

June 2012

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

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





7th Annual Ride 'em, Don't Hide 'em Café Run

Not a race, not a rally and definitely not another poker run!

NEW LOCATION !!

Garden Girls Café
6109 Lexington Road
Winchester, Ky

(On Route 60 between Stuffs and the Drive In)

Saturday, June 9th, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
for another gathering with riders of the Right Stuff.
No entry fee, no prizes - just a reason to ride.

Destination this year...The Kickstand and the Village Café!

For more information contact:
John Rice 859-229-4546

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Burkesville European Riders Rally 2012 hosts largest ever crowd, 317 riders

The springish, refreshing air of early Saturday morning gave way to summer on the weekend of the European Riders Rally, but it was DRY air and perfect camping weather for a record crowd, the largest ever to attend the European Riders Rally sponsored by the BMW Motorcycle Club of Nashville in its 14th year at Burkesville.

Over 300 riders attended, and as photos depict, a diverse range of machines and riders assembled for the usual Friday night movie and popcorn, Saturday hamburger lunch and steak dinner. Free breakfast also was provided this year courtesy of a local church.

The food helps to rationalize the rally fee of \$45, but this was Burkesville at its best, without the drama provided in recent years by Mother Nature.

Roger Trent said he saw at least 12 Bluegrass Beemers, but the Indianapolis club won the club attendance award.

Ron Blackburn went down in Liberty on the way to the rally, sustaining six broken ribs and road rash. I talked with him on Monday, and he said he wasn't sure he would be able to ride to the National. I heard a "NO" in the background. Let's hope he mends quickly.

Beyond Ron's accident, the weekend provided everything we hope for, lots of motorcycle talk, cool bikes to study, The Kickstand truck with Ray and Lynn Montgomery, and time to simply contemplate our place in the universe.

Check out the images!

—PE



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Burkesville, Cyclemo's Motorcycle Museum and back in one day

by Roy Rowlett



What a great day! Saturday May 19, 2012. Had a great breakfast get together with the usual suspects. Then I mounted up on the trusty K1200LT, and along with Tom Rich, Erskine Clinton and his friend Edmond, we headed south on US 68.

Erskine led the charge down 68 till we got to Harrodsburg then turned onto Hwy 152. We followed this to 55 south in Springfield. Took 55 on down to Burkesville. The LT's trip meter showed 130 miles when I pulled into the Rally Site in Burkesville at about 10:30 their time.

I went ahead and registered for the rally, dropped my door prize tickets in the envelopes and bought some 50/50 tickets. After a quick drink, a few howdy's to some old friends and a quick trip to the men's room, Erskine, Edmond and I



We arrive at Cyclemo's Museum in Red Boiling Springs, TN.

saddled up again and headed south towards Red Boiling Springs TN.

If you've never been there, it's worth the ride. There's a motorcycle museum/restoration shop there called Cyclemo's. We headed out of Burkesville on 2276, and this road is curvier than Deals Gap. What a rush! We intersected Hwy 90 south east. After a bit we picked up Hwy 100 and this turned out to be another wonderfully curvy road.

About 5 miles east of Tompkinsville, we turned south on Hwy 214. A fellow at the rally said there was the only "Free

Floating" ferry on a state highway. I didn't get a picture of the boat itself, but did manage a quick snap with my phone camera.

After missing a few turns indicated by the GPS on the LT, we finally arrived in Red Boiling Springs at around 12:30 their time. The museum was great, with lots of motorcycle memorabilia and trinkets. I managed a few decent pics with my phone camera.

After a bit of browsing and picture taking, we rode up the street to "Big Ed's" Bar B Q. Had a decent lunch and then Erskine and Edmond headed



The only "Free Floating" ferry on state highway



This old military Cushman was supposedly one that was actually dropped by parachute during the war.



An original unrestored Honda CA95 150 Dream

Burkesville, Cyclemo's Motorcycle Museum and back in one day

by Roy Rowlett



A nicely restored "Turtleback Cushman"



Harley WLA military bike



A nicely Restored Harley



A modern Whizzer motorized bicycle

north, while Tom Rich and I headed back to Burkesville. When we got back to the rally, my trip meter showed 284 miles.

After a pretty good supper of steak and salad, and some decent rock and roll live music, I said my farewells and hopped on the LT around 9:15 their time and headed east on Hwy 90. It was a nice ride with the temperature right around 70 degrees. The bugs were out in

force, and I had to stop just south of Danville to clean the windshield and gas up.

I arrived back home just before 12 pm and pulled into the garage with 410 miles showing on my trip meter.

I haven't done this kind of riding for quite a while, and I really enjoyed the trip. The roads were wonderful, and the company on the trip very pleasant.

Hope to make another trip like this beginning on June 2nd. Headed south east to the "Back of the Dragon" and the Blue-ridge Parkway, but that's another story.

--RR

Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9 am



John Nolan stands with the 1957 Vespa 400 that his daughter Krista and friend Tommy restored.

What's a **CAR** doing on the cover of a motorcycle club magazine?

