



Biker 101

How to Survive in the MC World

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HOME

The purpose of this information guide is to provide the members of the Motorcycle community with information that will assist in bringing and maintaining a peaceful and respectful understanding between members of motorcycling organizations that share the roadways.

This document is a compilation of information obtained from various motorcycle websites. The information contained herein should be helpful to those who want to understand Motorcycle Clubs and how they are organized and the ideals they live by. Just remember, no two areas or clubs are alike, therefore, it would be wise to learn about the clubs in your particular area.

This information is for educational and information purposes only, however, there is no guarantee of the accuracy of all information presented herein. We would also like to say that we understand that you may or may not agree with some or any of the things contained within this document and only ask that you read it with an open mind and consider that while you may or may not agree, you are at least gaining some insight as to what a MC type club is about.

MC CLUB BASICS

The Club

The intent of this section is to give you an overview of the structure and philosophy of the traditional motorcycle club (MC). This does not necessarily express the feelings or priorities of any particular club, as all motorcycle clubs differ on some points.

Regardless of the basic philosophy of this group, it is important that you understand the perspectives of other clubs that you may be associating with from time to time.

If motorcycles influence your lifestyle, then you are part of the motorcycle community. Of all the types of organizations found within that community, the traditional motorcycle club stands apart and ranks highest in stature.

Respect

A serious MC club commands respect for one reason. Those who are correctly informed recognize the deep level of personal commitment and self-discipline that a person must demonstrate and sustain in order to wear a patch. They realize that a club's "Colors" are closely guarded, and the membership process is long and difficult. Other factors notwithstanding, they respect Patch Holders for what they have accomplished by being able to earn and keep the patch they wear. This is respect born out of recognition of dedication and accomplishment. The MC Club strives for respect for this reason. This is especially true as it pertains to those persons outside of the motorcycle community. This segment of society is by far the larger, and therefore represents a larger market for any fund-raising activities that the group might undertake. It stands to reason that cultivating a relationship with these people is important, and to be perceived by them as "Biker Scum" would not be advantageous to the group. They will therefore conduct themselves as upstanding citizens in every way... "Good neighbors" so to speak. The goal is to be admired and respected by the general public rather than feared. The serious club, and all of its members and guests, will always conduct themselves publicly in a highly professional manner.

Club Colors

The general public does not draw a distinction between different club colors. In many cases, they simply can't tell the difference: we're all "Biker Scum" to them. If one club causes a problem that touches the public sector, the offending club's identity is either confused or ignored and the heat comes down on all clubs. The general public does not make the distinction between a MC, a RC (Riding Club) or MM (Motorcycle Ministry), therefore EVERYONE needs to be aware that no matter whether they are in a MC, a RC, a MM or an Independent rider, their actions reflect on all in the motorcycle community. The MC clubs tend to police themselves to avoid such incidents.

Participation

A Patch Holder will not discuss any club business whether it's about membership numbers, club goings on, or any member's personal information with anyone outside of the club. They understand that they are a Patch Holder 24 hours a day whether or not they are wearing their colors. Everything they say or do in public can affect the club. They also understand that if they get out of line, that they are subject to be counseled for their own good and for that of the club. Wearing a patch is more than getting together for good times. It also means getting together for the other times, too. It constitutes a lot of work. It's committing themselves to a lifestyle in which they do not look for how their brothers or sisters can help them, but for ways that they can be of help to their brothers and sisters. They always look to give rather than to receive. All of this may seem very idealistic, and in some cases, it's just that. But it is an ideal that all clubs profess and are always striving for in principle and practice.

Always be aware of the "Golden Rule" of conduct while traveling in club circles: If you give respect, you'll get respect. If you act with disrespect, then you'll be treated with the same.

Levels of Commitment

When someone earns their patch, it does not mean that he or she has reached the ultimate goal and from that point they can kick back and coast. Moving from guest to probation to Patch Holder is not climbing from the bottom to the top, but rather more like climbing a constantly ascending slope, and in time becoming a stronger and more committed brother or sister. A person's probationary rocker and later their patch are merely presented in recognition of what they have demonstrated along the way. In this fashion, the more senior the Patch Holder is in the club and the more they experience, the more of a brother or sister they should be to all.

Purpose of Probation / Prospecting

Probation is not an initiation, as you would find in a fraternity. It is instead a period of time that is sustained until the person, in every sense, conducts themselves with the respect that is mandated to be a Patch Holder. It's a time in which:

- The attitude is conditioned so that he/she displays a sense of responsibility and respect toward the patch holders of the club, without which they will not develop a sense of respect for the group.
- He/she is educated in basic MC protocol and etiquette.
- He/she is given time to develop the habits that are basic to good security and good communications.
- To get into the habit of participating.
- To become accustomed to trusting the judgment, at times blindly, of those patch holders who will someday be his or her brothers and sisters.

The list could go on, but the point here is to demonstrate that probationary period has definite objectives and that a person will go nowhere in the club if he/she is not aware of this and does not apply themselves to those ends. It's not possible to make a checklist of what is expected from a person in all cases. There isn't any formula for success, but the key is ATTITUDE AND RESPECT. Everything else can be learned in time, but a person's attitude comes from the heart.

PATCH HOLDER BASICS

As a Prospect, strive to conduct yourself as a responsible Patch holder always.

Always display a positive attitude.

Participate as much as you think is acceptable; then participate more.

If you see a Patch Holder of your group that you have not met, take the initiative to introduce yourself as.. "Prospect (your name)."

At all gatherings, make it a point to circulate when you have the time to do so and greet every Patch Holder who is there.

Don't get overly friendly with someone that is not a regular acquaintance of the club. If someone outside the club has questions, refer them to a Patch Holder. Never give out a Patch Holder's name, phone number, address, or any personal information to anyone outside the club.

Never give out any information about the club itself to outsiders. This includes, but is not limited to, where the club is based, how many members are in the club, etc.

While in public places, always conduct yourself with your association, with the club in mind. Remember that what you do, people will remember; good or bad.

Never let a Patch Holder walk off alone in an unsecured area. If he/she is going out to their car, bike, or even just out to get some fresh air, go with them. Watch their back at all times.

Remember who you are 24 hours a day. Your association doesn't go on and off with your colors.

Out of respect, if two or more Patch Holders are having a private conversation, don't approach them within earshot, especially if they are talking with a Patch Holder of another club. If you feel that you need to interrupt, put yourself in a place of visibility and wait to be acknowledged.

NEVER use the term "Outlaw Club" when speaking to a member of another club.

Never lie to a member of another club. If you are in a situation where you are asked about the club or its membership, it is acceptable to say, "That seems like club business and I really can't talk about it". If this doesn't put the subject to rest, offer to put them in touch with a Patch Holder for them to speak with.

Always show respect to a Patch Holder of another club. Even though they are with another club, they earned their patch.

Never call a Patch Holder of another club "brother". He's not your brother.

Remember, your patch is earned, it is not given to you.

Never bring a personal friend or a stranger into the presence of Patch Holders without asking permission to do so first.

At an open function, never turn your back to a Patch Holder of another club. This is not so much for safety reasons, but as a show of respect.

Always show respect and courtesy to Patch Holders of other clubs. Don't come across like you want to be best friends. Be professional in such encounters; keep it short, then move on.

Never be quick to walk up to a Patch Holder of another club in a public setting, even if you know them well and the clubs are on friendly terms. If you want to greet them, walk up slowly and wait for them to indicate that they want such a public display to take place. They may be on some club business and may not want to give the general public the impression that the clubs are on such friendly terms. If they look like they are going to ignore you, accept it and keep your distance, the best approach is always to wait for them to come to you and let everyone else see that.

Learn what different parts of your patch represent and what the different color combination of yours and other clubs represent.

PROTOCOL BASICS for the MM or RC

These are some things for you, as a MM (Motorcycle Ministry) or RC (Riding Club) member, to consider when dealing with motorcycle clubs.

1. Patch Holders are people too. They have good and bad days, they have jobs, families, and normal everyday problems and concerns just like anyone else. There are those who no matter what you say or do, it will not be right with them. Just like with any group, you will find both good and bad.

2. **Protocol** and **Respect** are primary rules when dealing with a motorcycle club Patch Holder.

If you are FORMALLY introduced to a Patch Holder, make sure either you or the person doing the introduction knows what club you belong to & if you are an officer, what position you hold. Under no circumstances do you interrupt to correct a mistake while that person is introducing you or while they are talking. Wait till the introduction is done & politely introduce yourself correctly. i.e.....

Joe Rider, xxxxxxxxxxxx Riding Club, 1st Officer, Anytown Chapter.

Fred Spokes, Any state Officer, xxxxxxxxxxxx Riding Club

The order of introduction may differ in your area, learn the protocol.

(Use your road name – if no road name, use your name.)

3. Greet them as you would meet anyone else & wait until the offer is made to shake hands. DO NOT interrupt, wait for them to recognize you. DO NOT be offended or make a big deal if they do not offer to shake your hand. Many times, they want to get to know about you and your club a little better before they will offer to shake your hand.

4. Never, Ever, Lie. You can refuse to answer a question in a polite manner by saying something like, "That seems like club business, and I would like to refer that to one of our officers in order to get better information for you." Be prepared to answer questions about what your club is about. Such as....

