

**The Office Bars 9th Annual Summer Kick-off party**

Here's a few pics of in Schofield, WI held May 27th. With free pizza and entertainment by Captain Ron, it was a good time. Thanks to Pam and all the Office Bar staff for the event.



**THE SHORT-CUT**

I woke up and turned my head, first to one side, then the other. Through my grogginess I realized I was lying in the middle of the highway, and I was hurt. As I looked to my right, kind of along the yellow center stripe, a pile of twisted metal came into focus. Oh Lord, this is not good. I reached down with my left hand to push myself up off the pavement, but nothing moved. I tried my right hand and slowly pushed myself to a sitting position, from where I could survey my predicament. My bike and I were scattered across a seldom traveled stretch of state highway in the mountainous desert of Southern California. We were at least 20 miles from anywhere, and neither of us was in very good shape. This was a time that preceded cell phones, and I didn't have a CB radio. As I checked my aching body for broken pieces, I remembered that I had not passed any traffic for miles, and at this time of evening, traffic flow wasn't going to pick up. I couldn't even remember passing a house at all on this road. I was injured, and alone, and it was beginning to get cold, as it does in the evenings on the high desert. Oh Lord, you know where I am, don't you?

It all started with a trip to visit my daughter, who was a counselor at a mountain camp for two weeks. The ride up the mountain was spectacular, and instead of using the same route for the return trip, I decided to take a "short-cut" home, and maximize the experience. Coming off the mountain, I followed a fast-moving storm that produced prodigious thunderclaps, intense lightning flashes, and a fair amount of rain. I knew that I had to be careful when I got down on the flats to watch for flash flooding, which could cause some real problems. I wasn't paying real close attention to my surroundings and as I rounded a curve, I realized -too late - that the thunderstorm had washed across the highway, leaving a solid mass of mud and pea gravel on the road. As I hit the gravel, I knew I was going too fast to be able to stay on the road. The alternative to a quick 1000 foot plunge over the side was to lay the bike down on the highway. I was hoping to slide to a stop, but the bike had other ideas and tumbled, taking out the lights and twisting the handle bars and front forks. Struggling to retain control, I hung on to the handlebars and followed the bike through its contortions. There I was - road kill, lying there next to a heap of twisted metal and leaking gas, in the middle of the road. At least I wasn't over the edge. I have no doubt that they would not have found me in my lifetime. Oh Lord, I hurt so bad - and look at my bike! I don't think I'm going to make it.

I was somehow able to get the bike up and rolled it onto the shoulder of the road. Checking the damage, I figured that I could straighten things out enough to make it the 45 miles or so home. Then I realized that my left arm wasn't working right. When I went down I tore up my shoulder, and had lost a significant amount of blood and mobility. I also had a lot of sand and gravel imbedded in the open wound. Deciding not to wait in vain for a passing motorist to come by and lend a hand, I began to try to straighten the forks and handle bars, using a fallen tree limb with my one good arm. After what seemed like hours of strain and struggle, the bike was ready to get me home. She started right up, slipped into gear, and rolled along with only a little limp. The lights were not functioning - in fact, they were non-existent, so I slowly started down the mountain. That forty-five miles was one of the longest rides of my life. I learned how to shift without the clutch which was unuseable anyway, steered and held on with my one good arm, and prayed an awful lot. I rolled into the driveway long after lights out, but I made it home.

There are many times in life when our "short-cuts" don't turn out the way we thought they would. Hopefully, the fall we take serves as a wake up call for the future. No matter what befalls us, we can be sure that there is One who will be there for us. In the depths of our struggles, He will help, if we call out to Him. Psalm 50:15 gives us great instruction for when we need help: Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Jesus Christ endured the death of the cross, and can identify with any troubles we may have. He may not keep trouble from your door, but he will be there to help you in your difficult times. Physical healing and spiritual healing produces strong people who aren't afraid to face anything, because the Lord is with them. Oh Lord, thank you for being there for me. I will glorify you with my life from now on.

Pastor Sam

To respond to this in any way, positively or negatively, e-mail:

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