



Former business advice man co-starts his rental franchise

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Renting for the roads to freedom

Former actuary now has a Harley-Davidson franchise, EagleRider, in Costa Mesa.

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COSTA MESA — After 23 years of helping businesses create retirement plans, entrepreneur Russ Proctor took a hard look at his own retirement plan and was unsatisfied.

Although he's an expert in giving businesses advice, Proctor had never tried running a business himself.

That changed four years ago, when the former actuary decided to take his weekend hobby of riding motorcycles and turn it into a new career by opening his own rental company.

Today, Proctor co-owns the Costa Mesa branch of EagleRider, a national Harley-Davidson franchise, which earlier this month moved to a new location on Avocado Street.

"It's a good thing to be able to look back on life and know that you did something because you were passionate about it," said Proctor, 49, of Newport Beach. "Not just about making money."

The location stocks more than Harleys. There are 17 different vehicles right now, including an electric motorcycle, which only weighs about 200 pounds.

That bike, manufactured by Zero Motorcycles, is often rented out by people who are taking their motorcycle license test at the DMV. It doesn't have a clutch or manual gears, making it easier to ride.

"All you have to do is twist the throttle and go," Proctor explained.

However, the ultra-modern bike isn't Proctor's favorite. With so many at his disposal, Proctor actually couldn't choose a favorite if he tried — a common problem among motorcycle enthusiasts.

"It's hard to find one that does everything you want it to," Proctor said. "They all have their special purpose and what they're good at."



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NICE RIDE: Daryl Heinly, the co-owner of EagleRider in Costa Mesa, sits on a Harley-Davidson V-Rod, one of the bikes the shop on Avocado Street rents.

For example, for a long ride down Coast Highway, he'd choose a Honda Goldwing. Or, for a ride through Laguna's twisting canyon roads, he'd take a sportier BMW.

Many of those renting a bike actually own one, he said.

Other renters are those trying to relax after a long week at work, said Daryl Heinly, Proctor's business partner.

"It's like Halloween around here," Heinly said, adding that he's seen renters change from a suit and tie into their riding leathers in the company's parking lot.

Then, the same person who dines at corporate lunch spots during the week, will ride

a rented motorcycle to bike-friendly places such as Cook's Corner in Trabuco Canyon.

"It's just kind of an exciting adventure," Heinly said. "Of course, there's some danger involved, but maybe that just adds to it."

However, he said the danger comes from other drivers on the road, not from the bikers.

As intimidating as a mustachioed, tattooed biker might appear, most are actually friendly, Proctor said. Their easy-going attitudes are probably the result of escaping the stress that fill most people's work lives. Riding a motorcycle brings a sense of freedom, Proctor said.

"You're not penned in by rules and phones," he said. "You just pick a direction and ride."