



## Newsletter Vol. 7. #6 Nov.-Dec. 2009

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We're the **Lone Star Voyagers Motorcycle Club**, a chartered club of the **American Voyager Association**, and are looking for new members. The club focuses on Kawasaki Voyager owners but welcomes all makes and models of bikes. Dues are only \$7.50 / year for one-up riding or \$15 / year for two and are due in January. For an application, if there's not one at the back of this newsletter, there's one on our web site at [LoneStarVoyagers.org](http://LoneStarVoyagers.org). Our Secretary - Treasurer Sandra Judge will accept dues and applications at RR1 Box 162A, Mooreland, OK. 73852. (580)994-2411.

We are a family-riding club with activities scheduled nearly every month. We are also a fun club with no attendance or participation requirements. You are not required to be an AVA member. Our ride calendar is established at a business meeting that is held at a fall meeting. Normally we plan to host at least 2 camp-in weekends each year. We feature this bimonthly newsletter where members submit articles, & our web site is ([LoneStarVoyagers.org](http://LoneStarVoyagers.org)).

If you are interested you can contact our President, [Richard Baxter](mailto:richadntexas@dishmail.net), in Liberty Hill (512-515-0133), [richadntexas@dishmail.net](mailto:richadntexas@dishmail.net), or our Vice President, John Herring, in Liberty, TX. (936-336-2840) [voyagerjohn@gmail.com](mailto:voyagerjohn@gmail.com) or our Sec/Tres [Sandra Judge](mailto:jjudge@pldi.net), [jjudge@pldi.net](mailto:jjudge@pldi.net) for more information. Hope you can join us.

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### Richard's Ritings & Wridings

Winter is upon us. Music Man asked the other day (on the forum) if we were gonna have a December lunch ride. No comment from anyone so far other than me saying I'd be a willing participant to us taking the winter off & maybe make the next lunch ride (to Houston area again) after Hill Country Tour. Feb too cold, March still too cold but we're meeting EVA in Alpine anyway, April, HCT.

Speaking of that, our Ride Captain has been working his Beemer off checking out spots for HCT & the prez is dragging his feet. We found a very nice campground in Bandera but the only decent motels are \$100 per night - or real close to that.

Kerrville is ok on prices but the traffic there is so scary that we're shying away from that. So we're currently looking at Fredericksburg where we held HCT back in '07. The Oakwood RV Park & some motel with a 13% tourist-trap tax rate. Stay tuned. If you haven't renewed your LSV membership and intend to do so, please do it soon. Membership is from Jan 1 thru Dec 31 - except for Wayne who does his dues a decade or so at a time. - SpeedBall

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### Letter to LSV from David and Sheila

I know its early to start talking/planning on the 2010 AVA Rally but it will be here before we know it. It's in NY, which is one of the northern counties of TX and about 1500 miles from Central TX. It would be great if we could have a group go. I am not at the point that I can enjoy retirement so it is going to be difficult for me, not even there yet..

On another subject, I want to say I/We have enjoyed our short time with the LSVers. Sheila & I have enjoyed the rallies, monthly meet & eats and the great fellowship we have had. I want to give our Pres, Richard a BIG thank you for all the work he has done. Blessing of the Bikes was the first we attended & plan to do it again this year. HCT was made our 1st adventure in motorcycles. I didn't know if the wife was up to it but she was a trooper. Deer & a little rain always make a trip memorable. Can't beat Fayetteville for food & fun. Ole Hippi outdid himself. Sam's was a great way to connect with the northern LSVers. VH in Paris was fun only dampened by a little rain. All in all, it was a good year. We are looking forward to Blessing of the Bike Jan 1 & another year with LSV. Thank you for all the work put in. Have a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.

David & Sheila

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### Treasurer Report:

As of the 19th of November (because I haven't gotten Dec. statement yet), we have in our general fund \$985.91 and in the down rider fund \$273.50 for a grand total of \$1,259.41.

This does not include the monies from the shirt income as of yet or the money that Russ sent to me last week from VH.

Thank You,  
Sandra Judge

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## Ride Reports

### Lunch At Fredericksburg Nov 21

For the past few weeks prior to this event- essentially since Paris, I'd been having trouble keeping the battery up. The lead/acid battery was only about a year old & I'd kept it pretty much on a battery tender but ya never know how long one will last. I got the new battery. Sealed gel battery was not readily available, so I got another traditional type battery. It was dry-charged but after adding the acid, I charged it for about an hour before starting the bike. It fired right up. I put Sea Foam in the tank when we gassed up leaving L Hill.

