

What's A Biker To Do?

By Kenn Hartmann

The phone rings – I check caller ID. Who do I know in Outer Mongolia? A telemarketer asks me to partake in a radio survey. I assure her robots now execute that function. Humans with chip implants in their brain are remotely scanned in store aisles. Cell phones divulge their every move. Homeland Security cuts our communiqué; the landline goes dead. Like National Security might be compromised. Do Americans really submit to lobotomies? Illegal aliens ground into Soylent Green to feed the masses? Maybe she just hung up on me. Fret not loyal readers; a few weeks have evaporated since last mounting my trusty steed & I've gone certifiable.



On the first Sunday of December, I'm with Pablo's crew at Chicago's annual TFT parade. Rain mixes with sleet, the day's gray as faded board-ups in the ghetto. A drenched motorcycle phalanx passes outside Simpson's on Western; the patrons raise bottles of beer to cheer them on. A few hand unwrapped presents into the USMC Hummer manned by a couple of Devil Dogs. Someone twists my arm to slam down another shot of Malort. The usual suspects gather for a Sloppy Joe breakfast & other barroom delights, mostly blonde. Hardrock, Coco & Joe leap out of a Suzy Snowflake cartoon, mount their sleds & catch the parade. Pablo follows suit. A few bystanders brave the elements to wave at the last stragglers in the 2-wheeled promenade. Pablo veers left across southbound lanes. I gently brake & fishtail a U-E. I figure Pablo spotted some shithole gin mill but instead pulls his bike over the curb & onto the sidewalk where a mother huddles with her toddler in the dreary wet chill. Pablo un-straps a toy off the back of his bike & hands it to the wide-eyed tyke. Even the Mom gasps in awe. So a baldhead Santa dons black leather, a half a dozen earrings & decks out on a Harley? 'Look, Ma, Santa wears biker boots!' His beard appears more beatnik than yuletide. The twinkle in his eye comes from a two-fisted liqueur. We stop at Mutiny – a blow up Santa-on-a-Sickle balloon strapped to a car top wobbles in the wind. I wrap a garbage bag over my Trumpet's carb socks to keep off the rain. That plastic bag's been in my handlebar pouch since the Fungus Fest deluge at Wildlife Refuge in Kansasville. The downpour failed to dampen spirits at Wildlife & unfazed folks at Mutiny. Pablo's wife Maggie cranks the hardcore jook, dances with abandon & raises holy Holly four-barreled carbureted hell to the regulars' delight.



The next weekend on the outskirts of town, far Southside tundra, laid low, a blizzard swoops down upon the land. Experiencing an acid flashback in an ancient Rock club, drab velvet décor, a half



dozen junky mannequins dressed to kill they mother. Like if the original Planet of the Apes movie had a Damn Dirty Biker Bar in the Forbidden Zone, everyone welcome – even humans. Iron skeletons creak like when Tin Man flees from flying monkeys. Steel teeth, frozen smiles and rattle bones. Gaunt shadows adorned with patches & colors. A neon glow tints the fleshless heavy metal marrow. A bluesman jams a few riffs on some stiff's exposed rib cage. A nameless fossil stares into a glass reflection at nothin' pretty. The band Jackyl takes the stage, hillbilly chainsaw blues; the club fills with gasoline nasty exhaust as wood chip confetti ripped from a stool showers the audience. The buzz saw screams perfect pitch. Back in punk rock days a few noise bands tried this trick but sucked. The singer, Jesse James Dupree croons a quasi-acappella Kristofferson/Cash rendition of 'Sunday Morning Coming Down.'

Another week transpires, expires – a perilously frigid downtown Chicago night, another TFT party at one of those endlessly elusive city venues – a trendy club niche. Evil Olive. The place crawls with wild-eyed poets in desperate love. A homeless transient checks his I-pod for messages & millionaire chum come to slum. A veritable zine scene. The crème de la crème of Chicago's musical sphere gathers for charity. Steve Goodman's ghost lurks in the balcony. Gamble Rodgers floats through smoking Hava-Tampa Jewels, this being the last legal week to smoke anything in an Illinois bar. The late great phantom Patrick Day appears to schmooze a couple vogue a' la mode Soviet sweeties who smile demurely at nothingness making even an impossible fantasy real.

Forget the dead. The live wires roll in & the bartender claims it's never been this crowded this early. The stage hosts Ronn Dorsey, Kevon Smith, Larry Beers & Brad Peterson.

Continued on Page 15



Nationwide Insurance
Jim Kelly Agency
 1-866-517-9777
REV AND RIDE WITH NATIONWIDE MOTORCYCLE INSURANCE
 Call us for a free quote on all Insurance including ATV's and snowmobile's
REMEMBER NATIONWIDE IS ON YOUR SIDE!!
 Illinois/Wisconsin Only
 Nationwide

SALES SERVICE PARTS ACCESSORIES CLOTHING TRAILERS
G&G POWER SPORTS
 Tom Gara Art Graves Bill Gara
 Victory
 POLARIS
 SNOWMOBILES • ATVs • RANGER • WATERCRAFT
 W191 57757 Racine Ave. • Muskego, WI 53150
 262-679-9036 • Fax: 262-679-9038 • www.ggpowersports.com

NEW ADMATTERS
 AFFORDABLE & EFFECTIVE SERVICES!
WINTER SPECIAL -20% OFF- DESIGN SERVICES
 FREE 920/210-9638
 www.admattersinc.com
 • Graphic Design/Illustration
 • Innovative Marketing
 • Four Color Printing
 (WITH THIS COUPON -EXPIRES 4/08)
 Victory

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
 JEREMIAH 29:11 NIV
www.ridefreeforever.org

Motorcycle Riders Depot
 639 Grand Ave. Schofield, WI 54476 715-359-0989
 Full Service Dept. -Custom Builds -Rebuilds -Performance -Dynojet Dynamometer
 Large Show Room Parts & Accessories Jewelry & Clothing Water Storage

Northland Ballroom
FRIDAY FISH FRY with \$1 Rails after 9pm
 Wednesday Open Mic Bluegrass
 25¢ Wings on Tues
1/2 lb Burgers! Great Pizza!
 Between Rosholt & Iola
 N10103 Hwy. 49 Iola 715-677-3491