



NATIONAL VETERANS AWARENESS RIDE 2006



**MILO'S RAT BIKE RUN
May 16th thru June 10th 2006**

MILO'S RUN TO THE WALL WASHINGTON, D.C.

2006

Tuesday May 16th, 2006

We met at Elmer's Restaurant in Roseburg, OR. Ray Adams from Winston, OR drove his pickup and enclosed trailer with his Harley in the back. This is the third year he has volunteered to be the chase truck driver. Tim from Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association (OVMA) was with us also. Mike arrives from Rainer, OR on a pretty nice looking Honda Gold Wing trike. We all left Roseburg with about six or seven bikes at 9:00 AM., picking up another OVMA member,



Jim at exit 101, who rode a Yamaha. The next stop was at the Grants Pass rest area where four more riders joined the group. At the California border, pictures were taken of everybody and at Hilt everyone turned around to go home, except Ray, Mike, Jim, & myself.

As we continued on, we arrived in Redding, CA, which was 103 degrees, for lunch & fuel. Mike & I decided to run at 80-85 MPH and left Ray & Jim in the slow lane and then waited for them to catch up at a rest area just south of Sacramento.

At Rancho Cordova four riders came to escort us to the motel and among them were Rich & Sandy who are from Petaluma, CA. They right away asked me if I was in Sturgis last year. I told them I was parked on a corner for three hours, got bored with the Sturgis stuff and left. They said they had taken pictures of the Rat bike & me, not knowing who I was, so they were going to look at the pictures again. As we rode on in to the motel, we received a standing ovation with people clapping on both sides of the parking lot. There was a barbecue going on and I got to meet a lot of people from North Carolina, Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Illinois, to mention a few, & also Steve & Tami from Michigan City, Indiana who were the organizers. They were all there just waiting for the Oregon group to show up. On the ride

by Redding, in over 100 degree weather, my bike started cutting out from a vapor lock. I went to an auto parts store in town and got two brass T's. I spliced my crossover line and my main feed line and added a short line between both of them, giving the carburetor more of a direct supply of gas. It worked perfectly with no more problems the whole trip. I sacrificed my reserve by doing that, but I count the miles to know when I need gas anyway.

Wednesday, May 17th

We continued our ride on to Mather Air Force Base in Sacramento. We had breakfast, a morning



prayer, & a riders meeting, thanks to all the people working there. We then took off with 26 motorcycles. Next stop was the VA Hospital in Reno. A TV camera guy interviewed me and I got to tell him about our mission, which I didn't know much about at the time, but said it was for Veteran recognition and keeping people aware of the MIA/POW situations. Newspaper people were also taking pictures.

Mike, Jim, & I were not very happy about the road guards zipping up on our right & left sides to get to the next light signal to block traffic. We were almost going to ride on our own and meet everyone at the night stop. We figured we would give it another day and see how it went. It was okay once we got used to it. Ten miles or so before our exit for gas, food, VA stops, & etc., the six road guards would ride up ahead of us. Two guys would be at the exit waving orange flags aiming us toward the off ramp. The other guys would stop traffic and aim us toward our gas station or wherever we were headed. It became clear how good the set up was and how organized the road guards were.

Noah, from Colorado, was riding a Triumph. Mud Flap was riding a big blue Gold Wing. Recon (Don) was also on a Gold Wing from Illinois. Dennis (Strawberry) was from Michigan City, Indiana on a large import bike. Ed from North Carolina and Mike were on import bikes. Trevor was on a large BMW. They all did an excellent job being road guards and keeping the pack going and stopping in a very orderly manner. We made it to Battle Mountain, Nevada for our night stop.

Thursday, May 18th

The next morning we rode to a school in Battle Mountain. Joe Leonard had just been released from the hospital to present our group with a flag from Hickham Field and a letter that showed where else the flag was flown, including the White House. He wanted to donate this flag to the Air Force Museum in Washington DC and honored us with the task of delivering it.

We rode to Wendover, Nevada for lunch at the Red Garter Casino. After lunch, some of us went off to gamble a bit. On my third \$20.00 bill in a dollar machine I hit a \$240.00 jackpot. I hit the cash out button and 240 silver dollars fell out of the machine. I needed three buckets to catch it all. At a \$200.00 profit I quit and walked out. WOW, Joni (my wife) would not believe it because I usually play until the money is all gone, since it is their money. We then rode in to Salt Lake City, Utah to a large Veteran's Hospital to visit patients.

We were supposed to get a police escort into Salt Lake, but it never happened. Instead they show up at the VA Hospital with thirteen Harley's, talked with us for a while and escorted us out of town in a very organized manner. The front two would peel off right & left to block traffic then the next row would do the next intersection and so forth. It looked and felt pretty cool. We arrived in Evanston, Wyoming for the night.



Friday, May 19th

During the night Ray & I were woke up at about 3:30 AM with a horn honking and pounding on a door. It was in the room directly below us. A gal was outside yelling, "If you can open the door for your ----- whore bitch, then you can at least open it for your wife!" Then we heard a large window shatter. The wife then threw something through the window and broke the whole window out. Oh well, we went

back to sleep! The next morning when we went to the lobby to check out, we found a big color picture of Mud Flap & I on the front page of the Evanston, Wyoming paper.

At the riders meeting, I told people about me hitting a \$240.00 jackpot the day before and walking out, clearing \$200.00. I volunteered to fill up the Chase truck at the next large fuel stop, which was very much appreciated. At Laramie another group of riders joined us for the next leg of the journey to Cheyenne,



including Jenny from Chicago. We went to a VA Hospital there and at that hospital a cop decided I needed a souvenir from him. He wrote me out an official ticket for impersonating Sanford & Son. Great Laugh!!!

He also had a fellow VA cop take his picture sitting on my bike. He said he was going to tell his supervisor that he gave a biker a ticket to get a reaction from him and then show him the picture. All great sports, it was a very good stop!



