Filming Zien
Videographer Vicky Cape, foreground, records Dave Zien as he gathers with other bikers Monday evening outside the Lake Hallie Walmart store. A Chicago-based film crew interviewed the former state senator for a planned documentary on motorcyclists who have logged more than 1 million miles.

Ex-lawmaker Dave Zien to be featured in documentary

By Chris Vetter
Chippewa Falls News Bureau

LAKE HALLIE — When TV producer Adam Moore was researching motorcycle enthusiasts for a documentary, it was hard to ignore the story of Dave Zien.

The colorful former state lawmaker logged more than 1 million miles on his 1991 Harley-Davidson Sport Glide. Even after a March 2011 near-fatal crash in Florida that cost him his left leg, Zien continues to ride on a three-wheeled bike.

Moore's five-member crew from Chicago came Monday to the Chippewa Valley to interview Zien for an unnamed documentary project that is financially backed by Sony.

More than 100 motorcyclists gathered Monday evening in the Lake Hallie Walmart parking lot to go for a ride with Zien and be filmed by the cameras.

"It's about Dave — he's the central part — and the motorcycle culture," Moore said.

Moore said he began researching cyclists who have ridden more than 1 million miles, learned about Zien and his story, and contacted the former Republican state senator, who lives in the Chippewa County town of Wheaton.
"Passion turned into perseverance, and here we are," Moore said.

Moore said his goal is to have a finished documentary by the end of the year and submit it to Sony headquarters in Los Angeles. He said it could wind up appearing on Discovery Channel or PBS.

Zien said he was humbled to see so many cyclists turn out for the event, which was announced just two days prior.

"Sony is behind it, and it's a major TV documentary," Zien said. "It's not just about me, it's about the biker way of life. We have such a message to tell. Some of the most generous people are in motorcycle groups."

News of the filming was put out on social media websites, said John Berman, manager of Sport Motors, a Harley-Davidson dealership in Lake Hallie. Berman said he also advertised it in his shop.

Berman said he was excited for the cameras to tell the stories of bikers and particularly volunteer work, such as clothing drives.

"We do a lot for the community that people don't see," Berman said.

Dave Zien File

Age: 62.

Birthplace: Chippewa Falls.

Residence: Chippewa County town of Wheaton.

Family: Four adult children; grandchildren.

Political career:

Republican state assemblyman, 1989-93.


Senate president pro tempore, 2005.

Lost 1996 primary bid in 7th Congressional District.

Other:

Marine Corps Vietnam War veteran.
Reprinted with permission.

Inducted into Motorcycle Hall of Fame in 2000.

Rode more than 1 million miles on a 1991 Harley-Davidson Sport Glide.

Graduated from Cadott High School.

Earned bachelor's degree at UW-Eau Claire.

Earned master's degree at UW-Stout, Menomonie.

Vetter can be reached at 715-723-0303 or chris.vetter@ecpc.com.