

BMWNEF

winter rally

2026

Florida's coolest rally

Camp Weed January 16-18 2026

11057 Camp Weed Place - Live Oak - Florida - 32060



BMWNEF.org

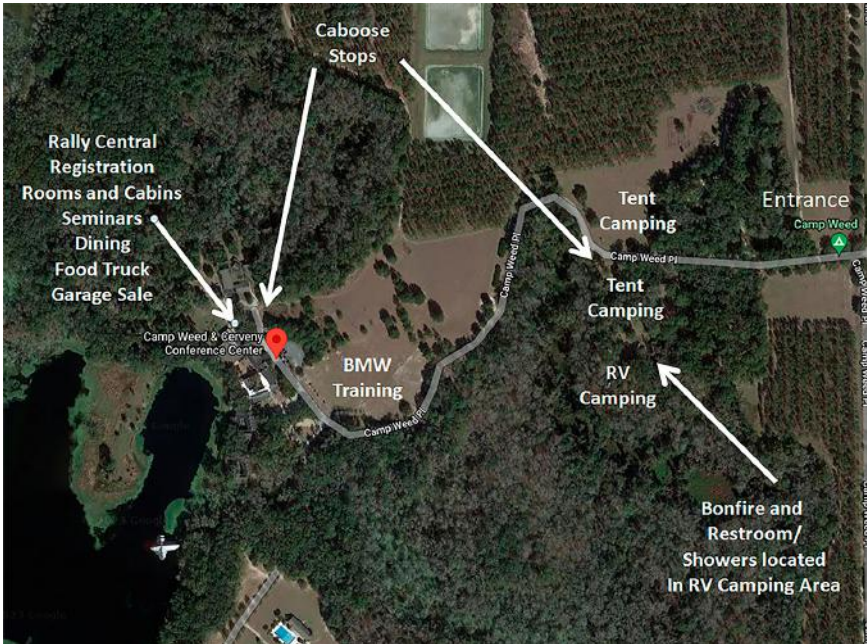


WELCOME

BMWNEF Winter Rally

We are very happy you decided to join us.

Camp Weed Rally Location Map



Tory Hamlin
ALLSTATE INSURANCE

Visit My
Rally Booth

See How You
Can Save On
Insurance

On The Cover

Fall colors near the entrance of Cheaha State Park in Talladega Nat'l Forest

Meal Schedule & Menu

Saturday Breakfast

8:00 AM - Dining Hall

Eggs	Milk	Hot Tea
Bacon	Orange Juice	Lemonade
Sausage	Un-sweet Tea	Coffee
Fresh Cut Mixed Fruit	Sweet Tea	

Friday & Saturday Lunch

11:00 AM - Rally Central Parking Lot



Friday Dinner

6:00 PM - Dining Hall

Salad Bar	Assorted Deserts
Brats With:	Unsweet Tea
Onions/	Sweet Tea
Peppers,	Hot Tea
Sauerkraut	Lemonade
Green Beans	Coffee
Rolls	

Saturday Dinner

6:00 PM - Dining Hall

Salad Bar	Unsweet Tea
Pulled Chicken	Sweet Tea
Pulled Pork	Hot Tea
Baked Beans	Lemonade
Cole Slaw	Coffee
Potato Salad	
Rolls	
BMWNEF Cake	



**Don't Forget To Attend The
SkyMed Breakfast Presentation
In The Dining Hall**

Saturday Morning - 8:00AM

Attendees Receive Lunch Voucher

Seminar Schedule

Friday

- 11:30 AM - Sgt. Thomas - FHP
12:15 PM - Rider Safety
(Seminar Room)

- 1:00 PM - Davis Hart
1:45 PM - Crash Scene - What To Do
(Seminar Room)

- 2:00 PM - Ron Torres
2:45 PM - Riding in Retirement
(Seminar Room)

- 3:00 PM - Tom Nagle
4:30 PM - Adventure Bike Setup
(Courtyard)

- Following - Tami Bakke
Dinner - All Women Southeast BDR
(Dining Hall)

- Following - Tom Nagle
Tami Bakke - Mid-Atlantic BDR &
Intro To Auto-Train
(Dining Hall)
-



**Enter To Win
2026 Season
2-Night Cabin Rental**

Saturday

- 8:00 AM - Taylor Paloscio - SkyMed
8:45 AM - Medical Transport Service
(Dining Hall) (Breakfast)
Attendees Get Lunch Voucher

- 9:15 AM - Brent Durfee
10:00 AM - Dunlop Motorcycle Tires
Tire Selection, Care &
Maintenance
(Seminar Room)

- 10:15 AM - Sebastian De Almenara
11:00 AM - Andean X Tours
(Seminar Room)

- 11:15 AM - Greg Rice
12:00 PM - Riding In Mexico
w/Asphalt Rats
(Seminar Room)

- 1:00 PM - Knut Wagner - Helite
1:45 PM - Helite Air Vest Systems
Electronic or manual / vest
or jacket. Pros and cons
(Seminar Room)

- 2:00 PM - Davis Hart
2:45 PM - Crash Scene - What To Do
(Seminar Room)

