

The Florida MSTA Grapevine

You heard it through the Grapevine...

Volume 3 Issue 10

Feature Article

Events in October

details on pages 13-14

In This Issue:

- Page 1 - Feature Article
- Page 1 - Monthly Riding Tip
- Page 2 - Grapevine News
- Page 4 - (2nd) Feature Article
- Page 12 - Florida News
- Page 14 - Mystery Hyperlink
- Page 14 - Classifieds

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(Editor's Note: Tom Blake was kind enough to fill us in on his SE STAR 2010 adventures...no pics but a great story, so enjoy!)

SE STAR 2010

Tom Blake

Coming from central Pennsylvania, I try to take advantage of every chance I get to go to any mountains. Of course, those in north Georgia, western North Carolina and southeastern Tennessee are the closest. And they have some of the finest motorcycling roads that you'll find anywhere. So riding up for SE STAR is always on my *to do* list.

It's about a 10-hour ride to Dillard and leaving at 6:30 on Friday got me around Jacksonville after the worst of their rush hour. The rest of the ride was pure back road pleasure. The police patrol US441 north of I-85 pretty closely so you do need to watch your speed the last part of the way up.

Saturday broke, as days often do in these mountains, with a dense fog which didn't burn off until about 9 o'clock or so. This is a nice thing because you can sleep in, take your time with the really good complimentary breakfast there at the Holiday Inn Express, share a bunch of lies back and forth with other riders and then leisurely get the bike unwrapped and ready to go while temps are still low.

MONTHLY RIDING TIP: Finally! The Fall riding season is upon us... - ed.

It's the beginning of Fall in Florida! That means riding without the sweltering heat is back! However, it also means temperatures start out cooler in the morning. Riders starting out first thing in the morning need to be aware of larger temperature swings. It's also not unusual for the central interior of the state to be several degrees cooler in the early morning hours than the coastal areas. Make sure that if you're going to do some distance, and particularly if you're starting out early and headed into the interior, that you examine the weather conditions and layer appropriately to manage changing temperatures and other environmental factors.

My Saturday ride started with a cruise over to Blairsville on US76. This is a fun little road with a variety of twists and turns, none too technical, so a good way to get into a rhythm. I stopped at the Honda-Kawasaki dealer there to get the tail lights replaced. After 6 years and 60k miles, one had burned out so I replaced both. Nice folks, nice shop.

I then headed down a very curvy US129, up into the mountains to beautiful Vogel State Park where I turned on to GA180 over some more mountains to TWO at Suches. GA180 is quite a ride. It's challenging, technical in spots with some pretty steep climbs and descents. By the time I got to Suches, my mountain riding skills were honed back into shape.

After a huge burger lunch, I headed south on US60 and then US19 toward Dahlenega to visit Black Mountain Motorcycles on the US19 bypass. **Terry Brown** told me that **Mark Hanke**, who used to be a FL MSTA member, worked at a bike shop near the US400 and US129 intersection and I thought this might be the one. The manager at Black Mountain is his good friend but said it was the Moto 400 shop on US400 that he used to work for. In any case, he wrote down my name and said he'd let Mark know he had a visitor. Black Mountain has a good selection of mostly used European bikes including Moto Guzzi, Aprilla, MV Augusta, Ducati and Triumph, maybe some others. Had to wipe the drool from the corners of my mouth before saddling up for the next leg of the day's ride.

Back out on US19 and US129, I headed north over more very twisty mountain roads, back through Blairsville to US64 in North Carolina and then west. In a few miles I turned right onto 294 which took me northwest over Ghomley and Burger Mountains into Tennessee. Some of this route was canopied with trees. A very nice ride. Then I turned right again onto US 68 up into Tellico Plains. I was over 300 miles on that tank of gas so filled up in Tellico Plains before starting across the Cherohala Skyway to Robbinsville, NC.

There's not much to say about the Cherohala - other than the fact that it's **probably the most fun 46 mile ride you can find east of the Rockies** ! It starts and ends slow with car traffic on either end. But the middle 34 mile section that goes up onto the mountaintops is pure thrill. Lots of elevation changes and mostly sweeping turns. Dragging a foot peg at 65 mph is just an awesome experience - puts a really big grin on your face. Even with the balls of my feet on the pegs, I was chewing up the soles of my boots. If there's anything more exhilarating in the way of riding, I haven't found it. I was riding briskly (but not recklessly) and as smoothly as I could - just a pure blast!

