



Motor City Beemers

Club Newsletter



BMW MOA Club #231

BMW RA Club #209

September 2016

Volume 25, Number 09

All meetings are held the **SECOND** Saturday of the month at 10:30AM at BMW of Detroit

Immediately following the meeting is a Lunch Ride

We welcome owners and fans of all bikes

Our *next* meeting is September 10, 2016

Following Meeting: October 8, 2016

Web site: www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers

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Some of the best riding time of the year is starting up next week. September and October are my favorite riding months. There are always some great rally's and we have two club rides coming up.

The next major club event is the Chicken Dinner Run to Frankenmuth, September 17th. I think Betty said there were still some rooms available for the 17th to 18th at Port Austin. I think a few of us might camp it at one of the State Campgrounds. For club members the dinner is just 5 bucks, and I don't mean the kind with antlers. Betty will have the particulars.

The other major club event is the color tour at Cycle More Campground the 14th, 15th and 16th of October. I am really looking forward to seeing the other members of the other clubs.

We had a pretty good turn out for the observation run despite the threat of rain that was not supposed to happen (right Doron?). Everyone made it through the route before the rain. We were eating at Murphy Inn when it started coming down. Doron, did you end up getting a room for the night? I think everyone had a good time.

A big thanks to Keith Harrison for the article on a track day and what it can do for you. Also check out next month's newsletter for part 2, what to expect and do when you get to the track.

The next meeting is the 10th of September. Check the ride destinations here in the newsletter. See you at the meeting.

Pat





Last month's newsletter was finished up literally the night we arrived back home from a four day motorcycle trip through Michigan's Upper Peninsula. No time to write it up then, but here's a short version of our lessons learned.

We like to travel "free form" without reservations, go where we feel like going, stop when we want. The work day is filled with being at various places at various times, vacation should be the opposite of work in my mind. We've literally hit the end of a motel's driveway in the morning, and said, "Right or left". Well, it seems with the slowly improving economy and the reduced price of gas, much of the world is traveling to the UP. Apparently, tourist records are being set all over the UP for the last

couple years. Turns out traveling to the UP without reservations (or at least, emergency camping gear!) is now a really bad idea.

Short version is we ended up discovering the hard way that there was no rooms available in the western UP, and our assumption that we'd be able to get a place back in St. Ignace was...horribly flawed. Fortunately, a night desk person at a motel there was able to find us a room in Cederville a little after midnight, which was "only" half an hour of pitch-black roads away. Yay headlight upgrade! (more later).

I recently had a battery failure in St. Clair on a Sunday evening. Wolfie had started fine several times that day, but after a long drive, it died, wouldn't accept a charge, almost like it wasn't there. I've jump-started hundreds of vehicles, replaced dozens of batteries, but only seen this failure mode once before, but some research both on the 'net and with a mechanic friend of mine confirmed it does happen. It's nasty when it does, too – to jump-start the vehicle, you need good cables and a good power source, and the vehicle will often not stay running because the *instant* the engine speed drops or power load changes so that the alternator can't keep up, the engine shuts down.

Wandering around the mall we were at in St. Clair, I found someone who not only could give me a jump to get the bike running, he had a jump pack he offered to let take with me to make sure if the engine stopped, I could restart it. "Just drop it off where I work when you can". Wow. We hear lots of stories of people being unpleasant to others, but there are still some great people out in the world. The trip home was exciting, but other than the bike's electronics resetting itself a few times (including on the freeway!), it was uneventful, and the jump pack was returned Monday evening. Detroit BMW got me a new battery, I installed it, and all is back to as it should be. I like to believe there should be a lesson in events like this, but I'm at a loss to say what it is here. This mode of battery failure is pretty much unpredictable, as it gives zero warning. Fortunately, it seems rare. In retrospect, I'll make sure my best Li-Ion jump pack is in my bike for any long trips – ALONG with a cigarette lighter to Powerlet adapter, so I can keep the vehicle running if need be. There's a lot of ways a vehicle can fail, realistically, this is not one to obsess over, other than being in a position of understanding exactly what's wrong, what's needed to get home, and NOT HAVING IT is a bit frustrating!

Nick.

What's a Track Day?

Keith Harrison

That's a question I get a lot. For those that don't know, a track day is the opportunity to ride your motorcycle on a racetrack. It's not racing. It's not a riding school. It is just riding your motorcycle in a controlled environment. And it is a safer way to enjoy your motorcycle that is just not possible on the street.

I attend track days frequently, and our esteemed President asked me to write an article on what happens at a track day. I thought about it and agreed but decided to break the subject into two articles. This first one will cover the basics of track days and bike prep. The second article will walk you through a typical track day in detail.