- 3:00 PM - Taylor Paloscio - SkyMed
3:45 PM - Medical Transport Service
(Dining Hall)
Gift Card Raffle Drawing

- 4:00 PM - Lenny Ovrutsky
4:45 PM - MyRoute-App
Route Planning
(Seminar Room)

- Following - Paul Pelland (Keynote)
Dinner - Million Miles For MS
(Dining Hall)

Event Schedule

Off-road Skills Training Friday & Saturday



SEE PAGE 8 FOR MORE INFO &
REGISTRATION LINK

Led Ride Friday

09:00 AM - Mr. Chick

Leader: Doug Bakke

Meetup: Rally Central Parking

Details: Route Info Link Pg 46

Door Prize Drawing Saturday

There will be a single door prize drawing for all prizes. The drawing will take place Saturday afternoon in the garage sale room. Winning numbers for each of the door prizes will be displayed, on a white board, in the garage sale room.

**Door Prize Winners Are
Required to collect their prizes
before 5:00PM Saturday.**



AirHeads

The Airheads will once again be attending, and hosting several activities at the Winter Rally. They will again be setup in the campground / RV area.



Schedule To Be Posted At Camping Area Pavillion & Rally Central

See Page 30 For Airhead Event Details



Visit Our Booth At The Rally

Attend Our Seminar
Tire Selection, Care & Maintenance
Saturday @ 9:15AM

Drawing To Win A
Set of Motorcycle Tires





2026 Winter Rally Program *Florida's Coolest Rally*

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BMW Motorcycle Club of Northeast Florida

Winter Rally Committee

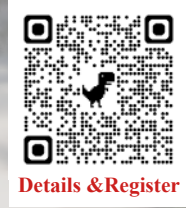
Chris Terajewicz - Rally Chair
John Bruggeman - Co-Chair, Ads & Marketing
Jim Allen - Co-Chair, Facility, Tickets, Web Site
Bill Botkin - Vendors, Sponsors
Chip Kenyon - Door Prizes
Larry Meeker - Cmpgrnd Pavillion, Airheads
Larry Dengler - Video, Refreshments
Tom Nolan - Garage Sale
Chris Terajewicz - Seminars

Officers

President: John Bruggeman
Vice Pres: Chris Terajewicz
Secretary: Jim Allen
Treasurer: Myron Beachy
Past Pres.: Chip Kenyon
Director: Larry Meeker
Director: Tom Nolan
Ride Capt: Lenny Ovrutsky
Videographer: Larry Dengler



DC DIRT CAMP



Details & Register

Adventure Bike Off-Road Training At The Rally

Training Provided By DC Dirt Camp

Classes Friday & Saturday

13 Riders Maximum Per Class

Bring Your Own Bike

You Must Register Separately With DC Dirt Camp

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JACKSONVILLE**

\$50 Gift Card
Offered To The
First 20 Registrants

BMW MOA FOUNDATION

Training Support
Funds Apply
Inquire At Our
Rally Booth



Look Who's Talking



Paul Pelland

**Long Haul Paul
Million Miles For MS**

After being diagnosed with MS, Paul was once told. *“The cure for MS is a million miles away”*. In true *“Hold My Beer”* fashion, Paul decided to just go get it and bring it back. Thus began his mission of riding a million documented miles for MS. Educating, Motivating, Inspiring, and Fund Raising every mile along the way. He will once again make the Winter Rally part of his journey. Let's hope that, unlike last time, he doesn't have to ride home in a blizzard.

Tami Bakke

BMW MOA Foundation Chair

In April 2025, Tami Bakke and a group of friends set out to be the first all-women group of riders to complete the South East Backcountry Discovery Route – a ten-day, 1300 mile, journey from Navarre, Florida, to Damascus, Virginia. A motorcyclist since 2016 and an adventure rider since 2021, this would be Tami's first BDR.

Seven women came together from three states to complete this life-changing journey on three brands of motorcycles – BMW, KTM, and Harley-Davidson. In Tami's presentation, she'll share the story of this journey from planning and execution to lessons learned.

Tami is the Chair of the BMW MOA Foundation and a vocal advocate for rider skills, education, and training. She enjoys testing the limits of her 2015 BMW 1200 GS on and off pavement and has recently added a 2025 BMW 1300 GS to the



Tami on the Southeast BDR

family. Follow Tami on Facebook and Instagram: [@TamiBakke](#) and [@bumble-ee_and_blip](#) and learn more about the BMW MOA Foundation and rider training grants at bmwmoaf.org.



Sebastian De Almenara
Andean X - Peru & Latin America Tours

After 40+ years riding around the world, Sebastian has found his true calling in his childhood backyard, the Andes of Peru — rider’s paradise of dramatic landscapes, ancient history, and warm hospitality. Sebastian will share his expertise, insider tips, and inspiring stories to help American riders plan and experience their own unforgettable adventure through the heart of Peru.



Brent Durfee
Dunlop Motorcycle Tires

Brent has worked in the motorcycle industry for 40 years and has spent the last 29 years at Dunlop Motorcycle Tires. His current position is Field Training Manager and his presentation will be applicable to all tire brands, even if you are currently not riding on Dunlop.



