

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO TEXAS MOTORCYCLING
NEW COLUMN: BILL'S GARAGE (SEE PAGE 12)

Ride Texas[®]

FALL
EVENT GUIDE
P. 40

AN ARKANSAS ROADTRIP

RHINESTONES
& DIAMONDS

SADDLE UP
FOR THE

TEXAS
MOTORCYCLE
STAMPEDE

BILL'S GARAGE

AN INTRODUCTION TO BILL'S NEW COLUMN

A CHANGING OF THE GUARD

WORDS BY BILL DRAGOO



Bill Dragoo in his garage



PHOTO BY SUSAN DRAGOO

D.A.R.T. Tips has entered its seventh year with *Ride Texas*. Since 2019, we have shared numerous lessons and stories revolving around the ADV scene, and the time has come to open up the scope of this space so graciously dedicated by the publisher. I have enjoyed sharing wisdom from the trail, coaching tips, and ideas on how to handle heavy motorcycles in rough terrain. I hope you will refer to past issues of *Ride Texas* to review some of those stories from time to time. Physics is physics, and the techniques and outcomes discussed in D.A.R.T. Tips are timeless.

Bill's Garage rekindles that wind-in-your-hair and bugs-in-your-teeth feeling that first sparked the fire in our bellies to ride. From the moment we threw a leg over a motorcycle, for most of us, something in our DNA was awakened. You know the feeling. The next best thing to leaning into a curve or ducking down a dark, backcountry trail is sitting around the shop, swapping stories of the perfect, or not-so-perfect, ride. I hope you find something relatable in this space as we go forward.

After more than a dozen years of operation in the ADV community, Dragoo Adventure Rider Training (D.A.R.T.) itself is also turning the page. My son, Ben, has taken the helm, and I could not be more proud. Training is the single most valuable investment an aspiring rider can make, short of the machine itself, and Ben is a natural instructor. He has watched my own growth in the professional coaching community for decades and has exhibited extraordinary talent in riding skill, communication, and coaching. The time is right. A new captain is on deck.

Young Ben on the Yamaha PW 50 YZinger



PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL DRAGOO

BILL'S GARAGE

Ben Dragoo is taking leadership of Dragoo Adventure Rider Training.



PHOTO BY JIM BEAN

MEET BEN DRAGOO

"I wanna ride!" exclaimed my four-year-old son, Ben. The field across the road from our home was perfect for his six-year-old brother, Jake, to try out his new Yamaha PW 50 YZinger. I hesitated since it was Jake's birthday and his time to enjoy the new bike. Ben, however, was relentless. His mom chimed in, and Jake, in a rare moment of brotherly sharing, agreed. Ben was already an accomplished bicycle rider and daredevil on the zip line, in the swimming pool, or wherever he could find a dose of adrenaline.

Jake stepped off, and Ben climbed aboard with a smile bordering on malice. Before I could complete my safety talk, he pinned the throttle wide open, stood on the footpegs, and streaked across the field, blowing a line of two-

stroke smoke from the exhaust like a bottle rocket. He arced through the first turn, leaning so steeply that I felt certain he would fall, and headed back toward the street. His life flashed before my eyes as the little Yamaha began to run clean. It seemed to fire an afterburner as he sped towards certain death. Barely easing the throttle, he made another turn and rode back to where his mother, brother, and I all stood ... speechless.

The ear-to-ear grin on his face told it all. This boy had talent. Before then, he had only seen others ride, but, like an AI robot, he seemed programmed to do things right. This moment sums up my son Ben.

All his life, Ben has taken to difficult tasks with enthusiasm. He has worked out methods and practices to help achieve his end goal, whether fitting the complex joinery of a fine piece of

IN BILL'S GARAGE, I LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING A WIDE VARIETY OF MOTORCYCLING STORIES.

furniture or teaching a struggling student to successfully perform a counterbalanced turn.

His natural talent for riding and teaching has flourished over these past few years, and, on January 1st, 2025, Ben took over D.A.R.T. He has established his name in the industry through winning rally contests, building challenge courses, teaching International GS Trophy contestants, and demonstrating his creative skill by helping enhance our curriculum. Odds are you haven't heard the last from D.A.R.T. and how we make the hard stuff easy through expert coaching by caring, accomplished instructors.

In Bill's Garage, I look forward to sharing a wide variety of stories from other aspects of motorcycling. Much of my time is now spent in the shop, bringing old motorcycles back to life and studying the history of riders like Danny Liska, who in the early 1960s rode his BMW R60 from the Arctic Circle to Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America. Stay tuned for more on Danny and the R60. Vintage motorcycle travel is also on the radar as I slow the pace a bit to smell the flowers and wet sage along the way. Stick around, grab a cup of coffee, and I'll spin a yarn or two to help pass the time between rides. ☑



Bill Dragoo is a lifelong teacher of things technical, retired flight instructor, and automotive service director. He is also a certified Airframe and Powerplant mechanic and an avid adventure junkie. He is a certified scuba diver, mountain biking state champion, and former Team USA competitor in the coveted BMW GS Trophy in South Africa. Bill founded Dragoo Adventure Rider Training (D.A.R.T.) based in Oklahoma, a legacy that lives on through his son, Ben. Learn more at <https://billdragoo.com/> and register for D.A.R.T. training at <https://www.dartmoto.com/>.

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