SugarBeet wore her leather but I thought positive & wore the mesh jacket when we left on a dreary morning for lunch in F'burg. A little mist- no problem for the driver, but even I was getting a little chilly behind the windshield so we stopped in Burnet and put on the rain suits. When I started back up, the bike backfired. It's never done that. I blamed it on the gasoline additive & proceeded south on US281 toward Marble Falls. About 3 miles further down the road, the bike started chugging like we were running out of gas (is this the Sea Foam acting up again?) I wanted to keep going & try to rev it up & blow it out. SBeet wanted to turn around & go home.

So, when we slowed to turn around to go home, as I suspected that it would, the engine died on the center stripe of US281. But I coasted to the now, northbound shoulder. Hit the starter button & not a whimper. It ain't the Sea Foam, it's the alternator! Evidently a brand new, fully charged, battery will run the bike and lights and GPS/mp3 player for about 30 miles before you run out of juice to spark the plugs. (Do you have a voltmeter? - me neither, but I'm workin' on it.)

I had an LSV roster in the glove box (Do you? you should.), so I called my current-best friend Wayne Noble for a rescue. We removed all the easily-stolen items from the bike & left it on the side of the road & Wayne taxied us back home. Pickup, trailer, tie-downs & headed back. Only two miles away from the house, I remembered the loading ramps. Back to the house, get ramps & back to Burnet. Loaded up & got home without too much more drama.

Charged the new-but-dead battery at 1 amp for 6 hours overnight & it started right up on Sunday morn. I went thru the first two or three alternator tests and confirmed what I already knew. Monday morning went to Texas Alternator in Austin & got him to agree to check the brushes knowing that he couldn't bench test it because there's no pulley (this was a slow death not a sudden catastrophe). He called back & said they had to order a whole rebuild kit to get the brushes & he could get me a new one for \$320 in one day. So, I got a pretty expensive Christmas gift kind of early this year. Next day, it came in early so by 3 pm I was up & running. Meter test checked out, 30 mile test ride & unbelievably, I was able to make a nearly 300 mile trip to Bandera with Pathfinder the next day. - SpeedBall

### Lunch At Fredericksburg Nov 21 (*These guy's got to eat*)

Charlie was just pulling up to my rig when I threw a leg over Vinnie. We headed 2 blocks up the road to find Speakeasy waiting next to his Harley. We left the park about 8:55.

It wasn't as brisk as I thought it would be, but then it was almost 9am. We stopped at the corner of 46 and 281 to wait for Greyhound & Roxie, who showed up right on time (at 9:30). While waiting I began a conversation with some ladies that were also waiting for friends. There were 2 GW's (one a trike) and an Aquillo 250. Never heard of that one before! They were part of the Chrome Divas motorcycle club out of New Braunfels. Their ride was just cancelled and I asked if they wanted to ride with us to Fredericksburg. They said yes and off we rode, the 7 of us, north on 281.

While negotiating traffic through Blanco, the Chrome Divas apparently decided not to continue with us and turned off. Nevertheless, Charlie, Speakeasy, Greyhound & I continued on to our next stop at the Country Cupboard in Johnson City. Roxie was really cold so we were going quite slow and made a few extra stops.

We found Andy's with ease (using my GPS). I saw a Bergmann and a Harley in the parking lot which meant that Viejo and Mike were already there. Viejo came out to tell us that we were in the back room. After seating ourselves the rest of the group arrived. They included PathFinder, Ray & Jan, and Larry which brought our group total to 11. Our conversation turned to the 2010 HCT and a day ride date to check out a campground in Bandera. The food was GREAT. It was a breakfast buffet and, of course, I had enough to sample the quality!

After eating, we had some tire kickin' in the parking lot and said good-byes to good friends. Charlie, Speakeasy & I were gonna take a ride through Bandera to visit the RV park for HCT so Greyhound & Roxie decided to go straight home. However, after further thought, Charlie's back was preventing him from making any extra miles so we headed home as well.

The ride home was uneventful but a lot warmer. Charlie rode into the park with us. A short conversation with the two led to a decision that if I ride to Bandera with Speedball & PathFinder, they both wanted to ride along. What a great time to ride with good friends.

See y'all on the road.

