"CCN" BMWMOC's Quarterly Newsletter

BMW Club
Motorcycle Owners
of Cleveland

Cleveland Club News

Winter 2015

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A commercial advertising rate schedule is available upon request. Communications for CCN should be addressed to: Cleveland Club News, c/o Dominic Cioffi, 4174 Elmore Rd., Fairview Park, OH 44126. Please submit articles and photos electronically to: riderandpillion@gmail.com.

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From the Editors

Dominic and Kristin Cioffi

Although Christmas is less than a week away, it doesn't seem like the holiday season without snow! The nice weather has made it too easy to procrastinate when it comes to holiday shopping. But, it sure has been nice to continuing riding in December. We were even able to get another tank of ethanol-free gas in the GSA. We've seen several of you posting pictures online from the rides you have been taking the past couple of weeks. It's hard to believe we are in northeast Ohio.

Pretty soon it will be time to start thinking of travel plans for next year. The BMWMOA rally is only a short ride away in New York next summer. It's almost close enough to commute daily for some of the east siders. It would make a good kick off point for a longer New England or eastern Canada adventure. As for us, this may be the first time we haven't started planning our summer vacation by now. Checking out everyone's adventures this past year as give us lots to add to the bucket list.

A big thank you goes out to every one who submitted content for the newsletter. We received enough submissions to give us a head start on the Spring CCN. Be sure to keep them coming.

CCN 2016

The CCN will be published quarterly, at the beginning of each season. We welcome and encourage member submissions.

Deadlines for submissions are:

Spring CCN	**March 15**
Summer CCN	**June 15**
Fall CCN	**September 15**
Winter CCN	**December 15**

Happy holidays and see you next year,
Dominic and Kristin Cioffi

The BMWMOC is Chartered Club #196 with both the BMWMOA and the BMWRA national organizations. The BMWMOC is a Not-For-Profit Corporation of the Great State of Ohio consisting of about 145 riding enthusiasts mostly in the Northeast Ohio Area. The Club is an active group with a common interest in BMW Motorcycles and the people who ride them.

President's Message

Leo Buckon

I hope everyone is enjoying the extended riding season. I just checked the weather forecast for the next 10 days and after a dip in the 30s this weekend it looks like it will be in the mid 50's for most of next week. You might be able to hop on the Beemer and ride to the family gathering on Christmas Day. Recall that last year, the deep freeze started in November and lasted into March. I love El Nino!

In this issue you will find a special ballot for a change in the bylaws that will open up the eligibility requirements to be a club officer or director. The officers and directors felt that this will allow others to have more of an opportunity to help keep this club running and add to the fun and comradery of all. We have even extended the opportunity for early voting to all. If you will not make it to the meeting on January 7th to vote in person, you can submit your vote by email. Send the completed ballot to Roger Pivonka at rpivonka@gmail.com. Please include your name so we can track who has voted.

I would like to close by thanking all the officers, directors and the volunteers who pulled together to make 2015 such a good year for the club. Please take the opportunity to thank them for the effort they put in so that we could all have so much fun this past year. I am looking forward to working with the incoming officers and directors to make 2016 as good or better.

I'm looking forward to starting the year off right and seeing you all at the Winter Banquet on January 9th.

Leo

Calendar of Events

Visit the calendar on https://bmwmoc.shutterfly.com/calendar for an updated list of events

Membership Meeting
January 7, 2016
7:00-p.m.
BMW Motorcycles of Cleveland
7315 Aurora Road, Aurora

Holiday Party
January 9, 2016
6:00 –11:00 p.m.
Brennan's Party Center
13000 Triskett Road, Cleveland

International Motorcycle Show
January 29 - 31, 2016
I-X Center
1 I-X Center Drive, Cleveland

Breakfast Before the Bike Show
January 30, 2016
9:00-10:00 a.m.
Gene's Place Restaurant
3730 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland

Membership Meeting
February 4, 2016
7:00p.m.
Location TBA

BMWMOA International Rally
July 14– 17, 2016
Hamburg Fairgrounds
Hamburg, NY 14075

BMW Motorcycle Owners of Cleveland

Holiday Party

Saturday, January 9, 2016
6 to 11 PM

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Now That My Knees and Ears Are Hairy, Part IV

Don Poremski

Now that my knees and ears are hairy, I am being philosophic about the American election cycle. I've given up trying to avoid news items about the Republican campaigners. What is upsetting is that I, personally, am being clumped together with other "old white men" to whom these candidates are supposedly appealing.

Hey, I've been in the pyramid of Cheops and can tell you personally that it was not made for storing grain as Ben Carson related. After paying an admittance fee, you must ascend a staircase in a stooped position for approximately half the structure's height. A second staircase then opens up to allow erect travel until you reach the top. There a room opens to allow viewing of the sarcophagus that would have once held the mummified remains on an Egyptian leader, Cheops.

