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President's Comments

October 2025

Here we are in October!

It's been a busy year for me to say the least. We still have more to come in the next couple months.

I must mention the loss of one of the biggest parts of our club, Rich Ostrander. If you're new to the club you may not even have seen or heard of him. If that's the case I apologize, but you missed out. Rich was so involved with Fort Sutter as well as other chapters and even the national. Rich inspired so many to build bikes, talk bikes, ride bikes and much more. Rich loved to recruit the youth to get involved because he knew we need the next generations to keep our passion going strong. I don't want to make this all about Rich but the man deserves a nod for all he did for all of us and for at least what he has done for me. I'm sure more will be said and written in the future.

Speaking of the future we have events to really start buckling down on: Dixon is headed our way quickly. We are also hosting a national road run not long after that. Having said that I appreciate all of you behind the scenes getting the work done that's needed. We have several new faces in our club wanting to help out and I gladly accept.

We have been getting out in the public eye and we are now reaping the harvest with new members. Let us start trying to find sponsors for both events. If you know people in the industry, or businesses willing to donate to the cause let us know.

We will be riding to the Nevada County Toy Run on Dec. 13th. Details in the near future. If you don't plan to ride please bring an unwrapped toy to our December meeting.

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**Our next chapter meeting will be Saturday, December 6, 2025
location TBD.**

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Sorry I wasn't at the meeting but I'm not available in October due to other obligations. I hope to see you all at the Dec. meeting.

Ride safe you all

--

President Tracy Stahlman

Ft. Sutter Chapter, AMCA

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Fort Sutter Meeting Minutes October 4, 2025

Call to Order: The October 4, 2025 meeting was called to order at: 12:45 pm with 13 members present.

- **Welcome New Members:** None; **Guests:** None at the meeting
- **Membership:** Karie Schenken, Membership Chair, reports there are: 97 Primary members, 30 Associates, 2 Junior members, and 7 Honorary members and 6 honorary past.
- **Treasury Report:** Julie reported that all the Dixon expenses have been paid. However, the expected \$250 from AMCA national was only \$150 because it was calculated on the size of the event. This was not something we were aware of prior to the event. We got \$290 back from our deposit on the Mayfair fairgrounds. The chapter made about \$2,400 from Dixon when sponsorship money is included; it would have been a small loss without the sponsors. This is pretty typical of the Dixon event. Current total cash assets are \$34,537.
- **Minutes:** A motion was made by Mark Wiebens and seconded by Mark Loewen to approve the minutes as written for the August 2, 2025 meeting. Passed without opposition.

Old Business

- **NORCAL Cycle Swap:** The NORCAL Cycle Swap will be October 12, 2025. This is often an opportunity to recruit new chapter members. Contact Bob Henry or Tracy Stahlman if you can help. Bob Henry plans to be there.
- **Dixon** - The theme for Dixon 2026 is planned to be the 90th anniversary of the Knucklehead. Phyllis noted that when she and John attend other events, Dixon often comes up with very positive comments about the event.

New Business

- **Moment of silence and recognition for Rich Ostrander** - The members present at the meeting observed a moment of silence in Rich's memory. Rich's passing will be memorialized on the Dixon event shirt for 2026. In addition, the Best Chopper local award will be named in Rich's honor for the 2026 Dixon event. John Markley made some comments about a conversation with Rich which are briefly summarized here. He met Rich in 2006 when he joined the chapter and Dick Hardmeyer was president. John noted that Rich could be very forceful in the expression of his opinions, but his heart was always in the club. John talked about a photo, that he got from a friend, of the well-known artist Georgia O'Keeffe on a Harley Knucklehead taken in New Mexico in 1944. In a recent conversation with Rich, John found out that Rich had also had a print of the same photo, and that Rich really liked it.
- **National Road Run 2026**
Tunie was not present to update progress, but the run will be based in Jackson and she has been scoping out potential host hotels.
- **National minute:** John Markley was just back from the Chesapeake national meet in Maryland. AMCA is trying to have 4 national road runs in 2026, with a second west coast run in addition to our planned run. John is coordinating with AMCA and Harley-Davidson to try to do something special for the 90th anniversary of the Knucklehead. Hopefully, they will have a presence at Dixon 2026. John spoke a little about the Trans America endurance run. He had noticed that several participants were AMCA members and he emailed them congratulating them on their participation. He received a reply from one who said John's email gave him the greatest pleasure of all the recognition he received.
- **Board elections will be held at the December 6 meeting** - The board of directors terms are up at the end of 2026 for Tracy Stahlman, Joe Giammona, Tom Myers and Julie Loewen. All of these directors have indicated their willingness to stand for reelection to another two year term. However, Julie, who has been serving as