- a) "We are a riding club & not a motorcycle club and have no intention of ever trying to become a motorcycle club".
- b) The Patch is bought & not earned.
- c) No dues or Dues - as applicable.
- d) All makes, and models of motorcycle are welcomed. Or it's a brand specific or special requirements club.
- e) We are a non-territorial club.
- f) We are a neutral club and do not wear any MC support patches.
- g) Women riders are welcomed and in many cases, are club officers.
- h) We are an AMA chartered riding club.

- i) Do not offer forum links or web sites, it's better to refer them to a club officer.
- j) Do NOT brag about how large the local or national membership is.
- k) Do not volunteer club info. If they ask a question about the local chapter answer it if you can. If they start asking questions about the number of members, or the National chain of organization refer them to one of the club Officers.

5. Women in leadership positions or being a Patch Holder in motorcycle clubs, while not totally unheard of, is very rare. That's just the way it is. Most motorcycle clubs would also rather deal with a man if there is business to conduct. Most realize what a riding club is about & will for the most part accept a woman as an officer, and a woman officer will most likely be allowed to attend any meeting. Whether or not they will deal directly with a woman officer or not depends on the individual motorcycle club/chapter. There is no set rule for this and they will let you know if it's ok with them or not. Many motorcycle clubs do not care to deal with the National officers. They would prefer to deal with the local or state representatives.

6. If anyone knows a Patch Holder, don't let him/her throw the Patch Holders' name/nickname/club's name around like you're a great buddy of theirs (even if you are). Many clubs consider that as a major disrespect to the whole club.

7. Watch where you are when speaking about them, and never say anything about them in public because you never know when that woman, man, or kid in regular clothes standing near you might be one of them, or a "support member". Patch Holders do not always wear their colors. By the time the story gets back to the top club in your area, it will have been changed many times over and could be blown up way out of proportion.

8. Anything said about them between club members is club business ONLY. If comments, even those said in a joking manner were to get out, problems could start. Discussion outside the privacy of the chapter can start rumors which could cause a lot of problems for not only the chapter, but also for other chapters in and out of the state.

9. If for some reason you have to say something while in public about a motorcycle club, take the person you're talking to aside, alone, and say ONLY what you need to say to get your meaning across. Say as little as possible so anyone else can't overhear it & misunderstand what you're talking about.

10. Watch where you wear your patch (RCs don't wear colors, colors are earned, not bought) and it's just common sense to stay in numbers when wearing the patch. (Some motorcycle clubs can be very territorial, and some clubs don't see any difference between a MOTORCYCLE MINISTRY or RIDING CLUB and MOTORCYCLE CLUB, good or bad.) If you are unsure of the areas or places normally frequented by motorcycle clubs, find out from your club Officers. If you are planning on traveling and are concerned about what the situation may be in regard to the relationship with the

local motorcycle clubs in the areas you'll be traveling through or staying in, talk to your local officer and ask if they can find something out by contacting the officers in the areas you will be in.

11. "SHOW THEM RESPECT." That's A #1 with them! (and worth repeating).

12. If you already know a Patch Holder, or get to know one in the future, don't just walk up to him/her and interrupt when they are with other members. Wait till he/she acknowledges you first and NEVER touch them or put your arm around them like a buddy. Don't put your hand out to shake theirs; wait for them to extend their hand first. If for some reason you're not acknowledged at all, then just keep walking. If you need to talk to an officer of a Motorcycle Club the proper way is to go through the Sgt at Arms or one of the Patch Holders.

13. You have to decide whether or not you want to show respect by going to any of their functions or if you want to avoid all of them all together. If you do choose to show respect and go, you can do this in a way that may make you feel more at ease by going to one of their "support's" functions instead of the top club's function (if they have a support patch then you're still indirectly showing the top club respect). But if you do go, then you also have to go to their rival clubs' function or you'll be telling everyone that you're not a "NEUTRAL" club as you said you were. (Example: If you go to the Club A's function then YOU HAVE TO GO to the Club B's function, etc..) You have to decide how you want to stay neutral, by going or not going and you have to let all the other area chapters know if you're going too, so they're not in the dark and we can ALL stay on top of things.

****** NOTE ******

A better way to support them and still give the appearance of being a neutral club is to attend only "open to the public" events that a motorcycle club may be sponsoring.

If you feel that you do want or need to go to a "limited event", then you'll have to go representing yourself as yourself, preferably without wearing any patches identifying your club. Remember, if you're wearing your club patch, you are considered by everyone to be representing your whole club. If anything were to turn sour, then your whole club could wind up with problems down the road. Also, once the rivals of that club you visited find out (and they will within a day or two), then those rivals will see you as no longer being neutral & you could be considered a rival of theirs too.

14. No CLB's (Chapter Location Bars), any territory rockers, or anything giving the appearance of a rocker should be worn with the MM or RC patch. State flags, state logos may be worn in some areas and not in others. It's best to check with the local MM or RC officers to make sure what is ok in your area.

15. If someone from a motorcycle club requests that you remove your vest/patch, don't argue. The best reply is, "No Problem" & politely take it off and let your Club Officer

know what motorcycle club it was, so they can deal with any potential problems. You normally will only get asked once.

16. If an establishment has a sign indicating "No Colors", even though your patch is not considered "colors", the vest should be removed out of respect to the other clubs and the policy of the establishment. While you may just be a MM or RC, it's only respectful to honor the house rules. Motorcycle clubs that have honored the "house rules" would probably be deeply offended that you didn't. Also remember, many establishments choose to have this policy and it applies to all clubs that use any kind of patch; they do not distinguish between a MC or a MM or RC. Be aware of the local motorcycle club hangouts & it's best not to wear the MM or RC patch into them without an invitation.

17. Do not wear your Patch into a motorcycle club clubhouse unless you have asked if it's ok to do so or have been invited for a "sit down" with the officers of the motorcycle club, or been invited As a Riding Club Member, to attend a function there.

18. In regard to women who are with a MC club, but not in the club: Old Lady is not a negative or derogatory term, it's just a slang term commonly used. "Property Of" patches are their way of showing support for their man and the club he's in.

19. A Patch Holder may not, and many times will not, acknowledge your wife or girlfriend, especially upon a first meeting.

20. DO NOT touch or sit on a Patch Holder's bike unless invited to do so. Do not expect the invitation.

21. A prospect can usually be identified by the back patch they are wearing. There are many different ways motorcycle clubs identify prospects. They can have the rockers without the main patch. They can actually have a patch saying "PROSPECT". Some do not wear any patch, because all the Patch Holders know who the prospects are. You want to treat a prospect or even someone you suspect is a prospect the same way you would treat a Patch Holder - with respect and courtesy. Many clubs will take offense to someone outside their club using the term, "Prospect". Calling someone "Prospect" if you are not a Patch Holder of that club more often is considered disrespectful.

22. Have absolutely no doubt that a motorcycle club is serious, and many have been known to physically educate a person who shows disrespect or displays a bad attitude.

23. Be aware of the behavior and attitude of the other MM or RC members who are with you (especially if anyone has been drinking) at events. If necessary, try to take action to avoid problems before they happen. For example, if someone appears to be getting too angry or loud and possibly disrespectful, take them aside or suggest going somewhere else until things settle down. You could also let one of the officers of the club know about the situation. If an incident should occur in spite of your efforts when no Officers are present, make sure to let your officers know as soon afterward as you can. If no club officers happen to be there, then ALL of the MM or RC members that are

there need to make the attempt to take that person aside, and strongly suggest that the offending MM or RC member go somewhere else to settle down.

24. Be aware that problems created in one part of the country by a MM or RC member or issues with the MM or RC in one area have the potential to affect MM or RC members in other areas and states.

25. The term Brother or Bro has special meaning to a Patch Holder, do not call a Patch Holder Brother or Bro. Their Brothers are fellow Patch Holders and those that have earned that term.

26. Don't ever touch any part of another club member's colors, which includes the vest or jacket it's sewn on. That is considered serious disrespect, which could cause them to aggressively educate the un-informed.

HANG AROUND

The hang around period is just a honeymoon. You are not a member or representative of the club and neither you or the club has a claim on each other. If something happens to you, the club is not expected to back you up. It is a time when you size up the club and ask yourself if they are what you want. It is also a time when they are sizing you up and asking themselves if you are what they want. It's a gentleman's agreement at this point. There is no dishonor for either of you if you back away from the deal. In making your decision, you should remember that as a prospect in that club, life will be a lot harder than it is in the hang around phase. Until you are patched, you will be sitting out Church meetings as an outsider and not permitted to enter until you get patched in.

While nothing is perfect, there is really only one rule if you decide to back away. There will be conditions on your doing it honorably. That could range from just asking to be let loose to a request that you meet with each patch holder individually and ask their blessing on your decision. Even in the case of an honorable decision, there can be some hard feelings. For instance, you can bet your bottom dollar that the patch holders in that club think it is the second-best thing in life, so a decision on your part to move on could result in some hurt feelings (especially if they thought you were going to make a good prospect). However, if you do it right, and move to another club, those feelings will usually subside with time.

