

# THE CRAB POT

November 2004



The Irrelevant  
Publication of the Mid-Atlantic's Most  
Irreverent Motorcycle Disorganization

In this issue:

Phil and Elsie's Courthouse Ride  
October Ride & Dine  
Backroads Rally Report  
Fall Foliage Campout  
Bob's Halloween Day  
November Swap Meet  
December Christmas Party  
January's DC Motorcycle Show  
Motorcycle Instructors Wanted  
Picture of the Month

### ***COURTHOUSE CHALLENGE***

According to Phil Ager, he and Elsie Smith have visited 220 of the 244 courthouses in Maryland and surrounding states! Their contest ends 14 November and they hope to pack in a few more before then. They've visited more courthouses than my cousin Louis (but he's normally a required guest of the law enforcement community).

### ***OCTOBER RIDE-N-DINE***

Saturday, 23 October, was a fine day for a ride: the fall color was in full stride and the sun was shining. It wasn't even cool enough to justify electrical assistance to stay warm. Betsy and I lit out over the back roads and ended up at Courtney's Restaurant on Wynn Road in Ridge, MD. When we got there, Julie Courtney asked if we needed menus. When we answered by asking if there was fresh rockfish, she said "Tommy just filleted one." That eliminated the need for menus right there and about 20 minutes later we were busier than truffle-rooting hogs with big pieces of the freshest, best-prepared fried rockfish mankind could want.

Free entertainment was provided by some lady in a Volvo wagon with a boat trailer, sans the required skills to back said trailer to the ramp. It was a real laugh until she headed right at my bike. Fortunately, her passenger ejected her from the driver's seat before she could wreak havoc on my machine, but they left with an empty trailer nonetheless. I have no idea what happened to the boat: perhaps it fled of its own accord.

As we left, the sun was setting over the Potomac in spectacular fashion and on the horizon, headed upstream, was the silhouette of a square-rigged sailing ship. It looked like the "Maryland Dove," a replica of the vessel that brought the first settlers to St. Mary's County in 1634. That's not something you see every day. If you weren't there, you missed a nice evening.

### **CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW ARRIVAL, TIM!**

My neighbor Tim Pugh took delivery of a new, blue R1200GS on Friday 29 October. We may have to christen that thing this weekend!

### **TRIALS, BUT NO TRIBULATIONS**

Trials-meister Randy Black continued his winning ways at two trials in October. Randy made good on the name of the BSA 441 Victor, winning two vintage events. You have to really admire someone who can do that on an old Beezer. An old geezer on an old Beezer...kinda has a nice ring to it.

## **BACKROADS RALLY AT ROCKY GAP STATE PARK, MD**

Columbus Day Weekend, Betsy and I joined Brian Rathjen, Shira Kamil, and around 50 of their friends at the *Backroads* Fall Foliage Rally. The site, Rocky Gap State Park, is just East of Cumberland, MD on I-68 and features a huge lodge and a Jack-Nicklaus-designed golf course. We had a great room on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor that offered beautiful views of the sunrise over Lake Habeeb.

True to the name of the rally, the ride up on Friday saw us on some good back roads: we hit WV 9 through Berkeley Springs and then US 522. We got there in time for libations and conversation Friday night. We avoided the alleged "misunderstanding" with the barmaid and security by turning in early to prepare for what would be an eventful Saturday.

Betsy and I watched sunrise over the lake Saturday and enjoyed a breakfast buffet that included Belgian waffles and made-to-order omelettes. We got under way at the crack of ten for some freelancing of the best back roads in Pennsylvania. We went to Flintstone, MD and not finding the road we expected, just turned North toward the Mason-Dixon line. We romped and rolled on empty, squirmy ribbons of leaf-strewn, sun-dappled, macadam that made us sing. To quote the Yogi, when we came to a fork in the road, we took it. For a while, the only car we encountered was an exotic sportscar that passed us going down the mountain in Buchanan State Forest. As a motorcyclist, I hang my head in shame at that, but if you have to get dusted on an unfamiliar mountain road, let it be done by a Ferrari or Maserati or Lotus.

Our first stop was Martinsburg, PA, home of the Cove Shoe Company. Cove makes the boots used by our military, police, and fire personnel, including the USMC's infantry boots. I have the desert model and the ones called "Matterhorns" and they are wear-all-day comfortable. We didn't find any we had to have, despite my propensity to be Imelda Marcos when it comes to specialty shoes (road cycling shoes, mountain biking shoes, motorcycle boots, hunting boots, running shoes, hiking boots...it's a problem). The road beckoned us onward.

Hollidaysburg, PA was next, home of...The Slinky! The venerable toy made from simple spring steel originated at James Industries on Beaver Street in Hollidaysburg, PA. Mr. James thought the wiggly thing would make a great toy and he was right! The factory wasn't open on Saturday, so we consoled ourselves with lunch at the Capitol Hotel on "The Diamond."

