

THE SHAFT



The Journal of the Riders Association of the Mid-South



<http://www.bmwrams.com/>



JULY. 2020

I hope this RETRO version of the shaft finds you in good health and spirits.

I am not quite sure if the news letter will survive. The News Letter has a history of disappearing and reemerging years later.

I plan on bringing this up at the next meeting. We may need to suspend the news letter until someone wants to do it.

Our Next Meeting will be The July Meeting will be held on July 11, 2020 at 1 pm:

Watch your e-mail for updates. The meeting will begin at 1 pm or as close to that as we can get everyone ready.

RAMS Meeting Minutes – June, 2020 submitted by Spencer Bennett

June 2020 Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Paul Whitworth on June 13, 2020 at 1:00 pm Via the Zoom Conferencing Web Application. There were 13 RAMS and many motorcycles present (at the various members homes).

Call to order:

1. We have no new members for this month.
2. We currently have 69 new and returning members for 2020.
3. There were no guests for the meeting.
4. Donut Volunteers are still needed for 2020. There is hope that Donuts at the Dealership will be restarted in July.
5. Thanks to Meeting Host: Rose-Anne Bennett who choreographed the web set up.

New Business:

1. No new business this month.

RAMS Rally Update:

1. Paul Rhodes reported that everything seems OK up to this point.
2. Door Prize committee is doing well.
3. Rosey Bennett reported that on-line pre-registration went live on June 1. All pre-registrations will be refunded if the RAMS Rally is cancelled.
4. Rally Shirts were discussed and the Rally Chair and Co-Chair will reach a decision on whether or not to do them and what they will have for a design at some point. One proposal is to do a “generic” shirt without the year so we can reuse them if need be.

1. Rally Co-Chair Steve Clark has some concerns over the conflict with the MOA Motorrad Festival the same weekend. The free Sunday Pass with each RAMS Rally registration may help keep the impact down, or it may not.
2. The number of Awards given will be reduced this year due to several awards not being claimed last year. Per the Awards Chair (Spencer Bennett) the 2020 awards will be:

Long Distance Male BMW Rider
Long Distance Female BMW Rider
Long Distance BMW Two Up
Long Distance Sidecar
Oldest Male BMW Rider
Oldest Female BMW Rider

3. The Bike Show Categories will be reduced this year. The Bike Show Chair (Donna Clark) will get these figured out before the Rally.

VP's Corner:

1. Paul Whitworth asked for the members support in supplying material for the 'Shaft'.

Old Business:

1. If anyone still does not have their picture in the online directory, please see Spencer or Rosey.
2. If you would like a RAMS patch (old logo only), decal (old and new logos) or need RAMS business cards, please get with Spencer.
3. Some previous year RAMS Rally Shirts are still available for \$3.00 each or two for \$5.00.

For the Good of the Club:

1. Check RAMS website for rally schedules for other Club's Rallies. Please note that many of the scheduled Rallies (including the MOA National) have been cancelled or rescheduled so please double check to be sure an event is still going on before you head out.

1. Paul Whitworth reported, and observed a moment of silence for, the passing of long time RAMS Member Bob Garey on May 4, 2020. Bob had been having health issues for the last few years and had not been active but he and his wife, Pat, were very active for many years. Bob was retired from GE and was very active in restoring BMW's as well as a sidecarist. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him.
2. RAMS Meeting hosts are needed for October 2020.
3. The July Meeting will be held on July 11, 2020 at 1 pm:

The July Meeting will be an online Zoom Meeting. Watch your e-mail for updates. The meeting will begin at 1 pm or as close to that as we can get everyone ready.

5. If you have an item you would like to see in the next meeting agenda, please get it to the Secretary by Wednesday prior to the meeting and it will be added to the next meeting agenda. This is not required for an item to be discussed, but it will make sure it gets in the mix. Send the information to: officers@bmwrams.com

Treasurer's Report:

1. Balance in Bank plus petty cash = \$7367.63
2. Petty Cash = \$50.00
3. No unusual expenses for this month.

Movement to adjourn: Paul Rhodes

Second: Donna Clark

Vote: Unanimous to adjourn

Tour of Honor

Spencer Bennett

The Tour of Honor is a self-directed tour that runs from April 1 through October 31 each year. The goal is to visit as many Memorial Sites as you can during this period with a minimum of seven required to earn a Finisher's Certificate and Pin.

