

# THE BEEMER

BMW Hotline 595-6203

NOVEMBER 2004

President: Steve Stratz – 242-1567  
Vice President: Terry Elliott – 776-2626  
Secretary: Chad Hargis – 833-9669

Treasurer: David Sparkman – 292-6041  
Newsletter Editor: Polly Wright – 794-4280  
Activities Dir: Mark King 790-8038

## PRESIDENT' CORNER/ EMPEROR'S CORNER

By

Steve Stratz

We have two very important events coming up this Tuesday. The first is to make sure that you vote for the presidential candidate of my choice to be our Commander In Chief and leader of the free world. Second but equally important is to re-elect me to continue on with a second term as your emperor. This election is rigged, so any vote for the three-legged blind goat that some of the Old Guard has been backing only serves to let me know whether you're "wi'me or agin me". Besides, the three-legged blind goat has turned up missing. He didn't have much of a platform to run on anyway. Ha! Pun intended. Terry Elliott intends to continue on as Vice President, and Chad Hargis as Secretary. David Sparkman's stellar performance, record and reputation as a completely honest and competent treasurer has forced me to have him replaced by someone more sympathetic to my whims. Your vote for Mark King as Treasurer is highly encouraged. We will need someone to step forward as the new Activities Chairperson to plan and lead rides, picnics and parties. This is your chance to share what you enjoy with the rest of the club. The meeting and elections will be held at Pie In The Sky Pizza in Cool Springs at 6:30 on Tuesday, November 2. I'll be showing a short video of a GS ride we took from the Top O' The Rockies Rally over Schoffield Pass and Lead King Basin in Colorado back in July.

Don't forget to come to Bloodworth's Open House and Bike Show this Saturday, October 30. You are encouraged to enter your bike in the show. Bloodworth is also sponsoring the Post-Turkey Day Ride on Friday, November 26. The Christmas Party is scheduled for December 7 at Pig & Pie, but be prepared for a possible date change on this.  
SScratch@bellsouth.net

## MEETING

NOVEMBER 2, 2004  
6:30 PM

PIE IN THE SKY  
PIZZA PARLOR

COOL SPRINGS  
FRANKLIN, TN

I just wanted to take a little space to let you all know how much I appreciate the honor bestowed on me at the last meeting and the one for Carson at the meeting before that. I know David and Virginia were responsible for this and it was truly appreciated. I do things for the club because I love all you guys and gals. It is something I got started with because Carson wanted to join the club when it was started in 1980. I think he depended on me to tell him what was going on because he was beginning to loose some hearing even then. It has become like a second family to me and he always enjoyed visiting with all of you at the meetings and Rally's. My heartfelt thanks to all of you for the compliments and love. I'll probably stay a member as long as you want me to. I love doing things like this and besides, I'm old enough to treat you like my kids and you mind me better than they ever did.

Thanks again.

Polly



**Letter from the Editor**  
Polly Wright

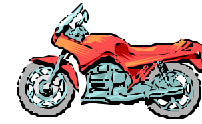
We will meet at the Pie in The Sky Pizza Place at Cool Springs on November 2, 2004, 6:30 PM. Please let me know if you plan to be there.

Elections of our officers for the coming year will be held that night. If you would like to nominate someone for office, please get their permission before you nominate them.

Don't forget to get out and vote on November 2<sup>nd</sup> for President of the United States. The polls will be open from 7:00 in the morning until 7:00 at night. PLEASE TAKE YOUR VOTER CARD WHEN YOU GO TO VOTE. YOU WILL NEED SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION IF YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR CARD. I will not be at the November meeting because I will be working in the Election Office.

We will meet at Pig & Pie for our Christmas Party and I will need a definite commitment from you, if you plan to attend. Please let me know as soon as you can. The date will be December 7<sup>th</sup> and I'll give you the time later. Probably will be 6:30 just like the regular meeting. I'll give you more details in next newsletter and maybe some for the meeting, next week.

