

# THE ALABAMA BEEMER



Newsletter of the BMW Motorcycle Owners of Alabama  
BMWMOA Chapter #5/ BMWRA Chapter #107



Volume XXXVII Issue 1

January 2008

## THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If you haven't paid your 2008 dues, please mail ASAP so there will be no interruption of receiving your newsletter. The dues were past due on 12/31/07.

The annual dues for the principal member is \$20 plus \$3 for the secondary household member.

The information for the 2008 MEMBERSHIP BOOKLET is now being compiled so please send any changes in your address, phone numbers, or e-mail. You need to renew now if you want to be listed.

Please make your check payable to BMW M/C Owners of AL and mail to:

Marty Simpson, 10010 Torino Dr.,  
SE, Huntsville, AL 35803

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Make every effort to attend the January meeting at the Alabama Traffic Safety Center in Montevallo. All activities for the coming year are determined at this meeting by vote of the members in attendance. Please come and share your ideas for campout locations.

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## Corrections/Retractions

Due to an editorial error in the January birthdays column in the November newsletter, Gene Barber's name was misspelled. Gene you have our apologies and the record has been corrected.

## DIRECTOR OF TRAVEL EXPOSED?



This picture of our Travel Director, Bob Steber has turned up in an X-File style drama that casts a shadow of doubt on the authenticity and integrity of the Alabama Beemers' Exploring & Epicurean Society, familiarly known as "ABEES".

The competition has been very keen during the year to earn ABEES points by traveling to various points around the state that are defined in the ABEES Guide that was furnished to the membership.

Most contenders logged their mo-

torcycle excursions in a straightforward manner to compete for the riding jacket to be given away at the January meeting in Montevallo. Of course the cyclist that visits the most locations on their motorcycle has the best odds at winning the jacket.

It is assumed that each competitor has ridden his/her bike from their place of residence to the defined location to claim the points.

This may have been an erroneous assumption. As a note, Bob is currently leading the contest with the most points. Hmmmmmmm...

## JANUARY MEETING DETAILS

**Where:** Montevallo Traffic Safety Center, Montevallo, AL. Phone 205-665-6740

At The University of Montevallo on Shelby Street

**Dates:** Saturday Jan 27th thru Sunday 28th

**Dinner:** Sat. night we will be ordering in pizza and have a pizza party. Soft Drinks will be available also and included in the cost. Dinner will be \$8.00 per person and **I DO NEED A HEAD COUNT BY WEDNESDAY THAT WEEK (23rd)** so we can know how many pizzas to order. We have pre-planned with Dominos Pizza in Montevallo for this event. Please call, or e-mail me to let me know you will be there. [BAMABMW@aol.com](mailto:BAMABMW@aol.com) or 205-663-5376 and leave a message. Also, let me ask you again to please bring cash, and change (PLEASE break those \$20 bills before you come). Also included in the cost will be pastries and coffee before the meeting on Sunday morning.

Some folks have mentioned going back to the Vizzini Winery for dinner. You are welcome to do anything you wish for dinner. The Pizza Party is for convenience and fun while watching the year end DVD.

**Meeting Sun. Morning:** We will hold the business meeting Sunday morning at 9:00 AM at the Montevallo Traffic Safety Center. This is the longest meeting of the year. Plan to be there a couple of hours for this one. We will hold the elections and plan the entire year's meeting sites. Please bring your ideas of places you would like to see us go, and get details ahead of time from those places if we have not yet been there.

Also please be thinking about whether you would be willing to host one of the meetings if it's near your area and cook something for the Saturday night dinner or scout out a place for us to ride to eat.

**Swap Meet:** If you have bikes, parts, gear, or camping items you would like to sell please bring those items and set them out in the Safety Center's garage for our annual "Yard Sale".

**Year in Pics:** Unless something happens, I should have the 2007 Year in pictures DVD ready and we will have it playing for everyone Sat. night. If you have a video or some pictures on CD of a bike trip you have taken, that you would like to bring and share please feel free to do so.

**Where to stay:** You may bring your bedrolls and spend the night in the Traffic Safety Center, slumber party style. There are male and female shower facilities available there. Or there are dorm rooms available at the Ramsey Hall just up the street from the Safety Center. It's within walking distance.

