



SAN ANTONIO BMW RIDERS

MOA CHAPTER 62 RA CHAPTER 77



ISSUE # 147

March/April 2006

President's Notes

by John Dunn

Winter is mostly behind us and a good riding season (minus the thunderstorms) is ahead.

We have a three day ride scheduled to South West Texas. Chuck has set up the following schedule for March 24, 25, & 26th to Presidio and in to Mexico.

Tentative schedule:

Fri, March 24th - San Antonio to Marfa, via Balmoreah.

Sat, March 25th - Marfa -Presidio-Canyon Road (in Mexico no permits required)-Presidio- River Road- Alpine-Marathon.

Sun, March 26th Marathon-Langtry-Home.

I'm making reservations at the Riata Motel in Marfa for Fri night (432-729-3800).

Marathon Motel for Sat night.(432-386-4241)

Make your reservations now, you may not get a room at the Marathon Motel, try the Gage Hotel (800-884-4243).

Both have a 48hr cancellation policy.

Should be a great ride.

We also finalized the club picnic information for the 6th of May. Many thanks to Graham Littrell for letting us use his property just outside the town of Bandera, TX. Graham even has directions: from SA to Bandera on 16, right at the light in town and travel for approx. 6 miles to Highland Waters, take a right and go approx.1.1 mile to the house with a bunch of motorcycles parked in front. Milestones along the way are: crossing the Medina River @ 4.5 miles, Ranger Crossing and then at about 1 mile there is a highway sign indicating an upcoming street intersection, this is the right you will take. From Kerrville on 16: About 5 miles past the town of Medina you come to Highland waters. Take a left and go approx. 1.1 mile to the house. On Google maps the road is listed as Highland Dr. off hwy 16 to Kerrville. This picnic will have meat provided by the club – just bring a covered dish and we'll have a pot luck picnic with plenty of trees, picnic tables to sit on, and the Medina River within eyesight – it promises to be a great day.

I passed another minor milestone and am a year older and realized I have been riding for 44 years – whoa, where did they all go? Even with those 44 years and close to 600,000 miles (over 200,000 on BMWs) I realize that we can all brush up on our skills. I've recently learned to do full lock U-turns like a pro – you can too! I really like what Graham told me, we should be “unconsciously competent vs. unconsciously incompetent.” This is so true – when that unexpected pot hole or animal jumps out do you do the correct maneuver automatically or not? Do you look for the way out or look at the object? Do you always look where you want to go or does the road just in front of the bike draw your attention? Think about it and practice honing your skills now that better weather is getting here.

Hope to see you on the road and keep the rubber side down.

John

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Club dues are \$12 single, \$18
w/associate(s).

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Editor's corner

We have the club barbeque coming up on May 6th (Saturday). We have a great place in the country, just off Hwy 16 between Bandera and Kerrville, to have the event. The plan is for the club to buy the meat and the membership to bring side dishes for a pot luck lunch. Refreshments will be BYOB. We will require a RSVP so we know how much meat to bring so watch the newsletter, website and your email for more information.

The Texas National Rally is coming up the first part of April. It's a no frills rally and a great excuse to do a little early season camping. It is also situated so that you can get in some great day rides to some areas that most of us don't get to often on day rides. See the calendar for details.

Three rallies, three weekends, three thousand miles. The MOA, the RA and the BMW club of Colorado have gotten together to offer special recognition to anyone who makes all three rallies this year. The RA National Rally is in Boise, Idaho July 6-9, the Top of the Rockies Rally is in Paonia, Colorado July 13th -16th and the MOA National Rally is in Burlington, VT July 20th -23rd. If you can get the time off this is a great opportunity to attend three great rallies while seeing some of the best parts of our country.

I know it seems early to be talking about this but you know how time flies. I've tried to give away the office of newsletter editor in the past but it keeps coming back to roost. I will be retiring (from my paying job) at the beginning of next year and have plans to travel extensively. That means I won't be around too much (at least till I run out of money) so I need to find someone else to take over the newsletter starting in early 2007. If you have any interest let me know. It's not difficult and, if you start now, you will have plenty of time to learn. All that's required is a working knowledge of MS Word, a computer that's connected to the internet and an ego.