If you do move on, you are OUT. That means that none of them are going to call you to go out for a beer or to hang around with them anymore. When you're in, you're in and when you're out, . . . you're OUT.

Motorcycle Clubs operate on the honor system and you "always dance with the one who brung ya". It is a huge act of dishonor to be doing a hang around with more than one club.

Motorcycle clubs are a family thing. Your brothers become your brothers because you have all learned to love each other through thick and thin. You know each other's strengths and weaknesses and love each other even when you are fighting. Brotherhood is based upon a million little moments that run the gamut from life threatening situations, sitting on the side of the road at midnight broke down in the middle of no place, and watching each other's kids grow up. Lots of joy and lots of tears make up the brotherhood.

PROSPECT

The prospect/probate.

For a prospect its simple, keep your mouth shut, never discuss club business with anyone, and the reality is a prospect is the bottom of the chain. To be really good, learn all members names, Easy, learn their occupations, hobbies, etc., A club is a brotherhood so be a brother, also make sure you are available for all events, all prospects are expected to do as they are told or instructed, that's a given. IF an officer needs his back watched at an outing or a run, or a brother is broke down at 2 am, just be there. The more you do the easier it is to become a member. You are being watched and it will be noticed, always remember as a prospect you have no rank or privileges, and upon introducing yourself to any patch holder. You must only introduce yourself as a prospect of the ***** Motorcycle club, and keep all other conversation to a minimum, it's time to start thinking of a road name. We will pick a name and it will be who you are when in club attire. The road name will be short and describe your personality or something that happens to you or that you do that the Patch Holders think would be an appropriate road name. If your probate time gets extended it means you have screwed up, and you should talk to your sponsor. Prospecting should not be looked at as a necessary evil, but a labor of love. All the horrific stuff you've heard about initiation or rite of passage ritual from prospect to member is true. Good luck.

PS, never leave a patch holder anyplace, never ever, especially if out of town, always stay to the end. Unless you have an extreme reason, like your family has an emergency. Parents or children. (Family) remember all PH are brothers. Respect is the biggest lesson some guys have to learn.

MC CLUB ORGANIZATION

The information below is just an **example** of basic duties and responsibilities of one MC club. Each club and even chapters within the same club will have differences, therefore, you will need to learn the differences.

Principal Officers – Executive Committee

There shall be five voting officers for each chapter; President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant-at-Arms. These officers make up the executive committee. The Road Captain shall serve on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member, except while serving as an alternate.

Eligibility

Any Active Member may run for office. Nominations are not required to run for any principal office. Any Active Member may become a candidate by simply stating their intention to do so at the October or November monthly meeting. A member may not run for more than one office at a time.

Elections

Elections of principal officers shall be held at the December monthly meeting. In order to allow for an orderly transition of administrations, the newly elected slate shall assume office at the Annual Meeting. All principal officers shall be elected by a plurality vote. A member may not hold more than one office at a time.

Term of Office

All principal officers shall be elected for a term of one year.

Special Election

In the event that the current elected officer is no longer able to perform their duties, a special election for that position shall be held to fill that position at the next monthly meeting.

Impeachment

A writ of impeachment against any officer may be submitted by any active member at a regular meeting. This writ must be signed by at least three Active Members of the chapter and must list the charges as the basis for the writ. All Active Members in the chapter must be informed of the writ prior to any impeachment vote. In order to allow the officer in question an opportunity to prepare a statement concerning the charges against them, a special meeting shall be scheduled for action on the writ no less than three, no more than seven days following the submission of the writ. Prospects are prohibited from attending this meeting, unless required to give testimony to support the writ or to support the officer in question as a witness. Impeachment requires a 2/3 majority vote of all Active Members in the chapter. Any disciplinary action besides the impeachment will be decided upon by the remaining officers within 7 days of the impeachment vote.

Duties and Authority

President

The President is the CHAIRMAN of the Executive Committee and the Chief Executive Officer of the club chapter. All matters concerning relations between the club and any outside person or organization should be routed to the President for appropriate action. The President or his delegate shall assume the Chair at all chapter meetings. He is responsible for controlling the meeting and keeping order. If necessary, the Chair may utilize the services of the Sergeant-at-Arms to aid in keeping order. The Chair may not make or second any motion, and may only vote on questions where their vote would affect the outcome, as in making or breaking a tie vote, or on ballot questions.

Vice-President

The Vice-President shall coordinate all committees and supervise plans for all club events. The Vice-President shall act as an intermediary between the President and the Members and Prospects. All questions or comments concerning any club business not specifically related to the duties of the other officers should be brought to directly to his attention. Additionally, the Vice- President is the Second-in-Command to the President, and shall assume all responsibilities and duties of the President in their absence.

Secretary

The Secretary is responsible for making and keeping all club chapter records. Membership List, Chapter Bylaws, Rules of Order, Standing Rules, Records of all committee appointments, all written reports, copies of all correspondence between the club and any outside person or organization, Meeting Minutes. He is responsible for calling roll at the meetings. The Secretary must notify Active Members of special or emergency meetings, and must notify all the members of any appointments or elections in their absence.

Treasurer

The Treasurer keeps all the funds of the club chapter. All un-issued Club Colors and Patches, as well as a record of colors, patches, or reproductions thereof issued to members. He may disburse funds to pay expenses as prescribed in the Standing Rules. The Treasurer must keep an accurate record of all income and expenses. He is required to report the fiscal status of the club at each regular meeting for the information of the members. He must submit a written annual report to the Executive Committee at the Annual Meeting.

Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms is responsible for ensuring that the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the club are not violated. He is responsible to ensure that the orders of the Executive Committee are carried out in an expeditious manner. He is responsible for policing and keeping order at all club events, except as noted under the Duties of the Chairman. He may conscript members to aid in keeping order on their own authority. He has the responsibility to the club to report any unseemly behavior of incident to the Executive Committee. He is responsible for securing any patches or colors from any member who retires, resigns, or is expelled. The SAA is responsible for the safety and security of the club, as well as the protection and defense of its members and prospects. He shall keep and maintain a record of all data pertinent to the safety and security of the club and its members and prospects. Upon becoming aware of any real or perceived threat to the club, its Members, Prospects, or events, he shall immediately notify the Executive Committee of that information.

Road Captain

The Road Captain is responsible for all club runs. He shall research, plan, and organize all runs. During actual time on the road or at intermediate stops during a run, he shall act as the ranking club officer, deferring only to the President or Vice-President if either of them are present, and only then for matters involving persons outside the club. He

shall supply the Secretary with any information required to notify outside agencies of impending club runs in a timely manner.

CLUBS AND TRIBALISM

Some general truths ring loudest...

How do clubs fit in as modern tribes...here is a great excerpt so folks can see I'm not off with this.

1. **Cultures must have clear-cut and well-expressed rules of conduct.** What to do and what is taboo must be shown in unmistakable terms. A rule of conduct that states that *anything goes* is not a rule. It is an absence of a rule. It is a rule against having rules. There is no such thing as a null culture, a culture without individual freedom restriction. Anarchy is not a culture.

2. **A successful culture will provide for the teaching of its rules to its members.** The time-honored method of teaching a culture is the family system. Parents obey the personal restrictions of their culture and teach their children to do so. School augmentation insures completeness and uniformity. Some rules are also so important that they must be codified into criminal law.

3. **A culture must hold its members responsible for their own actions.** The instant that the culture is used as a basis for the breaking of the cultural rules, that culture ceases to exist. The instant that the breaking of rules by one is allowed to be justified by the actions of another, then it ceases being a rule of the culture. **The purpose of a rule in a culture is to obtain predictable behavior.** If it does not, then the rule becomes invalid. If enough rules are thus declared invalid, then the culture, which consists of these rules, also becomes invalid.

4. The culture must satisfy **tribal** instincts. If a culture exists, it must have a reason for existing. The only valid reason for a particular culture is that it provides a value for its members perceived by them to be greater than that offered by any other culture. It must differentiate in some manner. **If a member of a culture is not loyal to that culture, he should move to a culture in which he is comfortable or abandon all culture.** Remaining in a culture (or being allowed to do so) while antagonistic to it is not acceptable in any culture. If many members rebel, the culture collapses, as can be seen in the American culture today. **The only successful cultures in America today (if there are any) are the subcultures. Only there can the tribal instincts be served.**

5. **To be a successful culture, one that provides a dependable environment for all members, rules that describe all human interaction must be provided. These standards include language, dress, ethical values, life philosophy, family structures, customs, music, art, sexual behavior in and out of wedlock, even facial expressions. Each such rule should be required only for species comfort and longevity. No rule should exist which allows the unbridled satisfaction of any instinct.**

6. A culture is useless if it does not enforce its rules. A culture that defies its own rules, is a con. It has a purpose other than the health and well-being of its members. A culture that espouses a set of cultural rules that it has no intention of following, is a hollow culture. Living in a hypocritical manner is worse than anarchy. Such a culture mocks itself.

7. A culture that does not condemn those who do not abide by its rules has no meaning.

8. A culture based on knowledge and reason must not have any rule without basis. Every rule must be backed up with an intellectual reason for being. This is absent in all current cultures.

