

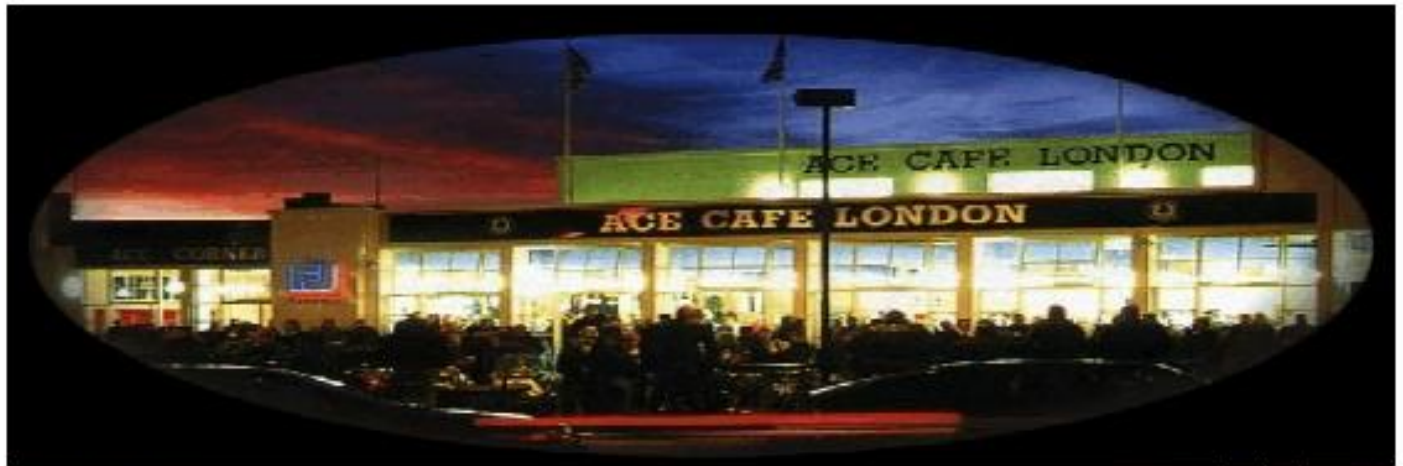
April 2012

Apex

Looking Through The Curve

Official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc. Lexington, Kentucky
MOA #146 RA #4-49 <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>





7th Annual Ride 'em, Don't Hide 'em Café Run



Not a race, not a rally and definitely not another poker run!



NEW LOCATION !!

Garden Girls Café
6109 Lexington Road
Winchester, Ky

(On Route 60 between Stuffs and the Drive In)



Saturday, June 9th, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.
for another gathering with riders of the Right Stuff.
No entry fee, no prizes - just a reason to ride.



Destination this year...The Kickstand and the Village Café!



For more information contact:
John Rice 859-229-4546
www.riceheathlaw.com

Bluegrass Beemers Annual Awards Banquet

April 27th, 7pm

The Chop House, 2640 Richmond Road, Lexington
Larger private room than last year for a larger crowd

Ace Dreams

By John Rice



With the idea in mind that we didn't know how many more trips we had left in us, Brenda and I decided to return to England.

No motorcycle riding on this jaunt, it was to be for her a run through of the historical venues in and around London. Both of us have been long-time Anglo-philosophes (one would have to be to put up with the aggravations of

old British motorcycles) and just to be there is reason enough to return.

On our second day in London, we made our way to a tube station around 5 PM and headed for the Ace Cafe, a



One of the many interesting things about London is that even now, with temperatures in the mid 30's in the mornings and evenings, seldom higher than the 50's in the day, there are motorcycles and scooters everywhere, filtering through traffic, people making their way to and from work and other errands. They're just a normal part of the scene here.

Ace Dreams

By John Rice



Mecca-like journey for me. While the cafe racer movement didn't "begin" at the Ace, it was here in the late 40's and early 50's, on into the 60's that the trend was centered, the spot where so many of the bike and style traditions began that still endure today.

The Ace was once a major travel stop (a "transport café") then expanded into a multiline car dealership and motoring center. It was partially bombed out during world war II and rebuilt.

After its heyday in the 60's, the roads were rearranged and the main thoroughfare it bordered became more of a side road and it fell into disrepair.

