



*Michigan*  
*Sport Touring Report*

October 2019

Editor – Rachel Durling

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**2019 Fall Color Ride Report**

**By: Keith Danielson**

This year the MSTR 2019 Fall Color Ride was held on October 3-6. Twenty-three riders plus Max and Rachel showed up for the event. Overall, the event was a big success, with some good weather and some not quite so good, some old roads, some roads we have never seen before and some great time spent with friends.

Many people trailered down to Marietta to start, but since for me, trailering is only for track days and for when the weather is just not conducive to riding (i.e., potential for snow and ice, though I have had some exceptions), I decided to ride down. There was a bit of rain on the way to Toledo, and it was a bit chilly. I met Roy Winseck and Ken Snodgrass at the Bob Evans in Northwood, and after a typically good breakfast, we began heading south. There were two routes down to choose from; both went down to Coshocton for lunch, then after lunch they offered a long and a short way to get the rest of the way to Marietta. We had a couple of small detours before getting to Fremont, and then the same road closure we had before Republic on the way to the Barn Burn Raid in August. All were easily detoured. Just south of Fremont we rode out from under the clouds and into the sunshine, and within an hour, the temperatures had probably risen about 20°F, and we were getting somewhat warm, dressed for where we began.

After riding down OH-60 south from Killbuck, just before we reached US-36, we saw a

motorcycle parked in the school parking lot, with two people standing by it, and most of their luggage on the ground nearby – could not be a good sign. We quickly turned around and went back to find that Bob and Jennifer were from Grand Rapids, MI, on a trip to SE Ohio, but that the final drive on their motorcycle was failing. From the BMWMOA Anonymous book, we found the nearest dealer in New Philadelphia. Bob called them, and he was advised to not try to limp it to the shop, so after a call to AAA and assurance that a tow truck was on the way, we left Bob and Jennifer and continued on to Coshocton. Before leaving we left them with a card for the MSTR and told them a little bit about the club (and they came to the west side meeting the following Saturday).



Lunch in Coshocton was at the usual Warehouse Steak and Stein, which filled the empty spot in our bellies quite nicely. After lunch, we continued on to Marietta via the short route, with the obligatory stop at the Big Muskie Bucket. For dinner, we loaded into all of the 4-wheel vehicles available for a

quick ride to DaVinci's across the river in Williamstown for a great Italian dinner, followed by the rider's meeting back at the Microtel.

Friday arrived with mild temperatures, clear skies and clear roads for the ride to Lewisburg. Most of the roads were familiar, until we turned onto Alexander-Helvetia road, a short distance north of Rock Cave. This is a county road, but the asphalt is like new, and was mostly clean as it snaked around the mountains and through the valleys as it took us to Helvetia, WV, where we had lunch at The Hütte restaurant. Helvetia is a rather small community (59 reported as of 2010) of Swiss heritage. The town was formed around 1870 by a group of Swiss and German immigrants looking for a place out in the country. It started with 32 residents in 1871, and by 1874, reported 308 residents. Today the Helvetia Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places. Most did not venture too far into town, as The Hütte restaurant is right on the corner. They serve tasty authentic Swiss cuisine there. Seating was at tables scattered around inside the various main floor rooms of what appeared to have been a house or possibly a hotel from the 1800s, and the interior decorations lent credibility to that theory, with old tools, photos, and appliances all around, as well as an old organ and a switchboard in one room. Unfortunately, as we all arrived within 15 minutes of each other we rather overwhelmed them. While they no doubt worked as hard as they could, patience was required, for which we were ultimately rewarded with great authentic Swiss food, and a dining experience that did not disappoint.



After lunch, the road was good for a while, before it deteriorated a bit due to heavy trucks servicing a coal plant and a quarry, though it remained very entertaining. We had three choices to Lewisburg after lunch, with a long and two short routes. My group took the long route, which took us back south and west to Webster Springs, then south to Charmco and US-60. In Charmco, we had a wait of about 10 to 15 minutes where they were repaving all three directions from the main intersection of WV-20 and US-60, and then we were stuck in traffic to I-64. The rest of the traffic all opted for I-64, so we were left with an entertaining ride the rest of the way into Lewisburg on US-60.

