



## *Rat Bike Run*

August 1<sup>st</sup> thru September 4<sup>th</sup> 2003

*As seen through the Authors eyes; MILO ANDERSON*

## Day1

August 1, 2003.

I, Milo Anderson, my wife Joni Anderson, Randy and Carol Fergusen, Mitch and Jan Myers, Gino Benidetti, Bonnie Fender and Gordon Spezza left on our trip to Sturgis South Dakota. I was on my 1970 Shovelhead Rat Bike that I've been riding for 28 years. Joni was on her 2003 Heritage Soft Tail Classic. Randy was on his 2002 Soft Tail Deuce. Carol was on her 1999 Road King Classic. Gino and Bonnie were on his '90 Springer. Mitch and Jan were on his '95 Soft Tail and Gordon was driving the C & R Stripping truck and trailer with his 1978 Low Rider in back.



We made it to Pendleton OR for the first day. It was also to be the day of the closest near tragedy of the whole trip. Joni, my wife, was going through a sweeping left hand corner with the river on the right side of the road. Her foot board bracket was scraping the asphalt in the middle of the turn. She looked down to see what was scrapping and when she looked up again she went straight off the road and into gravel. It was pretty scary for her, as well as for Mitch and Jan who were riding behind her. At approximately 40 MPH she had the back wheel try to slide out in the gravel and was sliding sideways. Joni remembers what we have told her in the past. "When in doubt, throttle out!" She gave it the gas and looked back to the road and she got out of the gravel and back on the road like it was meant to be. She put a big scare in Mitch and Jan but Joni said it happened too fast to be scared. I was very proud of her. We also felt like God helped hold her up and get her bike back on the road and out of harms way. While Joni has her experience, Randy

and I were making our own. Randy pulled up beside me at about 60 or 65 mph and we both twisted the throttle wide open. Randy said his speedo was bouncing between 95 and 100 mph, closer to 100. We were both still side by side. Randy said he was inching ahead of me but I didn't notice. It was so slight. We had to shut down for a corner. When we got to the motel a short while later, I told Randy that was every ounce of speed I could muster up with my 1000 pound Rat Bike. Randy said, "Me too. That's all I had also. When I get home I'm taking this twin cam 88 motor out of this bike, throwing in the trash can, and am gonna put a motor in it that will beat your Rat Bike!!" About that time everyone else got to the motel and that's when we heard about Joni's activities. Later Carol told me, "Randy ain't touchin' that bike. He finally got a something that don't break down every time we go for a ride."

A little more information about my '88 S&S motor. Another record for me and *Red* happened a couple of weeks before leaving for Sturgis this year. Gino and I had left at 8:00AM on a Friday to go to the Redwood Run. We made it about 35 miles south of Roseburg and we were really cooking going up a hill when my engine let loose and made a really wild sound and spewed oil everywhere. I pulled in the clutch and the engine died right away. We were precariously parked on the shoulder of Interstate 5 Southbound, in the middle of a right hand, sweeping, steep hill grind where heavy slow moving trucks need to use the shoulder lane. We were up against the guard rail and it still wasn't far enough off the freeway. Gino was signaling trucks to move over out of the shoulder lane as I was looking at the source of my problem. The rear lifter block was pulled out from the case. The inside 2 ( $\frac{1}{4} \times 24$ ) bolts were pulled from the case and the thread holes stripped completely out. The outside two bolts were sheered off leaving the two bolt ends still in the case. I called Joni on Gino's cell phone and she was coming to get me. I just hooked up our horse trailer the night before 'cause our Andrea had a horse show on Saturday. Joni came to get me and pulled over in front of the bike. I backed it up close to the bike and used it for a ramp. I removed the cotter pin on the slant partition of the front unit and took it off. I put it on the road and on the trailer. While doing this, one slow moving semi could not move over in to the slow lane in time, so he stopped just before running over my bike. He had to wait 'til it was clear and start from scratch going up the hill again. Oh well, at least he missed us. It took Gino and me and Joni all we had to push my 1,000 pound bike up the ramp with padding on it. I got it strapped in and we went down the freeway until I could turn around. When I was driving back I was going over my options. Option #1; Take my 2000 Road King; *No*, that wouldn't do. Option #2; Don't go. Stay home and drink.  *Nope*. Option #3; Change motors. From the time I started draining the gas from the tanks, to take them off, pulled the bad

motor out, put in my spare Shovelhead 1978 motor in, and fired up the bike, it was done in 2 1/2 hours. Gino and I cleaned up our greasy hands and left. We got to the Redwood Run in six hours. Only one stop for two beers at the Red Garter Saloon in Cave Junction Oregon. Both beers were for me. Fuel and Go. We made it to the run before dark. Not bad for changing engines earlier in the day, Turns out, my 88 inch motor that let loose, the tappet roller assembly let loose first and wedged itself between the lifter assembly and the cam. When it pushed the lifter base out of the case, it broke all four guide fingers off the base of the casting. Metal everywhere. Bad cam and anything it came in contact with. I took the engine back to Greg Coen. He said he didn't know why stuff let loose. He ordered all the parts necessary, including rings, 2<sup>nd</sup> day air. He met me half way on the bill. He paid for all the parts and I paid for the labor for Jim to put the motor back together again. Greg called me Thursday afternoon and told me my motor was done. It was only two days before, Tuesday AM, that I gave him back the broken unit. I went up Friday morning and got it. Fired up and to warm up at about 10:00PM. I brought up the cylinder temperature to just being able to feel the heat and shut it down for the night. The next AM, I did the same thing and went to the horse show.

Saturday evening I rode it a bit to put maybe 15-20 miles on it. Sunday morning I rode it about 50 miles. I let it cool all day and then Sunday evening I did another 60-70 miles. Monday I got up at 5:00AM and rode another 60 miles or so. Monday evening, same. Tuesday I rode about 100 miles at 5:30 AM; Wednesday and Thursday, same routine. Packed up Thursday evening, and Joni and I went to Randy and Carol's house at 7:30 to leave to Sturgis. Apparently motor stuff was good enough to do 10,200 miles more in the five weeks to follow.

## Day 2

We met up with Hughy, a friend of Randy and Carols from Washington in AM before we left Pendleton. We got a porta potty for the girls to use in the trailer. Milo tested it!!



We went out of Clarkston, WA and Lewiston, Idaho up Hwy 12 to Lolo Pass.



Joni and Carol left us all behind as the two women in the wind went racing up the mountain. They were thought to be riding in the *Missoula 200* which we just made up for the road racers. A beautiful road. Very smoky, as a lot of Montana was on fire by Missoula. We spent the night in Missoula.

### Day 3

We were glad to get away from the smoke and go east. We went to Butte Montana and got ready for the rain. It was pretty hard rain as we couldn't see the road too good. We finally arrived in West Yellowstone. We were tourists for the evening. Very quaint town. The guy who owns West Yellowstone Motorhead T-shirt shop gave me a free T-shirt for parking outside of his shop and attracting customers for him. He said' "Man, I got to get me one of those," referring to my Rat Bike.

We met a guy from Canada with a crumpled up front fender on his bagger. He said he and his wife were riding with a friend and they both made a U turn in the park. His friend's U turn was shorter than his was. As he completed his U turn, he was looking back at the car he was trying to beat and he hit the throttle too hard and T boned his friend who wasn't quite done with his U turn. . He crumpled his fender on his buddy's leg. Double compound fracture to his friend's leg and had to be airlifted to the hospital.



### Day 4

We rode through Yellowstone and saw old Faithful and the Grand Lodge there.



Going through the park my bike was doing weird things in the corners, like I had a rear flat tire but it was fine. We tried to find a motel in Cody Wyoming. They were all full. We found a motel with a lodge room which slept ten. It was a very fun night with all ten of us in one big room. We started laundry there.

We went to a steakhouse that was recommended to us. They put all ten of us in a separate room. I wonder why. We hadn't been sitting down for ten minutes when a female came up to me and asked, "Is that your bike with all the stuff on it?" I asked her, "Why? Are you an environmentalist?" She said, "No." But in her next breath she started yelling at me loudly about how I'm raping the earth by murdering the animals only to parade them around on my bike. She was continuing to make a scene with all her ranting and raving. My wife asked the waitress to escort the Waco out of our room. About that time the Waco's husband entered the room and came up to me, shook my hand and said, "Nice bike. Real nice bike." Then the loud mouth wife of his yelled, "My husband feels the same way as I do about your animals, only he's too much of a Pussy to tell you." He finally got his wife out of the room and he came back and asked Joni and me exactly what his wife said before he came in. "I need the evidence for the divorce" he said. We told him I don't even hunt and I didn't kill a single animal on my bike. I'm only taking them for a ride in their afterlife!" A while later I walked through the lounge to the restaurant and I saw her sitting at a table waiting to be seated for dinner. When I walked by, I paused at her table and said, "You know when it's all over, God will still love you!" and I walked away. She was starting to come unglued again but it wasn't my problem anymore. What a Wacko Broad.