When we were here before, in the 90's, it was only a shell

and not a spot for a visit. Thanks to the efforts of true believers Mark and Linda Wils more, the Ace was resurrected a few years ago and has resumed its rightful place in the hearts of all those who follow the "less is more" philosophy of motorcycling.

It's open 364 days per year and hosts regular "bike nights" as well as being the venue for vintage motorcycle and car events. It's a smaller place overall, with what used to be the forecourt for complex now being taken up by other businesses, but the corner where the cafe itself stands is still intact.

From the outside, it looks much like the old photos, though the bikes parked there this night were a good bit more

modern. Inside it is quite close to the images I'd only seen in photos and in the old movie "The Leather Boys" that prominently featured the cafe (pronounced "caff" in the vernacular) as its center.

This was a "bike night" at the Ace, a regular event every other Friday. We were there early, so the full complement of machines hadn't yet arrived. In the fading daylight I stood in the lot, imagining what this place was like in those halcyon days when the young men of the time were just coming out of the post war economy and beginning to get the idea that the world could be fun again.

Motorcycles, used mainly for transport by the majority, were developing again a sporting

image and people (mostly men then, but some women as well) were modifying them for performance and style. The stodgy old British singles, used for years like the family car, were being stripped down to their essentials and "hotted up" for performance with the inevitable "mine's faster than yours" competition becoming all important.

We're told that "record racing" was popular for a while. Young men would put a record on the jukebox, sprint out to their bikes and try to race around a particular course to make it back to the Cafe before the record stopped. (I would have had to choose "Stairway to Heaven" or even better,

Ace Dreams

By John Rice

“American Pie,” songs that lasted twice as long as usual!)

There are legendary stories of the races and general motorcycle havoc emanating from this lot, some documented by the papers of the time and some told by men now my age who may recall their own prowess in somewhat rosy tinted memory. Nonetheless, there's no doubting that this is the place where the memories started, the place that all our cafe racer icons were centered “back in the day.”

While there, we met an Australian couple of about our age, on the same nostalgia mission as us. The husband said he, like me, had wanted to ride into this lot but both of us were pre-

vented by the necessities of long distance travel from making that goal. It's a testament to the power of the Ace legend that both of us, from opposite sides of the globe, were here for the same reason.

Perhaps some day, in a perfect world, I will ride into the Ace on a proper cafe bike, a Norvin or a Triton or maybe a Velocette 500 single with low bars.

Probably not, but a guy can still dream.

*Sent from my iPad
Www.riceheathlaw.com*



Above:
Brenda pondering the menu at the Ace.

Right:
Old man at the Ace
With Guinness



Ace Dreams and related notes

By John Rice



Above:

Motorcycle parking just off Fleet Street in London. Particularly convenient in a town where parking is at such a premium. Shows how much motorcycles are considered as a legitimate part of the transportation scheme.

Right:

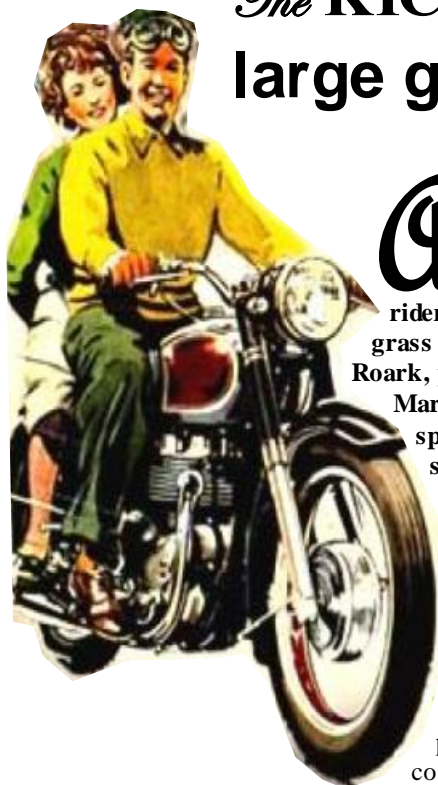
My new helmet. Not sure if it's Snell rated but it is rather heavy.

The rest of the suit exists, but re-tailoring for all the weight I've gained on this trip would require a welder.

