

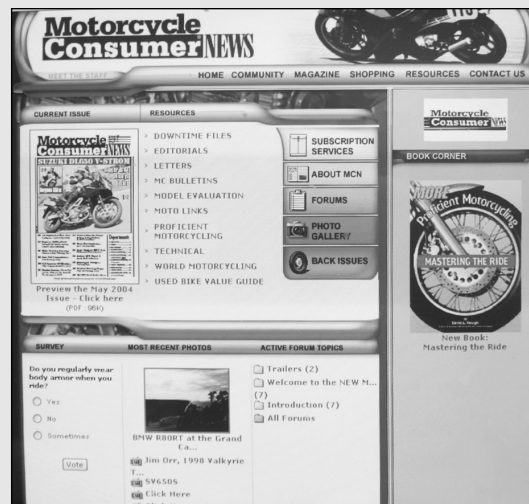
# All-New MCNEWS.COM!

## Reader-Interactive Forums Now On-line

**M**OTORCYCLE CONSUMER NEWS is proud to announce that our all-new website is now available for viewing and use by our readers at [www.mcnews.com](http://www.mcnews.com). Included are samples of some of our bike tests and product comparison articles, as well as copies of our famous Used Bike Value Guide, World Motorcycling Reports and various editorials and feature articles. Trying to find an old article in your MCNs? The website allows access to an Article Index for finding what you're looking for, and contains links for purchasing copies of old articles and issues.

The new site also includes a monthly "Survey Question" about some aspect of motorcycling. Register your vote, and see it counted in an upcoming issue of MCN. You can also send Letters to the Editor, and queries on maintenance and repair topics to our Downtime Files column.

But the most exciting feature is our all-new "Reader's Forum." Basically



an interactive bulletin-board service, the Forum allows MCN readers to interact with each other, and with the staff of MCN, on a variety of subjects. All you have to do is register, and follow a few simple rules (you know—like no porno or profanity). Current topics include General Discussion (where you can make your own topic), Safety and Legislative Issues, Maintenance and Repair (Technical) and a Reader's Market, where you can buy and sell bikes, parts and other equipment with other MCN readers. There is also a Photo Gallery, where readers can share pictures of their bikes with each other.

New topics and features will be added as the need arises, or readers suggest them, and the editors and writers of MCN will drop in regularly for questions and comments.

We here at the offices see this as a great opportunity to stay in touch with our readers, and encourage you all to make use of the new MCN Forum and website. See you online!

**A new chapter in the ongoing Aprilia saga:** The Noale, Italy-based manufacturer that was so recently teetering on the edge of bankruptcy and had actually ceased production, now looks to have a new life. A consortium of financial institutions has extended the company a credit line of \$180 million Euros, which will allow them to go back into full production just in time to meet demand for the new riding season.

Rumor has it that Aprilia got itself into such dire straits through its very costly foray into MotoGP racing, slumping scooter sales in the home market due to new helmet laws, as well as by sinking millions into reviving the aging Moto Guzzi line—which now looks like it will be sold off to Ducati.

Demand has been especially strong in Aprilia's growing U.S. market. Despite being a relative newcomer in the market—the company established its U.S. subsidiary in 1999—American consumers have embraced the Italian manufacturer's line of motorcycles. Aprilia just posted its best April sales month ever, increasing 30.6% over sales in April, 2003. In addition to strong scooter sales (mostly in Europe and Asia), Aprilia's line of high-performance supersport bikes, adventure touring bikes, and their Laverda marque continue to sell well, and to receive good reviews from the world motorcycling press.

For information on Aprilia's complete model line, visit [www.apriliausa.com](http://www.apriliausa.com).

The U.S. House of Representatives has voted overwhelmingly to approve a six-year \$284 billion transportation funding measure, which includes **provisions to expand state rider training programs** and other motorcycle safety initiatives. H.R. 3550, the "Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users" (TEA LU), was passed by a vote of 357-56 on April 2, 2004.

The U.S. Senate approved a similar measure, S. 1072, the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act" (SAFE-TEA), by a vote of 76-21 on February 12. The Senate version reauthorizes \$318 billion over the next six years to fund highway, mass transit and safety programs, but does not include language specifically addressing motorcycle safety concerns.

Both bills will now go to a conference committee, comprised of both Senators and Representatives, to iron out discrepancies between the two and submit a final bill to the President for his signature or veto. The White House has proposed an alternative \$256 billion transportation package, and President Bush has threatened to veto the legislation if costs exceeded that amount.

**Wisconsin Governor James Doyle** signed a bill on March 15 that will ensure that motorcyclists who choose not to wear helmets do not face reduced awards in per-

sonal injury cases if they are involved in accidents. In ruling on an ATV accident two years ago, the Wisconsin Supreme Court said that a jury could consider a person's decision not to wear a helmet if they received a head injury in a crash involving a "high speed open air motor vehicle," and reduce the amount of lawsuit damages paid to that person by up to 100%. Wisconsin only requires helmets be worn by motorcycle riders and passengers under 18 years old. "What we're saying in Wisconsin is that if you do something that is in compliance with the law, it will not be held against you," said Governor Doyle in signing Senate Bill 223, which effectively nullifies the court's 2002 decision by dropping the allowable reduction amount to 0%.

**Safety or protective helmets will be exempt from Pennsylvania's state sales tax** under legislation sponsored by Representative Allan Egolf (R-Perry and Franklin) and unanimously approved by the House on March 24th.

