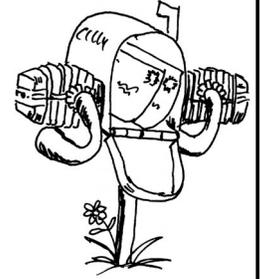


The Mail Boxer

March 2003

BMW MOA #7



The Prez says...

by Steve Huber

Ok, according to the usual progression of seasons, about this time of year it is supposed to be getting a bit warmer here in Wisconsin. Along with that alleged warmer weather comes the first real motorcycle ride (for some of us, anyhow) of the new riding season. Unfortunately we're likely to come face-to-face with our nemesis: The Clueless Driver.

According to the AMA (that's American Motorcyclist Assn, not Amalgated Mothers Assn): "Over two-thirds of car-motorcycle crashes, and nearly half of all motorcycle crashes are caused by drivers, not by motorcyclists. Of the 1,319 fatal car-motorcycle crashes in 1999, 38% involved another vehicle violating the motorcyclist's right-of-way by turning left while the motorcycle was going straight, passing, or overtaking the vehicle." Let's face it folks, they are out to kill us.

During the winter our Clueless Driver hasn't had to deal with the inconvenience of two-wheeled obstacles. It's likely they are even less aware at this time (as opposed to during the summer) that you might be sharing the road (how inconsiderate of you!). Let's face it, you don't have the visibility of a SUV. You're just not enough a threat for them to put down the double-latte and drive.

So what's to do? Be especially aware out there. Be even more defensive than usual. Watch behind you at stoplights. Take it a bit easy on that first ride (or two). As always, the only assumption you should make is that they are trying to kill you. Be careful out there.

Enough alarmist drivel, here are some club items:

March 23rd Madison Motorsports is moving down the road to a new location. Various folks from this and other clubs will be helping out. Duties are (mostly) loading and unloading boxes. MM has been very generous at supporting the Madison area clubs. Here's a chance to help them out. AFAIK starting time is 8am.

The Daytona 200 is on the Speed Channel, around noonish, March 9. I'm hosting a small get-together. I'll provide brats; you bring beverage of choice and a dish to pass. Please RSVP me (242-1873, shuber@terra.com.net) so I know how many brats.

There is a GR3 planning meeting at my place 7PM, March 11. All club members are welcome to attend and help out.

My notes are sketchy: Has someone been coerced (er, volunteered) to arrange food for the June Club picnic?

Ok, the RT really needs a new set of tires (guess I know where my tax refund is going). I'm heading out to the garage and pull those wheels off. See y'all at the (March 9) b'fast meeting.

Upcoming Events

3/9: March Breakfast 9am at the Maple Tree Restaurant in McFarland

3/16: St. Patrick's Day Ride led by Todd Herbst. Meet at 9am at the Citgo in Cross Plains.

4/2: April Breakfast 9am at the Maple Tree Restaurant in McFarland

5/16-18: Great River Road Run

5/22-25: Memphis, TN ride.

Leaving late afternoon Thursday. Arrive Memphis area Friday night. Beale Street blues, Graceland, much more. Return Sunday and Monday (Memorial Day) Contact Ed Burington for more information.

6/13-14: New Vienna, IA ride. Leaving Friday afternoon for steak dinner and probable overnight camp. Field of Dreams is about 5 miles away. Contact Ed Burington for more info.

6/14: Horribly Hilly Hundred Century Rile to support Blue Mounds State Park needs motorcycle support. Contact Tom Wiesen for more info.

8/8-10: New Vienna, IA ride
Leaving Friday afternoon for steak dinner, camping and Perseides meteor shower. Field of Dreams or Amana Colonies possible on Saturday. Brunch at Timmerman's overlooking the Mississippi and return home on Sunday. Contact Ed Burington for more information.

8/22-25: Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Friday ride through Upper Peninsula
Michigan to Canada. Saturday take
the Agawa Canyon train tour.
Sunday visit Macinac Island and stop
in Manistique, MI for the evening.
Monday return to Madison. Contact
Ed Burington for more information.

9/28: Dyersville, IA. A Sunday
morning ride to Timmerman's, East
Dubuque, IL for brunch. Continue to
Dyersville for a Field of Dreams visit.
Back home the same day. Contact
Ed Burington for more information.

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Secretary's Report

by JT Wagner

37 people attended the February breakfast.

Business discussed:

GR3 Update from Bert Hefty We may have the place from noon Thursday to Sunday the weekend of the rally. John Schroeder latched onto a 100-cup coffee maker and donated for the rally use. We are still checking into the food situation for the rally. Badger Camp has coolers that they will rent to rally goers for food or other liquid refreshments. As always any help to furnish door-prizes will be much appreciated. Rob Himmelman is donating one of his tents for the registration booth. There will probably be a meeting of some sort to set up committees for rally jobs. Club members working the rally will get a discounted registration.

