

JANUARY 2017

# NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride

**This month featuring:**

Choosing a helmet

Ride (Drink Wine) and Camp

Ed's Pictures from Vietnam

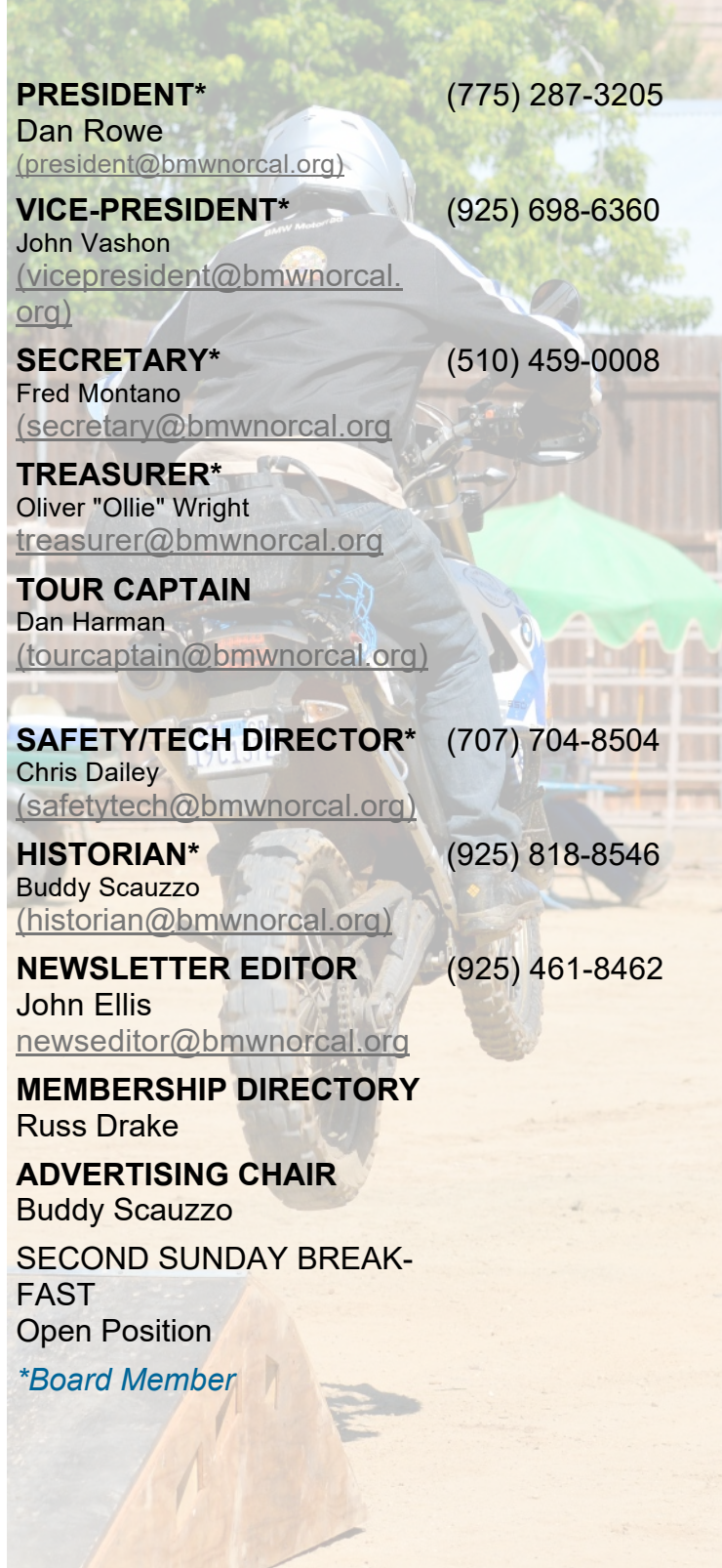
Second Sunday Breakfast Rides



BMW Motorcycle Club of Northern California



Ride to Camp  
Camp to Ride



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**SECOND SUNDAY BREAK-FAST**  
Open Position

*\*Board Member*

## Editors Corner

The January newsletter includes three rides. Sometimes I think we forget just how lucky we are living in California and are able to ride 12 months a year. In other parts of the country put the bike away in October and are only able to get it out again in April.

