

THE ALABAMA BEEMER



Newsletter of the BMW Motorcycle
Owners of Alabama

BMWMOA Chapter5/
BMWRA Chapter #107

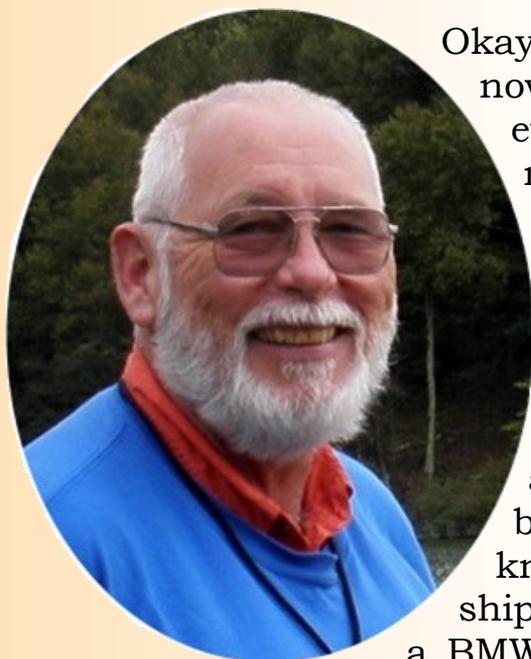


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October 2013

...TOSSING MY HAT IN THE RING...

Don Little, President



Okay folks, we had quite a meeting at Nauvoo and now we have some decisions to make. I want to urge everyone who is able, to attend our next club meeting at Little River State Park. This is serious business and we need all the input we can get, so give it some thought and some prayer and let's make the right decisions.

I announced earlier that I would not run for president again, but now I think I must. Vance and I are friends, and I hope we will always be, but we have some differences of opinion. You all know that I have been against opening membership to non BMW owners. This club was founded as a BMW club and I do not see anything wrong with a brand specific club. I joined a BMW club, and with few exceptions, I would like to see it stay a BMW club.

We have lost some members in the past few years but I would like for you to think for a moment about who you see when you go to a club meeting. With a few exceptions, all the active participating members that we look forward all month to seeing again are there. I regret our lost members. I think they have missed out on a wonderful thing but numbers are not what it is about. We do not need more members just for the sake of numbers; we need more participating members. Just now as I was writing this I had a thought: what if each of us were to call each of the people on the page in the membership book where our name appears, to encourage these members to become more active?

If I remember correctly, in the early 1990s when Barbara and I first joined the club, the membership was around 200, give or take a few, and we still had a strong club and a rally. But even then our active core was 30 or 40 people, not much different from now. In the early 1990s Carlos Whilhite opened Dixie Sports Plus and started giving a free membership with each new motorcycle sale. When Dixie Sports went out of business and Venture Motor Sport opened in Birmingham, they continued the free memberships.

During this period of several years of free membership our membership grew to almost 500. A few of these people joined the core group and many of the others continued to belong to the club for whatever reason. Let me ask you this, did you join this club because it had 500 members, or because you came to a meeting, or the rally, and met the wonderful people, and you saw how much fun we were having and wanted to be a part of this group?

I do not think this club faces imminent demise. I think as the testosterone level evens out, the younger crowd will remember this group of old farts and the fun we have and will migrate back.

You may hear that I have said that I don't care about those that are not part of the core group; and yes I did say that, and it was a bad choice of words. I care primarily for the core group because they are the ones I see from month to month but I do care for the others because they are missing out on so much and who knows how much we are missing out because we do not know them.

This club has a history of greater good. Over the years we have given much to the Alabama Traffic Safety Center, the Alabama Head Injury Foundation, and many other charities. I believe we should and will continue this, because it is the right thing to do.

I too am proud of this club and believe we have a great and respected club with a wonderful reputation. Barbara and I have been members of this club since the early 1990s and we have seen the numbers go up and down. Some faces have changed over the years but the core remains a group of people that we love and enjoy being with. I do not want to see this club change from the thing that has made it great, a club of fun loving BMW riders.

I love you all and look forward to being your president for another year. With all of us working together we will work this out because that is what a family does; and this is my BMW family.

SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

September 28, 2013

Nauvoo, AL

President, Don Little presiding

Don opened the meeting with a round of applause for Darlene, Gary and all of their helpers who put together another great meal. He also thanked our host and hostess, Earline and Gene McDaniel and their family.

