

MAY 2017

# NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride

**This month featuring:**  
Fred's Mexican Adventure Part 2  
San Lois Reservoir Campout  
Chris Daley's Safety Tech  
Adrian Pineda Short Story



BMW Motorcycle Club of Northern California

MAY 2017

# BMW Motorcycle Club of Northern California



Ride to Camp  
Camp to Ride

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## Editors Corner

Special thanks this month to Adrian Pineda for the two interesting articles highlighting Adrian's affection for Northern California. The first is one about Hartford in the valley and the second about the National Cemetery in San Lois.

Fred Montano's December 2016 journey is also included. The story, following on from last month, starts with the crossing of the Sea of Cortez and describes the ride though Copper Canyon back to the States. If anyone was wondering why Fred was riding his R100GS down to San Lois with only one side bag, the answer can be found here.

Thanks to Chris Dailey for remembering how simple intuition once saved his life.

I want to thank Puck and Jorgen for the San Lois photos, and Buddy for the picture on the from cover taken on this year's Death Valley ride.

I would like to welcome Cycle Specialties in Modesto as a new advertiser this month. It is owned by John Wienholz and his well equipped shop is definitely worth checking out.

*John Ellis*

## May 2017 Anniversaries

### 15 Years

Jerry Baker  
Richard Burton  
Gene Cox

### 10 Years

Lee Fulton

### 5 years

Jeff Nelson  
John Notch  
Ron Winingar  
Alicia Brown Docken  
Christine Cearing

## Events

**Second SATURDAY Breakfast Ride  
(Moved to Saturday for Mom!)**

13 May 2017 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM

**49'er Rally 2017**

12:00 PM 25 May to 29 May 2017

SEE BACK PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER

## From the desk of our Safety Tech Director

As club members and some long time motorcyclists, we give advice to other riders. Sometimes it's advice that has been asked for, sometimes it's advice that has not been asked for.. Some of us even go around and check other bikes tires at our club functions and take the time to point it out to fellow riders that they need new tires. Maybe we're giving advice about riding style tire pressure, suspension brake fluid and riding gear helmets jackets pants boots gloves and lets not forget staying hydrated.

In some cases we even give advice about speeding. Which reminds me of a story. "I love stories"

It was 1992 I was commuting from Vallejo to Mountain View and had to be at work at 5 a.m.

I was talking to Teddy, a friend of mine, and one of my first AA sponsors about what time I had to leave in the morning to get to Mountain View on time. My friend stated. "Chris sounds like you're doing 80 plus on the freeway maybe you should try leaving about 10 or 15 minutes early and slow the hell down" I didn't give it much thought just kind of blew it off.

Then a couple months after we have talked I was going into work bee-bopping on the freeway Highway 80 South and right before the Cutting Boulevard exit noticed I was doing 80 plus just like we all do from time to time. I suddenly remembered that there was no particular reason for this excessive speed as I had left for work about 10 minutes early

it was very dark I was coming around a turn on the freeway and for no particular reason I decided to slow down. I rolled off the throttle a little and changed from the fast lane to the next lane over and right as I did.....there was a stopped car in the fast lane with no lights on. Surely at 80 plus miles an hour hitting a parked car on freeway I would have been killed....

What I learned besides **slow the heck down** is even though we may think people's advice sometimes has motives other than trying to help you we really should listen "and hear them"

I still get chills every time I tell that story. My friend Teddy is no longer with us but I'm sure he's riding up there watching over all of us. Keep in mind the simple suggestions from other people can really help you if you listen and hear them.

"Ride your own ride within your own limits"

*Respectfully submitted  
Chris Dailey*

## A Short Journey Story

Hanford is your typical, quiet, San Joaquin Valley city located 40 miles south of Fresno. It's growing and changing, but not enough to lose its small town feel. What started in 1929 as a full-service dairy, Superior Dairy is still known for some of the best ice cream (they also serve hot food) to be found in the entire valley. Located on North Douty Street, across from the Civic Center Park, it has hardly changed since opening and should not be missed.



