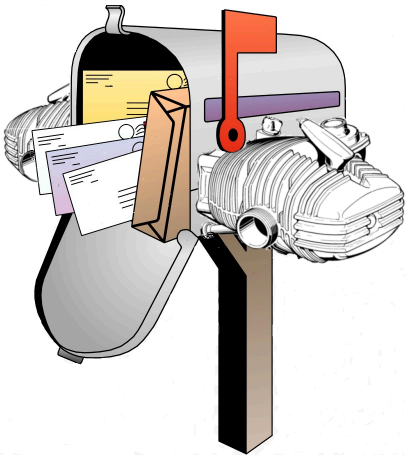


THE MAIL BOXER

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

Established 1968

Click! Renew Dues or Join

Rallies, Leadership and Beer

By Chris Brown, Club Secretary

GR3: A Formerly Confident Man Reflects

The Great River Road Rally has been in Soldiers Grove for some time now, same weekend every year—the one after Mother's Day. We'll see what Mother Nature brings us this time—rain, shine, or the occasional attempt by the Kickapoo River to reclaim the campground—and still, we show up.

Last year, I chaired the rally, which I say now with the calm tone of a man who has survived something he did not fully understand at the time. Going in, I assumed GR3 planning was mostly about confirming a few details, making sure there were porta-potties and such, and then standing around looking mildly in charge.

What I discovered is that everything except the place is up for discussion: food, coffee, logistics, and, of course, *beer*. (story continues further below.)

President's Letter

Welcome to April. The Wild Goose ride is coming up quickly, so make plans to join the club in Beaver Dam for the unofficial/official opening of the 2026 riding season. The GR3 is only a month away. The GR3 committee has been very busy working to bring us and our guests another great rally. I would like to see a big turnout of club members at our Rally, so please join us in Soldiers Grove any way you can. It is a beautiful day ride in the driftless region of our state, so if you are not able to stay overnight with us, come out, stop by, and ride with our club. I am looking forward to joining up with one of the planned routes this year since I was on the injured reserve last year. Lets go ride together!

SamG

Inside This Newsletter!

- **Reflections from Chris Brown about rallies...and beer.**
- **Mark your Calendars - upcoming events**
- **Welcome new members**

- **2026 Rally T-SHIRTS ready for purchase April 12!**
- **Triple Nickel and Car Camping by Jim Harms**
- **Club ride to Annual Wild Goose Run April 19**

Upcoming Events

- **Sun. April 12, 8:30 a.m. - Club Monthly Meet-Up and Breakfast Eat-Up!** Tully's II, **6401 Monona Dr, Monona, WI.** Come at 8:30 a.m. to order breakfast. Club meeting starts 9:00 a.m.
  - PLUS 2026 GR3 T-Shirts Ready to Purchase!

- **Sun. April 19, Noon - 41st Annual Wild Goose Run,** Bayside Supper Club, Beaver Dam, WI. Club Ride to location starts at 11 a.m. at **CP/Petro Mart at 4905 Commercial Ave., Madison**. Otherwise, meet us there. Details below.

- **Sat. April 25, 40th Flea Market/Moto Expo**, Leaf River, IL (Blackawk BMW Club - see further down for details)

- **May 15-17** - **Madison BMW Club's 51st GR3 Rally,** Soldiers Grove WI. Great food, riding and fun.

- **June 11-13** - BMWMOA 2026 Rally, Vermont

- **June 18-21** - BMWRA 2026 Rally, Chippewa Falls, WI

Tully's II - Monona = see you there

Pre-register for the GR3 Today. Click the logo above.

Welcome New Members!

It's great to see new faces joining our club!
Let's welcome:

Matt Harbert, Wautoma
Jeff Kirchman, Verona
Jerald Polly, Oregon
Jeff Schultz, Stoughton
Brent Starry, DeForest

Hope to see you guys at a meeting, a club ride (Wild Goose!!!), the GR3, our picnic, our banquet...or just on the road!