Saturday was overcast, and the temperatures were in the 50s. With the forecast calling for rain on Sunday, more than half of the riders opted to have a fun ride back up to Marietta on Saturday, then ride around Marietta on Sunday until it started to rain there. About ten people remained in Lewisburg. My group had a great ride, on a loop of about 251 miles. We started by heading west, then south and east to Virginia. Lunch was at a Mexican restaurant in Pearisburg, VA, after which we headed up to Paint Bank for dessert before heading back up to I-64 for the last 15 miles to Lewisburg. We took a brief detour to the Smooth Ambler distillery about five miles north of Lewisburg to get a taste of their spirits, before opting to purchase a bottle before returning to the Quality Inn.

During the morning, in the first hour of the ride, we stopped at the John Henry Memorial outside of Talcott, WV. John Henry is an African American folk hero. He worked as a steel driver swinging a sledgehammer driving a steel drill bit into rock, drilling holes to place explosives to blast the C&O Great Bend Tunnel through the mountain outside of Talcott. A few years earlier, a steam-powered drill had been invented, and it was brought in to speed up the work. John Henry did not like the steam drill because it threatened to put many men out of work. Legend has it that he challenged the steam drill to a contest to see who could drill a hole

fastest. With a 10-pound sledge in each hand, swinging as fast as he could, he drilled a hole 14 feet into the rock (although the drill bit was only 9 feet) and beat the steam drill. He died in victory with his hammer still in his hand because his heart gave out from stress (or, after the extreme exertion with no rest, he got sick and died a few days later, take your pick). He is buried somewhere near the east entrance to the tunnel. A park at the entrance to the tunnel, which was retired after 100 years of use when a new tunnel was built, memorializes the man, and in 1996, the USPS issued a stamp with his image. To this day, Talcott celebrates the John Henry Days festival each year.



Sunday came overcast, but not raining as we departed Lewisburg. My group began following the route back to Marietta, and most of the first 100 miles were dry. We did have some light rain and wet roads through

Hawk's Nest State Park on US-60, but that stopped and the roads dried back up coming down the mountain into Gauley Bridge, and stayed dry most of the way to Clay, where it began to rain in earnest. At Clay, we stopped for gas, and decided that we would continue to follow the route, but if the roads were wet as we got to I-79, we would hop on the expressway and high tail it back to Marietta, which turns out is what we did. As my riding buddies loaded their bikes into the trailer for the ride home, I continued for home on the motorcycle. Roads started wet with light rain, then dried up for an enjoyable ride to Coshocton for lunch. They remained dry until I was nearing Glenmont on OH-520, where I ran into the heaviest rain of the ride, but after pushing through that, they dried up again for the rest of the ride to Toledo and home.

It turned out to be four fun-filled days of riding with great friends. Thanks to everyone who shared the weekend with me. To those who were unable to make it this year, put this one on your calendar for next year as one to make sure you go to.

## Fall Colors Ride

*By MJ Allmond*

There is so much in life to be thankful for!

Sometimes the weather at this time of year can be a challenge, but this year, it was almost perfect. Therefore, with circumstances being what they were for me this year, this was the only ride I was able to participate in and I am glad I was able to make it happen.

I had a very memorable time on this year's Fall Color Ride, (with just one little part that I hope will not be repeated), but the rest was great. The routes were good, the roads that I was on were in good shape and as I said, the weather for the most part was beautiful, warm and sunny!

So, now the THANKS part; I want to thank the MSTR riders that made it a great ride for me.

First, I need to thank Joe S. for getting the routes loaded on my outdated GPS. FYI; mine was the only one in my group that actually worked, so I was point rider after all.