Heard Thru the Grapevine:

OCTOBERFEST!

Don't forget the October Just For Fun Event: Oktoberfest!, organized by former State Director Phil Ridgill. It is scheduled for Oct 22-24. See all the details on the website events calendar!

PS: If you're going to the Oktoberfest event, please book online ASAP with your MSTA Choice Hotels Saving Card, ID: 00800151, 800 258 2847.

Also, we have Lee Park's Total Control motorcycle class coming up in November! This is a great opportunity for some valuable and fun training. See Van's monthly report column for more details!

Last but not least...Becky and I rode off to Vermont this past month, doing some demo work up there. Look for our ride story and photos in the November issue! - ed.

Remember:

Ride Safe!

At Robbinsville, rather than heading north to the *Dragon*, I elected to go south on US129 and then east on US19 to the Nantahala Outdoor Center along the Nantahala River. It's so nice and peaceful along the river. At the outdoor center, there are a couple bridges across to the north side. I walked over, bought a bottle of Gatorade and sat down on a bench near the cold water's edge and watched kids feed the ducks. It was a nice way to slow the heart rate while enjoying the scenery and the sound of water coursing over and around rocks.

The final leg of the day's ride was south and east on US28 to Franklin and then the few miles south on US441 back to Dillard. That particular stretch of 28, particularly just south of US19, is intense. You head right into the mountain where it twists and turns, rises and falls and twists some more. Tight stuff. Excellent route. The intensity diminishes as you near Franklin. This is one of my favorite roads.

(Ed's Note: I can vouch for this section of 28, between Hwy 74 and Franklin. It has some great twisties and almost NO traffic. If the pavement is dry, this is a great ride!)

Saturday evening it seemed like everyone was in a jovial and talkative mood. Libations were flowing and stories were flying. One fellow from Alabama had a black ST1300 with a home made trailer hooked onto it. He brought his Suzuki off-road bike to the rally on the trailer. Another guy had his new 2010 Ducati Multistrata 1200S there. Lots of ST's, BMW's, a few Triumphs and Goldwings. Bikes pretty much were parked two to a space, all around the hotel. Nice turnout.

On Sunday, once the fog lifted, I headed straight up US441 to Gatlinburg for pancakes at the Log Cabin restaurant on Airport Rd. The best around - they were delicious. I would have liked to come back over the mountain to Cherokee but it was a parking lot on the southbound side. So I headed east on US321 then southeast on the Foothills Parkway to I-40 and then got off on US276 which intersects US19 between Waynesville and Maggie Valley. That stretch of I-40 is really twisty and dangerous. I worked to avoid being trapped between the 6 foot tall concrete lane divider and semis on tight turns at 70 mph - not my idea of how to live a long life.

After filling up in Maggie, I caught the Blue Ridge Parkway west of Maggie and rode it over to Asheville. After my big day Saturday, I was in the mood to keep it down at the speed limit - which is not without a little challenge. I just thoroughly enjoyed the Parkway but by the time I got to the first Asheville exit it was mid-afternoon and I had had enough. I took back roads to Hendersonville, had a nice dinner and packed it in for the night.

On Monday, I took US25 down to Greenwood, South Carolina and then US221 to Wrens, Georgia. From there my GPS took over and I wound up on US1 coming into Jacksonville and then I-295 and I-95 home. Great mountain roads, great camaraderie, great rally, great weekend. Let's do it again next year.



The USA 4 Corners Tour

By Bill Royal

(We are used to Bill's marathon rides by now, but this one is a little different, as he and Larry Troutman decided to do an AMA-sanctioned distance ride this time around. - ed.

Also, we have included a couple of trip pics, but to see the entire gallery of trip photos, go to:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/106705246536041681721/USA4CornersTour?authkey=Gv1sRgCK6jyKO96b3mDg&feat=directlink>)

So here I go with yet another mega-mile trip in a month. I know they sound like a lot when you first hear or read about them but they don't seem nearly as hard when doing them. In fact, I have come to enjoy these trips the very most of all I do - just riding day after day and covering the miles. So sit back, relax and read what it was like - as best I can describe in words.