Davis Hart
Crash Scene - What To Do

Davis’ motorcycling journey started early, led to motorcycle sales after high school, and enabled him to see the country, like most of us, on two wheels. Davis has since added holistic health-care, combining medicine and faith, by working his way from ambulance service, to paramedic, to APRN in Primary Care.



Tom Nagel - Motowayz
Southeast Backcountry Discovery Routes (BDR)

Tom is a certified trainer with 37+ years of touring, off-road racing and training experience. He is also a BDR Ambassador and MotoQuest Guide. Tom returns again this year for another presentation of the opportunities and challenges offered by the many BDR routes across the country.



Lenny Ovrutsky
MyRoute-App

As the current BMW Motorcycle Club of Northeast Florida Ride Captain, Lenny invests a great deal of time and effort planning interesting ride routes on which he leads club members. To make the process of creating, organizing, and sharing his routes as easy and efficient as possible, Lenny uses MyRoute-App. Lenny will discuss the methods and tools he uses to create his rides.



Taylor Paloscio Leeman & Travis Leeman SkyMed Medical Transportation Services

SkyMed is the premier emergency medical transportation company that has you protected at home and while traveling. SkyMed is the ONLY company in the industry that guarantees to take you home by “choice of the member.” We are also the only company that offers the primary driver (rider) disability service. We cover ground ambulance, helicopter ambulance and fixed-wing medical jet. We get you home, your companion and your motorcycle too! See you Saturday morning 8AM or 3PM in the Dining Hall.



Greg Rice Riding In Mexico - w/Asphalt Rats - Mexico Iron Butt

Greg’s riding resume’ is far too extensive to cover here. It would more than fill this entire publication. You can visit his website at <https://gregrice.com> to learn more about his rides, motorcycles and much more. During his presentation, Greg will cover riding in Mexico in general and together with the Asphalt Rats Endurance Riders - Mexico’s Iron Butt Association.



Sgt. Thomas - FHP Motor Officer Staying Safe While Riding The Roads of Florida

Sgt. Thomas will once again share his valuable insights and lessons learned during his many years patrolling the highways of Florida. His seminars are very interesting and informative. Attendees always walk away armed with a better understanding of environment they ride in and ways to keep themselves safe.



Ron Torres Riding In Retirement

My mission is crystal clear: to ride easier and longer than ever! I’m harnessing the power of awesome techniques and cutting-edge technology to conquer the realities of the senior rider lifestyle. I absolutely love sharing my experience, my best tips, and my total life hacks with our community. My purposeful intention is to help you keep that kickstand up and ride longer in life, too!



Knut Wagner Helite Air Vest Systems

Knut will present the various air vests and jackets Helite offers, the technology behind their design and their functionality. Attendees will be able to get answers to questions about their use, care, maintenance, air travel with vest cylinders, charging inertial systems and accidental discharge of lanyard systems.



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- OR -
Attend Our Seminar 10:15am Saturday To Learn More
\$800 Trip Voucher Prize Drawing



Be Sure To
Visit Our
Rally Booth
Located In
The Dining
Hall



helmethead.net



**HELMET
HEAD**
HELMET HOLDERS



**Enter To Win
2026 Season 2-Night Cabin Stay**

Winter Rally Vendor Booth Map

Camp Weed Dining Hall



Door	Stage				Door
	86ft by 58ft				SkyMed
					MOA T BAKKE
	Doors on either side of the stage 15 ft				S Wishard
					Dunlop
	Doors opposite end 7ft				Helmet Head
	Squares 10x10				Andean X
Door	Allstate	Big Ears	Micheal Feldbauer	BMW Motorcycles of Jacksonville	Helite

MY 3R^S of Moto

photos by Steve Wishard

Rally



R is for Rally. I typically average 25K 2-wheeled miles per year. At least that has been the case for most of the past decade. However, the past 18 months has seen a significant reduction in miles ridden.

There were several factors affecting my riding, not the least of which, was supporting my wife's recovery from multiple knee surgeries. Pickleball, a sport I'm certain was created by an orthopedic surgeon. Anyway, she is all good now and back on the courts. Although a little less aggressively.

So, as the 2025 riding season arrived, I was largely obligation free, well rested, and ready to get back on the bikes. My return to frequent riding, however, would be undertaken with significant changes.

Big miles had been my approach, with occasional 1000-1500 mile days. When not traveling, my neighbor and I averaged 2000 miles a month doing lunch rides. That will rarely be the case going forward. Been There - Done That.

No, I decided that I would focus on the rally scene for the foreseeable future.

Admittedly, the fact that the MOA Rally was in Tennessee & the RA Rally was in Ohio made the decision a lot easier. But I would have made the change regardless.

I've attended rallies over the years, but I would typically drop in for a half day and then hit the road. Usually I have one or more rides planned in the area. I also enjoy meeting other club members for the "on the road dinner". But generally they would be non-stop rides there & back, separated by some local rides.

I haven't completely given up my old ways. I trailered my G310 GS straight

through, to & from, the BMWRA rally. Then did the Hocking Hills ride. However, I spent the majority of the day at the rally and attended 2 interesting seminars. I also spent several hours talking to friends and acquaintances. Not a complete change, but a change none the less. I had a great time and look forward to participating more in future rallies.

