



WBCCI MONTEREY UNIT'S
FORTY-FIFTH CARAVAN

THE
TECATE SAFARI

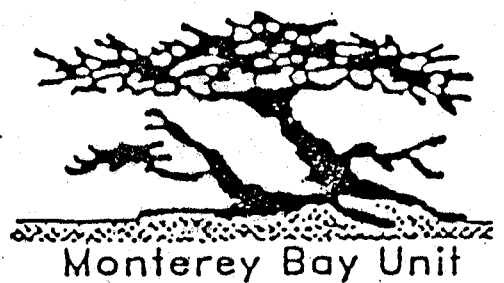
February 24, to March 14, 1991

LEADER - Jack Benjamin

Watsonville - Lost Hills - Victorville

Anza Borrego - Tecate - Chula Vista

Flying Flags - Kettleman - Sutter Creek



THE TECATE SAFARI - MBCU CARAVAN #45

SUNDAY, Feb 24, 1991

Following an interesting Rally at the Watsonville Fairgrounds, and loaded down with sausage from the famous Correlitos Sausage Factory, the happy group headed South. Seven trailers.....Benjamin, Browns, Connells, Gormans, Leippers, Olivers, & Schneiders. The Ginters are to meet us tonight, and the Paxtons & Leiths will join the Caravan tomorrow.

Our night's stop at the Lost Hills KOA was just right, and we are parked nicely close together. At drivers meeting Jack had several organization details to offer, including the appointment of Shirley to coordinate our joint dinners, Alma to work up Happy Hour details, Bob Oliver to handle the Caravan Kitty, and Jay to organize tour arrangements. The Kitty Fee of \$5.00 per trailer is to handle telephone calls, postage, & other misc. expenses. All food and parking costs are to be paid by the individuals involved.

The entire weekend has been sobered by the news that the land assault has begun in the Persian Gulf. So very many causalities could amass - it is all very frightening! BUT, the first 24 hours brings very, very good news. Wonderful almost beyond belief.

A few letters written, a game or two of Tile, and a lot of just "sitting & talking", rounded out our first Caravan Day.

MONDAY, Feb 25, 1991

Beautiful clear morning - no wind. The radio & TV are filled with the very good news from the war front. At 36 hours into the land portion of the war, we are making tremendous progress - - - more so than even the most optimistic predictions. WONDERFUL!

It was an easy drive down to the Victorville KOA Park this morning, and we are here in time for lunch. Dick Ginter was getting such good mileage he made three or four extra loops in the trailer park before parking.

In passing Kramer's Corner we were happy to see Barb & Dave Paxton waiting for us, as per schedule. Also surprised to see the Monahans there with the Paxtons. They were on their way to Quartzite, and had stopped to visit.

Following a restful afternoon we gathered for the usual Happy Hour & Drivers Meeting. Bob Connell suggested a 25¢ pool on the arrival time of the Leiths who are joining us at this stop. The Browns eagerly jumped in, fully expecting to recover some of their travel expenses. Of course they lost and complained that the whole thing must have been a crooked deal. The Leiths arrived at 5:105PM, with Dale the winner. Most of us were glued to the TV this evening & war news.

TUESDAY, Feb 26, 1991

News came during the night that Saddam Hussein has now offered to withdraw his troops from Kuwait but the actual fact seems to be that his army is in full retreat. What a victory it seems to be, and in such a short time.

Arrived at the Overland RV Park in Anza Borego at lunch time. A tough park for leveling & parking, with some grade & short back-to-back spaces. First thing even before setting up camp was to put on the TV to check the war news. So very much is going on in these three or four days - but all looks GREAT!

WEDNESDAY, Feb 27.

The news is better and better. We all watched TV this morning. Predictions are that the war will be over this week. AMAZING!

Bob Oliver made a repair to his Cad's cooling system. Bob Connell replaced a fan belt. Some stood around watching while others stayed with the unfolding war story on TV. At 10:00AM we all left for the Visitors Center, the slide show, and the Nature Walk. THEN, wonder of wonder, it started to rain. As much as California needs rain, and realizing how very grim the war news could have been, it seemed almost too much to have rain & the war ending on the same day.

It was dark and rainy all afternoon - - and a group dinner prepared by Marion Leith has been planned for this evening. What to do? Then word arrived that a building had been found here in the park and we were to meet there for Happy Hour and Marion's dinner.

Turned out GREAT! A nice building and we were in out of the heavy rain now falling. Much credit to Marion for the main dish (very good), Ruth Ginter for the French Bread, Ruth Brown for the Rum Cake, and a lot of help from Barbara Paxton for organizing the salad bar.