Background:

The [USA 4 Corners Tour](#) is an AMA sanctioned "Grand Tour" for 2010 and is hosted by the Southern California Motorcycle Assn (SCMA). The SCMA sets the rules for the ride, which essentially states that you have 21 days to visit all of the 4 designated corner points of the USA which is documented by mailing in a "corner sheet" and gas receipt in each corner city. The ride clock officially starts the date you mail the first corner sheet and finishes the date you mail the 4th corner sheet. Travel to the first corner and returning home from the last corner are not officially counted as part of the ride, but of course from a riders perspective they are. I got the idea to do this ride from my trusty riding buddy Larry, who completed it once before in 2005 (if I recall correctly). He's always up for putting on miles so decided to "tag along" though not certifying a second completion for himself.

East Coast:

We decided ahead of time to do the corners in the order of Key West FL to Madawaska ME to Blaine WA to San Ysidro CA. Since Larry and I were already in FL we left on a Thursday morning on a regular breakfast ride we do. After breakfast in Zolpho Springs FL, we headed down to Key West. We got our corner gas receipt and Southernmost marker photos and completed the paperwork in the hotel that evening. Our official adventure would start the following morning when we mailed the package and departed Key West which would be on Friday Sept. 3rd. The ride up the East Coast would primarily be Interstate, with a 2 day "layover" in PA to visit for the Labor Day holiday with Larry's family. The Southern leg out of Florida was hot bordering on unbearable, but we managed 560 miles the first day. The next day it was cooler, the traffic lighter, we started earlier and with a concerted effort to keep stops to under 30 min for lunch and under 10 for gas we rolled into Harrisburg PA 850 miles later at 7:51 PM. We would now have two full days to attend holiday parties before resuming the trip. On Tues the 7th we struck out again taking I-81 up to Scranton and then I-84 across NY and CT where we then took the Mass Pike to I-495 up to I-95 through NH and into ME. Another 570 miles out of the way - and \$6.10 in tolls. Wed the 8th we started out on I-95 and covered the 190 miles to Houlton ME in about 3 hours. From here we would be on secondary roads for a very large portion of the trip. As we worked our way up through Me the clouds built and by the time we were an hour or so away from Madawaska it started raining. Light at first, but building steadily such that by the time we got to Madawaska it was pouring down hard and steady. We got our fuel receipt, corner photo and got to the

post office to fill out the paperwork in the dry and get it in the mail. It was still raining when we left though as we headed out of town it was easing up a bit. We worked our way south on SR 11 which was a nice road which I later wished we had used to come up to Madawaska on. The rains let up completely, the road was practically deserted and there were few towns to work through. We ended up the night in Millinocket ME having covered another 456 miles.



Continuing after a break for the Labor Day holiday...

Across the North:

We Left Millinocket heading southwest on more of the same. It was sweet riding with nil traffic, mostly smooth roads and plenty of twists and turns to enjoy. We made great time for a while but then ran into a detour at the Kennebec River in Solon ME where we had to make about a 10 mile detour. It wasn't too delaying and the whole rest of the road west out of ME was fun and clear sailing. We crossed into NH just north of Errol where we stopped for a nice home-style lunch. We continued on through Dixville Notch and into Colebrook where the pace now began to slow as we encountered more and more towns, traffic, lights and slow speed limits. The further west we got the more tedious it became. When we crossed into NY at the top of Lake Champlain we'd had about enough yet we still had 165 miles to go for the days planned route of 521 miles. We finally rolled into Watertown NY at just a bit after 7:00 PM. The next days ride plans had us taking a short interstate hop down to Syracuse and then paralleling the NY Thruway on SR-20 until crossing over into Canada in Buffalo where it would then also be all 2 lane roads, but based on the previous days