Although I managed to make all three rides, it's tough to wake up at 6am, shower, dress and leave the house at 7.0 when it's still dark and foggy outside. These rides with the Norcal club are pretty much the only time I ever plug in my electric jacket and put on my glove liners. I made a mistake of using my mesh over pants in the December SSBR, and I swear it took me 4 hours to thaw out when I got home.

When riding through the freezing fog at 7am I think to myself, why am I doing this, and why don't we start an hour later in the winter (hint, hint). I have to say however, that the ride always turns out to be brilliant, and I get to ride on roads I wouldn't normally if I wasn't a member of this great club. The winery campout was exceptional, and I look forward to visiting it again. I was extremely surprised we didn't get a bigger turn out. Maybe people were put off by the forecast of freezing temperatures. The secret is when the thermometer drops always put more clothes on before climbing in the bag. This way you are also ready to go in the cold morning.

Big thanks to contributors Fred Montano (for the Nov SSBR which he also led) and Mike Morlin for the winery camp out. Buddy as usual contributed some great pictures.

Thanks as well to Chris Dailey for leading the December SSBR and also reminding us all that helmets don't last for ever.

As always I am looking for newsletter content. Please!!!

Happy New Year!

*John Ellis*

## Well its time to get a new helmet! - Chris Dailey Safety Tech Director

Helmets should be replaced every 5 to 7 years max?  
Who knew?

I like the New Schuberth C4 Coming out in April 2017

*Chris Dailey*

### Schuberth C4 Press Release

Who would have thought that a flip-up helmet could look so little like a flip-up when closed? The new Schuberth C4 with its modern design were created in the Kiska studios.

The Schuberth C4 also sets new standards in terms of features, by enabling Bluetooth communication and radio reception.

Not only does it have an integrated aerial as standard, it also comes with two integrated speakers, a microphone and slots to accommodate the new SC1 optional communication system, which was developed in collaboration with Sena.



The new Schuberth C4 was developed in the Schuberth Air and Acoustics Lab. Consequently, it offers everything that has made Schuberth flip-up helmets so popular with touring riders.

Its aerodynamics assist at high speeds, even for demanding sportbike riders.

The C4's standard anti-fog face shield is designed so that its upper edge won't obscure the rider's view even in a sportbike riding position.

Despite the low weight and compact shape of the C4, the outer shell is made from a fiberglass matrix and the inner lining from special EPS foam that offers maximum impact absorption.

The proprietary Anti-Roll-Off System is included.

The Schuberth C4 will be available starting in Spring of 2017 in six different solid colors in sizes XS (53) to XXXL (65).

## Picking the Right Helmet

This is a BMW club and BMW riders don't typically ride around in beanies or Nazi helmets. They purchase proper helmets that meet necessary standards. In the past there has been controversy about which standard is the best but the one thing more important than standards is the correct fit. I have been riding motorcycles for 50 years and until about 4 years ago I had never had a helmet that fit properly, and I was too ignorant to actually understand this fact. Like many people I would go into a shop which had the biggest selection and spend hours trying on a helmet that fitted comfortably. In the end I would find one, but what I didn't realize is that I had purchased a helmet a size too big.

When riding a bike with a screen which sends the airstream over my head I was totally unaware of the mistake. However, when riding one of my old bikes without a screen at speed, I found the helmet strap pulling at my chin and the helmet making every attempt to leave my head.

The discomfort is one thing, but an ill fitting helmet will not do its job in a crash, so it is potentially dangerous as well. I really couldn't figure it out; I was buying good quality helmets such as Nolan and Shoei, so why wouldn't they fit?

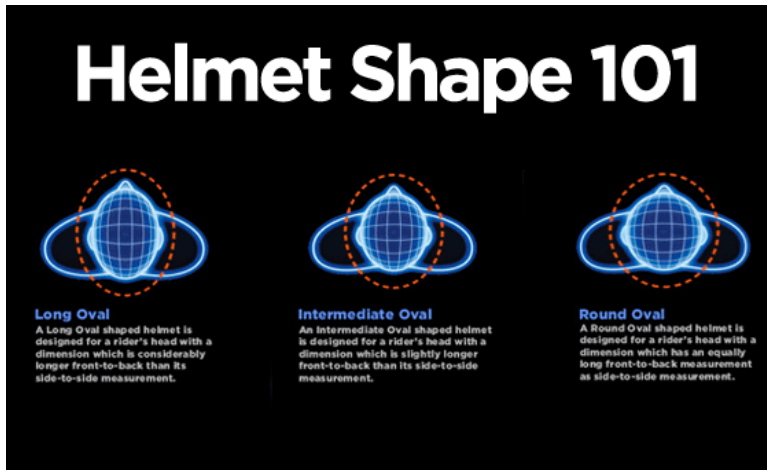
I decided to do some research and what I found surprised me. Every manufacturer makes the internals of the helmet with a different shape. The other thing to know is that

manufacturers may change the shape of the helmet when they introduce a new or revised version of an existing helmet. When the Nolan helmet I mentioned above needed replacing I went in the store to try the latest version but it did not fit. Do not assume because your current favorite helmet fits that your next one from the same manufacture will fit as well.

