

## A Late Fall 2186 Mile Journey

When you think about the bikers' lifestyle, I think that sometimes certain things get overlooked. The fast pace that we all endure daily keeps us blind to one thing that makes us all who we are, and that's the circle of friends that we surround ourselves with.

I was invited to attend the Rolling Thunder National Convention 2009 this year in Washington, D.C. and after some thought on it, the journey seemed like the thing to do. So I started passing the word about the trip to raise a few bucks for gas and hotel. Little did I know that the trip was going to be filled with ups and downs, but the people on this trip more than made up for any frustration I had incurred.

I left Tuesday, November 10th with the hope of making it into Indiana where I could find a place to crash. My old '86 FL and I were rolling the miles off and decided to make a quick stop at Kutter HD in Janesville, WI. For those that know me a short stop is never really in the cards as I chatted with Lucy Anderson (head of marketing) for over an hour. Talking about next year's events and a run I am thinking about doing that will be aimed at the whole family. (More on that in the future) Little did I know that as I chatted with Lucy, the reality set in of how much I really enjoy people's company and like helping them out with any suggestions I may have to better their events. The chat eventually led to a small donation to what



Lucy from Kutter HD

I call the "Preacher's Gotta Hit the Road Fund." This surprised and humbled me to no end. And I do thank Lucy and Kutter HD [www.kutter-harley.com](http://www.kutter-harley.com) for their support and friendship.

As I headed out of Janesville on my way to Chicago to hook up with my Chicago go to guy Kenn Hartmann, the early stages of this trip got very interesting..

**Your One Stop Leather Shop!**

**LEATHER**  
*Headquarters*

**Jackets ★ Vests ★ Chaps ★ Gloves**  
**Accessories ★ Helmets ★ Bags**

**New Hours**  
**Starting March 1st!**

Monday-Friday 9A-7P  
Saturday 9A-6P  
Sunday 10A-4P

**Get Your Patches**  
**Sewn Here!**

**Stitching by Rachel**

**4230 W. Loomis Rd. ★ Greenfield, WI**  
**Just off I-894 Loomis Exit**

**(414) 727-5898 ★ Formerly "Real Leather"**

**10% Military Discount**



**RESERVE YOUR  
GET AWAY FOR THE  
2010 RIDING SEASON  
DATES FILL FAST!**

**"a unique destination  
for motorcyclists"**  
Located in  
Southwestern Wisconsin,  
in Hillsboro

**Group Discounts    Open year round**

**For rates and more information call (608) 489-4131**  
[www.bluehighwaymotorcyclelodge.net](http://www.bluehighwaymotorcyclelodge.net)

As I was pulling away from a toll booth on, the "We want more of your money" roadways in Illinois my bike's coil gave out for a brief moment and then kicked in again. I didn't make much of it until the next booth where it gave out and I was running on one cylinder. Now this led me to an interesting cross road. Do I abandon my trip and head to the safety and stress free comfort of home or do I try to get it fixed and keep rolling on?

Well being an adventuring type, I decided to continue to hook up with Kenn at his place of employment, Illinois Harley [www.ilharley.com](http://www.ilharley.com) in Berwyn, Illinois. This in itself would have been fine, but between the rush hour traffic at 5:30, the directions I interpreted wrong, and a 20-mile detour meant I was way behind my planned schedule. I rolled in to the shop around 7pm to find a crew waiting to give me a helping hand. Jim Egizio-performance specialist, Marc Maxant-Parts Manager-Ed Long, Service Manager and a few other sales' associates and staff all hung out with me while we got the coil changed. Why is this important to me? It shows people still care about one another. Jim was off the clock while getting me rolling again and my charge for the work was, (well let's just say the staff all had pizza on me the next day). The staff was very friendly to a new face and I do recommend you stop down and check out the store. (It's quite cool) After a quick tour of this U-shaped complex I was ready to hit the road, considering I wanted to be somewhere in Indiana for the night, away from the morning traffic. A short side note: Illinois Harley [ilharley.com](http://ilharley.com) does rent bikes and I know people they helped out besides myself. Give them a call (708) 788-1300

Before leaving Kenn and I had dinner at "Salernos Pizza & Pasta." (A little Italian joint on Roosevelt and Harlem on Chicago's West side. MMM good pizza.) After some conversation and a quick history lesson from Kenn on the eatery we headed to the bikes. Kenn decided to run with me till we parted ways. I headed east toward Indiana and he headed back home. I give him credit due to the fact that it was upper 30's and he really didn't plan on a 30-mile late night run on his new bagger. How's it working for you so far brother?

I made it to Merrillville, Indiana where I grabbed a room at the La Quinta Inn. Talk about a nice place for a chilled road dog late at night.

### Nov 11:

The next morning I loaded up and headed East on Hwy. 30. This being Veterans Day, I was hoping to find a smaller size town that was having a parade, ceremony or anything to honor our veterans. This to my dismay eluded me and after thinking on it, I thought about what has come of small town America, when it can't take the time to celebrate our hero's. In defense of the towns along 30, I did not stop at every one of them so I may have missed an event along the way. I did eventually stop in Delphos, OH for a bite to eat and just check out a town with this kind of name. A small town with some cool buildings, an old tractor on display but no small café that I could get an omelette to eat around noon. I had to settle for Pizza Hut but the waitress was friendly.

I ran 30 all the way to Wooster, OH where I swung south on 250 toward Wheeling, WV. After some gas and advice from a local to watch for deer ( which I always heed) I headed out for the 68-mile trek to Cadiz, OH. I wish it was lighter out because I have a feeling this stretch of two lanes was the start to some really beautiful scenery. Guess I will have to catch that next time. After arriving in Cadiz, I was given my next choice of the trip. It was 8:30 p.m. and my choices were 40 or so miles on the straight longer way, or 25 miles taking the high road of switch backs, turns and mountains. I opted for the shorter route due to the fact I have had already 377 mile and 10 hours invested in this day and was ready to put up my feet. (I have never ridden the Dragons Tail in North Carolina, but if this is anything like it I would prefer to do it in daylight hours.)

I got to Relax Inn in St Clairsville, OH around 10pm and I will say the room was nice and quiet, reasonable at \$45 per night and the owner was really friendly. The only down side of this room, and it was my fault, I couldn't figure out how to turn the heat up till the following morning. It had a valve on the heat pipe that needed to be opened up. Oh well, a cool room with lots of covers works for me.

### Nov 12:

On day 3 I woke up to 38 degrees of dreary over cast with a chance of rain all the way to D.C, yuck. I figured on making the best of it though. No sense in focusing on the