES:

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 26TH 2007

The First Remembered Outdoor Meeting Opened with six members and one guest. In attendance were Laurel, Lisa, Glen, Catfish, Chris, Josh, and Diter. Notes from the previous meeting were read.

Urban Moto is out – with a very nice 2-page spread on Craig (RIP). Contributing articles are written by “Craig’s Girls”, Carig’s parents, and many others.

Old Business: Previously, Josh had prepared a letter for Allan to submit to the bank intended to remove past member’s names from the club account signature card. No word on current status.

New Business: Discussion of nominations for 2008 officer positions, which are typically opened in the October meeting. In previous years, there were enough members and peer pressure to fill the slots. Now, it doesn’t seem that enough people are interested in holding officer positions. Catfish led the discussion, and the consensus was to seek volunteers for traditional positions and leave the empty positions as they be. Everyone agreed it would be great to have enough interested volunteers to have a VOTE! Come to the next meeting, or post your interest to the list now. Laurel has volunteered to help in some capacity. The discussion led to the ride calendar, and overall structure of the club. Members should step forward to lead rides! It was acknowledged that the “traditional” club rides seem to attract higher numbers, and maybe we should concentrate on those rides.

Upcoming Rides: Nov 4th president’s scooter & shoot dual-sport ride, which will be led by Laurel. Nov 16th thru 18th is the International Motorcycle Show in San Mateo – the Northstars traditionally go Friday night.

Ride Reports: Sept 1st Memorial Bakery Ride for Craig was attended by over seventy motorcyclists and one truck with Criag’s kayak [ride report included]. Sept 16th South Bay Ride was attended by Catfish and Josh – rode some great roads, goat trails, and watched a road bicycle pass a big rig. Sept 23rd Carnegie ride was missed by Catfish (the ride leader) due to smoke and oil, but enjoyed by Laurel, Glen and Sue where they ran some challenging trails.

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

Celebrating
The Life of Craig Hightower

*We invite friends, neighbors and relatives
To join us on*

Saturday, October 20

Richmond Yacht Club
351 Brickyard Cove Road, Point Richmond
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
2:00 p.m.—A short program

Hosts: Max & Irene Hightower
510.237.6470
*Hors d'oeuvres and beverages
will be served.*

Please wear a name tag, not less than 6" x 4", to identify yourself. Creative name tags are encouraged.

Your Name:
Who you are and how you knew Craig:
Interests: Motorcycles, kayaks, bicycles, or ...
Something about Craig that you want to share:

If you would like to make a donation in Craig's name, these were his favorites:
Breast Cancer Fund, S.F. AIDS Foundation
Planned Parenthood, Alameda Food Bank,
Bluenbon Coalition, NRDC (Natural
Resources Defense Council)
or
donate to a charity of your choice.

Yosemite - October 13/14, 2007

by Laurel Sutcliffe

The annual Northstars ride started out in ordinary fashion but was quickly deemed, by Lisa, "the Craig Hightower practical joke ride". He was up there somewhere laughing and having some fun with us. Nothing too bad happened, besides one crash on Sunday, fortunately Diter was fine, but many other odd and funny things did make the trip an interesting journey. A number of us made it for breakfast on Saturday morning at Doug's Place in Castro Valley and tanked up on their hearty breakfast that could feed plenty! Myself, Diter, Catfish, Gino, Kari, Ben, Lisa, and Jim "rolled" on out about 9:30am and was met by Allan just pulling in. Oh well, better late than never, hope you weren't hungry :-)

We meandered out 580 to 205 to 120 to Manteca and then stopped for a potty break. As we rolled out after the break, someone noticed that Allan had a flat tire. The group separated a bit as others realized there was an issue. This was Craig's practical joke #1. Fortunately someone had a tire plug kit and pump and we were all soon off again. Catfish had mentioned he was going to deviate from the route and try a few different roads. Ooooh ooooh, I wanna go too. Catfish is the master at navigation so when he wants to deviate, we listen. He lead us all on some fun whoopde edooos and twisties through Copperopolis and back down to Highway 108. Woo-hoo. This put us close to our pre-scheduled lunch stop in Jamestown. After our BIG breakfast we weren't exactly starving, but we had to stay true to the motto of the club - ride to eat ;-) ... Damn that sherbet float was tasty.



My turn to navigate again with my shiny new GPS. Ah, yeah, about. I could say this was Craig's practical joke #2 and I am sure he would be snickering, but I am afraid it was just a learning curve with the mapping software. I had us so screwed up at one point that I was leading everyone up a mountainside in the complete opposite direction. In hindsight it was hilarious, but at the time I was disgusted and embarrassed. I don't like being lost in the first place, let alone leading seven other riders into oblivion. Lovely. I think the horse at the dead end cul-de-sac we ended up in was equally amused with our situation. Sheesh. Well, Catfish to the rescue again. He took over leading the ride again and got us outta there and back on track. He was such a sport when I was groveling and feeling foolish....he simply looked at me with a patient smile and said "see, this is why it is a good idea to pre-ride your route". I think I heard "you are so fired as route leader" from a few others at the back of the pack....all in good fun and jest though.



