

the **Legendary** **SHAFT**



News from the Land of Enchantment BMW Riders • November 2000

Motor Weenie

I don't know if you've noticed lately, but the weather has really sucked. It seems like every weekend another storm moves through, and it's mostly a washout, riding-wise. Having said that, let me confess that I, who don't even have a car, who rides year-round in every nearly weather there is, have discovered that I am a motor weenie.

There I was sitting in my apartment, veritably trapped all weekend by the rain that never stopped, wishing I could have gone on the Datil ride, sorry that the event that so many club members look forward to all year was rained out. I sat watching storm after storm move through thinking about all the stories I'd heard about crazy rides down Route 666 at ridiculous speeds, and what a great campout the weekend always brought. I wondered if this weather was going to be a harbinger of what the winter was going to be, and wishing it had waited just one more week. I looked out the window every now and then at the cover on my bike whipping around in the gusts, wondering if there would be any breaks all weekend.

Then I talked to Robert Keen on the phone, and heard the sordid truth. Not only was the Datil weekend not rained out, but a whole crowd showed up. They went riding! And I don't mean just potato-ing around in the rain, but doing the hair-raising 666 and bashing around on off-road biking adventures.

I was stunned, I couldn't believe it. I wouldn't even go out my front door and here is a club contingent camping in the wind and rain and, despite all, having a great time. While I was sitting around feeling sorry for myself they were out riding.

I always felt a little smug riding through the winter, mostly on my own while everybody else's bike hibernated in the garage. I thought I was the *real biker*. But once again I was proved wrong.

Knowing the club members as I do, I don't think the people at Datil were there to prove anything. I think they love to ride and hang around with friends, and the cold and wet didn't figure into it very much. For many of them, riding is just what they do, and their love of the ride overcomes a lot of discomforts.

I recalled the MSF course I took with the club a while back. In the beginning we all told how long we had been

riding, and I found that, with 15 years' experience, I was the youngster in the group.

I think they ride because they love it. Sometimes I feel like I ride because I have to. But realizing that, I remember how I got to this place and that I *do* love to ride, and I still don't really like driving around in a car. Since then my commutes have been a little more enjoyable, and I've been using my lunch breaks to go on little cruises.

I'm still not sure how I would have felt riding over the Datil weekend. I hear it wasn't as bad there as it was here, but in Albuquerque it was definitely a poor weekend for riding. But I think that had I gone, I would have reconnected with the open road and had a great time hanging around with the club. Maybe the rides would have been a little slower, and the rainsuit may have come out, but being away from the city and its cares and being on the road, even a wet one, would have taken me to the place I found when I first started motorcycling.

I find that getting wrapped up in the day to day grind, it's easy to forget that there are other states of mind, other places, and other ways to be. For me riding is the break that takes me where I want to be instead of where I have to be. It may just take some effort to get there and remind myself of it.

The campers at Datil remembered that a little better than I did. They knew that the weather was temporary, but the stories would last a long time. Instead of sitting there complaining they went out and got involved, and came back with stories they'll be telling for a long time.

And that's a lot better than just remembering how I wish I could have gone to Datil, when in reality I could have. Check out Robert Keen's account of his off-road Datil adventure in this issue.

David Wilson, Editor

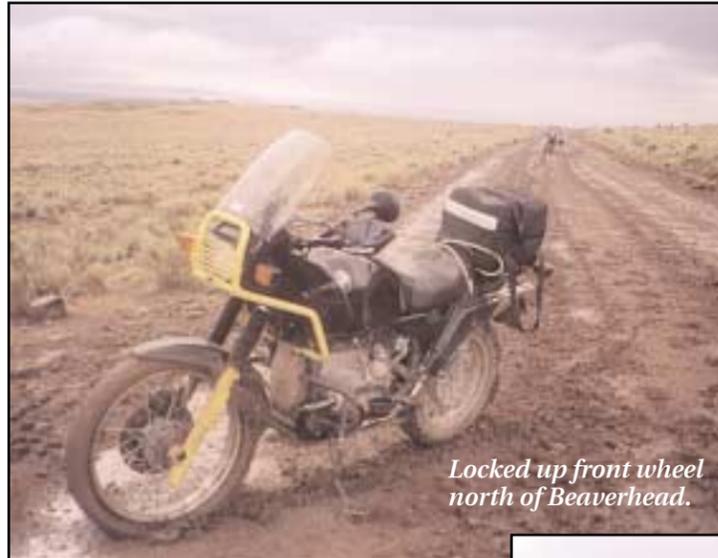
Welcome New Members!

Please welcome Steffan & Josephine Marley, and Rick Levin of Albuquerque, Jack And Lori Curtis of Sandia Park, Tom "Andy" Crevenna of Corrales, Stan and Debbie Sammons of Vadito, and Bill Keeler of Gallup. It's great to have you with us!

