

May 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 9<sup>th</sup>, 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  
[www.riceheathlaw.com](http://www.riceheathlaw.com)



**Cover photo by Bill Voss** taken at the 28th Annual Vintage and Antique  
Motorcycle Show in Phoenix, Arizona.





## Lowell Roark, John Rice, Peter Galskis win awards; Lee Thompson turns power over to Ray Brooks at annual banquet, April 27th, Chop House



2012 Bluegrass Beemers contest winners are Peter Galskis (above, left) for having attended 49 Saturday breakfasts at Frisch's, John Rice (above right) for having ridden a motorcycle to 38 breakfasts in the past year, and Lowell Roark (right) for having ridden 20,114 miles and having attended 21 motorcycle events during the past year. Presenting awards is 2011 President Lee Thompson.

**A**s is the case every year, a large number of Bluegrass Beemers members and spouses attended the annual Awards Banquet, held this year on April 27th at the Chop House in Lexington.

President Lee Thompson welcomed everyone and presided over awards presentations to this year's contest winners.

Each winner won a large duffel bag embroidered with the club logomark arranged by Treasurer Roy Rowlett who also tabulates award data based on member submissions and Log entries maintained by Keeper of the Log, Dave McCord. Roy also gave every-

one a fancy club ink pen.

Lowell Roark won the High Mileage Award with 20,114 miles. Lowell also won the Motorcycle Events Award with 21 events attended over the past year.

Peter Galskis won the Saturday Breakfast Attendance Award with 49 Saturday breakfasts for the year.

John Rice won the Breakfast Rider Award for having ridden a motorcycle to 38 breakfasts.

Following awards presentations, Lee Thompson turned power over to President Ray Brooks. Ray's remarks to the group perfectly characterized the casual nature of the Bluegrass Beemers organization that



takes pride in its lack of organization.

Lowell Roark will serve at Vice President for 2012 and will ascend to the office of president for 2013.

Also agreeing to continue service to the club are Roy Rowlett, Treasurer; John Rice, Rally Chairman; Dave McCord, Keeper of the Log; Jeff Crabb, webmeister; and Paul Elwyn, newsletter editor.

Roy Rowlett reported a Club Fund balance of \$340.71 and a Rally Fund balance of \$797.64.

Roy Rowlett placed second, and Dudley Gaines, third, in the Saturday Attendance competition.

Ray Brooks finished second, and Hubert Burton, third, in the Breakfast Rider category.

## Roark, Rice, and Galskis win awards; Thompson turns power over to Brooks at annual banquet



Leaders of the organization-resistant Bluegrass Beemers and award winners are (from left) 2011 President Lee Thompson, Breakfast Attendance winner Peter Galskis, Treasurer Roy Rowlett, Log Keeper Dave McCord, Rally Chairman John Rice, Mileage/Event winner and 2012 Vice President Lowell Roark, Webmeister Jeff Crabb, and 2012 President Ray Brooks.





**Lowell Roark,  
John Rice,  
Peter Galskis  
win awards;  
Lee Thompson  
turns power over  
to Ray Brooks  
at annual  
Banquet**

**President Ray Brooks (right)  
addresses the gathering.**





# ***Saturday*** @ Frisch's 7-9 am





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### **New rider, “new BMW” with unique safety feature**

Meet Todd Fuller, a veteran BMW rider who recently acquired this 1988 R100RT with low miles at a ridiculously low price.

One of the features of this bike is the unique sidestand deployment system. A simple pull of the handle to the left of the fuel tank while seated on the bike extends the sidestand, ensuring a safe park without dropping the bike.





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## ***Saturday*** @ Frisch's 7-9 am



President Ray Brooks (right) at the April 28th Frisch's breakfast debuted his freshly -modified 2007 K1200LT featuring a Hannigan 3-wheeler conversion that doubles fuel capacity and adds a 7 cubic foot trunk between the rear wheels.





# ***Saturday*** @ **Frisch's** 7-9 am





# Lost on two wheels, again by Tom Weber

**E**ither my Guardian Angle was flying overtime, I was extremely lucky, or I was riding with “eyes wide open.”

In my search for part of my past, I rode yesterday until I found part of what I was looking for. It started right after breakfast. I knew the tank was nearly empty when I left, so I filled it up across the street with no intention of doing anything more than riding the short distance back to the apartment. More than four hours later and 130 miles later, I arrived back at the apartment. What is it about a full tank of gas that says, “its zoomtime, zoom, zoom, zoom”.

During my ride, many animals crossed my path, that’s when I knew I had found what I was looking for – that lust for discovery, that lust for explor-

ing knowing full well that if I made a “non-recoverable” mistake, I would not be able to call anyone, (no cell phone service), nor would anyone find me for hours, if not days, for I had traveled into the “jungles of Kentucky” where most roads are not marked with signage and many roads do not show on most maps.