**Details on rooms:** Hotel like rooms, with TV, 2 twin beds, air and or heat, bathoom, but no phones in rooms and they are \$40.00 per night which includes the tax. Call 205-665-6280 for reservations. The "office" is open from 8AM to 5PM so you should arrive and get checked in by 5PM or CALL THEM AND TELL THEM YOU WILL BE LATE AND MAKE SOME KIND OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR GETTING YOUR ROOM KEY.

### January Meeting Directions

University of Montevallo, Alabama Traffic Safety Center, Phone (205) 665-6740

Sat. Jan 28th - Sun. Jan. 29th 9:00 am Meeting. Arrive anytime after noon on Saturday. *Please keep any ADULT beverages HIGHLY concealed during the day when the folks are there taking the rider course.*

Directions: From I-65 take exit of choice to Montevallo. The main street through town is Hwy 119. Off 119 (across from the Pontiac dealership) take Shelby Street. It's just two blocks (north) down Shelby Street on the left. Call number above if you need more directions.

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 Bill Shanks  
 2 Brian Shark  
 2 Paul Wharton  
 3 Maureen Griffin  
 3 Terri Reaves  
 4 Larry Camp  
 4 John Lide  
 5 Debra Keele  
 5 Anna Morgan  
 6 Bo Abernethy  
 7 Steve Johns  
 8 Douglas Dyar  
 8 Jim Holley  
 9 Bill Carty  
 9 Bob Sweeney  
 9 David Wergowske  
 10 Steve Odom  
 10 Lisa Gilbert  
 11 Connie Reaves



11 Anna White  
 12 Glenda Cockrell  
 12 Leslie Johnson  
 13 Betsy Barber

14 Judith Converse  
 14 Teresa McGee  
 14 C. R. Burns  
 15 Peggy Guffey  
 15 Sybil VanderVelde  
 16 John Penn  
 17 Tina Younger  
 18 Paul Brooks  
 18 Elaine Willey  
 19 Tony Authier  
 19 Dan Thompson  
 19 Marcella Thompson  
 19 Craig Vechorik  
 20 Harland Dyer  
 20 Joan Ware  
 24 Lenny Gribben  
 24 Joel Dabbs  
 25 F. Scott Kennedy  
 28 David Yokley

## NEW MEMBERS

J. Bruce & Beverly Huffman	Birmingham, AL	Sponser: Connie Reaves
J. Don Flowers	Auburn, AL	Sponsor: Marty Simpson
Tom & Lisa Gilbert	Elkmont, AL	Sponsor: Gary Dubois



## DUBOIS DUAL SPORT DANDY

Vance Harrelson

The chatter began about the end of June about putting together a dual sport ride for the club members. Since Gary Dubois had forced Angie into dual sporting with him in the wilds of north western Alabama he volunteered to set up the ride for the club.

Those of you that have visited the club website forums may have watched the interest build over the past few months. Gary and Angie planned the entire weekend including the meal plan...we got to have the meal plan you know!

To allow the maximum amount of time, and since most of the participants (except me and Terry Ware) are either retired, wealthy or both it was decided that we would meet at the River Walk Café on Friday at noon to begin the weekend adventure. Participants would be converging from all directions including Paul, Gail and Dave from Mississippi, Jim Dubick, Terry Ware, Ron Shea and me from Birmingham and Bob Steber (you know the Travel Director) would be trailering in...yes trailering in from Birmingham. I had threatened to trailer up because I thought it might be a good deal to ride home in the cage with the heater but I was "beat up" verbally by my peers. But Bob was having trouble with his bike so he thought it best trailer in and ride where the riding was. Can't say that was not a good idea...read on.....

Terry, Ron, Jim, Bob and I met on US 280 at 7:30 Friday morning. We planned our route and headed off. Bob decided he would take slab and meet us in Waterloo. It was a chilly start but the day promised to warm as the clock advanced. Our route took us up AL 79 through Pinson to Locust Fork, Cleveland and into Blountsville. From there we turned Northeast on a couple county roads and into Holly Pond. US 278 led us into Cullman and up AL 157 to Tusculumbia and onto Cherokee where we hopped on the Trace, crossed the river and blew into Waterloo.

When we arrived at the café I thought we had come to the wrong event. The sidewalk was covered with Kawasaki KLRs! Just then I caught a glimpse of Steber "unloading" his ride in the empty lot next to the café. We stumble through the café door to let them know the beemer boys were in town.....we found Paul, Gail and Dave enjoying lunch! Seems they had brought their KLRs to dunk in the river this weekend.