"Many children and adults enjoy activities such as horseback riding, bicycling, roller-blading and motorcycle riding where helmets are either required or recommended for the safety of the participant," said Egolf, an avid bicyclist.

"I believe it is important to encourage the use of safety helmets whether they are mandated or not," he said. "I believe that elim-

## Joe Glydon

**J**ust as this issue of MCN was going to the printers, we heard the very sad news that motojournalist Joe Glydon had passed away. Details of his death were not available.

Commentary by Fred Rau...

Joe Glydon was a graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute, and a motorcyclist. About 17 years ago, he wrote a letter to the editor of CityBike magazine that resulted in the editor contacting him, and hiring him to write a regular monthly column. That column had become so popular over the years, that at the time of his death plans were underway to publish a book, "The Best of Joe Glydon," made up of his former columns.

Most people either loved or hated Joe. I loved him. I didn't always agree with him, and at times I felt he had gone totally off the deep end, but he was never boring, and always thought-provoking. People have called me cantankerous, and a rabble-rouser, but I couldn't hold a candle to Joe, who had recently begun to worry that he couldn't seem to get a rise out of people, no matter how inflammatory his message. I offer you this excerpt from one of his last columns:

*Recently I have sensed a more pronounced "I've got mine" attitude among my contemporaries, particularly those who have been freshly cast upon the white sand beaches of retirement. This newfound contentment seems to extend beyond a hammerlock on fiscal well being to manifest as an aversion to inquisitive discourse. Incendiary verbal prompts not infrequently fall upon deaf ears these days; subversive and seditious notions are met with gazes at watches and the horizon. My mind echoes: "Is it us, or is it them?" though nowadays the more appropriate question must be: "Is it me, or is it them?"*

*It is much easier to excuse the complacency of youth: 20, 30, even 40-year-olds were brought up by television. Except for the reactionary minority among them, whose company I cherish and find thoroughly refreshing, children of the past 40 years have rarely found any incentive to distinguish between propaganda and fact. Sanctioned opinions are represented and accepted as intelligent opinions; unpopular or politically incorrect opinions are damned as patently ignorant. Why bother thinking when opinions have been consensus-branded, like hip and tawdry products?*

*Yes, I can accept the conditioned complacency of youth much more readily than I can accept a dismissive wave of the hand from those who I know know better. As the oil of brilliance thins over the puddle of human discourse, I try to make amusing swirls in the micron-thin film of my own intellectual superficiality.*

Such a mind, and such insights, are all too rare in this industry. We are sorely depleted by his loss.

inating the sales tax on these purchases is an incentive to encourage helmet use."

HB-417 will now be considered in the Senate.

The Motorcycle Riders Association (MRA) of Victoria (Australia) is up in arms over a proposal to require Aussie bikers to affix **license plates to the front of their motorcycles** so that they can be identified from the front for speed cameras.

MRA Victorian president Alex Money said the group is planning a protest to alert the general public as to how much money the government would waste in the move.

"We just want the public to know the Victorian government is spending \$14 million to introduce motorcycle front number plates," he explained, noting that speed cameras in New South Wales take photographs from behind.

Tollway operator Transurban has said it would also consider introducing motorcycle highway tolls if bikes could be photographed from the front.

Justice was finally served to 26 bikers who had **been ticketed during a "routine" traffic stop for running a stop sign** last October while on their way to the Concerned Bikers Association (CBA) Swap Meet in Charlotte, N.C.

All the ticketed bikers were represented by North Carolina Aid to Injured Motorcyclists (A.I.M.) Attorney Robert A. Donat, who's courtroom strategy was to show that it is common practice for riders to do a "stop and go" when traveling in large groups. The Assistant District Attorney was also informed that no one was going to plead guilty to the charges and that each and every rider desired a trial (there were four dif-

## Latest Recalls

### Big Dog

Models: **Boxer, Bulldog, Chopper, Mastiff, Pitbull, Ridgeback**

Year: 2004

Number Potentially Involved: 1,906

Dates of Manufacture: September 2003–March 2004

Defect: On certain motorcycles, the piston in the rear master cylinder may have been improperly sized, which could cause the rear brakes to drag or lock up. This could result in a crash.

Remedy: Dealers will remove the piston from the rear master cylinder and replace it with a new piston.

NHTSA Recall No. 04V137

### Harley-Davidson

Models: **FLHPEI, FLHPI, FLHTCI, FLHTCUI, FLHTPI, FLTRSEI**

Year: 2001 - 2003

Number Potentially Involved: 73,678

Manufactured: N/A

Defect: On certain FL touring and police motorcycles, the 40-amp main circuit breaker can "open" for reasons other than which it was designed, causing an unexpected interruption of all electrical power to the motorcycle. This condition could cause the motorcycle to stall, which could result in a crash.

Remedy: Dealers will replace the circuit breaker.

NHTSA Recall No. 04V134

ferent trial dates, as four different officers wrote tickets that day). Furthermore, that this "routine" stop was nothing more than a harassing intelligence operation, and there was evidence that the whole operation was pre-planned, including statements made by one of the ticketing officers, and the fact that a DMV inspector appeared at the scene. Mr. Donat also found an eyewitness passerby who could confirm that there was a person wearing a ski mask at the scene, and that the bikers were videotaped. The DA finally agreed that this was not worth prosecuting, and every one of the charges was dropped.