

August 2017

# Apex

*Looking Through The Curve*

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



Better top off your tank here!  
Photo by Lee Thompson

# Turkey!

By Jeff Crabb

Last month I spoke of how much I didn't like riding in July. To my favor the last weekend of July had cool temps and great riding weather.

For some reason or another, this year I'm finding a lot more turkeys out on the road. We still get our share of deer, dogs, cats, rabbits, squirrels

and chipmunks. But I think I've seen more turkey's running around than in years past. They are a peculiar bird. They'll run down the road trying to get away from you (in a not so straight line) and as soon as you think they have given up, they take to flight. They are both an ugly runner and flier. Unpredictable in both.

This month we have the continuation of John Rice's trip home on his new hack and Lee Thompson's MOA Rally trip with plenty of pictures from both.

Please enjoy and remember, send all of your contributions to [apex@bluegrassbeemers.org](mailto:apex@bluegrassbeemers.org).

Thanks

## National Parks raising Senior Pass costs from \$10 to \$80

On August 28, 2017, the price of the "America the Beautiful" will be increased for the first time since 1994. The lifetime Senior Pass, available to US Citizens 62 years or older, will increase to \$80 or \$20 annually. If you are at all interested in visiting National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands and you meet the requirements, you really should purchase this pass before the rate goes up. The pass doesn't expire, but aren't replaceable if lost or stolen. For more information visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

### Area Rallies

What	Where	When
40th Annual Dan'l Boone Rally	Boone, NC	8/11-13/2017
MOA Getaway Pine Mountain	Pineville, KY	9/8-10/2017
Ride the Blue Ridge	Morganton, NC	9/14-17/2017
31st Annual Hoosier Beemers Rally	North Vernon, IN	9/22-24/2017

**Apex is the official newsletter of Bluegrass Beemers, Inc.**

**Lexington, Kentucky MOA #146 RA #49**

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**Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month.**

Back issues of *Apex* can be accessed on our website

**Join us at Frisch's on Harrodsburg Rd.**

**in Lexington, Kentucky on any Saturday, 7-9:00 a.m.**

**BMW Club**  
Bluegrass Beemers



# Why not Utah?

By Lee Thompson

While preparing for my retirement in 2013, I envisioned checking off my “bucket-list” as a routine weekly exercise. Four years later, I realized my checks were only a few while the list continued to grow robustly. At the top of my list was taking a motorcycle trip out west, specifically Colorado, and any other state along the way would be a bonus.

My older brother spent three college summers in Estes Park, Colorado and one year our family took a vacation there to bring him home. That trip made a lasting impression and I have always felt a personal connection to that area. Each year Colorado was at the top of my list, but something always got in the way of my trip and reluctantly I would resign to move it to the “next year” column.

After cancelling a trip earlier this riding season, I started to think about the 2017 MOA Rally in Salt Lake City, Utah as a possibility. Why not Utah, I could check off several items on my bucket list in one trip. First, I have to “sell” this trip to Laura before setting myself up for a huge disappointment if she doesn't buy in. With only a few questions, how many miles? How long will you be gone? Who is going with you? And finally “you know I think you're NUTS”! She is reluctant, but willing to accept my latest “crazy” ride idea.

Next, I have to get my best friend Don Wilson to sign on....check, well that was an easy sell! Don lives in south Louisiana and readily agrees to meet me most anywhere for a “good ride”. A few of you have met Don, we grew up together in a small town in south Missis-

sippi and started riding motorcycles together when we were “almost” teenagers. Don is a true motorcycle enthusiast and rarely drives anything with more than two wheels; he currently rides an RT and occasionally his “little Honda 700”. He has a love for all types of bikes and has owned too many to count without considerable time with pad and pencil.

With the comments above, you now can understand how excited I was to finally have the opportunity to experience what many in our Beemer group have done many times. On day One, we met in Sikeston MO and kicked off the trip with our celebration dinner at Lambert's “home of the throwed roll”....I caught mine!

