

Laura the Potter

Finally summer is here! I haven't written in a long time. Things are going well for me, and I'm doing something this summer that I never dreamed I would be doing! My boyfriend has a beautiful RV and we put it on Mile Lacs Lake for the season. It is a very different lifestyle – Everyone is there to forget pressure's at home, any worries or problems they may have, and they are simply there to have a good time, catch some walleye, enjoy the water, make new friends and simply enjoy life! It has put a bit of a cramp on the amount of riding I am doing...but I really don't care! Life is about doing lots of different things, and I'm having fun. I'm writing now to share something with you that a friend of mine wrote. It is his definition of "cool" and I love his perspective! I have known Kosse for many years; he is the Treasurer of Lake Chapter, ABATE of MN that I belong to. And Kosse...YOU ARE COOL! Here it is...I hope you enjoy it.



Laura, I hope you have a great summer, and remember to stay "Cool"... Preacher



Cool

We've all survived brutal winters with mounds of snow and temperatures well below freezing. We all know what cold is. But, do we really agree on what cool is? Merriam-Webster's definition: "slang a : very good : excellent; also : all right"; I think that you may say it falls short of expectations. What may be cool to one person may be far from cool to another. These differences in opinion can be attributed to age, gender, experience, skill...and the list goes on.

As bikers, non-riders have a tendency to put us all into one generalized group and some label us as cool; but why? It could

be the clothes. It may be the bikes. Possibly, it's the attitude. However, most of us don't consider ourselves cool. We like our unique modifications to the bikes we own. The clothes we wear are usually based on weather, road conditions, comfort and utility. Our friends are great people, and many of them are unique in their own right: but it should be noted that we don't make modifications, or choose our gear (or clothing) based on public opinion.

So what really is the essence of cool or being cool? Please allow me to try and provide my insight. Cool is unique. It, what ever it is, is considered cool because not everyone is capable or willing to do it. Cool is obtained, not by trying, but simply by doing what you do in spite of any constraints and specifically against obstacles, barriers and challenges.

Physical property for example: our bikes, clothes, etc are things that could be cool because they are unique. Primarily, we wear specific clothing for its protection or because it easily hides road grime. Since it is not chosen for fashion, it isn't clothing that you would see just anyone wear. Some distinctions can be made because we chose something different or have combined several things that others haven't tried or seen before. Even to bikers, this can create a sense of cool. As for our bikes, we look for talent in fabrication, restoration, paint design and application or preservation. When we see something that is outstanding and one of a kind; WE see it as cool. Bikes, clothes and accessories are not cheap, so not everyone makes riding a priority in their life. To many this "life" is cool.

How about what we do? Sure, talent is cool. Not many can argue that those in the world that can jump great heights, make beautiful art or create heavenly sounds are cool. But those are things that no matter how hard many try, they can't match those with that talent. We also do things some others can't. Family commitments and finances keep so many from traveling the back roads with friends or taking trips across country. However, I think that the ultimate cool is going beyond expectations; and really making sacrifices for what someone believes in without the consideration of being recognized or acknowledged. There are so many charities, foundations and individuals that have benefited from runs, raffles, donations, or volunteer support and there are no expectations of even a thank you card. Those in the world who are aware, know that bikers are some of the first people to lend a hand, donate money, and do what they can in any situation. In addition, we experience this great country. The miles we put on our bikes are a connection to the U.S.A. that not everyone has. We have stories, memories and more friends because of where we've gone and how we got there. In some situations, mostly weather related, we really earn our character.

People going about their daily lives have a coolness all their own. Working behind the counter at a motorcycle bone yard and being able to tell a customer that you have three tanks that will fit the project bike and what color they are without looking anything up on a computer or log book, ranks right up there. Helping someone who walks into a shop with a quick welding job to get them back on the road and not charging them goes beyond customer service.

While you are in the middle of working around the house, you get a phone call from a buddy that needs a little help, everything stops and you are on your way out the door. That's just what we do, that's just the way it is.

There are so many choices we make that are not even a second thought to us, but create admiration by others. True cool is standing in a flag line during adverse conditions to honor a fallen hero, brother or sister. Acknowledging that we are free and exercising every right and responsibility possible, despite the opinion of the extremists, to us is normal. But to others it is something they struggle with. And there are so many who have been there to fight for and protect our rights in foreign countries with the possibility of the ultimate sacrifice. Cool should not be thought of as just something interesting or in line with personal tastes. Cool means much more than that. It goes much further than just a word used for a lack of a better description. It's something we can't claim for ourselves. Cool is not isolating the bike that's ridden, the clothes worn or what is done. It's an attitude that isn't forced, it just evolves in an individual. The ultimate cool is not knowing that the steps we take are looked upon as outstanding by so many because so few are willing to take those same steps, either with us or after us.



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