MusicMan

### Ride to Bandera

As decided the week before in Fredericksburg, we decided there was a need to check out the Pioneer RV Park in Bandera as a possible site for the 2010 HCT. Greyhound couldn't make it. I talked to Speakeasy and his girlfriend was coming for the Thanksgiving weekend, so he was out.

Charlie was up for it so we left the park about 8:15 to meet Speedball & PathFinder at the Shell station in Blanco. Yeah, it was colder today than last week. When we pulled up, they were already there. Charlie & I went in to use the facilities and I got a fresh cup of coffee. We left at 9:15 and headed down Old Blanco Road.

About 5 miles on Old Blanco Road, I spotted a garbage truck sitting on a curve about ½ mile in front of us. PathFinder went by and I saw the workers get into the truck. I was a little worried about Speedball, I thought I saw the truck move a bit, but he got by them OK. It was moving very slowly when I went by. Now, away from the curve, I felt a little better about passing. But just as I throttled up he turned a little left, into me. I throttled hard and zipped by him. He was moving about 8 MPH, not fast. I remember thinking, "after two bikes just went by, wouldn't the driver be looking for others before moving into the middle of the road?"

Then I thought about Charlie. He has been riding (for the second time) for about 2 years. I watched my mirrors, no Charlie. Kept watching, no Charlie. Stopped and watched, still no Charlie. Now I'm really worried. I turn around and head back to find the truck stopped nearly in the middle of the road with the two workers standing next to the ditch with a bike on it's side and Charlie standing (sort of) in the ditch. I asked if Charlie was OK and he said that he thought so. The two workers & I got the bike upright and onto the road surface. After the workers left (I think that was a mistake), he told me the truck turned into him slightly so he swerved slightly to the left (on the narrow road) and hit a small washout (maybe 1 ½ foot long by 8" wide) which caused him to lose control and put him into the ditch.

Speedball and PathFinder finally returned (it takes a lot to stop and turn around DS). With their help we got the ol' Harley started (it IS a nice bike). I did 2 short test rides and the decision to try to bend stuff was made in order for us to get back to NB. I got the bike back to a driveway and PathFinder started to bend the shifter linkage straight so the bike would engage all the gears. With that being accomplished, and one more test ride, Charlie decided that he wanted to head for home (blame him?). He has a bad back but managed to only tweak a shoulder. It was a good decision because the closer we got to home the more he hurt. We followed PathFinder and Speedball for another 4 miles, turned left as they continued on to check out the RV Park in Bandera. The ride home was uneventful and I was glad. Charlie's bike rode fine. It even started to warm up.

I followed Charlie home and his wife, Sandy, met us outside, surprised that we were home so soon. After assuring her that he was OK, we went inside and I was offered cake and coffee...sure I accepted (didn't want to make her feel bad). Relatively speaking it was a good ride. No one got really hurt.

See y'all on the road. Ride safe.

MusicMan

## Overcoming Mother Nature

by  
Bud Pacotti

As probably your newest member and occupant of your most northerly outpost, I take this opportunity to say I am proud to be a member of both the Enchanted Voyagers and the Lone Star Voyagers. I joined the EVA last spring and helped Rod with leading a few rides at the national rally in Santa Fe. I had hoped to attend the Alpine, TX spring ride, but snowy weather forced me to cancel out at the last minute. It was a good thing as it would have taken an extra week before I could have made it back to Denver. I joined the LSV this month.

Over the years, I have attended several rallies where my wife Pat couldn't or wouldn't go with me as it involved a long ride to



get there. She has repeatedly requested a solution that would allow her to go with me. This, and the iffy weather conditions of your northern outpost, led me to get a trailer that I can haul the Voyager on behind my pickup truck or my 5<sup>th</sup> wheel. It is a single swivel wheel trailer especially designed to "track" with the towing vehicle and not jack knife. Here is a photo. Now there is no excuse for missing your events! See you in the Spring.

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## The Safety Corner:

Short editorial note: I visited Jim's web site a short year or so ago and signed up for his email newsletter and I have never regretted it what so ever. So if you are interested or maybe you will be in his area in the future, I think you should check it out or maybe contact him. JWH Editor

### **R.P.S.V.P. RELAX**

This piece is a little long. Bear with me and give it a read.

