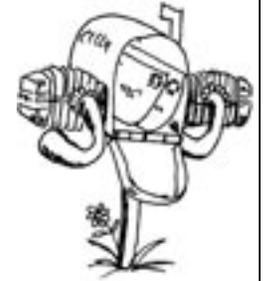


The Mail Boxer

August 2006

BMW MOA #7



The Prez Says

By Todd Herbst

Wow, What a great RA National Rally, Betty and I had been planning to go to the Vermont National Rally, but by the beginning of June it looked like that wasn't possible so we decided to go Boise instead.

We had never been out west on the bikes before, so this was kind of exciting. early on Betty got the grand idea of hitting as many states as we comfortably could in 9 days. I was sceptical at first listening to where Betty wanted to go in such a short time, it really didn't leave anytime off the bikes except maybe a day or two at the rally. I started looking at maps and added an extra state or two to Betty's agenda.

We left home Sat. July first at about 6am on Betty's '04 R1150R and my '85 R80. We headed down

Hwy 151 towards Iowa, we veered a little south just before Dubuque and clipped Illinois thru East Dubuque then on into Iowa. We took 151 all the way to I-80. We turned south at Des Moines on I-35 until we crossed the Missouri border and jumped on state roads. MO Hwy 46 just south of the Iowa border was a great road lots-o-hills and curves. We kept heading west until we were in Nebraska then south into Kansas and found a hotel room in Concordia KS (it was to hot to camp, plus yummy food delivered right to our door.) Not to bad 1 day and 6 states.

We got up early the next day to try and beat the heat, but it always catches up with you out on the plains. We headed west and south through Kansas then straight west out of Great Bend, KS on US 96, super straight and flat almost all the way to Pueblo. I've been out west quite a few times but have never seen anything like SE Colorado, completely brown and nothin' movin' for a hundred miles except for a few wild horses we saw. We got through Pueblo CO easy enough but we could see storms a-comin'. We kept riding until the storms were literally right over us in Canon City, CO (the o needs a little squiggly mark over it, it's pronounced Canyon City). We were treated to a great lightning storm before we found shelter in a little mexican restaurant with good margaritas. (editor's note: 1 each sipped conservatively) After the storm passed, we rode another 60-70 miles into the Sangre De Cristo Mnts. and camped with a noisy little stream just feet from the tent.



Upcoming Events

BMW Club meeting & breakfast 9am at J.T. Whitney's.

Sunday, Aug. 6, 2006- Madison Ride for Kids' Middleton Fireman's Park. Reg. closes 9:15 come early for coffee & donuts. Ride to Devils Lake. For the program more info cont. John Schroeder 608-325-4621

Friday August 11, 2006 - Field of Dreams ride and Camp out Departure from Speedway gas station on the corner of Verona Road (HWY 151) and Raymond Road @ 3:30pm. Camping at The New Wine campground (5 miles north of Dyersville, Iowa) **Notes:** Depending on interest and weather we will stay one or two nights. Contact Ed Burington, 772-1933 or ed_burington@hotmail.com for more information.

Wednesday August 16 & 23 - Eat To Ride, Ride To Eat Ride to Baumgartner's on the square of Monroe (about 45 miles). Why: Baby back pork rib dinners. Departure from Speedway gas station on the corner of Verona Road (HWY 151) and Raymond Road @ 6pm. Arrival in Monroe about 7 PM. Contact Ed Burington at 772-1933 or ed_burington@hotmail.com for questions.

Sunday, August 13 The Unpteenth Hillsboro Run—Once AGAIN, TVH will lead a meander up to the Country Cookin' eatery in Hillsboro. Those of you who've been on it know that we this is one of the Great

Comfort Food destinations anywhere! This in the oldest continuous event in the MBMWC -Jill Dean once had a column in WISCONSIN TRAILS magazine ('Nearsighted I') wherein she once wrote up the ride. That was in '68 or '69, as I recall... ...come and help maintain two grand traditions: The oldest club run, and Riding To Eat. Leaving the Brennans market at the corner of University Ave and Capitol Ave at 9:00ish with a stop of some sort en route, we should arrive at H'boro around noon-12:30... ...See yawl there



This is the road that winds through the Black Canyon. Stopping at every pull-off to peer over the edge takes a lot of time!

