



Why We Ride

*Great bikes
and the people
who love them.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ADAM EWING**
WORDS BY **WHIT SHEPPARD**



Steve Bunker, left ■ 58 ■ Bowling Green ■ USAF, retired, currently at Defense Logistics Agency at Fort Belvoir ■ 1st Bike: 2007 Honda Shadow Sabre ■ Current Bike: 2017 Harley Davidson Street Glide CVO ■ Favorite Ride: Bull Run III ■ Bunker served in Operation Desert Storm and in Somalia. He and his wife Pam, also a veteran and a U.S. Army civilian operations employee, ride with the Northern Virginia Chapter 27-2 of the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association. The group organizes the annual Bull Run III ride, to raise funds for veterans suffering from PTSD and traumatic brain injury.

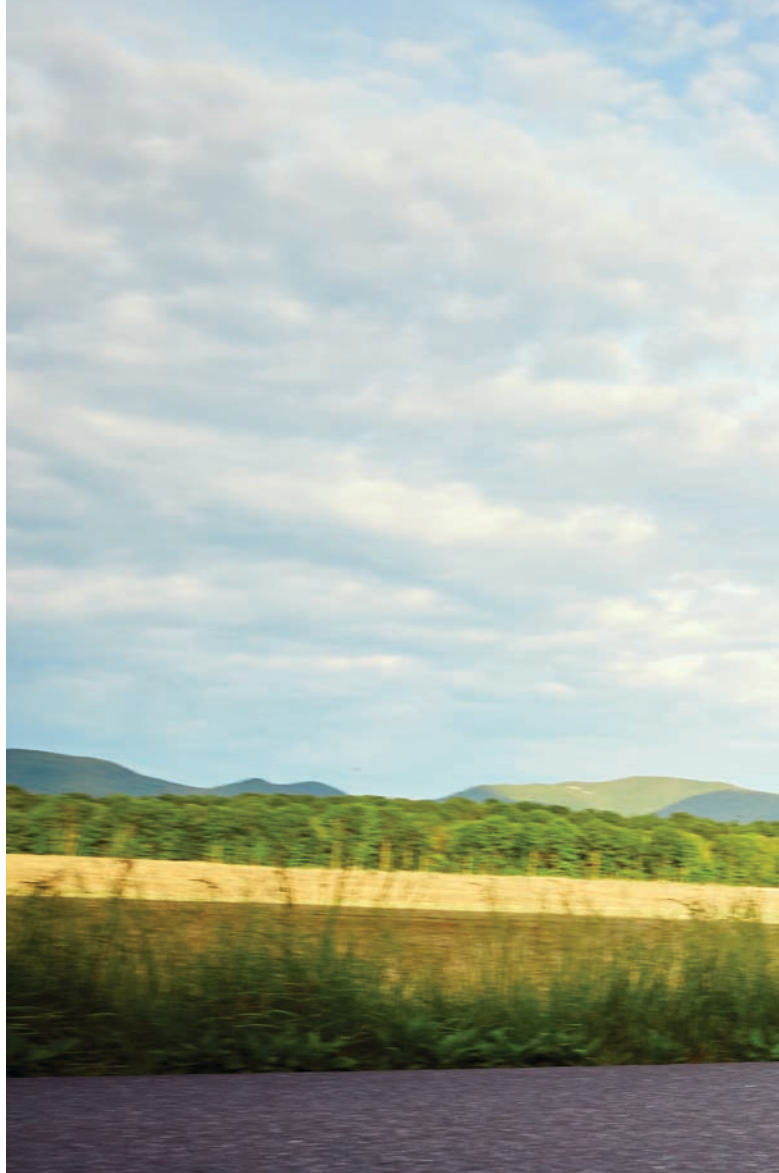
Adam Darby, above ■ 22 ■ Richmond ■ Graduate student ■ 1st Bike: 1997 Honda Nighthawk ■ Current Bike: 1973 BMW R75/5 ■ Favorite Ride: West on Route 6 from Richmond to the Blue Ridge Parkway in Afton ■

Darby rides a bike with a past. The original owner, a family friend, picked up the BMW R75/5 in Munich in 1973 and rode it around Europe that summer. Forty years later, he sold it to Darby, who had always been interested in the bike and its history. Last summer, Darby and a friend motored along U.S. Route 1 down to Key West, camping along the way.