Doing anything new expresses what we have now become. To do anything new - proficiently, there is always some skill set to learn, then understand, and, finally, internalize. The effort of first learning a skill set to the point of understanding kicks off the journey. With understanding comes regular practice, with the earnest intent to make the skills your own. In time, the price of ownership is met. Finally, when a person becomes naturally proficient and can effortlessly express a new skill set, there can be much satisfaction for having "become" something new. Trust me when I say there is immense joy and satisfaction in becoming an confident, competent motorcyclist. Honestly, there is nothing like it!

Before the journey to motorcycle proficiency begins, there's an important preliminary skill set to dial in first. Without owning this skill, the journey is much more difficult.

Learn to be relaxed.

In no way can anything be learned well unless you first learn to relax into whatever it is you're trying to learn. This is particularly true of motorcycling, which unfortunately causes a certain dilemma. You see motorcycling one of those skill sets that simply is not conducive to relaxation. There is too much stimuli that generates tension.

For example: First you've got motorcycle riding gear to contend with. Cumbersome boots often make it hard to access the gear shifter and rear brake lever. Gloves dull the feel of your hand controls. Helmets are awkward and often block peripheral vision. If you're not wearing ear plugs, wind noise is a louder than a jet aircraft and if you are wearing earplugs, ambient noise is muffled so you're unsure of what's going on around you. At least initially, wearing motorcycle gear seems to amplify tension.

A street bike is heavy. Anytime you're maneuvering your bike from a standstill, from the side-stand, or center-stand, your bike is scheming to get away from you. It's a lock, that if your bike is ever left to its own devices, it'll be hard on its side in no time. Anytime a motorcycle is horizontal is cause for tension.

Riding a motorcycle down any road requires the rider's use of all four extremities - often simultaneously. This is a cause for tension. Contemplate the twin act of downshifting and braking in unison and you'll know what I mean.

The loss of stability while riding slow causes tension. The blur out your visor from riding fast causes tension. Left turns across intersections cause tension. Left U-turns cause tension and right U-turns cause even more.

Curves seem to cause a lot of tension. I know of one particularly gruesome, gravelly curve. It is a super steep uphill, off camber, right-hander of the first gear variety, on the back side of a blind crest. One time I took it, it was cold. It was nighttime, rainy with heavy fog. Safe control required just enough first gear juice to get over the crest without stalling but not so much power to throw myself wide. You know how abrupt first gear roll on can be. There was tension. (Check out Sulphur Spring Rd/VA State Route 606 behind Clifton Forge, Virginia. In all the Appalachians, I don't know of a tighter road. Do you?)

With all this tension part and parcel of the motorcycling experience, learning to "become" relaxed isn't easy.

So here's how:

Begin by faking it. That's right, pretend! New riders are tense during a ride. Experienced riders aren't. So do like to be like - be like an experienced rider, and do what they do. Be relaxed. Since you're absolutely not, pretend. Consciously will yourself to be relaxed. Will yourself to become relaxed and discipline yourself to remain relaxed. When you forget, which you surely will, no problem. Start pretending again. And when the going gets tough, pretend harder all over again. There's nothing to it. Just do it. Soon enough, you'll get the hang of it.

Start with your hands. They are the tip of the smooth riding "spear." The key is to create soft hands. These are hands that softly wrap around your motorcycle hand rests. Whenever you're aware of clenching the hand rests, soften up - right now! Always be aware of your hands. Think about it. How are you ever going to develop smooth throttle control, smooth gear shifting, or smooth braking if your hands are all balled up around the hand rests? Think soft. Feel soft around those hand rests. Remember, they are hand RESTS, not hand grips.

Do you ever clench your teeth? Sometimes I experience clenched teeth long after tension has passed. Same with the hands. Long after tension has passed on the motorcycle, you'll become aware that you're still clenched. Consciously will your hands soft and keep them soft so you can always be soft on the controls. Capiشه? You want to clench? Clench instead the gas tank, with your thighs.

From your hands, focus on your wrists, and forearms. Elbows should be slightly bent and loose. Shoulders too. When a situation gets tense, experienced riders lean forward slightly to keep those elbows from locking up. Don't stiff-arm the handlebars.

My grandmother used to say that good manners and good posture are essential for success in life. True enough for motorcycling too. Good riding posture enables a relaxed yet alert riding position. Good riders don't slouch in their seats, particularly around curves. This is especially true of the sport-touring motorcycle. Whenever on the approach to a curve, think

p.o.s.t.u.r.e. Sit up, lean forward slightly, and slide the balls of your feet up onto the foot pegs. Ducking into curves is serious stuff. You want your entire being in on the action. Having your legs engaged helps all of you engage the curve. You can shift your body easier into whatever kind of lean position the curve is demanding. As for manners, we can all be more polite.

