



P O C O N O R I D E R S I N C .

Volume 38, Issue 5 **May 2024**

Happy May~
 This month is one of my favorites. I love the blooms of spring, especially cherry blossoms. Riding is an olfactory experience this time of year with lilacs and other flowers in bloom! It can also be a bugger for those of you with allergies!

Congratulations to those of you who ventured out for the club's first ride of the season! It was a cold one but the following week, the weather flipped and it was warm and beautiful! With two rides already in the books and TOTH riding on Wednesdays, we are officially back on the road!

I posted some photos taken by Taylor H. for your perusal. They are in the first few pages. Special thanks to her for posting on our page! The rest of the newsletter is influenced by Japan. I guess the cherry blossoms had an effect on me!

On pages 4-7 are the best Japanese bikes of all time! How many of them have you owned?



Connecting Japan and our motorcycle club, one would naturally go to Reading! We've been to the Pagoda quite often but every time, it is amazing. If you don't know the history of the Pagoda, it is on pages 11-12. If you've ever been in the Pagoda, you have noticed the large bell. It, too, has a wonderful story.... Read about it on pages 9-10.

I write about places we visit so the next time you encounter them, you appreciate the destination even more!
 May is motorcycle awareness month. It's not only for 4 wheelers... stay alert as motorcycles start to take to the roads after a long winter. Until we meet, ride safe!

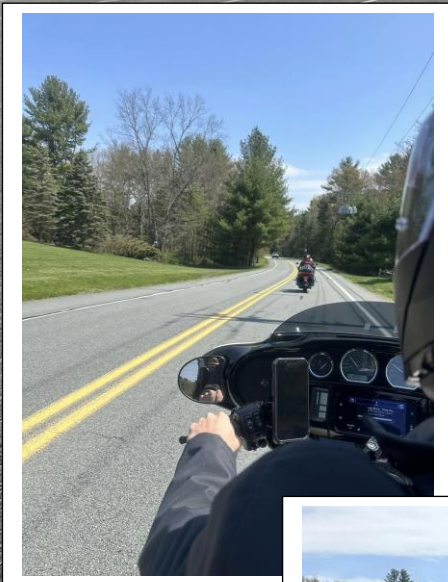
MAY

5/5	9:00 AM	Citizens Bank Tannersville	Charter 328 Legion Ride, Archbald PA--Scott Gilliland
5/12	10:00 AM	DWG Visitors Center	Mother's Day Ride--James Catanzaro
5/19	10:00 AM	DWG Visitors Center	Presidents Ride--Philadelphia Zoo, Rob Heh
5/26	10:00 AM	DWG Visitors Center	Wayne County--Scott Gilliland
5/28-6/1			Americade

