



*01 Apr 10*

## President's Corner

*by Todd Tyer*

It appears Spring has finally Sprung! Despite the cold and wet weather I hope everyone kept their skills sharp this winter!

First off a Big Thank You to the Frankins for having the Club to the home for The Cabin Fever Breakfast in March. Thanks to Donna Frankin and Brenda Martin (*and Ms. Wendy Tyer*) for the preparations and the good vittles. Despite a death in the family The Frankins hosted a very nice gathering and opened their home and driveway to us for bit. The Club was represented by Gary, Larry, Pete, Scott, Gerry, Rusty, Lamar, Wendy, Myself and our host Dan. After a hearty breakfast and coffee fill up the 7 riders headed out for a ride to E-city, Plymouth and points south. I hope to get a full report at the April meeting! Wendy and I (after watching the riders leave and wishing we were along) got to spend a little time with Donna and Brenda cleaning up and visiting. We had a great time in our visit and Thanks Again to them for their hard work. While on the subject the turnout was only about a third of those who said they would attend. As the Club paid the bill for the food it's a shame that you didn't get to enjoy it. We did get to donate the left over baked goods to an outreach center.

April looks to be a very busy Month to start another great riding season!

In honor of Easter, The Club meeting has been moved to the second Sunday this month, April 11<sup>th</sup>. Come join us for a quick meeting and a good ride afterwards. The following weekend

we have The Open House at Mortons, April 17<sup>th</sup>. Last year we had approx. 7 members gather at the open house, I hope we can beat that this Year. I'll be going on the early ride up this year, I think Gary has the route down to a science by now. Charlie Vaughn has a ride planed for the 10<sup>th</sup> to ride the path of Lee's retreat for anyone available to join him he should be posting details on time and place soon.

So I think that's all for April, look for updates on the website and from the new Google group E-mails.

I've referenced the Google group several times so I guess I should give a little detail on it! The Google group was an idea by several on the board to serve as a quick way to inform the members of Club rides or events and to give members an easy way to discuss anything going on, be it Items for sale, ride maps or ideas for the Club. As always the Club website contains most of this information but members have found the forum a little hard to use. So far this has served as a good tool to communicate to the Club. If you receive this Newsletter but haven't joined the Google group the link to join is: <http://groups.google.com/group/bmw-motorcycle-club-of-hampton-roads>

Ride Safe,

**-Todd**

## Book Report on Two Stinkers!

by Gary Shanafelt

*Pilgrimage on a Steel Ride* is a waste of a good title. I am begging you to not buy this book and if you see it in the library, you'll do your community a favor by hiding it in the cooking section. Author Gary Paulsen spends most of the book telling us how he grew up poor, as if he is the only one ever to have a hard youth, and he has spent the rest of his life hosting one big Pity Party for himself. In this book Paulsen chronicles a trip he made from Alamogordo, NM to Fairbanks, AK with flashbacks describing his unfortunate upbringing and believe me, it is BOORING! Publishers Harcourt Brace & Co obviously never read the draft when they agreed to publish this loser, but that was not their only mistake. *Pilgrimage* was published in 1997 and two years later, they published another Paulsen gem, *Zero to Sixty; a Motorcycle Journey Through Midlife*. IT'S THE SAME BORING STORY! They even use the same map of his route inside the cover.

Throwing these two losers away wasn't good enough. I had to shred them.

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*Ever wonder what the "GS" stands for on your BMW dual-purpose machine? The German word for road or trail is **Gleise** and the word for street is **Strasse**. So GS describes the bikes most favorite environment: "Trail and Street".*

## Small Town Dinning

by Gary Shanafelt

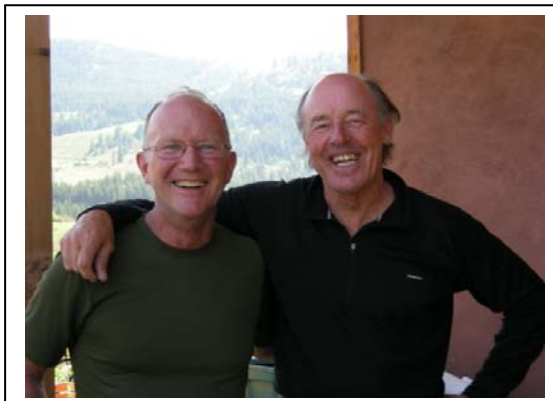
Like many of you, I like to travel the back roads and enjoy stopping in at one of the small town local cafes for a meal. You know the ones where the locals stop all conversation and stare at you until your entre arrives. The cafes usually don't bother enforcing those silly "non-smoking facility" signs either. A couple weeks ago I rode the secondary roads down to Tarboro, NC then over to Rocky Mount and back up to Weldon, NC. It must be a sad testament of our economy but most of the small town cafes are no longer in business. I stopped at a Mickey-Ds for a coffee but held off eating until I could find a small café. By the time I got to Weldon my stomach thought my throat had been cut so I pulled in at Ralph's BBQ with the understanding that all BBQ only ranges between good and great.