Our plan to meander west toward the Rally in Salt Lake worked well with help from John Rice, Todd Fuller, Roy Rowlett, and a few others. With their experience and advice, we developed a must see list along with some logistics for safely surviving the July heat and making our trip a success. A quick text while at the Rally to Jeff Crabb even got us a great dinner recommendation, Ruth's Diner. Although hard to find with some GPS/MAP issues and despite my inclination to always take the longest route possible and getting lost, we did arrive before the thunder storm and enjoyed our ride up Emigration Canyon Road just outside the city. Good choice Jeff.

Learned on the Road West; July is HOT, before you get to the good stuff, roads are long and straight, people are friendly, July is HOT, gas is not available in every town, Feed Lots

stink, flat straight two lane roads and small towns are worth the lost time, correct gear increases comfort, incorrect gear is painful, love my new Moto-Skiveez's, July is HOT, strange things are seen on the roadside, strange people are seen on the roadside, Clayton, New Mexico has speed traps on both ends of town, gas is always cheapest when you're empty, Maybell, Colorado has a gas pump, miles decrease when buttocks are HOT, wind turbine farms are there for a reason "wind", mountain weather changes quick, love my trip, miss Laura, pack less, drink more water, plan to revise plans, all people are interesting and have great stories so take time to listen, pictures help you to relive the adventure so take more, GoPro video is awesome, love each day with an excitement for what God has planned for

you, best friends are the best, July is really HOT!!!

Trip notes: twelve days on the road, eight states, three National Parks (w/senior discount card), and 4,318 miles on the clock. I now have a much longer bucket list and already dreaming of my next trip west anxious to make a few more checks and also add some.

Too many stories from the trip to share now, more notes to come! Much thanks to my support team: Paul Elwyn-Ergonomics Consultant, Roy Rowlett-Bike Prep & Ergonomics Engineer, John Rice-Must See Consultant, Todd Fuller-Logistics/Comfort Coach, Jeff Crabb-Dining Advisor, and special thanks to anyone at Breakfast who motivated me by sharing their stories of trips West.



Day One kickoff celebration at Lambert's.....at least one roll was caught!





Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park, small specks are Elk



Maybell Store! One pump, road sign said “next fuel 57 miles”



Vintage Barn  
1975 R90/6 with claimed 321,000 miles



1938  
R61 Mail





You

You never know who you might run in to at the Rally.  
Good to see Jesse Vaca again.



Arches National  
Park

No I'm not hot,  
these are air  
flow pants.

# Getting the Rig Home, 2017

By John Rice

*(We left our peregrinating practitioner of the sidecar life languishing in South Lake Tahoe, waiting out the storm.)*

In the morning, the sky is clearing and the air has that freshly washed smell that comes after a good storm. The puddles in the parking lot of my motel reflect the blue sky and wispy white clouds as I'm loading my bag on to the rack. It is still cold here; maybe mid-40's, but one can't fault the setting with the mountains in view. The people in the room next door come out to watch me pack up and have to talk about the rig and where I'm traveling to. I can see in their demeanor when I tell them I'm coming from Washington and heading to Kentucky that they can't really take that in.

On the route north, following the eastern shore, there are not as many views of the water, but still very impressive scenery with the stark grandeur of the snow covered hillsides punctuated by the lake. The road is rising steadily into more snow, with ice warnings on the mobile lighted signs. At the crest, as often happens in the west, the scene is completely changed as the road goes down to Carson City. The temperature begins to rise dramatically, the snow is gone and the terrain becomes weathered, all brown, low hills, and in the distance, the flat expanse of desert. This is the beginning of "The Loneliest Road in America" as the signs proudly proclaim.

Outside of Fallon, after the various iterations of "Bunny Ranches" fade out, is where the "lonely" begins, with endless expanses of

nothing much as far as the eye can see and no traffic other than me. Framing the pavement for a while are wide shallow ditches in the yellow sand/clay and kids have taken the ubiquitous tennis ball sized black stones and spelled out messages, names, etc. in the mud. There are no overpasses or concrete walls to tag here, so one must make do when the urge for anonymous communication arises.

It is easy to be numbed by miles of treeless desert on both sides, but it does change character subtly from no vegetation to low bushes, with the color going from pale yellow to sage. (I wonder if "sage" is as popular a color for clothes out here?). Occasionally I see an unfortunate desert dweller who ended life beneath some passing wheels. How unlucky does one have to be to cross the road just when the only vehicle in days is coming by?