The Diamond is their version of a square, with streets emanating from the corners. The Capitol Hotel lunch counter retains the

mirrored saloon decor replete with a tin ceiling and the accompanying fans. Downstairs, the "Pipe Room" offers a glimpse into the past (and a TV showing any sport Penn State is capable of televising). We had a decent lunch with entertainment provided by the dowager at the counter who described all his beautiful women.

Our next stop was the Mallo Cup factory in Altoona! The Boyer Candy Company off 17<sup>th</sup> St. in Altoona, PA is responsible for those marshmallow-filled chocolate goodies. They don't give tours, but they have an outlet store, so we got a case to distribute to fellow rallygoers. Yum! On the way out of town, we went by the Joffa Mosque, a huge Masonic Temple with an auditorium capable of seating over 3,000. The stonework alone is worth seeing.

Horseshoe Curve is famous among railroaders and it's just West of Altoona. It helps trains gain the necessary elevation to get them over the Allegheny Mountains. We hit the visitor center and watched a freight roll through, then scampered through the tunnel and up the mountain for some of the best twisty riding around. We turned around and came down the same road, then left via the winding road along the reservoir. We had to make it "home" in time for the door prize drawings (and to distribute our Mallo Cups)!

Back at the lodge, Brian and Shira drew names for a number of things they had for giveaway, including several complete riding suits they'd been given for product evals. Betsy and I got a couple tools, a T-shirt, and a free year's extension of our *Backroads* subscription. We capped the night sitting by the lakeside fire roasting marshmallows.

Sunday we elected to join a big group for a couple-hundred-mile round trip: the Flight 93 Memorial at Shanksville and a Frank Lloyd Wright house at a place called Kentuck Knob (not far from Fallingwater). It started out comically, as Brian and Shira had thirty motorcyclists making not one but two u-turns on old US 40. We felt like the Keystone Cops at the start of our second foray into the Keystone State. We finally found a road going our way and the trip turned more somber. Much more somber.

Were it not for the events of 11 September 2001, Shanksville, PA might have gone unnoticed into history. Thanks to a group of extremely courageous Americans, it's become a shrine. Down a gravel road, there's a temporary memorial to the people who perished trying to wrest control of an airliner from the despicable vermin who hijacked it. It turned fittingly cloudy, windy, and cold at that site, matching our moods. On a reclaimed strip mine, a little hut has been constructed that contains photo albums with pictures of the crash site.

A chain link fence serves as a posting place for talismans from folks who want to remember the dead in their own way. The guardrails are festooned with signatures and messages of condolence and hope. There are remembrances of every kind, from children's painted rocks laid out in an American flag pattern, to wooden benches inscribed with the names of the passengers and crew. Someone left a pair of red, white, and blue sneakers. I think the pictures affected me the most: they put a face on the tragedy. The last time I remember feeling like that was when I saw a similar chain link fence at the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City.

We left Shanksville for a more hopeful destination: a house designed for the Hagan family (of Hagan ice cream fame, not Haagen Daas). The house is above Ohiopyle State Park on a peak known as Kentuck Knob. It's not as well-known as its notorious nearby neighbor, Fallingwater, but it's a fantastic house. It's based on the angles of a hexagon, and everything from the courtyard to the clerestory windows carries that theme. Old Frank was only there once: he remarked that since he drew it, he knew what it looked like...

We ate at a little place in Ohiopyle called the Firefly Grill. Their outside cook tent served up Polish delicacies of Kielbasa, Kraut, and Pierogies. After lunch, Betsy and I took in the beautiful waterfall at the park, deciding to abandon the group and freelance a little on the way back. I had an ulterior motive for taking old US 40.

When I was a kid, we used to travel US 40 quite a bit. "The National Road" was the only way across that part of the country before I-68. We used to stop at Penn Alps near Grantsville to eat Mennonite-prepared food by the big fireplace. My most memorable occasion on "Old 40" occurred near a now-defunct restaurant called "Happy Hills Farm" when our family of four spent the night marooned in a snowstorm inside a 1968 Plymouth. Betsy and I enjoyed the traffic-free old road and I pointed out the spot where we made our own yellow spots in the snow that night.

Knowing we had to go home, to quote Brian Rathjen we "partied like rock stars" Sunday night. Actually, as he so aptly noted, we partied like aged rock stars like Jagger and Dylan. We dragged our feet Monday and just made checkout time. We freelanced roads to the South, knowing MD 51 was along the Potomac somewhere. I just kept taking back roads that went South or East until we hit 51, then followed the C&O canal to Paw Paw, WV and the tunnel there. After a brief stop, we reluctantly headed toward home. It was a great rally with fantastic weather. It was also a very happy 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary for Betsy and I. Thanks Buddy!