A few years ago I encouraged my daughter to learn to ride a motorcycle. I took her to Cycle Gear, and had her try on some of the low cost helmets. She had never worn a helmet before so she didn't really know what to expect. We found a helmet but when she was on her training course after 15 minutes she was suffering from severe head aches, with intense pressure on her forehead. It was only then that I realized that her head was malformed in the same way as mine. We both have long, oval, alien-like heads. Although others might disagree, I hadn't really considered my head to be a weird shape, and I think my daughter has a beautiful head. However, even a doting father can be wrong.

The only solution for her was an Arai Signet Q, which really is the only available, long, oval helmet. I carefully measured her head and determined she needed a size small. With an incredible stroke of luck I found one in near new condition on Craigslist and immediately we set out to purchase it. She tried it on and complained it was a bit large, but we bought it anyway. I knew it was the right

shape and size from the measurements. We took it home and ordered a slightly thicker liner, and it fit perfectly.



It's preferable you know your head shape before picking out a helmet. Look on line and helmet reviews, and there is usually a section on shape.

I personally have tried on other manufactures helmets that are claimed to be oval. Unfortunately none fits like my Arai, which is unfortunate as its a pretty expensive helmet but for now, I'm stuck with it.

*John Ellis*

## How to measure your head

The best tool for this is the soft vinyl or fiberglass seamstress or tailor's tape measure. Wrap the measuring tape around the fullest part of the head - just above the ears and about a half-inch above the eyebrows for most and take the measurement at the forehead. To get the most accurate measurement have someone help.

Take the number found above and go to the size chart for the motorcycle helmet being viewed and find the helmet size which includes this dimension in its sizing information. Each manufacturer has sizing which is specific to its own models, so only rely on the size chart produced for the make motorcycle helmet being considered.

When you try on the helmet do not be tempted to go a size up or down from the size determined by the measurement. If it doesn't fit it's probably the wrong shape for your head. Walk away and find another make.

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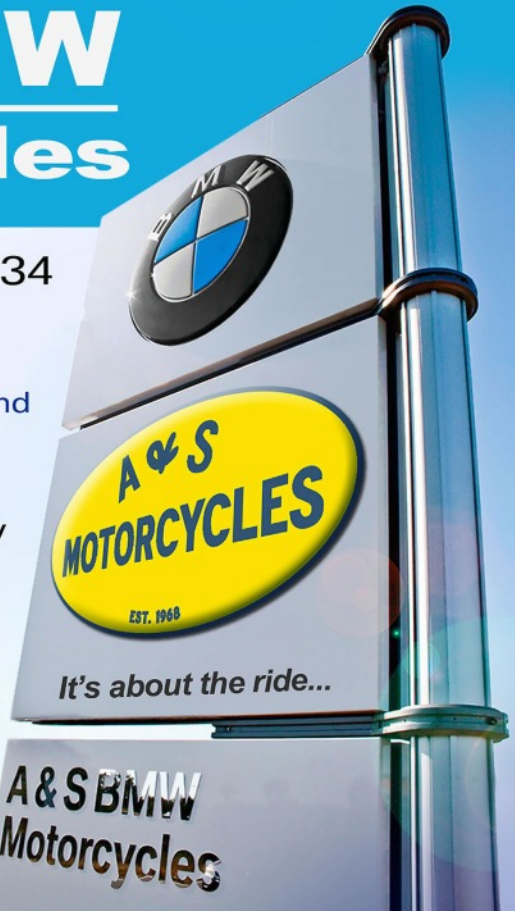
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# December Second Sunday Breakfast Ride

Chris Dailey organized and led the December SSBR, starting out from the Embers Restaurant in Pinole. About 12 riders turned up on a cold and foggy morning to participate in the excellent and cheap (for the Bay Area) breakfast fair. We then set out along the Richmond Parkway to the San Rafael Bridge, and then down 101 to the lookout over the Golden Bay Bridge. There we were met by around 12 other riders. Buddy Scauzzo took a bunch of photographs to validate the great turn out before setting out to Muir Beach and then up Highway 1 to Bodega Bay. To be frank it was pretty cold. By the time we got to Bodega Bay I was in desperate need of a coffee to get the circulation going in my hands. Based on the rush of my fellow riders to get inside, I was not the only one feeling the cold. After 30 minutes or so I was in good enough's shape to attempt the ride home.

