

NORCAL NEWS



Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride



President's Column

It's hard to believe that just four short weeks ago we were having a great time at Clear Lake State park, without a worry in our mind. Lots of laughing, talking, hand shaking and sharing of food and drink. So much has changed since then and it's hard to see when it will return to normal. It may be a long ride for everyone. We of course had to cancel our annual Death Valley Run and will be canceling our April Meeting. We may even have to conduct our election meeting online. At this juncture I am not really sure when we will get back to regular meetings.

Given the current statistics, it seems unlikely that we will hold the event on Memorial Day. Even the Indy 500 has been rescheduled to August this year. As a result, we have stopped all preparations for the event including signing of contracts and purchase of supplies for the time being. Even if by miracle we have an all clear for Memorial Day, the level of attendance may be significantly reduced to the point we would need to cancel. I will definitely be ready for a blow-out event once we get over this mess. We will be talking as a Board at the next meeting about the status of the 49er as well as developing ideas for alternative events later in the summer. As with me, I am sure everyone will be ready for some sort of blow-out rally!

We all have a passion for riding and camping and want to get out and ride. It seems like a perfect activity for isolation. If you are riding solo, wearing gloves and a helmet and pose little risk to yourself or others so long as you don't stop and get gas, food or use the bathroom. However, we have a Statewide Shelter in Place order that includes limiting your travels for essential

activities and unfortunately riding a motorcycle for recreation is not viewed as essential. So before you hop on your bike for a recreational ride please consider all the grocery store and delivery workers and especially the health care workers who are working day and night to keep some semblance of order to all of us. They are at great risk to getting sick and sacrificing their health to support all of us. The least we can do is respect our statewide order. Besides that, think if you have an accident and end up in the hospital using up valuable healthcare resources.

One of the characteristics of most motorcyclists is a strong sense of individual responsibility. Of course, this is driven by the fact that every time we get on a bike, our life depends on it. I believe this is a strong asset to have during these trying times. The other characteristic I greatly admire and a key reason I really love the club and working on the board is the selflessness our members demonstration. We stick together where there is a get off or bike problem. We help people that might have forgotten something at the campout and share food and drink. Everyone pitches in to make the club what it is. So please let me know if any of you need some help during these trying times and we will figure out how we can help.

While it may take longer than we would like and the economic impact greater than we wanted I am confident we will get past this situation and be better for it. Now go wash your hands for 20 seconds!

Kevin Coleman President

The BMW NorCal Captain's Log Covid Date: April 2020

So how is everyone? As you read this edition of the NorCal News, undoubtedly from an isolated, sheltered in place location, we remain in a mandatory state of social distancing, which is now extended nationally to the end of April. And unfortunately this newsletter will only be distributed electronically for the remainder of this social distancing order and until our vendors and sponsors are able to open back up to the public. During this period we are not charging our advertisers, things are tough enough as it is. So in the meantime, now that folks have oodles of time to get to all that deferred maintenance, be sure to hit up our sponsors for all your parts and farkles! I'm sure they will be more than happy for the help in keeping their online sales up.

Also due to the Covid-19 social distancing orders; state parks, national parks and forests, and BLM lands are closed. And while

it goes against every fibre of the club, we will comply with these orders and do our part to interrupt the transmission of this virus. So for the time being we have suspended our SSBRs and our Member Meeting/Campouts, as well as any social gatherings. Obviously this is the right choice for us as a club.

That said, when we get the all clear we will resume our regularly scheduled Ride to Camp: Camp to Ride format. In the meantime try a zoom or skype video chat with your club pals. It's a great way to connect for a couple of drinks without leaving your sheltered in place location!

Stay home, stay safe, stay healthy and we'll see you on the other side of this.

Nick Glloyd Tour Captain

Urgent Appeal - Save the Norcal Newsletter

Lack of NorCal events due to the lock down has resulted in a critical shortage of articles for the newsletter. Do your part. Contribute a story to the newsletter. All contributions are fully tax deductible. Review a product. Relive a past adventure. Express an opinion. repair tips etc etc.

Break the Boredom and Contact the Editor Today

Norcal Newsletter Advertisers are Open

A survey of the advertisers who support this newsletter indicates all are open for business. Phone ahead to verify opening hours

Interesting new bike from BMW

Adventure bikes and specifically BMW GS bikes are incredibly popular. There are a few of us with the ability to ride these 600lbs monsters in the dirt, and for the most part they spend most of their time on pavement. So why are these bikes so popular?