There are some rises, brief moments of gentle curves, as the road gains altitude. The low passes are still higher than the highest point in my home state of Kentucky where Black Mountain tops out at less than 5,000 feet. Reaching about 7,500 feet on this road is common and the cold is palpable as I rise. Just where it should be for a break on this lonely road is Austin, a tiny town located just on the west side of a pass over 7,000 feet. I can picture the pioneers who, having crossed a desert and ascending this pass, got down the other side and decided that this would be a good place to settle in and start a town. There are two restaurants in this wide spot in the road, one at each end of the town and I choose the second one. I get a chef's salad, which turns



out to be enough for three people. I notice halfway through that the chef has left out the meat portion, and when I tell the waitress, soon the chef appears, apologetic, bearing a plate with the meat and enough salad for yet another person. I failed to bring three friends for lunch and, since the road is indeed lonely, I haven't seen anyone else out here I could invite to share.

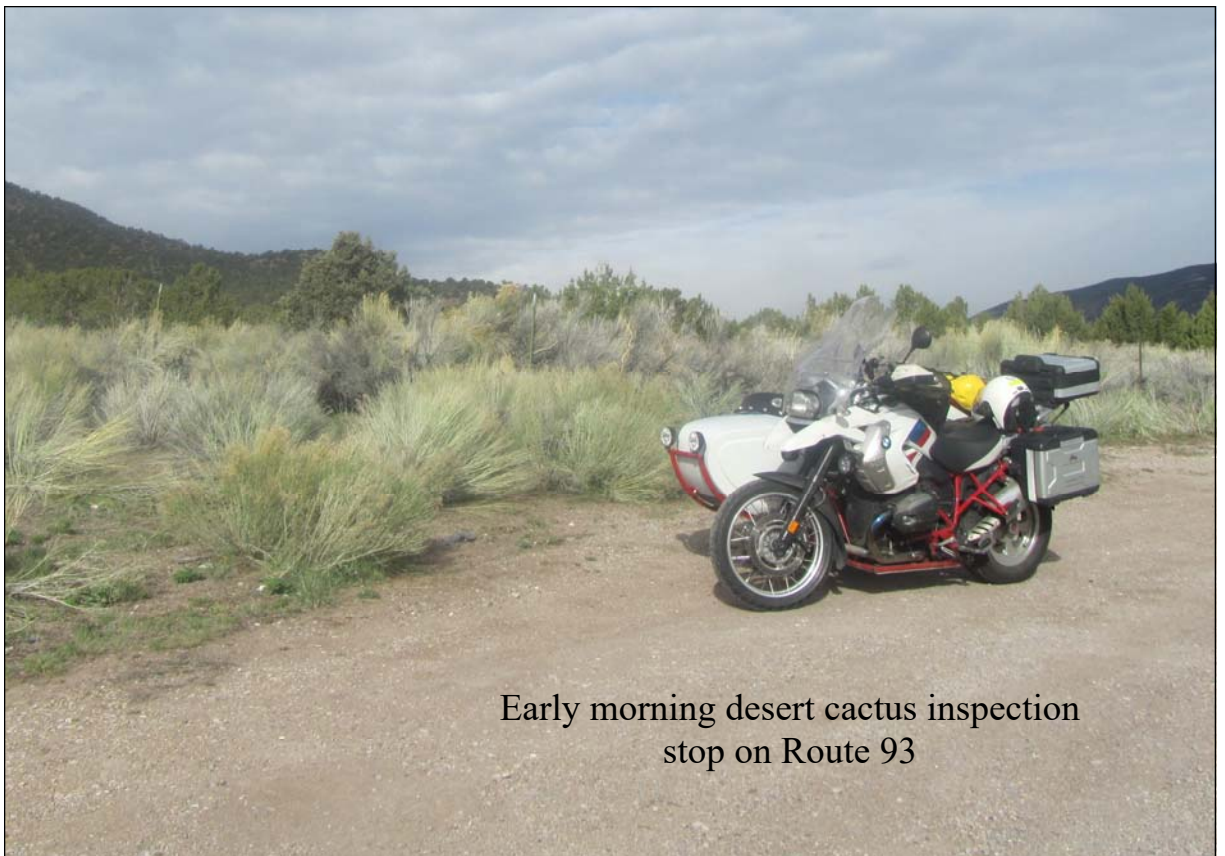
One should never pass up a gas opportunity out here, especially on a rather thirsty sidecar rig, so I fill up the tank again at the only station in town and begin the slow climb up the switchbacks and down the canyon on the other side. The desert here on the east side of the pass is a bit more green-ish, with more low bushes and the occasional scrawny tree. Unlike the pioneers who crawled across this expanse in wagons, I'm whistling by it all at 70 mph or sometimes a bit more. The loneliest road looks a lot more so, I suspect, when the time to cross it is in days or weeks rather than hours.

