

OCTOBER 2018

NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride



This month featuring:

Fred Montano's Alaska Odyssey Part 2

All you wanted to know about Fastrak but were afraid to ask
ATLAS throttle lock

BMW Motorcycle Club of Northern California

Presidents Column

Saddleback Lake was a beautiful ride through Yosemite to get to a campsite with a postcard view - thank you Nick. A little angst heard about the last mile of hard dirt/rocky road to the campsite but everybody made it just fine. And a lot of everybodys came. Over 40 members made for a very interactive Club meeting. New members, first timers, and long time members partied around the fire till late in the night. Lots of food, wine, Scotch, Glogg (BIG thanks to Jorgen) and snacks meant no one went hungry or thirsty. .and it was a very short distance back to everyone's tent since we packed all those tents and people into a site rated to only 25 people. The Ranger was great...said he's never had that many people at the site before but since we were good campers and having fun he was OK with it.

The meeting was informative – thank you Gene Austin for the history about the National Park Service; and productive. After a good discussion, the first 3 updates to the Club By-Laws passed unanimously and are now in effect. We're getting the next 3 proposed By-Law updates out at the November meeting since everyone should just be having fun at Octoberfest.

We still need some volunteers!

Kevin is looking for 3 members in good standing to participate in the Finance Committee. The Club has excess cash and is looking for options on how to best make use of the funds.

The position of Ad Chairperson is still open. Pretty much on automatic thanks to Buddy's hard work over the years but he said it's time for someone else to get involved. You get to meet all the owners of our advertisers ..the BMW shops, Clearwater Lights, BeemerShop and others and coordinate with Nick to schedule Club events/rides in partnership with our advertisers - in other words plan parties.

Octoberfest is up next...hope to see everyone there...bring a guest and have fun.

Greg Hutchinson

Editors Corner

Thanks to Fred Montano for providing part 2 of his epic Alaska trip and I used a photo from the trip as this months front cover. Thanks to Ken Castleman for suggesting an article on Fastrak tag usage and Jorgen for suggesting a review of the Atlas throttle lock. Ideally as newsletter editor I prefer to receive articles for inclusion but if there are particular subject that are of interest or ideas for articles drop me an email.

The Captain's Log

I'll have to say the September member meeting/campout came as a bit of a surprise to me. Sure, I know the awesome mountain scenery, the world-class riding over Sonora Pass, the thin air of 10,000 feet, the nippy overnight temperatures, and of course the great camaraderie of my BMW NorCal peeps! But what really came as a surprise was the massive response to this campout. When I made these reservations 6 months ago I was thinking September at 10,000 would thin the crowd, some folks might be turned off by this. But 47 people registering for the campout was pretty cool. It was a great campout but we were camped in close quarters. We were able to stave off the temps for a while with some Glogg, chili, and stew brought by Jorgen, Kevin, and myself. There was also a variety of grilled sausages and meat as well. Not to mention plenty of spirits and other adult beverages and a hot fire. The ride out the next day was just as awesome as the day before, with bikes scattering in all directions. And if you didn't make this campout, you've got a little more time to catch the Aspens in their full fall splendor, head up soon before the season changes!

Also added to this month's ride was a GS option led by Kevin Coleman, and aside from a small crack to a valve cover, they had a blast!

Next month we are at Freemont Peak State Park. And remember, it will be the first weekend of December as we get pushed back a week by Thanksgiving. December, we don't have a meeting/campout, we have our holiday party instead. This will be at Skates on the Bay at the Berkeley Marina – December 8th at 5:00PM. This is open to Members (and a guest) only. The Club is covering over half the cost for members. The cost for a Member dinner is \$30. And if the guest is a non-member, their cost is \$50. (The cost of dinner to the club is about \$75/person). This is a no host bar so bring your wallet. And expect, again, our White Elephant gift exchange. The suggested price range for a gift is \$20 but as usual BMW NorCal Members do whatever they want. And whoever got the "toolkit", make sure you attend. Register as soon as you can at www.bmwnorcal.org/events so we can get our reservation confirmed.

Lastly – we are still looking for folks to contribute ride ideas for the Second Sunday Breakfast Ride, or even step up and help out as a coordinator for this part of the Club. The SSBRs are a great way to casually and informally get together and ride. It doesn't take much so step up and pitch in.

Thanks and keep an eye out for some cool ride destinations coming up for the next year!

