



SAN ANTONIO BMW RIDERS

MOA CHAPTER 62 RA CHAPTER 77



ISSUE # 148

May/June 2006

President's Notes

by John Dunn

Spring is upon us and great riding weather is here (just dodge the thunderstorms).

We have our annual picnic plans all firmed up for 2:00 PM on the 6th of May at some property owned by Graham Littrell – many thanks to Graham for letting us use his place. To get there from SA, go 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 fajitas cooked on site provided by the club, just bring a covered dish, your favorite beverage, and well 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. We are trying to get some door prizes and have some games set up (washers, horse shoes, etc.). Please give me a call (684-5530) to let me know if you are coming so we'll know how much meat to buy so we do not run out.

We've also decided to drop the number of socials from once a week to twice a month. We will still meet on Thursdays but only on the Thursday after our 1st and 3rd Saturday rides. So in May, we will not have a social on the 4th. We will have the picnic on the 6th and our first social on the 11th to the Third Coast Pizzeria. The 3rd Sat. ride will be a lunch ride to Tarpley for some great burgers & on to the motorcycle museum for dessert. The last social for the month will be out to the Clear Springs café in Afton Oaks. See the web site for details.

I went to the coast last weekend and there were some serious gusty side winds coming off the gulf when I was riding on Mustang Island from Port Aransas to Corpus Christy. These winds were causing the bike to occasionally lean precariously over in response to the gusts. I remembered how engine RPM had stabilized the bike in u-turn situations so I down shifted from 6th & 3200 RPM to 3rd & 5800 RPM. What a difference that made! The bike was remarkably more stable, the wind gusts moved the bike MUCH less and it was a much more enjoyable ride. With very low engine loading, the bike was remarkable smooth and tracked straight. It sure made climbing the bridge to the mainland easy – I sure didn't have to give it much additional gas to go over the top of the bridge.

Another couple of tips. Summer trips are almost here so get your bike ready for some trips – pay attention to your tires and watch the older batteries in the heat – the water levels can drop quickly. Here is another one sent in by Graham. The headlights can easily be broken (ask Connie) and a headlight protector is cheap insurance. One of the best is by X-Pel technologies here in town at 10414 Gulfdale St. 78216 (by the airport). They make a vinyl headlight cover for bikes, cars, everything, and it's 90% less than Cee Baileys covers. See them at www.xpel.com for all the details.

Hope to see you at the picnic or 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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Club picnic notes

There will be tubing available on the Medina River but you need to allow time.

Here's more detail for those wanting to tube the Medina. The river is low (or was before Saturday's rain) but the trip can be made. A couple of options:

#1 Coming from Bandera on 16, leave a vehicle at the bridge, Ranger Crossing, about 4 miles out of town. Then go to the picnic site and jump into the river, allow @ 3 hours to get to the bridge.

#2 From Bandera, go past the entrance to the Highland Waters turn off, go on for about 1/2 mile, take this road to the low water crossing and drop off the tubers, return to the picnic site and wait for them to arrive @2.5 hours. A member of the party needs to put up a marker so they will know where to exit the river.

The picnic starts at 2PM but we probably won't eat till about 4pm or so in the event you want to tube, hike or just sit around and visit. Horse shoes and washer toss will be available.

As mentioned the club will supply tea, if you want sodas or alcoholic refreshments, bring your own.

IF YOU GET LOST. Call me, Paul Mulhern @ 210-559-5234 or 210-865-4664 or John Dunn at 210-241-3688

Please remember to RSVP to Paul Mulhern (pmulhern@swbell.net or 210-650-9703 – leave a message) or John Dunn (johndunn@satx.rr.com or 210-684-5530 – leave a message). Please try to RSVP by Thursday evening (4th).

Club is supplying the fajitas (beef & chicken) and all the fixin's and we'll have ice cream and watermelon for desert. All you need bring is your favorite side dish or desert, preferred drink and yourself. We have chairs but if you come in a car or truck you might bring your own.