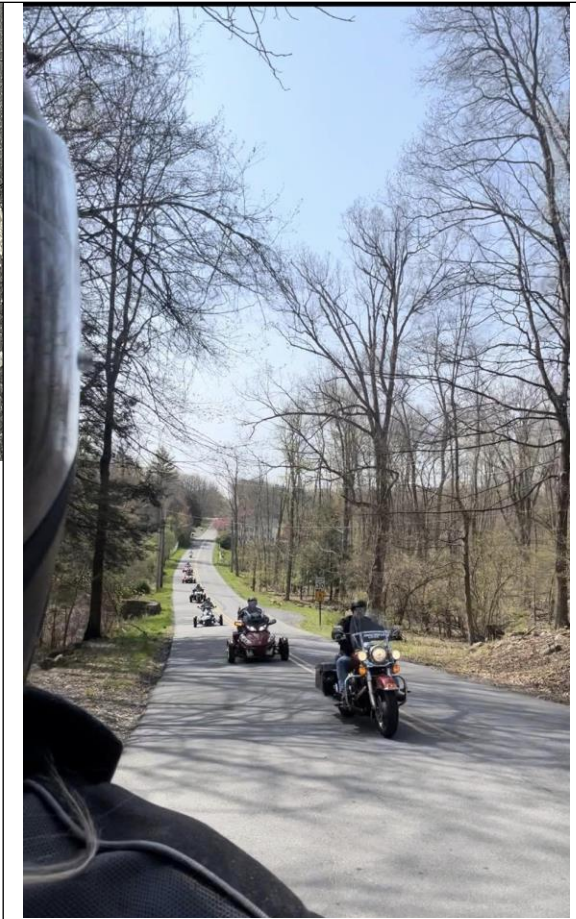
On the Road Again

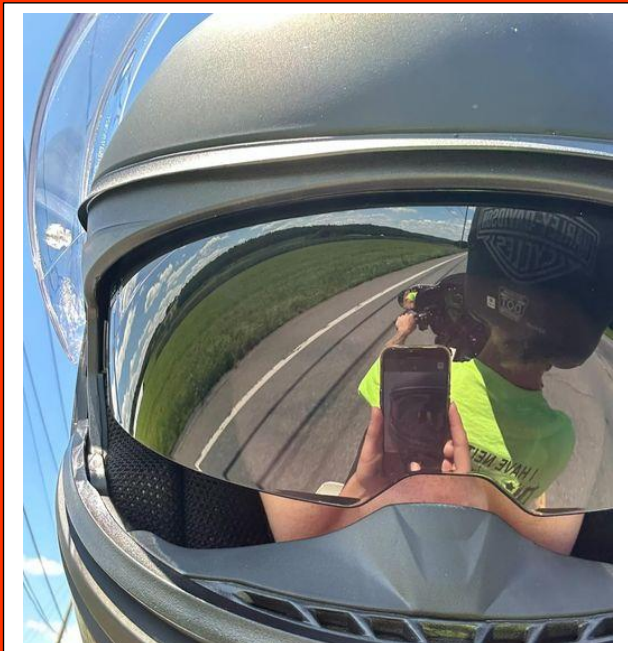
April was a good month for the Pocono Riders as we officially started the 2024 riding season! The first ride should have been called the penguin ride! Temperatures dipped way down and it was chilly but some brave bikers met up and did the Pennsylvania Tail of the Dragon. First ride.... Check!

The second ride was just the opposite. A gorgeous 80 degree day brought out the riders to explore Wayne county's back roads.



#2 - Wayne County Ride on a warm, sunny beautiful Sunday!





Taylor Heh announces Pocono Riders first ride hoping to entice some new bikers to join us for a ride or two!

Tomorrow 🌧️ Our first group ride is tomorrow at 10am meeting at the Delaware Water Gap Visitor Center. If you are not a member and want to join us on this ride to see what we are about, please visit our website www.poconoriders.com and you can print out a waiver to bring with you. Dress for the weather!! It's going to be a chilly start, but will warm up in the afternoon ☀️ Can't wait to see everyone!

CHILLY & CURVY



According to Web Bike World, these are...

The Best Japanese-Made Motorcycles Of All Time [2024 Edition]

1972 Kawasaki Z1



Specifications:

Price: \$1,895 in 1972 (\$13,950 in 2023)

Engine: 903cc inline four

Power: 83 HP

Torque: 54.2 lbs-ft

Transmission: 5 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 542 lbs

Strengths:

- The ultimate UJM: Ridiculously fast, agile, easy to ride, easy to maintain, and reliable.
- Shocked the world, and especially the USA, with its firm sledgehammer blow against the American manufacturers of the time. It surpassed pretty much anything on offer from Indian and Harley, and didn't even stop to wave at them as it roared by
- Its racing version, the KZ1000R, is renowned for helping launch the racing careers of both Eddie Lawson and Wayne Rainey, two of the greatest American champion riders of all time.