Saturday, May 20th

Left Cheyenne at 8:00 AM after breakfast, riders meeting, & prayer. We left the American Legion with 40 bikes. We went to Fort McPherson for a very good ceremony at the cemetery. Our venture then took us to Grand Island, Nebraska to a very large Veteran's home. It seemed like the whole town turned out to greet us. We joined in a barbecue and good visits of stories from previous wars and experiences. One guy got wheeled up to me and my bike and said, "Sonny, I used to ride a 1935 Harley Davidson." I looked at him and said, "Oh, you had a Flathead." His face lit up as he proclaims, "you know", with a smile. I then said, "Yes, because in 1936 Harley introduced their first over head valve engine called the Knuckle Head." His faced beamed even more as he said, "Wow, you really know, you're not like some of these young whippersnappers around now days!" What makes that statement so interesting is that I was the third youngest rider on the ride, so far, at 51 years old. Steve Moore is 50 and Tami is even younger. Mike's son rode from New Mexico and he's probably in his 30's. I had a very good conversation with that 90 something year old guy.



We rode back to our motel and waited for Josh & Meagan to show up. They live a couple hours away in Nebraska. Josh is my nephew and Meagan is his wife. Josh got on with Mike & I took Meagan



and we went back into town, about eight miles, to get a battery for Mike's camera. No luck at Wal-Mart or Best Buy. When at Best Buy, we were talking to a young blonde gal at the



front counter. She had never heard of a Rat bike and she couldn't leave her station to go look at the bike. I walked outside, started my bike, and rode it to the door. The first set of sliding doors opened, so I figured, why not, and rode it to the next sliding door. They also opened, so I rode right into the store. Mike, Josh, & Meagan were still talking to the gal as I rode in. The gals had shocked looks on their faces and Josh turned around and hid his face and said, "I don't see him, I

didn't just watch my Uncle Milo ride into a store." My bike was still idling, so I decided to back out, loaded up Meagan and we all went back to the motel. Very funny, if you didn't work at Best Buy, that is!! Back at the motel we decided to go to the truck stop for dinner. We all visited until after 11:00 PM and then Josh & Meagan went home, since it would take them a couple of hours to get home.

Sunday, May 21st

At the riders meeting this morning, Trevor told of a 90+ year old gal who used to fly bombers from base to base in the states and also of a guy who was on the recovery team of the Baton Death March, retrieving bodies and seeing to it that they got a proper burial. Then we went on to Council Bluffs, Iowa



for another very good ceremony. We then rode over to Greenville, Iowa to a painted rock that Ray Sorensen painted.

He wasn't quite done with it yet, but it looked awesome. We took some pictures there and then headed off to Des Moines. We went to the memorial park in the government complex. The ceremony there was also very good. A mother of a son who was just killed in Iraq was

introduced there. That always brings the war closer to home when we come into contact with people who have lost someone.

I had just noticed oil dripping from my train horns on the right side. My oil cooler (my nephew gave me an Impala cooler a few years back) was rubbing on my crash bar and it rubbed a hole in it, letting the oil leak out. I saw a couple of Shovel Head local riders and asked them if they could solder up my cooler. They said, sure, so I followed them to one of their houses. They had to go buy solder and flux to try and fix it. It didn't work, so they mixed us some JB Weld and put that on it, still no go, (still tacky in the AM). I splice the lines together bypassing the cooler and rode to Trophy's Bowling Alley, Bar & Grill for dinner. My eight new friends & I sat down and soon got cheese burger plates put in front of us. My friends said they had not ordered them, and I told them it was part of our complimentary dinner for our ride to the Wall.

The other guys I had been riding with were already gone because dinner wasn't ready yet when they arrived. After a bit of conversation, Tom said, "Hey, this guy is about goofy enough to fit right in with us." A compliment, I reckon!! They then rode with me over to the motel and said, "Bye." They also gave me a little Harley doll that they all signed and wrote Des Moines, Iowa on it.



Tom was called "U-turn Tom", because he would see a bar and makes a u-turn and falls down. He said he went through three clutch levers and two gas tanks the first six months of his Shovel head riding career, and has only been riding for a year and a half.

Monday, May 22nd

Back to Trophy's for breakfast and then Mike & I headed off to PaxAir to replace my empty CO2 bottle. The folks at PaxAir donated the bottle and said to have a good and safe time going to DC. They told me where a radiator shop was, so Mike & I rode there and a gal walks out wearing a Harley shirt. I asked if they could make my oil cooler stop leaking and she said, "I'll put the best man on it." He fixed it and wouldn't take any money for doing the job. He said, "It's an honor to be part of letting this Rat bike get down the road." I put the cooler back together in their parking lot and said, "Thanks!" and we left to catch up with the gang.

They were to be at the Iowa State Veteran's Home, so when we pulled up, a VA cop told us we had missed them by five minutes. I called Ray on his cell phone and he said they were just getting on 80 east, we got on 80 east and hauled ass for about 80-90 miles. We were cruising at 85 to 90 MPH and I finally had to stop for gas. I checked my phone and Ray had left me a message telling us not to forget to take 65 North to Marshalltown, Iowa. OOOPS, that was about 70 miles back!! We went north and then back east to the VA at Marshalltown. We got there with about ten minutes before time to go. Tami told me at the first VA stop that Mike & I just missed; there were some disappointed people who were looking forward to the Rat bike coming. OOOPS!! Back south to Hwy 80 and east again, Mike & I got to do about 70-75 miles again of the same road. When we passed where we had stopped for gas earlier, it was

only eleven miles until our next group gas stop. We did 105 miles extra back tracking to catch up to them. We then went to another VA home to visit.

The looks on the patients faces when they got wheeled out to see the bikes pull up and get to talk to us, is so very much worth it for giving purpose to our cause. It's a feeling in my heart that just wants to yell, "Thank You, Lord in Heaven, for letting me make a difference in someone's life!!" If only for a few moments, they will know that they are not forgotten.

Next we go to Davenport, Iowa for the best and most impressive ceremony yet. It was a large ceremony for Veterans' of all wars and a very impressive memorial at the cemetery. I was interviewed for the paper. There was a great picture of Steve & Tami and I was quoted as saying, "I'm not a Vet", but very proudly said, "My Dad entered the Coast Guard on December 8, 1941." We were then off to dinner by the Veteran's Memorial Committee and then to the motel.

