



The Crab Pot

*The thin publication of the mid-Atlantic's
most chubby moto club*

January 2006

⚡BOLD New Look
(same old editor)

WHO ARE THE CRABS?

It's a new year and time for a new look. It's also time to admit I'm a poor mailing list steward: for some of you, this is your first *Crab Pot*. If so, welcome. I am turning scraps of paper with email addresses into a distribution list. Since some of you are receiving this for the first time, let me explain the CRABS:

A few years ago, I realized non-Harley riders in Southern Maryland had no way of getting together. The Harley guys had HOG and other clubs, but there was nothing else. When I spoke to folks about a club, however, their eyes rolled back in their heads as they envisioned business meetings, officers, and DUES (it's true that the cheapest thing on a BMW is the rider).

With that in mind, I created an untraditional club in which there are: 1) no dues, 2) no officers, and 3) no business meetings. I made myself dictator, newsletter editor, and doer of what needs to be done. CRABS is a group of motorcyclists who get together irregularly for a meal or a ride. CRABS has also become a "virtual club" in which the primary contact is via email and the *Crab Pot*.

The "B" in the name, Chesapeake Riding And Beverage Society (CRABS), was originally for "Beemer" but since there are Japanese and Italian bike folks, the "B" is for a favorite après-ride activity. I like it because it isn't politically correct and represents a range of snootiness from having tea to slurping down a Budweiser. That's pretty much who we are: motorcyclists from all walks of life representing the tea drinkers to the Bud swillers and everyone else.

We TRY to have an R&D (Ride & Dine) session each month, but that's sporadic at best. The *Crab Pot* advertises chances to ride or take in something interesting via (or about) motorcycles. Twice a year we put on a chili feed at our house and we have a Christmas party. Anyone on the list can call a "meeting" simply by sending an email to the list or advertising it in the *Crab Pot*.

As for the *Crab Pot*, I produce it more or less faithfully each month. I use as much guest-written material as I get, but it has largely fallen to me (which is fine as long as you enjoy it).

The logo is a product of one of our brilliant members, Jen Seidel, who runs her own company called Design Mason Graphics. She artfully captured the area, our namesake crustacean, and the name on the

logo. Jen is also responsible for CRABS gear, which can be found at www.cafepress.com/chesriders. I can't thank her enough.

I originally intended CRABS to serve the tri-county area of Southern Maryland, but it has taken on a life of its own and we have members from Ohio, New Mexico, New Jersey, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. I occasionally get an email from someone asking to be added to "the list." I am very gratified that people want to get the *Crab Pot* and want to know what we're doing. That said, if anyone ever wants to be removed from the mailing list, I will gladly do so: just email me that request.

I hope you enjoy the *Crab Pot* as much as I enjoy putting it together. Ride safely in 2006. 🏍️

MARK BYERS



My 1974 Honda TL125 Trials Bike

"They'll talk to ya and talk to ya and talk to ya about individual freedom. But they see a free individual, it's gonna scare 'em."

Jack Nicholson in *Easy Rider*

POTOMAC VINTAGE RIDERS SWAP MEET

On 22 January, a few of us went to the Potomac Vintage Riders swap meet at the York fairgrounds. This annual event always provides a good selection of vintage on- and off-road motorcycles and parts. This year was no exception. Put this one on your calendar for 2007. 🏍️

CUSTOM MOTO SHOW

4&5 February
Dulles Expo Center
www.cycleprousa.com/showinfo.cfm?showid=84

FREDERICKSBURG MOTORCYCLE SHOW

18 & 19 February
Fredericksburg, VA
www.keymarv.com/neme/site/fredricksburg/index.html

MID-ATLANTIC MOTO SHOW

10-12 February
MD State Fairgrounds
Timonium, MD
www.cycleshow.net

BUDD'S CREEK VINTAGE MX

26 March 2006
Budd's Creek, MD

POTOMAC VINTAGE RIDERS OBSERVED TRIALS

Sunday 9 April
Monrovia, MD

LOCAL ROAD RAGE!

Excerpted from *The Enterprise*

Maryland State Police said that two women driving like lunatics were reported to police. One was arrested.

