



SANTA BARBARA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

[HTTP://WWW.SBBMWRIDERS.ORG](http://www.sbbmwriders.org)

BMW MOA CLUB #165

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May 2020

Member News and Rides

On April 20th, we had our first Club meeting using Zoom, with about 18 participants. Zoom is not exactly the same as being able to greet everyone at the big table at Cody's, but it was nice to see everyone's smiling faces, thanks to electronic wizardry.

Steve asked: How is everyone doing? How are people staying connected?

Michael M. said that he went on Foxen Canyon Road and other roads in that area and the roads are empty. He has also been riding Colson Canyon and Ballenger Canyon.

Bob rode on Camino Cielo and noted 3 riders on e-bikes.

Harvey has been riding with **John W.** and **Phyllis** and has not changed his riding habits. Phyllis mentioned that she noted many more motorcyclists out since just a few weeks ago.

Dagi has been riding her bicycle and hiking. **Steve** has also been bike riding, as have **Diane** and **Wayne**, who have also been exploring neighborhoods on long walks.

Jeff L. lives in Camarillo and he has been riding around Malibu.

John A. has not been doing much riding, but on occasion rides to Ojai for take-out food for 3-4 families.

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Deb W. has been doing some day riding on Highways 150 and 33 and she has been doing a lot of bicycle riding, too.

Dave M. has been busy with other projects and has not been riding; and **Michael** and **Veronica** have been laying low and not riding.

Big Sur by Bill Cox



Photos from Out on the Road



SB BMW Riders Calendar

- ❖ Monday, May 18: Club meeting, 6 p.m. via Zoom. Register in advance for the Zoom meeting at this link: [Zoom meeting registration](#)
- ❖ We will be having Zoom meetings in lieu of meetings at Cody's Café for the indefinite future.
- ❖ Any other activities or rides scheduled, let me know! djkrohn@cox.net

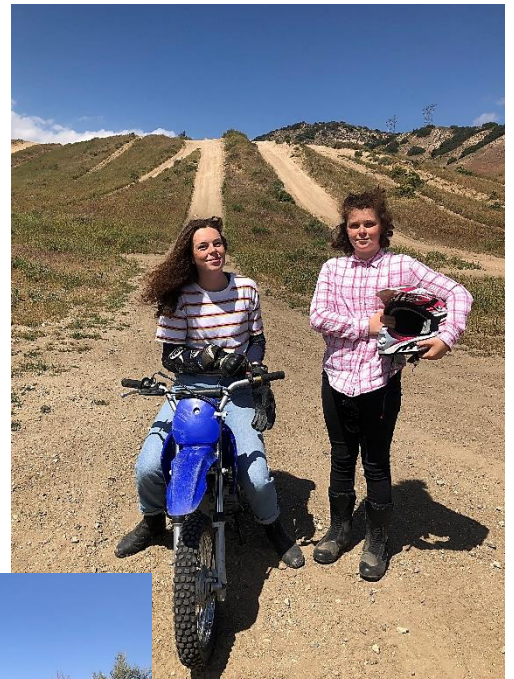


Top: Spring 2020, by David Hamilton.

Left: Antelope Valley, by Tanja Stoyan.

Right: Young riders getting familiar with bikes at Gorman, by Eddie Vertucci.

Bottom: Quatal Canyon, by Eddie Vertucci.



BMW MOA National Rally

Yes, the 2020 National Rally has been postponed for this year. It has been re-scheduled for June 24-27, 2021, at the same location, Expo Park, Great Falls, Montana. If you had already registered and paid for the 2020 rally, your registration will automatically carry over to the new dates. If you had made alternate lodging reservations, you will need to contact the hotel separately to cancel those reservations.

If you prefer a refund from BMW MOA, you can either get a refund for the registration costs, or you can apply the amount to any other MOA event anytime between 2020 to 2022. If you do this, a voucher will be issued that will be for your registration cost plus 20%.

Either way, you must submit refund requests using the Refund Request Form at this link: [Rally Refunds](#)

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Upcoming Events

Note: With the current physical distancing requirements, many events and rallies have been cancelled or postponed.

