



THE CENTERLINE



CHARTERED BY THE BMW MOTORCYCLE OWNERS OF AMERICA, THE BMW RIDERS ASSOCIATION AND THE AMERICAN MOTORCYCLIST ASSOCIATION

MOTORCYCLE ADVENTURE IN SOUTH DAKOTA *submitted by Bill & Susan Carrier*

Last June we had an excellent motorcycle adventure in South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado. Our buddy Sandy took a leisurely, cool, five day ride from Boston, over the Great Lakes to meet me in Sioux Falls on Friday afternoon. I was so jealous. I left Atlanta on Thursday afternoon in 95° at rush hour. I bought a camel pack the day before I left and it probably saved my life.

Saturday we traveled across South Dakota. The weather was nice most of the day, however there was this “scary cloud” that we encountered. It was as far as I could see in the North-South direction (and you can see far in the plains), about a mile wide and extremely low to the ground. We didn’t get rained on nor did we get sucked up by a space ship! The first attraction was the Badlands. Spectacular. The next stop was Wall Drug. We had seen billboards all day driving across the state. Saturday evening, I picked up Susan from the Rapid City airport.

Sunday we visited Mount Rushmore, Custer Park, rode Needles Highway and visited Crazy Horse. We stayed in Rapid City another night and headed west the next day. Sturgis was practically a ghost town. We visited Devil’s Tower, traveled through Big Horn National Forest and stayed in Cody, Wyoming (the home of Buffalo Bill). The next day we traveled on Chief Joseph Highway and had lunch in Montana. We traveled through Yellowstone stopping long enough to see waterfalls, hot springs and, of course, we watched Old Faithful do its thing. This is the home to “where the buffalo roam”! We then traveled south to Grand Teton National Park. We stayed in Jackson, WY that evening and Susan jumped on a plane the next morning to travel home. Sandy & I head back up to the Grand Tetons then headed southeast into Colorado. We played in the Rocky Mountain National Park and rode to the highest paved road in the USA, Mount Evans Road — elevation 14,130. There were a dozen mountain goats at the top and in the road!

Now, the fun is over and I’m ~1,500 miles from home (Sandy ~2,000). Since we are Iron Butt riders, it was time to “git er done”! We stayed in Oakley, Kansas and parted ways in Saint Louis and I spent the night in Paducah at sunset. The only regret on this adventure was squeezing so much adventure into too little time. The steady paycheck is a double edge sword, but that’s another story for another time. □



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MOTORCYCLE MARSHALS *submitted by Paul Truong*

When I first saw a posting on the BMWMOGA forum in August of 2009 asking for volunteers with motorcycles to marshal for the MS 150, I jumped at the opportunity because I could enjoy riding my motorcycle and help a fundraising event at the same time. My complete understanding of what I was signing up for came after the event, as I was riding home with the wonderful feeling that I played a small part of a much bigger plan.

It's Saturday morning, May 2011 and my 4th opportunity to marshal for the MS150. We are all up before the sun. The cyclists are preparing to gather to the starting line with their cycling gear all packed on the frame of their bikes riding on two rubber tires that are as wide as one of my fingers. They have to pack light to maximize their speed and endurance with bananas, water and power bars as their fuel. If they fall unexpectedly because of whatever the obstacle in their path, there is little protection between their fragile bodies and the harsh road elements and black top paved road.

The volunteer motorcycle marshals also prepare our gear and gather to make our plans to patrol the scheduled route. As soon as the first batch of lead riders pass our group, we start to send off our motorcycle marshals staggering about every 5 minutes apart riding and repeating the pattern back and forth as many times as it takes to cover the miles and miles of the designated course. We execute our plan to keep an eye on the lead cyclists and making sure they stay on the designated route.

Chuck was there to make the big save of the day. He noticed some cyclists turning down the wrong road, with a roll of his throttle he chased down the cyclists to point them in the correct direction. We all patrol the roads watching for any potential confusing signs and hazardous intersections. Jan noticed where a couple of trucks were

blocking the turn signs, so she took it upon herself to stop and work the intersection for a while. Daniel was all over the roads working the various packs of cyclists. Forwards and back to the end of the packs we monitored for the many vehicles passing the cyclists to make sure there is sufficient space between the cyclists and the vehicles passing. With a careful eye, Lori watched as a truck full of pine straw spilled a few onto the road. She did not hesitate to notice the potential danger and got off her motorcycle to kick the bails of pine straw to the side of the road. Sometimes the cyclists just need our moral support as they are struggling to climb that difficult hill while other times they just need to see and know that we are minutes away if assistance should be needed. An extra banana, another bottle of water, bandages and cell phones are all they may need. We can carry it all on our motorcycles. We continue to press on until the last cyclist makes it across the finish line safely.