(At the museum in Greenwich)



The KICKSTAND's Polar Bear Run draws large group on a sunny March 3rd



@pproximately 85 riders, according to Bluegrass Beemerphile Lowell Roark, participated in the March 3 Polar Bear Run sponsored by The Kickstand in Burgin.

Kickstand co-owner Raymond Montgomery as ride captain surveyed the route prior to the run to ensure the roads were safe.

Riders on the run paid \$5.00 to cover the cost of chili and drinks at

Mallard's in Danville at the conclusion of the ride.

Prior to the run, riders convened at The Kickstand to socialize and shop at the store.

The Polar Bear Run always draws a good crowd and provides excellent time among fellow motorcyclists.

If you have never attended one of the events at The Kickstand, you need to do so.

The following photos capture a portion of the event.



Raymond Montgomery ready to lead the Polar Bear Run.



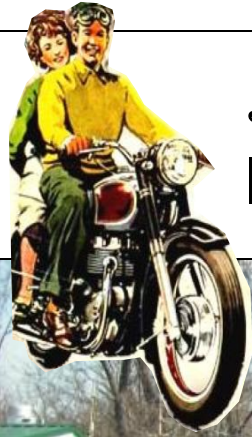
The KICKSTAND's Polar Bear Run draws large group on a sunny March 3rd





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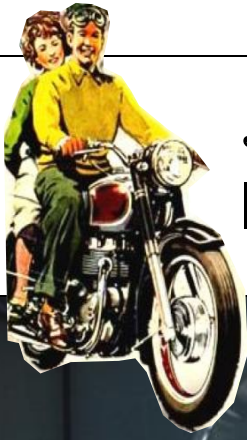
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Go West Young Bike

(Or, How Paul's Bike Finds a New Home In Hawaii) Part 10 By Bob Beard



It is morning in my Williams, Az. campsite and, as always, I am up well before the sun has a chance to roll over the horizon.

Packing up is done by feel and intuition and a remembrance of what goes where. My equipment list is small. It is chilly this morning, but the memory of flashes of snow where I was yesterday make this lingering chill seem a bit warmer. It's all perspective.

Hanging a flashlight from a nearby friendly tree I open my road atlas and get a shocker: On the next page of travel the Pacific Ocean is hugging the left side of the page. Seeing it there is an indicator that my days on the road are numbered, and I suffer a twinge of melancholy. I think I could realistically spend an entire year doing nothing but living off the seat of a motorcycle. Maybe if Mary gets that sabbatical she is applying for... and I can wrangle a year off of work...maybe. Of course, then I would need to come back to some semblance of reality and reformulate my life, again.

For now it is enough that my cell phone has no reception and I have only a self-imposed schedule. Westward I go.

If I were interstate oriented, or if I were pressed for time, I could make it to my mom's house, or the San Diego drop-off point for the motorcycle later today. By now you should have figured out that interstates are not my preferred mode of travel, and as I have mentioned before, I will gladly put in an extra 150 miles on a series of nice back-roads to miss 20 miles of interstate travel. Plus, as indicated, I am in no great hurry to end my journey.

Luckily I am mere yards away from access to that most iconic of all the varying stretches of asphalt crossing the United States. I speak, of course, of U.S. Route 66. Call it the Will Rogers Highway, the Mother Road, The Great Diagonal Way or The Main Street of America. It answers to all. There have been songs, movies, maps, ideas, countless diners, and even more countless fruit stands and gas stations dedicated to this stretch of asphalt.

From Williams, where I spent the night, I connect with route 66 through an unobtrusive side road. A single right turn deviation and the trucks and SUV's zooming through the darkness are left behind. Within half a mile I am alone and left with the quiet of the predawn world. The pattering of the old flat twin moving through the terrain seems to be what this road is made for.



The sun comes up, but it does little more than illuminate a flat, grey semi-windy and cold landscape. Within the 70 miles or so it takes me to get to Seligman, Arizona I have become more than ready for a cup of something warm to hold. I may

even drink it, but really, I just want to hold it, and pet it, and tell it that I love it.

