



# Motor City Beemers

## Club Newsletter



BMW MOA Club #231

BMW RA Club #209

May 2016

Volume 25, Number 05

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

Immediately following the meeting is a <sup>Shopping or</sup> Lunch Ride

*We welcome owners and fans of all bikes*

**Our next meeting is May 14, 2016**

**Following Meeting: June 11, 2016**

**Web site: [www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers](http://www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers)**

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Greetings Beemers! The riding season is really beginning to ramp up. I hope some of you got over to the all bikes day in the Stockbridge town square. Next weekend is the Mini Rally in Sturgis Michigan, 6th, 7th, and 8th of May. If you wanted to, you could be at a motorcycle gathering every weekend from now through November.

I was able to stop by the dealership on their first Stake Night which is held the last Wednesday of each month. I had a couple Tube Steaks as an appetizer for our normal Wednesday night dinner this time at El Charro on 14 mile near Utica Rd. I think if we keep the Wednesday dinner location fairly close to the dealership, Stake Night will make a very good

appetizer stop and talk spot and then head for dinner.

Remember, the meeting is May 14th which is also the dealership's open house, so there will not be a lunch location for this month. It always helps to have lots of bikes in the parking lot to draw people in. If you can make a day of it, that would be great. Let's hope for good weather.

The Beemer Blast is coming up in June. I have checked the Camping rules at the State Parks and they are only allowing one tent per space, but they do allow 4 motorcycles. Because Tawas Point only has a few spots left, I am going to see if they will allow us to have two to three tents. I am not holding my breath for it. I am trying to reserve two spaces back to back so that we can have a camp fire Friday night. Orchard Beach has lots of spaces still open for Saturday night.

So, I recommend getting reservations either camping or hotel /motel in as soon as possible. The dates again are: Tawas, arrive Friday the 17th of June, we will watch the sunrise Saturday morning over Lake Huron, then head across the state to Orchard Beach State Park, Manistee, Mi to watch the sunset over Lake Michigan. Then we will leave Sunday to head home.

The weekend after the Beemer Blast is our annual Picnic at Ft. Gratiot park. More details at the May meeting.

So, lots going on and with any luck we may be able to get some riding in as well.

Pat

'13 R1200GS



Thinking back, I seem to usually open up my comments here by mentioning the riding weather. And usually griping about it. Why break with tradition? I got a bike out in February. Rode to work a few times in March. I really assumed by April, I'd be riding regularly. Imagine my surprise. It's really been a slow start to the riding season, at least for me.

Last month's "ride" was my first trip to Rocky's. Even though I bought almost nothing, it was an interesting place to see, and now that I know what they have, I'll start preparing a shopping list for next year. It does seem to be a good "too early to ride" destination to go to in our cages, so we can stock up on goodies without being limited by our side bags and top case.

One common complaint about many motorcycles is the rather anemic headlights and night time visibility. My K1200LT is a good example of this. Not a big surprise, as it uses one standard headlight bulb that is identical to that used in *pairs* in many cars. So, this past month, I purchased and installed an HID (a.k.a., "Xenon") headlight upgrade for my bike. And while I was at it, also did an upgrade to a friend's R1150RT as well. More on this later...as if you have a bike with a traditional halogen bulb, you may wish to consider this, yourself.

When I first started driving, my dad outfitted my car with a basic tool set, including a set of jumper cables. The number of cars that I have jump started since then has got to be in the three digits – going to school in the frigid U.P. with students who spent their battery money on beer provided most of those opportunities. My record was jump starting two different people in five minutes. Probably almost twenty years ago now, I discovered the "Jump Pack" – a sealed battery and cables in a small, portable container, which in total weighs about the same as a good set of cables, but you don't need another car, so I could actually jump my own vehicle if needed. Unfortunately, none of these work well on motorcycles, both good cables and jump packs take up too much space on a bike. However, for Christmas last year, Paula bought me a Lithium Ion jump pack that our dealership is selling. I was skeptical, but we've had a couple chances to use it now, and I must say, it does work. I doubt it would do much with my full-size van's V8 engine, but it did flip over Paula's 4cyl Fusion's engine with a stone dead battery, and I am sure it would have no issue with a K bike (R bikes? Not so sure, as the difficulty in starting an engine isn't based on the total displacement, but by the displacement per cylinder). I'm amazed at the amount of energy they can pack into that tiny, light weight case...oh by the way, it can power your phone and other USB devices, your laptop, and has a flashlight, too. Thanks, dear!

Let's hope May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting is a good bike day. I'd love to replace the cover picture on the Facebook page with something with some actual member BIKES in it! And speaking of Facebook, a lot of members of the club are not members of our Facebook group – if that's intentional (i.e., you don't use Facebook and don't wish to), great, but if you haven't been invited to join the Facebook group MCBeemers, let me (or any other club officer) know.