Nick Gloyd

I have now fixed my bike after accident at the RoL. but its not quite on the road yet as I am dealing with some maintenance related items. I should be at Octoberfest - don't forget to register ahead of time

John Ellis

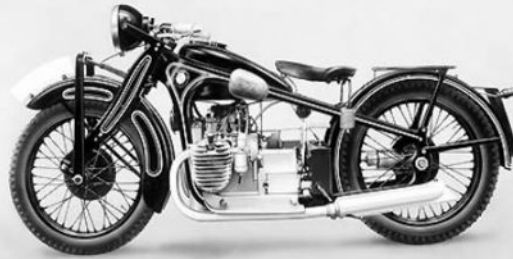


On 8th August Wunderlich announced they were moving their US location from Watsonville in CA to Hendersonville in NC. The move will take place before the end of 2018. They will continue to offer the same products and services from their new location. I am sure there will be a number of club members that will be sad at their leaving and will now need to order their products by mail, just like the rest of the country. Wunderlich is an active sponsor of Norcal.

Pictures from the September Saddlebag Camp Out by Jorgen Larsen



Real Classic Is a motorcycling magazine produced in the UK and has an interesting article by Alan Cathcart in the October 2018 issue. It is entitled "Pressed Steel Boxer" and includes a short road test of a 1929 R11 from the Sammy Millar museum as well as a very informative potted history of early BMW motorcycle developments. Who knew that BMW acquired a company called Dixi making Austin Sevens under licence. Dixi was responsible for the pressed steel frames for the BMW motorcycles during the 30's. After the war in East Germany the Dixi factory made Wartburg cars using a three cylinder two stroke based on British Scott motorcycle power plant. I get my copies electronically though subscription but you should be able to pick up a paper copy at B&N by the end of October. Editor



Camping Light at Harbor Freight

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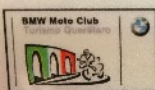
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ITEM 64110

2018 BMW Cross-Border Rally



Loreto BCS to Long Beach CA

Ken Castleman has produced a really nice video of the 2018 BMW Cross-Border Rally. It can be found by going to Youtube and search using "Baja Adventure 3/18". Alternatively if you click here you might be redirected.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su8f8oaHA7o>

Editor apologizes for forgetting to included this months ago when Ken first sent it to me

Bay Area Fastrak and Motorcycles

Fastrak has been around for years on Bay Area bridges. More recently it started being used on a limited number of so called "Express Lanes" which have replaced the some HOV (high occupancy vehicle) or car pool lanes. The HOV lanes can be used by vehicles carrying 2 or more people, motorcycles or vehicles with clean air stickers during specified times of the day. Express Lanes allow the same the multiple occupancy vehicles, motorcycles and vehicles with valid clean air sticker to use but in addition allow single occupancy vehicles to use the lane but in this case the driver is subject to a Fastrak charge. The original 680 and 237 Express Lanes made use of the original Fastrak tag. This meant that if you were carrying 2 or more persons in the car AND you were carrying the original



Fastrak tag, then you were likely to be charged the same as a single occupancy vehicle.

To get around this the Fastrak web site recommends the following

"For toll-free travel in the SR-237 and I-680 Sunol express lanes as a carpool, motorcycle, or eligible CAV. If you

have a standard FasTrak toll tag, you must enclose it in a Mylar bag to avoid being charged a toll."

In other words if you have the original Fastrak in your pocket when riding your motorcycle on an Express Lane you are going to be charged, and who remembered to save the Mylar bag?

Metropolitan Transport Commission (MTC) introduced a new type Express Lanes on the 680 from San Ramon to Danville and on the 580 from Dublin to Livermore. These lanes requires ALL VEHICLES (including motorcycles) carry the new Fastrak Flex tag (see picture in this page) to be able to use these lanes. Car pools, motorcycles, and cars with clean air stickers can continue to use the lanes for free BUT THEY MUST carry a Fastrak Flex.



The difference between the original Fastak tag and a Fastrak Flex tag is the little switch which allows you to indicate the number of persons in the vehicle. If you are on a motorcycle then you should set the Fastrak Flex to "3". If you are in a car



with more than one person set the switch to 2 or 3. With the switch in positions 2 or 3 there should be no charge.

MTCs preferred way to collect lolls is by the Fastrak tag. If you don't have the tag or for some reason the tag doesn't work then the system falls back to using its licence plate reader which computationally is more costly. If the camera comes up with a match then your account is charged.

So do you need the Fastrak Flex? Well if you plan on using the Express lanes that are designated Fastrak Flex only then you should have one and it's probably an offence if the police stop you and you don't have one.

If you are diving a car in an Express Lane and don't have one then the camera will pick you up and if you have a Fastrak account, charge you, even if you had four people in your car. If you don't have a Fastrak account you will be fined as well.

If you don't have a Fastrak Flex and riding a motorcycle on a Express Lane then it's extremely unlikely that the police would stop you to check if you had a Fastrak Flex on your person, If the camera picks you up then the image recognition will figure out you are a motorcycle and hence will not be charged.

However if are riding a motorcycle and are carrying the original Fastrak tag in your pocket (or the Fastrak Flex set to 1) then it's my guess that you will be charged for using an Express Lane.