Next Don introduced George Nyktas, the President of the RA. George tried to explain the reasons behind the RA's decision to schedule their 2014 international rally the week before our rally and his request for confidentiality from our President. Primarily, they wanted to have their rally in conjunction with Keith Code's track session. They had no intentions of hurting our rally or our Club and in fact, would like to do all they can to promote our rally. If we will submit an article and photos about our rally they will publish them in OTL.

When Vance asked specifically if the RA would make a financial commitment to our Club, to offset any loss of funds that we might incur at our rally, George said that their policy had changed in that regard. They now wait until after their rally and only then will compensation considered based on profitability and the participation of the local club. George then fielded question and comments from Club members.

After a short break, we resumed our meeting with a financial report from CFO, Tommy Arnold. We have sold a smoker and some aluminum pans and a few other things out of our trailer and 2 fryers. Some of the food has been donated to the local food bank.

Jamie on behalf of newsletter editor, Malvene Jackson again talked of doing away with our newsletter "as we now know it". We can put financial reports, any minutes that need to be private, and any other information that does not need to be shared with the world into a member's only email blast. Information that members need will go to members only. The forum is a great way to share our rides, photos and other information that we don't mind anyone seeing but some things need to be private. Jamie said that we have had some members leave the Club because they no longer receive a printed newsletter.

Mari Harrelson said that in the past we have put copies of the newsletter in the BMW dealers so that potential members could see them and perhaps join the Club. She also asked why we want to keep secrets.

Vance asked what the intent of our newsletter is. Jamie went on to explain his statement to eliminate the newsletter "as we know it" and to use the Club forum to get needed information that can be shared to both members and potential members.

Jeannine Arnold said that she and Tommy belong to several organizations and more and more of them are going to electronic methods of sending information.

Jim Kalahan said that newsletter, whether on the forum or email blast, must be sent, but he asked how many members are not getting the email blast and asked why this information can't be put on the forum. Don replied that some members did not receive mailed newsletters either. Amelia suggested a one page brochure to hand out at bike shops with Club information.

Gary took the floor to ask everyone to stick around after Sunday morning breakfast as that is when the door prizes would be handed out.

Don then turned the conversation towards our forum and asked that we keep our dirty laundry off there. He said once it's on our public forum, it is there forever for the entire world to see. We can certainly disagree but it needs to be done privately.

After more discussion of our 2013 rally and having put the matter to rest at least temporarily, Rickie Bonner took the floor to tell us about the Bonner family's plans for next month. We are meeting at Little River State Park near Atmore and they are going to serve fried catfish, chicken, Cole slaw and baked beans. There will be pancakes on Saturday morning and pastries Sunday morning.

Vance then announced that he was interested in being Club President again next year and showed some information he had compiled towards that end.

Suzi Dubick asked to speak about the fact that stories and information is seen all over the world as her cousin in Europe commented on something she had put on the internet.

Don then told the members that he really cared about the Club and each of them and he did not intend to harm the Club in his dealings with George Nyktas and the RA. He said that when someone called and asked to confide something on the condition that it remains confidential he thought he had two choices, say "No Thanks" and hang up the phone or listen and keep the matter confidential. He chose to do the latter but in no way meant to harm the Club or rally.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Little, Secretary

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Melanie Turp
 2 Will Diener
 2 Keith Gutbier
 2 John Tarver
 5 Kathy Steber
 6 Vance Harrelson
 8 Jeanne Zibell
 9 Tommy Arnold
 9 Oliver Wright
 10 Buzz Cole
 10 Don Kimbrell



10 Sue Lyons
 11 Carolyn Shea
 11 Elaine Thompson
 12 Barbara Brown
 15 Martha Warren
 16 David Hogg
 17 Pam Bogle
 19 Michael Greenwood
 21 Ernie Brooks
 29 Larry Mullens
 30 Richard Laitinen

BMW MOTORCYCLE OWNERS OF ALABAMA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Date: ____/____/2013

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 \$25.00 per year for primary and \$5.00 per year for secondary members. Make check payable to:

BMW M/C Owners of Alabama. Mail application with check to: Tommy Arnold, 471 Plantation Pt. Rd., Scottsboro, AL 35768

BARBER'S VINTAGE DAYS

Once again Lynda Wooldridge of BMW Atlanta has generously purchased booth space for our Club at the Barber's Vintage Fest October 11-13th.

Since we are not going to be raffling off a bike for 2014, we will use the space for recruiting new members and as a place for members to gather and to leave coolers, equipment, etc.

We will have one table there for membership forms and perhaps a history of the Club.

Connie has agreed to head up our involvement there, but at this time she is not able to take off work on Friday. She is asking for volunteers to set up two pop-ups on Friday morning and take them down again on Sunday afternoon.

