

BMWMOCM NEWSLETTER



Volume 25, Issue 1

EDITOR'S NOTES

I wandered into Trackstar the other day, mostly to extend my condolences to Nick, an old friend, on his recent 30th birthday. We marveled that we're still here, alive and well, and reminisced about events on the road we've gotten away with. Like the night we sped through snowy southern Indiana hill country with our van's headlights turned off, just to scare the other guys in the band to death. Nick was our sound man and roadie. Anyway, touring around the country in a '79 GMC van, making heroic overnight drives to get to the next gig, planted the seed for my current passion for endurance rallies, which also present similar "heroic" opportunities, like riding across Wyoming all night, in a cold rain, just to try and win some damn trophy from Eddie James. Hmmm, maybe the old van with those penniless, hung over musicians wasn't so bad...

These days Nick rides a Triumph TT600, and yes he's got the fuel injection bugs worked out. Loves the bike. Then he surprised me by saying we both should take an advanced motorcycle safety course this spring. What?!? He may have the word 'skinhead' tattooed across his neck, but he's no dummy. Perhaps we shall. I'm not sure any class can save us from the passion for speed, though. Most of us have it, and some are sicker than others. (Ask Teri Ruder about her Hayabusa.) Both of my rides are pretty slow by modern sport bike standards, but cruise comfortably at 90, topping out at 115 or so. Yawn, right? Well, yeah. Looking at the 2001 Aprilia Futura RST, I can imagine myself crossing the Dakotas at...(well, better not print that). Which leads me to believe that I belong on an Airhead, to keep my sillier inclinations in check. Despite the safety improvements on the newer bikes, the old bikes have one big safety advantage. They're slow. Kinda like the old green '79 GMC van.

Guess I'm right back where I started.

February, 2001

The Grand Finale
By Karol Patzer

The installation/holiday party was the grand finale for the 2000 season and the beginning of a new season

and new slate of officers. The banquet room at City View (Lost Spur) was aglow with holiday lights, and provided a great view of the Minneapolis skyline at night. The evening began with a social hour, and a chance to gather around the tent and "kick tires". 80 members and guests enjoyed an excellent meal followed by cake for dessert.

We enjoyed some videos provided by Bob Ekeberg, and some of our members sauntered through the crowd showing off their favorite "gear" (among other things). Thanks to Deb Westberg, Doug Hippe, Lisa Kinney, Jerry Dubrall, Dale Peterson, Jeff Oden, Dave Porter, Jamie Jensen, and Molly Gilbert. Dave's spine protector set the chandelier in motion and Doug and Lisa were the ideal couple in their one and two-piece Aerostich suits. (Even if they stretched the truth about riding here). Jerry's Belstaff was accessorized with shades (even though he couldn't see). Jamie admitted to being a "fair-weather" rider, and Molly's parody on riding apparel made the audience chuckle. Molly also performed a reading of "The Wave" which was very entertaining.

We had a multi-media presentation which included photos provided by Estelle Hasert, Nancee Musto, Darrell and Elizabeth Penning, Galen Wolf, and Karol Patzer. It was intended to highlight the meaning of riding and participation in club activities. It included glimpses of the bikes, the rides, scenery, rallies, fun and the club. Keep this in mind as you're riding this year, and don't leave home without your camera. Those Kodak moments mean a lot during a long Minnesota winter.

The presentation was followed by the serious awards. Mileage awards were received by Jack Fredricksen for Rider who came closest to his goal, Nancee Musto, Club traveling mileage award, and High-Mileage award, and Estelle Hasert, high-mileage passenger. The Dot Fisette award was presented to our Newsletter editor, Bart Bakker, and the BMW MOCM Board award was presented to Pat O'Keefe. Dale Peterson received the BMW MOA Award, which was presented by BMW MOA Ambassador, Charlie Coons. That was about it for the serious awards, and it was downhill from there. Doug and Estelle received a new travelling award called the Shaft/Hard Luck Award. You probably read Estelle's article about their "hard luck" summer in November's newsletter. Try as we might, we couldn't come up with a better recipient than Bob Cox for the Agitator award. [*Agreed! ed.*] We also had a long list of Gag awards. Keep this in mind throughout the year, so we can recognize those well-deserving riders. If someone does something you think the club should know about, make a note and let next year's organizer know.