Wow, our second day and we're already half way across Colorado. Mayby this route is going to be possible after all. We woke up to beautiful cool temps. on Monday. Only a few more days and we should be in Boise.

We left our camp by 7 and were in Salida, Co by 8, gassed up and were crossing the Monarch pass by 9. Our first big pass at over 11,000 ft, cool. We stopped in Gunnison for some mocha latte and a muffin around 10. Gunnison was neat but I'd bet you'd need a bit of cash to live around there. From there we headed west on US 50 to Blue Mesa Reservoir, we were getting close to running out of gas by the time we got there and there wasn't a gas station for miles, so I went down to the marina and bought gas for 4 bucks a gallon and spilled half of it filling our bikes. Waaa.

Next was Hwy 92 around the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. This was absolutely one of the neatest roads I've been on, although Betty wasn't so thrilled with it, she thought she was going to fall into the canyon on every turn.

We arrived at Grand Junction around 1:30 and needed to find a place to get out of the sun for a few hours. Hopefully the margaritas would be as good as yesterday. We were tootling around downtown looking for a spot to stop when Betty asked if I'd been using my blinkers. She said they were very dim and difficult to see. Right about then my motor stumbled then quit. I restarted and I sounded like my plugs were fouling or something. Wierd. We rode about another half mile with my bike acting worse and worse until pop. Dead. In a Midas parking lot, 2pm on the 3rd of July. Drag. I called the local dealer but they closed early for the 4th of July holiday. Double Drag "Hey, Betty get the anonymous book out." she dug in her tank bag and got it out. I looked up Grand Junction, CO and found at least 20 entries. Which one do I try? As hard as Betty and I tried we couldn't find the key for all the abbreviations in the book. so I called the one with the longest list. Robert Krause answered right away. I told him my dilemma. He proceeded to tell me he was only 1.5 miles from us and he'd be right over to help, oh yeah, he also had a 1984 and a 1986 R80. "what, are you kidding me, you're the first person I called!". YeeHaa, the Anonymous comes through again.

I unpacked the bike and Robert showed up about 10 min. later with a volt meter, a diode board and a tube of di-electric grease. We proceeded to pull the tank and clean and grease the Electrical Controller. We reassembled, no go. Next we pulled the front cover of the bike and installed the diode board, reassembled, no go. Then I was really looking at the freshly installed diode board and saw some indication of arcing, I pulled the board out and tested it. It was bad. In goes the old board. Robert asked how old my battery was. 7-8 years. It must be the battery. Now started the longest part of this repair, trying to find a battery that would fit the R80 from Sears, Lowes, or WalyWorld proved to be a real hair puller. After 4 tries of buying and returning batteries I finally bought an

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Left: The Bonneville Salt Flats, up close the salt has the appearance of the rock salt used on sidewalks but is softer, kind of like chalk.

Right: In Yellowstone the fire damage from the early 1990's is still evident. The damage covers nearly 1/2 of the park.



undersized battery and used closed cell foam to hold it in place. Oh, did I mention it was 95 and blazing sun this whole time, I forgot.

With the battery in place the bike started perfectly. Well at least the diode board is good. We had a few people stop by throughout the afternoon to see if they could help, one guy named Lee said he had a /6 and he wasn't leaving until we were on the road. He suggested putting the volt meter on the battery and run up the motor to see if we were charging. No! No charging. Triple Drag. So with a fresh battery we loaded the bike and rode it over to Roberts nice, clean and cool garage. The bike stayed there over night and Betty and I got a good nights sleep at a local hotel. Robert and Kathleen invited to stay the night at their place, but they had cats and Betty's allergies couldn't handle it.

4th of July. Robert and Kathleen picked us up early for breakfast then over to the garage to start in on the bike. We basically took all of the charging system (voltage regulator, diode board, and rotor) out of his newly rebuilt '86 R80 and put it on my bike. The bike fired right up and it was charging. All the parts were after-market high output components from Thunder Child. I shouldn't have any problems with my charging system for years to come.

It's great when you find someone so willing to drop everything and help you, even taking their bike apart so you can get back out on the road. We left there around 2pm with new friends, a bike that was running great and a day or two to get to Boise. From Grand Junction we headed for Utah on I-70 then north on Hwy 6 through Price, UT and up into the Wasatch Range. We found a great camp spot about 30 miles east of Provo, UT.

