NERCAL NEWS

Ride to Camp

Camp to Ride



Presidents Column

After our Covid nightmare I wasn't really prepared for further challenges to our monthly rides and campouts. The fire situation is another dynamic that will likely have longer term impacts to us going forward. It's shocking many of the roads and campgrounds we have frequented over the past several years have been through significant fires. For sure the intensity and frequency of these events is increasing over the past several years. I feel lucky to have been able to do so much riding and exploring with the Club.

We had to change course again for the August meeting with the closures in the Eldorado Forest due to the Caldor Fire. Luckily, we were able to secure a group site at the last minute in Mt Madonna Park in Watsonville. We had a great turn out, awesome weather and no smoke. We ended up with about 40 riders and campers and despite some of the weekend traffic in the coastal hills had a great ride through some of the best roads in the Bay Area. To cap it off we stopped at Freedom Meat Locker for dinner. It was great to welcome a number of first timers to our campout. The conversation around the campfire was entertaining.

The Fires were also a challenge for Nick and the ROL team. We worked overtime to replan the entire route, locations and catering to deal with the fires. I am sure the new route will not disappoint. I am just so grateful we could pull this rabbit out of a hat at the last minute. Please be sure and thank Nick and the team when you see them at the ROL.

I am happy to report that Chris Weld is back at home and doing well after his mishap with a car on a narrow road that was in the left-hand lane avoiding a bicyclist around a blind turn. The thought of that accident was in my mind riding the roads on our August ride. It's so important to always be prepared for what's around that corner and expect the unexpected. It's easy to get lulled into a false sense of security given the infrequent cars on the road. I am recommitting to staying as far over to the right as I can and slowing down around blind curves.

Stay safe

Kevin Colman

Editors Corner This month started off really well with an article on fixing punctures by Markus Fromherz which arrived just too late to go into the August newsletter. Informative and entertaining.

Mid-month Delf Hedde sent a description of his ride to New Idria, on the Bay Areas' doorstep. Its a place that I was completely unaware of. I was surprised to learn that most of the world's quicksilver (mercury) comes from mines located in the area as well as rare gems. It was a truly fascinating read. It made me wish my off road skills were good enough to allow me to explore the area.

I figured the September newsletter was in good shape with enough space to add a write up for the August camp out, and then at the last minute Lance Harrison sent the story of his ride to Mt Madonna along with pictures.

All that was needed was me to include a sample of the pictures I had taken at the camp out (what a happy group we have) and it was done.

Then out of the blue Ed Perry sent me details of his favorite instructional videos. Ed does all of his own maintenance (in the long distant past he was a aircraft mechanic with the US Marines). BTW his well maintained 2010 R1200GS is currently for sale. Contact Ed.

I am very pleased with how this issue turned out. Hope you all enjoy.

John Ellis

Ed Perry Recommends JVB Instructional Videos

Shortly after I purchased my Hexhead in 2010, I was making a purchase at Ted Porter's Beemer Shop in Scotts Valley and noticed he was selling a maintenance DVD for my bike. I'm always skeptical when it comes to advice posted on youtube by shade tree mechanics as I've found some to offer very inaccurate, though entertaining advice. But since Ted was selling this DVD in his shop, I knew that he must have vetted it and given it his stamp of approval. Good enough for me. So, I forked over twenty-five bucks, took it home, loaded it in my lap top, and used it to perform all maintenance on that bike for the next 11 years and 85,000 miles. Other than two recall

issues, my bike has never been in a shop.

Produced by Jim Bade (AKA Jim von Baden), the DVD is very well laid out in chapters covering all routine maintenance tasks. Jim has a very methodical and practical approach that I greatly appreciate with tips and tricks. For instance, his use of a section of plastic from an oil container can save time and knuckle skin when changing an alternator belt. He even has tips for something as mundane

as an oil change to make it less messy. And without his advice I never would have known about the cheap and convenient measuring container to be had at Sally's Beauty Supply, which makes rear drive oil change a quick and clean job.