The successful accomplishments of our work is not measured by the number of incidents we assisted with at the event, but is measure by the incidents that we have prevented from ever happening at all during this wonderful day. The number of incidents where we do help only remind us how important it is for us to volunteer. We are out here riding our motorcycles we love for the greater cause of the fundraising. If there are any dangerous vehicles running out of control, we shall defend our cyclists with our motorcycles because we can only imagine what would happen if a moving vehicle comes into contact with any of the cyclists.

Today I am riding a motorcycle of a very special friend of ours, Hal Kent. I know that I would not be here today if it were not for his decades of military service including two tours in Vietnam. You see, I came from Vietnam as a small child. I am here in the United States today because of the generosity and kindness of the citizens and brave soldiers that helped us defend our country from the North. I am sure Hal was out here in spirit with us today. He and Sherri volunteered at past events as motorcycle marshals. Hal loved riding his motorcycle, and volunteering at the same time was just icing on the cake. January of this year Hal was cycling for the cause of autism when he was taken from his family and friends.

If you ever have the time and opportunity to volunteer to marshal for one of these fundraising cycling events, let me encourage you to do so. When we volunteer to marshal, we are contributing to the greater cause of the fundraising that gives the organization the resources to fight for their cause. More importantly we are volunteering to protect the cyclists' safety in their ride. There are no measurable rewards that can match the feeling of accomplishment that you have played a part of protecting the safety of the cyclists. When you leave for the ride home, know that you contributed to the enrichment of the many lives because you cared to take a day of your life to spend for our cycling friends and families.

Thank you to the following people who volunteered for this event:

Tom Van Harte	Jerry Goebeler	Lynne Goebeler
Chris Zastrow	Roger LeRoy	Dot LeRoy
Pete Chamberlain	Chuck Murphy	Jerry Wickliffe
Jerome Lofton	Joy Lofton	Lori Zastrow
David Brown	Paul Truong	Steve Ehly
Jan Fields	Daniel Palazzolo	Hal Kent (in spirit)



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HORSE PENS 40 *submitted by Phil Albritton*

Horse Pens 40 is a geological anomaly resting smack dab at the top of Chandler Mountain near Steele, AL. To visit Horse Pens 40 requires minimal traveling over anything less than what we normally call "paved" road. The only gravel section is the little driveway entering the facility itself. Notwithstanding, Sir Bob Cramer felt compelled to complain to this ride leader about "practicing his dirt road riding skills" once we made our day's destination and checked in to our camp site. You see, Bob was on his trusty RT. Randy Miller also rode a similar touring motorcycle....BUT, I didn't hear Randy complaining at all. The rest of the exploratory contingent consisted of 4 riders on GS bikes: myself, Lucy Flambeau, C.A. Ernst and Charles Barnard. Lucy came along as a guest to see if she might like to join the BMWMOGA. I hope we represented the club well enough. While Lucy didn't mind flaunting her Flambeauesque curves during the campout, she proved to be sort of camera shy. I think she may be in the U.S. Government witness protection program. Consequently I have no photos of FoxyRider other than what she herself posted on the forum.

Our motley crew began a gorgeous riding day shortly before 10AM on this particular warm Saturday morning. We could never have guessed how this day would end! Bob was the only one who arrived early and ate breakfast at Shoney's. There's no way to be sure, but this may have contributed to his surly attitude vis-a-vis the "dirt" riding at the end. Only time will tell. Charles never arrived at the starting rendezvous. He chose to sleep in I guess, and would join us later at the lunch stop.

All fueled up and ready to go, we headed north up the I-75 slab only to jump off two exits up and connect with GA 61 to GA 113. This took us over to U.S. 278 and through Rockmart, GA. Just before going straight through Cedartown, I took the group down some beautiful, cool back roads to the south winding up at the Chief Ladiga biking trail where we stopped for a rest and a drink after which we rode on into downtown Piedmont, AL stopping right in front of the Rock Solid Café where we ate lunch. I don't know if you have ever been to Piedmont on a Saturday, but I absolutely expected to find signs of activity along the main streets at noon time in a town this size, despite it being in Alabama. The empty streets and quiet made me refer to my watch to make sure it was indeed Saturday and not Sunday. The shops all seemed to be 'open', but there was NOBODY around! Deserted! Like a ghost town! I really feel photographically neglectful because I have no pictures of our stop at the Rock Solid. What an establishment it was! I was expecting a little country diner right there in the heart of back country with little plastic, red and white checkered tablecoths and tea-stained menus featuring apple pie and fried chicken. We were all taken aback at the avant garde feel of this place. It reminded me of an inner city, college town type café with modern, rough-chic décor and furnishings. The walls behind the counter were adorned with multiple menu offerings featuring every known sandwich type known to modern man along with a plethora of dessert items from simple cookies to ice cream sundaes and milk shakes that would make a Pakistani Dairy Queen mogul drool with lust. There was even a band stand in an adjoining room with a long bar just waiting for the evening hour when suddenly cars full of youthful party animals would come screeching into the empty streets and unload to fill the place! Just as we were contemplating the sandwich menu, Brother Barnard joined us inside. I ordered a Rueben with chips, pickle and a sweet iced tea and my total, with a buck tip, came to \$9.45. Sounds good right? Here's the catch: the sandwich was only about half the normal size! It was GOOD though! Just not nearly enough for almost ten bucks....BUT THE PLACE LOOKED FABULOUS!...and so did Foxy Rider as she ate her ice cream cone dessert. Just sayin'.

