



# GREATER CINCINNATI BMW CLUB

March 2005 Newsletter

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## A Height Challenge of a Different Kind

By Lynn Cummins

Did I mention that I'm height challenged???? At about 5'2" (plus a very important fraction or two), and with an inseam of 28", it's been difficult at times to avoid or overcome certain challenges I face as a motorcycle rider. Most significant observation: there aren't too many bikes out there that I can straddle comfortably! Even when searching for my first bike, a 2001 F650 GSA, I was uncomfortable with the standard seat heights offered on many makes of bikes. I looked at Suzuki, Kawasaki, Honda and Triumph in addition to BMW. I remember thinking the Kawasaki Ninja 650 looked "invitingly appropriate" for my height...only to find that, when I straddled the bike, I could just **barely** touch the ground with both feet. As a relatively "new" rider at the time (after a hiatus of 20+ years), having barely a tiptoe stance to stabilize the bike when stopped was enough reason to keep me looking for the right fit. I returned to my first choice, the BMW F650 GSA, and purchased an aftermarket, lower seat from Wunderlich. (Thousands of miles later, I would feel comfortable enough to return to the standard seat on the F650 as an "experienced rider" well practiced in stopping with only one foot on the ground.)

About nine months, 47,000+ and two BMW motorcycles ago, I transitioned to my newest ride, a 2004 BMW R1100S. With a seat height of 31.5", it is about 3/4" taller than my previous bike, a 2002 K1200RS. So, once again, I found myself height-challenged. And, when traveling long distances, I even add to the height of my new bike with a sheepskin seat cover by Alaska Leathers. It adds about 1/2-3/4" to the S's seat

height due to the cushioning effect over the seat and sides of the seat, but the added comfort is worth the episodes of "tenuous" stops with which I have to deal.

So, where is this all going? Well, naturally, to the **next** height-challenge I recently endured and conquered! This is probably the most vexing of all the challenges the S has thrown at me other than the seat height. I've come to accept the quirks of an R bike vs. the K bike's smooth, consistent, non-quirky character. (I never understood the "personality" remarks spoken about R bikes until now.) I had ridden Jerry's RT before, so it wasn't totally new to me, but it was a change from the KRS. I've also become accustomed to the increased airflow I experience on the R1100S versus the K1200RS. But, by far, the worst, almost insurmountable challenge—again related to my height—was the side stand on the S. Now, for the history...



My first experience with the R1100S was on a demo ride at the Nationals in Charleston, WV. I wanted to ride the R1150R, and Jerry was, prophetically, wanting to ride the GS. We proceeded

on the demo ride and got to the half way point where the ride leader demo-ed some skills. He then announced that this would be the time for riders to switch rides, to try something different, if we wanted. Another rider--on an R1100S--asked if I'd switch and let him ride the R1150R that I was on. I said, "fine" and got ready to ride the sharp looking S. (The two bikes have

identical seat heights, so I had no reservations in switching with him.) We were all mounted and ready to go—with some riders already moving out--when, to my horror, I realized that I couldn't reach the side stand on the S to retract it! As more bikes pulled out, I thought fast and quickly asked the rider to my left if he'd help me. He didn't hear me, so I desperately flailed my left arm at him, striking his right arm. Alleluia! I got his attention and explained that I couldn't reach the side stand and asked him to kick it up for me. He tried and failed, as I was just a bit too far from him. I timidly but quickly duck-walked (on my toes) the S to a point close enough for him to kick up my side stand and we were on our way. Other than very minimal footfall at stops, it was a fun ride on a super-looking, super-handling bike! I made a mental note that I'd now found two more BMWs that I wasn't too short to ride! Granted, I had difficulty with the S's side stand, but I'd now successfully ridden six BMW models: the F650 GSA and CS, the R1200C, K1200RS, R1150R, R1100S and R1150RT (2002 low seat and also aftermarket lower seat). This is significant, as I don't think there's another make of motorcycle on the market that would offer me, a lowly short person, that many models that I could actually ride! (Little did I know, however, that there was an "S" bike in my future!)