A **DAM EWING HAS BEEN** photographing riders and their bikes over the last few years, capturing them in moments of rare stillness. A lawyer, a mechanic, an entrepreneur, a CPA, a soldier—Ewing's portraits are of men and women who, in their daily lives, seem very different from one another. Hoping to find some shared, expressible desire that calls so many to the open road, no matter where they come from—a high-octane sense of freedom, the chance to unplug, the rush of the wind, the value of staying grounded in the present—we posed the question, why do you ride? The takeaway: Riding is the answer, not the question, and the question is different for everyone. As one rider told us simply, if you ever rode, you would know.

Don Jackson, right ■ 45 ■
 Henrico ■ Government worker ■
 1st Bike: Kawasaki Ninja ■
 Current Bike: Kawasaki 2X 10R ■
 Favorite Ride: The Five-and-Dime
 along Routes 5 and 10 from
 Richmond to Williamsburg

Pam Bunker, below ■ 52 ■
 Bowling Green ■ U.S. Army,
 retired, currently in Army
 Aviation Operations at Joint
 Base Langley-Eustis ■ 1st Bike:
 2010 Harley-Davidson Softtail
 Deluxe ■ Current Bike: 2016
 Harley-Davidson Street Glide ■
 Favorite Ride: Bull Run III



Rallies & Shows

Thunder in Kanawha, July 14-16,
Dugspur ■ International Norton
 Owners Association Rally July
 17-21, **Buena Vista** ■ Bull Run III,
 July 29, **Fredericksburg** to
Shenandoah ■ Central Virginia
 Classic & Vintage Motorcycle
 Show Sept. 10, **Charles City** ■
 Twin Valley Rally, Sept. 15-17,
Meadows of Dan ■ **Colonial**
Beach Bike Fest, Oct. 5-8

John Ryland, right ■ 48 ■
 Richmond ■ Owner, Classified
 Moto ■ 1st Bike: 1981 Kawasaki
 KZ550 ■ Current Bike: 2002
 Honda XR650L ■ Favorite Ride:
The Five-and-Dime ■ A former
 art director at the Martin
 Agency, Ryland built two post-
 apocalyptic bikes that featured
 in season 5 of *The Walking Dead*.



Lee Clemens, above, with his wife, Brenda ■ 70 ■ North
 Chesterfield ■ Owner, Departure Bike Works ■ 1st Bike: 1956
 Triumph Cub ■ Current Bike: 1987 Harley-Davidson FLHT ■
 Favorite Ride: "Any back road'll do. Anywhere my wife and I
 can try to get lost."



Jeremy Cupp, left ■ 39 ■ Grottoes ■ Custom motorcycle fabricator ■ 1st Bike: 1979 Honda XR-80 ■ Current Bike: 2007 Triumph Bonneville ■ Favorite Ride: Route 340 to Love Gap and the Blue Ridge Parkway ■

Cupp, owner of LC Fabrications, constructs custom motorcycles. He recently sold a flat-track “Speedway” bike he built from scratch (the engine a blend of Buell and Ducati parts) to a collector who now displays the bike in a Dallas motorcycle museum. Cupp also rides: “Every once in a while when it’s been a bad day, I get on my bike and go on a big loop ride. On a bike you’re really in your environment instead of just passing through it.”

Best Rides

More than 57,000 miles of highway in the state means great rides are waiting everywhere. Here, 6 of our favorites to get you started.

Route 17’s **Back of the Dragon** is 32 miles spanning three mountains and more than 300 curves between Tazewell and Marion in Southwest Virginia.

A meander along **Skyline Drive from Front Royal to Waynesboro** offers 105 miles of breathtaking scenery and awe-inspiring overlooks in the heart of Shenandoah National Park.

Eastern Virginia bikers enjoy a sweet 188-mile westward stretch of **Route 40 from Homeville to Rocky Mount**, with cotton and tobacco fields giving way to wooded areas and hillier terrain.

The **Five-and-Dime** follows a circular route along Route 5 from Richmond to Jamestown, where riders hop a short ferry across the James and then cruise to Hopewell or Chester on Route 10.

The **Blue Ridge Parkway** traverses 469 miles of the Appalachian Highlands from Afton to Cherokee, North Carolina, and features a mix of long-distance vistas and close-up views of muscular mountains and placid landscapes. For a shorter ride, start halfway in Fancy Gap, just off I-77.