I ride an adventure bike and my criteria for an ideal bike are

- Very comfortable on long trips
- Low vibration
- Naked design without bulky and weighty fairing, but with screen
- Long suspension travel for comfort over less than perfect roads
- Upright riding position, that does not require excessive knee bending
- A wet weight of less than 500lbs
- A range of at least 200 miles at touring speeds
- Tubeless tires
- Bars that allow ability to stand on the pegs when riding imperfect road surfaces
- Shaft drive



Reading this month's Motorcycle Sport and Leisure (a UK mag) I saw the road test of a new BMW – the BMW F 900 XR.

This bike uses an enlarged version of the F750/850 engine introduced a couple of years ago which is now has very close to 100bhp. BMW have it listed under the "Adventure" category, and looks like a smaller cousin of the S1000 XR that been around for a few years. Wheels are cast 17 inch back and front so its focus is definitely to the road. It looks like it may well meet most of my requirements for an ideal bike, with the possible exception of lack range and a shaft drive. Starting price is \$11,695 but out of the door price is anyone's guess right now. Check it out on BMW web site or search for F900 XR.

Saw this in Cycle News. Brought back memories of the breakable plastic fuel connectors used on my R1150. Looks like BMW sometimes never learns.

Own a 18-20 BMW S1000RR? We have a part you want! This BADASS Fuel Distributor is a must have! While developing our products for the new bike, we found the stock plastic fuel distributor broke! We then discovered it was a common issue with S1000RR's.

No problem, just order a new one from a dealer right? Not ONE dealer had inventory!! So we developed this beauty out of a chunk of 6061-T6 aluminum, CNC machined to factory specs, and available as much needed upgrade.



YOSHIMURA

Bottom line, if yours isn't broke, it's a matter of time. We made a handful of them, get one before they are gone!

Editors Corner

The cancellation of events this month left a big hole in the newsletter. I contacted Ed Perry and he agreed to write about his trip to Africa. Massive thanks to Ed for putting his story together along with an brilliant selection of pictures. A truly unforgettable trip. The picture on the right is Ed (in his Norcal shirt) competing in a jumping contest to win a new wife.

Thanks to Kevin Coleman and Mike Ferguson the story behind the the March SSBR. Fortunately nobody was hurt.

I am aware you mostly ignore my monthly plea for content.. However, the next couple of months are going to be tough for me, but since we are mostly stuck at home, maybe now's the time to pick up that keyboard and help me out.

John Ellis



Finding the Right Tool

Anyone who maintains and fixes their own bike must know that things are made easier when one has the "right tools". In the past I have rebuild a few bikes (although admittedly relatively simple vintage affairs) and have acquired or made special tools when required.

The new tools I purchased this month are not special like a purpose-built puller, but are tools that make a couple of jobs a bit easier.

My (unnamed) motorcycle regular maintenance requires lifting the gas tank. This is pretty easy since the tank is secured by two hex (or Allen) bolts. On the right side after removal of the paneling the bolt is accessible with a 1/4 inch 5 mm hex socket and ratchet wrench. On the left-hand side, the situation is a bit more difficult. The Altrider crash bars I installed prevent the paneling from being removed, but the panel can be moved back sufficiently to just get my smallest ratchet plus socket in place. So, although the bolt can be loosened the difficulty arises as the bolt is unscrewed the space available is reduced, together with restricted motion on the ratchet wrench due to various pipes. Last time I did this I must have spent 20 minutes unscrewing this damn bolt. This same issue arises trying to screw the thing back in.

My first thought was to buy another hex socket and shorten it by cutting/grinding the end. I looked at buying a cheap set or an individual socket on which to perform the surgery, but then I thought maybe there is a better solution out there. I started searching for low-profile wrench sets and found the one pictured below. You can see that the thing is tiny, roughly



the same size as an Allen key, but the ratchet means that tool needs only to be located once. It is about 1 inch deep compared to the 2 1/4 inch of a regular 1/4 inch ratchet and bit.

The best news is that KAIFNT K402 Screwdriver Bit Set with Mini Ratchet Wrench, 1/4-Inch Drive, 34-Piece bits set cost just \$12.49 on Amazon. It is reversible with a button on the side. Not sure would stand up to a lot of torque but is perfect for what I need. The kit comes with the star/torx bits that BMW loves to use.

