

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Montana BMW Riders

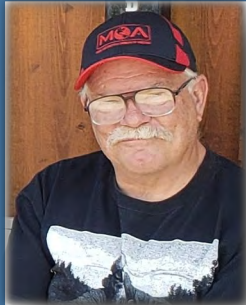


CLUB CHARTER MEMBERSHIPS :

BMW MOA #155

AMA #6830

## President's Corner - Larry Manchester



The election results are in for the Officers of the MONTANA BMW RIDERS Club for calendar years 2025 and 2026. Thanks to Dick French for sending out the ballots and doing a final count. There were 75 ballots returned, and all unanimously approved the slate of officers. I want to personally thank all of you who responded for your support. The officer team for 2025 and 2026 is as follows:

- President–**Larry Manchester** (Corvallis)
- Vice President–**Lon McComas** (Seeley Lake)
- Sec/Treasurer–**Al Murray** (Helena)

I look forward to the next two years. We have a great ride schedule for 2025, and I am hoping for some good turnouts with lots of bikes once the weather cooperates. The Club continues to grow, we are now at 164 members. I have already received some suggestions for future venues and as we start to put together the ride schedule for 2026 I will keep those in mind. We are always open to more suggestions so keep them coming in.

We always have more venues to choose from than available dates. By meeting once a month we are limited to available days. With that being said, I am planning on adding a few localized informal rides to just meet, share a meal and enjoy a good ride. Venues such as Fetty's Cafe in Wisdom, Lochsa Lodge, Avon Cafe come to mind for riders in the Missoula and Bitterroot area or for anyone else who just wants to get out and ride. The long summer days with lots of daylight are perfect for an hour or two rides. I am thinking of an early dinner, such as 5:00 pm. That gives us time to ride home before dark. More to come on this - please let me know if you have venue suggestions. I will be reaching out to some of you in Helena, Kalispell, Bozeman and Billings regions to see if you want to add a few rides for your areas. Talk it over with your friends, we could put the rides in the Newsletter, so all are aware.

I have read some interesting articles on the financial troubles of some motorcycle manufacturers. Both Harley Davidson and KTM are struggling. KTM has declared bankruptcy and is going through a restructuring to try and save the business. They have between 300,000 and 500,000 bikes in warehouses and dealer showrooms waiting to be sold. Some are 2022 and 2023 models. It seems buyers are not interested in the high dollar, \$20k and up bikes and a vast majority of bikes not sold are in that category. Smaller, cheaper bikes are moving better but management did not make those a priority for the factories; go figure.

Harley made a gamble on their new electric bikes and that gamble has not paid off. Seems the Harley crowd is not into quiet, funky looking bikes. That seems like a no brainer to me. And just like KTM, the majority of Harleys for sale in showrooms are in the upper \$25k range, some pushing over the \$30K mark. Many folks nowadays do not have that kind of money to shell out.

It will be interesting to see how motorcycling evolves in the coming years. When I look at our Club I don't see a lot of young people. Will the sport die off once all of us geezers can no longer ride? I hope not. I am trying to encourage my grandkids to get into motorcycling. They are young so there is still time before I panic, but right now they seem to be more interested in video games and smartphones.

The March meeting is March 23rd in Wilsall at the Vault Restaurant. They have great food, see you there!

*Larry*

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Report from the Road - Sandi Simons



Even before reaching the door of the plane, I could feel the hot, dense air. Walking down the stairs, onto the tarmac and toward the building that housed immigration and customs I was glad I had researched and bought gear that would make riding in this hot, humid environment more bearable. Exiting the building with my luggage I found myself staring at various signs being held by drivers, looking for one that had my name on it. Not initially seeing it, I stepped to the side, out of the doorway and quickly opened an email to search for the shuttle company's name. I found the name and looked again, spotted the van and then the driver across the street. My name was on the board along with another woman's. I walked toward him, signaling that I was one of the people he was waiting for. While he loaded my luggage and we waited for the final person, I introduced myself to the others waiting. One was a woman, who was on the same tour I was on and three men who were also heading to the same town to rent motorbikes and ride on their own adventure.



