



Michigan Sport Touring Report

December 2016

Editor – Ian Orr

An MSTR Season of 'Firsts'

By Susan Ozimek

Traveling back from a tiring business trip in Calgary my colleague and I had a layover in Minneapolis. As the Universe would have it, I recognized a senior level engineer of one of our top customers sat directly next to me on the final leg home. My colleague signaled me to make sure I had noticed the FANUC brand on his shirt and to ensure I took advantage of our flight time to reinforce the message of our company's capabilities to meet FANUC's automation needs. Somewhere during the flight, our conversation segued from machine building to motorcycles, and a breakfast meeting invitation for me to meet a fun, yet serious group of motorcyclists known to respect riders of all ages, skill levels and bike types. This was the "first" time I'd acted upon a guest invitation to attend a non-business related social event without really knowing a soul. The decision to participate was one of my best ever. What ensued was a season of "first" experiences that ignited and fueled a passion which I had suppressed for many years. A "first" MSTR season of new friendships, laughter, excitement and cherished moments that have and will forever change my life.

The logical next step? My "first" street bike. Sport or Touring? Scrambler or Roadster? How about the engine size – of course that matters. Opinions and feedback were plentiful from the group, with representation for all brands. MSTR is open to all makes of motorcycles which made the data gathering plentiful. Jan Pennington shared how thrilled she was with her R1200R. Actually, I'm not sure who was more excited about the bike, Jan or Don, but I

took the recommendation to heart. At a group meeting I learned about a bus trip to the Cleveland Motorcycle show. Organized by John Horner and BMW of SE Michigan, I



jumped on a tour bus to Cleveland. At the end of the day, I had bought a Shoei helmet and made my decision. 12 weeks later my "first" 2016 white and red BMW R1200R sport /touring bike rolled into her new home. I named her Sabine. (Thank you Jac!).

Where did the first experiences grow from here?

As a rookie rider and newcomer it was awkward trying to find my fit. My "first" MSTR summer barbeque at the home of Jan and Don Pennington was my test for MSTR socialization. Hospitality, fun and conversation were plentiful amongst the veterans. An eclectic collection of food offered abundant options on how to satisfy an appetite. Surrounded by the allure of nature artfully positioned around us, I retreated to the gardens in solace. Then, I met MJ. Whether she sensed my self-consciousness or was just curious about me, she initiated conversation that led to introductions and my background check, laughter, and a new friendship, sealed by the official Curt Bear Hug. (Please Note: this ritual is reserved for women only.)

My "first" invitation to ride to a West Meeting came from what I call, one of The Fantastic Four, Augie Fernandes. In charge of memberships, he took on the task to help the rookie find her way. Nervous, with only a few hundred miles on my odometer, and late (due

to a stupid parade that blocked my route), I arrived at the rendezvous point where Augie anxiously waited. His rules were clear; “stay 3 seconds behind me and flash your bright lights if you want to signal me“. Got it. At the time I couldn’t remember where the bright lights switch was on my bike, but I figured, what the hell. If he couldn’t see me behind him he’d figure out there was a problem. When we arrived at The Alibi, I was pretty sure he was not riding his normal pace. I felt I kept up well, and dared to ask him if he was running at 70% or 80% of his normal pace. Hoping he’d say 85, he replied, 70% maybe 75. I had a lot of learning and experience to get in.

Determined to be worthy of the group, I told Augie I’d be interested in any ride where members would tolerate my rookie-ness and help me learn. From these excursions, I added road time. Sabine and I were closing the unfamiliarity gap and I widened my circle of familiar MSTR faces. Rinse and repeat. I went hot into one turn and almost ended up in the grass. An MSTR rider (thanks Brian) pulled me over and gave me some important mentoring. On another, I crossed the double yellow, thanking the Universe there was no oncoming car. Rinse and repeat. One day, it seemed to connect well enough that I felt worthy to join a “first” organized ride.



My “first” MSTR ride – Marietta, Ohio and the 555. First timer and nervous. No problem. Everyone was helpful. Greg, Ian, Bart, MJ, Curt, Augie, Mike, Brian and more. Need help loading routes on your GPS? No Problem. Not sure what to pack? No problem. Need help finding a group to ride with? No problem. A

well choreographed production with unequalled solidarity resulted in the time of my life. Absolutely the most amazing experience.