I bought a new 1250GS in February and was getting ready to perform a valve check/adjustment and needed information on the variable cams. In addition to downloads or DVDs covering Oilheads, Hexheads, Camheads, and Wetheads, Jim now has a DVD covering Shiftheads (there IS an "f" in the word), 2019 to present. As with my previous DVD, this

download was excellent in explaining and demonstrating the procedures and includes shim charts. I had a question and Jim responded to my email very promptly. His products can be purchased directly at http://www.jimvonbaden.com/ for \$40 or I believe the Beemer Bone Yard sells them (another stamp of approval) for \$30. Whether you perform all your own maintenance or just simple fluid changes, I think you'll find this product well worth the money.

http://www.jimvonbaden.com/

Ride to Mt. Madonna by Lance Harrison

Saturday morning started off slowly: Woke up too early, went back to sleep. Missed the group meetup and ride starting at the Black Bear Diner in Colma. I whiled away the morning setting up for some farkling, and completed the Touratech side-stand foot enlarger installation. The new footpegs and skid-plate will have to wait. I ate lunch, showered and packed a couple things on the bike, then headed out from Modesto. Destination: Mt. Madonna!

I rode my new 2021 BMW F850 GS Adventure 40th Anniversary



Edition, which by now, everyone has seen is black with yellow in honor of the first R100GS BumbleBee.I geared up with my HyperKewl cooling vest, a cooling neck wrap, my BMW Airflow boots, and an Aerostich R-3 Light one-piece riding suit. I wanted to test how effective the cooling vest was with a minimum of air flow; I know how well it works with my mesh riding jacket: Very!

Especially when riding through Death Valley NP. I gassed up at a nearby station. Estimated range with a full tank was (253) miles, per the bike's computer. The TFT screen is *beautiful*! I was practically sold on the new F-bikes as soon as I saw photos of the screen two years ago.



rode south out of Modesto on Crows Landing Road. The Nav VI led me to Crows Landing, then south on (CA-33) through Newman, Gustine and then to Santa Nella. I don't recall riding this much of (CA-33) in the past; I just followed the whim of the GPS. Riding south out of Santa Nella, I passed the O'Neill Forebay and saw the raised gates used to separate the 'Forebay from the California Aqueduct. I took the westbound on-ramp on (CA-152) headed for Pacheco Pass and points distant. The pass was windy as ever. I stopped off at Casa de Fruta to get off the bike, drink some water, and stretch a bit. After answering the omnipresent question, "Aren't you hot in that," I got back on the GSA and continued west to Gilroy. Temperatures were in the 90s when I left Modesto, and the neck wrap and cooling vest were both doing their jobs admirably.

This was my first ride in the town of Gilroy. In the past, I only saw it whizzing by on the (101). The downtown strip on Monterey Road looks nice. I'll have to go back and check it out. After turning left onto 1st Street, I continued west to Hecker Pass, and

then turned off onto Pole Line Road into Mt. Madonna County Park. Before leaving the house, I noticed the sharp turn into the park, and expected a near hair-pin blind turn; uphill(!!), mind you. I was not disappointed. I managed not to hyperventilate into the turn, rode the clutch, and accelerated uphill in second gear. I did not stall the bike, let alone drop it. Bonus!

I rode up the hill to the gate house and paid the \$6.00 day use fee. I realized after arriving at the meeting that I should have reregistered for the meeting and campout, at the new-new-new location, but I overlooked that option in my rush to get out of the house and down the road. I received a map and directions to the Indian Rock group campsite from the nice ranger. I made a point to ask if the road into the campsite was steep; she said it was "a little steep." *sigh* I taped the day pass to my windscreen, turned the bike back on, kickstand up, and onward I went.

