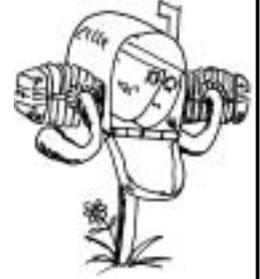


The Mail Boxer

December 2003

BMW MOA #7



The Prez says...

by Todd Erickson

First off, I would like to reiterate thanks to Steve Huber for his extensive service to our club. My comments at the November banquet may have seemed off the cuff and flustered, but I was sincere. I just wanted to make one more important point about Steve's service to our Madison BMW club. There are two leadership styles which I am familiar with. People either lead from the front or they lead from the rear. Steve lead our club from the front with his positive example of being actively involved. Making coffee at the GR3. Setting up registration tents at the GR3. Greeting new folks with a smile. Riding Bert for the necessary details pertaining to GR3 updates. (Really now, who wants to ride Bert Hefty?!) Thank you Steve for leading our club, out front, for all of us to see how it is done. Dang, those ARE some big boots to fill!!

Congratulations and Thank You as well to all who worked behind the scenes of this club in relative silence, without compensation, to make this club work as it does. What we give to the Madison BMW club and it's membership comes back to us many

times over in abundance, and it shows. Give yourselves an attaboy and a pat on the back for another great year of riding and camaraderie. Let's talk riding now.

One of those el nino things is hanging over the coastal oceans again, ready to provide us with some late season riding, albeit wet. Tanya is enjoying her new 650 GS barn door, as much of a barn door as can be fashioned or fastened to such a bike, the Cee Bailey windshield. I am already prepping our race bike for next year's CS engagements that start in April. There are tons of motorcycle related events this winter, indoors and out. We'll discuss them at the December breakfast I'm sure.

Having a hard time holiday shopping for that long lost uncle, aunt, brother, or sister that rides? How about getting them a membership for our club. This way they can better keep track you and your biker buddies. Seriously folks, remember to renew your dues soon and give the gift of our club experience to someone you love. Aw, now take that warm fuzzy feeling out for a ride.

Cheers and Happy Holidays.

Upcoming Events

12/7: 9:00am Club breakfast at the Maple Tree Restaurant in McFarland.

1/1/04: Madison Motorcycle Club New Year's Day Ride. For more information call John Troya at 271-0582.

1/4: 9:00am Club breakfast at the Maple Tree Restaurant in McFarland.

2/1: 9:00am Club breakfast at the Maple Tree Restaurant in McFarland.

2/6-8: Cycle World Show @ Donald Stephens Convention Center 5555 N. River Rd. Rosemont, IL



Club members Peggy Waters and Jan Engelen are having a good time at the club banquet.

V.P.'s Report by Tom Van Horn



Hard to be Humble Field Events:
Bert, Roland, Todd H. and Tanya
carry Betty while blindfolded.

Okay, I guess some of you weren't there (...and why NOT?!?) -

CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2004:

Todd Erickson, President	Betty Bruun, Editor
Tom Van Horn, Vice-President	Todd Herbst, Activities
John Ong, Treasurer	Bert Hefty, Rally Czar
J.T. Wagner, Secretary	

I'd like to slip in here that Derek Engelen is taking over the Members Directories from me, and, unless I prove totally incompetent, I'll be taking over the club web listserv from Matt Berigan (who thought it up, created it, and has maintained it!). Thank you both!!

A quick synopsis of awards:

Most Miles: Steve Lemke(36,400); Bill Jutz(29,151); Steve Huber(19,093)

Commuting: Tanya Erickson (6,000); Jim Low/Bert Hefty (4,000); Dave Maly (2,700)

Sport/Day Rides: Steve L. (15,000); John Schroeder (7,607); Jim Low (6,000) (Bill J. and John Ong said, "All of them")

Touring: Steve L. (21,300); Betty Bruun (10,200); Russ Champion (7,575)

Passenger Miles: Linda Low/Karen Krukenberg(7,000); Tereesa Schroeder (4,076); Sharon Maly (2,000) (Steve Huber mentioned "Consuela"; Yertz Truly mentioned J.T. for helping set a personal pillion milestone...)

Bill J. did 4,450 in 16 days; Tom Schirz did 33,41 in 6; Phil Wilson and Jim Low did 3,300 in 12 and 11 days respectively.

