



# THE CENTERLINE

March, 2002

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# Georgia 400

- A slightly different Club Ride -

..... by Wolfgang Enneker

**H**aving led several club rides, I developed a routine in planning a guided ride: Pick a good lunch spot, spend some time with maps finding nice roads to the lunch spot and back, test ride the route and you're done. Sound's easy and it really isn't all that hard since you can ask other experienced members for help when preparing the ride. The most important factor is the time schedule. Even if you are able to average 50mph during a day on your favorite back roads, it is foolish and dangerous to assume that you can average the same speed in a group. Less is more. I have a few Iron-butt certificates and am a lurker on the long distance rider mailing list. I also attended a few long distance rallies. Some members asked for poker runs and scavengers hunts in last year's membership survey.

Trying to put this all together into one, I am currently working on an event which combines a scavenger hunt with the elements of a long distance rally. After some thought, I called this event "Georgia 400".

Georgia 400 will take place on Saturday June 29, 2002 and is the June club ride. The details are published on a web site at [home.earthlink.net/~wenneker/GA400](http://home.earthlink.net/~wenneker/GA400). There will be a link from our [www.bmwoga.org](http://www.bmwoga.org) website to the Georgia 400 website. Since the attendance is limited to 50 riders, you will have to register when you plan to participate in the event. Registration is done through the website. Updates about the event will be communicated

through the website and through email.

Georgia 400 is a self guided tour. You can choose from a set of 30+ bonus locations throughout Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and the Carolinas. By proofing that you visited those locations, you will collect points. The number of points will be different for every bonus location. Bonus locations which are

further away will typically yield more points. The rider who collects the most points will win. You will have to answer a question or collect some other documentation (e.g. dated gas pump receipt) to prove that you have visited a bonus location. You do not have to take a picture in order to show that you visited the bonus location. A camera

might be desirable for the scenery, though. And you might be able to take some nice shots for our Bikes'n Pictures contest on that day!

The bonus locations will be published several weeks before the event, so you will have plenty of time to plan their routes.

The ride will start and end in the metro Atlanta area. The total mileage is limited to 400 and the total time is limited to 9 hours. When you ride more than 420 miles or are more than 15 minutes late, you will be disqualified from scoring. Plan wisely.

I hope that this mini rally will be safe fun. Check the web site often for updates and do not forget to register. And I will have to spend some time this spring riding around and scout those 30+ bonus locations.

It's a tough job, but somebody has to do it!



## Here's What's Happening.....

**March 10: Club Meeting** Meeting will begin at 10:00 am at Toosy's Way Station. The good folks at Toosy's are setting up a special breakfast buffet in honor of our presence and your patronage is invited prior to the meeting. Toosy's Way Station is located just below the northern end of GA400 on the east side of the highway.

**March 17: Club Ride** John Graham's March ride will be a North Georgia mountains ride, meeting at McDonalds at the corner of hwy's 53/400 North of Atlanta at 8:30am - full tank, ready to ride at 9:00am sharp. Though the details are not complete at this time, the intent will be a large loop starting in the Suches direction, and returning from the War Woman area. We will stop for a 1 hour lunch break/gas around 12:30-1:00pm, then returning to the McDonalds hwy 53/400 sometime around 5:30-6:00pm. These will be familiar roads to most, and weather permitting, a good time to get the winter cobwebs off the seat. Cell number for use on the morning of the ride 404-822-6072.

**March 24: Rat Ride** Adam Levenstein Meet at 8 am, leave at 9. The IHOP in Griffin, GA - right on 19/41, if memory serves. Get "lucky" with Adam on this ride. Mystery destination for now.

**April 7: Club Meeting** Amicolola Falls State Park. Meeting starts at 10:00am and picnic lunch will be served afterward. Ken Long, of Ken's Motorcycle Tires, will be our guest to give us a seminar on tires and answer all our questions on the subject. Bob & Lynda Wooldridge will be serving "Wooley Brats", Coleslaw, and Baked Beans!

**April 12: Opening Day @ T.W.O.** Big Party!, says Britt.

**May 3-5: Georgia Mountain Rally** BMWOGA hosts a large portion of the BMW world at it's annual rally to kick off the riding season. Held again this year at the Bald Mountain Park near Hiawassee, GA. More details later on.