It was Wednesday, we might be able to get to Boise today. But, alas I forgot Betty needed an oil change. We headed to Salt Lake BMW where we spent about 3 hours waiting to get a really expensive oil change done. I should have done it myself. (editor's note: really neat shop. They carried all of the top of the line riding apparel from Rev-it and Chicane accessories. And they

washed my bike after they worked on it just like the expensive car dealerships!) We were headed out of Salt Lake on I-80 around 1pm and headed west across the salt desert. I've seen the salt lake before but haven't seen the salt flats before. Wow, was that cool. We had just seen "The Worlds Fastest Indian" and wanted to see where it was filmed. It's unbelievable how expansive they are, and nothing but pure white salt.

On into Nevada we skirted the Ruby Mountains which were vibrant green with grass and the tops were still covered in snow. This was Nevada. Where was the desert? At Elko, NV we turned north on Hwy 225. There was some Mnts. just south of the Idaho border on my map that should have some camping about 70-80 miles away. After an hour of riding and seeing only 1 or 2 cars, all of a sudden there was a sheriff pulling us over, he came out of nowhere. We were probably doing 10-15 over the speed limit. Oh well. He just stayed in his SUV and started talking to us. He asked if we were headed into the Canyon ahead. "Yep." "Well I pulled you over to warn you about the crickets." "crickets?" "Yeah, there pretty thick up there and very slippery. Last night they washed 4 inches off the bottom of my truck. They had the snow plow out to push them off and to sand the road." He proceeded to give us good camping recommendations and off we went.

When we got to the canyon we started seeing a few crickets. These weren't you ordinary Wisconsin sized Crickets these were those massive "out west" crickets. You know the ones, 2 and a half inches long and a half an inch in diameter. MMMM Yummy. Pretty soon we couldn't avoid them, they were everywhere. smash smash smash. Some corners had them 2 inches deep on the road. It was slow going, but at least we were almost to our campground. But, before we could get there it started to rain and hail. Yes, slippery as snot crickets with rain on them are great, not to mention the dreadful smell.

We finally made it to our camp, it was still pouring out and wasn't stopping any time soon. We had to set up camp in the heavy rain. Thank goodness for those super soaky camp towels



"Sculpture" located outside the Barbed Wire Museum in Kansas.

to dry out the inside of our tent which was starting to resemble a bathtub by the time we got it up. It stopped raining in about an hour. We went out to make supper and didn't see a single cricket. We were only about 300 feet from the road and there wasn't a single cricket.

Thursday was sunny and cool. We packed up and headed up the rest of the canyon. The crickets showed up immediately when we got back on the road and lasted at least 15 more miles. Usually sand is frowned upon on the road when motorcycling. Not in this case. It stunk but at least the sand created little islands of less slippery-ness.

We made into Idaho early and were about 45 miles from Boise by noon when we were crossing I-84 at Mountain Home. We waved towards Boise and started heading back east, we would have gotten to the rally Thursday about 2pm paid our rally fee then got up early Friday morning and left for home. We decided it wasn't worth it, plus we were having a great time traveling around. Yep, we traveled 2000 miles to a rally and then didn't go!

I've always wanted to see Craters of the Moon National Park so we took Hwy 20 out of Mt. Home crossing most of southern Idaho. Craters of the Moon park is a crazy landscape of lava flows that covers 1000's of sq. miles in south central Idaho. The lava is puffy black stone that nothing grows on, very eerie. We could only see it from our bikes though, the hwy through the park was completely ripped up with a foot high line of gravel on each side of the road, including the entrances to the pulloffs. We continued on Hwy 20 to Hwy 22 northeast towards Yellowstone. Just outside Dubois, ID we were doing about 70 mph down an unnamed road in a wilderness area, I was looking down at my map on my tankbag when the pavement ended without any warning. How rude, I'm gonna have to write the Idaho Signage Dept. and ask what's up. 15 or so miles of gravel and we were at our campsite. I couldn't believe it but Betty didn't say one peep about the gravel. that's cuz it was a cakewalk compared to the crickets.

I woke the next morning to "TODD.....TODD..... TODD!" poke, poke, poke "wake up.... did you hear that?"

