

God's Gift to Bikers

I just got a tummy full of Bruce's quick tex mex chili delight. Recipe=one can of Hormel chili with beans, add a ton of my new Mexican hot sauce I am totally addicted to, one shit pot full of Mexican cheese, three squirts of olive oil to replicate authentic beef grease. Heat to a blazing temperature or until the cheese changes shape and becomes brittle and chewy. Pour the chili in a bowl and add Blue Corn Hot Chips for crunch. Fresh cut onions, cilantro and sour cream would have been great, but no deal. I ran out. Add salsa on the side and you have a meal in less than three minutes. Finish with a can of chilled peaches. Yum yum, full tummy for sure.

Back to today. Today was one of a gift from the motorcycle God. Thank you motorcycle God for you presented me with a day that for many riders lives only on the pages of magazines or dreams. I don't know if I did anything to deserve this, but just in case, man do I appreciate it. Thanks, thanks, thanks.

My morning routine starts out by deciding if I want to get out of bed in a 39 degree trailer and go to the bathroom or pee in my bed. So far the bathroom has been the best decision but if it gets lower than 39 the decision may not be so easy. After the big pee, I throw some water on the stove to make coffee and turn on the computer to see if anyone still loves me. While the coffee is brewing I check email, weather reports on the damn storms and get going. After returning a few emails and doing morning chores I got it together around 10:00. Tough morning.

Today was another one of those perfect weather days. Blue sky, cool or maybe even cold temps and dry. After riding in this neck of the woods for years I still had not yet seen Crested Butte. So I decided to mount the GS and head up there and see what's up. The plan was to ride to Crested Butte, have lunch and return in time for whatever happens when I return.

I got out on 149 and headed north to Lake City. I have ridden this ride twice but not from this direction. Once again the landscapes are impossible to describe with any credibility. There has been a lot of rain out here so the mountains are in full green mode. If it can get green, it is. The rocks, bluffs, cliffs are never ending. The

pavement is perfect and there is no traffic. I mean no traffic. I have this track all to myself. Dang I can't help but smile. Dang this is fun.

Just when I think it can't get better I see a road sign approaching. The sign says, MOTORCYCLES USE EXTREME CAUTION FOR THE NEXT 8 MILES.



Could there be a better sign? Could there be a better way to increase anticipation, increase the pace, get in the mode. Hell no, let's go. For the next 8 miles the road is a series of 20 mph hairpin exposed turns. Oh my, oh my. Making sure I did not exceed the posted 20 mph speed limit I got through the 8 miles. I glad they warned me, ha ha.

After a while I pulled into Lake City. Again it's just too nice to describe. I stopped at the gas station, grocery store and kept going. On the way out I looked at the Luna Rest which was previously the Blue Iguana. Scott and I stopped there and

had lunch on our big western ride. I miss him.



On the way out of town the Lake City Bakery OPEN sign was lit. This is where Ryan and I stopped on our big adventure. I didn't stop instead making a note to stop on the way home. The road follows the river and was the road Ryan and I rode on our big west adventure. The leaves were in full color when Ryan and

came this way. Wow it was like Ryan was with me, I miss him.



I followed 149, then over to Gunnison and on to Crested Butte. Again the landscapes are just mind blowing. Good tarmac, no police and good weather. I motored into Crested Butte to get lunch and get a feel for this place. Downtown is one of those typical little Victorian western ski resort towns. Except I kept getting images of these big hairy arms coming out of the stores reaching into the middle of the street with big hairy hands trying to get in tourist pockets as they drive down the street. Damndest image. Maybe Burning Man coming back in flashbacks or maybe I made the coffee a little strong this morning.

I dismounted and started my walk down Main Street trying to avoid hairy knuckles getting me. Every other store front was a real estate office, bank, Mortgage Company, property management company or a restaurant. I stopped at the Soul Food Rest and had a 3 ounce bowl of beef stew, with 12 sweet potato fries and a leaf of collard greens. This clearly reminded me of the time Scott and I had truffle fries in Aspen. What the hell, I was the only one in the restaurant; the

