

ON 2 WHEELS

George "The Parts Guy" Richardson Special Farewell Edition

Editor's Ramblings

Carl Pulley



As you astute HERC members can tell, this issue of *On 2 Wheels* is a bit special. I've suspended your regular scheduled programming of club news, events, and articles of interest, and instead have collated your stories, anecdotes, comments and photographs of George "The Parts Guy" Richardson. As most of you are aware, George, who has served the club so admirably as our esteemed treasurer, is retiring at the end of March. I'm sure it's no coincidence that he chose April Fools Day to be his first day of retirement. As most of you know, George is quite the jokester, and I wouldn't be surprised if he were to show up on April 1, shout an enthusiastic "April Fools!" to confuse us all, and then to promptly walk out the door anyway.



Oftentimes the people you work, associate, and recreate with make or break the activity. Motorcycle riding is quite a solo sport, nevertheless, other's riding etiquette while on the road and their company when you stop to rest, eat, or just socialize can make it more or less enjoyable. In all occasions when I've

been around George, whether at work, on a ride, or even racing against, he has always made that time more enjoyable. The Parts Guy has a contagiously upbeat, *joie de vivre*, demeanor that enlivens and brightens any activity, and for that I'm really going to miss him. In an increasingly cynical, constrained, and antisocial world, I think we can all take a page out of George's book by brightening our own outlook and thereby radiating that light on others.

When I first started working at Honda in Customer Relations, I had occasion to speak to many people from different departments to help resolve customer issues. I remember on an occasion being directed to George Richardson, but couldn't put the name to the face.

When I was told that he is the one that sounds like a radio announcer, I immediately knew who it was. George's oratory skill was further displayed to me when I attended the WSB and AMA races at Laguna Seca a few years back, just after I started working at Honda. The Pro Honda Oils and Chemicals sponsored Supersport race had just ended and I was standing by the winners circle. All of a sudden George strode up on stage, interviewed the winner and runners up, plugged Pro Honda products, and awarded the trophies. He was so slick I fully expected him to do a little song and dance number or ask Vanna to reveal letters on the board!

It has been a pleasure George, you have always been entertaining, and helpful to boot! In no particular order, here is what others have to say about you...

What We Want to Say about George...

George and Wayne Rainey

Rick Mitchell

George has always had a keen interest in all forms of motorcycle racing. During his tenure in Motorcycle Parts Sales & Marketing he's had the opportunity to meet most, if not all of the multitude of our official Honda "Factory" racers from both the current era as well as icons from years past.

Back in 2005, George's boss, Steve Osbourne, called me to ask that I orchestrate a department luncheon at which time George would be honored and acknowledged for his 25th year of consecutive service to AHM. Steve wanted it to be a surprise and it was going to be up to me to lure the unsuspecting George to this surprise location. Figuring that I only had one shot at pulling this off and so I decided to "GO BIG!" No way could I set myself up for a "NO" answer from George. Whatever my plan was going to be it had to be so compelling that George would just have to say yes. So playing on



his history of meeting famous racers, I went straight for the jackpot—El Racer Grande, numero uno. So, I told George a big fat lie and said I was having lunch with former three-time world GP champion Wayne Rainey, and asked George if he'd like to join us at the Depot restaurant. Well of course George was all over it, and enthusiastically said "YES!"

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Knowing full well that he was hooked, I continued to scheme, and came up with a truly wacky idea. I made up cheesy life sized paper reproductions of Wayne Rainey's face (in black & white of course). When George and I walked into the Depot at our appointed time, the entire staff of the department along with George's boss Steve Osbourne, the whole group was holding these silly Wayne Rainey faces up, covering their own. Poor George, I think he went through sensory overload, as it was truly the only time in my life that I've ever seen him completely speechless! A rare moment indeed!

