



## Michigan Sport Touring Report

January 2022

Editor – Rachel Durling

### **Bonneville Speed Week 2021**

**By: Bill (Kickstand) Preininger**

On August 10, 2021, MSTR Rat Pack Bruce Agababian (Bass Whore – a story for another time), Bob Harris (Go Blue beat the Buckeyes) and Jim Robinson (forfeited due to family obligation) departed to West Wendover, Nevada to witness the famed Bonneville Speed Week.

With a short stop over in Nashville, we landed in Salt Lake City and rented a well-used Dodge Caravan from a privateer via Turo Car Rental. We wound up at the Peppermill Casino to spend the next three nights which was a leisurely 20-minute drive to the Bonneville Salt Flats. Speed Week is an annual 6 day event which begins on Saturday and ends the next Friday. We prepared for our experience at the Salt Lake City Walmart with the purchase of a Styrofoam cooler, snacks, bottled water and beer.



With our wide brim hats, sunscreen, sunglasses and binoculars in hand, we entered the Salt Flats entrance paying for a modest 2-day pass

and proceeded to drive toward the distant parked cars. Old vintage cars were everywhere with flat head power, skinny tubed tires and unpainted bodies as they commanded the popular transportation of 'Run What Ya Brung'. Then we just kept driving along, what we soon understood as, the side of the course with makeshift paddocks galore. We continued our drive until we encountered a barrier only allowing chase vehicle entrance. After a quick U-turn and we parked next to a few cars and RV's. It was then we met the best spectator ever from the two days we attended, he was a divorced muscled Buckeye who traveled the country in his RV. In most towns on his journeys, he found amorous companionship via his iPhone and was about to start up a boat charter in Florida. A total free spirit also on his first visit to Bonneville and was quickly accepted as a "Brother Motorhead".



For those of us who have visited race day tracks, sponsored racers are inaccessible guarded by officials and their pit crews. They race against each other with their sponsored machines and alpha egos, acknowledging spectators only after they win. At Bonneville the atmosphere is like nothing you will ever experience anywhere else. The Bonneville Salt Flats are sacred grounds, attended by legend

drivers setting world speed records with their personal contraptions readied for the record books. They are here unsponsored with determination and bottled adrenaline. Their race is against pure speed and not with each other. This is the race component that is unique, total camaraderie from all who look out for each other and assist if needed.



Michigan license plate. Turns out the driver and racer is Larry Erickson, the former Ford Director of Exterior Design. He has been racing his Buick powered hot rod for the past 8 years. We found Larry the next day at the starting line accompanied by his daughter. Recently graduated from college Larry's daughter plans to drive the hot rod in the next 2022 season.



We were not prepared to be totally present, walking up to the drivers and their machines at the paddocks and starting line. The tone is professional and unpretentious. Some drivers were nervous, others singularly focused and some even euphoric. We were envious. What a spectacular moment to put everything you have 'on the line'. Then either solo or with a push vehicle the modified machines began its assault. If there is Heaven on earth, we discovered it.



Days later sunburned and dehydrated, we saw 2-cycle, 4-cycle and multi-engine motorcycles, open cockpit Hot Rods, NASCAR's, Belly Tank racers and turbocharged, supercharged multi-engine streamliners. No one was at Bonneville because they had to be there, but only because they wanted to be there. At a neighboring casino Bob discovered a vintage Ford Pick-Up with a

My personal best racer was Valerie Thompson [www.valerithompsonracing.com](http://www.valerithompsonracing.com).

She remains the World's Fastest Female Motorcycle Racer at 328.467 on the BUB 7 Streamliner from 2008. Valerie was due to be a laid off banker of 13 years when her employer offered her a job in Ohio or a severance package. After motorcycle street racing someone told her to take it to the track, and so she took her severance and went racing. We saw Valerie at the starting line on a turbo charged ZX-14R (my stock bike). She was having a great time and doing jumps and

clicking her heels before her run. Yeah, I am most definitely envious wannabe.

So is the journey worth your time and expense? Where else can you experience both men and women competing together against time? See you in Heaven?



A special thanks to **Bill (Kickstand) Preininger** for his article 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 **2022 MOTY Awards!**



## MSTR Heads Up

Here is a listing of some of the upcoming local events and meetings within the next few months. If you know of a local motorcycle event in Michigan or Ontario the MSTR would be interested in send Rachel Durling an e-mail to [Communications@mstriders.com](mailto:Communications@mstriders.com) with the details.

We unfortunately had to postpone our annual MOTY banquet that was planned in February, we plan to have it in the Spring or Summer.

## MSTR

## East Breakfast Meetings

Our East Side Breakfast meeting will be on **Saturday, on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at Coach's Corner, 36000 W Seven Mile Rd, Livonia, MI 48152 at 9am but please check your email in case there are changes.**

## MSTR West Breakfast Meetings

Our next West Side MSTR meeting will be on **February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at the Alibi Bar & Grill, 1394 East Riverside Dr, Ionia, MI, 48846 at 9am.**

Please email Gala at [gschip@me.com](mailto:gschip@me.com) to let her know that you will be there for breakfast, so that she can plan to have enough food for everyone.



## MSTR 2022 Rides and Updates

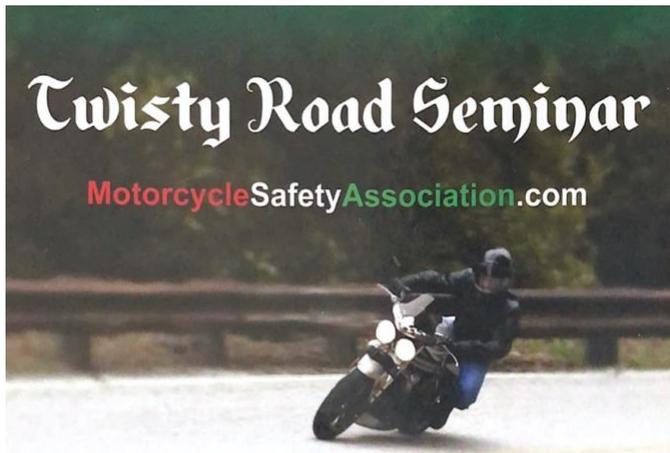
Please check the MSTR website for a tentative list of the rides and events for 2022 ([www.mstriders.com](http://www.mstriders.com)). We have completed all our scheduled riding events for 2021.

Starting in 2022 we'll be adding local weekend day rides around Michigan and surrounding states, stay tuned for details.

## 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)



## *What a Professional rider says about the Seminar*

"The Twisty Road Seminar offers sound advice to all street riders, regardless of experience level"  
Mark Miller, Isle of Man TT – 1st Place Winner

### *About us*

The Motorcycle Safety Association is a State of Michigan Non-Profit corporation. The U.S. Treasury Department has determined the Association is a charity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are therefore tax deductible to the extent the law allows.



info@MotorcycleSafetyAssociation.com

If you are interested in the Twisty Road Seminar, please contact Bill Webb at the email address above.

### **For Your Information**

Regarding politics, the MSTR does not and shall not support any political party. Political discussions are not allowed during MSTR meetings or events.

Regarding human rights, the MSTR does not and shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, age, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or military status in any of its activities.

You are free to have whatever political views you desire, but please leave them at home or on

Facebook. Please don't bring them to the MSTR.

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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.

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

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