See you in December  
Polly



## CALENDER OF EVENTS

**Oct 30** – Bloodworth Motorcycles Bike Show and Open House

**Nov 2** - BMWCON Meeting at Pie in the Sky Pizza

**Nov 26** - Post Turkey Day Ride - Sponsored by Bloodworth BMW

**Dec 7** - BMWCON Christmas Party at Pig & Pie Restaurant

**Jan 7 - 9** - International Motorcycle Show in Atlanta

<http://show.motorcycleshows.com/IMSBrandManager/V40/index.cvn>

**Jan 21 – 23-** Arena Cross Municipal Auditorium  
[http://www.arenacross.com/showDetail?id=copy\\_of\\_Show.2003-11-26.2623](http://www.arenacross.com/showDetail?id=copy_of_Show.2003-11-26.2623)

**Feb 26** - Supercross In Atlanta  
<http://supercross.cc.com/tickets/x.php?mode=view&tile=1&id=8771156>

**Feb 26** - Supercross In Atlanta  
<http://supercross.cc.com/tickets/x.php?mode=view&tile=1&id=8771156>

**March 4 – 13** Daytona Bike Week

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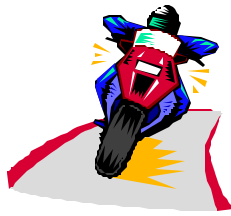
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**Tom Sherrill and Lee Waggoner**  
Call us toll-free at (888) 729-9836 or email us at: [mctchair@centerville.net](mailto:mctchair@centerville.net).

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**BMWCON.ORG YOU CAN DOWNLOAD A MEMBER APPLICATION AND FIND OUT ALL SORTS OF GOOD THINGS. CHECK IT OUT.**

BMW Club email: {[pw630@aol.com](mailto:pw630@aol.com)}

<http://nashlinks.com/remember.htm>  
[www.bmwmoa.org/features/080502openhouse.htm](http://www.bmwmoa.org/features/080502openhouse.htm)

**ALABAMA CLUB:** [www.merrill.org](http://www.merrill.org)  
**Barbers museum information:** { [www.barbermuseum.org](http://www.barbermuseum.org)

{ [www.bmwmoa.org](http://www.bmwmoa.org) }  
[www.bmwra.com](http://www.bmwra.com)

{ [www.bmwriders.com/](http://www.bmwriders.com/) }  
[www.cycleshows.com/index.html](http://www.cycleshows.com/index.html)

**Bloodworth Motorsports:** [bloodmotor.com](http://bloodmotor.com)  
**Knoxville**

<http://tailofthedragon.com>  
<http://www.sportbikeshop.com/index.htm>  
<http://www.sportbikeshop.com/weblinks.html>  
Iberian Moto Tours – { [www.imt-bike.com](http://www.imt-bike.com) }

[www.bmwclub.org](http://www.bmwclub.org)  
[www.AmericanMotor.com](http://www.AmericanMotor.com)  
[www.midsouthswapmeet.com](http://www.midsouthswapmeet.com)  
<http://www.miamimotorcycle.com>  
[Newsdesk@AmericanMotor.com](mailto:Newsdesk@AmericanMotor.com)

**NEW:**{[www.mcwriders@motorcycleworld.com](mailto:www.mcwriders@motorcycleworld.com)  
[www.classickawasakiclub.com](http://www.classickawasakiclub.com)  
[Newsdesk@AmericanMotor.com](mailto:Newsdesk@AmericanMotor.com)

**GLOBEBUSTERS** [www.globebusters.com](http://www.globebusters.com)

[www.usdesmo.com/events.html](http://www.usdesmo.com/events.html)  
[www.bmwchr.org](http://www.bmwchr.org)  
[www.motorcycleevents.com](http://www.motorcycleevents.com) Reference # E04450

**Here is a new website for you to visit.**

[www.29Dreams.com](http://www.29Dreams.com)

