Enchanted Voyagers M/C Touring Association
NEWSLETTER
Jan/Feb, 2010

From Our President…

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I was unable to cut and paste Rod's article due to technical problems with my computer. I have transcribed the article here as carefully as possible. Rod, I offer my apologies if I left anything out!)

Good day to all from COLD southern New Mexico. This has been the worst winter we have had here in many years. We have had snow 3 times so far this season and I had to go to work in a 4-wheeler two times. Can't get too much further south and even El Paso is cold.

This will be the first newsletter out by our new editor Hank. Thanks Hank for taking this over and good luck.

Anyhow, we are into the new year and it is time to think about the riding season (and getting those dues in if you haven't already). We have quite a bit on our calendar which is available on the web. Well, maybe not quite a bit, but there are several gatherings. First is the Spring Fun Run which will be out of Alpine again this year. It was a little bit cool last year, but other years, has been warmer. That time of year it is hard to predict what the weather will be. We will have good rides and the campground and hotel are good places. The info and registration is on our web. Then, even though it is not an official Enchanted Voyagers event, the Arizona Bike Week is in April. I have gone there several years and it is OK. The vender area is a lot for Harley types, but they have demo rides available and it is always nice to look around. With the cutbacks I hear about at other events it is hard to predict how things will be this year.

Next is our Grand Canyon Run in May. This is early enough to beat the tourist season, but still late enough to be getting warm but not too hot. The campground in Flagstaff is nice and the rides last year were excellent. We might even have some interest in this from the NorCal Voyagers. I was contacted by Tony Curtis, the vice-president about having a joint get-together somewhere in between and I suggested the GCR. They are having their first meeting of the year to plan events, so will have to see what comes out of that. It is always nice to get with other groups. If you remember, Don Medina the NorCal president attended our Enchanted Tour a year and a half ago in Silver City. He was on his way thru to Colorado and spent a day with us.

Next is the annual AVA rally in Ellicotville in July. I doubt I will be making that as the COG rally is the same week in Wisconsin and my Westphal family reunion is the Saturday after, so I may attend that. Plans are still up in the air about that.

Then August is our Enchanted Tour back to Silver City. That is a very nice place for a gathering. The campground is excellent, a nice grassy area for tents and the weather is great that time of year. And of course the roads around the area are designed for motorcycles.

We also have our quarterly lunches. I am planning one in March in the western part of our state for those living in the faaaarrrr western parts of our state. No date yet but I am looking at the 13th or 20th in Silver City.

Other events around the area are the Lone Star Voyagers Hill Country Tour in April, Ruidoso has the AspenCash in May and the Golden Aspen Rally in September, the Voyage Home in October and the western regional AVA rally Oregon in August.

Well, enough of my ramblings. I had better get this off to Hank so he can get the newsletter going.
Rodney Westphal
President

TREASURER'S REPORT
Brenda Herring, Treasurer

BALANCE (01/01/10)	253.00
DEBITS (Website Fees)	148.00
CREDITS (Dues)	10.00
BALANCE (01/15/10)	115.00

The 'Silent Gentleman in the Grey Flannel Suit'
The 2003 Voyager XII

VS

The 'Hooligan From Hinckley'
The 2005 Triumph Rocket III

An 'APPLES AND ORANGES' COMPARISON
Hank Scally, V.P & NL Editor

So, you ask, why am I writing a comparison on 2 such radically different motorcycles? Well, it all goes back to last August. I was looking to buy another motorcycle, something to use around town so I could save my Voyager for long trips. I had already checked out a Suzuki scooter and liked it, but could not arrange financing. So, a few weeks later, I was down at the local Triumph dealer looking at their offerings, and they had 2 Rocket 3's on the showroom floor, one red and the other one silver in color. I liked the red one because it already had hard bags on it, but found out that it had already been sold. That left the silver one. Just for 'grins' I decided to see if I could finance it, and surprisingly, the financing deal went through. So, after making a small down payment, I found myself the owner of a 2005 Triumph Rocket 3. I decided an 'off the cuff' comparison would be fun, so Here We GO!!!

