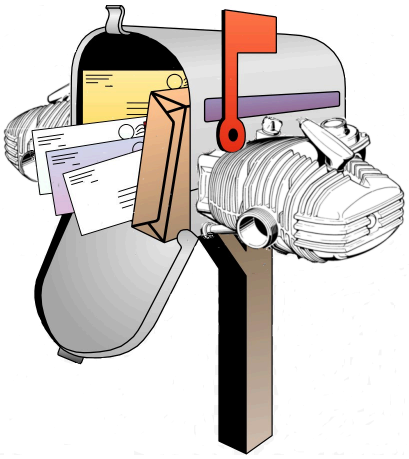


THE MAIL BOXER

MADISON BMW CLUB ~ January 2026
BMW MOA #7 BMW RA #5

Established 1968

Click! Renew Dues or Join

Hello 2026! Club News and BMW Stories to Brighten Winter Ahead!

President's Letter

Greetings!
Happy 2026 everyone. It's a new year and I'm looking forward to some great rides with you.

I'm not gonna be able to attend the January meeting because I'm making my first trip out to Utah to begin our move to that fine state. Those of you who attended December's meeting might remember I mentioned my intent to retire there in 2-3 years.

Anyway, I'm sure that Tom will do an admirable job of running the show on Jan. 4.

I was sad to see that BMW has decided to discontinue the GS 310, but I am excited to see the new 450 when they finally decide to let the United States have it. An aspirational new bike in the garage? Anyway, happy new year to you all and I'll see you in February.

SamG

Inside This Newsletter!

- News from Our Officers
- Links to BMW stories, podcasts, videos to enjoy while you hibernate
- Renew your Dues - Or Join up. Whatcha waitin' for?
- Upcoming events
- Welcome New Members!

Upcoming Events

- **Sun. Jan. 4, 8:30 a.m. - Club Monthly Meet-Up and Breakfast Eat-Up!** Tully's II, **6401 Monona Dr, Monona, WI 53716.** Come around 8:30 a.m. to order your breakfast. Club meeting starts 9:00 a.m.

- **Sun. Feb. 1, 8:30 a.m. - Club Monthly Meet-Up and Breakfast Eat-Up!** Tully's II, **6401 Monona Dr, Monona, WI 53716.** Come around 8:30 a.m. to order your breakfast. Club meeting starts 9:00 a.m.

Tully's II - Monona = see you there

Quick Up-Dates from Club Officers

It's so obvious, but are we all doing it?

From Tom Lubben - Club Vice President & Rally Chair

Hi everyone,
Now that we are into January, it's that time of year when it seems like everything is on hold. *But really, this is the time of year when we need to get the bikes and gear ready for the spring season.*
First, make note of your odometer readings for the 2026 mileage contest! Since we award that in November, if you have it as of November 1 2025, use that. If not, go look at your odometer(s) now. Write it down, send yourself a text or take a picture, whatever. But record it!

For me, winter maintenance is one of those things I often put off, then regret doing that when I discover something I should have taken care of. The obvious thing right now is to finish installing the rebuilt transmission in my Green Machine R75/5. It's in place, and bolted up, but none of the ancillary items, like the clutch lever, cable, neutral light, and airbox items are in. I have a propane *(continued below)*

Madam Secretary says.... by Linda Low

President Sam Garst called the December meeting to order at 9:03 AM. Rhonnie Garcia is now a BMW MOA Ambassador. Sam presented her with the award and accompanying swag.
VP Tom Lubben – We voted on monthly breakfast locations and agreed to continue coming to Tully's II. Also, there is no change in the August picnic location (Brigham County Park). However, the attending members agreed that we should look into other Club banquet locations as the food and prices at Esquire Club are not satisfactory.
Treasurer Susan North – She will be meeting with Sue Rihn in a couple of days to have duties turned over.
GR3 Tom Lubben – A new committee has formed (Tom, Susan, Chris, Jim H., Jim K., and Liz). The 2026 rally will not change too much from the previous year (American Legion catered meal, guided rides).
Some of the possible changes are:

- Sprucing up the gazebo for registration to utilize tarps on tracks like we did previously for the pavilion
- Reserving the gazebo for registration only and moving info booth to our white tent

(minutes continued below)

Welcome to our newest member!

Rob Bartle - Brooklyn, WI

BMW Stories, Videos, Podcasts to brighten winter's lull

Liz Jacobs, Newsletter Editor

Got the winter blues? Your club newsletter editor picked a few BMW stories to brighten your January. When you get that motorcycle itch and it's snowy out, explore these videos, podcasts and short biographies of people I've learned about who made history on BMWs. Some you may be aware of. Others may be new to you.