Please check your address label for the expiration date of your membership. If your membership is getting close to expiration I will highlight your membership date in yellow on the label. That means it's time to send us more money. If your address or membership date is incorrect, send me an email or leave me a phone message.

The new club shirts should be here by month's end. If you didn't order one I suggest you act quickly as there won't be too many extras.

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Attention!!!!!!!

Are you getting the semi regular club activity update emails? If not, then that means we don't have your email address or we don't have your correct email address. I know people change addresses and sometimes I can't read your handwriting on the application. So send me an email (pmulhern@swbell.net) so I can add you to the mailing list. If you have friends that would be interested in joining us for rides or socials, even if they don't have a BMW, I'll be glad to include them. Remember, sometimes there are changes to the published social and ride calendar and the only way we will pass the info along to the general membership is via the website and email.

Living with a BMW R1200/RT – by John Dunn

Most of you know Mike Bonner let me ride his R1200/RT last November and I was so impressed that I promptly went and traded in my one year old 2004 R1150/RT on a new 2006 R1200/RT, it was that much better. Now that I've owned it for three months and have almost 8,000 miles on it, I can give you some first impressions.

When Bret Hensly asked a R1200RT rider about his bike, the response he got was "What's not to like." I almost agree, but I can be a bit picky sometimes. I like the power and smoothness and handling most of all. The power does not start falling off at 6500 rpm like the 1150 did – in fact that is where the power really starts coming on. The bike is glass smooth at highway speeds (3300 to 4 grand) but does vibrate a bit below 3 grand and from 4000 to about 4300 and then smooth above that. I also discovered that the bike is very sensitive to its state of tune. Careful setting of the valves and throttle cables on Bonner's bike made it much smoother than mine. The transmission improvement is phenomenal and there is not that big jump from 5th to 6th gear that was present on the 1150. Starting and engine management (no choke is nice) works like it is supposed to except that the on/off throttle transition at parking lot speeds is not quite as refined as the dual spark 1150. It will also give me a little surge when the injectors turn back on at 2 grand when decelerating in gear which can be a little unnerving until you get used to it and know what causes it.

I have been getting about 46 to 48mpg with city & spirited hill country riding. With the 7 gallon gas tank, that equates to a comfortable 280~300 mile range before I have to start looking for gas. Many thanks to the guys at Lone Star BMW for fixing the gas gauge. When I got the bike, it would read 0 miles left and it would only take 5.5 gallons to fill it up. They adjusted the gauge sensor and now when it reads 0 miles left it accepts 6.5 gallons of gas – a .5 gallon reserve, perfect. I also got the electronic suspension adjustment feature and it makes a real difference switching from comfort to normal in the hill country. I used the sport setting on the river road (set on the fly) along the Rio Grand which handled that grueling challenge beautifully. Highway riding is greatly enhanced with the electronic cruise control and a more relaxed ride can be had than with a throttle lock that always seemed to have to be adjusted to maintain a steady speed.

I also commute on the bike and the lower weight is helpful. I really like not having to use the key to open and close the bags and the big trunk and larger side bags are a nice benefit too, my briefcase fits in the trunk – finally. The side stand is easier to deploy and works effortlessly. I like the seat rail as a handle to stabilize the bike when you rock it up on the center stand; it's less trouble than the spring loaded handle on the 1150. The oil filter is easier to get to and change and the oil filler cap on the left valve cover does not have that light oil mist around it that my 1100 & 1150 used to get.

Another major improvement is the headlight. I thought the headlight on the 1150 was adequate but it is no comparison to the 1200's headlight. I improved on that already impressive headlight by changing to the Sylvania SilverStar headlight bulbs. These bulbs run at a color temperature of 4000 Kelvin which is an intense white light that improves visibility to close to HID standards without the cost and the needed ballast and wiring. The higher color temperature light really lights up the highway signs at least ½ mile away with high beam and improves driving safety. You can check them out at the following Sylvania Web site – just click on the SilverStar link at <http://www.sylvania.com/ConsumerProducts/AutomotiveLighting/HighPerformance/>.

