



# THE BEEMER BEAT

Newsletter of the  
BMW Riders of Oregon



March, 2016

Volume 40, Issue #3

Founded 1976 - Charter #83, BMW Motorcycle Owners of America



## A Small Portion of the Palenque Ruins

*photo by Keith Matheson*

### Ten Pesos for Both Bikes

— a journal entry from Keith Matteson's "South on a Bike" adventures with Jalene Case.

See pages 4 and 10-11

### Three Ambassador Ride Reports

Dan Hall, see page 6

Bob Metzger, see page 9

Michael Ripley, see pages 12-13

### Grant County Recipients

Letters of appreciation from Grant County non-profit organizations. See page 7

# BMWRO President's Message

by Jay Bennett

## Spring 2016

We are moving out the winter and into the riding season. Do I hear a collective triumphant cheer from around the state on that? What do you want to accomplish this year? New bike? New roads? See something new or enjoying some special yet familiar rides? Or maybe just enjoying what you have done many times but doing it better? My goals would be all of the above and hopefully some pleasant surprises along the way.

For activities we NEED more ideas but what we have are some good ones planned. The Team Oregon classes coming in Albany and Bend on April 3 and May 14. They are very popular, fun and can save you a couple of dollars on insurance. The class held in Eugene last year was well received. We are putting the plans together for a day ride, a club supported meal and a meeting in April for the Southern Willamette Valley (more details to follow). But we need some campout type events—so those of you out there that know of a spring, summer or fall “Special Place” to host an event get in touch with the Vice President, Scot Lamper at [bmwro.vp@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.vp@gmail.com). With all the talented people in the club it should not be a stretch for each individual or a set of partners to put on an event in each region of the state.

You will read more on the rally in another part of the issue but I want to mention a couple of points on this. The rally will not happen without you (and me and everyone else). The rally continues to be a huge boost to the club and the club members—by allowing us to fund various events—to the BMW aficionados throughout the region, and to the community around John Day. For instance the rally gave us the



money to donate \$3,200 last year to the Grant County area including a sizeable donation to the wild fire relief fund. On another rally-related note, I have gotten a couple of correspondence of people reticent about going to Grant County because the support the Sheriff showed during the Malheur Wildlife Refuge Occupation. As part of the leadership of the club, I can assure we will not take sides in political events such as this. We can't hold the people of Grant County responsible for whether or not a politician in the region—right or not—and does what we support. If we start pulling support from regions and governments that we disagree with, then it would be hard to justify living, visiting or showing support of any place in the world (including the United States). Okay enough on that and if someone wants to propose solutions, please bring it to the meetings.

One bit of politics we do need to keep bringing up is our own election process and that it's not too early to start proposing candidates. We vote in the fall. As this is my forth year as president, it's definitely time to find a new person with new ideas. The role is very prestigious and has a huge salary. Okay one of those is true. It's been really interesting, gratifying and sometimes a bit flattering to meet the BMW community, the BMW company, Team Oregon, Grant County officials, other clubs and other organizations as the leader of a well-respected organization such as the BMW Riders of Oregon. Yes it is work and requires some special skills, but most people in this club are very talented. If you want more information, get a hold of me for questions or I can send written description of role. I'll offer my help in anyway I can to enable the success of this next individual.

*Okay—get off the sidelines and ride well, ride far, and ride safe*

Jay







# BMWRO

## Coming Events



### Club Sanctioned Events

**Event:** **Spring Club Meeting**  
**Date/Time:** April 24, 2016 — 12:00-noon  
**Place:** [Roaring Rapids Pizza Company](#) 4006 Franklin Boulevard, Eugene (541-988-9819)  
**Description:** The cost will be \$8 for members and \$11 for non-members. Registrations may be made on-line, [www.bmwro.org](http://www.bmwro.org). Buffet lunch will include Penne Pasta with Beef marinara sauce, dinner rolls, fresh vegetables, boneless chicken wings with dipping sauces and soft drinks. For those so inclined, mini golf is available at [Camp Putt Adventure Golf Park](#) at the same location as Roaring Rapids Pizza Company. (Mini-Golf not included in event cost)  
**Contact:** Linda Tewksbury, [bmwro.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.treasurer@gmail.com)

