



Kristen Mosbrucker stopped at an overpass along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Even from that elevation, she couldn't see the experiences that waited for her up ahead.

DAY 26

Alamo Lake State Park, Ariz.

DAY 23

Pie Town, N.M.

DAY 21

Oasis State Park, N.M.

DAY 19

Chicksaw National Recreation Area, Okla.

DAY 17

Cleveland, Miss.

DAY 13

Smokey Mountain National Forest, N.C.

DAY 1
PHILADELPHIA

DAY 7

Blue Ridge Parkway, Va.

Enjoy the view

A cross-country motorcycle trip teaches an SMC alumna to keep her head down, focus forward and appreciate the journey.

By Kristen Mosbrucker

EDITOR'S NOTE: Like many young adults, Kristen Mosbrucker, *TOUR '11*, aspired to move to California. After a year working in Philly to save up enough money for the experience, it was time to head west. But Kristen decided to forgo the U-Haul. Instead it was just her, her motorcycle and thousands of miles of road between her and the next chapter of her life.

I glanced down at my odometer at a gas station in Parker, Ariz. It read 10,206 miles. Wow.

When I left Philadelphia in the beginning of September, my Kawasaki Vulcan 750 motorcycle had fewer than 6,000 miles on it. I'd been riding through Arizona's rocky, saguaro cactus-filled desert all day but I was still at around 1,200 feet in elevation for most of the trip, which is about a ten-degree temperature difference.

But when I came out of that gas station it was noon, I was at 423 feet above sea level and it was 95 degrees. I had nothing but low desert for the next 100 miles and neither a cloud nor shade tree in the distance.

For the most part, clouds actually disappeared from my life as soon as I rode into Arkansas.

I'd been slowly watching the earth change under my feet for at least 4,000 miles at this point. The world was getting drier and, by the time I hit Quartz Mountain in western Oklahoma, the bare red rock had me in awe. The Texas panhandle was 75 mph speed limits—hot, dry and flat.

But honestly, I felt so lucky to wake up on a Tuesday morning with a full tank of gas and no immediate destination.

Escaping the aquarium

Motorcycling across the United States is like swimming in the ocean to see how fish live, and driving a car the same route might as well be like going to an aquarium. Each morning, my options were as vast as the open sea.

Maybe I'd eat lunch on the side of the Blue Ridge Parkway with the blue swallowtail butterflies, or maybe hunker down next to the VLA (Very Large Array) of satellites in the middle of nowhere, New Mexico, and watch a baby rattlesnake digest his breakfast.

But none of it would match the beauty of riding the Linn Cove Viaduct, a bridge that is attached to the side of the nearly 6,000-foot Grandfather Mountain in North Carolina. I had been riding through the cold wind and misty mountains for only a few hours, climbing higher and higher until I suddenly whipped around a curve and nearly fainted.

An entire mountain range was breathing white, smoky fog in front of me and I was looking down on pristine peaks unscarred by human hands. I couldn't stop in the road, but I realized it was better not to ruin my memories of this truly gorgeous view by trying to take a photo.

At least there's pie

New Mexico was like riding through a dream and a nightmare. The desert wind began to sting my eyes but the scenery was amazing through the high desert mountain ranges. A massive cold front

bulging with the potential of freezing rain loomed over me as I reached 80 mph trying to outrun the storm.

The Land of Enchantment was also the state where the campground 20 miles outside of town had a small sign saying they were closed for the season, my motorcycle broke down and I had the best pie in my life.

It was blueberry with star-shaped lattice crust and I savored it with hot coffee at the Pie-O-Neer in Pie Town. I arrived after riding through the freezing high desert, which included evergreen trees, yellow signs warning of moose and sparsely covered mountains.

Less than two miles down the road, I was in awe of the vast country when I felt something snap beneath me. For weeks now, my loyal iron horse had buzzed between my legs, responsive to the throttle and sturdy through tight curves. It was my only home and sense of security in the wilderness.

