Newsletter April 2009

The Enchanted Voyagers is a chartered club of the American Voyager Association. The club started as a group of Kawasaki Voyager enthusiasts, but welcomes all makes and models of bikes. Dues are $10 per year for a family and are due in January. Any applications received on or after October 1st will include the following year. Our web at http://enchantedvoyagersmc.com/index.html has an application and one is also included with this newsletter.

From the President

Here it is April already and we have our first event under our belts. The Spring Fun Run was great. There was a little wind and it could have been warmer, but the people were great and the roads were in good shape. It even warmed up nicely by the time we left. Not too much more on that as I have an article later in the newsletter. I also have an article on my ride to the Arizona Bike Week. It is mostly for Harley Davidsons, but it was good to go for demo rides. And the ride there and back were great. Over some of my favorite routes.

Several of us will be going to the Lone Star Voyagers Hill Country Tour. I have been to it almost every year and it is always a great time with the rides and people and eating and rides and people. The hill country is beautiful.

The time is quickly approaching for the AVA rally. I have several routes laid out, but have not had a chance to ride them. I am hoping for a chance on May 8 and 9. That is my next available Friday off. Hopefully the weather will cooperate. I have the routes on the web page under 'AVA Rally'. If anyone has some favorite or any other good rides around the area let me know. It should be a great time to show off our state.

If any of you have been to a rally the past couple years you might remember the spirit night. That is where we get together and put on some kind of skit. If anyone has any ideas, please let me know so we can get on with that also.

If anyone feels prolific with the computer and would like to be published, send me an article for inclusion in this newsletter. I am sure everyone is getting tired of just hearing from me.

New Members

I would like to take this time to also welcome our newest members, Bud and Pat Pacotti from Centennial, CO. They joined last month. Bud was going to try to make the Spring Fun Run, but that was cancelled when the weather took a turn for the worse. Probably the next chance we have to meet will be the AVA rally. Be sure to welcome them. Also, Bud and Pat, keep September open for the Enchanted Tour out of Las Vegas. I don't have much planned for it yet as I have been concentrating on the AVA rally. That will be my priority after the rally.

Spring Fun Run 2009

This ended up being a rather quick trip as I had commitments at home Wednesday night (couldn't leave until Thursday morning) and Sunday (had to be back home Saturday night). It was still a great time. Weather was a bit on the cool side and some wind, but the people were great and the roads were great (except for one detour of under 2 miles which still wasn't bad).

I was up and finishing packing at 6 Thursday morning and wheels were rolling by 6:45. Headed south to El Paso where I turned left on 180 heading for Salt Flat. This is a nice ride out of El Paso with some sweeping curves. Then after a few miles it turns into a straight road. I had a tail wind, so

the riding was good. I got to Salt Flat and stopped at the café for a good breakfast burrito. Then headed further east to 54 where I headed south to Van Horn. Kept heading south thru Valentine and headed east on a ranch road and then 166 to Fort Davis. This is another good ride with some sweepers. I made it to the campground a little after 1 and found James and Steve sitting around enjoying the nice weather. I set up my tent and got all settled in.

Bob and Dorothy showed up a little after me and they set up close by. Others trickled in and got set up. The Cadran clan showed up and we had them set up across the road so people wouldn't think we knew them. We did go over to help them set up. Dennis had a castle and said he finally had enough room. David set up his camper. It is a nice roomy place. Nancy couldn't make it as she will be able to make the HCT.

We ended up with 15 people on 14 bikes. James and Nola had 2 bikes, the Vulcan and his 1300 trike.

Dave Shani found a good BBQ place where we ate supper. We then headed back to the campground to talk about those not here. It was a bit cool, so we didn't stay up too long before it was time to crawl into some nice warm sleeping bags. We remarked about not having a campfire to sit around. That would have made things better.

Friday started out cool, down to 34. Richard brought his coffee pot, so coffee was available. We had our riders meeting a little before 8 and headed out about 8:15 after the sun finally made it over the horizon. We headed west to Marfa and the café where we had an excellent breakfast. The service was great and the food was great. Nola and Dorothy stayed at the campground to keep warm. After breakfast James headed back to the campground for the day and the rest of us headed south to Presidio. We had a little side wind, but the weather was warming up. At Presidio we headed east on the river road with a tail wind. We came to the detour which was just under 2 miles of gravel. Not bad. We stopped about half way to Terlingua at a nice pulloff. Last year we rode the other direction on this road and stopped on the other side of this hill. I think the wind helped keep the bikes from rolling back down the hill. We continued on to Terlingua where we had requests to stop at the Kosmic KowGirl for lunch. It was windy but warm as we head east to 118 where we would turn north. Thermometers on the bikes said lower 70's. As we headed north the wind started turning to come out of the north. About 10 miles north I could feel the temp start to drop. In a period of about 15 miles the temp dropped 25 degrees. Dave Shani saw a low of 43 at one point. We pulled in to the campground and tried to keep out of the wind. When the clouds were gone it was pleasant, but when in the shade it was cool.

We went out for supper the same place as Thursday night for BBQ and ribs. When we got back to the campground James and Nola invited us in to their motorhome where the temp was perfect. We sat around talking until almost 10 and then headed for the tents. Paul Cadran opted for a motel room for the night. The rest of us braved the tents. Steve purchased a heater for his tent. Richard put the coffee pot in the bathroom so it wouldn't freeze. We delayed the start Saturday morning to give the sun a chance to warm things up.