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treasurer for several years, would like to see someone begin learning the responsibilities in order to eventually take over. Volunteers are therefore welcome as an understudy or as a candidate for a board position. Tom noted that according to the by-laws, at least 10 members must be present for a valid election, so attendance at the December meeting is important. Officers are chosen by the board of directors from the members of the board themselves.

- **Past events:**

- Club ride led by Joe Giammona, August 16, starting in Folsom. This was a really nice run planned out by Joe with good participation by more than a dozen members. Nice roads, an interesting stop at a winery/museum, and a nice lunch after the ride.
- Ride to NorCal Chopper show in Lockeford, September 13, led by Tracy Stahlman. This ride also had good participation. The show was similar in size to last year, but in a new location in a paved courtyard instead of the nice park-like setting like last year. Still, a good ride and show.

- **Upcoming events and club rides**

- NorCal swap: October 12
- Nevada County Toy Run, December 13 - More info on this will be coming. Ft. Sutter is a perennial supporter of this run. A motion was made by Mark Wiebens and seconded by Mike Laird to make a \$500 donation to the Toy Run fund. The motion passed without opposition.
- Comstock Classic Road Run October 9-11
- Next meeting December 6 - Bob is looking into holding the meeting at Scot Ostrander's restaurant, but that is still to be determined for sure.

Meeting adjourned at 1:51 pm

In memoriam: Rich Ostrander

As many of you have heard by now, one of Ft. Sutter's long time members, Rich Ostrander, passed away in September. Rich was a member of the chapter for over 40 years. He was an Honorary member of the chapter and was recently made an Honorary member of the AMCA national organization.

I'm a relative newcomer to the chapter, but it would only take a short conversation with Rich to realize that, "Wow! This guy goes *way* back." The respect that chapter members had for Rich was obvious, and Rich's confidence commanded respect from those around him. Rich was actually the person who nominated me for my current position on the chapter board after John Markley twisted my arm and got me to volunteer (just kidding , John). One time when I arrived at a meeting in a car because it was raining, Rich said, "Tom, I think that's the first time I ever saw you show up in a cage." I thought it was kind of cool that Rich had noticed that I almost always rode a bike to the meetings. Because Rich knew I followed Indy car racing and was attending the 2025 500, Rich recently passed on to me a partially completed miniature of an Offenhauser 4-cylinder engine that honors John Schaefer, the second president of the Ft. Sutter AMCA chapter. I will consider myself custodian of this piece of club memorabilia until it is eventually passed on to another generation of members.

On the following pages, I've included some photos and memories from other members. Rich may be gone, but he is not forgotten. In this and future newsletters, you will continue to see reprints of a few more of his Dr. Sprocket columns.

Godspeed, Rich. We will miss you.

—Tom

In memoriam: Rich Ostrander

Rich, with other chapter and AMCA members at various events:



In memoriam: Rich Ostrander

Rich, with other chapter and AMCA members at various events:



Richard L. Ostrander Obituary

Richard Lee Ostrander was born on December 6, 1947 in Bradford, PA to Harold H. Ostrander & Erla Mae Vreeland. He passed away at home on September 19, 2025 due to a battle with Stage 4 brain cancer.

He came to California in 1950 by way of a 1930 Model A Ford Sedan in the back rumble seat. He graduated from David Starr Jordan High School in North Long Beach in September 1966. It was during this time he developed his love of surfing, skateboarding and music. He was drafted upon graduating high school into the Air Force the following year, serving 4 years in the Vietnam War until 1970. He returned to Southern California, working with his father in the construction trade, developing a love for antique motorcycles and cars, often restoring Ford Model A's and T's with his father.

He got his first motorcycle, a Harley Davidson Shovel Head Chopper from his lifelong friend and fellow serviceman, Richard Morris, beginning a lifelong passion for motorcycles. It was during this time he took a keen interest in early antique motorcycles such as Indians, Harley Davidsons & Super X Excelsiors, soon joining the AMCA.