**Event:** **Chief Joseph Rally**  
**Date/Time:** June 17, 18 and 19, 2016  
**Place:** Grant County Fairgrounds, John Day, OR  
**Description:** Full Page Poster in this issue  
**Registration is now open online**  
[www.bmwro.org](http://www.bmwro.org)  
**Contact:** Clarence Story, Rally Master (541) 525-5315 or email: [bmwro.cjrallymaster@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.cjrallymaster@gmail.com)  
Carol Lamper, Co-Chair, [carol.lamper@gmail.com](mailto:carol.lamper@gmail.com)

### Recurring Events

**Event:** **Central Oregon 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday**  
**Date/Time:** Second Saturday of each month  
**Location:** Various ride and lunch locations in the Central Oregon Region.  
**Contact:** Alice LeBarron [alicelebarron@hotmail.com](mailto:alicelebarron@hotmail.com)  
**541-647-7194**

**Event:** **Central Western Region 1st Saturday Ambassador Ride**  
**Date/Time:** Various dates and times. See the event calendar on the web site for more information.  
**Location:** European Motorcycles of Western Oregon  
**Description:** Various routes.  
**Contact:** Jim Breen, **541-912-4500** or [jpbior@aol.com](mailto:jpbior@aol.com) or Bob Metzger **608-642-1186** [bobmetzger51@gmail.com](mailto:bobmetzger51@gmail.com)

**Event:** **Southern Oregon 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday**  
**Date/Time:** First Saturday of each month  
**Location:** Various lunch/breakfast and ride locations for southern Oregon members.  
**Contact:** Dan Hall, [dnehall@frontier.com](mailto:dnehall@frontier.com)

**Event:** **NW Oregon 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Ride**  
**Date/Time:** First Saturday of each month  
**Location:** Various breakfast and ride locations in the Northwest Oregon Region.  
**Description:** Finding the twisties and connecting with our membership for grins and food sharing.  
**Contact:** David Peterson **503-327-5592** [dwpeterson01@yahoo.com](mailto:dwpeterson01@yahoo.com)  
Susan Ortiz-Renteria **503-779-7842** [dirtsquirt816@gmail.com](mailto:dirtsquirt816@gmail.com)

**Event:** **Doc Wong Riding Clinic**  
**Date/Time:** Second Saturday of each Month, 9:00 am  
**Location:** Mr. Ed's Moto: 414 Queen Avenue, Albany  
**Contact:** Don Weber **541-791-5142** [don@mredsmoto.com](mailto:don@mredsmoto.com)

### YOU STILL HAVE TIME....

Again this year, BMWRO have set-up two Rider Skills Practice (RSP) sessions with Team Oregon. Based upon the response to the member survey taken late last year, we anticipate enrollment in these session will take place quickly. There is a maximum of 12 spaces per session. Here are the times, places and remaining spaces:

- April 3rd Albany . . . . . 3 spaces remaining
- May 14th Bend . . . . . 8 spaces remaining

RSP sessions are a perfect way to hone your riding skills and practice in a safe controlled environment with seasoned instructors. Price for the session is \$99.00 for a half day of group instruction. Remember to contact your insurance company: **completion of this class may make you eligible for a discount on your insurance premium!**

For more information on the class content, go to: <http://team-oregon.org/training/riderskillspractice/>

**Bob Metzger**  
**Central-West Co-ambassador**



## Winner of the "Mystery Guy" puzzler

From the February 2016 issue of the *BEEMER BEAT*, the prize for identifying the Mystery Guy is honorable mention here—and it goes to **Clarence Story**, who identifies him as **Tom Foust** out of Cresswell, Oregon. Congratulations, Clarence, and thank you for playing the puzzler.



## Ten Pesos For Both Bikes

by Keith Matteson  
written January 4, 2016

It seems forever since I posted here. Sorry if anyone is wondering what happened to us. *Where have we been, and what have we seen since the last blog post?*

When I last wrote, we were on Zipolite Beach on the south shore of Mexico, and I was recovering from a cold. At the end of ten days, we left the warm sands and headed east along the coast of the Pacific, spending a night in a gritty town called Juchitan. Moods the next morning were soured when Jalene discovered one of her custom-made earplugs missing, and no amount of searching turned it up. Resorting to foam plugs, she donned her helmet and we headed east. Soon we were in an area forested with wind generators, and a strong crosswind was picking up.

