



Michigan Sport Touring Riders

July 2026 Newsletter

Editor - Peter Stephan

Route 66

By Keith Danielson

In this issue!
Route 66
Hocking Hills Twisty

Club Meetings & Events

Eastside Meeting

Saturday, July 25, 9 AM

[Senate Coney Island](#)

34359 Plymouth Rd. Livonia

Westside Meeting

Saturday, August 8, 11 AM

[Alibi Bar & Grill](#)

1394 E. Riverside Dr. Ionia

2026 Membership

Forms

[2026 MSTR New Membership Form](#)

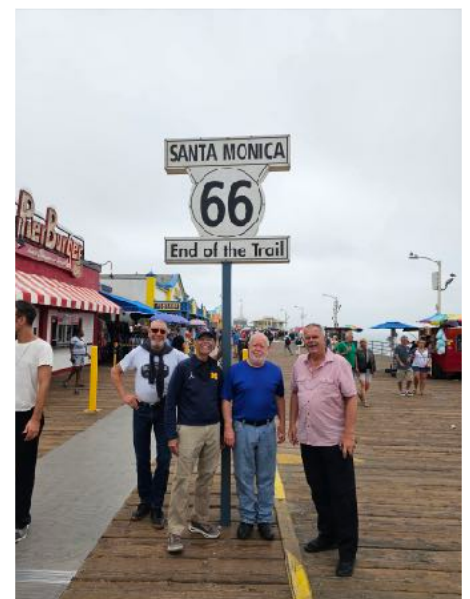
New members may join for \$25. The form includes the release form for new members to join in 2026 rides.

Learn more about MSTR
HERE: [https://
mstriders.com](https://mstriders.com)

In 1926, as motorcycles (and automobiles) were becoming more common, and to promote travel and tourism, the US Highway system was authorized, and the very first US highway, Route 66, was inaugurated. Ninety-nine years later, in September of 2025, Keith Danielson, Kelly McCrystal, Roger Zander and Tom Hudson set out to follow Route 66 – the Mother Road, the Main Street of America – from Chicago to Santa Monica, California.



We took 12 days to complete the ride, beginning on a Sunday Morning in downtown Chicago at the beginning of the road, and ending at the Santa Monica Pier on a Thursday afternoon.



Barn Burn Raid (BBR) is one of our most popular and best attended events. See page 7

We saw many things as we retraced the route that so many travelers took over the nearly 40 years before route 66 was decommissioned as the interstate highway system took over. It would take much more than one article to describe our adventure, so to not bore you to death, I'm just going to offer some insights on one facet of our trip here, with the thought that there are more things to write about in future issues of our newsletter.

One of the most prevalent things seen on Route 66 today is old motels and hotels that are sitting abandoned. After the interstate came through and bypassed the towns, then the chain hotels sprang up at the exits, the majority of the places that once served travelers on the Mother Road were not able to sustain themselves. Some, however, are still in operation, so while planning our trip, we looked for some of the old motels and hotels to spend a night. While some nights



At the end of our second day on the road, the Wagon Wheel Motel in Cuba, MO was the first of the old lodgings we stayed at. Originally called the Wagon Wheel Motor Court, then redesignated as a motel in keeping with the times, the Wagon Wheel Motel claims to be the only continuously operating motel along old Route 66. It has been in operation since the 1930s when it first opened. The motel had a service station and a restaurant to serve travelers, along with about 12 stone cabins. The cabins are still original, though they have been updated with modern amenities and refurbished. This was Kelly's and my smallest room for the trip, with barely enough room to walk around the two double beds in the room. On a beautiful September evening, after returning from dinner next door, we sat out on lawn chairs in front of our cabin as we enjoyed a little sip of Bourbon to finish off a very interesting day.