For instance, you might have known that BMW motorcycles grew in the US because of Butler & Smith, the importer of BMW motorcycles in North America from the 1950s through 1990s. There was a nice article in the July 2025 *BMW MOA News* on that history.

But you might not have heard of Danny and Arlene Liska, whose 1950s/1960s journeys on their 1958 R/60 BMW caught Butler and Smith's attention as a perfect advertising opportunity. (cont.)

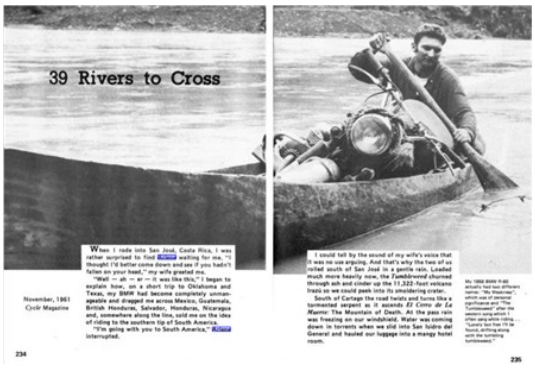
Continued... In the late 1950s Nebraskan Danny Liska was the first person to complete riding over 95,000 miles between the Arctic Circle and the tip of South America. He did it on his 1958 BMW R/60. Arlene, who married Danny a few years before, rode portions with him as his passenger, mainly throughout South America, spending months with Danny on the bike and when off the bike, running their cattle ranch in Niorobra NE. Both wrote articles for newspapers and motorcycle magazines of their journey to earn money. For this feat, Danny Liska is included in the *Guinness Book of Motorcycle Facts and Feats*.

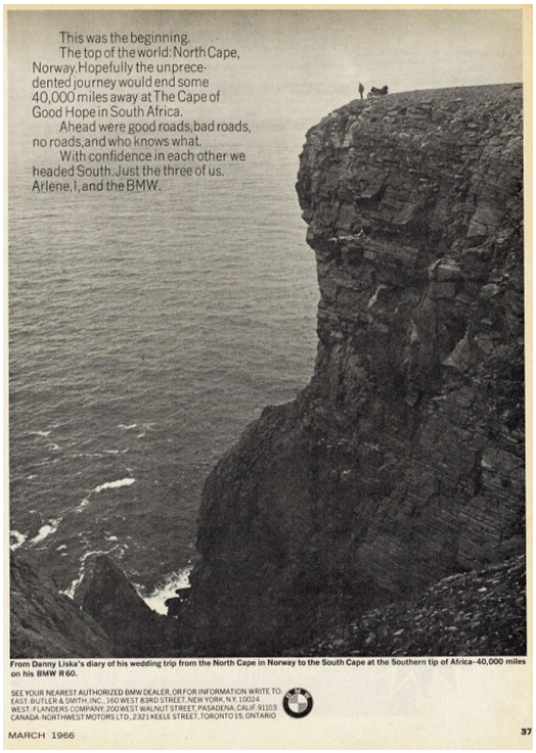
The articles and interviews they did attracted Butler and Smith's attention. Butler and Smith convinced BMW to donate a new R/60 to Danny and Arlene as a promotion to have them ride from the tip of Norway to the tip of South Africa. The advertising was dubbed "The Honeymoon Trip" even through the couple had been married 12 years by then.

In late August of 1963, the Liska's flew to Germany to pick up their BMW and begin their tour. No individual rider, much less a 2-up couple, had ever documented a ride from the north cape of Norway to Cape Agulhus, the southernmost part of South Africa. It took them 15 months and 40,000 miles to accomplish the feat.

By luck, I was introduced to Arlene in her late 80's, and wrote her letters, sent birthday and Christmas cards, small gifts and flowers until she died in Nov. 2024 at age 94 in Verdige, NE. Danny died in 1995. I've included some publicly available photos of the ads BMW ran using them. One of them hangs in my pole barn.

You can learn more about Danny and Arlene at this Iron Butt Association link. Here's a link directly to her interview**: https://www.ironbutt.com/liska/LivingHere.pdf** A digital copy of Danny's book using many of Arlene's photos about their South American journey can be found here, written in the 1980s: **Internet Archives: https://archive.org/details/danny-liska-two-wheels-to-adventure-1989/page/n7/mode/2up**





January Blues? Watch this GS1250 video of the Adventure Cannonball Rally

I found this video of Robert Baldinger's 8-day ride across the United States well done, entertaining and perfect for an evening viewing. Perhaps you'll enjoy it too.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9glA5GU17iY&t=728s

Have a favorite YouTube episode, podcast or motorcycle book you'd like to share? Email me - Liz Newsletter Editor - at beekeeper60021@gmail.com.