When riding a motorcycle my advise is to either get a Fastrak Flex and set to it 3 or leave the Fastrack tag at home. If you plan on driving a car in the Express Lane definitely get hold of the new Fastrak Flex and return your old one.

Exchanging Old for New

The easiest way to get a new Flex tag is to phone them up at 1-877-229-8655. If you phone them you will need your Fastrak account number. You may have to pay a refundable deposit. Ask them to send you a postage paid return envelop to return the old ones. If you already have a Fastrak account DO NOT buy a new Flex at Costco or the like because you think you will get \$25 account credit – this only applies to new customers

Fastrak Article written by John Ellis at the suggestion by Ken Castleman

ATLAS Throttle Lock is recommended by Norcal Members

If you own a bike without built in cruise control then you may be interested in the Atlas Throttle lock. This has been used by both Fred Montano and Jorgen Larson and they are both highly enthusiastic about this product.

The ATLAS Throttle Lock is a mechanical cruise control that fits on nearly every motorcycle. It rotates with your throttle, is thumb activated and just over 1/4 inch thick. The ATLAS mounts between the throttle housing and grip on the plastic throttle tube so it doesn't take up any grip space. Using combination of pressure and friction, the ATLAS will hold your throttle in place with the press of a button.

Overriding the ATLAS is as easy as twisting the throttle to adjust speed or disengage it immediately with the "cancel" button. The ATLAS bolts on in minutes and requires no modifications for most motorcycles. There are two versions – the Top Kit and the Bottom Kit. Find the best fit for your bike the Atlas website: <https://www.atlasthrottlelock.com>



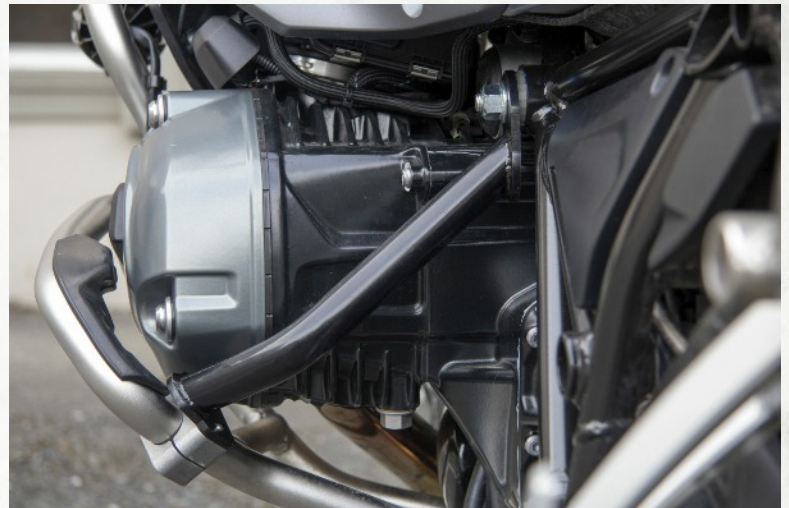
AltRider Reinforcement Crash Bars for the BMW R 1200 GS Water Cooled

I really don't like plastic or aluminum screw on head protectors. In my experience they don't protect and can actually cause damage. Well designed crash bars are much more effective but not all crash bars are equal. Unfortunately the stock OEM crash bars on the water cooled R1200GS/GSA are poorly designed and rely on rubber cushions between the bars and the head cover to improve rigidity.

Even a low speed fall can result in the head cover being cracked which means your ride is over and a recovery truck will be needed to get home. Here's a picture of a cracked head where a bike fell over with a wind gust.



CycleWorld magazine (January 2015) tested the BMW crash bars R1200 GSA and flexed the bars enough to crack the valve cover.



AltRider have recently introduced a 1 inch stainless steel bar that can be used with the BMW OEM crash bars to significantly strengthen the whole set up. The bar attached between the OEM bar and the frame as seen in this photo. Rather than going to the expense of completely replacing the OEM crash bars this looks like an excellent alternative.

AltRider makes them in silver electro-polish finish to match the OEM crash bars, or black powder coat to match the engine and frame and sells them for \$216.97. A replacement head cover from BMW is \$319.

If I was fortunate to own a water cooled GS, based on my recent accident record, I would buy these before taking the bike out on the road.

John Ellis



Lane Splitting Safety Tips

*****DISCLAIMER*****

Lane splitting can be dangerous and extreme caution should be exercised. It should not be performed by inexperienced riders. The risk of death or serious injury during a lane splitting collision increases as speed and speed differential increases. These general safety tips are provided to assist you in the practice; however, they are not guaranteed to keep you safe. Every rider has the ultimate responsibility for their own decision-making and safety.