The original Kings County General Hospital still stands on West Lacey Avenue, but it is now empty as the city has replaced it with a new hospital. One of Hanford's most famous residents of Portuguese decent was born at the original hospital in 1949. Stephen Ray Perry grew up in Hanford and eventually attended nearby Lemoore High School. He played in the band, sang in a few of his own and attended the College of

Sequoias in Visalia. He then left Hanford for a music career, returning frequently to visit family. Along the way, he made some albums and history.

Not forgetting where he came from, his band used KIGS's radio station (Which started as a Portuguese station), located on California State Route 198 just east of Hanford, as the basis for the cover of the 1986 album, Raised on the Radio. A song about his girlfriend "Oh Sherry" was one of his most popular hits. I tried, but I can neither confirm nor deny she was from either valley town of Porterville or Bakersfield.

Steve Perry eventually left the band and now lives

in coastal Del Mar. The band replaced him with a new singer, Arnel Pineda (no relation). And the band Journey continues.

*Adrian Pineda*



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## April Campout at San Luis Reservoir

This month's ride was organized by our "new" tour captain, Nick Gloyd. It started out at the Black Bear Dinner in Walnut Creek. 16 riders enjoyed a good breakfast before setting out on a 170 mile ride to San Luis. 170 miles doesn't sound like far but the route selected included some pretty gnarly back roads so that it was nearly 4 o'clock before we arrived at the campground. The route took us down March Road. In one place the road was blocked with PG&E repair crews who were replacing an electric pole that had been knocked down the previous night. The crew kindly allowed us to go through. From there we went down Mines Road stopping at the Junction Bar and Grill to stretch our legs. There was still a little gravel on the road but fortunately no Alameda County trucks driving on the left! From there we carried on to the Glick Observatory, and stopped long enough for me to get another caffeine shot and others to check out the old telescope. The 130 to Alum Rock is closed due to a road slide, but Nick's route took us down Quimby Road to San Jose. This is pretty challenging with steep road and adverse cambers. A couple of riders went down

but with no permanent damage. The route south avoided the 101 all the way down to Morgan Hill where we called in at Safeway's and picked up supplies for the Potluck dinner.

A blast across the 152 took us to the San Luis state camp site, where the officious gate guard charged an unexpected additional price per vehicle. Sometimes motorcyclist really do draw the short straw when one person on a bike gets charged the same as 15 people in a bus.

Arriving at the site we were met by around 20 others who had driven/rode directly to the camp site.

And so began the luck supper. There was wine, beer and snacks. Fred and Nick showed up with two large containers full of fried chicken. Jorgen's wife arrived in a truck with an incredible spread of cheeses, pate and crackers. There was wine and beer aplenty. Puck got a barbeque going and was cooking all sorts of meat dishes. The night finished with a serious looking game of poker under the light of an LED.

This was certainly a memorable, not to be missed camp out



# The San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery

It's inevitable. We all eventually reach a final resting place. For our local veterans, and those lost on active duty, the United States Department of Veteran's Affairs operates the San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery. Established on donated land in 1990, it is located near Santa Nella in Merced County. Admittedly, a cemetery is not a typical destination for a planned ride. However, it doesn't take long and there is plenty of gas and food nearby. Due to the location, it is a local treasure, which goes unnoticed by most passing through the area. I think you will find it is a worthy stop on a ride to the coast.

Just a few miles north of Santa Nella, there is a sign directing you to turn west onto McCabe Road. You immediately pass back over the I-5 and head into the low hills. Within a few minutes, you will arrive at the gates of the cemetery. It sits almost hidden in a hill area overlooking the O'Neill Forebay of the San Luis Reservoir. There are blended grey and earth-toned flat-stone walls (a design theme throughout the cemetery) to announce where you are. A short wall centered at the entrance is adorned with the seal of the Department of Veteran's Affairs. As you pass them, in the median, is a long line of young pine trees dedicated to our silent warriors, the Submariners.