Multiple switchbacks, tight cornering and elevation changes mark the 107-mile route on **VA 250 from Staunton to Elkins, West Virginia**. Stop for provisions in rider-friendly Monterey before crossing the border.



Wendy Patterson, above ■ 62 ■ Richmond ■ Retired, banking and transport logistics ■ 1st Bike: 2006 Suzuki C90 Boulevard ■ Current Bike: 2007 Harley-Davidson Street Glide ■ Favorite Ride: Country roads in and around Lively and Morattico



Travis Robinette, above ■ 35 ■ Glen Allen ■ U.S. Army veteran, currently a heavy equipment service tech ■ 1st/Current Bike: 2013 Harley-Davidson 883 Iron ■ Three tours in Iraq left Robinette with PTSD, but he says, “Riding has been the greatest help of all.”

Frank Robinson, right ■ 61 ■ Spotsylvania ■ USAF Col., retired, and owner, Indian Motorcycle of Fredericksburg ■ 1st Bike: 1971 Kawasaki 350 ■ Current Bike: 2017 Indian Springfield ■ Favorite ride: Skyline Drive

Beth Captain, below ■ 44 ■ Lakeside ■ CPA ■ 1st Bike: 2009 Yamaha V-Star 1100 ■ Current Bike: 2016 Harley-Davidson Heritage Softail Classic ■ Favorite Ride: Southbound on the Blue Ridge Parkway ■

Captain had gotten pretty comfortable seeing the world roll by from her perch on the back of her husband's Harley Road Glide Ultra. But after a 13-hour ride back from Daytona Bike Week he told her she needed to get her own ride. Captain now cruises on a Harley Heritage Softail Classic. "It's my happy place," she says. "It's two-wheel therapy."



Matt Danielson, right ■ 51 ■ Providence Forge ■ Attorney specializing in motorcycle law ■ 1st Bike: 2001 Harley-Davidson Dyna Lowrider ■ Current Bikes: 2013 Harley Road Glide and 2017 Triumph Bobber ■ Favorite Ride: "Getting lost in the back roads of Southwest Virginia." ■

In a prior life, Danielson was a Chief Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney in Newport News. But he also loved motorcycles, and in 2003 received an offer he couldn't refuse from one of his now-partners at the Motorcycle Law Group, which has offices in four states: "Come work for me and you can practice law, ride your motorcycle, and when you're not arguing cases, you can wear jeans and boots."





Angela Kenyan, above ■ 40 ■ Richmond ■ Human Resources Director ■ 1st Bike/Current Bike: 2014 Dyna Switchback ■ Favorite Ride: Skyline Drive ■ Kenyan, a novice, rides with the Richmond Harley Owners Group to honor her late boyfriend's memory. "You need to just let your mind go and do it," she says.

Kyomi Takahashi, top right ■ 56 ■ Richmond ■ Japanese interpreter and calligraphy artist ■ Current Bike: She rides as a passenger on her husband Scott's 2013 Ducati Monster and 2013 Ducati Multistrada ■ Favorite Ride: Blue Ridge Parkway, Route 5 as a close second

Scott Takahashi, above ■ 47 ■ Richmond ■ Martial Arts Instructor ■ 1st Bike: 1984 Honda Rebel 250 ■ Current Bikes: 2013 Ducati Monster and 2013 Ducati Multistrada ■ Favorite Ride: Blue Ridge Parkway and tertiary routes like Route 60 near Buena Vista ■ Takahashi, who just bought his 50th bike, has been riding since he was 15. Today, he rides with his wife Kyomi and organizes the weekly RVA Bike Night at Richmond's Mission BBQ. Takahashi is a true believer in the healing power of riding: "How many motorcycles have you seen parked in front of a therapist's office?"

Motorcycle Clubs in Virginia

Antique Motorcycle Club of America, **Richmond** and **Chesapeake** ■ Diamond Roses Chapter of Women in the Wind, **D.C. and Northern Virginia** ■ Fredericksburg Eagle Riders ■ Green Knights Military Motorcycle Club, Langley Air Force Base, **Hampton** ■ Southern Cruisers Riding Club, **Lynchburg** ■ The Virginia British Motorcycle Club, **Richmond** ■ Tribunal MC Motorcycle Club, **Viewtown** (for active and retired law enforcement) ■ Twin Valley Riders, **Roanoke**