It was in Southern California that he met his future wife Kathy Radulovich in 1975. They soon moved to Northern California (Sacramento) where he began work as a metal fabricator.

In 1983 he joined the Fort Sutter Chapter in Sacramento, California. It was during this time that he began writing for various motorcycle enthusiast publications, taking on the pen moniker of Dr. Sprocket, writing for such publications as the Ft. Sutter Chapter newsletters, AMCA National magazine, Motorcycle Classics, Greasy Kulture, Rust magazine and The Vintagent. Riding and fixing motorcycles for 50+ years created many memorable rides, trips, and shared experiences with countless and cherished friends from every corner of the United States and other countries.

The family would like to give a special thanks to our neighbors for all their support as well as the Kaiser Oncology & Hospice teams for their excellent care.

Also a special shout out to his many friends and club members who kept in touch with him throughout his illness.

Richard is survived by his wife Kathy Radulovich and son Scott Ostrander, sister Laura Allen, Sisters In-Law, Danica Berner & Janet Sweeney and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Some final words from Dr. Sprocket, "Try to show a little empathy. E is not a bad letter in the alphabet. Good conversations now are always better than never. I wish I could have had more conversations with those who have come before".

Down the Road.....

My Friend Rich

By Bob Henry

I first met Rich Ostrander where I think many people did, at a motorcycle swap meet. He was in the process of helping liquidate Lenny Miller's lifetime parts collection, and (in his own phrase that he often used) "He had the shit!". The beautiful October morning saw a flurry of buyers descending onto Rich's spot, his tables set up, the display cases full of treasure. I was selling a few spaces down the row, and had to see what all the excitement was about. To preface this day, I wasn't really connected at the time to the antique motorcycle scene. I had only recently began to afford the good vintage iron, but I had been going to the motorcycle swaps for years.

A '46 Indian Chief had come into my life, but it was missing the proper headlamp. My heart fluttered to see THREE of them sitting on Rich's table. I picked my favorite one and patiently waited my turn to ask a price. There was a shark attack of buyers grabbing, buying, and asking so I had to be patient. Having not recognized or paid attention to Rich from the past swaps, I prayed that this old guy was having a fire sale. Finally I got his attention, held up the light and prayed-

"How much for the headlight?" I asked.

"\$500" Rich says firmly, his voice is almost booming, the price makes me internally die a little.

"Any wiggle room?" I smile back.

"Nope." He replies even quicker than the first time.

A small silent pause between us and that's my signal to set the headlight back down. Deflated, I retreat back to my own swap spot. Luckily for me I know Brand X (Indian) parts don't exactly fly outta swap meet stalls so I've got time before the need to mount my counter attack. The morning progresses and I wander back over Rich's way. To my horror one of the headlights is gone, but quickly I see my desired one is still there. Damn, my plan to wait him out just went up in flames.

This time, I take the offensive-

"\$450 on the light?" I simply blurt out as I fumble the light in my hands, inspecting it-

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“Nope” Rich replies without even looking up from what he’s doing. I think he was counting money from a recent sale; The spot is still pretty busy. I retreat again to my spot. The sting of returning empty handed twice now turns to slight irritation as my mind now knows the inevitable. It’s a gentleman’s bet that when you go back a third time to haggle on a part, the seller has figuratively got you by the balls. Shit, I really need that light though! I walk back to Rich’s-

“So \$500 on the light?” I ask for the last time, knowing full well what I’m about to hear. This time though, Rich looks at me, a warm grin across his face and in his firm, booming voice-

“I’m here to tell ya, that’s a good price on that light and if you know what your looking at, I think you know it too.”

Fuck, that’s checkmate, I know he’s absolutely right. As five \$100 bills leave my possession and Rich takes custody of them, he says one last thing-

“I was wondering how many times you were gonna comeback and fondle that thing!”

Then for the first time I heard what I would soon consider his signature laugh. Full, LOUD, but a laugh you couldn’t help but smile when you were around it. Unknown to me in that exact moment (as I was feeling the sting of being bested on the field of swap meet negotiation) would I know how that laugh would shape the next 6 years of my life. We parted ways that day as simply swap seller and anonymous buyer, no more, no less.