This event has two purposes: to expose you to some of the great memorials around this country and cause you to consider why those memorials exist and to generate income to support the Fisher House Foundation, The Gold Star Family Memorial Foundation, or Police and Fire: The Fallen Heroes with all of the profits generated being split between the three Charities. You can designate which of the Charities you prefer your portion of the profits go to if you so wish.

In return for your registration, you get a numbered Tour of Honor Flag and a listing of the Memorial locations selected for the current year. You then pick out your routing and off you go, submitting a picture of your motorcycle and Flag in front of each monument via email to the scorers, who are all volunteers. The picture is then evaluated by the scorer and your score is kept on the Rider's List on the Tour of Honor web site.

The question often asked is: "Why do you do this?" I do it because it has provided me with some opportunities to visit small towns across America and see some amazing monuments that their inhabitants have erected to honor their Heroes of various sorts. A recent example of this was last weekend when I visited the Viet-Nam Veterans Memorial in Tunica, MS. I have been through Tunica many times but had never taken the time to actually visit the "town" as it is a ways off of US 61. Turns out there is a nice small town over there with a very nice Memorial.

Some of the Memorials are more generic in nature in that they honor not Veterans of a specific conflict but rather Veterans in general and sometimes others that supported them as the Memorial in Belzoni, MS does with it's recognition of WW I Veterans, The Wives and Mothers of Veterans, and Veterans of all wars. The reference to wives and mothers in this example is something that made me think more about the sacrifices many families made to the causes that this nation has fought for.

An additional benefit of the Tour of Honor is that it gives you an excuse to go riding on those days when you would like to but don't have anywhere to go. I frequently use this to spur myself off the couch and out onto the road.

I would urge you to consider the Tour of Honor as an event worth your participation as well as being a good way to contribute to some worthy charities. Full details are available at : <https://www.tourofhonor.com/>

THE TENNESSEE 1000 - By Mark Campbell

A friend (Jim) at work said “I would like to try an Iron Butt ride. I think those type of rides would interest me. How about a ride to Bristol, TN and back?” That’s what got this ride started! With that in mind, I recommended an “In-State Saddle Sore 1000” Iron Butt ride.

The “In-State” Iron Butt series of rides require you to remain within the state during the duration of the ride, but if you do cross into another state, you are required to re-enter the state at the same point. Miles ridden in any other state are not counted toward this achievement. A note for later.

Our plan was to get this ride done before it got too hot, so we planned it for Saturday, June 13. Luckily, the forecast was for a very pleasant low humid day. (A rare occurrence in the month of June here in the south!)

Since Jim was asking for my experience on this type of ride, I suggested a plan: 1) Start before sunrise to maximize our daylight hours. 2) Ride tank to tank to minimize stops. 3) At stops, we will do what is needed to do with minimal down time. 4) Stop for a photo op to remember the ride and 5) Eat one meal at a Waffle House (Typically, easy in and out with minimal time loss). If you need anything else to eat, I advise beef jerky/protein snacks carried in your pocket to eat along the way. If we follow the plan we could complete the ride in a reasonable timeframe and it would not interfere with our Sunday plans.

There was a Love’s Truck Stop near our office that would work as our start and end location. From here to Bristol and back is 999 miles according to Google Maps. We would need to add some miles to this route to get well above 1,000 and have some cushion so there is no doubt that it would qualify for an Iron Butt ride. If we bypass Nashville (a pain point) by riding around it on I-840, that will add 37 miles to the route. Plus, if we eat at a Waffle house in Piney Flats, TN, that will add another 10 miles for a total of 1,047 miles.

In order to document this ride for the IBA (Iron Butt Association), we would be required to obtain the following receipts:

1. Love’s Truck Stop, Memphis
2. Marathon Station on I-840
3. Gas Station in Bristol
4. Waffle House in Piney Flats
5. Marathon Station on I-840
6. Love’s Truck Stop, Memphis

Any other gas stops would require receipts as well. This would document our route in accordance with the proper IBA protocol.

The intent was to set up expectations between both of us. Jim agreed. This plan worked great!

The day of the ride, we were to meet at Love’s at 5:00 am. Both of us arrived early. This Truck Stop was busy at this time in the morning! Who knew? We fueled up the bikes, took the required photo of our receipt next to our odometer and headed out. My official start time was 4:52 am. Let’s ride!

The ride around Memphis on I-240 wasn’t too bad until I almost exited off on hwy 385! I was going through a mental checklist and suddenly realized this wasn’t in the lane I needed to be in! Back on track and onto I-40.