George the Interviewer

Bill Olsin



Man, there have been lots of good times with the "Parts Guy." The one occasion that stands out for me, is when the Parts department teamed up with Cycle World for an "Endurance Race" at Go Kart World. We got the track for a few hours and George was able to get the Honda powered upgraded karts, which were great! Well, at the end of the race there were many trophies to be awarded, one of those was for the fastest lap time, which I was awarded, as such, I was interviewed by George. He asked how was I able to get the fastest time with all these quality drivers present as well as many other questioning. I felt as though I was being interviewed by a commentator from the Speed Channel. It was really cool. I felt very proud because everybody wants to be the "Fast guy." I remember telling him that I drove the car like I was riding a speedway bike and that was the difference.

Thanks for that George and for all your hard work while at Honda.

George and Pro Honda Stickers at the Baja 500

Connie Connally

As you know George is always giving Pro Honda and Honda Genuine Parts stickers away and telling people to go deface and promote Honda Parts and products. The following photo was one

of the results of us handing out George's stickers at last year's Baja 500!



Pit crew car plastered with stickers

George Taking a Broken Thumbs-Up Photo

Joel Breault

Back in 2001 our department leader George "The Parts Guy" decided it would be a great idea to have a product familiarization ride to Daytona Beach for Speedweek. The plan called for half of our department staff to ride east and the rest of the staff would ride the return route west. I got the return run on a brand new bright yellow GL1800, accompanied by George and Dave Potter. It was a great first day of riding with brisk clear weather along the coast of Florida, up through coastal Alabama, and finally stopping for the night in Pascagula, Mis-



Broken Thumb Up Joel!

issippi, after a 500 mile day. Day two began with a deluge of cold rain along the Louisiana coast but finished with a sunny ride into San Antonio, Texas. All was well and good.

At 9am on the morning of day three we were cruising through the small Texas town of Uvalde. And then it happened. A drunken woman in a Volvo decided to turn left in front of me as she headed to the Texas-sized liquor barn for more hootch. Her front bumper caught my left cylinder head and the impact launched me over the bars and along her windshield pillar. It was a head-on low speed get-off. I was DNF'd, done for the day. George and Potter were on the scene

immediately. As I sat dazed in the middle of this Texas Highway, George sprung into action. Did he offer first aid or a hand getting up? No! Instead he started snapping pictures! As I left the hospital George insisted I pose in the classic thumbs up picture; Broken thumb splint and all.

It was pure George, not that he was unsympathetic to my injury (he knew I was generally okay), but that he always sees the bright side of things and raises his, and other's, spirits in times of adversity.

George "The Engine Guy"

Dave Walters

As an FNG back in the summer of 1982, I had my first encounter with George "The Parts Guy." Having only been a Special Tools "newbie" for about three weeks, Wes Arnold sent me down to meet George at Regional Parts on the Gardena site. The plan was to remove several complete engines from warehouse stock so I could confirm they fit on various engine stand adapters. Of course, the engines could not be damaged in any way because they had to return to stock.

I made my way down the alley and up the stairs to where George sat. I wasn't sure what to expect; if my request was reasonable or how much time all this would take—naturally, I was on a deadline. Then I met George. He told me not to worry, he would handle my request. And boy did he!



Dave and George during HERC ride

The very next day I had six or seven engines in front of me in the shop, delivered by fork lift from the warehouse.

There was a note, it said "call me if you have any problems, George." I finished my work in a few days and called George to ask about returning the engines. Once again he said "I'll handle it." Sure enough, within an hour the fork lift was back and all was right with the world.

This was the beginning of a wonderful 24-year friendship with George. I'll miss you buddy, but I know that we'll ride together again in the future. Enjoy your retirement, you deserve it!

George and the Honda Heart Award

Cyndi Mayeda

George Richardson has been so supportive towards our Honda customers. Whenever we had difficult parts concerns, George would always receive our department's analysts warmly and went the "extra mile" to help our customers. We presented George with a plaque that reads: "George Richardson, thank you for all your years of support and sharing your Honda Heart." Thank you, George!



George "The Parts guy." What is that?

Charlie Keller

George the parts guy is what is the best at Honda and in humanity. He engages life full on and everything it throws at him with, no excuses, with an attitude laced with I can only describe as "mega enthusiasm."

