



Anne's Amblings

By Anne Shumaker
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Hats off to the Southern Cruisers Riding Club, Weiss Lake Chapter No. 80. The group definitely polished the image of motorcyclists by implementing a major visitation and gift project at the Cherokee County Health and Rehabilitation Center.

Hal Wilson spawned the idea for the project. Pat and Ray Gardner called on neighbors and businesses to ask for monetary donations. (The Gardners were delighted that every neighbor wrote a check!). Several other members visited individuals and businesses to request funds or gift items. Danny's Builder Supply, Centre Kmart, 10 Cents and More, J and W Cycle, 411 Dollar Store Employees, Midway, Cedar Bluff Piggly Wiggly, Biker Shack 411, Southern Cruisers Weiss Lake members, Wingmen Motorcycle Club earned high marks for their contributions.

First and second graders at Cedar Bluff School, second graders and library classes at Gaylesville, and Glencoe Middle School Library classes decorated bags in holiday themes.

More than a dozen Riding Club members gathered in the CCHRC's education center to set out 140 bags and fill each bag with special treats. Then on a Sunday afternoon, 15 motorbikes and 20 club members pulled up to the front of the CCHRC door. They were greeted by activities director Kim Hays and activities department staff, John Boggs (the CCHRC's operations administrator). Kim assigned a few Cruisers members to each activities department staffer. Each "group" then visited several CCHRC residents. The Cruisers learned that at least 10 of the residents had no family members (or at least no nearby relatives), so special bags of goodies were presented to those residents. Within a couple of hours every resident had visitors and gifts.

One delightful CCHRC resident was so delighted with the project that she just had to dash outside to the portico and try out a "Big Dog Chopper." The 97-year young Ruth Coley Camp was the "hit of the day" among Cruisers and CCHRC staffers!!! Rah for you, Miss Ruth. As the teenagers say, "You GO, girl!"

The members of the Weiss Lake Southern Cruisers chapter are mostly retirees who enjoy riding to see the countryside, have fellowship with other members, and working together to manage community-service projects. (They have helped many individuals and causes during the past three years). Thanks to Steve Wilson for sharing details of the Cruisers' special work!

Area Southern Cruisers sponsoring charity project

BY ANNE SHUMAKER
Times Correspondent

CENTRE — Members of Weiss Lake Chapter 80 of the Southern Cruisers Riding Club are leaving behind the stereotypical view of motorcycle riders.

Member Ray Gardner, who admits being 70-plus years old, notes that "most of our chapter's members are in the over 39 group; in fact, many are retirees. We enjoy riding, and our communities are important to us. During the past two years, we have sponsored 10 projects to assist people in need."

Gardner also jokingly said, "At our ages, we have mellowed a bit, so safe riding is our goal."

Gardner and Pat, his wife of 54 years, recently saved some gasoline and money by riding their motortrike (three-wheeler) from Centre to northern Kentucky for the funeral of a friend and former neighbor.

Gardner was noticed riding his trike through his neighborhood recently.

He stopped at every house to ask for donations for the SCRC chapter's current project, Christmas for the Elderly.

By the end of the day, he had collected several hundred dollars for the effort to provide Christmas gifts for the residents of the Cherokee County Health Care and Rehab Center (formerly Cherokee County Nursing Home).

Gardner distributed fliers listing items his group is accepting in addition to money.

The list of new items includes hand lotion, body powder, playing cards, blankets and throws, socks and footies, large T-shirts or night shirts, hair combs and brushes and gift bags (instead of paper for wrapping).

Donations made by checks should be made payable to CCHRC-Activities, with "resident activities" on the memo line.

The deadline for contributions is Sunday. Additional information may be obtained from Gardner (927-6152, messages may be left on voice mail if there is no answer) or Steve Wilson (927-6635).

Questions may be e-mailed to scrc@weisslake.com. The chapter's Web site is <http://weisslake.com/scrc>.

Ray Gardner and his fellow members of the Southern Cruisers motorcycle enthusiasts are sponsoring a fund drive to assist residents at Cherokee County Health Care and Rehab Center during the holiday season. Prospective donors may telephone Ray at 927-6152.

Interestingly, almost all of the SC group are "above 39" in age and many are retirees. They use their time for recreation riding and helping numerous worthwhile causes.

During the past months they have raised funds for the Cherokee Humane Society, St. Jude Children's Hospital, Rose Haven, a pitching machine for the Cedar Bluff baseballers, victims of illness and accidents, and the elderly — just to name a few. The SCers are having a positive effect on the stereotypical view of motorbike riders.