But even there, after I stopped on the edge of the road after a large female turkey crossed my path, (tree watering time), possibly the only passerby that day, took the time to stop and ask if I had trouble. I said no, it’s just between me and a female turkey that crossed my path. I’m afraid to think what he thought, just some city-fried country boy wanna-be.

In those few miles that I rode yesterday; 8 squirrels, 2 ground squirrels, 3 chickens, 1 dog, 1 female turkey, 1 deer, a multitude of birds including 2 cranes, 1 car, and 1 full size tractor pulling a set of discs, (which I met on a 1 lane country road in a blind curve where he was taking up the entire road, even the mailboxes on either side were in his way), crossed my path and we all made it home safely.

Obviously, my Guardian Angle was flying overtime. Glad I did not see any black cats!!

Another successful safe journey, both into the past and into the future. Never ride angry, and never ride any faster than you Guardian Angle can fly!! Zoom, zoom, zoom.

whw



**All I own when I ride. The rest is either borrowed, given or loaned. Where have your boots been today?**

**Right: A place for your gear, courtesy of Walgreens.**



# A momentary lack of grace By Robert Beard

**Q**uite some time ago, decades really, I read an article about Gene Romero.

He of several venues of motorcycling excellence, having at various times competed in TT, flat track (both long and short courses), road races, etc... Romero was a top contender in all forms of Grand National racing and won nationals on miles, half-miles, road-racing circuits and TT tracks.

This was back in the 70's and motorcyclists of that era were not so specifically provincial in their two-wheel pursuits. They were quite a bit more open to the idea of motocross this weekend and dragging a knee at Willow the next. But that is not the point.

The article I read was, if I remember correctly, one from a stack of Playboys that my dad harbored out in the garage. Be assured those magazines were out in the garage for exactly two possible reasons: 1) because my mother was not enamored of their being in the house, and (2) to make sure that the young prying eyes of the household did not sully themselves on the many fine articles therein.

Sorry mom, dad did not try all that hard to hide them. But that is not the point either. The point is this: The slant of the article concerned itself mainly with Mr. Romero's flat-tracking skills. And it must be admitted, that to consistently pull off wins while sliding sideways at 80+ mph, wearing a 10 pound metal shoe on one foot and being thigh-jostling close to the whirring spokes of the roaring machine alongside of you, could be considered to be a rather high-end and enviable skill. Certainly this would not be a pastime for the faint of

heart, or for those lacking the ability to concentrate on the task at hand.

One bit of wisdom, and several indelible memories of Miss June, has been carried around in my mind ever since reading that article. When asked if there were any special modifications he performed on his bikes to

ately cause the front tire to start pushing into a slide and the only way he could keep it on track was to commit quickly and wholeheartedly to bringing that rear wheel out where it shouldn't be for any activity but flat tracking at speed. One thing about the written word is that it is devoid of in-



thoughtfulness, education, reflection and planning. The latter had only the necessary attributes of fleeting faith, a small dose of conviction and impulsive action. I could do that!

Modification of motor vehicles has always been one of those things I am torn about. All of my vehicles, and most especially my motorcycles, have been purchased without any conception of getting rid of them some day. Each and every one of them was golden in its own way and I was generally more of a mind to take them to a completely stock condition than the other and opposite route. I knew on some inner level that the factory mechanics and engineers might possibly possess slightly more knowledge of what makes a machine run than I.

On the other hand, I salivated as freely as the next kid in my Pavlovian response to someone brave enough to make that commitment to altering what I would consider a perfectly acceptable machine, at least on those machines where the results were worth envy. Yet I quavered at the idea of altering my own precious ride and ultimately winding up with something that I both liked less and thereafter functioned in a fashion below what I had started with.

Then too there was the fact that for most of my life any vehicle I might own was also my primary transportation. Hacking it apart would cause me expenditures of both time and hard-won cash, not to mention the fact that it would also serve to relegate me to bus and bicycle status for the duration.



**Gene Romero circa 1971, doing his thing**

help him win so consistently at the flat track Gene admitted that he was not above modifying the stock geometry to help him gain a better commitment to entering the turns. When asked to elaborate he said that he would run his bike into a solid object, such as a solid wall, to reduce both wheelbase and track. The resultant oversteer tendencies would cause the bike to fall into a turn so suddenly that it would immedi-

flection. The typical lilt and swing and timing of a phrase spoken can carry a lot of intent and purpose that typesetters can never imbue.

