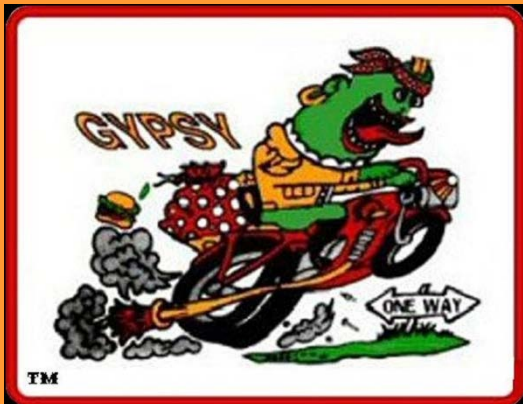


Gypsy MC International

Newsletter: 4th Qtr. 2012



Editor's Corner By Alduro

Welcome to the newly revived Gypsy MC International Newsletter. You will likely notice several changes to the newsletter since last published, notably that it is now hosted on the Gypsy MC International website rather than being emailed out. You might also notice that we have not included any events on the newsletter, this is because these are already listed on the "Events" portion of the Gypsy MC International website and we would rather not duplicate the effort. The newsletter is, and probably always will be an evolving work in progress, and as such we are always open to your suggestions, just shoot them to Gypsyalduro@gmail.com.

Call to Action: The Gypsy MC International Newsletter cannot survive without input from the Gypsy nation. That's right, we need authors who have something to say, a story to tell, or who may just want to share an experience about a ride or party somewhere. If you aren't a writer but you have just some

fun and interesting pictures, submit those as well, we can use them. The survival of this newsletter depends on you. Our goal is to publish this newsletter once a quarter but without input from our members we may be relegated to simply putting stories into the Gypsy Speak Up section of the International site. It's up to you. If you are able to commit to being a regular or occasional contributor, please contact Alduro ASAP. Contributions may be as small as a paragraph or two or as large as several pages, all contributions are appreciated.

Jingles By E.T.

Let me tell you about a brother named Jingles. His given name was Mark McNeal, but nobody, not even his wife, called him Mark. He was Jingles.

He had served in Viet Nam on a helicopter crew. There's a belief that if a bell is dedicated to someone, then every time you hear that bell, a piece of them is with you. He got the name from wearing a bell for every fellow crew member he'd lost in that war. There were thirteen of them. I'm sure he made quite a sound walking around with all those bells jingling and jangling, but sadly, by the time I'd met him, his walking days were over.

Jingles had previously ridden with the Viet Nam Vets MC, but had left over several philosophical disagreements. One of those was that his wife, who rode her own bike, wasn't allowed to ride in the pack. Of course, that's not the case with the Gypsies. He and his wife had joined Gypsy long before me, and were well known throughout the club by the time I came around.

Also, by the time I came around, Jingles had had a lot of serious medical trouble. Between

Agent Orange and Diabetes, he just couldn't catch a break. When I met him, he was riding a wheelchair, but had to be pushed because he couldn't see anything more than shapes and lights.

A story to emphasize how attached he was to his road name: His wife told me about a time he was in the VA hospital for some sort of treatment or procedure or surgery. (Damn my memory, I can't remember the specifics, but it's been twenty years...). Anyway, while there, and not yet under sedation, he started having a flashback. He thought he'd been taken prisoner in Viet Nam, so he was fighting the medical people. Well, all the medical staff starts yelling, trying to calm him down. Funny thing about yelling at people: it doesn't usually calm them. Also, they kept calling him "McNeal", which of course is what he was called in the Army. Needless to say, this didn't really help end the flashback. His wife stepped in and hollered "Jingles! Cut the shit!" At the name "Jingles", he immediately relaxed, back in the present reality.

At the time I was prospecting, I was on a bit of a gin kick. Apparently, Jingles liked gin, too, but wasn't supposed to drink. Once in a while, he'd lean over toward me and ask "Is Phyllis looking?" I'd say no, and he'd say "Quick! Hand me your bottle before she sees!" I knew it wasn't good for him, but I figured how bad could one shot every once in a while be? Especially when he seemed to enjoy it so much.

He had been a Harley mechanic before he lost his sight. One of the members of the chapter I prospected for told me about rebuilding his bike in Jingles' driveway. Even though he was already blind, Jingles told him step by step what to do, down to saying things like "now look to your left and take off that bolt", even though he couldn't see the bike being worked on. Once, he and I were sitting at camp during

the St. Valentine's Day Massacre rally, when a bike pulled up. Jingles called it – Ironhead Sporty, and he called the year, only missing it by one.