**May 5: Club Meeting:** The May club meeting will be held at the rally site on Sunday morning.

**June 1: Club Meeting:** This will be a Saturday club meeting at Red Top Mountain State Park. Meeting starts at 10:00 am and a picnic lunch will be served afterward.

**June 2: Ride for Kids:** The Atlanta Ride for Kids event will depart from the Northpoint Mall. Registration begins at 7:00 am and the ride departs promptly at 9:30. Rain or Shine! Dahlonga is the new destination this year.

**June 29 Club Ride:** Wolfgang Enneker will organize this unusual club ride. Details at [home.earthlink.net/~wenneker/GA400/index.html](http://home.earthlink.net/~wenneker/GA400/index.html) or link it from the club website.



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# The Invisible Motorcyclist

*Editor's note: Fred Rau is Senior Editor of Motorcycle Consumer News (a respected national publication) and a close friend of mine. Moreover, he's been closely involved in motorcycling for more years than most of us and has forgotten more about motorcycles than most of us will ever know. Fred is absolutely committed to improving the safety of our sport and I'm honored that he has allowed me to re-print a recent article he wrote for Motorcycle Consumer News (www.mcnews.com) on this subject.*

.....Buster



Perhaps this subject would get better treatment in one of our "Proficient Motorcycling" articles, but several people have told me I really should write a column about it, so I decided that I'm going to give it a try.

What it involves is the old, "I never saw him" excuse heard in thousands of police reports and courtrooms around the country, whenever a four-wheeler is asked why he mowed down an unsuspecting motorcyclist. The subject particularly intrigues and fascinates me because I've lost three good friends over the years to this "phenomenon." And, like most of you, I'm sure, I often find myself worrying that I might be next. Especially after incidents like yesterday, when a lady in a Lincoln Navigator, which is just slightly smaller than a school bus, decided she needed to make a right turn from the center lane—directly in front of me.

It's not that I don't believe the car/truck/SUV drivers either—I honestly believe that they often don't see us, despite our high—viz vests, modulating headlights and any other number of devices we use to make ourselves conspicuous.

Which brings me to the study that enlightened me considerably on the subject. But first I have to admit that I can't quote accurately from this study, or even tell you where it came from or how

to find it. I wish I knew, but in truth it was a magazine article I happened to come across while sitting in a Doctor's waiting room, and though I meant to steal the magazine when I got done with my appointment—I forgot. And when I remembered and went back for it a couple of days later, the magazine was gone. I don't even remember for sure what magazine it was in, or the month, or anything else. So, if you happen to recognize what I'm talking about on this page, and saw the article, I'd really appreciate it if you would contact me so I could get a copy.

Still, despite not having a copy in front of me to quote from, I want to give you the gist of the article, because I found it so enlightening. And yet, it actually had nothing to do with motorcycling, at least from the researchers' point of view.

Somewhere, a group of researchers was studying attention and perception characteristics—I think in regards to using the data for treating attention deficit disorder. Anyway, they put a large group of people in a screening room, and told them they would be seeing a film with two lines of people facing each other, one side wearing black t-shirts and the other, white. The two groups would be passing a basketball back-and-forth, and the

audience was to try, without taking notes, to keep track of the number of times the ball was passed, and how many times each side had possession of the ball. Then they were shown another, similar film, but this time the ball was sometimes passed laterally, and sometimes bounced. Again, they were to try to notice how many times each of these things happened. During a third and fourth film, the people in the different colored shirts were mixed up, part on each side, and other variables added in to make it a bit more complex.

After all the screenings were done, the audiences (this was done several times, with several different groups of people) were tested. However, none of the questions they were asked related to the people passing the balls—none at all. You see, during the first film, a woman walked by in the back-ground, carrying an opened umbrella. In the second, she walked by in the foreground, between the camera and the people passing the basketball. In the third take, a man wearing a gorilla suit passed by in the back-ground. And in the final film, the man in the gorilla suit walked by right in front of the camera, and even stopped for a moment and "mugged" for the camera by jumping up and down a couple of times.