Was Mr. Romero having a bit of fun with the interviewer, or had he, in a beer-soaked training run, found a system to modification that relied little upon mechanical prowess and mathematical theory and more upon bravado and faith? The former qualities rely upon



But now, with two motorcycles in the garage and a 2011 Honda Fit sitting out front, I found myself thinking of modifications to my current motorcycle; that 1979 R100 I bought from Paul last year.

To be sure I was fudging a bit on this, as this particular bike had already seen its share of non-factory massaging. It had started as a R100RT and by the time I 'inherited' it from Paul he had transformed it into a rather clean-looking 'S' mode. This was accomplished mainly with the removal of the factory mega-fairing and standard bars and replacing them with an 'S' fairing and lower bars, cables and such to match. Bar-end mirrors rounded out the look, and VOILA! An 'S' bike is born.

A couple of items had already begun pestering the back corners of my mind about modifications. I had been looking at the possibility of replacing the current cast Snowflakes with some spoked units. Ooooh, spendy, that. Next!

The brakes. Useable, yes. Efficient and effective with a light touch, not so much. That rear brake in particular, the one I tend to fully employ only when I am in pucker mode, was a weak little sister. Again, the bits involved to affect a cure were apparently made of platinum and unobtainium with a price reflecting that.

New paint job? Maybe that nice dark Blue Marine Aqua Pearl that I had seen on one of the Ford Flex models of late? \$\$\$ Fugedaboutit!

Then I started reading some articles explaining the intricacies of rake, trail, lowering, etc...that can have such dramatic effect upon a motorcycle's handling. Just a smidgen here or there can take a heavy-handed and reluctant mount into one that will seemingly follow your thoughts into a turn. And, associative memo-

ries being what they are, right about that same time, as I was deep in the technology of castering effect, fall-in, speed wobble, etc....I happened to remember those golden words of Mr. Gene Romero.

Oh, I am just sure there are those of you right now who are thinking "Such a BAD idea forming here." Well, they laughed at Robert Fulton too when he invented the cotton gin.

With the confidence born of new-to-me, shallowly understood and 100% untested skill I went looking for just the right object to plow my trusty steed into. Think about it: no tools needed, I already owned and knew how to use all the required safety gear, results would be immediate and, if done correctly, I could simply ride away with a newly modified and quicker-steering mount. Oh, this idea just had shining stars attached all over it.

As it turns out most things are harder in actual practice than they are in theory. And I cannot tell you the delays I suffered whilst searching for the proper impediment for my now impending steering adjustment project.

My first thought was that curbing would be ideal. My primary obstacle then was to find an obstacle, one that would fulfill my needs. Curbing came to mind immediately. I mean, you can find a curb just about anywhere, and no one seems to hold them in high regard, so were I to inadvertently damage a curb by bouncing my bike and body off it the possibility that someone would be offended seemed slight. But once I started looking at curbs several undesirable properties concerning them came to light.

First, they are not of any uniform height; they seem to come in all kinds of roundness and crumbliness. Plus, they are

pretty darned low, and I would hate to have some mean-spirited curb merely damage a wheel without benefit of reducing my track, as I am planning. Then too, curbs often have pesky cars parked in front of them, and tend to be placed at severe right angles to any given street almost insuring that I would need to place myself crosswise to any traffic. So, curbs are off the list.

Parking lot headstones, you know those little sections of curb-like structure they put in parking lots to delineate the end of the stall? They had some of the same limitations as curbs in terms of height, and they are even less square in cross-section than actual curbing, so they got scratched from my list too. And I certainly did not want some Wal-Mart security guard putting his two cents worth of attitude in on my mechanical aptitude.

Something taller then, perhaps a wall would do.

The problem with walls is someone always seems to own them and care about them. Also, I started thinking about rebound. What if I misjudged slightly and had a bit of bounce back? Those fork legs are springy! It is not like I could do practice runs to get this right; it seemed like it was going to be a one-shot modification attempt. Possibly something that would allow me to strike it firmly but would then roll away so that I would not have to back up to inspect my handiwork? Hmmmm....

Inspiration struck like a slap from a wet towel: A car...No! Something larger, but with smooth and slab-like siding was what I required. A van then, like a large moving van, except moving vans tend to sit quite high and I certainly did not want the front wheel of my motorcycle going beneath the impeding behemoth whilst I struck it squarely with my fore-

head. I might ruin my stunning good looks or, even worse, damage my helmet.

An SUV, maybe? There are certainly enough of them on the road to choose from at any given point in time. Sometimes it seems as though SUV's and Mini's are the only cars plying the streets of suburbia. But no, SUV's, while having all the mass and size I sought tended to be too stylishly extravagant for my needs. There are too many rounded and streamlined corners and wind-cheating surfaces on the modern SUV's for me, and my immediate needs. I needed a square hit, not a chance of a glancing blow. I need one of those old fashioned Ford Econoline type of vans. Where are they?