The next encounter I had with Rich was, of course, the next swap meet in December. Hard rain had moved into the area the previous evening so again in Rich’s words, “It was a frog-strangler”. The wet weather kept many away but the dedicated few still braved the elements to see what might be sold and found. I was selling again but there was only a few rows of vendors. Wet as a drowned rat already, I scurried from pop-up tent to pop-up tent, quickly scanning for deals. At the very end of the row I saw a square white trailer with a large group of people around it, another shark attack ensuing. I wedged my way into the group and saw the grade “A” nice stuff laid out. VL forks, springers, Indian parts, and right on the end of the table, a UL 74” engine bottom end chilling in a crate. I’d been looking for one for a couple of years but the pricing had kept them out of my reach. The price tag read \$1600, a great price but I was cash short this early in the morning, so of course I wanted to pay less. I was looking around to see who’s stuff it was and getting a game plan together for a offer when guess who popped outta the back of the trailer? Rich. Crap. I knew my work was going to be cut out for me and he was so busy, I didn’t even ask. I returned to my swap spot and hoped to sell enough to buy the UL bottom end outright so there was not a repeat of the “fondling” that Rich found so entertaining in October.

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The day progressed but I couldn't quite get the scratch together to seal the deal. I approached his spot, hoping maybe the inclement weather had maybe watered down the prices a bit-

"Is the \$1600 firm on the UL bottom end?"

Rich made eye contact, paused and with a small tilt of his head and a grin-

"Yes." as he began to chuckle. I could tell he recognized me, (as I would later find out he had the memory of an elephant) and finished by saying the engine was yet again, a very good deal.

"I know what those go for, and I've moved the price to well below that, it's already priced to move."

This time I noticed a change in his demeanor when he was explaining to me why it was good buy. He was almost excited to explain how complete it was with cams, early timing cover and with the oil pumps and that alone was worth the asking price. Looking back I realize on that wet morning I was getting the first of many of Rich's Master Classes. Small, but deeply informative bursts of history, technical info, or pop culture brought to you in real time.

Regardless, I was still short the funds, so I parted ways with his contact info. I asked if he was local and if we could meet later in the week if I could pony up the funds. He didn't seem super excited at the idea, but said to call him if I did.

Needless to say I ponied up the funds a few days later. A short call and I had an appointment to meet him, and I was surprised to be meeting him at his house. Most after-swap transactions are done with strangers at gas stations, or shops for obvious safety reasons. You don't want people scoping out home base and your rides, a rule I still adhere to.

A knock on the front door and I'm instructed to meet him out by his detached garage. I figure this is going to be a quick exchange and I'll be on my way. As I round the corner I see the engine in the crate, and Rich pops out his back door. His garage is closed and as I go to hand him the envelope of money, he asks me-

"Want to see some antique motorcycles?"

Of course I agreed, he opened the door and we proceed to talk about his beautiful '40 knuckle and his '67 shovel for the next hour. I hadn't been around classics like that up close really ever, and I was given the full museum tour. He really glowed explaining and showing me the modifications he'd done to his Knuckle. Rich went on to talk about how he'd done

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ground-up restorations on both of them. The thing that struck me most was his stories of the rides he'd taken these machines on. I had never met anyone who put serious miles on the old machines. I'd ridden my chopper on some long rides, but never with the frequency he spoke about. Then he capped the night off with an invite to come meet his antique motorcycle group called Fort Sutter AMCA. He said if I wanted to get serious about antiques I needed to get around like minded people who had them. I departed with my new engine and a handshake, my mind spinning with all the info I had just been told.

I took him up on his offer shortly after that, and became a member of Fort Sutter. We started to hang out and correspond about all things antique motorcycle. I can safely say I was moved categorically from swap stranger to blossoming friendship. Soon, Rich's '67 was up for sale and I bought it almost immediately. Our friendship started to really grow after that. Rich took me on my first Road Run and that's when I can say positively he sunk the hook deep. We rode through the hills of Napa together, hung out with all sorts of antique motorcycle people and had a hell of a time. There were hours of stories about goddamn everything honestly, but I enjoyed near every minute. He was so passionate about the history, spoke with a fondness of the people he had met, and had no problem saying what he thought about a subject or person. I admired that about him. You always knew where he stood, but he never had to beat a person down to let them know it. He was always available for a technical question, to b.s. about AMCA happenings, or to joke about the "FleaBay" (eBay) prices we saw online.

