

The view from a single Mom who is still "fender fluff" -

At last the weather has warmed up and the bikes are out. Of course there have been those few brave souls who have been out and about for at least a couple weeks, if only on occasion. Now that it actually seems like 'summer', you hear the roar of bikes day in and day out. Music to my ears!

Nothing like hearing that familiar rumble as a single rider rolls into your drive. Or better yet, the whole crew! And you gotta love the expression on your neighbor's faces as they roll in, pipes roaring.

"Let's go!" they holler. But unless plans have been made, I can't just grab the leather and pile on. Gone are those days. Don't get me wrong - I wouldn't trade the kiddo's for anything. But they aren't yet at an age where they can be left home alone and as much as I like to ride, my time spent with them is fleeting, and I have come to realize this through the worst of circumstances. Leaving for a day is a possibility - they love to go visit Grandma for a day. Overnight? Every now and then. A weekend away? Bike week in another state? Not likely unless child services were to get involved at a later date! (kidding)

I was always taught it is wrong to be envious of others' good fortune, but I must admit - as I cruise along in my mini-van, the passing bikes tend to taunt me. No longer having someone to call my own to ride with and having no bike of my own makes it difficult, to say the least, to get in the wind.

Then there is the issue of trust. I won't just hop on a bike with anyone that offers. I may not be much to look at, but I don't want to be smeared along the pavement either. And anyone who thinks that the "ass, gas or grass" thing isn't real, I've got news for you! And FYI, gas or grass aint usually an option. It gets frustrating asking for rides. Worse is asking and getting turned down. For whatever reason. Thinking the time will come for me to get my own bike again. Yes, I said again.

I have always been amazed at how it feels as if the weight of the world is lifted from my shoulders as I head out on a bike. When asked where I want to go the answer is always the same - "I don't care - just ride."

And it's not JUST the wind in my hair and my knees in the wind that I miss. I also miss the camaraderie. That glorious feeling that you are among those whom you are one of - you belong. Mia famiglia. I miss coming home dust covered, sunburnt and my hair all in knots as a result of a good day's ride.

Whether in a group of those I feel closest to or riding alone - there is nothing that compares. It brings me a peace I cannot describe. I have some of the best memories, the funniest stories, the most unbelievable happenings and a few wrecks to speak of as a result of being on a ride.

It's one of those life lesson things - don't take for granted the fact that you can hop on and ride whenever your heart desires. There are those of us who don't have that ability or option.



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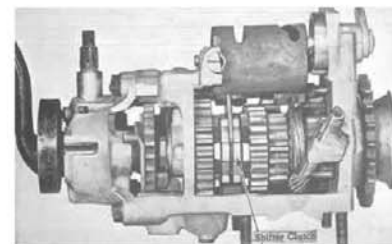
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