**Motoworld** <http://www.motoworld.com/>  
**ESPN's RPM** <http://rpm.espn.go.com/rpm/>  
**Speed Channel** <http://www.speedtv.com>

**BMW Motorcycle USA**  
<http://www.bmwmotorcycles.com/home>

**Helen Tow Wheels Packing Systems**  
<http://www.helen2wheels.com/>

**Cycle Trader** <http://www.cycletrader.com/>

|  |              |       |  |                  |         |
|--|--------------|-------|--|------------------|---------|
| Motorcycle gear BMW and brands you know and love |              |       |  |                  |         |
| 2 hard plastic side saddle bags with liners      |              |       |  | good, tight lock | \$20 0  |
| One Piece Rain Suit                              | Tourmaster   | XL    |  | excell ent       | \$35    |
| Black Leather Pants                              | Field Shield | 48-50 |  | excell ent       | \$50    |
| Rain Jacket                                      | Field Shield | XL    |  | excell ent       | \$35    |
| Reflective vest                                  | Vision       | XL    |  | excell ent       | \$25    |
| Black Leather Jacket                             | Pro Sport    | 50    |  | excell ent       | \$80    |
| helmet cases, cloth Shoei and other brands       |              |       |  | excell ent       | \$15 ea |



Polly,  
As per our conversation at the Shiloh Rally, and at the risk of shameless self promotion, I am reporting that my 1967 R60/2 with Steib sidecar won 1st place at this years Steel Horse Stampede. The category that I won in was the "Metric Cruiser" category. The antique class was reserved for Harley's only. The competition in the metric category were 2 Vincent's (one was a Black Knight), 2 Triumph Bonnies, a BSA and a host of Japanese Cruisers. Caulk one up for BMW.  
Regards, Vince

## Bloodworth BMW Motorcycle's Bike Show and Open House

Saturday, October 30, is the date set for Bloodworth Motorcycles Fall Motorcycle Show and Open House. Motorcycles and fun will be the order of the day. The Bike Show will be an "all brands" show with no entry fee. Those who enter their motorcycles in the bike show will have a chance to win awards given to the various class winners. In addition to the Bike Show, Bloodworth Motorcycles will be hosting an Open House to showcase the latest in BMW Motorcycles and motorcycling accessories.

Pig and Pie Restaurant will be on hand with breakfast and lunch as well as soft drinks for purchase.

### Schedule of Events

8:30am – 2pm Food available for purchase from Pig & Pie Restaurant

9am - 10:45am Registration for the bike show

11am – 1pm - People's Choice Bike judging to take place

**2pm - Awards Presentation.**

Rain date for the Bike Show and Open House is November 6<sup>th</sup>. For further information call Bloodworth Motorcycles at 321-3311 or go to our web site at [www.bloodmotor.com](http://www.bloodmotor.com)

## Post Turkey Day Ride

Those of you who have been in the club for a number of years, you will remember the days when the club would meet on the Friday after Thanksgiving and ride to East Hills Café in Dickson for lunch. East Hill Restaurant closed many years ago and we have not really had a post Turkey Day Ride since. Bloodworth Motorcycles would like to revive this old tradition by organizing a Post Turkey Day Ride.

On Friday, November 26, interested riders will meet at Bloodworth Motorcycles at 8:30am for coffee, donuts and conversation. At 9am the group will take off on a morning ride that will end up the new Puckett's Grocery and Restaurant in downtown Franklin around 11:30am. The route will be handed out at the dealership Friday morning before we take off. Be sure to mark your calendar for November 26 and make plans to join us.

## Register Now

With the coming of new products from BMW, both in motorcycles, Riders Apparel and accessories, Bloodworth Motorcycles would like to be able to better inform our customers as the new products come about. We would like to also inform our customers about upcoming motorcycle related events of interest, such as racing, rallies, and open houses. The best way to do that would be with an e-newsletter. Additionally, we would like to make sure that our customer information is current. So the next time you are in the shop, be sure to fill out one of our customer information cards. As a little incentive, for each quarter that you complete a card, you will be placed in that quarters drawing for a \$100 gift certificate. Customer information forms can be found at the parts counter.