Police say a citizen called 911 and advised of two motorists driving in a reckless manner. The suspect vehicles were traveling in excess of 80 MPH, passing on the shoulder, and weaving in and out of traffic. The citizen eventually lost sight of the vehicles.

An off-duty trooper was traveling North when **both vehicles passed him on the shoulder at a high rate of speed.** He observed both vehicles drive into oncoming traffic in an effort to pass.

Police say that after running a red light, both vehicles pulled into a Shell gas station. One vehicle then ran into the back of the other. State Police report that troopers arrived on the scene and "contacted" the drivers of both vehicles.

One driver advised police that while sitting in her vehicle the other driver punched the side window. She stated to police that she was driving in a reckless manner in an attempt to get away from the other driver.

The other driver advised that she became enraged after an argument with the first party.

The first driver was cited for reckless driving and released. The other was arrested and charged with engaging in reckless conduct and assault on the other driver. 🚗

"I believe that, as a species, human beings define their reality through misery and suffering."

Agent Smith, *The Matrix*

URBAN TUMBLEWEEDS

By A. Crab (AKA editor forgot who)

I recently picked up an urban tumbleweed, AKA plastic bag, on my motorcycle muffler. It immediately melted and started to burn, finally turning black and becoming approximately as hard as the chrome to which it was attached. I decided to share my efforts at cleaning my muffler, just in case you ever pick up one of these unwanted passengers. After researching the best way to remove this burnt-on, hard-as-steel mess, I finally decided to try the following:

1) Goof-Off. No discernable results. Put in on and worked it in a bit, let it sit for a few minutes, and it...removed absolutely nothing. A waste of time.

2) Goop. Same result: removed absolutely nothing. More wasted time.

3) Easy-Off Oven Cleaner. Sprayed on cold muffler, very carefully making sure not to get it on the paint of my bike (use something behind it to catch overspray). Let it sit for an hour or two. I was worried about the corrosive materials in oven cleaner but figured at this point that it would either work or I'd have to replace the pipe. It removed about 70% of the burned-on crap from the muffler after several applications and seems to have had no negative effects on the chrome.

4) Next I will run the bike until the muffler gets very hot and try to scrape the remaining plastic off with a wooden spoon and then clean and polish with oven cleaner and chrome polish. 🚗

A PLACE TO LAY MY HEAD

by Mark Byers

It's Memorial Day Weekend and I'm in a town called Franklin, West Virginia. I'm taking my motorcycle on some US Routes because I wrote a magazine article about the US Routes and how we should ride them, stay in the remaining motels, and eat in the remaining restaurants. So here I am in Thompson's Motel. I am beginning to question the sanity of my article: not the US Route part, just the motel part.

This is a typical old motel/restaurant gone to seed. It sits near the outskirts of town next to a gas station at the junction of two US Routes. Because the neon is out, the sign perpetually says "Vacancy." The L-shaped, two-story motel surrounds the restaurant/office in classic fashion. There's a smattering of chairs on the porches: wooden Adirondack loungers with a hundred coats of paint. I imagine this was once a bustling stopover on the way to million family vacations, but that train left the station long ago. Let me put it this way: I got here at 7 PM on Memorial Day Weekend with no reservation and they still had rooms.

In fact, I got one of the last three rooms. The lady said, "You just want a place to lay your head, don't you hon?" "Yes maam," I replied while forking over a mere \$31. I have the ground floor single off the "breezeway" (which is rural talk for the place they put the Coke machine, an old, rusting freezer, and assorted scraps of screen, drywall, and ceiling tiles). There hasn't been a breeze in this way since the 50's. One saving grace of the breezeway is that the lady suggested I park my bike there in case of rain. What they lack in splendor, they sure make up for in friendliness. It

doesn't hurt that my bike classes up the breezeway big time.

After I get my key at the office/restaurant/lottery-ticket counter, I saunter over to the room...to find that the key will not work. A 60-ish matron from the office/restaurant comes back with me and after about 10 minutes of fighting, gets it to work saying "See, it works! You just have to jiggle it a little." Riiiiight. She leaves and I fiddle with the key until I can break the code.