I should also mention that I recently volunteered photography services to the BMW MOA Foundation. The professional training sessions offered to rally attendees are perfect for getting the shots I need.





Ride



R is for Ride. Since BMWNEF is my home BMW club (I belong to several), I don't participate in the riding opportunities offered at the Winter Rally. Frankly, I created a lot of the routes. Plus, I'm usually working on gathering content & ideas for the next year's rally program.

The Georgia Mountain Rally (GMR)

is where my rally riding really begins. I have a good friend, who I rode with for many years in Florida, who moved to Hayesville, NC. Only 12 miles from

the GMR location. Several of us guys from the old Jacksonville group have been going up and riding with him each year.

This year I thought it would be a good idea to tie the two trips together. So I rounded up the guys and brought them to the GMR.

We stayed for the week and rode with our local friend.

Unfortunately, it often rains during the GMR and this year was certainly no exception. We had horizontal rain several evenings during our stay. On the bright side, the GMR attendees, and the group I brought

along, are undeterred by challenges along the way. Weather or otherwise. So we got in several rides.

Due to the frequently changing weather, we stayed pretty much with the old favorites. Cherokee Skyway, SixGap, Maggie Valley (another rally was there), Helen, Brasstown Bald, etc. It was familiar to all but one of us. My next door neighbor, a Maine snowbird, had never ridden the Blue Ridge Mountains. After the first couple of rides I told him I would need to add telescopic mirrors to make sure he was still with us. But by the 3rd or 4th day he was hanging in nicely.

This year's BMWMOA National Rally

was held in Lebanon TN. Beyond attending the rally, I set out with an objective of getting a number of photos for the MOA Foundation. There were multiple training sessions being offered. Street, off-road, and authority. So, I could get a nice collection of shots.

I wanted to make sure I got the photos I needed so I only planned a couple of rides. Natchez Trace, south from Nashville to about the Alabama state line. And, the Cumberland Plateau loop. My wife had joined me for the trip so I trailered the K1600 GTL to the rally. In the end, we rode roughly half of the planned Natchez Trace ride. Severe thunderstorms in the area forced us to cut our riding short. However, the riding we were able to do made us commit to return with friends.

One final note on the rally visit. There was an excursion to Grand Ole Opry. I had already gotten tickets and parking before I learned the rally was offering a group trip. It was a great show. Another must repeat.



The BMWRA National Rally was held in Athens, OH. As I mentioned earlier, I trailered my G310 GS. Once again, I had a very specific objective at the rally. So I only planned one ride. The Hocking Hills Nipper. A brief bit of research prior to my departure led me to believe it would be the most scenic of the Windy 9 routes. I don't know about the other 8. I'll return one day and find out. However, Hocking Hills Nipper didn't disappoint.

The images on this 2-page spread, and the previous 2-page spread, are from the

RA Rally ride. The turns, both sweeping and sharp, the elevation changes, both significant and rapid, and the roadside scenery, both structures and nature, made the 96 mile, 2 hour, Hocking Hills Nipper, a great riding experience. The sections in Wayne National Forest and Hocking Hills State Park contribute significantly to the beauty of this route.

Back at the rally, both before and after my ride, and between conversations with friends, I got down to my objective. That is where the 3rd "R" comes into play.




BRIDGE
WEIGHT
LIMIT
5
TONS

MR7388

A close-up, high-angle photograph of a complex mechanical assembly, possibly a typewriter or a similar vintage machine. The image is heavily tinted with a cool blue color. The focus is on a central component that looks like a carriage or a frame, with various metal parts, bolts, and a small circular dial or knob visible. The lighting creates strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the metallic textures and the intricate details of the machinery.

wRite



R is for wRite. It's that time of year again. Spring has sprung, fall has fell, winter is here and it's cold as..... Well, not as I write this, but by the time you are reading it, yes. And it's likely as not it'll be raining. For now, however, fall is rapidly approaching. So, it's time to get started on the Winter Rally Program.

Hard to believe that this will be the 4th issue. It doesn't seem all that long ago that I was chasing every lead in search of information on the Winter Rally's history. Research for the first issue. Well, over the years it has become a labor of love. Which probably explains the perceived, rapid passage of time.

Each year I try to make improvements in the hopes of making the program more like a professional magazine. This 2026 issue is no exception, and in fact, I have already taken steps to hopefully improve significantly again in the 2027 issue.

To that end, I thought I might try my hand at writing for actual magazines. The feedback I would receive would help me become a better writer and photographer for magazine use.

I thought I had my opportunity following the 2024 Winter Rally when I was told that Chris Parker, Editor in Chief of On The Level Magazine (OTL), had looked for me at the rally.

And then again later, when I saw he mentioned me, and the rally program, in his OTL write-up about the Winter Rally. I had missed the rally due to illness but contacted him later about becoming a contributor. He was very supportive and encouraged me to do so.

However, as far too often happens, life had other plans. You may recall the knee surgeries I mention earlier. That was one example of an alternate life plan.

Well, I guess the universe truly does reward patience. As it turned out, Chris was doing a seminar at the BMWRA Rally about that very thing.