The ride further up the mountain was nice and sedate: No cars in a rush. One hair-pin left-hander, no stalls, no drops, and I arrived a few minutes later at the dirt parking lot above our campsite. A couple deep breaths, a shouted, "heads up," to allow the kid playing on the road to move on with his dad, and I edged my way down the dirt and gravel path. Just past the turnout clearing with downed trees I saw the path to camp continue at a slighter steeper downward angle. At this point, feeling tired and very cautious, I turned back into the clearing and parked the GSA. I got out of my gear, draped it over the bike, turned the tank bag into a backpack, grabbed my new Big Agnes camp chair and a groundsheet, then headed down to camp on foot. My Airflow boots were not as slick and slippery on the dirt path as I feared, so I made it into camp on foot without trouble. I greeted a couple of members and new faces, set up my camp chair and settled in for the August meeting to begin.





Kevin called the meeting to order; announcements were made; various comments from the peanut gallery piped up; new members introduced themselves. Updates on Chris Weld's condition were welcome news: Still recovering at home, but out and about, and soon to be shopping for a new ride. Hooray! After the meeting I ate my emergency PBJ, drank some water, chatted with some fellow members, then headed back up the hill to leave: I had to work in the morning, and I am not an early riser when it comes to camping with the club. I was disappointed as this looked like one of the best campsites where I could hang hammock! Plenty of trees surrounded the site, and the temperatures were cool.

I checked in at the bike, then continued back uphill to the dirt parking lot, just to get a feel for it. I returned to the GSA cum clothes-horse, spent a few minutes looking for my clear safety glasses (that I managed not to step on while they lay in soft dirt next to the

bike), geared up, texted home, then rode back out. The ride out was even less eventful, and I arrived at the stop sign at the bottom of the hill without shenanigans. Goal achieved: Get off the mountain before sunset. I rode east back to Gilroy, to Casa de Fruta (for another water stop and rest), back to Santa Nella, then wildly decided to ride north on (I-5). It'll be faster, I told myself.

Northbound on (I-5) was a little more punishing than I expected with the wind, and the engine vibrations began to bother my hands and arms at (70)+ mph. Using the electronic cruise control did not help that much, but it was nice. I kept my hands on the



controls and the levers covered. The handlebars definitely need some Grip Buddies, bar-end weights, or some combination thereof. I feel like bar risers are also in order. Maybe a taller seat, or peg lowering kit, too. The hip-knee-leg angle is still a touch sharp on a long day like today.

After passing Patterson, I took the (I-5) branch north to (CA-132), then east on (CA-132) to Modesto. I passed an accident scene east of Vernalis. Traffic slowed down, but kept moving, with some bystanders taking the lead and waving cars around and through the site. Emergency responders passed me as I got closer to Modesto, first one patrol cruiser, then a second, then an ambulance. Wow. I arrived home safely shortly before 10:00 PM. First long ride since I picked up the bike now in the books, Time for the (600) mile break in service. Up next: the 2021 Range of Light Gypsy Tour!

Lance Harrison

Addendum: Heading back to Modesto on (CA-132) I passed an accident scene. A head-on collision had occurred and both cars were resting on the edge of the roadway shoulder: A red sedan and a white SUV. I was shocked to learn from my supervisor the identity of the driver in the red sedan. She was a security officer we worked with for several years at Kaiser Permanente Modesto, before she was hired by the client. She will be missed.

Just Plug and Roll - Learning to accept your leaks and how to plug them

When my brother and I were planning a motorcycle trip through the Dolomites years ago, I asked him what he would bring for emergency tire repair. "Uh ... I'll just call roadside service when I have a problem." I pointed out to him that there might be no cell reception when he gets a nail in the tire, or the service might not show up for hours, or they may only transport his bike to the closest shop, or the shop may be closed, or they may not be able to service the bike until the next day. With a tire repair kit, you can often instead be back on the road within a short amount of time. Clearly, there are many reasons to be prepared and able to plug your own tire.

My wife Heike and I experienced that firsthand on our ride to the July club campout. On Saturday morning, we were about 20 minutes past Lodi when the red warning triangle came on my K1600GT. My rear tire was losing air rapidly. I stopped and, after a first "oh sh*t" moment, turned around to ride to the last town to park in a shady area next to a restaurant. We quickly found the culprit: a tiny allen wrench had punctured the tire! Fortunately, I had everything I

needed: a toolkit to plug the tire and a pump to fill it back up.