The road rises as you near the main buildings with the Visitors Center. Across the road from it, standing alone, as if on eternal sentry duty is a statue of a Paratrooper. The sculptor was a former member of the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment, William Porteus. The Airborne Soldier (prophesized by Benjamin Franklin) statue is an Infantryman in a Class "A" uniform of the World War II era. He stands smartly at the position of Parade Rest. His shoulder insignia and unit patch emblazoned on the pedestal at his feet identifies him as a member of the 11<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division. This unit fought in several campaigns in the Pacific. It's most famous being the (Philippines) raid at Los Banos, which is south of Manila. He wears a steel pot, bandolier belt and is armed with the standard issue, M1 Garand rifle. Besides the requisite bloused Corcoran Jump Boots, parachutist's wings, Infantryman shoulder-cord and ribbons on his chest, he wears the coveted Combat Infantryman's Badge.

The area in front of the statue is set up to accommodate parking for individual vehicles and areas designated for funeral groups. Parking was plentiful when I visited as it was a week-day and there were no services being conducted.



Behind the statue at the highest point of the cemetery, is a flag-pole and vista point. You can ride up and park there. From here you see the entire cemetery and in the distance the placid waters of the O'Neill Forebay. It is quite a view. The rolling hills were green with grass when I visited. These will turn golden brown in later months. Well-placed signs guide you on your route through the cemetery, which uses one-way roads and roundabouts in several locations.

At the visitor's center, there are information kiosks, a small museum, bulletin boards of the different uniformed services and restrooms. The area is floored with large tiles and a fountain is centered between the two buildings. Young trees attract some birds, but there is little sound except for the fountain and wind. There is an ATM like device at the end of the building. There, you can locate those buried by name, branch of service, dates with rank and where they are in the cemetery. Very helpful and it is extremely easy to use.

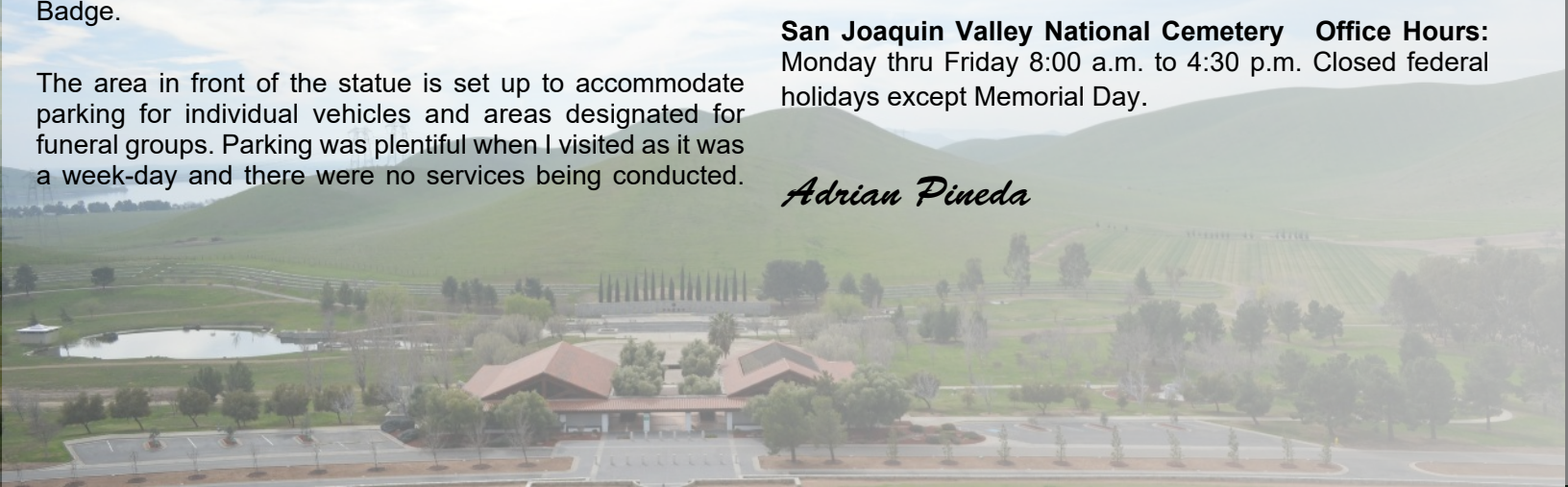
There are several memorials around the cemetery. Those dedicated to Marine Corp units and others like the California Korean War Veteran's Memorial. With a flag for the POW/MIA's in the center, it is 16 five-foot-tall granite monoliths arranged in a circle. Engraved on each is the name of the 2,495 Veterans from California who died during the Korean War. There are multiple pathways from this area and roads to traverse the cemetery.

