

[Metro.net](#) (web)

Resources

► [Safety](#)

► [Pressroom](#) (web)

► [Ask the CEO](#)

► [CEO Forum](#)

► [Employee Recognition](#)

► [Employee Activities](#)

► [Metro Projects](#)

► [Facts at a Glance](#) (web)

► [Archives](#)

► [Events Calendar](#)

► [Research Center/Library](#)

► [Metro Classifieds](#)

► [Bazaar](#)

Metro Info

► [30/10 Initiative](#)

► [Policies](#)

► [Training](#)

► [Help Desk](#)

► [Intranet Policy](#)

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Metro's Jim Pilon is a Moving Force in Off-Road Motorcycling

- He's credited with creating 'dual sport' riding

By SARAH WINFREY

(Sept. 29, 2006) Jim Pilon has two jobs. During the day, he works at West Hollywood Division 7 as a transportation operations supervisor.



TOS Jim Pilon

On his free time he is the California representative to the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC). He was recently inducted into the NOHVCC Hall of Fame.

The organization serves motorcycle enthusiasts who enjoy "dual sport" riding, defined as non-competitive on-road/off-road riding in scenic and historic areas. *Dual Sport Magazine* credits Pilon with creating the sport, which often includes organized events, in 1984.

Pilon became interested in dual sports in high school when he got his first motorcycle, a 1953 Triumph Tiger Cub. Later, when American Honda asked him to help promote off-highway vehicles, he helped dual sport riders find places where they could ride.

Pilon went into action by creating self-guided tours that riders could purchase to explore an area. He was told that no one would pay to take a tour, but he proved them wrong.

The self-guided tours Pilon created had their origin in off-road endurance events, which tested the skills of the riders with timed runs. He felt that by adding directions and more recreational opportunities participants could ride at their own skill level and at their own pace.

It's the camaraderie

"I try and put a little history into the tours when I do them," Pilon explains. "Everyone looks out for one another if they need help. The camaraderie is what really brings a lot of people out to the rides."

The goals of NOHVCC include educating the public about off-highway safety and providing information aimed at making off-highway riding a safe and responsible sport.

“We have to be conscious that we don’t damage the environment,” Pilon states.

Pilon’s whole family, including his wife and grandkids, is involved in the sport. His daughter, who recently got into dual sports, had a minor crash while riding the bikes.

Pilon says she walked up to him afterward and said, “Daddy, now I’m never gonna say, ‘Aw too bad, you crashed,’ because now I know what it’s like.”

Near his desk, Pilon keeps a picture of an outdoor scene that he often looks at. He calls it a five-minute vacation.

But, his time isn’t just spent in wishful thinking. “You have to go out and experience life,” he says.