

TEXAS GOLD 1000

This was our 3rd year attending the IBA's Big as Texas Party in Allen, TX. And, like every IBA party, they offer a variety of rides to participate in, from a "you design your own ride to get there" or once you arrive you can participate in a special themed ride created for that year's event.

This was the first time that Karen has taken any time off since starting her new job in March. She was ready for a long weekend of riding! So, we headed out after work on Wednesday and rode to Texarkana, TX for the night. About an hour into our ride, it starts to get dark. I tell Karen it looks like our bike doesn't have any headlights. So, we stop at the next exit, Karen gets off the bike and looks. Yep! No dim lights, but the high beam work just fine! Well, we decide to continue on with our high beams, we would stop in the morning and replace the low beam

bulbs. From Carlisle, AR to Texarkana, TX, truckers didn't appreciate our bright lights! But, I didn't want to deal with replacing them in the dark. We arrive about 11:00 pm that night at our hotel. The next morning, we're up and at the local Autozone at 9:00 am. It took about 5 or 10 minutes to install the lights, then we were back on the road! We arrive at IBA Party Headquarters around noon that Thursday. This allowed us time to attend seminars on GPS routing, satellite tracking systems and rallying (scavenger hunt) techniques.

There were riders from as far away as Washington State, New Hampshire, Florida, California, etc. We have made some great long distance friends over the years. And, they all have stories to tell!

The next morning, we are up at 4:30 am and downstairs by 5:00 am. The hotel has a nice breakfast buffet set up for us prior to today's organized ride. The IBA has a check-in table where we are issued a rally flag. This flag must be in each picture taken at the 9 locations required to prove we rode the 1,015 mile route. At 5:45 am, they hold a rider's meeting. When they release us, they give us 24 hours to return. Any rider returning after the allotted time would be considered DNF (Did Not Finish)! We had until 5:55 am the next morning to return!



Riders Meeting

Since there was a lot of rain forecasted, several riders elected to complete the ride on another day. But, most of the riders came to ride! Karen and I were one of them!

Our first stop was the first oil well ever drilled in Texas on June 9th, 1894! Corsicana, Texas! This location was about 90 miles away. We are starting in Allen just north of Dallas. So, as we head south through Dallas, Friday morning rush hour is just starting up. No, problem for us this morning other than a steady rain.

We rode in the dark and rain the entire way to Corsicana. The temperature was nice and our

waterproof gear made the ride quite comfortable. As we were riding, we separate from all the other riders until we arrive at the first oil well. All of a sudden, we are surrounded by a dozen riders. We get off the bike, take the required picture and then jump back on the bike to leave. Within a few minutes, we are riding by ourselves again.

Now, onto the Joe Roughneck Memorial in Joinerville, TX. Up to this point the rain hasn't let up, just a steady rain, nothing major. We arrive at the Memorial, take the picture and head out to the next location.

Location #3, the world's richest acre in Kilgore, TX was developed well before spacing rules. This block is the most densely drilled tract in the world with 24 wells on 10 lots owned by 6 different operators! Picture taken! Now, on to the next location.



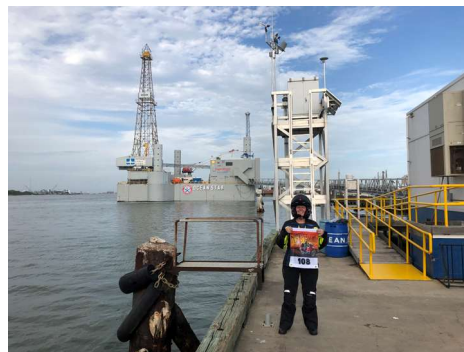
World's Richest Acre

Location #4, the Joe Roughneck marker was just around the corner! Again, off the bike, take the required picture with the rally flag and back on the bike! By now, the rain has slowed down and the weather is starting to clear up!

Our next stop was a rest park on I-20. This location had unique picnic shelters with oil rigs on top of every shelter. Picture taken, we're off!

We do this for several more locations. The weather has cleared up and it turned out to be a great afternoon. Much warmer than predicted!

We work our way east and south of Houston and end up riding a ferry over to Galveston, TX. Although a short ride, it allowed us to get off the bike for a few minutes and enjoy the boat ride!



Offshore Oil Rig in Galveston

Once off the ferry, we find the offshore oil rig required for our ride. After we snap the picture, we decide we need to stop for a little break and a bite to eat. Its 5:00 pm. I can see our GPS is routing us right through the middle of Houston on a Friday evening and rush hour is just beginning. Stopping for a bite to eat will hopefully be to our benefit.

After the 30 minute stop, we head north to downtown Houston. It takes 2 hours to get in and out of this huge city! Sometimes it was stop and go traffic, but for the most part it is just the size of the city that takes so long to travel through.

Once we are outside of the Houston City limits, its dark and raining like cats and dogs! One of the riders said it rained "Biblical proportions"! Traffic and the torrential rain slowed us down quite a bit for the next 1 1/2 hours. After that, it was smooth sailing! We jumped on a toll road near Austin where the speed limit was 85 mph! Sweet! Later, at 1:00 am, as we ride through downtown Dallas, the lit up skyscrapers in the foggy, damp, night was surreal! We finally arrived back at IBA Party Headquarters around 1:45 am. It had been almost 20 hours since we left! We were excited to be back!

At breakfast, a few hours later, we were talking with several riders about our adventures when someone walked up and asked if we had a wet ride. Karen spoke up and said, it hardly rained at all! This big cowboy (hat, boots and bushy mustache) looked down at Karen and said "I don't know what ride you were on!" I just laugh to myself! Karen has been through some tough rides! This wasn't her first rodeo!

We enjoy the rest of the day visiting with our long distance friends! That evening, the IBA held a banquet and presented certificates to all the riders that earned one that weekend! Plus, they had guest speaker's talk of challenging rides they had accomplished. It was another great event!

Karen and I have learned the most challenging events also have the most memories. That's what makes them so special!