Knowing that I would probably never have a chance to return, I positioned my camera on a small outcropping on the wall that probably once held a lantern or candle. I set the timer and scrambled back behind the sarcophagus to await the flash that would record my presence in a really unique setting. But, just as the flash went off, it caught two other tourists that had just arrived and stepped into the shot. Surprised, they tried to figure out what just happened. Their heads swiveled to my location next to the ancient bier and apologized in Arabic for ruining the shot. Not that I understood Arabic, but it was a logical interpretation.

"Oh, that's okay", I responded. My English tipped them off and they asked, "Amriki?" Are you an American?. "Aywah" was my response which was the cue for one of them to begin laying down some dance moves.

Strange? Well, not if you had already been in Saudi Arabia seven times. These were Saudi young men who, being in the Cairo area, could find themselves on a dance floor with (heaven forfend) WOMEN, a feat impossible in the kingdom. So, I checked his moves and offered that he should incorporate a bit more hip motion and we parted friends.

So, if I know that Carson's statement was untrue, as would anyone with exposure to ancient history or who has traveled in the Middle East, what has that got to do with our upcoming (ongoing) election cycle? What difference does it make in choosing the next leader of the free world? I suppose I'll have to add an adjective to how I'm being described these days. I am an old, cranky white man, but I know my pyramids.

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Bylaws Change Ballot

Change to Bylaws requiring All Club Vote. **Votes must be returned before the start of the Club Membership Meeting at 7:00pm on Thursday January 7, 2016.**

Proposed change to Section 5 b of Bylaws regarding eligibility requirements for election to club office

Currently reads:

An individual must meet all membership requirements, must have attended at *least 5 monthly membership meetings* during the 12 months prior to the September membership meeting, and must expect to be able to attend all Board and monthly meetings during the coming year to be eligible for nomination. *Meeting* sign in sheets will be used to verify the required attendance.

Change to read:

An individual must meet all membership requirements, must have attended *at least 5 club events* during the 12 months prior to the September membership meeting, and must expect to be able to attend all Board and monthly meetings during the coming year to be eligible for nomination. Sign in sheets will be used to verify the required attendance.

Member Name:_____

Approve of Change

Yes_____

No_____

Return your ballot in person or email your ballot to Roger Pivonka at rpivonka@gmail.com.

Please include your name so we can track who has voted.

Riders Wanted

Mike Kanczak is looking for club members who are interested in participating in an Adventure motorcycle training two day event. Participants must bring their own bike.

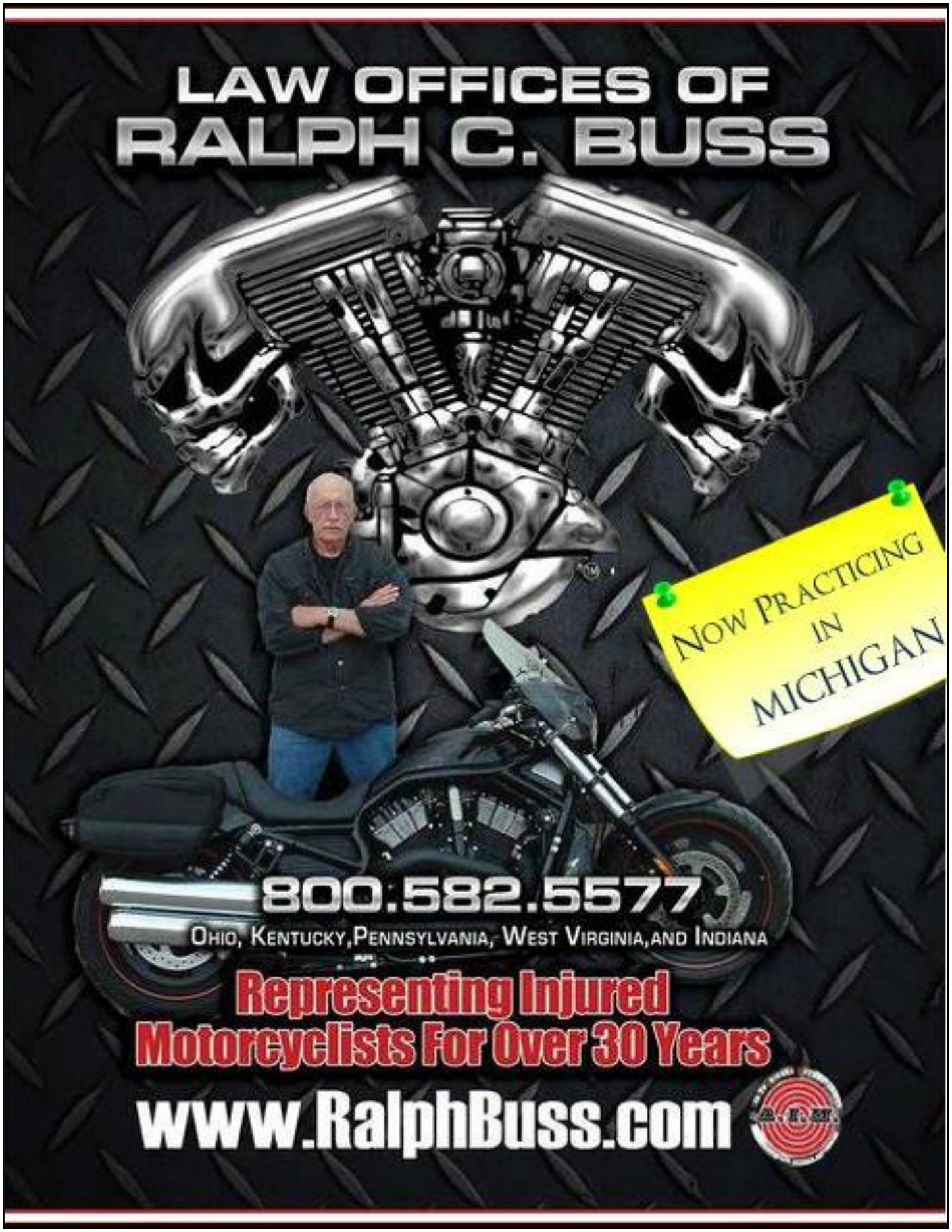
Locations:
Spring Mills, PA Bald Eagle State Forest: April 22-24, May 20-22, June 17-19, July 15-17, 2016
Flintstone, MD Green Ridge National Forest: May 27-29, June 24-26, July 22-24, 2016