Compassion is emotionally driven, and is an instinct (as are all other cultural forces). When it was developed by evolution, it was a survival tool. **The tribe that showed compassion between its members could survive better than one that consisted of selfish individuals.** Their world was a harsh and dangerous one. Accidents and sicknesses were common. Floods and famines were common. When an adult was sick or hurt, others helped him care for his children. Food was shared during food shortages. **Sympathy, empathy, family love, tribal love, and tribal cooperation are all part of this survival aid. This instinct is under siege.** It was successful if it reacted within a small group. When welfare is provided with personal contact, there is a repayment in personal pride and satisfaction, a joy in seeing the results of the sacrifice. When the tribes became huge so that personal contact was lost outside the immediate family, this instinct failed on any charity outside the immediate family. Now that the family unit is also disintegrating, antagonism rather than cooperation is becoming the norm in all social interactions. The modern teaching of personal rights (I have my rights and you are supposed to be tolerant of whatever I do) as opposed to personal cooperation, causes compassion to fall into disuse. Even our government works against the instinct for compassion by taking our money at gunpoint and giving it to a stranger (who we suspect is undeserving) and doing it inefficiently as well. This instinct is falling into disuse (due to lack of personal compassionate behavior). Mutations are occurring which are degrading that instinct. Since we have a population that is increasing rapidly, natural selection will recognize this degradation as successful and spread it around in the gene pool so that everyone will eventually become demanding and hostile toward his neighbor.

AMA AND THE 1%

History of the three-piece patch

The AMA was founded in 1924 as an organizing arm of Motorcycle Manufacturers and mainly supported by the Motorcycle Manufacturers to promote motorcycle riding in America. They sanctioned groups of riders from the same area that rode together as motorcycle "clubs". Some wore complete matching dress outfits with the name of their motorcycle club stitched on the back of their shirts and jackets.

At events, the AMA gave awards for the best-dressed club, so this was the start of motorcycle club's patches.

During an event in 1947 in Hollister, CA when a member of the Booze Fighters Motorcycle Club made the headlines with an exaggerated news story that was later made into a movie called "The Wild Ones".

The AMA wrote an article in their magazine, shortly after this stating, "99% of all of their members are law-abiding citizens and only 1% are "outlaw"". This then, began what is today known as Outlaw Motorcycle Clubs and "one percenters". Clubs that were not sanctioned by the AMA and non-members of the AMA were banned from attending AMA events.

In order to designate themselves as an outlaw club to all other clubs, the one percenters cut their club patches into three separate pieces. The top rocker was the name of the club, the center was the emblem of the club, and the bottom rocker was the local from which they came. These outlaw motorcycle clubs put on their own events and parties and did the opposite of what the AMA had been doing. There were no Best Dressed awards, they "chopped" down their bikes to go faster and look different, rode with no mufflers, they would drink, and do other "wild" things. Such is history.

The term "colors" is used in referring to a motorcycle clubs' patch set up. In the case of a 3 piece, one is placed over the top of the middle large graphic patch and one placed underneath it. The "rockers" are usually curved bars with the top bar designating the club name and the lower bar designating the location of the club. The two rockers are separate from the middle, larger graphic type patch, hence the term three-piece patch. Motorcycle clubs differ from motorcycling organizations as they traditionally have "prospecting" time required before the club members decide whether the individual will be accepted into the group and allowed to wear or "fly" the "colors" of the group. Most club "colors" will also have M/C printed on the "rocker" or a separate "cube" patch with MC on it to further clarify it as a club rather than an organization.

Many national organizations in the early 1980's set policy to unite their "rockers" with their patch to make it one piece to avoid any designation or confusion within the motorcycling club community. H.O.G. (Harley Owners Group) is one example.

As motorcycle club patches are recognized today:

- A one-piece patch normally signifies a family club or Social motorcycle club when it's done with respect to the area clubs.
- A two-piece patch can have many different meanings as long as it's done with respect to the area clubs.
- A three-piece patch normally means that the club is a Traditional MC club. With the top rocker being the club name, the middle being their patch and the bottom being the territory they exist in. There are also a few 3pc patch clubs where the bottom rocker has something other than territory, such as a saying. The traditional MC is one that adheres to the protocols and traditions established. There are few exceptions, but, traditional clubs are approved by the local dominant. The traditional 3pc patch club is not necessarily a 1% club or even the dominant club.

The Diamond patch with "1%" or the number "13" worn with the 3pc back patch signifies the club is a 1% or 1% support club.

While rare, they may not be the dominant club for the area but will be sanctioned by the local dominant. There are also a few areas where the lead club is not a 1% club, but those are few.

When one is just hanging around, he has no part of the patch. Then when he is sponsored by a full member and approved by the club as a prospect he may wear the lower rocker that only says "Prospect". In some areas, the prospect wears the "Prospect" rocker at the top of the vest. Some clubs even allow the lower rocker saying prospect and the upper rocker with the club name but not the main patch. Different clubs do things differently across the country. Different rocker combinations of what a prospect might wear differs depending on each club.

If he is approved after his prospect time has been determined to be over and the vote goes in his favor, he then is allowed to have the full colors and is considered to be a full member, having all three pieces if that club uses the 3-piece patch.

The Nomad Rocker.....

Some MCs entitle a Member to wear a "NOMAD" bottom rocker. This is only when that member continues to exhibit a lifestyle within the common definition of the word nomad.

“no·mad” per the dictionary

- A member of a group of people who have no fixed home and move according to the seasons from place to place in search of food, water, and grazing land.
- A person with no fixed residence who roams about; a wanderer.

It is a valued distinction of lifestyle that only a few can truly live up to, and as such, causes unfavorable notice when seen used by those most obviously not living up to the common meaning. By definition a "NOMAD", more often than not, will be traveling alone and needs an ability to represent, maintain & otherwise survive under circumstances unusual from the norm.

BROTHER

The word "Brother" has become very abused in the motorcycle world these days. Seems like if you buy a bike and a new set of leathers, everyone else that rides have now become your brother. Some call it Brotherhood when sharing the wind on two wheels. Some call it brotherhood when you ride a few roads together. Just what truly is brotherhood?

There are Brothers in Christ. Brothers in Masonic temples. Brothers in several organizations. Elite military units commonly form a brotherhood among the members of squads. Navy Seals for example, are more than the sum of their individuals. They become more than just a team. They become brothers, totally committed to one another up to and including giving their lives for one another if necessary. Men that have shared combat together have formed such close relationships as to call each other brother. While these are no less committed than any other Brotherhoods, when it comes to the motorcycle world, there is also a very strong bond among those that call themselves Brothers.

What is a Brother in the MC world?

Once you've gone through the hang around period, the members of the Club have viewed your behavior, your attitude, your dedication, trust and loyalty, to be there. If you've actually completed this period, then you may be asked to become a prospect. During this time, you are put under a much more intense review. You and the other members of the club find out if you are suited to be a part of the club and if you can accept the other members as Brothers just as much as if they can accept you and call you Brother. Can you dedicate yourself to the others as close as you would your own flesh and blood? Many times, it is an even closer commitment than family. The person that you call Brother becomes family as a part of his as well as you being a part of theirs. A common phrase used in MC circles is "I am my Brother's keeper". This means you will support him and help him any way you can, sometimes to the point of selling your bike to help him, quitting your job to go help him and, in some cases, Brothers have even done things that they already know could get them put in jail because they were willing to take that step to help a Brother out.

With all that commitment, it's also that you would not ask a Brother to do something drastic without very good cause. Brothers may disagree, but they will always respect one another and treat each other with respect.

Please take note that if you haven't had any experience being around some of the more serious MC's (1%, support clubs, etc.), they take the word "Brother, or Bro" very serious, and they'll only use the word as a show of respect towards their own club, their members, and any club who they've also bestowed that word upon.

And if a club overhears someone throwing around the word lightly within their midst, it could cause them to aggressively educate those whom they felt disrespected them by abusing the word.

Next time you feel the need to call someone Brother or Bro, just what is behind it? Commitment or just trying to sound cool?

GENERAL INFO OF INTEREST

A few thoughts from the "old school" way....

In Case of an Accident

If a club member is dead from a MVA, etc., the colors don't die. And if a member does die, his colors better not wind up being all chopped up, because as a sign of his club's respect and brotherhood to him, the club normally buries him with his colors on. If his injuries wind up not being too serious after all, or if he recovers later on, he's probably going to be mighty ticked off if his colors were desecrated.

Just something to think about here.... if a member has been hurt or even killed, because of a stupid act of negligence on the part of a cager, or a CSW (Club Sanctioned War) over a turf battle, etc., his club's members are already going to be enraged (and certainly aren't going to be thinking clearly), so even the slightest little innocent thing (like cutting his colors off him), could very well be perceived as a snub to their club and would not sit well with them.

Also, another thing to think about, is that although some of the small newer clubs keep their jacket and colors looking real nice and spiffy (a few older clubs are starting to lean towards this new trend too), that if you happen to see one of the "big 4" clubs around, make sure to take note to look at the jacket & colors of their oldest, longest members. "The worse his colors and jacket looks, the prouder that owner is of his colors" and the more the other members will look up to him with respect.

Anyway, I think the safest way to cut a denim jacket or leather vest off a patch holder, is to just carefully cut straight up the left and right-side seam's stitching that's already there. And since most MC's jackets will already have their sleeves cut off, you shouldn't have to cut the shoulder line, just try sliding the jacket away from him.

