

September 2011

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
MOA #146 RA #4-49 <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>





Beemers in the Bluegrass Rally September 9-11

Stillwaters Campground

8 miles north of Frankfort on US 127

**\$25 provides 2 nights camping,
breakfast and dinner on Saturday.**

**Contact Roy Rowlett at
kr4mo@yahoo.com
if you can help set up on
Thursday, assist in some way with
the rally on Friday and Saturday,
or tear down on Sunday.**



**Roy Rowlett
Rally Chairman**

SEE YOU AT THE RALLY!

***Apex* is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.**

Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #4-49

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Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

Back issues of *Apex* can be accessed at <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>

Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd. on any Saturday, 7-9:30 a.m.

**NEW
EVENT
T-SHIRTS
\$ 10**



*Thanks for
5 great years!*

Saturday, September 17th, 2011

***9/11 Memorial Poker
Run & Toy Drive***

**sponsored by the Mercer
County & Harrodsburg Fire
Departments**

- leaves from Harrodsburg fire station at 125 West Broadway
- registration is from 10:30 – 12:00
- kickstands up at noon
- cost is \$10 rider/\$5 passenger
- feel free to bring a toy to kick-off the Community Christmas Toy Drive
- ride about 80 miles and visit area fire stations
- the ride will end at *The KICKSTAND*
- gas cards for 1st, 2nd & worst hands

**for more information,
call Chester Craig at
(859)613-4478**

**TRAILER
TRASH**

*as heard at
Eddie Montgomery's,
The Pocket, JD Legend's
& Hill of Beans*



**PLAYING FROM
2:00 – 5:00
at *The KICKSTAND***

**FREE ADMISSION
BRING A CHAIR AND JOIN US!**

BBQ ALL DAY

**at
The Village Inn**
(across from *The KICKSTAND*)

featuring Hartley BBQ

PLATE LUNCH:

sandwich
2 sides
chips
drink
ALL FOR \$6

**DINE
INSIDE THE RESTAURANT
OR
OUT ON THE DECK**

The KICKSTAND

500 East Main Street Burgin, Kentucky 40310 – at the intersection of highways 33 & 152
FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT 859-748-KICK (5425) or SeeYou@TheKickstandLLC.com
www.TheKickstandLLC.com

Imitation sincerest form of flattery



Looks like a BMW Adventure bike from the rear. Mitch Butler (right) of I-75 Yamaha provided a Super Tenere for BMW enthusiast study. Everyone was impressed!

BMW has a history of setting the benchmark for other, much larger manufacturers to meet.

The latest nod to BMW industry leadership comes from Yamaha with its Super Tenere dual sport bike.

Mitch Butler of I-75 Yamaha bought a demo and brought it to breakfast. Yamaha's sales approach requires advance orders from individuals. Dealers otherwise cannot have models on the floor for riders to see and ride.

I have not ridden the bike, but I was impressed with what I saw at breakfast. Roy Rowlett and Raymond Montgomery have ridden the bike and like it.

Parked alongside current BMW GS bikes, the Yamaha

looks every bit as good as the BMWs with similar overall architecture and features, albeit with a parallel twin.

As motorcyclists, we welcome new products that meet our riding preferences. Competition is good for consumers and prevents manufacturers from becoming complacent.

Through the early 1970's, BMW was known as the touring choice among serious riders, and with the R90S set a new standard with the only superbike capable of comfortable cross-country touring. But the airheads were expensive to build and were among the most expensive motorcycles to purchase in the '70's, circumstances that reduced BMW market share despite quality products.

BMW in the face of increas-

ing competition had to learn how to build better bikes at a lower manufacturing cost, a slow process that eventually moved BMW production from less than 4,000 units to over 100,000 units per year.

Here's a sampling of BMW industry leadership:

"Adventure" touring

In 1980 BMW created the large displacement enduro/dual sport class with the R80/GS, a niche product line that at first seemed odd, but which has been a world-wide best seller series for BMW, inspiring other manufacturers to create at least one product that captures many elements of the GS. The GS breathed new life into BMW.