I I hadn't plugged a tire in ages, but it's straightforward with the Stop & Go tubeless tire repair kit I brought (see pictures): remove the foreign object, use the file to rough up the hole, thread a rope plug through the needle of the insertion tool, apply plenty of cement to it, then push the needle in halfway and pull out. The plug stays behind. Wait 15 minutes, cut what's hanging out of the plug back to about a quarter inch, and pump up the tire.

My little pump took a while, so, once

I had a decent amount in the tire, I rode to a nearby car repair shop to fill up the rest. Altogether it took about an hour before we were back on the road. This included talking to fellow bikers who called a nearby repair shop (which was closed) and me calling A&S Motorcycles (about an hour away, which I've had good experience with in the past, but they couldn't guarantee that my bike would be serviced before the end of the day, which would have been the end of our trip).

After I got some reassurance from other bikers that the plug would hold the rest of the life of the tire, we decided to continue to the campsite and arrived just in time to hear the tail end of the club meeting.

It's relatively rare to have your tire punctured on the road, but wouldn't you know it, I discovered a screw in the rear tire at breakfast the next morning! Perfect, now I get to practice what I learned the previous day. This time I rode to a nearby gas station and timed myself. It took less than 30 minutes from parking the bike to being back on the road! I was quite proud of myself:).

The tire repair kit and the pump worked well. Here are some pro tips to make repair even easier.

- My pump has multiple power pickups, but not the plug for the DIN power socket on the GT. Fortunately I had a DIN-to-cigarette-lighter-socket adapter with me.
- 2. If you have pliers, it's easier to remove objects that are wedged in the tire, such as screws.
- 3. If you can park the bike near an air pump station for the repair, pumping it up will be that much faster.

Altogether, on this weekend, Heike and I were able to ride all the miles we had originally planned, with minor delay. It confirmed for me that it's worthwhile to bring the right tools and to be prepared to fix your own bike, if possible.

Markus Fromherz



Stop & Go Repair Kit



Apply cement to plug



Push in halfway and then pull out



Wait 15 minutes and then pump up the tire



Look pleased with yourself and then ride off into the distance

A Day Ride to New Idria and through Clear Creek

Even though the Bay Area is densely populated, the maps show many vast blank regions, crossed by a single lonely road in close proximity. Seeing these, always makes me wonder: "What the heck is out there?" Having an Adventure Bike makes it easy to give in to the lure and go and find out. The experience is always so much more than just another Sunday ride!

New Idria has a great deal of lore that adds to the allure of its remote location in the southern Diablo Range. At one time, it was the second richest quicksilver mine in the United States (New Almaden in south San Jose was the richest) producing thirty-eight million pounds of mercury from 1854 to 1972. Hundreds of Mexican, Chilean and Cornish miners, stripped to the waist, worked miles and miles of underground shafts. Despite the torrid heat and horribly toxic environment, excellent wages drew plenty of men.

During the 20th century, mainly in the 1950's and 1960's, the principal mineral extracted was asbestos. In addition to mercury and asbestos, many rare minerals are found in the area. The most notable is the semi-precious gem Benitoite, which is California's official state gem. This gem is mined on a 40-acre parcel of private property located in the middle of Clear Creek. Another rare gem is the demantoid garnet. This stone is green, unlike most garnets which are red. Demantoid garnets are only found in the Ural Mountains of Russia, Mexico Namibia and Clear Creek.

All that remains of New Idria is a ghost town of more than 100 buildings. It's so polluted that the EPA has declared New Idria a Superfund Site and has taken measures to limit mercury contamination in downstream creeks. The dilapidated homes and rusting mining buildings are accessible and made great subjects for photography – but there are still some residents, and they are not always friendly. If you choose to visit, please respect private property and "No Trespassing" signs.

Even more appealing than just visiting the ghost town, was the idea of riding through the old mining areas. The Clear Creek Management Area (CCMA)" is a 50,000-acre area run by the Bureau of Land Management. Elevations range from about 2,200 ft. in the staging/camping areas to 5,241 ft. on San Benito Mountain, the highest point in San Benito County. Most of the riding area is between 3,000 and 4,500 ft. elevation.

