



Merry Christmas 2010

It's that time of year again when I send out my Christmas letter to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and the best wishes in the New Year. I have been busy all year teaching knitting classes and knitting for others. It has been lots of fun and keeps me occupied and out of trouble for the most part. Amy and I spent a few days at the Downtown Disney resort with a friend and his mother. It was a lot of fun and we hope to do it again in 2011. I taught a knitting class for teens at the Port Orange Library and had so much fun with the kids, they all took to knitting quickly and now they are in High School and have started a knitting club meeting during their lunch hour. I'm very proud of them. I was reading the Hog Magazine and saw that there would be a Route 66 ride this year so I began to research and see if I could join in the fun. I left Ormond Beach, FL on September 5th and headed to Macon, GA the first day. The weather was perfect and the next day I arrived in Clarksville, TN and had dinner with Gary & Chris. I drove through some beautiful countryside the next day and stopped at the Shaker Museum. It was interesting and I learned about their ways of life. I arrived in Elizabethtown, KY just before the sky opened up so I was glad to be safe and dry in my motel room. I called an old friend, Sandy and she came over to the motel and we had a great time visiting and remembering all the fun times we had while we were all stationed at Fort Knox. The next day I played the tourist and learned a lot about Abraham Lincoln and his boyhood life in nearby Hodgenville, KY. I went to the local museum, ate lunch in a quaint café and took lots of photos. I then headed to Rineyville, KY to see if I could find Jim & Violet Cowden. I asked at the post office and got directions to their home. We had a great visit and it was wonderful to see them again. I made it to Seilersburg, IN tonight. I met 3 bikers at the hotel from Sidney Australia who were on their way to Sacramento, CA. We took photos and exchanged information before heading our separate ways. The next day I stopped in Columbus at Mann's Harley Davidson, had lunch at Montana Mike's, lots of construction on I-465 but no long delays like posted so that was a relief. I'm only 100 miles from Chicago, IL the starting point for the Route 66 ride; I thought I'd start to see lots of people headed to Chicago but so far not many bikes on the road. It will be interesting to see how many folks show up for this once in a life time ride. I stayed in Lafayette, IN I borrowed Dan's Garmin and it's all programmed to get me to the Convention Center in Chicago so I'll see if it gets me there. The

problem is I can't hear the directions over the rumble of my bike and there wasn't any place to mount it so hard to see the map clearly, but it was nice to try it out. It was interesting to see the many wind turbines from Lafayette to Remington, there were so many that both sides of the Interstate were lined with them. Nice to know that we are trying to get energy via Mother Nature. I arrived at my hotel in Chicago, IL and will be here for 2 days. I went to the convention center and registered for the ride and picked up my packet and the goodies that went along with the trip. It looks like there will be about 350 bikes so far. I went to the Harley Shop that was listed for the party but it was closed so decided to start on the ride a day early. The Chicago Bears were playing football so I wanted to get out of Chicago before the game was over so I wouldn't get caught up in that traffic night mare. I found the beginning of Route 66 and began to follow it as it wound its way through the little towns so far its 4 lanes but by the time I stopped it was down to 2 lanes in Wilmington, IL. I stopped for an ice cream at a small drive in along the highway and visited with other bikers. There was so much to see that I couldn't possibly stop for it all but it was fun. On my trusty stead I'm just putting along and taking it all in. It was like going back in time and seeing the small town America as it was in its glory days. I arrived in Springfield, IL the next day and took in more Lincoln History. I walked down the street where he and his family lived, it has been beautifully preserved and you could walk inside and see how they lived. It was very interesting. I stopped at Henry's Rabbit Ranch and picked up souvenirs and visited with the owner, his stories about the old route 66 were very interesting and he had VW Rabbit cars lined up out front, it was funny to see them just sticking up out of the ground. He said he moves them all over his property and if you come back another time you'd be sure to see them in a new location. They are cut in half and just standing up. I got a neat book showing the Route divided into segments and I wish I had it sooner as saw that I missed things already. I tried to eat only in local diners and no chain restaurants, so far the food has been great and the people have been so friendly. One such restaurant is the Artison's Café, the owner came over and had me sign his guest book, gave me post cards and magnets. I met and sat with two bikers Lady Fred & Lou "Ghost Whisperer" I enjoyed their company and we had a great lunch. The food was awesome. Now I head to St Louis, MO and I hope I won't have to spend much time on the Interstate as it's crazy around there. I made it through and got to my hotel for the night. It has been good weather so far. I had to back track to Kirkwood to get my pin @ Doc's Harley Davidson, it was rush hour traffic last night so didn't want to try to get off. It was good to see everyone at the breakfast. I ride by myself most of the time but see a few of the same people every night. I've exchanged information with lots of the riders and hope to hear from some of them and perhaps see some of them if they ever come to Bike Week or Biketoberfest. I wanted to make sure that I went to the Meramec Caverns as when I was a child we always went past the signs but

