Ride for the Clover

I am sure most of you are familiar with the 4H organization and the Cooperative Extension Service, but there are a lot of people in New Mexico who are not. Since youth who are involved in 4H are more likely to finish high school, are more likely to graduate from college and are less likely to be involved with drugs then why not promote a program which is in place and working rather than reinventing the wheel. This is roughly the reasoning behind this ride. Since Mike Cheney is a bike rider from youth and Chair of the Board of Regents of New Mexico State University and since Dr. Garrey Carruthers, President of NMSU is an avid supporter of 4H and the Coop Ext Service, they thought a bike ride through southwestern New Mexico might reach a new audience and showcase some of what is working well for the youth of NM as well as provide a two-day ride through some of the prettiest country in NM.

Bob Sherman and I joined this ride and agreed that it was one of the best weekend rides we have been on recently. I don’t know how much money they raised because for a $25.00 registration fee, they provided four meals and refreshments at all stops and provided support vehicles and personnel all along the way and group discounts for the motels in Socorro. Since Dr. Curruthers is not a rider, he drove the route and made appropriate remarks at all the stops on Saturday. But Mike and his wife rode their bike and led their group for the entire ride. We had 75 pre-registered for the event and some 50+ bikes of all kinds. The participants were a diverse group both by age and ethnicity from all walks of life. So I think the goal of reaching a new population with the “message” was achieved.

Very briefly, the ride started in Las Cruces with breakfast and orientation and the VIP remarks at the Coop Ext Service, up through the Hatch Valley, over state roads to Hillsboro, then over the Black Range to Silver City for lunch at the Grant Co. Ext Off. After a lunch of BBQ brisket, we were off to Reserve for the Catron County Fair. Those rural folks have never seen so many bikes and bikers at their county fair! They probably thought the “Wild Hogs” had invaded their fair.

From there it was on to Datil through the rain, past the lushest meadows I have seen in a long time, and on to Socorro past the VLA. A delicious Mexican dinner was served by the staff of the Bodega Berger with drawings for cash and other door prizes as well as a silent auction rounded out the evening.

We met the next morning and headed for Corona via Bernardo, Mountainair, Willard and Cedarvale with a rest stop in Mountainair which is also green. In Corona we parked our rides at the Corona High School football stadium where a couple of 4H students watched them while we were driven out to the Corona Range and Livestock Research Center where the staff served an excellent meal of BBQ, beans and coleslaw with homemade cobbler and ice-cream. Of course we ate too much. To me this was the highlight of the trip. This is an excellent facility for small to large groups of people and well maintained. The staff are doing all kinds of experiments on cattle and range management on the 42 section ranch which is divided into 52 pastures. Various exhibit boards outlined some of what is going on at the station.

Then it was back to Corona where we mounted up and rode to Carrizozo. Most of us donned our raingear before we got there. At this point, Bob and I decided to head on to Roswell and bypass the final stop at the Farm Bureau office in Ruidoso. It appeared that most of the riders went on to Ruidoso,
so most of the riders made the entire trip, even though you could join at any point and leave the ride at any point.

In summary, an excellent ride which I think met their expectations and exceeded mine. Perhaps this will become an annual ride.

File: Ride for the Clover