I do miss some of the things I got used to on the 1100 and 1150 that I had though. I miss the clock not always being on and I miss not being able to see the odometer and trip odometer with the key off. I also liked the center stand on the 1150 better as the bike was balanced front to rear. It's not easy to clean the front wheel or spin it around to check the air pressure on the 1200 as there is weight on the front tire. The ambient temperature sensor on the 1200 is also way off – it always reads high – some of those mornings when the bank sign and the weather channel said 30 degrees the bike was reading 43 degrees. The instrument panel and on board computer are nice but can be hard to read in some light conditions. Also, the mirrors vibrate a bit more than the 1150 (the new one has rubber mounted mirrors and does not work as well as the 1150's solid mount).

The seat does not work that well for me either and I have ordered another from Cee Bailey's but that is another story...

Over all, I am still very happy with my purchase and would not hesitate to encourage anyone thinking about a new bike to look at the new R1200RT.

SABMWRA Activity Calendar

March

Weekly social every Thursday (23rd, 30th) @ 7pm. We will be at the Thai Chili restaurant, 4303 Thousand Oaks San Antonio, TX 78217 210-656-8589

24th Presidio Ride - San Antonio to Marfa, via Balmoreah. Sat, March 25th - Marfa -Presidio-Canyon Road (in Mexico no permits required) - Presidio - River Road - Alpine - Marathon.
Sun, March 26th Marathon-Langtry-Home. Reservations at the Riata Motel in Marfa for Fri night (432) 729-3800. Marathon Motel for Sat night.(432-386-4241) or Gage Hotel (800- 884-4243). Both have a 48hr cancellation policy

April

Weekly social every Thursday (6, 13, 20, 27) @ 7pm. We will be at the Chuy's, southeast corner of 1604 and 281 in the strip mall.

Saturday breakfast rides (1st, 15th). We will meet at 9am at the Sunset Restaurant on square in Blanco. Ride to follow.

7-9 Texas National BMW Rally - Cedar Ridge Park - Turkey Roost Camping Area - Lake Belton, TX

10 miles west of Temple, Texas, off TX Hwy. 36. A no frills camping rally organized by the BMW motorcycle clubs of Texas. GPS coord N31 10.128 / W97 27.189. No registration fee but camping is \$10 per tent for the weekend. Hot showers and coffee, BYOB. Abundant lodging and restaurants available in Temple, Texas. For more info, contact Mike Moon at mmoon1948@aol.com or 817.237.6508

13-16 11th Blitz to Branson - Branson, MO - Internet BMW Riders

Branson Towers (1.800.683.1122). Room rate is \$48 per night including tax and breakfast buffet. Reserve your room early, they go fast! Mention and request the Internet BMW Riders discount