Clear of mature foliage, the nascent green lawns are just taking in some areas. There are Willow trees and farther down the hill, Italian Cypress' are growing in formation behind the wall overlooking a rectangular reflecting pond. Though there are still large tracts of unused land, thousands of veterans are already resting here. Initially odd looking, are the multiple areas of buried ashes. They rest beneath flat headstones, mere inches apart. Casket burials are also conducted. All the graves are neatly spaced and in formation below attentively manicured lawns.

"Where is the prince who can afford so to cover his country with troops for its defense, so that ten thousand men descending from the clouds might not, in many places, do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?" —Benjamin Franklin, 1784

**San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery Office Hours:** Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Closed federal holidays except Memorial Day.

*Adrian Pineda*





## Fred's Mexican Adventure - Part 2

We rode to the kiosk and presented our passports, prepaid tickets, and import permits. We filled out some paper work then they directed us to the end of the automobile line. We were the only motorcycles going on the ferry. As we waited to board the boat we met a guy, Guadalupe Castro, from Cabo San Lucas who was going to visit his family in Las Mochies. Turns out that he owns "The Nowhere Bar" in Cabo. We had a good chat with him and he invited us to visit him. Well, some other time. There are large multiple wheeled trucks going on the ferry and many cars. The boat is very modern, clean and comfortable. There is plenty of room where we tie our bikes to the railing, (they do not provide tie downs but I had brought some). Our bikes were parked on the fourth level of the boat, so we walked up to the deck to view the boat leaving the port. The water is calm as we leave. I

see the terminal getting smaller. There are other boats in port as we head out of the Bahia de la Paz. The sun is shining, the



water is calm, the sea breeze smells fresh, and the birds are all around. The Sea of Cortez is beautiful! Dinner is included with our fare so we go to the cafeteria. It is a very modern

dinning area that is clean and comfortable. We get in line and they serve us a big plate of food. The food is tasty and good. After dinner I

walk outside to view the beautiful rose colored sunset glimmering on the Sea of Cortez.

At about 10 pm we dock at Topolobampo. The ferry slides into the port and the doors open so we can walk downstairs to our motorcycles. We unstrap our moto's and get prepared to ride the short distance to Las Mochies in the dark night.

We ride off the ferry and into the night following signs to Las Mochies. I'm following Ed, as he has the GPS and has previously stayed at the Santa Anita Hotel. On our way Ed stops because my headlight is aimed o high and it is blinding him. So I lead into the city of Las Mochies. Only problem is that I don't know where the hotel is located. Las Mochies is a large city of 100K plus. So I head for the center of town. Finally I stop and ask Ed to lead since he has the GPS and has stayed at this hotel. What? The GPS is not working and

you can't remember how to get to the hotel? OK, we will just cruise the streets and find a motel. Finally I ask a few people where the hotel Santa Anita is and we find it. Whew! What a hassle... We park in the covered parking area and go inside to get a room. Good they have a room available. What? They want 1,950 pesos? No way Jose! I'm out of here! I leave and walk to the motorcycles. Kevin comes out after me, (he is tired and negotiated a better price - 1,200 pesos roughly \$20 each). Ah, that is better and we pay for the room. Wow, the room turns out to be a beautiful suite on the fifth floor with a tiled bathroom that has windows that look out over the city. We go down to the restaurant but it is closed. The hotel staff points us toward the next block where there is an all night eatery. We could not find the place so we stopped at an OXXO (7 Eleven like), and bought warm up microwave stuff (this was our worst meal). We finished eating and started walking back to the hotel. The streets were well lit and clean, and not many people walking around at eleven at night. Within a half a block there it was, a good restaurant we could have eaten at. Darn! Oh well, we were tired and it was time to get some Z's. A good hot shower and clean sheets made it all better.