After a good lunch we head to camp with Angie bringing up the tail end in the "mother ship" packed

with the weekend's supplies. This was a great ride along the river up and down steep hills on dirt road. This was a great ride and a good plan by Gary for us to swap the sure footed grip of the asphalt for that feeling of riding on a bed of shooter marbles! Back on the tarmac for a bit we turn onto Lauderdale County Road 3 that will lead us to the campground. This is a beautiful ride of about 6 miles or so through alternating fields and forests. The fall colors are bright and we cross four or five very shallow creeks on the way. Gary leads us out onto the river bank. To quote Ron Shea, "this is a place and a feeling you can't buy at any price". The Tennessee River laps at the beach of our camping area and offers a post card view of both the banks of Mississippi and Tennessee but we are standing in Alabama! Now that is being in the corner of the state!

Everyone hurries to unload and set up their tents. I pick out my spot and unpack the tent, mattress and the....where is my sleeping bag? Yep, I have packed pee bags, a toboggan, my flashlight, extra socks and boots. Just forgot one thing...my sleeping bag! Expected low tonight....40 degrees! Well, I will worry about that later; we have an afternoon of riding to get in! Gary calls a riders meeting to explain the plan for the afternoon and we are off!

Our route leads us along the river and soon we are climbing up a rocky hill and down the other side only to pull up to the first water crossing. Well great Gary, lets get soaked early on Friday afternoon so we can be wet AND cold all weekend. One by one we ford the creek called Dry Creek but let me tell you, it ain't dry! Safely across one rider (kept nameless here) topples over with excitement once out on the creek bank. Back up and back on we are headed toward Rainbow Falls. There are several creek crossings over the next few miles of trail. I am trying hard to keep my feet dry but with little success. We take turns at each crossing watching and laughing our fellow riders cross the water hazards. We arrive at Rainbow Falls and take turns making pictures of our bikes in the pool beneath the towering 50' falls. The sun is shining brightly into the horseshoe shaped bluff over which the falls cascade. Hey, look close and you can see the rainbow! Hence the name.

We head back toward camp along the creek but turn up a hill and break out onto pavement for a short ride back to county road 3 and return to camp. Arriving at camp we find that Angie has dinner on the tailgate of the truck. Tonight's fair is barbeque pork and turkey with an assortment of chips and chili complimented by the now famous deserts provided by Gail "Chuckwagon" Thorne. I am again amazed at Gail's ability to pack her bike with all the essentials and the best desserts ever. This is a fan-

tastic meal that is enjoyed around the campfire with friends and laughing about the days events....and telling a few lies.

The sky is clear and the sun provides a spectacular show as it goes out of sight on the West bank. The air chills quickly to remind me that I remember I don't have a sleeping bag! Angie offers me her sleeping bag liner and convinces me she will be plenty warm...and I take it. Terry Ware offers me a blanket he says is an extra...I take it. Later Gary offers me his bag liner...I take it too. Oh...I'll be fine it can't be that cold....it is though. Some of us stay by the fire until 1 AM. I for one am putting off going to bed as long as I can! I slept some but not much...I am cold. But I might be dead if I had not been offered the extra cover from my friends! Daylight finally arrives and everyone is up and ready to go. Around the coffee pot I learn that Bob Steber has to return home this morning and therefore will not be spending tonight on the river. I have a quick thought and offer to buy his sleeping bag....name the price Bob. But he doesn't need the money and offers to let me use his bag tonight...I take it.

This morning we are to ride into Waterloo for a special breakfast prepared just for us by Glenda at the cafe and to meet up with any riders joining the group on Saturday. The breakfast is great and we meet up with Bill Barnes who has ridden up from Tuscaloosa this morning. He had a chilly ride for sure! This is to be Bill's first GS ride and we are all excited to have him along. Back to the camp we unload his bike and head for the afternoon's exploration. There are many unpaved county roads in the area that wind along the river and offer spectacular fall scenery. Gary leads us to several other river camps on the loop back to the camp. Yep you guessed it; Angie has prepared a wonderful lunch with deli meats, chips and more of Chuckwagon's deserts. Hey it has been almost three hours since we ate!

The afternoon ride would lead us back to the falls and across those creek crossings again. This time we take turns laughing and taking pictures at several crossings while trying to drown our motorcycles. Its fun! The return trip takes us across the waterholes again and up the mountain to the paved roads where we explore more of the area. This is the definition of dual sporting!