Big thanks to Chris for organizing a great ride.



# November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Sunday Breakfast Ride

The East Bay Hills are so close to most of the NorCal Club Membership but are not very well known as beautifully scenic, aggressive curvy roads, and with some of the best views of the Bay and wonderful cities. We began our tour and ride in Emeryville at the Black Bear Restaurant. I arrived early to reserve a couple of tables for our group. To my surprise Steve Kesinger was right behind me on his beautiful K100RS. As we sat down Nick Gloyd arrived. And before long there were sixteen riders ready to have breakfast and ride.

The pre-ride meeting was on time. Dan Rowe arrived before we started. Now we had seventeen on the ride. We lined up and turned right past the Emeryville shops on one side, and the view of the new east side Bay Bridge and Treasure Island, on the other side. The fog gave a shade of gray. In the distance you could just barely see the outline of the buildings in San Francisco. Up 40<sup>th</sup> street past some of the shops on San Pablo Avenue and older housing in North Oakland. There's MacArthur Bart with all the riders going on their way to enjoy a Sunday outing. Our bikes roar as we struggle to stay together up Telegraph Ave. We see many old business establishments like hardware stores and restaurants that

have been well-maintained and interesting people sitting on outdoor tables having their morning coffee and breakfast. There's Lanesplitter's Pizza – a restaurant owned by an avid motorcyclist that

has placed classic bikes around the inside and named it for lanesplitting on the highway with a motorcycle.

We continue our ride up Claremont Avenue in Berkeley. Past the beautiful Claremont Hotel that shines with its glaring white color





and large castle like appearance. It opened its doors in 1915. It has been revered as one of America's iconic luxury hotels ever since. It overlooks the bay and has the best view of San Francisco, the Bay Bridge, and out the Golden Gate. We continue up Claremont and the road begins to wind up the Berkeley Hills. The pace quickens and we go past thick vegetation and tall trees. We reach the junction of Fish Ranch Road & Grizzly Peak. We turn up Grizzly Peak and head to Wildcat Canyon Road. As we negotiate the curves, we notice we are above the clouds. They look like a blanket covering the Bay Area. Wildcat Canyon Road is an aggressive curvy and steep ride. We turn onto Camino San Pablo with San Pablo Dam on our side. The Dam looks full and beautiful with boats and weekend activity. We turn up Alhambra Road and the backside of the dam with beautiful rolling hills, green grass, and cattle on the mountains. Time for a bladder stop at Briones State Park. Before we take off Buddy has us line up with our bikes for a club picture. Snap, Snap, Snap, and we are off again. We ride past Orinda and beautiful homes. Moraga is always pleasant and picturesque. We head up a windy road to Pinehurst, lucky there are few cars or bicyclists on the road. Now we catch Redwood Road to Castro Valley, Dublin Grade, and then Foothill Blvd. Past big beautiful homes, trees, and Castlewood Country Club to Sunol Village. We head through Livermore and catch the road to Morgan Territories. The road narrows to barely the width of a car. We zoom around curves and up the hill past a couple of oncoming cars till we reach the top and head down the difficult grade. The turns become tighter; the road has gravel and potholes. We can barely get around a Cal Fire truck coming the opposite direction. The vegetation and trees are thick and make it difficult to see around curves. We make it down to Clayton Valley road and onto Willow Pass Road and reach Franklin Canyon road. We turn towards Port Costa on McEwen Grade. This is always a challenging road to ride. It has off camber turns, long then tight curves, and descends into Port Costa and the Warehouse Café. We park our rides, order grub, and libations at the old rustic café and bar. The waitress is used to bikers and she is on the rough side of communication as we order. After a good jaw session we mount our bikes and bid farewell to all our compadres and head home. It was a very fun ride over many East Bay roads. I'm tired – time for a nap...

