



# BETWEEN THE SPOKES

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE DC AREA'S ONLY BMW MOTORCYCLE CLUB



BTS NEEDS MORE CONTENT. BMWBMW NEEDS A MEDIA CHAIR AND AN EDITOR. It could be you! Contact Kurtis Minder ([president@bmwbmw.org](mailto:president@bmwbmw.org)) to volunteer your time to help out with Between the Spokes. BTS is only as good as you make it!

## RECHARGE AT THE SQUARE ROUTE RALLY

“Battery Low,” the Scala lady says. “No kidding,” I think to myself. I am riding to a meeting on a beautiful spring day and feel pretty exhausted. So many things get in the way of my motorcycle hobby on a daily basis. I work so hard so that I can enjoy this bike and a ride like this, yet the work that I do gets in the way. Heck, even the motorcycle hobby gets in the way! I need a retreat—a motorcycle retreat to hit the reset button and recharge my battery; Scala lady can wait.

I was recently riding through the hills in Germany on a restored R65 lent to me by Jochen Siebenrock of the famous Siebenrock motorcycle parts. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and experience. This should have been the recharge I needed, but I was preoccupied with thoughts of “don’t crash,” “are you legally allowed to ride here?” and “don’t get lost.” I safely returned that beauty to Herr Siebenrock and was off to the next mission. To really unwind, I needed a guided ride on friendly familiar roads - maybe in my own country.

My commute to work is an opportunity to ride the bike. It is an avenue to spend some quality time with her and set the tone for the day. Unfortunately, this opportunity is often spoiled by that Scala lady, incoming calls, and traffic nightmares, and my thoughts about the upcoming meeting cloud my mind. Any remaining mental bandwidth is poured into staying alive on the streets of the DC metro area, not to mention finding where to park.

I need a place I can ride to and park anywhere, maybe without cell coverage,

and some nice green grass to lie down on. It would be fantastic if I were surrounded by like-minded motorcycle enthusiasts, beautiful bikes, and maybe a campfire. Batteries wouldn’t be required in a place like this.

This year, we will be hosting the 42nd annual Square Route Rally at Camp WestMar in the Catocin mountains. If you have attended the rally in past years, you may remember that you can park your bike nearly anywhere, there are guided rides on friendly roads (except the GS ride... not friendly, by design). There is green grass to lie on, and your cell phone does not work well here. Fellow BMW motorcycle enthusiasts surround you, and there are field events, prizes, good food and beer. I personally know the rally organizer, Andy, and he assures me that all of these things remain true this year. I don’t know about you, but I plan to attend, participate, and enjoy the rally this year.

Last year’s Square Route Rally was a hit. Chubby’s served up some fine barbecue, and we had some incredible door prizes from sponsors like Aerostich, Touratech, MotoQuest, Gerbings, MotoSkivies, Morton’s BMW, Bob’s BMW, Motorcycles of Dulles, Battley Cycles, and more! We served fantastic local brews. We had motorcycle movies in the pavilion, and a bonfire each night! My plan is to attend the Square Route Rally... to recharge the battery. Will you join me?



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**BMW Club**  
Bikers of Metropolitan  
Washington



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BTS welcomes all news, story and photo submissions from club members. No photo is too large, no article is too small! Submissions are used on a rolling basis and may not appear in the month they are submitted. Materials may be edited for length, content or style. Send all submissions to the editor. Classified ads are free to active club members and run on a rolling, space available basis. Commercial vendors can see advertising rates and requirements at [www.bmwbmw.org/advertising](http://www.bmwbmw.org/advertising). Display ads must be submitted no later than the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication.

Please submit address changes and all membership correspondence via email to [Membership@BMWBMW.org](mailto:Membership@BMWBMW.org). BMWBMW is chartered as BMW MOA club #40 and BMW RA club #15.

*Front cover photo by Kurtis Minder. Send in your submissions today!*

BMWBMW is currently seeking a Media Chair, an Editor to take over *Between the Spokes*, and several committee chairs. If you’re interested in any of these positions, contact any sitting Board of Directors member.

If you enjoy what you see here, we encourage you to join the club. Come to a meeting (see the calendar) or contact the Membership Chair for more information.