- The 49'er Rally is cancelled: [49'er Rally Cancelled](#)
- The Chief Joseph Rally is cancelled: [Chief Joseph Rally Cancelled](#)
- Overland Expo West has new dates: July 24-26: Overland Expo West, Flagstaff, AZ. [Overland Expo West](#)
- MOA Getaway Los Osos has new dates: July 24-26: [MOA Getaway Los Osos](#)
- The BMW National Rally is cancelled for 2020, but will take place in the same location, Great Falls, MT, in 2021. [BMW MOA National Rally 2021](#)
- July 16-18: 49th Annual Top O' The Rockies Rally, Paonia, CO. [49th Annual Top O' The Rockies Rally](#)



Munich to Istanbul: Part 1

By Marilyn Makepeace

Note from Marilyn: *These are abbreviated notes are from my daily journal. Our hotels were all 4-5 star with a couple of exceptions. Over Pentecost, all hotels were booked a year in advance, too soon for Ayres to book for the group, so the best ones weren't always available. I talk about members of the group and I've deleted many, but not all, comments about Bob and Donna because it sounded like complaining. It wasn't, it's observation only and my response to their behavior. Donna had many good ideas for the group through this trip. On occasion I refer to people I've ridden with on other trips.*

Friday, May 10th: Munich

Met the group at breakfast, scattered throughout the dining room: Bob and Donna, Carlos, Mauricio, Ricardo and Jean Paul (the Chileans), Estuardo (Nicaraguan), Carlos (Honduran?) living in Texas, Brad (Swiss), Mary Lou (American). When Bob and I were introduced he slumped into his chair, clasped his hands in front of his face and stared at me, eyes wide, as though he was terrified. Wouldn't say hi. Others in the group were friendly and glad to meet each other.

Saturday, May 11th: Munich

Packing and organizing for tomorrow's departure. Waiting for the bikes so I can set up my seat, straps and Gerbings pigtail.

Late afternoon: everyone met in the lobby. Claus led the intro and overview. Axel and Janis would be our tour leaders. After the meeting we went to the garage to set up our bikes. Late dinner at a brew hall. Noisy.

Sunday, May 12th: Munich to Millstatt, Austria

First ride day, leaving Munich. Cold: mid 30's most of the day, raining and snowing in the mountains, so we didn't ride the passes. Stayed on the Autobahn; no trucks allowed on Sunday.

Disappointed in my gear. It's waterproof (has been until now) and treated but I'm soaked through. Damn. My waterproof boots are also wet. Damn. What happened? My heated gear is on high. Watched the thermometer on my bike flashing at 3°C (36°F). Watching for possible ice on the road. We did ride in mixed rain/snow.

Before lunch, we crossed into Austria. Long downhill, several km. As we descended, it warmed to 10°C. Despite the rain and cold, today was an easy ride. Several long tunnels through the mountains.

Monday, May 13th: Millstatt, Austria to Ljubljana, Slovenia

Today: Ride a short distance through Italy and stay the night in Slovenia. We've ridden through and into four countries. All EU, no borders. Except for Slovenia, there were no border signs that I could find. The mountains and hills are filled with charming villages and farms.

Change of plans: the pass in Italy was rainy, cold, possibly snowy and icy, so Axel decided it was too risky. We took a country mountain road instead; tiny switchbacks, beautiful.

Tuesday, May 14th: Ljubljana to Lakes of Plitvice, Croatia

Another cold, rainy day. At least it's no worse than yesterday and my gear is still wet. Miserable to put on. Beautiful countryside. Easy riding. Several days of rain has caused major flooding in this area.

Lakes of Plitvice: National Park. Waterfalls were spectacular, all lakes were overflowing and we couldn't take the walking tour.

We ate in the dining room to avoid hundreds of Chinese coming off several buses and swarming the buffet. This hotel is not the greatest, beat up and industrial, part of the National Park system. Croatia is still recovering from the war.

