



Spoke 'N Word

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Newsletter of the Potomac Area Road Riders

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February 2010

Holy Ice Cube Batman!

Was January a cold month or what!! I don't remember a day that I didn't see snow on the ground even though it was mainly of the "left over" variety from the December blizzard. The best I could do in the way of motorcycling was to open my garage door, point my bike's exhaust pipes toward the outside, sit on the bike while it was running and dream of warmer days. Not much fun but it had its moments. To be fair, there was one day (if I recall correctly) that the temperature did hit the 50 degree mark and one could have gotten out if one had planned carefully. But alas, I did not.

On the upside, January is over and we really only have 4 more weeks of winter weather before March comes in and we start seeing buds on the trees and grass starting to turn green again. So you still have time to do those needed repairs and adjustments on your favorite ride.

For me, I'll spend the next several weeks planning the June Endless Mountain Tour. It keeps me occupied and excited about the upcoming 2010 motorcycling season. I've always found that it's never too early to plan a tour.

PARR has a lot planned for the new year. Our new Trifold (soon to be distributed throughout the area) lists all our riding activities for the 2010 riding season including our day rides as well as our tours. It's a good time to start planning your ride calendar. A number of you missed out on some exceptional rides last year. Even though our rides were well attended, we still missed seeing the rest of you — **and you know who you are!** By the way, if you'd like to read about one of our overnight rides, check out the latest issue of the *Winding Road Motorcycle Times*. On page 26, you'll find the article "**Almost Heaven Over the Mountains**" written by one of PARR's talented writers, Paul Flynn. It's about the tour he planned and led last summer. It's a good read!

This year our tours will be well advertised and we'll be including details, highlights, and costs of each tour in a flyer that will be featured on our PARR website. Watch for them!

What You Missed

Despite the deep freeze we were in most of the month, we did have some motorcycling related activities that many had the pleasure of enjoying.

First off was our monthly business meeting with the new Board Members in charge. The minutes of the meeting are available on our PARR Website in the

Members area.

Secondly, was our Annual Winter Party/Awards Banquet held on January 9th at the Hamburger Hamlet in Crystal City. We had a great turnout! The food was plentiful and delicious! During the event, Ed Bugash received the 2009 AMA Service Award for outstanding service to the Club as President for the past two years and furthering the motorcycling family in general, and Tom Southard (aka Chief) received the 2009 AMA Safety Award for his outstanding safety record on the many trips, both day and over nighters, that he arranged and led. The evening was topped off by the, always fun, game of Greed. It was a great way for PARR members to get together for a little socializing. Thanks to Joe Peralta for making all the arrangements with the Hamburger Hamlet.

Capping off motorcycle related activities for the month was the Motorcycle Show in the Washington, D.C. Convention Center held on January 15-17. Our newly created PARR TriFold made it into the show and hopefully we'll get a few calls from potential new members (this year's goal is to strive to increase PARR membership).

Our next monthly meeting will be on Tuesday, February 9th. Attend for the information as well as the socializing. Hope to see a lot of you there.

Motorcycle Show

Maryland State Fairgrounds — Timonium, Maryland
February 12-14, 2010

www.cycleshow.net

[facebook.com/timoniumcycleshow](https://www.facebook.com/timoniumcycleshow)

Phone: (410) 561-7323

Admission Price \$15.00 Adults.

NOTE: \$5.00 off admission coupon available on cycle show website

PARR MEETINGS AND RIDES

Monthly Meeting: Second Tuesday of each month

Location: JCC 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax, VA.

Note: Go to front desk to sign in and you will be directed to the location of the meeting room. Meeting time is 7:30 pm

1st Sunday Ride: Breakfast Buffet between 8-9:00

Location: Masonic Lodge 999 Balls Hill Rd
McLean, Virginia

3rd Saturday Ride: Meet for Coffee at Starbucks at 9:00

Location: Colonnade Shopping Center
5722 Union Mills Road, Cifton, VA

Contact Info: PARR President, Mike Wascak
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EDITOR'S NOTE:

The story below was written about 20 years ago when I returned to riding again after a 10-year hiatus (young family, concerned wife). It was the middle of winter and I was longing for a good ride in nice weather. Because the weather was not cooperating, all I could do was dream of a good ride. That's when I wrote this article which was subsequently published in the Winding Road Motorcycle Times. It's appropriate today. Hope you enjoy it.