"Hear what.....I was dreaming about beagle howling. What did it sound like?". "Like a trumpet." " Oh, thats just an elk." Zzzzzzzzip. Betty couldn't get out of the tent fast enough to try and see the elk. she didn't.

Betty hadn't ever been through Yellowstone before so it was 20 miles north to the West Gate and into the park. we took the north way around the park to try and avoid the real crowds near Old Faithful. We didn't see any geysers, but we did see the Mammoth Hot Springs. I don't know if mammoth is a large enough word for that area. We went and saw the Artist Paintpots, some large mudpots that hiss and glurp continuously. The evidence of the wildfires in the early 90's is still very obvious. There are new trees everywhere but they aren't even close to covering up the devastation yet. We left the park out the Northeast Gate the least travelled road in the park. The road follows a beautiful river valley chock full of Elk and Buffalo and one snoozing black bear.

In Montana the road turned to gravel again for nine miles until we turned off on the Chief Joseph Hwy another great road with a Mtn. pass that had european like switchbacks up and down both sides. Fun. By the time we got to Cody it was near a hundred degrees. No camping tonite. We found a little Motel and cooled off for the night.

Saturday we got up early to beat the heat. It worked for awhile. I totally forgot about the Big Horn Mnts. (Editor's note: Todd forgot to mention one of my favorite parts of the trip. Through the Big Horns we kept seeing signs warning about free range livestock. After one large sweeping corner we are completely stopped as hundreds of bleating sheep flow around us like water! I would have loved a picture of my bike amid hundreds of sheep but traffic behind us wasn't as enthralled with us as much as I was.) The mountains were beautiful and the wildlife plentiful. As the temperatures rose so did our speed although fortunately without the notice of any police. Then I-90 straight to Mitchell, South Dakota where stopped for the night. Another motel. We set it on the "deep freeze" setting before seeking dinner. We found a great Mexican restaurant less than a block from the Corn Palace, it might even be worth a ride just to eat there. By the way, the Corn Palace has great art on it this year.

Sunday. Early. Ride. Home by 2pm. It was a great trip with a bunch of stories we'll never forget. (Oh yeah, I forgot about the Barbed Wire museum in Kansas. Oh well I guess I can't remember them all.)

I'm sure the Boise rally was great. It was for us.

8 days of Travel. 3970 miles. Upteen stories. Priceless.

J.T.'s **BIG** ADVENTURE

by J.T. Wagner

This year I did something completely different. I undertook a solo trip out to Montana to see Glacier National Park. The original plan was to take some camping gear along, but at the last minute I decided I didn't want to carry the extra junk. Glad I didn't.

Left Madison on a Friday afternoon and headed up I90 towards the Twin Cities. Somewhere south of Eau Claire it started raining. Yippie. Made it to St. Paul where I stayed the night with and had wonderful dinner with Mike and Helen Shannon. In the morning with temps hovering around 50 degrees, Mike helped me navigate out of town to pick up US12 west. I took 12 most of the way out. Not long after parting, it started to rain a little again on and off. Stopped for the night in Aberdeen, SD.

The next day dawned somewhere in North Dakota as it rained and drizzled until I crossed the state line. From then on until Miles City, MT it was a great ride. I didn't do much sight seeing along the way, just enjoyed the mostly empty road and the scenery. There really was some out there. The weather was just about perfect .

Eventually, I stopped in Missoula for a night before heading up to Whitefish, MT. On US93 from Missoula to Whitefish, there was some construction, with a little rain and gravel slop for good measure. I stopped outside of Polson to take some pictures when I realized how dirty the bike was. The headlight, taillights, turn signals and just about every square inch of the bike was a nice shade of brown. Time to at least clean off the lights. The washing, sort of would come as I rolled into Kalispell; more rain. Well at least it was a little less grimy.

Got to my motel in Whitefish, where they let me keep the bike parked under their awning in front of the place. They said they do that for a lot of motorcyclists. I was able to walk to downtown Whitefish for dinner. Typical tourist town, unless it was a chain place any restaurant was kinda pricey.

The next morning I was going to head out to West Glacier and Going to the sun road. more rain and WIND with flash flood warnings on all rivers and streams. Headed back to motel. The Park Service ended up closing 18 miles of Going to the sun between Avalanche and Logan Pass due to a large rock slide caused by, you guessed it, all the heavy rain. Spent the day doing laundry.