The next day we went down to the hotel restaurant for breakfast. This hotel was as nice, if not better, then any I have stayed at. The lobby was posh and well appointed. Seats, chairs, pictures, light fixtures, wood & tile; were all nicely done. You can purchase tickets for the train ride to the Copper Canyon here. And there are excursions into the Canyon you can take from this hotel. The travel agent at the Hotel was very attractive so I had to stop and ask questions. Ed & I sat down for a good breakfast before leaving to the Copper Canyon (Barranca del Cobre). It was time to re-pack, saddle up and hit the road.

Highway 15 heading toward Hermosillo is a beautiful toll road. Four lanes of good road. We stopped and paid 104 pesos, (for all three bikes), and rode to the little town of Esperanza where we turned off on highway 12. This road is a small road heading into the mountains of Sonora and Chihuahua. What a great ride this was. It had curves, hills, trees, boulders, cliffs, and not much traffic. There was plenty of challenges and beautiful scenery. The weather became cool as we rode up the mountains. We reached a junction and turned onto highway 16, (the main road between Hermosillo & Chihuahua). What a surprise to see snow on the side of the road. This was something I had not considered.

We were at an altitude of 6,000 feet and it had snowed the day before. The road was mostly clear so we kept on truck'n. We could see the valley behind us and the mountain range in front of us. The road was





tree lined and in good condition. The hills were jagged, rocky, with huge boulders and cliffs with drop offs and no guard rails. Pretty exciting! Before we knew it the sunset and we were riding in the dark. But we were in the mountains and there were no towns, campgrounds or motels. So we kept going until we reached Yecora. I stopped at the first motel I came upon. Yep they had a room with three beds.

Yes! We lucked out again. For 450 pesos we got lodging on a cold night where we were tired and ready for a good dinner, shower, and rest. Not to mention the road was dark and very



windy. There was a restaurant just across from the motel, (I think it was operated by the same family). We had a good meal then we walked back to our room for some well-deserved sleep. Good night!

The next morning we woke up to a cold but clear day. Yecora is a working town with heavy trucks traveling through town and men dressed for construction or industry. We ate breakfast, packed up, filled our gas tanks at the local Pemex station and rode off toward Creel. When we arrived at Ocampo we turned off on highway 23, a small road that cuts off to San Juanito. This was a very windy road that had potholes, snow & ice in some spots. It was a challenge but very picturesque. We finally arrived at San Juanito and filled our gas tanks. There was a roadside taco stand so we stopped and purchased a few delicious tacos. Now we were close to Creel and the Copper Canyon. The altitude was 8,672 feet and the weather was cool. We arrived in the beautiful Pueblo of Creel.

Creel is the main town in the region. It was named after Enrique Creel, an American, and railroad promoter and builder. His village was founded in 1907 as a railroad station. Accessible by rail and by a newly paved road from Chihuahua. Pine forest, mountain meadows, and Tarahumaran villages surround Creel. Creel has the best gift shops, and best hotels available in the northern Sierra Madre. This is a good place to stop and take in the sights and local culture. We stayed at a nice motel, El Parisio del Basque, right off the main highway. The room was perfect with three beds and a good shower for 450 pesos (about \$23 or \$7.90 each). After settling in and arranging to get our clothes washed, we strolled into town. There is a best Western Hotel



that is top drawer (one of the best I have been in). We walked the main street and looked at the many

gift & clothing stores. There were also restaurants, grocery stores, drug stores, shoe stores, and at the end of the street was the main Plaza. The cultural center and church was next to the Plaza. This is a beautiful place that is all lit up at night and very lively. We walked back to the Best Western Hotel and ate dinner at the restaurant. The lobby had a huge fireplace with rustic wood and lodge poles for beams and plenty of local paintings, sculptures, silver items, and local cultural designed furniture. We had a very pleasant evening.