Tuesday, May 23rd

We went to Wieblers Harley Davidson shop for breakfast. It was at the riders meeting that I got to present Trevor with \$180.00 cash to replace his stolen chaps that he had for 15 years. A couple of days before, Trevor had his leather chaps stolen off his BMW at one of the crowded stops with a lot of day riders. The night before I had kicked in the first \$20.00 bill to help buy a new pair and the pile grew real quick to \$180.00. WOW!!! I guess I had a good idea and Trevor really appreciated it.

We then rode for awhile and got off for a gas stop and ABATE of Illinois had tables set up with refreshments, pop, & goodies for us. We were joined by them and a group called "The Canaryville Riders of Chicago. Those Chicago guys were very forceful when it came time to stop traffic for us. Pretty Cool!! Arriving in downtown Chicago at noon time on a work day, having traffic stopped for us was amazing. There was 70-80 riders coming into Chicago and we were led into the wrong hospital. There we were blocking the ambulance entrance and getting lot of looks like, "What the hell is going on here?" We had only one way to go on the four lanes with a median, so we couldn't turn left. We went to the next block and six of the Canaryville riders formed a horseshoe type blockade of the large intersection and we all made a big u-turn inside of them. It looked like it was meant to be, it looked so cool! We got to the correct VA hospital and went into a great reception. A bunch of vets did a show for us, singing, dancing, & playing music and they sounded real good.

We had the same sack lunches that Jenny & Recon make for the homeless on a regular basis. We then went to a Vietnam museum.

CBS News was there interviewing people about a Veteran's Affairs worker taking home a lap top computer, with information of twenty six million Veteran's; it was then stolen with names, addresses, social security numbers, mother's maiden names, etc.

They filmed me and my bike riding in and wanted to interview me. I told them, I was not a vet, so they talked to guys who were vets. Brenda Poland called Joni and said, "I just saw Milo and his bike on CBS, he is in Chicago!" Leaving Chicago I hit the biggest sink hole ever. It swallowed up the front of my bike. I hit the hole so hard that my flashlight popped out of my bag on my handle bars and flew over my head. Mike saw it fly and told me about it. "Oh well, they make



more!" I'm lucky it didn't break my mag wheels. It scrapped my frame pretty good, I saw later. Another rider stopped and got my flashlight and handed it to me at the next toll crossing. Before we left we each gave one person \$4.00 to pay for our tolls; \$2.00 for a bridge, \$.50 a road, \$.30 another road, & etc. That person stopped and paid for all of us and the collector was trying to count all of us as we rode by at 30 MPH.

Then we went to Michigan City, Indiana where we were met with a fire truck, tow truck, cops and other riders. It was a very good reception, with a lot of the people from here being on the ride. Next we went to dinner at St. Joe's Youngman's Society Building. After dinner Mike, Ray, & I went and did our laundry. The laundry mat attendant closes at 9:00 PM and it was after 9:00, so I took my clothes out of the dryer and stuffed them in my two packs. The attendant said, "Don't do that or they will wrinkle." I told her that my wife tells me the same thing, so I told her I'd fold them when I get back to the motel.

Wednesday, May 24th

We had breakfast at the American Legion Hall and the Mayor and the top sheriff spoke to us and wished us well on our adventure.

We headed south toward Indianapolis and took back roads for 50-60 miles, which was a nice change from the freeways. We went to a very large Indiana Veterans Home for lunch in Lafayette with about 120 bikes showing up. We



heard a lot of stories from people in wheel chairs and a lot of happy Vets to talk to. Marshall had a Polaroid camera and he was taking pictures of Veterans' by



The bikes. My bike got quite a few takers for pictures including two gals in their 90's. Then they went around showing everyone their pictures and pointing at the Rat bike saying, "Look at me, I got my picture with that bike over there with all the stuff on it!" They were so proud of their pictures. Things like that really make my heart feel good.

When we got to Brookville, Ohio there was a band playing at the school, where the mayor talked to us for awhile. From there we went to the AMVETS place for dinner that Lisa & John had arranged which was very good. A break off group of the Indiana Wall gang were at the AMVETS; expecting a free dinner. There was some bad blood there between members and it seemed that the break off group didn't want to stop at all the Vet places, just ride. What's the ride about anyway? The Veterans'!! That group left to do another 100 miles before night fall and we stayed.

Before we reached Brookville, Grant and his wife joined us in their van. Grant had no legs and was totally deaf. His spirit was high as they did all the stops with us clear to the Wall!!

Thursday, May 25th

We had breakfast at the same place we had dinner. John's wife, Lisa, gave me a doll she signed



and wrote Ohio on it. We went back to the school, but no one was there so we went on to the VA hospital and visited patients. Pam, the head nurse, was escorting us to rooms of patients who don't get very many visitors. It was pretty cool!! Once outside I got Pam to sit on my bike for pictures. Her boss figured it would be good for blackmail!!

At the Ohio, West Virginia border on the Ohio side, we got fuel. Roads were very wet and there was watering pouring off the roofs. It had just got done dumping lots of rain about 20 minutes before we got there. We were really lucky that we didn't catch a drop of rain. We next rode to Clarksburg, West Virginia to an American Legion Hall.



The all the way crew from Sacramento to DC.

Wiley gave out more certificates of appreciation, which he did at every stop. We always thanked the police and fire departments, VA Medical Centers, Chiefs, AMVETS, VFW Halls, escorts, meals & etc. We wanted to make sure that everyone was recognized for all their help in getting us across country. I was really surprised to hear Wiley call my name to come up front. I received a certificate of appreciation for paying for flags that were put on Ray's chase trailer and fueling up the truck, but mostly for my positive attitude that I helped spread through out our trip. Also for my "Rat" bike that catches the media's attention to our cause and smiles on the people's faces!! Wow, pretty cool!!

As we were riding to the motel, we saw a bunch of bikes a couple of blocks away and were told that it was bike night there. We got settled in to the motel and then I rode back to the bike night place, but there were only a couple of dozen bikes left. A crowd of people came up to me and wanted pictures of my bike and I. A few couldn't believe I rode my bike from Oregon. I met a guy named "Dog" and he asked if I wanted to go to another bar where things were really happening, so we left. As we rounded the corner, both sides of the street were lined up with bikes, so I pulled up to the front door.