By doing it that way, any cleaners/tailor can re-stitch those same seams again in about 5 minutes and it will look just as good as "new". If it happens to be an open-sided leather vest that has got the leather string zig-zag down the length, just cut off the leather string's knot, & pull the string out of the eyelets. Most leather shops and shoe repair shops carry that leather string for about a buck each. But if it looks to be a head, neck or spinal injury, then you'll probably have to cut along the top shoulder line seam too.

And preserve his jacket. And I'm not positive about the different club protocols on this, but if possible, I'd present his colors first, to whoever was there from his club. I'd try to do it in the order of "chain of command" below (since colors are usually considered to be "club property", I'd think that they should stay within his club first, even before his old lady or relative).

1. If conscious, give back to injured member
2. If unconscious, give to their Sgt-At-Arms
3. Club President
4. Club Vice President
5. Any of his club's other officers
6. His club's full patch member
7. His blood relative

Parking your bike

A common question is about parking your bike when a MC is there also. It could be at the local bar/club, or at events.

If a MC shows up, they will normally park their bikes together. Often times there will be a prospect watching over them. Park where you can, but, don't go parking right in their midst or at the end of their line. You don't have to park around back just because they may be parked in front. If there is a problem, normally they will politely ask you to move. There will only be problems if you show an attitude.

If you are parked and see that they have parked all around your bike, then consider your bike safe. If you are ready to leave, it's best to push your bike out of the group if possible, start it up and ride away. If there is someone guarding the bikes, just let him know that it's your bike and you are ready to leave. If you do not see someone guarding the bikes, you can safely assume there will be someone watching them. They know where they park and when they may have to park with one or more bikes mixed in. If you want to look at the different bikes, fine, **do not touch**. Try not to knock any of theirs over.....

Too many people keep that stereotype of the biker that's always looking for trouble in their minds when dealing with clubs. Club members have enough other things to worry about and normally will not give you any problems until you give them an attitude. It all boils down to common courtesy.

STARTING AN MC

So, you want to start your own MC club.....

It's been brought to my attention there are people trying to start their own clubs after reading this web site. I guess the several times it's referenced wasn't simple enough for some people. So, I'll put it simply.....

If you decide to start your own club, MC or otherwise, you MUST contact the local Lead MC Club and discuss it with them. Period. There is a few, VERY FEW, places that do not requires this, but the only way is to contact them.

It is generally seen as poor taste to decide to start your own club. Basically, it tells them that you are trying to avoid paying your dues and avoid the learning of what they mean by respect, because there are already enough clubs in existence where you could be taught and bond with an existing brotherhood. Everyone hears about the big clubs. Few outside the lifestyle realize there are hundreds of smaller MCs across the country that are not 1% or even support clubs. I would recommend getting to know those in your area first. Who knows, you might fit right in with one of them instead of trying to start your own.

Besides the fact that there does need to be some controls on who's running around sporting backpatches and calling themselves an MC, the established clubs know what the situation is with other clubs and former clubs. If you think the procedures are bad now, imagine if the government controlled clubs. Scary.

Let's say for instance you created a backpatch. It happens to look a lot like another club's that has caused a lot of problems in the past. You are wearing that into an area where other clubs mistake it for the troublemaking club and I think you can see where that is going.....

- Maybe the colors you use are representative of a rival club that your local club has had problems with. The colors used as well as the patch itself has meaning.
- Maybe the name you choose is the name of another club from the past that disbanded with honors or disbanded due to causing too many problems for the MC community.

The MC community, despite the actions of some, does not want any more problems that may reflect on them that others may cause. To do this, they keep some controls on who fly's colors and wants to be sure they understand the different protocols involved.

While the web site has a LOT of information, it's basic information and doesn't cover many things that do not need to be known by the general public. Someone starting a new club will be schooled in these more in-depth protocols.

As a former military, I learned they had a certain way of doing things that while in the beginning you may not have understood and thought it was stupid, as you progressed in

your time in, these stupid things slowly came to make more and more sense. Something as simple as keeping your pants tucked into your boots seemed a bit silly at first, but, later you found there actually was a good reason for it. Wearing green socks instead of white can save your life when in combat.

It's the little things that going through the proper procedures can help prevent misunderstandings and can establish the reputation you will develop as a club.

Not to mention the fact that if you go through the proper procedures to get their blessing, you will have them on your side if there are any problems.

Yes, the image of the tough guy biker is fading, but, it's still there. So, while the tough guy image is fading, it's nowhere near gone. MCs do not want people with that image to be flying colors and playing at being the badass. This will not only bring heat down on the "club" that does it, but, brings heat down on all MC clubs.

As for the right to wear anything you want. Wear a Cop uniform and see what happens. Wear a military uniform with all the patches. That's a no no. Freedom of speech isn't so free. Sure, you can say anything you want, but, certain things can land you in jail. Threaten the President and see what happens. Tell someone you are going to kick their butt and you could wind up in court. While you are there, wear a t-shirt that says Lawyers Suck and see what happens. You have every right to wear that t-shirt, but is it a wise thing to do?

Reality of consequences of our actions sometimes overrides what we perceive as a right or privilege.

If you insist.....

DO YOUR HOMEWORK FIRST!

1. Where will the Club be based?
2. What is the Dominant 1% Club in your area?
3. Is there a COC or some type of "Motorcycle Rights" association in your area?
4. Are there other non-1% clubs in your area?
5. What kind of an MC do you want to start?
 - A. Traditional back patch MC club
 - a. A social club
 - b. A riding club
 - c. A Service oriented club
6. Will you prospect the members? How long in general?
7. What does it take to get approval to become a member?
8. Harleys only club or accept all brands.
9. How many members would you have if you started up a club tomorrow?
(Need to have 4,5,6 potential members at the very least.)

10. How well do you know the people that are going to start this with you?
Brotherhood isn't just a word, it's TOTAL dedication to each other, not just when it's convenient.

If you're seriously thinking of starting a M.C. or other type club centered around motorcycles, then do an on-line search and check out all the serious clubs' websites (if they show it). In general, I would recommend you do some research and find out who is the top dog club in your neck of the woods. You can find out easy enough by asking at the motorcycle shops, biker friendly bars, etc. Are there any other non-1% clubs in your neighborhood and if so who are they and what type of club are they. You may consider hanging around several to see if there is a fit. If you find one you like, you could approach them and find out what requirements are to join their club.

When you find the local dominant, MAKE SURE you read up on them if you can. If they have a web site, read the "About Us", "Our History", "Our Brotherhood", and any "Mission Statement" they may have. Then read and check out everything else on those sites too. That should give you somewhat of an idea of what's involved and, at the very least, the same things that they'll expect from the other clubs wanting an OK in their area.

*******PLEASE NOTE*******

Also, with that said, different clubs may have some differences in the way they work too and what they'll want from any new start-ups.

Then there are all types of "other" clubs, but not counting the area's dominant (1%) club or their support clubs, most of the others seen around are these six: Mom & Pop social MCs, RC's (Riding Clubs), Military Clubs, Fireman Clubs, Cop Clubs, or Bikers' Rights Organizations that ride.

The dominant MC's (1% Clubs) and their Support Clubs normally work on a "need-to-know" basis. If you really want to find out a lot more about a certain club, joining them is the only way. You'll need to become (if invited in) a Hang-around first for a period of time and then, if OK'ed, go to the second stage, a Prospect for another amount of time, for the club. If you pass 100%, only then would you become an equal, a full-patched member.

So, let's start with RC's: Some MC's have no problem with RC's (Riding Clubs). That may be because they both ride in very different circles and live by different codes. There are other clubs that look down at RC's and others that see them only as weekend warriors or wannabes. But they tolerate them as long as they stay out of the MC's biz, as long as the RC's members don't start putting on the "macho act" or trying to mimic the real MC's. Then there's also a few clubs that see a place for RC's, that hopefully, the RC will join an area MRO's (Motorcycle Rights Organizations), and help our cause by helping to vote out the politicians that deny our biker rights, etc., etc.

The Military, Firefighter and Cop Clubs: Most of the oldest MC's have some kind of military background which got them to start their clubs, but we also have the MC's that proudly boast their military background and military membership, right in their club name. Some allow only members from a particular branch of the military, while a few also allow non-military supporters to join. Although they're also into biker rights, their main objective is to focus on military rights and POW/MIA issues. The Firefighter Clubs are made up of their brother Firefighters, so their main objectives are going to be Firefighter related issues and the same goes for the Cop Clubs, with a LEO (Law Enforcement Officers) membership.

Biker Rights or Freedom Fighter Clubs/Orgs (Organizations):

They may be either a MC (dominant club OK'ed their use of the MC patch, usually) or an Organization (if not OK'ed). But with that said, some Bikers Rights Organizations only want to be known as an "Organization" that rides, and not a MC, so as not to take anything away from their objective of what they do. And that would be, to do everything in their power to aid, support, and further all the brotherhood, freedoms, and rights of all riders, whether they be hardcore bikers, or just the occasional motorcyclist. That would include making websites and newsletters for "calls to action", email and letter writing campaigns to all riders, and to the politicians and legislators when needed, putting on runs or riding in and showing support for motorcycle causes, motivating our riding masses, speaking out against injustice and bad laws, and speaking out and/or voting in favor of our best interests. And that's just to name a few of the things they do, passionately, for EVERY motorcyclist.

