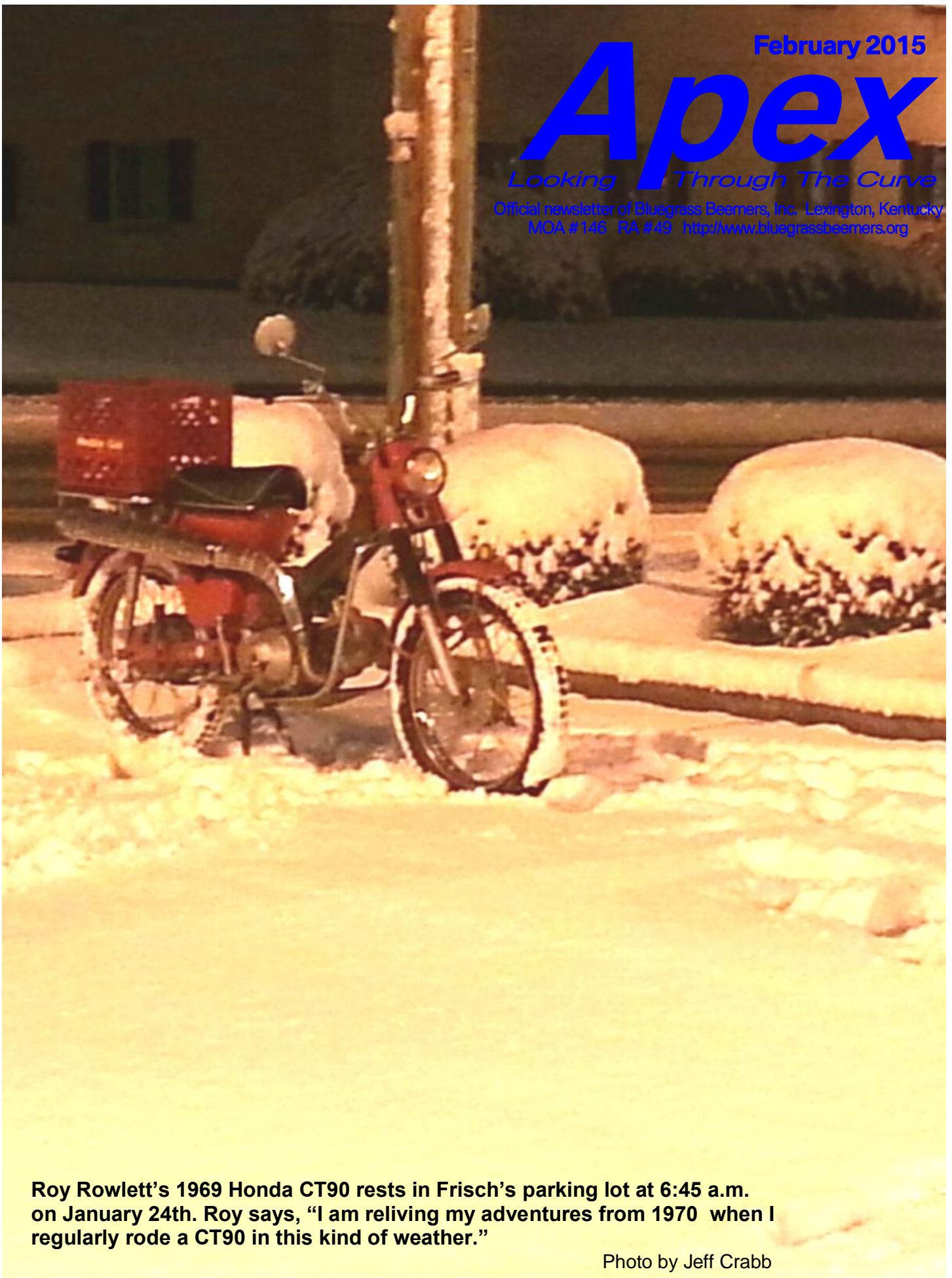


February 2015

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

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



Roy Rowlett's 1969 Honda CT90 rests in Frisch's parking lot at 6:45 a.m. on January 24th. Roy says, "I am reliving my adventures from 1970 when I regularly rode a CT90 in this kind of weather."