Electric Windshield

With the K100RT in 1985,

BMW introduced electric windshield adjustment.

ABS Brakes

In 1989 BMW introduced ABS brakes to motorcycling.

Paralever Shaft Drive

BMW's Paralever addressed common shaft drive rising and falling. Similar technology now is a given for all shaft-drive motorcycles.

Heated Grips

Heated grips were introduced by BMW in the 1970's, now at least an option offered by all manufacturers.

Advanced Electronics

Electric suspension adjustment on the fly and adjustable engine management features on BMW motorcycles continue to set a new standard both on the street and now on track with the superbike class-leading S1000RR..

The R90S was the class-leading superbike in 1974, but it cost far more than the competition. Today, the BMW class-leading superbike is price competitive, thanks to the competition.

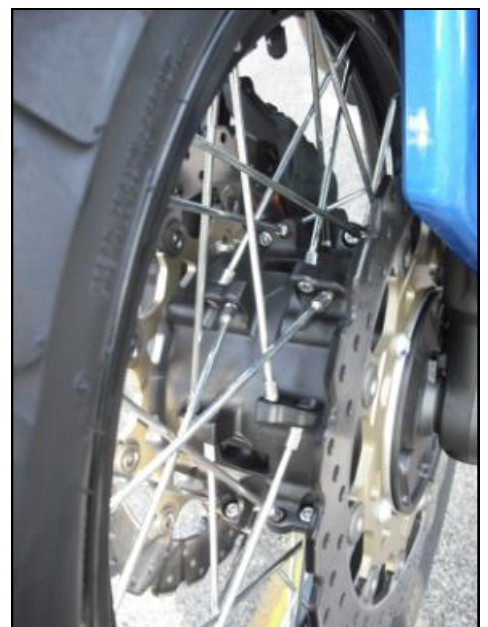
Today, BMW's influence is undeniable, and we are experiencing the broadest-ever range of product choice from manufacturers.

So, if you want a Tenere, buy one. But BMW is ready to release its all-new liquid-cooled boxer series bikes, beginning with the 2012 GS, and the pressure will send Yamaha, and every other manufacturer, back to the drawing board.

We are experiencing the Best of Times, motorcycle-wise.

—Paul Elwyn

Imitation sincerest form of flattery



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These boots were made for riding Words and photos By Tom Weber



Boot at Talon Winery. Jacket at Clay's Ferry Bridge boat ramp.



Boots at Clay's Ferry Bridge boat ramp.

R100RT on Valley View Ferry. Boot (below) at White's Hall.

These boots were made for riding!!

If these boots could talk. How many lives do a set of boots have? Bill Moore wore them for a number of years. I wonder what stories they would tell of Bill. Now I'm wearing them.

They made it to the rally this year and back. They go to work with me at least a couple times a week. They go with me to Fricsh's each week.

Thanks also to Bill for the Joe Rocket Jacket. It is a little big, but that does not bother me.

The more I hang around you'all, the more humble I feel. I even feel a little guilty sometimes. I mean, if I could afford it, I would buy my own gear, my own bike, but right now, I just don't have any extra money what so ever, so I thank each and everyone and the big man/person upstairs for the time we spend together.





Jeff Crabb put his gear to the test, and it passed!

Saturday at Frisch's Every Saturday 7-9 am



Meet Alex Boone.



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Lee Jarrard's new
Triumph Thunderbird
1800

Photo above
by Lee Thompson

Go West Young Bike

(Or, How Paul's Bike Finds a New Home In Hawaii) Part 4



By Bob Beard

4 am. Day Two. Wide awake, so it must be time to pack up and go.

Even though it was slightly coolish overnight I had not put the overleaf on my tent so that I could look up through the mesh and see the stars. The sky was still fairly clear, but the wind was picking up and swirling about, and it felt as though it were getting cooler. Also, I thought it smelled a bit like rain, but I was camped about 20 feet from a river, so it was hard to pinpoint that one.

