

MDA's day at the races... see page 16

Harley-Davidson and American Motorcycle News

OCT '05

# THUNDER PRESS

FREE

FOUR CORNERS RALLY IN THE ROCKIES  
MOTORCYCLE RALLY  
Labor Day Weekend  
Concerts • Beer Tent • Contests • Vendors  
Durango Colorado

"Riding with you since 1992"

FOUR CORNERS RALLY IN THE ROCKIES 2005

## Doin' a Durango tango

Rootin', tootin' and ridin' 'em high

by Nancy Paganelli and "LoDown" Dan Parker

DURANGO, COLORADO, SEPTEMBER 2-5—Nobody doesn't love a parade, and that was certainly true on a fine Sunday morning as a stream of hundreds and hundreds of Harley-Davidsons and a few bikes of other ilk flowed down the main street of Durango's historic district during the final day of the Four Corners Rally in the Rockies.

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5TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA MID STATE RALLY

## The rules of the rally...

Gettin' into mischief and not gettin' caught

by Buckshot

PASO ROBLES, CALIF., SEPTEMBER 2-4—California's Central Coast; what better place to be on a sunny summer weekend?

Rolling hills, twisty two-lane blacktop, those quaint little towns along the coast, and the Mid State Rally.

This is one of the big ones, with just about anything you could want, and then some!

(Have I mentioned the margaritas yet?)

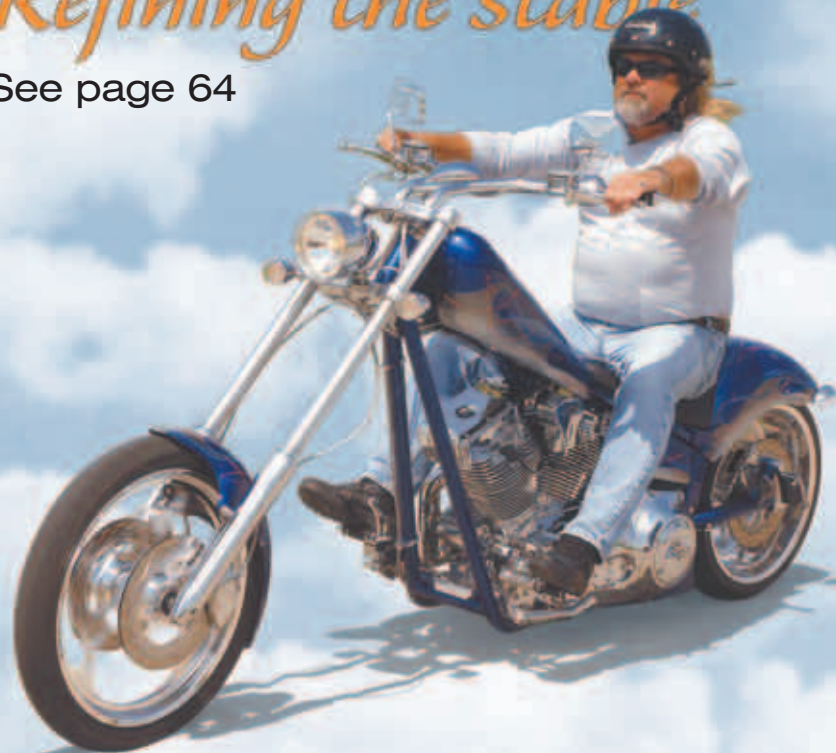
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AMERICAN IRONHORSE 2006

## Refining the stable

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# Rally in the Rockies

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Flags fluttered, banners streamed and everybody—those on bikes and the folks lining the sidewalks five deep for blocks—waved at everybody else. Some riders wore goofy hats or buckskin togs in keeping with the region's Old West character. Just about everybody had a goofy grin plastered on their face. A long-running tradition, this parade was clearly a hoot for all involved.

The parade participants tossed beads, bubble gum or candy to the crowd and children of all ages laughed and scrambled at traffic's edge for the goodies. Even Durango's own Harley-mounted female troupe, the Hardly Angels, made the scene. No brass band was needed; the roar of the Harley engines was music sweet enough.