BMWBMW welcomes motorcycle riders on all marques, but as we are specifically a BMW club, we have found our members gain more from the fellowship if they own or are at least interested in owning a BMW motorcycle. Antique, airhead, oilhead, camhead, hexhead or wethead—all are welcome here.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

\* INDICATES BMWBMW EVENTS

1 May, 10.00: First Sunday Gathering, Motorcycles of Dulles, 22890 Quicksilver Dr. Suite 189, Dulles VA.

\*7 May, 09.00: Baltimore Breakfast Ride, Ashland Cafe, 10810 York Rd., Cockeysville MD.

\*14 May, 10.00: BMWBMW Board of Directors meeting; 11.00 General Membership meeting, hosted by Bob's BMW, 10720 Guilford Rd., Jessup MD.

20-22 May: Morton's BMW Spring Fling, Natural Bridge Hotel & Resort, Natural Bridge VA. Separate event and hotel registration required, hotel fills up fast. See [www.mortonsbmw.com](http://www.mortonsbmw.com) for more information.

\*21 May, 10.00: Maryland Breakfast Ride, Old Town Diner, 307 Main St., Myersville MD.

21 May, 09.00: Grand Re-Opening of Bob's BMW Museum. Come see 65+ vintage and classic BMW motorcycles and other collectibles dating back to 1923.

\*22 May, 08.30: Virginia Breakfast Ride, Main Street Pub, 7140 Main St., Clifton VA.

24 May, 19.00: Dinner Ride organized by Battley Cycles, 7830 Airpark Rd., Gaithersburg MD.

28-29 May: N8 Kern, Official Factory Test Rider, visits Bob's BMW. Saturday seminar at the shop and Sunday track day at Summit Point. See [bobsbmw.com](http://bobsbmw.com) for info.

\*18 June, 10.00: Maryland Breakfast Ride, Myersville MD.

**\*3-5 June: BMWBMW's annual Square Route Rally, Camp West-Mar, 14509 Brown Rd., Sabillasville MD. Registration required but available onsite. Plentiful camping available, bunk house slots available on a first-come, first-served basis. Friday and Saturday night dinner provided, Saturday and Sunday breakfast too. Lunch is on your own. Early arrival (Thursday night) available for event volunteers only. Contact Andy Dooley, VP & Rally Chair to volunteer ([vp@bmwbmw.org](mailto:vp@bmwbmw.org)). Guided GS, GS-Lite and Road rides leave Saturday morning. (In)Famous awards ceremony Saturday night. Join BMWBMW for the first premier event of the rallying season. Chat with old friends and make new ones!**

\*26 June, 08.30: Virginia Breakfast Ride, Clifton VA.

\*2 July, 09.00: Baltimore Breakfast Ride, Cockeysville MD.

14-17 July: BMW MOA "Das Rally" in Hamburg, NY.

\*16 July, 10.00: Maryland Breakfast Ride, Myersville MD.

23 July: Jeremy Cook #81 visits Bob's BMW to talk about his racing career. See [bobsbmw.com](http://bobsbmw.com) for more info.

\*6 Aug, 09.00: Baltimore Breakfast Ride, Cockeysville MD.

7 Aug, 10.00: First Sunday at Motorcycles of Dulles.

18-21 Aug: BMW 100th Anniversary celebration during the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, Mazda Raceway, Laguna Seca CA.

\*20 Aug, 10.00: Maryland Breakfast Ride, Cockeysville MD.

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Of course we will all attend our club's Square Root Rally but there are other clubs and other rallies. Which ones will you attend? Reviewing our club calendar at <http://www.bmwbmw.org/events>, we have a lot of local choices this riding season. Which ones are you riding to? More details and contact information is in the calendar descriptions. Do you know of any other rallies that should go on our club calendar? Email me at [events@bmwbmw.org](mailto:events@bmwbmw.org).

3rd Annual New Sweden 450 – Saturday May 14 to 15 – Cherry Hill, NJ. The name of this club should be familiar to all of us because they come to our Square Root Rally every year. Their rally, the 450, is a different kind of campout because you do not know in advance where you will pitch your tent. At the start, you get directions and, optionally, a GPS file for the route through some of the best roads in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware to the mystery destination. Ride alone or with me because I'm going. Included in the price is free camping, dinner on Saturday night, prizes, a 50/50 drawing, a good breakfast on Saturday and Sunday morning, and a finisher's patch.

Blue Ridge High Pass Boogie! – Saturday May 14 – Asheville, NC. Asheville BMW Riders Club, in conjunction with Eurosport Asheville, invite all dual sport, sport tour and endurance riders to a single day fundraiser showcasing world class terrain, sweepers and twisties. Proceeds minus basic expenses will be donated to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation. A silent auction on Friday May 13th at Eurosport Asheville offers participants more opportunities to donate.