Lane Splitting Safety Tips for Motorcyclists

- ⇒ Consider the total environment when you are lane splitting (this includes the width of lanes, the size of surrounding vehicles, as well as current roadway, weather, and lighting conditions).
- ⇒ Danger increases at higher speed differentials.
- ⇒ Danger increases as overall speed increases.
- ⇒ It is typically safer to split between the far left lanes than between the other lanes of traffic.
- ⇒ Avoid lane splitting next to large vehicles (big rigs, buses, motorhomes, etc.).
- ⇒ Riding on the shoulder is illegal; it is not considered lane splitting.
- ⇒ Be visible – Avoid remaining in the blind spots of other vehicles or lingering between vehicles.
- ⇒ Help drivers see you by wearing brightly colored/reflective protective gear and using high beams during daylight.

For more information on how to sign up for motorcycle training, contact the California Motorcyclist Safety Program at www.californiamotorcyclist.com or 1-877-RIDE-411

CHP063 (Rev. 6/2010)



Russ Drake pointed out the long awaited Lane Splitting Safety Tips endorsed by the CHP and CMSP are now available. The page above is the first of 2 pages of recommendations. The other page relate to recommendations for car drivers. The actual recommendations here are a bit under whelming. Maybe the answer can be found in the +++DISCLAIMER+++ above

The next page are guidelines from the Bay Area Riders forum which appear to me to be more helpful. Editor



Lane Splitting – Filtering – Sharing Guidelines

Presented by

Bay Area Riders Forum

Your safety depends on your good judgment:

- Don't expect to be seen. Lane-splitters are hard to see and some drivers are distracted.
- Keep speed down so you have time and space to react to hazards.
- Avoid splitting next to large trucks and other wide vehicles. They reduce space available and can be deadly in a crash.
- Leave a margin for error, so when someone makes a mistake in the tight confines of the splitting corridor, it may not end in a crash.
- Respect other motorists. Commuting is a cheerless grind for everyone. Don't make it harder for them even if a few make it harder for you.
- Watch for lane changes, they are a frequent cause of crashes.

Less risk:

- Lower traffic speed and speed differential.
- Wider lanes.
- Dense bumper-to-bumper traffic that limits ability of vehicles to change lanes.
- Left-most lanes farther from merging and exiting traffic.

More risk:

- Higher traffic speed or speed differential.
- Narrow lanes, wide vehicles.
- Gap in traffic that permits a quick lane change across the splitting corridor.
- Right side lanes near merging and exiting traffic.
- Intersections and crosswalks in the city.
- Following or being followed closely by another motorcycle.
- Night time or wet pavement.

Minimize your risk:

- Ride with your head and eyes up, looking well ahead.
- Anticipate the flow of traffic and predict hazards.
- Limit your speed to 10-15 miles per hour above surrounding traffic. This helps others to see you and gives you more time and space to react to hazards.
- Adjust your speed for road and weather conditions.
- Cover your brakes to reduce reaction time.
- Keep your hands and feet on the controls.
- Don't split when traffic is moving at higher speeds. It raises risk but saves little time.
- Be skilled at maximum braking and swerving.

Disclaimer: Lane Splitting can be dangerous, you could be seriously hurt or killed. These guidelines are meant to provide basic information based on experienced riders/commuters input and the SafeTrec Lane Splitting study by UC Berkeley. There is no guarantee these guidelines will keep you safe. Ride with extreme vigilance.

Additional tips are available at: www.bayarearidersforum.com/features and www.bayarearidersforum.com/1Rider

OCTOBER 2018

THREE PEAS IN THE ALASKAN POD - Part 2

The story ended last month having completed to first 60 miles of the Dalton Highway heading north. We stayed at a BLM campground (free) which is located right next to the old Hot Spot Café and Arctic Circle Gifts but is now permanently closed. If you are planning the same trip beware because some guides still reference it as a stopping place. This month's story continues as we set off to cover the remaining 355 miles of the Dalton Hwy to Prudhoe Bay/Deadhorse .

Six o'clock rolled around and we were up and packing our gear on the bikes. On our way out of the campsite we found the water spout. It was actually in plane sight but toward the entrance. Darn, too late to stop now since we were packed up. In a few miles we turned into the Coldfoot restaurant, gas pump, and campground. This is a major stop on the way to Deadhorse. The restaurant serves good food at a decent price. We ate a big breakfast with plenty of coffee and hit the road after we topped off our tanks with gas. It wasn't long before it started to rain and the wind picked up. The road was packed gravel but very wet since it had rained the day before. The mountains and vegetation



was so beautiful. The oil pipeline paralleled the road and there were pump stations every so often. We would encounter loose gravel for a few miles then it would be solid again but slippery. Construction areas were the norm because they can only repair the road three months during the summer. We stopped at a viewing site to take pictures and rest. I placed my helmet on the seat and walked over to view the scenery. "Oh shit - my helmet

fell on the ground and busted a catch that holds the face plate. We tried to fix it, but after great efforts it would not hold. We finally got the face plate to hold in one place but it would not close. This be-



came a nuisance in the rain, wind and cold weather. The road went up and around mountains as we travelled between 45 and 55 miles an hour. We were lucky because there were only a



few trucks on the "Haul Road " to threaten us with dust, rocks, or wet splashes from potholes. We stopped at three construction zones for about 15 minutes at a time. At one stop the signal lady



told us that the road would be closed from 6AM to 6PM the next day. This meant we would not leave Deadhorse until later in the afternoon so we would cross the construction zone after 6PM when it opened. This would not

be a problem since there was 24 hour sunlight.

