

Chopper's World

After secretly wanting to go to Sturgis for 21 years I finally went. My husband and I saved up for almost a year, and it was well worth it. There was so much to see and do. The bikes, the people, the stands, the noise, the scenery, everything just blew me away.

Here are some words of advice, if you want to buy any t-shirts buy them on Friday or Saturday, they are on sale then. Pack warm clothes, it can get pretty cold, and pack a rain suit, rain at 75 miles an hour hurts. It didn't rain for 2 weeks before that and it rained everyday we were there.

Be patient. It takes a lot of time to get all of those bikes moved. We walked the 4 blocks from the house we camped at to downtown, we beat most bikes. A trip that would probably take 5 minutes could take up to ½ hour. One woman told me it took 3 ½ hours and \$60.00 just to see Toby Keith at the Buffalo Chip. At least there are other bikers in the same situation and are willing to talk to you. Gotta love it!

Everyone was so nice. Churches opened their doors and had pancakes and all the trimmings for a free will donation. The vendors charged \$6 to \$8.00 for a burger, but the restaurants charged their regular prices. They could have raised their prices but they didn't.

For those of you like me who are a fan of "Biker Build Off the Series" show there was plenty of stars to gaze at. I talked to Rick Fairless, (nice and looks younger in person) Billy Lane, (nice hair) Chica, (taller than I thought, nice also) the Detroit Brothers, (they are a legend in my house) Paul Cox, (we rode next to him on the street) and finally Russell Mitchell (now he is MAN PRETTY!!!!!!) On Friday the OCC family was supposed to be signing autographs at 1:00 p.m. people were lined up at 9:15. What a bunch of Lemmings. I saw Arlen and Corey Ness, (Corey is also man pretty) Mondo, Hank Young, and Keino. I didn't talk to them, I figure they were on their off time and they deserve their privacy. I was disappointed that I didn't see Pal Yaffee, he is my favorite.

If crowds aren't your thing, do the tourists bit. The canyons, outstanding! I went through there in a car once and thought it was no big deal, but on a bike it is a big deal. I tried to imagine what it would be like to be the first to see this, but all I kept thinking that it would be a sin to develop that area.

Would I go again? Yes, in a heart beat. I wouldn't hesitate to bring my children (one is 12 and the other is 13). The town is well patrolled by Sturgis's finest. Now, the campgrounds are a different story. I was there for a while; I wouldn't bring children there. A lot of beads were passed out, and a lot of beer was drunk. It was pretty wild. If you decide to go, I'll be riding my bike, and I love to talk, look me up. See ya there! Chopper
Finally, I look forward to writing this column, it is a real treat to be able to "converse" with so many people. I love to talk, so through this column I can talk to so many different people. I'd love to hear from anyone, so email me at chopper@meltel.net

Judge ends wet T-shirt contests in nightclubs

By David Wren-The Sun News

For now, wet T-shirt contests are illegal in Myrtle Beach unless they are held in areas zoned for sexually oriented businesses, an Horry County judge said Tuesday before issuing a temporary restraining order against three nightclubs that have held such contests. The temporary order is in effect until a hearing for a permanent injunction can be held. That hearing has not been scheduled.

"Wet T-shirt and booty-shake contests ... are a violation of city ordinances," Judge Stan Cross said after hearing testimony from undercover police officers and watching videos of contests held at two of the nightclubs - Hog Wild and Marti's, both located on Kings Highway.

Representatives from Hog Wild and Marti's did not appear in court because the nightclubs have agreed not to fight the temporary injunction. Hog Wild has closed, and Marti's said it no longer will hold wet T-shirt contests.

An attorney for the third nightclub, the Freaky Tiki on Ocean Boulevard, said he will appeal Tuesday's ruling because he thinks the zoning laws are too broad and violate free speech and equal protection rights. "The statute is vague and unconstitutional," attorney Ralph Wilson said.

None of the nightclubs is in an area zoned for adult entertainment. Tuesday's ruling means the Freaky Tiki cannot hold wet T-shirt contests unless it wins an appeal or the city fails to get a permanent injunction. Wilson said that is irrelevant because the Freaky Tiki was forced to close last week after Cross, in a separate case, called the nightclub a public nuisance that encourages lewd and illegal behavior among its patrons. Wilson said he also will appeal that ruling.

"It is impossible, without them violating a court order, to have any activity in the club, much less a wet T-shirt contest," Wilson said. Undercover police officers with Myrtle Beach and the State Law Enforcement Division testified Tuesday that they have seen dozens of wet T-shirt contests in recent years. "Each of the contests I've seen follows the same track," one officer said.

He said the contests "start out mild" but get racier as each contestant tries to outdo the previous one. By the end of the contest, the police officer said, women often are totally nude.

Two videos shown during the hearing featured wet T-shirt contestants at Hog Wild and Marti's removing their shirts and dancing suggestively. At one point, Cross asked Michael Battle, the city's attorney, to stop the video. "I think we've seen enough," the judge said.

There was no video from the Freaky Tiki, but Battle showed photos taken from the club's Web site that feature scenes from a wet T-shirt contest. Wilson objected to the evidence, saying the hearing was to determine whether illegal activity had taken place in the Freaky Tiki, not on its Web site. Cross accepted the evidence, however, saying the Web site photos are indicative of the type of activity taking place at the nightclub.

Under questioning, the police officers said they had not seen a wet T-shirt contest at the Freaky Tiki this year and had not made any arrests during the contests they witnessed last year. In response to Wilson's questioning, the SLED officer said he never reported any activity taking place at the Freaky Tiki to Myrtle Beach police. "If you believe what you saw was illegal conduct, would you have reported it?" Wilson asked. "Probably so," the SLED officer said.

Wilson told Cross he was concerned about the lack of evidence against the Freaky Tiki and asked the judge to dismiss the case.

But Cross granted the temporary injunction, saying what he saw in the videos and heard from police convinced the 63-year-old judge "my generation is the most naive generation that ever lived."

Battle said getting an injunction is the best way to stop sexually oriented contests in clubs catering to tourists. He said arresting the contests' participants has not been an effective deterrent in the past.

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