The other tricky bit in servicing my motorcycle is replacing the breather pipe that runs into the air filter. Rather than placing this pipe on one side of the air filter it is located in the middle and there is just enough room between filter and cylinder head to replace the breather, reaching in from one side and using the tips of one's fingers. Not only that but the breather is secured in place with a constant tension hose clamp (see picture). I have never had to deal with a clamp like this before, and usually I struggle to replace it using the biggest set of pliers I own. Unfortunately, many times when trying to get the clamp in place I manage to knock the breather off so I have to start all over again. If this whole process takes less than 15 minutes, I think I have done well.



I am getting old (but maybe wiser), and I suddenly have the thought there is probably a special tool to deal with this. Sure enough, after five minutes on Amazon I find there is indeed a special tool to deal with this type of hose clip. Here it is..

Professional Hose Clamp Pliers Repair Tool Swivel Flat Band for Removal and Installation of Ring-Type or Flat-Band Hose Clamps \$10.99.

So, there you have it. If faced with a fitting in a location where the standard tool kit can't deal it, search around. It is likely someone has faced the same problem before and come up with a solution. Amazon is a great place to discover these specialized items.

John Ellis

Wunderlich America BMW LIQUI MOLY Oil Recommendations

Wunderlich America, Boxer2Valve and Plam Werks, use the German Oil Liqui Moly for all our service work and restorations. Through this process over the years, we have developed a oil recommendation guide for your BMW and it covers all eras. Take a look.

Pre-1969 models:
SAE 50 Classic

1970 through 1995 Air Cooled 2 valve models.
15W-50 Motorbike 4T
15W-50 Off Road (GS Models)
20W-50 in Hot Conditions

NOTE: 15W-50 is often better for 2V twins than 20W-50 because it is slightly thinner when cold, making cold starting (an issue with these bikes) easier yet the warm viscosity (50W) is retained.

In winter, and in cold climates, 10W-40 can also be used.

R1100 and R1150 Models Plus R1200C
10W-40 Street or Off Road under most conditions.
10W-50 Street or Off Road in Hot temperatures

R1200 Oil Cooled Models
15W-50 Street or Off Road (GS)
or
10W-50 Synthetic Race or Off Road

R1200 and R1250 Water Cooled Models
5W-40 Synthetic

S1000 Models
5W-40 Synthetic

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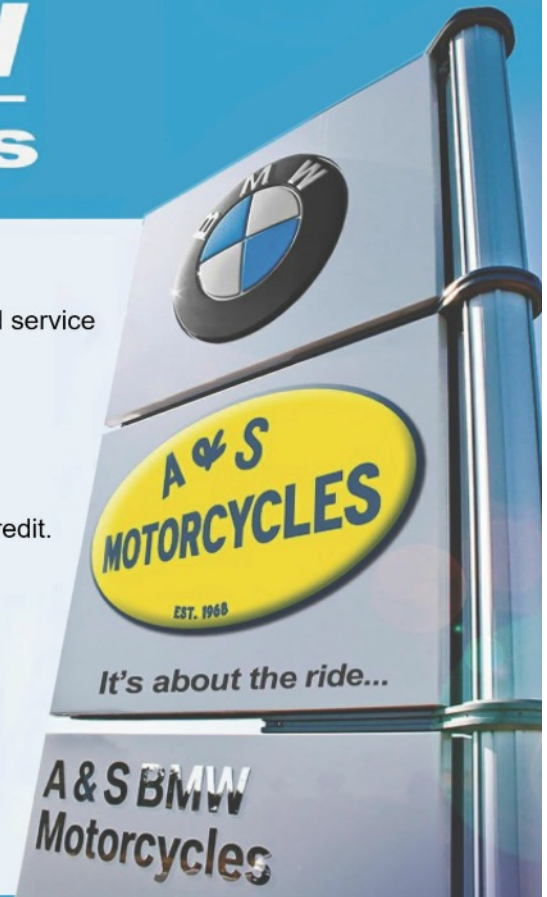
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March 8th 2020 SSBR



We had an adventuresome March SSBR. About 20 riders showed up for Breakfast at Omlette Express in Santa Rosa. The name is no joke. Most people were done eating by 8:30! After a short safety briefing we left in three smaller groups up Bohemian Highway with a short stop in Cazadero. After that we headed to the main event of the ride, Stewart Point Skaggs Spring Road. That road is so much fun. Unfortunately, we had one rider ride off the edge of the pavement. The bike ended up on its side hanging on the edge of a precipitous valley. Luckily the rider had no injuries other than roughed up pride. We needed a tow truck to winch the bike back on the road. While it looked rideable, the bike was dropped off at EuroCycle. Then another rider who had left their hazards on wore out the battery

and jump starting wasn't working, so that meant a ride out to Santa Rosa Cycle Gear to pick up a new battery.

