

New Rider Participates in International Female Ride Day

AZ Rider

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The month of May is already recognized as Motorcycle Awareness Month to promote rider safety ~ both within the motorcycling community and to the drivers who share the road with us. The month is host to a collection of awareness campaigns, proclamations, safety presentations, events, etc. It seems appropriate somehow to incorporate an additional level of recognition to the sport of motorcycling, on behalf of women who ride.

The Int'l Female Ride Day celebrates women who have chosen to take life by the handlebars and become their own pilot. This year was the 9th annual Int'l Female Ride Day ~ taking place on Saturday May 2. If you visit their Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalFemaleRideDay/> you'll read, "This worldwide, synchronized unified presence additionally demonstrates to others the fun and enjoyment females of all diversities share in this wonderful activity of motorcycling!" This is indeed a Worldwide ride; with more and more participation each year. In addition to all the USA riders, there were FB postings from Budapest, Ireland, South Africa, Canada, India, Philippines, France, Australia, Colombia, Hungary, United Arab Emirates, Czech Republic, Kuwait, Egypt, Bangladesh, Germany..... You get the idea.

Red is a woman we've enjoyed getting to know; meeting her well before she became an employee of Chester's Harley Davidson in Mesa. She was very excited to successfully complete the Beginners Rider Course {BRC}; which is among the classes presented by Chester's H-D. She emphasized that she was very glad to have taken the BRC. Upon deciding that she wanted to ride her own bike, her first thought was to read the book a few times & go take the test. After reconsidering, and now having gone through the class, she acknowledges that she learned so much more than she expected to.

The class she took was co-ed... Red never worried about finding a class for women only. She grew up with 4 brothers and always managed to keep up. The Beginner's course takes place over 3 days.... It incorporates a mix of classroom & bookwork with the roadwork. Beginners need no personal motorcycle to take this class. Bikes are provided by the riding academy at Chester's H-D.

There is no need to get a learners permit before taking the BRC either, as the lessons take place within the fence line of the riding academy's paved lot. There are exercises in cornering, stops, U-turns, downshifting & up-shifting, weaving between obstacles, and more. The instructors go over the need for mental preparation to allow for real-life road experiences. No matter how many miles you've driven a car, THIS will be different. The instructors take the time to help each student to gain confidence & command of the skills being taught. You must demonstrate your ability to control the bike safely before you will pass the test. Red spoke very highly of the teachers. Lead instructor Mike Hargrove takes his responsibility very seriously; demonstrating a passion & commitment to teaching his students. He also emphasized the importance of continuing education. When

ready, advanced classes are available through the Chester's H-D academy.

Red shared that she learned a LOT but feels that the most important lessons had to do with lane position while riding. Knowing where you need to be in a lane to be seen by others & how to see what's coming up ahead are critical to safe riding.

The differences between abs brakes and other braking systems were discussed. Different stopping techniques were also covered; including quick emergency stops. Red commented that she's already had some quick stop situations while on the road that her training brought her through safely.

Red's endorsement came along in time for her to participate in the 9th annual Int'l Female Ride Day as her first major run. That was a 250-mile day. Riders gathered at various locations, including some dealerships around the Valley. Everyone's destination was the Buffalo Chip in Cave Creek.

About a dozen gals from Chester's H-D met up and rode out to Superstition H-D in AJ; where they joined a group of some 50 women. The ride route took them out Beeline Hwy, through Fountain Hills, out to Dynamite, & into the backside of Cave Creek. The BBQ at the Chip was hosted by 'Diva Amy' of Team Diva and motorcycle racer & 7x land speed record holder Valerie Thompson. The afternoon included camaraderie, drawings, giveaways, and sharing of road stories. An estimated 200+ women had gathered for the IFRD.

Int'l Female Ride Day is held on the first Saturday in May, so 2016 will be on May 7th. So Ladies, if you've read this and have decided to take the class and get up on your own 2 wheels... you'll have plenty of time to put on some miles before participating in next year's IFRD.

Red has taken to riding like a duck to water. She rode dirt bikes and horses growing up and had family that rode for years. So it's come naturally to her. She's got some out of state runs in mind, to visit family. She's already done a 700-mile day. We figure she'll be training for an Iron Butt run next ~ lol.

What bike does she like? She's looking at a Road Glide, but she's taking some test rides on different makes & models first before buying her bike. You can too. Options include motorcycle rentals ~ as many H-D models are available for rent. Also, Chester's Harley-Davidson regularly hosts demo days, so you can watch their Facebook page for details about that.

Are you a woman who's 'on the fence' about riding your own bike? There are many resources and organizations that can help you arrive at the right answer for you. The Riding Academy at Chester's Harley-Davidson is scheduling classes now, for beginners and more advanced riders. Call 480-894-0404 or visit online at www.chestershd.com for more information. "Great Riders Aren't Born. They're Made"... at your participating Harley-Davidson™ Riding Academy.

Enjoy the Road... Hell Yeah!
These women own it!

Betsy