Once sated, we mounted up and headed on over to Gadsden via U.S. 278. The most boring and un-fun part of the whole ride was getting through Gadsden



and past I-59 on the cumbersome main drag with traffic, lights, etc. Once we made it over to Attalia we took a sharp left turn south on U.S. 11 to just past Steele where we connected with U.S. 231 toward Oneonta. At County Road 35 we took a right off 231 and then another right turn onto County Road 42 which led us up to the top of Chandler Mountain to the dreaded dirt entrance of Horse Pens 40. Once parked, we wandered into the store to register and scope out the provisions offered. The cost to camp is a modest \$10 per person for a campsite and \$5 extra if you need electricity all night. Mike, the owner, and patriarch of the family that owns and runs HP40 later admitted that he would not mind, or charge us extra, if all we needed was juice to run phone chargers, sleep apnea machines or other similar small electrical appliances. In fact, the gruff outer appearance, long beard/hair, 45 automatic strapped to his side and the large hunting knife on his belt, gave little indication of Mike's mild mannered and downright cordial personality! He also gave us permission to pull the bikes in under the covered pavilion should the weather get nasty.

We finally agreed on a spot to pitch the tents and proceeded to get set up for the night. We managed to transfer one set of geocache coordinates to C.A.'s GPS, then four of us went



wandering down toward the rocks with Randy carrying the GPS in hand. Charles and Bob were happy lollygagging among the boulders and doing some photography, while Randy and I diligently followed the coordinates to the geocache, taking us farther and farther back into the woods. Then the rains came! Our rain cover consisted of the tree canopy in the bush, but it didn't matter much since the rain was very "cooling" and we were dressed very casually. Once we were "upon" the cache we began the methodical process of making ever widening circles searching behind stumps, under branches and logs, at the base of trees and around rock outcrops. Eventually Randy located the cache. It contained a variety of worthless but not entirely uninteresting items: a Buford Pusser DVD, a bottle of green bubbles, miscellaneous coins, plastic shiny objects of questionable purpose, and the plastic bag holding the 'log'. Mostly just junk! I signed the log in the cache and we replaced it in its hiding place, whereupon we strolled back down the hill to join the group for dinner.

The long days of summer lulled us into thinking we had lots more time than we actually did, but we still managed to have a great dinner and after-dinner discussion about a variety of subjects. There was a local ban on campfires in this area, so as the sun set we simply used the battery lanterns for our lighting and center of activities, as one by one we made it down to the shower house to refresh and clean up before retiring

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to the tents, each silently hoping for a glimpse of Foxy Rider as she made herself.. ahem.. “comfortable” inside her small bivouac. The next morning brought sunshine again and a promise of more high temps. Charles led us up to Oneonta and we all “huddled” at the Huddle House for breakfast, after which we fueled up and headed back eastward across the Alabama wilderness toward home, as old Sol slowly crept across the sky sending sunshine and heat down upon us. Respite was had in the form of an ice cream break at McDonald’s once we made it back to I-75 in Georgia, after which we all split up and headed back home.

The best part of an activity like this is not the riding; to me anyway! The riding is great, and one of the main reasons we get together...the common bond of 6 totally different personalities. But the BEST part of an activity of this sort is associating with other people, and talking, and laughing together, oftentimes discussing and making jokes about those friends who chose to not join us! Yes, we talked about YOU! And the next time you’ll be talking about ME! That’s what makes a little weekend adventure like this worth the planning, riding and expense it takes to accomplish it. Just plain fun! And if you’re not up to LEADING a ride, you can follow along...maybe behind Foxy Rider...like Randy chose to do the whole ride, for some reason I can’t imagine! ☐

NEW LOGO FOR THE BMWMOGA

As part of a long-term program to maintain a consistent brand identity, last year BMW AG established new guidelines for how chartered clubs can use the BMW name and Roundel (blue/white graphic) in their logos, on stationery, merchandise, etc. While many have expressed feelings that this was not a positive step, in fact it gave us a chance to update our logo with a fresh new design. Thanks to Sandra Berube, our newsletter designer, who took all our members’ forum comments and created a great looking image for our club. There are a few things to know about how we can use this logo, and if you’re interested there is a [FAQ on the BMWMOGA web site](#) where you can learn more. Great work everyone on a new design we can all be proud of. ☐



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