

Karen Campbell BBG



1,579 Miles in 22 ½ Hours

A few years ago, Karen rode with me on what was one of the first “Selfie” Iron Butt rides recorded. We started in Hernando and rode to Mark, Illinois and on to Campbell, Missouri before returning to Hernando.



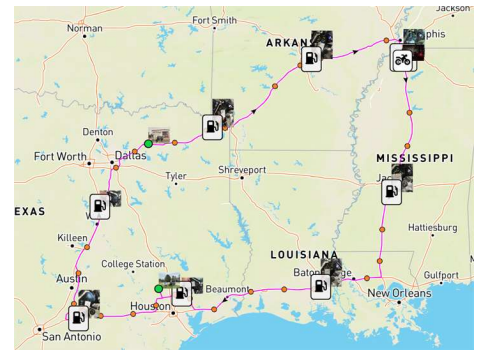
Mark, IL 2020

After that ride, we scoped out Karen, Texas for the possibility of a Karen Campbell ride, but at that time, there was nothing in Karen and no way of obtaining a DBR (Dated Business Receipt) to properly document the ride.



Campbell, MO 2020

Today’s new technology allows riders to embed photos in the electronic route they provide to the IBA (Iron Butt Association) as proof of their ride. This new technology allowed me to take a picture and embed it at the exact coordinates where Karen, TX is located on Google Maps.



Route with Embedded Pics

This year, we will celebrate our 45th wedding anniversary in June. Since I need to do some serious riding to prepare for the IBR (Iron Butt Rally), I decided it would be a great time to do a “Karen Campbell” ride. The route would be over 1,500 miles—enough for a BBG (Bun Burner Gold/1,500 miles in 24 hours).

On Saturday, February 25, 2023, I was at the local gas station early to fuel up and obtain a DBR. Official start time 1:00 am! A BBG will take basically the entire 24-hour period, so I like to get at least half of my night riding out of the way first, instead of doing the majority of it at the end of this extreme challenge.

Luckily, there was a break in the rain as I left Hernando. It had rained the day before and forecasted for more rain the day of this ride. Fortunately, I didn't hit any rain at all on this ride!

The temperature was 47 degrees on this early Saturday morning. The temperatures increased as I headed south. By the time, I fueled up south of Jackson, MS, it was 60 degrees.

I saw a lot of deer on the sides of I-55 as I rode south of Batesville. And, they were in small groups instead of the usual one or two individuals! Near Duck Hill, MS, I spotted a small group on the right side of the road near the tree line, only to look down and see 5 or 6 more deer right beside the road with their heads down grazing! Wow!

As I entered Louisiana, the temperature was up to 70 degrees! I stopped at the Visitors Welcome Center/Rest Area to shed my electric jacket and gloves.

Along with the warmer temperatures and high humidity also came fog—not enough to hinder my visibility, but enough to hinder my use of bright lights. The fog remained as I rode west on I-10 and into Texas. It was around 9:00 am when the fog actually dissipated.

The nice thing about riding in the wee hours of the morning is there is little to no traffic, but as the sun rose so did the traffic level. In Beaumont, TX the traffic halted to stop and go as I rode through a

construction area. I'm sure that cost me 20 or 30 minutes of time. After that, no other real traffic issues the rest of the ride!

Just before entering Houston, I exited off on Tollway 99, a new 3rd outer perimeter around the north side of Houston. It was awesome! Hardly any traffic—I had the road to myself! This took me around to where I exited for Karen, TX.



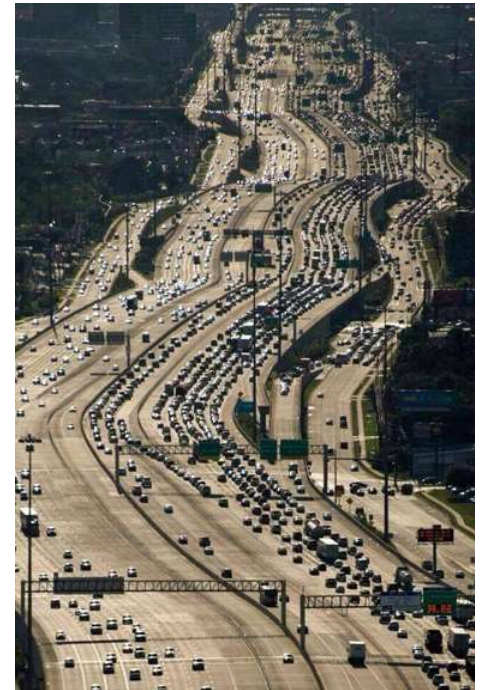
Karen, Texas

Karen was so small, I had to bring my own sign for the photo op!

