

MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA

The Siren

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

OF THE MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS OF CALIFORNIA

June/July 2024

2024 Mid-Year Edition

Doug Wayne, President
Oakland P.D. - Retired

- We just finished our annual MMOC motorcycle ride last week. This year we traveled through the Los Padres National Forest. We had some new riders who were guests, an MMOC member who hadn't been on a ride in quite a long time, and then some of the usual suspects. The weather was perfect and the riding had some twists and turns, but not necessarily related to the roads. For more information please read the "Ride Recap" later in this issue.
- We are all set for the 2024 Convention/Cruise to Alaska. We have fifty-five people signed up for the cruise. We will have a brief general membership meeting on Saturday, 17 Aug 24, in order to fulfill our by-laws' obligation. I will send an email to the MMOC members with information regarding the meeting.
- I am sad to report that since the last issue of the Siren there have been the passing of many prominent, long-time members of the MMOC. Please take time to read about each of them at the end of this issue.

Future MMOC Events

2025 - 32nd Annual Motorcycle Ride

During the last ride we discussed possible locations for the 2025 ride and we have tentatively set a location to Hell's Canyon in Idaho. Stay tuned for more detailed information from Dewey Pressnell - Ride Director.

2025 - Annual Convention

This may be the most important convention MMOC will ever have. At the 2021 convention the membership voted to dissolve MMOC in 2028 if we did not have new directors, President, Vice President and positions filled for the tasks needed to run this organization by the 2025 convention. Those positions and tasks are listed on the next page. To date, those positions have not been filled. We are still quite some time away from the 2025 convention so there is still time to get involved. **It's up to YOU!** The convention will be in SoCal. I am looking at Temecula as a possible location. If any of you have other suggestions please contact me.

The History of the Siren

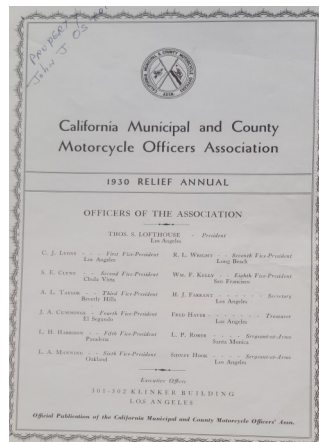
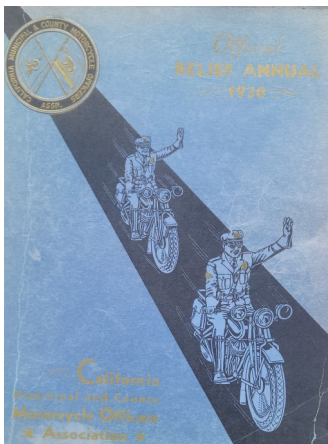
The first publication was in 1930 as THE OFFICIAL RELIEF ANNUAL OF THE CALIFORNIA MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION.

This magazine had articles written by members of the Board of Directors themselves, and a few submitted by others in various branches of law enforcement who wrote about road safety and safe driving habits. The advertisers were mainly from the major movie studios at that time, other advertisers were obtained by the general membership.

After twenty-seven issues of the magazine, the year of 1957 brought some changes. The organization officially became THE MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS of CALIFORNIA and the annual publication renamed the SIREN, very appropriate for a magazine devoted to motorcycle officers.

In the time when loyalty, longevity and tradition are words either foreign or ignored concepts, it is with pride that we acknowledge ninety-four years of THE SIREN, the only official magazine of THE MUNICIPAL MOTORCYCLE OFFICERS of CALIFORNIA.

Research by: Gene Gray (Lt. retired Pasadena P.D. & Past President)



MMOC Positions and Duties

I've listed the positions and duties that make up 99% of the work to keep this organization functioning. You will see that many "Positions" are currently filled, however they are all available as ALL of the people in those positions have been there for many years. If you are not sure if you want to become a Director but would like to know a bit more about how we operate you can certainly take on one of the "Duties" listed to get your feet wet. Also, ANY MEMBER can attend the Zoom board meetings, which will also give you some insight as to MMOC's inner workings. I have formulated a list of functions for the below listed positions and duties which I can discuss with you.

Once again, the future of the organization is up to you!