Morton's Spring Fling – Friday May 20-Sunday May 22 – Natural Bridge, VA. Our club's friends, Jeff Massey and the crew at Morton's BMW, put on this rally that starts Friday evening with Brats 'n Brew. On Saturday, they have a scavenger hunt, great rides, a banquet, and fun. The guest speaker will be one of the winners of the GS Trophy Challenge fresh from his win in Thailand.

Cass Rally – Friday May 27-Monday May 30 – Arbovale, WV. The Mountaineer BMW Riders Club has an unfair advantage when it comes to rallies: the roads around Arbovale, WV. I mean, could you even find a boring road in the area if you tried? No, they are all great. I don't have much detail yet but will

add to the calendar when they post more.

Square Route Rally – Friday June 3-Sunday June 5 – Camp West Mar. The big one! Our Square Route Rally is known for great events and campfire shenanigans! Registration includes 2 nights of camping, Friday evening chili, Saturday dinner, continuous coffee, communal campfire, scads of door prizes, field events, and great rides! Plenty of bunkhouse beds and tent spaces. Everybody will be there.

14th Annual Laurel Highlands BMW Riders Campout – Friday June 10-Sunday June 12 – Somerset, PA. This rally includes two nights camping in a full-service camping resort, three meals, loads of door prizes, self-guided ride info, and 14th Annual rally pin for the first 100 pre registrants. It gets hot in DC in June while the Appalachian forests of southwest PA stay much cooler. It's only three and a half hours away on the historic National Road.

BMW MOA International Rally – Thursday, July 14-Sunday, July 17 – Hamburg, NY. This year the big rally is seven and a half hours away. Even if you had not considered it, it's close enough to warrant your reconsideration. Looking at the map, the roads between here and there are scenic and do not go through metropolitan congestion. Hmm, now I'm thinking about it.

Four Winds 50th Rally – Friday August 19-Sunday August 21 – Fairmount City, PA. They have been doing this for how long?! Whoa, that's longer than our own rally or anybody else. They claim the record for the longest consecutive BMW rally. The rally will feature a Friday Night Dinner Ride, Off / On Road Rides, Self-Guided Rides, Tech Sessions, Guest Speakers, Field Events, and an amazing Saturday Night Dinner. I gotta go find out how they made this so popular.

Finger Lakes Rally – Friday September 2-Sunday September 4 – Watkins Glen, NY. This is another long-running rally; this year is their 42nd running. There is six hours of roads between us and them but it's mostly nice Pennsylvanian roads except for Harrisburg's clogged arterials. The roads and wineries of the Finger Lakes are nice enough to make up for that. Several club members have been to this one. It's time to make another trip.

Twin Valley Rally – Friday September 16-Sunday September 18 – Meadows of Dan, VA. This event completely fills the Willville Motorcycle Camp in Meadows of Dan, Virginia. A local microbrew sells beer on-site. They have live music and good food. Of course with the Blue Ridge Parkway, Back of the Dragon, and the other great local roads, we don't spend too much time hanging around the tent sites.

BMWBMW Oktoberfest – Friday September 23-Sunday September 25 – Camp West Mar, MD. Hey, it's in September this year just like Munich's Oktoberfest. It's just for club members and very laid back. Just what we need to wind down the season.

# FIELD EVENTS AT THE SQUARE ROUTE RALLY

BY GREG KRAMMES

This year, the field events return for more fun and mayhem! For many years, the SRR has had an absence of field events. In 2015, field events returned with the very entertaining Slow Ride. In 2016, the Slow Ride has been modified for even more challenges and fun. Also added this year is the Boot Race, which should prove to be an annual favorite. So come join us as a participant or as a spectator and enjoy yourself!

Approximately 125 yards in length, the Slow Race will challenge up to 4 riders at a time to be the last one across the finish line without a foot down or a dropped bike. The grassy course will roughly take an oval shape where the start and finish will be at the same place. Mild hills will add to the thrills (and possibly spills). The race will go on until a lone, brave rider conquers the field.

New to the SRR this year is the Boot Race-- and it should be a real hoot! Helmeted competitors will stand beside their bikes, facing the opposite direction. Their boots will be located in a pile 20 yards away. At the start, riders must dash to their boots, stuff them on, haul butt to their bikes, start up their bikes, then ride like the four horsemen to the finish line 50 yards away. First one across the line wins. Note - no prizes for the smelliest boots (though you may be asked to move your tent), and the use of caltrops will result in automatic disqualification.