Most Miles in 1 Day: Bill J.(1,142); Roger Klopp(900); Bert H.(780)

2 Days: Bill J.(1,442); Tom S./Roger K.(1,100); Russ C.(1,035)

Nights in a tent: Dave M.(22); Roland Thompson(21); Tanya E.(20) (Steve H. said, "not sure")

Nights in a motel: Russ C.(30); Ed Burington(20); Jim L.(17) (Tom S. said, "all of them"; Steve H.: "Too many", and John O. said, "2 in a dorm"...)

States/Provinces: Betty B. (17); Bill J. and Steve L. (16); Jim L. and Phil W.(15).

Rain Miles: Jim L. (4,700); Peggy Waters (1,853); Dave M. (1,000)

(Bill J. said, "How 'bout 8" of snow in CA in April?"; Bert said, "It's only water.."; and Steve H. said, "..Too many, but it builds character")

Rallies Attended: Steve H. and Tanya E. (9); Betty B. (8); Roger K. (7) (Todd Erickson put down 1 and 1/2)

Trailer Miles: Roland T. (2,600);

Sidecar Miles: Dave M. (3,705); T.V.H.(629) (John O. reported, "All of them.")

Total BMW Miles: Bill J. (710,000+); Dave M. (500,000+); Steve L. (410,000)

Years Riding: Russ C. (51); Dave M. (47); Tom S./Roger K. (40)

GR/3s Attended: Dave M. (All but one); Ben Cimino (24); Russ C. (20)

Shafty character: Quite a few votes received here—Arbitrary high points include:

Peg Waters: Pulled over twice in a day and got no tickets

Dave Laufenberg/Troy Kratz: Still not sold on BMW

J.T. Wagner: "his transmission sure shafted him!" for riding bitch from IL-WV and back

Bert Hefty: "Who else?"

John Ong: "See the hack"

Todd Erickson: For selling the shaft

The new club mascot, the tin flamingo: no reason given

Madison BMW Club

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Treasurer's Report

by John Ong

We reached some new milestones. We ended 2003 with 101 members. This is the first time we broke 100. Last year we ended with 98 members.

The banquet had 50 prepaid folks, plus four walk-ins who ordered off the menu directly. The food was good, although I thought the 18% gratuity coming to \$107.74 was a little steep.

The club picnic was attended by about 40 and the GR3 rally by about 200. I've heard that we're down about 50 due to the 2-wheelers that don't like the long gravel road.

Treasury has about \$4500 in it, but a couple of small bills haven't come in yet.

2004 dues can come in anytime now. \$20 for a primary membership for a calendar year and \$5 for an associate membership.

Secretary's Report

by JT Wagner

Didn't get a count of attendees at the banquet, though the place was full. New club members were voted in en masse. A gratuity of \$100.00 dollars for the wait staff at The Maple Tree was agreed upon by club members for taking care of us at the breakfasts.

Elections were held with the only changes being Todd Erickson as new President. Derek Engelen will be taking care of the membership directory. V.P. is still Tom Van Horn. Secretary is J.T. Wagner, Newsletter Editor is Betty Bruun, Treasurer John Ong, Activities Director, Todd Herbst. And Bert Hefty is still our Rally Czar.

Some awards given out were to Steve Lemke for High Miler with 36,400 miles. Steve Huber got Shafty Character. Steve Huber also got the MOA medallion for his service as president for the past 5 years.

Dues are due in December. Pay up. It looks like Sunday, December 7 is the next breakfast.

V.P.'s Report Cont. by Tom Van Horn

Todd E./Roland Thompson/TVH and others: Who cut their BMW miles by riding those other makes

Alex DePillis nominated himself for "Kickstand Award"

And the Shafty Character for 2003 is: Steve Huber, for: his "I am not a candidate" bit, avoiding lifelong service; for giving himself the shaft at Top O' the Rockies; and for being "ex-prez".

Distinguished Service Medallion: Again, many worthwhile nominations here: J.T., Matt B., and Bert were mentioned for helping Alex after his mishap, and Bert also for running a guy home to Chicago after a GR/3 crackup...

Betty Bruun was mentioned for all her newsletter efforts...

Tom Weisen, for all his Ironman coordination;

Dave Maly, for "All the usual reasons"...

TVH, for "being around for all the years (hm, is that a good thing?)"...

Ed Burington was a close second in voting, for all his numerous led rides...

And the 2003 Distinguished Service Medallion went to Steve Huber, for ALL of his efforts as club President, webmaster, website creator, and etc...

...Thank You, Steve!!

Remember, the next club meeting is 12/07 at the Maple Tree—see yawl there!



Todd cooks breakfast burritos at the RA National Rally with the help of camping neighbor Steve Cox. Of course a chef is not a chef without the hat—but tank bag rain covers will do in a pinch.