We reached Deadhorse about 5PM. To my surprise there was no campground, no restaurants, no old town. We were almost out of gas and we could not see a filling station. We stopped and inquired with a man standing at the airport "where is the gas station"? He gave us directions but even that was difficult. There were no signs like we are used to. It was only two gas pumps that



had the card readers in an enclosed kiosk that was non-descript. Wow - we were running on fumes so we were glad to finally get gas. Deadhorse is an industrial oil town.

There are warehouses with steel and supplies. Oil rigs and

welding garages and construction vehicles. There is a very active airport where the workers are flown to Anchorage for there off time. They work two weeks and are off two weeks. They are paid for a full year.

We stopped at the Brooks Camp complex and asked where we could stay for the night. Daniel, the facility manager, said he had three rooms available. The cost was \$140 each. I immediately said that was too much. Daniel said there was a hotel up the road



but the cost was the same. The three of us went outside to discuss our options. We soon concluded that there were no good options and we should accept Daniel's offer. This was one of our best decisions. The rooms were warm, comfortable, great facilities, breakfast, lunch, dinner and as many snacks as we could carry. Daniel even set up a hose so we could wash our motorcycles. The rack holding the top case on John's bike had cracked on the rough



road getting there. Daniel indicated that there was a welder that could fix it in the morning. We had a good dinner and a great sleep. We met for breakfast and John went to the welder. Jerry and I walked around and visited the store and took pictures. We were not in a hurry since the road was closed until 6PM. The sky seemed to be closer and not as high as it is in the Bay Area. That was an amazing feeling. The only problem we found was that I left my ignition



on all night and the battery was dead. "Oh NO... Jerry had a battery charger but that didn't work. I finally asked Daniel if they had a charger. Yes...they had a charger and it worked perfectly. Whew! John returned from the welder. After we had lunch it was time to saddle up and head to Fairbanks.

The weather in Deadhorse was clear but cool. We thought this would be a better ride then we had the day before. Boy were we wrong. We started out at 3:30PM on a paved road. It soon turned into loose gravel. There was a couple of graders working on the road. The wind was blowing



and it was dusty then an eighteen wheeler passed and a cloud of dust engulfed us. I could not see the road or anything else. If the road would have turned I would have gone off the road. It cleared and as we approached the next hill it began to rain. It came down harder and harder as we approached a curvy hill. My bike wanted to go sideways



and slip around. We kept on going and finally made it out of that area. The oil pipeline kept us company all the way to Coldfoot. It continued to rain and the cold weather was uncomfortable at times. It was a challenging ride with dust, mud, gravel, slush, rocks, hills, curves, slipping and sliding uphill and down. The fender on Jerry's GS fell off on the road. We just left it on the side of the road. We were so glad to reach Coldfoot at 8:30 in the evening. We had a wonderful big dinner then set up camp. "Good night" It was a challenging ride...

It was great to wake up on a dry grassy field again. We walked over to the restaurant and ordered breakfast and coffee. Stephen, the guy behind the counter, recognized us and we chatted awhile about our ride to Prudhoe Bay. He has heard a lot of different stories about traveling on the Haul Road. The weather dictates much of the problems encountered on the Dalton Highway. It is 255 miles to Fairbanks from Coldfoot. We filled our tanks with gas and headed to Fairbanks on the gravel road. The road is half paved and half gravel. It was not as bad as the day before. It was cloudy, cold and rainy. On our way we passed two guys on old Harley's. It sounded like they were having carburetor problems. We stopped so Jerry could pour gas from his gas can to his tank and John put on his rain gear. The two Harley guys passed us as we were on the side of the road. We started out and in a few miles my bike ran out of gas. I had not put the bike on the center stand when I filled it in Coldfoot. So I was a few drops short of making it to Fairbanks. I stopped and added gas from my gas can.



We reached the Hilltop Restaurant and filled our tanks with gas. The two Harley guys were in the restaurant. They were wearing leather chaps, leather jackets with skulls and fire drawn on the back. Tattoos on arms and neck and who knows where else. They had to be cold and very tired. They were speaking spanish so I went over to talk with them. Turns out they were from Mexico City. They rode from Mexico to El Paso, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Calgary, Edmonton, Dawson Creek, Fairbanks, Deadhorse/Prudhoe Bay; and are now heading back through California, Baja, and down to Mexico City. I am amazed about the adventurous people we meet on the road. They gave me the the sticker you see here.



