



# die Zeitung

July 1, 2005

## Upcoming Events:

- 2 Jul-Capitol BMW Open House 10am-3pm  
5200 Atlantic Avenue  
Raleigh, NC 27616  
(919) 834-5111
- 3 July Club Meeting, Waffle World 8 for 9am

## Rick Moran Memorial Ride

The date for Rick's Memorial ride is still being worked but will most likely be in the early fall, probably the Sept-Oct time frame. Among the meeting notes, web site, and *die Zeitung*, we should be able to get the word to all club members.

## Bob Ross Rides With Two Classic Air Heads!

*I think Bob means that in the most complementary way.* Last Sunday Mike Bodner with his newly acquired RS and I met up with Bob outside of Smithfield where Mike took us



on a really great tour of extreme southern Virginia's back roads. Being the consummate epicurean, our first stop, naturally, was for breakfast at one of Mike's favorite stop and go Quick Marts. After finishing my bacon, egg, cheese, and grease sandwich I was pretty sure my cholesterol had a comma in it. To scope out the upcoming memorial ride, we stopped by the site where Rick Moran had his accident where we met Rick's wife and some of her friends who had just placed a wreath on the spot. One of her neighbors had made a very nice cross and placed it on the center median. We exchanged ideas for the memorial ride and went on our way

To be sure the day was a memorable one, Mike finally found a downpour for us to ride in so we could get that nasty old dust off our machines. A great time was had by all!

## Memo From Herb

*By Herb Gill*

I want to thank everyone who has helped in one way or another to raise money for my van fund. That said, I thought you might like to hear the story of how I got my van. I had been watching vans in a magazine called Disabled Dealer as well as Ebay. The problem was that everything was going for \$12-18,000. I was never going to raise that much! Then one evening I was scanning Ebay. It was late and I was on page 14 in my search when I noticed a van that almost seemed too good to be true. A 1989 Chevy G20, 71,000 miles, a raised roof, and a Braun lift for \$2800. I thought about it for a day, then paid the money to have it checked out (all the time driving my wife nuts talking about it). The report came back good. Talk about getting nervous. I'm buying a van that is in Pennsylvania, with only a report and 4 small pictures to go on. I made a mental list of all that could still be wrong with the van. Finally I told myself what I already knew, everything worth going for is a risk. I pressed about four buttons and made my bid. Well we won, so now my wife, Jeanne, had to take a day off of work and fly up to Harrisburg, PA. The drive back would tell a lot. She arrived home saying that it drove great. I had my mechanic check it over. The only thing that it needed was a rear axle seal and new brake shoes because of the leak. He then changed all of the fluids. I next had seat belts and wheel chair tie downs installed. All of that came to just over \$1,000. Thanks again people!

We still have to put a 4 way adjustable seat in and hand controls before I can drive. We have enough in the fund to do these things. It needed a good polish and wax job. I am doing that up to the bottom of the windows. I think I'm shaming some of my neighbors by waxing my van from my wheelchair.

The reason that I have taken you through all of this, is that you gave me the tools to get the job done. The club, some close personal friends, and the Friends Meeting Place, made this happen. Once again I will say thank you.

## Unofficial and Uninvited Dealership Inspections

*By Gary Shanafelt*

When I stop by **Adventure BMW**, I tell Rick things like "**Morton's** is offering Starbucks coffee for their patrons" and when I go to Morton's I tell Jeff Massey that "Rick is serving oversized cookies to his afternoon clientele". Steadily the snacks at both dealerships gets better and better. I have made it my life's work to travel the world evaluating BMW dealerships, *using very complex and ill-defined criteria*, with an objective of cranking up their CI (cookie index = ☺).

Last month while in Albuquerque I stopped off at **Albuquerque Motor Sports**. They have a mammoth show room and a huge stock of BMWs, Honda ATVs, Honda motorcycles, Kawasaki ATVs, Kawasaki motorcycles, Suzuki ATVs, Suzuki motorcycles, a big parts department, and a respectable line of clothing. A friendly salesman said hello to me as I entered (*a very important factor if being rated by a distinguished looking customer bringing with him nothing more than "Hoover Flags"*). I looked around but they had so much inventory packed so tightly into that store you couldn't even look at the bikes. There was one bike that caught my interest but even my svelte hips couldn't maneuver over to closely examine it without knocking over a whole row of new inventory. I had to be satisfied with standing just inside the front door gazing at the bikes and pretend I had the down payment in my pocket. AMS does, however, have a neat feature on their website. Log on and move your mouse. It

could easily replace the lava-lamp for lowbrow entertainment. ☺ ☺

One of the better small dealerships I visited is **Capitol BMW** in Raleigh, whose Open House is this weekend by the way. The dealer met me just as I stepped into the store, offered me coffee, asked what I was riding, and almost immediately offered to let me demo one of his R1150RTs. I felt like he really cared and I enjoyed the visit. They have a good inventory and lots of spirit. ☺ ☺½