Nick.

**Disclaimer:** Modifying your vehicle's headlights is not legal, just as modifying your vehicle's exhaust, emissions controls systems, or tinting your car windows. These are all illegal but very common activities, but seemingly, the police do not generally bother with it unless you give them reason to give you a bad day. HOWEVER, done improperly, HID headlights can be horribly unpleasant to oncoming drivers, and stand out like a sore thumb, and if you do it this way, I hope the cops DO bust you, because those people are obnoxious and dangerous. And unfortunately, since it is modifying legally controlled parts of the bike, I suspect most reputable mechanics will not touch a headlight modification. The good news is it isn't hard to do yourself.

Like many people, I was not really happy with my K1200LT's factory headlight. Not even plural, just one. While I don't do a LOT of night time riding, we all occasionally end up out later than planned, and good headlights are important, so I wanted to do something to improve mine.

### **What were my options?**

When it comes to improving your bike's lighting situation, you have a few choices. Add-on lights are a popular option, but good ones are expensive and all require additional wiring (which I could do, but I'd rather be riding). One can also get entire replacement headlight assemblies, but their price make the add-on lights look cheap. Which leaves upgrading the bulb in my existing headlights. The technology that puts the most light on the road currently is “HID” (or xenon) lights – supposedly, a 35W HID bulb will put about over twice the light on the road as the factory 55W halogen bulb. Nice.

HID stands for “High Intensity Discharge”, and started being seen in some 1990s cars and is becoming more common. HID bulbs take a while to start producing useful light, which means that the traditional way of handling a high-beam – a second filament at a different place in the headlight lens and reflector -- is NOT an option with Xenon, as by the time it had reached full brightness, you probably would have turned off the high beam. Instead, automotive HID assemblies typically MOVE the HID arc within the headlight lens assembly, changing the focus to give you the high beam/low beam effect. In the case of the two bikes I upgraded (my K1200LT and a friend's R1150RT), they both have two bulbs, one for high beam and one for regular. I replaced the regular bulb, the high beam will remain a traditional halogen bulb. My '85 K100RT has one bulb with two filaments. Were I to upgrade the K100, I have two choices – either a single HID replacement that prevents the function of a high beam or a special bulb that moves back and forth to provide the separate focus points for the high and low beams.

HID lights are available in various colors “temperatures”, measured in degrees Kelvin. For example, a typical halogen bulb might have a color temperature of 3000k and is a yellowish white. HID bulbs have a wide range of color temps, from 3000k (halogen-ish), to 4000-5000k, (white to blueish white) to 8000 (definitely blue). The blue lights are popular with people modifying their cars, and they do look cool, but they are clearly not factory, so they are begging “TICKET ME!”. Plus, the human eye is not overly good at handling blue, so the effectiveness at lighting the road is reduced. I went with a 4300k bulb, which is a lot whiter than my old bulb, but not crazy.

There are many sources for HID retrofit kits, including lots of pop-up importers selling through eBay. I got mine from XenonDepot.com, as they had good reviews and sponsored one of the on-line motorcycle forums I followed, and have been around for a while. You can get retrofit kits for a lot less, but I've heard lots of stories about varying quality (or lack of), bad focus, “flicker”, and premature failure from some of the other kits out there, and realistically, saving \$30 on a safety function is probably a bad economy.

HID retrofits are more than just a new bulb. A device called a “ballast” is required to generate the high voltage to “light” the xenon gas and start vaporizing the metal salts, and then to monitor and control the voltage and current through the HID bulb as it warms up and reaches operating power. The ballast is about the size of a deck of cards. The power path is basically from the vehicle to the ballast to the HID

bulb. However, the fact that the ballast is of non-trivial size means it won't fit right next to the bulb in most cases, so the physical path ends up going from the headlight connector under the headlight back cover, out through a hole you put in the back cover, to the ballast, back through the hole, to the HID bulb.

I got a car kit – which included bulbs and lights for TWO conversions. As it turned out, my friend's bike used the same H7 my LT used, so the two-pack saved a few dollars. Most people will just get a single kit for their motorcycle, though many of the super-cheap sellers only sell in two-packs. Call it spare parts.

**Installation:** While the kit replaces the existing halogen bulb, there is a bit more to it than replacing the bulb, as you must also wire in the ballast and attach it to the bike somewhere. On both our bikes, the bulb was under a plastic cover. This needs a hole cut in it to pass the wires to and from the ballast through. Most of the instructions I have seen recommended putting a rubber grommet in the hole to avoid chafing the wires. The XenonDepot kit included even better: a whole rubber filler the wires passed through, keeping the bulb area weather resistant. Nice touch. Drilling the hole in the plastic cover was straight forward, I used a Harbor Freight step drill, and enlarged the hole to 1". The kit I got had the HID bulbs themselves in a nice plastic jar to protect them until installation, as like with any high tech bulb, touching the bulb itself will reduce its life significantly.