One nice thing about riding and camping on your own is that it cuts down on the time spent deciding which route to take, where to stop for eats, and when to break camp and get out on the road. There is no decision by committee, there is only indecision by a single idiot, but that is generally faster than gathering a consensus and arbitration can be instantly attained with the toss of a coin.

By 6:30AM I already had 110 miles behind me and was stopping for gas and a warm drink.

I am still somewhere in Illinois, and still making my way north and slightly west as I angled for my friends' home in Minnesota. No phone reception where I am so I cannot check the weather with my meteorological predictor (Mary) or even call the FAA weather guys to pretend that I am in an airplane.

I am also anxious for the sun to come up so I can put a bit more right wrist into the process. Yesterday's foggy syndrome meant that I spent half the time in the saddle just chugging along at a sedate pace on the twisty roads I had chosen. Safety first, right? But today I wanted to wick it up a bit and get some lean into the machine. Those little nubbies on the sides of the Metzlers were bothering me and it takes too long to pick

them off by hand. Sure there was plenty of time and country to do that, but I was sort of like that kid on Christmas morning; ready NOW!!

Away I went on my most recent chosen path(s) angling toward the south eastern part of Iowa while utilizing the most obscure roads I could find. You can blast the interstate if you want, I am of a different mind-frame, and remember, I had only that one guy in my posse to keep happy. And that guy likes the back roads. But as I progressed the wind, which had been moderate early, was picking up seemingly with every mile I travelled. By 11am I was out in open country and planting most of my weight on my right foot peg and butt cheek just to stay in a straight-ahead

orientation. The bike was heeled over like an America's Cup yacht, and I was occasionally getting pushed across the road as wind gusted from the east. Temps were dropping too. And, just to make sure that life was kept at the 'interesting' level, the horizon about 20-30 miles ahead was black and getting darker. Hmmmmmm. By 9 or 9:30 a.m. I began to see streaks of lightning in that dark morass up ahead and as a decision was made I pulled over to try and let my friends know that I would not be by to sully their couch or hospitable nature.

High winds, lightning, black clouds.....these are all things I do not want riding along with me when I am on two wheels. Checking the odometer at this point I see that I have already



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covered over 220 miles today. You think I would have made it that far, this early in the morning with my wife along? You could say "yes", but then everyone would think you owed me money or something.

No phone service (surprise), so I hunkered down behind some bushes and typed out a text message. I hoped that if I sent it and then left the phone on it might go through if I happened into an area of reception. I spread my U.S. atlas on the ground, placed some rocks on it, and scouted a new route, highlighting a likely path. I turned straight west a few miles along and settled on my new course.

Wow! The difference between a 25-35 MPH winds at right angles to your path, as opposed to that same wind directly behind you is phenomenal! The sudden quiet, relative warmth and upright riding posture was a giddy joy. And just so everyone knows, that little 'S' fairing at speed, with a hard side-wind breathing on you, does a fantastic job of creating head-jostling turbulence, but not much else.

Since beginning my trip I had abandoned seeing friends in Tennessee due to weather (floods, tornado damage and such) and now I was similarly abandoning my friends in Minnesota due to weather. (If you people in the states want to see me you better get a handle on weather control.) I have some friends in Colorado that I could pop in on with small notice, and Mary and I lived in wa-a-a-y northern California for about 20 years and had plethora (almost as much as a Brazilian) friends up there who were threatening dire consequence if I did not drop by to see them. I said I

would try. Along the way there were relations in Montana (pretty far north for May) and friends in Idaho (ditto) friends in Oregon also. All of these said I just *had* to stop by if I passed *near*.