A stop in the very western - movie looking town of Eureka for another top off and soon I'm in Ely, Nevada, which is distinguished by a wide vari-

ety of opportunities to gamble away one's trip money in historical-looking institutions. Needing to retain enough resources to eat and sleep and feed the rig on the way home, I bypass the temptation.

Lodging for tonight is on the east side of town at the old-style Bristlecone Motel, where the clerk tells me that my assigned room has just been completely remodeled and available just today. . "You will be the first person ever to use that bathroom" she says with pride. I don't know that I've ever had such an honor.

I can see my breath in the morning air as I wheel the rig out of its parking space and head south the next morning. While Rt. 50 may have the publicity as "lonely", this Rt 93 is a long, long road with not much to see, but desert and the temperature is getting still colder as I ascend the passes. Conner Pass rises over 7,400 feet, and then trickles down switchbacks



Early morning desert cactus inspection  
stop on Route 93

to the slightly warmer valley floor. The rig is getting thirsty again and I'm just about to pull over and use the Roto-Pax spare can, when signs tell me that I'm approaching Pioche, NV. The "new" road bypasses Pioche, so I detour into town and find fuel at only station for miles. It is an old style station, slanted awning over two pumps and the iconic dinosaur of Sinclair on the tall sign out front. There is a small garage attached, with a car on a lift and an air hose running across the pavement from a compressor in a small shed. Inside the station there is a glass counter with some dusty automotive knickknacks and a few candy bars, just like I recall from the 60's. No mega-store, "buy gas and a week's groceries" here. The attendant has a shirt with his name on it, but he looks and sounds so much like the actor John C. Reilly that I look around to see if I've stumbled into a film shoot. Outside, there is an old man filling up a huge early 70's vintage American car at the pump ahead of mine. He is bent double, using two canes for support as he makes his way to the rear of his car, eye level with gas cap. From the banter between

them, it is clear that he is a regular here. The attendant assists him with the fill up and then, after the man has situated himself back in the car, looking up through the steering wheel, tells him "and this time, don't run over my air hose". The massive old car pulls slowly away, running both sets of wheels over the air hose. I'm going to give him a bit of time before I follow.

Despite having three possibilities to choose from, there are no open restaurants in Pioche this morning, so I have to wait until Cedar City, Utah for sustenance. At a gas stop north of Zion, a man and his son come out of the store to admire the rig, and after the usual Sidecar Delay Factor conversation they tell me to go up three or four miles on this side road and turn around and park to look east into the "back side" of Zion park, where the tourists don't typically reach. I follow their directions and they were right...impressive. It occurs to me that these folks live with this grandeur every day, just part of the background of their lives.



The "back side" of Zion National Park



Zion National Park is crowded but even hordes of tourists in SUV's cannot subtract much from the view with red rock cliffs and arches lining the road, looming overhead and filling every scene. I've not been to the floor of the Grand Canyon, but I suspect this might be what it looks like. The rig draws some attention from some of the many motorcyclists cruising through the park, with many "thumbs up" gestures replacing the customary wave. I park in one of the many pulloffs and walk down a short trail, being careful to stay on the well trodden path. In moments, the rig and the road are out of sight and there are only the rocks, the scrub trees and the critters who call

this place home. A tiny lizard comes out of an unseen hole to inspect me, decides I'm not much of a threat and returns to tell the family it's nothing important. Here, only a few dozen paces from the road, one can turn 360 degrees and not see anything that suggests the 21st Century...or for that matter, the previous few....has intruded on this marvelous place.

