



FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO VMD: THE BIGGER PICTURE

BY ROB DINGMAN

As you can see from the coverage in this month's edition, the 2023 version of AMA Vintage Motorcycle Days did not disappoint. Each year after VMD I have the same two thoughts: *Is there any way next year's VMD will top this one, and then, I can't believe this year's event topped last year's.*

The fact that VMD gets better every year is a testament to our great AMA staff that works hard all year long to put on such a great event, always improving upon the previous year's effort. So a big thank you to our staff! I would be remiss if I didn't thank our sponsors, as well, a complete list of which you can see on page 46.

As you likely already know, VMD is the largest single fundraiser for the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame and museum. The event is co-promoted by the AMA and Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, and the AMA's share of the proceeds goes to the HOF and museum.

VMD is much more than simply a vintage motorcycle event. In addition to raising money for such a worthwhile cause, the greatest thing about VMD for me is that it is representative of almost everything the AMA is and does. The AMA's mission is to promote the motorcycle lifestyle and protect the future of motorcycling, and I can think of no better example of what is meant by the motorcycle lifestyle than what can be experienced at VMD.

VMD is truly a family gathering, as it showcases how motorcycling, in all its forms, is a family sport. It's so gratifying to see kids, parents and grandparents enjoying themselves. The event provides the type of experiences that foster great passion for motorcycling, and there is no doubt in my mind that VMD is an event where that passion leads to the development of lifelong

motorcyclists.

I was struck by Alex Boehm's description (on page 34) of his VMD experience this year, and how it brought him back to his VMD experience well over a decade ago as a 13-year-old. His words and the accompanying then-and-now photos illustrate my point about VMD and families very well.

While lifelong motorcyclists and motorcycling families are what the motorcycle lifestyle is all about, they are also key to protecting the future of motorcycling. Indeed, it is *their future* that we are so preoccupied with protecting.

Not only does VMD generate memories that last a lifetime among families and extended families, the event is also a gathering of the *AMA family*. One of the greatest things about the AMA is the diversity of motorcycling interests represented by the organization. The AMA is an all-things-to-all-motorcyclists organization, and there is no other event on the calendar where that diversity is on display more boldly.

The AMA has evolved a great deal since it was formed by the industry association in 1924 to give people things to do with their motorcycles so they would literally buy more motorcycles. I wonder if the gentlemen who created the AMA envisioned what the organization would become...or what they would think of VMD. To say that VMD gives people something to do with their motorcycles is quite an understatement, but I can't believe anyone in the early 1900s could have



Just as Steve McQueen said in *On Any Sunday*, "People out having a good time on motorcycles." That's VMD.

imagined anything like what occurs at VMD today. I am not quite sure they could have envisioned that the AMA would evolve into the all-things-to-all-motorcyclists entity that it has become.

You may think I just glossed over the fact that the AMA was formed in 1924, 100 years ago, next year. In fact, I mentioned the date to specifically call your attention to it, as next year we'll mark a tremendous milestone as we celebrate the AMA's 100th anniversary!

It is amazing to think of all that has transpired in motorcycling over the last 100 years. Motorcycling, and the AMA, for that matter, has changed quite a bit, even during my relatively short tenure of 17 years as the organization's president and CEO.

We have big plans in store to commemorate and celebrate this momentous anniversary over the coming year. You can read all about it in the pages of this magazine going forward, and keep an eye out for an AMA 100th Anniversary logo coming soon.

Thank you for being part of the amazing AMA family!

Rob Dingman is the President and CEO of the AMA, and a Charter Life Member