

Tink's Epic Journey/Diary Entry 3

June 29

Well, we are ready to go!

I would say that I am excited but that would be an incredible understatement on my part. For the past four days I have been obsessing about getting on the road. When I start to think about it I get sooo excited that I hyperventilate. I have taken to carrying a small brown lunch bag around with me for those moments when I feel I might lose consciousness. I whip it out and breathe into until my vision clears again. I figure I will be alright once I get on the bike. Having oxygen forced down your windpipe at 65 miles per hour while straddling a 1200 cc engine tends to help keep you focused and alert.

I have examined most of the highway traveling from Upper Sandusky into Illinois with Google Earth. It is not a challenging ride that day. That is ok though' as I think my task for that first day will be to keep my adrenaline below "blowing my head off" levels. I have scoured the internet for weather information and flooding information. We seem to be heading into some good mild, albeit damp, weather. I have practiced with my GPS system (a Tom-Tom) and named her Prudence. We work well together. She talks and I listen. My Husband LOVES that concept and, to be honest, He seems a bit jealous.

One day of car riding to go and we will be in EPIC territory. The bikes are loaded (and at this point I wish I was too in order to endure the car ride), our gear is in the truck; we have checked, double checked and re-checked everything. I have cried twice today. Once while thanking Scarlett for accepting my invitation to join me. I am deeply grateful for the company. And, once while packing photos of my Dad and my sister Sally. They will be my guardian angels on this journey. Sal would have loved to come along, I am betting, and I know my Dad would have been very proud to tell any one who would listen that his 5 foot tall, 120 pound, 50 year old daughter was touring on her Harley. And Dad, I promise not to let the "dirty S.O.B's get me down!"

I have kissed my three kids, kissed the three cats and two dogs, thumbed my nose at the laundry I never seem to get through, written my name in the dust on the TV and fireplace mantle, left all but one bra in the dresser, kicked the tires on the green Honda mini-van that normally sucks me in first thing in the morning and spits me out at night, left the neighbors to their mundane yard chores and chatter and in the words of Bonnie Rait...just let them "talk about us, coz we're gonna

have the time of our lives! And it sure feels right!" It's you and me, Scarlett. were gonna have the times of our lives! Oh, and Diary...keep us in your prayers will you?...Thanks!

Your sister in spirit,

Tink

Next entry: On the road!

July 1

Well we did it.

We got to Upper Sandusky towing the trailer with the two bikes loaded on it without incident. I had to employ the LaMaze method of breathing that I learned while birthing my children, in order to just get through the day. I was extremely excited and very happy.

Monday morning we awoke to gloomy skies and lots of drizzle. I have to tell you Diary that I was not that disappointed at first. Because of my excitement the night before I got little to no sleep, and developed a bit more trepidation about this crazy idea of an EPIC journey than here to for experienced. The thought of staying put seemed relieving.

But then the sky cleared a bit and the sun popped out and with it my firm intention to begin returned with intensity and we packed up.

We carefully examined all our gear, making certain that it was well stowed. We used essential oils to ward off negativity. (which, funnily enough, were stowed in a side pocket that never got zippered closed so all oils bounced out and merrily down highway 30....so much for positive energy...hahahah) We donned all of our thermal underwear (as it was chilly and a bit cloudy) and ritualistically geared up with a sobriety usually reserved for the highest masses in the Catholic Church.

We mounted our steeds with dignity and pride and with much integrity we circled the parking lot to make certain they were well balanced. As we finished the practice circle we headed off with great anticipation to the gas station for me

to fill my empty tank. Gracefully approaching the pump, coming to a perfect MSF stop, switching off the engine with the side stand down I withdrew my key from the ignition to find my gas cap key. I suddenly realized I could remember how it worked. Here I was....all set to go and I can not get the new locking gas cap off in order to get gas in the bike. ARGGGHHHH!!!!

The first of many road angels appeared within a minute....taught me how to unlock the gas cap and waved us off as we finally got underway.
Underway right into the path of four hours of drizzle and extremely high winds.

Diary, have you ever seen the crazy nuts who jump out of planes with parachutes strapped to their backs and the equivalent of a snow board strapped to their feet? Slipping and sliding through the air and manipulating the air with their bodies in order to stay upright or turn completely upside down?

WELL! That was me for four hours on that Sportster!! When passing the many semi-trucks I had to bear down on the throttle and ride a fine, imaginary line between getting sucked in under the truck's tires and blown off the road by the storm wind and the air wash coming off of the front end of the truck
At one point I looked behind me to see Scarlett riding solidly along with her hand in her lap!!! WHAT THE H.....?????

I am up here like a riding demon, leaning into a cross wind so hard that I am riding sideways down the highway just to move forward!!! OK, Hon...we are definitely talking about my moving "Love Seat" when I get back!