## Service Specials

The service department at Bloodworth Motorcycles is offering a great new service special for a limited time. A **\$30 oil change**, using all BMW parts and oils (petroleum). For less than it would cost you in parts to do it yourself, we will be the ones getting dirty, we will get rid of the used oil, and we will take a look at your brakes, tires and check for recalls. No appointments are needed. We can do it all while you wait.

## BMW's Year End Burn Out

If you've been dreaming of owning a new BMW motorcycle, you could search high and low and never find a better time to buy than now. BMW Motorrad USA is offering up to \$2,000 market allowance, up to the first 3 payments made, and interest rates as low as 0.9%. Programs may vary by year and model. Now is the time!! Come by Bloodworth Motorcycles and see Glenn or David about these great deals. Don't was any time because this is only available on current stock and only through December 31, 2004.

# Bike Storage

For some motorcycle owners, winter storage of their motorcycle can be somewhat of a problem. Keeping the bike out of the cold and damp conditions, keeping the battery charged, and just knowing that the bike is protected. It might even be nice to have a place to park the motorcycle(s), so that you can free up your garage so that you can work on other “garage” projects for the winter. Bloodworth Motorcycles has a solution. For the first time, Bloodworth Motorcycles is offering a winter storage program for their customers at their shop warehouse at 288 White Bridge Road. For \$20 a month, your motorcycle will be parked indoors and we will keep your battery charged. Then when spring rolls around or you have finished your winter garage project, you can come and pick up your motorcycle. For further details, call the service

Space is limited, so call soon for further details on winter motorcycle storage and / or to find out about motorcycle winterizing services, please call the service department.

## 2004 – 2005 MOTORCYCLE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct 30 – Bloodworth Motorcycles Bike Show and Open House

**Nov 2 - BMWCON Meeting at Pie in the Sky  
Pizza 6:30 PM**

Dec 7 - BMWCON Christmas Party at Pig & Pie Restaurant

Jan 1 – Annual Polar Bear Ride - TBA

Jan 7 - 9 International Motorcycle Show in Atlanta  
<http://show.motorcycleshows.com/IMSBrandManager/V40/index.cvn>

Jan 21 - 23 Arena Cross Municipal Auditorium  
[http://www.arenacross.com/showDetail?id=copy\\_of\\_Show.2003-11-26.2623](http://www.arenacross.com/showDetail?id=copy_of_Show.2003-11-26.2623)

Feb 1 – Chili Cook-off – Club House at Mike Gillespie’s neighborhood

Feb 26 - Supercross In Atlanta  
<http://supercross.cc.com/tickets/x.php?mode=view&tile=1&id=8771156>

March 1 – Club Meeting - TBA

March 4 – 13 Daytona Bike Week

April 5 – Club Meeting - TBA

April 22 – Opening of the Art of the Motorcycle in Memphis

April 22 –24 AMA Superbike Championship Series at Barbers Motorsports Park

May 3 – Club Meeting – TBA

May 13 – 15 European Rider’s Rally – Burkesville, KY

May 27 –29 EuroFest Nashville – The Factory at Franklin

May 27 – 29 Rocket City Rally – Huntsville, AL

June 7 – Club Meeting – TBA

July 5 – Club Meeting - TBA

July 21-24 BMWMOA National Rally  
The Allen County Fairgrounds  
Lima, OH

Aug 6 – Club Picnic – TBA

**Aug 30-Sept 2 Curve Cowboy Reunion -  
Jackson Lake Lodge, Grand Teton National  
Park, WY**

Sept 1 – 5 – Motorcycle Jubilee at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel

Sept 6 Club Meeting - TBA

Sept. 30 – Oct 2 - Return to Shiloh Rally

Oct 4 – Club Meeting and Rally Preparation - TBA

Oct 6 – 9 BMWRA Rally – Shelbyville, TN

Nov 1 – Club Meeting – TBA

Dec 6 – Christmas Party - TBA

# Big Ride 2004 For Patriot Dream...

By Mark King



Ron and I are both pretty regular church goers and our church friends often ask us if we ever visit any churches while we are on these trips. The simple answer for them is no, but the answer for those of you who can understand and relate to this is that we go to church all the time on these rides – just not the kind they are talking about. God provided grand cathedrals of His creation on this trip (and all the others that we have been on) for us to worship in as we rode. This was definitely a church morning.



Loft Mountain Coffee Shop

Our first stop on Skyline Drive was at Loft Mountain where you can get a cup of coffee at a combination gift shop and snack bar. A coffee break on this cool morning was just what the doctor ordered.

As a part of the National Park Service, the people who staff these gift shops and coffee shops are usually either retirees or college students who work

for small hourly wages just to be ‘stationed’ in such scenic and sometimes remotes places. Ron and I can both see ourselves looking into this in just a few years!

While we sipped our coffee our conversation revealed that we had both been mulling over the same question.

Which mountains are more beautiful - the Rockies or the Appalachians? We decided then and there that a reasonably sane person couldn’t rate one over the other. They are certainly different, but both spectacular in their own way. The Rockies have the beauty of the high altitude rocky faces, and the Appalachians have that beautiful coating of green trees and the smoky blue haze that gives their Smoky and Blue Ridge names.

Continuing to ride north we stopped at an overlook and met a man and his lady companion who were riding Harleys southbound. They were from Michigan and we traded only a few words about our



Gettysburg, PA

respective destinations and routes. They, too, were surprised at the cool temperature and related how they had to keep adding more layers of clothing at each stop along the way.

We returned to the parkway and completed the 105 mile length of Skyline Drive. At Front Royal we stopped for a brief lunch at a restaurant named JoJo’s and made the 340 connection back to I-81.

We rode I-81 north about 60 miles through both the West Virginia and Maryland panhandles and crossed the Mason-Dixon Line into Pennsylvania. In PA we took state highway 16 and US15 to Gettysburg. While we were again mixing history, we had to make at least a brief stop at the visitors' center. Those of you who have been here before know that you could easily spend a couple of days touring the whole area – especially if you're a Civil War buff.

From Gettysburg we took US30 east toward Philadelphia. We went through some nice towns like York (we went right by the massive Harley plant there) and Lancaster. East of Lancaster we took state 340 to the Pennsylvania town of Intercourse (how could we pass that up?). And how did Intercourse wind up, of all places, smack in the middle of Amish country? We promised our wives that having this kind of Intercourse on a Big Ride was the only kind that we would ever consider. Besides, Ron had a headache and my wife has taught me that I can never go directly to Intercourse without going through Foreplay first (and I don't even know where that is). Believe me, these Intercourse lines just go on and on and they get worse and worse as you go so I'll just stop here. Well, maybe just one more – did you know that if you miss Intercourse you'll wind up in Blue Ball only 6 miles away?



We saw quite a few horse drawn carriages still used by the Amish. As different as their lives must be, we noted at least one thing that is the same whether you're in a carriage or a mini-van. As we passed one of those carriages, two little mop-headed blonde Amish boys were fighting in the back seat!

We went on this afternoon to Valley Forge which is near King of Prussia, PA. We got there in time to ride through the site of Washington's encampment and while wandering around looking for a small town motel we passed through Phoenixville, PA. Ron recognized this as the location for the filming of the 50's sci-fi movie *The Blob*. You get extra trivia points if you know what

male Hollywood icon starred in that movie – it was Steve McQueen.

