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Ohio RA Winter-Spring 2003 Update

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Dear BMW RA Ohio Rider,

As I wrap up this newsletter to go to print, a soggy flock is breaking up at Daytona for the return home and Bike Week 2003 is history. Unfortunately, due to the weather, not all of the motorcycle races were run as planned, but the first race of the new BMW Boxer Cup Series did get off on time. This was the only race of the Series we will see scheduled here in the United States and it was done with all the excitement, eloquence, and class BMW is known for. There were almost fifty, virtually stock R1100RS machines, each adorned with the unique *bike rider's country of origin* custom paint scheme. If you haven't seen the, now famous, jug bump at nearly 180 MPH, find someone who taped the race and watch in amazement at the way the racers handled these Boxers. I watched as the Stars and Stripes painted number 46 of Brian Parriot took second place just behind the French rider Roberto Panichi in a photo finish. It's really good to see BMW back at the track in any event.

More than racing made history at Bike Week this year. This, as many of you know, was the second year the BMW camp out was held at the Holiday Campgrounds and the first year both national BMW Clubs were present in a cooperative atmosphere. I am still waiting for the full accounting, but anticipate a positive report from Headquarters. Also slated was a first ever BMW RA Board Meeting during Bike Week where much of what is to become of the new RA structure was discussed. One of the issues on the agenda was how we will restructure our regional officers and representatives. I am hoping the Board spent some time considering the proposal I submitted for Regional Coordinators and modeling their structure around the way we have been operating here in Ohio.

If you are new to the RA and live here in Ohio you might be surprised to find out that there is an organized state-level group here that is quite active, both during the normal and off riding seasons. In Ohio we have five indoor brunch meetings (one in each geographical quadrant of the state and one in the central state area) and a minimum of three riding season camp outs. All these events are for this region's members and usually at little or no cost. These statewide events seem to foster better local rider communications, awareness, and camaraderie. They also promote a more coordinated scheduling of events amongst the Ohio clubs -- avoiding overlapping dates. To this end, Ohio BMW events are well attended and supported by other clubs within the district. This is our mission in a nutshell and part of that mission is to keep you informed through a local newsletter like this one. You will find this newsletter in your mailbox or (if you are online) available to read on our web site twice a year. In this issue of the RA Ohio Update I have included a separate calendar for the year outlining each event. I highly recommend you save it for reference during the 2003-riding season, but for complete up-to-the-minute details of any of the events, go to the Ohio-RA web site at the address in the letterhead. Feel free to join in at any listed event. And don't forget, the most important item in our mission is to ride and have fun.

LOCAL CLUB NEWS

As you read this issue you will surely be thinking forward to the fast approaching riding and camping season. I for one have had enough time inhaling the two-stroke fumes of my snow blower and am looking forward to the sweet smell of lilacs as I jet past the smartly painted Bi-Centennial Ohio Barns on my Beemer.

If you're in the Cincinnati Club, you will likely be seeing as many of these barns as you can for the contest Jim Smith and Mike LaBar have set up for you. Mike has posted the contest details on their web site at <http://w3.one.net/~labrew/OhioBarnRules.html> and lists all 88 county barns and a map. The Greater Cincinnati BMW

Club (GCBMWC) has continued their active communications on their Club's Yahoo Group and runs a high tally of postings per month. They are even sending their newsletter via E-mail to online members. This may prove to be the wave of the future. I have been trying to do something similar on the state level and beginning with this issue these Ohio-RA newsletters will be available in PDF on the web site and in the eGroup files section to read and print..

In Cleveland, the BMWOC club will award its members MoCal points (a new participation tracking system) to members caught in a Bi-Centennial Ohio Barn Photo-Op. That plus a host of other membership participation incentives will give their members points that will in turn be cashed in for helmet stickers. The member with the most stickers will eventually end up with a cash prize at the end of the season. Now you're talking. This is quite an innovative program and it aggressively solicits member participation. I will keep an eye on this incentive program and report back on how it works out in a later issue.

The Ohio RA Regional Meetings are almost over for this winter with only the Central State Regional Meeting and Brunch remaining on the schedule for Sunday, March 16. As I wrap up the series I have found the local clubs in Ohio continue to be strong and viable. Some are growing, like Toledo, while maintaining their usual events while others like the Buckeyes have leveled out and are about the same size, but doing more events. For the second time in as many years, the Buckeyes will run their Dunlop Elite Series Poker Run on June 1st to benefit the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum and would love to see a strong showing of Ohio BMW riders. And as usual, the Buckeyes are also planning their BS Rally again at Lake Snowden on September 5-7 this year. Mark your calendar for both events -- they are for all riders.