Before long the wind was blowing across the road in the neighborhood of 75 mph, probably gusting higher. The trucks coming the other way acted as temporary windbreaks that made it even harder to deal with. This lasted about 30 miles, I'm guessing. The bikes were sometimes leaned over toward the center-line hard enough to scrub the tires as we fought to stay on the road. The best speed seemed to be around 25 mph, letting us maneuver at a speed to stay not just in the lane, but on the road at all. Twice, we came upon semi-trucks that had been blown over and lay across the whole road, and to stop we had to put the side-stands down then pull down hard on that side to keep the bike from blowing over. If either one of us had gone down (*both of us nearly did several times*) it would have been impossible to successfully right the bike again. Rolling along at slow speed was the safest option, and thankfully we were able to do that until we



got out of it. I've been riding for about 50 years now, and that was by far the strongest sustained crosswind I've ever had to deal with—flat-out scary. Jalene did great, and I'm pretty confident now that she'll be okay in Patagonia.

That night found us in San Cristobal, where we took a break and spent two nights. A beautiful city, we once again ran into a parade which we enjoyed immensely. It was made up of flatbed trucks, with each one carrying a depiction of one station of the cross—you know, the three wise men, the birth, the miracles, the flogging, the crucifixion, etc. The last truck then had Santa Claus with presents and Christmas carols, which seemed a bit jarring and crassly commercial after the very serious "floats" preceding. There is no purity in the world anymore. In between trucks were hundreds of people all dressed up like Halloween, dancing and having a great time. Jalene and I have learned to just go with it and join in the fun.

[Continues on page 10](#)

## NEW MEMBERS

### Motorcycle

**Sam Beardsley**, Portland, OR . . . . . 2009 1200 GS  
**Tim Cruse**, Eugene, OR . . . . . 2015 F800GS, 2004 R1150GSA,  
. . . . . 2007 Honda Goldwing, & 2008 KLR 650  
**Wes Molsberry**, Grants Pass, OR . . . . . 2001 F650 GS

## Letters to the Editor

*I just got my 1st BMW motorcycle. I had a little semi-thrashed Honda Dual Sport about 10 years ago, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I'm not a great rider and a mediocre mechanic, but I try. I probably won't join the club (I'm involved in too many clubs/hobbies already). It seems most of the Oregon BMWRO action takes place in the Northern part of the State.*

*A friend of mine in Bend is bugging me to go to the Rally in John Day. I was looking into it and poking around the web for things BMW and stumbled across one of your newsletters. I am mainly writing this to let you know, that I've not seen a publication of any club (regardless of the discipline) put together with the skill and artistry you present in those attractive newsletters. I'm truly impressed.*

*All the Best, Wes Molsberry (Grants Pass, Oregon)*

*We hang petty thieves and appoint the great thieves to public office". Aesop - (620-564 BCE)*

## FIND THE BMWRO NEW MEMBER APPLICATION FORM ONLINE:

[HTTP://BMWRO.ORG](http://BMWRO.ORG)

## Bylaws, Policies & Guidelines

If you are interested in any of the above, just visit our website and download. [www.bmwro.org](http://www.bmwro.org)

## BMWRO Club Officials

### President:

Jay Bennett (541-760-0675)  
[bmwro.pres@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.pres@gmail.com)

### Vice President:

Scot Lamper, (503-706-1601)  
[bmwro.vp@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.vp@gmail.com)

### Secretary:

Alice LeBarron, (541-647-7194)  
[bmwro.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.secretary@gmail.com)

### Treasurer:

Linda Tewksbury (541-543-7943)  
[bmwro.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.treasurer@gmail.com)

### BEEMER BEAT Editor:

Forest McGregor, (541-761-2320)  
[bmwro.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.newsletter@gmail.com)

### Webmaster:

Doug Tewksbury  
[bmwro.web@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.web@gmail.com)

### Club Liaison

Doug Tewksbury,  
[bmwro.news@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.news@gmail.com)

### Activities

Scot Lamper, (503-706-1601)  
[bmwro.vp@gmail.com](mailto:bmwro.vp@gmail.com)

## Ambassador Program Welcomes New Members

Ambassadors for the Four Regions are:

### Central Western Region

(South of Salem, including Eugene & Oakland from the coast to the Cascades).