Now, back to the original purpose of this article...my height/leg-length challenge with the S's side stand. When I got my S last June, I was constantly struggling to reach the side stand to retract it. I knew I couldn't happily commute to and from work each day without Jerry on my left to assist when needed...and that just wasn't going to happen. Granted, I did have about a 60% success level with retracting the side stand, but my efforts put me at great risk of dropping the bike or pulling something in my back due to my contortion-laden efforts. I felt doomed to a never-ending struggle, so Jerry began to search



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for a temporary remedy for my problem until we could have Jeff Nutter help us add an extension of some sort to the S's side stand. I didn't look forward to this as it posed another problem--bike withdrawal while Jeff had my bike in the shop to design and make any modifications necessary. (Yes, my S has a center stand, but, once again, my short stature and lack of

upper body strength wouldn't make it possible for me to ride my bike with only a center stand to rely on for parking. I just couldn't get the needed leverage for the lift action needed to put the bike on the center stand.) Since this was "prime" riding season and the shop was heavily booked, Jeff's efforts were scheduled for much later in the year...in winter when the load on the shop and Jeff's time would be lighter.

Jerry's efforts to come up with a temporary remedy proved rather effective. He decided to clamp an "extra" RAM mount he just happened to have to my side stand. It didn't take him long to attach the mount to the stand and we put his "design" to the test. The ball mount provided an extension that I *could* reach to retract the side stand. It also made it easier for me to locate the side stand to extend it for parking. While it looked somewhat strange to me, it was black and rather innocuous **and** it solved my problem! I could reach the side stand with much less effort (and much less swearing). I continued to use the RAM-accessorized side stand through the summer, fall and into winter.



In December or January (I really don't remember when), Jerry and I visited BMW of the Tristate and once again talked to Jeff Nutter about the side stand modification. He thought that adding a metal loop or extension to the stand (much like the one on the RT's side stand) would work and would just have to determine the size and orientation of the loop. When Jeff mentioned the RT stand, Jerry remembered that we probably

still had a side stand off his 2002 RT, as he had his RT equipped with a police side stand, for added stability just prior to his decision to "move on" to another BMW model. We went home to locate/retrieve the side stand and brought it back to the shop. Jeff looked at it and thought it could be modified for our purposes. Now, for those S bike purists out there, yes, this would probably add a few grams of weight to my S, but I'm not racing, it's not a Boxer Cup Replica, and I need it to ride with more piece of mind.

About a week later, the "new" side stand was ready and we brought my bike in to have it installed. I must say it actually looks pretty good! The loop on the stand was reshaped to allow it to retract up between the shift lever and the foot peg and not interfere with shifting. The retractor spring worked fine, so the potential for a problem there didn't materialize. The design project was a complete success! I can easily retract the side stand. And, it's **also** easier to extend than the standard S side stand! The other unforeseen, good outcomes to this effort are that: There's one less spare part or "I might need it sometime" accessory in our garage, and Jerry has his RAM mount back for whatever additional gadget he may need for his bikes!



Left: An easy reach for retracting OR extending the side stand. Right: Modified loop of the RT stand neatly tucked against the bike does not interfere with shifting action.

## Profile: Bill Gardner, BMW of the Tristate

By Lynn Cummins

*Preface: As part of my profiles on our club contest sponsors, I try to include a "personal" profile of the person interviewed. Because of the length of last month's article, and because I wanted to double check some of my notes, this second installment of the article related to BMW of the Tristate appears below.*

We all know Bill Gardner, but the time we (Jerry and I) spent interviewing him helped us learn a

bit more about the man who owns the dealership that Jerry and I could unofficially call our "second home." And, as we rarely have an opportunity to have a long conversation with Bill--because he's always busy with the business--this was a great opportunity for us to sit and chat. It was an enjoyable time and we thought we'd share it with you.

### Background...

Bill was born in Indianapolis, IN and lived there for three years before his father, a traveling salesman, moved the family to Cleveland where they lived for seven years. His family then moved on to Pittsburgh for three years; followed by a stay in Findlay, Ohio. Bill attended the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade there and recalled, "It was a "cool place to live. It was a small town and kids could ride their bicycles downtown." His family moved again, however, and he graduated high school in Cleveland and went on to earn a degree in history at the University of Virginia.