Jim and I both knew there was some construction between Memphis and Jackson. Fortunately, this early in the morning there was no traffic and the construction crew was just starting to set out traffic cones. We had no problem at all as we rode on by the construction crew. Life is good!

In Jackson, there is some lane diverting due to construction, but no problem for us this time of day. We continue on!

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Between Jackson and Nashville, we did run into a few sprinkles of rain. Where did this come from? It wasn't in the forecast! And, the temperatures dipped down to the low 60's just after sunrise. We both turned on the heated grips to take the morning chill off!

Once we are about to exit onto I-840, Jim rides up beside me. He gives me the OK symbol, then a zero, then repeated the hand signals.

Once we are about to exit onto I-840, Jim rides up beside me. He gives me the OK symbol, then a zero, then repeated the hand signals.

Prior to the ride, we knew the distance between Love's and our first required stop was 199 miles. Since the range on Jim's Harley Ultra is less than my BMW, we knew he would be the deciding factor on fuel stops. During the planning stages of this ride, Jim thought he would be able to make it to the Marathon station on I-840 near Thompson's Station.

Well, I thought Jim's hand signals were telling me that he is out of gas, the zero symbol. But, the OK symbol reassured me he was OK. So, I kept on riding knowing the Marathon station was in about 30 miles.

When we were 8 miles from the station, Jim rode up beside me, then in front of me and exited off I-840. At that exit, there were no sign of any gas stations. Jim told me he was about out of gas. Oh! I explained to him that I thought he was OK. He said that he was telling me he had three-zero miles of gas left, 30 miles! I ask "Can you make it another 8 miles? That's our next stop." He said "Maybe. But, we'd better slow down a little to conserve what little fuel I have left." I was thinking to myself. We don't need to run out of gas on our first leg! We make it to the Marathon station with no problem. We agree on simple hand signals. Thumbs up is good! Thumbs down is bad! We continue on!

As we ride around Nashville, we start seeing hills. Everything is bright green! We'll see the Tennessee hills the rest of the trip out to Bristol and back to Nashville. What a great day to be on the bike!

As we ride along, we do get into a little traffic going up a hill near Crossville. But, other than that, it was an uneventful ride to Bristol. Even Knoxville traffic wasn't too bad, a typical pain point the several times I've been through there.

Once in Bristol, we get a receipt and head to the sign that crosses over State Street. This sign shows VA is on one side of the street and TN is on the other with Bristol in large letters at the top. This is where I wanted to take a photo op of our ride.

State Street's center line has bronze markers embedded in it to show that it divides TN from VA. Traffic flowing west to east are on the TN side of the street while traffic flowing east to west are on the VA side of the street.

State Markers/ Street Centerline

As we arrive at the Bristol sign, there is a train track between us and the sign. And, a train blocking the road! We need to go around the block and get on the other side of the train. To do this, we cross over into VA.

Since there was a train blocking the street, we parked the bikes in the street on the TN side. While I was setting up the tripod, the train started to move! Imagine that! I was able to snap a couple of pictures before moving the bike over to a small lot off of the street. I wish I had thought about snapping a picture of Jim holding up traffic as the railroad crossing arms started to raise. But, Jim had the bike moved in no time! No holdup on the traffic!

From the empty lot, I snap a few more pictures and we get ready to head out. Now remember, if we exit the state we must return the same place we exited.

The train is now gone and the street we exited the state is only about 50 yards away on the other side of the train tracks. I explain the situation to Jim. He says "He'll follow me". I ride to the street do a U-turn and we're now compliant with the IBA In-State rules. We probably rode in VA at most a half mile.

Now, we are back on State Street heading east. Our next destination is the Waffle House in Piney Flats. The GPS wants us to do a U-turn. But, to stay compliant, I head south and let the GPS re-calculate. It does as expected and we're back on track. Life is good!

We arrive at the Waffle House and take a little break for lunch. Jim asks if Waffle House is a favorite of mine. Not really. It's just a convenient place to stop, service is relatively fast and we can sit down to eat.

By now it's 2:30 pm Eastern Time. Considering this is halfway on our route, we've covered 500 plus miles in 8 ½ hrs. We're pretty much on schedule. The sign fiasco took up more time than expected, but we still have plenty of time to complete this ride well within the 24 hr time requirements!

Club Contacts

RAMS Officers

- **President:** Art Manchester
- **Vice-President:** Paul Whitworth
- **Secretary-Treasurer:** Spencer Bennett

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