As is typical in an old mining district, there are miles and miles of roads carved into the mountains. The BLM has been actively maintaining about 100 miles of these roads that were identified as major contributors of erosion. This is just the tip of the iceberg: It is estimated that there could be over 500 miles of roads, bulldozer paths to exploration digs, and OHV trails constructed over the years by users of the area.

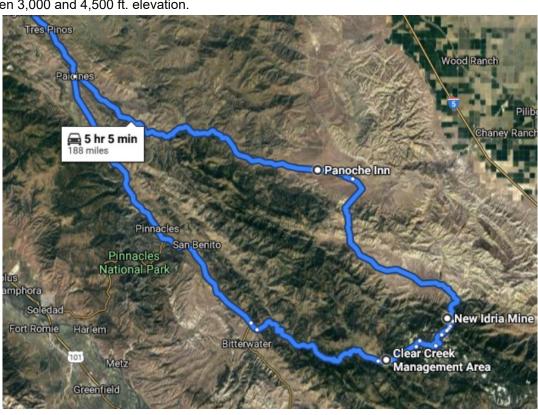
While the area used to be open for exploration, access has been severely restricted in the early 2000's. Visitors are now restricted to signed routes and to designated barrens. Most off the routes have padlocked gates – gate codes are provided with the reservation confirmations.

In order to ride through the CCMA, at least two permits are required.

- Serpentine Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
 Permit: This free permit allows an individual to access the
 Serpentine ACEC within the Clear Creek Management Area
 for the duration of one day. Each person, regardless of age,
 entering the Serpentine ACEC is required to have a permit in
 their name and on their person. An individual is allowed a
 total of five permits per calendar year
- 2. Clear Creek Vehicle Permit: Vehicles entering the Clear Creek Management Area, including the Condon Peak campground and trail head, are required to have a Clear Creek Vehicle Permit. The permit is \$5 per vehicle and allows the vehicle to enter the Clear Creek Management Area for seven days from the date of entry. Each vehicle must display the permit on its dash while in the Clear Creek Management Area.

These permits can be obtained online via recreation.gov. The gates are closed by daisy chained, color-coded padlocks. Your permit will provide the codes for padlocks of a specific color. There are quite a few gates, some can be ridden around easily, others are pretty much impossible to avoid on a heavy adventure bike. So, make sure you identify the codes on your permit, before you head out. The placing on the paper is NOT intuitive!

The Ride



From 101 at the south end of Gilroy, we took Highway 25 to Hollister. At Paicines, twelve miles south of Hollister, we turned left on Panoche Road. Thirty miles of country road led to Panoche Valley, a hauntingly vast and barren plain tucked in the Coast Range just before it gives way to the Central Valley. The Panoche Inn is a fun little place to stop. Completely out in the middle of nowhere. They sell food and drinks to those of us that wander off the beaten path.

South of Panoche, we turned onto New Idria Road. This paved but rugged road traces a remote canyon – forested mountains



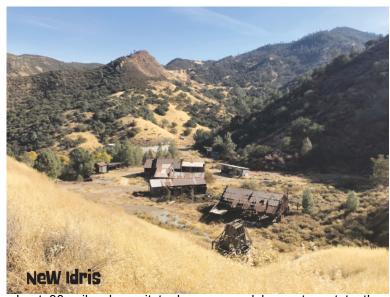




on one side, barren hills on the other – another twenty-five miles to the ghost town.

We drove through New Idria past dilapidated homes and rusting mining buildings to an overlook above the town. The pavement ends right at New Idria, where Clear Creek Road begins.

Even though our route through the CCMA was only supposed to be



about 30 miles long, it took us several hours to get to the pavement on the other side.

Even though we were supposed to "only follow the marked





routes", there were no markers! With lots of dirt racks going in all directions, navigation definitely was a challenge! I had a GPS track – but that was only helpful in telling me when I left the right track. It didn't really help in finding the right turns at intersections.

We ran into some dirt bikers, but except for comments like "You are really taking these big bikes here??!"