After graduating from college, Bill decided to go to Colorado where, in his own words, he was a ski bum for five years. While in Colorado he held mostly seasonal jobs at ski areas or worked in construction. He was 27 and had never had a job for over a year. Bill then went on to spend nine years sailing on the Great Lakes with the Merchant Marine.

As for when and how Bill got into motorcycling... During Bill's first year in Colorado, his brother came to visit him (1973). They visited a dealer in Golden, CO who had R75/5s for \$2,000. The dealer was Golden Cycles. Bill paid him \$100 to hold a bike until April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1973 when he rode it back to Ohio. The 600-mile service was done in Manhattan, KS. They camped out on a golf course waiting for the service to be completed. Bill had the R75/5 for two years before it was totaled in a crash with a deer. When he was headed back to Colorado for the summer of '75, his mother loaned him some

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money to buy a new /6. He rode that for nine years.



*Bill checking out the competition...*

In the summer of 1983, Bill went on the BMW 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tour in Europe through Edelweiss Tours. His group flew out of Toronto on a charter. There were two chartered planes for the tour: one for the east, leaving from Toronto, and one for the west leaving out of Vancouver. He took delivery of an R80ST in Europe and went on the three-week-long tour. His work in school supply had a distinct advantage here...he had summers off, so this was a perfect time to do the tour.

Edelweiss picked up the bikes in Berlin and brought them to London in a van. The tour Bill was on started in London. They spent five days in Britain and then went on to visit France, Luxemburg, Trier, Moselle Valley, Upper Rhine, Switzerland, Austria, and Northern Italy. They ended up in Munich for BMW's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary after three weeks of touring Europe.

After the tour, Bill chose to return to Vancouver where he met his brother in Seattle. They spent a week touring the Northwest and then another week getting home to northern Kentucky/Cincinnati. All totaled, Bill rode 5,000 miles in five weeks: three weeks in Europe, one week in the west and one week getting home. That's five weeks living on a bike...and only two days in that timeframe when he didn't have to pack up each night! (Ahhh...paradise!)

### **In the beginning...**

Bill's initiation to motorcycling came in 1970 when he was attending the University of Virginia on a football scholarship. He had no experience with motorcycling growing up as a kid. In his third year of college, he was hanging out with his three roommates who all had bikes. He started on an RD350 Yamaha...2-stroke, fast, didn't corner very well. Six months later he had two BSA 650s, A10 models. The bike was knick-named "The Clam" because it oozed oil. His next bike was a \5. He's owned BMWs every since. Bill's been a member of the MOA (#3669) since 1974-75.

### **The Future...**

I asked Bill what we could expect from BMW for the future. Here's a brief rundown:

The K1200S is due to be introduced in April '05, but it could be introduced sooner.

The new R1200RT and R1200ST (the replacement for the R1150RS) are all due in April '05. The dealership is planning an open house event to introduce the bikes. In June '05, the new K bike is due out. The R1200GSHP (high performance) is a model slated for the '06 production year. It should be in the dealership in September '05. Initial information is that the price tag for this model will be around \$20,000 and the production will be very limited...maybe 200 units in all. Also, there are no plans for an R1200 Adventure.

All in all, there are five new motorcycles due for introduction in '05.

### **Speaking of Safety...**

*By Lynn Cummins*

It's a quiet morning commute. Joe is 4-wheeling it today and traffic is heavy as usual on the main arteries; traffic on the four-lane roads along the route is moderate. Other than that, the weather's cooperating with mild temperatures and it's actually sunny for the first time in days! Joe's commute is almost complete as he waits for the light to change. He's in the right lane; another car is to his left, as the light turns green. As Joe begins to move out with the other car, both proceeding at a normal pace, the silence is broken by the shrill sound of a super bike as it speeds by, splitting the lanes between Joe and the other car. It happens so quickly and Joe doesn't know where the biker came from! It's as if he appeared out of nowhere! He starts

thinking about the lane-splitting episode as he watches the rider continue along the road ahead—still speeding and weaving between cars. About a mile down the road, Joe sees the rider turn into a local business, obviously the place where he works.