A funny thing about people who do not ride motorcycles, or maybe who have ridden motorcycles and maybe even own a motorcycle, but have not really travelled upon one: They mostly don't get it. I have tried patiently, impatiently, and in other moods to relate what it is like, but there exists that void of knowledge caused by lack of experience. The best way I have achieved of trying to get the idea of what I am doing across to them is to relate it to backpacking. Almost everyone can envision carrying something heavy and awkward too far, or getting caught out in the pouring rain well away from any shelter. It is close, and it mostly brings the point across, but still, until you have lived for three days in pouring rain belting you at 60 mph per drop, wet boots and crotch, chilled fingers and a wet and soggy tent, it is akin to reading about someone spending time in a gulag while you sit by the fire with an electric blanket across your lap. Sympathy, yes, Experience, no! It is like trying to describe the taste of a banana; it tastes like a banana! Nothing else gets it. You either have been there, or not.

So these various friends of mine, when I tell them that I would like to stop by....would LOVE to stop by, but it is very surely dependent on the weather, they don't get it. Even worse are the friends I bypass who are maybe *only* 400-500 miles from whatever path I am on. If I am headed west, and

they are north of me that distance, then they are a minimum of two days of travel away. One day gets me to them (and they have no idea of how long a day that can be) and one day to get back near where I was headed. If I spend any time at all with them I have now spent three days before I can get back near my path. Not too big an issue if time is no factor and the entire world is sunny and carefree, but throw in a time schedule, some sub-freezing temps and snow in my path (substitute tornado, flood, wind, rain, etc....here) and it becomes not only a logistical nightmare, but could even be hazardous to the health of my driver (that's me) I like my driver (me again) and I want to make him happy and keep him smiling. Obviously I try to steer him clear of weather conditions that put a grump in his frump.

Just an aside here to further illustrate my point: One of my buddies in Hawaii is a mutual friend of the couple living in Minnesota. He asked if I could take something to the Minnesotans. I went through the whole explanation of packing, flying, picking up and loading motorcycle and ensuing limited carrying space, etc....with him. Plus, at that time there was no strict guarantee that I would even go for a northern route. He nodded and told me it was just a little thing. What? A letter? A hankie? A key-ring? Sure, I could take it. No, it was underwater-camera housing. Not quite the size of a shoebox, but close. C'mon, are you listening to me at all?

Okay, 'nuff of that. Let's talk about this new (to me) motorcycle for a minute. I am somewhere in Illinois and as of my latest left hand turn I am

headed west and maybe southwest and this is a fairly flat county infused with straight and drab roadage, so yeah, I want to yak about my new wheels. It could be that Mr. Elwyn has already plowed this particular furrow with you, but I have the perspective of new ownership going on my side so I am both jaundiced against any bike related oddities (ready to kick Paul's ass for any faults) and a huge fan of my new kick-ass bike (ready to kick your butt if you dis my ride) all at the same time.

I will start kinda at the front of the motorcycle and work my way to the rear.....or not, as some of the items live at both ends or are a compendium of parts making up the whole. Come along:

First: The front tire, and just to show you that I cannot be held to a self-imposed schedule I am going to include the back tire in this description. Metzler, same as the back. Good tires, I have had them mounted on other similar bikes. Pretty good feel, and pretty good stick. But I am not the guy to give you deep info on slideability or skid pad testing. I am sporty when in the mood, but am generally unwilling to try anything approaching lateral movement combined with simultaneous forward momentum. And really, this is not the platform I would choose for that type of activity anyway. It is a 33 year old BMW fer Chrissake! Go talk to Danny Phillips if you want to investigate this kind of stuff.

Brakes: Front brakes are the drilled dual-disc set up. Fantastic! With superb braking ability.....at least compared with classmates who were around at the time of their introduction

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some three decades ago. Back when this bike was brand new I was just moving into my first disc brake setup on (I believe) a 1975 Honda CB550K I owned back in the 70's). My introduction to the wonders of disc brakes was a non-drilled slab of iron that rusted if it was foggy or if I sneezed on it, and it was nothing but a slick looking fly-wheel if used in the rain. And even that single spinning disc was a fantastic improvement over the shoed bikes I had been riding previously. The only thing that made those earlier brakes work within bounds of relative safety was the fact that the bikes they were on were light of weight and slight of horsepower. The twin discs on the R100 are a light-years increase in performance from that, but.....