So why should you do a track day? That's the second most asked question. The decision is a personal one. During a well-run track day, you will learn about corner entry, apex's, corner exit, braking techniques, body position and speed control. Why are these important? You use these skills on every ride, whether running a back road or traveling down the highway. Every time you exit the freeway, you run through these skills, maybe without thinking about them. But a track day gives you an opportunity to practice and improve these skills. You will see the same corner every two minutes or so. And you will get better.

Isn't it dangerous? There's the third most asked question. I believe it is safer than riding on the street. Everyone is going the same way, there's no gravel in the corners, no police, no cross traffic. There are corner workers that will warn you of upcoming dangers. Now it CAN be dangerous if you let your ego get the better of you. But crashes are rare in the Novice (or beginners) group. And they always have an ambulance on site.

OK, so you make the decision to go. How do I find out what is needed? There are track day providers that rent the track, provide the personnel and run the event. The best known is SportBike Track Time (sportbiketracktime.com) but there are others. Google "motorcycle trackday" and you will find plenty. The key is to find one that caters to beginners. I believe Sportbike Track Time probably has the best program for beginners. A second source is a dealer-sponsored event. These tend to be even more laid back than a normal day. All first time track riders must ride in the Novice group. Even if you are the fastest, most experienced rider in history, you start in Novice. Track days typically cost \$150 to \$200 per day.

Next, you will need to prep your bike. Each organization will post its rules for bike prep but the average is pretty simple for Novice Group: Tires at 50% of tread or more, free returning throttle, no oil or coolant leaks, no loose parts. You must tape up all glass (headlight, tail light, turn signals) and tape or remove mirrors. I recommend removing any luggage. Most organizations allow any type of street motorcycle but some do not allow cruisers.

Riding gear requirements for Novice are lower as well. Normally, leathers or textile suits that zip together at the waist are acceptable. Often, full leathers are available for rent from the provider – arrange in advance. Over the ankle boots and over the wrist gloves are required. Finally, a full face un-damaged helmet. No half, ¾ or flip-up modular helmets are acceptable.

The last decision is, which track? In Michigan, there are two. Grattan Raceway in Belding (near Grand Rapids) is the best known. Gingerman Raceway in South Haven is the other. Both are great tracks with camping allowed at the track and hotels nearby. There are lots of other tracks within a day's drive in other states.

Next month, I'll cover getting to the track and go through a typical track day in detail.

HID Upgrade, Follow-up

Nick Holland

A few weeks ago (ok, QUITE a few weeks ago) Pete shot me an e-mail asking a few followup questions to my HID headlight upgrade article from May. I don't do a huge amount of night time riding, so my real-life experience with my upgraded was limited, until recently having the chance to drive across the UP late at night...and into early morning with my upgraded headlight.

Reminder: I upgraded the LOW beam of my 2002 BMW K1200LT (H7 bulb) with an HID upgrade kit. I did NOT upgrade the high beam.

Is the HID upgrade significant?

YES. Truly amazing. Paula was even impressed from the back seat!

Is the conventional high beam still useful, or rendered pointless?

I wasn't sure about this one, but now can answer with certainty – yes, your high beam is still important and useful. Keep in mind, the primary difference between the high beam and low beam on a headlight is focus, not power. For example, the POWER difference between many conventional headlights between low and high beam is the difference between 55W and 60W – small. The real difference is that the high beam is focused into a tight beam, aimed further down the road. the low beam is aimed near and wide, to cover the shoulders, sidewalk, etc. One thing I read on automotive HID lights is that the “high” beam is just a physical refocusing of the beam, the same light source is used for both. I'm a little amazed at how wide the LT's low beam “fan” is, probably goes a long way to explain why the standard headlight is so lame – putting too much light up on the shoulders and sidewalk for one conventional bulb.

After the upgrade, the high beam is still very visible further down the road than the HID's low beam light is. And, if you leave the low beam as is, you have no question which is which – the color difference between the lights is easy to spot. I was very pleased with the amount of light being put on to the shoulders to help me spot deer and other critters, and yet still hitting the road with the HID upgrade.

Should I upgrade my high beam, too?

Probably not. Keep in mind, HID lights don't come to full brightness quickly. They take a few seconds to put out significant light, and maybe half a minute to hit full brightness. There are several reasons people use the high beams, and which your primary use is determines the benefit to upgrading your high beam as well:

- * Signal other drivers – pass, “Wake up, light turned green”, “get out of the fast lane you slug”, “turn off YOUR high beam, jerk”, etc. For this purpose, HIDs are horrible.

