



## OPEN LETTER OF THANKS

### 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Hospice Ride for Angels

What a fantastic weekend it was. I think this was the first time in several years that there was no mention of rain in the weekend forecast. Bad weather is always a concern as many bikers choose to stay home when the weather turns bad. And you can't have a successful poker run without motorcycles!

Stormy Hill's annual Anniversary Party was a huge success on Saturday. Janice was generous enough to purchase hamburgers, hotdogs, beer and water and offered a deal to the Hog Chapter. If we cooked and served it, we could keep the donations! Of course, we jumped on that offer. Along with that, Peggy from Gator put together auction items for the event and we were given the proceeds from that also. The day netted us an incredible \$1,300.00! A great jump start to the weekend. I wish all Chapters had a dealer that was not only a great friend, but a strong, integral part of our Chapter as well. Thank you Janice and Stormy Hill HD!

A poker run cannot be successful without a pre-defined ride. And year after year, Steve Crouse comes up with some fabulous routes. I heard nothing but compliments from riders at the finish. This is definitely one of the most thankless jobs of the event. Steve has to get up early to help us set up at Stormy Hill, then has to "ride" the route in his truck putting out signage showing places to turn and signs indicating entrance to the poker stops. That's not bad enough, he then has to wait for the last bike out and "ride" the route again picking up all those signs. While the rest of us are at Minneola City Hall enjoying lunch and entertainment, Steve is still out there beating the pavement. And this year he was lucky enough to have the help of Bob Partain. Great job guys!

As many of you know, we raffled off a pink Schwinn scooter last year. This year we were given another scooter by Kyle Fulmer from Carroll Fulmer Trucking. A 2005 Vento scooter, silver and red. I really didn't know how that would go over two years in a row, but I am happy to say that the scooter raffle netted \$4,500.00! Thanks Kyle.

This Chapter is blessed to have the support of so many volunteers. It takes months of hard work knocking on doors asking for donations. One of the main reasons we are so successful each year is because of the quality of our giveaways and auction items. Thank you to all of you that spent your precious free time gathering such great gifts again this year. To our dear friend Rita Flaker - you absolutely rock in what you do for this event. And to Mary Stickland - the baskets you make each year are incredible!

And a special thank you to our community partners. Without them, there would be no items for our fabulous auctions. Thanks to Mr. Joe Farro, our DJ, who supplies all the great music. A long time supporter and personal friend - thanks to Martin and Barbara McDonough who travel from Tampa every year to support us. A special thank you to them this year for arranging the wonderful ice cream from Blue Bell. Lawrence Johnston continues to support us every year with baked goods from the Donut King for our registration area along with Mimi's Café in the Winter Garden Village. Each year we've approached the Westgate Resorts to help us with a vacation package and each year they come through with something fantastic. Thank you to Mr. David Siegel and Ms. Ellen Tatich for their continued support. A couple of years ago we discovered one of our biggest supporters in Ms. Dana Boldizar, General Manager of the Best Buy in the Winter Garden Village. Not only does she donate very generous items for our auction, but she is gracious enough to let us set up scooter raffle ticket sales inside the store! On top of all that, she always has part of her team set up a fun, game station and tech talk at the City Hall. I think we should make her an honorary Hog member! And the Hospice Ride for Angels would not be complete without the help and support of Mr. Dewey Isbell and his "Outbackers" from the Outback Steakhouse in Clermont. All of the food sold at the event is donated by Dewey and his "Outbackers" who come out on a Sunday morning to set up, cook, and serve the delicious food each year. And the wonderful part of that is all of his team always has the brightest smiles and happiest attitudes. What a pleasure every year.

What can we do to show our appreciation for these loyal community partners? Support their establishments. When you go in, please tell them "thank you" for your generous, ongoing support of the Hospice Ride for Angels to support the Mike Conley Hospice House. We can't do it without them.



It absolutely amazed me this year to see 222 motorcycles with 288 riders aboard ride into Stormy Hill HD to register. It actually made the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. No matter what great auction items we have, the great food we serve, we would not have an event without you - the motorcycle community of Central Florida. In these hard times for many of you, you continue to show your support and generosity for a bigger cause. My most heartfelt thanks to all of you. And it was very encouraging this year to see so many other people show up in "cages" to support us at the City Hall.

Okay, all that being said, I am absolutely thrilled to report to you that we raised an incredible \$26,214.00 this year! I still can't believe it. This brings our total contribution to the Mike Conley Hospice House over the past eight years to an unbelievable \$151,001.00! And who says bikers aren't the most generous, community oriented group in the world! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

I would also like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be involved with the Hospice Ride for Angels again this year.

May you never need their service, however, if you ever do, know that Hospice will be there for you all. Mark the calendar for June 3, 2012!

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.....

Respectfully,

Dennis "Hedgehog" Halloran