**Jim Breen**—541-912-4500  
[jpbior@aol.com](mailto:jpbior@aol.com)

**Bob Metzger**—608-642-1186  
[bobmetzger51@gmail.com](mailto:bobmetzger51@gmail.com)

### Central & Northeast Region

(East of The Dalles, including I-84 to Ontario, south of Columbia River to US 20, Baker City & including US 20 to LaPine. Includes Camp Sherman/Bend/Redmond/Sisters & Prineville area).

**Alice LeBarron**—541-647-7194  
[alicelebarron@hotmail.com](mailto:alicelebarron@hotmail.com)

### Southern Region

(Oakland, OR into California. The coast through Klamath Falls).

**Dan Hall**—541-862-7411  
[dnehall@frontier.com](mailto:dnehall@frontier.com)

### Northwest Region

(from Longview, WA south through Salem, OR, the coast to the Cascades, including The Dalles).

**David W. Peterson**—503-327-5592  
[dwpeterson01@yahoo.com](mailto:dwpeterson01@yahoo.com) & [www.wfodave.smugmug.com](http://www.wfodave.smugmug.com)

**Michael Ripley**—503-648-0578  
[gobeezer@live.com](mailto:gobeezer@live.com)

**Please call or email your regional Ambassador for club outings and rally information.  
We can assist you with learning more about BMWRO**



# FEBRUARY SO BMWRO RIDE

by Dan Hall

The first ride of 2016 saw ten BMWRO members meet at the Pony Espresso in Jacksonville for lunch. The weather was cloudy and in the mid 50's—a nice change from the weeks of cold rain we've had in January and December.

After lunch, seven of us rode up to Applegate Lake to check out the water level. The lake is still pretty low, but I guess they need to keep it low for the spring snow runoff. Looks like we have a nice snow pack this year—I rode up Cedar Flat road above Williams a few weeks ago and got stopped by three feet of snow on the road. Last year the road was open all winter. A couple of us were planning on riding the gravel back road to the Applegate store, but a large sign near Ruch said that the road was closed. We talked to someone at the lake overlook and he said that there was a large slide over the road and it could be months before it opens. I may have to ride up there later and check it out. At this point we all decided to head for home.



However while talking to Steve Sincerny—a recently retired teacher from Ashland—he mentioned that he was going to stop and check out his old house at the commune he lived at for five-to-six years in the late 70's. Apparently there were about a dozen people living on 40 acres of land in a two-story house they built, no electricity but they did have water from a pump system

they had constructed. This was too good not to see, so I tagged along. We rode up to the end of Missouri Flat road and then turned onto a gravel road. After stopping and talking to a couple of people still living there, in newer homes, we continued on the road and then walked about 200 feet up the hill to the old house. It's not much to see at this point, pretty much collapsed, in fact they are all working on burning up the remaining structure to clean up the mess. Steve said that they had a piano on the first floor and when the house collapsed the piano was still standing upright with an oil lamp setting on top of it. Steve seems to have survived his hippy days and is now enjoying riding his big GSA around the country with Lois on the back. It was a great ride and an interesting day, you never know where peoples lives have taken them.



# BMWRO Donations for 2015/2016 February 26, 2016

by Doug Tewksbury, BMWRO Communications Liaison

The following are notes of appreciation for the donations made by the BMW Riders of Oregon club to various non-profit organizations in Grant County for 2015/2016. In total, the club donated \$3,200 to help support the efforts of these organizations. The donations would not have been possible without the club's Chief Joseph Rally and the support of the club members.

## Canyon Creek Fire Relief Fund, John Day, Oregon

In August of 2015 the BMW Riders of Oregon club donated \$2,000 to the Canyon Creek Fire Relief fund established at the Old West Federal Credit Union in John Day, Oregon. We then received the following message from Mary Weaver at the Grant County Fairgrounds.

"Thank you so much for your wonderful donation to this fund. The Fairgrounds Pavilion has become the relief center for the County and it is just amazing the amount of donations that we have received to help our County as we try to move forward from this horrible fire. It is amazing how much we have accomplished in just one week and how much more we need to do.

It is individuals and organizations like yours that has come together to help restore some of what was lost.

We are working on getting some pictures of the pavilion to share soon.