During his seminar, Chris, together with Assistant Editor Tamela Rich, Ethan Powsner, and Ken Frick, presented, “HOW you can and WHY you should be an OTL magazine contributor”. They also explained tips and tricks on story submissions and sending in your ideas and photos.

What We Do

- › Publish full-color club magazine (On the Level) six times a year



Adventure Awaits
bmwra.org

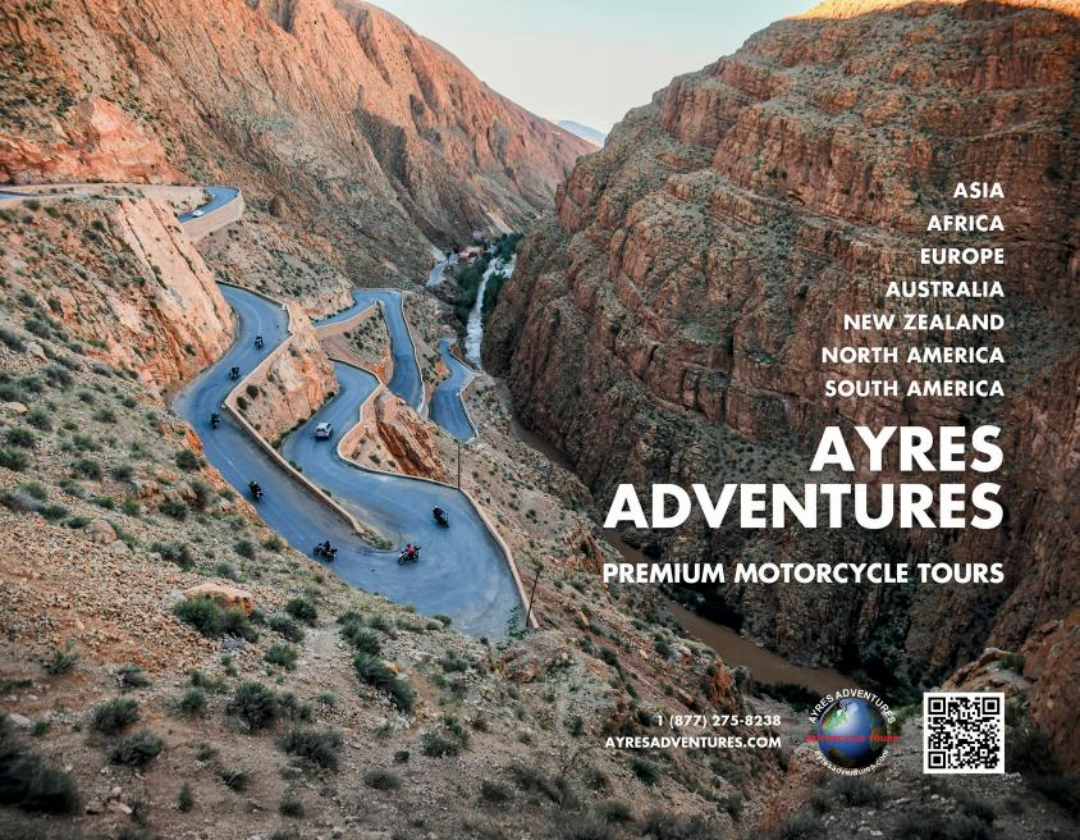


Equally as interesting as the HOWs & WHYs of magazine submission, was Chris' story of how he became the Editor in Chief of not one, but three publications. It was an evolutionary process, which, by the end of the seminar felt like a common theme among the staff. As I prepare to submit my first attempt, their stories make me feel like I'm entering a proven path rather than a road less traveled. A proven path on which those who have gone before will be there to help me succeed.

So, with a little luck, a lot of support, and once I have completed this 2026 Rally Program, I will begin my journey into magazine publication. Hopefully you will begin seeing and enjoying my words and photos in future issues of On The Level. ■

STEVE
WISHARD
PHOTOGRAPHY





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 And Mention The Winter Rally Offer
Ricardo.Rodriguez@bmwmcext.com

All offered training classes conducted at BMW U.S. Rider Academy, Greer, SC



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Visit Our Rally Booth
 Learn About The Training
 Opportunities We Support



Airheads to AI

by Steve Wishard

When my grandfather died, and every so often since, I stop to consider the changes he saw over the course of his life. Born just 4 months after the Wright brothers first flight, he saw Neil Armstrong walk on the moon, and, on what would turn out to be his last birthday, the first launch of the space shuttle. He died 6 months later.

I am reminded of that as I look at the image below. It is the first image I've created using a combination of photography and the AI Generation tools in Photoshop.

For a long time I've thought about creating an image with cowboys around a campfire, during a cattle drive, but with BMW GS motorcycles parked nearby.



I thought I would need to photograph some of the elements and download some from the internet. Then spend several hours removing backgrounds and compositing the various pieces together. Replace the sky, add atmosphere, and color grade the entire image.

I guess I procrastinated long enough. Turns out all I had to do was type a one sentence description into the AI image generating tool of Photoshop.

It took about 10 seconds for Photoshop to create the image below, or most of it. I added my 310 GS. It's not a great image. You can tell it's AI's work. But Photoshop is not a great AI tool, YET. However, great ones are out there.