What is included: training, adventure tour, lodging, professional t-shirt and class 1 off-road certification card (Arrival date 1 day prior).

If we can get enough people to fill a class (5-6 riders) we can customize the agenda to fit our needs.

Website: http://www.xplor-int.com/Pages/aboutus.aspx

If you are interested, contact Mike Kanczak at mkanczak@cox.net.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Completing the 48 on the Ruby Tripper

Robin Bova

Filling in the states in Walla Walla WA in 2001

I've had the bike for 21 years. it's been my steady reliable companion, carrying me to rallies near and far, and safely back home. I call it the "Ruby Tripper." (RT) and I keep a tiny pair of ruby slippers glued to the instrument pod. Spending nearly all of my vacation time in the saddle of my beloved 1994 K75RT, of the other bikes in the garage, this is the one I call "home." I'm not one to sell any bike I've ever owned. This bike is on its third odometer, totaling around 133,000 miles thus far. Just getting broken in, as some would say. We had been to the West Coast three times, completing a SaddleSore 1000 on the way to Redmond OR in 2001.

I make an annual pilgrimage to my hometown in Connecticut at least once a year and also to Iowa most every June. I had covered most of the U.S. on the same motorcycle. But after all this time, I was still missing 3 states; Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida. The RA rally in Harrison Arkansas would be the perfect opportunity to knock these out, being that it was the week before the Barber Vintage Motorcycle Festival in Alabama, which I was planning to attend with my husband John. We were married in the museum in 2009 and the RT was along on that trip too. I could just meet John and his gang right there at the swap meet. I had a plan.

This was to be my last long motorcycle trip of the 2015 season. I had some unexpected "vacation time" thrust upon me in July, and I was making the best of it. I had just returned from a motorcycle trip to New England--Maine for my Aunt's 80th surprise birthday, then on to Connecticut for Mom's 85th birthday, then back to Watkins Glen, NY for the Finger Lakes BMW Rally on Labor Day. I had about 3 weeks to prepare for the RA national, get my bike fixed as the fairing bracket had broken and flopped all the way to the East Coast and back. I had brought the bike to Mathias BMW to have some of the electrical components checked out. I got the call while sitting at the BMWMOC fall campout. They got the bike up on the lift and it wasn't good news. The fairing was broken in several places, and the bracket itself had split in half. A replacement fairing and bracket would take weeks to deliver from Germany. And I shouldn't be riding it in its current condition. I'm going to guess that much of the damage happened somewhere just outside of Boston over a construction zone bump.

In a lucky turn of events, a fairing bracket fell from the sky (a very fortunate find from the highest shelves at Matthias!) and thanks to Hilo and Jim from John's shop, who put aside their projects to get it bolted to the fairing and mounted on the frame and get me back on the road. And off of John's back!

Departure day, Sept 30th, I headed out on the slab due west to get out of the heavy rainstorms coming up the East Coast, heading through Indiana then Illinois... catching

photos at each state line, something I had long since given up on until this latest quest. Heck I've been through these states umpteen times but now I'm on a mission.

Just over the border I saw signs for the world's largest wind chime in Casey, IL. I almost didn't stop, but was richly rewarded when I pulled off the highway to investigate. This friendly little town is ALSO home of the largest wooden rocking chair, AND the largest golf tee. They like big things. I had to take pictures for my buddies who collect roadside oddities like the largest ball of paint, largest ball of twine, etc.