Replacing the bulb on the LT was all done from the front and below the faring, and above the wheel. While requiring some odd contortions, it wasn't too bad. The R1150RT was a bit more of a challenge. Most of the on-line guides I saw on doing this suggested removing much of the "tupperware" to access the back of the headlight, though I found one that said it was possible to do from above. I am happy to report that this was true...though having an extra and smaller set of hands was very useful. Fortunately, the owner of the bike had smaller hands than me and was able to help.

On my LT, there turned out to be little shelf-like structures on both sides of the faring, so I attached the ballast to one with the provided double-sided tape, and put a clamp on it for a couple days to make sure it got a good seal. The RT offered no such place, but there were some frame pieces I was able to zip-tie the ballast to. Good news: zip ties were included. Bad news: they were too big to go through the holes in the ballast, though that was easily fixed with a drill to enlarge the holes.

So, what if you are out on a long cruise and the HID system fails? Good news, since the only modification was a hole in the plastic back cover, reverting to a locally obtained halogen bulb (or your old one!) is almost exactly the same as replacing the bulb before the HID conversion. You will remove the back cover, remove the HID bulb, remove the wires from going through the hole you drilled, put the conventional bulb in, and attach the power connector that did go to the ballast back to the bulb as it was. In the case of the RT, I don't envy you the work, but it can be done in a Walmart or Meijer parking lot.

Both the bikes I did were 2002 models. Some newer bikes have smarter computers, and will think that an HID light doesn't draw enough power, and therefore must be a bad bulb. Xenondepot and other providers offer relay and "dummy load" kits to convince the computer into thinking all is well. The Internet and YouTube is full of guides for doing these kind of upgrades to whatever bike you likely have.

**Results:** I haven't had any nighttime driving with my LT since conversion, but the light looks really good in the garage, both bright and well focused. My friend with the RT has had a chance to try it at night, and she's very happy with her conversion as well. Upon starting the bike, the light goes through a curious sequence of intensity and color changes before it settles on its bright white color within about 30 seconds. One side benefit to doing this is to get familiar with changing your bike's headlight so you could do it out on the road if needed. The kit we got from XenonDepot cost a hair less than \$100 for the two kits including shipping, so \$50 each was a really effective and low cost upgrade to our lighting, not much more than replacing the standard bulb. Recommended.

## **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!

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Alternate local lunch</b>
May Friday 13	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> Canada ride	
May 14	Club Meeting – Dealership Open House	(Open House)
June 11	Club Meeting – Ride to Dorsey House	Great Baraboo
June 18-19	Beemer Blast (Sun-up/Sun-down across Michigan)	
June 25	Picnic	
July 9	Club Meeting – Lunch at Fenton Firehouse	El Patio
August 13	Club Meeting – Lunch at Pompeii – Port Huron	
August 23	Pat's Observation Run	
September 10	Club Meeting – Lunch at Tavern 109, Williamston)	
September 17	Frankenmuth Dinner	
September 17/18	After Frankenmuth Port Austin overnight Ride	
October 8	Club Meeting – Lunch at White Horse Inn	
November 12	Club Meeting – Lunch at Zukey Lake Tavern, Pinkney	
December 10	Club Meeting – Lunch at Azteca	
January 14	Club Meeting – Lunch at Great Baraboo	

## **Rallies**

May 6-8	Little Sturges	Sturges, MI
May 20-21	Morton Spring Fling	Natural Bridge, Virginia
May 20-22	European rider's Rally	Burksville, Kentucky
June 7-11	Americade	New York
July 14-17	BMW MOA	Hamburg, New York
Sep 30-Oct 2	RAMS Rally	Parker's Crossroads, TN.

**From the MOA:** “The BMW MOA Foundation is bringing rider training to our youth! Up to 24 students will have the opportunity for free riding instruction at the Hamburg Fairgrounds preceding Das Rally in July.

Do you know a young adult between the ages of 13 and 17 that would like to receive free rider training, attend the BMW MOA International Rally and have a good time? If so, please pass along the following information to young riders and parents. • July 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 8AM sharp and throughout the day until 5PM. Participants: male or female, ages 13 to 17 years old. No riding experience is necessary – this will be MSF-certified training on a dirt course. Lunch and snacks and MOTORCYCLES will be provided. Participants will need to provide: helmet, eye protection, full-finger gloves, over-the-ankle footwear, long pants, and long-sleeved shirt achieving full coverage of skin. There will be classroom as well as riding-course instruction. Included will be accident scene management, first aid introduction, along with personal riding instruction from noted riding experts.”

