

Apex

July 2016

Looking Through The Curve

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

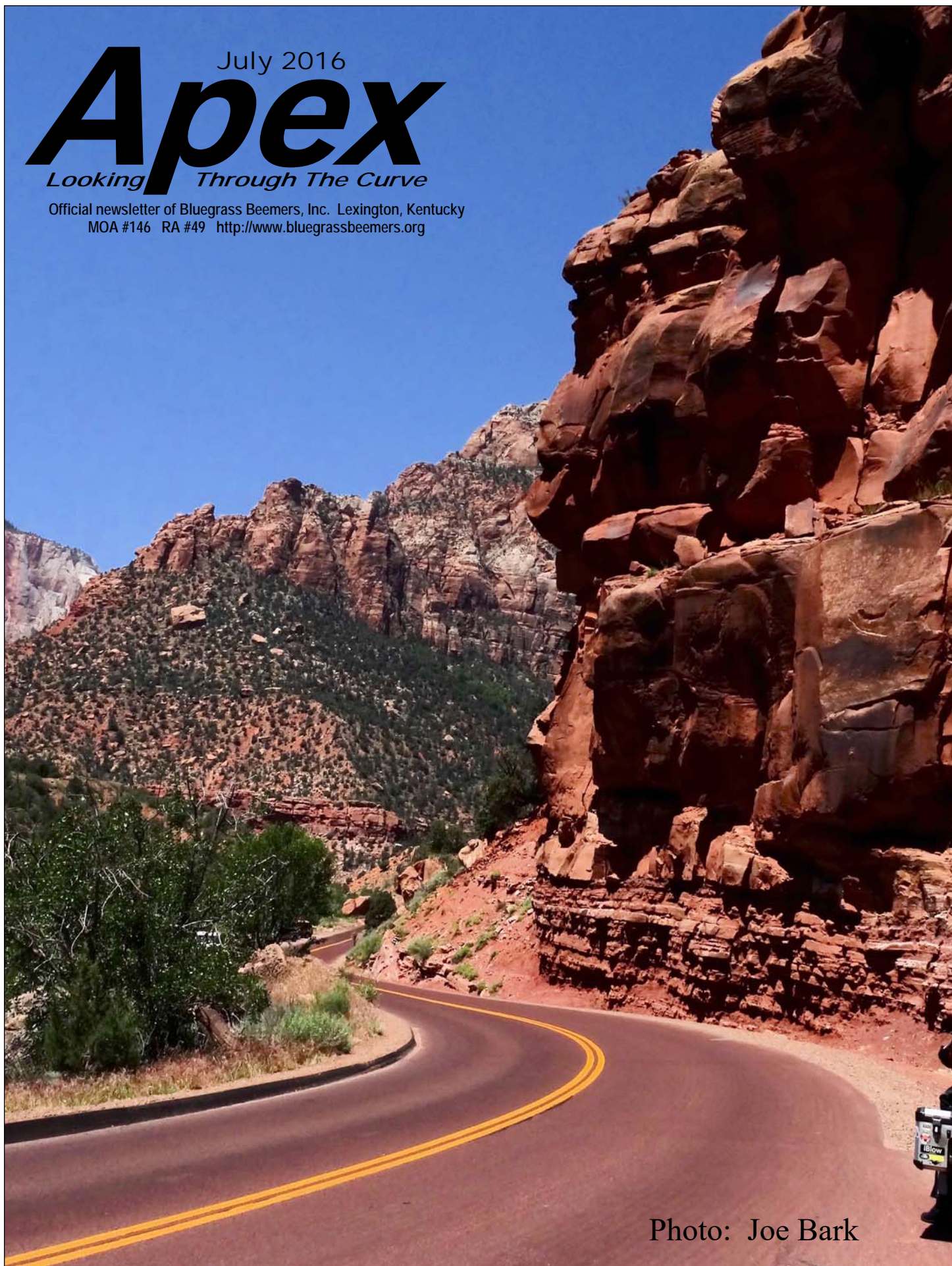


Photo: Joe Bark

Rally Time!

By Jeff Crabb

We've made it to July. The National BMW Rally is just a couple of weeks away. For those making the trek to Hamburg, I hope you have a great time and the weather isn't an issue. Please take plenty of pictures and send them in for the August edition.

This month, we have John Rice making his monthly trip to the Blue Ridge Parkway. (Just joking!) It does seem to be a re-occurring event this

year. John also provides us with a book review. Joe Bark has returned from Utah and has brought plenty of pictures back with him.

