

## Member Spotlight

### Brad & Jill Severe



Brad's motorcycling goes back to about 1970 with an old Honda 90. This quickly moved to a 90 Suzuki dirt bike in 1971. After joining the army in 1973, several bikes were soon to follow: a 175 Honda, a 250 Suzuki and then a 500 Suzuki in 1975. Brad's first long trip was from Chicago to Myrtle Beach, SC in the summer of 1976, about 2200 miles round trip! Next bike was a Honda 750 full dressed with fairing, bags and an AM/FM Cassette in 1979. In 1981 Brad met Jill but she never rode on the 750. Her dad called motorcycles "Donor Cycles"! Besides, she was happy in Brad's Triumph Spitfire! Things got serious between them in 1983, the Honda 750 had gone away. Thus began the big void, 13 years without a motorcycle! In 1996 and living in Hawaii, Brad decided it was time again and went out and bought a Kawasaki Vulcan 800 (without Jill's permission of course!) Hawaii is wonderful riding so this time Jill gave in. After a few required add ons such as a sissy bar, bags and a windshield, she jumped on and began to have fun! A friend of ours in Hawaii had 2 Gold Wings and they looked great and comfy! Since it wasn't far to anywhere on Oahu, comfort was not really a factor there.

Upon arriving in Texas in January of 1999, we quickly discovered the **Vulcan was not going** to make it in the comfort area driving the distances in Texas! Soon we found a 1983 1100 Aspencade and **we were** on our way again. We also found GWRRA about that time and signed up. But with lots of things going on and other priorities, not to mention a few bike problems, winging it took a second priority. In November of 2004, we got the urge to ride again and found a 1998 SE with only 29,000 miles on it, and we were hooked once more. We rejoined GWRRA in March of 2005 and began with Chapter U with its restart in February of 2006. Jill began riding in September 2005 with a Honda 250. She quickly progressed to a Yamaha V-Star 650 and then last December, a 1997 Gold Wing trike named "Black Pearl"! The rest is history!

Brad was born in Niles Michigan but grew up in West Chicago, IL about 30 miles west of Chicago. Jill is from the same area! Born in Elmhurst IL, she grew up in Glen Ellyn, IL. Even though they were only 7 miles apart growing up, they didn't meet until 1981 at Ft Bragg, NC. Brad was, however, a recruiter in the Chicago area and did frequently visit Jill's high school. Brad of course doesn't remember Jill from all the students, but Jill remembers seeing someone who fit Brad's description (tall, broad shouldered and wearing an red airborne beret and boots)! Brad & Jill are 4 years apart in age. Jill graduated from Wheaton College in 1980 and was commissioned in the Army the same year. She also has 2 master's degrees (paid for by the U.S. Army) in Latin American Studies and Management. In the first five years of our marriage, we lived together less than 2 years due to our military assignments. Jill's anniversary ring at 5 years had 2 diamonds and 3 rubies! (She has since upgraded bands and diamonds big time since then!) At one point Jill was teaching history at West Point while Brad was stationed in Germany and deployed to Saudi Arabia for Desert Storm! We were happy to turn in our frequent flier numbers when Brad finally retired from the army in 1993. Brad has a bachelor's in business from St. Leo University. Jill now teaches history to 10<sup>th</sup> graders at Saint Mary's Hall. Brad had his own business (web-based...can you guess?) for 10 years after retiring from the Army then moved in to real estate. He still keeps his real estate license current and is a referral agent. Brad is currently looking for a new job direction!

Our hobbies have changed over the years. Initially it was antiques and collectibles but then moved to travel and golf in Hawaii. We still have a lot of old furniture, dust-catchers, and golf clubs hanging around the house. We both still enjoy traveling but never seem to be able to do enough of it! The last two years our summer vacations have been long-distance Gold Wing trips with our first Wing Ding last summer. Brad collects watches and Jill enjoys the hot tub year round and the pool in the summer. Since becoming the Chapter CD's, Chapter U is our primary hobby!