And of course, there may also be other MC's and non-MC's whose Clubs have their own agendas, but I'm not going to get into them, that's their biz (and usually only on a "need-to-know" basis).

By the way, 1% Clubs normally only will hang with their own circles and supporters.

Anyway, I'm not an expert on all the various clubs out there, but I think it would be safe to say, that if you still want to start up an MC, you'll need a plan that your group can bring to the dominant club to show them what your group plans to be about. And since you now know a little about all the various types of MC's and Org's from the explanations above, your group should start with at least 5-6 members and hold meetings amongst yourselves to formulate what type of group you want to be. Then you'll also plan out your officers, your mission statement and what you'll all want to be about, your by-laws, rules, etc., etc. (DON'T RUSH ANY OF THIS, because once it's all done, this is what you'll be bringing with you to the first meeting with the dominant club).

Once your group believes they've covered everything and you're all set, then you'll have to make contact with the dominant's closest chapter and ask to speak with one of their Officers. If your state has a COC (Coalition of Clubs or Confederation of Clubs) that means they'll be holding monthly or quarterly meetings there with other clubs and that's usually the best way to find their members. Don't interrupt any Patch Holder, but if he's

not busy talking to someone, or he doesn't look like he's keeping an eye out for anything, you can politely ask him if he'll set up a meet date for your group. I would not advise approaching the President or the SAA. 99.9% of the time, they will have other things on their minds than someone wanting to start a club on their turf.

If OK'ed for a meet, don't be late. Everyone who's supposed to go with you had better show up, or you'll "lose face" before you've even gotten to speak.

Going up to a dominant club and announcing your intention to start up a motorcycle club and not have the right answers would be considered a show of disrespect or ignorance, neither of which would be tolerated. No one said it's easy and it's not.

Bring all of your club's documents, patch design, name, etc., with you for either their approval or changes that they request. More than likely you are going to be asking to start a one patch (mom and pop) club. They probably aren't going to go for anything more than that, as they expect everyone to start at the bottom, just like a hang around in a club. Forget putting any thing firm together on a patch or deciding on any colors for now. The COC and local dominant club will decide what is acceptable. You have to pay the dues first. Be aware that in some places, there is an agreement between the established clubs that enough MCs are already in the area that no new MC clubs will be formed.

Be honest: Answer all questions truthfully. Liars won't be tolerated, and your club instantly loses any credibility that it might've had.

Come well prepared. Since you should've already taken all the time needed to plan out everything, then you should already be able to answer any questions you're asked. Again, it goes to your group's credibility and whether you're actually ready to run the club right, or you're just seen as a bunch of screw-ups in their eyes.

But if you do wind up in that situation, DON'T DARE LIE, it's better to explain that you don't have the answer for them at that moment, but that you will get the answer to them ASAP, AND THEN MAKE SURE THAT YOU DO IT!

Show them "RESPECT". It boils down to...they've earned their dues, with blood, sweat and tears, you haven't!

******PLEASE NOTE******

While a club may work out a compromise with you, it could very well be that your group will do the compromising. And if you're told to make any changes to your rules, patch design, etc., or even what you can or can't wear, then that's it, that's just what you'll have to do in order for your group to exist in the MC world.

It's also imperative that you and your group need to familiarize yourself with the information right here on the MC/RC Education Site, so you won't make an innocent mistake that could turn into a sign of disrespect.

Also, if they just say "No" to everything about your group becoming a MC, then that's it, it's over.

At least you tried, but now you'll just have to make do, the very same way you had been doing. And the good thing is that you can still ride together and show your respects, you just won't be doing it as a declared MC, or wearing a patch. No matter WHAT kind of club you decide on, the advice here is solid for all kinds of clubs, MC or not. All types of clubs should at the very least let the local clubs know who they are and what they are about. By doing some kind of meeting, you can save potential future problems with the other clubs in the area.

Lastly, a patch is not a requirement to form and enjoy a brotherhood. Not many people are cut out to be in the traditional MC lifestyle. It's a lot of hard work and time on the road and away from family and friends. The club becomes your family and friends. The club will be expected to support the other clubs in the area. Often times it may conflict with something you may have planned.

And by the way, just in case you were wondering why I haven't stated any clubs above, by name, it's considered a sign of disrespect to throw a club's name, or one of its member's names around.

It's a difficult journey that many just cannot manage. Those that make it, wouldn't live any other way.

WHY THE CONTROL OVER NEW CLUBS?

Why does the Dominant club control who wears back patches?

Written by Chuck (Witness too), Bikers For Christ, Elder.

Many are apparently impressed with how "bad" they are ... there are people like that all over the world. They tend to gravitate together and form groups, gangs ... whatever you want to label them. They can present a real problem in a society such as ours where intervention by law enforcement is an "after the fact" event. Every little batch of a dozen or so "bad bikers" would literally make it hell for "mom & pop" on their Goldwing to go ridin' ... or any citizen and his gal passing through would be at risk in any area "ruled" by such a collection of "tough guys". There is really nothing of an effective preventive nature that the cops can do about such things ... you cannot arrest someone for what they "might" do, only for what they have already done. Like it or not, it really does not matter, because it does not change the reality ... the thing that makes it safe for "Mom & Pop", or the young citizen and his gal, to go essentially anywhere they please is the dominate club arrangement. Dominate clubs have a vested interest in ensuring undue attention is not focused upon the biker world ... and they do not have "restrictions" on waiting until after the felony has been committed by some group of bozos to take action.

This arrangement works ... and it neither wants nor needs your approval ... it just "is".

Second:

Bikers are not the most favored group in this world ... again just reality ... you cannot believe that, but it will not affect the reality. The groups that have faced the brunt of the negative aspects of that reality over the years are those at the end of the spectrum that includes people whose "life" is the biker lifestyle, not the weekend rubbie.

The bottom line is that there is a whole subculture of our society that has paid the price, and continues to pay the price for the "lifestyle" that some want to live and that some want to emulate. It is their world and it is no different than any other subculture that has ever existed in history ... to deny that, no matter how much one might not like it, is simply foolish. It is the equivalent of stepping willingly into a tribal culture in Africa and intentionally violating taboos held by the tribe just because you don't believe in the same things they do. It is the equivalent of putting on a Rebel Flag and intentionally walking down the street in Compton or Watts ... it may be legal, the Rebel Flag may be something we think is honorable beyond mention, but to intentionally fly that flag in the domain of those who see it as a sign of oppression is foolishness on the same order as wearing a black power T-shirt at a KKK meeting.

Finally, I have met some truly "bad" individuals in my lifetime ... and they seldom feel the need to advertise how "bad" they are ... just my observation that those who "think" they are "bad" eventually encounter someone with a bigger fist, bigger knife, or bigger gun ...

John Q. Public does not care what bikers do within their own realm and for the most part can't tell the difference between an outlaw club and a Christian riding association ... they all have a patch and are on two wheels and they don't give a hoot what the patch says. MC members whose world is the biker culture end up answering for the behavior of all.

MOTORCYCLE MINISTRIES

Christian Motorcycle Ministries, Associations, Riding Clubs, and M.C.'s have been in existence since the 1970's. There are currently over a hundred different Christian groups.

Names like: Bikers for Christ, Black Sheep HDFC, Christian Crusaders, Christ's Disciples, CMA, Soldiers for Jesus, Sons of God, Tribe of Judah, Sabbath Keepers MM and others - have been around for many years and have paid their dues to earn the respect of the motorcycle public.

New groups pop up frequently as churches realize that they have members that have a common interest – Jesus Christ and motorcycles – and they decide to start a club or ministry.

The problems come when well-meaning Christians are not very educated in motorcycle club protocol... as some MC's are not happy about seeing so many "new mom and pop – church clubs with new patches on the road. Many new Christian motorcycle groups end up changing their designs, colors, etc. – as they learn (the hard way) what offends the MC's.

Most Christian groups have different types of rules, codes of behavior, and focuses. Some have patches that can be bought. Most ministries will not give membership without a thorough screening of applicants. Christian MC's have a prospect period. There are varying rules and regulations. Some forbid public social drinking of alcohol – others allow it. You need to read their charters or hang out with them to know the differences.

The Riding Clubs vary greatly (some with one-piece patches, some with just t-shirts). They are designed primarily for fellowship and to hone their riding skills together with others. Fellowship Riders actually sells a package course to churches on "how to develop a successful church motorcycle riding club".

I will give you a brief description of a few groups to understand the differences. Please take into consideration – that the ones listed below are groups that I personally know and interact with frequently. All of the groups below have specific rules of Christian conduct and may deal with violations of such differently. Some are lenient – others are stricter. Again – experience is usually the best teacher.

While many think all Christian motorcycle groups are the same, Motorcycle Ministries vary greatly. The one thing that they all have in common is a strong Christian faith and their love for motorcycling.