The place was called "Soft-Tails & Hard-Bodies or Hard-Bellies", it all means the same!! Lots of people gathered around and after a few minutes someone called the local TV station for NBC News and suggested they send a camera crew to the bar. A story in the making!! In a short while, a guy showed up and started filming my bike. He plugged in the mic and asked me to answer a few questions. He asked me to tell him about my bike and I told him I would rather focus on our mission of our run to the Wall. I told him we were doing the northern route from Sacramento, CA to DC. It is the National Veterans' Awareness Ride. We had stopped at least twenty Veteran Homes & VA Medical Centers to visit our forgotten Veterans. I quoted Wiley when he said, "We live in the Land of the Free, Because of the Brave!" Our Vets are our brave ones both past, present, & future. I told him how rewarding it is to put a smile on the faces of our Vets and to lift their spirits, if only for a moment, and thank them for their service for our country. Then the camera man said, "Ok, now what about the bike!" He asked me to blow the train horns, so I gave them a good blast and seconds later another blast of train horns filled the air. An engine was idling across the street from the bar and he returned my train horn blast, so I did mine again, then the train engineer did his again. The crowd loves it!! I continued to tell the cameraman about my 31 year history with the bike etc. "Dog" then told me about another bar that was a few corners away and when I pulled up front, they told me to ride on in. They moved a few table and chairs and I rode all the way through the bar and parked on the back balcony. It was very cool; my bike was a great hit there. The owner of the bar gave me a battery action "Big Bald" guy figurine that sings and does R rated movements.

He had it on his bar for over 20 years. I had him sign it and put W.V. for the state, and then strapped it in on my bike. More pictures were taken and after I finished my 7up it was time to go. They had to



move more tables and a few bikes to let me out so I could get back to the motel. I told the gang about the interview and to watch NBC News. My interview aired that night and again the next morning. Lots of people in our group saw it and said it looked great. The newsman started by showing my bike and then me talking about our mission, while wearing my "Oregon Tool & Supply" shirt. They showed different angles of my bike as I was describing my history. After calling back to Oregon Tool a couple of days later, I found out that it made national news and was seen everywhere!!

Friday, May 26th

We rode into the Vets cemetery in Maryland and they had about fifteen Jr. Marines dressed in fatigues and saluting us as we rode in. I found out that this is the only place in



the country that has a Jr. Marine program.



A couple of kids were only six or seven years old, we had to duck down to see their faces under their hats.

We watched a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, another neat ceremony. All the people

involved were sure glad we stopped there.

We then left to go to DC and visit the Wall as a group. We were all wearing our NVAR grey run shirts and the freedom hats that the AM Vets gave us in West Virginia, we also did a group picture in front of the



Lincoln Memorial, and then we visited the Wall. I had no idea what to expect, I didn't know that the Wall was buried under a level of lawn and we walked down a slope to walk next to the Wall.

You approach the Wall on a walkway from either end. Both ends start very short and the Wall tapers



down towards the middle where it is about eight to nine feet tall. I found out that all the names on the wall, where it is the tallest, were the first ones killed in Vietnam. As it became later in time the newer names were added closer to the outside of each end. The names all the way at each end were the most recent killed in Vietnam or because of death caused by Agent Orange etc...

Wow, lots of names, very touching experience. I don't personally know any names on the Wall that I know of.



Before I left on this trip, Chet Hansen, a friend of mine from Roseburg, asked me to scratch the name of his friend who got killed in Nam in 1970. I found Lane Wiseman's name, took a picture and scratched his name on the paper that our Government provides for us. We then went to our motel. Ray got us a room in the Americana, a real dive. Recon was the only other person in our group staying there, everyone else was staying at the Days Inn in Alexandria, Virginia. A lot of getting

lost was happening. My GPS only told me where I was, not where I wanted to be.

Saturday, May 27th

We followed Recon through DC to the Naval Museum and a Navy Destroyer, of which we toured both. It took a lot of turns getting there. There were bars on all the windows and doors of homes and businesses, didn't look to safe to me. Recon finally asked someone at a gas station how to get there. When we finally arrived at the museum, the rest of our gang's bikes were all lined up.



Some were in the museum and some were touring the destroyer, they were both pretty neat. Some of the guys who served on board a ship told a few tales of life on the sea. Greg showed me a replica of the exact ship he was on in Nam at the museum. I asked him how young he felt knowing his old ship was now just a model in a museum!

Ray & I then left to go to the DC Harley shop to get our run to the Wall hog event pin. They were having a free barbecue and the line was wrapped around the building, so we didn't get any food. We could only register to get our pin and then it would be mailed to us. I then went in to buy oil and a filter so I could

change my oil after 3,700 miles. The guy behind the counter in parts had no idea what a HD-1 filter was. He looked it up in a book for my 1970 and tried to tell me it was a drop in element. He finally had to ask five or six other parts people behind the counter and at last they came up with a HD-1 filter. Imagine that, it even had the same number on the box that I asked for. Why was he even working behind the counter anyway? Oh, well, off to the service department to borrow an oil drain pan. The female service manager said I had to make an appointment for an oil change. I said, "No, I'm going to change my own oil in the parking lot." She looked at me with a bewildered look on her face as she asked me, "You want to change your own oil?" I replied of course, I've been riding the same Shovelhead for 31 years and it's never been in the shop and it isn't going start now. "Could you please lend me an oil pan?" She said she has ten oil pans and they are all being used by all my technicians. I asked her, "All the time?" She said, "Yes!" I then said, "What am I suppose to do, drain my oil on the parking lot?" She said, "NO!!" She didn't want me changing my own oil on their property. She had no idea what my bike looked like. I then asked, "Whatever became of helping out a fellow Harley rider from clear across the country?" She had enough of me and walked away. I went back to my bike, which was parked at the front corner of the building. A crowd of at least twenty people were around it. I walked up with my oil and filter and told my story about customer service at this establishment or lack there of. I told my stories ten or twelve times more to different crowds of people when a guy and gal dressed in Harley uniforms asked if they could take some pictures of the bike. I said sure and asked them if they worked here and they said they did, so I told them my story. The guy went in the back of the shop and came out with an oil drain pan, so I changed my oil and filter right there in front of the store. Quite an audience and when I was done, I carried the oil pan into the shop and dumped it in their oil recycling unit and propped pan up on six other oil pans



the
to
drain,
that
were not

being used. Imagine that!!! He let me clean up and it was all good. Ray's cousin, Ed and his girlfriend Kathy, showed up at the Harley shop, heard my horns and found me. The four of us left to go for a ride and went to a little café in downtown DC with not much traffic. We sat at the sidewalk tables and it was very relaxing, we then left to go to the motel. We then met everyone for a large group dinner that was our last meal together with all our new found friends.