Last but certainly not least, Dale Peterson passed the gavel, and the new slate of officers were installed. Thanks to Dale Peterson, Jamie Jensen, Pat O'Keefe, Jeff Oden, Larry Stern, Sheldon Moe, Kevin Kocur, Molly Gilbert, and Bob Cox for serving as our officers and board members for the year 2000.

Welcome to our new officers for the 2001 riding season. Molly Gilbert, Prez, Kevin Kocur, Vice-Prez, Secretary, Michelle Moe, Jeff Oden, Treasurer, Larry Stern, Mike Donahue, Deb Westberg, and Bob Ekeberg, Board Members, and Sheldon Moe, Activities coordinator. If you weren't there, you missed a great time.

Thanks to all who made it possible, with a special thanks to Jerry Dubrall, sound man and anything electrical technician.

The next time you are at any other the following businesses, please thank them for their support of door prizes:

Aerostich Riderwearhouse
Bob's Cycle Supply
Hopkins Hitching Post
Leo's South
Midwest Cycle Supply
Moon Motors
Motor Oil Café
Trackstar

New Meeting Site

The BMW/MOCM general meetings will be held in a new location, beginning with the February 8th meeting, at the **Motor Oil Café**, 2610 East 32nd St., Minneapolis. The Café is in the Trackstar 'complex' just east of Hiawatha Avenue, and will be the likely site of upcoming board meetings as well.

Tentative trip to Aerostich announced

After drooling at the Bike Show in Minneapolis and, if you are lucky, taking that trip to Daytona for Bike Week,

what better way to wipe away the late winter blues and get geared up for the season with a trip to the Aerostich factory in Duluth?

Following last year's popular event, BMWOCM is reprising the trip format, right down to the sticky buns on the way up, and White Castle burgers on the way back. Remember that you get a 10% discount on purchases made in person at the factory, and you will receive the complementary tour and lunch put on by Andy Goldfine's crew. I bought my Roadcrafter there last year, and it really helped to be there in person to be measured up. Then of course there is the clearance/seconds rack, filled with some unspeakable bargains, of which many club members have availed themselves of in the past.

Travel will again be provided by bus, so space is limited. March 24th is the tentative date. The official date and cost will be publicized once they have been finalized. Call Steffan Fay at 952-597-5320 or email him at sfay@odbs.com for more information.

Events Calendar

Feb. 1st, BMWOCM board meeting at Motor Oil Café.

Feb. 8th, BMWOCM general meeting at Motor Oil Café, 7:30 p.m.

Mar. 24th (tentative), club trip to Aerostich factory, Duluth, MN.

STURGIS

by Rand Rasmussen

We slow as we exit to the right into the rest stop near Jamestown, North Dakota, seventy-five or so miles closer to Sturgis than when we started an hour ago in Fargo. Susan and I look around, then shut off the ignitions of her R-65 and my R-80. I grab a bottle of water from my tank-bag and go back to the trailer to tend to my dog Maggie, residing there in her traveling kennel. We have chosen this rest stop to meet another couple, Lynn and Monica, who are on their way down from their home in Petersburg, ND. Lynn and Monica are two of those rare traveling companions who are virtually as easy to travel with as to travel alone. They love to ride, they almost never fight—either between themselves or with others—and they are up for virtually any side trip, regardless of distance. For all of us it is our first trip to Sturgis in a lot of years. As long as we're waiting I figure that we may as well be comfortable. I let Mag out, give her some water, take some for myself (separate drinking bowls) and set up my camp-chair next to the cycle, listening to the breeze and to the tinging of the metal engine cooling. Susan prefers to stand.