Outside the park just a mile or two, the road starts down and the terrain changes dramatically into a sort of forest of scattered thin pines, struggling to hold on in this dry land. I can only imagine the pioneers heading west through this landscape, laboring up such a long rise and then finding themselves in the



Inside Zion National Park





Near the Zion park exit, where things change

pass that became this spectacular park. For some, I'm sure it was a religious experience.

At Kanab, the time for finding a place to stay had arrived. After a quick tour through town, I selected Parry's lodge over the generic chain motels along the Main Street. This lodge began as a private home, but in 1931 was turned into the place where the stars stayed back in the



day for Monument valley movies and other

locations. Three Parry brothers recognized the coming of tourism and that the burgeoning movie industry would be looking for exotic scenery for motion pictures. They made sure the Hollywood executives knew that they were the “go to” guys for lining things up in this area and steered the actors to the developing Parry lodge for accommodation. Nowadays the stars stay in luxurious trailers on site and the lodge is

more for the “civilian” tourist trade. The rooms, quite adequate by my motorcycle trip standards, are small and a bit spartan compared to the Holiday Inn, but no chain can match the ambiance. The rooms are named for the actors who stayed in them and most include some memorabilia associated with that person. There was a Margo Kidder room, but she wasn’t in it at the time, so I let them

assign me wherever they wished. I ended up in the James Arness room, at the end of one row, past the original barn now being used as a theater. The bathroom is typical of motels from the heyday, old style fixtures, and made for the somewhat shorter people that we used to be. At 6’2”, I’m not as lofty as the Gun-smoke star Arness, and the sink top is just 6” above my knees. I can imagine the tall actor





bending over nearly double to wash the red Utah dust off his face. Just another day at the office.

There are pictures on the walls of the lobby and breakfast area, stills from movies made around here and in some cases, right here on the premises. The motel pool was used for some swimming scenes, with the stills showing recognizable actresses in the swimsuits of the 50's and 60's, wide lipsticked smiles beaming up at the camera. There are signed photos from the stars of the day, John Wayne, Richard Boone, Ronald Reagan, Fess Parker, Clint Walker, and others, along with many photos of actors we all know by sight, but not by name. The second level play-

ers who were in every western, but never the star.

I'm sure these room blocks witnessed some wild parties as well as petty jealousies over





who got the better room and the more juicy part in the picture. There were, I'm certain, location romances with all that those entail. If these walls could talk...probably better for all concerned that they don't.

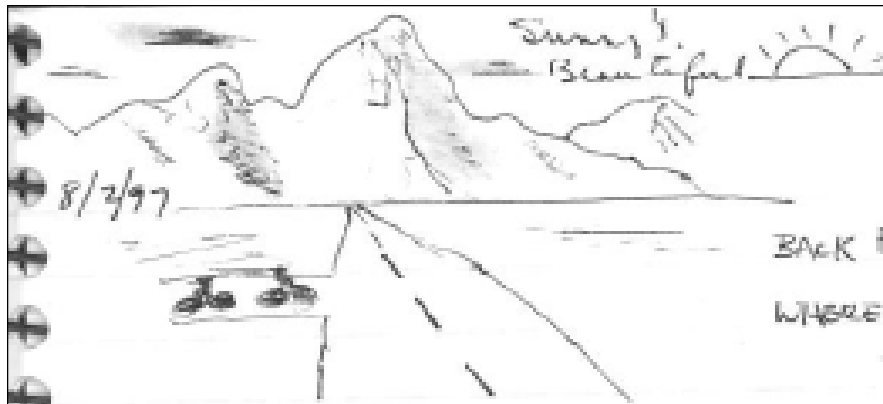
Supper is across the street at a "cowboy" bar and restaurant which has an old-looking sign at the entrance asking patrons to "Check guns here". I don't have a firearm, and wonder if the need arises, could they loan me one?

Later, having successfully fed without the need for gunplay, I make my way back to the Parry and tuck in for the night where once Marshall Dillon laid his head.

Tomorrow, Arizona.