Soaking wet and boots full of water we head back to camp but not before a run back through the deepest waterholes on the route. Gary wants to make sure we are all wet, really wet by the time we get back to camp; We are. Of course Angie is waiting on us at camp with a warm fire to dry our feet and re-

call the day's ride as the sun sets across the river. It is nice and warm in the afternoon sun. It can't get better than this!

Dinner tonight is really special. We are served blackened Tilapia filets with special recipe of green beans and potatoes. Of course this is topped off with cookies and the end of Chuckwagon's deserts. Gary and Angie are quite the gourmet campfire cooks! I am offered another piece of fish...I take it.

With a full belly and a sleeping bag for tonight I am feeling pretty good about now, tired but good! Ron Shea and I outlast everyone else tonight and keep each other company around the campfire until about 1 AM. After we have solved most of the world's problems we load the fire barrel to insure a bed of hot coals in the morning and head for the tents. Tonight I sleep well....and warm.

We awaken early Sunday morning and begin to break camp. Coffee and hot chocolate is served and helps warm us up in the cool morning air. One by one the bikes are loaded, good byes are exchanged and riders depart. Ron Shea and myself are the last to leave as we are going ride back by the beaver dam and take one last tour along the river. We are to meet Terry and Jim in Waterloo for the ride home. Gary and Angie pull out, Ron cranks his bike, I fire Tweety up, jump aboard and off the center stand we go; I feel the rim of the rear tire hit the ground. Oh no...I slowly turn to look...the rear tire is flat...completely flat! I yell for Ron and he quickly decides to try and catch up to the others and get me some help...Tweety is of course equipped with tube type tires.

Suddenly I find myself all alone on the river bank, miles from town. It is a beautiful day, nice and warm but I remember how cold it is at night. After a close up inspection of the tire I don't see anything in it. I race to the dying campfire coals and quickly rekindle the flames. If I am marooned here tonight, I'll need that fire. I am beginning to feel a little like Gilligan after the three hour tour and then I hear the sound of approaching Beemers and Terry appears...he has a compressor! Gary and Angie arrive and Ron returns. I tell you good friends are worth everything! We inspect the tire and again nothing appears to be in it to cause the flat. We inflate the tire, pack and ride into Waterloo with no problems. After Glenda serves the best BLT I ever had, we adjust our tire inflation to road pressures and head for home. Ron, Terry and I had decided to return through Russellville, Double Springs and down through Jasper. The tire holds fine and I arrive home about 3:30 PM. I am tired but I am smiling!

[continued page 11]

**BMW Motorcycle Owners of Alabama  
2008 Election Ballot**

Select one nominee for each position or write in your choice (with nominee's permission) on a blank line.

**Circle your choices**

**Officers**

<b>President:</b>	<u>Connie Reaves</u> _____
<b>Vice President:</b>	<u>Vance Harrelson</u> _____
<b>Secretary:</b>	<u>Mari Harrelson</u> _____
<b>Chief Financial Officer:</b>	<u>Marty Simpson</u> _____
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	<u>Jamie Jackson</u> _____
<b>Rally Chairperson:</b>	<u>Vance Harrelson/Connie Reaves</u> _____

**Directors**

<b>Director of Travel:</b>	<u>Gary Dubois</u> _____
<b>Director of Technology:</b>	<u>Tommy Arnold</u> _____
<b>Director of Photography:</b>	<u>Malvene Jackson</u> _____
<b>Director of Membership:</b>	<u>Jeannine Arnold</u> _____
<b>Director of Safety:</b>	<u>Jim Baker</u> _____

There will be ballots at the meeting, or you can e-mail your vote to [BAMABMW@aol.com](mailto:BAMABMW@aol.com). You can also mail it to: Connie Reaves, 108 Cape Cod Circle, Alabaster, AL. 35007.

All ballots mailed or e-mailed will be printed and/or saved for accounting purposes.

**Membership must be paid up to vote and you must be a BMW Owner. "Friends of Beemers" members do not vote.**

**Nominations will still be taken from the floor, up until voting time so please be aware that additional names may be added.**

## ABEES Points Leaders

Rider	Total Checkoffs	Total Tickets *
Bob Steber	190	16
Gary Dubois	185	16
Angie Dubois	163	15
Martin Benson	164	15
Vance Harrelson	120	13
Phillip Warren	102	12
Terry Ware	77	7
Connie Reaves	69	7
Jim Dubick	68	7
Larry Camp	27	3
Don Drasheff	42	2
John Harper	41	2
Gary Nesmith	36	2
Joan Ware	28	2
Ron Riggins	26	1

\* Tickets were earned based on a formula for Meetings Attended, POI's visited, Favorite Roads and Rides, and Extreme Locations visited.



