

Bruce on Bikers' Rights

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**RIDING TO MB BIKEWEEK OR AB BIKEFEST NEXT MONTH?
MAKE YOUR STAND ON THE STRAND!**
*A Call-to-Action for Black Bikers, White Riders
and All American Motorcyclists!*

(With contributions from Robert "RC" Conroy)

"If a law is unjust, a man is not only right to disobey it, he is obligated to do so."--Thomas Jefferson

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Despite all the rumors and the City of Myrtle Beach's best efforts to discourage them, next month hundreds of thousands of motorcyclists are expected to ride or trailer to South Carolina's Grand Strand for **"Myrtle Beach" Spring Bike Week (May 8-17)** and the **Atlantic Beach Memorial Day Bikefest (May 22-26)**. Yes, the Carolina Harley-Davidson Dealers Association claims they are moving their "Spring Rally" to New Bern, NC...

<http://tinyurl.com/bnvyt3>

...but that little burg is only gearing up to handle 3,000 to 4,000 *"safe and law-abiding"* (which in North Carolina includes DOT-lidded) motorcyclists:

<http://tinyurl.com/dxnjxe>

And according to this website...

<http://tinyurl.com/dbusro>

... "The Carolina Dealers Association, which had a 10 x 30 booth selling t-shirts last year, decided to start an event in New Bern, NC. This will have no impact on Spring Bike Week in Myrtle Beach. We wish them well in New Bern, but nothing from Myrtle Beach is moving to New Bern." That means virtually all of those 300,000 to 500,000 riders the Associated Press referred to will still be headed for "the Strand":

<http://tinyurl.com/ccejxc>

If YOU plan to be one of them, be advised that bikers ... especially BLACK bikers ... are no longer welcome in Myrtle Beach. And why is that? Here's the official explanation from Myrtle Beach Mayor John Rhodes:

<http://tinyurl.com/acf9os>



But others hint this is merely whitewash to cover racial undertones, and that in order for the city leaders to silence the NAACP while they axed the predominantly black Atlantic Beach Memorial Day Bikefest, they chose to sacrifice the predominantly white Harley-Davidson Dealers Association Spring Rally along with it:

<http://tinyurl.com/byf3co>

They have even gone so far as to pass a series of anti-biker ordinances that went into effect on February 28:

<http://tinyurl.com/dlyztg>

Hungry for your biker bucks, vendor websites are now saying *"Ride on in and let's party! Just NOT in the city limits..."* They're even giving you the *"Best Ways to Avoid the City of Myrtle Beach"*:

<http://tinyurl.com/chgefr>

Those may be good directions, but THAT IS BAD ADVICE: One of the worst things American motorcyclists could do is allow Myrtle Beach--or ANY municipality, for that matter--to effectively "ordinance away" our Right to Ride on "their" streets (streets paid for in part by "our" local, state and federal taxes!). So if YOU are riding to Myrtle Beach Bikeweek or Atlantic Beach Bikefest next month, here is what I challenge YOU to summon the courage to do:

MAKE YOUR STAND ON THE STRAND!

Ride to and RIGHT THROUGH the City of Myrtle Beach:

<http://tinyurl.com/map-of-myrtle-beach-sc>

But SPEND NO MONEY within the city limits. And cruise at very safe and VERY SLOW speeds, taking your own sweet time at every stoplight and intersection to demonstrate YOU are a responsible rider. And most importantly ... OBTAIN A MUNICIPAL CITATION (i.e. a ticket for an "administrative infraction") ... and either contest or refuse to pay the fine for violating one or more of the following ordinances:

<http://tinyurl.com/dlyztg>

My specific recommendation is to violate the helmet ordinance (have a DOT lid with you, just not on you, as YOU safely and slowly cruise through Myrtle Beach). Don't think for a moment this ordinance was intended to keep you safe: It was written to keep YOU out! And as I told a reporter recently, if the biker-hating bozos on the Myrtle Beach City Council thought we were all lid lovers, their "helmet ordinance" would have required YOU to ride bare-headed!

Will there be consequences if YOU violate these municipal ordinances? Yes. But keep in mind that the willingness to take a stand means the willingness to fight. Do NOT simply pay your fine. All that does is embolden the City of Myrtle Beach to continue to discriminate against motorcyclists. For violating the helmet ordinance, the most the City stands to gain is a \$100.00 fine from you. However, when YOU fight the city it costs them much more than that. They

have to pay the police officer to come to court. They have to pay a prosecutor and a judge. They have to pay the clerks and staff to collect the fines etc. The more motorcyclists who stand up and fight the more expensive it is for the City of Myrtle Beach.

Yes, there is a \$100.00 fine, but you may never have to pay it. Lawsuits have already been filed challenging the constitutionality and enforceability of a municipal helmet ordinance in a freedom-of-choice state. And in direct response to a memorandum from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, the City of Myrtle Beach has already been forced to scrap the "administrative courts" it set up to deal with "civil infractions" such as this one:

<http://tinyurl.com/c4rr8n>

So for now, your case will be heard in municipal court. And will you need a lawyer? Probably so. But you should not have to pay for one. Those who participated in the "Myrtle Beach Freedom Ride" on February 28 were offered free legal representation by Tom McGrath's Motorcycle Law Group (**TomMcGrathLaw.com**):

<http://tinyurl.com/TheRideOfTheOneHundred>

And since then, South Carolina State Representative Thad Viers has volunteered free legal help for any rider like YOU choosing to defy Myrtle Beach's discriminatory lid law:

<http://tinyurl.com/ck6q9s>

And what if YOU simply refuse to pay the fine? Well, if those challenging the ordinance in court prevail, in the end no one ticketed for a helmet violation will have to pay! But if they don't, I am told the municipal court clerk is empowered to collect fines, and might seek a judgment that could affect your credit. And conceivably, an arrest warrant which could be served anywhere in South Carolina might be issued. So if you live in South Carolina, an attorney will likely advise you to contest rather than refuse to pay the fine. But if you live outside of South Carolina, you might want to ask yourself just how much time, effort and money the City of Myrtle Beach is willing to expend chasing a hundred bucks. And keep in mind that violating these ordinances result in "administrative infractions", which are not like regular traffic tickets. So consult with an attorney in your state to be totally safe, but chances are your driver's license will not be subject to suspension or points penalties no matter what YOU choose to do.

A few days ago, on March 31, over 4,000 British bikers jammed the streets of London England to protest unfair parking fees being imposed on motorcycles there, concerned that the precedent would spread to the entire country:

<http://tinyurl.com/cwrvfg>

WILL AMERICAN BIKERS DO LESS to take back their Right-to-Ride through Myrtle Beach, and prevent the establishment of a precedent by which municipalities from coast to coast and beyond could "ordinance" motorcycling right out of existence? We certainly hope not. **But ***YOU***, by your action or inaction, will be the one who answers that question...**

With thanks to Robert "RC" Conroy (**BigBendBikersForFreedom.com**) for contributing to this call-to-action, and otherwise speaking strictly for myself and no other individuals or organizations,

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