Even though it was after 1pm Ralph's parking lot was pretty full and had several bikes scattered around. The jovial waitress looked shocked when I ask for unsweetened tea and I think they had to have it delivered from another restaurant. My first pleasant surprise was the hush-puppies. Let me make this clear, "Ralph's hush-puppies are the best I have ever eaten!" period-dot. It was with full anticipation on my part when my BBQ sandwich arrived but it only took one bite to realize I had made a big mistake. Let me also make this clear, "Ralph's BBQ is the worst food on the planet." and no amount of sauce was going to help it. Miss Congeniality asked if I wanted a take away box for the remaining 99.5% of the BBQ and I thought, why not. I can feed this to my ex-son-in-law. Traveling for two hours in a Styrofoam box tucked in a non-refrigerated Jessie Bag isn't going to do this sandwich any harm.

## FRESH HALIBUT

by Dan Franken

*When available in Hampton Roads, fresh Halibut usually goes for around \$15 per pound. This past June my good friend Craig Steenberg and I enjoyed some really fresh Halibut...its "price" had to be well beyond \$1500 per pound, and was oh so worth it! But this story is not about fish. It's about two longtime friends and motorcycle riders getting together for another "long ride," after several decades of life interfering with riding. It's about our June 2009 trip to Alaska. The intent is to pass along some of our experiences, to inform others for their trips up north, and useful insights for motorcycle travel in general. (Dan Franken, Jan 1, 2010 – yes, I put this off, too busy riding)*



Dan (R) with his college buddy Craig Steenberg.

**Some background.** Craig and I met at the University of Colorado, 1969, while students at the Engineering College as part of a military college program. Both motorcycle riders, we quickly became friends, and made many trips between semester breaks, as well as to the east coast for our Officer Candidate School sessions in the summer of 1972. Originally, we both purchased the then just introduced 1969 Honda model CB750 machines (a marvel for that era)...we racked up miles on those machines like mad, only slowed by the frequent need for new tires and drive chains. Several years later, however, we found ourselves on shaft drive motors, I on a Moto Guzzi 750 Ambassador,

Craig, a gorgeous BMW R60, with Earles fork and all. We were set.

(a b& w photos refers, will send separately)

Craig became a C130 pilot, but eventually left the USMC and earned his doctorate at Moscow, Idaho, and still holds a professorship at a nearby Idaho college. I went on to my Navy career, retiring from active duty in 1999. While we kept in touch throughout all those intervening years, we really reconnected several years ago when Donna and I visited Craig and his wife Karin at Moscow. We agreed that we needed to ride again, just like the old days...I began talks about the need to travel to South America.

Last January, Craig called and said, "how about Alaska, early in the Spring...something we can do more easily, would you be up for that?" "Sure," I said. Then, the idea about taking the ferry up from Washington got started, we bought tickets, and on Memorial day, 2009, at 0600, I cruised through the still sleeping side streets of VA Beach, the GS purring like a kitten, all loaded up (too much stuff!), giving me feedback that said: "don't worry about me, I can make this trip just fine." Destination: Craig's place, Moscow Idaho. Camping nearly all the way, back roads where practicable, freeway when time was most important.

For me, the trip consisted of the following segments, each and adventure in itself:

- trip west, across the US
- the inside passage ferry travel
- touring Alaska
- Going south – return from Alaska and crossing the Canadian provinces.
- across the US, back to Virginia

Prior to leaving, we agreed on several points: See Alaska writ large, sort of a motorcycle windshield tour of the main regions...devote a month (or more) to the trip, travel at a leisurely pace, and finally, that we were determined to (1) not have any breakdowns, (2) no accidents, and (3), no tickets. We opted not to pursue the haul road and other such ventures. Having both grown up in the Midwest (Iowa and Minnesota) we cut our riding teeth on gravel and dirt roads,

and elected to stay on the main northwest passages (of which there are none too many). We agreed to camp whenever we could, cooking out, etc. In fact, we camped about 70% of the time, usually in private campgrounds near the edges of towns or cities. (Our first attempt to make use of a Provincial park hit a snag when upon entry, the sign said "BEAR IN AREA." Upon finding the park ranger (blond uniformed thirty-something woman, straight out of Fargo), we asked her lengthy questions about the nature of the potential threat. Finally, getting nowhere, I asked her, "would you tent camp here?" To which she replied, "oh, no." That settled that. It turns out that the private, commercial campgrounds are handy, close to supplies, and more likely to be less risky.

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## Prologue



Craig (C), Dan (R), with pal Ron Spicer riding a man's bike back when men were men and women were glad of it!



Yep, it's true. You meet the nicest people on a Honda. Dan and Donna crossing the saltflats c1971.

*(At least I hope that's Donna!)*



Dan at the Drag Strip c1970. If you look hard to the left you can just make out Craig trying to unwrap his chain from the front sprocket.

### **Buzzard's Bottom May 7-9, 2010**

Come join the Poverty Rider's International and Airheads for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Buzzard's Bottom at High Country Motorcycle Camp to usher in the 2010 riding season with amazing twisties and camaraderie. Ride 421, the Snake, and enjoy the beauty of NC High Country and the Blue Ridge Pkwy in the spring. Tech sessions by Airheads as they arise and field events by Poverty Riders. If you have parts to sell or trade, bring 'em. Camping fee for Friday & Saturday is \$24. Contact Brent 336-973-3911