Friendship, adventure, laughter, concern and care. Wrapped up in the excitement, my comrades and I returned much later than the other groups to the hotel on our 2nd day, without alerting anyone that we were safe. Anxiously awaiting our return, plans for dinner, entertainment, drinks or merriment were suspended until we were all accounted for. It was an absolutely incredible journey with an exceptional group of enthusiasts who share a love for the sport and commitment to the community they dwell within.

It occurred an hour into the return trip from Marietta, as we exited a gravel road. My first experience with a flat tire. Not mine. Stranded



at the base of a small hill, on a rural road, Police Chief Augie directed us to strategically locate our bikes for best visibility. Continuing in his role, he directed traffic as

collective work began to fix the deep puncture wound to a rear tire. Motorists were helpful and the local police stopped to check in. Repair time was just over an hour, as we utilized repair components from every resource in our group. My only contribution was a sterile alcohol pad to cleanse the hole (embarrassing). Being a dentist Craig knew the alcohol content. Still, it felt good to do something. Cicadas at high volume all around us, we supported the frustrated rider through the tire plug, failed air compressor attempts, and several CO2 cartridges with humor and camaraderie. The thought of breaking-up the group was never considered. I reflected back to my first meeting when Don Pennington said, “You’ll never be left alone should trouble appear, and the group stays together.” He told the truth.

My Other MSTR Firsts:

My “first” 112 mph sprint. Earned my “Ton” rider badge. It took 10 minutes for my smile to fade that day.

My “First” Labor Day BBQ at Bart and Marion’s home. 5 meat choices, surrounded by complimentary side dishes and desserts that could have fed 200. Best part? The entertainment. Potatoes gun, row boat, and chainsaws. Ahhh, my “first” chainsaw experience. Following a brief safety tutorial, I donned gloves, goggles and the “Mama Bear” choice of 4 different hp chainsaws. I cut two 1” discs from a log about 15” in diameter. Awesome.



A late September excursion in Northern Michigan zipping through the Tunnel of Trees, followed by a run down M22 on a sunny, 72 degree day.

Sabine’s “first” flat tire on the return trip from Bellaire, MI. Offering to use my BMW

Roadside service, my companions would not consider leaving me. Don’s words echoed back to me again. Of course my flat was not a clean puncture, but a “v” cut. With the plug in place, air continued to leak. Requiring a little slime (tire sealant), a rider was dispatched to Auto Zone to secure the remedy. Approaching the hour and a half mark, we resumed our return journey with a 10 mile safety check. Tired, and ready to be home, no one complained and moral support was abundant. The repair held with no issue.

“First” Track Day at Gingerman Raceway, October 21, 2016. Again, a rookie, with no track experience, I didn’t know what to expect. With the first season coming to a close, I wanted Sabine to get some track time. During a dinner conversation at Marietta, an MSTR member mentioned his registration at Gingerman in October. I asked if he had room to trailer Sabine as well. He did. Arriving at the track with a compromised knee, after only four productive rounds, it gave out and I was devastated. I would have rode until the sun set. Then, the Universe presented an opportunity to



lift my spirit. A seasoned Racer and Sport Track Instructor, Glen, asked if I wanted to go 2-up on his bike, around the track. I accepted without hesitation.

Staying as neutral as possible; arms around him, legs tight, on the balls of feet and palms wedged into the gas tank, we ran five laps around the track at speeds I didn’t expect. 120 mph in the straights. On the turns, I tipped my head and saw the blacktop and grass, both at arm’s length. I trusted Glen completely. Exiting the track with my face mask completely fogged, heart pounding and endorphins high, I’m sure my resting pulse did not return for half an hour, maybe longer. The excitement was overwhelming!

What an amazing first season. MSTR challenged me to accept my rookie status, seek to learn, cultivate new relationships and disintegrate the boundaries of an all too safe comfort zone. I am honored to join this diverse people who share a passion for the adventure, freedom, excitement and thrill of motorcycling. I admire this community whose blueprint is ingrained with respect, commitment to safety, camaraderie, collaboration and distinction. I look forward to the next season, and those that follow. My gratitude to all who have extended me friendship and courtesy even in the smallest measure. Collectively, you have contributed to A Season of Firsts that will be long remembered. Thank you MSTR. I look forward to the next season, and those that follow.