On our way John noticed that my fork seals were leaking. It appears that grime and dust got in the seals and they began to leak. Crap! Shades of my fork seals leaking on our way to the Copper Canyon. We arrived in Fairbanks, thank God!, and checked into Svens Hostel. It was raining hard and we did not have the energy or interest to set up camp. \$82 bucks and we had a nice cabin that was warm and comfortable. A hot shower felt so good. I slept on the top bunk and had a good sleep.

Tomorrow we will wash our bikes and try to fix the fork seals. And head to Denali National Park...

Svend's Hostel turned out to be a great place to stay. We met people from Switzerland, Holland, Romania, Argentina, Canada, and other parts of the U.S. These were very adventurous folks that were traveling throughout Alaska, Canada, USA, Latin America, and beyond. It is exciting to be among people that are exploring different countries and interested to meet other people and experience other cultures. I



I remember meeting a gentleman who was waiting for his daughter to arrive from Chicago. They were going to ride bicycles to Prudhoe Bay. It would take them three weeks. Holy smokes!

Now that is a challenge... The community kitchen was a good place to meet and talk over coffee in the morning. Everyone was so open and friendly. The kitchen was large and nicely appointed with cookware, refrigerator, stove, and food that guests had



left from times past. We sat at the long tables and exchanged stories of our adventures and where we were planning to travel next. Vera, the Hostel Manager who was from Switzerland, kept the place clean and was a terrific welcoming host.

"Come on guys time to wash the bikes and find the Honda Dealer." We were off to the car wash to get rid of all the mud covering our bikes. We could almost not see what color our bikes were through all the mud and grime. Oh well, they were not shining but at least they were clean and the headlights and rear stop lights were clear. "Now let's find a Honda Dealer and get some help regarding my leaky forks."



We found the Honda dealer who also sold BMW, Yamaha, and Polaris ATV's. I waited at the service counter while the serviceman talked to a customer for a long while. I finally explained my situation with leaky forks and asked him for advice. He was not overly friendly or helpful. They did not stock fork seal kits (it would take a week to get them), and they did not have the plastic cleaning tool that John had read about. So we stopped at an Autozone store and purchased brake cleaner and rags to wrap around the forks to keep the oil from leaking onto the brake pads. We returned to the Hostel and worked on my forks. Other guests there were willing to help and give advice. We cleaned the forks and wrapped them with the red rags I bought. Not bad, our job fit the color scheme.

OK time to hit the road to Denali National Park. It did not seem like a very interesting ride after the two previous days. The weather was clear and for once it wasn't raining on us. The road was paved and had beautiful wide curves. The hills were so

green with patches of snow and white clouds that hung at the top of the peaks. We reached the Denali National Park Center parking lot that was filled with cars, RV's, and buses from all over the country. We found a spot to park and walked into the beautiful Center that was built of huge logs and was very impressive. There were maps of the area and a history of the park. Mt. Denali is the highest mountain in North America at 20,310 feet above sea level. It was originally named Mt. McKinley after the president who was assassinated in 1901. The name was changed to Mt. Denali in 1975 to reflect the native people who settled north of the mountain and named it Deenaalee ("the high one"). We could not see the top of the mountain. It was hidden in the clouds. Apparently this is normal. There are few times that the top of the mountain can be seen from the ground. The mountain is huge with patches of snow clinging to it as it rises into the sky. We were informed that we cannot go into the park on our own. There is a four hour and an eight hour tour that tourists can take. The four hour tour is \$40. "OK maybe this is something we should take". In comes tourists off of a tour bus.

The ladies were gabbering about the trinkets and gifts they wanted to buy. No way I wanted to go on a four hour tour with this group. So we decided to find a camping spot for the night. Up the road about five miles we found the Grizzly Campground. This was a good spot by the river.



We pitched our tents next to the river Nanana and found a taco truck (can you believe this?) by the office area. What a find! The food was delicious and authentic. Muy bien amigo!!! Had a good shower after dinner and crawled into my sleeping bag. What a great day !