8/2/97

58°

BACK FROM COLORADO,

WHERE WHITE PEAKS

TOUCH BLUE SKY

WHERE CANYON ROADS BECKON,

AND MAKES US WONDER WHY,

WE CAN'T SPEND MORE TIME

RIDING,

AND LESS TIME WONDERING WHY...



Here's the group for today:

1. David SPARKMAN
- 2.\* Chester MARTIN
- 3.\* Chris WARNER
- 4.\* Hubert BURTON
- 5.\* Roy ROWHETT
- 6.\* Tim STREET
- 7.\* Dave MCCORD
- 8.\* Boone SUTHERLAND
- 9.\* Tim BRADON
- 10.\* John RICE
11. Mary BEND
- \*12. Duff NEAL
- \*13. Mitch BUTLER
- \*14. Bob GOS
- \*15. Bill VOSS
16. Pete GALSKE
- \*17. Danny Sipe
- \*18. Randy SCOTT
19. Dave LARME (p.L.O.)

*Boone*



# Books available on loan

The following books are available on loan. Email me when you want to borrow one, and I will bring it to breakfast (or whatever other arrangements need to be made...I can deliver within reason) and I'll put your name beside it on my list.

I don't mind if people keep them a while (it takes me forever to read a book now....I keep falling asleep and then have to re-read the last 10 pages or so) but I don't want to give them away for good. At least not yet.

John Rice



***Bahnstormer*** By LJK Setwright  
***Streetwise*** By Malcolm Newell  
***The Bart Markel Story*** By Joe Scalzo  
***Mann of his Time*** By Ed Youngblood  
***Yesterday's Motorcycles*** By Karolevitz  
***The Scottish*** By Tommy Sandham  
***This Old Harley*** By Michael Dregni  
***Racer: the story of Gary Nixon*** By Joe Scalzo  
***All But My Life: Bio of Stirling Moss*** By Ken Purdy (OK, not a motorcycle book, but who doesn't like and respect Stirling Moss?)  
***Investment Biker*** By Jim Rogers  
***Obsessions Die Hard*** By Ed Culbertson  
***BMW Twins & Singles*** By Roy Bacon  
***Bitten by the Bullet*** By Steve Krzystyniak & Karen Goa  
***Cafe Racers of the 1960's*** By Mick Walker  
***More Proficient Motorcycling*** By David Hough  
***Tales of Triumph Motorcycles & the Meriden Factory:***  
By Hancox  
***Sport Riding Techniques*** By Nick Ienatasch  
***Total Control*** By Lee Parks  
***Smooth Riding*** By Reg Pridmore.



***A Twist of The Wrist ( Vol 1 & 2)*** By Keith Code  
***Triumph Tiger 100 and Daytona*** By J. R. Nelson  
***This Old Harley (anthology)*** By Dregni  
***Side Glances*** By Peter Egan  
***Mondo Enduro*** By Austin Vince  
***Big Sid's Vincati*** By Matthew Bieberman  
***101 Road Tales*** By Clement Salvadori  
***Riding with Rilke*** By Ted Bishop  
***Legendary Motorcycles*** By Luigi Corbetta  
***Red Tape and White Knuckles*** By Lois Pryce  
***A Man Called Mike*** By Hilton (bio of Mike Hailwood)  
***The Perfect Vehicle*** By Melissa Pierson  
***One Man Caravan*** By Robert Fulton (first known circumnavigation of the world by motorcycle)  
***Monkey Butt*** By Rick Sieman  
***Ariel: The postwar models*** By Roy Bacon  
***Short Way Up*** By Steve Wilson  
***Endless Horizon*** By Dan Walsh  
***Leanings (1 & 2)*** By Peter Egan  
***Into the Heart of Africa*** By Jerry Smith  
***The Last Hurrah*** By Des Molloy  
(Autographed copy, with DVD of the trip)  
***Whatever Happened to the British Motorcycle Industry***  
By Bert Hopwood  
***Down the Road*** By Steve Wilson  
***Motorcycling Excellence***  
By Motorcycle Safety Foundation  
***Leanings 3*** By Peter Egan  
***Ghost Rider*** By Neal Peart  
***Revolutionary Ride*** By Lois Pryce  
***How to Drive a Sidecar Rig*** by David Hough