## **Other events:**

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

## **New Member: Tim Skiver!**

From Tim: "I'm a 52 year old, divorced, father of three (Daughter 27, Son 25, Daughter 21). I work as a Launch Engineer for Molex, LLC providing training for product use to our customers and problem solving when they have issues. I bought my first bike, a Kawasaki 400 when I was 16 and then took a break from riding while raising my family. I got back into riding with Yamaha V-Star 650 in 2011. I bought my BMW R 1200 RT in the spring of 2015 and have loved every minute of riding it! I am looking forward to many miles with new friends!



## 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.

May 4	<b>Bad Brad's BBQ</b>	6525 23 Mile Rd Shelby township, MI 48316 586-254-7010
May 11	<b>Juan Miguel's</b>	21342 Hall Rd Clinton Township, MI 48038 586.783.9751
May 18	<b>Apple Orchard Inn</b>	62840 Van Dyke Rd Washington Township, MI 48094 586.752.2188
May 25	<b>Waves</b>	24223 Jefferson Ave St Clair Shores, MI 48080 586.773.327
June 1	<b>Louis' Chop House</b>	50355 Gratiot Ave Chesterfield, MI 48051 586.949.9566

## 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](http://www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers)

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# Treasurer's Report

Jim Mick



Check book balance for the end of Mar:	\$1693.09
Check book balance for the end of Apr:	\$2228.11
Balance 3 months ago:	\$3020.39
Balance 6 months ago:	\$1892.39
PayPal balance for the end of Mar:	\$1024.52
PayPal balance for the end of Apr:	\$ 524.52

During the Apr club meeting, \$72.00 worth of 50/50 tickets was sold. David F. won \$36.00. Nick H. was reimbursed \$15.98 for donuts and the remaining \$20.02 was deposited in the checkbook.

These Members joined/renewed their membership just before, during or after the April club meeting: (mbr \$15, associate \$10) for 2016:  
Michael Pedrie (new member). Look for information about him in the newsletter;

The above membership added \$15.00 to the checkbook.

I made a transfer from PayPal to our checking account which added \$500.00 to the checkbook and subtracted \$500.00 from PayPal.

Our 2016 membership stands at 69

[ Jim's excellent information about on-line banking and using PayPal to pay for club membership and activities is available as a document on the Facebook group, and in past newsletters, for example, the February 2016 issue ]

## Trading Post

**BMW K1200LT** 62k loaded, runs great, new windshield \$4,900 for bike. Also, Unigo Trailer w/extras -- tire, wheel black powder coat, four trailer hitches. Complete \$2,000. Contact Larry Turk 313-563-0052



## Trading Post Continued

**2009 BMW K12LT** with 35,700 original miles, Loaded from factory and added items. Serviced every 6k at BMW of Detroit. Already serviced for this season. Tires are good for another 7-10k miles front and back. This bike is ready for the season. Are you? You can have years of serious riding pleasure with this Black Beauty. She even has hand painted pin striping to set her off. One owner, besides the dealership. Asking \$12,000. Call Rhys Blair at 586-216-3455.



**Pop-up Motorcycle Camper.** It is all self contained including a queen size mattress and zip on porch. No more sleeping on the ground. It comes with a heater, and a bunch of other extras. We've pulled it behind 3 BMW K bikes. It hauls just great even when you are riding 2 up. The new bike is not conducive to camping and neither am I any more. It has new wheels and tires including a spare. It comes with a trunk load of extras including a cooler on the trailer tongue. Now you're already to go camping. Just hook it up to the bike, plug in the lights and off you go. It takes less than 10 minutes to set up. Stop by and check it out. Maybe we can make it a 2-4-1 deal with our 2009 K12LT. We'd like \$1,500. for it. Rhys Blair at 586-216-3455.



## 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](mailto: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



**FOR SALE**  
**"MICK-O-Pegs"**  
*Expanding comfort  
for more models*

Spring Loaded Highway Pegs for your K1200LT, pre-2010 R1200\_, R1150\_, R1100\_, R1200GSA and even the new 1600GT/GTL (if equipped w/engine guards). Look at [www.ridingiswonderful.com](http://www.ridingiswonderful.com)

**ONE YEAR FREE MEMBERSHIP**  
with purchase of motorcycle from BMW MOTORCYCLES OF DETROIT

**MOTOR CITY BEEMERS**  
**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Club Web Site – [www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers](http://www.bizblvd.net/mcbeemers)  
Club eGroup Email – [mcbeemers@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:Jim@RidingIsWonderful.com)  
AND send completed form by e-mail to: [Jim@RidingIsWonderful.com](mailto:Jim@RidingIsWonderful.com)