The next day we packed our gear and headed to EL Divisadero. This is a town that is a major stop for the train coming from Las Mochies. From El Divisadero you can view much of the Barrancas de Cobre and its wild cliffs and deep canyons. There is a very nice restaurant built on the edge of one of the cliffs overlooking a deep canyon. The Tarahumara



Indian women were selling their craft goods on blankets and crude tables. They were dressed in their traditional cultural clothes that are very colorful. They were selling bracelets,

earrings, baskets, blankets, and clothes, and other small items of interest. Good thing I was on a motorcycle or I would



have bought more stuff. We entered the beautiful restaurant (owned by the Santa Anita Hotel in Las Moches) to eat breakfast. The building was two levels and built with rough-out wood and was rustic. The design was beautiful with paintings and sculptures of the local area. We ate upstairs where there was a large glass window looking out over the canyon and across from a cliff that went straight down the canyon. The meal was not so great but the scenery was spectacular. After breakfast we wandered around and took in the sights before we mounted our bikes and headed for Batopilas, a town at the bottom of the canyon.

The road going to Batopilas was upgraded to a black top surface about two years ago. Until then the road was dirt and gravel with a smattering of



rocks and boulders. It was a difficult ride and very dangerous. It took the good part of a day to traverse to the town and a lot of work and energy. Now the road looks like highways in the Pyrenees or Alps with switchbacks and steep declines and beautiful geography. On our way we encountered snow & ice on the road. I took a wide turn and my wheel got out of the rut in the road. I slowed down and in my attempt to get in the groove, I rolled over ice and my bike did a 360-degree. Ahh shit! Nothing broken and the bike was OK. Ed helped me pick up the airhead and we got going again. Later I found out that the latch on my saddlebag was broken. No problem, I tied it down with a ROK strap. However, this road had the added difficulty of large rocks and boulders scattered all



along the path from top to bottom. We could not cruise fast or keep a steady speed. We had to pick and choose our path carefully or risk a bent rim or maybe worse. But the road was still better than the old days with dirt and gravel. Ed could not get over the new bridge that was built. I guess the old bridge was quite rickety and narrow. After dodging a few boulders and rockslides we reached the bottom of the road. Now we were riding next to the river and enjoying the view. We finally got to Batopilas that is built along the river and on the side of a hill. This was a silver mining town. The Batopilas ore was first discovered in the late sixteenth century. The town's fortunes rose and fell with the production of silver and current political conditions. Most of the beautiful buildings in Batopilas today were built between



1880 and 1910, when the area enjoyed a consistent political climate and a high rate of silver production. I was told that Batopilas was the second town after Mexico City to get electricity. While the material wealth of Batopilas vanished with the closing of the mines, its cultural traditions are still rich. The revolution ended the high rate of production, but the mines were still being worked into the mid-1940's. The result of this history is a modern Shangri-La set deep in a remote canyon beside an emerald green river. As we entered the town we looked for the local hotel. Ed tried to remember the way to the hotel he and Chia stayed at a few years ago. We rode through the narrow streets that had few people on them. The buildings were quaint and very old looking but well maintained. It was a beautiful town that I was not expecting to see at the bottom of the canyon. We reached the end of the street where there was some construction blocking the road. So I asked where is the hotel. Well, as he looked surprised, the person pointed to the other side of the street just behind where we were stopped. The hotel did not have a large sign indicating a hotel (Casa de Minas de Acanasaina). It was quite plain on the outside but when you went into the courtyard it opened up and had rooms on two levels facing inward. Ed located the room where he and Chia stayed. Lupe, who owned the hotel, was outside when we asked her neighbor about the location of the hotel. She was very pleased to show us around. She offered us a room in an adjoining location with two beds. However, the electricity was off, (I gathered this was not unusual). There were coal oil lanterns so we had light. This made our stay more interesting. Lupe later came back and offered us another room for no extra charge, (we gave her an extra 100 pesos). Lupe suggested we park our motorcycles in a space next to the hotel wall that was fenced in and locked. She recommended a restaurant that was close. The Catalina Restaurant was just a stroll up the narrow street behind a beautiful tree.