I headed into Missouri about sundown and could not get a picture of the Missouri sign because its location is a death trap; the sign is on a bridge on I-80 with no shoulder. So I rode into downtown St. Louis to try and get a good shot of the Arch with my bike. With so much construction downtown it's nearly impossible to get near the arch, but I managed a distant shot as the sun was setting. I stopped for the night a little south of St. Louis, in Eureka, MO. **(588 Miles)**

I spent the following day stopping along Route 44 at places where in a previous life, my ex never wanted to stop. It took me all day to get through Missouri because -- I COULD!!! I took my time, stopping at antique shops, wineries and camping stores. I stopped in Uranus, MO to buy fudge and T shirts (They say the very best fudge comes from Uranus.) I finally pulled into Harrison AR around 6:30 pm, looked around, set up my tent inside the horse barn and met up with only a handful of friends who made the rally this time of year. A serious case of sinusitis was creeping up on me as I spent the rest of the trip trying in vain to keep 2 steps ahead of it until I got home. **(280 Miles traveled during the rally)**

I had plans to join my friend Brian (we call him Brainfish) from Connecticut, on a ride down to New Orleans after the rally. I needed to grab my last three states, and would have just done a quick circle then headed back to Alabama if I was traveling alone. But my retired friend indicated early on in the season that he would be at the BMWRA National and wanted to go to New Orleans, so I was thrilled to have a traveling partner on this leg of the journey. Sunday the day we were to leave the Rally we headed west, to take in an art museum

with some new friends from Wisconsin. We visited Bentonville AR, home of Walmart, where the founders built a beautiful art museum, Crystal Bridges. Pretty cool. There, I was thrilled to see my very first real-life original painting by Maxfield Parrish! Parrish is one of my favorite artists, an American Illustrator. "The Lantern Bearers," (1908) was even more surreal up close and in person. I loved it. I own several books and wall calendars of Maxfield Parrish works, I'm fascinated with his stuff. So this detour to New Orleans was well worth it.

It had been years since I had ridden with Brainfish, most likely it was on a group ride with the CT River Valley BMW Riders in the late 80's! "Brain" is a BMW Ambassador, and he reminds me of Burl Ives on a motorcycle. An excellent rider who has traveled everywhere with just about everyone. I haven't yet joined the ranks of riders who use GPS navigation. I still travel the old-fashioned way by studying maps the night before and making big Sharpie notes to myself to place in my tank bag. Like most experienced riders, Brain uses waypoints to get from one place to the next, connecting via paved roads which are not interstates. Brainfish hates interstates and avoids chain restaurants like the plague. So it was great, I could just follow his lead, giving more of my attention to the flora and fauna along the way. I had never been through this particular section of Arkansas, and it was interesting to see all the cotton being harvested. These were some dusty and desolate roads. **(145 miles)**

You could see smoke from controlled fires being set to clear fields for more planting. The air also smelled like cabbage, reminiscent of the odor of working paper mills. We crossed the Mississippi River near Lake Village AR. To my disappointment, there was NO state marker to be had! I had to grab that on the other end, on Route 27 into Louisiana, then turn around and catch Mississippi going the other way. My goofy expression indicates that this is the first new state I've ridden, in over a decade. In the meantime, we got mixed up in this little town, trying to get back in the direction we were headed. There were huge concrete tomatoes painted red on every street corner of this otherwise drab little town. A little research later on revealed that we were lost in "Crystal Springs, once known as the Tomatopolis of the World." Well then! We were way too late for the Tomato Fest, always the last Saturday in June. We ended the day in Hazelhurst, Mississippi, near drug stores where I could get some decent cold medicine! Pseudoephederine (sudafed) is regulated differently in every state. In Arkansas I needed a prescription, but thankfully in Mississippi I could just sign for it. I was a rolling pharmacy by now. **(392 miles)**

The next day, Brain ran me out of gas. He swore I should be getting more miles out of my 5.5 gallon tank than I had suggested. I'd been trying to stop between 150 and 175 miles, or shortly after the red indicator light comes on. It's an old bike! Riding the back roads is different. I don't stop at a tiny place if I'm alone and feel creeped out. I try to keep my wits about me when I'm by myself out there. Anyhow Brainfish thought I should be able to get

more miles out of a tank. Perhaps if my fuel filter had been changed recently it may just have been put in at a slightly different angle thereby telling me I had less gas than there really was. I said "whatever, as long as you're here to run and get rescue gas for me I'll join in this little experiment." I sputtered to a rolling stop in front of Bubba's BBQ in Folsom Mississippi, 207 miles on the trip meter, honking my horn frantically at my riding partner. The bike went a lot farther than it ever would have with me riding way-too-fast-for-my-own-good-but-having-fun-getting-there-style. Thanks Brainfish for sacrificing your water bottle to bring me gasoline. I owe you one!

We headed across Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, the longest continuous bridge in the world over a body of water, 23.8 miles long. I never knew this! It was very cool. Better than Tomatopolis. Once safely parked and settled into a hotel we headed out into the Big Easy to investigate. Brain had been there but this was my first visit. My cold was getting worse, and Brain's bad knee was giving him fits from walking the museum back in Arkansas. So we opted for a scenic bus tour, which was really a good way to see a cross section of the city. New Orleans was just about everything I heard it would be: historical, loud, smelly, and flashy. It's apparent the locals really love their city. I couldn't believe the trees lining the streets were weighed down with layers of beaded necklaces, hanging from the tree branches along the main parade routes. Some, we were told had hung there for decades. They are never removed. The lack of pictures at this point in the article is due to the fact that I wasn't feeling 100%.

