



Whether members are goofy or gung ho, riding clubs such as the Curve Unit offer companionship and a shared interest, whether it's a track day, a ride for a cause, or a jam session.

# Riding Clubs

Those looking for fun and friendship, in addition to two-wheel travel, usually find plenty as a member of a group.

> By **Alisa Clickenger**

**Y**ou bought your first motorcycle, or perhaps you've been riding for a while and haven't found your tribe yet. You might even be like me, having traveled alone to so many wonderful places that you want some companionship on the epic adventures. Whatever the reason, whatever you ride, there's one great solution when you're tired of going solo: join a motorcycle riding club.

Riding Clubs aren't only for the loud pipes, patches and leather groups featured in the movies. There are social, riding and service-oriented motorcycle clubs. Groups of people who have a similar interest in motorcycles, who share the same values, and who get together and ride motorcycles. Fun and friendship-oriented groups who want to attract like-minded people.

Commonality is at the core of the club experience, and clubs are often organized by the make of the motorcycle such as the BMW Riders Association or the Harley Owners Group. Some are organized by the style of riding the members prefer like the Coconino Trail Riders or the Ocean State Touring





**Andy Morse, right photo, joined a few motorcycle clubs and found not only fellow musicians (opposite page, bottom), but was able to track down a BMW once owned by his grandfather, left. He purchased it from the owner, who happened to be only 20 minutes away.**



Club. There are also clubs organized by gender, such as the Litas, or by era like the Antique Motorcycle Club of America, and many have different chapters all over the country and even the world.

“Connection with fellow riders is the heartbeat of clubs,” said Andy “The Music Man” Morse. “I met a fellow musician at the Damn Yankees rally (hosted by the Yankee Beemers) and he had a guitar strapped to his bike too.

“We connected, and Bill and I have had some great jam sessions around the campfire. So many club members have been willing to share their valuable time, mechanical knowledge and tips on safe riding skills. I have become a better rider after taking many courses that I learned about from the club.”

Motorcyclists are some of the most generous people, both with their time and their money. It’s impossible to count all the charity toy runs, veterans causes and illness-fundraising activities which motorcyclists organize and contribute to. Amy Snyder, President of Curve Unit is proud that they are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

“Over the last 15 years, we’ve raised and contributed over \$100,000 for causes such as the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation,” Snyder said. “We also host fun charity events, such as go-kart races, fundraising barbecues, and charity rides to raise money and awareness for multiple worthy causes. In addition to fundraising, we attend rallies and track days to mingle with like-minded women in the riding arena.”

Not only will you find people to share your passions and rides with, but riding clubs broaden your horizons. Belonging

to a riding group enables you to interact with people who have different opinions, viewpoints and personalities than your own. Most clubs have rules which ensure everyone has a great time, even if you do bump into ideas contrary to your own.

“We’re incredibly supportive and encouraging as it relates to embracing new women in the sport,” Snyder said. “The Curve Unit culture leaves no room for territorial or intimidating behavior, as we’re simply here to inspire and motivate women to be the best version of themselves.”

Andy Morse decided he wanted to own one of his grandfather’s BMW motorcycles, but since they’d been sold in the mid-1980s when his grandfather fell ill, he didn’t know how to find one. He started doing web searches for BMW motorcycle clubs and found the BMW Motorcycle Owners of America (BMW-MOA).

Morse joined the club and signed up for the online forum. Every few months he would post about looking for one of his bikes. Through the forum he learned of the Yankee Beemers and the AMA, and joined both of those organizations.

Two years later he got a message from a member who thought his buddy Chris was at the auction where the bikes were sold in the 80s. Two months later Chris called Morse and asked if his grandfather was Richard J. Stahl from Binghamton, New York. The answer was yes.

Chris informed him that he was holding the registration to the last bike that was sold at the auction. “It’s a basket case but all the numbers match,” Chris said. “It’s his 1965 R69S. Are you

interested?” Miraculously, the bike was only 20 minutes away from where Morse lived.

Chris loved that Morse found his grandfather’s bike and charged him exactly what he’d paid for the bike and parts. Morse received various boxes of parts, as well as the frame, and one of the boxes even included his grandfather’s license plate. Morse had the bike’s engine torn down and rebuilt, and to this day still rides his grandfather’s motorcycle. If not for the affinity with BMW motorcycles and the helpful nature of the club participants, Morse’s good luck would never have been possible.

“The lasting and hopefully life-long friendships I’ve made with other riders along the way has been a gift, and perhaps the greatest surprise of all,” Snyder said. “Curve Unit has not only inspired me to become a better rider, but a better person, mother, daughter and friend.”

Joining a riding club doesn’t mean that you must fit in and conform to make a positive impact on the world. You can follow your own path, have a blast riding with your friends and be a part of a group whose integrity and legacy will far outlast its members. If you’ve thought to yourself that it would be nice to have someone to ride with, or someone to talk about motorcycles with, consider joining a riding club. **MCN**

#### **TO FIND A RIDING CLUB**

- » Ask friends
- » [riderclubs.com](http://riderclubs.com)
- » [womenridersnow.com](http://womenridersnow.com)
- » [meetup.com](http://meetup.com)
- » Motorcycle dealerships