June marked the closing of the Kickstand in Burgin, KY. It will be missed. It was truly a destination for all motorcyclists. I had stopped by there plenty of times either on my way to somewhere or to attend an event that was being put on. Whether it was a Polar Bear Run or a Bikes,

Blues & BBQ, it was always a good time spent. Ray & Lynn, I hope you enjoy retirement to the fullest.

Please enjoy the stories and the pictures and please keep sending in your stories and pictures.

Please send all of your contributions to
apex@bluegrassbeemers.org.

Thanks

2016 BMW MOA International Rally
7/14/2016 - 7/17/2016

Location: Hamburg, New York

Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.

Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #49

Jeff Crabb, *Editor* jdcrabb@hotmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

Back issues of *Apex* can be accessed on our website

Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.

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

BMW Club
Bluegrass Beemers



The Mountains are calling and we Must Go...

Article & Photos by John Rice

Motorcycles, it seems, are not very efficient transportation. Jay Smythe and I sat eating excellent pie in a tiny restaurant/bakery in Portsmouth, Ohio ("Portsmouth's Best Kept Secret", the writing on the window exclaimed, and it is so well kept that the place doesn't even have a name) and wondered why it had taken us well over four hours to get to a city

that is, by highway, less than two hours from our starting point. We had left the Beemer Breakfast on Saturday morning with a generalized intent to head northeast to Front Royal Virginia to start down the Skyline Drive and then the Blue Ridge Parkway from the very top. It had been two whole weeks since I had been on the Blue Ridge, so of course it was time to go back.

Well fed, we made it about one hundred yards before the morning's rain caught up with us again and kept us company up Route 141 through Ohio and into West Virginia until we stopped for the night in Parkersburg. Our "non-smoking room" reeked of stale smoke, caused no doubt by the plethora of butts outside on the parking lot. Note to customers: Standing in the open



door to smoke doesn't help much to keep it out of the living quarters. Next door was the "newly re-opened" Mountaineer Restaurant. Apparently the rebirth had not included any staff training. There were so many screw-ups in our orders, including "dueling waiters", that we thought "Candid Camera" had re-opened its antics as well. As Mr. Funt knew, there is eventually a point where it becomes more funny than irritating.

Sunday morning dawned without rain and a short couple of miles on I-77 got us to WV 47, a perfect motorcycle road winding through the hills and nearly devoid of traffic. The pavement, canopied by trees, remained damp, so no curve-carving heroics. The rising sun filtered down through the wet leaves to dapple the surface as we passed through tiny farming communities waking up, by animals just beginning to stir and along valleys with newly-fed streams tumbling over rocks on their way down to the river. The rain found us again just as we joined up with Rt. 50, the curvy US highway that would take us on into Front Royal. I was last on this road a few decades ago, on the Green Bike chasing (unsuccessfully) James Street on our way toward the MOA rally in York, Pa. Not much seems to have changed. It is a fine way to

get somewhere, or nowhere in particular, on a motorcycle, even in the rain.