- * Annoying other drivers: HIDs rock for this. Just turn on your high beam, leave it on, ignore everyone else's distress. Get the most blue or purple HID kit you can. Show the world what a jerk you are! (hopefully, you aren't taking this part as a goal)

- * Momentary flash to see down the road or figure out what the sign says: stick to the conventional. HIDs don't do momentary well, and the conventional lamp does a fine job at this already.

- * Visibility, with a high-low flasher: you definitely don't want this on an HID light, high or low beam!

- * Driving through dark, very empty, two-lane roads: IF you can actually get the time to leave the HID on for extended periods, it might be nice...but really, I think that's pretty rare for most people.

Summary: IF you really drive long distances in empty roads late at night, an HID high beam might be justified, but then you lose all the other benefits of a rapid-response high beam. I'd suggest leaving your high beam alone and adding some serious aftermarket supplemental lighting.

What color should I get?

I'm REALLY happy with the 4300k bulbs. VERY white, maybe just a hint of blue, but doesn't scream, “Look at me, I put stupid bright headlights on my bike to annoy you!” I'd really suggest nothing hotter

than 4300K. IF it had been available in the package I was after, I'd probably have gone for the 5000k light – I'm glad it wasn't so I didn't.

Does it appear to annoy other drivers?

For the first month or two after doing my HID upgrade, I was pleased that I hadn't seen any signs of other drivers flashing me or otherwise letting me know my headlights were annoying them. However, on one of our group rides, on the way home, I was behind a small convertible and the guy was acting quite oddly – first put his hand over his rear view mirror, and then he pulled to the side of the road, then pulled out back behind me once I passed him. I thought the behavior odd, until I realized that he was probably getting my headlight right in his mirror (he had Canadian plates, this might explain the lack of more obvious indications of displeasure). Unfortunately, I was unable to catch up with him at a light to verify my conclusions.

When I later had a chance to check the headlight aim in a parking garage, turned out that while I had done a good job of aiming the headlight one-up, riding two-up had moved it substantially skyward. Yeah, the guy was entirely justified to be unhappy with my headlight. Yay K-LT and the dash-mount headlight aiming knob (for those that don't know what I'm talking about, the K1200LT and some other BMW bikes have a headlight aiming knob on the dash to adjust your headlight aim for bike load). Dropped it back where it belonged, and no indications of displeasure since.

Any electrical system distress?

Nope, nor is any expected. I replaced a 55W bulb with a 35W light, so there is less heat being produced in the headlight assembly and less power draw, not that an LT has any shortage of electrical power.

Note that while LED bulbs draw even less power than HID's, they are very heat sensitive, so while I'm excited about LED lighting in general, I'm cautious about retrofitting – you have to make sure there is something to take the heat powerful LEDs generate away. In contrast, both halogen and HID devices rely on heat to work, so this is not a problem.

Any other feedback on XenonDepot as a provider?

No...the purchase was smooth, the delivery was prompt, the product was good, I've had no reason to touch base with them since my purchase. Stuff can go wrong with the best of companies, and the real measure is not what happens when things are perfect, but how they fix them when things go wrong, but I have no info there, sorry.

Summary: Should I do it?

In short: If you have a BMW K1200LT or RxxxxRT with halogen lights and have ever wished your headlight sucked less, this is probably among the best sub-\$100 upgrade you can do for your motorcycle. Results may vary for other motorcycles, but it's a cheap way to add a LOT of additional light to your bike.

Adding to my LT was probably a half-hour job, the RT was more difficult, but took about an hour. In my previous article, I indicated that dealers were unlikely to do this upgrade, but I might be wrong on that, give Don a call and see what he has to say, if you don't feel like doing it yourself.

Club events

Lunch rides take place right after the Saturday meeting on the second Saturday of the month. Other events as we can make them happen!

Date	Event	Alternate local lunch
September 10	Club Meeting – Lunch at Tavern 109, Williamston)	Great Baraboo
September 17	Frankenmuth Dinner	
September 17/18	After Frankenmuth Port Austin overnight Ride	
October 8	Club Meeting – Lunch at White Horse Inn	El Patio
November 12	Club Meeting – Lunch at Zukey Lake Tavern, Pinkney	(tbd)
December 10	Club Meeting – Lunch at Azteca	
January 14	Club Meeting – Lunch at Great Baraboo	

Rallies

July 14-17	BMW MOA	Hamburg, New York
Sep 30-Oct 2	RAMS Rally	Parker's Crossroads, TN.

Other events:

Stockbridge All Clubs Day has been announced for Sunday September 18, 2016. Fliers have been uploaded to the Facebook group (Thanks, Pete!)