SPECS

2003 KAWASAKI Voyager	2005 TRIUMPH ROCKET 3
ENGINE:	
DOHC I-4, Carburated, 1186cc (73 Cu.In.)	DOHC I-3, Fuel Injected 2294cc (140 cu. in.)
Wet Sump oil system	Dry Sump oil system

DRY WEIGHTS	
728 LBS	704 LBS
FUEL CAPACITIES	
6.1 GAL	6.6 GAL
INCLUDED TOURING ACCESSORIES	
Hard Saddlebags	NONE
Trunk	
Frame mount Fairing	
Radio/Cassette player	
Air adjust suspension	
OWNER ADDED ACCESSORIES	
Satellite Radio (Previous Owner)	Front & Rear 'Crash Bars'
GPS	Leather Saddlebags
	Windshield
	Fuel Gauge
	Floor Boards (Driver)
	Heel/Toe Shifter
	Relocated rear brake pedal
	Triumph 'Off Road' exhaust system
	Clock (analog)
	Rear Rack & Sissy Bar
	-and Lotsa Chrome (all added by previous owner)

RIDING IMPRESSIONS……..

So, how do they stack up? Surprisingly, both bikes have their good points as well as bad points. Riding the Triumph is literally like riding a rocket. If you don't know what you're doing you can get in trouble real fast. By comparison, the Voyager is much more forgiving, and you will not get into trouble unless you want to. Basically, it's a lot easier to ride 'beyond your limitations' with the Rocket than it is with the Voyager. All this is well and good, but how do they TOUR? Since I am basically a touring rider, this is what I will address in my article.

TOURING THE ROCKET

About 2 weeks after I got the Rocket, I rode it to Las Vegas, NM for the EVA 'Enchanted Tour' yearly rally. This is a 3-day rally held by the EVA in a 'distant' corner of NM every year and is (usually) a lot of fun. This year proved to be no different. I stayed mostly on the 2-lane getting there, and found the Rocket very tractable and stable. At 60 MPH, the engine is loafing along at 2200 RPM, and in spite of the basically straight 'Authorized Triumph Accessory' pipes, I had to strain to hear the engine. The top end is very quiet at speed. A faint noise is all you hear to indicate all the reciprocating mass underneath you. Vibration is basically absent at all legal speeds, the only time that it gets bad is over 4000 RPM (about 100MPH in top gear-Don't ask me how I know!), and is evidenced by a vibration in the floorboards and the handlebars. I found very quickly that you do not have to twist the throttle at all to get going. Just put her in gear and release the clutch. That 146 foot-pounds of Torque does the rest. Interestingly, even though the specs say the Rocket is a bit lighter than the Voyager, they handle quite differently. The Rocket, with its gas tank

in the ‘traditional’ position atop that massive, tall engine makes it handle like a much heavier motorcycle. It brings to mind my dear departed Voyager 1300, ‘Rusty’.

The handling of the Rocket is very much like the Voyager 1300, with the provisio that since the Rocket is lighter, it is easier to ‘throw into’ curves, and I can pick it up without having to call for help. Once it is in a curve,

The Rocket will tend to maintain its course without input from the rider. You can get some frightening lean angles on this Beast! One of my fellow riders on the Enchanted Tour commented after a ride, “Wow! That thing can handle!” The one Major advantage that the Triumph has over the Voyager is the seat. While the Voyager seat is basically a hard ‘bench’, the Triumph seat is designed to fit your derriere, and it is wide enough to accept even my copious rear end. I wish there was a way I could put the Triumph seat on the Voyager, THEN I’d have the Perfect touring bike!

The suspension on the Triumph is standard hydraulic with non adjustable forks in the front and rear shocks that are adjustable for preload only. While the suspension is not compliant enough to soak up all the cracks and crevices on an Albuquerque city street, it works great at higher speed on the highway.