Everyone then scampered back to their trailers in heavy rain. Rain here in the desert where it never rains, and in the driest year on record.

THURSDAY, Feb 28

It rained all night, heavy at times. Still dark & overcast this morning. Shirley had canceled her waffle breakfast. At a 9:30AM meeting, Jay suggested a car-pool tour of a few of the closer points of interest. This turned out well and we ducked in and out of the cars between rain showers. But the showers turned into heavy rain and we again used the building for five o'clock meeting time. Some ate at the local restaurant which was close by and quite good.

FRIDAY, March 1,

It has rained all night - HEAVY!. We must be getting 50% of their year's total. The 10:00AM trip up to Julian to visit Dale's Sister's home has now been canceled. The winds are heavy, still having showers, and it is reported that there has been six inches of rain in the past 48 hours up in the mountains. Many roads are closed by mud slides. We will now go tomorrow.

The winds and rain continued all day. Fortunately we still had the building and many played Tile or cards. Shirley furnished a fine ham hock bean & vegetable dinner. VERY GOOD! With the pot luck salad & freshly cooked corn bread by Ruth G. and Jack, things were great.

The tonight's news reported this weather as "the Great Storm of 1991", and showed the damage done by the wind and rain.

SATURDAY, March 2nd

Some heavy wind gusts and light rain in the night but clear this morning. At 9:30 the Browns, with the Paxtons aboard, the Schneiders in their car, and the Leippers in their car left for the trip up to Julian. As several roads are reported closed we took the round about, but very interesting back route to get there.

After a brief tour of Julian, we ate at a delightful restaurant. What a treat to find such wonderful food, so nicely cooked, at a place way up here in the mountains. The important reason, however, for the trip was to meet Dale's Sister, and her very unusual adobe home. And it was well worth the trip.

The house is built with large log pole rafters, red tile floors, all adobe inside and outside walls, and a central circular turret. Quite unusual throughout and a delightful place. And it was fun to meet Dale's Sister, and her Son & family. And they did serve us Apple Pie that was "out of this world!"

Back in camp the others had been busy sight-seeing, etc. Following Happy Hour in the building, we were served an elaborate Chinese dinner prepared by the Paxtons. Even had chop sticks & fortune cookies! Chow Chow - good show! Thanks Barbara & Dave.

SUNDAY, March 3

A clear day.....everyone busy. The Leippers had Dales's Sister and her Daughter visit camp. The Ginters had their three Sons and wives & friends visit. What a handsome group.

At 10:30AM the stronger of our group left for the hike to Palm Canyon. We older and feebler members left later to meet the survivors as they staggered out of the pass. We then enjoyed lunch together in the sun screened shelters at the picnic area. Well done! Lloyd presented a brief outline of a Video Tape Bob Connell had suggested we prepare for the Dahme's coming 50th Wedding Anniversary. All seemed in favor and Lloyd worked up a scrip from ideas presented by Dale.

At the 4:00PM Driver's Meeting, the video script was shown the group and all agreed that we should proceed with the project and Bob Connell set up the time for the shooting the next day. No time for rehearsals or fancy stuff....just gather and shoot!

Following H/H we all left for an outstanding dinner at the Rams Head Country Club. What a dinner! And a truly lovely place. Not sure what the others ordered but must report that there has never been a better lamb chop dinner served anywhere! This plus that fine meal up in Julian - - may move down here.

MONDAY, March 4

Before getting into today's report, want to say that Bob & Rosa did have a very pleasant visit yesterday with friends from long ago. They drove 175 miles to make this visit to Palm Springs and sure did enjoy the day.

We broke camp at 7:45 and most were settled in Peterro before noon. This San Diego County Park is as beautiful as ever. As there seemed to be only one other RV, we certainly had the pick of the campsites. A restful afternoon and early Happy Hour outside the Paxton's trailer. Dave built up a nice campfire and all went well.

There was discussion on the proposed Video Tape for the Dahmes. Further work has been done on the script but there are problems and questions to answer. It was decided to meet tomorrow at 3:00PM and "shoot" the film. We have our fingers crossed.

It got cold and things broke up at 5:30PM.

TUESDAY, March 5

The Browns & Jack rode with the Paxtons and Dave bravely attacked the Tecate traffic. He will long remember that "U" turn on that busy street, and that drive down that narrow alley way. Had to pull in his side mirrors! Dave also drove us out into the countryside for a quick look.

In Tecate we met others of our group who had hiked across the Border and were "doing" the town. In general, most were disappointed in the lack of shopping centers. In fact, there did not seem to be anywhere to spend our US Dollars. In desperation we all loaded down with assorted food items in the bakery store, and Dave loaded these in his car to haul back to camp.