After only a fifteen-minute wait, I hear the sound of Lynn's vintage Honda 750 four, and of Monica's Silver Wing transverse V-twin coming in for a landing. Their smiles, as they dismount, show that they are as feeling as good as we are about the ride. After a short break we mount up, fire up the engines and accelerate down the on-ramp of I-94 west, and toward our evening destination of Medora. We ride along in staggered twos, spread out from as close as half a mile to as much as a mile, accordioning up and back as we please. This is all accomplished easily and without thought. Out here tight formations aren't necessary nor even important. Getting separated by other vehicles, taking wrong turns or losing sight of one another are worries for other places, not for here. Out here seventy-five MPH seems natural, even leisurely, and the R-80/7 just snores along. My mind is relaxed as my eyes wander to the horizon and back. On days like this I find it hard to believe that in three short months this will all be under a foot of snow with below-zero wind chills; but not today. Today the late afternoon sun bathes everything in a soothing, pale late-summer light. The deep greens of shelter belts frame the deep gold of wheat and oat fields nearing their time for harvest. The wind, an ever-present companion in North Dakota, blows warm and strong from the south, but not strong enough to be a factor.

As with the planning of many of our cycle trips this one assumed a number of iterations before it settled on the final version. At the heart of the problem, as always, lay the "big twin" of constraints for the working motorcyclist: money and time. Susan and I had been planning a trip to Sturgis since 1993, but each and every year one or both of these two factors obviated our plans. This year we had just planned too many major trips, leaving

us with a paucity of funds. I could hear the disappointment in Susan's voice when I called and told her that I just couldn't swing it this year. I encouraged her to go anyway, with Lynn and Monica, but Susan is loyal and so refused. Still, it kept gnawing me until finally I came up with a plan. If we shortened the trip by a couple of days, pooled our money, used credit cards to buy gas, cooked most of our meals (and here's the big one) brought Maggie along instead of boarding her at a kennel, we could do it. Susan readily agreed, as did Lynn and Monica, and so we find ourselves together on Friday, 12 August, 2000, in central North Dakota, outbound from Fargo to Sturgis.

After a hundred or so miles in the soft heat we stop at rest area west of Bismarck for supper. Susan and I dig out the Svea 123 stove, cooking kit and food bags and set them up on the shelter table, away from the wind. Lynn and Monica have an assortment of non-cook salads and cold-dishes they have brought from home. Black bean burgers, salad, chips and water might not seem like much at home, but it is the perfect dinner for a windy shelter west of Bismarck. After an hour we pack up and proceed straight west into the setting sun until, without warning, semi-disaster strikes.

This is a stretch of highway whereon the lanes are divided by those three-foot tall orange rubber tubes. My attention wanders and I drift too close to one. I feel a significant, although not violent, tug on the left side of the trailer. I glance back and all looks well. Mag, who is a somewhat jittery traveler, has not even stirred from her supine position. At a Dickinson gas stop I examine the trailer more closely. I find that the left wheel rim is dented, but that the tire still holds air: annoying, but not unsafe. Also the tongue has been torqued a bit, but that's not too hard to fix. Although I am angry with myself, I figure I have gotten off lightly. Just before we are ready to leave, however, something still looks not right to me, and so I dismount and slide underneath the trailer. A weak nausea sweeps over me as I realize just how close I came to killing my dog. The entire trailer frame is deformed with every frame tube bent to the left. It will need to be entirely disassembled and reworked in order to be road-safe again. We complete the final 40 miles to Medora in the dark, at a significantly reduced speed, with Susan directly behind me keeping an eye on Maggie.

We check in at the campground, which sits on a bend of the Little Missouri River, light the fire, and set-up the tents by fire and flashlight. Nothing can be done with the trailer this evening and so we sit around the fire and talk about this trip, trips past, family, Sturgis. The evening passes gently, pleasantly. When I step away from the fire I can faintly see the outline of the painted cliffs on the other side of the river. It is quiet except for crickets and frogs and the sound of the water flowing, which is fine by me. Silent night.

Away from the fire the night sky comes alive. I have been trying to learn the constellations and I can see dozens, even in this river valley. Without any light-pollution I can even see the milky background which gives our galaxy its name. I enjoy the thought that for thousands of years people have been looking up in wonder at this same night sky. After a few more minutes of listening to the dark I turn and go back to the others. Sometime after 11:00 when the gaps in the conversation start becoming longer than the sentences, and we spend more time staring at the fire than talking, each lost in our own thoughts, we troupe off to bed.