...If you have been riding only motorcycles since the early 90's or some of the more recent -year sporty-type bikes then you have undoubtedly become used to the fact that a two-maybe-three fingered approach to hard front brake application is plenty in any situation. Heck, some of the current crop of sport steeds can generate enough power with an exuberant single finger to instantly create unrecoverable stoppies. Try the one fingered approach on this late-70's steed and what you get is a subtly slowing panorama and time aplenty to appreciate the gradual conversion of kinetic energy into heat. With this bike I have become used to a three-finger-minimum approach to approaching zero speed. If I even *think* I may need to stop more quickly than that then the brake lever gets the undivided attention of every digit on my right hand except

for the one opposable unit that separates me from most other mammals.

The back brake: I can see it, so I know it is there. I press the pedal and a couple of pads come out to linger amazingly close to the actual brake disc, and I believe if I press that pedal hard enough and far enough the pads even begin to lightly caress that disc. It is pretty much theory, as is the stopping power supplied by that rear brake. The rear brake pedal does make the brake light come on with just a slight nudge though, and that is pretty much how I utilize it: as a brake light switch. I do about 99% of my stopping with just the front tire. This is fair because I use the back tire to do about the same percentage of acceleration duties, so the wear evens out nicely.

The rear brake might work better were it flat surfaced, but a cross-sectional cut of the single disc would reveal a profile

reminiscent of the Dakota badlands. Someone in this motorcycle's dim history (and we have all the culprits within our ranks) must have been a true aficionado of rear brake usage, but it seems they were not so steeply inclined towards maintenance issues. It is fairly apparent that somewhere along the way someone let the pads wear to less-than-nothing and did not mind overly much the squealing and metal shavings produced as a result of such sloth. Such is life. To replace that piece of metal with a pristine unit straight from the coffers of BMW will set me back about \$350. Did I mention that I do not use the back brake overly?

Bar End Mirrors... They kick ass! I cannot believe I have never spent the money on a pair. I have headed down this road a few times but always cheaped out at the last second. This is the very first motorcycle I have ever owned where a par-

tial view of my own elbows or shoulders does not impede the view to the rear. Sure, if you are a fan of lane splitting (not me, but thanks) these mirrors would be less than a smart installment. I like the way they look, too. Win/win on this one. Two thumbs up here.

Self-retracting kickstand:

Argh! This is one of those BMW things that is the solution for a problem that never existed. Okay, in the drawing room I can see where it would sound like a cool idea.

'Whassat? It goes up all by itself so you never get that embarrassing high-side jump on your first left turn. Fantastic!' Yeah, whatever. And I bet the first prototype bike that had one installed was dropped four times before it ever got rolled outside of the factory doors by some unsuspecting drone who had no idea what that metallic CLUNK! meant when he pushed the bike upright. And how many times have I damn



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near dumped it because I have to push the kickstand so far forward before it will well-and-truly stay up there that it slips off the edge of my boot, catches on the cuff of my riding pants and hamstrings me as I then try to put a foot down to save myself. Mr. Brown, expect a phone call.

Snowflake rims: You know them. Invented by BMW to be lighter, stronger, less-costly to produce and better looking than conventional spoked wheels. Strike four! At least they let you use tubeless tires.....Oh, not without modification. And they are a test of teeth-gritting stamina to clean. Plus, anytime I *do* take the time to clean them properly my toothbrush tastes funny for the next week. Not a fan, but still too cheap to buy spoke wheels, so I lie and talk about them as if they are in my will.

Seat: Stock seat. And you know what? I think it is the stock foam in that stock seat lying there under the original seat covering. A-fricking-mazing! The seat cover is getting a bit stressed at the (faux) seams, but Really! It is comfy enough that I never lacked for more while traveling cross-country. I do like the older style bench type seats that let you shift around a bit instead of locking your tender derriere into a one-butt-sits-here designation. In time I may have to go see Mr. Corbin because they have a "gunslinger" seat I like the look of, but until that time I may just take it down to a local upholstery shop and have them stitch a leather cover to replace the vinyl that is on there right now.

