

Cover Story

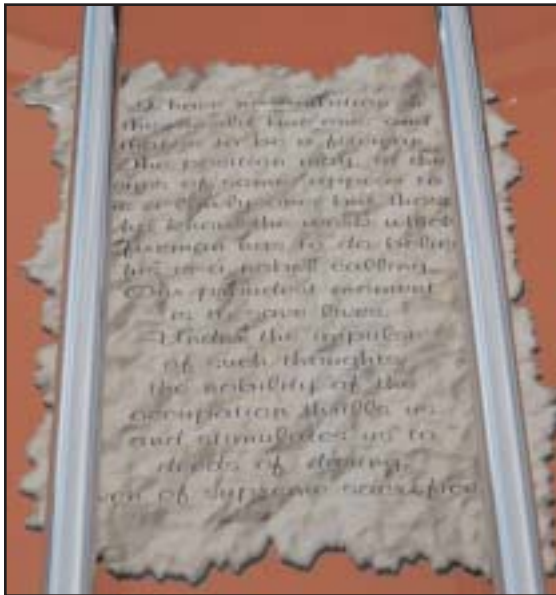
2002 Firefighters Edition Ultra Classic



Harley Davidson came out with this particular bike after 9-11. Since I "live to ride" and love my job, I, of course, had to get this bike. Since purchasing my bike in August of 2002, I've customized it with a lot of chrome accessories, including the flame package Harley offers. It also has a 12 disc CD changer, Screaming Eagle exhaust, and a stage two kit.



The paint job, all fire fighter-related, was done at Custom Painted Vehicles in Franksville, WI. Jay Wright was the artist. Paint work on the bike also includes flames that are ghosted and change from red to gold in the light. The graphics on my bike consist of the following: the fairing has an eagle which to me symbolizes America and freedom. Below the eagle is a fireman in his gear and the American flag draped over his shoulders. The helmet he's wearing has the number 343. This number represents the number of fireman who died at the World Trade Center on 9-11. Recognizing and remembering this fact is so important because firemen are brothers no mater where we are from, and their loss was our loss, too. The left saddle bag lid has an old fire department steamer being pulled by horses. This reflects the firemen of days before. The right saddlebag lid has a background of the World Trade Center collapse with a fireman crouched down picking up a found helmet, with another firefighter resting his hand on that firefighter's back as he looks at the collapse. (This again depicts the great loss of our brothers on that day). The lid of the trunk has artwork that looks like parchment paper with burnt edges and has a saying that dates back to the late 1800's. The author of that quote is a New York fire chief. In short, it describes a fireman's job, and why he considers his job a noble calling. Proudly displayed on the back of the left saddlebag is the International Association of Firefighter (IAFF) emblem. Also, on the back of the right saddlebag is a Never Forget 9-11 New York fire emblem, and on the bottom of the rear fender is a red, white, and blue fire helmet—again homage to the pride of being a fireman. Finally, on the rear speaker covers, the bike has miniature badges which represent my position in the Kenosha fire department as a firefighter and driver.



As I mentioned earlier, I purchased this bike in August of 2002, and already, I have over 32,000 miles on the road. Some of my trips include traveling around Lake Huron (2300 miles in 7 days), a trip to Memphis in 2002, then to Halifax, and Nova Scotia (3910 miles in 11 days), the Harley 100th Trip (1400 miles 5 days), the Smoky Mountains (1800 miles in 5 days), and while down there we braved the Tail of the Dragon at Deal's Gap—318 curves in 11 miles. Besides these trips, there have been many small trips throughout Wisconsin. Obviously, I love my bike, and I feel free when I ride; thus, I consider myself a "free rider".



Raffle bike

A local Kenosha bike shop, K-towne Motors, had a poker run/bike raffle on September 11th. In remembrance of the tragedy of 9-11, they contacted the Kenosha Fire Department offering to donate a check from their proceeds to the Kenosha public safety monument constructed this past year. The monument, which is located at Kenosha's lakefront, is dedicated to the local fire, police and sheriffs who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

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