Prizes will be awarded to the winner of each event. Field events will start at 14:00, hopefully well after all the morning riders have returned. See you there!



*BMWBMW members and other attendees line up for a field event at a long-ago Square Route Rally. Photo by Bob Henig.*

# SQUARE ROUTE RALLY UPDATE

## RIDES AT THE RALLY

BY BRUCE DIMON

A highlight of any rally is riding the local roads. The Square Root Rally will deliver thrills with a selection of guided and self-guided rides on roads and trails. This year we plan to start the rides earlier so that riders will be back in time for the afternoon field events. All the rides offer stops for lunch and, maybe, ice cream.

Guided GS rides

**Easy GS Ride:** This paved and unpaved route through the Michaux Forest is familiar to long-time rally goers as it is the original GS route. It's perfect for GS newbies who want to ride on some smooth and dry dirt and gravel roads. There are no water crossings nor any mud to deal with. There is also no planned gas stop so everybody must fill up before the start. The route winds north from West-Mar through Catoctin Mountain Park and crosses into Pennsylvania at Pen Mar. In the Keystone state, riders wander through state game refuge land into the Michaux Forest. Northward through the game lands west of Route 233 the dirt roads lead to Pine Grove Furnace. The General Store in Pine Grove is the lunch stop for our adventurers. Crossing the paved route, our riders will return south on the roads east of Route 233. The total trip will take about 4 hours to travel the 95 miles plus the time for lunch.

**Hard GS Ride:** For hardier GS riders, the Hard GS Ride offers a technical challenge that includes mud, water crossings, and single track. You will not find this route on Google Maps! Last year we called this the "Mini-GS" because of its shorter length but that did not adequately convey the difficulty that makes this ride just as long in time (4 hours) even though it is considerable shorter (69 miles).

Last year's riders showed up at the finish with mud-splattered bikes and, in one spectacular case, drenched in mud from helmet to boots. Once again, Dawn and Paul Miller offered to lead this ride. Last year, Paul led the group on a R27 with street tires!

Guided Road Rides

**Covered Bridge Ride:** Jose Abiles will reprise the popular Covered Bridge Ride. This leisurely ride through Frederick County crosses three covered bridges of different construction and eras. The riders will not only ride through the bridges but will park for pictures and closer look. The 42 miles will take about an hour and a half plus time in Thurmont for lunch.

**Pennsylvania Sweepers:** Jim Pellenbarg will lead riders through easy sweeping curves through rolling farmland and shaded Michaux Forest roads. The speeds will be higher and

# JOIN BATTLECYCLES IN MAY FOR SOME GREAT RIDING

MAY 7 - Covered bridge ride 9:30am

MAY 14 - Spring Poker Run & Fish Fry 9am

MAY 24 - Martian Ride (night ride to see Mars at perigee) 7pm

MAY 27 - Night ride to see DC memorials at night 7pm

MAY 28 - Open House with food and music 10-2

MAY 29 - Police escorted ride to the Pentagon to take part in Rolling Thunder. 6:30am

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### BEAR THIS IN MIND BY MATTHEW EICHNER

the 74 miles will pass by in a couple of hours. That leaves plenty of time for a leisurely lunch.

**Canal Backroads:** Fans of tight, narrow, and bumpy roads will wander through Washington County roads in search of the C&O Canal. In a couple of places, the road was paved right over the original tow path. The route will also traverse the Antietam Battlefield and cross South Mountain where the eponymous battle took place. This ride will also stop for breakfast early in the ride so that the participants will have time to build up an appetite for a stop at the South Mountain Creamery late in the ride.

#### Self-Guided Rides

For the history buffs, we will have route sheets to the Gettysburg and Antietam battlefields. For the curious, we will have a loop around Camp David. At least where I imagine Camp David is. For all who scream, we will provide a route to the South Mountain Creamery. You will find me there.

Although we have the basic plans in place, there is still work to do and you can help. We need a volunteer to lead the Easy GS ride. If you are comfortable on a GS and can pre-ride the route before the rally, you have the skills to be an awesome ride leader. We will even call you "Road Captain" and salute.

I recently had a chance to speak with Matt Danielson, who is one of the leaders of, and seems to function as legislative director for, the Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists. I looked forward to asking him about why motorcyclists seem to be such an influential force in Virginia politics, at least on those issues where they have a strong interest. But, before getting into the political economy, I figured that I would take advantage of Matt's current day job, as an attorney, and prior day jobs, as a police officer and prosecuting attorney, to ask for some practical advice.

