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Grant Johnson teaches his very popular "Tire Changing" class. It's so thorough that you walk away feeling very confident about facing your next puncture.



## Finding Inspiration: Horizons Unlimited Travelers Meeting 2011, Cambria CA

by Nicole Espinosa

**W**e are at a point in adventure history where many daring individuals have completed grand travelling accomplishments by motorcycle. Yet, it's what an adventurer does with the experience when he or she returns home that sets them apart from the others. How many can walk away from such vastly different cultural experiences, all the while pushing bodies and bikes to the limit across our planet's most treacherous terrain, without registering some sort of insight from the struggle? Not many.

Sharing inspirational stories with others in a way that takes them along for the ride physically, emotionally and philosophically, can create a moment of connection where a spark ignites and excites the listener. Multiply that type of storytelling by over 25 presenters and you have a Horizons Unlimited (HU) Travelers Meeting -- the most inspirational adventure riding event ever created thanks to founders Grant and Susan Johnson.

What was the impetus for Grant and Susan to single-handedly create a famous destination portal website, while sprinkling these nuggets of knowledge all over the world through hosted rallies? Most likely it was a deep desire to share hard-earned adventure riding wisdom from their own fourteen year odyssey covering thirty-nine countries and over 62,000 miles, turned into inspiration and information for other riders planning their own adventures. Ever-grateful HU attendees arrive in droves to the meetings around the world to ogle sexy adventure bikes, meet like-minded and fun-loving new friends and soak up pearls of wisdom from others who have done it before. With these events gaining in popularity, I wouldn't be surprised if Grant and Susan get the gold wing pin for most frequent flier miles just to keep up with the many meetings around the world... ranging from the Americas to Europe and Asia. This is their gift to us as individual riders, and to the elevation of our industry as a whole.

Luckily, my boyfriend Paul Smith and I live within 200 fun-riding coastal miles of this year's Western North America HU meet. We rolled into Camp Ocean Pines in beautiful Cambria, California, on Thursday, October 14 by sunset and were thrilled to be met by the perfect venue on thirteen inspirational acres of Monterey pine forest overlooking the Pacific Ocean. I was invited to be a presenter this year by lovely hosts Mike and Sandy Dimond. Grant and Susan can rest assured that their meeting couldn't have been in better hands, because of Mike and Sandy's affability, enthusiasm, organizational and



Paul makes himself at home at our campsite amidst the vendors and a spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean. Also at home are the Super Tenere and Nemo Asahi 4P tent we tested for review on this trip.

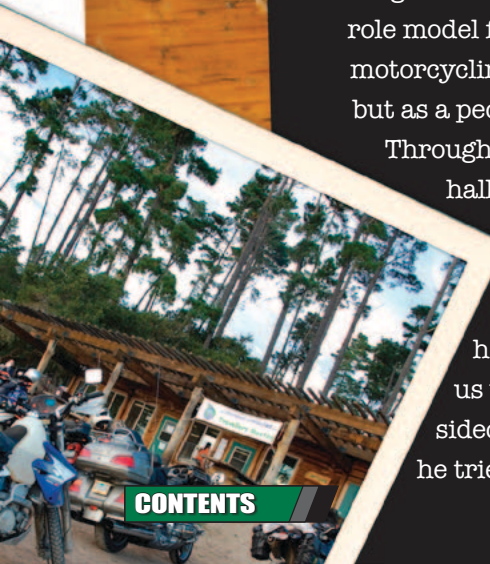
photographic skills. I was honored beyond belief to be in the standing company of an all-star lineup of adventure motorcycle presenters scheduled throughout the three-day event. Over 200 attendees found themselves scooting between the three lodges and outdoor amphitheatres to squeeze in as many motivating tales and how-to classes that time would allow.

I was especially excited to experience the latest multi-media presentation from Ted Simon, 80-year-old adventure riding icon, who wrote the famed and extremely insightful round-the-world motorcycle adventure book, *Jupiter's Travels*, in 1979. To our delight, Ted had put together a DVD—a historical film slideshow—that showcased the most poignant photos of his 1974-to-1977 adventure. Set to an audio track of his lyrical voice describing his inner-most thoughts of that time, as well as cultural music from international musicians who lifted him to higher levels on his journey, the audience was riveted. Watching Ted sit off to the side of the screen in a meditative posture, while being taken back in time with the rest of us, mesmerized me. Does he hear something different in each account of his story? Is he still moved by the life transformation of this 44 year old journey? I could only imagine how he felt behind his closed eyes.