As I stood in the shade staring at the palm trees, my body was coming to grips that it was no longer in the dry, cold Montana air or the sterile air-conditioned air of airports or planes. I smiled. I was here, in Belize! Adventure and new experiences await!

After almost a two-hour drive we arrived in Hopkins, a small seaside village. Hopkins has a population of probably 2,000 people and five miles of beaches. It also has a strong Garifuna<sup>(1)</sup> cultural presence, and you can hear drumming



throughout the town. I was shown to my room by my roommate. The place the tour was staying was also the motorbike rental business. Alternate Adventures and Crash Pad are the brainchildren of Emma Cases, a Swedish/Spanish woman who had spent a lot of her life traveling before settling in Hopkins and starting a motorbike rental company (Alternate Adventures) and then the small hotel (Crash Pad) with a hostel-like communal gathering area on the roof

overlooking the main street of Hopkins with hammocks and comfortable chairs. Together with her employees Cornelio and Juan, who are more like family, they had created a unique building and space. She had lived there, going on 15 years and was also going to be our tour guide.



We walked to a restaurant to eat while we waited for the last of the tour group to arrive. This all-women's tour was put together by Shalmarie Wilson, a motorcycle instructor based in Colorado. Although none of us knew each other before signing up for this tour, we had all previously taken courses from Shal. I and another woman ordered Hudut, a local dish. It consisted of a coconut soup with fried fish and a ball of mashed plantain with spices that you break up and add to the soup. It was delicious but time-consuming as you had to pull the meat from the fish into the soup and watch for bones. The others joined us a short time after we started eating. After much talking, we turned in, ready and eager for next day to start.

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Report from the Road - Sandi Simons - (continued)

Sunday morning, we did paperwork and were introduced to our bikes. Mine was a Honda XR 190L, others were Honda XR150's and Lifan LF250's. Once that was done, we suited up in our gear, ready for our first ride in Belize. By the time I left my room and reached the bike I was sweating. It was sunny and in the 80Fs with about 80% humidity. I had a base layer with mesh upper body armor and a jersey, thin dirt bike gloves, hip armor with well-ventilated dirt bike pants, knee guards and my Alpinestar Tech 7 boots. I carried a backpack with a 2-liter bladder along with a bottle of water and electrolytes.



After a few drills in a field to help us get acclimated to the bikes, off we went into the countryside. Riding through small villages and along the Sittie River. We stopped long enough for Emma to pick up lunch and we headed up a road to a small parking lot. We were having lunch at the Maya King Waterfalls, a series of three beautiful waterfalls! After a quick meal we jumped into the pools to cool off (we were told to wear our swimwear under our gear so we all were hoping water would be involved). The water was cold and felt so good! After a while we got out, dried off, geared up and jumped on



the bikes for more riding. Up and down a few hills and through a little mud. It was a good introductory ride to Belize and my bike for the week.

When we got back to Hopkins, we were shown a room to place our gear in so we would not have to bring it into our rooms. After a shower we headed out for dinner and conversation. We were from all walks of life, ages, and riding experience. Some had done multiple tours in foreign countries, for some, it was their first time. We all could not wait for what the next few days would bring.

Monday morning, we were all up early and eager to get riding. I walked to a local coffee shop that made stove top espresso. It was a long wait but so good. After breakfast at the hotel, we suited up. As I sat on the bike waiting I watched the school children walk and bicycle by in their school uniforms, some with backpacks that are almost the same size as them. They smile and wave and we wave back. It seemed wherever you went here people genuinely smiled and greeted you.

The entire day was a mind-boggling blast, there was just no other way to put it. The route was perfect, two track or dirt road weaving through forest, cleared forest and farmland. Wooden bridges, muddy sections, Emma stopping to point out a toucan and green parrots along with various plants. Clouds had moved in, and it was a little cooler. At one point she turned off the dirt road onto a, well, I guess you would call it a green road. Vegetation was probably a foot high and so thick you couldn't see under it. It was



a little disconcerting not to see the ground but figured I had put my tires where the person in front of me put their tires. The road led up a hill to two abandoned buildings, they are what is left of Lynam Prison. After walking around inside for a bit we got back on the bikes and headed down the hill.