We gave up on the small town motel and rode back into King of Prussia where a Best Western seemed to be the logical choice for the night. There was a Chili's right across the street that we could walk to from the motel. After you ride all day, it feels good to walk a little so we always try to find a motel with a restaurant within walking distance. Total mileage for the day was 407. We got up early the next morning, Sunday, August 8, to ride through Valley Forge one more time and take a few pictures in the morning light. The Continental Army spent the winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge and touring it powerfully calls forth the same spirit of patriotism, sacrifice, and resolve that brought American independence. Here, through months of drill and practice, the army became a professional force that marched onto victory over the British and secured America's freedom in 1783.

From Valley Forge we took a short ride into downtown Philadelphia knowing that traffic this early on a Sunday morning would be light. If any city can claim to be the nation's birthplace, this is it. Both the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were created in Independence Hall. Also on view is the Liberty Bell, an international symbol of freedom. In fact, we were amazed at the number of foreign tourists we saw here and in Boston later on.

Security at Independence Hall has been significantly tightened since 9/11. Now to enter these sites you must wait in line for a security check very similar to an airport screening and stay with a closely controlled tour group. We all know the necessity for this, but I missed the freedom to explore these sites on my own that I experienced years earlier when I first visited.

Next we went over to Washington Crossing, PA to see the site where George Washington led his ragged troops across the ice-choked Delaware River on December 26, 1776 to surprise German soldiers employed by the British at Trenton, NJ. This stunning victory boosted American morale at one of the lowest points in the Revolution.

We also crossed the Delaware here and wondered why George didn't just use the bridge – just kidding!

**Continued in December Issue**

# THE EUROPEAN ALPS EXPERIENCE

Part II  
Hack Tidman

So the Tour begins. Twenty-four people, divided up between nine ladies and fifteen men, plus a Tour Leader and a Van Driver. We are making a fourteen day loop, starting and ending in Munich. This includes, first heading west to Imst, Austria ( 1 night), to Feldkirch, Austria ( 1 night), to Interlaken, Switzerland ( 2 nights), to Andermatt, Switzerland ( 1 night), to Zuoz, Switzerland ( 1 night), to Trentino, Italy ( 1 night), to Arabba, Italy ( 2 nights), to Villach, Austria (1 night), to Salzburg, Austria (1 night), to Munich (another night).

Most of the people on the Tour were traveling in pairs or foursomes. Jim Cooper and I shared a room as we came to ride together. One couple from Marietta had asked a lady friend of theirs if she wanted to come and ride ( 2 up ) with the tour director, as he said it would be OK. Being the sport that she was, she agreed to do it, and we believe the Tour Director became quite smitten with her, as she was pretty easy on the eyes. There were two couples from California in the Riverside area who came together. Both ladies had to show off their enhancements to the Group, mostly in a competing way. I don't believe either wore the same outfit to dinner any two nights. I don't see how they got all those clothes in their suitcases.

On Beach's Tours, we usually stay in the best hotels, with the rooms with the best views. Many of ours were suites. The Breakfasts were top drawer with eggs and the works, that came with the rooms, and dinners were at least five courses most every night, that is also included in the tour. You might say, the hotels and meals were all five star. The Tour price also included the motorcycles, which were all BMW's. The only thing that wasn't covered in the Tour Price were lunches, and maybe two or three evening meals for the second night in the same town. You also had to pay for your gasoline, which wasn't cheap. To fill up my RT would take the equivalent of \$30.00 U.S.. Meeting you at the airport and taking you back was a real plus. You can look up Beach's Motorcycle Tours on their website, to see what they offer and what price. And decide if the price is worth the trip for 2 weeks.

Every night after supper the Tour Leader, Rob Beach, would stand up and we would go over the next day's trip. Normally, there would be an option of three routes that we could take to get to the night's destination. He would talk about each one. Like what we could see, or the number of mountain passes we would go over, the scenic views, etc. Also, if we wanted to stop for lunch, where the good places are located. He then talked about the hotel and where it would be located. Some of the hotels and towns cater to the motorcycle bunch, as that town, such as Arabba, Italy, is a cross roads for those riding north/south or east/west. The Hotel Evaldo had an enclosed or underground parking garage for motorcycles only, no cars allowed. At 7:15 pm on the first night there, I counted 78 motorcycles parked in the garage.