Karen, Texas is on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad and Farm Road 149, two miles north of Mostyn and fifteen miles southwest of Conroe in southwestern Montgomery County. A post office was established in Karen in 1909 and remained in service until 1921. By 1915 the town had a telephone connection, the Bauer sawmill, a wood dealer (J. F. Shannon), and a population of forty; the postmaster at this time was John H. Bauer, who, according to one source, had named the town after his youngest daughter. By 1946 Karen had only two occupied dwellings, located near the railroad

station. The town in 1990 consisted of a switch on the railroad, a store, and a few houses.

After taking a few photos, I jumped back on the bike and continued around Houston on Tollway 99 to I-10 west—completely bypassing Houston. Luckily, the Katy Freeway on I-10 wasn't too busy!



Katy Freeway (World's Widest)

According to charlesandcharles.co.uk: The Katy Freeway earned a righteous place in the Business Insiders "11 Wild Highways to Drive Before you Die".

By now, the temperature had peaked at 73 degrees. As I rode west toward San Antonio, the temperature quickly plummeted to 53 degrees. At my next fuel stop, I had to put my electric gear back on!

From Katy, I continued west on I-10 to highway 183 north around Austin. The speed limit on this highway was 85 mph! Sweet!

The traffic was pretty light as I headed north. From Hwy 183/130, I jumped on I-35 north of Austin headed for Dallas.

I reminisced as I rode north passed signs for Ft. Hood. When Karen and I were first married, I was stationed there for a year. We started our lives together there as a very young married couple. I saw several other signs of the local towns that were familiar to me during those times.

There were no issues as I continued through Waco. Karen and I rode through Waco a few times in the last couple of years when construction and traffic slowed us down.

At Dallas, I hit I-20 east to I-635 north to I-30 north. No issues, just typical Dallas traffic with the over-the-top interstate crossovers (pun intended).

70 miles north of Dallas, I stopped in Campbell, TX for another photo op. But, this town was big enough to have a few businesses and signage!

Campbell, Texas is a mile north of Interstate Highway 30 and six miles east of Greenville in eastern Hunt County. Settlement began at the site in the fall of 1880, when the long-awaited East Line and Red River Railroad was extended from Black Jack Grove to Greenville. The town was built around the railroad, and a station was constructed. A post

office was established in June 1881, and the community was officially named Olivera. By fall of that year, however, the town was generally referred to as Campbell or sometimes Tom Campbell, perhaps in honor of Thomas M. Campbell, later governor of Texas, who had played a prominent part in the extension of the railroad. At least one source contends that the Tom Campbell for whom the town was named was not the governor, since the community was established before Governor Campbell became prominent. The name of the post office was officially changed to Campbell in September 1882.



Campbell, Texas

From here, I continued on I-30 north. As the sun went down, so did the temperature. It bottomed out around 48 degrees—one degree difference than when I started out that morning.

At Little Rock, I headed east on I-40. I hate this road! Semi-truck traffic is awful! And, we ride this road a lot! But, after 8 or 9 o'clock, the trucks thin out. Fortunately, visibility was great due to lack of moisture in the air. I did use my

bright lights when needed, but could see pretty well otherwise.

This ride was all about Karen, so I wanted to end it in Love, MS after texting with a good friend, Kith Burkingstock, the day before. I was telling him about my plan to do a “Wifey” ride for Karen. He told me I ought to include a Love’s Truck Stop in the mix. I immediately thought of Love, MS. That would be the perfect end location! Thanks, Kith!



End of the Road - Love, MS

Official end time 11:26. For a total of 1,579 miles in 22 hrs 26 min.

Sometimes, I have to ask myself “Why do I enjoy this type of riding?” My answer is always “I don’t know why, but I love it! I enjoy the challenge, the scenery, the unknown—everything about it!”

This ride was awesome! Not only was it challenging, but it was also rewarding for me to include Karen as the theme. She has supported me and my extreme hobbies for 45 years! This ride was all about her!