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Report from the Road - Sandi Simons - (continued)

After a quick lunch in Dangriga, we rode to Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary, the only jaguar reserve in the world, to go river tubing! Now, there are crocodiles in Belize but since they do not particularly care for faster moving water, we were generally safe. I never imagined I would be floating down a river through a jungle but here I was. I am generally not a river tuber, having done it a handful of times in my life. It was a unique experience, quiet except for bird song and laughter from us as we navigated the tiny rapids. After we reached the designated exit point, we walked our tubes back up to the center, dawned our gear and headed back to Hopkins.

We were all eager to head to dinner and learn what the next two days would bring. We had been told there would be an overnight trip, but we did not know where we were going or doing. The itinerary was set very loosely for this tour. It allowed for changes depending on the group, energy level, and environment. It also was nice not to be stuck to a timeline and to be surprised.

Over plantain lamb sliders and fried breadfruit fries (both delicious, in case you were wondering) I learned we were headed to the Caracol Mayan ruins, close to the Guatemalan border, and then to a research center deep in the jungle for the night. I was over the moon with excitement! I had hoped we would visit the Mayan ruins. We went to bed early as the plan was to leave shortly after getting up. The day's mileage was roughly 144 miles, which does not sound like a lot but figuring in stops, road conditions, and a speed limit of 55 mph, it would take us all day. We were also taking a fellow that was staying at Crash Pad, he was a friend of Emma's getting his diving certification. He is also a traveling motorcycle mechanic, and she asked him to tag along in case one of the bikes had an issue. Luckily, we never needed his expertise.



Tuesday, we rode north, then west on the Hummingbird Highway then south on Chiquibal Road through farmland, jungle, and pine forest. We stopped for gas and snacks and watched a horse and buggy leave the parking lot. Belize has a large population of Mennonites and Amish; most having moved here decades ago from the US. They own most agriculture and animal production in Belize.

Emma had again ordered lunch ahead, picked it up and took us to a beautiful lunch spot near a river called Rio on Pools. After eating a burrito, some of us decided to take a quick dip in the cool water (me included) shortly after getting in, it started to rain. By the time I reached my gear it was a downpour. Nothing like struggling to put on wet clothes! After getting back to the bikes, I put on my rain jacket. I did not think I could get any wetter, but it would provide wind protection at least. We made it back to the main road which was sections of pavement and dirt (now mud) and shortly ran into road construction. There were no flag men or pilot cars, we found ourselves weaving around dump trucks and skirting by backhoes in the rain.



<sup>(1)</sup>*The Garifuna people, also known as Garinagu, trace their origins to the intermingling of West African and Carib indigenous populations. The Garifuna people forged a distinctive language, dance, music, and spirituality, blending African traditions with elements of Carib heritage.)*

**Editor's Note:** The second and final segment of Sandi's article will be continue in the April Newsletter.

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER



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When you go, tell them you saw our ad in the MONTANA BMW Riders **MARCH 2025** newsletter and ask about our models and financing.