George is an example to us all as associates, managers, and human beings. Always ready to share and be part of the solution. Nothing for George has been too big or too small, it all is important or at least he sure made me feel that way.

George, my hat is off to you for balancing your personal life with business. We in the HRCA look forward having you on the "Civilian HRCA Team." See you at the Hoot! Ride safe, ride often, and ride Red.

George and the Love of Motorcycling

Ray Blank

In the Motorcycle Division we are joined by our common cause; that love of the sport. Many outside of our family profess it, some contest it, few live it, and only those who do can understand it. George has always been one of us.

In whatever endeavor we encountered, one could ask for no greater ally than George Richardson, sometimes, in the face of dismay, by his management. Always proficient, George moved mountains, soldiering on because he could look upon our customers as only an enthusiast can. And would.

I, for one, am happy to see him turn himself out to range now to explore, in good health, that game of ours he so long and compassionately officiated.

Ride on George. You're free now. We'll catch up with you down the road.

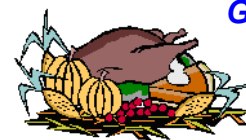
George and the Xmas GP

Doug Toland

George participated in the Carlsbad Xmas GP (along with his son) many times. One year when I was fortunate enough to stall my 450 on the start line to give everyone a good head start, I came up behind George, just like I had on many other "younger" associates/friends from Honda on that day. The difference being with George, it was a truly inspirational feeling to see someone that close to retirement (old guy!) out there "racing" against/with all of us "younger" riders (guys and girls). Now, I could say that George was flying around the track with both feet off the pegs and roosting everyone but he was smooth as ever and making it in his own time (wisdom!) and having fun, just like the rest of us.



Bottom line is: What we do as motorcyclists is fun, and once an enthusiast, always an enthusiast, and George is living proof and that was only one example of his enthusiasm for our sport. I am sure there are many more.



George and a Rainy Thanksgiving Ride

Fred Wing

During the 2001 HERC Thanksgiving Off-Road Event, George, my wife Gina, Jon Row, Robie Heilbron, Jim Spicher, myself, and a couple others, left on Saturday morning to go to Burrow Schmidt's Tunnel, a round trip of about 40 miles. The sky was threatening rain, Big Rain. Nine miles into the ride, both Robie's and Jim's bikes were found to have low transmission oil, so they and several other riders departed headed back to camp. The skies started to look a little threatening as well, so that was a further incentive to ride back to shelter.

Despite this, George, Jon, Gina, and myself continued in a light rain towards our destination. After crossing the road at Garlock, the rain was pretty steady, and we were still a couple of miles from our destination. Jon called it quits, so the three stooges (George, Gina, and myself) pressed on. We were pretty soaked by the time we got to the tunnel, and spent quite a while there, hoping to wait out the heaviest of the rain. It eventually became apparent that the rain was not going to let up, so off we went, riding towards our camp. At least it was a dust free ride!

When we got back down to the road at Garlock, we decided to take the pavement back to camp. Thank goodness for dual sport bikes! It rained heavily all the way. George was the only comfortable one, as he was wearing a Gortex jacket.

The Nylon jackets that Gina and I were wearing were definitely NOT water proof.

When we got back to camp, we found most of the HERC members gathered in Casa Wing, heater on, and two dogs for extra warmth (A two dog day?). Gina was certainly a trooper, as we poured about a cup full of water out of the bottom of each boot. After that, the hot shower was great. Neither one of us wanted to stay cold for too long, so we saved water by... In the meantime, George was just happy as a clam, being already warm and dry because of his good riding gear. George, got any extra Gortex jackets?