Ahhhh, the room! It's not that small, but the bathroom is another story: when I open the door, it bangs into the commode. The shower stall reminds me of a joke David Letterman told about going to the bathroom on an airplane: "Anything you do in there is a hook shot." The carpet and the bedspread are liberally festooned with cigarette burns.

I am initially slow to turn down the bed for fear of what I'll find, but I get past that. From where I sit, I can see the box spring and...I have to sleep on it and I don't want to think deeply enough about it to write a description. Over the bed hangs a pastoral picture of a farm. It's firmly screwed to the dark paneling to prevent theft (but I can't imagine what sort of sick bastard would steal it). The furniture is pure 50's.

Speaking of the 50's, when I checked in, the desk clerk asked if I cared about TV. I asked "Why?" "Well" she said, "the single rooms don't get all the cable channels and there's no remote for the TV." An incurable channel surfer, I gasped but since I knew I'd be writing, I thought I'd be OK. It is nostalgic to channel surf by standing in front of the gizmo turning the dial. The TV gets all the really vital channels: shopping, Jesus, weather, C-span, and the networks. The TV complements the other gadget in the room: the air

conditioner. When I first turn the beast on, it sounds like a rock crusher. After the initial gravelly rumbles, it settles into a nice, deafening roar. I try opening the windows, but there are no screens and the storm windows look to be permanently rusted in place.

The restaurant has the requisite booths, tables, and counter. I sit at the counter and have a decent turkey sub while reading pamphlets about the town. I found out a long time ago that a single diner will read virtually anything. They have a house that was ordered from the Sears and Roebuck Catalog! They have some interesting homes in styles like "Victorian Revival," but I'm not going to take the walking tour. I notice that the wallpaper has a bad picture of George Washington with the term "Father of the Country" written below him in Latin. How's THAT for culture?!

The waitresses are friendly and banter with me, giving way more information about them than I really want to know. The blonde only needs six hours of sleep and the other one has a big Spanish test next week, but it's multiple choice, so it's OK. I share the counter stools with a couple regulars they call by name, one of whom I think is the mayor.

After chow, I wheel the bike into the breezeway. I just about have it behind the Coke machine when a male voice startles me by saying "I'm going to have a BMW some day!" Hoping he doesn't mean MINE, I turn around to see a big, curly-headed guy and his redheaded son, who introduce themselves as Hank and Eric. A nice conversation about motorcycles ensues. Hank and Eric are from Pottstown, PA and are dirt riders, but Hank knows a lot about all sorts of motorcycle racing. Hank used to be quite the motocrosser, but his mom stood in the way of a budding pro career. We go

over motocross, supercross, supermoto, superbike, and every other damn super-thing you can name, plus trials. Hank has a thing for rallying and the Isle of Man and knows about the recent deaths of Fabrizio Meoni, Richard Saint, and Joey Dunlop. Not bad for a 38-year-old former motocross rider from Pottstown. He has high hopes for Eric, a lad of 12, but I'm not sure Eric the Red is going to follow in Dad's footsteps. They're having a father/son weekend before a move to Florida for a new job and a new life. Godspeed, Hank and Eric.

Tomorrow I'll enjoy breakfast served by the six-hour-sleep lady, then continue to Route 72, the "West Virginia Dragon." I'll cruise through Philippi and check out the famous mummies and the covered bridge. I'll cross the covered bridge and slice a few sinews of US 250. The weather is predicted to be outstanding (if you can believe the weather liars).

Even though I've made light of it, the motel is safe and the people are really friendly. I'm pretty sure they know they're not the Ritz and they're doing their best to make up for it with old fashioned service. Hank and Eric are great folks and their conversation was an asset to my evening: we would probably have remained strangers at a big chain motel because I wouldn't have been pushing my bike behind the Coke machine. I used some fantastic roads to get here and will ride some more tomorrow. I have a room despite leaving the house with the vaguest of plans and no reservations (literally or figuratively). Remember what I said about doubting the sanity of this? Forget it: I'm happy as a puppy chasing butterflies. Plus, I've got a place to lay my head. 🐾

SAVING YOUR HIDE

I ordered a garment from a place called "Motopart" and they included a sheet called "The Save Your Hide Guide." Here are some excerpts, plus a little of what I've learned.

