

On Sale Until 08/16/2011

WWW.IRONWORKSMAG.COM

AUGUST 2011

Volume 21 Number 6

# IronWorks®

## KIRK TAYLOR'S JOHNNY CHOP TRIBUTE BIKE HONORING TIME WELL SPENT



**IW SPOTLIGHT**  
MILWAUKEE'S COOK CUSTOMS

**METAL DRAGON**  
A FIRE-BREATHING SOFTAIL

**DREAM RIDES BAGGER**  
ABLE AND STABLE

**STEADYMATE CHOCK** • MAD JAP CUSTOMS • **SAM KANISH** • ROAD GLIDE BLACKOUT • **BERT BAKER**  
ANDREWS CAMS • **SUSPENSION EXPLAINED** • ROAD GLIDE UPGRADE • **POSIE ON HP & TORQUE**  
**1961 PANHEAD** • CTEK CHARGERS • **PROJECT XR1200** • HOW IT'S MADE: MUSTANG SEATS





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## ON THE COVER

Volume 21 • Number 6 • Our 176th Issue

Tribute bikes are nothing new but most of us would agree that forging rolling art from metal alloy and honest sweat is a righteous way to honor someone we cared about who is no longer among us. Motorcycles that claim this genesis are always more than the sum of their parts and it's the story behind those parts—and how the builder assembled them—that enhances the bike. Kirk Taylor's tribute to Johnny Chop, photographed here by Stephen Berner, hits all the high points: born from a genuine connection, handled in a respectful manner, and producing a striking result.

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## SPOTLIGHT: Cook Customs

Dave Cook is a guy who's been around the block a few times—and sometimes he takes that lap of the city block on his motorized couch! But no matter his mode of transport, you can bet that any vehicle bearing the Cook Customs stamp will have its share of visual appeal and functional dependability with a spark of astonishing cleverness tossed in. That's because Dave's been on the scene for some time now and he's here to stay. Visiting with Dave at Cook Customs on Milwaukee's east side, and meeting with his band of merrymakers, convinced us of that. Join us on page 24.



## Choices

Sitting in the Editor's chair requires making a lot of choices. Part of making choices is explaining yourself, and I get to do a lot of that, too: the usual why this and why that. Selecting bikes to run in the magazine is one specific area we get asked a lot about. How do we select bikes for features? How do we select shops and builders for spotlight stories?

So to keep on track and on point, we use a guiding principle applied to identifying the bikes for *IronWorks*, described thusly: "bikes worth celebrating." Okay, I can see eyes rolling, but bear with me. I describe a bike worth celebrating as the sort of machine that has handmade, thoughtful touches, a machine that is uncommon in its design, function, manufacture, collection of parts and appearance, and stands out in a crowd for the right reasons. These are machines you have to get down on your knee to appreciate fully, that draw you in and beg to be understood, carefully scoped out, and ridden.

Ultimately, "bikes worth celebrating" are fun to look at. This is about the pursuit of fun, right?

A machine worth celebrating is a platform for ideas and for showcasing the artist/builder's talents. This is how a builder reflects an understanding and a respect for the functionality of the two-wheeled art form, as the machine must work and perform the duties of a motorcycle. And they need to be fun to look at.

So do the bikes that you and I hose down in our driveways, ride daily, and keep in our sheds, garages and living rooms in general and for the most part qualify as bikes worth celebrating? Well, we as owners certainly celebrate our own machines and rightly so, but in the world of media, not so much.

We love our personal machines and we lavish attention on them and honor them as family members, and that is what keeps our passion propelled forward. But alas, when it comes to what appears in a printed publica-

tion, we strive to find the top-shelf gems that you are not going to see at most local bike nights. Isn't that the point?

It's a hustle, ferreting out and telling the stories behind these cool machines that are for the most part off the radar. But it is our responsibility to bring you the very best that's out there. For the record, it matters not one whit if a bike rolls from a shed, bedroom, or pro's shop—cool is cool and if the machine in question is, we want to know about it, we want to feature it.

Another choice: do we use our valuable pages to showcase reader's letters and reader's rides or do we bring you more unusual and high quality machines you've probably not seen before? We choose the latter. Really good reader's rides (and we have fea-



tured many) become bike features anyway, as we contact the owner to make a shoot and story happen.

As moto-consumers we buy stuff and make lots of choices nearly every day. There is a lot of gear designed for V-Twin enthusiasts and to help navigate the waters of choice we choose to use as much of the best, relevant product as is reasonable. We also endeavor to report back on how the gear we got worked—a check-back, if you will. It takes time to bring a product out and that is why the check-back is important. We weave product usage into much of our editorial so over time you get a sense of how things are performing as we travel about using and abusing our stuff.

Tech is an area that is always up for discussion. Do we show splitting cases and ground up engine builds or do we show the

type of work that most modern machine owners are contemplating? While I have to admit a personal fascination with seeing connecting rods and pistons on scales, I am pretty sure—based on what I've heard and been told—that talking about stage 1/2/3 upgrades and the options therein (cams, intake, exhaust, tuners) is a little more along the lines of what most long riding, aftermarket supporting owners want to learn about, so that is where we focus our attention. Not to say we won't be cracking cases in the future...