George and the Belt Buckle Bottle Opener Technique

Will Wright



I believe it was in the early 80s when I first met George, he was working in HondaLine. I bought a HondaLine "HAWK" belt buckle. It had a little hook on the back side to fit into the adjustment hole on the belt. I broke the little hook off trying to open a brew. Being a little upset with the seemingly poor quality of the material used in the making of the buckle, I decided to give the HondaLine boys a bad time. That's when I first met George. I introduced myself and proceeded to explain my complaint. I told George that I had a similar type of belt buckle (brand H, other than HondaLine) and had I not lost it, I would still be using it to open brews. Also, I felt the quality of the buckle wasn't up to HondaLine, nor the Genuine Honda Parts quality.

That's when George set me straight. Without even blinking, nor skipping a beat, he proceeded to show me the approve method of opening a brew with ANY HondaLine buckle. George took my broken buckle and held it in his left hand, emblem towards his palm. His left hand was level, and with his right hand he pretended to be holding a brew. He held it on a 45 degree tilt towards the buckle. Then he proceeded to show me the approved method. He clearly stated that is essential to strike the neck of the

bottle across the edge of the buckle. He also stated that if the bottle hits the buckle about 13 mm below the cap with enough force, the cap and part of the neck will break off cleanly. And that's how it's done folks!!!

This instructional method has helped me with similar complaints when I was in Customer Relations. I'll miss George's cryptic humor, ride on George!

George and Team Responsible

Mark Obert



When mullings started within certain quarters of the HERC that mini-bikes in the desert would be a fun event, even if the event was to be on pavement, the effervescent G.V. Richardson II made it known that he wanted to come out and play. He didn't have a one-hundred in his fleet. No XR, no CRF, not even an XL or SL and he'd long given up Pall Malls. That didn't matter to him, he's George "The Parts Guy!" After all, it was going to be a TEAM race. Show up, slide on the white gloves, nod a knowing glance to the crew and ride. That's the ticket!

Mark & George, teammates at a CMRRA endurance race event



Me, ever slow to commit to anything, was c-o-n-s-i-d-e-r-i-n-g going. George gauged his quarry just right. Faster than an ACME Roman candle can slam Wyle E. Coyote into a desolate cliff face, the trap was sprung. "You know, Mark, for a

ride on your bike, I'd be willing to acquire some gearing, spares AND entry fees." Yeah, the hook was set; give Mr. Stingy some freebies and he'll let you "run the bejabbers out of" his bike!

George and I had a great time operating as Team Responsible, which we were. Our lap times were responsible as well. We were unable to supply our "pit tootsy," St. Kate of Long Beach (Mrs. Parts Guy), with an operating stopwatch, but timing by calendar proved just as effective.

In recognition of our partnership I took a photo someone had shot of us at the track, thumbs up (of course), and emblazoned it with a new Team Responsible logo. I put the photo on George's desk with great humility and appreciation for all that had occurred. Unfortunately, Mr. Pro Honda® Oils & Chemicals took offense to the curiously strange coincidence that the logo resembled one of his arch (evil?) rivals. Well, all's been patched up, the Team has ridden again (we are consistent in our placing).



You know, I think I might have to make up some team shirts. I've got an idea for some-

thing along these lines of the Nicky Hayden Repsol shirt. But a name change may be in order. How does Team Retired sound to you, George?

George and His Funny Pants!

Rob West

My first recollection of George was at a quarterly HERC meeting. I thought for a treasurer he sure worn his pants funny. Then I surmised that it was due to his portly sense of humor, which was infectious in any setting and a real "ass-set" to the club. As an outsider to the Motorcycle Division, George always made me feel welcome. Speaking for many I'm sure, we'll miss his presence, wit, wisdom, kindhearted nature, and his funny pants.

George at the Ascot TT

Phil Tsuji

The photo at right was probably taken in the late 1970's, I am pretty sure that George's father took the picture. To the left is George of course, I'm in the middle, and to the right is Bruce Wing, Fred's brother. It was CMC amateur night racing on the TT track at Ascot Park Raceway in Gardena which was open to all. I was racing a SL100 that had a stroker crank and bigger bore piston and I am sure that George was on a Honda 350 twin. We had great fun but found out that the future young racers there that night were fast, really fast! One in particular that stands out was a very young, unknown, future World Champion, Eddie Lawson!