FOR SALE

First Gear women's vented riding jacket size Medium. Textile with leather padding on the shoulders, elbow and back. Red, Black and silver. Excellent shape \$100

Gericke women's vented textile riding pants size 10. Black with charcoal striping. Excellent shape \$50

Contact Jackie at pmulhern@swbell.net or 210-650-9703

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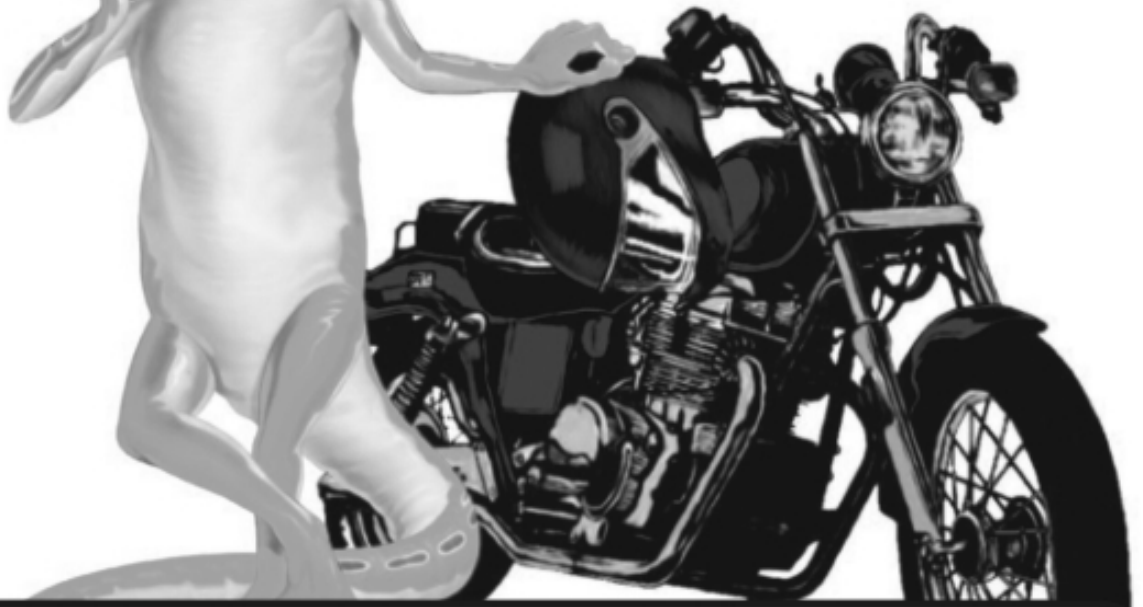


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!!!!!!!Attention!!!!!!!

We are changing the social schedule. In an attempt to see if we can get better attendance at the socials the officers decided to try something new.

Instead of having a Thursday social every week, we will only have the socials on the weeks we don't have a Saturday ride. In other words, since we have rides on the first and third Saturday, we'll have socials on the second and fourth Thursdays.

To make things even more complicated, we're going to meet at a different place for each social. That means that you will have to post a copy of the calendar (elsewhere in this issue) on the fridge so you can remember when and where we are having the social or you can always check the calendar at WWW.SABMWRA.ORG

I will send out reminders weekly to help everyone keep it all straight, so if you aren't getting those weekly emails make sure to email me (pmulhern@swbell.net) with your address so I can add you to mailing list.

E85 Tech Bulletin

The following was supplied to us by Jim Adair and our friends at Rhinewest. It is the official BMW technical bulletin #SIB 13106 and deals with E85 and your warranty.

SUBJECT

Alcohol Fuel Blends in BMW Vehicles

MODEL

All with gasoline engines

SITUATION

Fuel blends containing a high percentage (above 10%) of alcohol, mainly ethanol, are becoming more commercially available. Customers inquire about the possibility of using alcohol fuels (e.g. E85) in BMW vehicles.