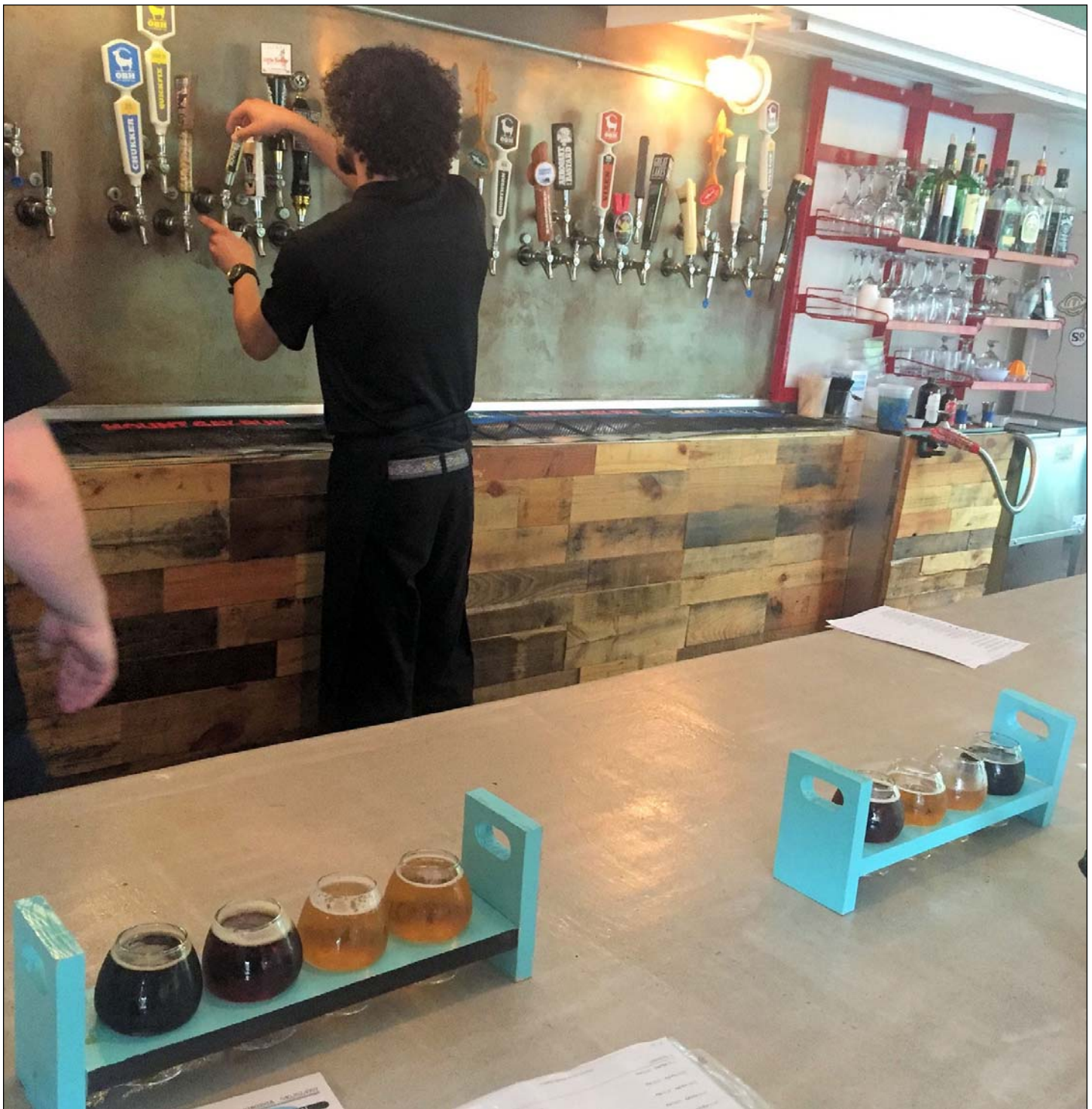
As we pressed on, I pondered our situation while I calculated for the next apex through a water-streaked face shield. I could have been home, dry and warm in my house, reading a good book or napping in my chair. Instead, I'm out here in the cold rain, perched on two tiny contact patches of rubber against wet asphalt, taking a risk with each curve that I, or the next driver coming toward me, may misjudge the line or the available traction leading to perhaps life-changing consequences. But I've been doing this for a very long time, and I cannot imagine not wanting to be doing exactly this instead of those more "sensible" options. Perhaps a highly educated, experienced and qualified expert in human behavior could offer an explanation...but Jay is one of those and he's right behind me, doing the same thing.

The forecast for tomorrow was much better, so rather than hit the Skyline in the fog and rain, we made an early day of it in Front Royal. We had been nearly 300 miles in the rain and that seemed to be enough. The extremely friendly and helpful lady at the Information Center downtown showed us where the Quality Inn was located, right at the edge of the main street and

across the road from The Pavemint, a converted gas station now housing a brewpub and restaurant. Yes, please, we'll take it.

At the motel we met several other motorcyclists, some Harley riders waiting out the rain and another group on a variety of brands and styles of bikes, combining two passions: they were riding their motorcycles to this place and using it as a base from which to hike part of the Appalachian Trail which is nearby. This latter group was just coming back in from the trail, pants and boots covered in mud from the rain-soaked slippery slopes, but smiling nonetheless.

For supper, we walked across the street to The Pavemint to see what sort of fill up the converted gas station could offer. The eager young bartender, with his unruly shock of hair and multiple indecipherable tattoos filled us in on the choices offered by the many taps emerging from the wall behind the bar. We each got a flight of samples with Jay opting for the Belgian-inspired wheat beer end of the spectrum and me going for the dark side, the porters and stouts. One, which I would not ordinarily have considered, was Caramel Macchiato Oatmeal Stout. I included it in the sample in the interests of experimentation and found it



surprisingly good. One should expand one's horizons occasionally. We ate Crab & Hash, a local specialty of The Pavemint, and eventually made our way back across the street to our room.