Just. From. The. Sound.

Impressive.

Once Jingles had to stop riding, his wife mothballed her FXR and a special sidecar was built to attach to his FHL and she took over pilot duties. The back of the sidecar was a ramp on a hinge. You lowered it to roll the chair in or out, then it locked into the up position. There were clamps in the floor of the sidehack to lock the wheels in place in the sidecar.

Blind. Wheelchair bound. Dialysis every few hours. Most people would crawl into a hole of self pity and wallow there the rest of their lives. But Jingles made more runs and rallies in that wheelchair than most healthy people made on their healthy legs riding their comfy dressers. I remember showing up at a poker run in January and it was 29 degrees (I knew because I'd just passed a bank with a thermometer). Jingles and wife were there. He was in a leather jacket and chaps like the rest of us, with a blanket thrown over his legs. And yes – he made the entire poker run.

Jingles was well known and very respected throughout the biker community. When he passed, there were Gypsies who traveled all the way to San Antonio from Oklahoma and even New Mexico, to see him off. Many other clubs attended as well. There was even a write up in Easy Riders magazine about it. There were so many bikes, and so many cars behind the bikes in the procession, that after a second, graveside service was performed, his casket had already been lowered into the ground

before all the cars were even parked.

I spent a lot of time with Jingles while I prospected. He taught me a lot about club life and motorcycles. By his example, more than anything he ever said or did, he taught me that you can have a good time even when everything around you tells you you can't.

RIP GBNF

Rest In Peace, my brother, you are Gone But Never Forgotten.

Peach By Truck

Wish You Were Here
by Truck (while I was still a Prospect), Houston
Chapter, Gypsy MC International



The phone rang about a week after

Peach's funeral. It was Super Pickle, a Black Rocker and beloved friend to many Gypsies. He is already someone I look forward to seeing at each run, but that Saturday in January was a mix of joy and grief.

Pickle called to thank me for helping Ms. Pickle down the stairs after the funeral. It was my pleasure, and I told him so. Prospect or not, any one of us would have done the same if Pickle had asked. I have no doubt about that. So when Super Pickle asked me to write something about the day of Peach's funeral, I answered "yes" without hesitation.

A number of us from the Houston Chapter made our way up to Brenham to the funeral home. Bill the Cat was already there waiting for us, along with a handful of other Gypsies. By the time we escorted the hearse to the small country church a few miles out of town, there must have been a hundred bikes if not more. As people gathered in the parking lot of the funeral home, many hugs were mixed with as many tears. Some of those who rode up knew Peach well, and had partied with him for years. Even though he was a very young 26, he patched in when he was only 20, so he had been around quite a while.

I hate that I was not one of those who got to party with Peach. I was there to support a club I have come to love dearly, but I was also there to grieve, even if it was measured grief over what might have been. Peach was taken before his time, and that was all I could think about that day.

After riding to the back of the church where the cemetery is located, we filed in making two rows of bikes on either side of the dirt road. We stood outside talking for well over an hour, just as we had done at the funeral home. The pastor of the country church even came out to thank us for being there,

almost certainly moving her quite a ways out of her comfort zone. But it was a good gesture.

When it was time for the service to begin, the sanctuary was filled, so the rest of us went into the fellowship hall and simply listened to the service over the speakers. Gold was all around the room. And I imagine that if Peach had been with us had it been someone else's funeral, he most likely would have wound up with us sitting around the tables on folding metal chairs.

At one point during the service they read Ecclesiastes 3, the well-known poem that wound up as a song by The Byrds in the 1960s. One point in the passage simply states, "A time to be born, and a time to die." That is precisely what made the day of Peach's funeral so hard. It was not time. His death was out of season.

After the service, we all met in front of the church and walked in procession to the graveside. Out of respect for the family, we stood quietly and patiently as the preacher finished. The family went back inside, eventually leaving only Gypsies around the grave. And that is when we had our own version of a funeral, and it was one of the most moving experiences I have ever had. Granted, I am saying that having preached literally hundreds of funerals over the past twenty years. We church people could learn a great deal from the way that golden graveside sent Peach to the Forever Chapter in celebration.

Area E Red Rocker, Toddster, grabbed a set of small, portable speakers after instructing those of us gathered around the grave that we were there to raise a final toast to Peach, especially out of respect for the rest of the Paris chapter that he left behind. We opened a bottle of Gentleman Jack and began passing it around the crowd until it was gone. From Toddster's speakers, Stevie Nicks' comforting voice sang

"Gypsy." We clapped, cheered, and made enough noise for Peach to know that we hoped to see him again some day. It brought home another line from Ecclesiastes 3: "A time to mourn, and a time to dance." That day we did both. We mourned because the Gypsies had to say goodbye to another beloved member; but we danced because he was where we all long to eventually be, in the presence of God.