Again thank you,

Mary Weaver, Grant County RV & Fair Manager"



The following organizations each receive a donation from the BMW Riders of Oregon in the amount of \$300.

## Grant County Fairgrounds, John Day, Oregon

"I have contacted Oregon Telephone about getting improvements to our internet situation and we received a bid of \$2,000 to change equipment, update and install. With your great donation we are going to make this happen. It is much needed and we want to say a great big thank you.

Mary Weaver, Grant County RV & Fair Manager"

## Grant-Harney County CASA, John Day, Oregon

"Thank you for showing your commitment to our local children by giving to the Grant-Harney CASA program. None of our work could be done without our amazing supporters like you!

Your \$300 donation will be used toward the purchase of a new pop-up tent to be used at CASA events, which serve the community while bringing awareness to our important mission to provide a voice for every abused and neglected child making their way through the dependency system.

With Deep Gratitude,

Tracy Blood, Executive Director Grant-Harney County CASA"

## Families First Parent Resource Center, John Day, Oregon

"Thank you for your donation! We will use it to purchase supplies & materials for our weekly parent group. Families attend to get parenting information & fun activities are provided.

Teresa Aasness", Executive Director/Program Manager

## Prairie City Senior Citizens, Prairie City, Oregon

"Thank you so much for your generous and unexpected gift of \$300. We deliver between 25-30 meals each week and some of those cannot pay. This will help fill the gap. Thanks again. Stop by on your next Grant County ride.

Sincerely,

Rose Coombs, Secretary/Treasurer"





# BMW Riders of Oregon present CHIEF JOSEPH RALLY

Join us at the **Grant County Fairgrounds**, nestled in the scenic Strawberry Mountains, **John Day, Oregon**, for a weekend of terrific riding, seminars, food and fellowship. This historic city is located at the Junction of Hwys 395 and 26. Enjoy the West's best riding; gold and cattle country, refreshing mountain passes, painted hills, river canyons, and wide open desert. Visit the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument or any of four different museums.

**Friday and Saturday evening dinners are provided in rally fee.** On site food vendors and in town restaurants available for other meals. Beer garden on site. Experience organized tours to selected attractions; self guided maps with touring and off-road routes. Tech sessions, seminars, door prizes, awards, entertainment and more are scheduled. Commemorative Rally T-Shirt will be available for sale.

**The Grant County Fairgrounds**, on the **John Day River**, offers green grass camping and hot showers! Reservations required for adjacent RV Park [541-575-1900] extra cost involved. Excellent motel accommodations, dining options and shopping are just three blocks from the Fairgrounds. Leashed pets are welcome.

**Oregon is for Riders!**  
**Come to John Day**  
**and see what we mean!**

**We encourage everyone to pre-register for the rally. This helps us efficiently plan food and the rally schedule.**

**And, you save \$10.00!**

**The first 500 pre-registered guests are guaranteed a rally pin.**

## **Gate Registration:**

**\$60.00 per person for club members**

**\$70.00 for non-club members**

**12 yrs and younger: \$10.00 per person**

## **Pre-Registration:**

**\$50.00 per person for club members**

**\$60.00 for non-club members**

**More info at: [www.bmwro.org](http://www.bmwro.org)**

**click the Chief Joseph Rally link**

## **Deadlines:**

**US Mail Pre-Registration: June 3, 2016**

**OnLine Pre-Registration: June 3, 2016**

**Refunds: June 3, 2016**

# Grant County Fairgrounds ~John Day, OR June 17-19, 2016

2016 PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

ON LINE AT

**WWW.BMWRO.ORG**



# BMWRO Central-West Ride Report February 13th, 2016

by Bob Metzger

BMWRO Central West Co-Ambassador

## The Route

Sometimes we become creatures of habit. We have our favorite bikes, restaurants, and ride routes. Often, our favorites become traditions. One of my favorite definitions of a tradition goes something like this: Traditions are a group effort to keep the unexpected from happening.

In case you missed it, **SOUND RIDER!** this month published the five hidden gems for motorcycle rides in Oregon. Here is the link: [http://www.soundrider.com/current/1602/oregon\\_paved\\_bucket\\_list.aspx](http://www.soundrider.com/current/1602/oregon_paved_bucket_list.aspx)

**SOUND RIDER!** assured us that these were definitely “bucket list” worthy. This turned out to be true—Lobster Valley Road was on their list, and right here in our backyard as an extension of Alsea Falls Road.