Joe pulls into the parking lot at his office and reviews in his mind the events of the past two miles. What was his spontaneous reaction to the bike splitting lanes? Why hadn't he seen him coming? No one got hurt or lost control so, what's the difference?

The reason Joe doesn't remember where the bike rider came from is: 1) Joe apparently hadn't been as diligent as he normally is when commuting on his bike. If he'd been on his bike, he'd have been ready to move out while stopped at the light—knowing what had been behind him and what was approaching; 2) the bike did come out of no where, possibly from a business or side street a block ago or from behind the line of cars behind Joe in either lane; 3) any number of other scenarios to explain the biker's sudden appearance between Joe's car and the other vehicle.

The lesson here is that even when you're not 2-wheeling, you need to keep practicing the skills that keep you safe while riding: scanning the road ahead, to the sides, to the rear, always alert for the expected...and the unexpected. Your attention has to be keenly focused on your ride. As a car driver this morning, a number of things happened to distract Joe. It might have been the false sense of security of being in a "cage" that let him drop his guard. Joe might have been listening too intently to the radio, or diverting his attention to that cup of coffee he had in the cup holder. The good weather also had a calming affect on him—sort of like Sunday driving on his Monday commute. There were lots of factors influencing Joe's state of mind and alertness—compromising his reaction time and safety. Next time you're riding or driving, pay close attention to your mindset or frame of mind. Channel your energy to focusing clearly on the task of

driving/riding safe.

## ERC/BRC Class Update

*By Jerry Cummins*

The classes are now full for both sessions. The **ERC class** will convene on **March 26<sup>th</sup>**, a Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Scarlet Oaks Campus. Please arrive by 8:30 a.m. The **BRC class** will be on **April 12<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>** at Scarlet Oaks, Classroom time for the BRC is on the 12<sup>th</sup> from 6-10 p.m. (arrive by 5:30 p.m., please) and the range time is on the weekend from 1-7 p.m. (again, arrive early). Both classes are full. Your commitment to participate is both significant and appreciated. Statistics demonstrate that riders who take these courses benefit from the skills learned and honed and decrease the potential for personally adding to future recorded statistics. See you there!

## The Prez Sez...

It may not seem like the national rally is just around the corner, but we've just flown past February and launched, snowflakes flying, into March. (I guess it's coming in like a lion and not a lamb.) As a club, we've already committed to providing rescue and retrieval efforts--trailing for riders needing assistance--at the rally and also done some recon to locate potential "off-road" sites for the GS seminars. Since I've received emails from rally participants from other areas of the U.S. wanting to know how they can volunteer, I thought I'd mention some other possibilities if we as a club or individuals wish to volunteer for the rally.

One area already mentioned at the last club meeting is the need for security personnel. Lynn and I volunteered for security at the rally in Charleston, WV. We volunteered for 4 hours (or a half-day session) to provide security during set up for the vendors. We just sat or stood at our appointed entrances and ensured that only authorized personnel/vendors were gaining access to the vendor floor. They were happy to have us show up and volunteer, and we had the extra-added benefit of getting a rally hat—with security marked on the back, and the opportunity to sign in/register half a day earlier than the official start of the rally. That was a very nice benefit! There are other areas that we could volunteer for, as individuals or as a club.



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In past years, we've staffed the registration tables. The beer garden is also a favorite for many volunteers. We don't need to volunteer for anything more than what we've committed to already, but if you are in the "volunteer-frame-of-mind," the rally committee would appreciate hearing from you/us. So, let me know if you might be interested in volunteering some of your time—regardless of the amount of time (small or large) you might want to offer.