*Fred Montana*

## Birthday ride to Pianetta Vineyards



What a nice weekend of weather for the club meeting at Pianetta vineyards near San Miguel. The November meeting (the weekend after Thanksgiving) usually falls at the beginning of December, and this year coincided with my b-day, the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Yeah, 39, again. My wife, sweet Lucinda, gave me the gift of weekend freedom to ride.

I met up with folks at the designated café in Morgan Hill; there were maybe 10 of us. Dan Rowe took us on farm roads through Gilroy down to Hollister and Hwy 25. Road conditions were fantastic – no wet crap nor even loose gravel or rocks – and traffic was near non-existent. We maintained a pleasant pace on to our first stop in King City. It was clear, sunny, and had warmed up appreciably. Dan was going to head back to 25 on Loneoak Rd. then down to Peachtree. I wanted to add a few miles figuring that I would still arrive at the winery in the early afternoon, so I headed on to the west side of 101 on Jolon Rd then past the lakes into Paso Robles. Several riders joined me. It seems like every time I ride down G14 there are more “ranches” with their miles of shiny white fences, more wineries, and now even a new housing development just south of Lake Nacimiento.

By the time we reached P.R. it had gotten into the low 70s – perfect. We had a lazy break before heading to our destination. Eschewing the freeway, I looked for a country road to head back north. After one U-turn, Bob Berner got us on track, twice. The narrow road zigged right and left several times, then we got a good straightaway on Airport Rd, then west on River Road right to Indian Valley Rd. and to the vineyard entrance

where we found Dan and Chris Daley waiting at the gate. Dan was on the phone and got the code for the electric gate and we all rode up the hill to the winery. What an incredible setting for our camp and meeting. We were on a knoll, surrounded by oak covered coast range hills, grasses quite green from the Fall rains, and acres of vineyards, mostly Cabernet. We met the owners/winemakers, John and Caitlin Pianetta, father and daughter, and Caitlin’s sweet dog Beau, a shy female mastiff who warmed up to everyone after a while and became a frequent visitor to our tents, picnic tables and around the campfire. There was a tour of the winery, wine tasting and the opportunity to buy bottles winery-direct. It was a very welcoming and hospitable visit.

By the time the meeting was over, it was well dark with a crescent moon and Venus up. The sky later became one of those you only see from clear, remote places or a planetarium. The owner provided an ample supply of firewood in the form of old grape wood and some oak. He got it started easily with a dash of diesel. Chris kept that fire stoked so that it was giving off toasty heat at a ten foot radius. The coyotes were singing to each other across the hills.

Some folks rode to San Miguel for Mexican food at Dos Hermanos, the house recommendation; others of us cooked up our camp chow. All of us camped except for one motel man and one who rode home. It was expected to be cold, but it wasn’t bad. Once the sunrise came over the eastern hills, we were good.

Kudos to Dan Harman who booked this venue. We definitely need to return. As it was, the dozen or so of us who attended this month’s meeting had a pretty special weekend.

*Mike Morlin*







## What exactly is “Synthetic” Brake Fluid?

My brake and clutch levers were feeling a bit spongy, and seemed require to be air in bleeding off fairly regularly (see insert on how to do this), and after listening to our Tech Director, Chris Dailey recommending changing the fluid every one to two years, I decided to go for it.

The reason for this post was not to explain how to bleed the brakes/clutch but more to deal with the confusion I faced when going into my local automotive stores and Walmart to buy some DOT4 fluid.



All of the DOT4 fluid available was marked “Synthetic”. It wasn’t “Synthetic” last time I purchased it (I have the old cans to prove it). This got me worried. I was concerned they had changed the formula so that it might be incompatible with the old stuff. In the end I decided to play it safe and buy some BMW branded fluid from the dealer.

I Googled “synthetic brake fluid compatibility” and found a number of message board posts which implied the new “synthetic” stuff should not be mixed with the old stuff. Here’s an example

*“The car in question is a 1971 Morris Traveller. I have always used DOT4 brake fluid with this, and another car of similar age, with no troubles. However recently I bought another brand of DOT 4 brake fluid which had the word “Synthetic” written on it. Hmm. I don’t think my usual supplier’s bottle has this word. After topping up with the new brand, a few days later the brake master cylinder gave way such that the pedal didn’t operate any brakes”*

Scary stuff - so I decided to do a little research. **Do not believe everything you read on the web**

### Everything you never wanted to know about Brake Fluid

Brake Fluid is used to transfer force into pressure, and to amplify braking force and it works because liquids are not appreciably compressible. Brake fluid is subjected to very high temperatures, especially in disk brake calipers. It must have a high boiling point to avoid vaporizing in the lines because vapor is highly compressible relative to liquid, and negates the hydraulic transfer of braking force.