News from VP Tom...

Tom Lubben - Club Vice President & Rally Chair

Hi everyone,

It looks like the consensus for our November dinner meeting is that we do it at Great Dane Eastside, 876 Jupiter Drive, on the far east side of Madison. Details will follow, and we still need to decide on a plated meal or a buffet, as well as things like whether we use drink tickets (which gets credited to the room minimum) or just a cash bar (which does not).

On a similar note, the Club Picnic is August 2nd, at the usual location at the Brigham County park shelter. We have it reserved from 10AM to 9:30 PM, which is the default, but I think we will do our normal time. If groups of over 25 want to have alcohol, we need a permit. We probably will be right at that number, so discretion is advised. Of course, all this will be re-visted when it is closer.

GR3 plans are coming along well, **Click here for our on-line signup sheet for volunteering**. We need the help, and you will get a lot more out of the event if you participate! We will have plenty of flyers to give to all of you to distribute at the April 12 meetings also. Put some in car/truck, or in the tank bag, and post them everywhere you stop!

Remember, because of Easter, the meeting in on the 2nd Sunday of April (the 12th), not the first Sunday!
See you then.
Tom Lubben, VP
Tom

CLICK HERE FOR RALLY VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Volunteer to help at the Club rally. Be a cook, server, registration person, put up/tear down help.... It's easy by using the sign up button above. Most slots are 3 hours.

Gentlemen... get your 2026 Madison Club GR3 T-shirts at the April 12 meeting. $25. GR3 logo bold on the back, Club logo tasteful on the front. Snazzy.

Ladies...get your 2026 Madison Club GR3 T-shirts at the April 12 meeting. $25. GR3 logo dainty on the front. Club logo dainty on the back. Snazzy too!

Rallies, Leadership and Beer story by Chris Brown...continued

Continued from above...

Now, I made a critical mistake early on—I believed beer was a simple category. It is not; it is a deeply personal identity. Domestic versus microbrew, light versus dark, local versus “I’m not drinking that.” I offered, at one point, that “a beer is a beer,” which I now understand is how conflicts begin. For the record, I can tell the difference between a Coors and a Guinness. Everything in between exists in what I would call the “also beer” region. This position did not gain traction.

But the real surprise wasn’t the beer—it was the divide.

On one side, the Campfire Crowd: good people who believe GR3 should remain what it has always been—friends, a fire, no schedule worth arguing about, and the quiet understanding that nothing needs to be improved. **On the other, the Growth Group:** equally good people who talk about outreach, sustainability, and making sure this thing is still around when the rest of us finally miss one for the last time.
And there I was, somewhere in the middle, trying to figure out how to promote something the other half might consider impeachment-worthy.

And yet, the rally happened—which, in hindsight, feels less like planning and more like a minor miracle held together by people who knew what they were doing while I smiled confidently nearby.

This year, I'm back on the committee in a much more appropriate role: observer, standing by in case of emergency—which, so far, has not been necessary because the current chair is doing an outstanding job.

What I've learned, now that I'm safely out of the blast radius, is this: the people who want to keep it the same—I understand them now. The people who want to move it forward—I understand them too. The people who've done this before? I underestimated them. The person doing it now? I respect the heck out of him. Because when you sit in those conversations—really sit in them—you realize there isn't one way to do this right. There are a dozen, maybe more. Some people build it quietly, some push it forward, some hold the line, and all of them care more than they let on.

