

ROCKY POINT BIKE RALLY

Until last Tuesday I didn't even know there was a bike rally in Rocky Point. My brother Todd had arranged for all five siblings to spend four days in a beach front house in Puerto Penasco, Sonora, Mexico. It ended up as four couples as my brother Russell and his wife couldn't go.

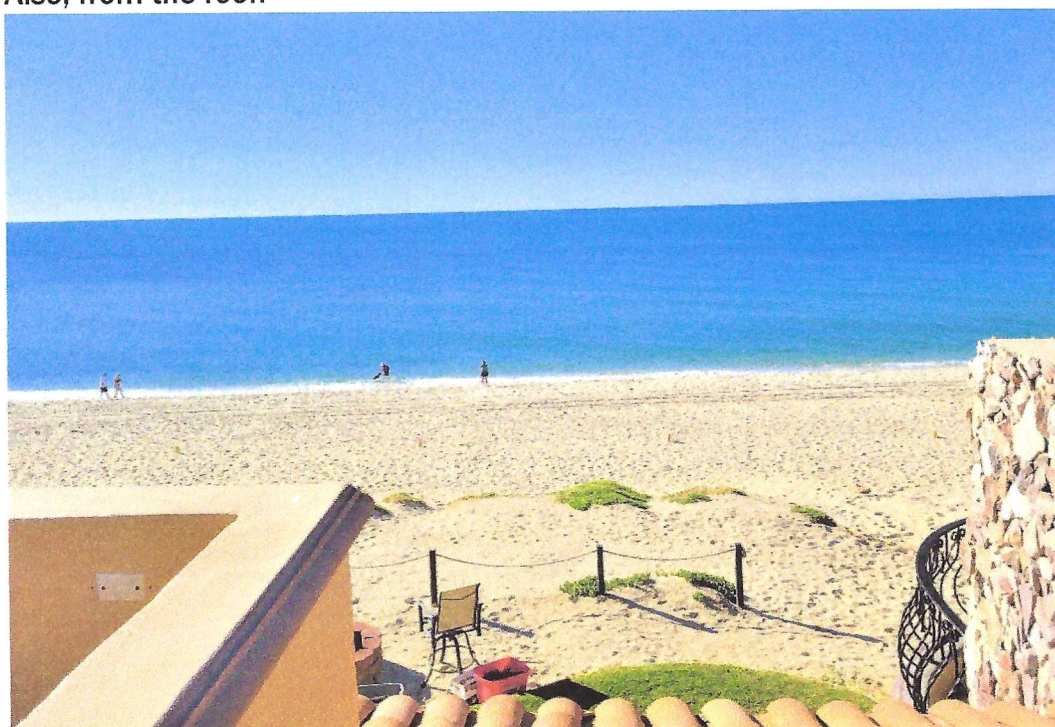
I have to explain about the name of the place. Before there was Puerto Penasco, there was Rocky Point. The first time I went there was 1966. With three other 16 year-olds we went to Rocky Point for a few days. It was a chance to drink beer and look around a bit. Rocky Point was about 70 miles beyond the port of entry at Lukeville, Arizona and my buddy's '56 Olds was the transportation. Great time. Puerto Penasco was the name given to the same place by a mayor and council with big plans. In 1966 it was a small fishing town with a few bars, the largest of which was the Crystal Palace, your average bar. Those with the big plans saw the area as a tourist town, maybe like Mazatlán or Cancun. Their plans have come a long way. The place has grown and the beach front where we pitched our tent in 1966 is now lined with very nice houses and high-rise condos. The place we stayed was one of those very nice houses.



And you could see the beach.



Also, from the roof.



Anyway, during this stay I discovered that there was a bike rally. Not too tough, there were signs and banners all over town. It started on Thursday while we were still on the family vacation. There seemed to be a lot of motorcycles on the streets by the time we left on Friday. This was apparently the 20th year of the rally. It occurred to me that I should check this out, but not in my wife's Buick but on my motorcycle. However, my motorcycle was at home in Tucson. No problem, just drive home and come back tomorrow. Patricia approved of the idea. After 4 days together she was fine with me going back and her having some quiet time.

It was 58 degrees when I left home headed back to the Rocky Point Rally. But the day warmed up nicely and I stowed my jacket after about the first 100 miles. It's about 225 miles from my house to Rocky Point, most of it two-lane and most of the part in Arizona is across an Indian reservation. The weather was great; low 80's, no wind, clear sky. I stopped and gassed up the bike in Why, Arizona. Mexico is OK, but Pemex is questionable. When you cross from the U.S. into Mexico you just drive across. Nevertheless, I left the sidearm at home. They get funny over bringing in guns. And the 70 or so miles from the border to Rocky Point are marked by signs designating in a "No Hassel Route." Remember I said that the mayor of Puerto Penasco had big plans? He apparently has enough influence to see that the money, I mean the tourists, coming south to his town get there with all their money without any issues. The route is marked as 90 Kilometers or about 56 miles an hour, but I was cruising at 70 mph, and pretty much everyone passed me. The road from the border to Puerto Penasco is a good road and there are none of the usual issues on Mexican highways. There are Federales along the road from time to time, but they are there to keep the NorteAmericanos and their money flowing swiftly and safely to, where else, Puerto Penasco. As an aside, there is a story, which comes from a reliable source, that a few years ago a Mexican drug cartel planned a meeting in Puerto Penasco. The mayor apparently told them they were not welcome. They came anyway. Federales, with armament up to and including a .50 caliber truck mounted machine gun, blew the door off the house in which they were meeting and killed all participants. To my knowledge there have been no further cartel meetings in the town.

The trip down this road is kind of cool. Not so much for the scenery, but some of the best signs since Burma Shave.



When I got to Rocky Point/Puerto Penasco I thought I'd have some lunch before hitting the main drag. I can recommend a place called The Friendly Dolphin. Great shrimp, cold beer and the staff was cool. When I wanted a picture with the waiter, everyone wanted in.



The urinal in this place needed to be included. I've been to the Madonna Inn near San Luis Obispo, California but this one was also interesting.



The Rocky Point Bike Rally is something worth adding to your list of things to do. It is a rally which combines American and Mexican bikers with copious quantities of cerveza, good food and very little interference from the local Policia. There were some badges in evidence, but I saw no interference with the fun.

There were a lot of patches of Mexican Clubs.







I didn't see many patches of clubs from the states. No telling if the Mexican clubs had anything to do with that or not. But patches or not, there were probably about as many bikers from the States as there were from around Mexico. But at no time did I sense even mild hostility. This rally is about the usual biker fun; beer, bikes, boobs, burn outs and even some food. By the way, burnouts are not restricted, they're encouraged.



The crowd is big and the balconies along the street are packed.



I didn't want to leave but the border crossing at Lukeville closes at 8:00 p.m. and this was just supposed to be a day ride. So, I found my bike among the thousands that were lining the streets and headed out. Getting through the crowd was slow going. The participants had pretty much overflowed into the street and it was like splitting lanes on a narrow freeway. I made the border crossing in time and got home around 9.

I'd recommend this Rally to anyone with a good attitude and the capacity for fun. And don't let the troops carrying machine guns along the road on the way south. Think of them as your personal bodyguards.