I wake up at five and decide to get right to work. Over the next two hours I disassemble the entire trailer and straighten each piece by laying it across the exposed root of a nearby giant cottonwood, and gently standing and bouncing on it until it is relatively true again. I am thankful that I chose to construct the trailer out of aluminum rather than steel, and that I chose to bolt it together rather than welding it. Thankfully, none of the frame members is buckled, and none buckles from my rough-and-ready repairs. Meanwhile, Lynn is busy cooking breakfast on his Coleman propane stove, and he brings me every fourth pancake. Mag noses around and bugs me for pancake scraps. By 8:00 the trailer is roadworthy and, I am confident, safe again.

Thanks to the hard work of Susan, Monica and Lynn, camp is struck and we are ready to leave as soon as I have the tools put away. The painted canyons of the North Dakota badlands surround us as we trail slowly through Medora with its recreated turn-of-the-century downtown. In just a few minutes we are freeway-bound again. Ten-minutes for gas at Dickinson and we are off on 85 south which will eventually take us on down through Belle Fourche and into the Black Hills. I remain especially conscious of the trailer, but despite the violent treatment visited upon it, it shows no further signs of trouble.

US Highway 85 south takes us through the beautiful and remote butte country of western North Dakota. Although most people seem to think of North Dakota as flat, it is really composed of several highly different regions. The Euclidian plain with which people normally associate the whole state actually occurs for only forty miles either side of the Red River of the North, which separates Minnesota and North Dakota. The central part of the state extending from Valley City to Dickinson is gently rolling, not unlike the land where the picture "Dances

With Wolves” was shot. In the lush northeast corner of the state, near Walhalla, there is a set of small mountains, called the “Turtle Mountains,” similar in size to the “Sawtooths” on Lake Superior’s north shore, or the “Porcupines” on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The North Dakota Badlands, which run along the western edge of the Ft. Berthold Reservation are, in my opinion, far more spectacular and beautiful-albeit less visited—than the better-known South Dakota Badlands.

Out here, where we are now, there are several buttes which rise to more than 3,000 feet above sea level. As we glide past, some 3 mile from their bases I always wonder what it would be like to sleep on top of one on a clear night. I am still always amazed when I see the sign saying “Camp Crook, 50 miles,” and an arrow pointing down a gravel road toward Montana. I wonder what 50 miles of gravel is like and what is at the other end. We stop to buy gas at Bowman, ND. Even here, still 150 miles from Sturgis in a town of a thousand people, there are bikes lined up for gas, competing with RVs for the pumps. We fill up and grab a small snack and a drink before hitting the road again. South of Bowman we encounter road construction which takes us through almost 20 miles of firmly packed gravel. Although it is bad enough for us to plan a different route back home, it is not the worst road we have ridden on. No, the worst was last spring when Susan and I were returning from a conference in Denver.

We had deliberately chosen a route which would take us into some truly remote areas of South Dakota—a kind of “miles from nowhere” approach. While nearing our intended breaking place of Faith, we saw the sign for road construction ahead. No surprise there; in the west in the summer you can’t swing an Aerostich without hitting road construction. Gradually, however, the road devolved from asphalt, to gravel, to loose gravel, to sand, and finally to deep sand with ruts four or five inches deep running in all directions, gullies to traverse and culverts waiting to be buried. We were both reduced to first-gear with our legs poised for action should our wheels suddenly abandon us. On that day, even though we were within a mile of the town and a much-needed break, when the opportunity arose to quit 212 and turn northward toward Lemmon, much further away, we jumped at it.