## Day 5

The next morning I found why my bike was handling strange. My frame was broken in two pieces by the left rear shock. I rode to Cody Custom Cycle. Ray and Kathy who own it are very cool people. They go out of their way to see everyone on the road with a problem gets first priority. He gave me a grinder, a welder, and metal to fix my frame with. I took off the saddle bag, crash bar, shock, and siren to get to the frame. Gordon Spezza is a much better welder than I am, so he welded my frame for me. Ray and Kathy at Cody Custom Cycle didn't charge me a dime for using their stuff. I checked out his shop and saw that his drill bits were trashed so I called Oregon Tool & Supply at (541)672-1935, at 276 SE Stephens, Roseburg Oregon, 97470, and had a set of cobalt drill bits and a few screwdrivers sent to them to say Thanks. Very good solution to a temporary problem.

We made it to a brand new campground/motel between Buffalo and Gillette WY.



No one had stayed in it yet.

The rooms were so new all the bugs weren't gone yet. Just before getting to camp my bike was making a loud screeching sound intermittently. I thought the front wheel bearings were going out so I put my bike in the trailer for approximately ten miles. When we got to the motel everyone was making a big deal 'cause my bike was in the trailer. I took the front wheel off and pulled out the bearings. They all looked fine so I put it back together. The next morning I rode back west a few miles to erase my ten *trailer miles*. The noise was still there. I looked close at it and found that the chain guard brackets had both broken off. Probably due to the frame being broken and all the vibration. The chain guard was being caught between the chain and wheel. Wow, could have been bad news. I pulled the chain guard off and tossed it in the trailer. All's well. Less weight to carry!

Devils tower was the next stop. Very crowded as was Wednesday.



Carol by her bike.

## Day 6

We finally made it to Sturgis. We made our way through the packed streets to Glenco Campground. Mitch and Jan picked out our camp spot in the trees. Very nice spot.



We finally got to get our tents up for the first time. After dark the main road in Glenco turns into a very interesting show.

We went into the Full Throttle Saloon the next night.



Randy and Carol decide to put their bikes on the simulated drag machine. Everyone was telling Carol how to do it. Unfortunately, she listened to them. She revved it up and dropped the clutch and she broke her rear belt and shot it out the back. We pushed the bike back to camp. The next day we tied her bike to my Rat Bike and I towed it to town to have a shop put a new belt put on.



Milo and Jan on the

mattress ride through the camp.

We (Joni and I) visited my brother, Brion, who lives in Blackhawk while everyone else went to MT Rushmore and Crazy Horse. They got caught in a very wild hail storm and lightning and thunder and it was quite a show for them.

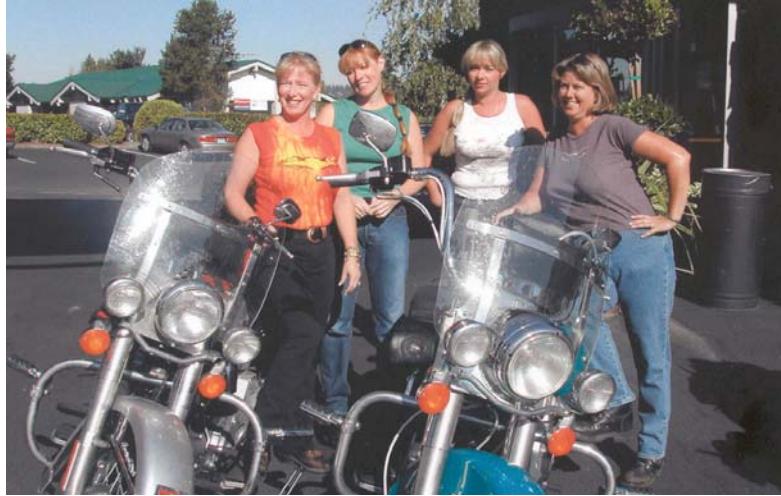
On the last night in camp Joni and I went to town (Sturgis) to get some last minute gifts and shirts. Another major lightening storm erupted just before we left town. Joni and I got soaked by the time we got back to camp. Quite a bit of cross wind also which is not too friendly to my bike. We stayed out watching the show in the sky for quite a while.

We headed up to North Dakota and Carols bike made a lot of noise from the primary side. We pulled off the primary cover and found quite a mess. The people who put the belt on, only put a little bit of oil back in. The chain got hot and melted the Teflon adjusting shoe down to metal on metal. It got very hot and stretched the primary chain. We put her bike in the trailer and went west to Billings Montana and got a new Teflon shoe. Randy put the correct amount of oil back in. We took the chain adjuster all the way up and she was good to ride again.

We left Billings, rode through Bozeman, Butte, and to Missoula for the night again. We then went through Coeur d'Lane to Spokane. The Harley shop in Spokane gave me a single highway peg to replace the one which fell off of Joni's bike a while back. We went to Grand Coulee Dam to spend the night and watch the light show on the dam. It was a sight to see. Once was enough for me.



Then it was off to Wenatchee to visit with Randy's Mom and other relatives. Next stop was old town Leavenworth. We toured it for a few hours before going off to Seattle to spend the night again.



All the other guys and gals wanted to go to the Space Needle.



Here is Joni with a guy taller then Milo.

Joni and I said bye to everyone and we headed up to Canada. The Canadian Border Guards had a problem with me and my Rat Bike. It seems they thought it was not in their best interest to let us into their country. So Joni and I went to the Port Townsend Ferry and went over to Port Angles and around the Olympic Peninsula and down the Washington and Oregon coast.



We spent three days doing that. It was nice and relaxing: just me and my wife doing relaxing stuff. We went through the Astoria Maritime Museum and then the Tillamook Air Museum.

On Monday afternoon the 18<sup>th</sup> we stopped by Oregon Tool & Supply in Coos Bay to say Hi to the gang. We then went to the Coos Bay Harley Shop, Hwy 101 Harley Davidson. Shauleen said we just missed the Coos Bay Gang. They left two hours ago to go to Milwaukee for the Harley Davidson 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party. I told Joni I really wanted to go. She said, "Go ahead; I'll take care of our daughters and the payroll and store stuff."

So back to Roseburg we went. When we got home at around 6:00 PM we hugged both Danielle and Andrea a lot and Andrea cried a lot. So glad to have us home.

I changed oil in the engine and transmission and fixed a bad running light and my headlight which was out also.

I left at 5:00 AM to ride up Diamond Lake Hwy again. I made it to Bend in three hours and it was a bit chilly riding over the pass in early AM. I met up with Danny Miller, the owner of Hwy 101 Harley Davidson in Coos Bay and Mike, Dwayne, Kay, Jim, Mike, CJ, Karen, Dave and Yani. Had breakfast with them and we headed Northeast. We were heading to Antelope over a very switchback road with chip seal freshly covering it. Mike, riding a new borrowed V rod

from Danny, went off the road and down about 20 feet embankment, went through a barbed wire fence and landed in a field with rocks and brush. The road curves to the left and he slid off to the right. Danny was out front, Mike second and I was third. When I came around the corner I saw a cloud of dust and only Danny on the road. I was the first one down the steep drop off to get to Mike. He was standing by the bike looking very bewildered as if to say, "Where am I and what do I do next?" I tried to get him to sit down and see how bad he was hurt. He said he was ok but worried about Danny's bike. As Dwayne came running up to the road to help, he slipped on the gravel and twisted his ankle. We got Mike back up on the road and a guy came by with a cell phone that worked, and called an ambulance. It took an hour to come from Madras. While they were waiting, I went to my bike and got Allen wrenches to remove the left side of the twisted up crash bar. It was bent back into the shifter which was bent into the engine. I removed some pieces and grabbed a T fence post and pried out the shifter. I got the bike to start finally and I rode along the fence line to try and find a gate. I rode for a few hundred yards and finally found a gate. From the road the gang said I looked like Steve McQueen in the Great Escape riding the fence line to find a way out. But I wasn't gonna jump my fence! It took me about 45 minutes to find my way back to the road. There were at least a dozen gates through stockyards and corrals with cattle and horses that I had to get out of the way. As I rode back up the road to get to the crew the ambulance had still not arrived yet. Before all that happened, Danny asked me if I had ridden a V rod yet. I said, "No", so he told me when we get back he would hook me up for a test ride. So I joined the crew on the road on the crippled V rod and Danny asked how I liked my test ride. I said it was a little rougher than my rat bike! The ambulance showed up and Danny followed Mike to the hospital. We loaded up the bent bike in the trailer and went up to the Columbia Gorge to Biggs Junction. It was VERY windy going north to Biggs. My bike was in a very steep angle just to try to go straight. Lots of extra muscles being used in a cross wind. It was rough on everyone. We headed east on Hwy 84 and up to Kennewick Washington for our first stop on the Northwest route of the Harley Davidson's "Ride Home". We got lost trying to find the motel. (I was leading). I asked directions, yes me, and we finally got to the motel. Danny, his dad, and Mike in the truck made it to the motel also. We were too late to make it to the dealer party. We went there the next day and dropped off the broken V rod and Danny was going to pick it up later on the way back. We ran into Tim who was there for two days to try and get a problem fixed on his bike. The mechanics there took apart the drive chain side and clutch assembly only to find nothing wrong. They said the transmission is next and would probably be 2 or 3 more days. Before they did that, Tim suggested that they tighten up the rear belt pulley on