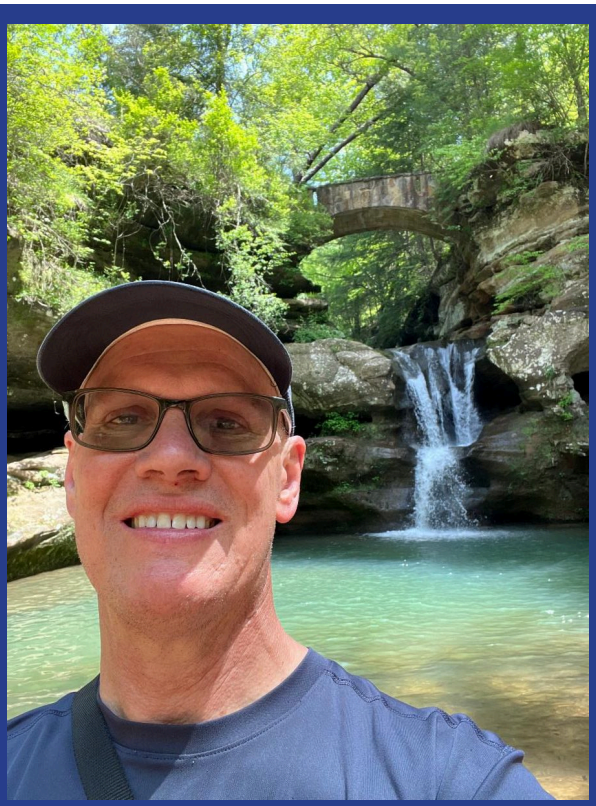
And somehow, through all the opinions, all the personalities, and all the very serious discussions about beverages, it comes together. Every year.

So if you've ever thought about volunteering—chairing, helping, stepping in—I'd encourage it. It's a great way to see how the sausage is made, and an even better way to realize just how good the people around you really are.

Tom Van Horn to lead group ride to Wild Goose Run, Beaver Dam, 4/19

As in the past, Tom will be leading a leisurely back road run up to Beaver Dam, leaving from the PetroMart around 10:00, arrival around 11:00. The run up to the 2026 Goose Run will leave the **CP/Petro Mart at 4905 Commercial Ave.** This is just east of Thompson Dr and north of Hwy 30. If you approach from 30, exit at Thompson. Commercial runs parallel to and just north of 30.

You can get advance tickets from Tom but he needs to **know by Saturday April 11th!** tvh@beemerhill.com; 608-695-6784.



Triple Nickel and Car Camping - Jim Harms

Last spring club member Randy Boris and I did a good job of talking up the 2025 National RA Rally at Athens

The Triple Nickel is a very technical road that winds through the Ohio countryside. Lots of farmland, hills, tight off camber curves and blind hills. It's very rewarding, but it also requires your attention. I did see the police pulling one bike out of the ditch who took a turn too fast.

The Rim of the World is a bit more relaxed and easier to navigate. Views at the top of the hills reminded me of our Driftless Hills, only much taller. Unlike Wisconsin, you will not find any kind of gravel or paved shoulder.

The tent experiment turned out well. I purchased the UNP 6-Person SUV Tailgate Tent which is a tall 6-person tent that can work either stand alone or attached to your uplifted tail gate.

A comfy double-sized air mattress fit perfectly in the back of my Chevy and opened to the tent where I kept my camp chair, gear, etc. My only complaints were that the bungees to attach the bottom part of the tent to the back wheels were too short. This was fixed by extra bungees. It also had some small air gaps that I could have fixed, but it wasn't mosquito season yet. So, I'd recommend this tent if this is something you'd like to try. It basically paid for itself after 3 nights of camping vs. hotel rooms.

It's a great area to ride in and visit. If you get there, I highly recommend that you visit the free state park called Hocking Hills. It's full of deep gorges, caves and

Ohio. I couldn't make it during that time, so I decided to check the area out earlier in the year.

It was also a test run to try out a new tent that attaches to the back of my SUV. In mid-May, I trailed the bike out to this SW corner of Ohio, not far from West Virginia. I camped at Burr Oak State Park, which was located 30 minutes from Athens along a motorcycle loop known as Rim of the World.
That was one of the 'Windy 9' motorcycle routes that originate out of Athens. The Triple Nickel (Hwy 555) was also on list.