Mentioned above the Toledo Club continues to grow it's membership and host both spring and summer camp outs. Their February newsletter included a full color photo (on glossy stock) of their members at their annual banquet. If they grow any more they will need a wide-angle lens for next year. Toledo also recently approved a new patch design that is now for sale through their club and they are looking into updating their Constitution and Bylaws. They are moving and shaking in Toledo complete with a web site and are a club to keep an eye on.

All in all, Ohio's local BMW clubs continue to thrive and provide numerous rider events for all to enjoy. The number of exclusive Ohio BMW events always surprises me as I put together my calendar. Be sure to support your local club and their efforts. Imagine for a moment what life would be like without them and I'm sure you will realize they are the jewels in our crown here in Ohio.

OHIO RA REGIONAL CAMP OUTS FOR 2003

If you missed it last year, the newly located Spring Camp Out (13 miles east of Mount Vernon) was a big hit. There were thirty-five on the roster and everyone reportedly had a good time. Last month during a severe snowstorm I called to reserve the same set up we had last year that includes the grassy camping area and pavilion. (My way of keeping semi-sane during the winter.) Each site has water and electric and is on level ground. The Kokosing Valley Camp and Canoe also has a camp store, laundry, hot showers, and flush toilets. Restaurants can be found in nearby Millwood and Danville via a short ride on the wonderful roads in the area. Camping is \$4.00 per person, per night, payable to the campgrounds as you come in. The Ohio RA Regional kitty will fund hot and cold beverages and I will give a BMWRA one-year membership away to some lucky rider on Saturday night. Hope you can make it to this one.

Our premiere event of the year is the Ohio Regional Summer Camp Out on Father's Day Weekend (see calendar). This event is our regions all out attempt at a full-fledged rally, but keeping in the traditions of the RA -- without the hoop-la. Each year we have kept the menu quite interesting and this year is no exception. There are additional details on the web page, but I will summarize this event for you. Friday evening we will again have a hungry-riders soup pot for a meager donation. Camping is free and includes a shower, Port-a-Potties, pool, arcade games, coffee, tea, cool beverages, and some of the best riding roads in Ohio. Saturday, *by pre-paid reservation only*, enjoy your choice of a steak, ribs, or BBQ chicken dinner *catered on site* by the Scioto Ribber Restaurant of Portsmouth, Ohio. They are famous for their enormous steaks and dinners that you can hardly finish by yourself. Each dinner will come complete with baked potato, sweet n' sour German Style or creamy style Cole slaw, roll and butter, all for \$16.00. Please note -- if you are interested in the catered dinner you must prepay before June 2nd. There will be no extra dinners available on site. After dinner I will have a brief Ohio RA Regional Meeting, a door prize and club membership give away sponsored by your Ohio BMW Dealers, bonfire, and the usual festive atmosphere. This has become *the* Ohio RA event not to miss. To reserve a dinner ticket, call Randy or Kris Phipps at 937.587.3443 or E-mail them at randy_kris73@dragonbbs.com for details.

Last but not least, the Halloween Camp Out is on the calendar a bit earlier than usual this year, but will still be held on the *time change weekend* (October 24-26). This will allow the NE Regional Meeting and Brunch (Atwood Lake Lodge) to be on the calendar in its proper time slot (2-weeks later). The Halloween Camp Out near Cadiz has slowly morphed from a Spartan outing to the literal food orgy of recent times. It started out several years ago as just a Chile pot. Then a bean feed was added, to the mix. Now we have pumpkin pancakes with sausage and maple syrup just for breakfast. There were always the normal *share-a-dish-if-you-wish* items like some homemade cookies and a jug of cider, but this may be getting out of hand. I don't think anyone left the campsite for food last year.

Those who did go for a ride mostly ended up at the Mathias Grand Opening Celebration for a hot dog lunch and door prize drawings. Gene and his crew have moved into a wonderful new facility on the south side of New Philadelphia that has room for them to grow. The parking lot was full of visiting BMW's and their showroom was buzzing and standing room only when I was there on Saturday. It was good to see a supportive turn out on such a marginal day, weather wise.

One of the Ohio RA Halloween Camp Out regular events is the Sam Hill Memorial Ride to the Motorcyclists Memorial Foundation (MMF) site in Hopedale, OH. This year I found Sam's name is clearly now part of the memorial wall and just a few names below Gary Paine (GCBMWC), who also lost his life while riding. Strolling the walkway I also noticed two memorial bricks placed by the Toledo BMW Riders. I snapped photos of both and forwarded them to the club. Let's all hope we have many safe riding years and won't need to add any more RA's to the MMF. I will be updating the web page soon with the new MMF photos and finally bring closure to these recent losses.