Gas Mileage is low 30’s in town and 38-40 on the highway. Not bad for a ‘monster’ engine!

To summarize, the Triumph is a great bike. It’s fun, fast, and a head-turner wherever you ride it. Since there is NO plastic, it makes a great ‘in-town’ bike, and is fun on short trips in the summer. It’s great for weekend rallies and anywhere where you want ‘bragging rights’ as the largest displacement bike present.

TOURING THE VOYAGER

Everyone knows the Kawasaki Voyager XII. It’s not the biggest, most powerful, or the fastest bike around, but there is one thing it can do very well, and that is TOUR. Just as the Rocket is a ‘purpose built’ bike, the Voyager is also ‘Purpose Built’…and that purpose is TOURING. The Voyager has many necessities built in for the touring rider that few other bikes this side of 20 kilobucks do. While the design is definitely ‘old school’ (as the youngsters say) it still keeps you dry and keeps the bugs out of your face (thanks to the frame-mounted fairing) on trips. You can take (almost) everything with you in the hard saddlebags (so much better than leather!), and can get 2 full face helmets in the trunk, if it’s empty (mine rarely is). As far as wind and weather protection goes, it’s no contest. Unlike the windshield on the Triumph, the Voyagers fairing and lowers keep the wind and rain off me, and make riding 200 miles at a pop much easier than it would otherwise be. The radio and cassette keep me company on those long stretches of Interstate where there’s nothing to see, and my GPS keeps me from getting lost (unless I want to!) It does all this while sipping gas at the rate of 45-48 MPG on the highway (on several occasions I’ve seen MPG figures of over 50!) Handling on the Voyager is completely different than the Triumph. While the Rocket feels like it’s a much heavier bike, the Voyager feels like a lighter bike, due to the Kawasaki design that centralizes the mass lower in the frame. In spite of the fact that the engine is rather tall, the gas tank is behind it (under the seat), and there is nothing on top of the engine except some of the electronics, the fuse block, and the gas filler cap.

Even with all of the plastic and included accessories, the Voyager feels much lighter than the Rocket. So, as they say, the “Best Kept Secret in Touring Motorcycles is still a

competent Touring rig, and will be for years to come, due to the reliability reputation of the Voyager engine. One other thing that I consider a plus for the Voyager is the air-adjustable suspension. This allows you to adjust both preload and dampening for different loads and riding situations. It's very helpful when riding 2-up and pulling a trailer (which I never do.)

IN CONCLUSION…

So, we have 2 different bikes here, each with its strength and weaknesses. However, since I am a Touring rider, I have to say that when I take my 3-week riding vacation in May, Ol'Faithful, my 2003 Voyager, will get the nod. The Rocket is fun, and great for scaring Hardley riders, and it has a WONDERFUL pilot seat, but it comes up short when serious long-distance

Touring is what you want to do. By the time I get back from my trip, the old gal will probably be over 100K miles!! Old Voyagers never die, they just keep on Touring!!!

2010 RIDE CALENDAR

MARCH	
(Exact date TBD)	Lunch in Silver City
25-28	Spring Fun Run (with the LSV from Texas) Big Bend Country
APRIL	
Arizona Bike Week	(contact Rod and ride out with him!)
MAY	
6-9th	Grand Canyon Run
20-23	Aspen Cash Poker Run, Ruidoso
JULY	
12-15th	AVA National Rally Ellicot, NY
AUGUST	
12-15th	ENCHANTED TOUR, Silver City EVA Chapter Meeting
SEPTEMBER	
15-19TH	Golden Aspen Rally, Ruidoso

Well, That's All Folks!

I hope you enjoyed this newsletter, and please remember that I am always soliciting articles to print, so try your hand at it sometime!!

Ride Safe, and Have a Great Day!!

Hank & Rachael (Meow!)

Your Newsletter Staff