



# Voni Glaves:

## Thanks a **Million** For The sMiles



*Voni Glaves is the first of two women on earth to have a medallion on the back of a BMW motorcycle proclaiming her an undisputed long-distance goddess of German motorcyclists. Ardys Kellerman is the other woman to achieve the million mile marker.*

**By Jack Riepe #116117 and Mary Baker #121770**



More than 200 motorcycle riders converged on Engle Motors, in Kansas City, Missouri, on Saturday, October 15, 2011, to witness Voni Glaves, 64, a retired teacher, ride a scant 50 miles from her family home, though she now resides in Big Bend, Texas. This culminates in 1,000,000 accident free miles covered from the saddles of 15 BMW motorcycles — over the course of 34 years. She's known as the "Lady in Red" of BMW because of her red gear and red motorcycle. Engle Motors was appropriately decorated with red balloons and banners and served red velvet cake for desert.

Glaves and Kellerman are the first two women riders in the 39-year history of the BMW Motorcycle Owners of America to earn this honor. (Only x other riders, all men, have previously shared this distinction.) The presentation was made by Norman and Mike Jones dealer/principal of Engle Motors. Glaves is no stranger to mileage awards. She was honored as BMW's Woman Rider of the Year in 1999 for traveling 73,660 miles in six months. A school teacher then, it was her goal to ride 100 miles each work-day, and 500 miles on each weekend day.

In a logical progression, Glaves has broken BMW MOA distance records for women five times. In 1999 she was honored

as the winner of the Women's Mileage Contest with the highest overall mileage in either the Men's or Women's contest. That summer she rode 72 consecutive 500-mile days. The 600,000-mile mark followed in 2001, establishing Glaves as the first

woman to hold both. She passed the 700,000-mile mark in 2004. Of her favorite bike, a red 1994 R1100RS that she rode 360,000 miles, Glaves said, "Soon it will be time to change those spark plugs, or at least to take a look at them."

Glaves refers to her two-wheeled odyssey as the trip of "A Million sMiles," as she has met the nicest people, passed through the most beautiful countryside, and made the best friends.

"I could write a hundred novels based on the folks I've met and the places I've been through," said Glaves. "A ride that led through a desert, with the day's heat balanced by the cold light of countless stars... A run along the Talemina Drive in the fall, with a riot of color blazing against gray-blue skies... A week in the saddle on the West Coast, yellow line-dancing between cliffs and surf... And the long Haul Road up to

Alaska, where the bears still outnumber the riders on the endless gravel stretches... Each trip is a thread in a rare motorcycle-riding tapestry that continues to unfold."



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**Left:** Voni holding up her Mileage Award Medallions

**Below:** It was Norman's 80th birthday and he flew in from Texas to surprise me





Glaves' favorite destination is around the block. "Around the block" for Voni is 234 miles: south to Terlinga, west on River Road to Presido, north to Marfa, east to Alpine and south to the adobe (home). Voni currently rides a '07 F800S, red of course.

Her mechanic, husband and frequent riding partner, Paul Glaves, said, "There are two things to remember when riding with Voni... To let her lead and to always have a full tank of gas." No, Voni has never run out of gas! Paul also says that "It's a good thing that Voni isn't hard on equipment, because between the few things that break and routine maintenance, there is a lot in a million miles."

The ceremony was followed by an open house and luncheon held at Engle Motors, which has been the BMW motorcycle dealer of record in the region since 1959. It is a family run business first owned by Norman Jones and now by his son Mike Jones.



Adam Jones is the Parts and Accessories Manager. "We declared October 15th to be 'Voni Glaves Day,' and look forward to her further accomplishments, for which new awards and medallions will have to be created," said Mike Jones.

Glaves' advice to riders heading out for the horizon these days is simple. "Do your homework, plan for the miles and the contingencies. Always wear all the gear all the time. Never pass up a gas pump or a bathroom if the issue is ever in doubt," she said.

Ardys Kellerman, another legend among BMW MOA long-distance riders, has also scored her share of victories in the annual mileage contests, and broke the million-mile mark on a joint ride with Voni Glaves on US Highway 550, the "Million Dollar

Highway," near Silverton, Colorado.

Lone Star BMW is just waiting for Ardys to ride back to Texas so they can throw a Million Mile party for her. Voni will be her biggest cheerleader. ☺

**Top to Bottom:**

Norm Jones presenting Voni with her Million Miles Award

Norman Jones from Engle Motors presenting Voni her 300,000 mile award from BMW.

Face painting was another element of the celebration

Voni with a BMW MOA Mileage Contest award, one of 12 she has earned.







**Top to Bottom:**

- Voni with her K75
- Voni with her "red" velvet cake
- Voni and Paul attend many local rallies.
- Ardys Kellerman and Voni Glaves high fiving their achievement
- Planning a ride in her high tech M.A. Brown riding suit on her '78 R80/7. The suit was high tech for its time.
- Voni with Ardys Kellerman
- Ambassador Doug Crow with Ardys Kellerman