While “camping” in North Carolina, I did a dealer search and found I was closest to **BMW Motorcycles of Cape Fear**. My pragmatic daughter said, why don't you call them to be sure they are open before you ride down there? *Just like a woman!* I explained to her that I was going down on a Thursday and every BMW dealership in the world is open on Thursdays. So I rode down to Wilmington only to find a hand written note on the door saying, “Closed for Inventory”. Having a look through the window at their two-bike inventory it led me to think they could have easily opened 15 minutes late and counted their entire inventory...twice. Of course when I got back to the campsite I had already thought of a great story of free coffee, a rather large danish, a couple demo rides, and ordering hard to find parts; anything to keep from admitting I should have called first. ☺

Last summer I was sentenced to a trip to Tulsa, Oklahoma and stopped by **Atlas Cycle**. Entering the dealership, I quickly realized the Beals family has a larger inventory of bikes in their garage than Atlas does on their showroom floor. They advertise selling aprilia · bmw · ducati · moto guzzi · mz · triumph but I have seen more bikes parked in front of Dairy Queen on a Wednesday night than they had in their showroom. The Okie setting behind the desk asked, “Are you here for the Gun Show?” (*No, goober. Just looking for the worst dealership in the USA.*) He did look familiar, though. I probably went to school with him. ☺

The website for **Cyclewerks of Barrington** (Illinois) gives you the impression it is a really classy operation so I just had to drop by. The ground floor showroom is modest but the second floor service department is apparently quite large. I could not, however, figure out how to get up to the second floor and there was no one to ask. Matter of fact, there was no one there at all. I hung around for about 15 minutes and I was literally the only one in the dealership. The phone rang and I nearly answered it just to have something to do. As a dealer, you start losing CI points quickly if no one greets me after 10-15 minutes. ☺ ½

One of the fastest growing dealerships in the U.S. is **BMW of Las Vegas** and it is one of the nicest shops I have visited. A LV friend and I met the sales manager, Fabian Grasso, who immediately started talking motorcycles. Fabian encouraged us to take a new K-bike out for a demo ride. I told him I was very happy with my airhead but my friend is definitely in the market. (*The truth is, my friend has never been on a motorcycle in his life and even if he did ride one, his wife would beat him to death as soon as she found out.*)

BMW of LV has been selling over 30 BIKES A MONTH since they opened almost two years ago. But hey, with a sales manager named Fabian, how can you miss! They have a great inventory, well displayed, a knowledgeable lady working the parts desk, and a very nice apparel section. Well worth a visit on your next trip to Sin City. ☺ ☺ ☺

Last week, setting in the parking lot of **Country Rode Motorwerks** just outside of Rochester, NY was the nicest R-75/5 I have seen in a very long time. It was a beautiful bike. It turned out to be the daily ride of sales manager Ron Stone, who said the bike has over 225K on the clock. A truly well loved airhead. After looking over their wide assortment of BMWs, Ron patiently walked me through the pros and pros of their Gerbing heated jackets but they didn't stock my size. *Schade!* Ron said Morton's airhead expert,

George Mangicaro, worked for CRM until he got tired of their two-week riding season and snow up to his shop rag. In addition to BMWs they also are the local purveyor of Vespa motor scooters. *(All right, I admit it. Yes, I've always wanted a Vespa.)* For a nice visit in Yankee-land, try CRM. ☺ ☺ ☺

There is one dealership that truly stands out from the others and that is **Irv Seaver BMW** who has been in Long Beach, CA area since 1953. About the time I was doing a one-year stretch in the eighth grade, Evan Bell hired on as a mechanic. Evan bought the business in 1979 but kept the Irv Seaver name.

As you approach Irv Seaver BMW the first thing that strikes you is the large inventory



of really nice pre-owned bikes surrounding the building. I sort of drifted around outside for about 40-minutes just looking over the merchandise and then stepped inside where the sales manager, Brian, was seated. I humbly answered that I was ridding a R100RT and he immediately came back stating what a great bike it is. *(Already I sensed that Brian really knew his stuff!)* We chatted briefly, with zero pressure to buy anything and I politely turned down a demo ride. I looked around the shop whose inside walls are lined with vintage BMW motorcycles that have been rebuilt, primarily by Evan Bell. Evan's 1923 R32 on display under glass.

As I was admiring the bikes, Evan walked up and we started talking. He explained that he makes about two trips a year to Germany for



motorcycle swap meets looking for unique parts for his unique collection. He had just completed rebuilding a R-90S and couldn't decide if he wanted to ride the bike first or just display it in his shop. As most of you know, riding the bike then means draining the fuel and oil out of it for display. Evan patiently ended up spending over an hour answering my simplistic questions about motorcycles. I felt quite honored to have spent so much time with him. He was coming to Buschgardens the next weekend with his grandchildren and I wish we could have arranged to have him talk to the Club.

Irv Seaver BMW won one of the Top 5 Performer awards for customer service in 2004 and after my visit, I can see why. If you are in southern California, it is well worth your time to visit Irv Seaver BMW in Long Beach and say hello to Evan Bell. ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

### Newsletter Options:

Last month a couple club members commented that they could not open the newsletter from the e-mail I sent them. If you prefer I can send it to your e-mail account in MS Word format. We also have one hardwired, analog, almost foolproof way of getting this valuable periodical in your hands and that is through the US Postal Service. If you want to bypass cyberspace and get your copy of *die Zeitung* in the mail, just ask!

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