I didn't get any of these messages about problems so ended up turning around in Healdsburg twice to find the group. With the ride to Santa Rosa and Back, that made for four trips on a very nice portion of Stewart Point Skaggs Spring Road. My SSBR ended up being 400 Miles and 13 hours long! Great training for our Death Valley trip!

Thanks to Jorgen Larsen and the rest of the riding crew for sticking around and helping out with the situation.

Kevin Coleman



Club support at SSBR-Santa Rosa to Windsor Ride/March 8th

I just wanted to thank all the club members that fateful day my 1600 BMW Grand America took me to a horizontal position with my help. It was a wide sweeping turn, and my rear tire caught the lip of the asphalt. I tried to pull out, but the tire slid into loose dirt. Fortunately I was going slow enough, and put down slow enough that I was not propelled into the ravine below. The tow truck driver had recently pulled a Harley out of that ravine, and it was not easy. Most of his cycle tows have been on that turn.

Anyway, I quickly got out from under the bike, and inventoried body parts, and not a scratch or bruise even the next day.

I wasn't so lucky the next week, when a horse I was training, bucked me, and I landed full force with my chest against a pipe rail fence. Ouch!

The support of the members was fantastic!! They stuck around until the tow arrived, and helped get the big beast upright. That really meant a lot to me, and again thanks for the emotional and physical support.

President Kevin called me the next day to see how I was, and to recommend a shop in case it was not an insurance job. It is big time. The insurance adjuster approved the whole amount. It is going to take awhile to get repaired given the delays in getting parts from Europe with the current circumstances.

Well only my second motorcycle accident since my first one at 15.5 years. Hopefully my last...

Mike Ferguson



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HEART OF AFRICA by ED PERRY

Pick a destination, oh...say Ushuaia at the tip of South America. You tune up the bike, put on fresh rubber, close the garage door behind you and follow the front wheel south with no itinerary, timeline, or even defined route-- and certainly no reservations. Well, that's the kind of trip Fred and I recently took and it is a wonderful method of travel. However, it is not a good way to go for many folks who don't have that kind of time, don't appreciate all that "unknown" and would not want to "suffer" the necessary hardships. Someone like my wife.

She wants someone else to make all the arraignments and carry all our gear from luxury hotel to luxury hotel, reserve all excursions, and take care of all the meals so all we have to do is ride, eat, make new friends and take in the experience. There is no shortage of companies these days willing to take your hard earned money and provide just such a service. We've used a few. Some are better than others. One company we've done business with in the past is Ayres. The founder, Ron Ayres died a few years ago but the company is running well under the direction of John Jesson. My wife and I had the pleasure of traveling with him some years ago in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. He is a very good human being.

The trip we went on in September, 2019 is called The Heart of Africa, Nairobi to Nairobi. Essentially, it was just a 16 day, counter clockwise circle around Lake Victoria through Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Tanzania. It included two full days on safari in the Serengeti, the Ngorongoro Crater, a mountain gorilla trek in Rwanda, spectacular views of the Great Rift Valley (3000 miles from Syria to Mozambique), and several equator crossings. But this particular trip offered a lot more than one could read about in the advertisement.

Never one to over prepare, I re-watched Hotel Rwanda, got the necessary visas and malaria pills, cleaned my Areostich and flew to Nairobi. Let Ayres do the rest (\$\$). We arrived a few days early as is our habit. This allows time to acclimate and get over the jet lag before getting on the bike. After two fun-filled days seeing the sights in Nairobi on our own, our good traveling friend's from Boston, Ed Pedi and his lovely wife Linda showed up at the very elegant and historic Norfolk Hotel. The next day we met our guides from South African and our fellow