Oh - one more...here's **one podcast** of Aussie Ian McPhee's journey to set a world record riding to 49 US states in alphabetical order on his 2000 BMW R1100RT, sharing the journey with Wendy Crockett, a motorcycle rally friend of your newsletter editor. If it could go wrong...it would. Their book **Pushing Miles** is a good winter read. I hope these stories get you through winter!

It's Obvious... - Club VP message continued

...radiant heater in a somewhat insulted garage, so I can work when it's 25F or above, but no colder. The other big item that I have hanging over my head is my wife's 1955 R50, which has all new paint, rebuilt engine, transmission and rear drive, and is mostly set to be assembled, but it is a daunting task. I suppose I need to just get started.

GR3 planning is coming along, and thanks to Chris Brown, who has listed the things he did last year, it has every chance of proceeding smoothly.

The National this year is a long haul, so hopefully there will be some high mileage readings! Google Maps tells me it is about 1150 miles each way to either go through Sault Ste Marie and Ontario, or grind through all the cities along the southern shores of the Great Lakes. I know which one I would prefer! Maybe now is a good time to start making sure you have the necessary documents to drive through Canada, if you plan on doing that.

Hope to see you at the meeting!

Cheers,

Tom Lubben

...December meeting minutes continued from Linda Low

- New logo for 51st Madison rally – "Area 51"
- Possibility of having online registration for volunteer shifts

- More advertising and coordinating with other clubs such as Chicago, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin
- Registration payment options (online with MOA facility costs us 8% loss of proceeds)
- Possible hike in rally fee (committee will pull together a best guess budget to justify the increase)
- Looking into rally t-shirts

Newsletter Liz Jacobs – New format was well-received. A little snafu with not publishing the November meeting minutes in full which required a second distribution. With newsletter on the Club website, we can track stats such as open rate (72% for 67 emails sent out, clickable links usage). Discussed possible broader distribution of newsletter (Club FaceBook page subscribers, GR3 attendees) to enhance marketing the Club. MOA can send out an email blast for us. Liz will be added as a FaceBook administrator and she will work with Jim Harms in updating our website.

Membership Jim Low – Pay dues now. Associate members can list their own email address and cell number to get direct communications from the Club.

RA Randy Boris – Planning for 2026 rally in Chippewa Falls is underway. GS Giants online club has dissolved.

New Members and Visitors – Rob Bartel is a new member. John (friend of Chad) is a visitor.

Other topics

· Alan Penn has passed away. Susan will arrange for flowers to be sent to Joann Hayes.

· A suggestion to choose a different breakfast location during riding season and roll a ride, breakfast, and meeting into one event.

· A suggestion to have breakfast meetings in July and September rather than skipping those months.

· Rhonnie will set up an Instagram account for the Club.

· Sam is moving to Utah in 3 years.

· Ride activity suggestions – Wisconsin Rustic Roads, scavenger hunt

Meeting adjourned at 10:02.

Membership Form - If you prefer to write a check for your membership, print this newsletter page and use this form:

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DUES: $30 full year. Spouse: $5

Complete the form, make your check payable to Madison BMW Motorcycle. Mail to:
P.O. Box 5601 Madison, WI 53705-5601.

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

Email:

Spouse information, if applicable:
Name: Email: Phone number:

Optional Information: BMW MOA#: BMW RA#: AMA #:

Motorcycles you own - List Year/Make/Model
1)
2)
3)

Other Interests:

2026 Club Officers

Sam Garst President (through 2026)
email: guanocave@gmail.com

Tom Lubben Vice President (through 2027)
email: lub_sur@sbcglobal.net

Linda Low Secretary (through 2026)
email: lrlow2@gmail.com

Susan North Treasurer (through 2027)
email: sunorth@yahoo.com

2026 Club Officials

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Bert Hefty Activities Director
email: bhefty1954@gmail.com

Tom Lubben 2026 GR3 Rally Chair
email: lub_sur@sbcglobal.net

Jim Low Membership
email: lowjim09@gmail.com

2026 Club Board Members

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email: guanocave@gmail.com

Tom Lubben
email: lub_sur@sbcglobal.net

Susan North
email: sunorth@yahoo.com

Linda Low
email: lrlow2@gmail.com

Jim Kossow
email: jkossow53@gmail.com

Click! RENEW YOUR DUES OR JOIN TODAY

Submit Your Story, Product Review or Ride Photos for our February Newsletter by Jan. 15.

Just email Liz at **beekeeper60021@gmail.com** with your photo(s) and text.

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