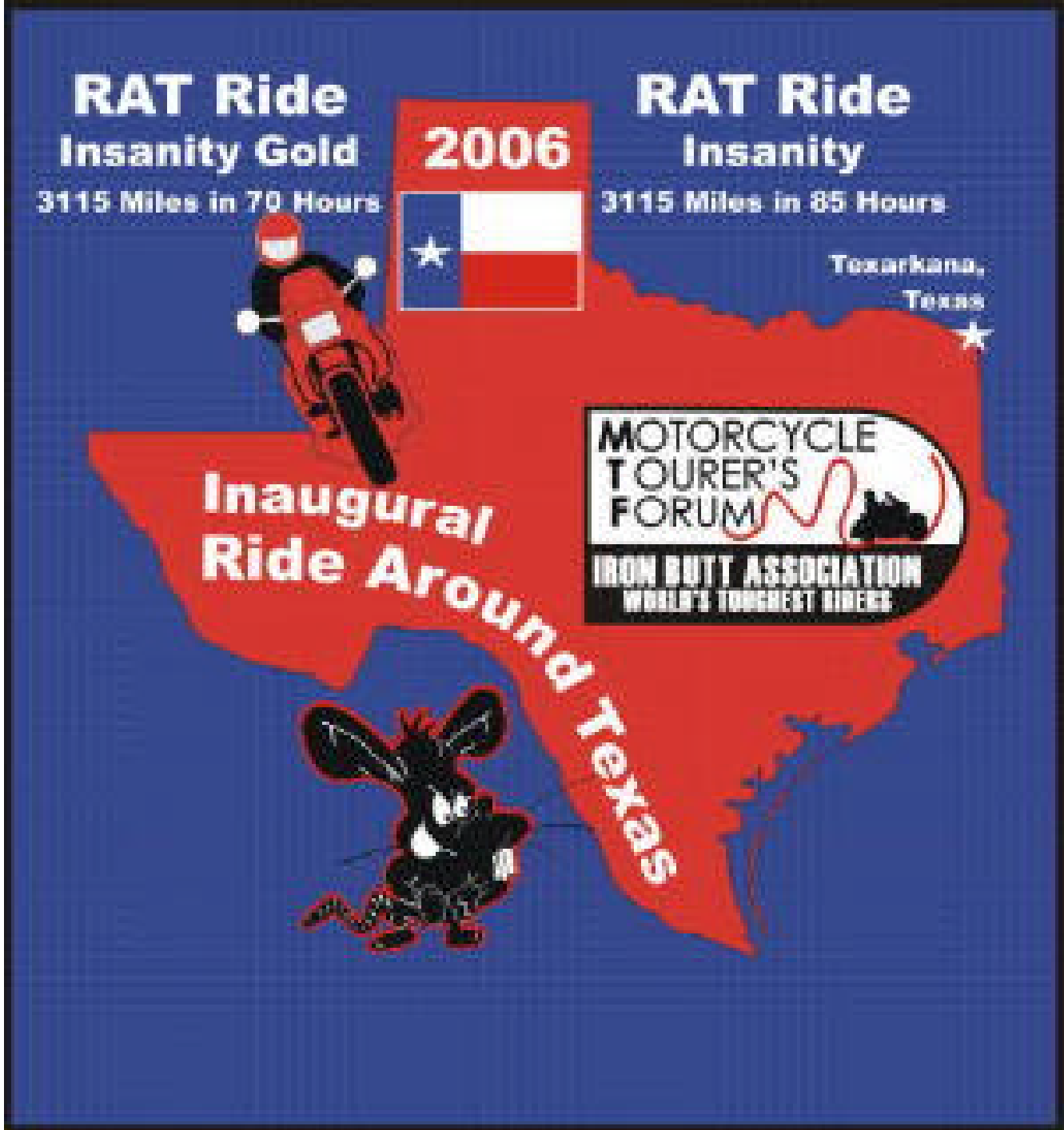
May

Weekly social every Thursday (4, 11, 18, 25) @ 7pm. We will be at the Mainstreet Pizza, 110 N. Crossroads Blvd.

6th - 2:00 PM, Annual Picnic. from SA to Bandera on 16, right at the light in town and travel for approx. 6 miles to Highland Waters, take a right and go approx. 1.1 mile to the house with a bunch of motorcycles parked in front. Milestones along the way are: crossing the Medina River @ 4.5 miles, Ranger Crossing and then at about 1 mile there is a highway sign indicating an upcoming street intersection, this is the right you will take. From Kerrville on 16: About 5 miles past the town of Medina you come to Highland waters. Take a left and go approx. 1.1 mile to the house. On Google maps the road is listed as Highland Dr. off hwy 16 to Kerrville. This picnic will have meat provided by the club – just bring a covered dish and we'll have a pot luck picnic with plenty of trees, picnic tables to sit on, and the Medina River within eyesight – it promises to be a great day.

Remember we have a Sunday breakfast run that meets every Sunday at 8am at the Walmart parking lot, 1604 and 281. Breakfast location will be determined by attendees.

Everything is subject to change so check the website and make sure we have your email address.



If you're interested you find out the details at
<http://www.mctourer.com/rides/2006FFRAT/RAT.html>