Another area in which we might want to offer assistance is **ride-route planning**. I'm sure the rally committee would welcome any prepared routes for rally goers to get in some good riding and/or get acquainted with Ohio and nearby neighboring states. In the next few months, some club members may be doing some "recon" runs to the Lima area and may seek out routes to travel on while at the rally. This would be a pleasurable way to make our mark on a successful rally! Additionally, we've all seen Mike LaBar's contribution to the Beemerville-featured articles in the BMW ON magazine. That was a very nice recognition of Mike's travels and contest coordination efforts. I'd have to look at the Barnstorming map again, but it's possible a nice ride route could be developed with the **Bicentennial barns** in the area as a focus for rally goers.

A natural result of the first unofficial recon ride Oscar, Lynn and I took in December was the discovery of Kupee's, a local "hot spot" for the



after church crowd on that particular Sunday. You can usually tell if a place has good food by how busy the parking lot is, and Kupee's parking lot was FULL! The place was crowded and doing a brisk business with their grilled offerings and pies. You ordered at the counter and sat at a table or booth awaiting your order. The place had to hold 100+ patrons at my best guess. Joe and Chris Berry even located the Kupee's in downtown Lima on a recent ride...and brought back two of their home-made pies for the last

club meeting! It's a small bakery at this location, but the pies are the same as at the site near the rally. Little contributions like that add a taste of local flavor (no pun intended) to the rally experience.

So, if you have the desire to contribute in anyway, let me know and I'll pass it along to the rally board.

## A Turntable for your BMW...

*By Lynn Cummins*



Let's face it, I shouldn't be surprised anymore by some of the things I see on Jerry's wish list each Christmas—a fairly new tradition with us that ensures that we still get surprised on that wonderful morning, but also gives us some idea of what to buy! (I have to add here that Jerry and I aren't really "shoppers." We don't go to the malls much if at all, and Jerry usually seeks and buys what he needs on the Internet or at BMW of the Tristate during the year. So, I'm definitely left at a disadvantage when it comes to having any fresh ideas on what to buy him for any gift...Christmas, anniversary, birthday, etc.) I've seen some strange things, but the item listed this past Christmas, "the Mat" had me intrigued. What was this, what did it look like and what the heck was it for?

It's a funny, sort of heavy, pizza-shaped disk with what looks like a target on it. You put it on the floor of your garage (or bedroom, living room, etc...wherever you keep your bike—just kidding I hope) underneath the center of your bike. You hoist the bike up on the center stand, having the center stand hit as close to center as possible on the Mat. Once your bike is on the

center stand, you're free to rotate your bike to any position attainable—depending on the surrounding garage clutter, of course.



*The Mat, purchased from the AeroStitch website, easily handles the weight of the GS.*

So, why would you want one of these nifty gadgets? Well, for us, it's an easy way to turn a bike around so we can exit our small, cramped, detached, late 1930's vintage garage with ease. Now, let me set the stage so you can really appreciate the benefit in having one of these "babies" in your garage. Our garage is narrow; so narrow that when empty, you can just fit a Ford Explorer or Ford Ranger in it with room to open the doors and exit the vehicle without much trouble or hitting the door on the studs. The reality today is that, as we've been in this house with it's not-so-accommodating garage since 1996, the garden tools, motorcycle trailer (Standup brand), motorcycle cargo trailer, snow blower, mower, weedwacker, edger, filled utility shelves, bike lift, air compressor, mechanic's tool chest and other various-and-sundry carpentry and other tools barely leave room for our three BMW motorcycles! Add to that the fact that our narrow driveway accommodates a Toyota Rav4 right up against the door to the garage and over to one side of the drive, our space is tight! Each time we want to get two bikes out for a ride, we have to deal with this limited space to maneuver.

Given my height challenges, I don't like to back my bike down the incline just off the pad of the garage...to say nothing about having to tiptoe or hip-walk the bike backwards past the Rav4!