The nightly meetings after supper lasted about an hour. Rob then presented buttons to those who did good deeds to others. He also presented buttons to those who fouled up during that particular day. And there was a button for those who showed problem solving skills in dilemmas they were

having. I know I got a button for ingenuity, for finding our hotel in the middle of town in Villach, Austria. At rush hour in this medium sized town with a bunch of one-way streets, and with the front of the hotel located on a pedestrian only mall, after Jim and I tried for twenty minutes to find this hotel, I finally stopped at a taxi stand and offered a driver 10 Euros to lead the way. He jumped at the chance and within five minutes he had us at the back of the place, where we were supposed to park the bikes anyway.

After supper and the meetings, we would get together with our partners and plan out our route for the next day. We had the tour book, which described each route, and a huge map of each country. It sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, each day we would have a great big breakfast, check out of the room by 8:30 am or earlier, and get to the bikes. For some reason, I would lead and Jim would follow. Many times, I would check my mirror and Jim would not be behind me. So I would wait for three minutes and he would show up. He had stopped to take a picture. Every time he takes a picture, he had to log it in a notebook. I kept telling him to log the location and the subject later, but that didn't suit him. I said, "Jim, if you don't get the location just right, nobody is going to give a damn". But he is stubborn. Another reason he might disappear from my mirror is that if he thought I should make a turn or I turned and he thought I turned at the wrong place, he then stops and sits there until I come back. This doesn't sit well with me, so I tell him to lead for awhile. But no, he doesn't want too.

When we toured New Zealand and Norway, it seemed easy to get around or ask directions. In the Alps, it is a different ball game. It seems like there is a "Y" or "T" intersection every couple of kilometers. Let's say we are heading for Huben. OK, we stop at a "Y" intersection and we find the name Huben. The sign says take the right fork. We take the right fork. In two kilometers we get to another "Y" intersection. There is no sign for Huben. There is a sign for Lienz or St. Jakob or Corvara. So which way do we go? We get out the map and look for one of the towns on the map. After 5 minutes we might find one, but a lot of the towns are not on the map. So we try to ask someone, but no one is around to ask. Let's say there is someone, but they can't speak English. So we say Huben and point to the right. They indicate that it is correct, or they just look blank, because they don't know what we are looking for. The towns on the map are written in English. These people may never have been more than 50 kilometers from where they live. If we point to a town on the map, they may not be able to read it. The city of Munich is the English word for the town. To German natives, Munich is spelled Munchen. So there is a real communications problem in the Alps. Switzerland is more of a problem than Germany or Italy, because the Swis s have skimped on road signs and the people do not seem as willing to communicate with you. And in the Alps, the roads do not have numbers in the rural areas, such as Hwy 100 or 412. One time in northern Italy, Jim and I spent two hours and went 60 kilometers and then were lost and came back to where we started. I had my compass, but that didn't work either, because the roads are too curvy.

There were three other annoyances about the Tour. Number one was the number of switchbacks or bobby pin curves to climb the mountains. There may be twenty or more to get to the top and the same amount to go back down. These are both time consuming and stressful. You have got to

look over your shoulder before you get to the curve to see if a bus or truck is coming up or down. If so, you have to stop because they are going to take up the whole road. And when you get ready to go around that hairpin turn you need to swing out into the oncoming lane. An example of this around here is to go out Hwy 100. Right on McCrory Lane, left on Poplar Creek Rd., down to South Harpeth, and make that right turn. That will show you what I mean. Some of the back road switchbacks were very narrow and really treacherous. Many times there are trees in your view and you can't see until it's about too late. And before the Tour was over, I was getting kind of tired of those switchbacks. Give me some good sweepers instead, like you find around here or northern Georgia.