ALSO...Vance has worked out a deal with the MOA Foundation to provide a custom 1200GS for display there. We will use the booth for selling raffle tickets for that bike as well as recruiting/renewing MOA memberships. For those members that are candidates for our AL Club, the MOA will pay the first year membership of the new MOA member's Alabama Club dues.

Jim and Sheila will be heading this up, but they will need help in manning the booth.

Please contact Connie (bamabmw@aol.com) for more information and to let her know when you can help.

Club Sponsored Events With Meetings

Oct 26 Little River State Park - Atmore, AL
Dec 14 Christmas Party - Hampton Inn, Eagle Point

Other Events of Interest

Oct 11-13 Barber Vintage Days - B'ham,AL

CRITICAL VOTE FOR 2014 GREAT CHICKEN RALLY AT OCTOBER MEETING!

Vance Harrelson

An in depth discussion concerning the 2014 Great Chicken Rally took place at the September business meeting in Nauvoo. That discussion centered around the fact the Riders Association (RA) has recently announced they had finalized plans for their 2014 rally and that it will be held at Barber's Motorsports Park on the weekend immediately following Memorial Day Weekend and our Great Chicken Rally.

The President of the RA George Nyktas attended the meeting to explain how those negotiations had been taking place since early spring 2013. George fielded questions from our membership on several topics concerning those negotiations and conceded the fact he had not clearly communicated with our President Don Little during that time. Don also explained how he had been contacted in early spring about this possibility but that he was asked to keep this news confidential and therefore did not share this possibility with the other officers or the rally planning committee that was in the midst of the total rally model review. George also explained how the RA would help promote the Chicken Rally as the RA pre-rally in their monthly magazine and through their social media outlets. The idea would be to entice people to attend the Chicken Rally and stay in the area visiting and then attend the RA rally the following weekend.

After George left the meeting, there was a lengthy discussion among the membership concerning the possible negative impact on attendance and therefore the finances for the Chicken Rally. Both pros and cons were discussed including how the RA rally might actually boost attendance or how it could really hurt our attendance. With an anticipated budget for our rally of approximately \$14,000 we would of course need at least 200 attendees paying a Chicken Rally entry fee of \$65 (2013 Chicken Rally entry fee was \$45)

So the question the club must decide is whether we will go ahead with the Chicken Rally as planned and work with the RA to help promote it....or.... cancel the 2014 Chicken Rally and re-introduce it in 2015 with the new model.

Because this is a major decision that could potentially effect the entire club membership, the decision was made to vote on this important issue at the October club meeting that will be held October 26 at Little River near Atmore, AL. We are asking all members to attend this meeting and participate in this important decision. If you will not be able to attend the meeting you are urged to send your vote by email directly to our Secretary Barbara Little (secretary@bmwmoal.org).

For further information please contact one of your club officers.

LET'S RIDE IN A NEW DIRECTION!

Vance Harrelson

I am proud of the BMWMOAL and proud to be a member. The hard work of many has created a great legacy and reputation all across the country. I am deeply grateful for all the members over the years that have worked so hard to build a great club....but I strongly believe it's time for a new direction. In order for the club to survive we MUST expand our outreach and be a club that attracts and openly accepts new members...and even riders of other brands. Further I believe we must offer our members multiple activities and opportunities not only to ride but associate with like-minded riders. We have to be more than a monthly get together...and I believe we need to be a positive face in our communities by actively supporting rider safety, education and training programs.

Consider These Facts

The BMW MOAL is one of the most respected BMW motorcycle enthusiast clubs nationwide with our 40+ year history!

The Chicken Rally Is One Of The Highest Regarded Club Rallies In The Nation

Members And Potential Members Have Multiple Demands On Their Free Time As Well As Many And Varied Opportunities To Ride And Recreate On Any Given Weekend.

The BMWMOAL Has Seen A 50% Reduction In Membership Over The Last Four Years!

I am seeking the position of President of the BMWMOAL based upon the following platform. I strongly believe that if we do not change the club model and change it drastically, we will not have a club in the future...and it won't take much longer based on where we are today.

So... what should we do different? Here Are Some Of The Things That I Believe We Should Do...

Open Our Membership – This is the single most important thing we MUST

do to ensure the future of our club. Yes we are a BMW club and we can still be a BMW club with club members who ride other brands. Keeping a closed attitude is not viable for our club's survival. We must not only allow new members riding other brands but encourage riders of other brands to join! This is how we will introduce the BMW culture and lifestyle and attract new members.