As the TC population gets more miles under its collective belt, we will be delving further into the maintenance issues encountered and that is where things will get juicy, as the aftermarket always comes up with

good solutions and enhancements to keep us on the road. Keeping older (pre-TC) machines on the road is also on the agenda, so we will have the bases covered... hopefully.

*IronWorks* Spotlight, the single shop/multi-bike feature we've developed, has turned out to be successful, with readers and builders alike being pleased at this innovation. So we are going to keep it up. Finding the shops that we feature hasn't been a challenge, and to boot, there

are many talented folks that we know about which we just haven't had the time to visit with, but we will. We are always on the lookout for talented shops we haven't featured so if you know of one clue us in.

Having choices, choices, choices: it's a part of what is so great about being an American and a big part of what makes owning a V-Twin so much fun and interesting. We want you to know the fact that you made the choice to read *IronWorks* means a lot to the *IronWorks* team and we hope that you choose to let us know what's on your mind. Check us out at [ironworksmag.com](http://ironworksmag.com) and on FB and if you want to save a few bucks, choose to subscribe.

Ride safe, long and like the wind!  
Stephen Berner  
[steveb@steveb.biz](mailto:steveb@steveb.biz)



# Ron & Janet's Freak'n Pan-A-Rican

*Frisco Ron puts out an impressive machine*

*Story and photos by Stephen Berner*

**S**traight up, the second I met Frisco Ron from Daly City I knew he was a good guy. No braggadocio, no bullshit, just a thankful enthusiast who was happy someone had seen his bike and dug it enough to ask some informed questions.

The engine is a 2005 Pandemonium from Custom Chrome, partnered up with a Baker 6-speed. A 3-inch Primo belt drive spins an 18X250 rear and a Paughco Springer sits proudly up front. Never hav-

ing assembled his own machine, but having spent many long years working on them, constructing this bike was the culmination of a dream Ron had had since the 70's but up until recently didn't have the resources to pull off.

The Frisco mounted tank with the rakish angle speaks loudly to Ron's club influences. The tank is a 1986-era donor that was stretched and then lengthened 3.5" to accommodate the frame and design he had in mind. The tank needed some work to make it fit just right; finally settling around the

backbone rather than on it was the cure. From there on out, the bike just spoke to Ron and he was smart enough to listen.

A student of the 70's V-Twin motorcycle era in general, Ron got sucked into the earliest *Easyriders* and that influence is clearly evident. During the time period of the build Ron's daily rider was a 2007 Street Bob, prior to that a 2003 Heritage. Ron's biggest influence, amongst others, during the design and construction of this machine was Indian Larry and his counsel to future builders: "if you hide





everything, you might as well as be building refrigerators." Amen, Larry. Amen.

Built on the floor, piece by piece by piece, the bike was started on August 3, 2004 with a visit, accompanied by his wife and patron saint Janet, to Paughco where the frame was ordered and the project was underway. Treated like family, his experience at Paughco was a wholly positive one and he was off to a good start. A short six years later, on August 2, 2010, the bike was finally registered. Well it really wasn't a short six years and the path was fraught with one step forward, one step back at times.

Finally with all the parts in hand and the bike constructed, in riding shape and totally raw, Ron started his newly birthed machine. There was no sound better to this soft-spoken man, as he had earned it. It





was one of the most exciting things he had experienced. From here on out it was all gravy. It was alive.

Taking the bike apart for paint and final finishes was a bit painful. Some parts had been around for so long they needed to be refinished—the Springer being one. Janet, in taking a good look at the machine, offered some critical advice: black out the rear legs and specific parts of the Springer to alleviate the overabundance of chrome in that area, to balance the machine better visually. All agreed Janet nailed it so the rear legs and front-end parts were painted.

A satin black painted frame sets off the raspberry red tin. The idea to go with satin was Janet's and what a great idea. The red just zings off the bike, set against such a subtle background. Johnny Chop, who was a friend of Ron's, introduced Ron to Kirk Taylor of Custom Design Studios and those who know Kirk and knew Johnny see both of their influences clearly in this bike. Lisa Taylor had a bike that used that same red color and it was off the hook—and so the paint was chosen.

One clean scallop makes the paint just right graphically. Kirk's touches and advice in fitment and product selection helped Ron, and in paying props he mentions that the advice he was given allowed him to take on the job of prep and assembly without much drama. Patient folks, like those at Paughco and Custom Design Studios, helped Ron realize his very specific vision.

So how does the Freak'n Pan-A-Rican ride? Ron relates that during his shake-down run, the chase truck following him through the gears to 50, up to 60, then 70, finally fell back when he snicked into 6th at 75mph: the bike was in its stride. Ron states that this chopper almost rides as good as his Dyna. This bike is perfect, exactly what he wanted from the outset, a dream come true, and a testament to a clear vision.

Nice job, Frisco Ron. Good to meet you, Janet, and the Freak'n Pan-A-Rican. **W**