the wheel. There were only a couple bolts left holding it on. New bolts and tight again, and Tim was on the road. He caught up to us just out of Lewiston and Clarkston. We had to take a detour off of Hwy 12 due to a fire by Orifino Idaho. Down Hwy 93 and east on 13 to Grangeville and back up to Hwy 12. Three idiot Harley riders passed us over a double yellow line on blind corners only to pull over a couple of miles down the road and wait for their friends. What's the point?

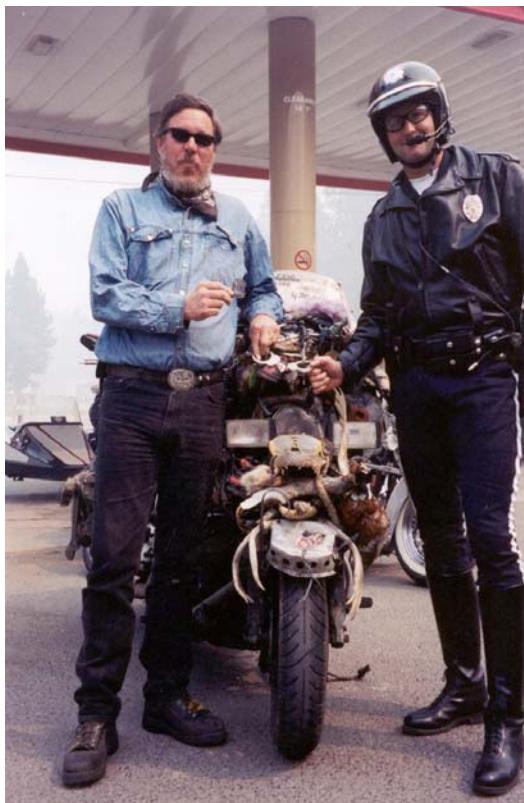
Off we went up beautiful Hwy 12, past Lowell, and following the awesome river. We stopped for fuel at the ranger station/campground where we stayed in the past. No one else showed up. Just me, Danny, Bill, and Tim. We waited for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour and continued on. We took pictures on top of Lola Pass at the Montana border. Met a couple female riders, one of which was the owner of Steve Dranes Harley Davidson in Victoria BC.

Off to Lolo and then to Missoula. The third time for me in a couple of weeks. I led us to the motel; right next door to the motel we stayed last week. The other part of the crew was already there. They beat us by ten minutes. A minor misunderstanding over where we were to get fuel and wait for each other. Oh well, everyone got over it. Yet again, we were too late for the Missoula dealer party. Off to Great Falls for the next stop. The first gas stop out of Missoula we had three Missoula Harley Davidson motor cops pulling in leading a group. One cop comes up,



pulls his handcuffs off his belt, puts them over the steer horn and said "motorcycle, Your under arrest" and stood there for pictures. I said "Hey I don't have any handcuffs yet, can I have those?" He said "No, I might need 'em for later." The cops took turns sitting on my bike for pictures. As one sat on my bike, I turned on the switch, grabbed the screwdriver and shorted the solenoid and started it. The look on his face, Wow, and he said "What do I do now?" He was glad when I turned it off. Whew!! The next cop came up to me and took his handcuffs off his belt and said,

“Milo, I’ll give these cuffs to you on one condition. You put ‘em on your bike right now.”



So I put ‘em on the two round parts of the horse bit on the front end and locked ‘em in place. I asked him for the key and he said he needed it for his other cuffs. Yes, they were real Smith & Wesson cuffs with his badge number engraved on ‘em. This was the first time a cop ever gave me a choice of where to put the handcuffs! Pretty cool event. Lots of pictures with the cops and the Rat Bike.

We actually made it on time to the next party which was in Great Falls Montana. I parked my Shovelhead in the middle of the parking lot and a reporter came up to me and interviewed me and took pictures. Made the paper the next AM. I put a new chain on in the parking lot of the shop there. Brian, the owner, introduced me to one of his guys and said whatever Milo needs, get it for him. I finally found a chain, STD only, no o-ring units available. They gave me a chain



breaker tool and I had quite an audience

while working on *Red*. Half hour later I was done and ready to eat. We got up the next day and rode to Billings. Yes, we made that Dealer party too. I parked in the middle of the intersection of downtown which was all blocked off to bikes only. Another interview and more pictures and made the Billings paper too.

Out of Billings towards Rapid City South Dakota we visited Custer's Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument. Must have been quite a slaughter. After about an hour or so we went back into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and on to Sheridan Wyoming. Bill, Tim, and I rode alone to Buffalo, Gillette, and into South Dakota to Spearfish. Then to Sturgis and Rapid City. We went to my brother's house in Blackhawk. I really surprised Brion by showing up a week and a half later **again**. Bill and Tim took off and I stayed at Brion's house and did my laundry.

I then rode to Sturgis for the Harley party. I rode downtown by all the bikes. It was 1/100 the size of the Sturgis crowd during the rally. At the end of the rows of bikes were two Sturgis cops sitting on Harleys by the fence blocking off bikes on the next block for a band and block party. I rode up to them and said "Hi guys, I'm back again. I came to Sturgis, went back to the west coast, changed oil in my bike, and I'm going to Milwaukee, over 7000 miles so far with no tickets!" One cop looked at me very seriously and said, "That can change." Wow, he sure can't have a very fun life with an attitude like that. I rode back over and parked with all the rest of the bikes behind the barricades. Quite a few people wanted pictures so I pulled Red out and sat on my bike in front of the double barricade just past the rows of bikes. A lot of people were taking pictures when the cops rode over 20 feet and said, "Move the bike." So I pulled up a few feet and parked in front of the single barricade by the sidewalk. More pictures and the cop said again, "I said move the bike now!" So I rode across the street and parked parallel to the sidewalk at the end of the row of bikes that were backed up to the curb. People gathered around there as the cops watched me park over there. More pictures and I left with Tim and Bill to go for a walk and look at the bikes. Tim and I walked into the Oasis Bar and watched the rest of the NASCAR race. I had one beer there and said, "So long, I'm gonna go back to my brother's house." I got back to my bike and the two cops had their bikes aimed at my bike with their lights on it. They were going over it with flashlights too. Dave Croll and Jay from Roseburg said, "Milo, they are gonna tow your bike." I said, "No way," and got my jacket off my bike to leave. The first not so friendly cop came up to me and said, "It's about time you got back." I said, "What? It's illegal to walk down your street?" He said, "You're illegally parked and I've called for a tow truck to tow your bike." I said, "I ride my bike everywhere and nobody tows it unless it's too broke to ride." He said, "I've written you a ticket for illegal parking. I'll tear it up but you gotta pay the tow

truck.” I said, “I ain’t paying for something I didn’t order.” He very emphatically stated, “You aren’t gonna move this bike unless you pay for the tow truck!” I begrudgingly paid the driver \$40 to ride away.

By the time it was over, dozens of people were watching the ridiculous actions of the Gestapo cops of Sturgis. A lot of people stated how that they were not coming back to Sturgis because of *that* incident. The cops went very overboard and out of control.

I left town expecting to be pulled over by the same two goons. It was not to be. I made it to my brother’s house in Blackhawk without any further cop stories.

The next day I rode to Rapid City Harley Davidson dealership’s free breakfast. They were having a group parade ride from there to Sturgis. They asked me to put my bike in front of



the lineup for the parade.

There were four lines with a couple of hundred Harleys or more. We were all waiting to get started when a guy came up with a bull horn and said, “I’m the mayor of Sturgis and I want to welcome all you bikers back to Sturgis again. It’s a great pleasure to be hosting the event today in Sturgis and you are all very welcome back. Thank you much. See you in Sturgis.” He handed the bull horn over to someone else and started to walk away. I caught up to him and told him, “That’s my Rat bike there and let me tell you what happened in your town last night.” When I got done he said, “If I had only known, I could have done something about it.” I said, “The cops are the body and the head is telling the body what to do. If you’re not the head, you know who the head is so they need to tell the zealous cops to mellow out and I want my 40 bucks back!” He said, “I’m really sorry that happened,” but didn’t offer to repay me.