2016 Life’s a Beach Grand Tour – Wrap Up

By Keith Danielson

With Thanksgiving over, December here, and the snow flying as I write, the 2016 Life’s a Beach Grand Tour is now in the history books! With an exclamation point! Once again, for those who participated, it provided a good

excuse to go for a ride and get out and see some more of our Great Lake State, with extra credit points as more incentive to get off the motorcycle and take a short break to see some of the other things that are available to us.

This year, since I got a little bit later start in circulating signup sheets and getting the information out than I have in previous years, I decided that everyone who has expressed an interest in previous years was automatically signed up, along with those who provided their information on signup sheets at the meetings, or via email. Consequently, I may probably have a few more “participants” than I might have otherwise, but at least nobody missed out on the opportunity if they desired to participate.



I ended up with 83 total said “participants”. Of those, 16 riders provided me with photo proof of 1 or more checkpoints

visited. Seven riders visited all of the checkpoints in both the upper and lower peninsulas to earn the “Grand Tourer” award. One rider visited all checkpoints in the lower peninsula, but had to stay below the bridge, hence earning the “Troll” award. For the first time in the recorded history of our grand tours (all 5 years), no one wanted to be called a “Baby Grand Tourer” by visiting all of the lower peninsula and at least one but not all checkpoints in the upper peninsula. (I wonder if there could there be



some negative connotations related to “baby” that I had failed to consider.) I’ll probably still keep the same 3 award levels anyway, and we’ll see what happens next year.



So as to maintain the suspense, I won’t give away all of the details here. Instead, I’ll be presenting the awards for our finishers at our first annual

MSTR Year-End Banquet at Karl’s Cabin on January 7th. Be sure to attend so you can receive your award if you completed the grand tour, or to see who did and find out how much they enjoyed visiting them.

Meanwhile, I’ll officially announce next year’s theme at the banquet, and begin taking signups at our January meeting. I hope to see you at the year-end banquet, and then see you on the road next year.

A special thanks to Susan Ozimek and Keith Danielson for their articles featured this month.

Remember... It doesn’t pay a reward, but your articles will be appreciated by your fellow members and the newsletter editor, and you will also earn points toward the **2016 MOTY Award!**



MSTR Heads Up

Here’s a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few weeks. If you know of a local motorcycle event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Ian Orr an e-mail at Communications@mstriders.com with the details.

MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, December 17, 2016, @ 8:30 AM

East breakfast meeting is at **Doc's Sport Retreat** in Livonia, MI. Doc's is located at 19265 Victor Parkway. East of I-275, north of 7 mile road and across from Dave and Buster's. Augie Fernades will be moderating this meeting.

MSTR Year End Banquet

Saturday, January 7, 2017, @ 6:00 PM

All MSTRiders and guests are invited to join us for the 1st Annual MSTR Awards Banquet to be held at Karl's Cabin Restaurant.

The banquet provides a great opportunity to get out of the house for an evening in the off-season, have a great dinner with your friends in the MSTR and recognize those MSTRiders who have achieved significant participation in and contribution to the MSTR in its very first year. Karl/s Cabin is located at 6005 Gotfredson Rd, Plymouth, Michigan. Your RSVP and pre-payment are required. A signup form is included at the end of newsletter and was sent to all MSTRiders by Mail Chimp e-mail.

MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, January 14, 2016, @ 10:00 AM

West breakfast meeting is at the **Alibi Bar & Grill**, 1394 E. Riverside Drive, Ionia, MI (www.alibionia.com). Please send an email to Gala (gschip@me.com) so she can plan on providing breakfast for everyone who attends. Bart will be moderating this meeting. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip.