## ***CRABS Fall Foliage Campout, 16&17 October 2004***

By Thursday night, the eight people who were supposed to do this trip dwindled to Betsy and I. If you let the weather forecast chase you away from this, you missed a decent weekend. There were a couple rainshowers and some gusty winds, but we had a great time nonetheless. The colors were just about at their peak.

Saturday, we took my 80-year-old father down the Trough to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his first float down that section of Potomac. The "old man" still retains an encyclopedic knowledge of the river and he and Betsy got hung up only once to my twice during the whole five-hour trip. They also got to watch me back halfway through the "Dead Deer Riffle," only to shoot it cleanly themselves. When my Dad's legs cramped from sitting, he solved the problem by kneeling in the canoe! We should be so lucky to have his constitution. The weather threw a lot at us: it ranged from drizzly at the start to stunning sunshine for most of the trip to gusty and rainy near the end, but at the takeout point, we were dry. We saw the Potomac Eagle sightseeing train twice on our trip and waved to a few hundred folks on the 13-car excursion train. We're in quite a few snapshots. I think we were one of only two parties who did the 7-mile trip that day.

We ate homemade soup with my Dad Saturday night, then retired to a driftwood campfire and hot tea on the riverbank by our tent. A crescent moon over Mill Creek Mountain lit the river. The CRABS camping area was large, comfy, quiet, and close to the bath house. We wish you had been there: Betsy and I are beginning to feel like lepers... Maybe we'll try again in the Spring.

## **HAPPY HALLOWEEN AT BOB'S BMW**

Bob's is having a Halloween event on Saturday 30 October. Staff members will be attired in Halloween Costumes and customers are encouraged to come in Halloween attire as well. There will be prizes for best costumes. It should be interesting. See [www.bobsbmw.com](http://www.bobsbmw.com) for details.

## **CRABS FALL SWAP MEET AND CHILI FEED**

Fall swap meet/chili feed Saturday 14 November, 1 PM until...at the Byers, 21116 Rosebay Way, Leonardtown, MD. Trials riding demos. Pennsylvania beer. T-shirts. Sweat shirts (?). Stickers. Club banner. Dwarf-tossing...just kidding. Bring your stuff to trade or just ride over and get a bowl of chili. IF IT RAINS, FUGGEDABOUTIT ALTOGETHER AND WE'LL REGROUP FOR THE CHRISTMAS PARTY.

## **A CRABBY CHRISTMAS PARTY**

We will be doing a CRABS Christmas Party on 18 December. Put it on your calendar. Pepperoni rolls, lumpia, and malted beverages among other goodies: yum! At the Byers' unless someone else volunteers. More later.

## **DC MOTORCYCLE SHOW, JANUARY 14-16 2005**

<http://wdc.motorcycleshows.com/imswdc/V40/index.cvn>

Let's see if we can get a group to go so we can scare away the winter demons.

## **PICTURE OF THE MONTH**



To Protect and to Swerve: Just What You'd Like to See if You Just  
Went by at Ten or More Over the Limit...

## **HALLOWEEN FUNNIES**

Q: What do you get if you don't pay the exorcist?

A: You get repossessed.

Q: Where do little ghosts go during the day?

A: Daycare centers.

## **PAX BASE NEEDS MOTORCYCLE INSTRUCTORS**

The Safety Division is recruiting Motorcycle Rider Coaches to instruct Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Motorcycle Safety Courses onboard Naval facilities. The following qualification requirements apply to individuals teaching the Basic or Experienced Rider Course Suite:

a. Candidates must be E-5 or above or civilian equivalent. Military must have at least 24 months left to serve at current duty station upon certification.

b. Own and operate a motorcycle on a frequent basis and be properly licensed with at least 2 years riding experience.

c. Have successfully completed the Motorcycle Rider Course: Riding and Street Skills (MRC:RSS) or the Basic Rider Course (BRC) within the past 2 years.

d. Provide own motorcycle if within 8-hour ride of course location. Motorcycle must meet all Federal, State, and Local equipment and emission requirements.

e. Furnish and use required personal protective equipment (PPE) which includes DOT-approved helmet, goggles or face shield, long-sleeve shirt or jacket, long trousers, full-fingered gloves, over-the-ankle sturdy footwear, and rain gear. Candidates not having required PPE upon arrival will obtain it prior to any range exercises or be dismissed from course.

f. Be mentally and physically prepared for 10-12 hour days and evening homework assignments.

g. Maintain a satisfactory driving record. Each candidate must supply an original current copy of his own state's driver license record to submit with his course application. A record is considered UNSAT if a major infraction is reported within the last 2 years. Major infractions include, but are not limited to, DUI/DWI, reckless driving, license suspension/revocation, or three or more moving violations or at-fault mishaps.

h. Each candidate must have written command endorsement or recommendation to attend the course. Also candidates must have on Command Letter Head written permission to teach once per quarter for the duration of their tour.

### **Contact:**

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