



BMW MOA Charter 280

Mid-Atlantic Riders' Rag

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The Monthly Newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Riders

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From the President

This newsletter is going to be a bit shorter than last month's. I've called in too many favors from past contributors over the past several months, and now I see them run for cover when I walk into a room – except for Davis who's a real life saver with his articles. A short newsletter does have its advantages: I don't have to buttonhole every member I meet for an article, we save on ink and postage for those newsletters that have to be mailed, and there is less work to put it together every month.

It's not just the newsletter that's changing, as many of you know, but we're also going through a period of change with our breakfast location in New Castle County. No one is enthused about Damon's, so we tried the Bear Diner. It

Next Breakfast

Our next breakfast will be at the Maple Dale Country Club in Dover at 9 AM on July 9.

was ok, but the LOUD group we had to share the room with made our conversations difficult. I couldn't make a little speech and present Ride Leader coffee mugs to Dean Smith and Bill Borda, or make a presentation to Dan Davis for all the behind-the-scenes work he and Carolyn do for the club. Unfortunately, the other group has a standing reservation at the diner, so we must continue our quest. I want to thank Davis for making the effort to find the Bear Diner. The club sincerely appreciates his effort, but it's unfortunate it didn't work out.



Tracy Novacich has offered to find the club another location that's reasonably priced and has a private area and a buffet.

I read an article recently that said the Vatican is soliciting information from anyone who witnessed a miracle after the death of Pope John Paul II. They're considering him for sainthood and any proof of miracles after his passing will be considered. I sent them an e-mail telling them Bill Borda led a ride that required sixth gear. We'll see what happens.

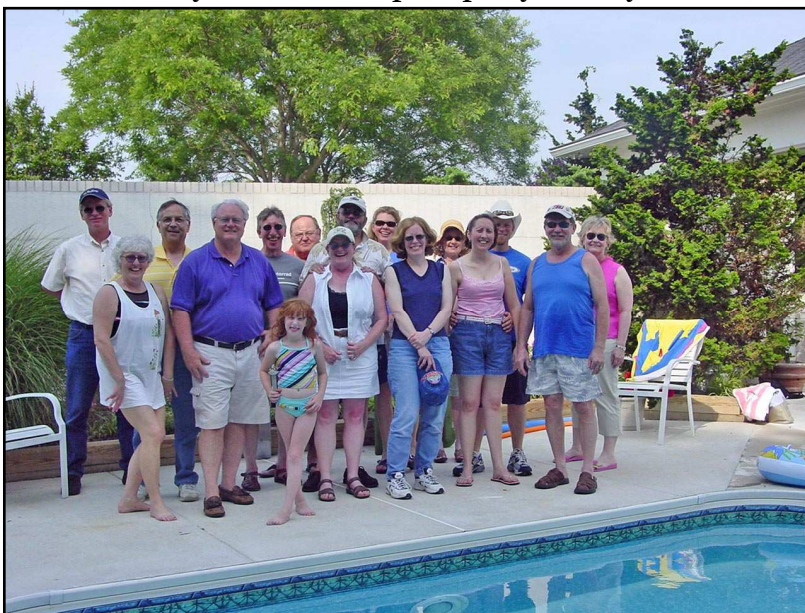
Ride Leaders Needed

While on the subject of quick rides...a quick look at our website shows you how much we need members to lead rides. After this weekend's West Virginia ride we'll have almost nothing listed and the entire summer is ahead of us. We don't just need leaders for long rides; we need them for short lunch rides on a weekend or a dinner ride on a week night. We can certainly use your help, so please give it some thought, get in contact with me and let's go! We're also looking for someone to lead a ride after the July breakfast. Anyone interested? If you are a first time leader then the club has a nice Ride Leader coffee mug for you.

I used to call members to ask them to lead rides, but it's getting more difficult now that most have Caller ID.

The Big Splash at Jay's

For those of you who could not attend Jay and Susan's pool party in Smyrna on June 25, you missed a great time, and the weather couldn't have been more accommodating. Thirteen club members came to the bash along with ten or so members of Susan and Jay's family. As was the case last year, there was enough food to feed three times the number of guests, and a surprising number of us actually got into the pool.



For those not inclined to get wet, there was plenty of time to talk and catch up on what's happening in our lives. We also had a chance to get better acquainted with several new members.