It was the thirteenth day of our trip to Alaska and the weather cleared up and we were on a role to Anchorage. We woke up at six listening to the birds singing the most different tune; and the beautiful sound of the Nanana River as it quickly heads to the Yukon. We packed up all our gear and trucked up the hill to our bikes. After loading our trusty bikes we decided to stop at a cafe along the way. OK we were on the road again enjoying the wonderful mountains, sky, and twisty roads. As we ascended up a hill around a curve we noticed a cafe that had a lot of patrons. Great, John decided to stop for coffee and breakfast. Little did



we know that this location had a direct shot to view Mt. Danali. You could stand on a log deck and look straight to Mt. Danali. However, as we were told, and experienced, the 20K plus mountain top is almost always covered by clouds. But it was still exciting to see how high and rugged this mountain is. It goes up, up, up, and higher until the very top disappears into the clouds. And this was on a good day. After taking pictures and goofing around we returned to our table and ate a wonderful breakfast of eggs, pancakes, bacon, potatoes, and plenty to coffee. Now we were ready to hit the road. We decided to skip the big city of Anchorage and take the Hwy 1 back to TOK.

On our way we stopped at the cute and very touristy village of Talkeetna. Jerry had been there before and enjoyed it. A nice picturesque place to walk and spend some time enjoying the rustic buildings and town park. Many interesting people were there from hippies, sports enthusiasts, young well healed millennials, to older folks having a good vacation. We jumped back on



There were three huge statues of Roosters in the front of the main building which is a restaurant, store, lodging, and who knows what else. This seems like a well known place to stop for bikers. There were eight GS's, Yamaha's, two Africa Twin's, and a



few Harley's; all parked in front of the restaurant. Everyone was happy to share a good tale. There was a group of six guys riding together from SoCal. I was impressed with one guy from Holland who had sent his fully restored R53 to Alaska to ride from Anchorage to Prudhoe Bay then to Argentina (Ushuaia - the end of the American Continent). On his ride to Prudhoe Bay and back to Fairbanks the motor got dirt and chalk in the engine and he had to have it overhauled in Anchorage. He was riding solo and expected to finish the ride by Christmas. Wow - what an adventure! We took pictures in front of a cut out chicken that read "I got laid in Chicken". Ha Ha Ha... I should be so lucky... Well, back on the bike and heading to Dawson City in Canada. We soon arrived at the Canadian border and had to dig out our passports. John got a grumpy customs officer and took longer than normal. But soon we were off riding on the gravel road and enjoying the ride through the twists and turns of the Top of the World Highway.

Hwy 3 to Wasilla and caught Hwy 1 at Palmer. Highway 1 is like a picture with a big river running next to the highway and Mt. Marcus Baker (13,178 ft) and Mt. Witherspoon (12,011) looking down on us. These huge mountains kept us company as we climbed up and down and around the road on our way. There were streams, big lakes, snow capped peaks, and beautiful wildflowers of purple and yellow along the road. It was like riding in a travel magazine. We soon reached Sourdough Campground. For some reason John was running low on gas so he stopped. Jerry and I went ahead to set up camp. We were glad to be back at this campsite again, but they did not have any rhubarb pie. Stephen, the owner, recognized us and fed us a good meal before we hit the sack. Snore, Snore, (it was a 500 mile day!)

In the morning we walked to the rustic campground restaurant to have another good breakfast. While we were waiting for our food we met a man in his 80's from Minnesota riding an RT. His name was Rod Walli and was originally from Finland. He had stories of rides to Latin America, all over the US and Canada. He was a real character. His partner was riding a Harley and not near the experienced rider as Rod. We enjoyed talking with Rod and exchanging good stories of where we have been and different experiences on the road. We took time to discuss a route for the "Top Of The World Highway". That would take us to Chicken and Dawson City on mostly gravel roads. So we packed up and got on our way. Over to Tetlin Junction and a left turn up Highway 5, the Taylor Highway. The weather was good, the sun was shining and the three of us were looking forward to today's ride. The road soon left the pavement and became packed gravel as we climbed up the hills and around curves. We experienced loose gravel, chipped seal, packed dirt, and some pavement; but no rain today. There were not a lot of trees, mainly grass and a bit of wind blowing us around. I could see for miles, big mountains in the distance and wildflowers by the road. We did have six miles of loose gravel that naturally gave us a challenge. After the Dalton Highway we were used to a rough road. This did not compare to the effort necessary on the Haul Road and I was glad. Soon we arrived in the interesting town of Chicken.



There is a small ferry used to cross the Yukon River to get over to Dawson City. This was a nice break from riding and a good change to be on the water. Dawson City is a very nice old gold mining town that is now a major tourist stop. There is an old paddle boat docked along the river and the buildings have the western facade architecture. This is a cool place to stop and have lunch. So we found a restaurant that enticed us to eat fish and chips. Yum! That was good, and I had plenty of fish. While we





were getting gas a guy named Jason, who was from New Brunswick, came up to me and inquired about the Africa Twin. He was having starter problems with his Yamaha and was waiting for a part. I mentioned that the only problem I encountered was that my fork seals were leaking after riding the Dawson Highway. I presume that dirt, mud, and sand had gotten in the seals. He said that he was given a plastic slider cleaning tool for fork seals and didn't plan to use it. So we followed him to his camping spot and he gave the cleaning tool to me. It is amazing how people help each other on the road. We rode another 30 miles to a Provincial Campground (Moose Campground) and set up camp. John and I once again tried to clean the fork seals with the slider tool. It was soon time to sleep and rest for tomorrow's ride to Whitehorse.