I got the #$&^&** scared out of me by a mime. This dude dressed up in what looked like civil war garb, was painted like concrete, standing stark-still on the sidewalk. We walked across the street and Brain wanted to get a picture of me by this dude. So I went back and stood behind the statue man. I made no noise but struck a similar pose like his shadow. That moment--he WHIPPED his head around, and bugged his eyes out and said "GOTCHA!" Then whipped his head back. I think my life passed before my eyes!!! I needed a costume change after that. How did he even know I was there???? I was silent! Freaked out, I ran to my friend to tell him what happened and he was GONE!!! That was enough to thoroughly spook me. Had someone taken Brainfish?! Then realized he walked to the diagonal corner to get his shot. That was my early Halloween scare. I still have visions in my head of that guy and his eyes. I have yet to see that picture! **(154 miles)**

The next day, October 7th was my birthday. It seemed like a good day for to conquer my 48th state. I said good-bye to Brainfish, him heading west into the Bayou and to the Falling Leaf Rally in MO, me heading East along the Gulf Coast, on route 90. It was easy to imagine this region being under water during Katrina and signs of devastation could still be seen. A hollowed-out boat here, an overturned sofa in the bushes over there. Perhaps these weren't casualties of Katrina, but it was easy to imagine that they could've been.

The scenery brightened heading into Biloxi, Mississippi, where the annual "Cruisin The Coast, America's Largest Block Party of Antique Automobiles" was taking place! I saw more early Chrysler New Yorkers in succession coming the opposite direction than I thought still existed, one after another for at least 10 minutes nonstop. I saw

miles and miles of hundreds of classic cars and hot rods of all kinds, along the beautiful coastline. It was a real treat of happenstance. This traffic didn't bother me at all! I found myself in the midst of that parade of show cars.

I proceeded into that little coastal section of Alabama, then into Florida for that final state sign photo.

I hate to admit that my bike had been in Florida, on a trailer, when it was new in 94. But I couldn't count this state until I could actually ride there myself and spend some time there, which I did. I stopped at the Florida welcome center where they handed out cups of fresh-squeezed orange or grapefruit juice, which hit the spot. Pensacola is SUCH a well-kept secret!!! I went to the outer-outer shores of Pensacola Beach, where I received a warm welcome by the lady at the hotel who reminded me of my Aunt Clara. She shared with me that her daughter's name was also Robin, and that she herself rode a motorcycle. Then Bonnie gave me some dinner coupons and invited me to park my bike on the sidewalk in clear view of the front desk. I was so tired, hot, and just wanted to chill out in my hotel room and look over my map to plan my route to Alabama. Which is what I did. I had romanticized about doing my laundry on my birthday while looking at the ocean but I wasn't that ambitious after all. I mixed a birthday drink of Red Bull and gin, called my sister Teri and friend Diane, thought I'd pass out from tiredness but ended up tossing and turning that entire night (it was either the Red Bull or visions of that damn mime jumping into my head!) **(240 miles)**

That next day I had a quick wade in the ocean after breakfast, filled an empty pill bottle with white sand, then had a gorgeous ride east to the Navarre causeway to take me back onto mainland Pensacola. What a neat place. Just passing through, it seems unspoiled compared to a lot of Florida's tourist coastline. I headed north through more cotton fields where I had to stop and pick a stalk, then back into Alabama and on to meet with John and his crew setting up their vendor space at the Barber Vintage Motorcycle Festival and Swap Meet. I spent the next 4 days there, using my bike to run for groceries and supplies, cooking meals for John and his crew, cleaning up afterwards and keeping the food iced down in the coolers. I am always amazed at how many groceries I can carry on the RT. I love to tell the cashier that the cart full of stuff is going to be loaded onto a motorcycle and watch her expression. I usually get "There ain't no damn way those bags are goin on a motorcycle." There is no electricity

in the swap meet area so it's a big campout. John did very well, sold some things, bought a LOT of tires, sold some bikes, bought some bikes. **(284 miles)**

We finally left Sunday night, me on my bike and John, Marie and Jim in the motor home, pulling the big box trailer. We got north of Nashville and I just had to stop. We got some hotel rooms with real showers and beds, and John took everyone out for Japanese Hibachi. I guess this was our first opportunity to celebrate our 6th anniversary and another successful Barber trip. **(254 miles)**

The last stretch home is always the longest, through Kentucky, then Ohio. I thought I'd never get home. Wow it was great to get back to my kitties! Stewart was the first to greet me and ask questions. There's No Place Like Home... There's No Place Like Home... **(522 miles)**

Total miles, Sept 30 - Oct 12, 2,859, 9 states.

Since returning to Ohio I'm trying to unpack, get to the bottom of the laundry piles and get back into everyday life. And kick this awful cold and cough. I am still coughing in December! I need a new clutch this winter after all this travel too! Now that it's getting colder I want to just hunker down and get things -- other than my thoughts -- organized.

Where to next? Alaska? Hawaii? Go back and photograph the state lines that I never got? Perhaps that will never happen on the Ruby Tripper. But I have a whole planet to explore on two wheels yet, and a big-ole bucket list!!!