The RA National Rally (part 2)

by Betty Bruun

Day 5:

We left the Natchez Trace campground to a balmy 55°. We headed Northeast on the Trace towards Alabama. The Natchez Trace is a true parkway; no commercial vehicles allowed. It is not a particularly curvy road but the scenery is beautiful and the pace a relaxing 60mph. We made several stops to read the history and see the Northernmost cypress swamp in the US. (Probably in the world but I don't remember for sure.) I enjoyed the scenery and the quiet ride enough that I would have been happy to ride the Trace all day. Todd on the otherhand got bored quickly and decided we should try to find BenchWerkz, a BMW restoration parts business, located in Sturgis Mississippi. I could have done without this detour as their driveway was constructed of large chunks of gravel; terrible for a terrified gravel weanie. After all that work to navigate the driveway they weren't even there! We found out later that they had left for the rally earlier that morning.

Back on the road; we planned to reach Birmingham by that evening. (Todd was tired of setting up and taking down the wet tent.) We we found ourselves at Tuscaloosa just in time for rush hour. It was busy but not so bad. About an hour from Birmingham the traffic did not decrease any as we got closer. As a matter of fact the interstate traffic was rather nerve wrecking; bumper to bumper at 75mph. Todd, with undies in a bundle, to be there wove in and out of traffic loosing me several times when there wasn't room for both of us. I called him every dirty name I could think of as I hurried to catch up. On the east side of Birmingham the construction started, the road was a mess with large edge traps at all of the ramps where resurfacing was in progress! In addition to the horrible road condition traffic had come to a stand still but fortunately our exit wasn't far.

Leaving the interstate was a relief, my nerves were shot. The entrance to the Barber Motorsports Track was impressive with big sweeping corners through dense trees. We cruised past a long line of trucks with trailers, RV's and a few bikes. "What is everyone waiting for?" We found out shortly that was a line of vendors and

rally volunteers the only ones who were being admitted early. To my dismay we were directed to a nearby motorcycle campground called 29 Dreams. The woman assured me that we would not need to get back on the interstate to get there it was just a few miles down one of the best motorcycling roads in the area. Great, in my exhausted state I did not even want to be on my bike let alone on a really twisty road!

After what felt like forever, we finally pulled into 29 Dreams which had a gravel driveway! F*@\$ing gravel! At least this was well packed and easy to navigate. We registered and went hurriedly to pitch the tent before it was too dark to see. Finally, Todd and I each with wine in hand went to the main lodge to see if we were too late for dinner. Addressing me, not Todd, the proprietor asked me what it was that I was drinking. "A lovely cabernet," I said. Still addressing me, not Todd, he rather rudely told me to step outside and read their alcohol policy while I finished my glass of wine. My eyes grew wide, I looked at Todd, "is he kicking us out?" I stomped to the door, bitching the entire way about campgrounds with alcohol policies.

After a few moments the owner came out and explained that he was unable to get an alcohol permit and allowing carry-ins could hurt his chance of getting one in the future. Now I appreciate that this man had invested everything he had in his dream of having a motorcycle campground and he was protecting that investment. However, the alcohol policy could have been mentioned at registration, and he could have addressed both Todd and I, and he could have been a little more polite about the situation. So needless to say despite the lovely accommodations I will not return to 29 Dreams nor will I recommend it to my friends.

Day 6

We got up early. Brrr it was cold again around 40°. After stopping for breakfast we headed once again to the rally site.

At registration we were informed that Arkansas has a strict helmet law and

it was to be enforced even on the rally grounds. (This was a source of amusement to me throughout the weekend, seeing people in their shorts and flip flops, shower gear under their arms riding with helmets to the bathroom.) The grounds were immense, we rode around for some time checking out all of the camping locations prior to making a decision on where to pitch the tent.

Camping areas were all on the same side of the road—across from the track—in a row but some distance apart. The noisy area came first at the top of a large hill that was a bit a pain to get up and down on the bike. Some distance down and on the trackside of the road was the pit area where the showers, rally central, and vendors would be located. Again some distance away opposite the track came quiet camping area 1 followed by quiet camping areas 2 and 3. Each camping area was a large flat open area surrounded by trees. We decided decided against the noisy area, we could go party with noisy people then go to our quiet area and sleep in peace once we were tired. We decided on quiet area 1 which was closest to the noisy area and the vendor area. We pitched our tent on a small strip of grass between the entrance way and trees. I'm not sure they really intended people to camp there but it worked out perfectly getting sun most of the day and being near the outhouse but not near enough to smell. Before long Steve and Karen Cox from Columbus, Eric Nyrop also from Columbus, and Bill from Kentucky (who remembered Tanya and I from the Beemers in the Bluegrass rally) moved in and our neighborhood was formed. And just by chance, Phil Wilson pitched his tent not far away.