We saw a low of 29 and had our riders meeting at 8:15 after coffee in the bathroom and rolled out a little after 8:30 heading north to Fort Davis and breakfast. The sun felt good and it was starting to warm. A few riders decided to head south to the Big Bend park. We had breakfast at the café in Fort Davis. There was only one waitress, so the service was slow and the food not warm. Not a good breakfast. Yesterday was much better. After breakfast we headed to the Fort Davis Historic Site to see the way the soldiers lived. We then headed to the state park to an overlook of the area. Then on to the restaurant for dessert. The pie was good. The weather was warming and the road was getting twisty. We stopped at the McDonald Observatory and went inside one of the buildings that houses the Hobby-Eberly telescope. Then on north for some nice roads. Headed back south on 166 and on thru Valentine to the Prada building for a group photo. Then we headed back to the campground.

As I had to be home that night I packed up and headed out leaving the campground around 4:30. I went up to Van Horn and took the freeway to make time and rolled into the garage about 8:30. I had a good time. The people and roads were great. Could have used less wind and warmer temps, but that has faded and the enjoyment is remembered.

The pictures of the ride are on the EV web site.
RR

Arizona Bike Week

I had been hoping the new VV1700 would be out for demo rides by this time, but that was not to happen. The press intro had just happened within the past couple days, but I decided to go anyhow to see what was available. The weather forecast looked good for the ride there, but windy while there and for the ride back. Our normal spring weather. It didn't look especially warm, so I didn't know how to pack. I ended up wearing my spring riding jacket with a long sleeve shirt. That proved adequate.

I left work Thursday early and made the Apache Gold casino for the night. They have a campground where I have stopped several times. It is 10 miles before Globe. I did have time to go on two of my favorite roads. I took the freeway north from Las Cruces to Caballo Lake where I headed west thru Hillsboro over Emory Pass to Silver City. The road over Emory Pass has to be one of the best in the area. The weather was good and the road clear. From Silver City I headed north about 50 miles and headed west on 78 thru Mule Creek in to Three Way. This was over the other of the best roads in the area. Again the weather was still great and the roads clear. The sun was getting low so I did have to take it easy, but it was still enjoyable. I made Safford just after sunset and stopped at a good Mexican restaurant for supper. I made the casino about 9 and laid down my tarp and sleeping for the night.

The sun was peeking over the horizon a little after 6, so I rolled up my bedroll and headed west. Another good road here is between Miami and Superior. There was road construction at the pass, so I got a break for about 15 minutes before heading down into Superior. The traffic started picking up and I rolled into the rally grounds about 8:30. There weren't many bikes there yet as it was Friday. This was good since it wouldn't be too crowded. I went to the Kawasaki tent and the ROK hospitality area where I got a drink and snack and checked my gear. They had a couple of the new Nomads, so I signed up to take one for a ride. As I had a little wait for it, I took a Vulcan 200 out for a ride. Not a bike I would own. The riding position is not good for touring and the seat was uncomfortable after 30 minutes.

Then it was time for the Nomad. I picked this bike as it was the closest to the VV1700 in seating. It felt comfortable sitting on it. I have never ridden a bike with floorboards or heel-toe shifter, so that took a little getting used to. The seating position is much like I can remember of the XII. The feet are not too far forward and the handlebars seemed positioned good for me. This bike also has cruise which I checked out. It seemed very responsive, much better than the XII. The exhaust was louder than I expected. The power was very good. Acceleration from a stop and roll-on was very good. Plenty of power available. The power delivery was smooth although I could feel the pulses from the pistons. The mirrors were clear. I did like the ride although I kept thinking a couple cylinders were not firing as it had been quite some time since I had ridden a twin. That would have been a Honda CB450 in the early 70's. This didn't have a tach which I really missed. The ride was about 30 minutes, but didn't really include anywhere I could get up to 60. The steering was very neutral on the corners we had. That felt good. The instruments are on the tank and I didn't really like having to look down that much. On the VV1700 they will be higher on the fairing which should be much better.

After this ride I headed for the vendors and lunch. The vendor area is pretty much available for Harley riders, but it was still nice to look around. If you feel you don't have enough power they had a bike with a Viper V10 engine. And if that wasn't enough there were two nitrus bottles on it!! And it was only $87,000 if I remember correctly!!

I headed back to the Kawasaki demo ride area and took a Versys out for a ride to see how it felt and then went for another ride on a Nomad. It felt better this time as I was getting used to the heel-toe shifter.

It was then time to head back home. I made it to Pima for a hamburger at the Taylor Freeze. That was right about sunset and I had a tailwind, so the gas mileage was good. I was retracing my route,

so was going over my favorite roads again. I made it to the Gila and a campground that night. Spread out my tarp and sleeping bag again. The campground had tall pines, so I just laid there for a while watching the half moon and the trees swaying in the breeze and listened to the rustling of the leaves. I stayed in the sleeping bag late Saturday morning as it was cool. The road was clear and good again and I really enjoyed the ride into Silver City. The wind was from the northwest and was blowing clouds in. I rode thru a light sprinkle in Silver City. I was watching the clouds in the mountains where I wanted to go. It looked like rain. When I stopped for gas another customer said he had small hail just out of town, so I thought I would have to go home the boring way via freeway. As I started out of town I looked to the east again and saw some clear spots so decided to head over Emory Pass and chance it. It was a good choice. The road again was clear and I only came up on 2 vehicles and they pulled over after a short time to let me pass. I would say this was probably one of the best rides I had over Emory Pass. The bike was running great around the corners.

I made Caballo Lake and headed south on the freeway to Las Cruces where I headed east to home. Made home about 3:00 and it sure was nice to see Cindy again. The ride was great, but home is even better. We looked at Duane's write-up on the VV1700 and based on my ride on the Nomad would agree with his assessment on the bike.

RR