Still, there was plenty of brass present in the person of U.S. Air Force General Ronald Fogleman, the 2005 Parade Grand Marshal. Accompanied by his wife, he led the stream of bikes along Main Street. Fogleman, who lives in Durango, retired in 1997 after 34 years of active commissioned service. On his final tour

of duty he served as the USAF 15th Chief of Staff and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

*THUNDER PRESS* just happened to be located in the same parade-viewing spot as the general's 9-year-old granddaughter, Amelia Jane Fogleman, who joyously yelled, "Hi Poppy! Hi Poppy!" as the general waved and rode past. Accompanying Amelia was Gayle Irving, whose husband Kelly was the general's roommate and close friend in Vietnam. Kelly also rode in the parade.



You sit on the back and wear a bikini

The friendly and patriotic spectacle put a fittingly festive feather in the cap of those promoters who had provided a full Labor Day Weekend of biker-related Four Corners Rally in the Rockies activities in what has become a proud tradition in this southern Colorado town and throughout the

Four Corners region. They should have flown a banner high above the steady stream of bikes that read: "Hey, does this event look canceled?" Hellfire, Durango would sooner cancel Christmas.

## A false rumor of demise

The "Four Corners" part of the Rally in the Rockies name stems from its proximity to the place where the state lines of Colorado, Utah, New Mexico

and Arizona meet. A cool monument out in the desert marks the spot. Certainly the event draws riders from all the Four Corners' states and those well beyond. But make no mistake: the Rally in the Rockies belongs to the resort and tourist-oriented city of Durango and to the small nearby community of Ignacio where the rally grounds sit on lands owned and governed by the Southern Sky Ute Indian tribe.

Typically, if not camped at the rally grounds in Ignacio

local businesses' tills. Welcome bikers indeed.

So, Durango wants the biker/rider trade and the bikers like coming here for lots of reasons, not the least of which is that the area has some of the most spectacular riding in the country. This is a natural spot for a rider rally, but it's not without its problems. Other bike rally efforts—principally the Iron Horse Rally—pooped out here several years ago.

The word on the grapevine was that future rallies here would be



Straight out of LA, the National Dust Band put on a high-decibel, high-energy show

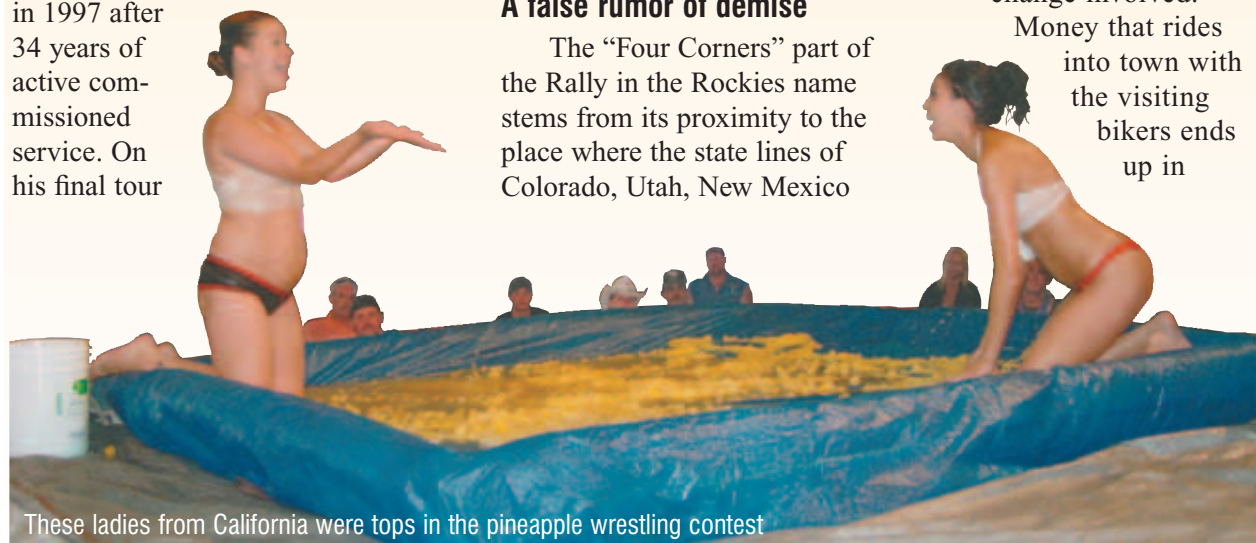
(and many are), riders stay in Durango. The historic part of town reflects the area's 19th century mining heyday. Durango does skiers in the winter and warm-weather tourists in the other months because this is where the motel beds, saloons, restaurants and other amenities are primarily located.