Friday, my last planned day, was dry. So I headed out US2 to the East Glacier entrance. Nice ride. I could see the Flathead River raging below due to the flooding . Going To The Sun Road was open to Logan Pass so that's what I rode. The road and the scenery here is where the overused word awesome works. There were places on the road where the snow was right up to the edge of the pavement. They had just opened it up recently. Coming up in Logan Pass, there were low clouds blowing through, so as I rounded the curve, I was literally in the clouds. COOL ! Saw a herd of Elk on the way back down the mountain. Unfortunately since this was my last day there, I couldn't spend as much time as I wanted. Next time.

The next morning I headed out back towards Missoula,

the construction zone was dry this time. Spent the night in Billings. From there I headed a little south to Little Big Horn National Monument. I got there before the gates opened and had time to look around and take in the stillness of the area. It's kind of difficult to describe the place. On one hand it has it's own beauty on the other, it's a gravesite. I went up the hill to the big monument, then walked over to the monument for the Native Americans killed there. I think this was put up fairly recently. This was an open mound shaped structure with several openings. It is circular with names of the tribe members on plaques around its circumference.

I continued on from there and ended up in Rapid City. Stopping for gas in Gillette, WY an older gentleman approached me and said," Boy it's sure nice to see someone on a quiet motorcycle for a change". I guess he didn't believe the loud pipers were out saving lives either.

From Rapid City, I just stayed on the interstate all the way to Albert Lea, MN .The next morning, loading up the bike I could see storm clouds and lightning to the south. Big black storm clouds and big lightning. Yay. Right where I was heading to, to pick up US18. So I got rained on again with BIG wind until crossing the Mississippi at Prairie du Chien. Stopped in Fennimore for breakfast. Rode in the dry from there home.

I hope it didn't sound like I was complaining about the inclement weather, it did lend an interesting aspect to the trip. In some ways it relieved some of the monotony of crossing parts of South Dakota. The cooler temps were nice too, never got drowsy riding. The bike ran great except for a little stumble after gassing up in Souix Falls, SD . I had let the gas get quite low before filling up and probably got some crud stirred up when adding fuel. After a while it settled down .

The total miles on the trip were: 3,757 .The bike averaged 47.65 mpg. And that was with most speeds between 70 and 80 miles per hour .

Secretary's Report

by JT Wagner

These are the minutes or seconds from the July breakfast. Pres. for the day, Dan Baum delegated authority to run the meeting to Todd Erickson. Roland gave a brief rally report, the club made a little over \$2,000 dollars on the rally. The Soldiers Grove Village board unanimously voted to have us back next year. A vote was taken at the breakfast whether to have a rally next year at the same location. Unanimously passed.

There was no free breakfast or 50/50 drawings seeing as how the bag with the number tiles was absent, rumors are that Bert has them and he was not in attendance. The drawings will be done next month.

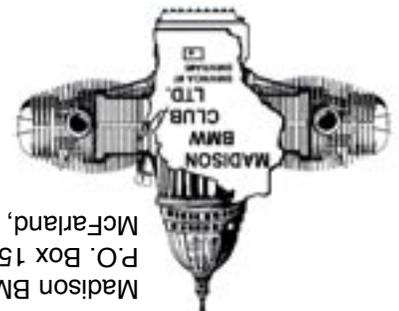
Sept. 22-24 will be a club members only campout at the Soldiers Grove park. Passes for camping are available at the Mobil station in town.

Classifieds

For Sale: 1998 R1100RT, graphite, 50K miles, bags and Sargent seat. Lots more to list. Call John Schroeder at 608-325-4621 Under book at \$7500.

For Sale: 2001 Yamaha FZ1, 25,000 miles. New MEZ 6 tires. Slight cosmetic damage on fuel tank. Can be seen at Madison Motorsports.

For Sale: 04 R1150R. Dealer serviced. Lowered with Works shocks, BMW system cases, BMW shield, heated grips, Two-brothers pipe with cat eliminator, throttlemeister, cylinder head protectors, hand protectors and new Metzler Z6 tires. It is non-ABS. 35K miles. Silver. Call Karen at 608-345-4009



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