Positions

Director 2-year terms

- President (Filled—Wayne)
- Vice-president (Filled—Hodson)
- Director (Filled—Pressnell)
- Director (Filled—T. Bailey)
- Director (Vacant)

Staff – no specific time limit

- Treasurer (Filled—Gray)
- Secretary (Filled—Nishiyama)

Duties

- Siren Newsletter Editor (Wayne)
- Membership Renewal Coordinator (Wayne)
- Website Webmaster (Wayne)
- Annual Ride Coordinator (Pressnell)
- Annual Convention Coordinator (Wayne)
- "Every 15 Minutes" Donation Coordinator (Wayne)
- Events Coordinator (vacant)

Contact me for further information:

Doug Wayne - dwayne@mmoc.org

Snags, Snafus & Mysteries with “Magellan”

Zero day (Monday) – Meet & greet at the Santa Maria Inn. Ride Director Ed Pressnell (OPD ret.), Cliff Rezendes (Antioch PD ret.) and myself met in Brentwood (the real one in the East Bay - NorCal) on Monday. The ole ride Director promised me we would not spend much time on I-5 (yep, he wanted to take that route to the coast). I-5 is one of my least favorite roads to ride. It took us 3 hrs. to get to Harris Ranch of which 2.5 hrs. were on (you guessed it) I-5. Thanks Dewey. Steve Armbrister (Bakersfield PD ret.) was waiting for us. The day before he had ridden from Oregon to join us.

After lunch the ole Ride Director fooled us again by taking a circuitous route to the Santa Maria Inn which included splitting traffic for about 10 miles on Hwy-101.



Nevertheless, we made it to the hotel where we met Kerry Ray, LAPD ret. (rode from

Idaho to meet us), his riding partner, Greg Khougaz (MMOC guest & non PoPo), and Mike DePasquale LAPD ret. (MMOC guest) and his 2-up lady friend, Lisa. We discussed the upcoming week’s activities, had a few pops, dinner, and then off we went.

Day 1 (Tuesday) – Ride-Director Pressnell set the start time at 0900 hrs. SHARP! So, after he finished breakfast around 0910 hrs. kickstands were up somewhere around 0930 hrs. (that was for Past Ride -Director Brown’s benefit).

We headed out CA-166, where we all began to settle into our new group dynamics and riding styles. We turned onto CA-33 where we made the customary stop at the Santa Barbara Pistachio Co. Aside from the NUMEROUS roadway construction delays and stops, my next stop was right after I tried to upshift with my heel shifter and found it was no longer attached to my motorcycle. Back-tracking a couple miles is where I found it the middle of the lane. We continued the ride with the intention of having lunch at the Deer Lodge, a legendary biker spot. Simple ride, you’d think, straight down CA-33 into Ojai. However, Ride Director Pressnell had another idea, making a left turn onto a not so well maintained road. About 7 miles later he realized that was a mistake. **The positive?** There was a good photo-op at the point where we turned around.



Now, what I didn’t mention, and what is important to remember for this next part, is Mike DePasquale, who resides about 40 miles from the Deer Lodge, knows that area like the back of his hand and did not make the left turn like the rest of us sheep. He continued to the Deer Lodge knowing we would have to get there eventually. So here we are, the sheep back on CA-33 me at the sweep position. At some point Kerry R. pulls over and waves me by. I’m thinking it’s a sudden restroom break. When the rest of us get to the Deer Lodge Greg K. said Kerry turned around to find Mike D. Of course I was bewildered because I was about 10’ away from Mike D. Somehow Kerry and Greg, who had audio coms on their motors, talked themselves into thinking Mike had gone down somewhere along the route because they never saw him not make the errant turn. While Kerry made his “Rescue” effort we all waited at 20 minutes for his return. Oh, did I

mention that the Deer Ridge restaurant is closed Mondays & Tuesdays? “Ye olde” ride director hadn’t checked. Go figure! **The positive?** Mike led us to



lunch at a real cool spot along the ocean beach. All good!