The CMA (Christian Motorcyclists Association) has been around since the 1970's. CMA is the largest Christian group with a logged membership of over 100,000 members... these numbers include tens of thousands of active members. Their

members wear a patch with praying hands and a bible. They combine fellowship, evangelism and different types of ministries: Prayer Teams, Jail Ministry teams, Children's Ministry Teams, etc. CMA is thought of by many - as a ministry that does a lot of good works... as they reach out internationally – with their “Run for the Son” rally. This event raises literally millions of dollars, which they use to purchase small motorcycles for missionaries in remote areas, thousands of Christian films, bibles, and use the rest to help with domestic evangelism. Any Christian man or woman can join CMA and be a member. Those who wish to wear the CMA back patch – must go through an extensive correspondence ministry course, and serve in one of the ministry teams. You can find out more about them by checking out their website: www.cmausa.org

Bikers for Christ is also one of the larger international motorcycle ministries with thousands of active members. BFC began in 1990. Membership is not easy to attain – as applicants are thoroughly screened. They also must have church and pastor references (which are checked out). BFC members wear a two-piece patch, that includes a bible, a sword, and upswept wings. BFC's primary focus is evangelism (while they, of course, enjoy riding and fellowship). The members seek to use their motorcycles as tools to open doors with others. They rumble around the country sharing the gospel with “all” types of people – street people, normal folks, motorcycle riders and hard-core bikers (and their families). BFC members also minister in jails and juvenile halls, and many chapters hold regional benefit rallies to bless disabled young people and downed bikers. BFC members are very active in the COC and NCOM. www.bikersforchrist.org

Black Sheep HDFC (Harley Davidsons for Christ) is one of the younger organizations (since 1999) – but they are going quickly across the U.S. (because of their targeted audience – H.O.G.) and also will have an international scope. Black Sheep is all about fellowship, riding, and sharing their faith as well. They fly a one-piece patch with a knight in armor, and a banner that proclaims, “Jesus is Lord”. Their specific focus is on evangelism and ministering to H.O.G. (Harley Owners Group) members and their families. www.blacksheephdfc.org

One of the most well respected Christian Motorcycle Clubs is:

Soldiers for Jesus. They've been around since the 1980's and are also an international group. They run a yellow and black, three-piece patch that has a Cross, star of David, with two crossed Calvary swords. They also wear an M.C. patch. Soldiers for Jesus operates like a true M.C. – with mandatory meetings and runs. SFJ membership includes a hang-around period, prospect period, then after they earn the right – the brothers become full members. Soldiers for Jesus reach out to many different types of people – but zero in on the MC's – and do a great job of reaching many with the Gospel

message. SFJ also has thousands of members internationally. SFJ is also very involved in the COC and NCOM. www.soldiersforjesusmc.com

It is the earnest prayer of valid Christian motorcycle groups to reach out with the love of the Lord Jesus Christ to some who are lost, hurting, and dying on the highways and byways of planet earth. Many Christians volunteer to help at various motorcycle events and seek to serve the motorcycle community.

There are also many licensed, or ordained Christian motorcycle ministers in different groups who will perform weddings, funerals, and counseling for motorcyclists in need of such things...

CONFEDERATION OF CLUBS

The COC is not really a MRO such as ABATE, but biker rights are often discussed and are paramount to the organization. And motorcycle club politics pertaining to legal problems with law enforcement. They also discuss harassment from certain law agencies. While Patch Holders may belong to an MRO, they don't have a united membership of patch holders where most MROs and COCs are made up from various clubs and independents,

The COC may vary from region to region in makeup, size, and strength but the overall mission of the COC is unity in the motorcycling world. The COC exists to bring communication through clubs, and improve the motorcyclist image, support legislation for the betterment of motorcycling, and allow clubs to come to a neutral spot and meet to discuss issues. They monitor and protect our biker rights in the court system. and possibly have lawyers that help to unravel legal red tape. In some areas the organization may also be a sanctioning body for new or probate clubs in that region. Often time, the Dominant club in the area may chair the meeting. The COC is also a good place to meet some of the people in the clubs in your area.

If you are a new club it is in your interest to put a face to your club, and display respect for the other clubs.

NOTE Some do require an invite to attend, so you will want to check and see.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Assertion of Rights

Officer, please understand:

I have the right to have an attorney present if you want to question me or conduct any search of my body or personal effects. I am not giving my consent to any type of search.

If I am under arrest, I wish to invoke and exercise my Miranda Rights. I would like to speak to an attorney now. I do not want my personal property impounded, nor do I consent to any impoundment. I request the opportunity to secure my personal effects.

If I am not under arrest, please tell me immediately so that I may leave.

If you are stopped for questioning:

1. It's not a crime to refuse to answer questions, but refusing to answer can make the police suspicious about you. You cannot be arrested for merely refusing to identify yourself on the street.
2. Police may "pat down" your clothing if they suspect a concealed weapon. Don't physically resist, but make it clear you don't consent to further search.
3. Ask if you are under arrest. If you are, you have the right to know why.
4. Don't badmouth the police officer or run away, even if you believe what is happening is unreasonable. That could lead to your arrest.

If you are stopped in your car:

1. Upon request, show them your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance. In certain cases, your car can be searched without a warrant as long as the police have probable cause. To protect yourself later, you should make it clear that you do not consent to a search. It is not lawful for police to arrest you simply for refusing to consent to a search.
2. If you are given a ticket, you should sign it, otherwise you could be arrested. You can always fight the case in court later. If you are suspected of drunk driving (DWI) and refuse to take a blood, urine, or breath test, your driver's license may be suspended.

While there are a lot of good LEOs out there just trying to do a hard job, there is no way to tell the good ones from the bad. For your own protection, consider what you read here and know your rights.

What the Police preferred you didn't know

Have you ever heard of the old saying "ignorance of the law is no excuse?" Basically, that's how police officers and some judges feel about your constitutional rights. What you don't know and never were taught in school could hurt you!

Police officers are generally depicted as public servants, but they can be your worst enemy when they count on people like you not being knowledgeable of their constitutional rights. Just because you or your children didn't know they had rights under the constitution and gave up those rights by talking to a police officer or a federal agent without an attorney could cost you dearly. This includes even a casual conversation that could happen on a traffic stop or on a sidewalk.

Educate your kids. Minors have Rights!

What to Do If a Police Officer Stops You

To stop you a police officer must have a specific reason to suspect your involvement in a specific crime and should be able to tell you the reason. This is known as reasonable suspicion. Most times you are probably getting pulled over for a traffic violation such as speeding or maybe a tail light is out. Although the stop may seem wrong or unfair, the police believe they have a reason to stop you

Your Rights During a Police Encounter. Rules you should know to protect yourself from the police:

Rule #1 - Never talk to a police officer. Keep your mouth shut! (You never have to answer any questions a police officer may ask, except for your name, address and date of birth.)

Rule #2 - Never talk to a police officer. Keep your mouth shut! (How can you be charged with something if you haven't said anything?) Remember anything you say or do can be used against you.

Rule #3 - "Am I Free to Go?" As soon as a police officer ask you a question, ask the police officer, "Am I Free to Go?" If you are detained or arrested by a police officer, tell them that you are going to remain silent and that you would like to see a lawyer.

Rule #4 - Safety. Never bad-mouth a police officer. Stay calm and in control of your words, body language and your emotions. Always keep your hands where the police officer can see them. Don't run away and never touch a police officer!

Rule #5 - Refuse to Consent to Searches. Just say NO to searches! Remember if the police didn't need your permission, they wouldn't be asking you. Never give permission to a police officer to search you, your car or your home. If a police officer does search you, don't resist!

Rule #6 - Ask for a Supervisor. If all else fails and you feel the police officer is abusing your rights, ask him to call his "supervisor" to your location.

Traffic Stops

You usually will be required to show the usual documentation, such as your driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. You don't have to open your window more than a crack to hand it out.

On traffic stops the police usually will ask you "personal" questions such as, where are you going, where have you been, who did you see, how long did you visit, etc. At that point it's the perfect time to exercise your RIGHTS by asking the police officer, "AM I FREE TO GO?" There is NO legal requirement that citizens provide information about their comings and goings to police officers! Another word it's none of the police officer's business! If you are ordered out of your car, lock the door behind you.

Remember that the officer is not trying to be your buddy and become a new friend, they are on a "fishing expedition" to find something against you! They have nothing criminal on you, so they're looking for anything while they have you pulled over.

A good time to ask, "AM I FREE TO GO," is after the cop has given you a "warning" or a "ticket" and you have signed it. Once you have signed that ticket the traffic stop is legally over with, so says the Supreme Court. Now if you want to stand around and shoot the breeze with the officer or answer his questions, that is up to you. Just remember you don't have to! After you sign the ticket ask, "AM I FREE TO GO?"

Anything You Say Can and Will Be Used Against You!

Staying silent will not hurt you. Do not let the police persuade you to talk. The officer may not like this and may challenge you with words like, "If you have nothing to hide, why won't you speak to me?" Just like the first question, you do not have to answer this one either. They may tell you that staying quiet will make things worse for you or that they'll go easy on you if you talk but this is not true!

You have every right NOT to talk to a police officer, and you shouldn't speak to them unless you have first consulted with a lawyer who has advised you differently. Some cops are worse than others and some of them may treat you differently if they think you know your rights. The police depend on fear and intimidation to get what they want.

