

**USO Cookout**

by Wally Wersching

The United Service Organizations (USO) was created in 1941 to support our troops during WW2. FDR brought together many service organizations like the YMCA, YWCA, Salvation Army, and others to form the USO. It was very helpful for our soldiers during the war. It was dissolved in 1947 by Harry Truman but then brought back during the Korean Conflict in 1951. It has been there for our men and women in the military ever since.



When I was in the Navy during the 1960's, I spent many hours at the USO with friends. They always had a comfortable setting, and something warm to eat or drink. The volunteers were always smiling, and willing to help. I was glad that they were there for me when I needed them.

On June 13th, the Charlotte Indian dealership held a cookout to support the USO. They had great tasting BBQ with all the fixin's. Cindy and I arrived at about noon. There was a group leaving - heading to the mountains for some cool weather riding. It was sunny and warm with temps in the mid 90's. The mountains would be much cooler - maybe the upper 70's.

We walked inside and talked with the owner, Mark. He invited us to have some BBQ, and we did. One of his employees cooked the pork, and it was done to perfection. Mark always puts out a delicious spread for his cookouts whether it be hot dogs or BBQ.

Inside the showroom was a booth set up for the USO. They were taking donations. I gave to the worthy cause, and felt good about it.

We hung around for a while talking with customers and salesmen. I always like to visit the showroom. I feel better when I'm surrounded by great looking Indian motorcycles along with friendly faces.

On the rotating table in front of the showroom, Mark placed a beautiful 1951 Indian Chief. It's easy to see where the new Indians got their good looks. It's in their genes.

As we left, we saw a couple playing "Corn Hole" in front of the dealership. It looked like it was a pretty heated match. I'd never get the bag in the hole because I'd be distracted by all the great looking Indian Motorcycles parked in front.

On the way home, we stopped at Crossroads Ford in Shelby. They were having their first car show. We saw a few friends, and some interesting cars.

In a part of the parking lot away from the cars, they had a wrestling ring set up with wrestling demonstrations.

Cindy found them interesting. The actors needed much more practice to be convincing. The guy fell down before the lady swung her arm. It was a joke. I had never seen wrestling live before, and probably won't again.

We then headed home. It was a fun way to spend a Saturday. We'll do it again soon.

*\*\*After all these years of writing about his riding adventures, I want to thank him personally for sharing these stories with me and all of you. For some it's the ride, for others the love of the ride, and yet for others it's the memories of the ride. Thanks again Wally. Your writing are a fresh breath, especially during the winter months in the north.\*\**



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