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Fat Fest II

JD Conner

The second annual Fat Fest at the Fat Man Inn in Gurnee, IL on August 21 was beautiful. The weather, the bikes, the people, the entertainment and the money that was raised for research for a cure for breast cancer, all made it a Sunday to remember. Over the course of the day, an estimated 3,500 people rode in and enjoyed the camaraderie at a great, summer party.

Gina Woods and her crew from Open Road Radio coordinated the event and were on stage, entertaining the crowd throughout the day. Sharing the stage were four, women bike builders (Katie Putnam, Sarah Lyon, Janye Gray and Chickie the Vagabond) who Gina had flown in from around the country to participate in the event by building a motorcycle in one day for charity. After a custom paint job by Joanne Bortels from Crazyhorse Painting, the bike will be raffled over the coming months with the proceeds going to breast cancer research.



Jeff Stark and his team from the International Master Bike Builders Association were on hand to judge some amazing bikes from all over the mid-west. Lots of beautiful winners but Dave Cook's "Number 9" took 1st place in the Radical/Extreme Class and kept me awake that night figuring out how I could get the cash to buy this beauty.

An amazing, all woman, kick-butt band called Cat Fight performed for the crowd and made everyone crazy...jumping, screaming, and rockin' to terrific songs with driving beats. This was the first time I'd seen this group and they were everything you could want in a band. Check 'em out at catfightband.com.

Lots of good vendors with food, drink and bike stuff that you can't live without. One in particular caught my eye. Paul Mahoney of Daideo's Custom Art creates very unusual wooden, motorcycle art. He makes custom or already finished framed pieces, clocks, picture frames or cribbage boards. Take a look at his art at daideoscustomart.com.

By the end of the day, there were some very happy but tired bikers. To the two ladies who danced in front of the stage to every song... my body hurts just thinking about how you must have felt the next morning. To Jake Brock, who supplied a bunch of the pieces for the bike build-off and stayed up all night arranging things...go back to bed. To the three wonderful families who rode down from Green Bay...see ya at the Bears/Packers game. To the two little girls who saw some beautiful bikes and had some fun with the bikers...thank your parents and start saving for your own motorcycles when you grow up.

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