Photo by Jeff Crabb



Stepping up and stumbling down!

By Paul Elwyn

I am happy to announce Jeff Crabb as editor of *Apex*, beginning with the March issue!



Jeff Crabb

Jeff first attended a Bluegrass Beemers breakfast in 1989. He created and has maintained our website, has been a regular on Saturdays and has helped each year with our rally. Jeff also has helped me several times with technical issues, so wrestling with *Apex* technical glitches should be a no-brainer for Jeff.

Please send content for the March issue of *Apex* to Jeff no later than February 28th, the earlier during the month the better to help Jeff with his first issue. Send your articles and photos to: jdcraab@hotmail.com.

STUMBLING DOWN!

On January 14th I announced that *after ten years* I was stepping down as *Apex* editor. Well,

it turns out I have *not* been editing since 2005, but since November of 2008, a fact I learned while looking back through back issues.

Roy Rowlett edited *Apex* from 2003 through 2006, according to the archive on our website. I apologize for this oversight, Roy! I was working 70 hours per week during that period and was aware of little beyond the J.O.B. (as Tom

says).

Ron Hampton edited the newsletter in the late '80's for at least two years. He may have been the first editor. If anyone has record of an earlier editor, let us know.

I edited in the '90's, naming the publication, "*Apex*," and **Bill Voss** edited at least one issue, but with no date.

At any rate, this is my last issue of *Apex*, and I will under-

stand if six years from now Jeff Crabb announces he is stepping down after editing for *ten* years. Editing somehow affects one's perception of time.

Apex has been fun because of the many contributions from members. I enjoyed serving as editor until wrist and neck issues emerged, and now look forward to watching *Apex* move forward with Jeff as editor. I intend to be a contributor from time to time, so, for better or worse, you haven't heard the last from me.

I also want to thank everyone for their thoughtful notes regarding my tenure as editor. A simple "Thank you" means a lot, so I hope you will support Jeff not only with content but with encouraging notes, as well.

Let's welcome Jonathan McKeown as president of Bluegrass Beemers for 2015!

We presented Jonathan as vice president/president elect last March at the annual awards banquet.

Jonathan has been a very active member with new ideas for the club. Address any business for the club to his email: jmckeown88@gmail.com.

—PE



Kentucky Wrecking Crew concludes AHRMA season at Barber; Little joins



Kentucky Wrecking Crew riders are (from left) Brian Sawyer, Lexington, BMW 750; Bill Umstead, Lexington, Yamaha XS 750; Jim Lawson, Frenchburg, Triumph 675; Wayne Moore, Lexington, Honda 350; Lon Fields, Morehead, Triumph 675; Chuck Skarsaune, Bowling Green, Triumph 500; Steve Little, Lexington, BMW R75. Photo by Dave Huntsman



Steve Little builds a racer, debuts at Barber Vintage Festival. Photo by Dave Huntsman

Kentucky Wrecking Crew riders also include Mike Wells, Versailles, Honda 350; Steve Upchurch, Bowling Green, Honda 350; Dave Huntsman, Versailles, Honda 175; Kenneth Baker, Nicholasville, Ducati 450; Brad Davis, Lexington, Suzuki SV650; Steve Pieratt, Lexington, Yamaha XS 750; and Darrell Woolums, Lexington, Buellco 250.

Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.

Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #49

Paul Elwyn, Editor paul.elwyn@gmail.com

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.

in Lexington, Kentucky on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.

**BMW Club
Bluegrass Beemers**



New year, new bike, new role

By Jonathan McKeown, *President*



guessing I'm not alone in that, so something that helps us all put the right name with the right face could be great and a huge help to new-comers to our group.

2015 will also be my first year on a new (to me) 2010 R1200R. On my first excursion with it I promptly dropped it off the left side of a trailer (oops). Hopefully the rest of the year I'll manage to keep the rubber side down!