After marveling at what I just witnessed, I thought about the rally, and the Airheads. The image below wasn't even science fiction yet when the bikes they ride were manufactured. ■



*gathering
strays*

BMWNEF Welcomes
Airheads
Beemer Club
To The 2026 Winter Rally



The Winter Rally is Airhead friendly and again WE plan some air-head centric activities down in the campground / RV area.

ALL rally attendees are invited and encouraged to stop by the campground for this session and enjoy bonfires each evening.

Talks Plus Q & A

State AirMarshals from Florida, South Carolina, Georgia, Michigan and ?? will host a Q & A session about the club and its initiatives for 2026.

We also will hold a technical Q & A session to discuss common issues and take some ?? from the audience.

Bring your ? about your current bike, parts vendors and airhead market.

Demonstrations & Shows

If there are specific demonstrations requested by our gurus, we will try to set that up as well.

During this period of 2:00 to 4:00 we will also be having a “ride-in” bike show.

To Learn More About
Airheads,
Scan This Code
To Visit Our Website



**TIME SCHEDULE WILL BE POSTED AT RALLY CENTRAL
AS WELL AS AIRHEAD CENTRAL.**



1976 BMW Motorrad R100/7



Visit Our Booth At The Rally

Vest Demos At Our Booth 11am & 3pm Each Day

Attend Our Seminar

Electronic or Manual / Vest or Jacket

Pros and Cons

Saturday @ 1:00PM

Seminar Room



Michael Feldbauer

Good Guys Firearm Accessories

Visit My Rally Booth To Learn More



DOWNSIZE...

by Steve Wishard



The photo above was taken when I took delivery of my then new 2021 K1600 GTL. That was May 22, 2021. I traded my 2017 R1200 RT. When I first pulled the 1600 upright from the kickstand, I remember thinking, wow, this is really heavy. But as soon as the wheels were turning it became weightless. What a great bike. Six days later it was in for 600 mile service. 25 days after delivery it had a bit over 3,300 miles, and on July 21st it had 10,730. I had been to Chicago and back, and, my wife and I had been to Glacier Nat'l Park, over Beartooth Pass, through Yellowstone, The Tetons, Monument Valley, the north rim of the Grand Canyon and back. Over the following four

and a half years my wife and I enjoyed countless hours touring the country on the GTL. After that initial experience of standing the bike up, I never really thought much about the weight. Admittedly, I paid attention to slopes when parking. But it was never really a concern since it had reverse. I just avoided using it. Generally only if I found myself having to push back on pea-gravel. However, as I logged another birthday, I realized that I was beginning to feel the weight of the bike more often. And getting it positioned and on the center stand in the garage is a bit like an UFC cage match. So, after months of deliberation and procrastination I finally decided it was time to downsize.

...SCALE UP



The photo above was taken when I completed the ridiculous list of upgrades to my G310 GS. If you attended the Winter Rally in January 2024 you might have read the article about the entire process. I acquired the 310 as a new bike in May of 2022, almost exactly a year after the GTL. I thought I would take it off-road frequently and it would be easy to manage due to its low weight. Well, that never really happened. It pretty much sat in the garage for most of the following 18 months. That's when the upgrading started.

I'd take it out occasionally, and I did do some off-road riding with it. However, it wasn't until I began to reduce my riding,

because I didn't want to deal with the big bike, that I really started riding it more and more. Every time I took it out I had a great time. So easy to get around on the streets of Daytona Beach. I trailered it up to the Georgia Mtn Rally and the BMWRA rally in Ohio. It was an absolute blast ripping around the mountain roads on that little bike. And, I was never afraid to pull off the road, even in a ditch, when I saw something I wanted to photograph. No fear of getting down or stuck. The only issues were that it was under-powered and no cruise control. So no longer rides. So once again, after months of deliberation and procrastination I finally decided I needed to scale up a bit.



The photo above is what I chose as the solution to the high weight, low power, no cruise issues mentioned on the previous pages.

I'm going to forgo the whole Goldilocks comparison. Besides, Ed Desimone would probably accuse me of plagiarism, (see his article in the July-Aug issue of On The Level Magazine), despite my belief he

and I *independently* ended up in the same place for very similar reasons.

Like Ed, my months of deliberation/procrastination were spent, as much if not more, thinking about the type of riding I expected to be doing, rather than the motorcycle I would be doing it on.

I mean the type of riding I was doing had already changed a lot. Trailer a little bike



to distant rallies rather than ride the big bike. That was definitely different.

I was also spending more time at the rally once I got there. Before, I would stop for a couple of hours and then go on a ride. Usually never to return. But more recently I've thought about extending my stay a day or two to participate in the rally more.

Then there was the significant drop in miles ridden because I wasn't enjoying it as much. It was beginning to seem like a lot of work to get everything out of the garage and back in. And all too frequently it was just to ride roads I've ridden hundreds of times to places equally familiar. More than once I considered simply selling the bikes and moving on.

Buuutt....