Sunday, May 28th

Ray & I left the motel at 6:00 A.M. to go to the Pentagon parking lot where they were staging for the big protest parade called the Rolling Thunder. We passed two police check points and I had just



remembered 38 reasons what I should have taken out of my jacket pocket and left behind. No searches, so it was ok. Ray & I found the rest of our group way back in line, so we pulled in next to them. Recon rode up and said he had saved a place for us all in front of the line for the whole group. Cool! My bike was at the very front of probably fifteen rows from the first corner. There were lots of pictures taken and

comments made. I attached a 3'x5' flag to the back of the bike that Mike had won earlier at an American Legion Hall drawing. Looked great!! We had a long wait since the parade didn't start until noon. We left at 12:25 P.M. and were done at by 1:00 P.M. Bikes were still rolling out at 4:30 P.M. At the beginning of the parade, in the street, a Marine stood at attention and saluted us, as we went by, for each and every one of us. Last year he made national attention for holding a salute for over



eight hours during the parade. WOW!! Next was a TV camera filming us as we got to the main road and I rode straight for it with a big smile and waving my freedom hat. I later found out that was Fox News and national at that. Gino was lying in bed in Winston, OR on Monday morning eating cheerios and Milo came on his TV set. He said he almost threw them back up seeing me in the parade. Pretty Cool!! Thanks to Recon we got out in the first ten percent of the bikes waiting.

The figure there was between 350,000-400,000 bikes in the parade and about 300,000 more in town that didn't want to spend all day in the hot sun in the parking lot, just to do a 45 minute ride.



Once the parade got going, it went pretty quick, we were cruising at 25-35mph most of the time. It was very well organized. My co2 tank for the train horns lasted the whole parade.



We all met again at the Lincoln Memorial for more pictures and another trip to the Wall. Wow, how the Wall had changed. There are pictures of soldiers with lots of Notes, "We miss you Dad", "We love you Uncle____", lots of faces put with the names, balloons with names, easels with wreaths, and more pictures. Our NVAR 2006 ride was dedicated to Lance Corporal Lawrence James Putz Jr., from Indiana, who was killed on November 25, 1968. Each year a different soldier is chosen to

honor their memory for the ride.

There were a lot of personal touches that adorned an otherwise cold granite memorial with so many names on it. It let's one realize the scope and magnitude of over 58,000 dead young soldiers and older ones too, that tries to memorialize their memory the best it can. It was a very emotional time for all.

Ray's cousin, Ed & Kathy, met us and we left a very crowded Washington DC together to ride south to Days Inn. I remembered the exit, wrong (go figure, that's why Joni got me the GPS in the first place). I was looking for exit 3C off of Hwy 395. There was only 3B & 3A, no 3C, so we got off at exit 2 and waved good-bye to Ed & Kathy. I figured I would just get on Hwy 395 north and get off at 3B. I don't know how I did it, but I led Ray & me onto the H.O.V. lanes going north back to the Pentagon. For ten miles there was no way to get off, there was a solid median on both sides, north bound on the right of us, south bound on the left of us and our two lanes going into DC. We skipped the Pentagon exit and took the downtown exit. A quick illegal u-turn and we were back heading south. We got off at our Americana motel and Ray loaded up his bike in his trailer. The



roads every where were very crowded with the parade just getting over. Bikes and cars every where!! A guy named, Crum, stopped by to say hi and he led us the back way to the Days Inn motel where everyone else was. I shared a room with Mike for the last night there. Mike, Ray, Jennie, & I rode to a diner and discussed the week's events. I treated everyone to dinner because Mike wouldn't let me pay for part of the motel room, and I told Ray I'd buy him a steak dinner for a bicycle



deal before we left. Back to the motel, I was watching the Coca Cola 600 on TV, but I fell asleep before it was over.

Monday, May 29th Memorial Day

I got up at 4:30 A.M., packed up and I was out of the parking lot before 5:00. My first day out on the big open highway alone, No rules, just right!! All I had to do was go two miles south on 395 and catch 95 east to go around DC. I missed 95 and it took me twenty minutes to figure out how to get back on the freeway. GPS only told me how lost I was, it couldn't tell me where the highway was. Finally I got to 95 East and up to New Jersey.

When you enter the toll booth at the Jersey Turnpike, it is automated to get on. A machine just spits out a ticket to say where you started. I entered the booth and no ticket came out. I pushed the button and



still no ticket. I pushed the button three or four more times and still no ticket. I backed up figuring maybe I didn't hit the sensor in the road. As I pulled my bike forward toward the center of the lane a ticket popped out and a big black lady in a uniform came up from the ground through a trap door and said, "What U want?" "You've been pushing the talk button and not saying anything!" Ok, now I know the button is to talk and

not to get a ticket on the turnpike. When I finally got to the end it cost me \$6.50.

I was trying to focus on the signs for the George Washington Bridge upper deck into New York

City. The next thing I know, the bridge entrance was on the right side of the median. I did it again!! I'm looking for a break in the median to cross over and I see a cop giving someone a ticket



close to where I found a curb that I rode over, across a 6' sidewalk and down the proper road on the right.



I recon the cop wasn't interested in me. I'm at the toll booth to pay my \$6.50 to cross bridge and a green sign say's "Toll paid, proceed across bridge." I didn't pay because I was in an E ticket lane that is for prepaid people with passes. There was no one to give my money to, so I just followed directions and proceeded across the bridge. I figured I'd pay twice on my way back. OOPS!! I made it through Manhattan and didn't have to get off 95.