NATIONAL SCENE

There have been some positive changes in the way the BMWRA operates as a club and I'm hoping you may have noticed. Recently guidelines and deadlines for everything from, the everyday, to the annual operations of the organization, have been adopted and implemented. This has put things like publishing the OTL on a workable timetable. You should actually get this month's issue, this month and possibly earlier if a Manager Editor is hired. Some of these changes are due to a more streamlined way that the Board of Trustees (BoT) is doing business, its decision-making (from our new Bylaws), and in part, to new personnel at Headquarters.

The last time I wrote to you, Linda Gotcher had temporary taken over as the RA's Association Administrator (AA) while Ed Jorgensen was placed on active duty with the military. Ed not knowing how long he would be away has relinquished his position to Linda. She accepted, and was officially hired as the new Association Administrator. Linda has moved the RA Headquarters into a specially adapted room in her house for her duties. One of the fine documents Linda has recently submitted to the BoT clearly defines the duties, responsibilities, and salary of the RA's AA.

Further work of the current BoT has been to create the position of Rally Coordinator and fill it with the best qualified person we could find. After some taunting, Juli Tucker has enthusiastically accepted the position. Juli also submitted a "Job Duties, Responsibilities, and Pay Scale Proposal" document that the BoT readily approved. We couldn't be in better hands. Juli already has this year's site secured and is laying groundwork for rallies four and five years from now. She has also initiated a Rally Newsletter that goes out via E-mail that I have been posting onto the Ohio RA eGroup message board. If you do not subscribe to the Ohio RA Yahoo Group you can sign up separately and have it delivered directly to your own E-mail. These e-mails will keep you up to date with the progress of the RA's national event.

As Rally Coordinator, Juli has done her usual bang up job and gotten what very well may be, *the Rally of the year* (if not the decade) lined up for us in early October. My only concern, living in Northern Ohio is possible inclement weather leaving or returning home, but I'm told the weather in Alabama at that time of the year is magnificent. The Barber Motor Sports Park, Barber Museum, 3-days of Reg Pridmore's CLASS, and the nearby Airhead Invitational are only the highlights. There is a ton more information on the RA web site and in upcoming OTL's. This will be another *not to miss event*. So, tell your boss today you want the first week of October for vacation.

At the annual Board of Trustees Meeting in Red River, NM (last August) the task of redefining the old officer positions was given to me. I used Ohio as a model and recently submitted a proposal to the Board to consider at an informal meeting held during Bike Week 2003. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend, but Gordan presented it and we should know soon if we will continue here in Ohio as is and if other regions will have the opportunity to follow in our footsteps. It is my hope that the BMWRA will once again become known for its grassroots outreach and develop a network of Regional Coordinators to aid the process.

Top of the list at this recent meeting was installing a Managing Editor for the OTL. This would be some welcomed assistance for Robert and is a long overdue step for the already excellent publication.

Another big issue slated for discussion at this meeting was the fate of the Chartered Clubs program. There has been some talk of dismantling it. I have been adamantly opposed to the idea and would be willing to take it over myself if it came down to that. If your local club has not renewed its charter for this year, please have your club secretary or other official do so as soon as possible. The process of renewing a Club Charter with the RA has gotten even easier with the revamping of the web page. Have your club officer log onto the BMWRA web site (see header) and the renewal can be done online. It only takes a few minutes. No more forms to get lost in the mail.

As you can see the Board of Trustees has been busy and seems to be moving in a positive direction. The current BoT is comprised of people who have a vast knowledge of where we have been, what worked in the past, and a good feel for what might work in years to come. They all care about the future of the RA and seem willing to make it work again. I hope this will be a pivotal year for the Association and its membership.

Since my appointment as Trustee, I have had occasion to toot my horn for Ohio as well as serving the interests of all RA members. This is certainly a special situation for Ohio RA's and to that end, if you have any suggestions, questions,

comments, or concerns about the way the RA or your Region operates, please address them to me. You can be sure I will be your voice at Headquarters.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The future of the BMWRA in Ohio seems to be bright. We have a strong group of active clubs statewide. We have money in our treasury for our upcoming events, and we have a full schedule of activities lined up until the snow begins to fly again. At this point, all we need is you to make this all come together for one more year. So stick the enclosed 2003 Ohio-RA Regional Calendar to your refrigerator so you don't miss an Ohio event. I'm looking forward to this riding season and seeing you all on the dusty trail again.

Ride with the **RA**,

Bob Wood

Bob Wood
Trustee and Ohio State Director
BMW Riders Association, International