



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A.B.A.T.E. of PA Hosts the 24th Annual Leadership & Legislative Seminar

Grantville, PA - The Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE) hosted its Annual Leadership & Legislative Seminar on January 23 & 24 in Grantville, PA. The sold-out event attracted 350 motorcyclists from Pennsylvania and the surrounding states, all with a common interest - Motorcyclists' Rights.

Attending the seminar were representatives from the American Motorcyclists Association (AMA), the Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF), the National Coalition of Motorcyclists (NCOM), and PA's Motorcycle Safety Program. Jeff Hennie, Vice President of Government Relations for the Motorcycle Riders Foundation updated the attendees on the ongoing legislative agenda in Washington, DC. The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) participants included Rob Dingman, President and CEO along with Imre Szauter, of the Government Relations Department.

Invited guest Dr. Jonathan Goldstein, Professor of Economics from Bowdoin College in Maine, presented a thought provoking session on his research with regard to motorcycle helmets and analysis of accident data.

The L&L Seminar has been an effective way for ABATE of PA to prepare its members and officers to properly represent ABATE, and update the members on current legislation affecting motorcyclists. It's a way to ensure, as lobbyists, bikers are familiar with the details of proposed legislation and issues, and have the knowledge to support or oppose it. It's also the way ABATE trains the chapter officers, and future officers, to manage chapter business.

To address the motorcycle issues in Pennsylvania, ABATE hosted a Panel Discussion with members of PennDOT, the PA State Police, Senator John Wozniak, State Representative Mark Keller, Representative Frank Burns, and representatives from the Motorcycle Riders Foundation and the American Motorcyclist Association.

Among the many interactive training workshops offered at the seminar were sessions addressing motorcycle safety, motorcycle sound management, issues at the state and federal level, Public Relations, and Communications. The focus was on current and proposed legislative issues, and how to manage ABATE as a successful organization to deal with the legislation.

The focal point of the weekend was the Awards Banquet. Speaking at the dinner was Lou Petrucci, from the Rhode Island Motorcyclists Association. Petrucci became a registered lobbyist in 1978, working tirelessly for Rhode Island's motorcyclists. As a promoter of motorcycle safety, he serves as a certified instructor for the Motorcycle Safety Foundation since 1985, and actively teaches more than a dozen classes each year.

Highlighting the Awards Banquet was the presentation of the prestigious Ed Fruecht, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award. Ed was a well-known motorcyclist and senior member of the ABATE of PA Board of Directors who suffered fatal injuries in a motorcycle collision on May 2, 1998, while on his way to Harrisburg to attend the annual Rights Rally. Ed was an MSF certified motorcycle safety instructor, an active member of the Harley Owners Group, member of the American Motorcyclist Association and the Motorcycle Riders Foundation and a supporter and fundraiser for the Shriners Children's Hospital. This year, the award was proudly presented to Mark Schultz from the Delaware Valley Chapter for his tireless efforts and contributions to the motorcycling community. He currently serves as Assistant Coordinator for ABATE of PA, and has held numerous officer positions in the organization. Mark has demonstrated strong leadership in all his efforts, most notably in the Annual Delaware Valley ABATE Toy Run in Philadelphia.

By the end of the L&L Seminar, approximately \$31,000 was raised for BikePAC, the Political Action Committee for Pennsylvania's motorcyclists, thanks to the generous contributors of auction items. Since its inception in 1986, BikePAC has contributed to biker-friendly candidates for the State Senate and House of Representatives.

A.B.A.T.E. is the "Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education". It is an organization of motorcyclists dedicated to the protection of the individual rights of motorcyclists through political change, public education, and charitable works. ABATE is active in the elimination of unfair legislation as it concerns motorcyclists; promoting motorcycle safety through both motorist and rider education; and improving the image of motorcyclists to the general public.

ABATE's goal and purpose is to keep motorcyclists, members, and the public informed, to promote safe riding habits, and to encourage favorable legislation for motorcyclists. This is accomplished through a monthly newsletter, e-mail alerts, safety & education programs, working with the state and federal legislators, and voter registration promotion.

Since 1983, A.B.A.T.E. has represented the interests of motorcyclists riding Pennsylvania's roads. Through a variety of programs, A.B.A.T.E. is working to protect and preserve the rights of over 800,000 licensed motorcyclists.