The Paint: It looks good! Nice job Paul! He did use lacquer, and he did warn me about its less durable characteristics. And this was proved out when I

apparently did not see a stray droplet of gasoline lingering after one of my fill-ups. There it sat, simmering and softening away under the tank bag until the next fill up revealed a little droplet-sized blemish. The tank bag itself also left a bit of an imprint that is visible in a strong side-light held closely. Still, at ten feet the bike looks very, very nice and I cannot complain.

Tranny: Paul and Roy did some work here, and this is one of the smoothest shifting BMW's I have ever ridden. The only other one that came close was the '78 R100/7 I had when we lived in Lexington. That one started out with the usual "CLUNK" shift, but after adding a mazillion shifts over the next 50 or 60 thousand-something additional miles things got a lot slicker and quieter. That must be what is going on here, too. BMW did a good job with these older units, al-

though I hear that is not necessarily so with some of the newer bikes. (K1300R anyone?) This bike, within a red-hair of rolling over 100,000 miles, shifts with nary a chunk nor clunk anywhere.

Lighting: Big, round headlight. Standard fare. Bright enough, but certainly not up to the UFO signaling capacity of current bike lighting. I imagine from a distance it looks like I am pushing a pale harvest moon out in front of me. It is all good though, no complaints. And I like the looks of a big, round headlight, so I am one happy camper. The indicator light for the high beam does not work, and the neutral light is likewise AWOL, although it did make a brief comeback for exactly two stops somewhere in Colorado.....never to be seen again. That is okay, I know where neutral is, and I have spare bulbs on hand for whenever I decide to get in there.

The light on the clock (which is keeping perfect time, by the way) was not working either, but it is a lot easier to get to and I have replaced that bulb. Turn signals all work about 50% of the time when I hit the switch. But that is what they are supposed to do.....On...Off...On...Off...etc....

Horns: Stupid horns. A Fiamm unit on one side, and some Italian look-alike on the other. The Italian job is in the trash now. The Fiamm was taken apart, cleaned, oiled, contacts sanded, etc...put back together, taken apart again, repeat.....forever. Should have worked, all checked out, and current was good through the switch. But nothing. It croaked a little bit....very little. Then, when it was about to join the Italian horn, I dropped it on the concrete floor of my garage, tried it one last time and Voila! Feeble, sort of like a castrated mallard being strangled, but I



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could hear it and so could the safety inspection guy, which is really all I ever wanted out of it. I cannot think of even one time when a good piece of evasive action and/or braking was not a better alternative than a horn anyway.

Bags: Equipped with the classic Hepco-Becker units that graced the 70 era Beemers. Big, square, tons of room, detachable right now and adorned with a cool handle so you can stroll from bike side to hotel desk in about 32 seconds. Not that any four-stars were graced with my unwashed and road weary presence during my trip, but had they been they would have had some killer bags to admire while they held their noses. One little thing: what the hell is up with the latches on those bags? How can the saddlebags themselves be so bulletproof, functional and otherwise kick-ass and be saddled (get it? I said 'saddled'...and they are saddlebags....get it? Funny, right?...whatever...) with the most cheese-ball latch system ever devised? These latches were probably conceived by the same guy who came up with the concept of snowflake rims. Paul had taken the time to attach some little bungee buddies to the sides of the rear rack and some corresponding hook points on the bags as a sort of hedge against the inevitable popping-open-at-speed moment these latches were headed for.

Suspension: Bland. And, as in all older Beemers I have had, the concept of rebound damping does not seem to be high on anyone's design concept. Although, this bike was originally set up as an RT so it may be that the set-up is lamenting that

extra weight from the missing fairing. The back end is functional with no surprises. Konis back there.