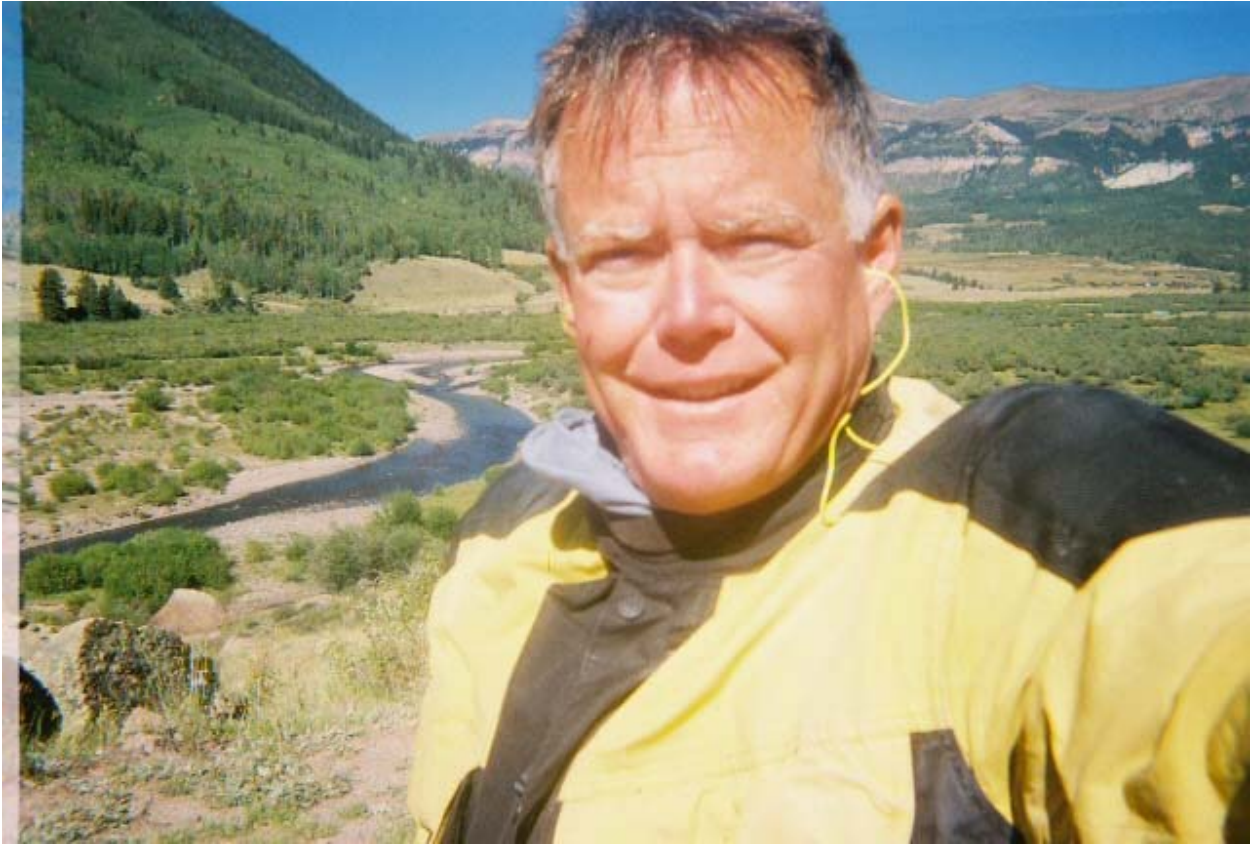
least they could do was to give me 20 fries. I was still hungry so I had the peach cobbler. A nice kid waited on me. I know it was not his fault so I gave him a nice tip.....next time bring me some f..... food and I will give you money for a tip. Just kidding.

The ski mountain was a few miles out of town so I went up there to admire the concrete and steel condos. UGGGH. But the mountain is beyond beautiful. Really good, but I don't think I have the need to come back. Now that being said, this is huge mountain bike country so I am sure there is a lot I did not see. After escaping hairy fingered hands I left for the return trip.



The way back was pretty much the above in reverse. Although I did stop at the Lake City Bakery and visited with the owner and had a cup of coffee. I asked about the two mountain jeep trails that go over the mountain. One is hard, the other is harder. One goes to Silverton. I don't which is which, doesn't really matter cause tomorrow I am taking the KTM over the first one I see. I think that is Cinnamon pass or it could Engineer pass. I will sort that out tomorrow.

After leaving Lake City I got this wild hair. I am going to ride all the way back to my trailer standing on the pegs. No sitting at all. The feeling of standing on the pegs of the GS on speeds up to 90mph is just almost more fun than I can take. It sounds dangerous but it is not really. Hauling ass thru twist and turns standing on the pegs creates the need for technical skills and great awareness. When it all comes together, imagine being about 9 feet off the asphalt, cool breeze in your face, lateral G forces and torque all coming together as the beautiful world comes and goes at speed. Sort of like flying a jet fighter, I suppose. And yep, I made it back all the way home standing up. I think I am still grinning.



So what is it about this thing that affects so many people in a similar manner. What is it about participant sports that release that special brain juice directly connected to the smile muscles. I think we humans really do want to live in the present and be totally there, without thought, without distraction, without worry. Meditation seems to be the disciplined intellectual strategy for calming the mind and being totally present. For folks like me who have not mastered this skill, we need something to cause the brain to focus so much that it will not let anything else in. Perhaps the transcendental state. For me because I have had a lifetime of undisciplined thoughts combined with unawareness my brain needs extreme

measures to shut down. Other people are attracted to other things, such as horses for Val. While the strategies are different, I think we are all better off living in the present. I am getting there.

My Burning Man experience provided all sorts of unanticipated results. I really was sort of kidding prior to the experience that Burning Man would be transformational for me. Well who knew!!!! The story is too long and boring for others but thru Burning Man I met people who have had a direct and meaningful impact on me. Ken the artist I met and helped build a sculpture gave me Eckhart Tolle's DVD's.

Eckhart's message is all about the ego, being present and the fact there is nothing but now. The trick for me is to comprehend the concepts, retaining the knowledge and integrating them into daily life. But the clearest example of what he talks about is the brain state that is achieved via the above for me . Is this the only time the brain can shut down and still remain hyper sensitive to information without conscious thought? I think not. With that being said, my trip title On the Road From Distraction to Engagement implies a destination which is a future event. The future does not exist, the only thing that exist is now and if I am not

engaged now, I never will be. So I proclaim myself engaged and loving it.



As always, much love to all and until the next report.

On the engaged journey.