experience we opted to ditch the SR-20 deal and stay on the interstate all the way to Buffalo. There we crossed into Canada at the Peace Bridge (\$3.00 toll). Canada was nice, the traffic light, but the national speed limit is 100kph which works out to 62 mph. To make matters worse, they only use that on their interstates which we were not on so much of our running was now averaging just 45 mph for 200 miles. We lost another 30 minutes waiting to filter through the border crossing back into the US at the St. Clair River (bottom of Lake Huron) in MI. It felt good to finally get back to interstate speeds on I-69 and then I-75 in Flint MI. We made our planned overnight in West Branch MI at 7:08 PM - another 12 hour day having covered 589 miles. This next day we would be crossing over the Mackinaw bridge into the UP of Michigan and then heading west across and through Wisconsin. But we had another concern. There was a weather front we would have to contend with. We really wanted to cross the "Mac" before the weather closed in so we got up early and left at 7:00 AM. We did make it up and across the Mac in good weather, but not too far west of that it started to cloud up, then sprinkle, then rain. Eventually we were riding in heavy rain for quite a time. Every now and then it would appear to let up raising our hopes that it would be done for the day only to return with a vengeance. We stopped for lunch in dripping wet outer clothes and continued the slog on after. It did eventually let up by the time we got to our next overnight destination - Superior, WI (just across the tip of Lake Superior from Duluth MN). We made 544 miles in mostly bad weather today. Tomorrow was a new day though and the weather more promising. We were off at 7:30 AM and now on US-2 it was all 2 lane from here to Washington. Grand Rapids and Grand Forks came and went and before we knew it we were in Minot ND looking for a room. 484 miles in just 10 hours, it was a good day. Our first choice of hotels was already full as was the next choice. Our third choice worked out but based on this we were calling ahead to our next nights planned stop to be sure. Good thing too. Shelby MT was the plan, but there was just a couple of hotels there and our planned one was already booked! They said it was Oil exploration, construction workers and a film crew hogging up all the rooms. After further review, several phone calls and map consultations we ended up with a reservation in Browning MT - about 50 miles further west than planned but at least we wouldn't be out in the street. That made for a 588 mile day but it was relatively easy up here. Most of the time we were just 10 miles south of the CA border and the 2-lane here rolled more like an interstate. Towns were few and far between which meant we did have to watch our fuel situation closely but it all worked out well and even the weather cooperated. Tomorrow's plan was to make the East entrance of Glacier National Park and take the Going to the Sun road through and over Logan Pass. The weather reports looked promising. Well, dawn broke enthusiastic until we opened the door to a heavy dense fog and drizzle. We decided to have a leisurely breakfast to see if it might begin to clear. It didn't. We mounted up and started for the East Entrance but just a few miles out of town I decided that it just wasn't worth paying an entrance fee to ride on a park road where we wouldn't see anything, provided we managed to even stay on the road that is. So I decided we would skirt south around the park on US-2 and the further south and west we went the better the weather got. Oh and the road itself was SWEET - smooth, twisty, elevation changes and plenty of passing opportunities for getting by the occasional slow moving travel trailer. By the time we were at the southern-most edge of the park the sun was out, the rain gone and the temps were even coming up. When we got the western entrance of the park we stopped for gas and assessed. We decided to ride into West entrance and see how far we would get. It was absolutely gorgeous and spectacular as we rode east into the park. We actually rode all the way into the park and to the top at Logan's Pass (some 30 miles) before we encountered the cold, damp and foggy conditions we'd seen in the morning. We turned around here and headed back out the west gate of the park. Now, there was quite a bit of traffic by this time and the road was under construction in a few places so the pace was not too much above snail so by the time we reached the west entrance again it was now 2:00 PM. It was going to be a late day. We still needed to make 345 miles for our overnight planned stop. The road was more of that sweet riding we'd had earlier coming around the park though. By the time we made Spokane WA it was nearing dusk and our hotel was still some 70 miles west in Wilbur WA. If we were smarter we would have opted to find a hotel in Spokane, but we didn't. We endured