In particular, I asked what we riders should bear in mind to protect ourselves legally in the event of being stopped by law enforcement or, even less happily, being involved in a crash. I had expected some general guidance on human interaction (which he indeed offered) but what I also got was some very specific advice: In particular, Matt noted that there are only five jurisdictions in the U.S. in which the legal doctrine of "contributory negligence" applies. Under this legal approach to negligence, if a party in any way contributed to a loss he or she is not entitled to any damages. That contrasts with the law in other jurisdictions, where "comparative negligence" applies and a party five percent at fault bears five percent of the cost of damages. Interestingly, the five independent-minded jurisdictions espousing "contributory negligence" include the three in

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which I ride weekly, DC, MD, and VA, as well as NC (known for its excellent “twisties”, headquarters of Roadrunner, and a great destination for multi-day trips.) and Alabama (which I have yet to visit). So, Matt advised, one is particularly wise in the event of a mishap in one of those states to remain silent and tell anyone who asks “I’m not feeling up to making a statement right now. I’d like to get checked out first.”

The practical phase of the discussion thus concluded, we turned to the broader policy questions. I asked why there was such a well-developed motorcycle advocacy community in Virginia, while not as obviously in Maryland or DC. According to Matt, the impetus in Virginia was the establishment of HOV lanes back in the 1990’s. At that time, the Commonwealth decided not to allow motorcycles to use the HOV lanes. Tom McGrath (who, we note in the interest of full disclosure, is one of Matt’s law partners) did lots of legal research and found some provisions in Federal law that seemed to preclude the use of Federal funds for projects that excluded motorcyclists. After consideration, the Commonwealth rethought its position. Not only did motorcyclists get to use HOV lanes (which seems rather a no-brainer from a policy perspective), but the motorcycle rights lobby was born in the Commonwealth, and this was ultimately formalized through the establishment of the Virginia Coalition of Motorcyclists (VCOM).

VCOM has since become a presence in Richmond, including during the compressed legislative session each year. Matt emphasized that there are two key things he and his colleagues bear in mind in their advocacy work: First, the motorcycling community is nothing but heterogeneous. Not only are there those who prefer K1600s and those who prefer F700s, to put it in BMW terms, but there also are people who come at our common interest from very difficult philosophical and political directions. That being the case, VCOM has tried in recent years to focus on the issues where there is a broad consensus in the community, which is notably not helmet laws (although he will offer his views if prompted). Rather, the focus of VCOM’s efforts include traffic safety, rider training and education funds, auxiliary lighting, and similar issues. Second, Matt emphasized that, with respect to policies that affect motorcyclists, there are a couple of key members of each state legislature who know and follow the issues in detail. To be effective, motorcyclists need to identify and work with this core group. Over time, a rapport develops and, even in situations where there are fundamental differences in views, there is still the potential for productive exchange and the development of solutions that reflect the range of perspectives on issues.



Apropos of that last point, when asked about the most important issues nationally that affect motorcycling right now, Matt quickly identified lanesplitting. He reminded me that, at present, only California permits this practice, although bills that would allow riders to share lanes under certain circumstances are under consideration in several other states including Texas and Oregon. Although I, as a Maryland-to-DC commuter am a big fan of lanesplitting, Matt seems to be unsure both of the merits and the politics. He advised that it will be some time before any legislature in our area will be ready to embrace the practice, and that may come only after there is a lot more data that is available from experience in other jurisdictions. Another issue Matt highlighting as deserving attention nationally is “tolling”. Practices differ significantly across jurisdictions, and even sometimes within a single jurisdiction, including on such key questions on whether tolls are charged and what technology is used to collect them. He noted, for example, that Colorado developed a special transponder for motorcycles which other jurisdictions either don’t require, or, less happily, require devices that are pretty challenging to mount on a bike.



A couple of guys taking it easy at the Square Route Rally circa 1976. Photo by Bob Henig.



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WOW!! What an absolutely fantastic experience!! My salesperson was Tony and he was an absolute pleasure to deal with. He answered all my questions and was even nice enough to put a pair of hard cases on a loaner F 700 GS so I could see exactly how they fit and looked. I am not sure I could have received that kind of service from other dealerships. Thanks, Tony!!

I would also like to give a shout out to Paul in parts and to Bob himself who took the time to speak to me directly on several occasions and personally welcomed me into the "Bob's BMW" family.

Jeff Coleman (Sykesville, MD)



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