Route 66 is minimally maintained. What this means is that whatever state it is wandering through has a governor who would rather spend the money on lunches and junkets than maintaining a withering piece of roadway. The surface is universally grainy, rough, pebbly, patched, sloping and scarred by tar snakes, sail rabbits and marks that could only have been left by a vehicle burning by the side of the road. It is an old road; it has an old road feel. It is scenic, not due to any onslaught of endless scenic wonders, but more for the fact that it offers endless vistas of something closer to what this country once looked like before it was inhabited to overflowing.

As the hours flow peacefully by, I pass through Kingman, Arizona and from there, maintaining my grasp on route 66, I

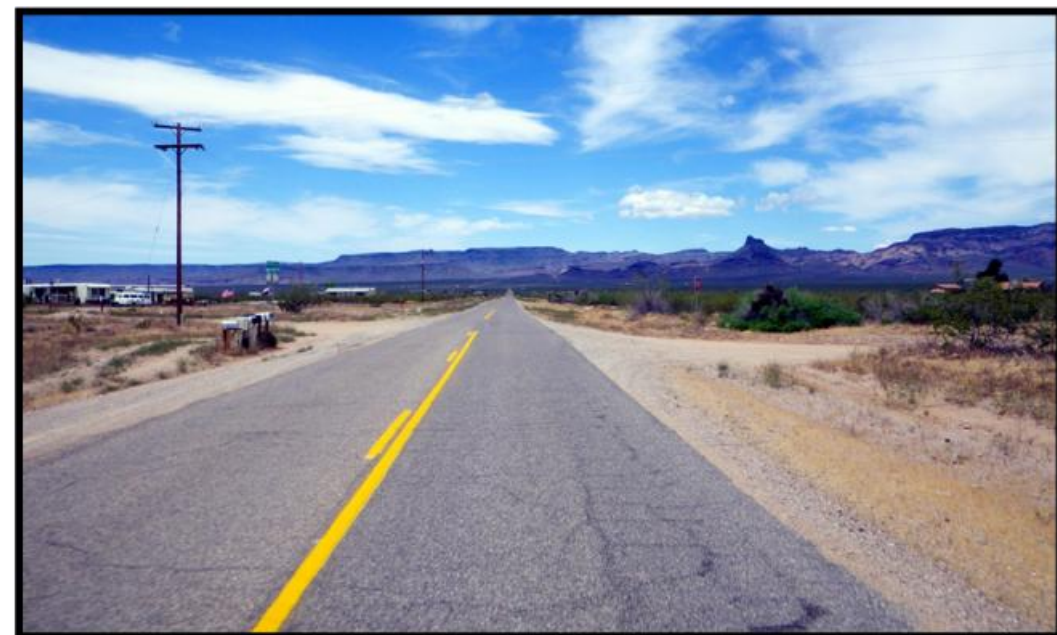


Go West Young Bike

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meander toward Oatman, Arizona.

The road approaching Oatman is custom made to humble you who feel that you have to apply full throttle in every turn. The last 15 miles or so into Oatman is habitually off-kilter and of inconsistent width due to abrupt and unmarked sections of roadway that have fallen into the cactus-and-boulder strewn canyon crowding at least one side of the road at all times. Tar snakes are everywhere and can be the consistency of rock or bubble gum depending on ambient warmth and how thickly they were laid on. Pulling over is almost never an option due to the lack of shoulder; there is almost always either a drop-off into a gully or a cliff-side close against the remaining tarmac. Blind corners, narrow pot-holed asphalt, lumbering sightseers, wild burros, goats, washouts,



gravel, sand, etc. occupy nearly every foot of the road. Speed at your own risk.

Built in 1902, the now-Oatman Hotel is the oldest two-

story adobe structure in Mohave County, a Mohave County historical landmark and is especially famous as the honeymoon stop of Clark Gable and

Carole Lombard after their wedding in Kingman on March 18, 1939. Remember that for your Jeopardy appearance. The Oatman census consistently records a permanent population of about 300 people. It was originally begun as a sort of mining town, and has never quite lost that feel.