Members came from both the extreme southern and extreme northern parts of the state to enjoy the Christmas Party at Vizzini's Winery.



## BMW MOTORCYCLE OWNERS OF ALABAMA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/2006

NEW\_\_\_RENEW\_\_\_UPDATE\_\_\_

Sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Member: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Member: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt# \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

Year / Model BMW(s) : \_\_\_\_\_

Circle those that apply:    MOA Member    RA Member    Airheads Member    Oilheads Member    AMA Member

Dues are \$20.00 per year for primary and \$3.00 per year for secondary members. Make check payable to:

BMW M/C Owners of Alabama.    Mail application with check to: Marty Simpson, 10010 Torino Drive, Huntsville, AL 35803

# THE DEADLY DOZEN: 12 Motorcycle Safety Myths and Misconceptions

By Art Friedman

Submitted by Terese Stevens

When science meets urban legend and imperfect logic, some of the "facts" motorcyclists think they "know" about motorcycle safety, crashes, and riding turn out to be dangerous myths and misconceptions. Get a group of motorcyclists talking about crashes and safety, and you will almost certainly hear some of them-popular misconceptions, incorrect assumptions, urban legends, and intuitive explanations about motorcycle safety that turn out to be wrong when you actually check out the facts. The problem is that believing these misconceptions can increase your chances of being involved in an accident or getting hurt when you do crash.

Maybe you know BS when you hear it, but maybe you have heard some myths repeated so often or by people whose expertise you respect that you think they are actually true. Unfortunately, there are a lot of motorcyclists who do believe them. We thought that some of these fallacies should be brought out into the light of day so that riders have the right information upon which to make informed riding-safety decisions. We also hope it will keep more motorcyclists from repeating such misconceptions to riders who turn to them for advice.

These are the Deadly Dozen, the motorcycle safety myths and urban legends ones that we hear most frequently.

## Myth 1: Other Drivers Don't Care About Motorcyclists

It may seem hard to believe at times, but other drivers almost never actually want to hit you. Most of those near-misses come about because they don't always know you are there, even when you are right in front of them, seemingly in plain view. You can be obscured or completely hidden by glare, by other things on or along the road, by the cars roof pillars, the handicap hangtag, or by other traffic. Of course, not all drivers "think motorcycles" and make the effort to look that extra bit harder to see if there might be a motorcyclist hidden by that obscuration or in their blind spot.

Instead of assuming that they will ignore you even when they see you, you should help make it easier for drivers to spot you, especially as the population ages and more drivers have greater difficulty in picking you out. To overcome the fact that you might be hard to see and harder to notice, wear bright colors, especially on your helmet and jacket.

Run your high beam during the day. Think about things that can hide you and your bike from other drivers, things that can be as common as the sun behind you, the car ahead in the next lane, or a couple of roadside poles that line up on the driver's line of sight toward you. Make an effort to ride in or move to a location where drivers with potentially conflicting courses can see you before they stray your way.

## Myth 2: Loud Pipes Save Lives

Yeah, there are a few situations-like where you are right next to a driver with his window down who is about to change lanes-where full-time noise-makers might help a driver notice you, but all that noise directed rearward doesn't do much in the most common and much more dangerous conflict where a car turns in front of you. Maybe it's the fatigue caused by the noise, maybe it's the attitudes of riders who insist on making annoying noise, or perhaps loud bikes annoy enough drivers to make them aggressive. Whatever the reason, the research shows that bikes with modified exhaust systems crash more frequently than those with stock pipes. If you really want to save lives, turn to a loud jacket or a bright helmet color, which have been proven to do the job. Or install a louder horn. Otherwise, just shut up.

## Myth 3: Motorcycle Helmets Break Necks

It seems logical-you put more weight out there on the end of your neck and when you get thrown off the bike, that extra weight will create more pendulum force on your neck. Turns out, it doesn't work that way. In fact, the energy-absorbing qualities of a DOT motorcycle helmet also absorb the energy that breaks riders' necks in impacts. Studies show that helmeted motorcyclists actually suffer fewer neck injuries when they crash compared to riders who crash without helmets.