I pulled off the road, put the bike in first gear and slowly let go of the clutch. Nothing. I hit the emergency engine shut-off and attempted to restart the bike, but it refused to budge.

Luckily a pair of retirees and motorcyclists who had traded in for a van stopped to see what was wrong. They had seen me at the bar in the pie shop and were kind enough to drive me back up the road to use their landline phone.

A nearly \$400 towing bill later, I found myself in Eagar, Ariz., with a broken drive shaft and a 27-degree night ahead.

continued on next page

The owner of the motorcycle shop was really generous; it was his wedding anniversary, but he volunteered to work on the bike that night and said it was either going to be able to be fixed by welding something, or he'd have to wait for parts until Tuesday.

One of his crew members drove me to the nearest motel. Less than two hours later, I heard a familiar engine roar. I opened the door wearing wool socks, spandex and a flannel shirt to see my motorcycle come alive again in front of me.

I grabbed my wallet and hopped in the pickup truck sitting on the worker's lap, hoping that the bill wouldn't ruin me. Only \$65 later, I'm trying to buy one of the mechanics a beer, but when we get to the bar it turns out he's only 19, so I reward him with a Dr. Pepper.

Onward

Motorcycling for a month straight is like living in a wind tunnel. It's usually fine when you're the only thing on the road making wind.

But when a giant RV passes you on a lonely sandy desert road because your hand went numb and you slowed too much for the driver, who is probably sipping a latte and listening to his favorite song, be prepared to feel like you're going to get sucked under his wheels, then spit out the back as the sand kicks and swirls up in your face and the wind tries to knock you off the pavement.

But what do you have to do? Suck in some air, bite your lip, hold your breath, keep your motorcycle steady and go faster.

Whoopi Goldberg was on Temple's Main Campus Oct. 17 to receive the Lew Klein Excellence in the Media Award for the impact she's had in her field.

But it's the personal connections she made with Temple students that day that will be held close to their hearts as these future camera operators, writers, directors, broadcasters and more strive to follow in her footsteps.

Following the 13th annual award ceremony, several hundred students in the Temple Performing Arts Center had the opportunity to ask Goldberg about her career in media.

"I was speechless at first," said junior media studies and production major Marc Anthony Gardner. "I absorbed everything she said."

Goldberg did not attend college and dyslexia forced her to drop out of high school, but that doesn't mean education was absent from her life. As a child, Goldberg watched *Schoolhouse Rock!* which she said resulted in her generation knowing the definition of a bill better than today's youth. It's how she was able to learn, and she encouraged the students to find what works best for them as individuals.

"Get yourself back in the habit of learning stuff in a new way," she said.

Goldberg spoke freely about the pros and cons of social media. She expressed envy over the ability of students to showcase their work on the Internet, but also about being too present online.

"Take a moment to have some privacy and that means," Goldberg said.

The questions students asked ranged from how to become a minority actor to using social media to promote their work.

"It's all on you," she told the students. "You have to be the one who's looking for, you have to be the one who's creating."

Alumni honorees

Prior to the student session, Goldberg was honored at the Lew Klein Awards in Mitten Hall, where more than 100 media professionals, students, faculty and staff gathered to celebrate the actor and comedian, as well as five Temple Alumni in the Media Awards went to David Murphy, a reporter for 6abc; Kevin Negandhi, BTMM anchor on ESPN; Deborah Veney Robinson, a communications officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; and the late E. Steven Collins, who was director of marketing and external relations at Radio City Records. Goldstein, recording engineer and producer, received the Rising Star Award.



Top, Whoopi Goldberg speaks to several hundred students in the Temple Performing Arts Center following the Lew Klein Awards ceremony. Honorees included Kevin Negandhi, David Murphy, Deborah Veney Robinson and Noah Goldstein. At right, Lew Klein greets a guest at the ceremony.



Photo by Kristen Mosbrucker

Joseph V. Labolito