The Road Less Traveled

(or) *At Least There Isn't Any Dust*

by Robert Keen



Locked up front wheel north of Beaverhead.

GSing is not to be underestimated. Whilest traversing the outback of New Mexico one can experience both the beauty and the beast of this state. The scenic wonders are so vast and varied that one lifetime will merely scratch the surface. But those scratches are sometimes the last marks left as all goes wrong!

Where has all the traction gone?
 Long time raining.
 Where has all the traction gone?
 Caliche clay too.
 Where has all the traction gone?
 Gone too deep to do much good.
 Oh when will it return?
 Oh when will it return?
 (with deepest apologies to Pete Seeger)

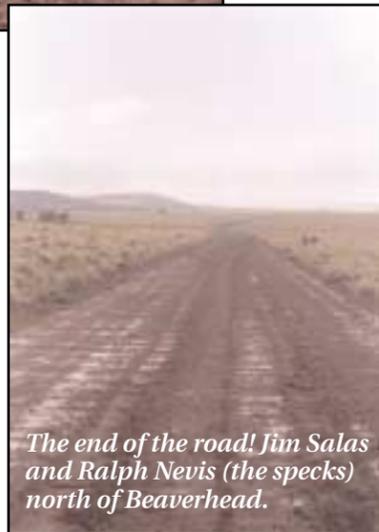
The day dawned with the road riders, in preparation for the triple 6 dance, coaxing themselves and their bikes to life. Anticipation and coffee quickened their pulses and soon they were off in search of the perfect ride. We GSers (Jim Salas, Steve Mounce, Rafa Nevis and myself) took a more laid back approach as we planned a shorter ride into the Gila. So there was time for breakfast in Datil and then east past the VLA to FR549 south towards Mount Withington (10,115 feet). This was initially a graded gravel road that narrowed as it wound its way up the side of the mountain. No problem for the three GSs or Steve's KLR. The road forked and we entered Bear Trap Canyon which was splendid in its fall wrapping of red oak, golden aspen and conifer. A campground was lightly populated.

The canyon dissipated into the high plains and we stopped for a break at a prairie dog town (it was more like a one room shack!). A tarantula was not impressed by our

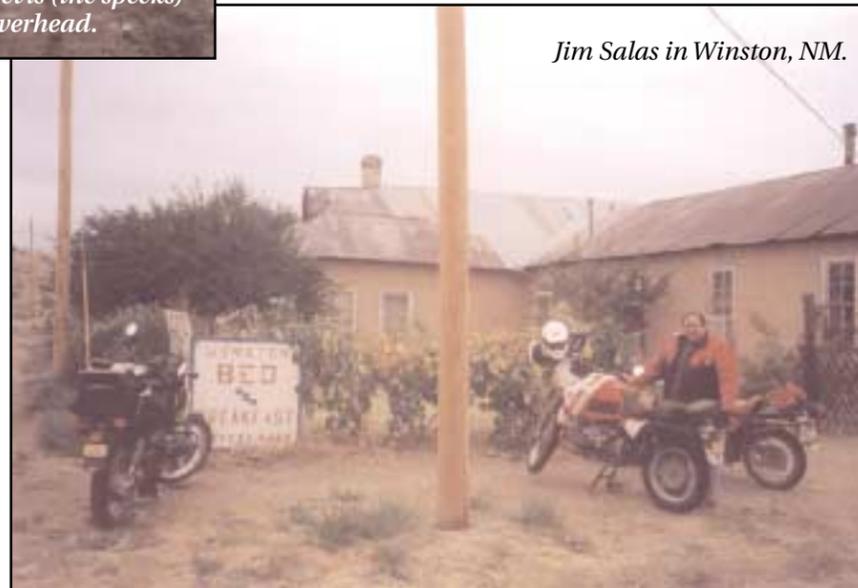
presence. Remounting, we soon joined NM52 and headed for Dusty and maybe it was hidden by its namesake for none of us could identify its location in retrospect. An abandoned Apache Indian (Geronimo slept here) reservation was next on the route and gave sight to the Monticello Box with its hot springs (now off limits to the public). Just more beautiful scenery as we followed Wildhorse Canyon until the road met NM59 and it was paved.

Our initial plan called for us to turn west at this junction and travel to Beaverhead, from there to Mogollon, Alma, Reserve and home. However, we were stopping often, if not to smell the roses then to take in the beauty of the scenery, and now found ourselves in need of liquid fuel for both man and machine. Steve was aware of supplies in Winston to quench the thirst so off we went on a narrow two lane no shoulder road into the quaint village where gas was reasonable and the green chile cheeseburgers more so. A leisurely lunch put us out of the envelope for the ambitious Alma trip so we rethought our itinerary. Beaverhead was a paved stretch and from there we could turn north on gravel, skirting the west end of the Plains of San Agustin, and be home in time to help with supper. *No problem!* We were soon to meet the beast.

