



THE WESTERN FRONT

By Patrick Lambie

The newly-launched Alberta Motorcycle Safety Society aims to keep the streets safer for riders

Along with almost every interest or passion that we are engaged in come challenges, frustrations and even occasional obstacles. However, while a golfer may struggle with perfecting a swing, lack of tee times or a playing partner who can't count, the realities awaiting motorcyclists can lead to life-altering injuries and death. As with any kind of risk there are choices such as avoidance, acceptance and mitigation, but more often than not, many of us—me included—gravitate to complaining. This is completely unproductive, of course, and only serves to draw others into a negative dialogue. So is there a better way? For an answer let me introduce, or reintroduce as the case may be, Liane Langlois.

Many readers will remember Liane from her story on contesting the Bonneville Motorcycle Speed Trials in the December 2014 issue of *Inside Motorcycles*. As it turns out, riding fast is just one of the skills that the Edmonton resident brings to the world of motorcycling. In addition to living out her dream of taking on the salt in Utah, Liane is a force to be reckoned with in the motorcycle community, organizing the annual Kootenay Rat Raid in British Columbia and working diligently to keep Edmonton city officials informed and engaged on the impact of municipal noise bylaws that inappropriately target motorcyclists. Along the way she still finds time in her schedule to rack up serious mileage on her Triumph Speedmaster and Daytona 955i. For all of her accomplishments to date, her latest undertaking has the potential to reach the widest audience yet and impact the lives of motorcyclists in Edmonton and beyond.

Frustrated by the seemingly endless string of motorcycle accidents occurring in Edmonton and an apparent lack of awareness or concern on the part of the non-riding public, Liane decided that

something more had to be done. Anxious to find an avenue for the creation of an awareness campaign that would actually coincide with the start of riding season, as opposed to the Alberta's unique approach that designates July as Motorcycle Awareness Month, she started a search for a media partner that could bring her vision to life. During the summer of 2015, a conversation with long-time Edmonton media personality Marty Forbes became the turning point in this story. While Liane's request had been for contact information and introductions to local media, Forbes, himself a long time rider, was so impressed with her passion that he suggested that they work together on this project.

Ten months later (after countless hours of volunteer time), in May of this year the Alberta Motorcycle Safety Society (AMSS) launched its inaugural awareness campaign, with the generous support of corporations including a donation of video production from Shaw Communications. Consisting of a series of public service announcements that will air on local television and radio, this well-executed plan has been designed to not only remind everyone that motorcycles have returned to the streets, but also employs a unique approach through the introduction of a human element.

Four out of every ten motorcycle-involved collisions in Edmonton during 2015—including two fatalities—resulted from vehicles making illegal left-hand turns into the path of an oncoming motorcycle. Given that fact, it should come as no surprise that the first video produced by AMSS targets this very specific issue. Anxious to dispel the faceless image of motorcyclists, this first video is being followed by an aptly named "We Are" campaign. Featuring examples of everyday riders from the Edmonton area, these segments emphasize the fact that behind every visor there is a person with family and friends whose lives can be forever changed by the careless actions of an inattentive driver.

Moving forward, Liane (who currently serves as the president of AMSS), Vice President Marty Forbes, and the rest of the AMSS team are already working on expanding their awareness campaigns to encompass rider responsibilities as well as the importance of proper riding gear and mechanical compliance with the Alberta Traffic Safety Act. In addition, based on the success of this initial launch and the overwhelming support received from all forms of media, the group is considering expanding beyond Edmonton into other areas of the province. While all of these goals may seem overwhelming to a casual observer, Liane has already proven that hard work, perseverance and whole lot of passion can accomplish a great deal. With that in mind, hopefully the next time I find myself complaining, there will be a moment of pause where say to myself, *What are you going to do about it?*