+Look for 3 things in riding gear:

- Impact protection
- Abrasion strength
- Tear strength

+To get proper abrasion strength, Kevlar has to be woven with Codura and Lycra in a product like Schoeller's Keprotect. Other than leather, Keprotect are the only suits approved for racing applications. Beware of manufacturers that use only Kevlar or use it in small quantities just to say their gear has it. Kevlar thread can actually cut through seams like a knife because of its tensile strength. Nylon thread is usually better because it stretches.

+Leather is a good material...but the best gauge of how good is usually the price. The type, age, and diet of the animal from which it came can affect its quality, as do the tanning processes used to clean and color it. Leather should be worn tight because folds can reduce its tear strength. Each time leather gets wet and dries, it can lose up to 20% of its tear and abrasion strength. Leather must be scrupulously cared for even when not worn.

+Nylon: the thicker the better. Only Cordura or Dynatec nylon of a denier (thickness) of 620 or better is considered good for moto gear. Due to cost, some makers treat their nylon with a layer of polyurethane that under heavy pavement friction can melt to your skin. Always wear another garment under nylon.

Here are some comparisons of fabric tear strength (some of the numbers may surprise you):

Cotton Jeans	4.5 lb!
70 Denier Std. Nylon	4.5 lb
500 Denier Polyester	8 lb
200 Denier Std. Nylon	7.5 lb
500 Denier Codura	22 lb
620 Denier Codura	35 lb
Leather	80-110 lb
1000 Denier Codura	110 lb
Air Mesh Kevlar	1260 lb!
Stretch Kevlar Blend	420 lb

As you can see, jeans don't provide much protection! Kevlar alone is really strong in tensile strength, but it can be almost brittle under abrasion. Leather and Codura usually offer the best combination of durability and abrasion resistance as long as they're well cared for and of good quality. 🐾

BACKROADS MAGAZINE SPRING BREAK RIDE!

19-22 May 2006

Join the publishers of the Nation's biggest and best regional publication for a four-day spring ride on the Blue Ridge! Meet at the Bavarian Inn of Shepherdstown, WV on Friday, spend two nights at Natural Bridge, VA on Saturday and Sunday, and spend Monday night at Harper's Ferry, WV to round out a long weekend of great riding and great company! Betsy and I have done BACKROADS rides and they're terrific: Brian Rathjen and Shira Kamil choose top-drawer roads and hotels and attract top-drawer people. See www.backroadsusa.com for details. 🐾

EXCLUSIVE OFFER JUST FOR CRABS

BMW riders, are you tired of having Harley guys make fun of the sound your bike makes? Does your catalyzed, overly-muffled German twin sound way too much like an anemic Volkswagen? Poser Products has the answer! After days of research with Pose Audio, we've come up with a way to make your Beemer sound like the biggest, baddest American V-twins: introducing the Poser Powerblaster!

Just install two Powerblaster micro subwoofers in an unobtrusive area of your bike (the R1200RT provides ample space under its voluminous Tupperware), wire the Powerblaster Amplifier to the battery, and attach the final lead to a spark plug wire. Voila! Now whenever you fire up your German twin, the Pose Audio subwoofers will emit the distinctive "potato-potato" of a Twin-cam 88! Thanks to the spark synchronizer, when you open the throttle, the volume and RPM appear to increase accordingly!

But wait, there's more! Each Powerblaster has a five-position volume control that allows you to tailor your faux sound to the particular amount of annoyance you desire. There are five volume levels from which to choose: stock Harley, Screamin' Eagle, Vance & Hines, Neighbor-Hater, and Bike-Ban. Yes, now even you Beemer geeks can make little children reflexively cover their ears when a motorcycle comes into view!

But wait, there's more! Tired of having to wring your right wrist incessantly at traffic lights just so you can sound like the "big guys?" If you order in the next 10 days, we'll include the Auto-Blipper absolutely free! It's simple: just attach the Auto-Blipper button to the accessory socket on the Powerblaster. When you pull up to a stoplight, simply push the Auto-Blip button and the Powerblaster will automatically begin to simulate blipping your throttle like it's being controlled by a meth addict with a nervous twitch. No more carpal-tunnel for YOU: let the Auto-Blipper do the work!