Brake fluid is classified by the US Department of Transportation (DOT) under its own ratings such as

DOT3, DOT4 and DOT5. All approved fluids must be colorless or amber to be acceptable for street use in the U.S, except for DOT 5 silicone, which must be purple.

Glycol-ether (DOT 3, 4, and 5.1) brake fluids are hygroscopic (water absorbing), which means they absorb moisture from the atmosphere under normal humidity levels.

DOT 5 is silicone fluid does not absorb moisture but silicone fluid should be used only to fill non-ABS systems that have not been previously filled with glycol based fluid. Any system that has used glycol-based fluid will contain moisture; glycol fluid disperses the moisture throughout the system and contains corrosion inhibitors. Silicone fluid does not allow moisture to enter the system, but does not disperse any that is already there, either. This can lead to relatively severe but localized problems, rather than the more general system deterioration experienced with old moisture-laden glycol fluids.

The United States armed forces have standardized on silicone brake fluid since the 1990s. Silicone fluid is used

	Dry boiling point	Wet boiling point	Viscosity limit	Primary constituent
DOT 2	190 °C (374 °F)	140 °C (284 °F)		Castor oil/alcohol
DOT 3	205 °C (401 °F)	140 °C (284 °F)	1500 mm <sup>2</sup> /s	<u>Glycol Ether</u>
DOT 4	230 °C (446 °F)	155 °C (311 °F)	1800 mm <sup>2</sup> /s	Glycol Ether/ <u>Borate Ester</u>
DOT 5	260 °C (500 °F)	180 °C (356 °F)	900 mm <sup>2</sup> /s	Silicone
DOT 5.1	260 °C (500 °F)	180 °C (356 °F)	900 mm <sup>2</sup> /s	Glycol Ether/Borate Ester

Wet boiling point defined as 3.7% water by volume. extensively in cold climates, particularly in Russia and Finland.

Quality standards refer to a brake fluid's "dry" and "wet" boiling points. Wet boiling point refers to the fluid's boiling point after absorbing a certain amount of moisture.

For reliable, consistent brake system operation, brake fluid must maintain a constant viscosity under a wide range of temperatures, including extreme cold.

Brake fluids must not corrode the metals used inside components such as calipers, wheel cylinders, master cylinders and ABS control valves. They must also protect against corrosion as moisture enters the system.

Most automotive professionals agree that glycol-based brake fluid, (DOT 3, DOT 4, DOT 5.1) should be flushed, or changed, every 1–2 years under non-racing conditions

The question remained is this "Synthetic DOT4" compatible with the plain old DOT4 stuff

So I visited vendor web sites to find out what the "Synthetic Brake fluid" contains. The following was extracted from the Prestone and Lucas web sites

**Prestone Synthetic Brake Fluid**  
 .... the mix of **polyglycol ethers** ensures hot brake-system operation will not create dangerous vapor...  
 .....Meets or exceeds DOT-3 and DOT-4 specifications.....  
 .....Recommended for all ABS, disc and drum brake systems as well as hydraulic clutches requiring DOT-3 and DOT-4 fluids.....  
 .....**Compatible with all conventional brake fluids**.....

**Lucas DOT 4 Brake Fluid**  
 .....is a high quality blend of **polyethylene glycol** ethers and additives which meet or exceed the industry minimum dry boiling point of 446°F  
 ...**Compatible with all brake system rubber components and other fluids.**

In other words the new "synthetic" is made up of just the same chemicals as the old stuff. The marketers are using the term "synthetic" to make the brake fluid cool/sexy/whatever and worry old men like me.

*John Ellis*



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## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

John Bowen 5 years

Mini McMahan 5 years

## Upcoming Events

**04 Jan 2017** 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM Board Of Directors Meeting  
Location Oakland/Berkeley Restaurant, TBA

**08 Jan 2017** 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM Second Sunday Breakfast Ride, South Bay  
Location Alice's Restaurant , 17288 Skyline Boulevard, Woodside, CA 94062

**28-29 Jan 2017** Bothe-Napa Valley State Park Camp Out  
8:00 AM Saturday Breakfast Location TBD



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