Other club members Dave Maly, Jim Dickey, and the Jutts were all camped at the noisy area. We of course joined them for beverages in the evening and to Phil's dismay we were all drunk and passed out by 11pm! (Ok, maybe not ALL of us were drunk but it sort of early.)

Day 7

We again woke to a chilly morning. Todd began cooking breakfast burritos for our little neighborhood and any club members who wanted to make the hike from the noisy area. As the cooking

RA National Rally Part 2 Continued...

progressed Todd borrowed more and more cooking gear from our neighborhood campers. Pretty soon everyone was involved and passersby stopped to see what the heck was going on. Jim and Dave made it just in time to ensure that we had no left overs.

A trip to Walmart for more groceries necessitated getting back on the dreaded interstate. We continued up the entire length of the ramp in hopes of a smooth transition onto the newly resurfaced road. Seeing no other choice Todd, in front of me, does an aggressive lane change in order to surmount the edge trap the resurfacing had left. Seeing no other choice, I follow suit with heart pounding. Although, I did keep the bike in my lane the aggressive movement startled other drivers who then left me a wide berth. Good.

Next a scenic ride carefully mapped out by rally volunteers gave detailed

instructions of a 100 mile ride that would take us past both the Taledagga Raceway and the Taledagga Speedway. I was not a big fan of this route as one of the roads although beautiful was little more than one lane with very limited visibility due to dense trees and tall grasses. That alone wouldn't have been bad but the dump trucks careening around corners was enough for me, I wanted to go back to the rally site. But of course to get there gravel roads and with Todd leading plenty of U-turns. (if you've ever ridden with Todd you would know what I mean.)

We had dinner at the rally site and I went to bed early knowing that tomorrow would be a long day as we planned on leaving after the awards ceremony.

Day 8

Another morning, this time relatively warm. Today we intended to hang around the rally site, we'd get enough riding later.

We decided to start the day with the motorcycle museum near the racetrack entranceway. Although not complete, the museum was quite impressive. Many of the bikes were yet unlabeled so many of the bikes I was unable to identify let alone understand their impact on the industry. Despite that, I still enjoyed myself.

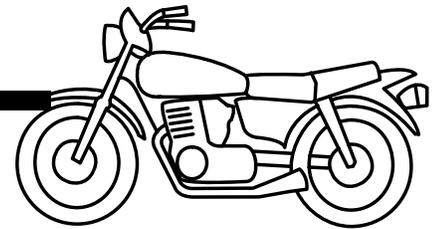
Next up, shopping the vendor area. There was a great vendor turnout and I added many things to my wish list but I came away with nothing but a t-shirt.

The award ceremony was not any better planned than the MOA national despite claims otherwise. I did not sign up for any awards but should have, I'm pretty sure that I would have given the long distance female a run for her money.

We left after the ceremony. With nearly 900 miles to get home I was unwilling to do it in one day. This was a good rally and the site could not have been better!

Buying a New Motorcycle

by P.J. Francis



Just because I have ridden motorcycles since forever—well, since I was 20—I survived my teenage years aboard a bicycle—people assume I know everything about them. Therefore, when people decide to purchase a motorized 2-wheeler for fun, economy or whatever reason they often request my assistance.

I was working at the Ix textile factory in Sixmilebridge, Ireland in the seventies when a coworker, Mick Maher, informed me that he had decided to purchase a motorcycle. Another coworker, a young man who would try to sell sun-beds to Sahara Bedouins, was the seller. I was immediately suspicious.

I arranged to call and examine the machine being proffered en route to my parent's farm on my days off work. It was mid-week as the Ix plant (American, of course) worked 24/7. (It would be another 20 years before I actually discovered that particularly annoying term.) We were 4-cycle shift workers. I ran the warping machine and the money was good.

I found the remote hill farm without too much difficulty. My arrival coincided with the preparation of a sumptuous meal by the seller's mother. I felt she had been holding off on serving the meal in anticipation of my arrival. The sale of the motorcycle was obviously an important occurrence in the household. The good woman was probably glad that her son, her pride and joy and the inheritor of the family farm, had finally saved-up enough money from working at the textile factory for a down payment on a sensible car. (Probably a Ford Escort or a Vauxhall Viva). He was getting rid of that dirty, noisy and dangerous motorbike at last. He had probably arrived home bruised and bloody, not to mention frozen to the bone in winter, on far too many occasions. The fact

that the local bars remained opened, illegally, to accommodate shift workers did not help.