were always on the way to relatives so never had time to stop. I was glad to take the tour and it was interesting. I had a nice lunch at the caverns and the waitress was interested to hear where I was from and where I was headed. Many of the bikers on the ride also took in the caverns and some brave souls even did the zip line over the river, but not me. I stopped at an old Sinclair Station in Ash Grove, MO and had a nice visit with the owner. He had some other bikers take my picture with him holding the Route 66 flag, he gave me a photo and he signed it with his signature art work. It was really cool. I took his photo with the other bikers who were good enough to photograph us. Then I was on to Baxter, KS, being born in Kansas I wanted to make sure that I took the little jog up into Kansas that Route 66 takes. I had wanted to see the Coal Mining Museum but when I arrived it had already closed for the day. I saw an old fashioned soda fountain and I parked and went up to check it out. It was set up as an after school care for High school students and they invited me in to see their set up. The kids learn how to operate the fully functional soda fountain, computers are provided for them so they can do their school work as many of the town's residents are poor. They provide food for them and for many it is one of the better meals they get each day. It's all free for the children; it is really a great program. The director said she would post my blog and the kids could see how my trip was going. I had an interesting twist while leaving Kansas, I'm putting along on Route 66 and all of a sudden it is a dirt road, very narrow with a narrow patch of black top down the center and gravel on both sides. I slowed down and managed to turn around being careful not to get off that little center strip, then made a bee line back to the newer section of Route 66. This was the old, old, Route 66. Wow, not so good for motorcycles. I stopped for the night in a little Route 66 motel and it was really quaint, decorated with Hollywood memorabilia, the room was clean, and the owner even autographed my book. The next day I headed to Tulsa, OK. The group will be spending 2 days in Oklahoma City, OK so I'll be able to catch up in time to have the group photo taken as well as a photo of only women riders who have made this trip on their own bikes. It was an awesome sight. I had some minor bike trouble and had to go back to Oklahoma City to get it fixed. After getting it rigged up I headed on my way but every time I'd stop and turn the bike off it would not want to start up again so curbed my sightseeing somewhat to what I could stop and leave the bike run and take a picture then go on my way. I'm trying to baby it until I get to Albuquerque, NM. I travelled across Texas and stayed on the interstate all the way because if I had trouble I didn't want to be all alone on old Route 66 where there may or may not be help. I did stop to see the Cadillac Ranch and world's largest cross and at the Midway Point, just didn't turn the bike off. I got to Santa Rosa, NM and was tired and had to stop for the night. The bike cooperated with me and started up fine but when I stopped for gas she quit and I got help from another biker who jumped it and got me going. Thank goodness for someone who knew how to fix the Bike. I arrived safely in

Albuquerque and got to the Harley Shop where they were able to fix the wiring problem. I was so grateful and they were wonderful. I decided that I wouldn't continue on the ride any further so said my good byes and headed to Los Lunas, NM where I stopped for the night. I was disappointed but due to the unexpected repairs I felt it was for the best. This was familiar country as I took this route when I moved to Florida in 2007. So I just putted along resting and enjoying the ride. The only thing I wanted to do before going home was to see the Alamo so I was happy to find it ok and take it all in. The next day everything was going well, I was back on the back roads and enjoying the Texas scenery and was getting ready to stop for the night when it started to pour rain, I new I had to seek shelter so I headed to a gas station to wait out the storm. I was nearly stopped when with all the water on the road I didn't see a pot hole in the road and I went in but didn't come out. I fell over and that was the end of my trip. I broke both bones in my ankle and my collar bone so after a trip to the emergency room and then off to a motel to arrange to get home. I called Amy and Dan took off in his brother's pickup to come to Beaumont, TX to rescue me and bring me and the bike home. I had arranged to have the bike taken to the Harley Shop so I just waited for his arrival. It was a great trip and I had so much fun and saw so many wonderful things along the way. I would recommend this trip to anyone who wants to see what it was like back when this great road was in its prime. After two months of recovery I'm getting better every day. I even took my first cruise with my Red Hat friends, it was wonderful and very relaxing, I wasn't able to do all I would have liked due to the injuries but I had a great time and managed to have lots of fun. Thanksgiving day I spent with Amy, Dan and his family. It was wonderful and the food was great and tons of it also. I will spend Christmas with them too. Here are a few photos taken along the way. Hope you'll enjoy them. Take care and God Bless all of you.