We started out Friday morning as a small group of three, but were soon joined by two more riders. We had a great morning ride and made it to the lunch stop at the Hutte in Helvetia, it was delicious. The afternoon ride, well let's just say I want to give a big THANKS to those that helped me with my incident, Bob K, Paul D, Curt and Lynn Higbee. Another thank you goes to Roger Zander for the 'Gorilla' that put me back together and for helping me regain my confidence on the ride back to Marietta. Thanks to everyone that supported me and gave me words of encouragement Friday evening, the Kentucky bourbon worked its magic too. I appreciated it all more than you know.



Saturday looked to be a great weather day for riding, so a few of us decided take our time and spend the day riding back to Marietta instead of having Sunday be such a long day. Everyone had a good ride back and then we had a wonderful BBQ dinner on an outdoor patio, right on the Ohio River Saturday evening. Thanks to Dave and his minivan for getting us all there and back.

Finally thank you to Dave, Bill W., Frank S. & Dave B. for letting me ride with you guys on Sunday morning. It was the best of rides. I did not know those roads could be so fun!

Here is looking ahead to next year and many more memorable years of rides with good friends.

FCR...my ride of thanks!

A special thanks to **Keith Danielson and MJ Allmond** for the articles and pictures featured this month.

**Remember...** All published articles earn a free breakfast, entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your fellow members and the newsletter editor will appreciate your articles. You will also earn points toward the **2019 MOTY Award!**



## MSTR Heads Up

Here is 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 Rachel Durling an e-mail at [Communications@mstriders.com](mailto:Communications@mstriders.com) with the details.

### MSTR EAST Breakfast Meeting

**Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019, @ 9:00 AM**

**Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019, @ 9:00 AM**

Note: this meeting is one week early due to Thanksgiving

East breakfast meeting is at **George Murphy's at the Creek (Now called COACH'S CORNER)**, 36000 W. Seven Mile Road, Livonia, MI 48152.

### MSTR WEST Breakfast Meeting

**Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, @ 9:00 AM**

West breakfast meeting is at the **Alibi Bar & Grill**, 1394 E. Riverside Drive, Ionia, MI ([www.alibionia.com](http://www.alibionia.com)). Please send an email to Gala ([gschip@me.com](mailto:gschip@me.com)) so she can plan on

providing breakfast for everyone who attends. Keith Danielson will be moderating this meeting. Breakfast will be available for \$11 plus tax & tip.



## MSTR 2019 Rides

Most 2019 rides are done for the year. Please check the MSTR website for the list of the rides and events for rest of the year and upcoming information for 2020 rides. ([www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com))



This year Keith Danielson's Grand Tour has hopefully taken you on some Michigan journeys to see some of our state parks throughout the spring, summer and into this fall.

The riding season is unfortunately almost over so get out there and get your last checkpoints in before it is too late.

You must have your pictures in to Keith by November 24, 2019. Please see MSTRiders.com under events for more information.

## MSTR Newsletter & Website

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

Rachel Durling:

[communications@mstriders.com](mailto:communications@mstriders.com)

## MSTR Dealer Members & News

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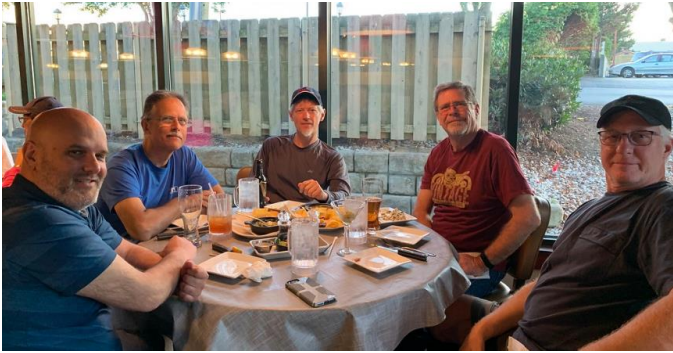
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## MSTR Photo Gallery

The MSTR maintains a Smug Mug 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.  
**Pictures from Fall Colors Ride**




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