During the Rally in the Rockies, nearly every business in town sports a "Welcome Bikers" sign and greeting, not to exclude a local Animal Hospital touting the words, "HOGS are Beautiful"! And let's be frank: There is a good chunk of change involved.

Money that rides into town with the visiting bikers ends up in

canceled. But a couple of bikers from the region—Dan Bradshaw and Berry Mullennix—picked up the fallen rally flag and have carried it steadily on, improving the Rally in the Rockies over the past four years. Their efforts have had the unwavering support of regional rider groups

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These ladies from California were tops in the pineapple wrestling contest



Don and Fran Driver with their children Grace, almost 2, and 4-year-old Devon holding his parents' "Honey I'm Home" trophy



Photo by Clare Hirsch

Clare Hirsch, winner of the V-Rod, with Jeff Murray, owner of Durango H-D and sponsor of the V-Rod giveaway

## Rally in the Rockies

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like CMA and H.O.G., the local Harley-Davidson dealer, and the area's Chamber of Commerce. Former U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell, the originator of the event, continues to support the Ignacio gathering, and until this year, has led the Sunday parade as Grand Marshal.

Nevertheless, rumors—some perpetuated, perhaps inadvertently, by newspaper stories published locally and in the northern part of the state—have persisted each year that the Durango/Ignacio event has been “canceled.” For example this year, in an otherwise straight-forward newspaper story about a rally to be held over the same Labor Day weekend further north in Loveland, Colorado, the writer speculated that attendance might go up in Loveland, “because another rally” traditionally held in Durango “has been cancelled.” And, according to Bradshaw, he and his staff had the vexing job of fielding tons of pre-rally phone calls from riders checking to make sure the Rally in the Rockies had not been cancelled. But Bradshaw assured them that bikers have been coming to this area to experience the exceptional riding for better than 14 years, and you just can't cancel that kind of tradition.



Dan Bradshaw was one of the rally's principal promoters

## Pineapples, bulls, and bands

So bikers, being the free-thinking lot they are, paid scant attention to the undercurrent of backbiting, rumor and regional politicking and simply headed, as usual, for southwest Colorado and the Rally in the Rockies. And why not when the array of events offered here in 2005 was so dizzyingly diverse?

For example, anyone wanting a new tattoo could easily be accommodated by the artists out at the Ignacio rally site. Just want to look at others who are tatted up? No problem; there was an afternoon-long tattoo contest on Saturday where colorful folk like Paul Gibson of Albuquerque strutted their stuff. Gibson's full “body suit” of tats earned him a first place in the “Fantasy” category and the “People's Choice” award as well.

If you wanted a new bike you could try to win one of two bike giveaways in progress. Music lovers could get in on the karaoke contest or just catch the event's live music offerings, including the National Dust Band in the beer tent or the nighttime concerts from Led Zeppelin, Lynyrd Skynyrd and AC/DC tribute bands, or the actual Guess Who, Saturday's headliners.

Naturally, there were hundreds of vendors and plenty of food and drink. Steed brought a display of their the new line of custom bikes. Mark Green, the company's president of sales and marketing, and John Covington, director of design and development, were both on hand. They proudly told *THUNDER PRESS* that this was their initial rally showing for a line of eye-catching bikes.

did the stunt in 10.9 seconds; however, he had his wife of 30 years lay down beside him rather than the volunteer. “I was giving him some good pointers!” wife Kerrie interjected.