With my eyes focused on the brighter horizon we sped 60 mph towards it and when we finally reached a ray of sunshine I realized I was living a year long dream. This was it and every drop of water had acted as a "spirit polisher" so to speak and I felt renewed, alive, blessed, grateful and ready for many more days of the same.

OK Diary...I am off to get a better nights sleep and dream about tomorrow.

Tink

PS...here is a joke I just wrote.

A biker chick walks into a general store/gas station in "Lost in Time", Wisconsin. She is clad from head to foot in pretty but functional safety gear and looks as though she is ready to be shot from a canon. She waits her turn at the counter behind a big burly man buying apple pie, shot guns shells and shiners and when it is her turn she asks to use the rest room. As she turns to find said room the big burly guy looking at her helmet blurts out..."You can do that with THAT on?"...Biker chick replies..."Yes, because I use my other end!" HAHAHAhahahaah Ahhhhh, I crack myself up sometimes Diary.....and yes, it really happened.....till next time Diary! "T"

July 1 continued...

Dear Diary,

Well, we made it to Gilman Illinois. I have never ridden so far and through so many different weather conditions in one day. By the time we pulled into our hotel parking lot all of our wet and cold weather gear had become redundant. It was 75 degrees, sunny and dry. And so were we, so to speak. Which brings me to the next little tale.

After having registered for the room, deposited our gear and bags in said room and washed a layer of grime off of our faces, Scarlet and I decided to walk the quarter mile to the gas station/wine store to purchase a celebratory bottle of Cabernet. But, by the time we got back to the lobby it seemed as though every local 'fella' had been called down by the women folk working the front desk to get a looksie at the two 'gals' that had just checked into a room after arriving on their motorcycles. I would have felt flattered if not for the fear it produced.

Scarlett and I decided we would venture out anyway, since it was still light out, and we confidently made our way to the gas station/liquor store amidst hoots and hollers from passing "men" in rusty trucks. At one point Scarlett gave a wave and a hoot back and I quickly informed her that, in these here parts, she had just promised her own hand in marriage.

By the time we got to our desired location we were laughing and relaxed. I found a decent bottle of red and when I plunked it down on the counter in front of a middle-aged Midwestern woman I got a most surprising, but welcomed response. As she scowled at my smiling, wind-burned face (more on that later), I became quite confused. I asked rather tentatively if this was where I was to pay for the wine. Her response was a cold and skeptical, "Yes, but I will definitely need to see some identification!" Completely dumfounded by this I asked ..." Why? What is the drinking age here in Gilman....48?"

After helping her to find the DOB numbers on my driver's license and stating simultaneously that I was FIFTY.....she sported an awesome look of amazement I will treasure forever and asked how I managed to keep so young looking. "You are lookin' at it sweetie! Red wine....a great picking agent!" HAhahahaha, ahhhh I do crack myself up from time to time, Diary.

Ok, Diary.....Tomorrow we head north. Continue to keep us in your prayers...

Tink

Next Entry: Moving North!

July 6

Dear Diary,

OMG. So much has happened in the last 6 days I don't know where to start! Perhaps I should start with all the nice people I met in a convenience store parking lot on our way north to Steven's Point, Wisconsin? Like the lady who was sooo excited to see and talk to women on motorcycles that I think she began to develop a stutter when she spoke to us. She did not tire of telling us how proud she was of us and that she thought we should also try track and field! (?????...yes, we were a bit confused too but we decided later that she must have enjoyed track and field in her hay-day and wanted to share that with us also).



We found our way to a gas station in Janesville and there waiting for us was "JenVroom".

Jen was sweet enough to meet us, have lunch with us and lead us down the highway for about 15 minutes before she had to veer off and get back to her family. Jen rides a Harley Softail Delux which just happens to be my dream bike. So while I fought back the urge to drool all over it I knew that somewhere in New Jersey my husband's butt cheek closest to his wallet was

going into a spasm of epic proportions.

We met up with Foxlady, aka Bev, and headed towards Bayfield Wisconsin arriving around 4pm or so. We were able to catch a beautiful ferry ride on the evening of July 4th and then watch some amazing fireworks from our dining table just a block from the Marina. My brother and his

wife arrived the morning of the 5th on his Harley Heritage and gave us a lead back into Duluth, Minnesota. It was really awesome to ride sweep position that morning and see him up there. As we approached the Blatnick Bridge that connects Superior, Wisconsin to Duluth, Minnesota we could feel the cool breeze off of the lake and I swear my brain went from thinking with a rather eclectic accent to thinking in pure Minnasoatan, ya, youbetcha....eh!

And, here is one over riding thought I have had since then: Thank the Lord I brought mosquito repellent!!!

til next time Diary

Tink

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