



THE MONTEREY BAY WATCH

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The Monterey Bay BMW Riders
meet Saturdays at 9AM
at the Red Apple Café
in Watsonville
for breakfast & conversation.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This may be the hardest article I have ever had to write. It is the last one for the club newsletter. After this January 2014 issue the Monterey Bay Watch Newsletter will cease to be published, ending its 20 years in existence. Yes, it will go dark, lights out.



JAY WHYTE

It's gotten harder to keep a small club publication viable without a lot of planning and input from the members. Even publishing electronically has not cut down on the amount of work to produce a monthly newsletter. Thank you, Ron, for keeping it going the last couple of years. I know it couldn't have been easy.

Now there are new modern electronic communication systems, as I'm sure you

are well aware, taking over. We still have the club web page and the announcements list and e-mail to communicate with each other. That has not changed. There is also the Facebook page for those who choose the use it. So

maybe going dark is a poor analogy for the future. I take it back. Power up, log in and get on line, the future may still be bright after all. And there is still my favorite communication type, the old-fashioned story telling over breakfast Saturday mornings at the Red Apple.

Ride, Eat & Repeat!

Jay Whyte

*Kurt, Jay, Daniel,
James, & Neil
taking a break in
the Santa Cruz
mountains*



RIDE TO EAT, EAT TO RIDE

Thoughts from the Nursing Home

New Year's Resolutions



JIM MARTIN

Back in the days when there were still sabre-toothed lions roaming Monterey County, I broke myself of the habit of formulating New Year's resolutions. Although I have a friend at the gym who believes that one only has to practice them for the duration of New Year's Day ("Whew, I'm sure glad that day is over!" he says) but, I have to say, I take decision making a little more seriously than he does.

But here it is, January 4, 2014, and I am ready to make one. Jim, don't ever drive your cargo van and motorcycle trailer all the way to Lodi, California, and back with the trailer loaded again... ever! Now I'm sure many of you could accomplish this feat with your eyes closed (maybe that's the secret!) but, perhaps because I'm spoiled by riding my beemer anywhere, at any time without any hesitation, I just don't enjoy driving much anymore.

Now my van has a quarter million miles on the odometer and, despite the fact that it still runs great, it never overheats or drips oil and everything (but the windshield washer) works, I still experience a little trepidation every time I leave home in it -- a feeling I never get when I jump (crawl, actually) on either of my motorcycles for a trip, long or short.

I think my 1964 Ranchero probably did that to me. It ran pretty good, but it did overheat, it did drip oil (in copious amounts from several places) and the number of things that didn't work (horn, emergency brake...) were too numerous to list. Now some would say that the reason for all of these maladies is that the chief mechanic in charge of its construction as well as its maintenance was none other than yours truly. Water under the bridge though that may be (I sold it in 2004), I'm still not without the deep

psychological scars that being stranded in Bakersfield can leave on a man.

So, I carefully checked the water, oil brake fluid and tire pressures (I like hitting the tires with a tire iron like the big truckers do) before I left. Then, upon picking up a little speed, I cranked up the stereo to drown out the rattling and clanking noises an empty cargo van towing an empty trailer makes. I had to restrain myself from waving at motorcyclists as I rolled up Highway 101 to the deafening accompaniment of "Scorpions" (an eighties' German heavy metal group, for those of you who are too old to know these things).

Without the ability to rocket up to any speed I want in an instant, or slow down quickly if, somehow, my old van could reach the speeds now typical of left lane traffic, I had to resign myself to trolling along behind the trucks and the illegal aliens in the right lane. Ho hum, maybe I should calm down and listen to Joni Mitchell for a while.

Branching off on 580, I headed into some of the worst Friday afternoon traffic I have endured for quite a while, only to get lost when I found out that staying on 580 (like my old California map seemed to indicate I should do) automatically dumped me onto Interstate 5 south. I had to stop at a rest area on I-5 to find out from a trucker what had just happened. Even his fancy, highly detailed trucker map showed a connection with 580 and 99 which I had intended to take up to Lodi. I was supposed to have known to take 205 north to Stockton. Too bad GPS is against my religion. On the other hand, you meet the nicest people at rest areas! I had to go nine more miles on I-5 south to turn around and follow the trucker's advice (he was from Arkansas) and take 120 east to 99.