You can see where this is going, right? I can't claim to remember the exact statistics, but something like 98% of the audience never remembered seeing the lady in the background with the umbrella. About 90% never saw her when she walked by in the foreground. Even worse, over 60% claimed they never saw the man in the gorilla suit walk by in the background, and about 48% didn't recall ever seeing the gorilla at all, even when he stopped in front of the camera and jumped up and down.

The consensus of opinion among the researchers was that people tend to only see what they're looking for. The audience had been primed to look for the

*(Continued on page 6)*



# From the Prezzzzzzzz

..... Tim McGee

Well I'm sitting here with a big-time dose of spring fever. The

weather has been very warm and unseasonable. Just think, a week ago I went riding with some club members and it was full electric's until around 10 AM. This morning it's in the high 50's, I have the windows in the house open and the attic fan is on. Go figure.

Well the Executive Committee has met and has started to wade through club business for 2002. We set the meeting schedule for 2002. This includes two Saturday meetings as was voted on at the November club meeting. Our first order of business was to adopt a new Liability Waiver that all members will be asked to review and sign. Rick Alembic our resident lawyer helped us draw up this waiver.

The By Laws sub committee has come up with its first draft for us to look

at. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months. Some other changes that you will see soon.

I have formed a Communications Sub Committee that will oversee all club communications including the Newsletter, the Web Site, and "The Line". The members of this Sub Committee are: Newsletter Editor Buster Moldenhauer, past President and past Director Damian Finch, and Director Mark Scofield. This sub committee will advise the Executive Committee on all things relative to communications in BMWOGA. "The Line" now has 4 moderators to oversee that function. Those members are: Newsletter Editor Buster Moldenhauer, past President and present Director Stan Dulemba, Vice President Wayne Farr, and past Vice President Ian Schmeisser. I have asked them to look at the Netiquette rules presently in force and advise us as to whether they are adequate, or need some tweaking.

I have also formed a Rally Site Sub

Committee chaired by Vice President Wayne Farr. After recently visiting the present rally site I feel we may be out of business at that location within several years. This new sub committee will be looking for alternatives. Our goal is to keep it in the North Georgia Mountains at about the same time of year. If anyone has any ideas contact Wayne.

Also, some new faces, and some old ones. Bill & Jane Moore have graciously agreed to handle lunches at club meetings for 2002. Paul Sotrop has agreed to act as the Vintage Classic Coordinator for 2002.

Our next Executive Committee Board meeting will concentrate on the new By Laws draft and the upcoming Rally, which is just around the corner. A lot of stuff is going on but all necessary in my opinion.

Hope to see you on the next club ride.

—//—

## Club Event .....

# February Club Meeting

**F**ebruary's club meeting was held at the Jasper Family Steak House in (where else) Jasper, GA. The breakfast buffet was good and hot and plenty of coffee flowed to warm up the hands and innards of riders who came in from the cold. Those who had electric clothes truly enjoyed them on this particular winter morn. Despite the cool temps a goodly number of members showed up and all of the officers were in attendance for their first meeting of the new year.

Utilizing a private room at the restaurant, we were able to discuss several items of business at the meeting and start to make plans for the upcoming Georgia Mountain Rally to be held (as always) on the first weekend in May. A new set of club by-laws changes was presented and will be publicized over the coming weeks for all to see. Eventually a vote will be taken on these changes.

Several other items were discussed and reports were given by each of the officers. Minutes now will be posted on the web site and will be available in printed form from the Secretary on request.

While the temps were a little cold for the ride in to the meeting, the air was much warmer afterwards and several groups headed out for a ride in the bright winter sunshine. This wasn't the most well-attended meeting we've had in a while but those that came seemed like they had a good time visiting

with each other and the rides afterward made the outing well worthwhile.

—//—



Dennis McNeal signals success after a small adjustment to his bike.

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(Continued from page 3)

basketball, and the people passing it, and that's pretty much all they saw. Their minds had automatically filtered out any other distractions.

Of course, you know who we are, right? We're the lady with the umbrella. Or, if we work real hard at it, with bright, reflective clothing, high-beam or modulating head-lights, or even (I hate to say it) extra loud exhaust pipes—at best, we graduate to being the guy in the gorilla suit.

Bottom line—about half of the people we mingle with on the road just plain aren't going to see us, at all. And that's because they've been conditioned, all their lives, to look for four-wheeled or larger vehicles.

