

By Maj Rebecca Colaw, Langley AFB, Va.

# Don't Be Stupid!

Bikers are often a “breed” all unto their own. I’m a biker who loves to get out on the roads on the weekend ...

It's one of those things that just makes me feel good. I love to ride horses, so riding a mechanical one was just the next natural step. I've been doing so for nearly 20 years. I know you bikers know what I'm talking about. There's a freedom in feeling the wind on your face — but as we all know, there's serious injury or death in feeling your nose on the road.

I know there are folks out there that think we're crazy. But while many don't understand why we do what we do — being a “different breed,” doesn't mean we have to be stupid. And in FY02, many of us were. Take for example the story of one biker who is now a statistic.

Last February, at 12:25 p.m., a 21-year-old senior airman decided

to depart his base, on a 600cc Honda, in a rather unorthodox — aka stupid — fashion. He drove very safely through the concrete barriers while exiting the base and stopped 100 yards later for a traffic light at a six-lane median-divided roadway intersection.

When the light turned green, the airman gunned his accelerator and put the bike into a wheelie—on a wet road. When the front tire came down, he lost control and struck a curb. Bike and rider continued on the grass, through the shrub and tree-covered median. Twenty yards later, he was ejected from his Honda when the handlebars struck a 10-inch tree. The airman's chest also struck that same tree and his body came to rest at the tree's base. The bike traveled for another 40

Photo by SSgt Sean Houlihan