INFORMATION

Fuels containing **up to and including 10%** of ethanol or other oxygenates with up to 2.8% oxygen by weight, that is, 15% MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) or 3% methanol plus an equivalent amount of co-solvent, **will not void** the applicable warranties with respect to defects in materials or workmanship.

Although, usage of such alcohol fuel blends may result in drivability, starting, and stalling problems due to reduced volatility and lower energy content of the fuel. Those drivability problems may be especially evident under certain environmental conditions, such as: high or low ambient temperatures and high altitude.

Only specially adapted vehicles (FFV - Flexible Fuel Vehicles) can run on high alcohol fuel blends. BMW, for the various technical and environmental reasons explained below, does not offer FFV models.

Usage of E85, or any other high alcohol content blend (e.g. E30) in BMW vehicles, will cause various drivability complaints (cold start problems, stalling, reduced performance, poor fuel economy, etc.), may cause excessive emissions, and may cause irreversible damage to engine, emission control and fuel delivery systems due to incompatibility of materials with alcohols.

General Notes Regarding E85 Fuel.

E85 fuel contains 85% (by volume) of ethanol and 15% of gasoline. Ethanol can be produced chemically from ethylene or biologically from grains, agricultural wastes, or any organic material containing starch or sugar. In the US, ethanol is mainly produced from corn and is classified as a renewable fuel.

Similar to gasoline, ethanol contains hydrogen and carbon; with additional oxygen molecules build into its chemical chain. This chemical structure makes ethanol's burning process slightly cleaner compared to the gasoline (lower tailpipe emissions).

On the other hand, due to lower carbon content, ethanol provides 27% less energy (for identical volume) than gasoline, resulting in the reduced fuel economy of E85 vehicles (approximately 22% higher consumption). Increased fuel consumption requires the appropriately enlarged fuel tank capacities (usually 30% increase), and the specific DME calibrations for the E85 lower Stoichiometric air/fuel ratio (10 compared to 14.7 for gasoline engines).

E85 fuel volatility is typically lower than gasoline (RVP 6-10 psi, compared to 8-15 psi for gasoline). Lower fuel volatility will reduce vehicle evaporative emissions, but it may cause cold starting problems especially with lower ambient temperatures.

Under certain environmental conditions, mainly lower ambient temperatures, ethanol separates from gasoline/alcohol mixture and absorbs water. The ethanol absorbed water molecules are heavier than gasoline or ethanol, they remain at the bottom of fuel tank and when introduced into combustion process they tend to form an extremely lean mixture resulting in misfire, rough idle and cold starting problems.

Certain materials, commonly used with gasoline are totally incompatible with alcohols. When these materials come in contact with ethanol, they may dissolve in the fuel, which may damage engine components and may result in poor vehicle drivability.

Some metals (e.g. zinc, brass, lead, aluminum) become degraded by long exposure to ethanol fuel blends. Also, some nonmetallic materials used in automotive industry such as: natural rubber, polyurethane, cork gasket material, leather, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), polyamides, methyl-methacrylate plastics, and certain thermo & thermoset plastics degrade when in contact with fuel ethanol.

In order to safely and effectively operate a motor vehicle running on E85, the vehicle must be compatible with alcohol use. Some manufacturers have developed vehicles called FFV (Flexible Fuel Vehicle) that can operate on any blend of ethanol and gasoline (from 0% ethanol and 100% gasoline, up to 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline). Ethanol FFVs are similar to gasoline vehicles, with main differences in materials used in fuel management and delivery systems, and DME control module calibrations. In some cases, also E85 vehicles require special lubricating oils.

Aftermarket conversions of gasoline-powered vehicles to ethanol-fueled vehicles, although possible, are not recommended due to internal materials and DME software incompatibility, as well, as the high costs of conversion.

WARRANTY INFORMATION

Components damage/malfunctions, or any drivability problems caused by use of fuels containing more than 10% ethanol (or other oxygenates with more than 2.8% oxygen by weight) will not be covered under BMW warranties with respect to defects in materials or workmanship.

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Fuel saving tip

Take your bike instead of your car whenever possible. You'll save gas, reduce highway congestion and arrive at your destination with a better attitude.