## Lunch in Waldport at Azul Mexican Restaurant It was fare - fare.

That brings me back to tradition. I have a rule. Here it is. Always, pre-ride the route before a group ride. I broke this tradition. Luckily I got away with it, all-be-it with some very heads-up riding.

## The Road Hazards

Although roads were quite good, one had to be especially

cautious of those Spring-time hazards: gravel washed over the road surface, ever present moss, wet leaves, pot holes and oil sheens. We encountered them all on this ride. Head and eyes up folk—watch for changes in road surface color and texture and assume reduced traction ahead.

## The Group

We all convened at EMCWOR in Eugene for a 10 a.m. start. **Butch Ferrand** and **Bob Whitlock** had ridden in earlier from Florence to join us and spend cash on new tires for their upcoming dual-sport summer adventure. The other usual suspects to show were, of course myself, and **Doug Tewksbury**. **Jeremy Brosnahan**, a prospective BMWRO member, also joined in the ride.

More photos of the ride on page 10



Left to Right: Bob Whitlock, Bob Metzger, Jeremy Brosnahan, Doug Tewksbury and Butch Ferrand at Siuslaw Coffee Roasters in Florence.





Continued from page 4—Ten Pesos for Both Bikes

After that we turned the bikes north toward Palenque, and the huge Mayan ruins site (*cover image for this issue*). The road north through Ocosingo has a reputation as one where the locals (aka revolutionaries, Zapatistas) often blockade the roads and demand money, and we found them.

The issue is the government mistreatment of the local native Mayan folk. The technique used is to take a board, drive hundreds of nails through it, then lay it down across the road, one in each lane, with the points up. Traffic backs up horribly. If they get what they want, they drag the spiked board out of your way, let you go, and then slide it back. At the first one we ran into, they had traffic backed up about a half mile. Policia, we noticed, were allowed to pass right through (*but they did nothing!*). We rode up the margin to the head of the line, and the guy asked me for ten pesos. I said no. He said ten pesos. I said ten for both bikes. Okay. A coin went into the bucket and we were through.

At the second roadblock we encountered, we rode right up to the front, then glued our front tires to the back of a huge tour bus they had to let through, and so got away for free. Later that day at Palenque, we ran into our friend and fellow traveler, Claudia, whom we had met in Oaxaca. She is German and drives a righteous Toyota Land Cruiser diesel wagon that has a pop-up camper top—a serious overland vehicle. They demanded 100 pesos of her, but she refused, finally parting with just ten pesos and getting through.

We found a campground at Palenque, but the ground was still extremely soggy from drenching weather the previous days. We took a little casita there instead of pitching the tent, then rode the bikes helmet-less and in shorts and t-shirts the two kilometers up to the ruins. It felt scandalous and terrific.



The Palenque Mayan ruins are a site with over 500 identified structures, but only a couple of dozen have been fully excavated. We were offered a tour but blanched at the price, and went off to fend for ourselves among the excellent interpretive signage. This is a site worth visiting! We were agog at the huge structures, and the details that were still visible—etched into the stones. An especially interesting building was one that they had restored on one side and left completely untouched on the other. A lovely pyramid with artful stonework here; but around the corner, it's just a hillside covered with trees. Ground penetrating radar has helped to reveal hundreds of structures in recent years—indicating a city of vast proportions, with intricate waterworks coming down off the hillsides above. Apparently, Mayan water managers really knew their stuff, and the city had running water everywhere.

After Palenque, we headed to the northeast and the Yucatan Peninsula. The ground quickly flattened out, and we dropped to just a few meters above sea level—and we were never higher than about 15 meters for the next week. We began to see monkey bridges over the highway. They are made by erecting a pair of “telephone poles” on either side of the road, then stringing ropes between them, and stretching net between the ropes, creating a sort of high suspension bridge over the pavement. There are five or six ropes



leading up from the ground to the tops of the poles on either side, making it easy for monkeys but extremely difficult for any predators.

It was coming on Christmas, and so Jalene found us a place in Tikul, just south of the city of Merida, where we could relax a few days and take a Christmas break with good wifi for FaceTime. Christmas was a very quiet day for us. We connected with families, catching up on the latest news back home. All seems well, which is always a relief. Maybe even more so for them.