some riding directly into the setting sun which made it all but impossible to see road signs, let alone traffic lights. Then when the sun fully set along with the dark came a heavy and fast developing fog in the endless fields through which we were headed. At times like these there is a certain mix of feelings - fear of hitting a deer, hope that you don't, optimism that you "only" have to make 30 miles... We did run at the speed limit for a while but the closer we got the more we wanted to make the destination. We bumped it up by 6-7 mph and we were just 3.5 miles from the hotel when I crested a small hill and blew by a rather large deer which was just standing in the opposing lane as I sailed by. It was facing away from me so that was a momentary relief as I felt if it did jump it wouldn't be in front of me. I radioed to Larry "DEER" - to which he responded "What?". By then he was already by and I clarified by asking if he saw the deer. He did not, so it had to have jumped off into the field as he couldn't have possibly missed seeing it if it was still there. Later when discussing it he said to me all he was thinking about as we were trying to make the hotel was Larry Grodsky. We would NOT make that mistake on this trip again. The next morning we headed out to make a planned stop to take in the Grand Coulee Dam. The only problem was that it was so close that when we got there the visitor's center wasn't yet open. Doh! We stopped and got some photos anyway and then headed on up the road. We were now on US-20 which turns into a Scenic Byway as it winds up through the North Cascades National Park. We made a lunch stop in an old west like town called Winthrop. Then the ride through the Cascades was OMG stunning. The scenic views were awesome and the ride up and down the mountains was every bit as much fun as you can have at "the Gap" only better 'cause the speed limits are higher, there is less traffic and even less enforcement (at least on this day). We enjoyed it while it lasted though as soon we would return to Interstate on I_5 to make the final approach into Blaine WA. We rolled in there at around 2:00 PM local time. We were flabbergasted when we got to the gas station - \$3.54/gallon! But it is what it is so we got it and the receipt and got to the PO for the picture and mailing and soon were on the road again, now southbound on our final leg to the finish. The weather had been decent so far and it remained so until we got back south on I-5 to where we had gotten on earlier. From there it began to deteriorate and by the time we got to the outskirts of Seattle it was raining - again... To add insult to injury, it was rush hour in Seattle-Tacoma. So there we are in stop and go traffic and pouring down rain slogging it out the last 60 miles of the day - which "only" took us 1:45 minutes to make (for an avg speed of 35 mph) - and that was WITH the blessing of being able to use the HOV lanes which were definitely moving better than the rest of the interstate. We overnighed in Tacoma on the southern side of town. 449 miles total for the day.



Somewhere in the Northwest...Larry taking a picture...of Bill taking a picture...of something.



West Coast:

We had yet another big day planned that included visiting Crater Lake and picking up a certain Freddie the Frog who had been patiently waiting for over 80 days for a ride. It would be interstate (I-5) down through Portland, thankfully getting there late enough to miss the rush hour, then onto more 2-lane on US-26 and then 97 to Redmond WA (Home of Microsoft) and then on US-97 down into Crater Lake. At least the weather was nice again. Coolish, but not raining. We got on into Crater Lake Park, got some pictures but really didn't have a lot of time for exploring. We headed on out around the western side of the lake and then out the western entrance. Once we got by a few pokey travel trailers it was clear sailing and more huge-grin inducing riding along the twisty park road. Only worries were deer and park rangers neither of which we saw. 50 more miles down the road we stopped to find Freddie the Frog. He was very well hidden but with a phone call to Jim Park we did manage to find and retrieve him and on down to just shy of Medford OR we made it. 479 miles for the day. From here we would have a short (20 mile) hop on I-5 over to Grants Pass and then the real fun would start. That would be the start of the Redwoods Highway, our gateway to California and eventually the Pacific Coast Highway. The next morning we were off and everything went as planned. We were tooling down the Redwoods Highway when we blew past an exit sign that said "Avenue of the Giants". I was pretty sure that was where we needed to go to really see the giant trees so we quickly made a u-turn and got on it. I can't possibly even begin to describe the awesomeness of nature when you see these living organisms that are so huge and have been here so long. You NEED to see them in person and for yourself. We rode some 20 miles or so before returning to the CA-199 route that is called the Redwoods Highway. Eventually that would merge with US-101 as we headed yet further south and through the multiple parks with giant redwoods in them Eventually we arrived at an exit that said "To Hwy 1" and we took that. All I can say is that if you've ever ridden "The Dragon" it barely holds a candle to MANY of the roads we were to ride in the coming days in California. Taking Hwy 1 from 101 at Legget, west to the coast, then south along the coastline to Fort Bragg and then CA-20 from Fort Bragg eastward to Willits was 78 miles of motorcycle riding nirvana that if I were to describe what a motorcyclist's road in heaven would be - this was it. No wonder those CA riders never come east ;-) Why did we cut back east to Willits instead of staying on Hwy 1 - Well, the coastal weather is very - variable. We had spots of clear views, but so too thick fog. Further, south of Fort Bragg it gets real sparse - meaning few to no hotel chains and only hoity-toity B&B's at \$150 a night and up. For certain the coast would be foggy in the morning and the weather forecast looked like it might even be worse than that so we elected to overnight back off the shore a bit in Cloverdale, CA on US-101. We still made 416 miles today. Turned out to be a good decision weather and route wise. Had we remained on the coast we most certainly would have been riding in heavy fog. As it was on 101 it was cloudy and cool as we headed out and the further south we went to colder, darker and wetter it became. By the time we were crossing the Golden Gate Bridge - it was raining and I am only sure we crossed the Golden Gate because I have a \$6.50 toll receipt to prove it. It continued to rain as we made our way through San Francisco, but eventually and slowly began clearing as we got down by Pacifica. Here we got back on Hwy 1 - Which curiously had signs calling it the "Cabrillo Hwy" as opposed to what I thought it was - the "Pacific Coast Hwy" Still need to research that. We continued south along the coast, having to increasingly deal with slow moving travel vans and trailers. CA has a law that is posted VERY frequently that says "Slower vehicles use turnouts" - the idea being not to hold up traffic. It works pretty well when they do it which, it turns out, is maybe 50% of the time. The rest of the time you have to live with it until you find a safe (though not necessarily legal) place to pass. And it's not just the RV'ers, many of the cars don't like to pull over either. I suppose some consider slower traffic only to mean someone going less than the speed limit on the straights which most will do, but then have to slow way down for the turns. Then there are those who clearly know they are holding you up and attempt to maintain as high a speed as they possible can, often at the expense of crossing the centerline, and/or the edge of the road until they either have a scary close call or