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BMWMOA Rally Trip, Part 1

Larry Cardo

The Plan: The excuse to ride was the BMWMOA Rally in Billings, MT. I figured as long as we were sort of close, we might as well visit the Canadian Rockies (Banff and Jasper), Watertown NP and Glacier. Upon returning Wayne wanted to visit the Grand Canyon. Thus the initial plan was for nearly a month and 8,000 miles. Candi says this was too long, but I remember days when this was not an issue…..

First half was ridden by Larry Cardo and David Isacco
Second half was ridden by Larry Cardo and Wayne and Anna Slepecky

Trip Highlights:

- Across the scary Mackinaw Bridge
- Across Michigan's Upper Peninsula
- US Route 2 across the top of the US
- Roosevelt National Park
- Watertown National Park of Canada
- Canadian Rockies (Banff to Jasper and back)
- Glacier National Park (Going to the Sun Road)
- Billings, Montana (MOA National Rally)
- Bear Tooth Pass
- Chief Joseph Highway
- Yellowstone
- Grand Teton Mountains
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison
- Million Dollar Highway
- Gooseneck State Park, UT
- Moki Dugway, UT
- Grand Canyon via train from Williams, AZ
- Ride the south rim of the canyon
- Antelope Canyon, Page, AZ
- Scenic New Mexico ride
- Wild Hogs Saloon, Madrid, NM
- Roswell, NM
- RT 66 Sights

Day 1—July 12, 2015 About 420 miles

Rain about 1/3 of the day, all along the turnpike. No rain issues. Once we turned north, the weather was great. The night before, I had a poor nights sleep, thus I was ready to stop--at 3:30. We may have planned to short days?? Tomorrow, the Mac Bridge. All in all, a very good day, as both of us had not ridden long days in quite a while.

Day 2 -July 13, 2015 About 460 miles

Grayling to Ashland, WI. Further than planned. Crossed the BIG MAC bridge. Naturally they had construction in the cement lane--Leaving us to ride the grating. Plus, a VERY SLOW (20 mph) bus was in front of us. Good news, no rain and no winds.

If any club members remember Harry Wagner, who is now living in Texas. When you rode with Harry, you had to earn your breakfast (ride 100 miles). In honor of Harry, we rode 100 miles before breakfast.

Great riding across the Upper Peninsula. Good roads and no traffic. One stretch has nothing but woods for 80 miles. Day was so good that we decided to keep on riding.

Dave indicated that today being Monday, we would not have a hard time finding a room, NOT. Finding rooms during summer vacation season sucks!

Not sure where we are going to land tomorrow. We are staying at a motel that overlooks Lake Superior, about 80 miles before my favorite city of Duluth.

Day 3 –July 14, 2015 About 340 miles

Ashland, WI to across Minnesota to Grand Forks, ND. Today the scenery changed from woodlands to prairie. Started out with rain that fizzled within 20 miles. Then Gray skies. Duluth sucks as usual. Temps dropped to low 60s. Mid 80s by the end of day.

Both Dave and I were concerned with our ability to drive these distances and weather the storms. But, we are feeling better with each passing day. I find myself getting tired at the 350 mile point. Plan to hole up near Ted Roosevelt NP.

Dave likes to get exercise each day. I usually take a nap. Tonight I suggested we walk to a restaurant about a mile away. While we were eating, a BIG storm came in. We had to wait an additional hour for the rain to stop.

Day 4—July 15, 2015 About 300 miles

Grand Forks, MT to Beulah, MT . Finding motel rooms is becoming challenging. The plan was to get close to T. ROOSEVELT NP. Found a couple of motel rooms in Beulah, MT about 100 miles from the park. We decided to leave RT 2 and take a smaller road, RT 200. Road was good but lacked gas and restaurants. Then a BIG storm came through with extremely heavy rain and lots of lightening. No place to hide from the scary lightening. Finally found a rest stop, with two outhouses (see pic). Storm stalled above us. Lots of lightening. Waited 45 min for lightening to stop. Very wet. Had to wait again tonight to walk to dinner. Rain forecast for tomorrow also!

Day 5- July 16, 2015 About 450 miles

Beulah, ND to Malta, Montana via T. Roosevelt NP. Every day Dave says "I'm too old for this!" Light rain early in the day--of course. GREAT visit to TR NP. Perfect weather. Spent about 3 hours in the park. Thousands of cute prairie dogs. Had a close encounter with a herd of bisons. They were on both sides of the road and on the road. A pick up truck moved them off the road. I thought I would follow. But 3 or 4 bisons sprinted across in front of me. SPOOKY! Dave says I was herding them with the BMW. Also had a group of wild horses requesting the road. In the 1700s there were 60 million bisons. We killed all but 200. $s. Purchased gas at Flying J and immediately my gas mileage dropped 3 MPG. Never again ! Dave is so knowledgeable about wildlife. Makes for a very I interesting riding buddy. Speed limits of 70 and 75 are great. GPS recorded 125. Destination for tomorrow is TBD.