Possibly the most famous motel in Tucumcari, NM, is the Blue Swallow. With 12 rooms, each with its own garage, and neon lights providing soft light for guests milling around in lawn chairs in the evening. It looks like it would be a fun and relaxing experience, but unfortunately, when we made reservations in April, it was already booked for September. The next choice was the Motel Safari, which opened in 1959 near the end of the heyday of Route 66. Originally an "L" shape and with a couple of garages to park in. Another wing and a swimming pool was soon added. With the opening of I-40, the motel fell into disrepair, and was nearly just a memory until it was purchased in 2007. With a sense of preservation, the new owners restored and modernized it, and subsequent owners have continued to update and restore the property. Much of the furniture is original, and replacements have been selected to maintain the original mid-century modern decor. As we arrived too early to check in, we sat around on the deck (where the pool used to be) and admired the period advertisements painted on the walls around us as we waited to check in at 3:00.

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In Gallup, NM, we again arrived too early and had to find lunch before heading to the El Rancho Hotel. This is probably one of the more famous hotels along the route and was definitely the nicest. The hotel gets its fame from its list of guests who have stayed there over the years, as it was the location where the movie stars would stay as they were shooting in the desert around monument valley. Each of the rooms is named after one of the famous guests. Tom and Roger stayed in the Fred MacMurray room, and Keith and Kelly stayed in the Susan Hayward room. The lobby was decorated with a life-size poster of John Wayne and many other artifacts, and the walls were decorated with signed photographs of the stars who stayed there over the years. Very cool...



Holbrook, AZ is the Wigwam Motel. This motel consisted of a series of tee-pee shaped cabins, decorated with patterns to mimic native American themes. It, along with many other things along Route 66, was the inspiration for much of the imagery in the movie *Cars*. We didn't get to stay there because we arrived in Holbrook in the middle of the day, though we did stop to take a few pictures and look around.



Arizona 9 Motor Hotel in Williams, AZ was originally known as Sutton's Hotel Cottages in 1927 and consisted of a gas station and 4 cottages. It expanded to 23 stuccoed adobe-style cottages before it closed in 1946. In 1965 it reopened as the Arizona 9 Motor Hotel. It gained recognition in the 2006 movie *The Canyon*. Williams is known as the gateway to the Grand Canyon, and the Arizona 9's history and location on old Route 66, and proximity to the railroad that takes tourists to the Grand Canyon gives it special significance.



The next one isn't historic, but is an interesting story, so I'll tell about it anyway. As I made our reservations before we did the trip, I decided that Needles, California was where we ought to be (unlike the Beverly Hillbillies, but only for one night). After making our reservation at the modern Rio Del Sol Inn, I asked the guy on the other end of the line what kind of weather we could expect while in Needles. He informed me that near the end of September it would not be as hot as the middle of the summer, but we could expect temperatures during the day around 110F. We were lucky, however, as when we arrived, the temperature was only 106F!



The Route 66 Motel in Barstow, CA was originally founded in 1922 as the Barstow Auto Court, and has been in business since in one form or another. Today it features a number of old cars parked around the premises that remind guests of days gone by, and is a neat place to walk around and see what used to be seen along the Main Street of America.



There are many other historic motels along the way, but with only 12 nights on the road, we obviously couldn't stay at all of them and if we did, this would be a much longer tome than it already is.

Stay tuned for additional highlights of our trip in future issues. In the meantime, you can see many more pictures of our epic trip out route 66 in our SmugMug gallery by clicking [here](#) using the password "Cadillac Ranch".

We'll see you on the road.

Hocking Hills Twisty Tour

By Jac Brown

Back in day, when US 33 wasn't a freeway, Don and Jan Pennington held a weekend ride in the Hocking Hills called the Hocking Hills Twisty Tour or HT2. The current reincarnation of the HT2 is in it's 4th year, the third time based in Chillicothe, Ohio. I was asked how to pronounce Chillicothe and answered that it rhymes with "Chilly Coffee".

This year we had 13 riders with Mike Dupuis (~450 miles) and Hal Kramer (~370 miles) riding the farthest. They also had miles of hard rain where most of us had a few drops at most on our way down from Michigan. Once we got there, the weather was perfect all weekend. The mornings were about 60 degrees and it was upper 70's to 80's by afternoon.

The roads in this part are great and a good time was had by all. The only issue was a little gravel on the corners from hard rain in the days before we arrived. Always an unwelcome surprise but we all managed.