Oil: It is using some oil; about two ounces on day one. Okay. It is an old air-cooled vehicle. I am not overly concerned, but I am aware. There is no oil on my shoes, rear tire, under the heads, along the bottom of the oil pan, etc....and the exhaust tips and plugs look good. There you go. I carry oil. Back to the present: I have scootled west across The Heartland called Illinois and have meandered into Missouri whereupon I turned south-southwestish and am skirting rain and windy grayness. I keep thinking I am going to stop, and after about 10 minutes it begins to sprinkle on me. I do that sev-

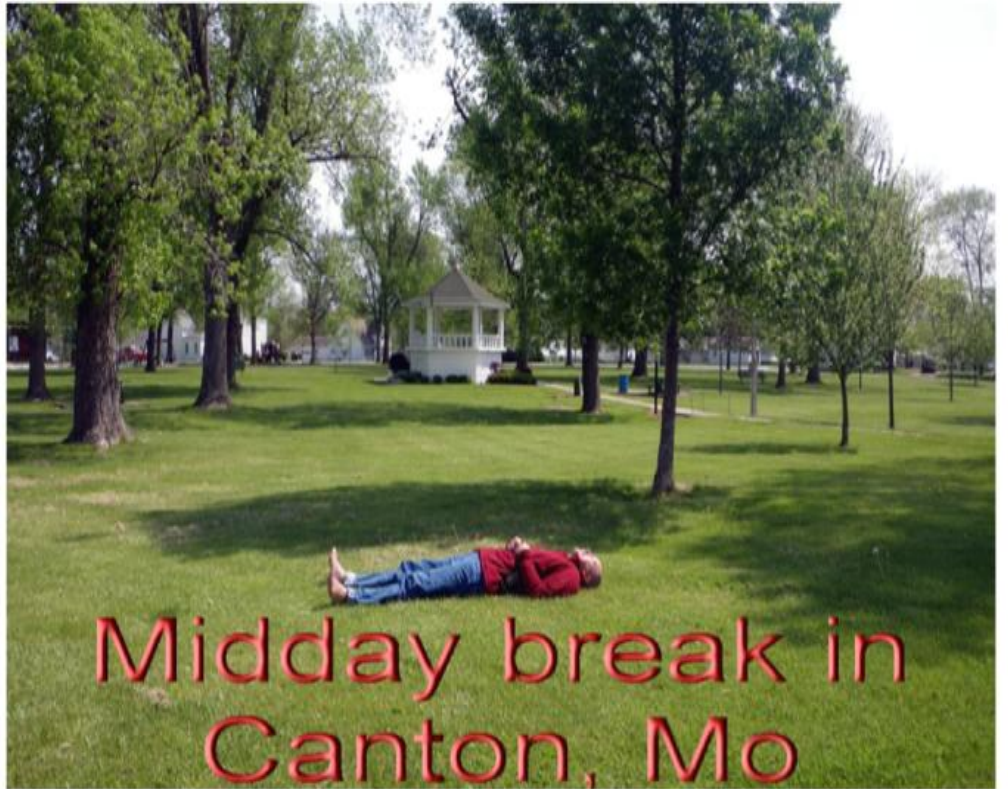
eral times until, as can happen with rapidly developing weather, I hit the edge of the system and BAM! I am in sunshine. This happens to happen in a place called Canton, Mo. Talk about your Norman Rockwell all-American apple-pie postcard small towns. This place had it all. I cruised down (what else) Main street and found a perfect center-of-town grassy square. White painted gazebo, brass cannon and a flagpole. It had it all. I took the chance on offending the local populace and offed the riding pants, boots and riding jacket and got myself horizontal on their greenery for a small nap in the sunshine.

After my little refresher I was ready to eat, drink and plan my next few hours. Right across

the street was a swept sidewalk running in front of a little mom-pop store. Pizza smells were drifting out and it seemed like the spot for me, so I ambled across in my shoeless state of attire.

Something to remember here, I NEVER wear shoes. This is not an exaggeration. Even at "work" I get to be barefoot most of the time, and at those times my skin is not hitting the ground there is naught but a pair of flips on my hooves. So, being all comfy mode I ambled across the street, skin slapping gingerly against warm macadam.