Men were working on a walkway that extended like a small plaza by the restaurant and other businesses. It was very quaint and pleasant. We entered the restaurant and were greeted by the lady who managed it. Turns out that the restaurant is owned and run by a local family. The furniture was not lavish but very functional and comfortable. One of the daughters came to our table to give us menu's and later came back to take



our order. We were the only customers in the restaurant, this is off-season, so we got top billing. We could view the women cooking our meal and making preparations in the kitchen. The

mom and two daughters kept very busy. Ed, Kevin, and I enjoyed our conversation about our ride of the day and our trip so far, as we drank our libations. A young girl that looked like a model served our meal. Toward the end of our meal the gentleman of the house came to our table and sat with us. We talked about our trip and exchanged stories. He was curious where we were from and about our trip into Mexico. He told us of other motorcyclists that he had helped get their broken bikes back to the States. When he learned that I could play the saxophone he said his dad played the sax. He went into the next room and brought out his dad's old saxophone and asked me to play it. What an honor! But the reed was so old and weathered and had not been played for years. I did not want to blow into something that might make me sick. I politely declined the offer. Maybe one of these days I will return and take my mouthpiece with me and play a few rancheras. After a wonderful evening with a fun family, we returned to our rooms. Lit the coal oil lanterns, took a shower then crawled into bed.

The next day we went back to the Catalina restaurant for breakfast. Ahhh, another good meal! Ed and I decided to ride to the old mission church that is accessed via a dirt road. Ed could not remember the road to the mission. I followed him up a hill with rocks and creases where water drained across the road. It was beautiful as we rode up the mountain and looked down the valley. There was a small side road that Ed decided to take. I waited for him. He returned and said the road led to the dump. So we turned around and went back to town. As we rode down the hill Ed remembered the road to the church was by the river. He asked me if I wanted to go to the church. I declined because my front forks were leaking oil and I did not want to make them worse. We returned to the hotel. Kevin was ready to leave. We packed up our stuff on the bikes and we headed out of the quaint little old town of Batopiles.



The ride up the mountain road was wonderful. All the curves and rocks were anticipated. I enjoyed the geography of the rugged terrain. We went past little farms and ranches on our way back to Creel, as we began our trek home.

We made a quick

stop at the Pemex station for gas as we left the Copper Canyon. What a wonderful visit to a special place on this planet.

It was decided to stay on the main highway and not take the short cut to highway 16 that goes to Hermosillo. So we rode on past San Juanito straight to highway 16 then turned west. This was the main road to Chihuahua. It was a wonderful curvy road in good shape. Up mountains and down valleys past little towns and truck stops. Not much traffic so we were able to cruise and enjoy the ride. We arrived at Ocampo where we stopped at a Pemex to refill and drain the bladder. It was about 4:30pm so the sun was going down and the

cold of the night would be setting in. We decided to keep traveling to Yecora, the town we stayed at on our way to Creel. Ed took off and led, then Kevin followed. I was following behind in sweep position. Soon Ed was no longer in sight. Kevin had slowed down as the sunlight became dim. We came into a tight turn when I noticed a truck pulling a long construction office trailer. Kevin slowed down and I stopped on the side of the road. The trailer took both lanes as it made the turn. I heard a boom as Kevin hit the trailer and went down on the pavement. Oh no - OMG! I was glad I had stopped just before the curve. But wait – the truck and trailer kept moving forward and taking more of the road as it exited the turn. Soon I saw the trailer and large wheels coming toward me. Wow – I'm stopped on the side of the road and I'm about to get run over, motorcycle and all. I quickly went into emergency mode and pushed my trusty motorcycle into the ditch. I landed on the outer side of the ditch with my feet caught under the side of the bike. Whew- the trailer went by and stopped on the other side of the road. I pushed the bike off my feet and crawled out. The bike was laying flipped over on the windshield and right mirror. The guys pulling the trailer rushed over to help get my bike out of the ditch and enquire if I was hurt. I did the usual initial physical feel of arms, legs, head, etc. No nothing seems to be damaged. We pulled my bike out of the ditch and it started up right away. The right mirror was gone and the windshield was scratched and bent. By this time Kevin had got up and walked back to see if anything happened to me. I told him I was OK. We walked up to where his KTM Adventure bike was down. We picked up his bike and noticed his mirror was sheered off; scratches to his side panels, and his Jesse Bags were seriously gouged. His bike started up and seemed to be ride able. Kevin indicated that his shoulder and back were a bit sore but not too bad. It was a good thing we were traveling at a slow speed. It would have taken hours for the Policia to arrive. And who knows how that would end. So we decided to get going on our way to Yecora. We got on our bikes with Kevin in the lead. He was riding very slow and deliberate. About 10miles up the road we encountered Ed. He pulled up next to me and inquired why we were riding so slowly. When I told him what had happened he understood and fell in behind me. It seemed to take forever to get to Yecora, the hotel, the restaurant, and a shower. We finally arrived and as Kevin got off his bike it went down. Oh Oh Oh... What a way to end our day's ride.