Specifications:

Price: Unknown

Engine: 399cc parallel twin

Power: 44 HP

Torque: 30.3 lbs-ft

Transmission: 6 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 360 lbs

Strengths:

- The best bike out of Japan for those interested in being less-than-sane while riding, aka being punks
- Can safely be considered the very first hooning machine, a bike that is agile, fast, and can dart around and between other traffic
- Did have some mild racing use, including as a flat-track racers and, heavily modified, as a junior series AMA sport bike

1975 Yamaha RD400



1978 Honda CBX



Specifications:

Price: Unknown

Engine: 1,047cc four-stroke inline six

Power: 105 HP

Torque: 63 lbs-ft

Transmission: 5 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 600 lbs

Strengths:

- Quite possibly the best sounding motorcycle ever made.
- Helped start the supersport and superbike craze that swept around the globe in the 1980s
- Was one of the first sportbikes that implemented a version of the sport-standard position that is now the hallmark of sport touring motorcycles such as the current Honda CBR650R

Specifications:

Price: \$4,499 in 1981 (\$15,235 in 2023)

Engine: 1,074cc inline four

Power: 111 HP

Torque: 70.8 lbs-ft

Transmission: 5 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 535 lbs

Strengths:

- Revamped Suzuki's entire image into a cyberpunk-futuristic style language that permeated the lineup until the aerodynamic revolution of the 1990s
- Had one of the best engines of the 1980s, period.
- Was so good in its original form that it was still relevant and competitive with other sport bikes all the way up to 2006. This includes bikes like the YZF-R1, the GSX-R1000, and the ZX-6R 636

1981 Suzuki GS1100S Katana



1985 Yamaha VMAX



Specifications (First Generation 1985-2007):

Price: \$5,299 in 1985 (\$15,155 in 2023)

Engine: 1,197cc V4

Power: 135 HP

Torque: 96 lbs-ft

Transmission: 5 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 631 lbs

Strengths:

- To this day, still one of the fastest power cruisers in its first generation, and the fastest power cruiser in its second generation
- Surprised everyone in the supersport-crazy decade that was the 1980s by bringing out a power cruiser that gave a solid kick to the face of Harley-Davidson
- Was so good that only minor upgrades were made during the first generation, with the most significant being a wider and stiffer damped front fork to increase handling dynamics

Specifications (1985 Model Year):

Price: \$3,999 in 1984 (\$11,845 in 2023)

Engine: 908cc inline four

Power: 115 HP

Torque: 63 lbs-ft

Transmission: 6 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 508 lbs

Strengths:

- The first supersport to go beyond 151 MPH
- Extremely popular and sold very well, very likely because of its short but significant appearance in Top Gun

1985 Kawasaki Ninja GPZ900R



1998 Yamaha YZF-R1



Specifications (1998):

Price: \$9,999 in 1998 (\$18,880 in 2023)

Engine: 998cc inline four

Power: 150 HP

Torque: 72.7 lbs-ft

Transmission: 6 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 437 lbs

Strengths:

- Introduced the concept of the stacked engine. Within 3 years, every supersport and superbike used that design, and it is still in use today.
- Was the first superbike to have throttle-by-wire, beating BMW's S1000 RR by just over 18 months to market with the system
- Is considered by many to be the ultimate superbike for track use, as it combines the rawness of a GSX-R, the features of a Kawasaki, and the speed of a CBR in one complete package.

Specifications (2023):

Price: \$7,399

Engine: 645cc V-twin

Power: 75 HP

Torque: 47 lbs-ft

Transmission: 6 Speed Manual

Curb Weight: 437 lbs

Strengths:

- One of the greatest beginner bikes the world has ever seen, and is still going strong in 2023
- One of the few bikes that you can start out on and not need to upgrade off of to a bigger, better bike, as the more you learn the bike and how to ride it, the more it opens up its capabilities to you
- One of the flattest torque curves out there, almost guaranteeing that you won't get overwhelmed with its power delivery
- Absolutely bulletproof engine that has changed only slightly in nearly 25 years

1999 Suzuki SV650





Call Joe Gilliland if interested –
570-350-5720

FOR SALE

2020 Moto Guzzi v 9 bobber sport
(limited #65)
\$8,750 · Stroudsburg, PA
2020 Moto guzzi v-9 bobber. Many accessories! Like new. Single and dual seat, passenger foot pegs, engine crash bars, hindsite bar end premium mirrors. Ohlins suspension. This bike is mint condition and I am the first and only owner.