They were not really helpful. They had ridden these tracks forever and knew them by heart – but our map was meaningless to them. As a result, it took as a very long time and lots of exploring of other tracks, before we found the gate that lead to R14.

My bike was tired and insisted on a lot of dirt naps on the steep, windy path up and down the hills.





The ruts were bottomless pits of very fine silt. Once I got stuck in one, it was very difficult to get out. And then, once out, I had the choice of riding of the cliff or getting into the next rut. While my riding partner had less problems, I just went from stuck to getting stuck again. This section was less then 2 miles long, but



extremely time consuming and tiring

As we learned later, this section of R14 is no longer maintained nor recommended. A new easier R14 alternate has been created. Unfortunately, the maps on the BLM website have still not been updated.

Overall, the ride through Clear Creek was stunningly beautiful and really fun to ride. Once we made it to the top of R14, through the next gate, the road was well graded, offered beautiful views and some fun water crossings.

We hit pavement again at the main entrance to the Clear Creek Management Area at Coaling Road. This itself is a fun road leading back to Hwy25 and finally 101.

Overall, we rode about 200 miles, with about 30 of those off the pavement.

This is a fun day ride from the Bay Area, leading through some seldom explored areas.

Delf Hedde

If you are considering giving it a try, here are some tips:

- For large parts of the route, there is absolutely no cell service. Even though you are relatively close to the Bay Area, you are in the middle of nowhere. Carrying a satellite communicator like InReach or Spot is a really good idea.
- Carry lots of water. The area can get hot.
- I would avoid this route in the rainy season, some of the water crossings look like they can get really deep.
- Bring a map! Navigation can be tricky!
- Make sure you have all the required permits. The northern part of the CCMA is very isolated, but there are Rangers close to the headquarters, and they do roam.
- Make sure you have the gate codes. The first gate is pretty far into the area riding all the way only to figure that you have to turn around is not fun!
- Basic info about the area can be found on the BLM web site: https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-passes/lotteries-and-permit-systems/california/ clear-creek-management-area

The South Bay Riders forum (southbayriders.com) has good info about riding the CCMA and even a dedicated subforum for political action regarding the reopening of the area.

August Campout - Mt Madonna Indian Rock

After two location changes due to the fires, Kevin and Bert found a site at the last minute and put together a new route that ran down the peninsula starting at the Black Bear Diner in Colma and ending near Watsonville.

About 30 riders showed up at the start. Kevin asked for volunteers to lead a group. After last month's diabolic attempt to lead a group, I kept my hand firmly by my side. Extremely fortunate decision based on later TomTom miss-directions.

Kevin led the first group and I tagged along at the end of the slow group led by Dave Halliwell. After being with the club for nearly 10 years now it's unusual to ride a new stretch of road, but starting in Colma we headed to Hwy 1 towards Half Moon Bay, which was my first time. It was unexpectedly spectacular in places, but because it was Saturday morning with decent waves, the surfers were out in force causing the traffic to slow to a halt in places.

We turned on Tunitas Creek Road riding through the redwood forest to Skyline. As we got higher the smoke from the distant fires got worse and the temperatures went up until we reached Alice's for our first stop, and at the gas station another first for me - a hydrogen fuel pump.

The route took us down La Honda, then Alpine Road to Hwy 9. It was clearly Kevin's intent to include all the best roads on the peninsular into this single ride. He wasn't finished because he managed to include Jamison Creek and a ride through fire damaged Bonny Doon before the lunch stop in Felton. By this time the temperature was in the 90's and I was starting to have trouble concentrating. I know when it's time to stop when I try to change gear with the brake lever. (I was programmed from birth to shift with the right foot).

I don't normally do lunch but I must admit the California Club sandwich at Redwood Sandwich was the best I have eaten for some time. I took so long that by the time I had finished all the others were on their bikes revving their engines waiting for me. I waved them off and five minutes later set off on my own, confidant in the capabilities of my TomTom. It was about 15 minutes later that my untrustworthy TomTom took me to a stop sign on Hyw17 and suggested I make a left-hand turn. This was around 1.00pm on a Saturday afternoon and the traffic was nose to tail running about 60mph in both directions. I was just thankful I wasn't leading a group into potential carnage. After about 5 minutes there was a 50-yard gap and I went for it.