Summer Riding Tips

By Paul Mulhern

By now we all realize we're in for a long, hot, dry summer. (Remember this prediction as the summer goes on.)

Riding in the heat of a Texas summer is not impossible; it just takes some planning and precautions. Here are some ideas to make summer riding more comfortable and safer.

Vented riding gear is great stuff and has done a lot to extend the riding season. But, your body still cools itself by giving up moisture. Exposing more of your body to airflow just expedites this process. In other words, you lose moisture faster and need to hydrate more often.

For this reason you should always carry some water with you. By the time you realize you need water you may not be able to make it to the next gas station. My personal favorite is a Platypus Breakaway Pack with a 70oz Big Zip bag inside. This allows me to carry 70oz (that's 2+ qts) of water in a convenient location, my back. (The more convenient the water supply is the more likely you will use it before you get dehydrated.) The Big Zip is a plastic water bag that opens via a wide mouth zip closure (like a plastic sandwich bag). The wide mouth allows me to easily fill the bag with ice and water (which feels nice and cool sitting against my back on a hot day). I just clip the tube to my jacket zipper so it's always close at hand. When I come into a town and have to slow down I just stick the tube in my mouth and drink until I get my fill or exit the town. Good, inexpensive hydration packs can be found at WWW.Aerostich.com and WWW.Campmore.com.

Cooling vests have recently become popular. These vests are designed so that you soak them in water and the resulting evaporation cools your body while you ride. We bought a couple at the Top of the Rockies rally last July and I don't think we could have made that journey back across West Texas in July without them. We pack a well soaked vest in a large (gallon+) plastic bag and throw it in the saddlebag before any summer ride. Keep the bag so you can re-hydrate the vest as needed (with some of the water you should be carrying). Warning, don't put your wet hydration vest in a plastic bag and forget it for a couple of days as they will mildew.

A good fallback is the simple bandana. Soaked in water and wrapped around your neck it will help cool the blood flow to the most important organ of your body, your brain. Tip, open your bandana, lay it on a flat surface and fill the center with ice. Now fold it in half, roll it up and tie it around your neck. Presto, super cool blood flowing to your brain.

A small collapsible ice chest (cheap ones available at Target, Walmart, HEB, Academy, etc.) will fit easily into your saddle bag. It can be used to carry ice, water, etc. Refill soda bottles with water the night before a ride. Put them in the freezer and the next morning throw them into your collapsible ice chest along with one or two bottles of unfrozen water. They keep the other drinks cold and when they defrost you have more cold water. Tip, get the biggest one that will fit in your saddlebag. It can also be used to bring home leftovers when you eat someplace really good, like Lowake Steak House. Remember, you don't want to over eat; it just makes the heat harder to take because your body pumps all the blood to your stomach to digest the food.

Avoid sugar, alcohol and caffeine, they do nothing to replace your body's moisture, they just make you feel better for a short time. There is NOTHING better than water. If you think you must have more minerals and vitamins then cut up pieces of fruit (lemon, lime, orange, etc) and add that to your water. You can even add it to the water bottle before you freeze it.

Fresh fruit is always good for you but especially in the heat. You not only get the moisture your body needs but some amount of natural, easily digested, sugars for energy. Cut it up in advance and carry it in reused yogurt containers in your collapsible ice chest.

Speaking of which, yogurt is a great summer pick me up. Freeze it the night before and throw it in your ice chest so you have a cold, refreshing treat in the heat of the day.

Learn to recognize the early signs of dehydration, both in yourself or others. Extreme thirsts, faintness, loss of consciousness, dark colored urine are all signs of dehydration. (Get more info at www.webmd.com). Play it safe, carry water with you at all times and drink it often. Also, don't forget the suntan lotion. It's the UV rays, not the light that burns you and that's true even on cloudy days. Your face can burn, even behind a face shield. Remember your neck, too. Suntan lotion also helps prevent dry skin. Sunburn only makes a hot day worse and skin cancer is no fun.

