

Cruisin' with the undead

Pack some garlic and a stake



Sunday morning, Monroe riders leaving Cycle Camp, heading to Forks venue

by Irv Walden

FORKS, WASH., AUG. 15–16— In 2005, author Stephanie Meyers' first novel, *Twilight*, was published. Set in Forks, Washington, the tale follows the coming of age conflicts among mortals, vampires and werewolves. The novel's success brought worldwide notoriety and visitation to the self-proclaimed "logging capitol of the world." Fans flocked to Forks for photos (say that 10 times fast), and the Fork's Visitor's Information Center has heard more than once, "Is it safe to camp, what with all the vampires around?"

So, Bob Wishon and Dan Roth's second annual Rainforest Run in Forks might cause some to wonder, "How will bikers and vampires mix?"

After a too-hot week, followed by a week of intermittent rain, a group headed west on Highway 101 from Port Angeles. It was a beautiful morning with some marine layer gray wrapping around the peaks of the Olympics. Ahead, the overcast was breaking up. The ride to Forks took about an hour, passing Lake Sutherland, and then entering Olympic National Park for the twisty 15 clicks of Lake Crescent shoreline. Beyond that, the road is mostly straight, passing homesteads, farms and forests in various stages of timber production.

Bob and Dan own Don't Tell Me What To Do Promotions, and are the force behind the Rainforest Run. For their second event, they moved the venue from downtown Forks to the nearby 101 Business Park, offering more elbow room. And perhaps most importantly, the move meant more electric power for vendors and bands.

Dan spoke of the event planning, "Last year we were in kindergarten, this year it was first grade." If you've ever been involved in the production of anything like a rally,

you know about unforeseen problems arising. One that tripped up Dan and Bob this year occurred when those responsible for providing the beer concession pulled out at the last minute. Dan assured me that the production team will have beer on-site next year.

The usual biker-related vendors were on hand, along with plenty of good food offerings provided by several burger and dog stands, along with a couple of barbecue joints. Jeffery Love of Sequim rounded out the line-up with tattoos and piercings. He was kept busy in his very well-outfitted trailer.

I spoke briefly with Doug, the secretary/treasurer of the Jefferson Co. Amigos MC. He and his lady were enjoying the fine day. Members of the local Roughnecks MC, including Prez Crush, were in the company of Sacramento Prez Michael "Wolf" Meeks. Wolf's son rode with dad, while wife Kristie drove support. The Roughnecks MC is 99 percent peace officers, and they organized the bike games, doing a good job.

The poker run took place in the afternoon. The stops were not too well identified for some of us with age-related issues, but we figured it out. A ride out to the small fishing village of Sekiu on the Straits of Juan de Fuca was a nice addition.

That said, I have to offer a suggestion. The poker run was on Saturday. But the prizes for the poker run, 50/50, and raffle were awarded on Sunday. I spoke with several riders who were just out for the day, and choose to not buy into the poker run since they were not going to be at the rally on Sunday. I'm certain poker run, raffle, 50/50, and awards all on the same day would really bump up participation.

Early Sunday morning I rode to Cycle Camp, nine miles from 101. Bob Wishon's rustic camp is

dedicated to two-wheel travelers and was filled to overflow capacity. Local builder Jason informed me that next year there will be a shower, flush toilet, and wash station. I arrived in time to speak with riders before they packed up and headed back to the rally site. Everyone looked like they had enjoyed themselves the previous night. For some, morning might have arrived a bit too soon.

I asked a group from the Portland/Beaverton area how they chose to come to the Rainforest Run. Seems earlier this year the youngest of the party, 15-year-old Rachael, was given the assignment of deciding where, this summer, the family would vacation. Well, Rachael is a *Twilight* fan (Remember? Teen vampires in love) and so she picked Forks. *Twilight* tours! A further web search of the area mentioned the Rainforest Run. And, as luck would have it, Rachael's folks are bikers, as are family friends. *Twilight*, rally, camping—all rolled into one sweet package. Now, Rachael's dad rides a metric. But as I understand it, Rachael chose to ride behind Bret on his Harley. And, Rachael informs me she has her heart set on a V-Rod. Guess you need to be quick to keep up with vampires.

Late Sunday morning at the Forks Elks Lodge, prizes for the poker run, raffle and 50/50 were awarded. Afterwards, I spoke with Forks Police Chief Mike Powell about the rally. He said that he was unaware of any problems. As a matter of fact, Mike's a rider, and was heading out on the final event, a ride under sunny, warm skies to the Hoh Rain Forest, south of Forks. With an average of 150 inches of rain each year, the rain forest is *green*. But Dan pointed out to me that according to records, the third weekend of August has the best odds of sunny, dry weather in the area.

And that's why the Rainforest Run will always be the third weekend of August. And that's where I'll be next year. And if you like an old fashioned, no-hype, laid-back rally, consider the Rainforest Run. It's only going to get better. (And, rumor has it, Saturday night, the vampires were buying rounds.) ▶