In the morning we hit the Skyline as the sun was just

filling the valleys below, bringing up the mist from the wet forests. We rose higher and higher, then settled in to the gentle rise and fall of the road along the ridge tops, going in and out of shade, ever mindful of the wet pavement and tree droppings to be found

there. At one point I took note of a sign that warned, "Watch for Falling Rocks" when we were on the very top of a mountain, with only wooded slopes extending down on either side. Perhaps the squirrels up here have evolved into



rock-throwers to discourage motorists.

Near the Skyland Lodge, a large black bear walked out into the road in front of us, then stopped. I have seen many bears in my travels, but typically they are in a hurry to get across the blacktop and back into the safety of the forest. This one stared us down as we came to a halt at a respectful distance, and then we saw the two cubs poking their noses out of the brush, making their way tentatively across the road to where Mom stood waiting. She gave us a last warning look, then took her family into the woods on the other side, unhurried by our presence. Yes M'am, you just take your time. We'll wait.

We pulled in to the Lodge, to find that we had missed the restaurant serving time by just a few minutes, so no pie break here. Parked in front were an R1200GS and a Triumph Tiger 800, with a father and son duo loading up to leave. In our conversation, the son piloting the Tiger said that he had just returned from a long western trip on the Triumph, only to have his biking friends back home tell him it was "a shame to put that many miles on a new bike". He said "they just don't get it", shaking his head in bemusement at how different perspectives can be among people ostensibly involved in the same activity.



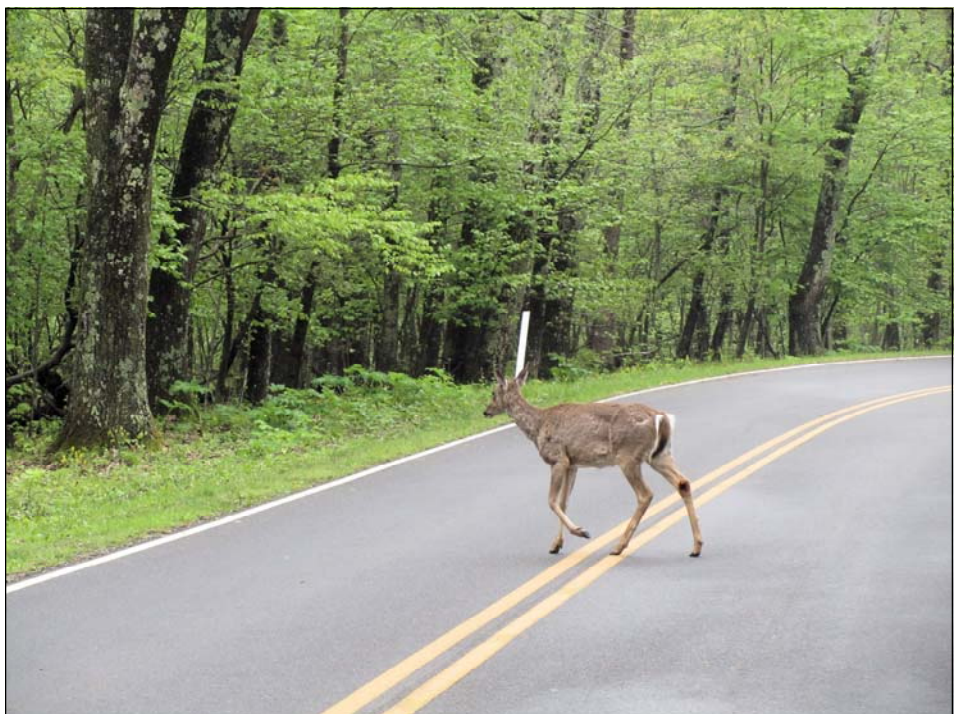
By now the rain had caught up with us again, in and out as we traversed the different sides of the mountain ridges. Even in a downpour, the Skyline Drive is a great experience and the curves can be enjoyed, albeit at a more sedate pace. By Staunton, Virginia, the end of the Drive and the start of the Parkway, we were in sunshine again as we left the mountains to run into town on a particular errand. There

is a restaurant there, Mrs. Rowe's Family Restaurant, that is famous for its pies and pastries and we had two tasks: one, of course, to eat lunch and have excellent pie, the other to purchase Mrs. Rowe's pie cookbook for my daughter-in-law who is an excellent chef in her own right. The book was at one time available only at the restaurant, but as we learned when we got there, they were out of copies and



recommended that we try Amazon. So after riding from Kentucky with the plan of buying the book at its source, I ended up sitting at a table there, ordering it from Amazon on my cell phone. Modern technology does present some irony.