Seriously? Look at this thing. It's a 1957 Vespa 400 that weighs about the same (800 pounds) as a loaded K1200 LT. It may not perform like a motorcycle, because it essentially is a SCOOTER with four wheels. With 14 hp, it might hit 50 mph downhill, but this vehicle captures the drama of small single-tracks that rely on strategy and momentum as much as any factor to deal with traffic,

so driver skill enters, and a willingness to work with the machine to cover ground in a satisfying fashion.

John Nolan, above, stands with the recently-restored machine found in Tennessee. Featuring a two-cylinder, air-cooled, two-cycle engine with a manual oil mix pump, this 400 is rare and parts are difficult to source, hence the missing windshield wiper for the passenger side, a part still to be found.

Riding on 4.40 x 10 white-wall tires (try calling Tire Rack for that), the Vespa employs a three-speed manual transmission without synchromesh. An

aluminum-housed fan dominates the engine architecture to force air around the twin cylinders. Dual points provide running and tuning entertainment as they have on all mechanical applications; ask the owner of a stock 1960's Harley-Davidson.

This project caught the eye of John's daughter, Krista Nolan, featured in the cover photo with her friend Tommy Walize, both recent University of Kentucky mechanical engineering graduates who studied under Professor Ken Perry who invited the former students to breakfast with Bluegrass Beemers to show off their project.

Krista and Tommy restored the Vespa.

Krista also is the pit mechanic for Tommy who races a Honda RS 125.

So, don't get your leathers in a twist over a car....a four-wheeled scooter....being featured on the cover of our motorcycle club magazine. The Vespa is well connected to our world, as evidenced by the crowd of Bluegrass Beemers who admired the Vespa on May 5th. Krista, Tommy and John are definitely our kind of people.

—PE

Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9 am



Former mechanical engineering students of Professor Ken Perry, Tommy Walize and Krista Nolan restored this 1957 Vespa 400.



The Vespa 400 employs a twin-cylinder, air-cooled, two-stroke with dual points and a hand pump(right side) to meter an oil mix to the fuel tank (left side of engine compartment).

Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9 am

UK mechanical engineering graduate Tommy Walize rolls back the top on the Vespa 400.

Tommy also races a Honda RS125. Krista, also a mechanical engineering graduate, restored the Vespa and serves as pit mechanic for Tommy when he races.



Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9 am

Photography this page by Tom Weber



Why is life so complicated? By Tom Weber

Some of the guys were talking about someone having a bad motorcycle accident on Nicholasville Road.

I just got off the phone with a friend of mine who works with my best friend's wife. They both work at a business near the accident. She had stopped to get her morning coffee that day. She explained the accident in "too much detail," phrases like, "explosion of the bike." She took note of how the truck driver pulled out carefully, but apparently the motorcyclist had a little too much speed under his belt. She saw most, if not the entire incident. She declined to be interviewed by the media, which was probably a smart thing, but then as we were talking, her concerns came up about anyone riding a motorcycle and how other drivers never see the "riders of bikes."

I said, "I have been down this road more than 20 years before." I know her concerns. I know my mother's concerns, and some days I ride like my mother, (not that my mother has ever ridden).

She said, "The guy's helmet came off."

I think that only would happen if it is not secured properly, or the incident is/was so traumatic, that the helmet would not have helped anyway, but that would mean it would have to have come off in pieces.....right? Wrong,

ps; Looks like I'll be riding in the morning, I have to. It is my duty, my responsibility, to ride long and to ride well, for I do not ride just to get from point a to point b, I ride because I love to ride, looking for the path that will lead me back to the past never to be found, I feel the need to "Get lost on two wheels - again," on the way to work; by the way, I'll probably, I'm sure of it, I will be late for work today...Again!! (yes I was).

As my now guardian angel used to say, I feel the "need for speed", in lies only one of the many reasons why he is now and forever will be, my guardian angel, he rode for speed, but that was not the only reason, it is the love of the open road. No one to answer to, but you, yourself, and I.

Back then there was no email, no cell phones, no lap tops, etc. If you got lost, there was no fancy phone to pull out, you either winged or looked at a map, back in those days, we never carried any maps, but we always found our way home.

I'll bet my bottom dollar, few other people, if any, ever text their boss and say, "wrong turn, in Richmond, gonna be late." I live 8 miles from the office, Richmond is 25 miles as a crow flies, I never ride like a crow flies, so that particular day, I rode right at 60 miles to get to work. Most people would consider that just a little bit crazy, and I would have to agree.

That is it, the end point of the article, you will never forget and I will never forget the time my now guardian angel and I used to ride together. "Times like those were never meant to be forgotten."



Riders raise \$355 for God's Pantry in ride to remember Boone Sutherland

Photography by Ray Brooks



Randolph Scott on May 26th conducted a Boone Sutherland memorial ride to remember Boone and to raise money for God's Pantry.



Riders raise \$355 for God's Pantry in ride to remember Boone Sutherland

Photography by Tom Weber



Boone's Harley

I'm Gonna Need Another Jacket

By John Rice

Everyone has a place that stays in the mind as a refuge, the quiet place where the real world stops intruding and one can be still, wrapped in one's own thoughts.