**Nate Bertland**  
OWNER



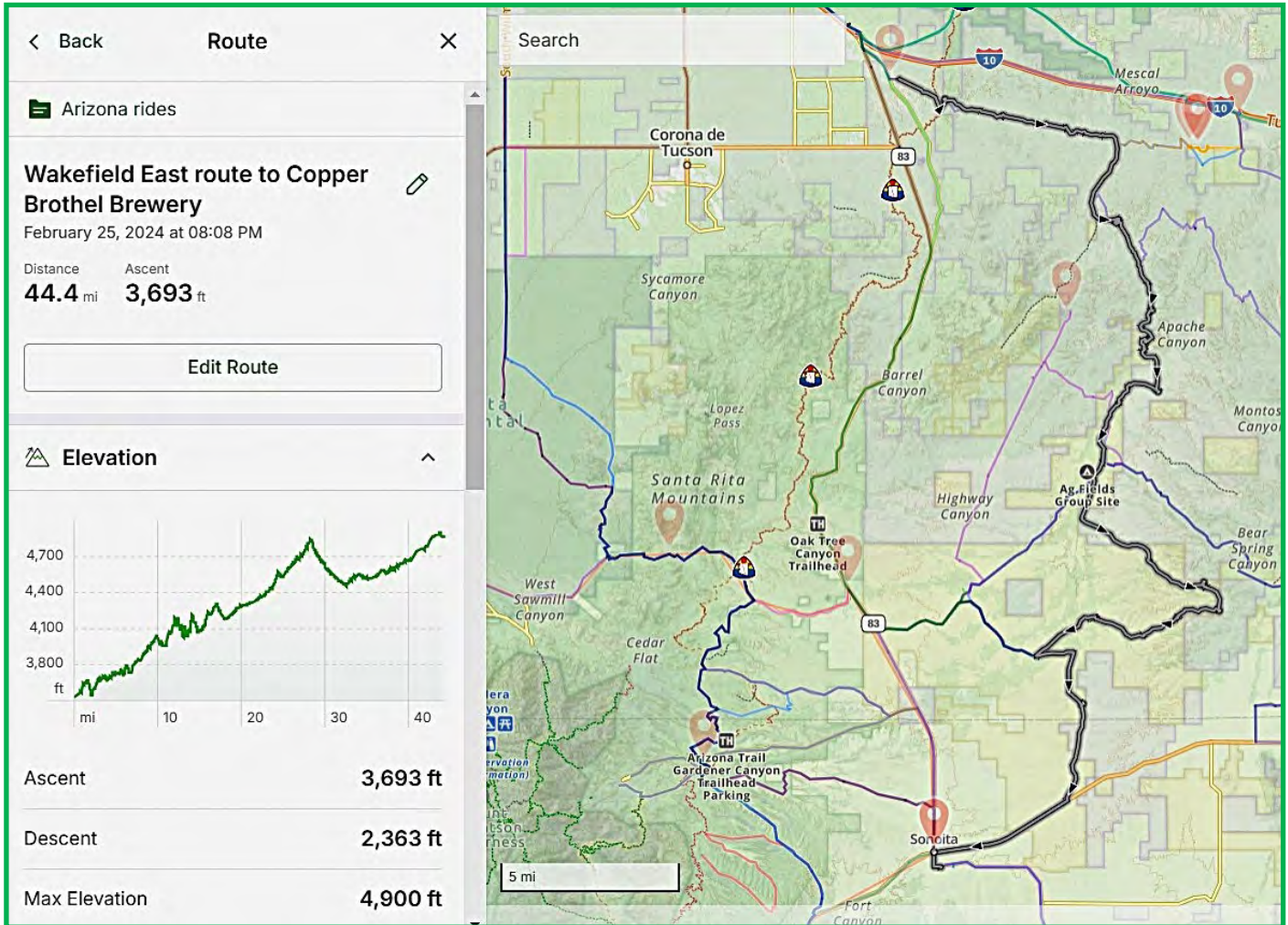
**Andy Main**  
MASTER CERTIFIED BMW TECHNICIAN



**Nik Anderson**  
BMW & KTM CERTIFIED TECHNICIAN

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Report from the Road - John DiBari - Tucson, Arizona



This was a ride I had been looking forward to. After riding for about 20 miles through the dry, rocky desert, we came to a perennial stream with cottonwoods and willows on the banks. The trail crosses the stream three times. If you don't ride across in the right spot on the last crossing you can fall into a deep hole and drown your bike. After that, there is the "cruX" part of the ride. It is a steep hill with embedded rocks and ledges. You have to make three 180 degree turns going up hill and over the rocks. A few riders tipped over going up the hill, but otherwise no issues. The tail end of the ride is through the Empire ranch and its many gates. We finished at the Copper Brothel Brewery for a relaxing lunch.



# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Report from the Road - John DiBari - Tucson, Arizona— (continued)



A ride with 9 other riders - quite a large group - from Amado to Patagonia, AZ. The ride is moderately challenging with some steep, rocky hills. The only casualty was a broken side stand spring on Jonathan's Tuareg 660, a bungee cord had to suffice.