MSTR **2016 Rides**

In 2016 a total of 291 MSTRiders attended 9 events. Individual event participation was:

Missouri Arkansas (MOARK): 38
Rough Rider 500 Mile (RR 1/2K): 31
Michigan Renegade Mountain Ride (MR2): 56
Rough Rider 1000 Mile (RR 1K): 11
Mid South Odyssey (MSO): 16
Blue Grass Boogie (BGB): 21
Barn Burn Raid (BBR): 60
Tip Of The Mitt (TOTM): 39
West Virginia Raid (WVR): 19

In 2017 we'll have a similar number of events for MSTRiders to attend. The dates for many events have already been set and are listed on the Events page of the MSTR Website (www.mstriders.com)

MSTR **Newsletter & Website**

The MSTR Newsletter and Website (www.mstriders.com) belong to you, the riders. They both can only be as good and as interesting as you make them. If you've got something to say about a ride, your bike, perhaps a trip you're planning, whatever, send it in for the newsletter and/or website to:

Ian Orr: Communications@mstriders.com

MSTR **Photo Gallery**

The MSTR maintains a SmugMug photo gallery (<https://mstriders.smugmug.com/>) to allow riders to upload and download pictures of various club events. Upload and download passwords are sent out to participants for each event. Click on the above link or visit the MSTR website and select the MSTR Photo Gallery link to check out all the event pictures.

MSTR Dealer Members & News

BMW Motorcycles of SE Michigan
www.bmwmcsem.com/

Winter Hours
November – February: Closed Wednesdays

BMW Motorrad USA
Accessory & Lifestyle Promotion
Through December 31

BMW of Grand Rapids
www.bmwmcgr.com/

Holiday Hours
December 23: 2pm to 6pm
December 24, 25, 26: Closed
December 31, January 1, 2: Closed

Ducati Detroit
www.ducatidetroit.com/

Gleaners Food and Fund Drive
November 26 to December 19

Fox Powersports
www.foxpowersports.com/

12 DAYS OF FOXMAS JINGLE SALE
December 12 to December 24: 9am to 4pm

Motorcyclist

🔊 *noun, singular (moh-ter-sahy-klist)*
: A person willing to take a container of flammable liquid, place it on top of a hot moving engine and then put the whole lot between their legs



Please patronize the following businesses owned by your fellow MSTR Members, whenever possible.



The magazine cover for 'Midwest Motorcyclist' features a large image of a black Harley-Davidson Street Glide motorcycle. Text on the cover includes 'June 2016 FREE', 'Celebrating 18 Years', and 'The Complete Guide to Motorcycling in the Midwest'. A QR code is in the top right corner. The main headline reads 'Test Ride: 2016 Harley-Davidson Street Glide Smooth, Cool & Fast'. A smaller inset image shows a 2016 Indian Springfield motorcycle with the text 'Exclusive First Ride: 2016 Indian Springfield, Giant Killer?'. Other featured articles include 'Destination Ride', 'Nelson Riggs Tank Bag Review', and 'Handlebar Tech Talk'.

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Michigan Sport Touring Riders

>> Inaugural Awards Banquet <<

Saturday, January 7, 2017

Plan on gathering at 6:00 to socialize with your fellow riders & guests followed by dinner at 7:00 - A cash Bar will be available. Awards ceremony to follow.

Karl's Cabin Restaurant & Bar
6005 Gotfredson Rd. Plymouth, MI

Join your fellow MSTRiders for our first of many awards banquets. Attendance is limited to the first 100 paid attendees, so don't miss out and sign-up now!

YES, I'll be there:

Member's Name: _____

Guest's Name: _____

Here's your dinner selections: *Includes Chef's Vegetable, Red Skin Potato, Tossed Salad With Choice of Two Dressings, Warm Bread & Butter. Price of Entrees include Cocktail Snacks, Dessert, Tax & Gratuity.*

PLEASE INDICATE THE NUMBER OF MEALS FOR EACH SELECTION:

- () **NY STRIP STEAK** **\$35**
Char-grilled Natural 10oz. Cut Cooked Medium
- () **CHICKEN PICATTA** **\$24**
Natural Chicken Breast with Artichoke, Caper & Lemon Sauce
- () **SALMON** **\$30**
Scottish Salmon Topped With White Wine, Lemon & Caper Beurre Blanc
- () **SMOKED PORK TENDERLOIN** **\$27**
Bacon Wrapped, Irish Champ Mashed, Butter Beans, Chipotle Peach BBQ
- TOTAL FOR YOUR SELECTIONS: \$ _____**

Please make checks payable to AUGIE FERNANDES – MSTR & mail it along with your completed form to:

Augie Fernandes - MSTR
9337 Tower Road
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