(To be continued)



The Butterfly Man

Review by John Rice

"Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly".

Brian House was a family man, a small-town lawyer, a respected mediator and a minister. His world was solving other people's problems, smoothing the way forward. He had been a motorcycle rider in his youth, but that part of life had taken a back seat to career and family. Then, with a phone call from his doctor, all that changed.

"The Butterfly Man" is an unsparing, candid account of a cancer diagnosis, the treatment and the aftermath, one not many would have the self confidence to present to the world, but it most certainly is

not a "cancer book". It is a journey tale, one by motorcycle and one inside Brian's head as he reorders his priorities.

Brian thought he'd left motorcycling behind in the past, but like all of us with the two-wheeled gene, he found that there can be only dormancy, not cessation. When he needed some time to think, some space to breathe, there is nothing like a motorcycle trip across this huge country to provide needed perspective. While he recovered from the surgery, the odyssey began to take shape.

His account of the "war room" where he planned (by his own admission, somewhat obsessively) the grand tour he would take...if only the US

Air Force would stop rescheduling his son's training...should be familiar to many of us.

He bought the wrong bike for his needs...a cruiser...but had the intelligence and maturity to admit it to himself and change his ways. His second choice was an excellent one, but not "the one" as he describes in terms any motorcyclist can understand. He finally settled upon a BMW R1200 GS, an Aerostitch Darien "banana jacket" and set off west. Along the way he met the lady in a restaurant who discussed the fortitude of "T-Plus Love, the guy who said he'd remember how to fly a plane once he got it back in the air, had a beer or two in

Beemers in the Bluegrass Mini Rally

September 9th—11th

Club E-mail Group

Have you joined?

To subscribe send an e-mail to

Bgbeemers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

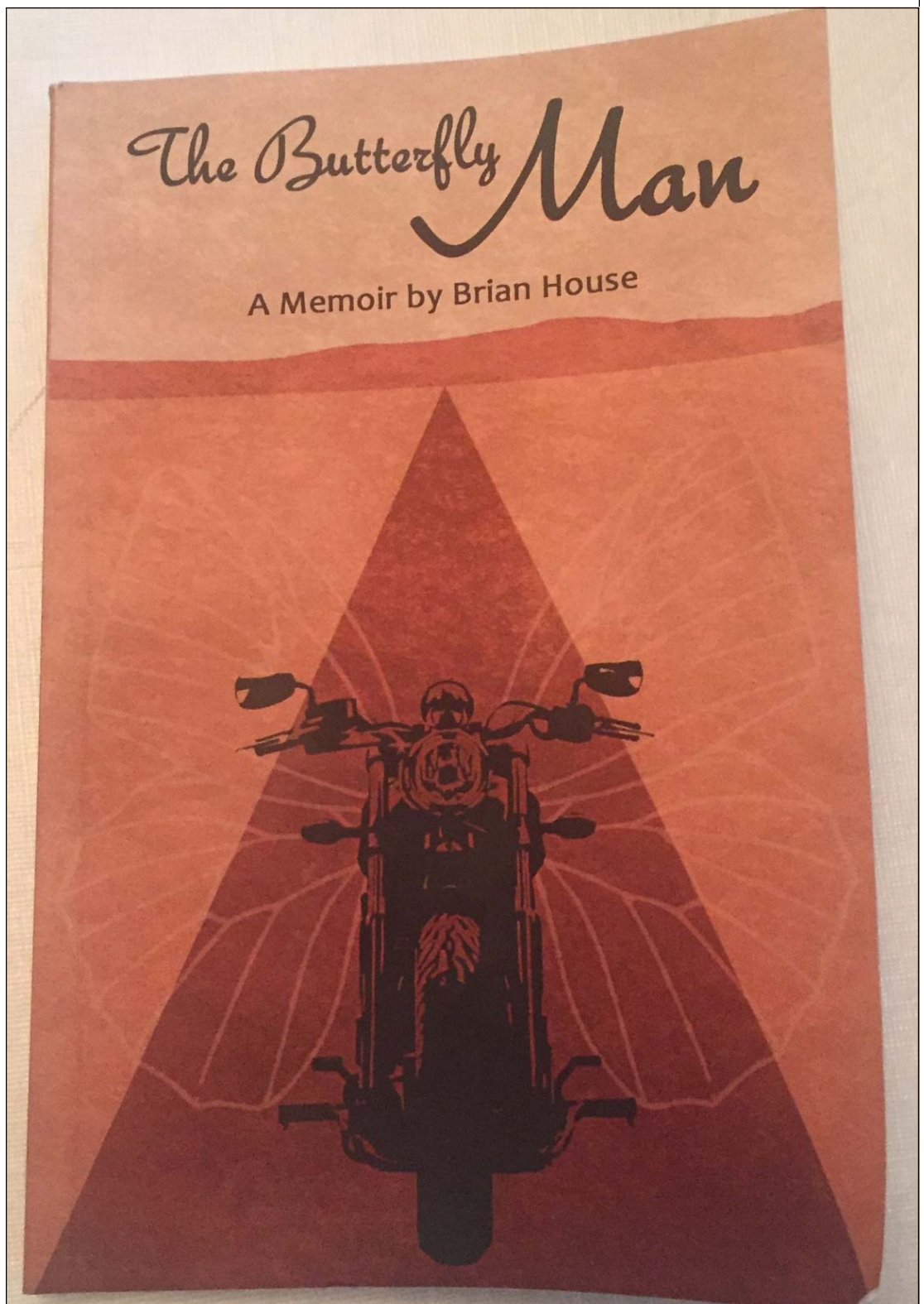
Silver City, New Mexico with legendary Nick Sanders and a group of British ex-cops who were riding across America collecting USA speeding tickets.