There's an item in this month's "Bul-

letins" [March, 2002 Motorcycle Consumer News] about a new kind of driver's license testing being instituted in Great Britain. You should read it. It's probably one of the best ideas I've ever heard for combating "motorcyclist invisibility." If I had my way, every motorist would have to take this testing every single year, as a refresher. Simply because it is aimed at reversing the pre-existing conditioning mode, and getting people into the habit of looking for, and noticing, motorcycles. I only wish there were some way we could get our governments to see the value of Great Britain's system. Not that the English are any more enlightened than us, but the sale and use of motorcycles and scooters in England's urban areas has shot up by about 200% over the past five years, with an attendant rise in automobile/motorcycle accidents. And, just like over here, studying the accidents shows the car drivers 'just didn't

see" the scooter or motorcycle. The new "Hazard Perception" test is simply a reaction to the carnage. Which is particularly frightening when you consider that per capita, two-wheeler use is actually much greater in England than it is over here, so their drivers are already better pre-conditioned to see motorcycles.

Wouldn't it be nice if we could manage to get our government to understand the problem and react now, before we have to point to a stack of broken and dead bodies to get their attention?

In the meantime, I suggest you try riding like you're invisible. Or at the very least, like you're wearing a gorilla suit.



-Fred Rau Senior Editor

# 12th Georgia Mountain Rally

## May 3, 4 & 5, 2002

When I joined the BMWOGA a few years ago I was not already a motorcyclist and had no idea what a "rally" was. Lots of folks invited me to come to the rally but I wouldn't let them talk long enough for me to find out what goes on at a motorcycle rally and I sure didn't want to get mixed up for a weekend with a bunch of strangers in a strange place. Besides, I reasoned, I had graduated from tents and sleeping bags when I became too old for the Boy Scouts. A Marriott or Hyatt would be more to my liking for a weekend escape or, at the very least, a late-model Holiday Inn if "roughing it" was the thing to do.

Boy, was I wrong! Somehow Mac McEnheimer talked me into helping his run the rally the following year—probably by letting me share his rental cabin instead of that "damp sleeping bag in a tent" business—and I've made the scene each spring since then. So, for those new club members who don't know what a motorcycle rally is, and for those who have not yet attended one of ours, let me pique your interest just a little.

- ☞ You can camp out in your tent on the site right where all the action is or you can stay in a nice motel close by.
- ☞ The food is great, with two dinners provided free (chili on Fri night and a full steak dinner on Sat. night) and breakfast costs a whopping \$2
- ☞ Several hundred people will be there on almost any model of BMW (ancient and modern) you can imagine.
- ☞ Lots of accessory vendors will be there showing their wares and offering special prices.

☞ Much, much more will be happening all day on Friday and Saturday and you'll meet lots of people; some of which may become your friends.

If you don't know about motorcycle rallies and you want my advice you'll make plans now to attend the GMR this year, if just to see for yourself what it's all about. You can dust off that old tent and sleeping bag or make yourself a reservation at one of the hotels close by and still get in on all the fun.

If you are familiar with motorcycle rallies in general I'll bet you'll come away saying this one was the best you've ever been to. Our rally is pretty much the first one of the riding season and those living up north like to dust off their Beemers and head south to Hiawasse. There'll be lots of them there.

Hope to see you there too! ..... Buster

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# Volunteerism



..... by Buster Moldenhauer

One of the dictionaries I use defines Volunteer this way:

*v. intr.*

**To perform or offer to perform a service of one's own free will. To do charitable or helpful work without pay: *Many retirees volunteer in community service and day care centers.***

Our club, like so many other civic and social organizations, depends on its members to provide the energy necessary to motivate and actuate itself along our chosen path. Like so many of those other organizations, our club depends on about 10% of its membership to do about 90% of the work. This isn't a startling revelation nor is it likely to change. It's just something that I don't understand; never have and never will.

My first BMWOGA function back in '97 was a club ride on my 20 year old R90/6. The bike had 99,000 miles on its odometer and I had about 1,500 total motorcycle miles under my belt. I had just graduated from Motorcycle Safety Foundation beginner school and was rewarding myself with a ride off my beaten and familiar local path.