NM59 from Winston to Beaverhead is in some respects a mini 666 as it passes through the



The end of the road! Jim Salas and Ralph Nevis (the specks) north of Beaverhead.



Jim Salas in Winston, NM.

Gila National Forest (with accompanying "Forest Fire in Progress" signs), crosses the continental divide and serpentine its way down into Beaverhead. This stretch of pavement was electrifying as was the lightening. And where there is fire there is smoke and rain!

(At this point I would like to offer the following testimonial: There are some naysayers who would impugn the reputation of Jim Salas as one who should not be accompanied on any GS ride. Well, I must state that I have never, *never*, spoken with anyone who has experienced mortal injury while riding with Jim into the Valley of the Shadow of Death or any other valley for that matter! So for all you sissies out there, stop your whining and saddle up for the ride of your life. I hope this settles the issue once and for all)

North out of Beaverhead we ventured on a nicely graded gravel road from which we departed onto a more primitive path that was adequate for several miles until, by some quirk of man and nature, we descended into the mud pit. At first it was merely an annoyance as the front end tried to pick any line except straight ahead. More gas (when in doubt, gas it) only produced wider handlebar fluctuations and true panic set in. *I am going to crash!!!* However, due to the superior design of the GS, the shiny side stayed up as the bike slid to a stop with the wheels locked up from the mud. The group was situated with Jim and Rafa some distance ahead of myself (the low fender was a serious disadvantage in this situation) while Steve followed me by about 100 feet (inferior KLR layout no doubt!). Since there was little traction on the road Jim and Rafa maneuvered to the downhill shoulder only to find no relief in the sparse vegetation of the stinking desert. And it was here that Rafa's GS said "enough" and laid down to rest. Jim rushed (boots caked with mud notwithstanding) to the rescue and they soon had the bike upright. As a happy group (I don't remember hearing any discouraging words during the whole sordid affair!) we were able to help Jim and Rafa get their bikes to the uphill side if the road where traction was once more sufficient to allow controlled progress. But, which way should we go? Ahead of us lay the great unknown (and the continental divide again) and as we watched the few passing 4 wheelers slip and slide by the option of our original route became somewhat questionable. Behind us was dirt and more dirt. What to do? The sky was getting darker with intermittent rain and a command decision was needed now. Jim backtracked to scout out the past path while Steve, Rafa and I extricated my GS and the KLR to the safe side of the road. I should point out that only by



After lunch in Winston the smiles would soon vanish!



Steve Mounce's KLR north of Beaverhead. Steve is off looking for a mud extraction tool (a stick).

unfastening the low fender and bungeeing it to the headlight assembly could the front tire be released from the mud's grip. And to remove the mud we needed strong sticks that were precious and few (I broke one and felt that I had let the group down). Anyway, after several hours we were finally able to get all bikes operational. Jim had returned with the news that a controlled withdrawal was possible and that is what we did as the bikes flung off mud for the remainder of the trip.

Backtracking several miles to the junction of NM163 we turned northeast into Railroad Canyon and set sail in the race to get home. This road was perfect with great and varied scenery and *no dust*. What we did have however was approaching darkness and intermittent mist/fog that required a shield wiper way too often. And, I kept stirring up flocks of birds that I swore (again, without using discouraging words of course) were going to self destruct into my helmet. Stupid birds! Jim and Steve passed the VLA turnoff and soon reached US60 whereupon, in gratitude for safely reaching pavement, Steve inserted his foot into a cattle guard. This sacrificial offering to the GS powers that be was rejected and he was able to ride on to Datil with the good news of our impending arrival for all to behold.

And so it was that we were greeted with great hurrahs and hearty congratulations on our epic journey into the wilderness. There were many among the pavement pounders who expressed deep sadness that they had not accompanied us and vowed to forsake the mind numbing asphalt for the pure, unadulterated joy of the road less traveled.

| NOVEMBER | | | | | | |
|----------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|--|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18  |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

Saturday, November 18

Henrietta's/Ride to be Determined

Meet for breakfast at 8:30am at Henrietta's in Los Lunas. Ride to be determined based on weather and attendees' preferences.

| DECEMBER | | | | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|---|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9  |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17  Tech Session | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

