



### 3RD ANNUAL LEGENDS RIDE

## Stars Shine on Main Street

Funds raised for Big Sky Ranch and Sturgis Motorcycle Museum



The ride's staging area in front of the Franklin Hotel in Deadwood by Shadow

DEADWOOD AND STURGIS, S.D., AUG. 9—Two years ago, Ron Woodruff, owner of the Buffalo Chip in Sturgis, decided to create a benefit ride to raise funds for several South Dakota charities, as well as to provide entertainment for supporters. The resulting Legends Ride caught on like wildfire, and it's been completely sold out since the first year, resulting in over \$150,000 in contributions to several charitable organizations.

Every year, the Buffalo Chip partners with the Silverado-Franklin Gaming Complex and the Deadwood Tobacco Company, in conjunction with the Deadwood Chamber of Commerce, to produce the event. For \$150, riders got a souvenir bag and a meet 'n' greet with various celebrities, participation in the ride, a private reception and auction at the Buffalo Chip, entrance to Michael Lichter's Motorcycles as Art exhibit and, topping off the evening, free admission to that night's concerts at the Chip.

There was plenty to do before the ride left Deadwood at 3:00 that afternoon. Some of the builders and other celebrities had their bikes on display at the Franklin and the Silverado across the street, and were signing autographs and posing for photos. The official 2010 Legends Ride motorcycle was to be auctioned off later in the day to help raise even more money for that year's charities—

can it Sturgis anything is just wrong. You can license a name but you can't export an aura. Sturgis and the Black Hills remain an experience that cannot be duplicated.

So is the uptick in attendance an indicator that our economic woes are

thus far mastered an impressive craft—it doesn't really take a lot of money to really have a lot of fun. S while Ol' Man Sturgis may be getting a little long in the tooth, this septuagenarian is still quite capable of flexing a little muscle. ♪

the Sky Ranch Foundation, an organization that for 50 years has run the Sky Ranch for Boys to give troubled youth a second chance; and the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum, which is planning to expand and needs funds to accomplish its goal. One of the more popular characters was Survivor contestant Rupert Boneham, who has formed Rupert's Kids, another charity that helps troubled youth.

The celebrity that drew the most attention, though, had to be Paul Reubens, a.k.a. Pee-Wee Herman, who appeared in Sturgis to film a clip for the *Jay Leno* show and to promote *The Pee-wee Herman Show* on Broadway in October, as well as a new movie. Pee-Wee rode an Easy Rider-themed electric bicycle to lead the first part of the Legends Ride as it started up Main Street. During "Pee-Wee's Big Sturgis Adventure," he led a rousing rendition of his famous Tequila Dance on the stage of the Buffalo Chip.

The route took us from Deadwood through the spectacular scenery of Nemo Road and Vanocker Canyon before arriving some 45 miles later at the Buffalo Chip. We parked our bikes and rushed to the bar and food tent, and then settled in to enjoy the bands; the first being an acoustic set featuring Charlie Brechtel and *THUNDER PRESS* contributor Bill Hayes. We were free to roam around the Buffalo Chip, or to peruse Michael Lichter's magnificent *Motorcycles as Art* exhibit.



Pee-wee Herman led the Legends Ride with his Easy Rider bicycle built by Steve "BREWdude" Garn

Later that afternoon, merchandise and art work was auctioned to raise more money for this year's chosen charities. The auction piece bringing in the most bucks was the custom bike built by the Western Dakota Tech, led by Michael Prugh. Silverado-Franklin VP and managing partner Tom Rensch made the winning bid of \$25,000, bringing the total funds raised to nearly \$53,000.

By the time the festivities were winding to a close, the first band of the night took the main stage. I'd wanted to see Trailer Choir, a country band discovered and signed by Toby Keith just a few years ago. The vocals by Butter and Crystal combined with Big Vinnie's dance moves were even more enjoyable (and amusing) than what I'd seen on CMT. Buckcherry followed, then headliner ZZ Top. By the time that little ol' band from Texas finished their set, our day at the Legends Ride was complete. ([www.legendsside.com](http://www.legendsside.com)) ♪