

I would like you all to welcome Gunner. He sent me an e-mail asking if I'd be interested in running some stories that he's written. I checked a couple of the stories out and came to the conclusion that he would be a great addition to the FRP. Without further ado, Here's Gunner.....

New Writer is New Rider

My name is John Gunnell and I'm a free-lance writer from Iola. I have been writing about cars (mostly classic) since the mid-1970s. I started my free-lance career last year and soon after that I began writing for Walneck's Classic Cycle Trader. I had no experience with bikes up until that point, except knowing a few collectors over the years. But I knew how to write about historical vehicles.

I did quite a bit of motorcycle things in 2008, starting with the Cycle World Trade Show in Indy. In May I attended the S-K Services "Rolling Thunder" auction and swap meet in Hatley. While there was still snow on the ground (which could have been June, right?) I traveled to a place called The Shop, on Milwaukee's South Side, to do an article on Japanese bikes. In June, Walneck's asked me to cover the S & S 50th anniversary in LaCrosse.

By July, I knew that I was hooked and decided that I had to buy a bike. Since the year was going good, I cashed in all my chips and bought a 1940 Indian Chief on eBay. This was a kind of "religious experience," as the bike came from the Episcopal Bishop of Ohio and had old saddlebags made by Rev. Kaiser, a man I'm trying to find out more about. So there I was with a tank-shift, suicide clutch Indian "74" and I had never even sat on a bike in my life!

There were a few Indians at the Iola Old Car Show and I talked to the people who brought them. In August I went to the big meet in Seymour, Wis., and then to the fabulous Antique Motorcycle Club of America National Meet in Davenport. My son went with me and on the way down we stopped at the Harley 105th party in Milwaukee. The Davenport show was the first event where I saw more Indians than Harleys. In the fall, I was a judge at the Barrington Concours in Illinois, which featured a class for motorcycles. I did not get to judge that class.

A lot of folks told me that riding an Indian wouldn't be easy for a "newbie." Since most folks are smarter than I am, I thought about buying a modern Gilmore Indian from the early 2000s, but a lot of Indian collectors recommended getting a Kawasaki Vulcan Drifter instead. Ultimately, I would up with two of them — a mint 1999 Drifter 1500 that is so big it's scary and a pretty nice 2001 Drifter 800 in need of some TLC. This is the bike you might see me on this summer. After I get some seat time, the long-range plan is to customize it to look like an old Indian.

The first week in April 2009 I took the Motorcycle Safety Foundation "Rider's Edge" course at Doc's Harley-Davidson in Bonduel. With three days of riding I somehow managed to pass and a week later I took the WISDOT



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knowledge test (written) and got my "M" endorsement. My teachers at Doc's (Betty and Deacon) warned me that I should consider myself "licensed to ride in any parking lot in the state" until I get some real world experience riding. At 61, I plan to take it slow as my creaky old bones no longer bounce very well.

I had picked up copies of Free Riders Press at shows in Oshkosh, Appleton and Waupaca and since I had a Bishop's bike with the Reverend's saddlebags and took instructions from the Deacon, I just had to ask Preacher if he needed another scribe to write stories for him. I hope you enjoy them.



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One thing I could use help with is a volunteer job I have of setting up a new class for vintage motorcycles at the "Masterpiece of Style & Speed" concours in Milwaukee in August. I need to find about 10 to a dozen stock, pre-1973 bikes to exhibit in this prestigious by-invitation-only show. If you're interested or know someone else who might be, please contact me immediately at Gunnellj@TDS.net. I am behind on this project and need to get "on the stick."

John "Gunner" Gunnell -

To contact Gunner, shoot him an e-mail Gunnellj@TDS.net



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A little info on B.A.C.A

In July of 2006 my oldest daughter was abused by my ex-boyfriend, feeling lost we contacted B.A.C.A (Bikers Against Child Abuse) their a non-profit organization that help kids of abuse and there families though the courts, and then they are there a time after to show support and love for the children and there families.



They come as a group, adopt the children and give them a B.A.C.A vest along with a few other gifts. But the best gift of all is the hugs and support!

My daughter went though hell for a year with the courts. But though it all B.A.C.A was there !

As I saw all that they did for my daughter ,I realized I wanted to become a member .

So I started talking with some of the members who helped my daughter and found out I would have to start a chapter. For about six months ,I hung up fliers, went on the net and posted chapter forming letters and also spread the word by word of mouth. Things were going pretty slow until I put my daughters story in the Free Riders Press. I waited and finally got a call!

Tech contacted me and said five other people were interested in joining, so I invited them to my daughters 16th birthday/naming ceremony and B.A.C.A graduation!

All six of them showed up on the big day along with our state President. After the naming ceremony/ graduation we sat down with them and told them what to expect.

Out of the six , three decided it was not for them , so three remained!

With those three, my hubby and myself we had enough people to start on our way to a temp chapter! Over the next six months we got all of our ducks in order, background checks, finger printing ETC. to gain our temp chapter!

As we were nearing our patching date, two of our five members took a leave of absence due to a death in there family! In Feb Beacker joined and the two who were on leave dropped out. In April of 2008 Shepard became a member seeking. In may of 2008 we were patched in as full members and chapter!

In July of 2008 we patched Shepard in early due to his outstanding input and dedication to B.A.C.A !

We have built this chapter with the help of our families and friends, even though it's been bumpy at times B.A.C.A is worth it. The children are worth it, and most of all out future is worth it! Our children are our future. We as members of B.A.C.A are there to support the children in the time of need !

The members of B.A.C.A are not only members, we are family , and our families are apart of B.A.C.A with or without patches. We are a united front to help the children of tomorrow and to stop the abuse! We are proud members of B.A.C.A !

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