It is late afternoon when we finally reach Belle Fourche and stop for gas and refreshments. It is now hot. Hot! Pavement-softening, blisteringly hot. I find a place where Mag can sit in the shade and give her plenty of water. Our location is a little deceiving. Although we have arrived at the Hills we are at the northern end, and our campground, Horse Thief, is in the central Hills near Hill City. This means that we still have 50 or 60 miles to go. We briefly hop on I-90 at Spearfish and take the Hwy. 14 exit toward Deadwood. We are totally unprepared for the motorcycle traffic in Deadwood. Wall to wall cycles. Traveling-at-10-miles-per-hour cycles. Parked cycles. Cycles being worked on at the side of the street. So many motorcycles that were it not for the police officers at the intersections we would be unable to make the left turn onto 385 south to continue our journey. We’ve been to rallies before, and I love motorcycles, but I am not used to any vehicles in this large of numbers. I feel a little overheated and a bit unnerved by it all.

We are now in the Hills themselves. They are very beautiful, green and looming, and we now spend much time in the shade because of them. By now we are ready to be there. The day has been full, beginning with the overhaul of the trailer at Medora, and continuing through 250 miles of excellent riding down the western portion of the state. Now though, I just want to set up the tent, make some supper, light a fire and relax for the evening; Sturgis can wait until tomorrow. Finally we turn left on 385, toward Hill City and away from the monumentally steep road leading to Lead.

We have confirmed reservations with the Horse Thief Campground which is one of the most spectacular in the Hills. It has the appeal of maintaining real campsites, even during the rally, instead of a “pack in all you can,” mentality, and also of locating the tent sites far away from the camper/RV sites. Equally amazing is the fact that the sites remain grassy rather than your usual dirt/mud combination. [Susan and I discovered this resort in 1994 when we were out here on a trip. We had left the Bighorn Mountains in the morning cool of 28 degrees, bound for the Hills. By ten it was 90 and by noon, back down on the central plains between the Bighorn Mountains and the Black Hills, it was 100+ degrees. We entered the Hills at the southern end after a mid-afternoon lunch at Newcastle, Wyoming, and began searching for a campsite. We passed up several because they did not have showers and we had already been out for two days in shower-less campgrounds. I became more tired and more cranky with each camping place we passed up; I wanted a shower too, but at that point I was so hot and tired that I just wanted to stop riding for the day. I realized the depth of my fatigue when I sat for 20 seconds pounding on the high-beam switch on my left grip, trying to shut off my turn signal which I believed to be stuck on. In fact the signal had merely not been shut off because on old BMWs the signal switch is on the right grip.

Finally we pulled into one of the most beautiful campsites we had ever seen. Granite walls surrounded us, rising

hundreds of feet in every direction, a lovely lodge and clean, hot showers. The owners politely informed us that the only open sites were very near a Lakota drum ceremony which was to take place that night, and wondered if we were still interested in camping. We were so tired that we would have stayed if they said they were having the John Phillip Souza 24-hour marching band marathon there. We paid and trailed slowly up to our camping space located on the side of a rather steep, green-clad hill. Thanks to the lovely surroundings we were beginning to feel better already. Showers and dinner completed the transformation, as twilight slowly and pleasantly descended.

Although we had set up the tent, we moved our beds outside and lay by the fire enjoying the warm late-summer evening and the lack of bugs. Just as the fire died down the drum ceremony began. We had a clear view of the night sky: jet-black and with stars clearer and brighter than I had ever seen them before. It is hard to describe what happened next, but something about the night sky and the primordial drumming made us feel almost as though we had lost contact with earth; that we were actually in the sky rather than beneath it. Falling stars flamed around us at uneven intervals and the Native American music, far from disturbing us, lulled us into deep and dream-filled sleep. Both Susan and I agreed that we had never felt it before and have never since felt anything like it. It was one of the most incredible things I have ever experienced in motorcycle travel.]

We pull into Horse Thief at around 6:00. We stop at the office to register and to buy some firewood. Of course we have no room to pack the bundles of wood so we pay for it and arrange to come back and pick it up. After several false starts and turns around we find our site in a secluded area of trees. Both couples select our tent sites and the next 25 minutes are spent erecting tents, inflating Thermarests, fluffing sleeping bags and locating the myriad other things essential to a night's camp. Once the cycles are unloaded I head back down and pick up the wood, using Mag's trailer to haul it. For supper we fire up the stove and have stir-fried vegetables and rice; easy and tasty. Usually we only use the stove in the morning to heat water. Although we are doing it for economic reasons, I am beginning to enjoy cooking for ourselves. Showers are next, and then an evening's fire.