Afterthoughts: Donna is a foodie and obsessed with photographing food. As soon as you're served, she gets in your face with her camera. I've also learned to not sit next to her at the table; she gesticulates so wildly I think she's going to hit me. Bob refuses to speak to me. I don't know if he's socially inept, afraid or hateful. Getting to know the rest of the group. A good bunch.

Wednesday. Yes, it's Wednesday: Lakes of Plitvice to Split, Croatia

Breakfast was terrible. Nothing worth having. We left in deep fog and freezing rain, 34 degrees. It started to clear, but then it didn't. Eventually the rain stopped; it warmed and the sun came through for a minute. We rode narrow mountain roads, hairpin turns, and through villages with houses riddled with bullet holes. Because road conditions were bad, we took a



different route to the coast. It warmed to low 60's. Feels like a heatwave. Lunch was in a small seaside village on the Adriatic. No credit cards, Croatian cash only. Suddenly we're in a different world. Riding along the coast we passed harbors, coves, picturesque anchorages. Beautiful Mediterranean blue water. Split: love this hotel. Too bad it's a one-nighter.

*Parked along the Croatian coast
at a lunch stop.*

Thursday: Split to Dubrovnik, Croatia

After 4 days of freezing rain and cold, we had a beautiful day to ride. My gear was dry and I didn't mind putting it on. We rode along the coast before turning up into the mountains, lots of beautiful twisties and scenery, stopped at a small café for coffee and comfort stop. Very few cars on the road. After the stop, Axel took us on a narrow road full of switchbacks. I had a close call with an oncoming car that swung too wide on a turn. I'm here to tell the tale.

In the morning we went into the mountains before coming back to the coast. We crossed the border easily from Croatia into Bosnia-Herzegovina and crossed the 10k easement that allows Bosnia-Herzegovina access to the sea. On the other side we crossed back into Croatia and rode on to Dubrovnik.

Another very comfortable hotel. I could stay a while. Our dinner restaurant was a two-minute walk down the road. I was tired, we waited a long time to be served, it was getting late and I fell asleep sitting up at the dining table waiting for dinner.

Today at the gas pump Donna got nasty. With three pumps I didn't realize there was only one nozzle for nine bikes so, being next in line, I lifted it not realizing she was going to fill three bikes at once. That's when she let it rip. Not necessary. I've been trying to like her but I'm not sure I can.

Saturday: Dubrovnik via Montenegro to Dures, Albania



Old Dubrovnik street.

Lots of tunnels today. Most were lit but some of the longer ones were pitch black.

At the Albanian border one of the guards kicked a bike and damaged the pannier. Another one yelled at me about my motorcycle papers. At the last window an immigration officer threw my passport at me. No cause that I could see. It's an angry, depressed country still recovering from communist rule.

Lunch in Kotor. Passengers from cruise ships swarmed the city. Leaving Kotor, we headed up a mountain road. A bus coming down cut the switchback too close, drifted into oncoming traffic and then hitting Mary Lou, knocking her over. The driver and several passengers got out to help her. No injuries, no damage. Incredibly good luck. Beautiful mountain riding. Parts of it were at a high enough altitude so that spring had not fully sprung. Trees were in very early greening.

Albania is depressing. Drivers are crazy. It's only been 20 years since Albanians could drive. Axle was right; most cars are missing lights or parts. Cars are tiny and beat up, the higher end cars look as though they've been through the battles and most are stolen from Europe. Don't ride at night; very little street lighting in towns, manhole covers are removed, don't know why.

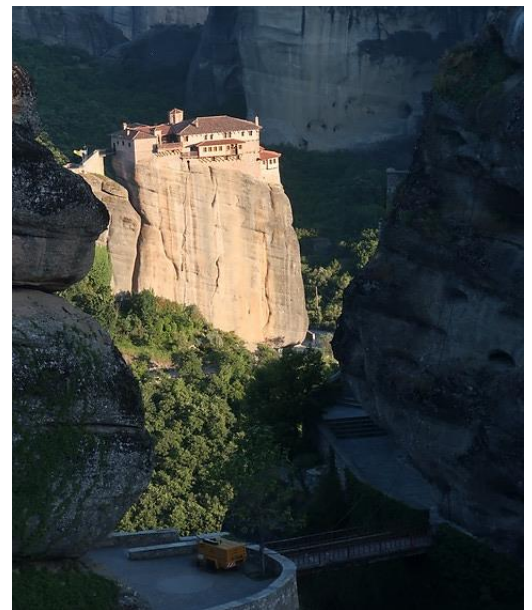
When checking into the hotel in Durres I noticed an oddly snazzy looking man by the front door. Suddenly a strangely dressed woman came rushing in and introduced herself to him. They shook hands and happily went running off towards the elevator.