Madison Motorsports is moving to their new digs on March 23, anyone who would like to help them would be welcome.

March 9 is the next breakfast.

50/50 drawing went to Phil Wilson.

Free breakfast for March went to Ken Johnson.



Save the Club a Few Bucks!

Start receiving the newsletter by email and club printing and mailing costs will be reduced. You will receive it in the form of a PDF file about a week earlier than by regular mail. You will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader (freely available) to open and print the PDF file. If interested, send an email to Derek Engelen at dkengelen@fdm-online.com indicating which email address you want to use.

2003 Full Moon Winter Campout

This was going to be no cakewalk like last year's so-called winter campout. This year's high of 23 degrees did not reach last year's low of 28 degrees. And, our low of -3 degrees was 61 degrees lower than last year's high of 58 degrees. Real Winter in Wisconsin, even with a light cover of snow in the park.

Bert Hefty opened up the camp site at Blue Mounds State Park on Friday afternoon, January 17. Todd Erickson was keeping Bert company by the time Steve Werlein arrived at 4:30 with the firewood. A little after 5, Todd Herbst, Activities Czar, came in to check that the activity was getting off to a good start.

Todd H and Steve drank beers (before they could freeze) while Bert and Todd E went for a social call in a nearby town.

About 7:30 all went to Hooterville Inn in nearby Blue Mounds proper and enjoyed the delicious fish fry and a couple pitchers of Capitol Winterskaal. After numbing ourselves on food and drink, we returned to the campfire and enjoyed talking and gazing at the moonshadows. With the light snow cover on the ground, the nearly full moon lit up the woods like a yardlight. We took in as much of the eerie splendor as we could, in case the next day brought the forecasted clouds and snow. Occasionally a faint tire whine from nearby Hwy 18-151 would rise over the crackling fire. But for the most part, the winter night was silent, still, and brightly lit albeit a bit spooky with the long shadows cast behind the trees.

Night time is a special challenge in winter camping. The transition from day clothes to night clothes can be jarring. However, with heavy long johns, one can quickly slip on the polar fleece pants and tops before the cold can penetrate to the bare skin. Once inside the down sleeping bag—or, layered summer bags, one is safe and warm.

Until the bladder comes pressing, usually about 4AM. Pee buckets are handy for guys, not so sure about the ladies...



No wonder why Todd E. snuck away in the night. This is enough to frighten anybody!

Sometime during the night there was an alien abduction. They must have been guided in to our remote site by the moon beams. We had Todd E with us when we went to bed, but he was gone in the morning. I think the aliens had a diesel flying saucer, for sometime in the dark hours I heard the unmistakable clatter of the compression ignition come close, then fade farther and farther away into the clear, cold January night. All that was left of Todd E and his truck in the morning was an irregular purple sploch in the snow....

A light snow dusted the campers Saturday morning, but the clouds quickly gave way to sunshine. Throughout the day the sun played hide and seek with swift clouds that brought sudden, brief snow showers. The local ski patrol was out on the trail in the morning—on boots not skis, and walking not gliding.

Early Saturday afternoon brought the BMW day trippers. Tami Bomkamp was the first to arrive and she hung out until the mid afternoon, and took a short side trip to a nearby horse trainer. Mr President made his appearance to make the event official, and we all enjoyed cider, chocolate, schnapps, and a variety of beer. And, there were the usual smokie

links to roast, and Barb Lang's delicious chocolate-marshmallow crispies satisfied the sweet tooth. I am pretty sure TVH was there, but he was hard to see, blending in so well with the snow and trees. Chuck Rabideaux got the dapper dressed award. We added two new Saturday night campers, Roger Klopp and Matt Berigan. Mary Klopp had the sense to return to Stoughton for the night. Ben Cimino held out around the fire until the early evening, and the local Blue Mounds members brought the kids up to liven the afternoon up. Nan & Al, Steve W's sister and brother in law, brought some bee combs which burned with lotts'a' heat and light.

Both Roger and Matt were hard core, sleeping in tents instead of in the back of a truck or van. Steve H made a good stab at staying, but his cold got the best of him and he too disappeared into the night, presumably to glorious central heat and running hot water.

We had a good time around the fire Saturday nite, and there was an idea brought up that we should try to have a tipi for the next winter camp! That thought is intriguing! We howled at the full moon a few times, and enjoyed once again the moon shadows and ghostly woods surrounding us.

