



Sportbike freestyle rider Clint Ewing and his crew zipped around the blacktop and awed attendees with their skills at Mesa's Desert Wind H-D dealership

RIDING FOR THE LONG HAUL

Catchin' a breeze at Desert Wind H-D

What the Harley-Davidson family is all about

by Felicia Morgan

MESA, ARIZ., MAR. 12—There's nothing more important than the issue of safety when addressing the motorcycle world and the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Foundation works hard to keep riders educated on how to reduce the number of crashes and fatalities in the state, so it makes perfect sense that the AMSF should team up with a dealership to help bring their program to the masses. Mesa Harley-Davidson was the perfect venue for a daylong presentation based on education.

Mesa Harley-Davidson, once known as Chester's, has become Desert Wind Harley-Davidson since its recent purchase by Ray Croghan. Croghan, a motorcycle enthusiast with over 50 years of experience riding all over the world, is the principal owner and dealer operator of Desert Wind alongside partner William Fisher, a veteran of the United States Air Force who served in Vietnam.

The partners rolled out the welcome mat for the family-oriented "Riding for the Long Haul" program, presented by ASMF on this blustery spring day and vendors who lined the blacktop near the giant concert stage found themselves chasing down their popups as the wind wreaked havoc by late afternoon, but everyone pitched in to help secure the tarps and disaster was averted. Anyone even remotely related to the industry was there pressing palms and swapping cards as folks went from vendor to vendor collecting

information from the various lawyers, manufacturers, medical officials and everyone in between. On the outer perimeter famished riders found a variety of food trucks ready to tackle their appetites. From a hot dog cart to a truck selling french fries with gravy, it was your own fault if you walked away hungry.



Mesa PD motor cops shared riding safety tips with attendees while cruising through a course laid out in the shape of the letters HD. One officer even had a cold drink in a side bag and never spilled a drop.

This area of the property does double duty on scheduled weekends during the dealership's Harley-Davidson Riding Academy classes, but for this day was taken over by an interesting juxtaposition of stunt riders doing wheelies and burnouts followed up by an exhibition on safety

demonstrated by the Mesa Police Department. While both performances were pretty cool and certainly attracted a crowd, we found ourselves lurking at the edge of the MPD's show and soaking up the interesting details the announcer was sharing. Apparently our assumption that all motor cops grew up on a bike with 50-weight coursing through their veins is pure fiction. While these guys navigated the tight curves of the cones that delineated an H-D course, we were told that two of the officers were in their mid-40s and have just taken up motorecycling three or four years ago. The skill level and grace under pressure of these guys was impressive and they spent their time sharing tidbits like "where you look is where your bike goes," good posture and counter steering. There was an actual discussion with the crowd about leaving your bike in gear at a stoplight and audience participation was encouraged. The good-natured cops had riders eating out of their hands even though this was clearly a Harley crowd and they were all riding Kawasakis.

Jim Moore, from Arizona Biker Information Guide, served as master of ceremonies and roamed the blacktop with a mic in hand to keep attendees apprised of the happenings. There was a silent auction, several prize drawings and over \$10,000 in raffle prizes and an awards presentation. Unbeknownst



Jim Moore, Master of Ceremonies during the Ride for the Long Haul, was presented with an appreciation award for his countless hours spent in support of the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Foundation

"We've worked closely with the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Foundation for years and will continue to do so because we've found it a good way to stay connected to our community and help educate our citizens. It really is a good program," the chief told us.



Mesa Police Department's Assistant Chief of Police, Michael Dvorak, was presented with an appreciation award for his support of the Arizona Motorcycle Safety Foundation during the "Ride for the Long Haul" event

to Jim, he was one of the recipients. Arizona Motorcycle Safety Foundation presented Moore with a well-deserved plaque for his unwavering support and various contributions over the years. Also awarded was Mesa Police Department's Assistant Chief of Police Michael Dvorak for his support of the AMSF.

Owner Croghan echoed the sense of community in his recent statement, "Job one is to reinforce this dealership's role as a leading supporter of the community and as a destination known for its Harley-Davidson Riding Academy and rental service. This dealership has been and will remain an exceptional expression of what the Harley-Davidson family is all about." ▶