

HOUTEX HOG Chapter Dutch Oven Cookout November, 2003

The day didn't seem too promising....overcast, with low-hanging fog clinging to the trees and rooftops in a misty shroud. A walk down the driveway to retrieve the newspaper confirmed that robe and slippers weren't quite enough to fend off the damp chill. But with coffee and breakfast finished, the day was looking a little more promising, though certainly no warmer. It was in this frame of mind that I pulled on silk long johns, denim, and leather and prepared for the first leg of my journey towards Coldspring.

My bike let me know her indignation at being pulled out of the relatively cozy garage by refusing to let me push the choke all the way in until much farther down the road than I was accustomed to. My body let me know that the wind chill factor – at 48 degrees and 75 mph – was more than the long johns and leather were up to. But, eager to get to Coldspring and the storied Dinwoodie Dutch Oven Cookout, my bike and I pressed on.

The first stop was Kingwood to pick up my friend and new HouTex member Keith. Now, by this time the dank cold air has totally permeated 3 layers of clothing and I'm looking forward to a warm house, maybe even a hot cup of coffee. Oh, wait...I forgot. This particular friend breaks out the shorts and tank tops when the temps reach 60 degrees. What was I thinking? We didn't dally too long before getting on the road. And there was no hot coffee. What respite I enjoyed was soon lost to the wind chill again on Highway 59, and all the while I was asking myself, "What's worse...going slower so it doesn't feel so cold, or going faster to get it over with?" The rider equivalent of that "walk-or-run-in-the-rain" conundrum.

After a quick stop for gas as we neared the Sam Houston National Forest, we pulled into the park area. The gate guard gave us excellent directions and we dutifully turned left at the fork and found the lodge and the parking area behind the building. The sight of all those Harleys neatly lined up in that parking lot told us we'd arrived none too early.

We'd hardly gotten our butts settled into our chairs, when the dinner bell was ringing. Spaghetti! Homemade meat sauce, a bit spicy, a bit sweet, with huge chunks of sausage! Dutch oven-baked bread, the sweetest, most tender bread I've ever tasted! Coleslaw! Poppy-seed cake!

The best part about getting there? The giant camp fire! The best part about being there? The friendship and sense of family one gets whenever the HouTex crowd gets together. This was exemplified by the generous and unselfish hospitality of the Dinwiddies, and the tireless assistance of Kay and James, and the others. A pleasant (but cold) ride, good company, a delicious "spread" prepared by excellent cooks. What more could we ask for as riders? Thanks, Dutch and Sandy!