finally tire of it before finally letting you by. We had one driver reviewing his passengers video as he drove while attempting not to let us pass. That lasted for some 10 miles or more before we finally had an opportunity to dust him. At any rate all this slow-poke play, along with some sections of the road under construction due to landslides and only open for one lane left us once again making slower time than planned. As a result when we got down to Pismo Beach we opted to get back onto US-101 bypassing Guadalupe and Lompoc and an exit that said "Pacific Coast Highway"... !01 did return us to the coastline at the Gaviota State Park, about 20 miles from Santa Barbara which is where we ultimately overnighed after trying at least 10 hotels all of which were full. 443 miles and lots of fun riding again today. The next day was Sunday. We had two routes to get to San Ysidro - one skirting around LA and snagging two famous riding roads - Angels Crest Highway and Ortega Highway taking 5+ hours to cover 335 miles and the other cutting right through LA but taking only 3 hours to cover 225 miles. Had it worked out to be a weekday we certainly would have opted for the longer route. But, having read about Angels Crest and Ortega being very much like Deals Gap on the weekends - crowded and loaded with squids and this being a Sunday so traffic through LA was sure to be as light as it ever gets it was a tough call. We had ridden so much twisty roads over the last few weeks we felt secure in passing on the twisties in favor of getting in and then back out of San Ysidro and out of the San Diego area before Monday's rush. We were posing for pictures in San Ysidro by 2:00 PM local time. After photos, paperwork, post office and a quick lunch we were back on the road, now towards home.



The Southwest Corner of the Tour...

Homebound:

We booked out on I-805 north to I-8 and headed east. All was good, weather nice and making nice time and then we approached Alpine. Here the road climbs from sea level to some 4000 feet. As we climbed it began to get warmer and warmer. By the time we got to the pass it was hot. About 10 miles from the top of the pass, the road gets very close to the Mexican border. Shortly after that there is a border patrol checkpoint. That means every vehicle is stopped and the drivers questioned by the border patrol. If the like your answers/looks/demeanor/whatever you're on your way again. If not, you get pulled aside for a more thorough inspection. By the time we hit that checkpoint it was getting REALLY HOT. I was thinking to myself - did Larry expect this? and if so what had he not warned me? Well, we got through the checkpoint (the first of 3 or 4 we would have to endure) after maybe a total of 10 minutes of waiting in line and I radioed him for a temp to which he replied 101 degrees - and climbing! We got to a section of the road where it was now steeply descending into a rocky sided valley and the rocks were throwing off heat like a blast furnace. At this point we were 100 miles from Yuma AZ which is where we finally called it a night. We rolled further along and finally stopped for an ice cream cone at a McDonalds in El Centro. I needed to replenish my cooler with a fresh bag of ice and we both soaked our shirts before continuing. When we rolled into Yuma, it was 4:00 PM local time and the temp was 113 degrees! That night the news reported that was a new record, breaking the previous record from 1964 by 5 degrees. We walked across the street from our hotel to a Burger King for dinner and didn't see anyone else waking around town. Total miles for today 426, our 2nd shortest mileage day of the trip. At this point we've done the 4 Corners and the rest is just getting home. We broke the remaining miles into four days. We made 516 miles from Yuma to Las Cruces, then next day we made 602 miles to San Antonio. The next day was 644 miles to Mobile, AL and somewhere along the way Freddie the Frog was returned to the wild and awaits a new ride. We finished off with a classic 550 mile day from Mobile to Tampa.