As I said before. It was an absolute blast ripping around the mountain roads on the little bike. So, I decided that what I needed was a midsize version of the little bike. One that had lower weight, so it would be easily maneuverable off-road and in the garage, but which also had the power and cruise control needed to ride long distance if and when I wanted. At that time, it was believed that BMW was coming out with a 450cc adventure bike. Their own response to the low power concerns of the 310. However, when I watched the early video about the bike, it appeared as though the stature of the bike would be similar to the 310. I had to add a lot of mods to my 310 to overcome its small stature. Lower pegs, bar risers, move the GPS mount, etc. So, as interesting as the 450 prospects were, I was confident that it wouldn't be the solution for me.

With that decision made, and knowing I didn't want to go back to the 1250/1300, which I had owned before, I knew my answer would reside in the 650-900cc arena. But I wasn't sure it would turn out to be a BMW.

Over the months of my deliberation I visited the BMW dealership in my area several times. They had a selection of 1300 GSAs and one 850 GS without cruise. Neither of which were options for me. As I explained what I was thinking in terms of type of riding and bike I was considering, they pushed the Triumph 900 hard. All of the reviews of the Triumph were positive and I did consider it.

Other options briefly considered were the Africa Twin and Super Tenere. However, only briefly. I had found mixed reviews on the Honda and while the Tenere was rated very reliable, it didn't seem to get good marks on on/off road versatility.

So, when I trailered my 310 to the rally in Athens Ohio, I was still undecided but leaning BMW.

I guess the universe decided it was time for me to get off the pot. I had almost decided to skip the BMWRA rally in Athens when I took one more look at the schedule. I don't know if it hadn't been there when I looked before, or if I saw it and it simply didn't register. Chris Parker, and some of his associates, were going to be giving a talk on contributing to On The Level Magazine. I had started to pursue this earlier but life had other ideas at the time. That cemented it. I was going.



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I loaded the 310 on the trailer and I was off to Ohio. I had already selected a ride I wanted to do, I knew several of the club members from Jacksonville would be there, and I would be attending Chris Parker's and Ken Frick's seminars.

What I didn't know was, as I was waiting for Chris to arrive, Ed Desimone would walk up and check out my 310. He started comparing some of my mods to those he had done to his F800. That conversation evolved into his F800, how he arrived at the decision to buy it, and how well it suited the changes in the types of riding he had made. Changes largely driven by his rally experiences. Sound familiar???

When I returned home I read Ed's article on his F800 decision in *On The Level*, and I watched his Youtube video on the subject.

Apparently the universe knew I would still need more convincing. For the next few weeks, it seemed every time I mention the idea to anyone, it turned out that they either currently or previously owned a 750 or 850 or 800 that they absolutely loved.

All of the reviews on the F800 were very positive. Now, they did say, if you want serious, single track adventure riding you should get an F900 or R1300. But nearly all said that if you are a forest service or unpaved road type of adventure rider, the F800 was the far better choice. Well, that is me to a tee.

I surrendered. The F800 GS was the bike that I would be taking on adventures for the foreseeable future. A couple of weeks later I swapped both my GTL and 310 for a new F800 and I've never looked back. ■

Auburn's Hideaway AirBnB



Auburn's Hideaway is an AirBnB, ideal for small motorcycle groups, located in Auburn Alabama. Motorcycling guests are provided information and GPX files for local rides. There are many scenic routes, including routes to Barber Museum and Talladega National Forest. The cover photo on this program was taken in Alabama. *Scan The QRCode to Learn More >>>*





Navigating Navigation

Finding A New Way To Find My Way

by Steve Wishard

It has been an interesting and challenging year, navigationally speaking. I have been creating routes and leading rides for many years. For the last decade or so I have been using BaseCamp, or its predecessor, and several GPS models from Garmin. The events of 2025, however, would cause me to reevaluate my tools and technique.

Initially, everything came into question when my computer stopped communicating with my GPS. Well, the computer connected okay. And BaseCamp connected okay. It was Garmin Express that suddenly couldn't find the GPS.

Garmin Express is the software tool used to update the maps on Garmin devices. Whenever a device is connected to the computer, Garmin Express checks to see if there is a map update available. If so, it lets you know and, if you choose to do so, downloads and updates the maps on your device and computer.