This is an excellent opportunity to own a rare and awesome piece of machinery.

Like his father, Joe takes great care of his bikes. This bobber is waiting for you!



Reading's Pagoda Bell

I can't remember how many times we have ridden to the Pagoda in Reading. Every time you see it in the distance, it's like a something out of a movie set. This beautiful building has a rich history but people do not know about the history of the bell that was acquired for this picturesque piece of architecture on the hill.

As written by W. Homan

Instructions for its use, as well as a written history, came with the Reading Pagoda bell when it arrived here May 5, 1907. Unfortunately, the written history as well as an important part of the bell has been lost. Fortunately, the history is contained in old Japanese (kanji) characters on the bell and an account appeared in the Eagle that May day in 1907.

Unfortunately again, the story of how the authentic and historic bell was acquired exists only in a tale that has come down among relatives of William Abbot Witman, builder of the Buddha temple that overlooks Reading.

One thing is certain from a translation of the Japanese characters. This is that the bell is one of the oldest pieces hereabouts. It was cast in Obata in 1739 by a man named Mikawaya and presented by him and forty-seven of his friends to the Buddhist Temple, Shozenji, at Yakuosan, now part of downtown Tokyo near Hibiya Park. The inscriptions on the bell are the names of the donors.

Charlotte Shick Dodson, native of Reading, now of Cleveland and a niece of Mr. Witman, tells the story about the bell's acquisition. The tale has never been published but it is apart of the family folklore. She says Mr. Witman told her that when the Pagoda was being built, the recommendation for an authentic bell came from a Japanese family living in Reading at the time. This family assisted in placing the order for the bell.

There was only one family of Japanese origin in Reading in 1907-09; Mr. and Mrs. S. Miyanaga who operated a Japanese merchandise store at 607 Penn Street. Apparently they came to Reading just as the Pagoda was under construction. Mr. Miyanaga, whose father was mayor of Kobe at the time, had traveled all over the world. He came to America and subsequently made trips to Manila and Europe. He returned to Tokyo in 1900 where he married Kiku Takami. Who, like her husband, was a graduate of advanced Japanese schools. They had operated stores in Boston, New York, Jacksonville and Tampa before moving to Reading.

Mr. Witman ordered the bell through the agency of A. A. Valentine of Broadway, New York City, an exporter and importer. It is possible that this was the same agent who supplied the Miyanaga family with their store material. The bell arrived in New York on April 19, 1907 and was shipped by the Reading Railroad to this city.

The shape of the Reading bell itself is interesting. It appears to be a miniature of the bell in a field near the Buddhist monastery of Miidera, near Kyoto. The Miidera bell is five feet in diameter and is said to have been originally as bright as silver. This bell has a rich history including many legends.

One legend describes a lady's visit to the temple. Instead of devoutly praying, she went to the bell, viewed herself in its reflective exterior and arranged her hair. The bell became angry at this disrespectful behavior and at once turned its shiny surface into millions of equally fine wrinkles.

(continued)

Continued from page 9...

When the miniature bell reached Reading there was with it another now-missing piece. This was a horizontal beam that hung by four ropes close to it. There was no clapper like those on Occidental bells. Oriental temple bells do not have clappers. This beam was swung on its ropes by a bell ringer who had a fifth rope as a guide string. This assured that the striker would beat against a disk-like spot (high on the side of the bell), and give the best tone. Striking the bell at the bottom produced lesser tones.

Mrs. Dodson remembers seeing the striker on the top floor of the Reading Pagoda. She used it many times when her uncle took her there during the building's construction.