Stats for the trip:

Total Miles from 1st checkpoint to last by GPS: 7670.9

Calendar Days: 17 Riding Days: 15

Total miles from 1st checkpoint to last by Odo: 7791.0

Total miles of trip from Home to Home : 10,549

Calendar Days: 22 Riding Days 20

Fuel: Total Gals - 229.617 Cost: \$641.61 Avg MPG 45.945

Daily Stats:

Description	Start Date/Time	Elapsed Time	Distance	Avg. Speed
USA 4 Corners Tour D00	9/2/2010 7:31	10:21:55	381	37 mph

USA 4 Corners Tour D01	9/3/2010 7:16	10:45:30	559	52 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D02	9/4/2010 6:36	13:15:08	847	64 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D03	9/7/2010 7:33	10:32:35	570	54 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D04	9/8/2010 7:13	9:46:46	456	47 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D05	9/9/2010 6:59	12:00:35	521	43 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D06	9/10/2010 7:15	11:52:37	589	50 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D07	9/11/2010 7:04	10:49:08	544	50 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D08	9/12/2010 7:32	10:01:16	484	48 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D09	9/13/2010 8:08	10:39:03	588	55 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D10	9/14/2010 10:25	12:25:50	481	39 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D11	9/15/2010 10:22	10:32:03	449	43 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D12	9/16/2010 10:28	10:31:07	479	46 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D13	9/17/2010 10:10	9:55:06	416	42 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D14	9/18/2010 10:01	10:14:47	443	43 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D15	9/19/2010 10:05	4:47:42	239	50 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D15a	9/19/2010 14:52	3:57:57	187	47 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D16	9/20/2010 8:29	9:59:57	516	52 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D17	9/21/2010 8:12	10:18:56	602	58 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D18	9/22/2010 7:23	11:41:40	644	55 mph
USA 4 Corners Tour D19	9/23/2010 7:55	8:54:17	550	62 mph

Florida News

North Director's Report

Ed's Note: Since Bill has been out on his 4 Corners tour this past month, Van has filled in all the pertinent details below...

South Director's Report

Happy Fall One and All!! I know, I know. We won't see 70 degree highs for two more months. But, attitude is everything, so keep thinking cool thoughts! In the mean time, get up early and go ride while it is cool enough to truly enjoy our favorite hobby.

Let's start with a brief report about the Central Brunch ride to Mojo's on Sept. 11. Only three members made it!! One lives in Lakeland, and did his usual 70 mile run to get 8 miles from home to restaurant! The other two were from Boynton Beach, which is over 300 miles round trip!! Where were the rest of you? Besides missing a GREAT breakfast, the dealership right next door have nearly every lust-worthy bike on the sales floor, ready for a test-sitting!

Fortunately, the South Brunch ride was well attended. We went to the Sebring Diner for great breakfast goodies, and lots of conversation. New members, Roger and Vickie from Port Charlotte, made their way on their own. Denis and Dorothy enjoyed a ride over from their Okeechobee base. Bill decided that 10,000 miles in three weeks wasn't quite enough, so after unloading the bike on Thursday, giving it a much needed bath on Friday, he rode over to join us on Saturday! Five of the Real Men made it from the East Coast, though one made it a two day trip so he could join his Mom for her 86th birthday. Way to go Mom!! And then there was Bob, our lonely member in the middle of the state. We really need to get another member or two for him to play with!! Seriously, if you know any riders who live within 50 miles of Lakeland, contact them and sign them up!!! Or drop Bob Shields an email (he's in the Blue Book!) and let him contact them. Believe me, he is blast to ride with!!