Day 2 (Tuesday) – Another great weather day for riding. If you recall in the last issue I spoke about the service veterans on bicycles Director Pressnell and I escorted from Santa Cruz to SoCal last October. Today we

traveled on many of the same roads (Foxyn Canyon and Stagecoach). However, instead of riding those roads at 3,4,5,& 6 m.p.h. during the escort, today we traveled them at 30,40,50 & 60 m.p.h.! Oh boy, what a difference (I hope **MMOC member Ken**

Culwell, back in Kentucky is reading this as he was



Mike & Lisa at Fess Parker Winery

also on the escort in October). We stopped at the beautiful Fess Parker Winery where Greg K.

bought some wine for dinner later that

night. Excellent! Another stop which Ride Director Pressnell stated was his main priority on this entire

ride was Going to Michael Jackson’s Neverland Ranch. We only got to the front gate, but that was good enough for his photo-op.



So far on this ride there seems to be one constant, and that is the planned restaurant, for our lunch stop, is closed, as it was on this day.

The positive? Mike found a cool spot for lunch at the Maverick Saloon in Santa



Ynez. The night ended with a fantastic dinner across the street from the hotel, the iconic Shaw’s Steakhouse, est. 1953.



L to R—Dewey, Kerry, Steve, Greg, Doug, Mike, Lisa, Cliff

Day 3 (Thursday)

– Keeping with the snafus, snags & mysteries of this year’s ride Thursday did not disappoint us. As we were ready to journey off for a fun day of riding, Steve A. couldn’t start his bike. After checking multiple possible issues (bike was completely dead, electrically), we determined it was his battery. A quick run to Batteries+ and he had his new battery and a running bike. However, when he started it he found some disturbing signs, the fuel gauge wasn’t working and his “check engine” light stayed on. So much for the relaxing ride through the wine country rather, it was off to the nearest Triumph dealer, 120 miles south to Thousand Oaks. That was the extent of our 240 mile ride that day. **The positive?** If you’ve ever read my past ride recaps I always say it’s a good ride if we ride near any body of water. Well, the Pacific ocean certainly qualifies as a body of water, and we got an eyeful during the day’s ride.

Day 4 (Friday) – We had departures by Kerry, Greg, Mike & Lisa. We all said our goodbyes and they were off. The core-four (Dewey, Steve, Cliff and me) took a leisurely ride to Pismo Beach and the surrounding areas. This would be the only day without a snag (with the exception of “ye olde” Ride Director missing a turn putting us, unwillingly, back



onto the freeway for 5 miles). Short ride day, no mysteries.

(Saturday) As the core-four got ready to head home, there was one straggler, “Ye Olde” ride director. Steve pulled alongside me in the parking lot and said, “What’s Magellan up to now?” That pretty much summed up the week’s ride.

Addendum from “Ye Olde” Ride Director:

Yes, everything the President Wayne said in the above article is true; yes I made a wrong turn. But then again, I always make wrong turns. I have found great roads by doing so. To quote Daniel Boone “I have never been lost but I have been confused for several weeks.” So, as I sit down for next year’s ride, possibly to Hells Canyon, Idaho, I will keep my map for Oklahoma handy just in case I make a wrong turn or two. If members want to take a ride where everything is plotted out and Vanilla go join a Harley Davidson HOG Chapter. But if you want to go down a road and find things you don’t normally see like a

camel grazing with goats or The Neverland Gate, come ride with us.



Dewey
“Ye Olde” Ride Director

Old Flame...

A couple was dining out when the wife noticed a familiar face at the bar. She recognized him as an old flame.

“Honey,” she said to her husband, as she pointed out the man, “that guy at the bar has been drinking like that since I left him seven years ago.”

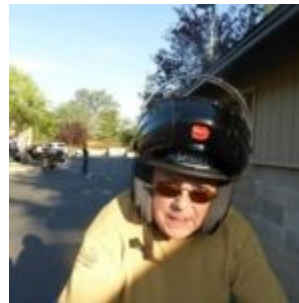
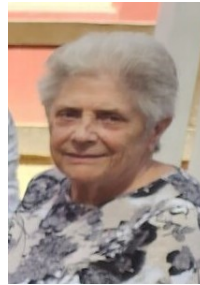
Her husband replied, “That’s silly, no one celebrates that much!”

In Memoriam

Mary Ann Mann

Born: 1944

Died: 1 February, 2024



Mary Ann was an MMOC “Widow” member. She was married to the late MMOC member, Michael Mann, Broadmoor P.D.