I knew that these were the kinds of answers I wanted to share with my audience who came to listen to my presentation and story of how solo motorcycling has launched me into realizing some of the biggest dreams of my life. I was completely moved by a packed house with some familiar ADVRider smiles amongst the crowd. It touched my soul to feel such support on the insights of my journey as a single mother getting out there on adventures to be a life-loving role model for my kids. Hopefully, my audience was encouraged and inspired to view how motorcycling this great planet of ours can open us up to transformation not only as individuals, but as a people.

Throughout the rest of the first event day, attendees piled into the continually packed meeting halls and amphitheatres ready to devour each presenter's experiences as their own.

AdvMoto's very own contributor, Alisa Clickenger, whet everyone's appetite with presentations on her "Women's Empowerment Motorcycle Tour" and "One Woman's Adventure Riding to South America." Carla King continued the inspirational fire with her entrancing talk on "Breakdowns in Small Towns All Over the World" and captivated us with her story on teaching a Chinese mechanic how to fix her cranky Chang Jiang (a sidecar motorbike derived from the 1938 BMW R71) before he tried to steal her tools.





Here I am with famed adventure moto gals Carla King (with 6 international solo journeys and one state-side on a Ural), and Sherrri Jo Wilkins (currently in the midst of her RTW solo adventure after tackling "The Road of Bones").

Katherine (right) and Jasmine sharing a moment before parting ways.



## Ride in Peace

*The draw of sharing an entire weekend with like-minded adventure riders participating in an inspirational event drew in very special attendee, Katherine Hawley. Katherine's lust for life and excitement about her upcoming adventure ride gave her a bright energy that others felt from a mile away. This energy was a gift to all who participated. Sadly, the one gift that adventure riding could not return to Katherine was the promise of tomorrow. On her way home from the event that Sunday on her BMW, Katherine lost her life in a collision with a driver in a high speed chase. She never made it home to her husband Troy whose words for her light a fire in our hearts where Katherine's love of life will live on...*

*"From the time Katherine was born, she expressed an independence, hunger for freedom, and desire to live every moment bigger than the last one. Adventure motorcycle riding was undoubtedly one of her most joyous forms of expression of that philosophy. May all of us who share a passion for riding, feel her love, protection, and adventurous spirit in the wind."*

*-Troy Gilliam (Katherine's husband)*

Dr. Greg Frazier had the nighttime audience doubled over in hysterics with his entertaining presentation, that also inspired incredible compassion, as he described taking a grandmother with Parkinsons on the back of his motorcycle around the world for his 6th trip. We all got a kick out of how he tried to wear her down so he wouldn't have to finish the trip, and all she could say at the end of a grueling day's ride was, "Loved it! What time do we leave tomorrow for our RTW?!"

Australian adventurers Peter and Kay Forwood continued the excitement with a gripping tale of their 300,000 mile journey through 193 countries on their Harley Davidson Electra Glide. All I have to say is thank heavens for Peter's long legs and Kay's adventurous and loving nature that made for such a successful and long-running two-up journey. But, it was Sherrri Jo Wilkins who stole everyone's hearts as she managed to pull together a stunning and exciting PowerPoint presentation in the midst of her current round-the-world trip by way of Russia, including the Road of Bones and on to 29 other countries... solo. Here is a girl who oozes inspiration just from her ear to ear smile as she climbs atop her loaded KTM LC4.

If that isn't enough to get any rider fired up to join one of 2012's HU Travelers Meetings for next year, then I better pull out the stops with the promise of my upside-down pineapple cake which we learned how to make in my "Dehydrated Food" cooking class. Yes, you too can easily learn how to eat healthy on the road and be able to pack it on a small dual sport bike. But, you'll have to wait one year to learn about these tips, because I'll be cruising around the world with Paul and the kids on our motorcycles at the same time as the next scheduled California HU event. At least I'll have a huge story to share come HU 2013!