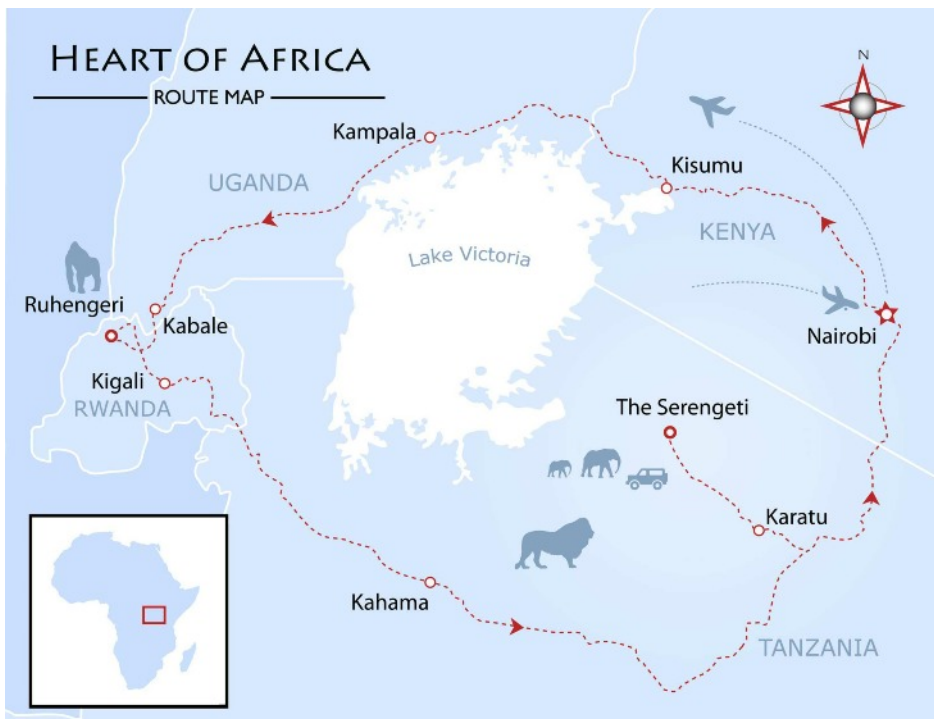
travelers. In addition to my wife and I, Ed and Linda, were couples from Texas, Spain, Mexico, and Australia. All were two-up except the Australians. Half of the Australian couple is originally from Taiwan and was quite short in the inseam. Riding a lowered GS 700 at home, and feeling quite comfortable on that mount, she ordered up the same for this trip. The rental company upgraded to the new 750s and she was not able to



touch the ground. So the seat was removed and one fashioned from foam and duct take took its place. With that and high heeled boots, she was at least able to touch ground. Did I mention this tour is for "experienced riders only?"

Nairobi traffic is horrendous, some of the worst in the world, so we got an early start on Sunday morning, which made it much more bearable. The first day was very pleasant and not too challenging. We stayed at a very nice premier hotel near the shores of Lake Victoria. We were briefed on the next day's ride to Kampala (hill of the Impala), capital and by far the largest city (1.7 mil.) in Uganda. The guides were painting quite a negative picture of the last 50 or so kilometers and suggesting we would have to ride "aggressively defensive." Let that contradictory phrase sink in. The bike with the duct tape seat was on the trailer that day and for most of the remainder of the trip, for cause.

Yes, that little cruise into Kampala was full of excitement. "General road regulations might be ignored for a quicker dodge through traffic, so be very careful with people overtaking illegally..." (Ayres guidebook). What regulations could they be talking about? Maybe just that you generally travel on the left. The surface was a combination of asphalt with huge pot holes, and silty dirt. The traffic was beyond heavy and passing was an "anything goes" operation. How about lane splitting in the middle of opposing traffic with little kamikaze



like bikes doing the same, but from the other direction. It's a bit like playing chicken. Who's going to yield? Will anyone? The things I saw my fellow riders do with their wives' on the back was almost unbelievable. What was truly astounding was that we all made it, albeit covered in dust and diesel soot, but unscathed.



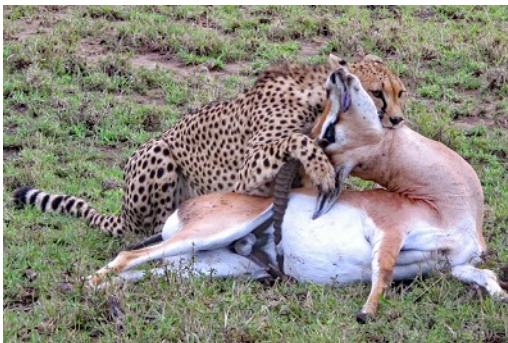
Ah, but this was just a taste of things to come.