Sunday AM we crawled out, warmed our hands by the glowing, smokeless coals of the fire, and made haste to pack up. By 8 we had cleared the site and were on our separate ways to warm coffee, hot showers, and a day of cleaning camp gear and storing it until warmer times.

We do owe Thanx to an unsolicited sponsor. Salesman Brian Babek from Operating Tech sent us some 12V battery testers and we awarded one to Mr President and retained the rest for GR3 prizes. Operating Tech makes Battery Doc chargers and maintainers. Read about them in your January 2002 BMW Owners News.

Blue Mounds State Park was very efficient—I received my annual sticker (paid for on Fri) already on Tuesday, along with invitations to join the Friends of Blue Mounds State Park and a flyer



Flambeau Jiffy pop was the gourmet appetizer.

advertising the new “Horribly Hilly Hundred” century bicycle ride scheduled for June 14.

As Matt indicated, winter camping proves to us that we can go beyond the limits we

put onto ourselves and accomplish something that at first thought seems insurmountable. And, we can have fun proving we can go beyond those limits.

This is Not the Mainland A Book Review by P. J. Francis



I am somewhat skeptical of the whole ice-age theory. Vast mountains of ice moving along gouging out valleys, shaping mountains and lakes and depositing giant rocks. Yeah, right. I am more partial to the theory of an angry giant throwing rocks great distances at an enemy. Or digging a great hole that became the lake we now know.

Well, it is just as believable as the ice-age theory. Remember it is just that—a theory. Some day the experts will come along with a totally different explanation. Amazingly, it will be accepted by one and all.

Rannie Gillis is a great believer of the ice-age explanation of things. He mentions it frequently in his wonderful book *This is NOT the Mainland a novel tour of Newfoundland and Labrador*.

This was one book I found impossible to put down. I read it over the Labor Day weekend. I like to stay at home and avoid the hustle and bustle.

With excellent photographs and extremely readable prose Rannie recounts his travels in Newfoundland and Labrador by car, motorcycle, boat and on foot. The wonderful thing is he avoids the more populated areas. Instead he travels the lightly trafficed roads and visits the remote outports. The outports are small communities that can only be reached by boat. Some have had roads built to them in recent years.

Rannie’s information is derived from personnel observation, visits to museums and historic buildings, and communicating with the locals. He is particularly adept at the latter. He seldom deals with tourist officials or government authorities.

The book is worth perusing for the photographs alone. They confirm the theory that a picture tells a thousand words. Rannie’s certainly do.

Read the sad story of Little Nancy from Fago Island. Learn why the Flat Earth Society considers Brimstone Head to be one of the four corners of the earth. Find out about the great opera singer Georgina Stirling from Twillingate and shy her lustrous career was so short. Why should one not drive after dark? Who established the first European settlement in North America 500 years before Columbus? Where did the residents along the Strait of Belle Isle find 4,000 gallons of rum in 1922? Have you heard of the Matthew? All those questions and more, are answered in Mr. Gillis’ 129 page book.

It has been my ambition to tour Newfoundland for some time. I paid a brief visit while on a transatlantic flight in 1996. The Aeroflot plane refueled at Gander. In the early years of transatlantic air travel Gander was the departure/arrival point for aircraft crossing the ocean. Foynes, and later, Shannon, was the corresponding spot in Europe. Sufficient fuel for a longer journey could not be carried. (The famous Irish Coffee was invented to provide famished passengers with their 2 most frequently requested drinks in 1 glass—coffee and whiskey. Necessity is, indeed, the mother of invention.)

Whale watching is a popular pastime for visitors to Newfoundland and Labrador. The hunting of those great and gentle creatures was a vast industry in both places for many years. Dolphins and porpoises (squid hounds) can be seen. Cape St. Mary has the largest gannet nesting area in N. America. Puffins abound also. Newfoundland is a great place for Celtic music.

This is NOT the Mainland and many other travel and motorcycling books are available from Whitehorse Press, PO Box 60, North Conway, NH 03860-0060. For a catalog write or phone (603)356-6633. I have no connection with Whitehorse Press other than as a long satisfied customer.

Cheese Trail by Matt Berigan

The Cheese Trail (Monroe to Mineral Point)

What is it about dirt that intrigues me? I know I'm not the only one (I know who some of you are!). And I also know that there are many of you that think that this penchant for off-road stuff is, well, odd for a big bike owner.

It all started many years ago with a CB400F and friends whose parents had family hideouts located in and around the hills west of Hwy 23 and north of Dodgeville. Trying to stay caught up with the pack of friends on those gravel roads required some ability slip and slide, a good read on the condition of the road surface, and driving like a fool while having a lot of fun.