After Mike passed she continued to attend MMOC conventions and rides. I first met Mary Ann while on one of those rides. She was a real trooper, riding in 100+ degrees, hunched over the gas tank on her Honda CB929. On that ride she experienced heat exhaustion but gutted it out. I would see her at many of the conventions, including our last convention in Santa Maria. Her best “buddy” at those events was Dennis Brown, as you’d always see them sneak off to smoke their cigarettes.

Mary Ann passed away after a brief illness. She had many friends in her small enclave in Daly City who said she will be sorely missed. R.I.P. Mary Ann.



Lionel Thomas Hess

Born: July 11, 1934

EOW: April 19, 2024

San Francisco Police Dept.

Joined MMOC in 1973 &

Past Director



(abridged obituary—for the full obituary [click here](#))

Lionel Hess passed away April 19 after a brief illness with his loved ones near, only a few months shy of his 90th Birthday.

He is survived by his much-loved wife of nearly 64 years, Helen, and his three daughters, Nadine Hess, Natalie Collins (John Collins), Nissa Hess and his two grandchildren, CE Collins, and Jack Collins. He was born 7/11/34 to Magdalen Hess and John Hess in Hollywood California.

Lionel grew up in San Francisco after about age 3, with his mother and Grandmother and he spent time in Los Angeles over the summers with his father, an LA Firefighter.

At the age of 17 he joined the US Marines with his mother's signature of approval. In his years in the Marines, he was stationed in Kodiak Alaska, and Japan.

After the Marines he returned to San Francisco and began classes at City College of San Francisco while also working nights as a Railroad Police Officer, and a brief stint as Daly City Police. His ambition was to be a Police officer with San Francisco Police Department.

He worked for SFPD in a variety of roles, including "Tac" also known as SWAT Team, rode Motorcycles in Traffic, and a little dabble in undercover work too. He retired as a Lieutenant on his 50th Birthday.

From MMOC Member Rene Laprevette (SFPD ret.)

Lionel was a solid guy and hugely funny. I recall working with him back during the on-going Zebra Murders when the Crime Prevention Company was detailed in civilian clothes/vehicles flooding the Western Addition at night hoping to on-view the Zebra Killers in progress.

I was on the Honda Unit at the time and we were riding our personal motorcycles, while Lionel was dressed as a postal carrier driving a right hand drive mail truck with a .12 gauge shotgun in his mailbag.



Jimmy Lee Conner
Born: January 26, 1943
EOW: May 3, 2024
Santa Cruz Police Dept.
Joined MMOC in 1985 &
Past President



(Abridged obituary—to read the full obituary [click here](#))

Jim was born in Spartanburg, South Carolina to Oren and Tillie Conner. He was the first of three boys. When Jim was 17 months old, his father returned home from the war. This was the first time they had met. In 1958, the family said goodbye to their family and friends and loaded into their station wagon. Along with his aunt and two cousins, they headed to California for better work opportunities. They settled in Pasadena where weekend trips included fishing, camping and exploring the western movie sets in Southern California. Jim graduated from John Muir High School in 1962. In 1964 Jim and his young family moved to Santa Cruz County. In 1969, Jim joined the Santa Cruz Police Department as a reserve officer and in 1970, he was hired as a full-time police officer. Jim loved his career, the people he worked with, and he was proud to serve his community. He served with honor as a Motorcycle Officer and was proud when his son joined the force. Together, they rode motors until his retirement in 1998. Officer Jim is survived by his children Kary Bisagno (Sal), David, Michael, Austin, and Ashley Benedict (Chris), ten grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, his brother Jerry (Gena) as well as numerous nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his son Rudy, brother Billy and niece Tracy.

From MMOC Director Tom Bailey (SCPD ret.)

It is with a heavy heart that my first article after rejoining the Board of Directors is reporting on the passing of Jimmy Conner, Santa Cruz PD Retired.

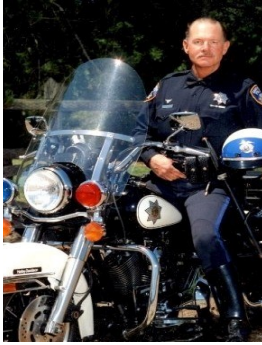
Jimmy, aka Jimmy Lee, J.C., Dad, Papa Jim, “Older Than Dirt”, Officer Conner (and other “loving” names I can’t mention here!), began his career with S.C.P.D July 3, 1969, retiring as an Assistant Team Leader after 29 years on May 15, 1998. During that time, he worked Patrol, Investigations, the Downtown Unit, Field Training Officer, Firearms Instructor, and of course his most cherished position as a Motor Officer. Some of the best times we had was splitting traffic on Ocean Street down through Beach Street, looking for open containers in the cars.

