

September 26, 2004

Mr. Brent Dugan,

I earlier wrote to you asking for Dave Hennessy's Email address. My purpose in writing to Dave, and perhaps I should be addressing this to you too, was to thank those who established the "Harley Hummer Club". I have been a member of the club for several years, and I have enjoyed seeing other members' restored bikes.

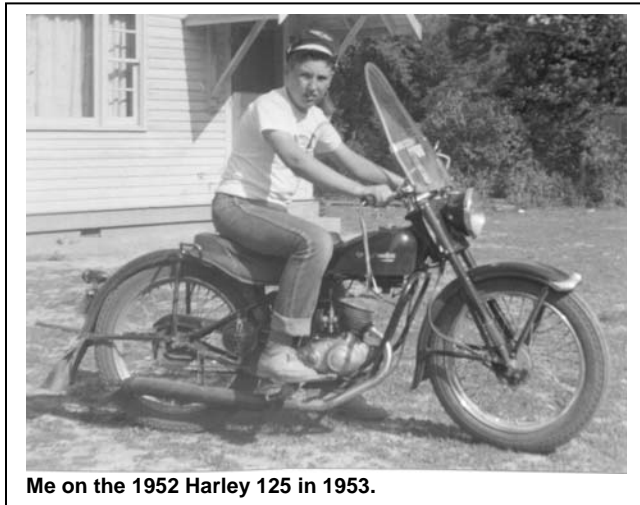
I have a great affection for the Harley Hummers. My love of motorcycling and motorcycles began in August 1953 when I purchased a low mileage 1952 Harley 125. I was only thirteen years old then, and I bought the bike with my father's blessing. I think I was realizing one of his desires as a young man. He had an eye on a Harley 45 in the 1930's, but at the height of the Great Depression he couldn't afford the \$25 purchase price. Twenty years later I had the money from doing farm work to pay for my Harley. The bike was a steal at \$150. It was in near new condition and a new one cost about \$400, so the deal was a good one.

The day I got the bike we locked it up in a garage and went to the Illinois State Fair where I got to see Harley legends Paul Goldsmith and Joe Leonard battle it out on the famous Springfield dirt track.

The little Harley was a doorway to freedom for me. At thirteen I was three years too young to get an Illinois driver's license, so all of my miles on the 125 were illegal miles. The bike allowed me to get to farm jobs

for money, and to ride with my buddies in the evening for pleasure. I had three buddies who rode together in those days. One was on a brand new 1953 Indian Brave (the English one), one had a new 125 BSA, and another had a 1949 Harley 125. The four of us put 10,000 miles on our bikes never venturing farther than fifteen miles from our homes. We were successful at avoiding the small town police, the sheriff and the highway patrol in those 10,000 miles. Fifty-one years later all four of us still ride.

In 1955 I was fifteen and felt I was too mature to ride a little 125, so I traded the Harley plus \$150 for a 1949 Indian 249 Scout. The Indian had performance (at least in comparison to the 125) and was a great bike. I rode the Indian until I



went to college. I sold it for \$150, which in retrospect makes me think I should never sell my toys.

I spent my college years riding my brother's bikes, and driving a convertible. Upon graduating from college I moved to Florida. As I developed a career in Florida I kept motorcycles back on the farm. I went through a series of motorcycles on the farm including a new 1977 BMW that I encouraged my father to ride. My dad had enjoyed the little Harley 125 and even rode it to work a couple of times when I was in school, so I thought he would enjoy riding the BMW. He didn't like the BMW though because he was afraid he would drop it and break off a cylinder. The BMW as a Boxer, a two cylinder opposed motor with the cylinders sticking out in front of the rider's feet. Of course he probably couldn't have done so, but he wasn't comfortable with the bike so he loaded in his van and brought it to me in Tampa. I had previously ridden mostly on the rural roads of central Illinois and was cautious of the traffic of big cities, but I began to ride the BMW in the urban press of Tampa.

In 1985 I joined the Christian Motorcyclists Association, and began riding with them. By then I was successful in business, was on too many civic and charity boards and was using my motorcycle to burn off the pressures of life. One of those boards was a mission called Missionary Ventures International (MVI). I was a founding board member of MVI. The purpose of MVI is to support the Christians in the third world with some of the material abundance we enjoy here in the USA. In 1987 I was in Guatemala on a mission trip and a missionary there asked me if I could help him get some money to buy small motorcycles for his pastors in the mountains. I said I would help him, but I had no idea how I was going to do so.

I flew back to Tampa on Monday morning and went to work. On Friday a buddy and I packed up our bikes (I was still on the BMW) and headed out for a weekend rally with CMA.

As it happened the head of CMA was also at that rally, so I pitched him with the idea of CMA helping me get money to buy bikes for third world pastors. CMA considered the idea for about six months and then agreed to help me. They inaugurated the "RUN FOR THE SON" in May of 1988 and promised me (really MVI) twenty percent of the proceeds from the RFS. In June 1988 my



That's me in the center with some other CMA guys giving away motorcycles in upper Guatemala in December 2003

wife Janet and I flew to Flagstaff, Arizona, rented a Yamaha Venture and rode to the CMA National Rally in Williams, Arizona where we picked up a check from the first RFS for \$40,000 to buy motorcycles for pastors. CMA has continued the effort and this year, sixteen years after the first RFS, we picked up a check for \$560,000 to buy motorcycles around the world in 2004. As of this writing CMA and MVI has given away over 2,250 new motorcycles in eighty-one countries around the world.

Last year, in my fiftieth year of riding, my wife and I bought a new BMW to celebrate our 40th year of marriage. Since then we have ridden the new BMW 18,000 miles including trips from Tampa to Marrietta, Ohio and to Mena, Arkansas. Without the 1952 Harley Hummer starting me on this journey, there might not have been a RUN FOR THE SON, or all of the wonderful memories we have had on the road on a motorcycle.

Thanks to the Harley Hummer Club for keeping the memories alive.

Edd McGrath (813.240.2889)

