

Too Broke For Sturgis They Came ~ It Rained ~ No Problem

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ABATE of AZ's 'Too Broke For Sturgis' took place at Mormon Lake again this year; over the weekend of July 27-29. This is an 18 & older party. Although drinking in AZ is still a 21 & over affair, the organizers determined that would be wrong for those in our military to be able to fight for us, but not party with us. We can agree with that. Good call!

We got on the road early Friday morning, arriving at Mormon Lake around 11am.

After signing in and many greetings, we realized we'd best get camp pitched. Thank you to the Desert Thunder MC for their hospitality. We had an awesome location right next to the Thunder Dome. Once we got home base squared away, we headed out to tour the venue, do the meet & greet, and take some pix.

Vendor row was a good place to start. Friday afternoon's activities included a poker walk to familiarize everyone with the Vendor area. 30 vendors were set up, offering a wide range of items. Congratulations to Lil Griz for winning high hand with 4 Aces and collecting \$50. Low hand prize of \$25 went to Donna Callodonato, with 2-3-5-6-7. Nice way to start the weekend ☺

We visited with Bob at the Law Tigers information booth. The Hog Wraps booth, owned by Theresa & Mark, was a busy place. Not only are they carrying the cooling neck ties they've become known for, they have added a collection of very unique and striking jewelry to their inventory. Food vendors of-

fered a variety of vittles... including a booth offering home-made ice cream. Very tasty ☺

We stopped by to see Yuma Harry & his lady Janice at the Sons of Hell MC support booth. She was plenty busy creating custom lever braids. So we chatted with Harry... discussing important issues of the day ~ like who was going to win in the upcoming games. Not the Olympics... the annual TBFS People Games ☺

There was really great participation in the games on both days. The players & their exuberance made for some very entertaining times.

Friday's People Games were emceed & run by Ralo & James. There was a Too Broke first, as one of the women landed all 3 helmets in the Helmet Toss. The Sons of Hell MC fielded a team of patch holders and a team of prospects. And there were two ladies teams that participated in the tug of war. As Ralo noted, "This is way better than professional wrestling" ☺
Winners were: Plank Walk = Sons of Hell prospects; Men's Helmet Toss = SOH prospect Pedro, Women's Helmet Toss = Joey Dockery; Pole in the Hole = Jill & Edward; and Tug of War = Sons of Hell MC, retaining their title for the 3rd year.

Shortly thereafter, ladies lined up to participate in the annual Ms Too Broke For Sturgis competition. While this is a separate contest

from the late-night wet t-shirt competition, some gals just keep missing the memo. Not that the fellas in the audience mind ☺ Emcee Paul Hassinger did a fine job as usual, taking the gals through their pageant questions. A few do involve MRO-related topics; as some of the intended duties of Ms Too Broke are to represent ABATE during the coming year and to promote the TBFS event. The winner is determined by crowd applause. Congratulations to Terry, contestant #2.

Moving right along... Participants gathered in the arena for the Tattoo Contest. The judging panel consists of people who have tats & are familiar with the technical aspects of tattoo work, plus a judge who has no tat experience; intended to add that gut feeling 'like it or don't like it' element to the decision process. The candidates select one tat in one category that they wish to compete. If their work is more mural-like, then they select one section to compete. After looking at a lot of beautiful artwork, the judges boiled it all down to these winners: *Men's Best Color* = Jimbo, DRRMC; *Single Color* = Kevin; *Most Realistic* = Jim 'Santa' Stein; *Women's Best Color* = Melissa M.; *Single Color* = Dawn; *Most Realistic* = Chrissy. Congratulations to each of you.

The band of the weekend was Phat Bastards. The flyer had announced Cell Phone Cowboys, but apparently the band broke up just weeks before the event. CPC member Shamus contacted Phat Bastards to see if they could step in on such short notice. They were happy to do it, Shamus sat in, the band sounded great. There was enthusiastic response from the audience. All's well that ends well. >>>



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Once all the scheduled events of Friday were wrapped up, the band carried the party on into the night. The music drifted out onto the cool evening air. In addition to the people who stayed on at the bandstand, others were visiting in the camps & cabins. Campfires and camaraderie filled the air with good vibes.

Saturday morning included an early launch for those who chose to partake in the poker run. Four different routes were offered: Petrified Forest Nat'l Park [300 miles], Sedona [156 miles], Winslow [166 miles], and Williams [222 miles]. Any direction you choose makes for a scenic ride.

Saturday afternoon's Bike Games were run by Sweet Pea, Wade, and Kate; with Paul again serving as emcee. These are hugely popular to watch, and the stands were well filled. The roar of the bikes in the line up indicated that the riders were ready to PLAY.

In the distance, lightning occasionally streaked across the sky; much as it had done on Friday without resulting in any storm. As time went on, the wind increased, clouds got darker, lightning more frequent... but it COULD still swing around and miss us. The games were ON!

Slow Race winner was Jesse, out of a field of nearly 50. Congratulations!

Road Kill was the next game up. This two-person game involves the passenger scooping up stuffed animals in a net as the pilot guides the bike along

the course without putting their feet down. 20 teams had taken their turns when Mother Nature joined the party ~ and she was NOT messing around! The games had to be called.

Lots of plans changed, fast. But in true biker fashion, people adapted and found other ways to have fun, share friendship, & make good memories. We made our way back to camp, and spent time hanging out at the Thunder Dome. After a spell, we donned our rain gear and strolled through the campsite. We ended up at the cabins; visiting with a houseful of East Valley ABATE friends. When night came and the storm let up a bit, we headed back toward camp; but music coming from the bandstand called to us.

The arena was a mud bog, the tent was full, & the music was rockin'. We missed the Wet T-shirt contest, emceed by Singer of Desert Thunder MC. The winner pulled the ticket for the 50/50. Jett, DTMC, won the sizeable pot ~ a welcome windfall, as his bike broke down on the way to Too Broke and arrived in camp on a trailer. Sounds like some good karma ☺ After that, the party continued on. People were dancing elbow to elbow, squeezed in under the tent, and having a blast. Crazy as it might sound, this was a GREAT day!

Sunday morning was greeted with bleary eyes and smiling faces. The sunrise was bright and promising. I rather got the impression Mother Nature was chuckling... "How do you like me now!?"

In addition to all the Independent riders, we observed representatives from 39 organizations in attendance. All in all, we're told that 2000 went through the gate this weekend. Our unofficial note of recognition for the 'long-distance travelers' goes to a couple from Alberta Canada who, we are told, specifically traveled down here for this event.

There are ABATE Chapters all through AriZona. If you are not an ABATE member, you should truly look into becoming one. Their dedication to Motorcyclists Rights and promoting Motorcycle Safety is a cause that ALL riders should support. Learn more at <http://www.abateofaz.org/>

We've been requested to extend a big Thank You to Everyone who attended, from ABATE and the Too Broke Committee. Thanks also go to the many volunteers.

ABATE-AZ and the TBFS staff did an outstanding job. This was such a good time, with no major problems. We strongly recommend that you keep this one on your calendar and make it part of your summer routine. That's our plan. See ya next time!!

B&B

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