The streets in town are sometimes traffic-clogged due to the presence of packs of wild burros that live about Oatman. They are the descendants of pack animals turned into the wild by miners of past. The walk on the board sidewalks, they stand resolutely in the middle of the road; furry speed bumps that can kick the chrome off your ride. They are probably registered to vote here. Many of the stores in Oatman will sell you carrots and 'burro-feed' packets for the burros. Try not to make the mistake of thinking they are tame though. Every now and then one of them gets too much attention and kicks the living crap out of an unsuspecting tourist. It is



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Tourists looking to get kicked.



Traffic control in Oatman

rumored they do not like loud pipes.

Saying goodbye to the traffic control burros in Oatman, I wended westward out into the southwest desert again. Traversing these areas on a motorized vehicle makes you wonder how people on foot, on horseback, and in wagons, ever settled these areas. Settlements tend to be near areas of water or, presumably, near areas where the impetus to move any further simply ran out. It is consistently dry, dusty and sparse. Life here would have been hard

indeed without benefit of guaranteed supply replenishment or rainfall.

Eventually I cross into California at Parker Dam after skirting the east side of Lake Havasu City. I remember as a kid coming out to the Lake Havasu City area with my parents and camping out. These days the camping would be done in the parking lot of a Wendy's. The streets are filled (and I mean *filled*) with bass-booming autos, gang-banger look-alikes, and more surf trend attired teens than I ever see on the

streets in Honolulu. This place is just weird, and I am glad I do not even need to stop for gas.

Parker Dam, where I cross into California, is a somewhat funky village of housing located along canyons crowded with retirement housing. Formed by the Colorado River as it winds its way toward the Gulf of Mexico (or, more likely, as it winds its way to Southern California swimming pools) the canyons force houses to be right up front and center to hwy 95.



Looking east on Rt. 66 from the outskirts of Oatman



Looking at the westward 66 from Oatman

Go West Young Bike

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Parker Dam overview

Crossing the river I pause to rehydrate and admire the view of Parker from the west side of the draw before venturing on into California at a town called simply Earp.

Earp, California, as near as I can tell, consists of a post office and a bullet-riddled sign that says “**Entering Earp**” on both sides. No need for a **Leaving Earp** sign. There is neither enough money in the budget, or enough room within the town limits to place two such signs so that they would not run afoul of one another. Earp is named quite obviously after Wyatt Earp, of OK Corral fame. Mr.

Earp and his wife of many years had a house in the vicinity, and apparently it was the only permanent residence they ever had. Even then the aging lawman spent much of his time over in Los Angeles until his death in 1929.

There is a faux gravestone located not too awfully far from the post office in Earp commemorating the death of Mr. Earp. He is not actually buried there though, so none of you grave robbing antics, please.

Earp is located in San Bernardino County, California. This is a huge and sprawling county. San Bernardino County is so

large, in fact, that is larger than the four smallest US states combined! That's right. If you cram Rhode Island, Delaware, New Jersey, and Connecticut all together they would fit inside San Bernardino County. It is nearly as big as a small Texas hamster farm.

At Earp I join hwy 62, which runs straight east-to-west across the Mojave Desert. ‘Mojave’ being an old Indian word meaning ‘what the hell were you thinking?’

My projected destination now is Joshua Tree National Monument. Joshua Tree is an amazing place; well worth the drive across hell to get there. Springing out of the low desert it rises up into a plateau of rocky ground of unquestionably stark, weird and wonderful landscapes. It is a chosen destination for rock climbers, nature lovers, and those who seek solitude for any reason.

My brother, way back in the 70's, when he was embarking upon his path to self-destruction, would pile into whatever functioning vehicle he and his cronies owned between them to motor out and spend weekends at Joshua Tree for full moon, no moon, new moon, quarter moon and both waning and waxing moon phases. They got to be real fixtures at Joshua Tree. Their treks were less of a ‘finding nature’ than a stumbling, bumbling, howling-at-the-moon



Walking around the bike in the Mojave Desert

Go West Young Bike

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Bob & Bob clowning at Joshua Tree Monument campsite

type of nature. From the stories I overheard the nutritional factors during these debauched dalliances were LSD, mescaline and peyote. Hydration was courtesy of Mr. Cuervo. Marijuana, which was quite in vogue in Southern California culture at the time, was deemed much too simplistic for these outings. Like the Vietnam War,

