

Wendy Moon, staunch supporter of TEAM OREGON and outspoken critic of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) died suddenly at her home in St. Louis, Missouri on January 11, 2011 of a heart attack. She was 57. She is survived by her four children, Rose, Jessica, John and Daniel Leifeld. Private services have been held.

Most of the motorcycle safety community knew Wendy as *Moonrider*, author of the thoughtful provocative and well-researched blog she established on *Journalspace* in 2005. She was unwavering in following her motto "Holding Powerful Interests Accountable".



Before she appeared on the motorcycle safety scene, Wendy was a writer, columnist and author for more than 16 years. With a master's degree in theology, she wrote for a wide variety of publications, including *Screenline*, *National Catholic Reporter*, *The Family*, and *Star Observer*. She was a columnist for *New Covenant* and *Catholic Parent* magazines and wrote two books on religion. She was also a founding editor of the *International Journal of Motorcycle Studies*. It's easy to see what a complex, remarkable and engaging person Wendy was, when you contrast these with her carefully documented reports on motorcycle safety issues, her screenplay for the movie *She-Devils on Wheels* and her post as Assistant Lecturer at the University of Southern California.

In 2004 David Hough, Fred Rau and Wendy researched and published a series of articles in *Motorcycle Consumer News* that sparked a national dialog examining the relationship between the MSF

and the motorcycle manufacturers who finance and direct its activities. Wendy's tireless and tenacious research exposed the motorcycle industry's alleged plan for monopolizing motorcycle training. It also revealed a disturbing trend in fatalities and near-fatal injuries to students in MSF-approved rider training courses.

Wendy and her readers suffered a terrible blow in 2009 when the *Journalspace* servers experienced a catastrophic failure. Her *Moonrider* blog vaporized along with hundreds of other blogs. Four years of essays and commentary were gone. Even before that, Wendy was discouraged and ready to give up on her blog. She had invested thousands of dollars on her own, not to mention the countless hours of research and analysis. She was ready to quit, but she wrote:

"I was very discouraged at the time – I felt I had worked very hard for years to little effect . . . and now it was gone forever . . . I thought about it a lot yesterday and decided there is a value in having an alternative view of the efficacy and safety of the Motorcycle Safety Foundation rider training curriculum available on the Internet . . . What was a disaster for Journalspace, then, gives me a chance to re-create a body of work that gives a non-industry and non-governmental perspective on rider training and motorcycle safety . . . So that's what I'm going to do over time—I'm just going to do it a little differently. And I'll continue to write on issues that have come up recently and those that will come up in the future."

So *Moonrider* became *Moonrider Redux*, rising from the ashes as Wendy re-established her blog at wordpress.com and took up the challenge again. She continued her quest for the truth until her death. Her selfless dedication to motorcycling and motorcycle safety created a priceless archive of data and history. Wendy was key in opening a conversation that continues to reverberate throughout the motorcycle safety community. It promises to forever change and improve motorcycle training. By questioning the "Sacred Truths" that many had accepted for years, she revealed the greasy underside of the motorcycle safety industry and inspired us to ask our own questions.

Wendy was a personal friend to many of us. Even when we disagreed, I admired her tenacity and razor-sharp B.S. slicer. She loved motorcycling and motorcyclists. She was persistent, resourceful and brave. This was dedicated to another departed friend who shared Wendy's remarkable qualities. It is now dedicated to Wendy, too:

### **Endurance**

We race the lost trails of the galaxy,  
thundering down from hyperspace  
for gas and Gatorade,  
a hastily scribbled note,  
time, date, mileage and a half-forgotten quote,  
from a crumbling spire  
on the abandoned shore of Mare Copernicus

Alone together on our quest  
we dream a grail of smoke and steel,  
of headlight-lasered highway signs,  
meteors flashing through dark pines,  
immersed in wailing mustang wind  
the dusty sweetgrass scent of night,  
the fire between our wheels.

Drawn ever toward our shimmering goal,  
we run to crest the shifting tide.  
Freed by trial of spirit, flesh and heart,  
by wheeled magic fueled on breath of nameless stars,  
we shed our mortal boundaries,  
mere riders no more.  
Becoming,  
    at last,  
        The Ride.

Wendy's loss leaves a hole in our galaxy that will never be filled.

Bob Reichenberg