The parade went like an accordion. Speed up and slow down, stopped up and slow down. All 25 miles on the interstate was that way. Couldn’t wait for it to end. We got to Sturgis and I

started to leave. I saw some more familiar faces from Oregon so I stopped to talk to ‘em. I hung around for the noon picture on Main Street.

Ran into Jeff from Coos Bay. He rode to Sturgis, left his bike, flew home, and flew back to Rapid City and rode on to Milwaukee.

Made the front page of Rapid City’s paper. Small picture in a bunch of the rest of the Main St Gang. Left Sturgis for the last time and back to my brother’s house. Met the Coos Bay crew the next morning at their Rapid City motel and off to the east for more fun in the sun. We went south on Hwy 240 and toured the Badlands National Park. Very wild scenery with all the rock formations and color of the beautiful barren land. This is quite a great country God made for us to enjoy! Back on 90 East for an uneventful ride to Mitchel and a stop at the Corn Palace. All of the crew took the tour but me. I stayed in the parking lot and adjusted my chain again. Also discovered the nut on my rear brake caliper was missing and the caliper was riding on the rotor and wearing down the pin for the brake pads. I hooked the caliper with a bungee cord and didn’t use the back brake anymore. The guys were done with the Corn Palace about the same time I got cleaned up. We continued on to Sioux Falls to our motel. Bill and I went to the dealership. It was so packed with bikes they were parking out on the road for blocks. They wouldn’t let us enter and told us to park on the street. We rode up front to the main four lane in front of the place and made a left turn over the double-double yellow line and the raised median in front of everything including two cops who were watching us and we went into the service department. I told the gal I wanted a caliper rebuild kit for a 76 rear and she said, “Oh, my computer does not go back that far.” She took me behind the counter to the old fashioned way of looking up *antique stuff* and said, “You’re on your own.” I found the part numbers I needed and she checked the computer and looked surprised ‘cause she had one. She told me I could pull my bike around the back and fix it. Very good idea ‘cause I did not have another large crowd watching. Only half a dozen people this time. I fixed the caliper with a new pivot pin and nut. I didn’t put the bushings in the boomerang bracket because I wasn’t in the mood to take the back wheel off. Half an hour later and a lot of sweat, it was still a very warm Midwest day. I rode back up front and talked to quite a few more people and a short time later Bill and I went back to the motel for a beer and drink. We met Tim and Tor, a Norwegian biker who now lives in Seattle, and walked up town to a seafood steakhouse. Pretty upscale place but we made due. Tim bought dinner for us and it was pretty good. Next day took us into Minnesota to Fairmont for the next fuel stop. Fairmont was the same place my wife Joni, daughters Danielle and Andrea and I spent six days waiting for the Ford dealership to fix my truck during a family vacation a couple of years ago. I knew the town

only too well! We rode past Albert Lea and I saw the plant where Edwards Iron Worker machines are made, only from the interstate; didn't stop. We made it to LaCross Wisconsin. The last stop on the road home tour before Milwaukee. We went to the motel first and I left to find the dealership on my own. We passed it a mile back on the freeway so I figured I could do it. Wrong. I took the south exit and it should have been the north. I had to take two more freeway turnarounds before finally getting off at the right place. I had to go through quite a few residential streets to get to the dealership. Strange place to put it. It needs its own off ramp. We Harley riders get lost often. Well at least I do. Anyway I pulled up to the entrance and it was all blocked off with flagging tape. Bikes were parked for blocks away in all directions. Four cops were directing traffic at a 4 way intersection in front of the dealership. An employee (I think) moved the flagging tape for me to ride inside. No bikes were in the parking lot as a stage was set up on a flatbed trailer and a big circus style tent and other vendors took up the rest of the parking



lot. A French camera crew was filming my bike for about 20 minutes and then they had me tell about the bike on camera. After a little while I said, "Wait a minute. I don't speak French. How is this gonna come out?" They said they will translate it and to just keep talking. After about ten minutes of the interview I recon I said enough so they went back to filming the bike. One French guy asked if his daughter could sit on my bike for a picture. Daughter, I thought she was his wife.

I ran into Tracy, a guy I knew from Roseburg Oregon who moved to Seattle. I saw him a few stops back and he introduced me to Jim, a guy with another shovelhead from Portland. We talked for a while and Tracy saw a gal walking her dog. He walked up to them, bent down and asked the dog, "Hey, you're a nice dog. Can I pet your owner?" The gal said, "What did you asked my dog?" Tracy repeated it and she gave him a big hug and said she never heard a pick up line like that before but she liked it.

Then Jim McCaslin, the president of Harley Davidson got on stage with a few more CEOs and thanked everyone for coming and said it's good to see a lot of people from the west coast who are making the whole ride to Milwaukee, including me and my Shovelhead (which was parked only 25-30 feet in front of the stage). Was a good evening and I made it to outback Steakhouse and met up with the Coos Bay Gang for dinner.

We headed out across Wisconsin to Oshkosh and stopped for fuel. John never made it with his motor home and trailer. The cops thought John was going too fast to suit them and gave him a ticket. He met us in Fond du lac where our motel rooms were for our five day stay. The Fondy Motel is a very well established place with a very nice little gal named Bea working there. I think she owns it as it looks like they both have been there for quite a long time. Bea and the motel, that is. Up until then I was staying on the floor of Mike's and Dwayne's room with the exception of staying at my brother's house in Rapid City, SD. The first two nights I stayed at another motel a few miles away. CJ and Karen turned back to Oregon somewhere in Montana due to a pain in CJ's shoulder. I bought his four day pass from him and told him I would stay in his room he had already paid two nights for. There were not refundable so I sent him a check for the two nights and his ticket when I got back home.



Bea, at Fondy Motel was sold out for two days but she had one room open for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> days. So I stayed with everyone else for the last three nights in my own room!

We all rode to West Bend to Club Hog XX. The fairgrounds were taken over by Harley Davidson to celebrate 20 years of Harley owners group. It was open to Hog members only. Everyone else parked in the parking lot with over 10,000plus bikes in it already. I rode up to a side gate with one person guarding it. He said, "You can't come in here." I said, "I'm here for the photo shoot." He said, "What photo shoot? I don't know anything about a photo shoot." I

looked past him and saw the Seattle Cossacks stunt team performing in a roped off area. I said, "They told me to come in here and park by the Seattle Cossacks for a photo shoot when they are done with their show." He removed the barricade and said, "OK, go on in. Nobody tells me anything around here!" I rode in and parked and the *photo shoot* started. Naturally it was a photo



shoot of my own design, but it attracted a lot of pictures just the same. I walked around after a while and decided to walk out and back in again with my Hog Card so I could get the two free Hog Commemorative pins. (My 14 year old daughter, Dani, proudly has them on her school backpack now). They had a bike show going on throughout the grounds and there were some pretty great wild paint jobs. I recon people spend a lot more money on their paint jobs than I do! After talking to quite a few more people here and there, I decided to leave and ride back with Bill to the motel. I rode to the nearest gate and got stopped before I got there by more picture takers. This time it was three little guys from Jakarta, Indonesia. None of 'em could speak English but they all had very big smiles and they all wanted their pictures taken while standing by me and my bike. After taking turns, a guy with a Polaroid camera took a picture with all three of 'em and me in it and gave the picture to me to keep. Then one of the little guys motioned for me to get off my bike and he wanted to sit on it. He got on it and pulled it up off the kickstand (with a bit of difficulty) and proudly posed for more pictures. Wow; they were sure happy with that that *photo shoot*! Next I came across some Russian Boy Scouts. No, that was in the Great Falls Montana dealership parking lot. OOPS, brain fart....with the order of things happening. I fired up Red again and headed to the gate where Bill was 10 feet away waiting. They wouldn't let me out there even though the main parking lot was right there and Bill was 10 feet away waiting. I rode around to the next gate; same story. "Can't get out here either. Go to gate #11." I tried two more gates and still couldn't

get out. Finally found the right gate and got out. Wow, it sure was easier to get in to the place than to get out! Is that a little backwards or what?

I finally met up with Bill and we went back through West Bend and stopped at the Harley shop there. Jim was standing out front and greeted me with, "Hi Milo, Welcome to my house!" I met him a few states back at a stop and he remembered me. He invited me to come inside and pick out a T shirt on the house! Wow. That's cool, another free T shirt. Jeff and Conrad from Coos Bay also showed up. They were heading down to Milwaukee so I rode south with them as I had not made it there yet.

