

Helping the Industry One Ride at a Time

BY [ALISA CLICKENGER](#) ON MAY 10, 2012

A couple of years ago I took a long motorcycle ride. My helmet time became the incubator for my dreams, goals and desires. I was on the road alone for seven



months, and the ever-changing landscape provided extremely fertile ground for formulating my current career path — empowering other women riders to hit the open road and ride their dreams.

My long trip's big “aha” moment for me was to take the most asked questions about my solo riding — “Are you alone ... Aren't you scared ... How do I do what you do?”— and blend them into a personal mission statement. Instead of working my 9-to-5 corporate job, I now ride, write and consult with motorcycle dealers to bring more female riders through their doors.

Last year I launched the Women's Empowerment Motorcycle Tour with my friend and colleague, Karen Thomson, of AVID MotoTours. It's a new concept for motorcycle tours. We combine pre-trip coaching, on-tour seminars and post-tour personal mentoring to inspire women to get on their own bikes and explore. We leverage our combined 50-plus years of riding experience into an educational and empowering experience for women who want to take the next step beyond the basics and begin touring on their own.

For Pam Graves, one of our First Women's Empowerment Tour (WEMT) members, her big “aha” moment was learning on tour that “hanging off the bike around a corner really does work and feels great!” After a motorcycle accident prior to the tour, her confidence was shattered even more than her Star Stryker. Touring with us on a 2007 Harley-Davidson Softail Deluxe, she regained confidence and learned strategies for caring for herself and for her motorcycle while on the road.

“I learned a great deal from WEMT, including what and how to pack for traveling, how to find alternative routes, how to stay safe, and how valuable it is to connect with the local people for information about the area as well as travel tips. After taking this tour of the Northwest with WEMT, I would definitely return to the area. I am much more confident about touring on my own now,” says Pamela.

We've had tremendous support from the industry for the Women's Empowerment Motorcycle Tour. REV'it! Generously donated a jacket to the tour that we offered as a prize for a post-tour mileage contest, which helped us further encourage the ladies to continue riding. Rose Kincart of Warm & Safe sponsored Karen and I with heated jacket liners, and many other companies sent along product information and discounts exclusively for our tour members.

Owner and dealer principal Ann Thye of Ride West BMW (sister dealership to South Sound BMW) has also been extremely supportive of the WEMT tour. Because our flagship WEMT Pacific Northwest tour is based in Seattle, through GM David Swezey our tour members have a priority-status repair shop as well as a gathering place for women riders in the Pacific Northwest. They've also given us a place to ship motorcycles and gear as necessary, as well as a venue for evening programs encouraging women to ride.

Looking back on all my road trips, it's easy to see how every mile brought me one step closer to living a life I love. Through my passion for motorcycling and viewing the world from a two-wheeled perspective, I'm able to see how that has translated into other areas of my life. I am more open, more confident, and I am more capable of handling whatever comes my way. I'm excited to see what the next “aha” will be.