A specific event at our first road run will always stick with me. One morning while outside our cabin at the KOA campground, myself, Rich and Greg Wood were sitting at a picnic table. I was drinking a Red Bull and Greg was finishing a joint he was smoking. Rich was telling a few stories about prior road runs and people that had recently passed (I think it was either George Hood or Ron Sabey). If you knew how Rich could get to talking, you know Greg and I were an engaged and captive audience. Then, Rich paused and said-

"You know early man and tribes used to have shaman and orators, who were in charge of the spoken history, people who made sure things were passed to the next generation, so people didn't forget."

He then stood up and kinda looked at me and Greg, then looked off and away for brief second. I didn't really know at the time what he was getting at as he never really finished his thought. There a subtle steadfastness in his expression, and there wasn't any hubris to it. The moment passed and we both rode off to breakfast shortly after.

As the years passed and our friendship grew stronger, it became clearer to me what he meant that day. Talks, road runs, the Greasy Kulture magazines he always gave me. His work to preserve the history of motorcycling is whole other write up I can't even begin to touch

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here, but needless to say he put in a absolute lifetime of work. Our friend, Sean, would eventually give him the nickname “The Storyteller” and he was happy to adopt it (he even had business cards made). The real way he let me and so many others see what it was truly all about was through his friendship. It wasn’t about just telling old stories, it was about friends getting together and making new ones. It wasn’t just about buying old bikes, it was about learning and respecting the journey those bikes had been on. Motorcycles were the catalyst but Rich had a knack for teaching you something whether you knew you were getting a lesson or not. His actions within the club were done with respect to the past, but always with an eye on the future. He also taught me a lot about navigating life, dealing with the struggle (“This too shall pass, Grasshopper.”) and being a better husband.

I could go on for many more pages with great stories about Rich, as I know many here can too. To be considered one of his close friends and brought into the fold is an honor I’ll never forget. I’m going to miss the talks, I’m going to miss the laughs, and I’m going to miss his friendship the most. You just get lucky sometimes in life and I did that warm October day. The universe can send you a gift in the strangest of ways, and deliver it in the most unconventional of packages. I’m not a poet, but I know he read many poems and books, so I did my best to close with this one I wrote-

Even though he’s gone now,
and its a hole that’s never going away,
it’s now my turn to tell the stories,
the best I can,
about my friend Rich.



Remembering our friend Rich Ostrander
AMCA Fort Sutter
October 2025

Hello everyone,

With the recent passing of Rich Ostrander, I will remember him fondly. My journey of getting to know Rich started back in 2006 when I first joined the AMCA and the Fort Sutter Chapter. For the first couple of years, my contributions to the Chapter involved helping with the Fort Sutter National Meet, affectionately known as the Dixon Meet. I recall attending club meetings at Sam's Hof Brau in Sacramento, where I first met Rich O., who was actively involved in planning and organizing the meet. If you knew Rich, you knew he was sometimes very vocal about making sure the Dixon meet was the best. He took on many roles, including designing meet pins, T-shirts, logos, and other promotional materials. He was a key contributor back when the Fort Sutter Chapter held a regional meet under the freeway in Sacramento. Then, in 2000, he, along with others, continued to contribute when the Fort Sutter Chapter relocated to the Mayfair Fairgrounds in Dixon, CA—becoming the only AMCA National Meet on the West Coast.

As time went on, I learned about Rich O. and his many passions in life. His diverse skills included being a welder, a motorcycle historian, an author, and a contributor to numerous magazines. He wrote many articles detailing the early history of the AMCA Fort Sutter Chapter and motorcycling in general throughout California. Rich O. was very helpful to me when Marie Moore asked me to take on the role of Secretary and Newsletter editor while our good friend Tom Green was ill and subsequently passed away. Without Rich O.'s previous articles, pictures, and stories of the founding members of our chapter, there wouldn't be much to write about. He wanted to preserve the memory of members who had passed away, so we could remember who they were and how they contributed to our success as a motorcycle club. I spent many hours over the phone and in person learning the history, and through his stories, I was able to keep alive their memories.