It was December 10th and Kevin had scheduled a court matter in San Jose on the 13th. He expected to get back on the 12th. So we did not have a lot of time to waste. As normal Ed and I woke up early and went to breakfast. Kevin joined us later. After having another good meal we went out to asses the damaged bikes. I removed the mirror post. Ed helped me wrap the fork seals so they did not leak on the brakes. Kevin had scratches and gouges to his bags but not much else. His riding suit was torn around the shoulder and hip. But it did the job of protecting his body. Kevin was quite sore but he was able to ride. We packed our stuff on the bikes, stopped at the Pemex station and headed out toward Hermosillo on Hwy 16.

## MAY 2017

This was a very nice road to travel on, with gentle curves and a few tight challenging turns to make it interesting. Plenty of green trees and vegetation. As we descended from the mountains the view was spectacular. We stopped to take off some clothing, the long johns and sweaters we had to wear in the cold mountains. It was heating up to the 60's and it was very comfortable. We could see for miles. The road was



curvy and in good condition. We could cruise and enjoy the ride. It did not take long to reach Hermosillo. In the outskirts of town there was large modern industrial buildings. Many of them were U.S. companies. I noticed Ford Motor Parts on one building. It was about 3 pm so we gassed up and ate at one of Ed's favorite roadside taco stands.

We got back on the road and headed to the border. The highway is a toll road that has four lanes in great condition. The Sonoran desert was beautiful with its large cactus looking like an army. The sun was going down and the sky was colorful in rust, rose, and pink, with a light blue background. The mountains in the background looked like saw teeth with jagged edges. The next town was Altar. We planned to rest there for the night. At first we could not find a motel. After going through town we spotted a nice motel. Ahh good, they had a vacant room for us. Only two beds but I was only too happy to sleep on the floor. There was plenty of room in a large walk in closet. My thermapad and sleeping bag was comfortable. A hot shower and sleep to end the night.

Morning came with clear skies and cool but nice temperature. Riding on Highway 2, we rode toward San Luis where we would cross the border and go to Yuma. As we rode closer to the border I spotted the very ugly fence the United States has built along the border of Mexico. This is truly an eyesore and embarrassing for our country. In San Luis we stopped one last time at a roadside taco stand. Yummy! Good food and good service with jovial people. The head taco chef directed us to the border crossing. Before we knew it, we were in the U.S.A. Oh no... What about our vehicle import permit deposit? We had to turn around and re-enter Mexico and locate the Mexican Customs office where they handle vehicle permits. We located the office quickly and

luckily there were no lines. It took about an hour for all three of us to go through the process. Now we were ready to get in line to cross into the USA (again!). Ed spotted a short cut and I followed him. Kevin lagged behind and was stopped from following our lead to cut in line and go through customs. Ed & I went quickly through customs and waited for Kevin at McDonald's. We had time to wait and rest before Kevin arrived. After eating a softie and drinking water we were ready to venture to Yuma, and stop when we reached Indio California. We stayed at a Day's Inn for \$110. What a change in travel expense. Go figure, we ate at a Mexican Restaurant. The food was good but more costly then we had gotten used to paying in Mexico.

The next morning we had breakfast at Day's Inn. We saddled up and headed for home. The wind was strong and blowing hard. We skirted L.A. and headed up the Grape Vine. I-5 is a boring road but quick to get back to northern California. By 4 pm we arrived at the Anderson Soup Restaurant in Santa Nella. Right on time! We all had a good bowl of soup and took pictures. Then Ed & Kevin left to San Jose and I charted a course toward Oakland. We all arrived back home safe and sound and very thrilled with our adventure in Mexico. For twelve days we enjoyed the riding, culture, people, food, hospitality, geography, and ease of travel in Mexico. I will be back!



*Fred Montano*



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