Then up to Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine. I took pictures of my bike with all the state signs. Wow, after all these years, I finally made it to Maine. I went west through New



Hampshire and Vermont, then south back



through Massachusetts and Connecticut again. I spent the night in New Haven, Connecticut, an 800 mile trouble free day in fourteen hours.



Tuesday, May 30th



Got up at 5:30 A.M. and out by 6:00 A.M., went around NYC and into New York state, south through Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, into North Carolina, then stopped at a motel by north Wilkesboro for the night. Pennsylvania must have a



lot of very disturbed deer, a lot of them committing suicide. There were dead deer about every mile or so all the way through the state. 735 mile trouble free day, "Life is good!"



Wednesday, May 31st

Slept in until 6:30 A.M. and on the road by 6:50 A.M., south to Charlotte and it started to rain big time, ten minutes later I was getting ready to stop and trade my sunglasses in for clear ones and it stopped raining. After thirty minutes of riding I was dry, stop. I followed highway 77 south to 85 Russ & Kathy's house in Anderson, South



Carolina, Joni's parents. My gas tanks were vibrating quite a bit on



the second day in Nevada. The main bolt that holds the tank on the bike in front broke. I cinched it up with Jeremy's Buell ratchet strap he had gave me last year at his house in Eugene, to fix the same problem. They still

were vibrating too much for me, so Russ had a 5" long carriage bolt 5/16-18; I made some more rubber spacers and bolted the tanks back together. Very good fix, just right!! The bolt hangs out a couple of inches so it looks perfect. Russ drove me to a place to exchange my empty co2 bottle. When we got back I noticed a 3" puddle of oil under my bike. I moved the bike and then another 3" puddle formed. I removed my pot from the right side of the bike (pot to piss in) by the transmission kicker. My oil line coming from the cooler unit I had fixed in Iowa, was rubbing on the cotter pin that secured the swing arm nut from coming off. I cut the whole section off and rerouted my oil line to a safe location. It's all good

again!! Pretty cool that it let me know it in Russ & Kathy's driveway and didn't pump all my oil out on a long run. Joni's sister, Teri & her husband Bobby and their granddaughter Haley came over for dinner and a visit. I did laundry there, at least I started it, Kathy put it in the dryer and Russ pulled them out and folded them, before I knew what he was doing. Kathy gave me her opinion about doing all my clothes together in one load. Oh well! I had rode 225 miles, short day, but a good visit day.

Thursday, June 1st

Up at 5:30 A.M., had egos, coffee, & juice. Kathy even got up that early to say bye. Of course, Russ was



already up waiting for me. I'm sure glad I had as much time to visit them as I did, because they're alright people, for in-laws, that is!! I took 85 south west through Georgia and Alabama and at Montgomery I took 65 south. I



stopped for gas and asked where Hwy 21 was, as was told I had missed it, it was two exits back. I back



tracked about twelve miles and took 21 south and twenty miles later I was in Florida at the northwest corner of the panhandle. Going back I saw a sign that said to 65, so I went west and when it brought me out of the back roads to 65, I found myself at the very same gas station that had told me Hwy 21



was a few miles back. Instead of asking where Hwy 21 was, I should have asked where Florida was!! Back on 65 to Hwy 10 to New Orleans, wow, still a lot of devastation from last years Katrina

hurricane. Hard Rock Café still had a giant crumpled up sign in the shape of a guitar, what was left of it anyway. There were lots of buildings with no roofs and half the walls gone, with yellow caution tape blowing around the destroyed buildings. There were also 120' light poles between east and west bound Hwy 10 that were laying on the ground twisted like pretzels. Trees were still up rooted and still laying

where they had fallen along with billboards toppled over and still laying on the ground, which was all seen from Hwy 10. I didn't need to go into town to see more. The swamp land on each side of Hwy 10 looked like roads only made of water and swamp. The highway was elevated for quite a few miles. After a while I started to notice brown spots on my map, the gas tank, & my glasses. I looked down and saw a puddle of oil by my crotch. My oil pressure gauge that I keep on the left rear of my gas tanks rubbed a hole in the rubber line and was pumping oil out. I had to go about another mile before I could get off the highway. I cut the bad part out, shortened it and it's was all good again. The bad part about this oil story was that the day before, I had just done laundry and now I had oil soaked jeans. Oh well!! I pulled into Baton Rouge outskirts at rush hour, what a traffic mess. I passed a bunch of stopped traffic in the breakdown lane to get to an exit for a gas stop. At the gas station, lightening, thunder, & rain had just started; ugly black skies all around. There was a motel very close so that was it for this day with 735 miles in 13 hours.

Friday, June 2nd

Up at 5:15 A.M. and out by 5:40, went back east on Hwy 10 about 40 miles and caught 55 north through Jackson up to Memphis. A little north of Memphis was Horn Lake, Mississippi to the Harley shop. I bought oil again and asked for an oil pan. They guy said he would have to ask the manager. He came over and said, "No I couldn't change my oil there." Wow, another Harley shop not willing to help a fellow rider all the way across country. I asked him, "What ever happened to



courtesy for out of state people?" He answered, "Lawyers put a stop to that with legal crap." As I was getting ready to pull out of their driveway, two businesses down, I spotted a sign, "Oil changes here." I pulled in and asked them if I could give them some used oil. They said, "Sure, where is it?" I replied, "Still in the bike!" They got me a drain pan and a 3/4" wrench so I wouldn't have to pull mine out.



Very cool guys!! They didn't charge me because they were happy to help. Back on the road, engine happy, fresh oil again.

I went up Hwy 55 to 155 into Tennessee and up to Fulton, Kentucky and on into Cairo, Illinois. I stopped for fuel and pulled into a Burger King for a bite to eat. Six soldiers in fatigues were getting out of



a van as I pulled up and I got some pretty weird stares. I went inside and ordered and as I was waiting for my food the guys were standing around. I walked up to the soldiers, stuck out my hand and shook the end guy's hand. I told him thanks for serving our country, he looked surprised. I told him about stopping at twenty or so Veterans' Homes & VA Medical Centers

to visit with forgotten patients to tell them thanks for serving our country. He called the other guys over to tell them what I had done and I got smiles and handshakes all around. They said thanks for giving them a smile with that bike of mine. Very good feeling all around! I then



went back



over to 55 into Missouri and down to Memphis again and east to Little Rock, Arkansas for the night. I called Joni again as I've been doing every single day while on the road to tell her where I was at. She looked at the map, Baton Rouge, LA last night, Little Rock, Arkansas tonight. She said, "You didn't make it very far!" I told her about my riding around to get more states in the run. She paused a bit and asked me, "You don't want to come home?" I said, "Of course, I'm getting all the states in while I can." Now I can say I've ridden in all 48 states on the same bike. It was another great day of riding 870 miles in fourteen hours.