Over the years, we grew closer and became friends. We both shared a passion for motorcycling and discussed how we could attract younger kids (his words, not mine) into our club. He believed that by working with and supporting younger riders, they would become AMCA members and eventually join our club, representing the future. Examples of this include Jeremy Loewen and Bob Henry, with whom Rich spent time and became their mentor. Over the years, both Jeremy and Bob have grown with the club, owning two of Rich's prized possessions: a 1987 Harley-Davidson custom 883, and for Bob, his cherished H-D Knucklehead.

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I was constantly receiving valuable club memorabilia. Since joining the AMCA National in 2019, I have brought many highly collectible items from Rich's collection to our archivist for safekeeping on several occasions. Toward the end, I would call Rich to reminisce and talk about his life, love, and passions. His wife, Kathy, was his soulmate, supporting his many days out in the shop, where he restored and fixed motorcycles, and rode in both chapter and national road runs. And, in the last few years, he spent time building these incredible miniature motorcycle sculptures. My last conversation with him took place the day before he passed. As we talked, he commented that his time was almost over, but he told me I have had a great life and hopefully will be remembered. I know we all feel the same; he will be missed greatly by so many.

Rest and ride in peace!

John Markley
AMCA President
Fort Sutter member

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Rich, presiding over a meeting, and Jeremy with the 883 Sportster customized by Rich.

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Copy and paste below to learn more about Rich's passions and stories

<https://www.rustmag.com/new-blog-3/2022/11/14/rich-ostrand-ers-miniature-masterpieces>

A couple of the miniature works of art that Rich made, Rich packed for one of his many treks across the country on his 883 Sportster, and the knucklehead that he passed on to Bob.



Motorcycles for sale

The following motorcycles are for sale by
chapter member Mike Williams.

Contact him at : 916 717-5599

1979 750 Triumph Bonneville
Starts, runs, and stops good.
New battery and brake master cylinder.
Clear Calif. title, on non-op since '98.
\$2,500.

1957 BSA A10, project with Road Rocket motor
All parts there
Georgia tag & registration
Georgia doesn't have titles on motorcycles before 1986
\$2,500.

Pics from October Chapter Meeting
October 4, 2025
(photos by Mark Loewen)

Mark Loewen once again generously offered the use of his shop in Elk Grove for the chapter meeting. A lunch of grilled hot dogs, chips, and home made brownies was enjoyed by the dozen or so members present prior to the meeting. Several members road bikes to the meeting.

See more photos on the [following page](#).



(Meeting, continued)

The meeting was chaired by vice president Joe Giammona. Roughly a dozen members were present for the meeting.



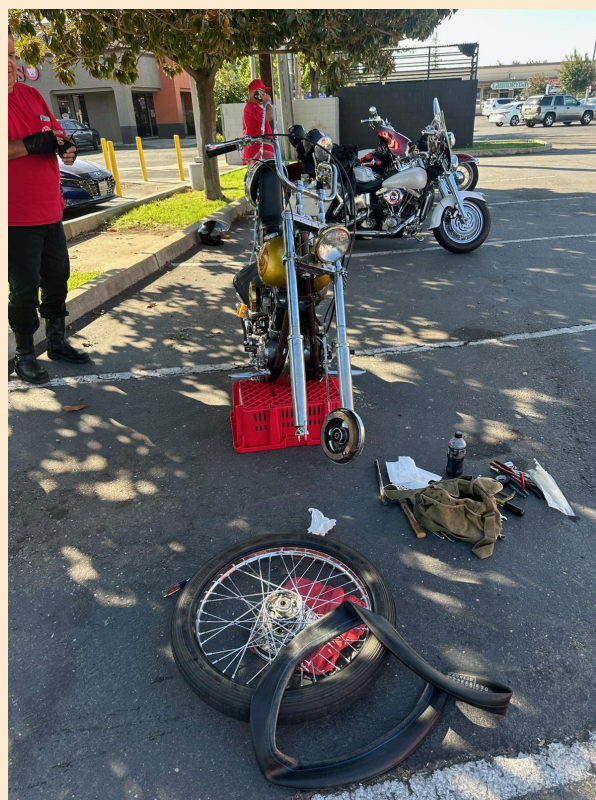
Chapter ride to the NorCal Chopper Show

September 13, 2025

(photos by Bob Henry)

The chapter ride to the NorCal chopper show in Lockeford again had a good turnout of members. Members thought the show was good, but the venue, a paved courtyard, was perhaps not as nice as the park-like venue from last year. Trouble with one bike was solved with the help of chapter members and a milk crate.