Weather overcast & rain seems likely. Some debate about tonight's group dinner. Weather has turned cold.

At 3:00PM sharp we all gathered for the filming of the great epic.....a glimpse of the Tacate Caravan, to be sent to the Dahmes for their 50th Wedding Anniversary. All went smoothly and we were finished by 4:00. The sun came out and held in there for the full hour of shooting. Director; Dale Leipper, Assistant; Lloyd Brown, Cameraman; Bob Connell.

Following H/H (and another of Dave's campfires) the Alma Connell/Ruth Brown chicken dinner was served from the Connell trailer. Because of the cold, eating out was voted down. So, Ruth Ginter & Dorothy Schneider set up their Jello Salads on the outside table. Then each of us picked up our salad, were served the hot dishes at the trailer, and then raced back to the comfort of our own rig. There was still wine available to round out a splendid meal.

Following dinner, the Browns were given a sneak preview of the afternoon recording. Bob C. had set his camera up in the trailer to run the tape through his TV Set. Quite frankly, it looked better than we had expected and we think everyone participated 100%. We think Dolores & Bob will enjoy it.

Oh yes, we forgot to report that at H/H Dick Ginter delivered a wonderful rendition of a poem involving he, Ruth, and her horse. It was beautifully done and we all marveled at his skill in producing such a gem. Even thought of sending it in to the Blue Beret. Then found out he was reading from a magazine! But very good anyway.

WEDNESDAY, March 6

Overcast & cool. Warm weather predicted! Joe & Lloyd set up their Coleman stoves & folding tables to be ready for the waffle lunch being presented by Shirley. In fact, Shirley has been busy as a beaver preparing the fancy egg dish to go with her waffles.

People shopped, gassed up, and various other activities used up the morning. The Browns made a mail run down to the Border Post Office and picked up groceries at the very busy market right at the Border. If you made a right turn instead of a left, you were instantly in Mexico. Most customers and the clerks were Mexican and we suspect that many of the customers were Native Mexicans who had crossed the line for the better quality market & goods.

The lunch turned out very well. The brown flour waffles were an interesting change. The egg/sausage dish was well received. Thanks very much, Shirley. And Virginia added a fruit salad that rounded things out very nicely. Must admit, after much training, Joe & Jack have become "Top Hands" at this waffle cooking. Perhaps they should consider going into business.

That evening Bob Connell presented a Bean/Hot Dog dinner. Bob has been working over his hot stove all day. And the results were DELICIOUS! At the appointed hour, he set up his barbecue to grill the Hot Dogs. Virginia added Bran Muffins she had just cooked. A salad bar was set up outside the Connell's trailer and the last of the Club wine was put out. Because of the cold weather, we all picked up our salad, were served the Beans & Franks, grabbed a bran muffin and hurried back to the warmth & comfort of our trailers.

THURSDAY, March 7th

Clear frosty morning. The Gormans left at 8:45....one half hour in advance, to sign up our group at the Chula Vista RV Park. We had all given Shirley the money and registration information and it was a pleasure to drive in and be all set to move into our allotted space. Good job, Shirley! Of course we were all worried this morning to see Joe driving off with his TV antenna up. It turns out that it was jammed and would not lower. We all hoped there would not be too much wind and the whole thing would not be blown off the roof.

And what a beautiful park this is. With the weather perfect and the Sun shining.....lets stay put for a month. The afternoon was spent exploring the yacht harbor, park buildings, waterfront, & doing laundry. Some tile games

played and a lot just relaxing. Oh yes, Lloyd visited the Yacht Broker & was impressed with a 47' sloop pictured in full sail. Listing says "This Beauty Waiting for You in Tonga! Sail it Home"! Wow! \$115,000 which is just about the price of the larger Airstream Motorhome. If only it had been a Ketch, but looks tempting anyway. But Ruth says NO!

Social Hour was held in the community room here in the Park. Jay presented an outline of the many things to see and do at this stop. Bob Connell announced that copies of the Tecate Caravan Video Production were ready on a non-profit basis and modest cost. The Paxtons left early to walk out on the beach to enjoy the Sunset. Hope they behaved themselves!

FRIDAY, March 8

A clear perfect morning. With much to see & do, our group spread out in different cars. The Ginters took the Browns & Jack on a wonderful tour of the Cabrillo National Monument, the Lighthouse, and the rest of that area. Then to an unique and unusual fish restaurant that is always swamped by the local crowd. And then a tour of San Diego, Coronado Island, & Lakeside Village. The Ginters have spent a lot of time in this area and were excellent guides.