If you run into a really bad cop, talking back to him and standing up for your rights might get you beaten up or killed, so be careful about the realistic limits of the law and of your rights as an American. Cops are perhaps the most dangerous members of our society, so be careful when you talk to them.

The Federal Supreme Court has ruled that as long as the police do not force an individual to do something, the individual is acting voluntarily, even if a normal person would feel very intimidated and would not reasonably feel they could say no. See (Florida v. Bostick, 1991) If you do what a policeman tells you to do before you are arrested, you are 'voluntarily' complying with their 'requests'.

Be as nice as possible, but stand firm on your rights! Read the Fourth & Fifth Amendment

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS CANNOT BE SUSPENDED -- EVEN DURING A STATE OF EMERGENCY OR WARTIME!

Car Searches and Body Searches

Remember they wouldn't ask you if they didn't need your permission!

A police officers swore an oath to uphold the Constitution, not to violate your rights against unreasonable search and seizure. If a cop asks or tries to search you, your home or your car, say repeatedly "I DON'T CONSENT TO THIS SEARCH!"

"The right to be free from unreasonable searches is one of our most precious First Liberties"

You DON'T have to give consent to a law enforcement officer to search your vehicle or home. While you DON'T have to consent, bear in mind that the expectation of privacy in a car is less than the expectation of privacy in your home. Based in part on the lessened expectation of privacy in a car, law enforcement officers are permitted to conduct a warrantless search of a car if the officer has probable cause. "In most cases the police officer will lie and make up a probable cause."

Just for being stopped for a traffic violation should not allow the officer to search your car; however, if the officer saw you throw an empty beer can out the window, that may be sufficient probable cause to search your car. If the officer "thinks" he smells marijuana as he approaches the car, he then may use that as probable cause to search your car.

Police Pat Downs...

The law allows police to pat down your outer clothing for the protection of the officer if you're being detained. The officer may only pat your outer clothing to see if you have any weapons. If the police feel something that could be a weapon, then the police can go into your pockets and search. Otherwise a police officer CAN'T go through your pockets or make you empty your pockets unless you are under arrest.

To protect yourself, make it clear that you "don't consent to a search" and ask why they are searching you. Remember the reason they give you. If they claim to have a warrant, ask to see it. Whether or not they have a warrant, you can protect your CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS by making it clear that you do not consent to a search.

If the Police Knock at Your Home-You Don't Have to Open the Door!

If the police knock and ask to enter your home, you DON'T have to open the door unless they have a warrant signed by a judge. Such an invitation not only gives the police officer the opportunity to look around for clues to your lifestyle, friends, reading material, etc.; but also tends to prolong the conversation.

There is no law that says you have to open your door to a police officer. Don't open your door with the chain-lock on either, the police can shove their way in. Police are known to kick in doors. Simply shout "I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY!"

If the police do have a search warrant, ask to see it and make sure that it is signed, has the correct date, correct address, and/or apartment number, etc.

* In some emergency situations (like when a person is screaming for help inside, or when the police are chasing someone) officers are allowed to enter and search your home without a warrant.

NEVER agree to go to the police station for questioning. Simply say, "I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY."

If a Police Officer Stops You on The Sidewalk...

You are perfectly within your rights to say to the officer who asks to speak with you, "Officer I do not want speak with you, good-bye." At this point you should be free to leave the officer's presence. The officer may not like this and may challenge you with words like, "If you have nothing to hide, why won't you speak to me?" Just like the first question, you do not have to answer this question either.

There is NO law that says you must tell a police officer where you are going or where you have been. So, keep your mouth shut and say nothing!

The next step the police officer might take is to ask for identification. If you have identification on you, tell the officer where it is and ask permission to reach for it. Some states do not require you to show identification, be aware of the laws in your state.

Probable Cause...

A police officer has no right to detain you unless there exists reasonable suspicion that you committed a crime or traffic violation. However, a police officer is always allowed to initiate a voluntary conversation with you.

Sometimes it is unclear whether or not a person is detained. If you are in doubt, you should ask the police officer if you are in "Am I Free to Leave." Now if the police officer doesn't have "probable cause", and you refuse him to search your car, he might bring in

a drug dog. At this point since the officer has no probable cause, he may be illegally detaining you.

Under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, police may engage in "reasonable" searches and seizures. To prove that a search is "reasonable," the police must generally show that it is more likely than not that a crime has occurred, and that if a search is conducted it is probable that they will find either stolen goods or evidence of the crime. This is called "probable cause."

Police may use firsthand information, or tips from an "informant" to justify the need to search your property. If an informant's information is used, the police must prove that the information is reliable under the circumstances.

Here is a case where the police used an "informant's" word and the police officers took it upon themselves to kick in a door of a home at 1:30 in the morning without obtaining a search warrant. The aftermath was six police officers firing over 30 shots and shooting an innocent man 9 times in the back as he laid on the ground.

What You Don't Know Could Change Your Life Forever...

You might be wondering, don't police tell me that I have the right not to be searched? After all, when a suspect is arrested, he is told before interrogation takes place that he has the right to remain silent.

The Supreme Court has said NO. According to the Court, the fact that a person might not know he has the right to refuse a search is merely one factor in the determination of whether his consent is voluntary. The Court has reasoned that the police do not need to give warnings -- to eliminate any doubt about the suspect's knowledge of her rights -- because warnings might detract from the informality of an otherwise "friendly" interaction between "civilians and the police." So, you might ask yourself, is someone that would use something against you really a "friend?"

The Supreme Court has explained that "the community has a real interest in encouraging consent, for the resulting search may yield necessary evidence for the solution and prosecution of crime...." Furthermore, the Court has concluded, it would be "thoroughly impractical" to require an effective warning about the right to refuse.

Can We Trust the Cops?

Are police officers allowed to lie to you? Yes, the Supreme Court has ruled that a police officer can lie to a citizen while questioning them. Police officers are very good at lying, twisting words and they are trained to be manipulative. Police officers and other law enforcement agents are very skilled at getting information from people. So, don't try to

outsmart the cop or try being a smooth talker because you will lose! If you can keep your mouth shut, you might just come out ahead more than you expected.

The federal government made a law that says citizens can't lie to federal agents. They can lie to us, but we can't lie to them. Makes perfect since don't it? The best thing you can do is ask for a lawyer and keep your mouth shut. How can you be charged with something if you haven't said anything?

Although police officers may seem nice and pretend to be on your side, they are likely to be intent on learning about the habits, opinions, and affiliations of people not suspected of wrongdoing, with the end goal of stopping political activity with which the government disagrees. Don't try to answer the police officers questions, or try to "educate them" about your cause, it can be very dangerous! You can never tell how a seemingly harmless bit of information that you give the police officer might be used and misconstrued to hurt you or someone else. And keep in mind that lying to a federal agent is a crime.

Officers may promise shorter sentences and other deals for statements or confessions. The police cannot legally make deals with people they arrest. The only person who can make a deal that can be enforced is the prosecutor, and he should not talk with you without a lawyer present who represents you.

Teach your children that the cops are not always their friends, and the police officer must contact a parent for permission to ask your child any questions. Remember that the police are trained to put you at ease and to get you to trust them. Their job is to find, arrest and help convict a suspect. And that suspect is you!

Lies That the Police Use to Get You To Talk...

There are many ways the police will try to trick you into talking. It's always safest just to say the Magic Words: I'm going to remain silent and I want a lawyer.

The following are common lie's the police use when they're trying to get you to talk:

- "You will have to stay here and answer my questions" or "You're not leaving until I find out what I want."
- "I have evidence on you. Tell me what I want to know or else." (They can fabricate "fake" evidence to convince you to tell them what they want to know.)
- "You're not a suspect. Were simply investigating here. Just help us understand what happened and then you can go."
- "If you don't answer my questions, I won't have any choice but to take you to jail."
- "If you don't answer these questions, you'll be charged with resisting arrest."

If the Police Arrest You...

If you are arrested, the police can search you and the area close by. If you are in a building, "close by" usually means just the room you are in. If during a search or an arrest the police take anything from you, they must give you a receipt for every item seized, including your wallet and its contents, clothes, and any packages you were carrying when arrested.

"I DON'T WANT TO TALK UNTIL MY LAWYER IS PRESENT"

- Even if your rights weren't read, refuse to talk until your lawyer/public defender arrives.
- If you are arrested and cannot afford an attorney, you have the right to a public defender. If you get a public defender always make it clear that the public defender is not representing you, but merely is serving as your counsel.
- Do not talk to the inmates in jail about your case.
- Within a reasonable time after your arrest, or booking, you have the right to make a local phone call: to a lawyer, bail bondsman, a relative or any other person. The police may not listen to the call to the lawyer.
- If you're on probation or parole, tell your P.O. you've been arrested, but nothing else.
- You may be released with or without bail following the booking. If not, you have the right to go into court and see a judge the next court day after your arrest. Demand this RIGHT! When you appear before the judge, ask for an attorney. An attorney has a better chance at convincing a judge to let you out on a lower bail than you could.

There has been a lot of information presented within this document. I trust that you will have read and reviewed this with an open mind with a willingness to learn the biker culture.