And, because problems tend to gather more problems, I ultimately decided that I needed either a willing accomplice driving said van or an actual reason to run into some stranger's van. Chances were that if I chose some stranger's van at random to ram my ride into they would wind up getting all huffy and weird on me. I needed either culpability or deniability. And since a partner in this endeavor might begin to think they knew a better way to do things than I (as if!) I opted for just finding a way to ram some stranger's van, but in a way that would allow me to act as though it was *their* doing, and not mine. A magician's trick if ever there were one.

This final decision delayed my modification for weeks as I trolled the byways and side streets searching for that perfect venue. I was even at the point of considering abandoning my lofty project.... when fortune smiled on me.

Riding home from work one day, my thoughts solely on the simple task of motoring along the sunny Hawaiian shore, there, right in front of me...an old white van. It was square



and nondescript. It appeared neglected and unloved. The driver was wandering haphazardly a full 5-8 miles per hour on either side of the posted 25 MPH speed limit. This looked perfect, lacking only a single thing to make it the penultimate target van.

There! There! HE HAS NO BRAKE LIGHTS OR TURN SIGNALS AND (Thank the Heavens) HE IS SLOWING RAPIDLY RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME!

My heart and soul fairly vibrated to the thrill that coursed through me. Today, yes today, would be the day of my planned modifications. Oh, the perfect synchronicity and serendipity of fortune and chance. A million-billion-gazillion autos in the universe and right in front of me the one perfect candidate. The search for the grail had almost ended. But, it could all still slip away from me. I needed the driver to not just slow, he must actually stop so I could attempt to brake and .....

YES! He is still slowing rapidly ...and now coming to a total and complete stop as though to turn left. No Brake lights whatsoever, not a glimmer. Turn signals? Ha! They were as absent as a hooker's hymen.

Slowing rapidly, but incompletely, even going to the trouble of slipping the front tire just a bit so I could feign an actual emergency-stop attempt, I smacked square into the back of the van at something approximating jogging speed. As I went over the handlebars I gazed down in teary-eyed wonder at the sight of my front wheel compressing against the rear of the van.

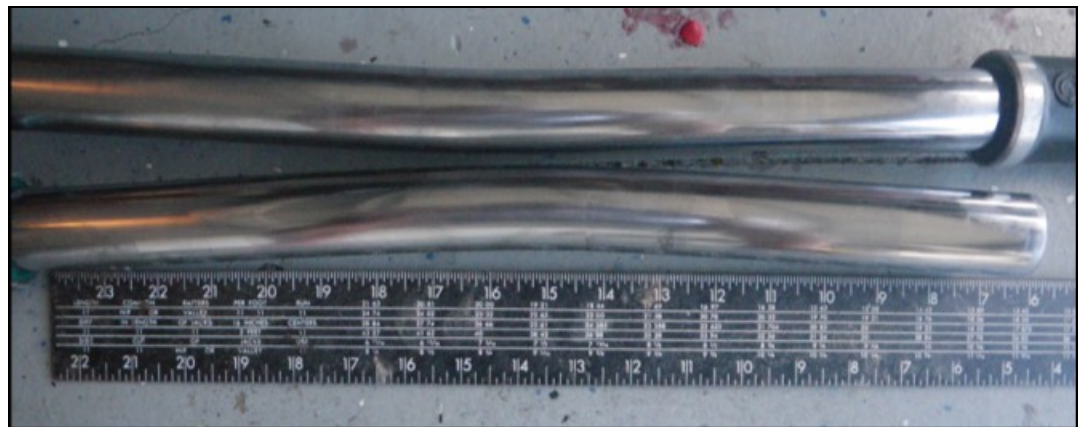
Oh Glory! It fairly brought tears to my eyes. Or, possibly, it was the inverted impact with the rear doors of the van and the resultant headfirst drop to the pavement that caused my tearing vision. No matter.

Afterwards, when the police showed up, and the ambulance attendants had released me as (physically) sound, I took a quiet roadside moment to bask in my glory.

Forks, ever-so-slightly bent. Mr. Romero would have been proud, I am sure. Yes, there was the odd scrape on my front fender, gas tank, forearm and bridge of my nose. But the thing here is that not only was my theory sound, the actual results were exactly what I envisioned might happen with a slow speed impact with an immovable object.



**Left and right stanchions: Just a hint of daylight showing. Perfect!**



**I can always buff that out and start over, right?**



Just goes to show you what a bit of foresight, planning and a momentary lack of grace can do for you.

**RB**

**Left: You gotta break a few eggs to screw up an omelet.**





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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.**