Saturday, June 3rd

Got up at 5:15 A.M. and out the door by 5:40 and went due west on 40 through Oklahoma to Amarillo, Texas. I thought about getting an armadillo for my bike. I've seen quite a few squished ones in



Oklahoma and Texas. They must have a lot of guts in them because everyone I saw on the side of the road there was a very large red pool of blood surrounding it. I figured it would be way too rank for me. Then I went north on 287 to Boise



City, Oklahoma, then same place that border last year going south to Boise City east on 56 to Elkhart, down same road to south on 385 to



north to Colorado for a picture. It was the Jeremy & I did our picture at the Oklahoma south from Sturgis. From there I went back and north Kansas, Boise City Dalhart,



Texas. There were big lightening & thunder storms just east of me and a medium size storm to the west of me. I made it south to Dalhart and proceeded south west on 54 and threaded the storm needle. I only got a few sideways sprinkles for a short while, but I got big time sideways easterly winds. I finally made it to 40 again and construction, single lane traffic bad roads and getting dark. I stopped in Santa Rosa, New Mexico for fuel and got a room after 1030 miles in sixteen hours. This is my second 1000+ day. The last one was coming home from Milwaukee, Wisconsin 1040 miles in sixteen hours three years ago. I never know when I'm going to do a 1000 mile day when I start in out the A.M. It just falls into place and if it feels good, I do it. I don't care about submitting proof to the Iron Butt Association for recognition. They want me to send them \$65.00 and proof I did it. I know I did it and that's good enough for me.

Saturday, June 4th

Slept in until 5:30 A.M. and out at 6:00 this morning. At the second gas stop, two little old ladies were in a mini van fueling up, one of them came up to me and asked me if I was just in Washington DC last week. I told her I was and then she asked my name. When I told her, she yelled to her friend, "I told you it's the same guy and bike we saw on the news." They remembered a strange bike and the owner had

a different type of name. They both had to get their pictures taken with me. I guess I made their day!! They said, “There can’t be two bikes like that!”

I called Lewis Clark from sixty miles east of Flagstaff and he told me how to get to Parker, Arizona where he elevation and it was got down off the degrees. When I rode City it was 110 P.M. and I had 40 put my hat on to shield only to loose it a few



lives. Flagstaff is 7700’ in only about 80 degrees. When I mountain it was well over 100 south on 95 into Lake Havasu degrees on their signs at 4:30 miles to go to reach Parker. I my face from the HOT sun miles down the road.

Hopefully someone is wearing my Oregon Tool & Supply hat down there. I raised my left arm to shield my face and my fingers were burning as if I was holding them over a flame. Ouch, couldn’t do that anymore and when I finally pulled into Parker it was a stupid 118 degrees. I stopped at a bar and went in and had two glasses of ice water. The guy beside me asked me if I just got done working. I told him I didn’t think so, I think I’m still having fun. He said my face was very red and I was sweating like a “Big Dog.” I told him I’m at the end of a 700 mile day on my motorcycle. He was very surprised and said, “Nobody rides in 118 degree heat, you can die doing that!” We talked a while longer and I called Lewis, only to get his answering machine. He said, “You mean Lou, Lou Clark?” I told him that’s the one and he said he would show me how to get there, so I followed him to Lewis’s house. Lewis wasn’t home, but his girlfriend lived next door, so she unlocked the house for me. Lewis finally got home after having a couple of beers. We visited for a couple of hours and after the sun went down I left to go back to Lake Havasu City. It was kind of slow going, it was dark and my lights don’t do to good after dark. Every time I hit a bump my front end compresses, the fairing hits my fog lights and aims one down and one up. The motels in Lake Havasu City are off the main road and it took me a while to find a Motel 6, which cost me \$55.00. The desk guy said it was a resort, that’s why it cost more. I got the last room with out a reservation. It was a 700 mile day, but the last couple of hours were very uncomfortable. Next time, it it’s that hot, I will stop early. 118 degrees is STUPID!! Why would any one want to live in Parker, Arizona!!

Monday, June 5th

Up at 4:30 A.M. and out on the road by 4:45 A.M. and it was 85 degrees and the sun wasn’t even up. I hit 40 west and over to Needles. My helmet went back on my head at the California border, the first

time since Tennessee. No helmet sure is good!! Just out of Needles a sign said last gas for 53 miles, I would just barely make it so I pulled into the station and gas was \$4.79 a gallon. The last gas sign is apparently a license to steal. Made it to Barstow and I was about ten miles west and no gas station in sight and the GPS confirmed that. I rode back to Barstow for a fill up. There was no gas for 35 more miles past where I turned around, wouldn't have made it. Next I went to Bakersfield for a bite to eat and coffee. I called Stuart & Leslie Pressman, high school friends who live in Monterey; to make sure they were going to be home. Stu told me how to get to his house. He rode his bike to meet me and waited about an hour and did not see me. He was waiting for about ten minutes when he had to go in the outhouse and heard a Harley go by. He thought it might have been me and it was. I went up I5 to Hwy 198 over to 101 north to Monterey. I pulled into Stuart's house about twenty minutes before he got back saying, "I knew that was you that I heard go by!" We had a good visit and then Leslie came home from work. Stuart had to go to school for a few hours, so Leslie & I went out to dinner and had a good visit with her also. Back to their house and in bed by 10:00 P.M. 600 mile day

Tuesday, June 6

Stu & Les were out of the house for work at 4:00 A.M. & 4:30 A.M. and I slept in until 6:20



A.M. I left and went to Stuart's dry cleaners and visited him some more and then left at 10:00 A.M. when traffic was down and I headed north again. When I got to San Jose, California I found Just Leather. In 1976 Jerry owned Just Leather where I got my custom made



leather jacket, chaps, flying hat, & wallet. Jerry retired, Debbie, his daughter, just got out of the hospital and his daughter-in-law, Tracy was running the shop. She took a couple of pictures of me holding my jacket up by the bike to show Jerry. I told her to tell Jerry thank you for selling me such good stuff 30 years ago. Back then he had a back sewing room with about thirty, south of the border people working there. Now it's all just a store front with leather, no more sewing stuff. Then I rode to Bob Drone's shop in Oakland but both Bob & Tracy were gone. I bought a couple of quarts of oil and went to Ken & Diane's house.