We awaken the next morning to the dappled-sunlight of the central Hills. Usually Susan and I are the only cycle-bound campers in the campground so it is strange to look around and see cycles as far as the eye can see. It is also disappointing to see the number of bikes which have arrived by trailer. Now, there are certainly a few legitimate reasons to trailer a bike to a rally. If a person is older or in ill-health but still wants to make the rally I understand perfectly the decision to trailer. I suppose if the bike is an antique, (at least if it's a real antique) or one is selling it, I can understand trailering it. Show-bikes, although I can't say I really approve, I suppose I get it-sort of. And just maybe if one needs to bring along one's whole family and cannot do so by bike, one might be able to justify truck or trailer. Although I certainly question the pleasure of combining the Black Hills Motor Classic with a family vacation when I would have to give up the whole reason for attending—riding-in order to do so. But most of the trailer jockeys I see-and I can see no less than 10 such rigs from our campsite—meet none of these criteria.

For example, just below us there are two Zubas and black muscle-shirt clad men who look to be in their thirties, unloading two sparkling Harleysque bikes from a trailer. The enclosed trailer from which they are unloading them must cost \$5k, and the Dodge Ram truck pulling that trailer must run into the \$20,000 if not the \$30,000 range. The bikes would have to cost at least \$20,000 each, and maybe more than that, judging from the way they are customized. I can see by the way that they are muscling these trailer queens around that if either is suffering any of the health or age-related problems mentioned above, which prevent them from actually riding to Sturgis, they must be pretty subtle. These two "riders" then don their pre-aged leather chaps and riding jackets, tie-on their black head-rags and leave for, I presume, the epic 40 mile journey to Sturgis. I half expect them to sprinkle some bottled "Genuine Wyoming Road Dust" onto their clothing for authenticity. We see this scene repeated again and again while we are there.

In the end I suppose it is the duplicity that bothers me the most; the desire to look the part and act the part, and to be included, all without actually engaging in the passion. Kind of like a person air-lifted to the top of Mount Everest; maybe such a person can lay claim to the pride of having been there, but not to the pride of having gotten there, and that is where the difference lies. At age 49 Susan rode, as did Monica and Lynn. Shoot, Susan and I had a woman-friend who was still booking better than 10,000 a year at the age of 70! I should say that I think people should be free to arrive at any rally any way they want. I don't favor rules and I don't favor limitations; just don't ask me to show the same respect to healthy people who trailer as I do to all the people, healthy or not, who ride to the rally. Thus endeth the sermon.

We fire-up both stoves for our morning pancakes. Funny, I never eat pancakes at home, but over a camp stove,

well.....We are at the front-end of a very pretty day, albeit a very warm one, and we are all anxious to get to Sturgis. We finish breakfast, wash our dishes and leave them to air-dry on a large rock. Next we pack our lunch (economy, remember?), and the bikes, remembering to bring lots of water. Down through the campground we go. Left on 244 for a very twisty two miles to Hwy. 385 N. We stop in Hill City to buy gas. There are already lines at the pumps. I can't imagine what it must be like in downtown Sturgis, though I guess we will find out soon enough. Going north on 385 is like nothing I have ever seen. Thousands, no tens of thousands of bikes coming toward us in a never-ending stream, and an equal number going the same direction as are we. We travel at 40 miles per hour with no chance to pass, and nowhere to go even if we managed to. It takes us almost 20 minutes to negotiate the two or so miles of Deadwood, and if there wasn't a traffic cop at the corner of 14 I believe that we'd still have been waiting on Labor Day to make the left turn there.

We are now within shouting distance of Sturgis. We cross beneath I-90 and we are there. I am not quite sure what to do next. I glance to the right and see the display for Royal Enfield. I know the Minnesota R.E. dealer and wonder if it's him who is here. We roll toward main-street but the traffic closes in on us. Besides, this is no place to be with a dog in a trailer and so we make a U on one of the side streets, and head back toward the freeway. We park on a back street and decide that we will walk downtown. First we visit the Royal Enfield dealer and indeed it is my friend Kevin Mahoney. We chat for a few minutes and start walking toward the downtown area.