Normally, you'd expect to pay as much as \$200 for a piece of engineering like this, but thanks to a special deal with the slave labor from the People's Army in China, we're able to offer this amazing device for the Harley-esque price of just \$100! That's right, just like the real thing, in the Powerblaster world "H-D" stands for "hundred dollars!" You'd pay much more to get a real Harley, so don't delay: supplies are limited to several hundred thousand units.

But wait, there's more! If you order within the next 5 days, we'll include at no extra charge a toy kids of all ages are sure to love: the Mr. and Mrs. Potato-Potato Head dolls! That's right; you can have your very own limited-edition copies of this classic toy made with a Harley twist. Mr. and Mrs. Potato-Potato Head come complete with an introductory set of Harley-logo dress-up accessories. Outfit Mrs. Potato-Potato Head with the latest Harley-logo fringe jacket, purse, and boots. Outfit Mr. Potato-Potato Head with tiny engineer boots and a special flame-painted "do-rag." The possibilities are limitless and additional Mr. and Mrs. Potato-Potato Head accessories are available at Harley boutiques nationwide. Make every day "Harleyween!" Don't delay, order today!

To get your Poser Products Powerblaster, send certified check, money order, or Kruggerrands in the amount of \$100 to Poser Products, FLHTXDPDQ Drive, Milwaukee, WI 50588 or call 1-800-BAD-EARS. This offer not valid in snooty-ass neighborhoods with HOA's or other anal-retentive, restrictive organizations. Installing this accessory on your bike will most certainly void BMW's warranty and attaching it to the newfangled single-wire bus will undoubtedly cause it to short out thousands of dollars worth of expensive circuitry. Not intended for installation by idiots. Warranted for the lifetime of the unit. Manufacturer is not responsible for misuse of the unit in aforementioned snooty areas, nor for hurt feelings of either Beemer geeks or Harley dudes. Get a sense of humor (sold separately).

CRABS ROAD RALLY

This spring, Scott Davis and Steve Whetstone will put on the first-ever CRABS road rally. They have selected bonus locations all over the region to use for a one-day fun rally to be held sometime in May. We'll meet for breakfast, hand out the info, and you'll have a set time to collect answers to questions about places and oddities in the area. I want to call it the "Marshmallow Butt" or something, but I get mean looks from Ironbutt Society members Davis and Whetstone. Whatever it's called, it should be fun. Stay tuned for more. 🍌

CRABS GEOCACHE RALLY

The popularity of portable GPS units has spawned a new sport called "geocaching." In a nutshell, there are various caches hidden all over the country (and an amazing number in Southern Maryland). They're as small as a bolt and as large as a Tupperware container. The idea is to go online, get the GPS coordinates, and then track one down. Simple, right? Well, the hidiers have found creative ways to make you hunt for them: just hitting zero feet to go on your GPS isn't good enough!

A couple people at work are avid geocachers and are helping me put together a "cache and dash" rally wherein all the caches are within 100 yards or so of a road or parking lot (sometimes IN the parking lot). Since so many folks navigate their bikes by GPS, it should be right up our alley. The caches are rated on difficulty to find, so we'll use those ratings to assign scores and the person with the most finds will win a valuable prize! This one will be in the summer or fall. 🍌

PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Each month I try to include a good or amusing photo related to motorcycling. I'd use more throughout the *Crab Pot* but the pitiful dialup connection I use for email does not lend itself to large newsletters. Sorry: when cable gets to my world, maybe I can use more.



Mark Murphy maneuvers his vintage Bultaco Sherpa. In the background, former world trials champion Mick Andrews gives instruction.

July 05 Photo by Randy Black

IN FUTURE ISSUES

A March R&D
A CRABS Web Site!
CRABS Spring Chili Feed
More Vintage Trials Events
Butler's Orchard Ride
More on Backroads Spring Break
Easter on the Blue Ridge
More crap from the Crabdicator
Your stories (??)
And...Blue Lou Hanratty rides again!

CONTACT

Send articles, emails, harangues, threats, etc. to the Crabdicator Mark Byers at cornersquid@aol.com or to PO Box 15 Patuxent River, MD 20670

