

**YOUNG AT HEART: SENIORS RIDE HARLEYS WITH KMC H.O.G.**

Annual Motorcycle Ride Offers Thrills and Adventure for Local Seniors

NEW BERLIN, WI, July 14, 2009 – On Saturday morning, July 11, 2009, National Avenue in New Berlin resounded with the roar of Harley-Davidsons and shouts of joy from grinning, waving senior passengers as members of the Harley Owners' Group (H.O.G.)--Kettle Moraine Chapter (KMC) treated residents of the ProHealth Care Regency Senior Communities to a ten-mile motorcycle ride in Waukesha County for the 4th annual Young at Heart Ride. Both the Kettle Moraine Chapter and the event are sponsored by Hal's Harley-Davidson.

On Saturday morning, the ride staged at Hal's Harley-Davidson of New Berlin and then headed to the Regency to pick up passengers. The Senior Center parking lot was decorated, refreshments provided, and the New Berlin police, largely due to Hal's generous support of local law enforcement agencies, escorted the group. Notable volunteer riders included Waukesha County Executive, Dan Vrakas, Kettle Moraine Chapter H.O.G. Director, Howard Wurgler and Young at Heart Ride Founder/Chair Lance Reyniers.

"To be part of a ride like this that allows senior citizens in Waukesha County to share in the Harley-Davidson experience was a privilege and an honor," commented Vrakas. "I commend the organizers and sponsors of the event for their incredible success."



**Event Founder/Chair Lance Reyniers with senior Harry Meinhold.**

Kirk Topel, owner of Hal's Harley-Davidson in New Berlin also noted, "We do a great many things to aid children's causes...we have done so, perhaps, because the freedom of riding motorcycles reinforces a life to be celebrated. Seniors—many who have lived a full life—are too easily forgotten in our communities. We wanted to give them a chance to experience first hand the freedom and celebration of a motorcycle ride-- some of the same enjoyment we are blessed to experience."

After attending a family reunion coordinated by his mother at her senior apartment complex, Lance Reyniers, ride founder and member of the Kettle Moraine Chapter, brought the idea for Young at Heart to Topel's attention in 2005; Topel immediately supported the idea.

"Actually, I was trying to get my Mom to ride on my bike at the family reunion. She sat on the bike but she wouldn't ride. Her older sister hopped on and we headed out with a nervous Aunt Irene holding onto me with an amazingly strong bear claw grip. On the return ride, Aunt Irene was laughing, waving with her arms raised high above her head and shouting 'let's go 'round again!' My other aunts didn't want to be left out of the fun so they all took a ride—everyone except my Mom," chuckles Reyniers. "The photos from that day are priceless. Other seniors at the home saw what was happening and were wondering if they too could ride a Harley. Their interest and the pleasure expressed by my aunts after their motorcycle rides became the seeds that started the Young at Heart Ride."

The staff at ProHealth Care Regency Senior Community in New Berlin gave their blessing to the event as long as the resident passengers would sign a disclaimer. For the first ride, 25 senior passengers were treated to a 2.5 mile trip—and several of the seniors wanted more. "Our first year, one passenger even pulled out a one hundred dollar bill and asked if she could pay for a longer ride," remembered Reyniers.



**Senior Edith Lewis enjoys a quiet moment on a Harley-Davidson.**



**Kettle Moraine Chapter H.O.G. Director Howard Wurgler with senior Mary Louise Beischer, surviving twin sister from last year's ride**

Every year since that initial ride, Reyniers meets with the seniors beforehand and encourages the residents to "come and feel the wind in their hair." Helmets were provided and about 50 chapter members turned out with their bikes to provide rides and help the seniors get onto the motorcycles. Thirty-five senior passengers range in age from 74 to 96 years old. And many chapter members prepare special CDs for the seniors so that they can enjoy music while they ride.

Sometimes, the seniors aren't able to get onto the back of a bike for a ride—but the KMC makes a special effort to interact and involve all seniors to the extent possible.

The first year, a resident restricted to a wheel chair couldn't ride...but the chapter Road Captains encircled him and snapped a photo so that he could have some special memory of the day—and the resident was thrilled.

After the 2005 ride, a cab drove up to Hal's Harley-Davidson and two elderly twin sisters from Regency hopped out and asked permission to go into the dealership. They spent an entire hour browsing through the clothing racks and selecting special matching H-D shirts for their much anticipated second ride. One of the twins passed away in 2009; her obituary noted that she looked forward to her annual Harley ride, much to the dismay of her family members! This year, the surviving twin enjoyed the ride again.

"My dream is to see this event—which we've started in Milwaukee with the Kettle Moraine Chapter—expanded nationwide so that some day we will have a national Young at Heart Ride that honors seniors across the entire USA," Reyniers commented.

"The Kettle Moraine Chapter provides our residents with a unique opportunity to experience something that most of them have not done in their long lives," notes April Dethloff, Director of Lifestyle Services at ProHealth Care Regency Senior Communities/New Berlin. "Riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle is exciting...exhilarating...at any age. We are so grateful and appreciative to the chapter members for making it possible for our senior residents to experience this joy in a safe and caring way."

Many of the participants decide that they must try a motorcycle ride...just once before they die. And repeatedly, upon their return from that first ride, the seniors simply smile sweetly with a parting comment of "See you next year—I'll be back!"



**Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas with senior Lynne Luchini.**



**Heavens Devils MC Central Chapter's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual "Can't afford to go to Sturgis Party"**

**\$ 30 donation per person includes soda, beer, live music, Sat. dinner, and camping August 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Party at Wild Horse Saloon , 9031 co. rd. WW Wisconsin Rapids 54494 , 715-421-2122**

**(1 mi. east of co. rd. U, town of Kellner , which is 5 mi. east of Wisconsin Rapids, opens Friday noon )**

**County Park on lake Wazeecha with beach nearby Daily passes also available at front gate**

**Sat. poker run, wet t-shirt contest, vendors, raffles and Great Food available daily at Wild Horse Saloon Any questions or Vendors call Tito @ 715-323-1633**

**Partial Proceeds go to help fund ; Wisconsin Rapids Family Resource Center**

**MUST BE 21 OR OLDER TO ATTEND THIS PARTY LEAVE ATTITUDES, MINORS AND PETS AT HOME !!! DRINK RESPONSIBLY AND HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND**