

California District Gold



Golden State Gems November 2008

This past month has brought some changes in many of our lives. As I started to reflect I realized that it is so important to be thankful in your heart for all the blessings that we have. Life is so precious and before you can wrap your head around it, it changes. This past month has brought the passing of Carole Phillips from CA2N. Carole is survived by her husband Tony. A couple days after Carole's passing, I lost a friend here. We've lost several members this year along with our beloved Ron Tolson. Take time to smell the roses, enjoy the sunrise and sunset, experience events as if it was for the first time, but most importantly let those around you know that you love them!

As the month has brought personal changes, so has it brought Mother Nature's changes. The leaves are starting to turn, yes even in Southern CA, there is a nip in the air and we start finding our cold weather riding gear. We are so blessed to be able to ride the entire year (with a few exceptions). I made JR go up into the attic and bring down the Halloween decorations and decorated the house even though we'll be in Hawaii for the holiday, our puppy and his sitter ☺ will enjoy them. Then we start getting ready for Thanksgiving which will be at our house again this year. All 13 of us will sit down for dinner and then we'll add another 5 for dessert. We had a blast last year having the family here so I am looking forward to hosting this again.

As some of you will be reading this we will be vacationing in Hawaii. We will be on the island of Kauai, an island that I haven't been to since I was 12 (yes a very long time ago and I am sure nothing has changed...ha). Our intent is to rent motorcycles to tour the island, the Harley place rents GoldWings ☺. Fortunately they also rent helmets so we don't have to take ours with us because I don't know where I'd pack them ☺. I'll report back next month and let you know all about the ride.

We hope that CAC had a great Harvest Run and we sure wish we could have been there but we had a great birthday with my Dad (86, go Dad!). The Zebras (1Z) had a great event and the mystery tour was fun. Joe reported that 2A had a good event and they have reserved their date already for next year so let's all try to go and really make it an event to remember. As I am writing this, tomorrow morning we fly off, CA1F will have their Halloween Fun Run. This will be the first one we'll miss since we joined GW. We know it will be a great event and look forward to hearing all about it.

On November 8th, JR and I will be going to Phoenix for a Regional meeting. I know that I have a few items on my agenda, but I'd like to ask you if you have something that you believe the District, Region or National should consider. Please email me with the idea or issue and we'll take appropriate action with your item. If it's something that we can do here we'll look at that, but if it's something for the Region or National to look at or consider then we'll look at it and take the item forward. We appreciate your input. Our email is jralkire@cox.net or go to the District website and you can find us that way, www.gwrra-ca.org.

As I close, JR and I want to wish all of you a warm and wonderful Thanksgiving. Let's remember to give thanks for all our loved ones, our friends, our country, our brave military, our families, and all the blessing that we have in our lives. Don't forget to thank yourself for all that you are, that's just as important.

So be good, have fun, and we'll see you down the road.



Anita and JR
California District Directors

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Random Ramblings

John Maguire

Thanksgiving

It was the day before Thanksgiving and I was on my way home from work.

The onramp to the freeway had a stop sign at the bottom of it. There were a few cars in line in front of me. Temporarily stopped behind the car in front of me, I casually looked from side to side and happened to glance in my left mirror. What I saw made my heart jump. A white Volkswagen was coming up on my rear and it didn't appear to be preparing to stop. I didn't have long to prepare nor take any sort of evasive actions. The driver never hit the brakes. He would later state that he hadn't seen me or my bike in the early afternoon daylight.

The Goldwing had a driver backrest. When the car impacted the back of my bike it felt as though I had been launched from a cannon. The bike's windshield broke off as my body was thrown forward toward the car stopped in front of me. I remember feeling the bike collide with the car's bumper and trunk and my body landing on the trunk lid and immediately sliding down to land on the badly bent and still running bike. As I instinctively rolled off and away from the bike I immediately found that I was now under the rear of the car. Since the car had apparently been moved into the one ahead of it, the woman driving put it in reverse and started to back over me! Though my body ached from the impact and I was somewhat dazed, I yelled as loud as I could for her to stop the car. Luckily my screams and yelling alerted the driver and she stopped before crushing me and the remains of my Goldwing.

