

## Racine HOG Rides the Lake



The new Director of the Southeastern Wisconsin (Racine) Harley Owners Group (HOG) had the idea that a good group event would be a weekend ride around Lake Michigan. It's about 700 miles covering two states, a 5 mile long bridge, and a high speed ferry boat out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The original idea included accommodations for 10 to 20 riders to cross Lake Michigan (via the Lake Express, a high speed ferry) from Milwaukee to Muskegon, Michigan, then continue through Michigan's Upper Peninsula to Escanaba by way of Traverse City, and return to Racine, Wisconsin.

It all seemed like a good idea.

When this ride was opened up to the Chapter members, all of the initial spots were filled immediately! Additional reservations were made and the trip ended up with 41 bikes, 62 participants, and one chase vehicle.

A Group Weekend Ride Around the Lake - Apparently our members thought it was a very good idea.

The ride began on Friday morning subsequent to a group breakfast. We took off for Milwaukee and the high speed ferry ride to Lower Michigan. The crossing had its problems. The lake was choppy and one rider suffered a bad case of mal de mer while about 10 others were just feeling "poorly". After landing, we formed up and left for Traverse City, minus one bike (due to the mal de mer). Being the troopers that they are, that bike caught up with the group later in the day. The first day was perfect riding weather and the traffic wasn't too bad. After the boat trip and riding "up" the lakeshore to Traverse City, the motel was a welcome sight. At this time, we learned that the chase truck doubled as a mobile refreshment vehicle for our evening stops.

Chase Vehicle - Another very good idea!!

Saturday morning began the next leg of the trip. We commenced toward Escanaba by way of the Mackinac Bridge, which seemed to go on forever, but what a view! Driving across that bridge in a car is way too insulating. It was group consensus that a motorcycle is the only way to experience this type of freedom of the road. Once over the bridge, we continued along the northern shore to Escanaba under perfect weather. Our little parade going through the smaller towns brought out smiles and waves throughout the day that made all our riders and passengers proud to be part of this experience. I was just FUN being there.

Once we reached our Escanaba destination, we once again welcomed our chase vehicle and it's contraband of refreshments. In addition, the hotel had veggie, cheese (we ARE from Wisconsin), and meat trays awaiting our arrival. After a brief moment of down time, we all hit our rooms to freshen up. Shortly, we met outside the hotel where we boarded a dedicated bus that would take us to some of Escanaba's finest establishments. By way of a 'very patient' bus driver, we were transported to restaurants, a local casino, and yes even a local tavern.

Chauffeured Transportation - Another good idea!

The last day, Sunday, was even better than the first two, weather-wise. The ride home included a stop at a dealership sponsored bike/car show in Peshtigo, Wisconsin. We all enjoyed an hour or so of shopping, eating, and strolling through the show. Before long it was time to hit the road hard for home! Some of our members broke off from the ride in Peshtigo to venture to their own locations for an extended vacation. The rest of us continued on the long road back to Racine. We all made it home safely, which concluded a most enjoyable and memorable trip.

Everything went well during this ride around the lake due to expert planning, safe riding, and camaraderie shared amongst the members. I don't think anyone on this trip can say they did not have FUN! The ultimate benefit from these three days of riding was the new friendships that were made along the way.

A Group Weekend Ride Around the Lake – What a GREAT idea!

The SE WI Racine HOG Chapter is comprised of 455 members and growing! Racine will host the 2007 Wisconsin HOG Rally in mid-August. For information about this ride or the upcoming rally, contact Racine Harley Davidson at 262-884-0123 or [www.racinehogchapter.com](http://www.racinehogchapter.com).

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