The biker games at the Rally in the Rockies draw contestants who are as competitive as they come. Randy and Nikki Knox are among those who travel the circuit of rallies purely to compete in the array of games. This



Tommy Barnes hung on a mere 4.6 seconds, but he looked good doing it

For those who like their entertainment a little hot, sweet and sticky there was the female wrestling in a big vat of pineapple chunks. Several attempts to draw in the crowd by the sticky ladies from California enticed a

year they were joined by their twin children, Randy Jr. and Kirra, who are attending college at Nebraska Aviation and Colorado University in Boulder respectively. Perhaps it wasn't such a good idea to bring the kids along, as

## The sticky ladies from California enticed a few bikers and biker chicks to join in on the fun.

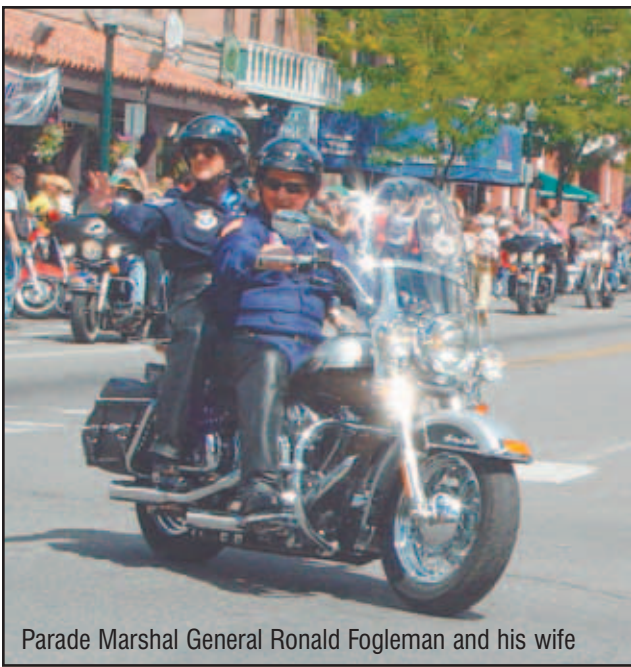
few bikers and biker chicks to join in on the fun. Later, another group of male and female contestants eschewed the fruit salad for a more traditional wrestling and writhing contest. Don't like body wrestling? Maybe an arm wrestling contest suits your taste.

On Saturday biker games included the enduring favorites like slow racing, barrel pushing, wienie bites and the hilarious “Honey I'm Home” test of a rider's ability—when surprised by the arrival of a spouse during a tryst—to jump out of a paramour's bed, put on a pair of pants and then climb through a window before booking it on down the road on his or her bike. This year the winner, Craig Siegel of Farmington,

Randy Jr. managed to take the first, second or third place positions ahead of mom and dad! In the slow race, the three finalists were Randy Jr. first, Randy Sr. second, and mom Nikki pulling up in third place. The Knox clan rode off with six trophies out of seven events!

One of the most popular Rally in the Rockies events is the biker bull riding contest. Crowds literally pack the stands every day of the rally as bikers sign up for and then ride real cowboy-type rodeo bulls. (Women can participate in a steer riding contest of their own as well.) This is the real deal, with bikers trying to go a full

Continued on next page



Parade Marshal General Ronald Fogleman and his wife

Continued from previous page

eight seconds on the back of a snorting, manure-smeared bucking bull intent on tossing the rider into the next county or just down in the dirt where he can be stepped on. This is a real crowd pleaser. Winners with the longest time for each day's event pocket \$250, and the winner with the best time of all four days takes an additional \$500. Managing to sit a bull for eight seconds isn't an easy task, as this year's winner, Tommy Barnes, can attest. His was the longest ride over the four day competition and his ride lasted a mere 4.6 seconds (or was it a lifetime?).

Not many would pass up the chance to win \$7,500 first place money just for taking a ride through the Four Corners area. Cruisin' for Cash was a new way to introduce riders to 20 biker-friendly businesses, and they had five days to complete the circuit, instead of the usual one-day poker run. Darrell Tasley from Georgia probably never dreamed that he would be able to pay for his trip and then some, just for entering the contest, but he did it, and won the first-place money. Polly Tynan of California took second in the ride, winning \$1,500, and Duane Adair of New Mexico couldn't have been too unhappy winning \$1,000 for third place. Each four-day pass holder could pick up a card free of charge at the rally grounds or Durango Harley-Davidson. Anyone else could purchase a card for \$15. Additional cards sold for \$10 and there wasn't a limit on how many you could buy. Once completed, the cards had to be dropped off for the Sunday night drawing, and you had to be there if they drew your card for one of the top three prizes of the poker run.