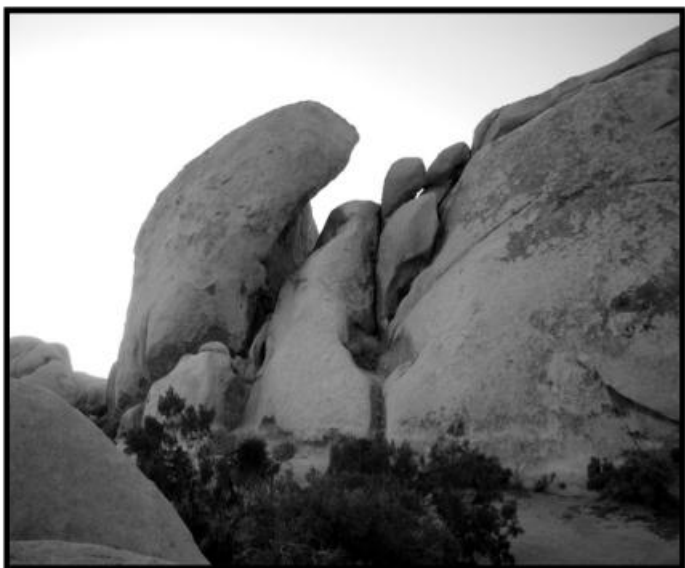
it is an experience I am glad to have missed.

Still, once you are witness to the Joshua tree phenomenon, it is quite easy to imagine the draw the place would have to those intent upon hallucinatory experience. The place is fantastic with rock formations both wind and water carved. The wind carries little but the sound of itself sighing across chapar-

al, mesquite and sand. The sky is clear and blue during the day, and star-studded at night. For those intent upon being intent upon themselves without the attendant intrusion of day-to-day scenery and witnesses, it would be an obvious repository. If a modern day messiah wanders out from a desert any time soon it may be well from the confines of Joshua Tree.

Before I made camp at Joshua Tree Monument, I needed a few supplies so I hit up the town of Twenty-Nine palms, which lies at the northern base of the park. The city of Twenty Nine Palms is supported none-too-well with sporadic bursts of income from tourism and a more reliable trickle of monies from the nearby Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Predictably bars, tattoo parlors, liquor stores and fast food establishments do quite well with the close-shaven clientele that bring in most of their money.

Camping at this time of year in Joshua tree reflected the fact that I was 'off-season'. I cruised a couple of camp-