-Editor's Note: I worked the front gate with Peach for about 3 hours during my first mandatory. He was a very likeable, mild mannered, laid back kind of guy with a keen sense of humor, and a knack for just getting along with people. When I heard the news of his passing I was in shock, it just didn't seem like it could be real that someone so full of life could be taken from us so suddenly, this is not the natural order of things but unfortunately this is the world we live in. It is my sincerest hope that I'll get to see Peach again someday.

The Road to Sturgis **By Raoul**



When one of my very best friends and long time riding partners, the Original Bobby McGee, visited me during Christmas last year he suggested we celebrate his 70th birthday by riding to Sturgis. Bobby and I had done this ride a number of times over the years but this

one would be special ... a geezer reunion of sorts. Bobby intended to invite the guys who'd joined us in the past, we'd rent a house and spend the whole week at the rally. Then we'd ride through Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park before returning home. For me, this would be an epic ride of more than four thousand miles that would last over two weeks.

Bobby made all the plans. He invited two of his friends from Seattle (Dennis and Lance) and two additional riders (Bill and Andrew) from Houston. When kickstands went up there were six riders: three from Houston, two from Seattle and Bobby, who lives in San Diego. The three groups left at different times, rode different roads that all led to Sturgis where we enjoyed a great week at the rally and riding in the Black Hills. It was one of the best trips I've made to Sturgis. The weather was fantastic, the rally was well attended and we were comfortable in our rental house. The best thing about the trip was the camaraderie between friends that had been established over the years.



Even though I'd just bought an '09 Harley CVO Road Glide I decided to ride my ten year old Anniversary Road Glide. I'd finally solved an engine noise problem that had haunted me for longer than I'd care to admit and the bike was running great. It had a new front tire and a

very recent dealer maintenance and, furthermore, I trusted the bike I'd ridden for seventy thousand miles a bit more than a used bike I'd just bought two weeks prior. My reasoning was sound and my old war horse served me well throughout the entire trip.

My story starts on Thursday before the rally. I loaded my gear, two saddlebags and a chopped tour-pak full of the things I knew I'd need during the next seventeen days. I set my alarm for 4:30am and laid in bed, wide awake for nearly seven hours, too excited to get any restful sleep. I was up and drinking my second cup of coffee before the alarm went off. I left my cabin a little after five and met Bill and Andrew in Huntsville about forty minutes later.

Our first day on the road was brutal. We knew that getting out of Texas was going to be painful - temperatures along our route to Amarillo were as high as one hundred-seven degrees. We marched on, arrived at our destination in the late afternoon, checked into a flea bag motel, took a dip in the pool and had dinner at the Big Texan. If you think it's not a small world, think again. Hill Country Gypsies Weiner and Poco Loco were one table away from us at the restaurant. It's always good to see your brothers and sisters when you're traveling.



Day-two was far more pleasant than day-one. We left Amarillo well before the sun came up and rode north to Dumas and Dalhart, then west to Trinidad and the Santa Fe Trail that would take us north into Colorado, through Pueblo and on towards Colorado Springs. We took a little detour west, across the Rockies, where we stayed overnight near the headwaters of the Arkansas River. What beautiful country - the Rocky Mountains are spectacular. After a great meal and a good night's sleep we were ready to get back to the business of making miles. At the end of day-three, we stayed in Cheyenne, enjoyed the sites of downtown and another great dinner before retiring for the night.

Day-four ended at our destination in Deadwood and we were at the rally. Bobby would arrive the following day so we stayed in Deadwood until we checked into the house in Sturgis. Deadwood is my favorite Black Hills town. It's rustic and set just where it was during the gold rush. It's a casino town and has plenty of bars and a number of decent restaurants. We'd already planned to enjoy our farewell dinner in Deadwood at Kevin Costner's Midnight Star casino. His restaurant, Jake's, is one of the finest in all the Black Hills.

The following day, day-five, we met Bobby in Sturgis, did a short pass through town and checked into our accommodations just outside of Sturgis. Our house was just off the freeway, one exit towards Rapid City and near the Black Hills National Cemetery. The house we'd rented was spacious, fully equipped and perfect for our needs. During our stay we were treated to a constant parade of wild turkey and deer that came out of the forest behind the house to graze in our back yard. We enjoyed this wild life entertainment as well as evening meals that would often consist of grilled steaks or salmon.