J.C. enjoyed nothing more than riding a motor, both on or off duty, flying his plane, spending time with his family and friends camping or on a lake, and kicking back wearing a cowboy hat with a drink in one hand and a cigar in the other. He often said, “A motorcycle rider is just a frustrated cowboy”.

After his son, Mike Conner, joined the PD, he was very proud that they were the only father and son to be assigned to the motor unit together. While Jim had competed previously with other partners, the highlight during this assignment was when they were the first father and son team to compete in the Pacific Grove Motorcycle Competition in 1996, coming in 5th Place out of 15 – 20 teams in the riding competition.

In addition to serving several years on the MMOC Board of Directors, Jimmy was President four times, 1994, 1995, 2000 and 2003.

In closing, I’ll use his favorite parting words, “Keep the rubber side down and the painted side up”! Rest in peace my friend.



F. Keith Thomas
Born: August 31st, 1953
EOW: May 19, 2024
Santa Rosa Police Dept.
Joined MMOC in 1990 &
Past President



(abridged obituary. To read the full obituary [click here](#))

F. Keith Thomas was born on August 31, 1953 in Roseville, CA to James Robert (Bob) and Clotella (Clo) Marie Thomas. Keith is survived by his brother, James “Kim” Thomas, his wife, Alison Thomas and their two sons, Keith’s nephews, Meritt and Erikson, as well as extended family members. He is also survived by his beloved parrot, “Gracie”.

Keith, through hard work and dedication was blessed with an illustrious career. In 1969, at the age of 18, he became the first licensed 18 year old ambulance driver in the State of California.

In 1973 Keith then moved on to become a part-time firefighter, and later that same year accepted a position with the Rocklin Police Department, becoming the youngest police officer in the city’s history at the age of 20.

For Keith’s entire life his first and foremost passion was being a law enforcement officer and servant of the community. It was not just what he did, it is who he was. He was an exceptional officer and served in many different capacities including foot beat patrol, patrol officer, homicide detective and motorcycle officer as well as serving as President and Vice President of the Municipal Motorcycle Officers of California (MMOC). Keith received many awards during his 32 year career as a police officer, including the Medal of Valor in 1986 for running into a burning building and saving a man’s life, and the Silver Meritorious Medal in 1999 for chasing down a robbery suspect while off duty.

F. Keith Thomas will be deeply missed but forever remembered in the hearts of those that loved him.

(From the Santa Rosa P.D. Facebook page)

Honoring the Legacy of Retired Motor Officer Keith Thomas

It is with heavy hearts that we bid farewell to a true hero of our community, retired SRPD Officer Keith Thomas. Keith recently passed away, and today we remember and celebrate the life and service of a remarkable individual whose dedication to duty left an indelible mark on all who knew him.

Keith began his career in public safety in 1969, becoming the first 18-year-old ambulance driver in California. In 1973, Keith became a part-time firefighter, and later the same year, Keith accepted a position with the Rocklin Police Department, becoming the youngest police officer in the history of the department at age 20.

In 1977, Keith joined the Santa Rosa Police Department where he spent the remainder of his career. Keith had a variety of assignments with SRPD, including being a detective on the Violent Crimes Investigations Team, but it was his many years as a Motor Officer that most people associate with Keith. Keith retired from SRPD in 2004 following 27 years of service to the Santa Rosa community, and over 32 years in the law enforcement profession.

As we mourn the loss of a beloved colleague, let us also take comfort in the knowledge that Keith’s legacy will endure through the countless lives he touched and the memories he leaves behind. Though he may no longer walk among us, his spirit will forever remain a guiding light, inspiring us to uphold the principles of honor, duty, and service to the community.

Rest easy, Officer Keith Thomas. Your watch may have ended, but your legacy will live on in our hearts forever. Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and the countless lives you touched along the way. May you find peace in the eternal embrace of heroes.