What became of the striker is as much a mystery as what became of the Oriental furniture Mr. Witman once installed at the Pagoda. r is as much a mystery as what became of the Oriental furniture Mr. Witman once installed at the Pagoda.

FYI

The bell on the 7th floor was cast in Japan in 1739. It was purchased by Mr. Witman in 1906 and was shipped via the Suez Canal to the New York Harbor. It arrived in Reading on May 5, 1907 by railway. The fish sculptures on the roof are to protect the Pagoda from any fires.



The Japanese cat, Maneki Neko (lucky cat) is a symbolic figurine that you have probably seen in shops, restaurants, or homes. The cat is a sign of friendship, good luck, and wealth. Lucky cat also brings positive energy and fortune to its owner.

You can own this gremlin Maneki Neko bell! Look for it on Amazon or Ebay!

PLACES WE'VE VISITED



The Reading Pagoda is a historic landmark and a symbol of the City of Reading for more than a century. The property includes 10 acres of land and is owned by the City, with management and preservation support by the Foundation for the Reading Pagoda. Built atop the south end of Mount Penn and anchored to the mountainside with 16 tons of bolts, the inspirational setting is known throughout the world.

- Built in 1908
- 7-story building
- Cost \$50,000 to build
- Built as a luxury hotel resort
- 72' tall
- 28' wide x 50' long
- Donated to Reading in 1911
- 87 steps to the top floor
- There is a Japanese bell made in 1739 at the top
- 620 feet above the City
- 886 feet above sea level
- 30-mile panoramic view
- National Register of Historic Places in 1972



Reading Pagoda

The Reading Pagoda, perched atop the south end of Mount Penn in Reading, Pennsylvania, is a captivating novelty building that has graced the city's skyline for over a century. Let me share its intriguing history with you:

Construction and Purpose:

The pagoda was built between 1907 and 1908 at a cost of \$50,000.

Originally, it was intended to be the hotel and restaurant centerpiece of a luxurious resort.

However, when plans for the rest of the resort were abandoned, the seven-story wooden pagoda on 10 acres (4.0 hectares) of land was donated to Reading in 1911.

It now stands as part of the Mount Penn Preserve, which encompasses 1,595 acres (645 hectares) of municipally-owned land.

Architects and Design:

The pagoda itself was designed and constructed by the father and son contracting team of James and Charles Matz.

Its architecture is Japanese-inspired, adding to its unique charm.

Location and Views:

The pagoda sits on the edge of a cliff, 620 feet (190 meters) above the city and 886 feet (270 meters) above sea level.

From this vantage point, it offers a breathtaking 30-mile (48-kilometer) panoramic view of the city and the surrounding countryside.

Historical Significance:

Within the pagoda's top story hangs a massive bell, cast in Obata, Mie Prefecture, Japan, in 1739.

The bell was originally installed in a Buddhist temple in either Ogose or Hannō, Saitama Prefecture, just north of Tokyo.

Inscribed on the bell's sides are the names of its 48 donors and a prophecy about the end of time.

Although the temple was closed in 1881 and later destroyed, the pagoda was restored in 1949.

During World War II, there were calls to demolish the building due to anti-Japanese sentiment, but it survived.

In the 1970s, the Japanese garden around the pagoda was restored, and cherry trees were planted.

LED lights were installed in 2008-09 to enhance its nighttime beauty.

A webcam on the third floor periodically records and publishes the weather atop Mount Penn.



We're on the web visit us at:
www.poconoriders.com

Meeting Place:

We will meet at the PA Visitor's Center at Delaware Water Gap

Sunday Rides: On Sunday, anyone considering becoming a member of our club is more than welcome to ride with us for a maximum of two rides. In order to continue riding with the club membership is required.

Wednesday Rides: Departure location Triplets Diner
If a change is needed we will sent out an email and/or our MESSAGE BOARD on www.poconorider.com
Perspective members welcomed.

Attention: Ride Leaders: Please post some additional info about your rides on our message board the Wednesday prior to your ride. ...