One of the highlights of the event was seeing Larry Schmittinger on his Harley Davidson Deuce (that's right, he joined the Dark Side) and wearing his Harley outfit! We're not going to say he made a lot of noise when he left, but most our hearing returned to normal by Monday. Some of us noticed Jay's neighbors putting a For Sale sign in his front yard as we were leaving.

Another Sign-up Sheet

Robert Davis

The time has come to send out the sign-up sheet for Grand Canyon Part Two. This one should be even more fun than the last, because this time we know what we are doing. And we have a load of fun on tap. Here is the short version:

Friday September 16th 10 a.m. sharp, we head out for the Grand Canyon of PA.

Saturday 17th Breakfast at Harland's, then rocket chairs and wannabes go carve the twisties while Barcaloungers and usedtobes ride to Penn's Cave for a boat trip through an underground river; returning by way of the Woolrich store.

In the afternoon, rocket chairs and Barcaloungers, campers and motel dwellers, we all meet up at Camp Stony Fork for a pig roast and bonfire.

Sunday 18th Breakfast at Harland's, then rocket chairs to the twisties, while the Barcaloungers head North to the Finger Lakes region of New York, for a nine winery five hour tour with food at every stop.

In the evening, rocket chairs and Barcaloungers join again, this time in town, for a play festival at the local theater.

Monday 19th Home again, home again.

Read the full write up in the newsletter archives from a couple months ago. If you're in, let me know now; the email is annie@webmost.com and the phone is (302) 345-0807.

BMWMOA Emergency Non-Assistance

Robert Davis

Almost one a.m., the tow truck driver is writing down his starting mileage when he exclaims "Oh no! You're not gonna want to hear this!"

"What?"

"The odometer reads 6666!"

We both busted out laughing. It figures. What a day.

Thursday, June 9th, Paul I-Ride-Everywhere Reburn, the Redhead and I ripped off 450 miles out to Winchester VA and to several places in West Virginia scouting for a rally site. Returning from Berkeley Springs WV down I-70, we ran through a real frog strangler, complete with lightning, hail, 50 yard visibility, hub high floods, the works. One of those cataclysmic once in ten years better pull over before you die then pour a quart out of your boots and hole up raingear was a joke oh my God thunder squalls. What they call down there a holler fillin' trailer floater.

Well, Annie mighta gotten water in her works while we holed up. Because when it settled down to mere rain, we set off again, and about a hundred miles down the road her left jug suddenly cut out. Still had plenty of power running on one side, so I rode another couple miles looking for a way off the slab. Time I pulled off at the next exit, the crossover and right muffler were cherry boiling red. I mean you coulda read a Bible by the light of 'em. This morning, they're burnt pitch black.

The tow home is another story. Tow driver suspended Annie from the two cables of a regular hoist, two straps round the triple clamp to one cable and two straps round the frame under the seat to the other cable, and securely stretched her between those cables and the T-bar of a tow truck, wheels lashed to the bar, bar stayed to the body. Niftiest example of engineering I have seen in a good long while. Gladly gave him a big tip just for the education.

But here is the point of my post today: That BMWMOA "800" emergency tow number was useless. Beware of the BMWMOA.

This was about 9:30 pm. Rain. Dark. Boondocks. I naively pulled out my membership card, whipped out my cell and called the 800 number thoughtfully provided for emergency roadside service. I get a smarmy recording followed by the obligatory mood music followed by disconnected. I call again. Smarmy recording, mood music, then a nice gravel voiced lady named Celeste takes my membership number and oddly named "producer code." I explain I am at the Havre de Grace exit, Route 155, off I-95. She cannot find Havre de Grace, nor Route 155. Asks me the zip code. Sure. Finally, we get that straight, and she takes my cell number, where I want towed to, and so forth. Says she must put me on hold while she seeks a tow company. Fifteen minutes of mood music follow. Finally, she comes back on to say she can't find anyone in their network, so she is about to try out of network. I suggest she call me back, as I am burning dots on this little cell and cannot listen to mood music all night. She tells me soon as she disconnects me, she will automatically and immediately receive another call from someone else so cannot call back. At which point I am glad that she took my cell number, but don't say so. Back to the mood music, and after several minutes I am disconnected. Call again. Smarmy recording. Mood music. Have to start from the beginning with another gal. Membership number. Producer code. Disconnect. Call again, smarmy, mood, a third gal, start again. Disconnect. Repeat. Next time, I luck out and get Celeste again, who tells me she has not been able to locate a tow truck out of network, has called seven places, will try some more. Intends to put me on hold. I tell her in no uncertain terms that I am going to hang up now and she must call me back because I am down to one dot and before she is done I will be flat out of reach end of