I'm always happy to keep in contact with any of you. I would love any and all input as far as club ideas, etc. Feel free to email me (jmckeown88@gmail.com) or call/text any time. I'm happy to give you my number in person!

—JMCK

So, apparently, I'm your new president.

As my first act of business I'd like to announce that I have no idea what I'm doing or why you all would want to put up with me. I feel blessed to have stumbled upon such a great group of screw ups, miss-fits, and all around wonderful characters as you all - and I will do my best not to royally screw up what you have going!

Hopefully what is left of winter will be short and warm. I, like the rest of you, am itching to put lots of miles between myself and this place on two wheels!

I have a few ideas for improvements for the coming year.

Once the weather is on our side I'd love to get together monthly — if not more frequently — for a dinner hang

and ride.

Many of us try to see 7 a.m. as rarely as possible, especially on a weekend, so any chance to foster more time to ride and eat when we're not still dreaming of sleep would be great.

I also would like to put together a photo directory. To say I struggle with names is an understatement, and I'm



The TL 125 (and its rider) Grows Up

By John Rice

We put the longer shocks on the TL125 a month or so ago (see the Apex cover for January) and pushed the fork tubes back down where they belong in the triple clamps.

When the McWilliams family gave this bike to Ian a few years ago, it was too tall for him to get his feet on the ground, so we pulled up the fork tubes, swapped out some shorter rear shocks (from an old Montesa) and shaved an inch or so out of the seat foam. It quickly became his favorite of the bike choices he had then. Only occasionally could he launch himself high enough to accomplish a kickstart, but each time that he did manage to light it off, he beamed.



Ian pilots the rig. Grampa serves as inert ballast.



Making a turn, with a sled. Not for the faint at heart, either as puller or pull-ee.

He has added four inches in height over the last year as he starts into a new phase of life. Now his frame matches the bike's original dimensions, so the modifications were undone.

Ian, thanks to Paul Rice, now has his dream bike, a 1975 Bultaco Model 151, "Sherpa T" trials bike. Oddly enough, the history of these two machines have converging lines. When purchased new, the TL 125 and this Bultaco shared a garage at the home of Dave Dinsmore (the legendary "Big Smith") with the TL belonging to Dave's wife Barbara and the Sherpa, then known as "Buford" being Dave's mount for his trials competition. (To illustrate the "small world" of the trials community, Buford's serial number was only a couple hundred off from the Sherpa that I bought in 2003 to return to trials riding after a long absence. The two bikes probably

came over from Spain on the same ship in 1975.)

Though the Sherpa is his dream, it's still just a bit big for him to ride on gnarly trails, so the smaller bikes have their uses.

In years past, I have been pressed into service as sled-puller for my grandsons and their friends on every snow day, usually on my Bultaco Alpina. Ian usually got his bike out to ride around in the snow for a while, but his ambition always was to one day be the one pulling the sled on his own.

We all age at the same rate, one year at a time. For those of us with way more of those years behind us than in front, the rate seems accelerated. For those who can't wait to get older and more capable, the pace is snail-like.

Ian will be 14 in a couple of months, the same age I was when I started riding motorcyc-

The TL 125 (and its rider) Grows Up By John Rice

cles. He's been at it since he was three. On this most recent snow day, the time had come for him to harness up his TL and be the one in front, with me serving as the load on the sled. We started out slowly, teaching the wide turns and the thinking in more than one dimension that is required to keep the sled and its passengers at the end of the rope and not wrapped around a tree.

He handled it all very well, letting me see again that youth and the skills developed at such an early age can smooth over a lot of the problems we old folks might see as important obstacles. The TL, like a faithful family dog, took the burden easily and without complaint.

The torch has begun its movement from the older generation to the next. Soon I'll be standing on the sidelines, watching him do the riding and the sled-pulling, and if I'm lucky, someday watching him teaching someone else the same. Sounds good to me.