Over 3 days, I rode good portions of both routes. Several rainy days after that cut my trip short. This was my 3rd time riding the Triple Nickel and it's one of my favorites. It extends from Zanesville Ohio to Parkersburg West Virginia. Be sure to fill up first as gas options are limited.

waterfalls along a trail that is very easy to hike. It's rated among the top 10 state parks in the country.

Meeting Minutes - March 2026

By Chris Brown, Club Secretary

March 2026

Sixteen members of the Madison BMW Club gathered recently at Tully's 2 to conduct important club business, which we nearly accomplished before discovering that our bylaws require 20 people for a quorum. This meant we were fully qualified to discuss things at length, but technically forbidden to decide any of them, which is surprisingly close to how many meetings operate anyway.

President Sam Garst opened the meeting and suggested we might want to reconsider the quorum rule, observing that winter has apparently driven many members into hibernation. On cold Sunday mornings, motorcycles—and their riders—tend to stay parked. If you have any thoughts on the matter, shoot him an email.

The club also paused to recognize longtime member John S. Ong, whose contributions to the club meant a great deal to many of us. A proposal is underway to rename the club's service award in his honor.

Vice President Tom Lubben then reported that our search for a future meeting location has been narrowed to two finalists: Vintage Brew Pub and Great Dane East. Menus were examined carefully, as any responsible

motorcyclist would do when faced with a serious decision involving food.

Preparations for GR3 continue moving forward, flyers are circulating, and routes are posted online. The website has also been updated and is now mobile-friendly, which means it works on phones, tablets, and possibly even devices that some of us still believe are science fiction.

We welcomed new member Jeff Schultz, who rides an F800GT and has been on BMW motorcycles for an impressive 38 years—long enough to have seen several generations of riders, motorcycles, and questionable riding gear trends come and go.

As always, the meeting covered a wide range of topics including club finances, newsletters, sponsorships, websites, shirts, and the ongoing mystery of who currently has access to the PO box.

Last Bits and Bobbles

A couple of final notes for the membership:

- Liz Jacobs is always looking for photos and short articles for the newsletter. If you have ride pictures, stories, or anything club-related worth sharing, please send them her way.
- Susan North still has plenty of 2025 club shirts available for $25. If your wardrobe is lacking in proper BMW club attire, Susan can remedy that.
- John is looking for recommendations for someone who can re-cover the seat on his K-1200. If you know a good upholsterer, please contact him.

Madison BMW Club Presents:

The 51st Annual Great River Road Rally

- 2 nights camping
- Free firewood
- Meals Friday and Saturday night!

Spaces for tents, cars, or campers. BRING THE FAMILY!

May 15-17, 2026
Soldiers Grove, WI

Guided rides to Pete's Hamburgers Muscoda Mushroom Festival and other places!

In the middle of the Driftless Area, The BEST riding in the Midwest (and other places too) ☺

ALL BRANDS WELCOME!
Including scooters!
We want to see all of you!

$50 fee per person (on-site cash or check only)
(children under 12 free)
Incentive for pre-registration (see website).
Rally fee includes:

- 2 nights camping
- Firewood
- Evening meal Friday and Saturday.
- Roofed shelter with tables
- Led rides, plus pdf and gpx files

To get to Soldiers Grove Beauford T. Anderson Park - 101 Church St, Soldiers Grove, WI 54655

The easy boring way: Take US14 to US61 and head 5 miles south.
For non-boring ways, check our website for pdf or gpx files from Madison, the Twin Cities, or other points.

Social tent with Bring one/Take one Cooler
Mp3 Bluetooth player available
Vendors on site
Coffee/Tea/Lemonade
Quiet areas
Bling bag
Door prizes
Field games
Prizes: long distance, oldest, youngest bike, rider etc.

For up-to-date information:
https://madisonbmwclub.org/gr3/

Click! RENEW YOUR DUES OR JOIN TODAY

Submit Your Story, Product Review or Ride Photos for our March Newsletter by April 25 for the May Issue. Really...we want your photos and stories!

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

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