

A Few Words From Winona Bob

Gather 'round kids and you'll hear the REAL story of the great Winona flood of 1965. Stories are told of bands of itinerant bikers pouring into the city to sandbag and save the little town that could – WRONG! I worked on the dikes thru the entire dilemma and never met a biker. They mighta been there and I missed 'em – but I grew up here and knew 'most every dikeworker so I doubt it. Story's told as well of the little town that pulled itself up by it's bootstraps – WRONG! There was plenty of valiant struggling and many brave boys risked life and limb (divers going into the storm sewer system to insert "plugs" to keep the river from seeking it's own level) but in the end , three local neer-do-wells, some sticks of dynamite and a small boat were what stood between the city and watery doom.

My hero Smokey Yunick says in his book, "... now I'm old and I mighta forgot a few details but in the main my story's the way it happened. You may disagree and you got

the right to your opinion but I'm writin' this here piece so it's my opinion you're stuck with."

Now a little backstory. Mighty Mississippi's not a misnomer – this durn river's BIG! Today's paper (Mar.28th.,2006) has the flow at 35,100 cu.ft. per second at Lock and Dam 5a. Normal day; normal flow –lotta water, right? April 1965's flow was 162,400 cu.ft, per second and that's like we said – at the dam. Now you gotta realize water's a lot like electricity –takes the path of least resistance. So a whole lot more water is going by that didn't even bother checking in at the official checking station. Farmland, swampland, roads -anywhere water can get to - water is going.

I was working way on the north end of the Prairie Island dike directly across from the dam dumping truckloads of anything to keep the dike from hemhoraging. I'm telling you that dike felt like standing on a pile of pudding - it wasn't gonna last another 8 hours much less another week. Winona city officials pleaded with the Fed to let the river flood into the newly-created Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. As kids growing up we knew this area as the Delta Fish and Fur farm. NO GO ! Said the Feds.

Swampland acts like a big sponge , soaking up and spreading out the clout of the river. There's lots of swamp, woods and low-lying farmland all around and south of the refuge –miles and miles of it as a matter of fact. Ixnay said the Edfays . Goodbye Winona , goodbye adventurous bikers , goodbye brave citizens or as Bill Cosby's God said to Noah, "...how long can you tread water?"

Here is where our unlikely heros enter stage left. Fresh from a tooter at wait a minute ... I know the place, I know the names but I think it's more " urban legend " to let them be anonymous – right? Right! Into the Batboat Robin! Got the dynamite? Check! Got the matches? Check! It's off to save the helpless and hapless denizens. To the Burlington RR dike; light the fuse – WHOOOMPH! Winona is saved and Big Muddy floods thousands of acres from Marshland,Wi. to Brice Prairie,Wi.

Now you know, as Paul Harvey is fond of saying, "the rest of the story." Hence the twice-yearly commemorative Flood Run. Strange how Winona never took the bikers into their bosom after they saved them! That's a whole 'nother story for another time. See you on the Flood Run. Keep the shiny parts skyward and motor on.

Your faithful scribe, Winona Bob.


3rd Annual Bulls and Bikes
POKER RUN
 For Children's Miracle Network
SAT. JUNE 17, 2006
 at **NEINFELDT CYCLE** (423-1903)
 This ride is a combination observation ride and poker run. You can go at your own pace or with a group. The scenic 100-mile course ends up back in Kellner, then gets you free admission to the Bull Riding Challenge at Golden Sands Speedway Saturday night.
ALL PROCEED ARE DONATED TO CHILDREN'S MIRACLE NETWORK
 Sign in at Neinfeldt Cycle Sat. June 17th between 10:00am-12:30pm. Last out at 12:30.
 For More Information call: **715-423-1903**



ANNUAL VETERANS BENEFIT RIDE

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2006

TO BENEFIT THE MINNESOTA VETERANS HOMES




Register: 9:00 - 11:45 AM
From: Elk River/Rogers VFW Post 5518, 7350 Quaday Ave. NE, Otsego-Between Rogers and Elk River, Just Off Highway 101 at 73rd St. NE

Ride: 12:00 Noon Sharp!
To: Grand Casino Mille Lacs, Onamia, MN
Cost: \$10.00 Donation Per Person - Includes \$5.00 Coupon For use at the Casino.

Join us for the **Annual Veterans Benefit Ride** to show your support and let **Minnesota Veterans** know that **THEY ARE NOT FORGOTTEN!**

Roads are all Blacktop -- Start to Finish

For More Information Call 651-260-7204 John Sullivan
 Can't go-Send Donations to Veterans Ride, 2549 Everton, Ave., Forest Lake, MN 55025





rights, riding, racing

All Bikers Welcome • Bring Your Flags

Fox Valley Motorcycle Show

at South Park in Oshkosh, WI
 Sunday, June 4th

Exit Hwy 44

All Makes & Models Welcome
 Static display-FREE
 To Show \$15 Registration fee

Music by **Bobby Evans & Alimony Blues Band**
 2:00-6:00 PM

Rain or Shine
 All proceeds go to the Shriners Children's Hospital
Family Event

Registration 10^{am} to noon
 call to pre-register

Awards at 4:00^{pm}

Vender booths available
 limited space

For more information call **920-233-7275**
 Ask for John or Julie



