

Watch Out For Motorcycles!

You Are Not Alone!

A favorite ride is to Blairsville, GA. My parents live there, about fifteen minutes from North Carolina. It's close to the Tennessee line and this tri-state area is truly great place to ride, in any direction. There is Blood Mountain, The Gauntlet, Suches, Tail of the Dragon, and many more.

On a recent trip, I made a solo run. I left Tampa about 4:00 am, had beautiful weather; and before daybreak, I watched the full moon move from one side of the horizon to the other, before a beautiful sunrise.

I was making great time. Around Macon, GA, the gas gauge was leaning far to the left, so I took the next exit. As I slowed down, the wind noise was down; and, I heard an awkward noise coming from the motor, the kind you just knew wouldn't go away. After filling up, the next billboard advertised the Macon Harley Dealership. I believe the man upstairs was looking over me. Just ten minutes later, the service department put me at the front of the line, the bike was on the rack; and the news wasn't good. A plastic tension piece for the timing chain failed. Had the bike ridden longer, significant engine damage could've followed. It was holiday weekend, parts were not in stock, the bike was "down" for the weekend. The dealership went out of its way to help me out, offering to take me to a local hotel. I called my folks, my Dad jumped in the car to bring me home. The dealership would've closed by the time of my Dad's arrival, so one of the guys dropped me off at a nice place to eat, which was really nice. Three days later, the bike sat front and center at the service department, cleaned and ready, looking like a new showroom bike, or at least I thought so. The \$1,000 repair bill was only \$50 dollars, as this happened just a few days shy of the seven year warranty expiring. Talk about luck!

I have had two other occasions where I was on a long ride, out of state, where others have stopped offering help. Each time, I arrived at out

of town dealerships, having unbelievably great service, who went out of their way to make sure a long distance rider was safe, not hungry and well taken care of. Hospitality at such unexpected stops has always been great without exception. I am sure many agree this is the way it is, nationwide.

Fast forward to this past weekend, I'm in my truck just around the corner from my place, when a Shovelhead Fat Boy stalled. The biker is pushing it across a busy intersection, with not much room for a safe place to pull over. As any rider would do, I made sure he had plenty of space, then pulled off down the street, got out and offered help. Turns out he had a dead battery, cables in his saddle bag, and in the next twenty minutes, we had his seat off, some cold water from my place, the cables connected and we were charging his battery. This guy knew he wasn't alone; and, it felt good to help a fellow biker. Afterwards, I offered to follow him home, to make sure he made it home safe. There is no doubt in my mind most if not all readers would have done the same.

The moral of the story: "We are all out there to help other people." "Stuff" happens. I've seen a friend's bike catch on fire, a flat tire; and another time, a friend accidentally put diesel gas in his bike and he didn't realize it until miles down the road, with lots of smoke and no power. Boy was that a belly buster. In any event: We never leave a fellow biker behind, we help others out, including bikers we don't know. We enjoy some laughs and have unforgettable memories. We are truly blessed. Ride Safe & Enjoy!

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