

Sunset HOG: Two Parades and a Summer to Remember

Celebrating America's 250th, Sharing Our Love of Riding and Making Connections in North Plains, Oregon

For the members of Sunset HOG from Tigard, Oregon, this summer brought two wonderful opportunities to share our love of riding and be part of the North Plains community. From celebrating America's 250th birthday in the Fourth of July parade to returning in August for the Elephant Garlic Festival, both events reminded us that riding motorcycles is about more than the miles we travel. It's also about the friendships we build, the communities we support, and the memories we make along the way.

Red, White, and Blue on the Fourth of July

Our Independence Day adventure began bright and early at our home dealership, Steelhead Harley-Davidson. After gathering together, we headed out on a scenic ride to North Plains. With beautiful temperatures in the 70's, it was a perfect day to be on two or three wheels!



Once we arrived at the parade staging area, it was time to decorate our bikes, show off our patriotic colors, and prepare bags of candy for the children lining the parade route. Our lineup featured an assortment of motorcycles and trikes, with one especially eye-catching entry: a trike hauling a hearse decorated in red, white, and blue!

This year's celebration was particularly meaningful as America marked its 250th anniversary. The streets of North Plains were filled with American flags, families, and enthusiastic spectators who came together to celebrate our nation's birthday.

Because we would be traveling at a slow pace for the parade, the North Plains Chief of Police



granted permission for us to ride without helmets during the parade. This allowed us to see the spectators' faces, wave to the crowd, and interact more easily with the children as we passed out candy. Their smiles and excited waves made the experience all the more rewarding.

For us, participating in a community parade is one of the many ways we can share our enthusiasm for riding beyond our usual motorcycle outings. We get to show people a little of what makes the Harley



community special while joining our neighbors in celebrating an important occasion. The warm reception we received in North Plains made the day even better – and earned us an invitation to return.

Back Again for the Elephant Garlic Festival

In August, Sunset HOG returned to North Plains for the Elephant Garlic Festival parade. It was fun to see the variety of groups taking part, each bringing something unique to the celebration. One of the highlights was a large club of Mini Cooper owners whose cars were decorated in a wonderful assortment of themes. Their creativity and enthusiasm added plenty of personality to the parade and it was a reminder that a love of vehicles and the fun of getting together can take many forms.



But the most memorable moment of the day had nothing to do with the vehicles themselves. It was about a young rider who just wanted to be included. Before the parade began, one of the coordinators approached our group with a question. A junior high school boy had his own electric motorbike and really wanted to participate in the parade, but he didn't have anyone to ride with. Would we mind if he joined our group?



Our Chapter Director's response was immediate: "ABSOLUTELY"

Our members gathered around the young man and welcomed him as though he'd been part of Sunset HOG all along. For a group of people who enjoy sharing the road and the riding experience, it was an easy decision. Here was a young person with an interest in riding who wanted part of the fun, and we were delighted to make room for him.

Then our chapter historian, who always seems to be prepared for just about any occasion, opened the trunk of his motorcycle and pulled out a brand-new pair of aviator-style sunglasses, still in the packaging. He handed them to the young rider, explaining that he would need a pair of these to ride

with us! The smile on that young man's face as he put on his new sunglasses was priceless. He looked ready to roll with the rest of the crew!



Before the parade got underway, our members went over a few basic safety riding rules with him. Then we gathered for a group photo, proudly holding our Sunset HOG Chapter flag. There he stood right alongside us, sporting his new shades and looking every bit like one of us.

It was a small gesture that made a big impression. This young man had hoped to participate in the parade and thanks to a thoughtful parade coordinator and our Chapter Director's enthusiastic response, he found a group ready to welcome him. His parents later came over and shared their appreciation for making their son feel so included.

It's About the Ride — and the People Along the Way

Looking back, our two North Plains parades offered different experiences but shared the same spirit. In July, we celebrated our country's history, decorated our bikes in patriotic colors and brought smiles to families along the parade route. In August, we enjoyed the creativity of festival participants and made a special memory by welcoming a young rider into our group.

Both events gave us a chance to share what we love about motorcycles and the friendships that grow around them. Whether we are heading out on a scenic ride, gathering for a chapter event or joining a local celebration, there's something special about coming together with fellow riders and being welcomed by the communities we visit.

Sunset HOG – sharing the road, supporting our community, and making room for one more.

Ride safe, ride proud, and keep the shiny side up!