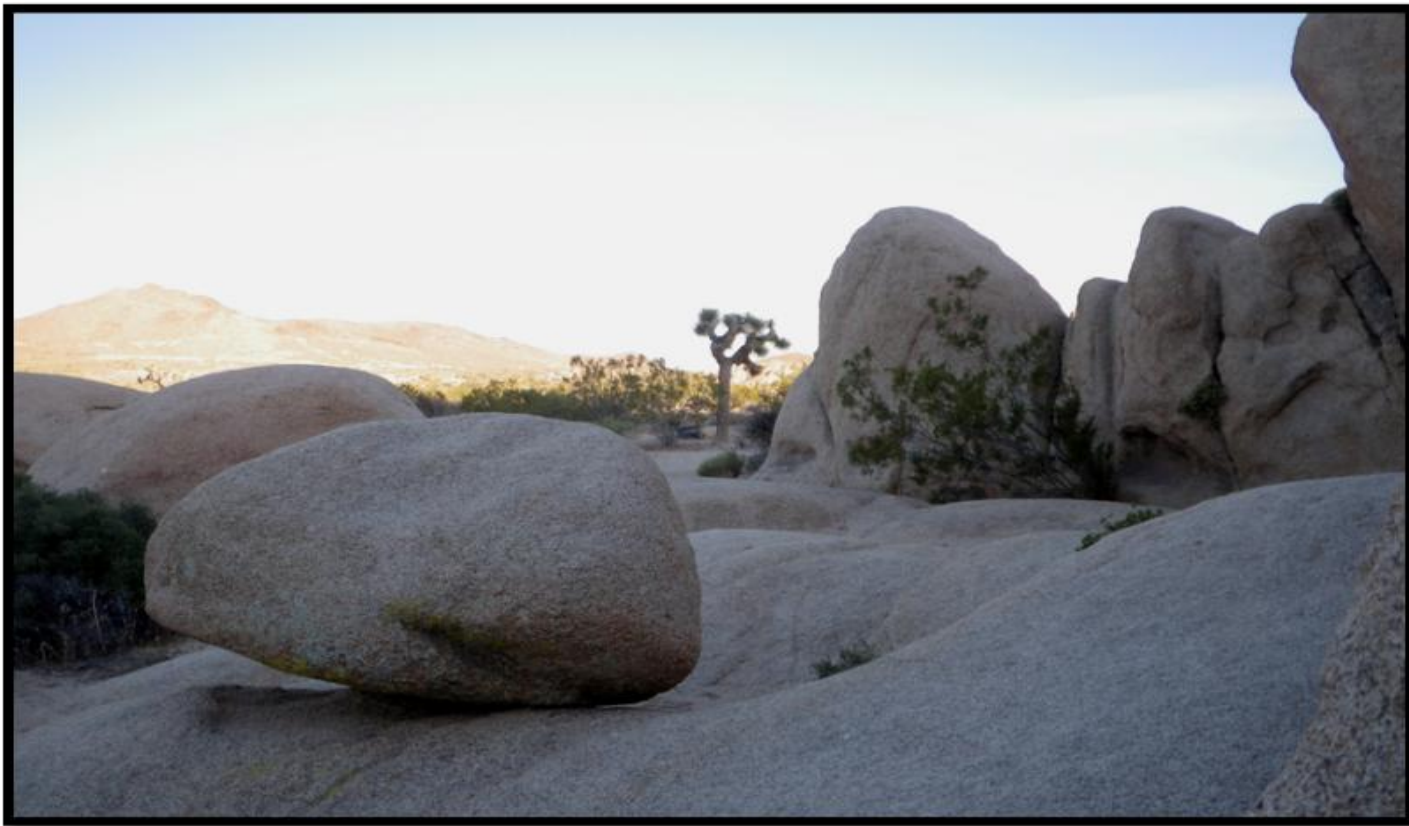
Rock Formations abound at Joshua Tree



Store in Twenty-Nine Palms reflects a dying economy. The beer aisle was well stocked.

Go West Young Bike

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Shadows Race to the Horizon as Day's End Approaches

grounds and saw no one else. I chose one campsite at random based upon a sudden smile from nearby formations. In a couple of hours of hiking about before the sun abandoned me I saw just two other sites occupied. In one of them, having spotted me atop some nearby boulder formations, a man asked if I could help him out.

Clambering down I found that he had lost his car keys. He had no spare. His bride of twelve days was none-too-thrilled and close to tears. I had no reception on my phone, and neither did they. I did offer to give him a ride down into Twenty-Nine Palms, but he said he would not worry too much until the next day. I advised that I would be

leaving before the sun came up, and would probably not be able to duplicate my offer of a ride. He still declined. It is quite possible he will not survive to celebrate his first wedding anniversary.

Back at camp I quaffed a couple of Guinness I had found down in Twenty-Nine palms, had a bite to eat, and lay out on

the ground admiring the end of the day until the cold drove me into my mummy bag.

G'night.

2012 European Rider's Rally May 18th - 20th

The registration is open for the European Rider's Rally.

We have a great rally planned this year with a class on slow maneuvering and throttle/clutch control with drag rear braking.

If you have ever wondered how motorcycle policemen turn around in the space of a single lane, let this 20 year veteran instructor teach you how. The steak dinner, Bicho Brother's Band and the campground are

ready. Go to <http://www.bmwcon.org/rally> to sign up.