There is so much for the eyes to feast on-at least at first. The noise is obnoxiously loud, but not from the numbers of bikes. I've always considered that comparatively few bikes are truly loud, but either they are all here or since this is the one time in their lives that they won't get in trouble for noise many have modified their pipes especially for the occasion, and feel the need to blip the throttles constantly to make the most of it. In any case it's fair to say that Sturgis during the rally is like no place I have ever been. We can hardly move for the people. Although we wouldn't have been able to afford this trip unless we brought Maggie instead of boarding her, downtown Sturgis is not the place for a skinny little dog on a 90+ degree day. The vendors were wonderful. Several set down dishes of cold water for her and spent time petting her; clearly dog-lovers missing their own animals.

After a couple of hours Mag and I head back for the bikes to sit in the shade and rest. Lynn, Monica and Susan keep trolling. It is now getting on in the afternoon, and about the time that I am getting bored I can see the Terrific Trio heading back my way. Susan and I decide to order a pizza from Pizza Hut across the parking lot from where we are. Although we figure it will take hours, due to the location, we have our pizza within 20 minutes of ordering...who'd have figured? When we finish eating we decide that it's a good time to call it a day. It takes about ten minutes to get back out on the main-drag which will take us the 500 yards to the freeway on-ramp. Even then it's not that the coast is clear, it's just that we realize that we won't get more than a two-second opening in traffic and so we take the next one. Our fellow riders are pretty forgiving, and let us in.

I know (?) a short-cut which will put us back on 385 just north of Hill City, and so we decide to head toward its terminus in Rapid City. Susan and I discovered this route earlier this summer, but I am far from certain that I can find it again. We proceed southeast on I-90 toward Rapid. After the morning of 40 MPH on 385-N, and the rest of the day at virtually ground zero in Sturgis, the freeway feels good and open. I am from North Dakota and I resent, however temporarily, the sense of crowds and confinement and claustrophobia, and I like the sense of speed and motion which the freeway provides at this time. The number of bikes inbound on I-90 is staggering. The two lanes are elbow to elbow with riders (and of course the requisite number of trailer queens). In just the distance between Sturgis and Rapid we see a fair number of bikes along the road with flats or mechanical problems.

We come to the exit I think will take us to the Sheridan Lake Road cut off. I am driving with much more confidence than I feel, trying to intuit my way through town. Just when I think I have steered everyone wrong I see the sign for Sheridan Lake Road and signal left. At the light Susan asks if I am sure this is it, and I reply expansively of course it is, thus ending my brief but successful career as a navigator. Sheridan Lake Road is lovely and incredibly twisty, once we have cleared the suburbs of Rapid. We come out on 385 and turn left toward Hill City where we stop for gas and snacks. We then finish the five miles to Horse Thief.

Susan and I will be leaving to begin the trip home tomorrow while Lynn and Monica will be staying for another crack at Sturgis in the morning and another night here. We meet some Canadian neighbors on a Harley bagger of some sort, in after three weeks on the road. We invite one another to each other's fire later in the evening, but neither of us end-up making it. When the darkness comes we light our fire and pull up our chairs. Although the

air lacks the autumnal nip that really makes a fire delightful, it is still pleasant to sit and talk with friends. We make plans to come back together next year. It is nearing midnight when we finally hit the tents.

Susan wants to go through Spearfish Canyon one more time, so when we saddle up in the morning that is our destination. This means that after our one mile per hour trip through Deadwood we turn left toward the mountain-top city of Lead. This requires the negotiation of a very steep road and some tricky starts and stops. Despite its commanding location, Lead is not a pretty town. It lacks Deadwood's sense of history and Spearfish's charm. But it is the way to Cheyenne Crossing and the top of the Canyon. As always when leaving a rally, I feel a combination of anticipation and remorse: anticipation for the road ahead and remorse that it is over. But if there is a way to end the Motor-Classic in style, Spearfish Canyon has got to be it.