Day 6—July 17, 2015 About 215 miles

Malta, MT to Cut Bank, MT. Our plan today was to start early (7:00) and drive close to Glacier NP. Then make a decision to go to Glacier or head north toward Jasper, then visit Glacier a few days later. Upon departure, the Temps were low 50s. Dave commented "It would be nice if it stayed cool all day". Well Dave got his wish with Temps in the low 50s, rain and high winds. After 220 miles we were miserable. We reviewed our options at McDonalds. Glacier would be in the low clouds. Driving closer or going north would put us in a high rent area. Thus we stopped for the day at 11:30 AM. Found a nice motel and had dinner at the across the street gas station. Living the good life. Tomorrow we head north to south of Banff.

Day 7—July 18, 2015 About 240 miles

Cut Bank, MT to Longview, Alberta via Canada's Waterton, NP. What a difference a day makes. Today the weather was warm and sunny. Heading toward Glacier, we hit a road construction of 12 miles of gravel. Sign recommended motorcycles to take an alternate route. But there was no other practical routes. Lawyer talk! The first 100 miles was "open range". We were chased by dogs and found lots of horses and cattle on and alongside the road. Waterton park cost was $18 for the "family". I informed the ticket person that Dave was my older brother. Worked well! We splurged and had lunch at the "Prince of Wales" Hotel. Very nice. Great weather heading toward Banff. Passed 100s of wind mills along with area high winds near Pincher Creek, AB. Tomorrow heading thru Banff to Jasper on the scenic Ice Fields Parkway.

Day 8 –July 19, 2015 About 300 miles

Longview, Alberta to Jasper, AB. Another day of perfect weather. Riding between Banff and Jasper in the Canadian Rockies is about 200 miles of stunning scenery and some wild life. Speed limits are very slow in the park. And we saw more cops than the total of our previous 7 days. Canada appears to have some economic issues? Saw a couple of moose and a flock of big horn sheep totally blocking the road. Arrived upon a serious accident. 3 police cars were at the scene and 3 ambulances were engaged route. A car drove directly off the highway and landed on top of some trees. Looked bad. Today was Sunday. The Ice Fields lodge parking lot was full. Inside was wall to wall people. We quickly left for Jasper. Jasper traffic was grid locked. Hotel had poor signage. Poorer parking! Such a deal for $225. We can't wait to leave tomorrow morning. Jasper is similar to Banff, wall to wall people. But the roads between are spectacular! Pictures do not do them justice. But, Dave and I are getting tired of the daily grind. We need a day off!

Day 9—July 20, 2015 About 220 miles

Jasper to Radium Hot Springs, AB. Great weather again. Went back the way we came to Jasper. The scenery was totally different in reverse. The Ice Fields Center was only a quarter full--Pleasant. No wild animals were viewed. I think they left the park. Both Dave and I remember much more wild life from earlier days. One of the elements of this trip I am finding enjoyable is breakfast, lunch and dinner with Dave. Today I found out that he and Sally got married on the beach in Maui--just like Candi and I. Tomorrow were off to a border crossing and staying near the west entrance to Glacier--at "Motel 6" YUK!

Day 10—July 21, 2015 About 230 miles

To Kasispell, MT. No wifi. Boarder crossing was quick and painless. Traffic gridlock in Kalispell. Temps mid 80 and hot in gridlock. Tomorrow, Glacier NP and nearly 500 miles to Billings.

Day 11- July 22, 2015 About 450 miles

Kalispell, MT to Billings, MT. The day didn't start well. No rain was forecasted and the rain began as we were loading the bikes for an early 7 AM start. Then Glaciers Logan Pass was closed due to a big fire. So we reluctantly bypassed Glacier and then ran into heavy winds. YUK! HOWEVER AFTER ABOUT 3 HOURS, ALL WAS RIGHT. Dave took all the pics today, mostly of wildlife. Arrived in Billings about 5 PM--a little tired—as usual. Dave is heading toward Cleveland tomorrow, and I am going to the BMW rally. We had a great 11 days of riding together. Very hot Temps (95 to 100) are forecasted for Dave's route.

Day 12—July 23, 2015

Day 1 of 3 in Billings, MT at the BMW MOA rally. A get together for BMW motorcycle geeks--and an excuse to ride. Spent 3 hours in the "chartered clubs leadership conference"--where they said the MOA is interested in receiving more inputs from members. But they took no suggestions. Much like Hillary! There is a MOA board meeting tomorrow. Maybe if I raise my hand and smile... Met a lot of Cleveland club members--about 8. And I understand there are about 6 more floating around. A bit lonely here without Dave. Dave left for Cleveland bright and early today. I hope he is doing well in this heat. The below pic from today is to show Dave that he is not the only one who can capture wildlife. The rally appears to be well attended. My guess is >6,000.