In Lodi, the warehouse I was heading for had not

Thoughts from the Nursing Home

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been blessed with an address number, so I drove around until I saw a guy (he looked like another one of those nice truck drivers, but I don't want to describe what that looks like for fear of offending Chuck Adkins -- okay, he was a little fat, but then so am I) to ask. It turned out he was the guy I had talked to on the phone and he wanted to know what took me so long. I ignored his question, loaded up my trailer and took off. Unlike John Fogarty, I would not be "Stuck in Lodi Again."

Even though I knew to take 205 this time in the other direction, I still managed to miss it. My excuse this time is that I was listening to the lyrics and singing along to a Bob Dylan CD, "Highway 61 Revisited..." see what I mean? And some people still wonder why I don't lead group rides! I pulled off, stopped at a "General Store" in Bird Dropping, California, and stopped for some directions. The man who ran the store but didn't speak much English (he was from India -- I knew because he sounded exactly like Daniel's imitation) directed me (sort of) to a "McArthur Street." I can't spell it the same way he pronounced it, so use your imagination. I never found that street (he's probably having a good laugh over that) but managed to get back on track myself.

Fast forward and I'm back in the thick of traffic headed toward San Jose. The trucks are going two miles an hour in three of the lanes and everybody else is trying to go one hundred and two, weaving this way and that in all of the five traffic lanes. Never once did I see any one of them using a turn signal, probably because they were following so closely that I couldn't have seen it anyway. All of a sudden, there was a loud clunk and a juddering feeling. Anxious that I had lost some of my load, I managed to see a large object bouncing across the freeway in my left mirror, followed by a dark colored (it was dark outside by now) car roaring around me on the left side. Concluding that this car must have hit my trailer,

knocking something off or out, I tried, to no avail, to read the license plate, and then to put on my right turn signal and pull off the road to inspect the damage.

I finally got to the eight-foot shoulder and stopped, activating my emergency lights (good thing I wasn't still driving the Rancho -- emergency lights hadn't been invented yet in 1964), waited to get out as not to have my door ripped off by cars zooming by inches away, to discover that the trailer's left fender, light, and license plate had been torn off by the gentleman who had been following so closely and who had been in such a hurry to get around me. Poor guy, I reasoned, his wife's water has probably just broken and he's trying desperately to get her to the hospital through this miserable traffic. I could hardly expect him to stop and exchange information. As sympathetic as I felt, a (very large) part of me regretted not getting his license number.

Less than fifty miles from home, I decided to just drive my one-eyed trailer the rest of the way home and put the trailer and its load into the enclosed storage space I rent and get some sleep. Unfortunately, I had just missed the seven o'clock closing of the storage facility and now had to find a large enough street parking place for van and trailer (homeowner's association says "no trailers") and parallel park them (my trailer backing skills are second only to those of the Three Stooges). The last two tasks took me about half an hour, then I had to walk a block and a half to the comforting confines of the nursing home.

I'll happily slap Clint Eastwood in the face and then stick that hand into a running garbage disposal while using the other one to try and kill a fly walking on my head with an icepick before I do that again.

By the way, to my amazement, all of the stuff was still in the trailer after parking it on the mean streets of Salinas all night. These are the times that I just feel blessed.

Editor's Notes

Ron Aikins



RON AIKINS

Last Issue?

As previously announced, this will be the last issue of the newsletter I will publish. That does not mean it has to be the last issue ever of the newsletter. That depends

on the membership. Anyone could step up and continue to deliver the club's news in the same format, plain or fancy, or – perhaps try out a new idea.

Speaking of new ideas and club business in general, we will have our annual meeting to discuss such things as the 2014 ride calendar and club communication at

approximately 10:30 AM on Saturday, February 15. Rob Ruedi has generously offered the use of his home for this. Rob's address is 106 Verona Court in Aptos. I assume everyone can find or let their GPS find the way there. Rob lives in a gated community, so after taking San Andreas Road from Highway 1, drive about 0.7 miles and turn right on Uplands Dr. There you will be confronted with the gate and what Rob says is a self-explanatory system for getting his attention so he can open the gate for you. After entering, turn right at Ventana Way then right again onto Verona Court.

Along with a photo from the ride to Duarte's last month, I thought I'd include a few from years gone by...



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CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Feb 15 - Club meeting after breakfast at the home of Rob Ruedi. See Editor's Notes for details.



*Remember our waitress,
Christy, at Sang's?*



Part of the old gang at Sang's

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