We rode downtown after quite a time trying to get there. The cops had the waterfront exit blocked off so we had to continue over the very long bridge going up and over the downtown area and next to the giant ocean looking Lake Michigan. About 100 or so bikes were stopped in the opposite direction on top of the highest part of the bridge, in the emergency lane, looking over the edge towards the east at a three mast schooner and taking pictures. We continued until we could exit and turned around and wanted to take pictures also. We approached the area in the northbound lanes only to find State Police making everyone leave. So we proceeded to the waterfront exit only to find it also blocked off. Next exit was open so we wound our way through the downtown streets to try to get closer to the entrance of Summer Fest.



It was held at the fairgrounds or something of that scale, big enough of an area to house everything. There was an area for high flying guys on motocross bikes doing jumps and acrobatics. Watched them for a while, didn't see any crashes as they must have been dialed in for the landings. Walked on further to the antique display tent. A guy from Kansas had a great looking display set up with an old truck with old Harleys in the back and a trailer behind it with two more antiques in it. Next to it he was occasionally starting up a couple of older units. Pedal start on the center stand and then

the engine spouts of energy and noise meant to be used almost a century ago. Wow. Good demo. Inside the large tent we went. We saw about a dozen or more real antiques. Then I spotted Smitty's Knucklehead Rat Bike from Kentucky. The primary was pulled out from the case exposing the chain. The tires were the same bald Maypops when I first met Smitty in 1990 at Sturgis City Park Bike Show. The old running boards were hanging down to almost hit the ground. No way was that bike ridden. If it was, he started it up when he pulled it out of the trailer and rode it 20 feet at most. In front of his bike was a sign stating that he was the first place winner of the Rat Bike contest in Sturgis that Big Daddy Rat put on for the last 20 years straight. Now I have to call Bullshit.

The bike show that Big Daddy Rat put on in Sturgis, in City Park, in 1990, I was there. There were 17 Rat Bikes in all. There were three judges who were picked by Big Daddy Rat. They had all won at previous shows he put on I was told. We were at the show for almost ten hours. All of the judges spent quite a bit of time talking to all of us. Learning about the bikes, the rider, the riders' habits, etc. Smitty had already told me he brought the Knuckleheads to Sturgis in a trailer and it's (the trailer) not too far away. Junkie Jim had a 45 cubic inch Flathead with so many things hanging off it it looked like a round brown snowball that kept gathering stuff every time it came out of the trailer, which he also said was in the parking lot. When the show was all over, I did not get 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Joni and I started walking away saying, "Oh well," when one of the judges came up to us and said, "Milo, Did you get first or second?" I said, "Nothing." He stated, "Bullshit! I rated your bike higher than the rest because I know you ride it!" Then, a short time later another judge came up to me and asked me the same question; "1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>?" Then the same reply with him stating he judged my bike higher overall 'cause he knew I rode it. So, two out of three judges rated my bike higher than the other 16 Rat Bikes, yet I didn't get 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> place trophy. We rode out of there knowing we were winners and Big Daddy Rat Fink Dude runs a fixed bike show. He gives the trophies to who he wants to, not to who really deserves them! Reading the sign in front of Smitty's bike brought up memories of a fixed show. That's the only way he can proclaim himself a winner for 20 years straight. I know 13 years ago he didn't really win. OK, OK, enough sniveling.

Now back to 2003. The rest of the bikes looked great. Especially the stock Knuck's and 'Pans. The police models too. Jeff, Conrad, and I were walking out when they ran into a few German bikers coming into the Summer Fest. They had hung out with them a while back and wanted to stay with them. We all walked back to my bike so the Deutschland Dudes could see my Rat. They took a few pictures. We talked with them for a while before saying, "auf

Wiedersehen.” I rode back to Fond du lac to the motel. Called my beautiful wife and told her of the recent happenings.

The next day was to be the Pilgrim Road Harley Davidson tour of the engine and transmission building facility. We all rode down to Milwaukee to the plant. All the rest of the guys and gals went to park and I rode up to the front of the plant. A parking guide let me go past him and I put my bike out in the middle of the blocked off area.



After more *photo shoots* I went to see where the rest of the crew was. The line to take the free tour was super long. It wound around the building and down the street. I couldn't see the end of it. I walked to the front of the line to see if I could find them. I had only walked about 20 feet and I heard a gal call, “Milo.” I looked over and saw Michelle. I walked over to her and her husband



Robin. I met Robin and Michelle back in Montana. She works for Harley Davidson at the Jeanau Ave plant. Robin gave me a special pin off his vest that only employees got for a company run. I think I got that one

right, if not Robin will let me know. I talked with them for a while and next thing I knew, we were right up to the metal detectors. I started the tour with them. How lucky can I get? I took off my belt buckle, change and Leatherman just like the airport. The tour took about an hour and a 1/2 and it was just like a precision machine shop I used to work in, Berkley Pump Company, making Berkley Pump jet drives for speed boats. Only a lot more modern machinery. Very awesome tour.

The next day was the parade. I mentioned that I would like to ride in the parade and could Robin and Michelle get me a parade pass? They said to call them in the evening and they would let me know if they would have a pass for me. I said, "Good Bye" to Robin and Michelle and rode north to West Bend again.

I went to Jim's Harley shop again and he told me they were having a street party in downtown West Bend. I went to it and six cops were standing at the entrance to the final two blocks which were blocked off to bikes only. Five of the cops waved me off and said it was too crowded and no more room for any more bikes. The sixth cop came up to the others, moved them aside and said, "There's room for this guy, let him in." So I rode to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> block where food vendors and the band stands were and I parked. A guy started asking me questions about me and my bike and writing stuff down. He said he worked for the paper and wanted to do a piece on me. He called for a photographer for the paper and got a few shots. Mrs. Wisconsin came over for some more pictures and she took me up on my offer to sit on my bike for more pictures. The whole town of West Bend was very friendly and welcomed us with open arms. The mayor of West Bend talked to me and told me what a pleasure it was to have me and my Rat Bike come to their block party. A few cops came over to see the bike close up and I told 'em the story of the Missoula cop who gave me his Smith & Wesson handcuffs. A West Bend cop took out his key and unlocked 'em and locked one on Mrs. Wisconsin's hand, jokingly for pictures. Everyone had a great attitude. I only had two beers due to the ride, after dark, I would be facing back to Fond du lac. I said, "Thanks for everything," and headed out of town.

Unfortunately it was in the wrong direction. After about 20 miles I decided to ask a store where I was. OOPS. I went back on Hwy 41 as I was on back roads and it didn't say which way I needed to go. Unfortunately the highway I chose was neither the quick one; nor the familiar one either. It took me through a bunch of little towns and I was wondering if I would ever see a sign of where I was going. Finally a sign said Fond du Lac 35 miles. What a long night that was. My headlight wire broke so I only had two spot lights. That would have been OK if the left one would not have been aimed at the sky every time I hit a bump and the crocodile head hit it and

aimed it up. I would reach way up front to fix it correctly and Wham, another bump. I was passed on a corner by four cars and pick up trucks racing down a county road. I think I used to do that too a few years ago! I finally made it back to Fond du lac, only the road brought me in on the opposite side of town. It took me quite a while to guess how to get back to the motel. A few wrong streets but at about 11:30 PM I finally made it.

I had a warm beer (the ice had melted) and called Robin and Michelle. They said they had a parade pass for me and gave me directions to their house in Milwaukee and said it would be in their mailbox. They had to get up at 2:30AM and be there about 3:00AM to start checking passes and ID's for the parade riders.

I left the motel at 5:30AM to go to Robin and Michelle's house and got the pass out of their mailbox. Bill was going to wait until 5:45 to ride to be in the parade. Danny Miller and his wife Barbara got to ride in the parade 'cause they own a Harley dealership. Stan and Robyn, also from Coos Bay, got to ride and display the Hog Chapter flag. Bill got to ride 'cause he bid \$555 and bought a parade pass at a fund raising auction at Club Hog XX to benefit MDA. I was gonna go to the staging ground even though I didn't have a pass and try to get in anyway. I don't think it would have worked if I didn't have the pass I got from Michelle. There were dozens of people along the pre-staging route asking to see all of our passes. Bikes were lined up in two lines for almost two miles back. As I pulled in line, Bill pulled up right next to me. Wow, 70 miles away and 10,000 bikes in the parade and I go 10 miles past to get my pass and get back to the staging line up and Bill is right next to me. What are the odds?

We finally made it to the city zoo's large, actually giant, parking lot. They staged us very close side by side and front to back like sardines. I traded with the guy behind me as he was the end of our row. That way my bike would be better accessible for the *photo shoot*. This one was more special.