story. I hang up. Wait. Wait. Wait. Nothing. Call again. Disconnected. It's been two hours. Call 911 and the state cops connect us with their emergency service number who gets us a tow guy in 45 minutes. At which point, I call back BMWMOA to let them have it. Get a fourth gal this time, says, "I apologize for the poor service." I tell her "You have nothing whatever to apologize for, because I got no service whatever. All I got was frustration." Thing that gets me is they never once called me back to say: "We cannot provide the promised service." Instead, just left me standing in the rain for hours.

Oh, and one last thing: In case you get stranded in rain, laminate your BMWMOA membership card now because it's made of oatmeal and will dissolve in drizzle.

Ironically, only last week BMWMOA sent me a note that my membership was up. I went to their web site to cheerfully re-up, but their on-line re-up program was busted. It's fixed now. But I am, shall we say, somewhat less motivated to give them money now. I shall present them the bill from the tow and see what transpires first.

A Rally in the Valley; Canaan You Dig It?

Robert Davis

A sailor aboard the Pinta sighted land in the Bahamas ten weeks after leaving Palos, Spain on October 12, 1492. But that's not the remarkable part. After all, if you throw a bottle into the sea in Palos, it will drift down the coast of Africa, turn west with the currents, and eventually wash up in the Bahamas. No, the remarkable thing is this: Columbus found his way back to the same port of Palos, Spain that he left from, by a completely different route in the North, and couldn't even tell you where he had been. Think about it. Not bad. And this was a guy to whom the astrolabes and cross staffs of his time were a mystery. He did it all by dead reckoning. Dead reckoning is just another way of saying "I guess thataway." Not bad at all.

Thus it is that we celebrate Columbus Day on the second weekend of October. In the Mid-Atlantic, it's a darn convenient time of year to have a long weekend, too. It's the weekend that the leaves turn. Nights are crisp. Days are perfect. Skies are dramatic. Let's ride. In just a week or two, the first cold and blustery rainstorm will strip the trees, crisp will turn cold and the days will feel raw.

So come on. Come celebrate the end of a great riding season with all your favorite Martians at the MARS Annual Rally on Columbus Day weekend October 7th through the 10th in Canaan Valley.

Just take a peek at this web site: <http://www.canaanresort.com>. This resort has everything from campsites in the woods to cabins or cottages to a lodge with a couple hundred rooms. You can eat veal in a high-toned restaurant or pizza in a food court. There's a chair lift will swoop you way up the mountainside for a heck of a view, horse drawn wagon rides, spa stuff, you name it. And all day long, the most beautiful roads this side of the Pond.

And just look at the prices. This time of year, a double in the lodge is just 73 bucks. A campsite is only 25 clams. If we can assemble a list of people committed to go, we can get a group rate which will drive the cost even lower. For example, they have four bedroom cabins for a buck ninety-four. If we can assemble four couples in a cabin, that knocks the rate down to a measly forty eight fifty for two people. Try and beat that anywhere.

Several of our members have stayed here in the past and highly recommend the place. Cynthia and I are staying there the 15th of July and will take some pictures and post them.

Get your name in early so we can get our plans in order. Tracy Novacich has volunteered to be the Keeper Of Our List for this event; principally, it appears, because the acronym for this prestigious post is KOOL, which she claims to be. Her email address is easy enough to figure out: novacich@comcast.net. If you are going, let her know as soon as possible, so we can call up the resort and chisel a group rate. Let her know whom you are bringing, whether you want a lodge room, a cabin or a tent spot, and how to get hold of you.

A Great Bike For Sale

The club president is selling his 2003 K1200RS. It has 16,000 miles and is Ice Blue/Marrakech Red with PIAA driving lights, FIAM horns, system cases, a tall windshield, new tires and recent rear brakes. You can see it by looking at the first page of this newsletter. This bike has always been dealer serviced and the records are available. He's asking \$11,200 or the best offer. If you're interested, e-mail him at edlombardi@comcast.net or call him at (302) 453-8666.