A four-day pass to the rally cost \$45 and included all of the entertainment on the rally grounds in Ignacio as well as three chances to win a cus-

tom chopper and a Harley-Davidson V-Rod. Wicked Brothers of Phoenix, Arizona, donated the one-of-a-kind custom chopper, which was sponsored by the Sky Ute Casino. Joan Genovese from Florida was present when her number came up as the Wicked winner. A one-of-a-kind V-Rod, sponsored by Durango Harley-Davidson, was given away to 55-year-old Clare Hirsch, of Loveland, Colorado, at the close of Sunday night's events on the Main Stage.

Turns out that Hirsch, who normally rides behind boyfriend Dan Gallegos on his Harley, had started talking about getting her motorcycle certification and taking the classes to be able to ride her own bike—"If I could ever afford one," she had said. Hirsch was resting at her hotel when the call came in Sunday night telling her that the V-Rod was hers.

"I didn't really believe it until I called my home phone and heard the message from Berry that I had indeed been the winner," she told *THUNDER PRESS*. "I didn't sleep for about three nights and am still so excited every time I look at this gorgeous bike. I can't tell you how grateful I am that they drew my name and everybody was so great." Clare has dubbed her new bike "Scarlet" and has vowed to ride it back to Ignacio next year for the rally.

### Riding the Rockies

Not coincidental to the success of the 2005 version of the Rally in the Rockies was the great weather and a chance to partake



Is that custom?

of the region's wonderful roads. Some headed east to Cortez, but one of the popular day rides is north out of Durango and up to the old mining towns of Silverton and Ouray. Those wishing to get off the bike for a bit but still see the sights could catch the old Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge train that

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## FOUR CORNERS RALLY IN THE ROCKIES

# Gettin' hitched rally style



by Nancy Paganelli

Russ Box stood at the entrance of the Durango Harley-Davidson dealership continuing to glance at the clock or his watch and the door; it was after 1:00 p.m. Dressed in motorcycle chaps and hat, Russ was wearing a boutonniere in the lapel of his black motorcycle jacket and a huge, nervous grin on his face. He was supposed to be walking down the aisle at 1:00 p.m., but his bride had not arrived yet. Cheering him on with jibes were Jeff and Jodel Murray, owners of Durango Harley-Davidson, and Raymond Dunton, the minister who would do the Native American ceremony. "Don't worry Russ... we're on Indian time... she'll be here!"

In 2002 Russ Box was just minding his own business at the Four Corners Rally in the Rockies when he ran into Brenda Charlie. Both of Indian descent, she is Diné (Navajo) and Russ is Southern Ute. The two were heading towards the Bear Tent when they began talking together. One thing led to another and they eventually began dating, which led to talking about getting married. Russ, an avid motorcyclist, decided that the 2005 Four Corners Rally in the Rockies would be a great time to tie the knot. The only thing is he waited until the last minute to make the arrangements.

According to Brenda, who claims to have been brought up around Harley ridin' brothers, and who has motorcycling in her blood: "We planned to do this since we very first met, but we never thought we were going to do it until today! It was his idea at the last minute!" Russ phoned Jeff

Murray about a week before the rally and asked if they could do the ceremony at the Harley dealership, and Jeff, one of the friendliest dealership owners I have ever met, said "Sure!"

Family and friends, including former Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell and his wife Linda, gathered at the shop and awaited the arrival of the bride. Raymond Dunton and his wife Tuggy, both motorcyclists, had prepared a special ceremony specific to the lives of Russ and Brenda. "Whenever I do a wedding ceremony for my Native or biker brothers and sisters, I create a service for that couple alone." This time Tuggy had found a special blanket with a bear claw design—the bear being very special, showing strength and spirit—that Reverend Dunton would give to the couples' families at the end of the ceremony, to wrap around the newlyweds—a tradition signifying sharing the blanket and life together.

Brenda, dressed in her black leathers and holding a beautiful bouquet, stood by Russ in front of their Harley, which was also a part of the ceremony background. "I'm really excited. It's the last minute but I'm OK, I'm calm now. We haven't decided where we will go on our honeymoon next week, but anywhere is fine. As long as it's a honeymoon I don't care if it's out in the boonies where there's nobody around, or in the woods. I don't care as long as it's on the Harley!"

In the meantime, after the ceremony the newlyweds were leaving the dealership on their Harley and heading to... where else? The Four Corners Rally in the Rockies, of course! What better way to celebrate how they met and when they hitched? ♦