George "The Inspirational"

Garry Higgins

George: An inspiration of getting things done by leveraging a positive-can-do attitude.

George and Prison?

Jesse Lessard

George told me the other night at Ricky & Ronnies that he grew up in prison!

George: My Time With a Boss and a Pal

Mark Booher

I have had the fortune to work for George Richardson for the last 3 years. George is a truly a great person to work for and a cool person to pal around with. His business approach is go to the spot, take care of business, eat well, have some fun and get back to work.

In one of our many trips to the Power Equipment Sales office, I discovered that George is an excellent slick track racer, and revels in making the rest of us look like true rookies. I knew I was in trouble when George brought his own pair of driving gloves. Needless to say I spent most of the session getting pushed around the track, passed and re-passed time and again.

While George may not be the fastest guy on two wheels he can burn the tires of a



George, Phil, and Bruce Wing at Ascot

race cart. He missed his calling as a race car driver.

George also loves to ride motorcycles, be it street or dirt. I have had the opportunity to ride with George on numerous occasions. While George may not be the fastest guy in the group, he maintains a steady pace and always seems to know exactly where he is going. I have enjoyed many rides with George from the mountains of North Georgia to the trails of Gorman. The beauty of riding with George is he always enthusiastic, on-time, rides within his ability and has a cup of hot coffee waiting for his riding buddy.



Mark and George during a cold HERC off-road event

George also likes to eat and I have found that he loves a good steak with the most obscure beer in the place. I think we all

know how many lemon slices George likes with his tea, "Ice tea with no less than 6 lemon slices please" and most importantly make sure there are no nuts in his meal.

George has many hobbies but none more passionate than photography, so it makes perfect sense that the focal point of his photography is motorcycles. But instead of focusing on action shots, George prefers more eclectic artist subject matter, grasping the subtle beauty of some of the most prized motorcycles in history. This Christmas the Motorcycle Parts team was honored to receive some of George's most prized photographs as shown in the George's Gallery section on page 7.

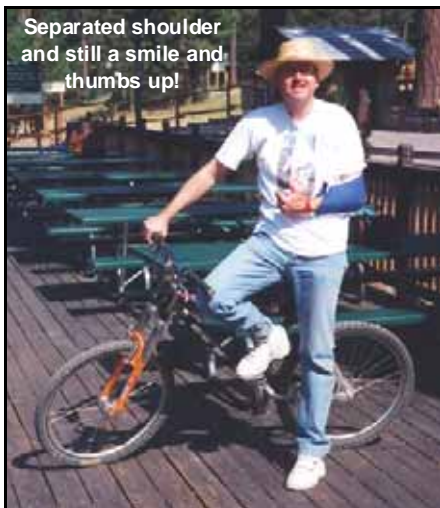
In closing I want to say that George "The Parts Guy" "has been a great boss, an esteemed mentor, and real inspiration for his passion for the Motorcycle business. Enjoy your retirement as much as you enjoyed working at Honda.

George and a Downhill Fall

Jon Row

I recall the great time at Big Bear when GTPG (George "The Parts Guy") organized a HERC downhill MX Bicycle day at the ski lifts. See... "we ride, we eat" isn't limited to just powered single track vehicles. The theory was we could improve our downhill skills without worrying about "engine braking."

Of course many of us had never ridden BMX bikes on ski runs before and once off the lift, at nose bleed altitude, we discovered the real meaning of black diamonds! Can you say steep? And loose? Most of us, including GTPG, crashed 50 yards off the lift. Unfortunately for GTPG he high-sided over the bars in heroic style landing right on his shoulder and separated it pretty good...as in a trip to the emergency room.



As his son was packing him into the car, I commiserated with him. I shared the time when I was recovering from the same injury. Roger De Coster noticed my sling and inquired what had happened. When I told him it was slow healing...out for six weeks, he sniffed and said "yeah I had one once too- I had the doctor put a screw in it and I raced the next week to stay on track to one of my five World Championships!" Ouch!