Wednesday Dinner Gatherings



The Wednesday dinners are a long-time, though less formal, tradition with the MCBeemers, started and run by Betty Ward. She picks out a dinner location, lets us know...and we get together and eat! Food is usually ordered around 6:30pm, but some of us don't straggle in until closer to 7:00pm.

Absolutely no agenda other than Good Food and Great People!

← Dinner at Juan Miguel's, 10/28/2015.

September 7	Twisted Rooster	45225 Marketplace Blvd. Chesterfield, MI 48051 586.949.1470
September 14	Penne Lane	44905 Morley Dr Clinton Township, MI 48036 586.741.5583
September 21	Jimmy Dee's	43820 Groesbeck hwy Clinton Twnshp, Mi 586.463.7500
September 28	Camp Ticonderoga	5725 Rochester Rd Troy, Mi 248.828.2825
October 5	Poncho and Cisco's	36942 Jefferson Ave Harrison Township, MI 48045 586.465.6161

Recruit a new member! Cut-out and carry these cards!

Hi, I couldn't help but notice you also ride a
BMW Motorcycle!

I'd like to invite you to join us, the Motor City Beemers,
on the second Saturday, monthly, 10:30am
BMW Motorcycles of Detroit
34080 Van Dyke Ave
Sterling Heights, MI 48312

www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers

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Treasurer's Report

Jim Mick



Check book balance for the end of July:	\$2177.63
Check book balance for the end of Aug:	\$2360.63
Balance end of Jan:	\$3020.39
Balance end of may:	\$2228.11
PayPal balance for the end of July:	\$549.52
PayPal balance for the end of Jun:	\$544.52

- \$5 from Brain B who used Bill Pay for Frankenmuth reservation
- \$100 from our President for 50/50 from May (Tim S won), June (Allen G won) & July (Nick H won) and \$5 from Picnic (Bill)
- Paid Nick H \$16 for donuts
- \$39 from 50/50 (Brett H won)
- \$40 for Frankenmuth reservations (Brett H, Nick H & Paula E, Tim P, Tim S, Roy S, Betty W, Brandon W)
- \$15 from Tim P for 2017 membership
- NOTE: It's never too soon to renew your membership.

Three new members brought our 2016 membership to 73. **Charles L** bought a bike from the dealership in June and received a new membership from our Dealership. **Jessica B** also received a free membership in July and **Alan B** joined free at the August meeting. Watch for their introductions in the newsletter and begin to get acquainted. Welcome Charles, Jessica and Alan to the MCBeemers.

Bavarian Inn Perks Card

John's Bavarian Inn card has helped reduce the cost to the club of our Frankenmuth chicken dinner for a number of years now.



MOTOR CITY BEEMERS NAME TAGS

Motor City Beemer name tags are available for purchase at Highest Honor, Inc. Highest Honor, Inc is located at **34711 Dequindre Road, Troy, Michigan 48083**. Their shop is just south of 15 Mile Road, on the west side of Dequindre. Herb and Jeff have a die set up with the club logo and can add your name and/or nickname for a cost of only \$9.00.

The easiest way to get your ID tag is to send Jeff an e-mail at: www.jeff@highesthonor.biz. Spell out exactly what you want on your tag and when you want to pick it up. You can also call Jeff at **248-588-7845**. Tell him what you want on your tag and when you want to pick it up. You can have two lines of text, the first your name, and you can add a nick name as the second.

Join the growing number of members who proudly wear their ID tags with their one of a kind moniker. It will help us to get to know each other and sure works a lot better than "Hey you!"

"A tip of the MCBEEMER helmet . . .

. . . goes to Viles & Associates, Inc., who have volunteered print the free copies of the newsletter available at the dealership. They are also BMW riders.



to



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MOTOR CITY BEEMERS
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Club Web Site – www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers
Club eGroup Email – mcbeemers@yahoo.com

Annual membership dues are \$15 per year for full membership and \$10 per year for each associate member and runs from January to January. Renewal payments are requested by January 31 of each year.

Please select 1 or more: ☐ Membership (\$15) ☐ Associate (\$10) ☐ each Additional Associates (\$10)
AND select one: ☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Renewal following lapse of years

(Please Print)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

Email: _____

National Motorcycle Club Membership Information

Please check the appropriate boxes to signify current membership in the following national motorcycle clubs:

BMW Motorcycle Owners of America No ☐ Yes ☐ #: _____

BMW Riders Association No ☐ Yes ☐ #: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Mail this application and payment to “Jim Mick” at:

Jim Mick
56750 Fairchild Rd
Macomb MI 48042

Dealership Use
Only

OR send funds via PayPal to: Jim@RidingIsWonderful.com
AND send completed form by e-mail to: Jim@RidingIsWonderful.com