

## Member Spotlight Bob & Michele Fairey



I was born in Harlingen, TX and grew up in Seguin. I spent 8 years in the Army and settled in Colorado after getting out. I was a long haul truck driver for many years and met Michele during this time. She was living in Syracuse, NY at the time. She was born in Florida, but has lived all over the country. I persuaded her to move back to Texas with me in 1991. We have been in Seguin ever since.

The story of our getting into the Goldwing scene actually begins in the summer of 2004 when I decided leave my home in Seguin to take a contractor job driving fuel trucks in Iraq. This was a great opportunity for us to get ahead and do a few things that we might not otherwise be able to do. One of the things that I told my wife Michele that I wanted to buy after getting back was a Goldwing. I have been riding motorcycles most of my life and have always wanted a touring bike, but have never really had the opportunity or the means to make it happen. We did get to do some riding while on vacation in Thailand. I rented a Honda Shadow for the entire 2 weeks we were there, and we did lots of exploring. Driving on the left side of the road was a little unnerving at first, but we survived without getting squashed. After a while on the back seat of the Shadow, the Goldwing was sounding better and better to Michele. Travel turned out to be one of the perks of our time in Iraq. Every 4 months we got a 2 week break, and we made the best of it. One time we spent 2 weeks traveling around Europe by train. We also went on a safari in Tanzania, Africa. We flew 2 of our daughters over, and they met us in Rome on one of our vacations. Our favorite destination was Thailand, though. I love the tropics and we went there on 2 different occasions.

One day back in September 2006 while still in Iraq, I was browsing Ebay and came across exactly what I had been looking for. A 1985 GL1200 Limited Edition in excellent shape with only 48K miles and a matching trailer. I have always liked the 1200s and especially the color scheme on the LTDs. I discussed it with Michele, who was also working with me in Iraq at the same base by this time, and we agreed that this was the one. I purchased the bike and had it shipped to my daughter's house in Seguin to be stored where it spent the next 6 months patiently waiting for us to return from our time in the desert. This really made the time drag knowing what I had at home waiting for me. We spent many hours talking about where we wanted to go once we were back in the real world. After realizing that we may not have another opportunity to take an extended trip after going back to work at home, we decided we would take off and see a lot of friends and family that we had not seen in a while. Understand that we have family scattered from coast to coast, so this was gonna be a long trip!

I finally got to see and ride my new Wing for the first time when I came back for a 2 week vacation in March 2007. Michele had returned from Iraq for good in January and was kind enough to have the bike serviced and ready to go prior to my arrival. We rode around the area some and made a 350 mile round trip to my parent's house in Corpus Christi to get the feel of the bike and to get used to pulling the trailer. All too quickly the vacation was over and I had to return to Iraq, but the riding had really wetted my appetite for riding. I returned from Iraq for good on May the 2<sup>nd</sup> and right away started getting things in order for the trip which included hard wiring in a GPS, upgrading the rear air shocks to Progressives and a very thorough service at my local Honda dealer. We also went on a benefit ride through the Texas hill country that I read about on the internet one weekend and happened to meet up with Brad Severe and Charlie Brown. We hit it off right away and decided we would hook up with Chapter U upon our return from our long trip. We departed on our road trip in late May and by the time we got back to Seguin in early July. We had been through 23 states and covered 7100 miles. Not bad for a couple of rookie long haulers. High points along the way were The Blue Ridge Parkway, seeing a Space Shuttle launch while in Florida, Washington DC, Gettysburg, the Flight 93 Memorial, and the Black Hills. Saw lots of other cool stuff along the way, but that's a whole other story.

I am currently the Track Manager at San Antonio Raceway in Marion. For someone who has been an avid drag racer for most of their life, it is a pretty cool job. Michele is a Deputy County Clerk in the Guadalupe County Courthouse. With my work schedule at the track, we don't get to ride with Chapter U as much as we would like to, but we enjoy the times that we are able to get away.

