



## **The Director's Digressions**

By Bill Taylor

This month's article was provided by Scott Engle. It is definitely worth reading.

### **Mileage. The ultimate way to survive a pandemic.**

2020 canceled all sorts of events. The one thing it couldn't cancel was the best way to social distance – riding.

Whether that riding was on 2 wheels or 4, it was a great way to get out of the house. Although my 2020 has been very unpleasant, I have to say I'm thankful for my friends, who just so happen to be the members of Chapter O! Without this group of people, I truly don't think I would be in the mental frame of mind I'm in.

Gary Squire in particular had given me something to look forward to this whole pandemic. He started what he called the LWH ride – Long Way Home ride. He would get off work early in the day (late morning) and rather than just go home, he'd take about a 100+ mile ride to get there. He and Mike, and eventually myself and sometimes Bob Tozer, would do these rides. Along with Tom Brennan's Tuesday rides, it kept me sane and somewhat fulfilled. These rides and the No Dinner Rides we had allowed me to accumulate 16,000 miles this season on the Gold Wing.

Of that 16,000 miles, there was one trip of 2200 miles over the course of 4 days that were great for keeping active. Brian Nelson and Todd Schneider were going to Harrison, AR for the GL1800Riders.com Harrison Gathering. I asked if I could tag along, and Brian and Todd graciously said yes. The route was formed and agreed on and we left on Wednesday October 7, and arrived back home on Sunday October 11<sup>th</sup>. We socially distanced when we were off the bikes, which wasn't a lot! The weather was generally very good, except for some periods of heavy fog in the Arkansas hills, making for some tenser moments. But overall, another great way to stay engaged and just get out of the house.

Not all my mileage was on 2 wheels. I had a 2600-mile 4 day sprint to New York and back in mid-April. That helped me get through a very anguishing time. My friends and family were a bit worried about me coming back from NY solo, but it was very therapeutic.

There were about 6 times I traveled to Arkansas and back in one of my trucks. That was worth about 8200 miles. Although a very boring drive, it allowed me to get out in the world and still practice social distancing. Again, somewhat therapeutic.

While being in Arkansas, I drove my convertible about 2500 miles, and rode the 2 motorcycles about 2500 miles.

Those miles, plus just driving around in Minneapolis and running errands in Arkansas allowed me to accumulate about 30,000 miles for the year so far. Those miles gave me the quiet time I needed, got me out in the world, which I needed, and kept me safe by being either in a car or out in the open air on a bike.

So even though many motorcycle events were canceled this year, it has to be one of the best years I've had when it comes to riding. Granted, a lot of "qualifications" go with that statement, but I've never put that many miles on a bike, or total for that matter in a given year.

So take that Covid-19. You might be able to put the world on hold, but you can't put Chapter O's members on hold!