See more photos on the [following page](#).



(Chopper show, continued)

Jim, Tracy, and Dave at the event.



Nominations for Ft. Sutter chapter board of directors

Nominations for the Ft. Sutter chapter board of directors are currently open to the membership and will remain open until the vote at the December meeting. Members present at the December 2025 will vote on the board members running for election.

Currently, the board is made up as follows:

President	Tracy Stahlman
Vice Pres.	Joe Giammona
Secretary	Tom Myers
Treasurer	Julie Loewen
Director	Bob Henry
Director	Tunie Crawford
Director	Mark Loewen

Directors serve two year terms. The 2 year terms on the board for Tracy, Tom, Julie, and Joe are expiring at the end of this year. The two year terms for Bob, Mark, and Tunie have another year remaining. Tracy, Joe, and Tom have indicated that they would like to stand for reelection to the board. Julie has said she is willing to continue on the board, but would like to see another member begin learning her duties as treasurer to potentially take over in the future.

If you have an interest in being on the board or would like to nominate someone for membership on the board, you can do so by contacting any of the current directors, or at the December meeting prior to the vote. Board members will be elected by a vote of members in good standing present at the December 2025 meeting. Officers for the 2025 calendar year are selected by the board members from among the members of the newly formed board after the election.



DR SPROCKET'S COLUMN

LONG BEACH

While I was stationed at Oxnard Rich and I would take off to Long Beach most weekends. We'd usually hook up with our friend Greg to party and get into some sort of mischief.

One late Saturday night Rich called me and said Greg and him were going to Redondo Beach to check out a motorcycle and were coming by to get me. The three of us packed into Greg's '50 Chevy pickup and soon found ourselves in a very dark alley looking into an equally dark collapsing shed. With a weak flashlight – is there any other

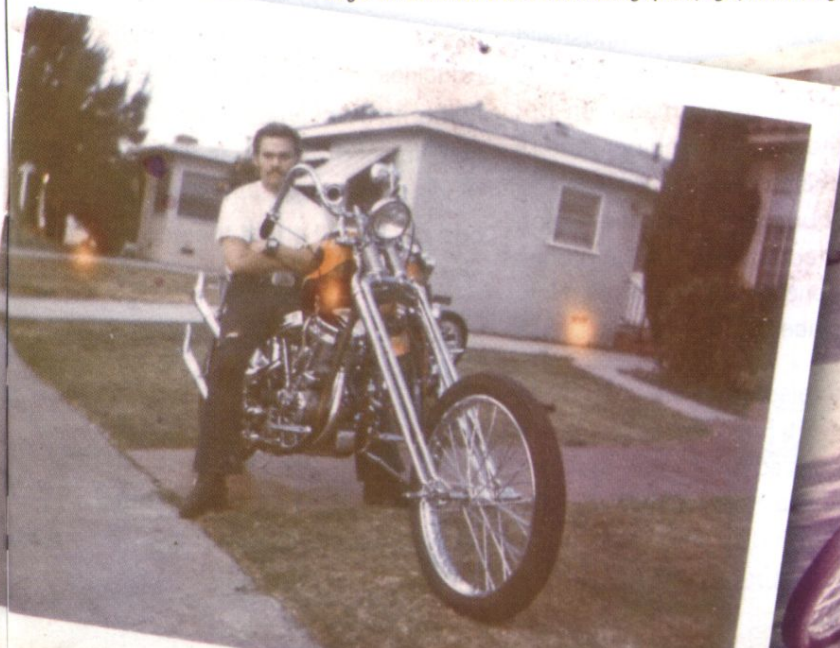
kind? – we viewed the remains of a 1957 FLH Harley-Davidson. I believe Greg handed the man five hundred bucks.

