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## Tomahawk Fall Ride 2005

By J. D

The four days that seemed they would never end are now a part of the past, but the echoes from more than 20,000 motorcycles will carry all year until they roll right back for next year's Tomahawk Fall Ride.

Motorcycle riders from across the Midwest filled events from SARA Park to the Tomahawk Speedway and the city's downtown. "It's kind of like a great big family reunion," said Brad Timmons of Tomahawk, who pointed to the camaraderie between motorcyclists that builds the strong atmosphere. "The worst part of this really is its' kind of like the wind down, the end of the year. You know that this is fall and the riding season is coming to an end."

Along with friend Leo Schnoor of Tupperville, Ill., Timmons and others left the city on a long, scenic ride up to Lake Superior and back. It was Schnoor's eighth year at the Fall Ride and he said it's as enjoyable as even bigger rallies. "It's just as fun as Sturgis. Definitely well worth coming to. Got to, every year," he said. "The national forests up here are just gorgeous. It's the first year I've actually seen the trees changing color."

The color black dominated the riders, who filled the region's campgrounds and restaurants and every official gathering. All the vendor spots downtown were full, said Jim Wise, owner of the Army-Navy Surplus Store. He said the organizing committee he sits on met more than a dozen times over the year to pay for "the security, the trash collection, everything it takes to make something this big happen." They've found a formula that works, he said, "We've seen the whole Harley event go from a few dozen riders trying to raise money for MDA to this huge event." The Muscular Dystrophy Association raised thousands of dollars through raffles and donations. Helping them was an appeal for Clarence Engwall, who also helped youth hockey by flipping burgers and brats on a grill for the second year in a row.

"Folks have good appetites," he said, "We're getting the burgers and flipping them out. And my wife's putting them in the sandwiches with the chips." He got to know motorcyclists better because of the ride, he said, and he considered climbing aboard one. "I've never been on a motorcycle," he said.

Cycles poured into that downtown party from tours of the city's Harley Davidson fabrication facility and another activity center at SARA park, where more than 100 brand new Harley Davidson motorcycles were on display next to a driving skills course. Parking at the park stretched almost a mile down an access road. Cycles were neatly tucked aside one another like endless rows of very powerful dominoes.

The music and events at SARA Park ended each night at 5 p.m. just as the two stages downtown started up their own musical acts and just as things got rolling at the Tomahawk Speedway just north of town. Local and regional acts filled at least six stages in three locations, with Fog Hat headlining in the tent at the Speedway.

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