Anyway, he was never going to find a nice girl to settle down with while he was gallivanting about on that old thing. The neighbor's daughter would not want chain grease on her stockings. He could not transport her, resplendent in her long evening gown, to the annual Macra na Ferma (farmer's club) dinner dance at the Old Ground Hotel.

Several other family members made an appearance for the meal which was admittedly, quite wholesome. There were a number of younger sons none of whom were in line to inherit the place, I assumed. A Boeing 747 to America would take care of them in time honored fashion. The man of the house sat at the head of the table but uttered not a word. A hen-pecked man if there ever was one.

The woman apologized to me for not having any attractive daughters. She did not, in fact, have any daughters attractive or otherwise. Sure, wouldn't I be calling on them on a regular basis to see those mythical daughters, she suggested. Maybe so. They would have to be very attractive indeed, if I was to overlook the manipulative characteristics they had inevitably, inherited from their mother. Fortunately it was all theoretical and I did not have to deal with the situation. Thank God for small mercies.

After the meal was consumed I was ushered unceremoniously to the farmyard. The son retrieved the motorcycle from its place of rest in the dark confines of a cow byre.

Ohmygod, I thought as he pushed the motorcycle towards me. Beneath the cow dung, rust and general decay I recognized a

Buying a New Bike Continued...

Honda 90. I had owned such a machine in the recent past. Traded it in against the Honda CD175 I had arrived on. Lovely bike it had been. I covered 14,000 miles in 9 months on that machine which goes to show just how much I liked it.

As I observed the unfortunate motorcycle being pushed across the farmyard I wondered how anyone could allow any machine to degenerate to such a state. The headlight was hanging limply in its mounting. The direction indicators were missing and their multi-colored wires were hanging uselessly on the mountings. The gas tank boasted several dents. All the chrome parts were rusted from many nights of being parked outside in all weathers. The seat was torn.

What would the Japanese guys who carefully and proudly placed the shiny new Honda 90 in its crate have thought if they could see it now?

"It's a bit hard to start," I was informed. "Hasn't been used in a while." No kidding, I thought. Or words to that effect. "I'll have to push start it. The battery's dead," stated Number One Son as he proceeded to run alongside the stricken vehicle. I placed my hand on the rear mudguard and helped to push. It seemed like the appropriate thing to do.

When adequate momentum had been attained, that is when we could not run any faster, Number One Son attempted to jump on-board in the time honored practice for starting an ailing motorcycle. When he was about to gain contact with what was once the seat, but now was a piece of rusty sheet metal with rotting foam attached, it fell to the ground. The unfortunate guy landed heavily on the jagged frame and, I was certain, in the

process rendered himself useless to the girl next door.

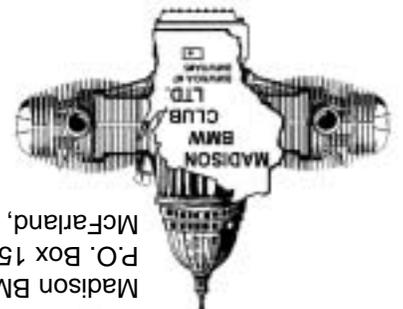
"I think it needs a service," he exclaimed as he sat there in obvious pain. I admired his fortitude. He hopefully suggested that he would make an adjustment to the price of the 90 if I was willing to "check the plugs and points." I pushed up the sleeve of my waxed-cotton Barbour jacket and remembered informing my parents that I would arrive early.

His mother came rushing from the house when she saw me fastening my red metal-flake Centurina helmet. "Are you going to buy it, then?" she worriedly inquired no doubt hearing the sound of wedding bells fading in the distance. "I think it needs a service," I said as I quickly kickstarted my CD175 and headed down the farm track.

I met Mick Maher on a recent visit to Sixmilebridge. He never did acquire a motorcycle or any other form of motorized transportation. He is the coach of the local soccer team and has the ability to consume pints of Guinness with impressive rapidity. I believe he has been a recipient of social welfare for many years since Ix closed and he lost his job as training supervisor.

I will be eternally grateful to him for having taught me how to make the weaver's know. That particular skill has been invaluable to me over the years.

As one of my fellow trainees stated at the time: "He has great fingers for the job."



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