Rwanda is a small country, but one I was most curious of and surprised by. My first impression upon entering from Uganda was how clean it was by comparison to its neighboring countries and the good quality of the roads. Apparently, everyone in the entire country picks up garbage on one day of the month, including the president, or so I was told when I enquired. At any rate it was quite rare to see refuse on the street. And since Rwanda is mountainous, with great roads, some serious sport riding was done. I put that brand new GS 850 through the paces that day.



Two very memorable experiences in Rwanda. Hanging out with mountain gorillas is one of the highlights of this trip. The permits have to be gotten a year in advance and the numbers are limited. It was an all-day trek up some very, very steep, very dense jungle, in rain, but the reward was more than worth the effort. How close were we?

Much closer than current social distancing would allow. A huge mother gorilla with a baby on her back brushed past my wife. She was moved, almost to the point of tears. The other was a visit to the Kigali (capitol) Genocide Memorial



Centre. Some were very uncomfortable and spent almost no time inside. I found this place fascinating. It covers all genocides, not



just the one in Rwanda, although that one was covered in more detail. And 1994 was not that long ago. Although we were cautioned to avoid discussing it with locals as it is still, and understandably, a sensitive subject, I did have some enlightening conversations.





We are though the border, the road is extremely bad for many miles. Be careful not to damage the rims and suspension of your motorcycles” (Ayes guidebook). Not only was the surface of the road a combination of powdery dirt and broken asphalt, but visibility was zero at times with trucks crawling along on both sides, trying to negotiate in and out of huge craters. One more 354 mile day and we were off the bikes for two, while we went on safari in the Serengeti. We had the opportunity to visit the local Maasai people and see all the wildlife Africa has to offer.



The final ride back to Nairobi was fine until we got to the city and encountered that crazy traffic. While splitting lanes (I'm not even sure that's what you could call what we were doing), between opposing traffic, one of our riders was side swiped at about 40 mph. Being behind him I had a good view of the whole thing. Parts flew from the small van that hit him and when the van moved out of the way I was shocked to see him still up. We didn't stop



The truck traffic from the major port city of Dar es Salaam to parts west in Africa goes along the main route that we were taking east in Tanzania. Main route, but terrible road, torn up by all the truck traffic. When people described this section of road I thought they were exaggerating. If anything, they were playing it down. “Once



Ed Fedt





and neither did the van (how could you really), and we continued on to the hotel. Once there we had a great laugh at the fact that the bike sustained very minor damage and the rider just had his foot brushed.

Our final hotel and dinner was at Ole-Sereni Hotel next to the Nairobi National Park. You could literally be having a beer in the bar and see elephant, giraffe, etc out the window. More crazy stuff.

Final thoughts: Food, lodging, yeah, yeah, all that jazz was fine, but what is really memorable are the people. Some that we traveled with, but mostly those we encountered along the way. This is what I always take away, and this trip was exceptional in that regard. Everywhere we went, the people were exceedingly friendly and interesting. And they were interested in us. In my

final days I will not think about the fine steak I had in Kampala or the luxurious sheets in a hotel. But I likely will recall, with a smile, the time I spent with two Maasai Warriors who carried their spears to protect us from lions.

Is this trip for you? How deep are your pockets? These guys don't come cheap. But if you got the dough, or you want to defer buying that new bike, or tell your daughter to pay for her own wedding or elope to Reno, you won't be disappointed. But do take head, experienced riders only means just that. I've rented a few bikes in this manner over the years and prided myself in never having to pay one cent in damages. I can't say that after this trip, and I don't think any of the other riders can either. There were plenty of bent wheels... but lots of smiles.

Ed Perry

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Anniversaries

April	Buddy Scauzzo	10
May	Puck Ananta	5
	Harry Bahlman	5
	Terry Burnes	30
	Suresh Chandrasekaran	10
	Donald Condon	10
	Lee Damico	10
	Marlena Govaars	5
	Kevin Harms	5
	Clayton Jolley	5
	David LaPoint	10
June	Ed Perry	15
	Roger Rapp	10
	Laurent Vailly	10
	Bill Hall	15
	Steven Palmer	20
	Robert Tsang	5

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