I showed up at the Waffle House on time that morning; early, in fact, so I could introduce myself and ask if it was ok for a FNG to tag along. Dennis McNeal, who was the ride captain in those days, welcomed me and made me feel like the group would take care of me if I got in

trouble. I don't know today if Dennis actually felt that kind of paternal instinct toward me but he wound up having to display plenty of it as the day wore on. Dennis would have had more fun on that ride if I had not shown up, or if he'd simply made me feel a little less welcome (I'd have turned around at the Waffle House toward home in a heartbeat if he'd done that). But he didn't. Dennis—and some others on the ride that day—went out of their way to make me feel welcome and help me get home in one piece.

Dennis wasn't getting paid to act as Ride Captain that day. He didn't owe me any extra care or anything else. He was fulfilling his duty as a volunteer in the above-average way most volunteers approach their tasks.

I don't remember anyone giving Dennis a hard time on that ride. I don't remember anyone bitching about the destination or the quality of the food at the lunch spot or the route we took to get there. I guess all of us were willing to subdue any of those feelings we might have had out of a sense that if someone was going to volunteer to do all that work the least we could do would be to follow along without giving him a hard time.

Lately, it seems, as the Righteous Brothers sang a few years ago: "You've Lost That Loving Feeling....."

We seem pretty anxious to bash one another over the slightest thing that isn't going our way. We've become a club of whiners. The rides are always either too fast or too slow. The banquet is either too extravagant or too plain. The meeting location is always on the wrong day of the week and always in the wrong location.

We also seem to have taken some college level courses in micro-management. We fail to recognize that the officers we elect might have spent a considerable amount of time working out the details of whatever issue is up for debate and that our over-simplistic answer for every problem might be inappropriate for this particular problem. Owing to our own superior intellect we are quick to throw out the work of the folks who have studied the problem in favor of the bright

idea we came up with after 5 minutes of deliberate and intense study of the issue.

Another thing I've notice about us lately is that the wishes of the majority are to be rudely scorned if they conflict with the desires of a couple of vocal individuals. We don't seem to want to abide by any kind of social order that protects the rights of the minority while insuring that the will of the majority is enforced. I don't seem to mind throwing trash out of the car in your front yard because it doesn't detract from the property values in my own neighborhood and I don't have to look you in the eye while I'm doing it.

The anonymity of our modern society seems to have removed the necessity for us to be polite to one another and those who champion the cause of individual freedom have forgotten that living together in close quarters requires all of us to conform to the will of the majority, at least to some degree.

For some reason our club has increased its membership numbers dramatically over the past couple of years and, from among those scores of new folks, we should be harvesting some great new ideas to enhance our club life. Will we discourage them by our exhibit of anti-social behavior? Will they want to volunteer their time and energy to bunch of folks who will kick them in the face for their efforts?

Maybe I'm not seeing the world as it really is. I hope that is the case. I do know that we've got a set of Officers and Directors who are working very hard to make the BMWOGA experience as much fun as possible for the largest number of our members. They'll make some mistakes and make some decisions that not all of us will agree with but they will have tried and they will have given us a large portion of their time and energy in doing so.

In return we owe them the courtesy of a "Thank You!" from time to time, and we owe them the benefit of the doubt when we might otherwise want to give them a hard time about one of the many decisions they have to make.

That's my opinion; what's yours?

(Continued from page 8)

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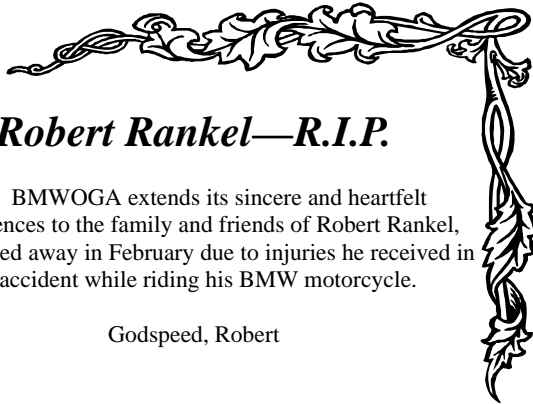
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### Robert Rankel—R.I.P.

BMWOGA extends its sincere and heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Robert Rankel, who passed away in February due to injuries he received in an accident while riding his BMW motorcycle.

Godspeed, Robert



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