Day 13-July 24, 2015

Day 2 of 3 at the BMW Rally. I over packed as usual and sent a lot of stuff home. Since we are heading south, a lot of cold weather gear went home also. I attended the MOA Board of Director's "Town Hall meeting". The Director's opened up the meeting for suggestions or comments. I brought up a topic, that lasted nearly an hour. I respectively told the board that in my opinion, the MOA was too cozy with

BMW and was not communicating with the members the significant warts on the BMW product. Namely systemic design defects that BMW refuses to officially recognize or recall.
The board justified their position by saying:
- This is BMW'S way of doing business and BMW wasn't going to change.
- It would be too difficult to collect accurate failure data.
- The MOA'S function was not to act as a consumer protection organization.
- And BMW always tries to make the owner of a failure "whole".
I sensed:
- The MOA is afraid of upsetting BMW.
- The MOA values BMW'S friendship over their 32,000 members.
- They said that if the members wanted to know information about failures, they should use the Internet forums, which the MOA does not sensor.

The MOA'S response was not unexpected, but disappointing. This afternoon was laundry time--yuk! There is a national motorcycle hill climb in town, near the rally site. A few of the Cleveland club members may attend. While Dave suffered from heat heading toward Cleveland, Wayne my riding buddy for the second half of this trip, started out with a 440 mile day from Medina, OH.

Day 14-July 25, 2015

Rally day 3 of 3. Rally attendance was good at 6,000. Paul Koontz and I went to the hill climb for the afternoon. This was a true National event. Most of the bikes had a dirt bike frame, stuffed with a HUGH 4 cylinder engine running nitro or nitric oxide. Most had an extended swing arm and BIG knobs on the rear tire. The hill shown below is only used once a year and it is gigantic. Paul got some nice videos. Temps today were approaching 100 (hot). Our club had 17 members at the rally. Roger Pivonka won a $4,000 overseas tour package at the closing ceremony. What made this more strange, is that Roger told me earlier in the day that he was going to win????

Off early tomorrow for a long day: Bear Tooth Pass, Chief Joseph Highway, Yellowstone, Grand Tetons, Jackson and ending up in Pinedale, WY.

Day 15—July 26, 2015 About 450 miles all on 2 lane roads

Billings, MT to Pinedale, WY. First up today were two exceptional roads (Bear Tooth Pass and Chief Joseph Highway). 150 miles of total fun! I told myself to just take it easy, but,.... Very glad that these roads were early in the day while I was fresh. The rest of the day was filled with slow RVs, slow park speed limits and heavy park traffic. Pictures show some of the beauty. Because of today's long miles, the next two days are easy (200 miles per day). Tomorrow's target is Vernal, UT.

Day 16 – July 27, 2015 About 200 Miles

Pinedale, WY to Vernal, UT. I was expecting an easy cake ride today (200 miles). Then I woke up to 38 degree temps. I found out that Pinedale is in the high dessert at > 7000 feet. I went back to sleep. Finally got on the road at 10:30. Temp had warmed up to mid 70s. Then came the brutal winds, which would accompany me the rest of the day. I have ridden in high winds many times before, but these winds were tough. The TV tonight indicated these winds were abnormal and had 40 to 60 mph gusts. The winds are reported to diminish tonight. Although the winds took a lot of the fun out of riding today, the scenery was great. Tomorrow night I meet up with Wayne and Anna in Montrose, CO.

Day 17—July 28, 2015 About 240 miles

Vernal, UT to Montrose, CO. Planning on a short day again, I got on the road at 10:30. Temps and wind were nice. Found a great bike road from Rangley, CO to Loma, CO. 72 miles with no towns, all hills and curves. Picture may show some of this road? Wayne and Anna arrived at the motel. We're off to dinner and some very scenic roads tomorrow.

Day 18—July 29, 2015

Montrose, CO to Mexican Hat, UT via Black Canyon of the Gunnison & The Million Dollar Highway. Black Canyon of the Gunnison was spectacular, as was the drive to the top. The million dollar highway was less wonderful then in the past due to the large amount of vehicles. Far too many to pass. The turns were just not as much fun as in the past. Wayne fixed this by lagging behind, then flying to catch up. Wayne has always been "the master of turns". We skirted a big black rain cloud, then ran into 99 degree Temps for the last two hours. I got a chance to try out my new cooling vest--not bad. Even with the vest, I was exhausted when we reached the motel in Mexican Hat, UT.

Day 19—July 30, 2015 About 250 miles

Mexican Hat, UT to Williams, AZ. Everyday seems to come with multiple scenic gifts. Today was no different. Today we started out by going to Gooseneck State Park about 15 miles from Mexican Hat. I'll bet that no one has even heard of this park. Maybe 5 cars in the parking lot and it is an absolute wonder! The San Juan River over 300 million years, cut deep channels that snake back and forth within the viewing area. The view is spectacular. Put this on your bucket list!Then heading south we went thru Monument Valley. This is where they shot all the old western movies that my dad watched. Before Flagstaff we visited Sunset Crater formed from a volcano that erupted only 1000 years ago. The last pic is a rock called "Mexican Hat". Anna booked us a tour package consisting of:

- Daily breakfasts and dinners with live entertainment!
- A 2 hour train ride to the Grand Canyon in a top of the great train car.
- A motor coach tour of the south rim.
- A stay in a 4 star hotel.

So far, everything appears excellent. We board the train tomorrow at 9 AM. It will be good to give the bikes a rest. It doesn't get any better than this!

To be continued...

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