Vroom vroom off we went but not before Jim noticed his front tire very low air. Off we go in search of a gas station. Found one but no air. What gas station doesn't have air. Good Lord what is this world coming too. Not to worry, I have my handy-dandy pump kit so we hooked it all up and get Jim some air and back in business. Craig practical joke #3 and at this point we are all starting to giggle about it and have some fun with the joke, asking what next. We finally make our way to our turn off on Tuolumne Rd and onto Cottonwood Rd. All sheer riding bliss and 30 miles of twisty heaven. But the GPS would rear its head again and veer Ben off on his own adventure. Ben also has the same GPS and I shared the route with him so he had the same one loaded on his. He decided to actually pay attention to it at some point and went off of Cottonwood Rd to a "shortcut". Long story short, it truly was a shortcut and he wound up beating us to the lodge. Go figure. We were all a bit worried initially because we didn't know where he had gone, but it worked out fine. Craig practical joke #4?



All made it safe and sound to the Evergreen Lodge. I stayed here last year and it really is a beautiful place amongst the redwoods and away from the crowds. The best part was that we were supposed to be camping this year in the group camping area where they already have tents and everything all set up for you. However, the weather had turned cold and guests had been complaining so they moved us into cabins instead and only charged us the camping rates. Now that is service!

Lisa and I were bunking together and got settled into our cabin. Lisa had come up with a wonderful idea of putting Craig's ashes in small containers and handing them out to folks. This would allow everyone in the group to have a little part of Craig and to be able to spread his ashes and say their goodbyes in a private way. Lisa had brought the containers with her and we set up in the cabin to put his ashes in the containers so we could hand them out at dinner. Initially this was very difficult for Lisa and I to do, we became very emotional of course. Once the tears dried we started to laugh and talk about the day and how many funny little things had happened. It was time to create the containers with ashes, so Lisa pulled out the containers. They were "Hello Kitty" containers, not exactly what I had expected or envisioned. This just threw us both into fits of hysteria. We have cried so many tears and we needed to laugh, to celebrate, not grieve. Craig was one of the biggest practical jokers and this was just so perfect that the containers and plastic bag holder for the containers were Hello Kitty. We managed to pull it all together, get everything done and packaged and ready to hand out to the group. At this point we were in serious need of adult beverages and headed to the bar/tavern to meet the others. We had a quiet moment and eventually a few laughs about the Hello Kitty packaging and then moved on with celebrating a great day, a great ride, great friends, and many more rides. Dinner at the lodge was fantastic with a few other Northstars and significant others joining us (Laura/Scott, Doug/Jae, Gino's wife Laura and son Nicholas) - they had driven up.



The next morning we were clutches out of the lodge by 10:15 and off to Yosemite Valley and the Ahwahnee Hotel for their famous brunch...mmmmm! A quiet romp through the park with no tic kets this year. After brunch most everyone disbanded, as many had to head home but some of us were hanging out another night. Kari, Ben, and I enjoyed a bit of hiking and then lounging on the lawn at the Ahwahnee. Lisa, Jim, Diter, and Catfish headed back home. On the way home near Mariposa Diter had a mis-hap in a decreasing radius turn and took a spill. Damn that stinks! Fortunately his gear did it's job and he was fine, only ripping his Aerostich suit and boot. The Ducati didn't fare so well though and it had to be towed. He transferred his luggage to Lisa and Jim and rode home on the back of Catfish's bike. Last I heard he was heading back out with a truck to go get it. Now that was not a Craig practical joke, that was just bum luck!

Sunday night I had dinner with the last people standing back at the lodge - Gino/Laura/Nicholas and Doug/Jae. We had a nice time hanging out and chatting and then it was early bedtime for me. Gino was riding back on Monday morning as well so we paired up and headed out. But first up was a ride to the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. Kari and Ben had recommended it and it certainly is a must see. There are some neat hiking trails too, but we'll get to that next year. We didn't have time this time. We had a nice ride home and found a few fun roads off of 120 - Smith Station Rd, Greeley Hill Rd, and Highway 132. We stopped for lunch in Waterford...wherever ;-) ... Yes, I was bravely relying on the GPS again and doing ok. I secretly consulted the regular map the night before...shhhhh...

All in all a wonderful trip and great group of folks to hang with.