Build A Closer Relationship With Our Chartering Clubs - I will work closer with the BMW MOA & BMW RA to utilize the strengths available from those clubs. They need us... and we need them... for event support, advertising and many other parts of our common club life. My goal is to see our club membership have 100% membership in the clubs with which we are chartered.

Do Something For The Greater Good – Our club was founded in part to promote motorcycle safety and to improve the public image of motorcycling. I propose we designate five dollars (\$5.00) of our annual \$25.00 membership dues to support safety, education and training. I will look for ways to raise awareness of our club by finding opportunities to use our motorcycles and the club to make a positive contribution to our communities by participating in community, charity and other civic activities. We need to get involved in activities outside of our group. I strongly support the missions of the AL Traffic Safety Center and the MOA Foundation that provides rider education and training to improve motorcycle safety. Let's support things that support our sport.

Make Use Of Our Social Media –Social media becomes more and more important each day and every day. With the assistance of our dedicated IT staff already on board, I will work to fully use all of our electronic tools including our fantastic website that is greatly underused at this point to our advantage. I will fully investigate the feasibility of continuing the newsletter as we know it or as an alternative, determine how best to use our available media resources to communicate meeting info and other items of interest to our membership.

Ride – I want to ride as much as I can and I hope you do too. I will work with our members and officers to create new and different rides, challenges and interesting trips whether to and from our meetings or on off meeting weekends. We will create more and different opportunities for our membership to

ride and enjoy their bikes and this lifestyle. Different rides...both on road and off road... that include riders of all skill levels. Bottom line...we'll work to provide more opportunities to ride than ever before!

So, Where Do We Ride From Here?

I believe the club is now on a course that will lead to its demise in a very short period of time unless we do something drastic... and do it now. If the club members we have today are ready to embrace the kind of change...big change...that I believe it will take to move us forward, I will pledge to serve you the membership as your President and lead that effort to the best of my ability.

I pledge to work along with the entire membership to build an open and inviting club to members and guests while remembering the history that is ours. I will work hard to promote the BMW brand but more importantly the lifestyle of the serious rider. Above all, my relationship with each of you personally is far more important to me than the brand of bike you ride. I want a club that has riding as its passion and displays it with pride. I want a club that supports awareness of motorcycles and provides support for the safety, training and education for all riders new and old with the quest for making our sport safer for all of us.

What do you want the BMWMOAL to be?

OCTOBER MEETING - LITTLE RIVER STATE PARK

Jamie Jackson

The October club meeting and campout will be hosted by Ricky Bonner and family at Little River State Park near Atmore, Alabama. The park used to be known as Claude D. Kelly State Park. The park is located approx. 11 miles north of I-65 on Highway 21 (Atmore Exit). The park lies slightly more than 75 miles north of the Gulf.

Cabins, mobile homes, R/V sites, and primitive camping are all available. Check their web site for details and pricing at:

<http://www.littleriverstatepark.com/>

For a real treat try Royal Oaks Bed & Breakfast located nearby and has one room in the house and two bungalows out back. Phone is 251-368-8722:

<http://www.royaloaksbandb.com/>

There is also a Best Western in Atmore that you can call if you are not going to camp.

Another option is Wind Creek Casino: <http://www.windcreekcasino.com/> located at I-65 and Hwy 21.

Dinner will be Catfish, chicken fingers, slaw, baked beans, french-fries and some kind of dessert. Dinner is planned for 5:30 PM.

Breakfast items will be provided. Coffee for sure and either sweet rolls or possibly sausage biscuits.



Directions:

If you are coming south on Interstate 65, get off at exit 57 which is state highway 21 Atmore/Uriah. Go north on highway 21 to Little River Campground entrance 11 miles from interstate. Going north on 21 you turn

right into the Park. If you are coming south on 21 from Uriah, it is approx 4 miles and you turn left into the park. The road is paved till you get to the fork going into the camping area, which is hard dirt and in good shape.

For the sightseer, a Vanity Fair Outlet Center is located about 15 miles north on Highway 21, the Creek Family Restaurant and Creek Bingo Palace are located about 12 miles south on 21 just off I-65. There are convenience stores located about three miles north and south on Highway 21.

One thing can be said for our campouts, there is always some good food around. It seems if every meeting we have had this year has been centered around good eating. Some of us are carrying a few extra pounds because of it. If Alton Brown had not already beaten us to it (Food Network's *Feasting on Asphalt*), we probably could have started a motorcycle touring food show.



It seems that some of the guys are already getting the fish ready.