



## OPEN LETTER OF THANKS

7th Annual Hospice Ride for Angels  
Dedicated to the memory of JoAnn Browne

The weekend started off beautiful with sunny skies for Stormy Hill's 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary party on Saturday. And quite the celebration it was. Sunday morning proved to be a different story. The weather report was calling for 60 – 70% chance of rain and by the looks of the morning sky, it was going to start early. The first hour of registration was very slow and it looked like the pending chance of rain might put a damper on our event.

Just when it looked like this year might be a bust, we began to hear the roar of motorcycles coming down the highway. First a couple, then more, groups of 10, 20 - they just kept rolling in. In all, 183 bikes came in with 234 total riders! This beat last year.

Steve Crouse laid out a route this year that took us down the scenic back roads of Lake County. How he comes up these fabulous rides each year is beyond me, but they are always first class – and fun for our riders. Signs are posted at all the turns making it extremely easy for riders to navigate the route. I can't begin to tell you how many compliments we receive on the poker run. Another great job Steve!

This year was really exciting with the donation of our little pink Schwinn scooter. The scooter was donated to Hospice by a couple living in the Villages. It brought a whopping \$6,001 as a raffle item. Can you believe that we almost sold the scooter on Craig's List for \$900! Thank you to everyone that got out there and sold raffle tickets. A special thank you again this year to Sharon Kimel for her donation of her beautiful hand made Harley quilt.

At the last minute, Jim Shope had to bail out of being our auctioneer due to his granddaughter's high school graduation being scheduled the same time as our event. At the last minute I volunteered to do the auction. I must admit that I was pretty nervous about taking this on for the first time. But I must tell you, it was definitely the highlight of my afternoon. I had the best time being a fill in auctioneer. Better watch out Jim!

Once again our volunteers beat the bushes to solicit items for our giveaways, Chinese auction, silent auction and our big live auction. The live auction was really exciting this year. The 73" big screen TV donated by Best Buy in the Winter Garden Village netted \$2,200! Thank you Dana Boldizar, General Manager, for your support and generosity again this year.

But the highlight of the auction was the guitar art piece donated by my friend, and up and coming artist, Karly Blake. For those of us lucky enough to see this piece, it was all hand done with individual pieces of colored glass. The guitar had a Harley theme with the

Harley logo and Live to Ride motto. The auction really heated up with bidding going from the front of the room to the back. It was really exciting! The high bid on this piece of art was \$2,600! Unbelievable.

I would like to express my sincere thank you to all of our volunteers that spent countless numbers of hours in support of this wonderful event. None of this would be possible without you. Thank You!

A special thank you also goes out to Joe the DJ, Mr. Lawrence Johnston of the Donut King for donating all the donuts again this year and Westgate Resorts for their donation of a weekend at the River Ranch. A very special thank you to our partners Ms. Dana Boldizar, General Manager of the Best Buy store in the Winter Garden Village and to our returning partner, Mr. Dewey Isbell of the Outback Steakhouse in Clermont. Thanks to Dewey and his "Outbackers" for preparing and servicing all the food – free of charge!

Last, but not least, I must say thank you to Janice Malik for sponsoring our great chapter and for her help and guidance in making this the best chapter in Central Florida. Without her and Stormy Hill HD, there wouldn't be a Clermont Hog Chapter.

Last year I said that it was a milestone year as we surpassed the \$100,000 mark in donations in support of the Mike Conley Hospice House. This year also was a banner year. We raised the most money this year than in any previous years with an incredible total of **\$24,720!** Wow!!! You guys/gals rock.

May you never need their service, however, if you ever do, know that Hospice will be there for you also. I'm already looking forward to next year.

May good health and prosperity shine down on you and your families and may GOD bless America.

Ride til the end with your friends at your side.  
Dennis "Hedgehog" Halloran