## **BSA Benefit Poker Run**

*By Jerry Cummins*

Can you believe it? This year marks the fourth (I think) annual Poker Run, coordinated by Mike Crum, to benefit the Boy Scouts--and the club. It's a fun ride with occasional strong winds, dodging wild turkeys, etc., etc. And, again this year, unfortunately, it does fall on a day that coincides with the BRC class. However, for those interested club members not taking the BRC, we encourage you to participate! Also, if you can't participate in the Poker Run, there's always the \$5 dinner to benefit the Scouts! The choices are a ham or turkey dinner with all the fixin's plus dessert and a beverage! The dinner, if I remember correctly starts at 3 p.m. and ends at 5 p.m. (Mike Crum, please let the Webmaster know specifics/updates/corrections to this info as needed!) There's more fun, too, with the classic car show that has also been part of this event for the past several years, as well as the rummage sale.

We should have more information soon, probably on the members only section of the website—as this is a "closed event" reserved for club members (contact Mike Crum for more details regarding this restriction). It's a fun event and both the Scouts and the club benefit financially by your participation. Thanks again to Mike for coordinating the event for our enjoyment! Let's hope for great weather!

## **GCBMWC Meeting Minutes Feb. 12, 2005**

Meeting called to order at 7:35 p.m.  
Minutes were read and accepted with one correction. The treasures report was read and accepted.

Old news -

Lima national will have musical guest of George Thorogood. This will be a great addition to the weekend. The rescue vehicles were discussed again and we decided to not attempt any roadside tire repairs. From a liability standpoint we should get the bikes and riders back to the site and let them address it there. A signup list was passed around for people that can assist in rescue and security. Security volunteers can arrive early and just keep an eye on the site till the rally gets going. You will also be allowed first pick on camping sites.

The Motel 6 has a few rooms available, Holiday Inn Express has a waiting list and the motor home sites are electric only. All sites with water and electric are taken.

The ERC course is full and the BRC has 3 spots left. Be on time or your spot will be given to a standby attendee.



*One of the club's first breakfasts at Mama's Grill...*

The Sunday ride had a great turnout and ride. The count was 28 at breakfast and 21 on the ride. Mama's Grill was very happy with us starting at their store and check out the sign at the next ride. A suggestion was made to try and find a starting point in Northern Kentucky for a breakfast ride. Somewhere around Walton or Corinth area to take advantage of the roads. Mary Pierce may be a vendor at the rally selling hats. She had a sample with "I'm a Lima Beemer." Could catch on!

The shower count at the rally was next. The site has 33 fixed showers and 10 portable in the trailers.

The Blue Ridge campout date was discussed again. Looks like the end of June, the 25th and 26th. The campground had more damage from the winter storms. All the cabins are OK but several fallen trees. You can start calling for cabins on March 1.

The Boy Scout Poker run will be the 16 of April. The starting point and meal will stay the same.

The Euroriders Rally will be May 21 to 26 in Brooksville, Ky. Should be a great week with many different brands and age of bikes.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:20. The 50/50 had a new twist. George had many donated prizes and the club donated several shirts. About 15 to 20 members received a prize. Way to go George!

## Club Calendar

- Mar 12** - 7:00 pm Meeting at BMW of the Tristate.
- Mar 26** - 9:00 am Club ERC Class at Scarlet Oaks Campus, Kemper Road
- Apr 3** - 9:00 am Breakfast Ride, Hitching Post in Hyde Park—Queen City Park Tour Ride
- Apr 9** - 7:00 pm Club, TBD
- Apr 12** - 6-10 BRC Class Scarlet Oaks Campus
- Apr 16** - 1-7 BRC Class Scarlet Oaks Campus
- Apr 16** - Poker Run (See website for times/location)
- Apr 17** - 1-7 BRC Class Scarlet Oaks Campus

## Membership Dues

Please pay your membership dues by the March meeting. Dues are as follows:

- \$15.00** for a single membership
- \$18.00** for a couple

Checks are to be made out to: **GCBMWC.**

## GCBMWC Market Place

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## **Newsletter Deadlines**

If you wish to include something in the newsletter—an article, classified ad, pictures-- the deadline for submission will be midnight on Friday, the weekend before the club ride.

Please send your submissions to my e-mail address: [jerrycummins@earthlink.net](mailto:jerrycummins@earthlink.net) or to Tom Raybuck at email address: [bucksinohio@aol.com](mailto:bucksinohio@aol.com).