Carry a small bottle of salt water nasal spray (available at any drugstore, grocery store and many convenience stores). Especially helpful when the humidity is low. A couple of sprays in your nose at every stop helps refresh you. You be surprised how effective this can be.

Don't let the heat keep you from enjoying your motorcycle. Just be smart, play it safe and be cool.

Maintenance tip

Every time you put on new tires check your final drive and swing arm pivot bearings.

How do you do this? Simple. Put the bike on the center stand and either jack up the rear of the bike or have someone hold down the front end. Stand or squat beside the rear wheel and grab the rear tire at the top and bottom. Now attempt to move the wheel back and forth (towards and away from you).

If everything is OK you should get no movement. If you get any movement at all it's a sign either your final drive bearing or the swing arm bearings are bad. The way to determine which one needs attention is to repeat the same procedure except this time, observe the rear disk. If the problem is the swing arm bearings the disk will not move relative to the caliper (in other words the entire rear end, disk and all, will move as a unit). If the problem is the rear end bearings then the disk will move but the caliper will not.

There are two sets of swing arm bearings, one at the swing arm pivot near the transmission and another at the second pivot point by the final drive. It is this second set which usually goes out. Fortunately these are less expensive to replace and you can do yourself if you have access to the 12mm Allen head required to remove the pivot bolts.

If the problem is in your final drive bearing you can save a few bucks by removing just the final drive and taking it in for the repair. You will need access to the same 12mm Allen head for this job.

If you change your own final drive oil you should always filter the oil through cheese cloth (or similar material) and look for chunks of metal or shinnny metal shavings. These are both early signs of impending failure. But, these signs do not always appear before problems start so I suggest you employ both methods. If you detect problems before they get too bad you can get off with only having to replace the final drive bearing, which is considerably cheaper than having to replace the entire final drive.

SABMWRA Activity calendar

All events are subject to change. Check the club website or subscribe to the weekly email updates.

Not listed on the calendar is the every Sunday informal breakfast ride. Meet at the Walmart parking lot, 1604 and 281 at 8am. Attendees decide destination.

REMEMBER – the social schedule has changed. **READ THE CALENDER** for times and places.

May

4th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL

6th – Saturday 2PM– Club picnic – detail in newsletter and at the website.

11th – Thursday 7PM – Social at the Third Coast Pizzeria (formerly Main Street Pizza) 110 N. Crossroads

18th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL

20th – Saturday 10am – Meet at the Exxon at 1604 and Bandera RD. We'll ride to Tarpley for burgers then to Vanderpool for dessert and a visit to the motorcycle museum.

25th – Thursday 7PM – Social at Clear Springs Café, 606 W. Afton Rd.

June

3rd – Saturday 9AM – Meet at the Los Jarros Mexican Rest. in Comfort (on Bus. 87 just past the Guadalupe river) for breakfast. Ride to follow.

8th – Thursday 7PM – Social at Specht's Store, 122 Specht Rd. From 1604 take Blanco Rd. north approx. 9 miles to Specht Rd., turn right onto Specht Rd and the restaurant is on the right about 1 mile down the road. It's out in the country so watch for deer!

15th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL

17th – Saturday 9AM - Meet at the Los Jarros Mexican Rest. in Comfort (on Bus. 87 just past the Guadalupe river) for breakfast. Ride to follow

22nd – Thursday 7PM – Social at the Blue Star Brewing Co. 1414 S. Alamo

29th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL

July

1st – Saturday 9am – Meet at the Sunset Rest. in Blanco (on the square) fro breakfast. Ride to follow.

6th – Thursday 7PM – Social at the El Chaparral Rest. in Helotes, 15103 Bandera Rd.

13th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL

15th – Saturday 9AM - Meet at the Sunset Rest. in Blanco (on the square) fro breakfast. Ride to follow.

20th – Thursday 7PM - Social at the El Chaparral Rest. in Helotes, 15103 Bandera Rd.

27th – Thursday – NO SOCIAL