—JR



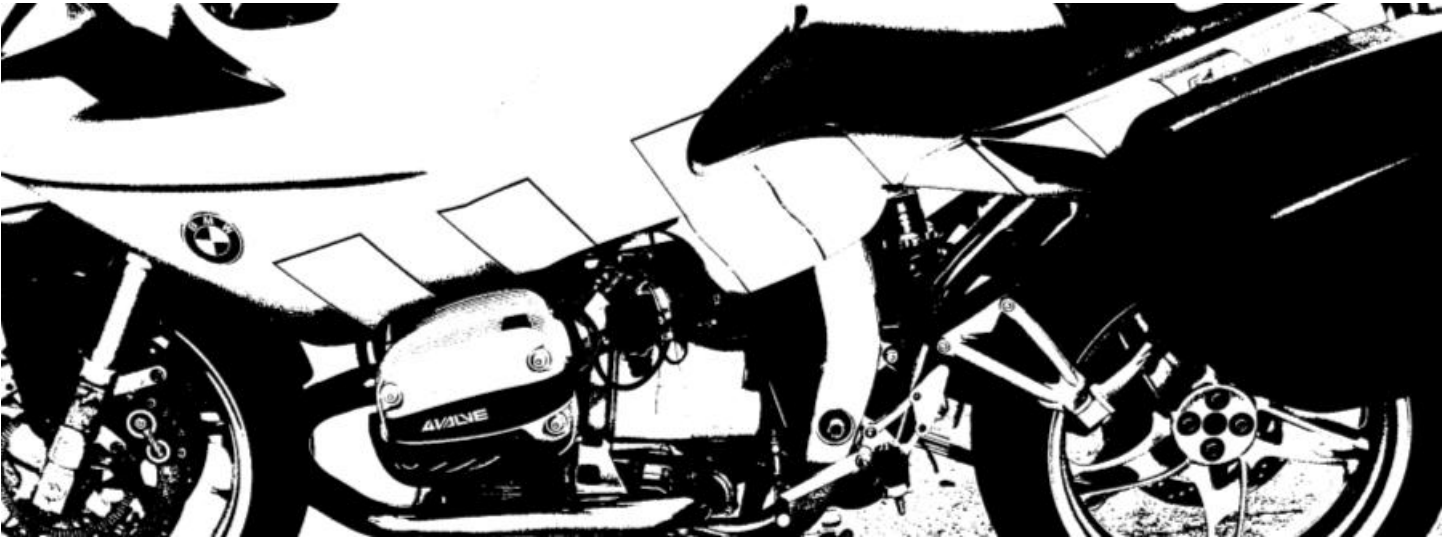
Back when Grampa did the pulling.



The old Alpina (and older Grampa) in the snow

Solo travel is satisfying, but conversation with locals can be uplifting

By Paul Elwyn



Solo travel is satisfying, but conversation with locals can be uplifting.

As usual in recent years, after about four hours of walking the grounds at AMA Vintage Days last July I was ready to hit the road. So at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday morning instead of turning right to spend a second day at Vintage Days I turned left to head home.

The early morning air was inviting, and the Airhawk whoopee cushion had lessened my seat discomfort issue on the BMW 1100S so I could once again simply enjoy the ride.

I stopped for coffee in London, Ohio, and met the most uplifting personality I have encountered in some time.

Ralph Jones joined me, and for the next half hour I listened as he shared his enthusiasm for life. As a younger man he rode a 1947 Harley flathead, exploring the performance of the machine to the extent that he often relied on the “chicken bars” to gauge available lean angle.

But for the most part he

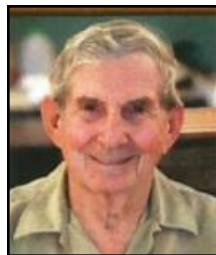
talked about woodworking. In the tradition of Welsh families, his grandfather taught him everything he knows, and for 66 years, now, Ralph has taught others and built custom furniture.

Over 125 former convicts at the local prison became woodworkers, thanks to Ralph, with 25 of them using their skills to make a living.