Keep breathing. Just before the action begins, take a nice deep breath, and hold it... then let it out slowly. You'll get nice and relaxed that way. It feels good too so do it again. Whatever you do, keep breathing. You'll stay more alive too.

Here are two more important tips to help keep you relaxed during a ride.

Start by deciding to motorcycle roads less traveled. This is an most important concept to develop. I called these less traveled roads Invisible Roads. Invisible Roads follow the lay of terrain, and are hillier and curvier than engineered thru roads. Invisible Roads originated as gravel roads and before that, dirt trails, and maybe before that, Indian trails following animal tracks. Invisible Roads are essentially local roads. You'll find local traffic doesn't stay on a local road for very long - a few miles at most. Most of the time, you'll have the road mostly to yourself. Less traffic means less tension and the more local you go, the more invisible you become to a certain kind of traffic - thru traffic. Since thru traffic is traveling longer distances, any congestion lasts longer which is a major source of tension. I remember traveling by motorcycle one Thanksgiving. Both I-81 and I-68 were "parking lots" Yet I motored the distance along parallel side roads clean and green, pretty as you please. Nothing teaches like experience!

Absolutely do your best for allowing extra time so you can route yourself mostly on Invisible Roads. While it's true these local routes are longer and take more time than direct thru routes, there's a magic to them! You see there is more to occupy your mind motoring down a back road - it's where the action is! When your mind is concentrating on what you enjoy, time and distance compress! Magically, traveling seems to take less time than riding shorter, straighter, more congested routes. We all know that time is a malleable entity. This is proof.

Slow down. Riding well on the street has nothing to do with riding fast. All speed does, is hurry things, and we all know the cliché that haste makes waste. Haste and waste create tension too. Slowing down does the opposite. It's calming so you can better concentrate on the skill set required to become a better motorcyclist. Remember that effortless speed is the result of the accomplished, experienced motorcyclist.

While initially awkward, experienced riders wear ear plugs. Back in 1981, there was massive study on motorcycling called The Hurt Report. According to Wikipedia, motorcycle guru David Hough, called this report "the most comprehensive study of motorcycling in the 20th century." The Hurt Report concluded that motorcycle riding without earplugs is hazardous to hearing. Riding without earplugs causes tinnitus - or ringing in the ears. Without ear plugs, the din of the engine and screeching wind, are sure to fatigue a rider too. So wear them. Before I purchased my fancy custom molded ones at a rally several years ago, I used wax ear plugs that can be purchased at a local pharmacy. Wax ear plugs, once warmed by your body temperature, will seat up nicely in your ear canal and blot out wind noise. Swimmers use wax plugs to keep water out of their ears. After an hour or two, you'll get used to wearing them and never be without earplugs again. Springing for custom molded earplugs has been one of the best investments I've made.

If you want to ride like an experienced rider, do what experienced riders do. Start by consciously willing yourself to be relaxed. Pretend. Pretending becomes a disciplined practice. With time you will stay relaxed for most your ride. And instead of traveling the thru roads, start thinking about riding magical Invisible Roads, and wear earplugs.

Remember, the goal is to become naturally relaxed motorcyclist. No pretending will make you naturally relaxed. Instead, you just have to ride long enough, over many miles and over many years to have earned it.

See you in Third Gear.

Jim Ford

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## LSV 2010 Calendar:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Hosts</u>
Jan 1, 2009	Blessing Of The Bikes	San Antonio	CMA
Mar 25-27	SFR (with EVA)	Alpine, TX	Hostless - just ride
Apr 22-24	*Hill Country Tour	Fredericksburg	Holleys et al
July 12-15	AVA National Rally	Ellicottville, NY	AVA
October ??	*Voyage Home	Unknown	Unknown
November ?	IMS	Houston	

\* These two events are our two ride-in weekends and include a business meeting.

At this writing, the dates and exact locations are not firmed up (the HCT date is probable but not finalized). Also, though not on our calendar, our New Mexican neighbors are having their Grand Canyon Run May 6-9 and their Enchanted Tour in Silver City, NM Aug 12-15, 2010. - ЯВ