## Myth 4: Helmets Block Your Ability to See or Hear Danger

The thing you learn when you dig into the research is that motorcycle riders who use helmets crash less frequently than those who don't. Maybe that happens because motorcyclists who decide to wear helmets have a better or more realistic attitude about riding. Maybe it's because putting on a helmet is a reminder that what you are about to do can be dangerous and the act of accepting protection puts you in the right mindset. Maybe it's because a helmet provides eye protection and cuts down wind noise so you can actually see and hear better. Maybe its because, by cutting wind pressure and noise, a helmet reduces fatigue. Whatever the reasons, wearing a helmet clearly does not increase a motorcyclist's

risk of having an accident and wearing one correlates to reduced likelihood of an accident.

#### Myth 5: A Helmet Won't Help in Most Crashes

People look at the seemingly low impact speeds used in motorcycle-helmet testing and assume that if you are going faster than that, the helmet will no longer be up to the job. That ignores a few critical facts:

Most accidents happen at relatively low speeds. Most of the impact energy is usually vertical-the distance your head falls until it hits. Helmets (or at least helmets that meet DOT standards) perform spectacular life-saving feats at impact speeds far above those used in testing. When a helmeted rider suffers a fatal head injury, it frequently doesn't matter, because, to hit hard enough to sustain that fatal injury, he sustained multiple additional fatal injuries to other parts of his body. In other words, the fact that the helmet didn't prevent the head injury was of no consequence.

The numbers clearly say that riders using DOT helmets simply survive crashes more successfully than those without them.

#### Myth 6: A Helmet Will Leave You Brain Damaged in an Crash When You Would Have Simply Died

Of course that's possible-your helmet attenuates the impact energy enough to keep the injury from being fatal but not enough to keep all of your eggs from getting scrambled. However, that's rare, and if you hit that hard, you are likely to get killed by some other injury. It's actually the un-helmeted rider who is likely to cross from animal to vegetable kingdom, and often from a relatively minor impact that would have damaged nothing but his ego if he'd been wearing a DOT helmet.

#### Myth 7: A Skilled Rider Should Be Able to Handle Almost Any Situation

The sharpest, most skilled motorcyclist in the world isn't going to be up to the task when a car turns or pulls out in front of him a short distance ahead and stops directly in his path broadside. Believing that your superior skills will keep you of trouble is a pipe dream, even if they are as good as you think. No matter how skilled you are, it's better to ride to avoid situations that can turn ugly. Slow down, scan farther ahead, and think strategically. And dress for the crash.

#### Myth 8: If You Are Going to Crash, Lay It Down

I suspect this line was developed by riders to explain why they ended up flat-side-down while trying

to avoid a crash. They over-braked or otherwise lost control, then tried to explain the crash away as intentional and tried to make it sound like it wasn't a crash at all. Maybe motorcycle brakes once were so bad that you could stop better off your bike while sliding or tumbling. If so, that hasn't been true for decades. You can scrub off much more speed before and there be going slower at impact with effective braking than you will sliding down the road on your butt. And if you are still on the bike, you might get thrown over the car you collide with, avoiding an impact with your body. If you slide into a car while you are on the ground, you either have a hard stop against it or end up wedged under it. Remember that the phrase "I laid 'er down to avoid a crash" is an oxymoron, often repeated by some other kind of moron.

The only events where being on the ground might leave you better off are: 1) on an elevated roadway where going over the guardrail will cause you to fall a long way, or 2) in that situation you see occasionally in movies, where the motorcyclist slides under a semi trailer without touching it. That's a good trick if the truck is moving.

#### Myth 9: One Beer Won't Hurt

Maybe not while you are drinking it, but if you get on your motorcycle after that, the effects of a single beer can get you hurt for life. No matter how unaffected you are sure you are, all the studies say differently. You increase your risk to yourself and to others when you drink and hit the road. Also, as you age, your metabolism slows down, and those "coupla drinks" you had last night may still be affecting you when you hit the road the next morning.

#### Myth 10: It's Better to Stay in Your Lane than Split-Lanes

In most parts of the world, motorcycles split lanes all the time, everywhere traffic is heavy. Here in the U.S., people often act as if lane-splitting is insane. But when someone actually studied it in the only place in the U.S. where it's legal (California), they discovered it's actually slightly safer than staying in the lane in heavy, slow-moving traffic. Still many motorcyclists berate others who do it, when they should in fact be endorsing it.