For me, that place is the Blue Ridge Parkway. I try to make at least one trip there every year and this was my first for 2012. Jay and I headed out Thursday, before the Memorial Day weekend.

Our second day on the Blue Ridge, perfect smooth roads, cool mountain air, it's an absolutely gorgeous place to be. In the early morning, the fuchsia blooms of the rhododendron made a parade-route lining for the road, with the black rocks, wet from dew and looking like they've been freshly varnished, setting it off like a border on a painting.

We've commented to each other on this trip that we've aged our way out of the kind of riding we used to enjoy, the seeking of greater lean angle, riding faster than was good for us. We've decided to slow down and smell the rhododendron. Take it easy, be safe and accommodate our increasing age and decreasing skills.

Just past Pisgah, we take a loop off the Parkway, down 276 toward Cruso for variety. As we turned down the steep side road, I thought "wow, this



Jay standing about where it went down.

road's in a lot worse shape" than the Parkway" then BANG ! Skritttttttccccch ! crash bars scraping along the

pavement, scene jerking up and down as my head bobbles, eyes wide open to a changed perspective as I'm suddenly a lot

lower, watching my bike ahead of me sliding on its side in a long arc to a bumping stop nose down in a ditch. I've got my left

I'm Gonna Need Another Jacket

By John Rice

hand outstretched, as if I somehow could bring the bike back to me, reversing this process. I hear Jay yelling "Don't get up" but before I can process that information I am up and looking around to see if a car is coming as I head toward the fallen BMW.

We had been going fairly slowly, no more than 25 or 30 mph, being careful. It was a steep downhill left turn, not particularly sharp. From my memory, I had just begun the process of a lean when there was the noise and the "does not compute" sensation that what I intended to happen wasn't and something quite unexpected was.

Reconstructing the scene, we learn that my front tire had hit a fine mix of sand and gravel just exactly as I had tipped the air-head R100 easily into the turn, losing all traction and tucking the front tire under, putting the bike down immediately. Jay said it looked like someone had pulled on a cable, yanking the machine out from under me. The gravel/sand patch was composed of a fine mix of black pebbles in the shade from the direction we were going, so that it was in effect, invisible, though it could be seen from the other direction, in the bright sun as we stood there looking up the hill. I was looking through the curve, ahead to the apex, and not down at the area right in front of my wheel, so



The slide marks arcing off into the ditch.



Where it went into the ditch. The marks are from the aptly named "crash bar and valve cover."

I'm Gonna Need Another Jacket

By John Rice

the dark gravel in the shaded area hadn't caught my attention. I know I've been through hundreds, if not thousands of sand and gravel patches on roads in all sorts of places, without more than a twitch at the bars. This one, however, was exactly at the point of turning, just the spot where the tire needed some traction and there was none to be had.

I went down so quickly that I didn't put out a foot or a hand. Jay said I was still seated when the bike hit the ground and it slid away from me, with my body in the position of a man sliding into home base, head up and left hand outstretched. The design of the BMW meant that the first thing that hit the ground was the crash bar, then the saddlebag, so my leg was not trapped underneath a sliding bike.

The bike fared much better than I expected, and I believe much better than a more modern machine like my GS would have done. There was a scraped



On top of Mt. Mitchell

area on the crash bar, nearly through the wall, but not quite. The left valve cover was scraped, but again, not through the metal. The left saddlebag has a scar on the bottom edge, with no breach of the interior. The bar ends, the mirrors, the fenders, none of these touched down. The front end nosed down into the ditch, but without any observable damage.

As for me, I tore up a perfectly good ventilated jacket and put some holes in my Aerostitch overpants, got a small abrasion on my left boot, but that's it. Not even a bruise, no scratches, nada, zip, zilch. I was a bit sore and stiff, but that's the way I usually am, so I

can't really tell any difference. From that point in the trip forward, whenever I saw a rider and/or passenger dressed in tank top, shorts and flip-flops, I wanted to stop them and point to the torn places on my jacket and pants. If I hadn't been wearing all the gear, all the time, I'd be writing this from a skin graft ward of a North Carolina hospital.

We continued on for the next three days, still going at a moderate pace, though I'm constantly looking for gravel now. Every shaded patch is, in my opinion, a hazard. It will take me a while, if ever, to get my confidence back and consistently keep my eyes up to the vanishing point and not down in front of my wheel.

I have to tell myself that the odds haven't changed, that the road is no more treacherous than it's always been, that this was just a case of my number coming up.

I'm telling myself, but as of yet, I'm not convinced.



—JR



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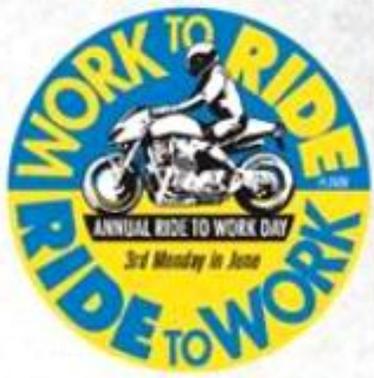
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Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

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

Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd. on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.