A fox TV news crew came up to me asking if they could shoot my bike and interview me. I said; "Sure." A large group of people appeared around the bike and camera crew. Everybody wants to be on TV. Why not? It's fun. The news gal was standing in front of my bike, clearing her throat, and looking into the camera. She asked the cameraman if the camera was ready. Just then I went over to her and said, "Wait, what's your name?" "Kim," she said as I put out my hand to shake hers. She had to move the microphone from her right hand to shake my hand, I reached out with my left hand *held* the mic for her and said, "My name is Milo." Then I looked at the cameraman and asked if he was ready. He aimed the camera at me and I started. "Hi, my name is Milo Anderson of Oregon Tool & Supply in Roseburg Oregon. I rode all the

way out to Milwaukee Wisconsin from Oregon and I'm talking with Kim from Wisconsin." I asked her, "Kim, What do you think of this motorcycle beside us?" I held the microphone up to her, she stuttered a bit, and said, "Ah... it's the most interesting one out here." I returned back to the camera's view and with the mic and kept going. I said, "Yes Kim, it is the most interesting one here because I've been riding it for 28 years and everywhere I go people give me more interesting things to put on it. I've got almost half a million miles on her and I want to make it perfectly clear that I ride this bike everywhere I go and it doesn't go anywhere in a trailer. And another thing; I did not kill any of the animals on my bike. I'm merely taking them for a ride in their afterlife. Back to you Kim." I handed the mic back to Kim. She said, "And that was Milo from Oregon and we'll get back to you soon." The crowd let out a giant roar of cheer and applause. I recon they thought I did good with my reverse interview. I was pretty proud of it. A short time later the camera crew came back again. Kim timidly came up to me and asked, "Milo, do you think we could do the interview again? Only this time, my way?" The cameraman said, "Kim, hold that mic with both hands!" So we did another interview with Kim asking me questions this time. I think it suited her better. I also think they will use my first interview as a training tape on what happens when you turn over the microphone, you've lost all control!

Four helicopters were in the air covering the parade staging. Big stuff. At 9:00 the first two rows started off on the 7 ½ mile parade route. By the time I rolled out it was 10:15. I was about 2/3 of the way back of the 10,000 bike field. The whole route was covered by people on both sides at least three or four deep and up to 12-15 people deep. What a sight. I did my train horns until I ran out about half way through the route. When the CO2 is gone the horns are silent, so I used the siren when I could get enough speed up rubbing it on the back wheel. . The crowd was overwhelming. The crowd loved the Rat Bike. What an overall welcome feeling of pride knowing I was participating in a once in a lifetime affair of 100 years of Harley Davidson; and I've been riding my Harley for 28 years of it!! It was about 1 ½ to 2 hours, to go the 7 ½ miles along the route. Just about at the end of the route, I went over some rough road or railroad tracks, I don't remember which, and a spark plug wire came out of my coil and only one cylinder was working. I pulled over and put it back in and ...back to normal.

The end of the parade route found us in another giant parking lot under the bridge by the waterfront. We had to wait until all bikes were through before we could leave.



Bill and I left and rode to

Fond du lac and Bill took a nap and I did laundry around the corner at a Laundromat. Then Bill showed up when I was half way done. He chose a machine which malfunctioned and didn't spin out the water so he hand rung out all of his clothes and put them in the dryer for an extra long time. I was beat by the time 10:30PM came around and watched some of the parade on TV before I fell asleep.

When I got up the next morning people were telling me I was on TV last night and on the morning news. They said it was at least a four minute interview with me. I never saw it but everywhere I went people said they saw me on TV. The lady running the market around the corner called her friends and told them that the guy with the Rat Bike on TV is staying around the corner. I had a few visitors pulling into the motel for pictures. Little Bea came up to me so excited and said, "I saw you on TV this morning" and she had to get a picture with me and my bike. She was *really* excited about it.

I checked my chain and it was very loose again. I adjusted it out and I could pull the slack out of the rear end of the sprocket, meaning this chain was shot again. Only 1500 miles since Great Falls when I put it on. It was only a STD chain, not an O-ring unit. I had purchased chain lube in Rapid City but apparently a little too little and a little too late. The rear brake caliper was loose again. The main anchor/pivot bolt did not have the nut become loose because I used Locktite on it. The aluminum caliper had worn down where the steel pin went through it and caused it to become loose. I removed the nut and put more Locktite on it and really tightened it up again. I then called the West Bend Harley shop that Jim owned. They were open on Sunday. The Harley shop in Fond du lac had closed on Saturday at noon leaving a few dozen bikes in the parking lot in amazement that they were closed on such a busy Saturday. They weren't even

open on Sunday. When I talked to Jim at West Bend he said the owner went to Milwaukee and told the staff that they could close early on Saturday if it was slow. Me, as a business owner, would be a little upset if my crew closed the store with a few dozen people still there. Bikes kept showing up only to find a closed Harley shop on Saturday afternoon. Not too bright on the biggest weekend of the century in Harley Davidson history. I rode to West Bend Harley and told Jim I wanted an O-ring chain. He offered to have one of his mechanics put it on for me. But I told him I'm the only one who ever works on my bike and it's *never been in a shop* in the 28 years I've been riding it. The only exception to that *never in a shop* was after I installed my engine that Greg Coen Motors in Springfield Oregon built for me. It was an all S&S 88 cubic inch big bore set, put in my original 1970 cases. They failed to plug an oil passage in the case so the new S&S oil pump was not building pressure. I brought it up to Greg so I didn't have to pull the engine again. They pulled the cam cover, called S&S and figured out what they forgot to do. They plugged the passage, put the cone cover back on again and I adjusted the valves with the solid lifters and I had oil pressure. I figured that wouldn't classify as putting it in the shop 'cause the oil pressure problem was something that they overlooked when building the engine. It was also the first time ever that I had someone else build a complete engine for me. The 88 inch S&S is not very apparent to the untrained eye. So it's quite a surprise when people on the road find out that my Rat Bike has quite a bit of *sleeper power* hiding inside waiting to be awakened. It sure is fun to play with it.

Back to the chain. Jim's guy in the parts department said they have no 0-ring chains. Apparently chains are almost non-existent in Harley's eyes. The Kawasaki shop in town had a trailer mounted dyno set up in Jim's parking lot and was doing dyno runs for the Harleys. The Kawasaki guy went back to their closed shop and got me an o-ring chain. The guy that Jim gave me, to assist me with anything I needed, gave me a chain breaker and an install tool. Vise grips with a chain flat link welded on it to press on the new flat link. It worked great, so I made one when I got back home. The nut on the right chain adjuster was stripped out from adjusting it so much at the end of the adjustment travel. New nut and a few washers and it was as good as new. New chain felt great. Jim said he was having a police escort parade through town at noon and asked me to ride up front with him. I said sure and I would be back in time.

I took off to go to a bar and try to get my empty CO2 tank exchanged. I went to a couple of bars and they didn't do it. As I was leaving the 2<sup>nd</sup> bar a truck pulled in and motioned for me to come back. They said they saw me on TV and wanted a picture. They also told me a liquor store down the road was open and they filled CO2 tanks. They even took me to it. The guy

working there put my bottle in the freezer and said to come back in at least one hour and it would be ready to fill. Wow, Cool! I stopped at a burger place and got a quick meal and made it back to Jim's by 11:45. He saved me a space up front for his parade. About 60 or 70 bikes were lined up. We rode through town to a few people sitting in lawn chairs waiting. Nothing like Saturdays parade in Milwaukee. We went by Club Hog XX which was closed down and just a big empty area. We got to the highway to Milwaukee and Jim and three more of us pulled over and waved bye to everyone else who continued on to Milwaukee. Jim brought us back thru some beautiful scenery roads that looked like the North Umpqua River road back home, only without the river. We got back to town and I kept going to get my CO2 tank back. The guy filled it in a few minutes and only charged me \$7.00. I then returned to Jim's shop to pay for the chain. They couldn't find the invoice before the parade and said just to pay for it later. Wow, that came from a Harley shop employee? So I paid the bill and rode to Milwaukee. It was the very last day of festivities. The town was packed with tens of thousands of bikes for miles around. Good thing it was Sunday and most normal town stuff was closed. Wow, bikes everywhere. I parked under the freeway near where the parade ended. I waited in line for a bus to take us to Veterans Park for the *Big Party*. It was about one mile away. A sign on the bus said shuttle service ended at 5:00 so it was a very long walk back when it was all over. When I got on the bus, shortly afterwards, a couple I knew from Oregon got on. It was Peggy and her husband. I'll try to remember his name later. We walked for quite awhile around a water way to enter the park. It was a packed mob like sardines being packed into a can. The closer we got to the center, the more packed it got. There was a very big stage with two giant speaker towers and a giant screen TV on each side of the stage. For hours before the music started at 6:00PM, they were showing the parade and interviews with the people to fill time. People said I was on the big screen but I didn't see it. I walked around as close to the stage as I could get. They let only the first 5000 people in the front section closest to the stage. We never made it to that section as it was already full. Stan and Robyn from Coos Bay were in that section from what I found out later. The next section back was to be 10,000 people of which I got into. Fairly close but still behind the next two big screen TV's. So I exited that section and went back farther to see the rear giant TV's. I walked around and sat and talked to different people I recognized from the ride out that I met along the way. I was walking way over to the right side through the very large capacity crowd. Something told me to walk over there when Becky Garino from Roseburg hollered, "Hey Milo!" Wow, that's what told me to go over there so I could run into Don and Becky.