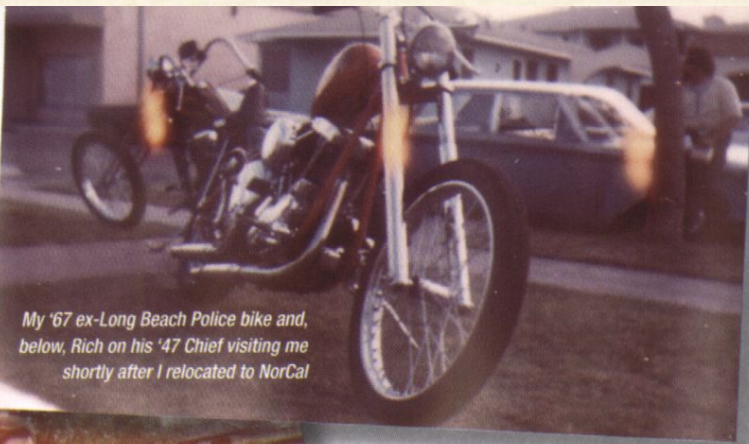
Back at Greg's we aired up what remained of the tires, jumped the wasted battery, added gas to the rusted gas tanks, and rode that beat up old hulk around the block for what seemed like hours yelling and laughing. Greg had his first motorcycle. I was twenty, they were younger. By the time I got back from overseas the bike had changed considerably. It now sported a freshly chromed

12" over springer, a 21" front hoop, frisco'd sporty tank, pull back bars, fishtails, and lots of chrome.

After I sold the Pan I got from Rich I had a little money from my accident and a friend had a '67 Shovelhead up for sale. He had gotten it at the Long Beach Police auction. It ended up hardtailed, painted candy apple red, narrowed glide with Barney's lower legs, Bates lights, Z bars, horseshoe oil bag and lots of chrome. Greg and I put a lot of miles on those two machines.

Greg's '57 rat dresser after a little cleaning up and, right, Paul's 'Long Beach style' Panhead.





My '67 ex-Long Beach Police bike and, below, Rich on his '47 Chief visiting me shortly after I relocated to NorCal



Paul, another friend of ours, would join us a couple nights a week and with tanks topped and beers affixed to our sissy bars, we'd roll down to Hwy 17 Ortega Canyon and out towards Lake Elsinore. Our usual stop was the Hot Springs to see if a party was going on. We'd roar back down Atlantic Blvd. through North Long Beach early in the morning. Never any cars and the sound of our pipes echoing off the buildings I can still hear today.

Paul was a good wrench and rode an early Panhead with a long girder as was pretty standard for a Long Beach bike back then. He was one of the first guys I knew who ran an S.U. carb on his machine. He's the only member of the "old crew" I haven't been able to track down but I hear he's still building bikes somewhere in Long Beach.

There was only a handful of shops back then to get parts from in our area. AEE and Cycle Engineering were getting up and running but we never got there. We'd either go to Tom's shop downtown, B and O Cycles, or Custom Cycle Delight in Lakewood. It was right around the corner from Lakewood Harley-Davidson which is long gone. The other cool Harley shop was Long Beach Harley-Davidson on Long Beach Blvd. Pat Leahy, who later worked at B and O, built motors there. They had one of the first dynos I ever saw.

My favorite parts counter guy was "Shorty". He must have been in his sixties then and rode a 1947 EL stocker to work every day with a winter windshield (and winter apron attached). We were just young men then but he knew we enjoyed our motors just the same as he did when he was our age. He was the reason I started listening to the stories his generation had to tell. Now the wheel goes full circle.

We'd also go visit "old man" Tate who had a shop downtown surrounded by a chainlink fence. No Harleys allowed. Tate was an Indian man. After Rich

got his license straightened out he bought what he thought was a stock 1947 Indian Chief from him. It turned out to be an Indian Chief motor in an Indian Scout frame with a Norton front fork. What'd we know back then?

Rich eventually did a backyard restoration on the bike. He painted it yellow and black with rattlecan epoxy in my old garage. Some of my tools still have the overspray on them. We called it the "Bumble Bee". Rich rode the hell out of that old Chief and had it for more than thirty years.

Another place we'd visit was Jungle Jim's on North Atlantic Blvd. He was the Harley equivalent of "old man" Tate. When you went into Jim's front door you had to shuffle sideways to get through the aisle to the back of the shop. To look at a motorcycle you had to crawl on top of the rows of seats till you found the one you wanted. They were stacked as tight as cordwood. Pans, Knuckles, flatheads, JDs, you name it. Sometimes it was the first time I'd ever seen one of those machines. Jim was an odd duck but he had the goods and he knew it.

About this time I picked up a 1947 EL basket for \$500. This started my life-long love of these motors. My Shovel would be sold to fund its build... but that's a story for another day.