

THE SHAFT

The Journal of the BMW Riders Association of the Mid-South

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34th Anniversary "Return to Shiloh" Rally: October 3-5, 2008

This newsletter is usually published the last full weekend of each month or shortly thereafter. The deadline for submitting articles, ride reports, want ads, etc. is the 24th of each month.

Monthly Business Meeting:

No November meeting minutes submitted

December Meeting/Christmas Party: Directions and Details

Date:

December 8, 2007
Saturday, 6:00 PM

Location:

Coletta's
3850 Appling Road
Memphis, TN
(901) 383-1122

Be sure to bring a gift if you wish to participate in the "Dirty Santa" game!

We need to know no later than Wednesday, December 5, if you are planning to be at the party and number in you party! Please e-mail me at wbray@hughes.net with this information!

Rides, Trips, Etc.

125 Freezing Miles

by
B. Bowden

It was 5:05 p.m. and my thermometer read 37 degrees when I left Cape Girardeau Missouri. I generally try to avoid riding at night but, if the truth be known, I actually love it in spite of the dangers. The cocoon of darkness and the tunnel vision of the headlights make time and miles go by more quickly. Having made this run more times than I can count, and considering the cold, I was all for making time and miles fly by.

Crossing the Mississippi river on that shiny new bridge in the frigid twilight, I was met with the full moon rising over the flood plain. The flat land and straight roads of Southern Illinois grew darker and colder as I hunkered down behind what little windshield I have and locked the throttle in at a seriously "go to jail" speed. Not a lot of traffic out here in the evening of the day after Thanksgiving.

I'm hoping it stays that way all the way home.

My radar detector goes nuts coming into Horseshoe Lake but I've already slowed down to the limit. I, and other's I know, have had our run-ins with the Sheriff of the "Duck Hunting Capitol of The World". He once cussed seven of us up and down before he let us go. Same thing down the road at Cairo. Radar detector flashing but I'm already the law abiding rider. Don't speed through Cairo, even if you've got a radar detector.

Crossing the Missouri river into Kentucky, that old, cold full moon reflects off the water and makes a silver snakelike, undulating line all along the far shore. A barge sounds it's horn and I know that this is one of those moments that will stick. This is one of those moments that will stay in my mind and pop up at unexpected times. Like the painted pony grazing on an impossibly steep slope in West Virginia or, the sad, ragged and pregnant bleach blonde teenager walking in the coal-dust along the roadside in Eastern Kentucky.

I will carry them with me always.

These momentary glances seem more important from the saddle of a motorcycle or, at the very least, more poignant than those seen from behind the glass and steel of four wheels. Why is this? Mostly, and I'm the umpteenth person to observe this, it's because when you're riding a motorcycle, you are right there in it. You're breathing the air, feeling the weather and smelling the smells of where you are. The only things that separate you from what you are seeing are speed and space.

It's more than that though. Your senses are already heightened because you are paying so much attention to your surroundings. You have to pay more attention because you're riding a motorcycle and riding a motorcycle is a dangerous thing to be doing. That's one reason I enjoy it and, while most won't admit it, it's one of the many reasons some of us ride. It's a Life and Death endeavor whether you think about it or not so you better think about it.

With your eyes open and your brain sharpened, what you experience when you're riding a motorcycle takes a firmer hold in your memory.

Wickliff, Bardwell, Arlington and Clinton. I glide through these little burgs at the posted speeds then twist it hard when the streetlights fade. I hit four-lane road at Fulton and I'm happy to see some Tennessee slab for a change. Two lanes at night, with the oncoming headlights blinding you can be nerve-wracking and a divided highway can allow you to relax a bit. There's still very little traffic for a Friday night and I'm really rolling it on now because I'm ready to get home.

"Are my brakes going funny?" I think, "no, my fingers are just numb." The ambient temp on my instrument panel says it's 31 degrees and that little snowflake telling me to watch for ice hasn't gone out all evening. Then, before I know it, it's 6:45 p.m. and there's my driveway and there's my dog, dancing in the light of that old, cold moon I've been watching all this way. She seems happier to see me than I am to get home but mostly, like me, she wants to get inside the house and get warm.

"Whatever"

This part of the newsletter will be for "whatever" you might want to send in pertaining to bikes, bikers or WHATEVER just as long as it might have an interest to the RAMS group.

We will be making up the 2008-meeting calendar at the January, 2008 meeting. If you have a desire to sponsor a meeting in 2008, be sure to let us know at that meeting to reserve the month you wish to sponsor. If you would like to sponsor the February, 2008 meeting, let us know by the December meeting!

Remember, you cannot vote for 2008 club officers without having your 2008 dues paid. You can send in your \$15.00 dues payment to Charlie Parsons @ 2314 Evelyn Lane, Jonesboro, AR 72450

Monthly Meeting Schedule

Thanks to everyone who volunteered to host a monthly meeting! Club meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month, starting at 1:30PM unless otherwise indicated.

| Dates: | Location: | Host(s): |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------|
| December 8, 2007 | Coletta's 2850 Appling Road Bartlett, TN | RAMS |
| January 12, 2008 | The Sidecar Café 2194 Whitten Rd Bartlett, TN | Butch & Nancy Turner |
| February 9, 2008 | TBA | TBA |
| March 8, 2008 | Home of Paul & Sidney Hitchings | Kaptin Krunch |

Calendar of Events:

Every Sunday:
(except holidays)

Sunday Morning Breakfast (and Ride)

Location: Mama Judy's Restaurant in Lavina, TN

Time: Meet on the porch at 8:30AM; breakfast at 9:00AM;

Ride: Starts at 10:00AM after the whistle blows at US Army Milan Arsenal

For more information: Paul (Krunch) Hitchings (Jackson), Tim Hendrickson (Memphis)

For Sale, Trade, or Want to Buy:

This is the section of the newsletter where we will list items that RAMS members have for sale, trade, or may be looking for. Ads will run for 3 months and then, if you haven't sold it (or found it yet) let me know and we'll run it longer. If you sell it before the 3 months are up and get tired of all the phone calls, let us know and we'll quit running the ad.