#### Myth 11: I'm Safer on the Street than on an Interstate

The thinking here must be that slower is safer, but that's only really true after the accident begins. Controlled-access roadways are inherently safer because all the traffic is going the same way, and there are no side streets from which someone can pop into your path, no pedestrians, and, often, less

roadside "furniture" to hit if you depart the roadway. Running down the road at 70 mph side-by-side with the whirling wheels of a semi may feel hairy, but you are actually safer than at half that speed on a city street or even a country road.

### Myth 12: A Skilled Rider Can Stop Better with Conventional Brakes than with Anti-Lock Brakes

Extensive testing done recently disproves this popular notion. Even on clean, dry, flat pavement, skilled, experienced riders (who did hundreds of panic stops for the testing on outrigger-equipped motorcycles) stopped in less distance with anti-lock brakes (ABS) than with conventional or linked braking systems. Though the tests didn't include samples on surfaces with slick, dirty or wet spots, ABS certainly would have performed even better under those conditions while eliminating much of the risk of crashing.

The other cool thing about ABS on a motorcycle is that allows you to safely practice panic stops without risking a crash caused by lock-up.

Anyway, the next time tells you that he had to "lay it down" or that green bikes crash more than purple ones, you can nod and snicker internally or challenge them. Just don't base your own riding choices on what other people assume unless there is some solid science to back it up.

[This article was written by Art Friedman and appeared in February 2006 issue of Motorcycle Cruiser magazine; Reprinted here with permission.]

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## **2008 - IS THIS THE TWILIGHT ZONE?**

Connie Reaves

Somehow, writing 2008, feels like I'm in the Twilight Zone. I am fully a year past the half century mark, (and most of another) and about half of 2007 seems like a bad dream. Where in heck did it go? I guess when you get up here it all seems to go way too fast to keep up with huh?

I guess I still have the same goals I started out with last year. Find a job out of "downtown" and figure out the "helmet hair" thing, so I can begin to ride to work instead of "trucking it". Just can't deal with a touring bike in morning and afternoon traffic and can't convince the Boss to let me wear a baseball cap every day. The hair thing I could manage with "falsies", but if anyone out there would like to donate a tip-top running condition, nimble, lil'ol' traffic type bike, I sure wouldn't hate ya. I could always glue a BMW sticker to it. Folks outside the "family" don't know the difference anyway. They al-

ways still say they didn't know BMW made motorcycles.

I do look forward to my monthly "fix" with you folks, and our 20<sup>th</sup> Great Chicken Rally, and to my son coming back from Baghdad in a few months. So 2008 should be pretty good. I've made no New Year's resolutions because they darn well get derailed anyway, so I'll plan to just keep on doing what I always have and see if it don't work out better that way. No guilt that way for sure.

I feel sure I won't have any better luck in 2008. My Mom, Polly (President of the Nashville BMW club), wrote me on New Years Day as to the fact that I lost out on the Nashville club's monthly \$50 drawing, because I wasn't there to claim it. Wonderful!. First day of the year and already I'm getting good news! I won! .....but I can't have it. Maybe I shouldn't re-up my membership in the Nashville club. (grin)

I want to make sure and thank all of you who have hosted meetings, done their jobs as Officers and Directors, worked on or at the rally, and generally just been GOOD FOLKS and hard workers and great friends!! Those folks have been prominent. I also want to thank Steve Schuckman for keeping our Website in tip-top condition. His name is not so prominent and I want to make sure he gets credit for his work. If you haven't noticed yet, the home page (under the picture) will lead you to a link that takes you to ALL the photo albums. One for each meeting, since we got this feature started. You don't have to wait for the home page pics to scroll any longer. Lots of other nice features on the website, so go take a look at what changes have been made since last time you looked, if it's been a while.

Don't forget to get your final ABEES points count to Bob Steber for the Bogart's Olympia Jacket drawing. We will draw for that at the Jan. meeting. There is a special award to the four who finished the Bogart's/ABEES challenge ride in under 36 hours. And there are certificates for all those who participated in the ABEES points totals. So make sure you get credit for any and all of your efforts.

If you have any nominations for Officers or Directors, please get that info to me to be added to the ballot. The person must agree to be on the ballot, and yes, you can nominate yourself.

Okay, back to planning my first ride of 2008. They are predicting 56 to 60 for temps this coming weekend around here. Can't get much better than that for the first weekend in January. I do so love the SOUTH!!!

## EXTREME ALABAMA RIDE

Paul Thorne

In May of this year, Gail & I made an attempt at the Extreme Alabama Ride. Leaving from & returning to Mississippi, put us with a two to three hour handicap. This along with I-65 being closed, our ride took over 27 hours.