A ride with Gino (Husky 701) and his brother Jake (KTM 690) doing the "Redington Ramble." A great and challenging ride with very steep, rocky hills, both up and down, and a long stretch of sand wash riding. It was a hot day and Gino cooled off with water from a rancher's stock tank.

## NHTSA Recall - Annie Huddy

- NHSTA Recall ID Number: 25V107
- Manufacturer: Honda (American Honda Motor Co.)
- Subject: Gear Shift Arm May Detach

Make	Model	Model Years
HONDA	CBR 650R	2024
HONDA	CBR 650R	2024

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

**Classified - Tom Moe**

## 2016 BMW R1200RT

One owner, purchased new May 2017. It is equipped with all of the factory options available at the time. It also has these additions:

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- Clearwater Billie license plate taillight \$149
- Enlarged foot for kickstand \$37
- Sargent Seats \$770
- BMW 28L Top Trunk \$567
- Michelin Road 5 Tires with 4,600 miles
- Grip Puppies
- BMW Tank Bag \$121
- stream sport tour windscreen 25.25" \$226, the original is available as well
- Bestem Pannier Liners \$48
- BMW valve cover protectors \$349
- Helmet Guardian license plate helmet lock \$50



**Price: \$10,500**

• Contact:

**Tom Moe  
406-599-5226**



March 2025

## Motorcycle gear for sale.

My wife thought she might like to ride but never did so this gear, never used, is for sale. Make reasonable offers and pay for shipping and its yours.

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- ◆ HJC Helmet CL-33 XS
- ◆ Slider Jeans size 12
- ◆ TourMaster boots size 39
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# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

## Montana BMW Riders Monthly Meeting - York, Montana

Eleven hardy soles made their way to the York Bar in York, Montana, where 92 Montanans reside. A short 20 miles from the State Capitol, it is another Montana town that got its start from gold mining in 1866.



Starting on the left, **Larry Manchester, Sandy Simons, Rick LePage, Mike Meredith, Mark Ellzey, Annie Huddy** (back to the camera), **Paul Smietanka, Kevin Huddy** (partially hidden) and **Bru Bizzotto**.



**Ken Conrad**



**Larry Manchester**



**Mark Ellzey and Paul Smietanka**



**Mike Meredith**



**Bru Bizzotto and Annie Huddy**



Be sure to read **Sandi Simons'** article on her Belize adventure elsewhere in the Newsletter.

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Montana BMW Riders Monthly Meeting - York, Montana (continued)



Rick LePage



A skeptical Kevin Huddy



The MONTANA BMW RIDERS meeting may be the first for the Club for this venue. Follow the York Bar on their FACEBOOK page, "*The Friendly York Bar*." Also, Historian **Kim Lemke** lived in Helena, pre-MTBMW Riders, and remembers it as the best hamburgers in the area, plus a nice ride.

## Letters to the Editor - Ron Kitchen

"My paralever swingarm pivot bearings are partially destroyed. The adjustable left side has 5 needles missing (ground to powder?) and the right side is seized. In the process of researching bronze bushings I found these on a few sites. In all cases these are cheaper than replacement bearings from BMW or Bearing Supply. Needless to say these are on order."

- [https://youtu.be/WBt6ftaJ\\_0s?si=yipA6YZ2MK0LpyHZ](https://youtu.be/WBt6ftaJ_0s?si=yipA6YZ2MK0LpyHZ)

*Ron Kitchen*

Editor's Note: If you cannot link to the video showing the repair with the above web address, contact **Ron Kitchen** at his email address for a direct link:

- [rgkitch@gmail.com](mailto:rgkitch@gmail.com)

# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

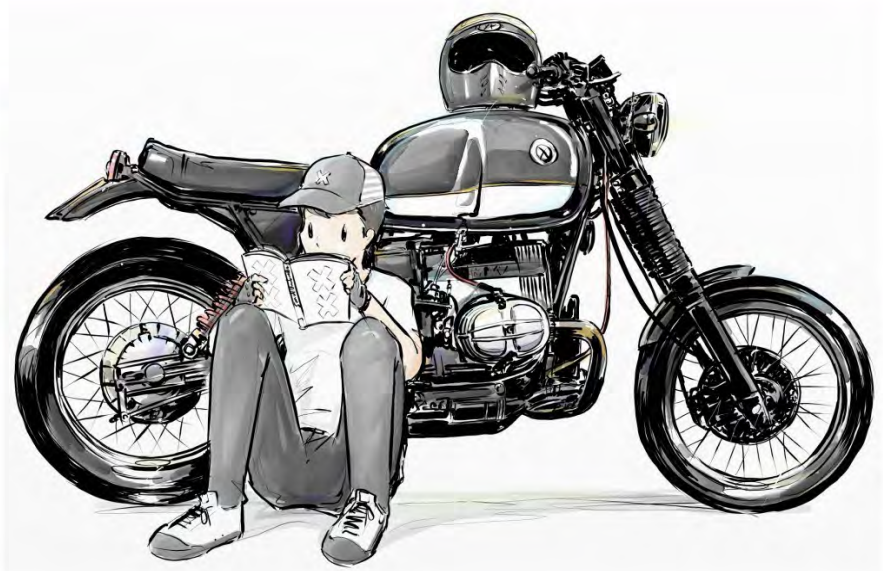


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# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

Monthly Ride Schedule - 2025 (Rev 02/15/2025)

MONTH	DAY	DATE	LOCATION	VENUE	COMMENTS 1:00 PM All Venues
January	Sunday	19 <sup>th</sup>	Seely Lake	Double Arrow Lodge	Dine-in Lunch
February	Sunday	16 <sup>th</sup>	York	York Bar	Dine-in Lunch
<b>March</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>23<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Wilsall</b>	<b>The Vault Restaurant</b>	<b>Dine-in Lunch</b>
April	Sunday	13 <sup>th</sup>	Lincoln	Lambkins Restaurant	Dine-in Lunch
May	Saturday	17 <sup>th</sup>	Helena	Huddy's Outpost Tech Day	All Day
	Sunday	18 <sup>th</sup>	Cascade Vicinity	Missouri River Bar & Grill	Dine-in Lunch
June	Thursday thru Saturday	19 <sup>th</sup> -21 <sup>st</sup>	Lebanon, Ten- nessee	BMW MOA National Rally	Independent Food Ser- vice
	Sunday	22 <sup>th</sup>	Lakeside	Tamarack Brewing Co.	Dine-in Lunch
July	Sunday	20 <sup>nd</sup>	Ennis	Lion's Park (picnic)	Picnic-bring your own sandwich, Kalena's Sand- wich Shop is close
August	Thursday thru Saturday	14 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	Red Lodge	Beartooth Beemers	Annual Beartooth Beem- ers Rally
	Sunday	24 <sup>th</sup>	Phillipsburg	Zane Murfitt Park (picnic)	Picnic-bring your own lunch
September	Sunday	14 <sup>th</sup>	Choteau	City Park	Picnic-bring your own lunch or buy locally
October	Sunday	12 <sup>th</sup>	Ovando	Trixie's Antler Saloon	Dine-in Lunch
November	Sunday	16 <sup>th</sup>	Basin	Silver Saddle Café	Dine-in Lunch
December	TBD	TBD	Regional Gather- ings: MSO, HLN, BILL	TBD	Local Christmas Parties- venues TBD locally



# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

## Report from the Road - John DiBari

This ride is a portion of Section 1 of the AZBDR that runs through the Empire Ranch. The Empire Ranch is an historic ranch in SE Arizona, about 30 miles south of Tucson, AZ. There is a visitor center and old ranch buildings you can walk through. On the map you will see that area is noted as Las Cienegas National Conservation Area. Although there are still cattle grazing in the area, a good chunk of it is a conservation area managed by the Bureau of Land Management. It has a flowing stream on the property. Las Cienegas translates as "the swamps."