After hearing this story, GTPG returned from the emergency room within a couple hours, in a sling du jour, and proceeded to ride up and down the ski lift shouting advice and encouragement to the remaining HERCsters still attempting to descend the mountain. Of course when asked how bad it hurt he said "A lot, but if I had to, I'd race next weekend" World Champs are all alike! Thanks for being such a role model for us George!



George, an Ode to

Victor Wilson

I know a good man,
That's honest and true,
I know a good a man,
You should know him too.

He's always smiling with something good to say,
He's always cheering "Hip, Hip, Hooray!"

Clearing a trail, or making a call, this is the man who does it all,
He loves to volunteer, with his long helping hands,
Always giving, never smacking your hand,

Our eight year treasurer, he knows what to do,
He created our motto, yeah I love it too,
"We Ride, We Eat!"

Man that sounds good, this guy George Richardson, he really understood.

But time is running out, this is true,
George wants to retire, as many of us do.

But before I let him go, I just want him to know,
He's been a great friend, right from the start,
A true meaning of Honda, straight from the heart.

So while G is the start of George, it also starts much more,
Like Good, Great, Gracious, Gideon, and Glow...oh yeah I know,
The start of Galaxy, God, Gold Wing, and Glad...hey it's true,
Now you'll retire, with lots more to do,
But what matter's to me, the truth be told,
George is a real "G", that will never get old.

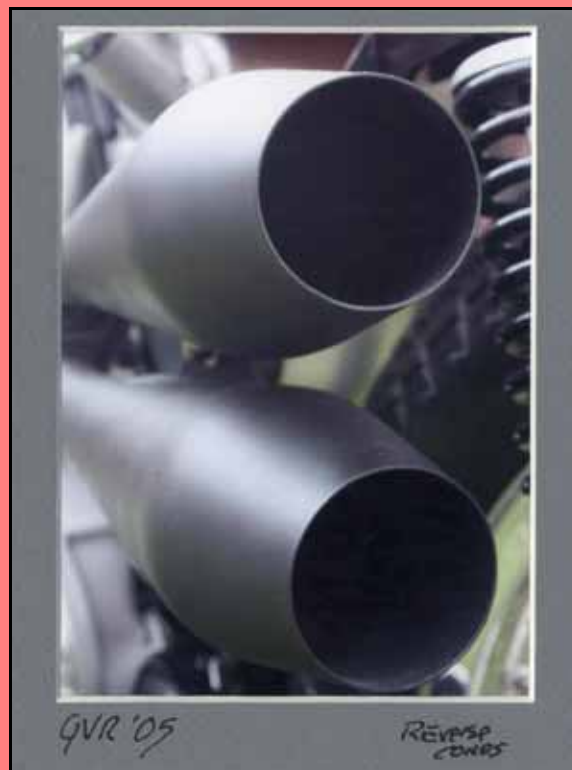
Farewell big "G," we will miss you here that's true,
But there's a whole new world, waiting out there for you,
Don't be too lazy, don't be too fast, just sit back and enjoy the grass,
The kind in the park, under the trees, where Good people Go To catch some "ZZZZ'S."

I'll miss you George. Enjoy, take care, and keep in touch. From your pal, Victor.



George's Gallery

As aesthetically pleasing as motorcycles can be in the whole, only a true gearhead can find beauty in their details. George has an uncanny eye for that beauty and the photographic skill to capture it. Here's a sample of his work.





GVR '05

Trophy I



GVR '05

SCOOTER
MIRRORS



GVR '05

Levers

George's Farewell Ride

Carl Pulley

After some last minute route and schedule changes, due to snow at the higher elevations of Tink's original route, a couple dozen or so HERCsters met at the Hill Street Cafe in La Canada on Saturday, March 25. The parking lot of the restaurant was a veritable cornucopia of Honda on-road motorcycles with virtually the entire lineup represented. There was even Alex Zemlin's Frankenhawk, or is it Hawkenstein, which by itself almost represents the entire lineup!