House is an Old West buff and has done his research well. He weaves in stories of the historical battles & characters associated with each the places he travels. We learn about such figures as Elfege Baca who held off 80 attackers without a scratch, the myth versus fact of Billy the Kid and the man who may have been the key figure in that legend.

I like reading travel stories and have read many of those from world travelers. House shows that one can stay in the continental US and inside one's head and have a worthy journey nonetheless.

So it is not a cancer book or a midlife crisis book, but one about somebody doing it right. Doing the right thing about the diagnosis, about the treatment, and then about what to do next when you suddenly realize how temporary all this life is. It is about having the right attitude toward life, best considered from the saddle of a moving motorcycle.

The Butterfly Man is available at better bookstores, from the publisher RRP International LLC, and on Amazon.





Twisties? You asked for TWISTIES? Photo by Joe Bark



Vietnamese, who wanted only to raise a family in the USA Photo by Joe Bark



Panoply of colors on the south rim nightly! Photo by Joe Bark



THE JULY SUN IS KIND THIS WEEK - AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY
 WAS AUTUMNLIKE AND BEAUTIFUL. THE BMW NATIONAL RALLY
 BEGINS THIS WEEK... TRIPS ARE PLANNED, BIKES ARE PACKED...
 WE WILL LEAVE FOR THE 21ST ANNUAL BIKE JOURNEY ON
 FRIDAY...

Here's the group for today:

- * 1). Chris Warner
- * 2). Roy Rowlett
- * 3). Jim Brandon
- * 4). Hubert Burton
- * 5). Mitch Butler
- * 6). Terry Finley
- * 7). Boone Sutherland
- * 8). Bill Voss
- * 9). Paul Elwyn
- * 10). John Rice
- * 11). Jay Smythe
- * 12). Lowell Roark
- * 13). Paul Wells & Suzanne
- * 14). Terry McLary
- * 15). Duff Neal
- * 16). Pete Galskin
- * 17). Chester Martin
- * 18). Mike Gill
- * 19). Phillip Baugh
- * 20). Steve Bishop
- * 22). Joe Bark

* NEW ALL TIME ATTENDANCE
 HIGH FOR BREAKFAST !!
 (32)

- * 23). Wayne Griffin
- * 24). Jeff Sauer
- * 25). Ben Pruitt (Norton)
- * 26). Ron Blackburn
- * 27). Nancy Russell (Krook)
- * 28). Randy Scott
- * 29). David Spickman
- * 30). Gary Huffman
- * 31). Jeff Graber
- * 32). Denny Phillips

(Back for the Bluegrass 10,000 - but didn't!)

Boone

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
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