Then, even though I took a short hiatus from motorcycles (a mere 21 years), I spent a lot of time traveling Latin American roads. If you have ever traveled South America you know what I'm talking about. If you've never traveled South America you might want to play with the thought.

What does this have to do with an abandoned railroad bed that connects Monroe to Mineral Point? My intentions are to find some way to get road-time in South America on a bike. I don't plan to limit my travels to asphalt trails goes because that would be very restricting. And so I need to improve my skills in driving on bad roads (ever see Amazon road clay-slime?) or in bad conditions (Latin America has the driest desert, snow-capped peaks, humid tropics). I'm not training for the Dakar or the Rally Dos Sertoos in Brazil but I am training for riding on the kinds of roads you find throughout the rest of this small globe!

The Cheese trail offers a limited training ground for taking a big bike (with someone riding pillion) through some pretty safe conditions. You don't need to have a dual or dirt bike. The trail has speed restrictions. ATVs, dirt bikes, bicyclists, and horses use the trail frequently (we once met a horse that didn't like motorcycles that was a different kind of challenge!). Occasionally, after a good rain, there are mud holes (ever do THAT on a 540 pound bike with a passenger?) one must traverse but most often it is dry, dusty, and just scrappy enough that it is useful in tuning up gravel riding skills.

My suggestion is to start in Monroe and work toward Mineral Point. Mineral Point offers some great eating destinations and is also the gateway to a lot of other gravel roads that are actually even more challenging (as they have grade greater than a RR bed has and twist and turn a lot more too). Mineral Point also puts you on a quick return back to Madison via 151.

Where do I find out more? You need a permit. It costs \$6 for the year. Stickers are available in Green, Lafayette and Iowa counties.

Visit <http://www.greencounty.org/tourism/cheesemap.htm> a direct link to the Cheese Trail map and sources for trail passes. The trail opens April 1.



Dr. Sprockette

Tech Tips

Small Engine Repair Clinic

A few days after Detail Days I was wondering aloud what would be a good subject to put in this nifty new column and someone asked, "So, what should I do if my spark plug is stuck and won't come out?"

This happens a lot more than you would think. And worse is when you don't know how to get it loose, get heavy-handed and end up snapping the top half off with the threaded part still in the cylinder.

Let me interject here that this column will be written for the basically non-mechanically inclined (NMI), so although the ideas are useful I am going to write this a tad elementary so everyone can benefit. If the NMIs don't read it and don't appreciate it, then we can step it up a notch.

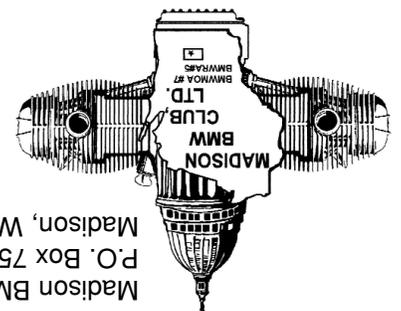
First of all make sure you are using the proper sized spark plug wrench, either a deep-welled socket or a tool kit-supplied wrench for your baby bike. If you just need a little more oomf try a longer ratchet handle or insert an extension between the socket and the ratchet wrench. You may need to squirt a bit of WD-40 or other penetrating oiled down the side of the spark plug. If it still won't budge, use a small, nonmetal mallet and tap the end of the wrench handle, remember: "Righty, tighty; Lefty, loosey." Lots of times when a bolt is stuck, a good sound whack with a metal hammer causes just enough vibration to loosen it for removal—Do NOT do this with a spark plug!

There are a few things you can do to avoid this type of treacherous grief. There is a gooey compound called Anti-Seize that you smear on the threads of the plug before putting back in the hole. Be careful with this stuff, it is silver and it grows, travels, and spreads quicker than bunny rabbits. Oh and it smells worse than a rally outhouse on a Sunday morning. But for \$2.95 a tube it does the trick and unless you lose the tube it will probably last a lifetime.

Some people like to check the spark plug gap before lubing and installing, however most plugs come properly pre-gapped for you. If you used an extension or long handle to remove the old plug, discard that now and just use a handle long enough to reach the job. As you screw the plug in use a gentle hand, you will feel it seat (get tight), once you feel that just give it one more itty bitty tightening grunt. Most motorcycle owner's booklets will provide a spark plug torque specification. If you follow the directions above you will usually hit that mark.

Using Anti-Seize and not over-tightening should help you avoid ever having to deal with the treachery of stuck plug syndrome, and remember to install the proper spark plug for your beloved bike.

Happy wrenching and let me know if there are issues you would like to see addressed.



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