



Polar Bear Grand Tour

October 2017
AMA District II



Contents:

- Welcome to Season #40!
- Email Only Notices Now
- Schedule Changes
- Staff Changes
- A Brief Polar Bear History

Forty Years of Winter Riding

Bob Hartpence, Chairman

40 Welcome to the Fortieth season of winter riding! On the following pages, I offer a brief history of our unique in the nation, likely the world, riding club.



But first there are some important changes for you

to know. One of the most important has to do with whether you received this newsletter via email or you're picking up a paper copy.

If you need any motorcycle parts or accessories make sure to check with MONTGOMERYVILLE CYCLE, 2901 Bethlehem Pike, Hatfield, PA 19440 Ph. # 215 712-7433

Their prices are very competitive. Make sure they know you are polar Bear member.

The reason you were able to purchase the shirts at last year's price and have your name and club on at no extra cost is because Montgomeryville Cycle gave us a very nice donation for our 40Th season. So, make sure you thank them.

They have always treated us very well.

If you ordered a shirt see Gary and new Quartermaster

Alex. To get your shirt.

If you did not order one and would like a shirt let Gary or Alex know; they may have one without any name.

Email Only Notices Now

From now on, any schedule updates or inclement weather announcements will be made *only by email*.

So if you picked up a hard copy of this newsletter at one of our stops because you did not receive it by email, please be sure to get on our email list.

Simply send your name, email address and flight to:
bear17332comcast.net.

You do not need to be officially signed up for the Polar Bear Grand Tour to be on the email alert list.

If you change your email, be sure to let me know. I am seeing “undeliverable” emails. It’s up to you!

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Schedule Changes

Returning Polar Bears will be relieved to know we saved Tilted Kilt on our schedule, even though we had to move a few towns away to keep it!

Tilted Kilt 4095 US Hwy 1 South Monmouth Junction NJ has closed. We replaced it with Tilted Kilt 755 Route 18, East Brunswick NJ 08816
Ph.# (732) 257-5458

Returning Bears may not be surprised to surmise that Cheeburger Cheeburger in Easton, Pa. has closed. A

replacement will be announced later in the season. And that's just one reason I need your current email!

Personnel Changes

We've changed a few positions. Jim Guiteras moved to Delaware and will no longer be a Flight B Leader. He will help when he can.

Amy La Sorda From the Eagles Has Volunteered to be Flight B leader.

Alex Meller, Jr. from the Bucks County HOG has volunteered to help as Quartermaster.

Polar Bear Grand Tour 40 Years

2017-2018 is the 40th season of the only one of its kind.

It started with 50 members mostly from the Dawn Patrol MC and the Raritan Road Runners MC of AMA District II who rode in the winter wanting to keep in touch with each other. But it was open to all motorcyclists. We did not advertise it.

Our objective was not to

see how many members we could have but to make it as much fun and enjoyable as we could.

As the years have gone by, the membership has grown. In some years, we had over 500 members, but it goes up and down as some members stop and some new riders join.

You need 30 points to qualify. The first year you receive a Polar Bear patch and year rocker. Then, every year after that, you get a year rocker.

As members put more mileage on, I added a 45-point rocker in the 2003-2004 season. That was still not enough, so in the 2004-2005 season, I added a 60-point pin.

It is set up on the honor system, and you are not required to do anything. You can come to any rides you want.

Sign-in was from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, but over the years we changed to 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

In the beginning, we were just called Polar Bear or the Polar Bear Group because most clubs have rules that you can only belong to one club.

We had a lot of problems with the AMA because it did not support anything like Polar Bear so every time someone new from the AMA got involved, they would say that we could not structure our group that way. Then we changed our

name to The Polar Bear Grand Tour, and that made it easier to work with the AMA.

When you joined Polar Bear, you were given a membership number, and your passenger was given the same number but with a P in front. Later we did away with the passenger system.

We gave awards to the three riders and passengers with the most mileage, but some members thought that unfair because they were too close to many stops and could never qualify for most mileage. (If we still had the mileage awards the members from Connecticut would get them all.)

So, in 1984 we changed to perfect attendance. That way, everyone had a chance.

The stops we went to were small and some we had to attend twice because it was hard to find places that would allow all of us there at one time. In the seventies and eighties, we were not welcome in many places.

Bikers were only known as outlaws and trouble makers. We

have done a lot to change that image at the stops. The staff at the stops now tell me how nice our members are.

In 40 years, we have never had any trouble and are always welcome back.

The Cape May VFW is the only original stop. As the group got bigger, we did not want to stop going to the destinations that welcomed us.

So, in 1984 we divided into two flights. George Westervelt, the chairman at that time, asked me if I would take one of the flights as he was looking for someone who came to all of the rides.

At that time George did all of the work. When you joined, you got one-half of the schedule, and he would work on the other half as the season went along. The schedule was done on a mimeograph machine.

After I became the Flight B leader, I got Bob Schunk from the Road Apples MC to be the ride coordinator. I bought a Commodore 128 PC, floppy hard drive, and printer and I

printed the schedule and sign-in sheets.

Then in 1997, George asked me to take over as Chairman; he was going to stop riding.

We had the District II hot line because we did not have the internet, email, or GPS.

The first ride was always the last Sunday in October to the VFW in Cape May.

(It is also the only stop that we still go to. There was also a club called the Silver Spokes that rode out of the VFW.)

You got the schedule with the name of the stop and the town it was in. The rest was up to you. You had to use a thing called paper maps. Now I have to give the GPS and web address.

We did not have heated gear as the bikes could not handle the draw on the battery. As you can see, things have changed over the years.

I firmly believe that riding in the winter keeps your skills sharp.

Bob Hartpence, Chairm-

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Alex for
your
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shirts.



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