The second thing I didn't like were the brakes on the RT. These are power linked brakes with ABS. And I want to tell you if you are not use to using them, they will bite you on your rear end. A couple of times, I applied a little too much pressure to the front brake lever and stopped sooner than I had anticipated. One time, I was at an awkward angle when I stopped and I almost didn't have a long enough leg to get it to the ground. I just barely saved it. Twice, I was coming up the mountain through the hairpins and at the corner of the hairpin; there is a large sign that looks like this. ( >>><<< ). This indicates it is the point of the road, and the road makes a 180 degree turn back the other way. Well, twice I was coming up the road and someone had taken this sign down. All of a sudden, there was no road in front of me. So I grab the brakes pretty hard. I want to tell you here and now, that when you do this, this RT is going to stop right now, like in less than ten feet!!!! I ended up sitting on the gas tank. The only thing that kept me from sliding beyond the gas tank was because my legs crashed into the fairing. I was able to get my feet on the ground before the bike fell over, however, and was able to save the spill.

The third stressful fact about this RT was the terrible surging it had. Between 27 hundred and 32 hundred rpms, and no load on the engine, there is a huge amount of surging. I have read a lot about this, but it is a shame that BMW has not done anything about it.

European merchants don't seem to work very hard. At least in the Alps area. The stores open about 8:00 or 9:00 am. About noon they would close until 2:30 pm when they would reopen. And close for the day about 6:00 pm. On Saturday afternoons and Sundays they would be closed. They do take credit cards for large purchases only, but unlike in the States, you always have to have a PIN. Many of the gas stations are unmanned. To buy gas at these, you have to have a credit card with a PIN. A few have a machine that will take 10 or 20

Euro bills, but if you fill up your tank before you use up your money, it doesn't give change back. And I had a BP gas credit card, but it didn't work in Europe at the BP station.

The next to the last day of the tour, we spent the night in a suburb of Salzburg. Rob Beach knew a professional city Tour Director who said he would give us a tour of old Salzburg, Mozart's home town. So most of our group got up early and caught the city bus and met the guide. He had a Goldwing 1500, and said the new 1800's were selling for \$30,000 there. So we took the tour, saw where Julie Andrews and the children sang in "the Sound of Music", and got back to the hotel about 1:00 pm. We changed into our riding clothes and our van driver said he would lead us back to Munich on Rob Beach's 10 year old GS with a GPS. That was a hoot, the best part of the trip. He said we might be going down dead end driveways or anything else, before we got back to Munich. Well, that was an experience. Fun though. The roads went through the woods, small drives, big and little roads. Some through fields on roads that were two-way, but no wider than your driveway. Those of us in the rear had to get up to 130 kph to keep up with this guy. But we all made it OK.

I always hate the plane trip back to the States. U.S. Airways uses Boeing 767 for overseas flights. The flight attendants were ugly and over-the-hill. After we got on board, they told us in economy class that we had 4 restrooms to use, and were not allowed to use those in business or first class. Then they said one of ours was out of order, leaving 3 to use for about 200 people. Before we got back to Philadelphia, they closed down another, so we ended up with two restrooms. Then we had to circle for 20 minutes before landing in Philadelphia. U.S. Air must not be in good standing with the air controllers. When we were getting ready to leave the gate in Munich, the Captain comes on the PA and says our cargo door is broken, and we'll have to get that fixed before take-off. When we got ready to leave Philadelphia for Nashville, the Captain comes on the PA and says we are ready to go, but we don't have enough fuel, so we'll have to wait on the fuel truck. Then the fuel truck pulls up and the driver is on his cell phone. Probably wants to know if U.S. Air's credit is good.

So there you have it. The Tour was more fun than I made it sound, but not as good as the Norwegian or New Zealand Tour. If anyone wants to talk to me about it, give me a call at Emma's Flowers (commercial plug). 327-0202.

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**Gillespie, Mark king**

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