We choose this location for several reasons. The best one is for the roads that are in the vicinity! For the Real Men, our ride home, courtesy of local knowledge guru Jim Park, had us twisting and rocking most of the way home. Certainly gave Dennis, George, Buck and myself some smiles for miles!

Also this month, some of our members made their way to SE Star in Dillard, GA. I haven't heard from them, so I can only assume that all went well. At least the weather was MUCH better than last year. They received up to 15-20 inches of rain over the 3-5 days around the event! Look for a full report in the upcoming STARreview.

Here's what coming up in October. The weather is definitely getting better, so there's no excuse not to be out riding. We have two LUNCH rides scheduled. Yes, we're back to lunch times, so there's more time to ride without leaving in pitch-dark-thirty! 10/9 Central Lunch

ride is to Stumpknockers. Close for the West coasters. I've heard great things about this place, and it's a new place for us. 10/16 South Lunch ride is to Nav-a-gater, an oldie but goodie! We have always had a great time here. Look for all the details for these places on the FL MSTA website. They are posted in the Events calendar, well in advance for planning and ride coordination. We also get them posted to the National website so that non-members can discover our goings-on as well.

Also in October, we have a Just For Fun event, Octoberfest!, organized by past State Director Phil Ridgdill. Make sure to check this out!! It's scheduled for 10/22-10/24. Places to eat have been selected, lunch destinations established, and a great route is planned for Saturday's ride. Please know this, this event is a terrific way to get to know and ride some roads in an area that might be unfamiliar to you. You can do so at your own pace, with whomever you wish, for however long you want, and have no obligations other than to have fun and thank Phil for his efforts before you head home on Sunday. ALL the info for this event is also on our events calendar, and elsewhere in this issue. Please note, reserve your rooms using the MSTA membership hotel benefit SOS card for your best deal.

Looking forward to November, we have lunch rides planned, and the Lee Park's Total Control Seminar. As of now, we only have two members signed up for this great learning experience. If we have six MSTA members sign up for this program, we all receive additional discounts!! Of course, more than six would be even better! I know there has to be at least six of us who think our riding abilities could stand a little improvement! If you haven't participated in a rider skills development program in the last two years, you are overdue for a tune-up. Please check back to the August Newsletter for a thorough run down of the programs and discounts that are available.

One last note. Several members have been brain-storming about how to make our lunch/brunch rides more appealing to more of the membership. Some ideas range from tying in a local attraction to a lunch destination; choosing a State Park/County Park for a place to bring our own lunches and enjoying the scenery; scheduling some shorter rides to destinations closer to urban settings, as 150-300 mile lunch rides may not be for everybody. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Please email Bill Royal or myself with some of your ideas. We are looking to schedule the rides for the upcoming year very soon, so don't hesitate, don't be shy, and send your ideas. Our contact info is at the end of the newsletter.

ATGATT!! Van

Florida Rides This Month

October 9, Saturday - MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride, 12pm - 1pm, Stumpknockers Restaurant, 13821 SW Highway 200, Dunnellon, FL 34432. This is a new place, ideal for the West and Central members alike. Please note we are back to LUNCH rides as of this month. For more details go to the FL MSTA website at <http://www.flahsta.org/>

October 16, Saturday - MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride, 9am-10am, Nav-A-Gator Grill, 9700 SW Riverview Circle, Lake Suzy, FL. This is an old stand-by, and for good reason! We moved this ride to October due to its distance from just about anywhere... For more details go to the FL MSTA website at <http://www.flahsta.org/>

For additional Florida events, including OCTOBERFEST, [click here](#) to see Florida MSTA web site Events page.

MSTA web site information on "Just For Fun Events": [click here](#).

National MSTA www.ridemsta.com

Florida MSTA www.flahsta.org

Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

Click on the words above and you will go to a mystery URL that should be of interest. If you know of a site you think the members might like, let us know!

CLASSIFIED ADS

BIKES FOR SALE

2004 Silver VTX1300C, all stock, 128k miles, all services performed at the scheduled times. Runs strong, ready to roll. \$2000.00 Call 813-335-3147, or 813-633-8155, email: eblueday@mindspring.com

GEAR FOR SALE

No Gear for sale this month! Folks, if you are looking for a way to clean out that pile of excess motorcycle "stuff" in your garage (we all have some), please let the Newsletter Editor know!

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