I chatted with Becky for about half an hour when Don came walking back with three Brat sandwiches. He had no idea that I would be sitting with Becky but the super long food lines made him get three. So he gave me one of them which was meant to be. I stayed with them for a few hours catching up with each others stories about our different journeys. Don and Becky were staying in South Milwaukee at Lenny and Sally's sister's house. Sally's sis, that is. Don was watching the morning news and my interview came on and he hollered at everyone in the house, "Come quick. Milo is on TV." At that point they realized that I was in Milwaukee also. As far as they knew, I only went to Sturgis and back 'cause I had not planned to go to Milwaukee. It was even more amazing that we found each other among about 150,000 estimated people at Veterans Park.

The Doobie Brothers were the first act up of the big anticipated surprise entertainment. They were OK. I just saw them at the Redwood Run in Northern California a few weeks earlier. Don and Becky just saw 'em perform at Summer Fest just a couple of days ago.

Next they had about a dozen Harleys ride out on the stage in another tribute to Harley's 100<sup>th</sup> celebration. They announced the winner of the new Harley and a new Ford pickup truck. We didn't know either of the winners but I bought a few tickets to support the cause. Jim McCaslin got on the mic and said that their goal for the MDA fundraiser was \$5,000,000. He said that was a pretty tough nut to try to crack. Then they held up a giant check for over seven million bucks to present to MDA. There was an overwhelming round of applause and hollering from the crowd. To surpass the goal by over two million bucks was fantastic. Everyone was elated. A few more CEO's of Harley Davidson took their turns speaking and Dan Ackroyd was the MC for the night. He then introduced Tim McGraw as the next performer and Tim rode up on a Harley. I chose that time to leave along with hundreds of other people. Not only did I have a

very long walk back to try to find my bike but I still had 75 miles more to ride back to the motel in Fond du lac and it was already dark. Lots of disgruntled people were complaining about the music. The big hype build up about who the surprise entertainment was to be, seemed to be a let down.

I finally found my bike and made it back to the highway. Had to stop for fuel and made my way back OK. It was a lot better with all my lights working. I got back to the motel to watch the 11:00 news and saw that Kid Rock followed Tim McGraw. Elton John was the top headliner. Wow, what a major letdown. The news reported and showed a mass exodus as soon as Elton John was introduced. The majority of the crowd was very disappointed and the news sure showed it. So did the paper the next day.

We were all getting packed to leave back west the next Monday morning. Danny and the crew were leaving south to Illinois and go back on Hwy 80 through Nebraska. Neil, Phil, his wife, Dave, and Yonna left a couple of days ago. Bill left Sunday morning to go back. Stan and Robin went to Indiana to visit relatives. They got very wet in Indiana; got seven inches of rain in just a few hours. Shauleen, Barbara, Dale and Myra who flew, out stayed in Milwaukee Sunday night to fly back Monday AM. That just left me. I didn't want to go back on Hwy 80 so I got directions to Sally's sister's house where Don and Becky were staying. I rode there and had lunch with 'em. Lenny and Sally left to go visit more of Sally's relatives. They were in a van towing their Shovelhead on a trailer with a *For Sale* sign on it. Don, Becky and I left around one or two o'clock Monday afternoon. We got through Wisconsin and mostly through Minnesota. We stayed in Fairmount. Can't get away from that town. The next day got us through South Dakota to my brother's house. Yes, we surprised him again! He is currently going through a divorce 'cause his wife Keli, of 22 years, left him and the three kids for a 57 year old drunken truck driver. Very bad feelings there. Keli happened to be there at the time, to pick up their 15 year old daughter, Krista, and take her clothes shopping for back to school stuff. Actually, this time was not a surprise as I called and left a message that Don, Becky and I would be over for dinner. As Brion heard our bikes coming down the street, he said to Keli, "By the way, Milo's coming over with some friends." He said the look on Keli's face was priceless. He said she turned white, her jaw dropped open and she looked toward the back door for a way out before having to face me. Brion loved it that I had such an effect on her. She looked shocked when she saw me but still asked me, "How are you?" I didn't answer and looked away. She got the message that I know she really blew it. She rapidly left with Krista. We left our bikes in the driveway and went to Classics Bar and Grill with Brion in his Suburban for dinner. While at

Classics for dinner, I saw a guy and his wife eating, and he had a Doyle's Harley Davidson shirt on. I talked to them for a while. They were from Eugene Oregon.

While we were gone Keli and Krista came back. Keli saw the bikes and said to Krista, "It looks like Milo is still here. I better not come in. I don't think I'm too popular in Oregon." Brion said, "She ain't too popular in South Dakota either." When we returned Krista told us what Keli said. We talked for a bit more until 10:00 or so. Don and Becky had the fold out couch downstairs and I slept on the couch upstairs.

I got up at 5:30 for a shower and discovered my brake caliper had worn down again and it was riding on the rotor. I stretched another Bungee cord and hooked it around it. I woke Don and Becky up and said, "Goodbye and have a great ride back." They were gonna stay there and hang out in Deadwood South Dakota for another day before returning homeward bound. I said goodbye to Brion and headed to the Blackhawk store for gas. I hit the road at 6:30 AM. I only got about 25-30 miles away and all of a sudden I was loosing something as it was dragging behind the bike. My siren bolt had broken and the wires to make it work came undone. The only thing holding it to the bike was a very thin return spring. I stopped and pulled the spring off and tied the siren to my back pack on the bike, I wrapped it in a rag first as it was very greasy. On about my way. About 125 miles later I stopped for gas. I got a cup of coffee and was shaking trying to drink it. It was a bit chilly that time of the morning. Back on the bike. I stopped another 120 miles or so for more fuel. The next fuel stop I stretched it 140 miles. Already on reserve for 20 miles or so, I was getting pretty nervous. I made it to a station and had 2/10<sup>th</sup> of a gallon left. Too close for comfort when I'm riding alone. So I purchased a red plastic gas jug and filled it up to have an extra gallon; for just in case. Next stop was another 130 miles. I got a BLT at a Connoco station Arbys. Back on the road.

I was cruising about 80-85 and sometimes 90 'cause the time between gas stops was going by pretty quick. I passed most of the bikes on the road. Only a couple of 'em passed me. One of the bikes I passed was Jim from Portland on his Shovelhead. He followed me to my next gas stop to say Hi. I pulled 2 beers out of my cooler and we drank 'em and talked. That was to be my only beer for the whole ride. Another guy pulled up to us. He was from Eugene. He said, "You don't know me yet Milo but I've known about you for quite a while." He introduced himself and we talked a bit. Then we all got on the road again. They were soon way back 'cause I traveled much faster than they did.

A while later my bike popped a couple of times and just quit running altogether. I pulled in the clutch and saw a wire dangling from my switch. The terminal broke at the switch and the