Ralph formed his own woodworking trade school to continue teaching. He also shares information and answers call-in questions on a radio show.

Ralph’s signature wood creations have sold coast to coast, earning a reputation for quality furniture.

When not woodworking or teaching, Ralph plays washboard in a popular bluegrass band that travels exten-



Ralph Jones

sively.

These details in themselves are not remarkable, but Ralph’s enthusiasm for his pursuits, his pride in his history and work, and his eagerness to interact with others, as he did with me, were entertaining traits that made me feel good listening to him.

Ralph is 79 years old, which isn’t all that old, anymore, in my mind, but his demeanor suggests he is much younger. He said he feels great, and looks forward to every day, and I believe him.

His wife of 54 years died two years ago, and for many that loss would have been enough to permanently dampen the spirit. Ralph said he was blessed with a wonderful marriage and continues to be blessed with many friends. I could see the truth in that last note, because every person who entered the restaurant spoke to Ralph with enthusiasm.

I was fortunate to spend some time with Ralph. The solo riding had been satisfying, but

over the entire trip I had been hungry for some conversation. Ralph reminded me that we have the power to make our days special. Ralph appears to have mastered that approach to life.

As I motored along OH 38 S, a small road connecting London and Washington Court House, the air seemed even more refreshing than it had prior to London, despite the rising temperature.

—PE





Fear does not prevent danger By John Rice

While watching the movie *Sidecar Dogs*, I picked up the above phrase during a discussion on whether it was “proper” to expose dogs to the risks of motorcycle sidecar travel.

An ex-pat Frenchman, now living in the US, referred to what he described as a common saying in his country to explain the notion that one should go on and do things that may induce fear for harm, because life isn’t safe for any of us and the fact that something bad might happen shouldn’t keep us from enjoying what living has to offer. I thought it was an interesting way of capturing the idea that being afraid of dangers, real or imagined, isn’t by itself very useful.

I’m certainly not a “brave” person, not in the “storm the machine gun nest” or “face down the charging lion” variety, but I’m generally not afraid either. I’ve had my moments, the awakening at 3 a.m., heart pounding, wondering if I had missed a statute of limitations or failed to do something I should have done for a client (fortunately, those were all false fears) and some medical scares that leave a dark cloud over the world until the good news (so far, anyway !) comes through.

That said, though, I’m not usually afraid on a bike. Non-riders seem to feel that every moment on a motorcycle is fraught with unpredictable danger and the prospect that the thing will suddenly and without warning go out of control. (I recall watching a movie in which the protagonist crashed badly because he ran over a flattened dead skunk in the middle of a straight dry road). The uninitiated don’t understand the physics of a two wheeled machine and cannot

imagine that it is anything but unstable, prone to crash suddenly at any random moment for no understandable cause. They think we who ride either are too dim-witted to understand that level of risk or somehow “brave” enough to ignore it. Certainly I have scared myself through an excess of enthusiasm with a minimum of tal-

Doesn’t your butt hurt ?”) but most of the framework of the discourse has to do with the non-rider’s concept of the fear of the danger these motorized contraptions induce and their pilots must endure. But overcoming fear doesn’t seem to be first on the minds of long-term riders I know.

In the movie “Fastest,” about

laps of the race. These two men were at the very limits of control at unimaginable speeds and lean angles.....but they never crashed or even looked like they could. What the non-riders see as raw bravery was in fact very skilled athletes calculating tire wear, traction, fuel, track surface, the other rider’s position and just how far they could push their skills and their equipment without going too far to recover a mistake. I doubt that fear had much place in their calculations at the time.