Nice rustic campsite and a good clear night. No rain and dry ground was good to wake up to. We made our way down a nice paved road with trees and hills lining our sight. It was cold with a few sprinkles on our way. I couldn't wait for a cup of coffee and breakfast. We ate at the Gold Panner Restaurant in Carmack's in the Yukon. It was warm and comfortable and good to be inside. There were pictures on the walls about the building of the road and work in this rugged area. We were not in a hurry to leave but we soon got on our way. It wasn't long before we reached Whitehorse.

It seemed to be a familiar place as we pulled into Tim Hortons Restaurant for a late lunch. Jerry decided he wanted to sleep at a motel, so we agreed to meet at seven in the morning for breakfast. John and I went to Robert Service Campground and set up camp. Then we went to the Canadian Tire Store to change the oil on John's Super Tenere. When we returned to the campground we noticed Jerry had set up his tent at our campsite. He could not find a motel room at a decent price. Apparently most of the rooms were already occupied and what was left was very expensive. No problem, we had room and the price was cheap.

So we had dinner at the Boston Pizza Restaurant and watched the Tour de France. There is a large paddle wheel boat docked by the Yukon River that is used for tourists and other occasions. Very picturesque! The Canadians and Americans used these ships to ferry supplies and men to construct the Alaska Highway from late 1941 to 1944. The construction of the Alcan Highway came about as a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor and the war effort. We rode past the beautiful white paddle boat sitting next to the river as if it was guarding the port. Ah ..my familiar tent and sleeping bag was ready as I arrived at camp. Good night Y'all !

Rise and shine and get breakfast at? You guessed it - Tim Hortons. It was overcast and cold and it felt good to get a cup of hot coffee. While we were eating I looked out of the window as the rain began to pour. It was raining hard as we mounted our bikes. Oh well we were getting used to the weather. It rained off and on all day as we headed to Hwy 37 the Cassiar Highway. Just before Watson Lake there is a turnoff to Hwy 37. Right at the junction is a cool restaurant called "37 Junction". We stopped here and had a piece of pie before continuing on. The Cassiar Hwy was more narrow than Hwy 1 but beautiful and very interesting with lakes, mountains, fox', rivers - to bad it was raining. As we negotiated the curvy road in the rain we passed the town of Dease Lake. There was construction along the way with loose



gravel and long stretches of packed gravel as we reached Inkut Village, where we gassed up.

On our way John noticed the Tatogga Lodge and pulled in to inquire about camping.

Yes there was camping and no

charge. Right On ! The rain had stopped and it was the right time to set up camp. Then we went to the lodge to eat dinner. This was a bit of comedy because John (the owner) was the order taker and his chef (Peter) was french. They had this dialogue going about the orders that got mixed up from time to time. They had the guests write down their food orders from the menu and submit them to John. Then John would interpret the order to Peter and you were lucky to get what you ordered. And of course there was a lot of grumbling and banter back and forth when the order was wrong. This could have been the making of a TV show. We just sat there and enjoyed the show. However, the food was really good and we looked forward to having breakfast in the morning.



The lodge was big inside and rustic. There were busts of wolves, bear, moose, caribou, fox, and many other animals that live in this wild area. We met a group of 11 guys that were traveling from Australia. They flew over to Anchorage and rented a bus and driver. These guys were really having a blast. I also met a couple that live in the Sunset District in San Francisco.

We had a good discussion about the economy and political situation in the US. The folks along the way were amazing. We enjoyed the dinner and the evening and now we would retire to our campsite for a much needed rest. Since the sun light was still bright, Jerry and I decided to walk down to the lake and see birds, racoons, and a fox. At the lake we saw the amphibious plane that John uses to give guests rides and I suppose this is how they get around for supplies (especially in winter). The Australian's were going on a plane ride in the morning. We walked back to camp and went to sleep in our cosy tents.



Fred Montano

The last installment will be next in months issue

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TBD
MUST REGISTER ON LINE – LIMITED PLACES

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Come check out the ADV Design Oktoberfest open house! For details check out their website.

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Oktoberfest Member Meeting and Campout - Liberty Glen Campground - Lake Sonoma
8:00 AM 27-28 Oct 2018
Breakfast spot TBD
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Monthly Board of Director Meetings
03 Nov 2018, 10:00 AM 12:00 PM
MotoGuild SF, 849 13Th St. San Francisco

Anniversaries

September Tim Booth - 15 years

October Thane Beckstrand - 35 years

**November Davis Opheim - 15years
Lee Wolff - 25years**



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