After our time being recently bested, we decided to give it another try. I laid out a new course and my friend Dave plugged it into his computer. Even with starting & ending in Alabama, my new route showed 1340 miles. I still thought it would be the quickest route, so we decided to leave Calera early on Sunday Nov. 18.

Our first stop at Montevallo was a bit of a surprise. The road in front of Main Hall was under construction and blocked. We got as close as we legally could, snapped the photo and headed to Waterloo. My plan was to get gas at Tuscumbia after leaving Waterloo. As before, I miscalculated fuel consumption and my R1100 low-fuel light was on 20 miles before we got to Waterloo. Upon leaving Waterloo, I was about to use the spare gallon of fuel I was carrying when we passed a little store open early for fisherman. We stopped and did a splash-n-go to get us to Tuscumbia and then east on to Long Island.

The foliage color near Long Island was beautiful. We got to the church, Gail snapped the photo and we headed to Cheaha. When we got to I-59, we got gas and headed south. We passed thru Gadsden and Anniston on to Cheaha. The fall colors going up the mountain were beautiful, but our trip could have come to an end. Some of that road has a lot of loose slag and on a right hand turn, the back end of my bike came around quite a bit. Gail was behind me and I could turn my head 90 degrees and look almost straight at her! I was wide awake now. Gail took more photos and we headed south towards Chattahoochee. As we got gas and a snack in Sylacauga, I noticed the sky was starting to darken.

While heading south north of Montgomery, it started to rain. We stopped to put on rain gear and I think the concern showed on our faces that the rain might ruin our chances of setting a new record. We got on our bikes as quickly as possible and pressed on. We made as good a time as possible and Gail did a great job of staying on my rear wheel as we sliced thru traffic in the rain thru Montgomery and Troy. As we got near Dothan, the rain stopped, we got gas and made good time to the Chattahoochee State park. Gail snapped the photo and we were off into the night heading west across the Florida pan-

handle. We made good time across Florida and I was glad to cross back into Alabama and turn south on 59 to Gulf Shores. The traffic on 59 was heavy and the police were out in force writing tickets. We went slowly to Gulf Shores and snapped a photo at the Pink Pony Pub and headed north. At a gas stop on 59 I swiped the card at the pump but it wouldn't work. I had to go inside to use the card and had to sign the receipt. This was time we didn't want to waste as we headed back to the Interstate towards Bayou La Batre-our last stop.

I don't use a GPS and was concerned about finding Bayou La Batre in the dark, but we drove straight to it. The photo was taken and we drove north thru Mobile on back to Calera. We had to get gas south of Montgomery so late at night we pulled into a C-store. I swiped the card at the pump and again it wouldn't work. We were the only customers there and I went in to see the clerk. She said to pump the gas and then come back in to sign the receipt. As I was finishing, she came out to a car and stood there talking to someone while I waited in the store for her to return. After a few minutes had passed with Gail and I glaring at her, she begrudgingly came back in and got the receipt. We headed north hopeful that we would prevail. As we got close to Calera, it was getting foggy but became apparent we would be successful.

We pulled in for gas at the same pump we had left 22 hours & 41 minutes earlier after traveling 1347 miles. We rode back to the Huddle House in Montevallo and had a big meal. Our plan was to return home that morning, but it was 3 a.m. and so foggy you couldn't see 50 yards. We rode back to Calera at 25 miles an hour and got a room. The next morning was beautiful. We left the motel about 8:00 and had a nice ride back to Mississippi. After getting home, I had an appointment in town that afternoon. Gail asked if I was going to take the pickup, I said "heck no, it looks like a good day for a ride". Ride far & have fun. Paul & Gail Thorne

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[continued from page 4, SPORT DANDY]

The entire weekend was a blast and I am glad to have ridden with great friends on a great ride on a great motorcycle while being stuffed with great food! Thanks again Gary and Angie for all your hard work and thanks to everybody for a great weekend. I had so much fun that I am already planning for the next GS ride. First thing on the list....sleeping bag!

(Check the club forums on the website [www.bmwmoal.org](http://www.bmwmoal.org) for more details and comments as well as plenty of pictures about this event.)

## BMW Motorcycle Owners of Alabama

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Dedicated to safe and enjoyable motorcycling



Many very interesting gifts were exchanged at the Christmas Party. These folks really do know how to play Dirty Santa.

Yep, I do love girls! And there were plenty of them at the Christmas Party.