At H/H we learned all had taken interesting sightseeing trips today. And we were sorry to learn that the Leiths would be leaving us tomorrow for a quick trip back home. But glad to hear that they would rejoin us at the Rally next Friday.

As this is the last time we would all be together on this Caravan, Joe expressed the thanks of the group and presented Jack a token of appreciation for his leadership on this trip. It certainly is another winner for MBCU. Thanks Jack, we appreciate all your work & effort.

Some then retired to their trailers and others went down the street to Jakes, which was very good indeed.

Saturday, March 9

All said fairwell to the Leiths. Some headed for the laundry. Bob C. left early for his appointment with the radiator shop. Turns out further repairs were needed following the work done across the Border while in Tecate. The Paxtons left for the Wild Life Zoo. The Schneiders, with Alma & Shirley, drove over and parked the car to catch the bus going over into Tijuana, - no doubt to do some serious shopping. Others stayed in camp, walked the waterfront, or watched the kites do their tricks. This new type kite is controlled by two lines and can do many acrobatic stunts. Out on the beach parkway behind our park, four men were putting on an amazing display of formation flying.

At H/H we learned that Alma, Dorothy, & Shirley had returned from Mexico loaded down with many wonderful buys. Even Bob Schneider claimed to have made an important purchase. Barb & Dave had a wonderful day at the Zoo. Claimed Scupper resented all the animal smells, particularly the elephant smell, when they returned. Some then went out to dinner.

Oh yes, the mystery of the missing "star engraved" spoon is slowly being solved. Dorothy has now recovered her spoon, and the search is on for the other missing spoon. Remember: it has stars on the handle!

SUNDAY, March 10

Cool & overcast. This last day at Chula Vista was spent quietly winding up activities in the area. Here we learned that the Ginters would be leaving us at this stop. The Browns spent the day with a friend of forty years standing. She is a very recent widow and lives about 55 miles north of here.

At H/H we learned that the Schneiders had attended the swap meet and had made many worthwhile purchases. Prices were low, in fact cheap! The Gormans & Olivers attacked the Factory Outlet and came away well pleased. Rosa looked very nice in her new shoes. The Ginters were with their children. The Leippers ran down relatives. The Paxtons purchased a Wedding Present. And who knows what else went on, - - but it was another good day.

And of GREAT importance, the spoon with the stars on the handle, has now shown up! Things seem settled at last BUT there is now a report of a missing blue bowl. So lets gather around and recover the blue bowl.

MONDAY, March 11

The early radio news reports say there has been snow in the passes and very heavy winds in the desert. There is a wind advisory out for campers, trailers, & trucks. Jack called an 8:30 meeting and it was agreed to switch our northward route to Hwy 101 & the Coast. Phone calls were made to cancel our reservations at Victorville & Lost Hills.

Our new route through Los Angeles went smoothly EXCEPT for that miserable stretch where some kind of repairs were being made and traffic was backed up for miles. It was stop & go for about an hour. Terrible! And look as we liked, we could not see where any repairs were actually being made to the road. We tried to think of who to blame, but insisted it was not Jack's fault.

Happy Hour was arranged in a building in out of the wind. Some then went over to Anderson's Split Pea Soup for dinner. The winds have settled, but TV reports more State-wide winds & rain. No report on the missing blue bowl.

TUESDAY, Mar 12

We learned from the Gorman's phone call that there was not space for us at our planned stop at Gustine. It was decided we would only go as far as the Kettleman RV Park today, and all arrived safely by noon. Said farewell to the Connells in camp and again at the Rest Stop on the way up this morning. They have been a fine addition to the Caravan.

At the RV Park we learned that the next door restaurant offered Park customers a 10% discount on all meals. Some of us, with the usual Airstreamer thrifty background, walked over to take advantage of this bargain for lunch.

H/H was arranged in the combination office & club house. Very nice. The Olivers arranged and provided the Hamburger Feed. With the real help of the Schneiders who not only helped set things up and helped Bob in the cooking, but provided the buns, pickles, tomatoes, etc. etc. Shirley made up a large potato salad & Ruth Brown made up her famous three bean salad. The very tiny bit of Club red wine was knocked off in nothing flat. A very pleasant evening indeed! Thanks Olivers. Tomorrow at Donalds!

So we wind up the 45th Monterey Bay Unit Caravan. And it has been a good one. Thanks Jack for the work taken to put this together. And to Shirley & Alma, and the others who worked hard to keep things going so well. Can hardly wait until we again hit the road for new adventures.

THANKS.....THANKS.....THANKS.

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W. Lloyd Brown