We took day trips into Sturgis, Deadwood, Spearfish Canyon, Devil's Tower, Rapid City and Hewlett. We walked the exhibits in Sturgis and Deadwood, checked out the factory and custom bikes and would often get to meet and talk to industry celebrities. My big moment came when I got to meet Brian Klock of Klock Werks Custom Motorcycles. Brian was featured in at least one of the Biker Build Offs. His entry, a Road Glide he calls the World's Fastest Bagger, earned that title at the Bonneville Salt Flats. I not only got to meet Brian but got my picture taken straddling the very bike that set the land speed record. The week was so full of experiences similar to meeting Brian Klock that it's hard for me to remember them all. We visited the Harley Davidson exhibit, S&S Cycle, Victory, FBI, Vance and Hines, Arlen Ness, Eddie Trotta of Thunder Cycle Designs - the list goes on.

Another highlight, at least for me, was getting to meet the author of a book entitled "Bikers" by Dave Ebert. He had a booth in the convention center and was signing and selling copies of his book. Goliad President, Jester, had turned me on to the book, a work of fiction depicting club life in the '70s, and I'd read where Dave would be in Sturgis. It was great to talk to a published author about the process of writing and the hurdles authors experience getting a product to the readers.

The week was over far too soon. Bill and Andrew left on Saturday, after our farewell dinner in Deadwood and the remaining riders wrapped up their goals for the week on Saturday and Sunday. The final four riders left for Yellowstone and a ride through the Grand Tetons on Monday morning, after eight days at the rally. Even though the ride would take me further from home I was enthusiastic about getting to tour the Tetons once again.

The Yellowstone leg would take us across Wyoming where, on our first night, we'd stay in cabins about twenty miles west of Cody. The next day we'd tour Yellowstone and stay in the park. We'd complete the Yellowstone tour the third day and exit the park towards Jackson where we'd spend our last night together before saying our goodbyes and leaving for our respective homes.

Highlights of the Yellowstone tour was the incredible scenery changes as we left the Wyoming plains and transitioned into the mountains. It's no surprise why Buffalo Bill Cody chose, for his frontier headquarters, the town that carries his name. Cody is small by metropolitan standards, but large enough to draw a significant annual tourist trade. The town was full of bikes and riders who were taking advantage of the scenic tour as they worked their way home. Cody is a true frontier town - we even ate at a restaurant called "Proud Cut". If you're not familiar with the term, look it up, you'll get a giggle out of the definition.

From Cody we rode due west into the Shoshone National Forest and into Yellowstone National Park. Unfortunately, I have to give the park mixed reviews. On the upside, Yellowstone is a vast area that we, as a nation, have worked to maintain in its natural condition. On the downside, the air pollution resulting from vast forest fires in Idaho, the dense visitor population and man's impact on the overall experience as well as the devastation caused by fires within the park diluted the pride I once felt for this area. The modern-day contrast to the days when Bill Cody, Jim Bridger, John Muir and Ansel Adams first traveled through these mountains is huge. Folk singer Joni Mitchell summed it up quite nicely in her song Big Yellow Taxi, she wrote "they paved paradise and put up a parking lot". Listen to this song on YouTube, you'll immediately understand far better than I could ever explain.

The ride out of Yellowstone was far more impressive (to me) than what we'd seen in the park. The road to Jackson Hole meandered through the Grand Teton National Forest dropping elevation as we neared the town of Jackson, Wyoming. After a few margaritas and lunch at a Mexican restaurant we checked into our motel for what would be the last evening our dwindling group would spend together. Our evening meal was taken at a Japanese restaurant where we swilled hot sake and beer and sampled many of Neptune's delicacies. Back at the motel we put a yeoman's effort into consuming the alcohol inventory we'd been working on since leaving Sturgis.

The following morning, I woke early, packed my bike and donned my leather jacket for the first time during the entire trip. This was the day when, like Erdin-Erdin would say, "let's get a'straddle of 'em and all ride out in different directions". I bid my farewells and, with a full tank of gas, pointed my front wheel east towards Denver, my first day's destination. I'd calculated a return trip of fifteen hundred miles and decided to make at least five hundred miles each day. This would require setting a brisk pace but would enable me to arrive home without making the ride an endurance race. At my advanced age I've found that I can sustain five hundred miles a day if I leave early, make at least three hundred miles by noon and coast the other two hundred as the heat of the day makes travel more difficult. I can generally hit my five hundred mile goal by four o'clock. With the daily goal achieved I'll evaluate my maps and my fatigue level and set another goal for reaching a town of modest size that'll certainly have clean motels and reasonable restaurants.