Saturday, December 9

The LOE Christmas Party

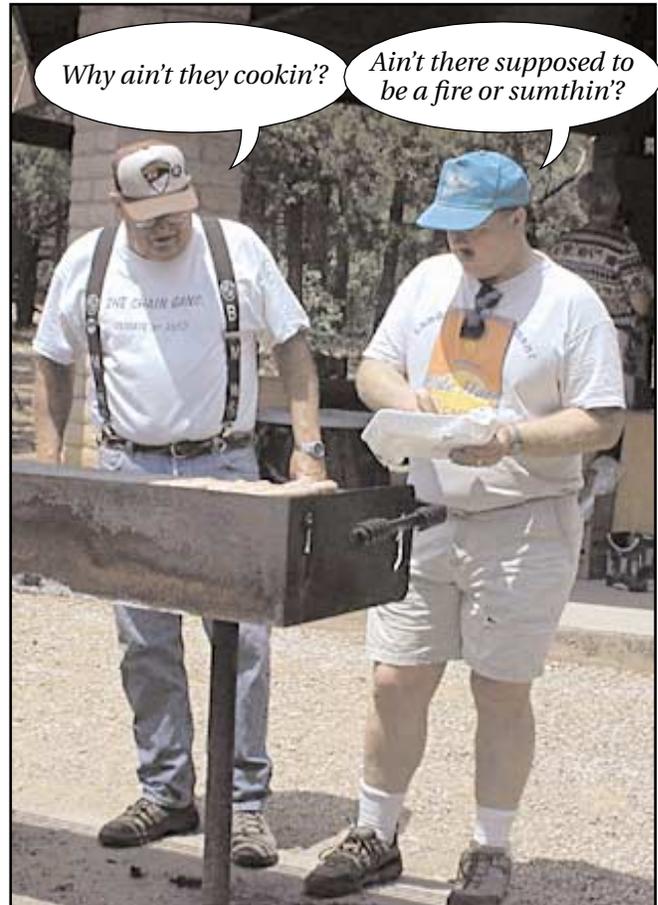
Nothing ends the year better than a big crowd of bikers reliving the rides of an excellent riding season, and the annual Christmas party is the perfect place for that. Come join all your friends at one of the club's most popular events, and we'll all eat until we start looking like Santa Claus.

Sunday, December 17

Tech Session

Place, time and subject to be announced.

Please note that if no person is listed as ride coordinator, you can check the club website at nmbmwmc.org for updated news and events. Or call Bill Koup, Activity Committee Chair, at 856-7513, (email koup@swcp.com).



Why ain't they cookin'?

Ain't there supposed to be a fire or sumthin'?

Remember back when weekends were sunny and warm? Remember the club's birthday party in the Monzanos? Great weather (mostly), great food (entirely) and an amazing slide show. The birthday campout is another event to be covered in the Shaft, keep checking your mailbox!

(continued on next page)

Join the LOE BMW Riders

Yearly dues: \$15 single, \$20 couple; payable each January 1. New member dues prorated on a quarterly basis. For more information or to pay dues, write or go to the web site:

Land of Enchantment BMW Riders
PO Box 92095
Albuquerque, NM 87199-2095

www.nmbmwmc.org

or call Ken Goode at (505) 892-5690.



If you were at Sipapu this shot should bring back warm (in your heart) and cold (in your body) memories. Sunday morning dawned bright and 40° with thick frost on the ground. Stay tuned next month for the rally wrapup, to remind you of what you saw, or make you wish you were there. Photo by Robert Keen

You Can Write!

Send in your stories, reviews, opinions – don't forget pictures, too (shots of club members and their bikes strongly encouraged). We'll publish anything! Send your contributions to:

David Wilson
5700 Copper NE, #B34
Albuquerque, NM 87108
Voice: 505-232-0266
Email: mrmtv@aol.com

Computer files are best; please send material via email or on disk saved as Text (ascii). I can also scan photos and graphics, so take lots of pix on that cross-country trip and send them along.

NOTE: The deadline for the December issue is **Monday, November 21st. Start typing!**

For Your Buying Pleasure

FOR SALE

1995 R1100GS, 17k Miles. White, metal tank, RID, PArabellum & stock windshield, BMW hard bags, hand protectors. Less than 2k miles on new T66 tires. \$6800.

Call Terry @ 821-0063 or email ttombaugh@uswest.net

1992 BMW R100GS, black/yellow (Bumblebee), 30K mi, BMW bags, WUDO & stock windshields, spline lube, full tool kit, well-maintained, excellent condition, \$6100.

Call Ed at 254-9092.

Roadcrafter riding suit. Size Men's 42, gray and black, good condition. \$400.

Call Ken Goode at 892-5690.

NOTE: Classified ads run for 3 months, then are deleted unless I'm told to keep them running.

LOE BMW R Officers

President: Tim Stone, **343-8396**

Vice President: Bryan Lally, **(505) 662-4083**

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Activity Committee: Bill Koup, **856-7513**

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The Rear View



I don't even know what to say about this one. You'll have to ask Dan. Photo by Bryan Lally