Inside the store I order a slice of that product that has been spewing pizza aroma into the atmosphere, and wander over to the cooler to grab something



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liquid. I am thinking water, but there, right there in front of me is a can of 50th Anniversary Dr. Pepper “made with real sugar”. Now this may not sound like a big deal to you, but really, when was the last time you had a drink (or just about anything) that was made with neither the ubiquitous HFCS (High Fructose Corn Syrup) or some type of artificial sweetener? Think on that. Probably only in your coffee. And you know what? The difference was positively astounding! I kid you not. Go ahead and charge me more, but let me have this option without the necessity of waiting 5 decades for it.

While paying for my goods a little blue-eyed, blonde angel of about 5 or 6 years casually asked me why I didn't have any shoes to wear. I tell her in all

honesty that I liked to be barefoot when I can. She whispered something to the lady holding her hand, who nodded to her, and the little girl informs me that her daddy has some shoes he does not wear but that I could have them if I wanted. Awwww.....how cute is that? I thanked her and the nice lady she is leading around and tell them that Really, I am fine. That I really do have shoes but that I am not wearing them because I really do like to be barefoot when I can. Really. They nodded, gazing ever-so-seriously at me, and then the nice lady leaned in and whispered that they could buy my pizza and soda for me if I was “a little short”. Wow! I pointed out my motorcycle across the street, that pretty red (dusty) one with all the riding gear

hanging on it, thanked them politely and made my escape. I am almost sure they bought my story.

Back across the street, sitting in the grass, munching pizza and sucking up some sugary goodness I soak up the sunshine. Odd, windblown and threatening to rain all morning and now it is warming quite steadily. Making sure I leave no trace I am gearing up again when a blue mini-van pulls up a few yards down. Side door opens and a couple elementary school age kids and a mom unit spill out and take up residence at a nearby picnic bench. Sandwiches and such come out of paper bags, juicy-juices are punctured and laughter floats readily above the tabletop. I am about to pull on helmet and gloves when a small boy walks

up and solemnly hands me one of those cheese and cracker snacky-pack things before running back to his lunch group. I am a bit dumbfounded. The mom calls over that they thought I might be hungry. I must be wearing that look like a worn coat, or this town is so far above the good Samaritan level that I cannot see it. I thank them, stuff the crackers in my tank bag and tool slowly toward the edge of town.

Me and my snack crackers toodle on westward through the Missouri countryside. The day grows warmer by the mile, and I drone on through gently rolling, but gradually flatter copses of woodland and prairie. Somewhere along the way late afternoon catches up with me just about the time I smack into Kansas. The wind has come



Go West Young Bike

(Or, How Paul's Bike Finds a New Home In Hawaii) Part 4 By Bob Beard

back, and of course, in the nature of winds everywhere, it has turned to a less-than-desirable direction. Instead of being behind me, it is now blowing from the north. Argh! Once again I have to lean to go straight. Kansas, right? Is it possible to drive through Kansas without wind? I don't think so. And it is an increasingly warm wind. I have switched to mesh gloves, removed the liner from my jacket and opened every vent available. It is bearable, but only while I am moving.

About 5 pm finds me up in the Northeast corner of Kansas at a place called Browns State Fish Lake. It is actually listed on maps as Brown SFL, and it took me some time to figure out what all those SFL's in Kansas were. The lake is pleasant and deserted. My kind of stuff. There seems to be a fee, but there also appears to be not one person within caring distance, and since it is the middle of May I am not expecting a crowd, or a ranger, so I have my money ready and will hand it over if confronted. The restrooms are locked, and there is

no running water, so I do not feel bad about using up all the facilities.

Remember the wind? Still here, and blowing viciously and relentlessly, and it is in the 90's. An unseasonal Sirocco hits Kansas. It does have the

benefit of keeping any lakeside flying-biting creatures away, so I am happy for that, but it is tent-whipping craziness. I found an area blocked from the wind by vegetation and brush, but every winged creature in the vicinity already knew that

address, so I opted to remain in the open and use my motorcycle as a windbreak and ballast. Good night.



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Montgomery
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