After our Christmas break, we headed up to check out the northern shoreline of the Yucatan, and see if the flamingos there really are pink. And guess what – they are! They look just like the plastic ones that were in our neighbors yard when we were kids (they were so exotic).

After a while the road turned to sand, and rather than get ourselves stuck and in trouble with the tide, we turned around and headed back inland to pavement. That night found us in Tizimin, where we found a fabulous and cheap hotel, and got to see another parade—although this one was over in about three minutes. Still, they had those huge rockets, which makes any festival great (for me, at least). The rockets are sticks about three feet long, with a rocket tube about two inches in diameter and eight inches long. They just hold it upright loosely and light it. Goes up a variable height—occasionally not at all—and gives a hugely satisfying boom. They set them off at all hours, and for any or no occasion, which I just love.

The next day we turned southeast and headed for the Caribbean shore. Our route took us through Tulum, which we had visited in 2007. Although I recognized the town, I was glad of our GPS to confirm it, because Tulum has noticeably grown in the scant eight years since. It's bigger and busier, but the same flavor still seems to be there. I did recognize a few restaurants we'd eaten at. Time moves on—so did we.

We ate our lunch through a downpour a little further along, finally pulling into Bacalar. We checked out the Green Monkey campground and hostel, but it turned out to be too crowded; and we didn't want to find out how all those people were going to share two toilets the next morning. So we looked around and found a wet but comfortable campground a little further north that had simple food and a slight high spot for the tent. Turns out that high spot was crucial, as it poured buckets again that evening after we turned in. We heard others arriving back at the campground, and loud consternation over flooded tents and sleeping bags. Time to put the earplugs in.



We packed up our wet things and went to check out Mahahual, which we'd heard some good things about. We found a place called Blue Kay, and they let us pitch the tent for really cheap, plus they had laundry service, showers, a restaurant—the works. New Years Eve was that night, so we signed up for their big party event, too. Seeing as how Jay (*Jalene*) and I never make it past about 9:00 or 9:30, we might have thought that one through a little better. The dinner served was outstanding, but then we had to soldier on another two hours until midnight—where some really bad (like, undrinkable) wine and champagne was poured for everyone. We toasted, and then got the hell out of there and climbed into the tent. Next day we rose early and went for another swim in the Caribbean; then watched the town explode as the three cruise ships that docked during the night disgorged boatloads of people to spend the day in town. By about 6:00 that evening, the boat people were all magically gone; and we had a very quiet town again, which led to discovering where the locals ate. Jalene had excellent crepes, while I found the busiest taqueria.

Finally it was time to leave sleepy Mahahual and head back west to rejoin our route south to Guatemala. The rain started as we finished packing that morning, and we had a soggy first hour until we got to Chetumal—where it dried out but stayed cloudy. We gassed up—as we had been told there was no fuel available on the trip across the Yucatan to Escarcega where we would spend the night. Turns out that information was garbage—there is gas at several points along the way. Actually, at no point anywhere in Mexico were we ever far from a fuel station. Pemex stations are very frequent and usually have a convenience store attached. The day improved as we rode along; and by the time we got to the hotel in Escarcega, it was full sun and hot. I took the opportunity to spread out the tent and camping gear to completely dry. Dinner was tacos de pastor at our **favorite-tacos-so-far taqueria** next door—where they mince pineapple into the taco, and the pork is tender and very moist. You can watch the lady behind the counter make the tortillas as they are needed, and so when you get your food it is steaming hot—much *too* hot to pick up!

Here I shall stop, as our story takes a sharp twist tomorrow. Stay tuned to find out how our adventurers fared when we rejoin them by the empty roadside, west of Escarcega.



# NW Ambassadors Ride Report- February 2016

Michael Ripley #191665

David Peterson #90113

The days are getting longer. So are the gaps between storms. And that is having a decidedly positive effect on our community of riders. As the First Saturday in February approached and the weather improved, the RSVPs poured in. At the appointed hour, 20 riders, on 17 bikes were queued up and ready to roll.