Like with any passion that we humans can devote ourselves to, the uninitiated cannot relate to anything but the superficial stories that float to the top of the “common knowledge” and that gives them a one-size-fits-all version that they can use to put that thing, that activity in a box that eliminates the need to think about it in any analytical fashion. Every gun owner isn’t Zimmerman, every lawyer isn’t a Fenn-Phenn crook or an ambulance-chaser, and every cop isn’t just out to harm people who don’t look like him. I have an acquaintance whose passion is rock climbing, hanging by her fingers and toes, dangling over the abyss for the fun of it. I can’t relate to doing it, but I know she doesn’t have a death wish. I know she plans every move and weighs every risk well in advance, knowing what she can do and what she can’t get away with, and is always practicing, pushing herself to move things from the second category to the first. She loves doing it, getting better at it and feeling the high that only comes with mastery of a difficult skill with some risk involved.

She probably thinks I’m nuts for riding a motorcycle.



ent, and other drivers’ dumb moves have left me momentarily contemplating my imminent demise, but those are, in one sense or another, known risks.

When a new acquaintance learns that I ride motorcycles, I usually get the “wreck” stories (“I had an uncle once, had a Harley, and he had to lay it down. Yep, there was nothing left of him but his left pinky, and we used to bring that to all the family gatherings in a plastic bag”) and the “daredevil” or “Evel Kneival” references and of course the “uncomfortable” stories (“I don’t see how you ride on that thing all the way across town.

the Moto GP series featuring Valentino Rossi and his contemporaries, the point is made that these young men are superior, not necessarily in “bravery,” but in thinking, planning and execution of the plan. That is the part that the non-motorsport public never consider. I recall seeing a video of a Moto GP race several years ago in which two riders, I think Colin Edwards and Troy Bayliss, had pulled far away from the rest of the field (which consisted of the rest of the best riders in the world !) and were all by themselves, mere feet or sometimes inches apart for the last few

BBB mnd rally

11-4-14

It seems like it
was yesterday, where
the sun was shining,
the weather was just
the temps were perfect

to upper 50's low 60's
during the day &
low 40's at night

It is a special feeling
one gets when over time
they trust a hundred people
they never knew before

Books available on loan

The following books are available on loan. Email me when you want to borrow one, and I will bring it to breakfast (or whatever other arrangements need to be made...I can deliver within reason) and I'll put your name beside it on my list.

I don't mind if people keep them a while (it takes me forever to read a book now....I keep falling asleep and then have to re-read the last 10 pages or so) but I don't want to give them away for good. At least not yet.

John Rice
Rickey@aol.com



Bahnstormer By LJK Setwright
Streetwise By Malcolm Newell
The Bart Markel Story By Joe Scalzo
Mann of his Time By Ed Youngblood
Yesterday's Motorcycles By Karolevitz
The Scottish By Tommy Sandham
This Old Harley By Michael Dregni
Racer: the story of Gary Nixon By Joe Scalzo
All But My Life: Bio of Stirling Moss By Ken Purdy (OK, not a motorcycle book, but who doesn't like and respect Stirling Moss?)
Investment Biker By Jim Rogers
Obsessions Die Hard By Ed Culbertson
BMW Twins & Singles By Roy Bacon
Bitten by the Bullet By Steve Krzystyniak & Karen Goa
Cafe Racers of the 1960's By Mick Walker
More Proficient Motorcycling By David Hough
Tales of Triumph Motorcycles & the Meriden Factory:
By Hancox
Sport Riding Techniques By Nick Ienatasch
Total Control By Lee Parks

Smooth Riding By Reg Pridmore.
A Twist of The Wrist (Vol 1 & 2) By Keith Code
Triumph Tiger 100 and Daytona By J. R. Nelson
This Old Harley (anthology) By Dregni
Side Glances By Peter Egan
Mondo Enduro By Austin Vince
Big Sid's Vincati By Matthew Bieberman
101 Road Tales By Clement Salvadori
Riding with Rilke By Ted Bishop
Legendary Motorcycles By Luigi Corbetta
Lois on the Loose By Lois Pryce
Red Tape and White Knuckles By Lois Pryce
A Man Called Mike By Hilton (bio of Mike Hailwood)
The Perfect Vehicle By Melissa Pierson
One Man Caravan By Robert Fulton (first known circumnavigation of the world by motorcycle)
Monkey Butt By Rick Sieman
Ariel: The postwar models By Roy Bacon
Short Way Up By Steve Wilson
Endless Horizon By Dan Walsh
Leanings (1 & 2) By Peter Egan
Into the Heart of Africa By Jerry Smith
The Last Hurrah By Des Molloy
(Autographed copy, with DVD of the trip)
Whatever Happened to the British Motorcycle Industry
By Bert Hopwood
Down the Road By Steve Wilson
Motorcycling Excellence
By Motorcycle Safety Foundation
Leanings 3 By Peter Egan
Ghost Rider By Neal Peart