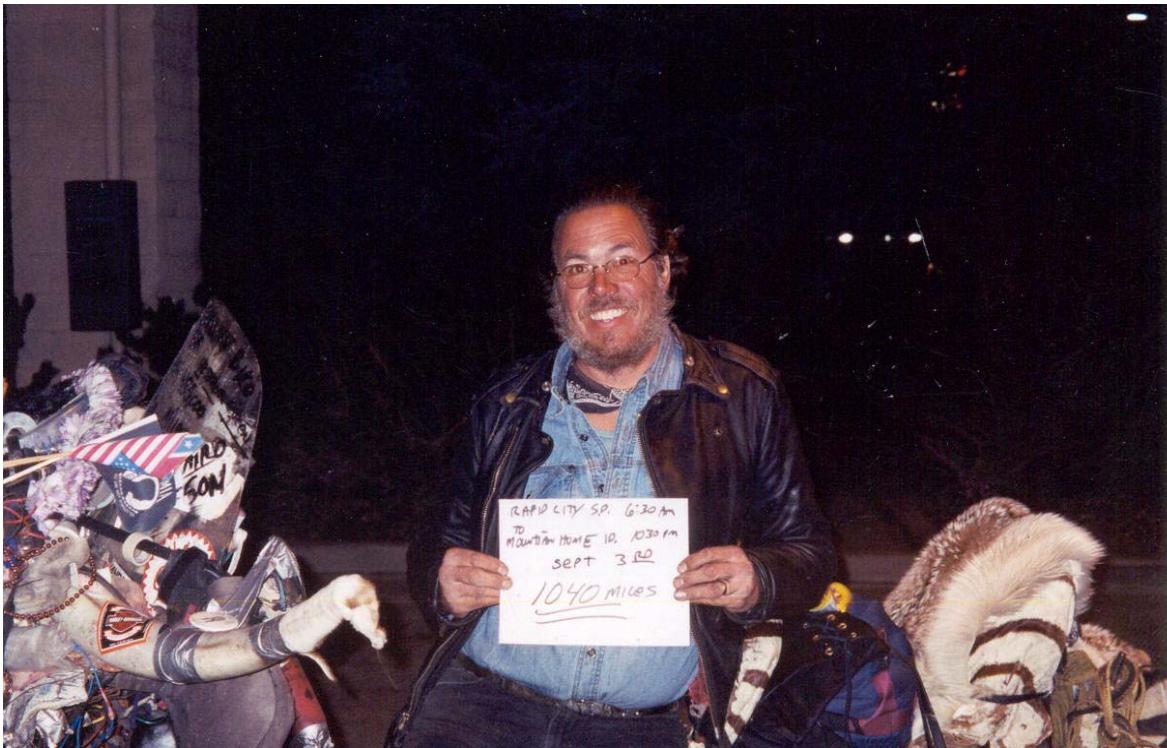
wire came off. I grabbed the wire and held it to the terminal and the bike let out a giant back fire and started running again. I held the wire there 'til the next exit a few miles away and stopped at the bottom of the exit. As I was stripping back the wire to reinstall it, another Shovelhead rider pulled down the exit and asked if that big backfire was me. I told him what happened and he offered me tools. I told him thanks, but I had plenty. He was one of about 600 Australians to come to the states for the ride home. 300 of 'em had their bikes shipped to the East Coast and 300 had their bikes shipped to the West Coast. He said he had a great ride. He left San Francisco and went out Hwy 80 through Nevada and Utah and the desert. I suggested he stay on Hwy 90 to Washington and go down Interstate 5 for a much more scenic route.

At that point in time, I still didn't know which route I wanted to return on. There were still quite a few fires around Missoula and a new big one just broke out around Cascade Locks in the Columbia Gorge shutting down Hwy 84. When I got to Butte Montana, I decided to go south on I-15 to southern Idaho to stay away from the fires. I got to Pocatello just before sunset. I then got on Hwy 82 and 84 heading west. I caught a beautiful sunset on camera while riding.

A short time later a semi truck was up ahead, with two cars between us. All of a sudden a large blast of dust came out of the right rear of the truck. He had a blow out and the tread of the tire flew out at the first car behind the truck. That car swerved one way to avoid it. The next car swerved the other way around it. It was right in front of me. I had plenty of time to miss and go around. But Wow. If I was right behind the truck the cap might have gotten me. Of all the things and animals I've hit on my bike I have yet to hit a truck tire cap. I don't recon I want to either.

Another fuel stop and I called home to Joni. She was starting to get a little worried 'cause she knew I was riding alone. I told her I was at 925 miles for the day and I was going for my first 1000 mile day on my bike. She said, "Your nuts, isn't it dark out?" I said, "Yes but I'm so pumped up to make my record day I am OK with it." I told her I would call her later. I was concerned about critters; deer etc. so I stayed behind trucks hoping for no more blow outs.

I went past Twin Falls Idaho and about 15 miles or so I was at 1,000 miles for the day. I was elated. My body handled the ride great. I was a little tired and sore but just knowing I was setting my personal record for one day overshadowed the soreness. I had to ride another 40 miles before finding a motel in Mountain Home, Idaho. I checked into the Best Western, asked the desk gal for a blank sheet of paper. I got my felt pen out and wrote: *Rapid City, SD 6:30AM to Mountain Home, ID 10:30PM-16 hours-Sept 3, 2003-1040 miles!!* I had the gal take my picture sitting on my bike, holding the sign.



Yes, I looked a little burnt out. But wow, I did it. I got my room and called Joni again and had two semi-warm beers. Most of the ice had melted in my cooler. I slept good and got up at 7:00 the next morning. I went to start my bike for the last morning and I noticed something wrong right away. It felt like I had a lot less compression and it was very stubborn starting. Red finally started and I fueled up, got ice, and headed west again. Through Nampa Idaho and Ontario Oregon. Bummer, back went the helmet on my head for the first time in two weeks. No helmet anywhere we went except for Oregon and Washington. Politicians take note: Isn't it about time Oregon and Washington followed suite and dumped the helmet law and let us adults choose?

I came into Vale Oregon and a lot of construction was going on. A guy was standing next to a female flagger, and his head shot up when he heard me gearing down. He then yelled, "Milo! What are you doing here?" It was Dennis Zuver, from Roseburg, working on the construction crew. I asked Dennis exactly what he does. He looked at the flagger gal, they both laughed and he said, "Not much but they still pay me good to do it." We talked for a while and he told me to watch out for the cops leaving town and going up the hill. I didn't realize it, but just west of Vale, was the place where eight Roseburg firefighters died while passing an 18 wheeler on a corner over a double yellow line. They hit an 18 wheeler head on. The road to Burns was very barren. I needed to use my extra gallon of gas. The road had no room to pull over if I ran out. So I choose to pull over at a driveway entrance to a rural ranch to add fuel. Better to add gas where I want to instead of where I need to. Got to Burns OK and filled up. Off to Bend.

More uneventful desert area. Made it to the next fuel stop and had my first beer of the day. Bend had a lot of construction so I had to go straight through town to Hwy 97 and then south. The only rain of the trip was between Bend and Diamond Lake junction. Three or four minutes of warm rain while in my sleeveless T-shirt. I filled up again at the junction and then back on to Hwy 138 West. I pulled into Oregon Tool & Supply at 3:30PM. An eight hour ride. That 560 mile last day coupled with the 1,040 miles the day before made it a total of 1,600 miles in 33 hours. The *Iron Butt Ride* says you must do 1,000 miles in 24 hours. I did it in 16 hours. The *Barn Burner* rider must do 1,500 miles in 36 hours. I did 1,600 miles in 33 hours. Wow, what a great personal accomplishment. When I walked into Oregon Tool & Supply for the first time in five weeks, I was so glad to be home. Joni had just left a few minutes earlier to get our kids from school. I said, "Hi," to everyone that Thursday afternoon and told 'em I'd be back to work on Monday. I went to Safeway and got three dozen roses of different colors to give to the three most beautiful women in my life. I went home to wait for 'em and surprise 'em. Joni figured I would be back around 8-9:00 in the evening. So Joni took the girls out shopping. They didn't get home 'til after 6:00. I was hiding behind the wall when they arrived. Joni saw the roses and figured Robin brought 'em into the house. My little Andrea saw me first and started to cry as she ran to me and hugged me. The look on Joni's face was, "Wow, he really is home." Big hugs from all three gals and me. Five weeks on the road. Both daughters saw me for two to three hours that Monday night when Joni and I got back from Sturgis. We sure missed each other. Five weeks, 10,200 miles on my Rat Bike, *Red*. No tickets, no wrecks, I didn't even fall over once. No breakdowns that I couldn't ride to the Harley shop and buy the pieces and put 'em on myself in the parking lot. Before that, my personal best was five weeks on the road through 33 states and 9,000 miles. Utah and Nevada in one day was 790 miles. I surpassed both of those records.

It was a super trip and lots of great memories. I only wish my wife Joni and the crew I rode with on the first trip to Sturgis could have joined us on the next journey of a lifetime to Milwaukee.

We just came full circle back to where we started on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 in Roseburg Oregon.

When I went to take the rear Avon Venom tire off my bike to change it, I rolled the chain around to take the master link clip off. IT WAS GONE!! Somewhere between Milwaukee, where I installed the chain, and home, the clip went *Goodbye*. I know how to correctly put clips on. The outer plate was pressed good enough to hold. What a miracle! Next revelation was the tire had a patch of cord showing about four inches long. Approximately 11,000 miles on the rear tire.

That's a lot for my bike. Every time I checked the tire on the road it looked OK. Guess that spot never came into view until home; Another 'Could have been bad' situation that let me get home. The next one was when I took the rear caliper off, the metal brake line broke completely off in my hands at the flare nut fitting. It waited 'til I got home before breaking. Another sign that God wanted me to make it back to my family safe and sound. Thank you Lord for letting me live another day!!

*Milo Anderson*