I rode the route solo. The riding is quite pretty. Nothing on the route is a deal breaker for a bigger motorcycle, but on the eastern half of the route there are a lot of rolling hills -- up hill then down through a wash then back up hill again. There are some ruts and larger loose rocks (like bowling ball size) that you want to avoid. Some sand, but not very deep or very long stretches. The road surface is just a lot of loose cobbles and more angled rock chunks. No Winnebagos allowed! On the west half, the road is largely smooth and suitable for towing campers to the dispersed camping areas on the ranch.

*John DiBari*



## Report from the Road - Stephen Sullivan



### Ends of the World Ride Part 8 — Day 14 - The End of the Ride

"... Made it to the end of the road today @ Ushuaia, Argentina. Can't go any further south. Reminds me of Anchorage, Alaska with tourists, etc.

Have 2 days of riding back to Puerto Natales, Chili to drop off the bike and catch my plane home. It's been a 'hellava' adventure."

(This summary was extracted from Stephen's FACTBOOK posting. - Editor)



# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

## Report from the Road - Mike Hofferber



Mike set his goal - ride at least once in every month of the year - and this is the February 'ride.' Out of the garage, by the snow bank and headed back to the garage - it looks like a very short ride, but ride never-the-less. We will be looking for more reports from Mike as he plans to spend some time in Arizona before the snow melts in Montana. Editor

## Letters to the Editor - Chris Keyes

3 February 2025

*"I mailed Al Murray my 2025 dues earlier this week. Still a bargain. Have got the Ennis meeting penciled into my calendar, let's see if I can make it happen, I certainly will try. I am still enjoying the newsletter each month. Interesting to see contributions from newer members and what people are doing. Lots of new members in the 3.5 years I've been away from Montana". ..... "I need some seat time in the GS but even with the relatively mild winter here in Logan it's still going to be some time in the future."*

Take care,

Chris



S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney  
College of Natural Resources  
Utah State University

Christopher R. Keyes  
Department Head

Wildland Resources Dept.  
NR 206  
5230 Old Main Hill  
Logan, UT 84322

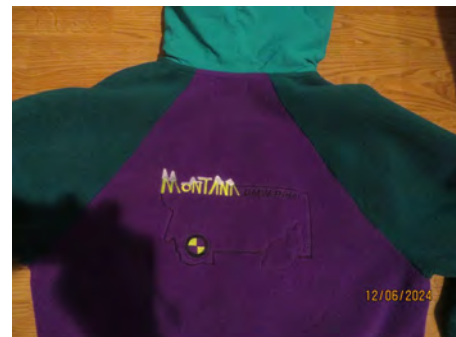
Office: (435) 797-2254  
Cell: (406) 529-5454  
chris.keyes@usu.edu  
qcnr.usu.edu/wild/

## Priced Right - Kim Lemke

A 1990 edition of a BMW logo prototype nylon and fleece pullover. It appears to be a medium size.

**FREE**

Kim Lemke - (406) 251-2559



# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

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# MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

## MONTANA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD

The Montana BMW Riders NEWSLETTER is Published Monthly.

Club Dues: \$15 per calendar year - Membership includes monthly electronic newsletter.

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Email or text to either:  
([R\\_G\\_French@msn.com](mailto:R_G_French@msn.com)) or  
TEXT to 406-274-0783

## Motorcycle Safety Training - K. Lemke

- Statewide MMRS (Montana Motorcycle Rider Training) begins the first weekend of April.
- Registration on line will be available March 3, 2025.
- You can check the courses, locations and dates on line now.
- In the past, phone registration was available and a Student Discount for High School was available.
- Advanced classes will be Helena in May and July.
- Advanced classes will also be in Missoula in July.

REGISTER EARLY

*Kim Lemke*



## ADVERTISING RATES 2024-2025

FULL YEAR—January through December

Full Page	\$100.00
Half Page	\$ 75.00
Quarter Page	\$ 50.00
Business Card	\$ 25.00

All ads will be on a calendar year basis. Ads will be billed to the advertiser in October of each year.

Rates are subject to change with advanced notice