For Sale



1998 BMW R1200C

- Cream color, blue seat hard bags
- Windscreen
- Under 17,000 miles
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- New battery
- 60% on rear tire
- Never been down, no scratches or dents.

\$5000.00

Brady Ratliff
859-619-5493
brady.ratliff@icloud.com



For Sale 2003 R1100S Boxer Cup Replica



22,356 miles

- BMW system cases
- Suburban handlebar risers
- tank bag
- fresh Metzeler

I purchased this lease bike in 2007 from Louisville BMW with only 3,500 miles registered.

This bike is always maintained according to book, garaged kept, in excellent condition and ready to ride.

Price Reduced!

~~\$7,900~~

\$6,900

Lee Thompson

leetlex92@gmail.com

859-475-7029



For Sale



New Mexico 2008

1986 BMW K75

41,929 MILES, GARAGE KEPT

TIRES ARE GOOD, 41,929 MILES

GARAGE KEPT, ALL FUNCTIONS WORK

AUX FLASHERS ON REAR BRAKE

TOURING BAGS, REAR TOP BOX

\$2,800

859-229-4496 or bob.biker1@gmail.com

For Sale 2008 BMW K1200S



- This bike has just over 7400 miles on the odometer.
- Tires have less than 1000 miles on them.
- Bike is in immaculate condition, always kept inside.

\$10,000 or reasonable offer

Roger Perry
859-489-6232

For Sale

Hard to Find Original Slash 5 Bags with mounts, \$450 plus shipping

Bags like these do not surface very often for sale! Come with mounts but I'm not certain is stock or fabricated. The bags are still deeply colored with well preserved pinstriping and roundels. One lid has a "bite" out of the lids inner seal not visible when closed but will let water in if riding in the rain. Perhaps can be repaired with some black PVC or replace lid or use as is and ride! Request pics.

\$450 plus shipping

Large unpainted Slash 5 fuel tank, \$425 plus shipping

Two very small dings, no other defects. No roundels/petcocks nor fuel lid. Great tank, Pics on request.

\$425 plus shipping

Bill Denzer
airhead@windstream.net

For Sale



- Brembo ABS brakes
- K bike close-ratio 6 speed
- HyperPro shocks
- Throttlemeister cruise
- nearly flawless OEM paint
- heated grips
- head guards
- stock clip-ons and LSL superbike bar conversion
- stock and custom (pictured) seats
- stock and touring shields
- rear seat cowl
- headlight protector shield
- BMW side cases
- cat eliminator pipe plus stock catalytic converter
- 50% left on Metzlers

1999 R1100 S

65,452 miles

\$4,650 obo

Paul Elwyn
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NOW IT'S YOUR
TURN.**

**Get one before your friends do or
you'll be on the couch this Spring!**

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The KICKSTAND's 9th Annual Polar Bear Run Saturday, February 28, 2015

(If snow or ice on that date, ride will be rescheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2015.)

REGISTRATION 10:30 – 11:45
RIDE LEAVES AT NOON

The group ride will leave from the store, located at 500 East Main Street, in Burgin, KY – at the intersection of highways 33 & 152.

\$10 per person *(covers cost of food, drink & tip)*

The route/distance will be dependent upon the group size and weather conditions. We'll end the ride with warm chili and drinks for everyone.

**For more information or to confirm the ride is on,
phone 859.748.KICK or e-mail SeeYou@TheKickstandLLC.com.**