Dinner was served at 10:00 after waiting an hour and a half after ordering.

Sunday, May 19th: Durres to Aristi, Greece

Another early start to another long day. Albania is dirty and the infrastructure is poor. People are tough; they've been through a lot and haven't come out of it yet.

Early on we stopped for gas. Albanian gas stations don't take Albanian currency or credit cards, Euros only. There was a big hoo-ha about me paying. The attendant seemed to want more money and Axel couldn't figure out how much the gas cost or if the attendant was scamming him. I wasn't sure if the "discussion" was about the two bikes in front of me (JP and Ricardo) paying together and including me or not. I did fill up, but maybe the pump wasn't cleared first. I have no idea. I ended up paying €15 for 9L of gas, about \$17 for 2 1/2 gallons. Pricey. I don't think this episode was anything more than language barrier and misunderstanding. Part of the adventure.



Meteora Monastery, Greece

Big wind came up as we headed into the mountains and passes. We started up the narrow, bumpy mountain road into twisties and switchbacks with oncoming traffic that included tour buses and trucks. At one point I was behind a slow overloaded dump truck that lost traction on construction gravel and shot rocks at me. It was too narrow and twisty to pass. Finally, he pulled over and let me and several others by. It was slow going; I was nervous, riding narrow turns in low gear while being hammered by wind. By the time we got to the top of the pass, I was shaking and had to stop. Brad kindly offered to ride with me because he was also nervous and we agreed that neither of us should be out there on that pass alone. (We're never alone, the van is always behind us.)

Albanian roads are rough and tiring but not as bad as I expected. Janis said we were on the way to the border, but this twisting back road didn't seem to be going anywhere. Many times I thought this must be a mistake, that I'd missed a turn and was on the wrong road, but

occasionally I got a reassuring glimpse of the van behind the last three bikes. Leaving Albania was easier than entering, and we were all glad to have Albania behind us.

Greece. The last 10K to the hotel was on another narrow, twisty and beautiful country road. The 1k “driveway” was an excessively narrow two track rough cobblestone road. I held my breath and went. Everything was going well when we came to a very sharp steep upturn to the right that sloped left and then went downhill. Made it.

Mountain resort hotel. Dinner was wonderful. The hotel offered the option of each choosing an entrée or the table deciding to let the kitchen put several different dishes out for everyone to taste. We chose the latter. Good choice.

Today was Mary Lou’s last day, as she’s heading home tomorrow. I’m sorry she’s leaving; she’s a hoot and I’ll miss her energy in the group.

Afterthoughts: The Chileans are the most helpful and polite in the entire group. Mauricio, especially, has been helping me with my bags. The one American man the group leaves a lot to be desired. I’m more than capable and don’t need help but when I struggle up/down steps and the only American in the group sees me and walks right on by, won’t even speak to me (basically makes me invisible), it’s a little annoying.

Monday, May 20th: Rest day in Aristi, Greece.

Late breakfast. Walked down a stone path directly from the hotel into the village, a 5-minute walk.

Aristi is a sleepy mountain village with one stoplight controlling traffic in a blind spot too narrow for two-way traffic. Wandered and browsed a few small shops and into a restaurant for coffee. The local crazy man was ranting in the village square. He apparently speaks several languages. (Maybe he plays to the tourists). Bob responded and cranked him up. Bob laughed but I felt uneasy. You never know when some nut job will go over the line. Bob’s way of handling things is to provoke and yell. The other night at dinner he yelled at the server calling him Achmed. Embarrassing, wrong.



View from the hotel in Aristi, Greece

To be continued....