Following Mike out of the parking lot were faces old and new. Regular riders included **Kim Dorsing & Janice Mathern, Frank Boyle, Ric Holderbaum, Neal Malagamba, Colin Luther, Louie Robida, Steven Polansky, and Mark Wegener.** Folks we hadn't seen in awhile included **Doug Tewksbury** (all the way from Eugene), and **Greg Straub.** What was really encouraging were the new faces that joined us; we wouldn't have expected much of a new crowd until later in the spring. **Linnea Alvord, Todd Cruz, Sam & Christie Beardsley, Rick Lieberson** and



**Randall Vogt**—welcome all. Oh, and **David & Diane** swept, making sure no stragglers were left behind.

Keeping with our winter theme, we wanted to stay in the area—in February, elevation is not yet our friend. We decided to head north. Although it's a region with which we are all very familiar, there are many paths not taken. We were determined to find a few.

After a freeway stint, we found ourselves heading north on Cornelius Pass Road. Although it's

a major arterial, it can be a fun, twisty passage to US-30. Today, we were lucky; traffic was fairly light. We quickly climbed over the 577-foot pass, dropping to the tee with US-30. From there, we did the usual ramble through Scappoose and St. Helens. US-30 parallels the Columbia as it turns north, forming the notch in Oregon's northwest corner. There are many branches west off of US-30 which take riders back into the twisty timber roads of Columbia County. Today, we opted to hold out a little longer until we found the road less travelled.

Just north of the Dyno Nobel plant in Deer Park is Canaan Road. It meanders west into the Tualatin Mountains, getting tighter and twistier as it pierces the forest. Becoming Meissner Road, it climbs to 1,200 feet before emerging from the forest in Rainier. Those last few miles required everyone's full attention: a season's worth of moss, muck, and debris covered much of the road. But everyone made it through unscathed, and after a short ride across the Lewis & Clark Bridge into Longview, it was time for lunch.



**Climbing Canaan Road in Columbia County**

*Photo by Steven Polansky*



**Pancake House** is the place for lunch or late breakfast in Longview. A family institution since 1972, and always packed, the staff is quick to respond to any order and the food is plentiful—and terrific. Even with 20 people in tow, they were able to seat us, albeit in two sections on opposite sides of the store. The compromise was worth it, judging by the empty plates and sated looks. If you're in the Portland area and you're wondering about a destination for a breakfast ride, you can't do much better.

Our return route had included a short section of I-5, which we thought was necessary—until Louie Robida stepped forward. “I know a way to avoid I-5 completely,” he stated confidently.

David, who pours over maps when planning his routes, while silently chanting his mantra, ***No interstates***, was agape. “Really?” was all he could mutter in response.

And so it was that the group took off toward the freeway and beyond with Louie in the lead. A handful of riders, confused by the cloverleaf maze, ended up on I-5 anyway, only to watch the group sailing south on the eastside



**Ric Holderbaum's multi-modal First Saturday adventure.**

*Photo by Neal Malagamba*

frontage road. At the next exit they intercepted the leaders, and the pack was again whole.

Kudos to Louie for stepping forward; his section of the ride turned out to be perhaps the highlight of the day. Turns out the Kalama River is bridged at Modrow Road, about a mile east of the freeway. The road is a 23-mile roller coaster all the way through Kalama, Woodland, and La Center, where the road crosses I-5 and continues the detour on the west side.

Unfortunately, on this day half the group wouldn't get that far. Just north of La Center, Ric Holderbaum's GSA glided to a stop. Efforts to restart it were fruitless. Mike, ever at the ready, broke out his GS-911 diagnostic tool, which indicated a fuel pump fault. Mike, Mark, Neal, and Frank rallied to keep Ric company while a tow was summoned. Sure enough, as the truck arrived, Ric's bike fired right up and kept running as he rode it on—and off—the tow truck. It was a humble end to the ride, but at least the weather stayed dry. More importantly, the bike will be ready for March's ride.

Check out photos from past First Saturday rides [here](#). And if you have photos of your own you want to share, don't hesitate to forward them to David at [dwpeterson01@yahoo.com](mailto:dwpeterson01@yahoo.com).

**Total miles, January Ride: . . . . 154**

**Total First Saturday miles – 2016: . . . . . 273**

[Pancake House](#), 1425 California Way, Longview, WA 98632 (360)577-9966



**A post-lunch gathering of the gang.**

*Photo by David Peterson*



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## Strange Art from South America

*photos by Keith Matteson*