I began calling a Houston rider, Ned Flanders, when I made my first gas stop. The company he works for had recently transferred him to

Denver. He had hoped to join us for part of the Sturgis ride but, unfortunately, had to cancel. Ned has been a friend of the Houston Gypsies for several years and had offered overnight accommodations whenever I passed through Denver. I secured my reservation at Casa-de-Flanders and had only to make the remaining four hundred miles required to arrive at his doorstep.

The scenic part of my ride to Denver was complete after about a hundred miles. Once on Interstate 80 it was open road, eyes alert for eighteen wheelers instead of Elk and Moose and Coyotes. Even though I hit a little rain and the temperature dropped considerably, my bike was running extremely well and I was clicking off the miles like the T-Mobile girl counts cell phone towers. By four that afternoon I was rolling through Denver traffic towards good company, a hot meal, a shower and a good nights sleep. It's wonderful to see old friends and share very recent memories of a two-wheeled adventure.



Early the next morning I was back on the road; my goal set at another five hundred miles that would put me south of Amarillo at the end of the day. I was back on the Santa Fe Trail (I-25), enjoying the scenery and the last of the really good weather. By early afternoon I left New Mexico and was back in Texas - living with the

knowledge that temperatures would elevate as the afternoon dragged on. Whoever said that Texas wasn't Hell, but you could see it from there was dead-on. Once south of Amarillo my blood started boiling and I couldn't get enough Gatorade to keep hydrated. I made it to Childress, got a room for the night, found a Thai restaurant and limped back to my room to drink the last of the leftover gin and charge my batteries for the final ride home. I wasn't particularly looking forward to that last leg home but I was really ready to sleep in my own bed.

For the last time, at least for this trip, I woke up while it was still dark, threw my overnight bag in the tour-pak, kicked the tires and lit the fires. With a full tank of gas and aboard my trusty steed, it was Hi, Ho, Silver all the way home. The heat I'd anticipated did arrive, but only for a short time. All was good through Fort Worth and south but well before Corsicana I could see a thick bank of black clouds begin to build. I hit the proverbial wall of rain about a mile north of Corsicana and pulled off for gas and to get in out of the torrent. Like most good Texas rains, this one was a lot like pouring piss from a boot - horrible if you're in it and awe striking if you're lucky enough to be under cover.

I spent less than an hour on the side of the road before I was in my rain suit and headed south. The remaining three hours home was pleasant; the rain had cooled the day and when the pavement dried, the traffic returned to it's normal seventy-five mile per hour speed. I made my final gas stop in Huntsville and rode the last forty miles home.

Road trips like these are often rough on your body, but they're so very good for your soul.

'Tis the Season By Alduro

It's that time of year again, the temperature outside changes from butt scorching hot, to butt burning hot, then fall for 3 ½ days, then right to butt freezing cold. This is the time of year when biker activity nationwide starts going crazy with club events, runs, toy runs, benefits, memorial runs, legislative and political meets, and of course various bike nights. More importantly, this is the time of year when we spend more time with those we love, more time reflecting and giving thanks, and more time and money on charitable causes in helping those less fortunate than ourselves...in other words, more time on the things in life that actually matter.

My favorite holiday during this season is Thanksgiving as I believe that gratitude is at the core of the kind of charity which makes Christmas even possible. To that end, I am grateful to be a part of the Gypsy nation, and be a part of a culture that has had the unique blessing of opportunities to give back as we have, and will continue to do. Working these Christmas toy runs, food drives, and various other relief and assistance events reminds me of one of the most important lessons in life, that good men are not those with good *intentions* but those with good *actions*. We are a club who *does* good by *actions*, and I find myself surrounded by good people anytime I am with my brothers and sisters.

When you think about the giving of your time and resources this season, supporting worthy causes and/or helping those less fortunate than yourself, consider all that you have. Consider all that you have been blessed with, even if nothing more than your health, a roof over your head, your club, and your motorcycle. If you are on this side of the dirt, wearing Gypsy gold, you are blessed.

As you go forward this holiday season, tap this gratitude to fuel your cheer and good spirit, remember your loved ones, those with us today, and those who have moved on to be with our Lord. Keep them in your hearts and let your conduct honor them, your family, and your club as we close out 2012 in true Gypsy fashion and welcome 2013 exhausted, and grateful for another opportunity to do the things that truly matter, to do good.