

Howdy Midstate,

Well, it appears if we want to have warm weather in a month that is typically cold, we will have a chili cook off! The second attempt this year and another 70 degree day full of sunshine!! We did have a fair amount of people “brave” the weather and attend the event at the KC Hall. We had 8 chili entries, 3 mild, 3 medium and 2 hot. 1<sup>st</sup> place mild was Sammie Smith, 1<sup>st</sup> place medium was Todd Graden and 1<sup>st</sup> place hot went to Rob Kinney. That is from my weak memory and I apologize I can’t remember the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners...sorry! The auction was a success...Bob Dunn handled the auctioneer duty, Mark Milligan and Todd & Kristi Graden assisted. We had a lot of donations from area businesses, thank you to Carol, Sammie and Matt for running around town seeking donations. We also had donations from Doug & Bridgette Crawford and Ken & Lila Koches, thank you everyone! The list of local businesses include: Gagne Distributing, The Sun Room, Amenities on Main, Cottage Rose, Karma, Family Video, Merle Norman/In Good Taste, Johnny Bobs, Westside, T-Bird Lounge, Main Cross Auto, United Riders Motorcycle Club and Carol & Rogers Bar...if I missed anyone at all, please accept my apology. Bring it to my attention and I will recognize it in next month’s article. If you get the chance, stop in and thank the sponsors! I really appreciate everyone who showed up and all the help we had. Thank you also to the KC Hall staff for opening up the facility on a Sunday for us. We were able to make a donation to their roof fund with part of the proceeds from the event.

OUR NEXT EVENT IS OUR BOWLING TOURNAMENT ON JANUARY 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2010 AT THE OLDE BOWL IN TAYLORVILLE. I do not have the flyer ready but it will be in the paper in January and I will have them available at our December meeting. I have heard from a lot of people who plan on attending this and I look forward to a great turn out. We have room for 72 bowlers and will be signing up from 1:00 – 2:00. Get there early to reserve your spot! Supermario Speedwagon will be set to rock at around 7:00 that evening. Hope to see you there!

Attendance at our last meeting was very low. I appreciate those of you who were there. Our membership has dropped to 143 active...the lowest I have seen it in 6 years! I know that a lot of Chapters are experiencing the same thing we are...what I don’t know is why. We see the same 12 to 15 people at all the meetings and all the events...some members have not been to either in months, maybe even for a couple years. Everyone who joined A.B.A.T.E. of Illinois, Inc. did so for the same reason, to protect our freedoms. I would really like to see some new faces at our functions...you can come hang out with people who have a lot in common with you...renew an old friendship with a fellow member or start a new one. I realize we all have busy lives and financial pressures have taken a toll on everyone...but it doesn’t cost a lot or take a lot of time to be an ACTIVE member of a great organization like ours. I welcome any and all feedback from all of our members...let me know what we can do to improve YOUR Chapter. We have a constant fight on our hands and need all the help we can get! See you soon??

Our next meeting will be Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> at the KC Hall in Taylorville at 7:00. We will be electing officers for the new year...it is likely that not many changes will take place. The efforts of all our officers are much appreciated by all members. We will need to start discussing our events calendar for next year as well. We have not had an organized ride for a couple years now and I

think we need to give that another shot. If you have ideas on a good ride, come share your thoughts. We don't necessarily need to hold a poker run; we can get together and ride somewhere for lunch...I am sure most of us would be up for a ride to just about anywhere for just about anything! We will also need to get started on our planning for our Chapter party next summer...or next fall...any ideas on this event??? Bring em out to the meeting... Let's work together and embrace the brotherhood that is A.B.A.T.E.!

It appears the good riding days are just about gone until next spring. I know a lot of us will still take advantage of a sunny 40 degree day this winter provided the roads are clear. Stay alert and ride defensively! We all know that there are a lot of distractions for the cagers and they may not have time to watch out for you! Hunting and harvest are both in full swing now too! Both of these events get the deer moving so keep your eyes open for Bambi also!

I guess that's all for now. Thanks for listening!

Until next time, RIDE SAFE, RIDE FREE!

Carry on...

Smitty