A little while later following TomTom's duplicitous directions I ended up on Eureka Canyon Road, another new road for me. This is a single-track road with quite a bit of traffic, full of potholes. In fact, I swear there were patched potholes inside the patched potholes. Roads like this remind one of the need to purchase a bike with at least 8 inch of suspension travel.

Riding on my own I was looking out for others who stopped at the Freedom Meat Locker, but both I and TomTom completely missed it and I kept on riding. Miraculously I arrived at a nearly empty campsite. After leaving the lunch stop behind the second group, I had arrived at the campsite before anyone.

My typical campsite cooking consists of opening a can of soup. Thinking ahead I spoke to Kevin and offered to pay for an extra tri-tip if the expert camp-site cooks would deal with the preparation. This was a brilliant decision and resulted in the best camping meal ever. Thanks guys.

John Ellis



















































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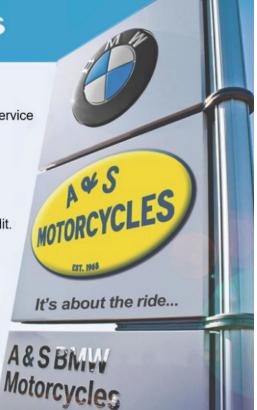
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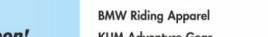
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	Kevin Coleman (president@bmwnorcal.org)	(925) 890-8449
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	Jorgan Larson	
	(vicepresident@bmwnorcal.org)	(870)273-4746
1	SECRETARY*	
	Mike Murphy secretary@bmwnorcal.org	(310) 497-0618
	TREASURER*	(515) 157 5515
	Hugo Bonilla	
	treasurer@bmwnorcal.org	(650) 534-8739
	TOUR CAPTAIN*	
	David Fliehr	(025)519 2020
	tourcaptain@bmwnorcal.org SAFETY/TECH DIRECTOR*	(925)518-3939
	Bert Lankins	
	safetytech@bmwnorcal.org	(408)705-6013
	HISTORIAN*	
Ser U	Rick Webb historian@bmwnorcal.org	(707) 494-6629
	NEWSLETTER EDITOR	(101) 434 0023
	John Ellis	
	newseditor@bmwnorcal.org	(925) 918 3106
	MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY Russ Drake	
	twobeemers@aol.com	(510) 427-3309
	ADVERTISING CHAIR	
9	Manny Rubio	
	Adchair@bmwnorcal.org	(925) 784-4856
1	SECOND SUNDAY BREAKFAST Mark Rodda	
	ssbr@bmwnorcal.org	(650) 213-6253
la la	49er CHAIR	
	open	
	49erChair@bmwnorcal.org	

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BMW Club of Northern California P.O. Box 2472

Santa Clara
CA 95055
www.norcal.org

EVENTS

03 Sep 2021 3:00 pm, to 06 Sep. 2021 Range of Light Gipsy Tour. Starts at Glenn County Fair in Orland (221 E Yolo St, Orland, CA 95963)

25-26 Sep 2021 Campout. Cedar Flat campground. Group Site - Camp Noren. located 25 miles Southeast of Bishop California in the Inyo National Forest

PLEASE CHECK NORCAL.ORG FOR LATEST INFORMATION ON ALL EVENTS. EVENTS MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR CANCELLATION BASED ON CURRENT FIRE SITUATION



Anniversaries

July	Jay Martin	5
	Dan Mulholland	5
	Lizabeth Workman	5
August	Michael Aday	5
	Richard George	5
	Nick Gloyd	5
	Dan Gragert	45
	Don Wilson	10
September	Todd Kennedy	5
	Bill Lopez	10
	Pierre Louie	10
	Bob Pelikan	35
	James Stoney	5
	Steve Weaver	10
	Rick Webb	35
	Ralph Wholey	15

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