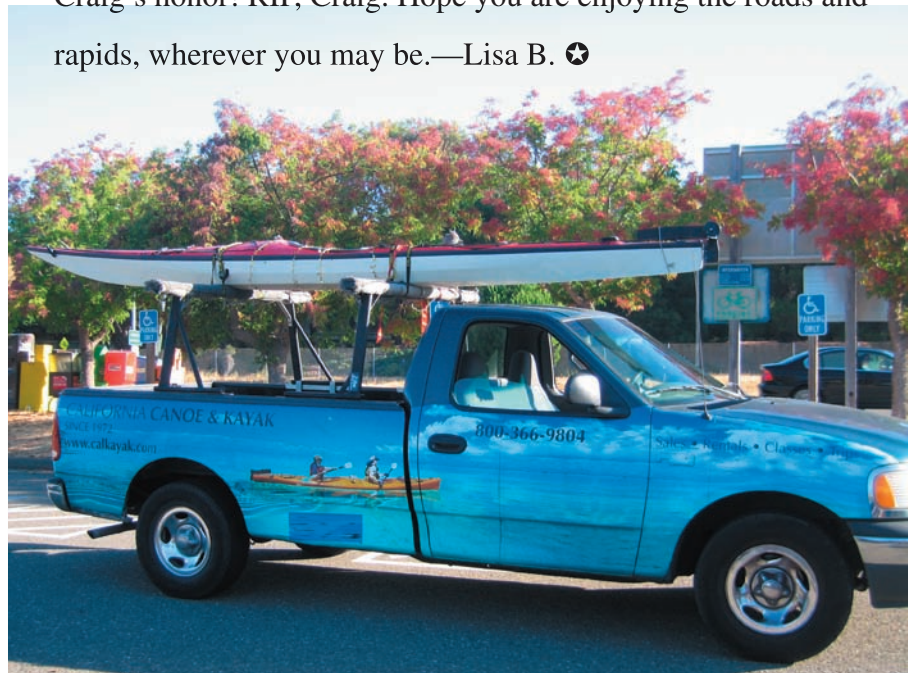
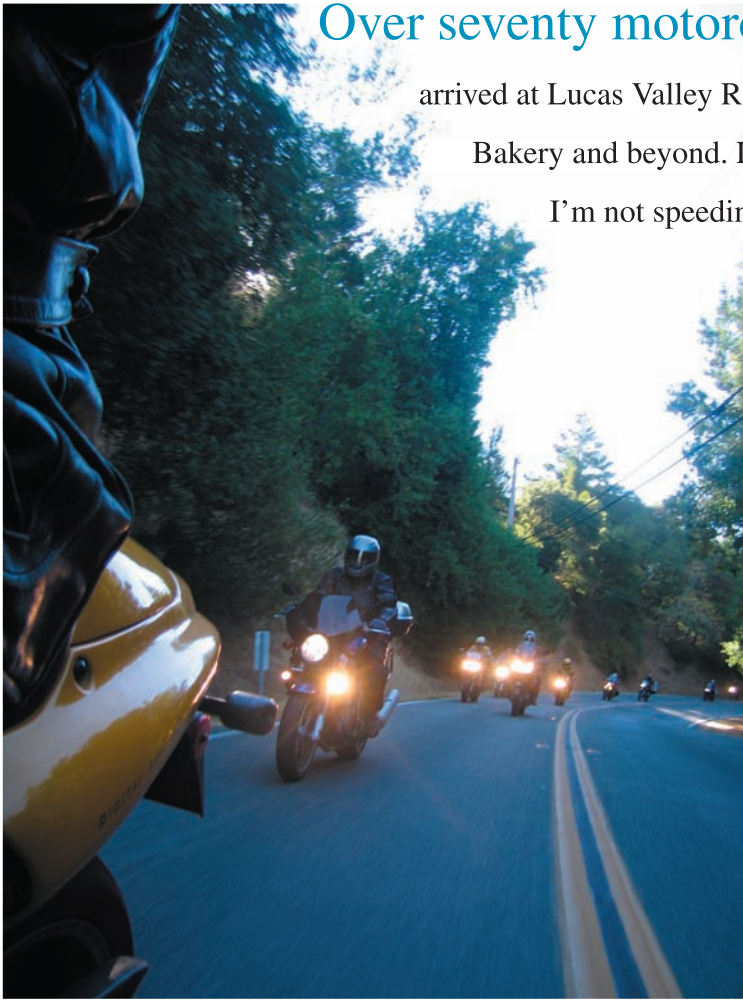
Over seventy motorcyclists and one truck

carrying Craig's kayak arrived at Lucas Valley Road on Saturday for Craig's memorial ride to the Tomales Bakery and beyond. Laurel led the crowd, her license plate frame standing out:

I'm not speeding, I'm qualifying. 🌟 I enjoyed the view while riding behind

Laurel, as she was joined by some of the Bay Area's most committed riders; Mike Chaplin, Wendy Epstein, Ray Roy, and Duffy Collin, to name a few. It was as if she was surrounded by a handful of big brothers, protecting her and also sharing the road and the experience, all in Craig's name. 🌟 Motorcycles and riders from all over showed up to the bakery, and stood in line for Craig's favorite pastry, the gorgonzola cheese twist. Craig stories were swapped, and soon riders were getting antsy, ready to have some fun on a few of his favorite twisty roads. 🌟 About half way up Nicasio Laurel heard Craig's voice ringing in her head "Let's go play!" When translated, this usually meant you were in for Mr. Toad's wild ride. And ride we did, in

Craig's honor! RIP, Craig. Hope you are enjoying the roads and rapids, wherever you may be.—Lisa B. 🌟



Craig's Kayaking friends joined the ride to Tomales

Laurel, ready to lead the pack



Laurel and Lisa

Lisa and Wendy



Sue and her Craig memorial t-shirt

The ride ended up at Dempsey's in Petaluma, and the crew enjoyed a pitcher or three of cold beer!