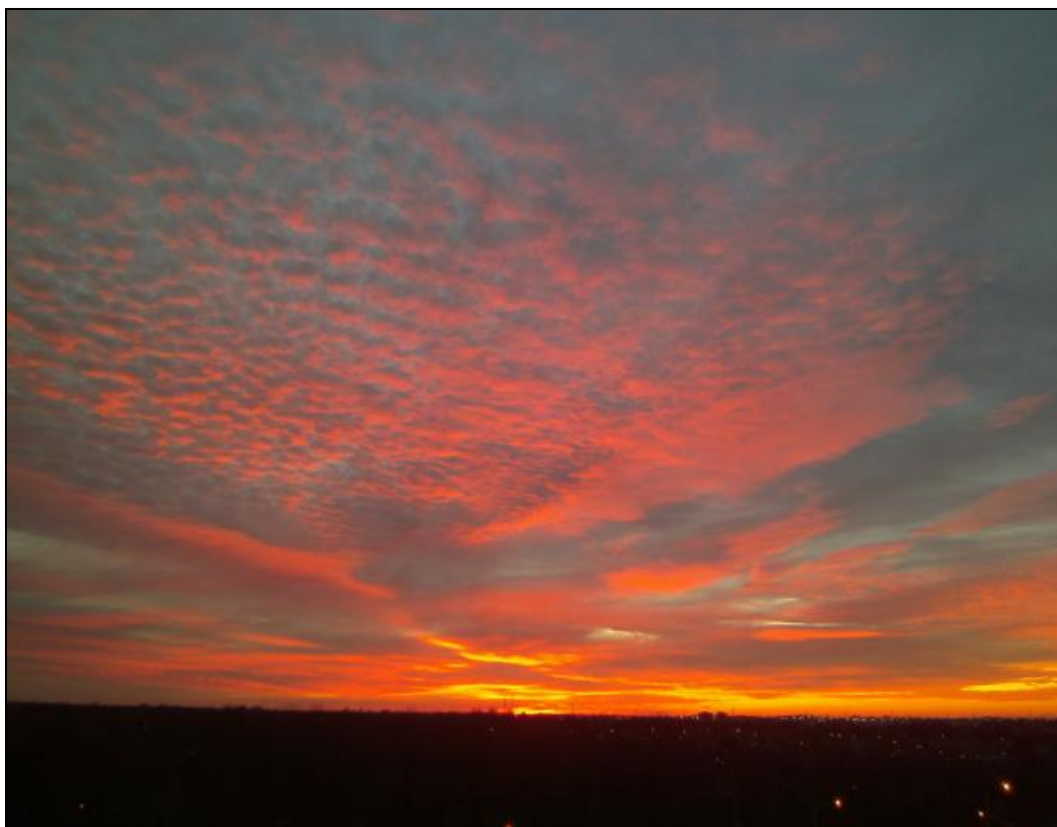
The first two hundred online signups are assured a long sleeved Rally shirt and pin. Once the shirts are gone, only

pins will be available--so sign up soon!

Andy Valentine
rally@bmwmcon.org

Images

by Tom Weber



Images

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Bluegrass Beemers Annual Awards Banquet

April 27th, 7pm

The Chop House, 2640 Richmond Road, Lexington
Larger private room than last year for a larger crowd

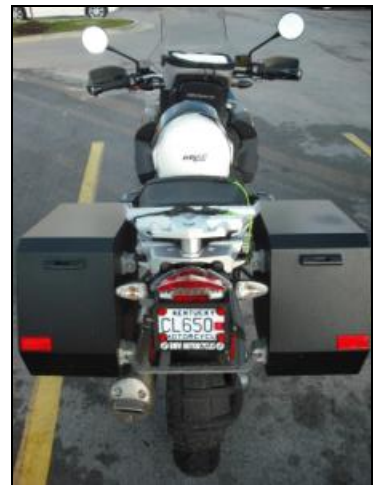
Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9am



Lowell Roark poses with his new 2011 BMW R1200GS sporting Micatech luggage.



Micatech provides an exhaust pipe adapter that lowers the muffler to enable a full-size bag on the left side of the bike as pictured below.



Left: Lowell shows off his cup holders!



Steve Jobs heading to Frisch's in 1966.



Saturday @ Frisch's 7-9am

Some day, when you are physically unable to do what you want to do, you will regret those times you did NOT attend Bluegrass Beemers breakfast at Frisch's when you were feeling fine but were simply *too lazy* to get out of bed.

Do breakfast.
Talk motorcycles.
7-9am
Any Saturday.



Above: Tom Rich sends Easter regards.

Left: Serious discussion regarding Tenere farkles in preparation for Alaska. Details in the May issue of Apex.

**Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.
Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #4-49**

Paul Elwyn, *Editor* paul.elwyn@gmail.com

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.

Back issues of Apex can be accessed at <http://www.bluegrassbeemers.org>

Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd. on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.