Road closures were a bit of a challenge too, but some of the work arounds turned out to be keepers. The biggest challenge was that the freeway interchange next to the hotel was closed so we didn't get downtown for dinner this year. Speaking of dinner, Mike Dupuis had at least one joke for every dinner. (Ian – You should tap Mike for jokes for the MSTR Eastside meeting.)

There were no performance awards given out this year as far as I know. As usual, some of the dinner conversation was about gps. No matter what gps you use there are times when it will lead you astray. I do have to award a gold star to Terry Morisi. There is this particular turn that I have missed at least 3 times, even though I made the route, and Terry got it right the very first time.

Finally, the evidence that we are all getting older comes in the form of leaving credit cards behind. I believe that the count on this trip was 3 cards either left behind or very nearly so. In the most serious case, the rider had to return 45 minutes to the last gas stop trying to find the lost card. The gas station had no cards turned in, so while looking again for where he might lost it, another motorcyclist at the station spotted the card and turned it in. Once again, you can count on bikers to do the right thing. And to very loosely paraphrase Hal Kramer, "We all have to follow our protocol every time. Otherwise we are going to lose shit."

I hope you will join us next year. I can't guarantee the weather but I think I can guarantee good company.



2026 Event Schedule

Barn Burn Raid (BBR)

* August 12 – 16 (standard)
August 9 – 16, 2026 (extended)

Tip Of The Mitt (TOTM)

* September 10 – 13, 2026

Fall Color Ride (FCR)

* September 23 – 27, 2026

Last Fall Ride (LFR)

* TBD, 2026

* Multi-day events include travel days to and from the event.

2026 Michigan Bridges Grand Tour

Keith Danielson, Creator and
Organizer



As in the past, all you will need to do is sign up at a meeting, or request the information directly by emailing me at keithmdanielson@gmail.com to receive the detailed information for the grand tour.

Special thanks to Keith and Jac for the articles and photos featured in this issue.

Remember: All published articles earn entry into the year-end newsletter drawing AND your fellow members and newsletter editor appreciate you! You

2026 Michigan Barn Burn Raid 11

Keith Danielson, Organizer

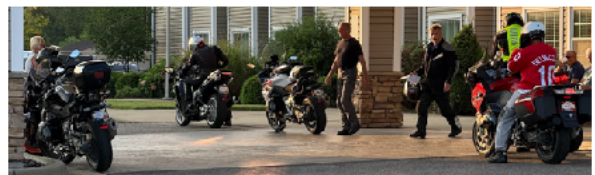
Barn Burn Raid (BBR) is one of our most popular and best attended events. It takes its name from the iconic Mail Pouch Tobacco barns seen throughout rural Ohio. We'll be riding along some of the best twisty roads in and around the rolling hills and valleys of southeast Ohio and West Virginia.



We'll visit favorite sites like the Big Muskie in Ohio and the New River Gorge Bridge and Holly River State Park in West Virginia. And of course every route includes a great lunch stop such as the Beallsville Diner, Boondocks BBQ, Hillbilly Hotdogs, Maxwell's Pizza and Pies & Pints.

BBR is headquartered in Marietta, Ohio, making it a comfortable one day ride from many Michigan locations. BBR 11 officially runs from Sunday, **August 9th to Sunday, August 17th**. MSTRiders can choose to attend for the entire week or for any portion of the week, whichever fits your schedule.

To join us for BBR 11 send an email to Keith Danielson (keithmdanielson@gmail.com) Event information, including the event hotel information, GPS routes, turn-by-turn directions and route maps will be made only be available to those who sign up.



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July 10 @ 9:00 am - July 11 @ 6:00 pm

Royal Enfield Demo Truck

Royal Enfield Demo Truck Event — July 10 & 11 The Royal Enfield Demo Truck is coming to town, and this is your chance to experience the ride for yourself. Join us for a hands-on weekend packed with test rides, expert staff, and full hospitality. Friday, July 10 — 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Saturday,...

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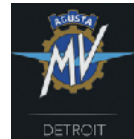


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