Everyone was a bit chilled from the early morning ride to the restaurant, but we all thawed out with hot coffee and a hearty breakfast. We ride we eat! After satiating ourselves and taking the obligatory Thumbs Up photo, we gassed up with a logistics operation worthy of the D-Day landings. With bellies and fuel tanks full, we took to the road and headed up Angeles Crest Highway in

two groups, the sportbike guys first and the rest following. Unfortunately there was a little incident at the left turn onto Angeles Forest Highway when one of our group slid off at low speed in a patch of gravel. The rider was fine but alas the bike suffered a cracked crankcase and was unridable. We ensured the safety and wellbeing of the rider and cleared the road. The rider had HRCA membership, so called for a pick up. Many fellow riders volunteered to stay with the fallen rider, but he insisted that the rest of us enjoy the rest of our ride.

Taking the rhythmic medium-speed sweepers of Angeles Forest Highway, we glided down to Big Tujunga Canyon, which is tighter and more of a technical roller coaster of a road, and thence to Foothill Boulevard in Sunland. We cruised along Foothill to Osbourne Street, that turns into Little Tujunga Can-



All thumbs up and ready for a great HERC ride outside the Hill Street Cafe

yon Road, which is where the fun started again. Little Tujunga Road tightly clings to the mountain side with hairpins and switchbacks that climbs to a ridge and then dives down the other side where it turns into Sand Canyon. On route to Harley's Rock Inn, to regroup, we crossed over the 14 freeway and then traversed Vasquez Canyon Road, the serpentine

Bouquet Canyon Road that follows the twists and turns of the same-named creek, the erratically tight Spunky Canyon Road that seems more designed for mountain goats, and then San Francisquito Canyon and Elizabeth Lake Road.

After a quick pit-stop at the inn's facilities, and waiting for some time for the entire group to catch up, we realized that a third of the group—the middle group (we had naturally split up into fast, medium, and take in the scenery groups)—was AWOL. We gathered that they had missed a turn, but as we all had maps and cell phones, we figured we would all regroup further along the route.

We turned into Lake Hughes Road, which started as a bumpy washboard that made every effort to buck us from our steeds. But then the surface smoothed out to offer an exhilarating ride that opened up to some very high-speed

sweepers that crested the horizon until swooping down to Castaic Lake and ending at the 5 freeway.

We stopped at a gas station and after making and receiving cell phone calls, we corralled most of the group and filled up with gas. A few riders were still missing but we left phone messages to let them know what route we would be taking to the restaurant for lunch. As Tink had made reservations, and we had been delayed on-route, he decided to lead us south on the 5 freeway to the 126 highway west, with a straight shot to Ventura. The original plan was to loop north to Ojai and come down the 33 to Ventura.

Go on pick a card, any card. George hands out cards at the start of the poker run



Cornucopia of sporting Hondas at a gas stop

The 126 was a bit of a slog and as we headed toward the ocean, the sky turned gray, the temperature cooled, and it became increasingly moist. We picked up the remaining errant riders along the way and by the time we entered town, a long convoy of slightly wet HERCsters was making its way through the congested streets. We finally arrived at the

warm and friendly Sal's Mexican Inn restaurant and sat down for a feast.



"It's okay guys, the coast is clear, no cops in sight!"

As the ride was a poker run, George had been distributing cards along the route. He gave us another two at the restaurant but then told us that we had to take a card from the hand of the person to our right. There were a few disappointed sighs uttered but also some cheerful whoops as hands were ruined or improved. Despite the cards in our hands, in the end everybody got a prize. Ultimately, though, the



It was a little sad as we each took our various routes home under dark skies and falling rain. It was the end of the last ride with George as The Parts Guy. However, after one more



Drying out, eating well, and time to anti-up!

biggest award, and one that we all shared, was that we got to ride, eat, and spend time with our buddy George.



week at Honda, George will move on to, not pastures green, but roads uncongested, winding, and scenic, to ride in his glorious retirement. I'm sure many of us will join him on occasion.