Mike WascaK

Springtime Dreamin'

It was definitely not a day to waste at the office - or at any job for that matter. After rolling out of bed and pulling back the drapes I discovered a spring morning so perfect that even the souls in Heaven don't awake to one more beautiful. A moment of dreamy doubt... Perhaps it's an illusion? Opening the window confirmed that it was indeed real. The fresh air of morning flooded into my room bringing with it the sounds of birds singing and children laughing in their precious few moments of freedom before the school bus arrived. The bright morning sun had even coaxed a few neighborhood cats out to bask in its warmth. Dogwoods and azaleas were in full bloom and trees that were leafless but a few short weeks before were halfway to the deep green of summer. An upward gaze revealed a clear blue sky accented with puffy white clouds. The air was pure, the horizon endless.

To which some may have responded, "It's a nice day for a drive." A drive? Some people haven't a clue: they're not riders, and there's no sense trying to explain. Let them go, shielded behind plates of glass and steel, locked away from the sounds and fragrances of earth and life, never to experience the ultimate freedom we prize so highly.

"Gotta ride" was the thought that came to my mind. A quick call to the office, letting them know of the

sudden "illness" I'd developed, set me free. I had sacrificed for king and country many times, but this day . . . this day was *mine*.

After hurrying through my morning rituals (too anxious to eat breakfast), I was finally standing beside my two-wheeled pride and joy. A turn of a key, a flip of a switch, a touch of a button, and the sleeping technology roared to life, ready to hit the road. During the warm-up, I took the opportunity to visually inspect the machine and to admire the detail and lines that first attracted me to this particular ride. I slide on the Ray Bans, slip on my helmet, and make a few final adjustments to the chinstrap and gloves until they felt and fit just right.

A twist of the throttle revs the engine and serves to refresh my feeling of power and authority over the controls. The clutch lever is pulled, and with the depressed shifter comes the solid sound of first gear engaging. I gassed the throttle a few times more to assure the machine's readiness, and my own. Then, with a synchronized release of the clutch and turn of the throttle, the bike launched from its shelter, down the driveway and onto the street. It's always a rush to accelerate quickly through the gears up to cruising speed, the sensation of warm spring air streaming forcefully by. It's a feeling I've experienced many times before but each time still seems like the first. The thrill never dies.

My destination is unclear but its direction is not - away from the city and its congestion, away from the steel and concrete barriers that hide the beauty and the rebirth that is spring's nature. No map is necessary. All that I seek is in the machine below and the road ahead. My purpose is not merely to go from point A to point B but to savor each inch of the road between.

I downshift and lean sharply into a curve. As the bike straightens under acceleration it seems to grab on and pull me along. The partnership of man and machine seems effortless;

the bike responding so quickly and soundly when one makes the right moves. The scenery around is a marvel; the rays of the sun finding their way through the trees; the uneven textures of sunlight and shade in the grasses along the road; the panoramic view of the valley below when cresting a hilltop; the streams, fences, bridges, and acres of solitude that pass along the way.

After an hour or two, the "gotta ride" fever partially subsides, and breakfast becomes a serious consideration. The fast food establishment in the next tiny town looks attractive. A decent parking spot is one that won't visually separate my bike from a good window table - not because I distrust any of the townsfolk, I simply want to admire the machine while enjoying breakfast.

With a big breakfast under my belt and riding gear back in place, the journey continues. The motorcycle (still warm) starts quickly and we pick up where we left off. Once again, it's out to the highway where there's little traffic to distract from the surroundings. Everyone else is at work and civilization is light years away. I hear only the pipes bellowing below, the wind whistling past, and a favorite song playing in my mind. Career, finances, and all the everyday stresses are far from my thoughts. Their channel doesn't come in out here.

The road ahead is a mystery, yet no map is needed. I have time, and no need to know the route numbers or even their direction. I'll recognize my turnaround when I come to it. Sure, at day's end I will have to go back, but that's a reality to be faced later. The sun is shining, the temperature is perfect, the scenery spectacular, the feeling exhilarating. This is a day to enjoy, a day to store up yet another memory of a perfect ride. I'll break out those memories on some snowy day next winter, when springtime dreamin' is all there is.

The End