At the top of the Canyon we stop at the Cheyenne Crossing store for just a few minutes and proceed down the Canyon. There is no real way to describe the beauty of Spearfish Canyon, although during the rally is not the best time to see it. In fact, go to Sturgis for any number of reasons, but if you really want to experience the Hills go during a time when the rally is not in progress. Although there is a certain beauty to a half-million bikes, when one is there for the beauty of the hills the bikes just get in the way. We stop at Spearfish for lunch at a Chinese restaurant and talk about how we want to get home. We have already decided to not rush. We'll get as far as Bismarck and stay for the night and head home tomorrow. At our gas stop Susan makes the suggestion that we take a less direct route home and head to the North Unit of the Teddy Roosevelt National Park for the night. I readily agree, and we head north out onto open prairie again.

The wind blows cool blustery from the north and smells strongly of rain, but who cares? I love the feeling I get whenever I exchange any city or other congested area for the open. Still lots of bikes heading in, but I'm glad I'm not one of them. This was a lot of fun. I am glad I did it and will probably head back again next year, but just for a few days. When it comes right down to it I like the riding best; everything else is just window dressing. We ride in and out of spattering rain; nothing heavy enough to put on the rain-suits for. Of course out here we can see that the rain comes, not from a concentrated storm, but from wispy line squalls, and that most of it evaporates before it hits the ground. Many times in my life I have been able to slip between major downpours by simply varying my speed or route a bit.

We are on 85 again, heading due north, but we have agreed that we will skirt east at Buffalo in order to avoid the gravel we hit two days ago on the way down here. East for a bit on SD 20 and then north toward Scranton which is (barely) in North Dakota, where we stop for some gas and some much needed fluids. We decide to wend our way through the farm and ranch country and gradually work our way back to 85, rather than to cut straight back on 12. We stop at Belfield, which is at the intersection of 85, and I-94, and go into a Mom & Pop store to buy food to make for supper. Then it's north on 85 toward the ND Badlands. Until, of course, we are stopped by road construction. Still, a 20-minute wait in the soft evening sun of remote western North Dakota isn't the same as sitting in traffic and swearing, and so we are able to enjoy ourselves nonetheless.

To be continued.....

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Sunshine Coordinator is Rosie Rudebeck. Whenever a club member is hospitalized or loses a loved one, please call Rosie so she can send them a card from the club. 763-757-6586

Steffan Fay is our web meister. Please visit our club web site at www.bmwocm.com to get the latest info on club events. Contact Steffan at sfay@odbs.com.

The **voice line** number is **612-534-7433**. Call the voice line to get up-to-date info about club events.

Deadline for newsletter ads and submissions is the 21st of the month. Really, it is. Contact Bart at blbakker@isd.net or phone 651.645.7796.

Want ads and commercial ad policies:

1. All ads should be sent to Bart Bakker, 740 Curfew Street, St Paul MN 55114-1045 or email to blbakker@isd.net
2. Any member may place a commercial or personal ad of approximately business-card size.
3. Commercial ads will be run each month without renewal (space permitting). Individual ads will be run for 2 issues and then will be deleted if not renewed.
4. If items are sold from your ad, we would appreciate notification. Deadline is the 21st of the month – after that, no guarantees.

For Sale : **1984 BMW R80ST**, 19,000 miles, “best handling airhead BMW made,” \$3695. Also for sale, **1985 R80 GS** \$4,500 Bob Cox 651.489.6467.

For Sale : **1966 R-69S**, 2,800 miles, original everything \$12,000. Also for sale, a **1965 R60**, 100 point restoration , \$8,000.

For Sale : tow behind motorcycle-**cargo trailer**, home made, 40x48”. Has a19 cu. ft. car top carrier on top, with spare tire. Cooler rack on extended tongue. Not used in over 2 years, asking \$150.00 or possible trade for good touring seat for my 1980 R100. Doug Hasert
612-727-2611.

For Sale : **Fuel cell**, came off an oilhead GS , will fit other bikes. Cell and hardware, \$100 Bob Cox ,
651.489.6467.

BMW Motorcycle Owner's Club of Minnesota
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