Lying under the car's gas tank with my head against the vehicle's rear axle housing I thanked God for sparing me what seemed like certain death. My relief was short-lived and I slowly turned my head to plan my escape from beneath the car. The uncontrolled roar of the engine had stopped and there, hovering over it were three heavily tattooed young men. The two men, wearing t-shirts and tattoos that I immediately recognized as gang markings reached under the car to pull me out from my very cramped landing spot. Two more had stopped the VW driver from backing up and leaving the scene and were having a very animated conversation with the driver in Spanish. Suddenly I felt as though I might have been safer under the car's gas tank!

That was not to be my day to die on a street in Whittier. It seems the young men who came to my rescue were actually ex-gang members attending services at the church across the street from the scene of my accident. The man who hit me didn't have a license; the woman in the car I hit apologized and went on her way. A short visit to the local Emergency Room showed that I was bruised and scraped but otherwise fine. My bike, a 1200cc Goldwing would be repaired and back on the road in a couple of weeks.

I considered myself a lucky man. I thanked God I was on that old Goldwing that afternoon in 1982. Perhaps if I had been astride a smaller, lighter motorcycle I might not have been so lucky. If I had been on a freeway, I might not be here today. In any case, those of us who ride know that luck is often a welcome passenger.

Thanksgiving proved to be very special for me that year. I rode that 1200 for a number of years and eventually replaced her with Ol' Blue.

May your rides be safe and fun, your Thanksgivings warm and tasty and your family and friends always nearby.

Green Lights and Open Highways to everyone

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Lady Riders

by
Pat Bennett



Some day the cool weather will stay for a while. Are you getting tired of hot weather? I sure am! Just for when it does get cooler (and perhaps wetter) you might want to put an extra jacket or sweater and even your rain gear back in a saddle bag, just in case! It's hard to steer when your teeth are chattering and you're shaking. Do you feel cooler yet?

Watch the road ahead of you in case of water and potholes, which can throw you off balance, or off your bike. Even the best and most seasoned of riders fall victim to this danger. Water in the road may camouflage an oil slick, so be cautious in turns, slowing and speeding up if you observe water in your path.

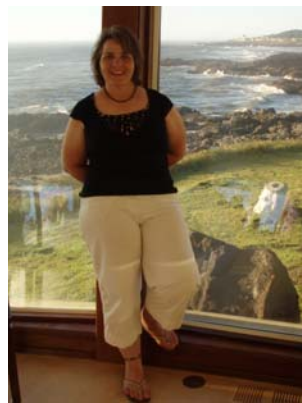
Happy Thanksgiving to all and keep the rubber side down!

Pat

Editor's Comments

by
Crystal Rush

I'm Thankful For...



When I was younger I would hear about families that would sit around their tables at Thanksgiving and everybody would state one thing they are thankful for and wonder why my family did not. This has been a year of change, a year of memories, a year of sorrows but still a year none the less. It has made me sit back a moment and take stock of my life. I would like to be a little selfish this month and list the things I am thankful for....maybe, just maybe it will get everybody else to stop a moment and realize all the things they have to be

thankful for as well.

- I'm thankful for my health – I have a motto "I never get sick", it has been working for me for a few years now.
- I'm thankful for my children – they always seem to know when I need a phone call.
- I'm thankful for my home – I'm not rich and I don't have a big fancy home but I do have a cozy

home.

- I'm thankful for finding my calling – I am a holistic health practitioner and it is what I was put on this earth to do. I am passionate about my work and look forward to it every day.
- I'm thankful for having just enough – enough food, enough hunger, enough laughter, enough sorrow, enough friends, enough enemies, enough of whatever it takes to keep me putting one foot in front of the other.
- I'm thankful for my sense of well being and safety.
- I'm thankful for those that love me and allow me to love them.
- I'm thankful for my family – we may not be as close as so many other families that I've had the pleasure to watch but we are still family and are there when we are needed.
- Finally I'm thankful for you – my GW family – thankful that you allow me the time and space to be a part of your life.

There are so many others things I could list but let's face it, the important stuff has been mentioned. I pray everybody out there has a wonderful Thanksgiving with their families/friends.

Ride safe, appreciate your life and take care of yourselves.

See you on the road!

Crystal J. Rush
CA Assistant District Director
Newsletter Editor
Leadership Training

*Remember: Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, coffee in the other, totally worn out and screaming “**WOO HOO WHAT A RIDE!**”*

November 2008

Sunday	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	Saturday
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 CAIN TOYS 4 TOTS
23	24	25	26	27 Happy Thanksgiving	28	29
30						

December 2008

Sunday	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Merry Christmas	26	27
28	29	30	31	HAPPY NEW YEAR!		