Ken, an old high school buddy, was working out of town, so I visited with Diane. She told me another

high school buddy; Pat Moffit is dying of Aids & Hepatitis, with less than six months to live. Smitty, Steve Smith, has stage four, cancer and he doesn't smoke. Wow, I guess we're pretty lucky to still be able to keep going. I then stopped by the cemetery building and went to see Mom & Dad in their bronze containers in the wall. I thanked them for watching over my family and me. Then to Moraga to visit with Ron McLeod, who got me started in Harley's back in 1975. He was my backdoor neighbor in Oakland, California and I was still riding a Yamaha, "See what he made me do!" Thirty-one years later and I'm still riding the same shovelhead. I then went to my sister's house, but everyone was working, so I tried the sliding glass door and it unlocked, so I went in. Twenty seconds later the alarm is going off. Their next door neighbor came out and shut it off. When I set my alarm, I always lock the doors I guess they do it different in California. Sis & Randy took me to out to dinner, still NO home cooked meal!!

Wednesday, June 7th

Left about 10:00 A.M. and rode to San Rafael and visited Drew Case, another high school friend. He took me to the Courta Madera Harley shop and introduced me to everyone there. They were impressed, sort of, that I rode across country on my Rat bike. Drew rode back to Oakland with me to downtown Oakland and visited Dan Seymour. At 3:15 P.M. we rode to my sister's work at a dentist office to pick her up because her car was in the shop. Quite a stir at her work, the dentist himself had to come out and check out the bike as well as co-workers too. Drew rode back home and my sis & I went to her house.

Thursday, June 8th

I stay at my sis's home all day and I didn't go anywhere, I watched TV and was on the computer.

Friday, June 9th

Left at 7:30 A. M. to go to the Redwood Run, I missed my Hwy to Napa and went to San Rafael again. Ooops!!! I found Hwy 101 north and two guys on baggers passed me so I fell in behind them. Wow, I finally have some one to play with after 6500 miles of riding alone. They screwed it on up to 70, 80, 90, & 100 and I stayed right behind them. I pulled over to the right hand lane and passed them at 105 MPH, so my GPS said. I waved and kept going and we all slowed down. I pulled in for gas at the Hopland and they followed me. Very surprised they came up to me and asked, "What do you have in that thing?" I told them it was just an old shovelhead. The one guy said they were doing 115 MPH when I passed them. That was his story!! My GPS said they were going 100 when I passed them. That's their story and they told it how they thought it was.



I got to the Redwood Run about noon. Greg Coen, from Springfield, had two



passes waiting for me. They were free corporate passes he got for his shop and he put my name down to get them at will call. Rode in and set up camp with Gordon & Vicky, Keith & Rachel, Norm & Chris,



and all the usual people who camp at Apple Flats. Gordon, Vicky, & I rode to Garberville for some supplies and lunch. Jeremy is supposed to meet me at the front gate to get my other pass. When we got back to the gate Jeremy had been waiting only about 15-20 minutes. Norm & Chris set his tent up for him. We went to the pit area to see music. We sat on the hill and saw Dave Mason. He played good stuff and a lot of old traffic songs. Very cold night!! I've got to remember not to

take the kid's sleeping bag, it's not very warm.

Saturday, June 10th

About 9:00 A.M. Jeremy & I rode a couple of miles south on 101 to a campground where Dickey was staying. He's an old friend and riding buddy from Oakland, in the old days. They were making breakfast, so we visited a while and ate with them. We left about 11:20 A.M. and got back to the run only to find out I missed the bike show, it had just gotten over. People were asking me if I broke down and where's Milo? They were calling me over the PA system for a while.



This year the Rat Bike Award is now called the Milo Award and they wanted me to present it. I told them

I had breakfast and missed it. Oh, well, I'll be there next time. I went back to camp and looked around and it was the same old run, same old stuff, and time to leave. I really missed my wife and kids. This was the Redwood Run's 29th year and it was the 28th for me. In 1992 on June 16th Andrea was born. Very good reason to stay home!! Jeremy said he was ready to go too, so we packed up and was out by 1:30 P.M. That was a first, to leave the Run on a Saturday afternoon.

We had to stop at the Lumberjack Tavern in Orrick to say hi to George & Lois. They all sure missed seeing us on the way down. They said hardly anyone stopped. One Pepsi later and we were gone. We stopped in Crescent City for fuel and a stop at the Red Garter Salon in Cave Junction. Very good

reception!! They called John and his wife and they brought two of their very big dogs down for another picture. Munster is a 212 lb special Rotwieller breed. We had prime rib sandwiches, which were great, and then off to Grants Pass for fuel. A couple pulled in that had Oregon Veterans Motorcycle Association patches on. They asked, "How was your trip Milo?" I told them it was great



and a few facts about it. I told them we met up with a few OVMA riders in Grants Pass a month ago on the way down. They rode to the California border with us. They said, "We know, we were one of the bikes who rode with you!" Jeremy & I headed north towards home and I waved bye to Jeremy at my exit 123. After 10,315 miles I was finally riding back up my hill a day early to surprise my wife and daughters. Danielle was home but Joni & Andi were shopping. They came home about twenty minutes later. It was a very good homecoming!! Wow, 40 states in 20 days, with no wrecks, no tickets (real ones), heck, I didn't even get stopped by a cop the whole trip. There were no break downs that I couldn't handle in five minutes. I was gone for a total of 26 days and it was another great adventure for Milo and his Rat bike. "WOW, what a high the whole ride was!!"