

Greetings Fellow Freedom Warriors!

I hope this finds you all well as we begin to settle into that time of year where there's less riding and more community service, do gooder shit happening in your communities and perhaps your chapters. Not that there's anything wrong with that, not a thing but I wonder if that's why you joined ABATE if you've been a member for 10 years or more? Is it?

I've been a member for over 10 years, and it certainly wasn't why I joined. I was hoping to help get the helmet law changed by being part of the organization that had a history of pushing for this type of legislation change. It was still an issue then, but it obviously didn't stay on the agenda for too much longer after I joined.

What happened? There was a shift in priorities along with letting in some creeping defeatism. We invested years on that issue, at one point got a hearing and even had a Rep introduce a pilot program to collect data but unfortunately had no good results in the end and ultimately we gave up.

Why did we give it up though? Did we let ourselves get talked out of it by other members who lost their desire to ever see that law get changed? Did we accept the defeatist attitude as being acceptable in general? Did we just buy into the idea that it was more important to give up and go sell raffle tickets to win a nice quilt?

What happened, and be honest, do you know folks that left ABATE because we as an organization accepted this defeat and just decided 'why bother'? I know of a few, and really don't blame them. I say all this, to bring awareness to how it affects our ability to grow when we call ourselves A Brotherhood AGAINST Totalitarian Enactments, but really have given up on the mission as we knew it.

Why would anybody who hasn't been around awhile and remembers how things were and the good fights that got fought before I joined want to be involved when we are more interested in putting our efforts into a toy run and burying a Christmas tree with toys than getting a totalitarian, nanny-state law changed? But that's who we are bringing in as new members because that's what we are presenting to folks who ride and how they see us when we ride now.

Again, I'm not against the community service stuff; it's in our bylaws as a requirement for each chapter to do at least one a year. But we've lost some good bikers who've moved on, and we've accepted the defeatist attitudes for things some of us thought were important enough to join and to get involved with. We aren't bringing bikers into the organization anymore; we're just not, in general. What's worse is that, as mentioned, we've lost some solid bikers who've moved on, who did care and participated when the organization cared about biker issues. In fact, we just lost

another chapter, and I'd be willing to guess the reason why they moved on was for the reasons I talked about here. I know this is likely to be the case because they were the only chapter that showed up at the state Capitol when the rest of us stayed home for Black Thursday during COVID. It's a damn shame; we lost some bikers.

See ya at the next toy run; hope I win a nice quilt in a raffle that does some wonderful community service, do gooder shit.

Stay Cool !

Chad Holtquist
West Side Ambassador at Large