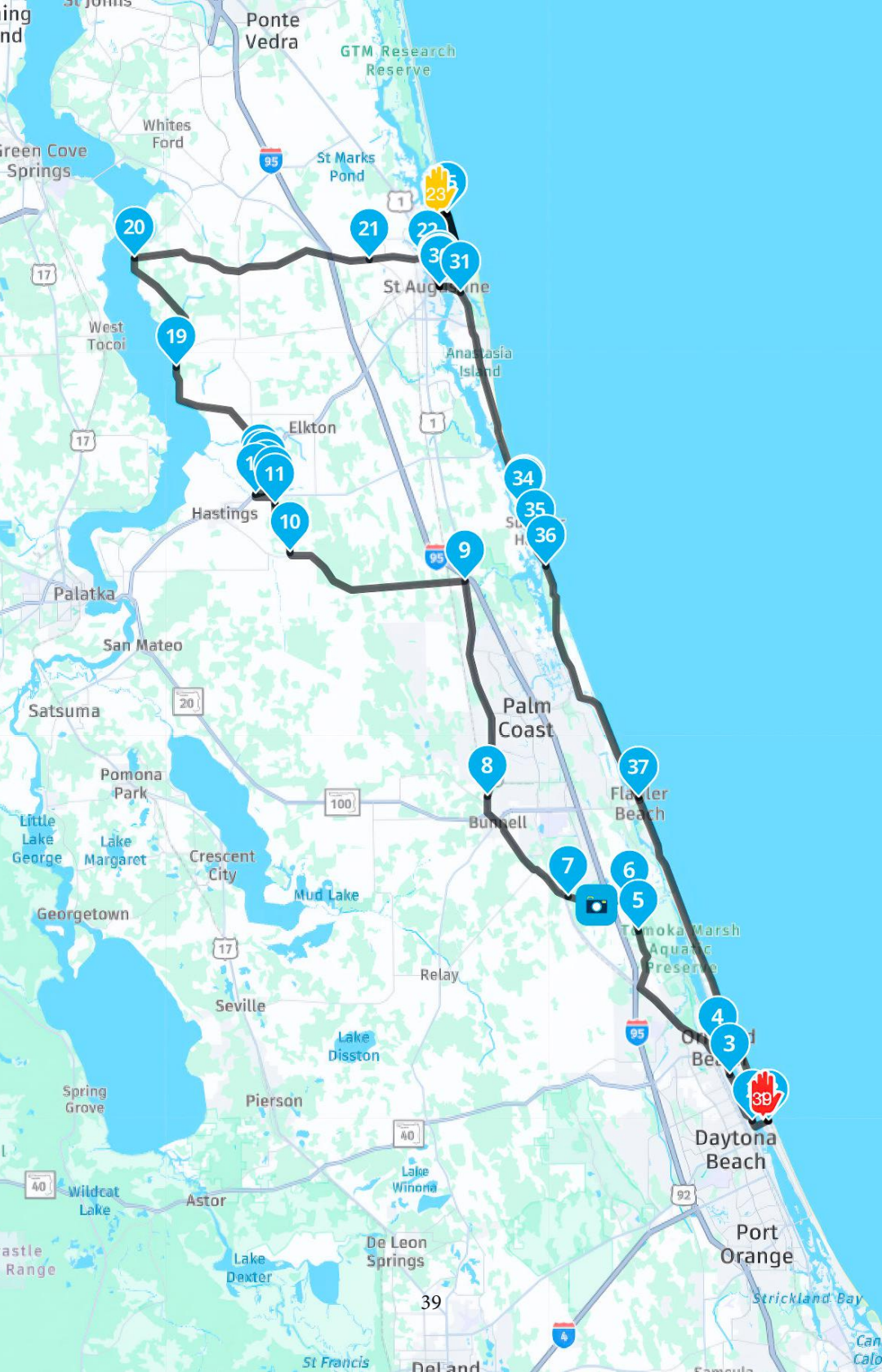
Maintaining currently updated maps is very important, because, if you share a route with someone with newer, or older, maps, they can get unintended results. So, if Garmin Express would no longer connect to my GPS, I would no longer be able to update my maps, and therefore, no longer be able to reliably share my GPX files.

While I was researching a solution, I was contacted by other club members who were experiencing the same problem. Actually, some were finding that BaseCamp had lost the ability to connect as well.

After several attempts to find a solution, I started to think I might need to make a change. Besides. The fact that BMW had, for several months at that point, been deploying their Connected App, meant they had also been breaking ties with Garmin. So Garmin's support for BMW was likely to be reduced as well. It seemed things would only get more challenging going forward.

As luck would have it, if you can call it luck, this all occurred just a few weeks before the club leadership decided to formalize several of their processes. While not a fan, I did recognize this as an opportunity to identify and implement new tools for route creation and sharing. Tools which had already been tested and which would end up being widely used within the club.

I had already begun exploring the capabilities of Rever when Lenny assumed the newly created position of Road Captain. He is an avid user and promoter of MyRoute-app. So, I dropped Rever and began working with MyRoute-app.



MyRoute-app has both a web based component and a phone app. You don't have to use both. Either one can operate alone. However, the combination is a very good replacement for the combination of BaseCamp and a Garmin GPS. And, as I would learn later, the phone app seems to be a pretty good alternative for the navigational functionality of the BMW Connected App. But I digress.

The web-based component of MyRoute-app is a route creation & management tool. It enables users to research, plan, create, organize, store online, and share, track & route GPX files. Those files can then be accessed directly by the MyRoute Phone App, exported to the computer hard drive, or exported directly into a variety of GPS devices.

The capabilities of MyRoute-app Web include everything BaseCamp offers, plus, a significant list of other very valuable features. Features like having Google Street View accessible directly in the app rather than having to use both BaseCamp and a browser.

In fact, the only feature of BaseCamp I miss in MyRoute-app is the ability to see multiple routes displayed on the map, at the same time, by simply selecting a folder contain-

ing multiple routes. The ability exists in MyRoute-app, but you need to add the routes you want to see together, one at a time. It's a bit of a process. But then, it also means you can see selected routes from multiple folders together. A definite plus.

The phone app component of MyRoute-app is, like a Garmin GPS, the navigational tool which displays the GPX file as you ride. For me, the phone app is sort of a mixed bag when compared to the Garmin GPS. The display not being as big or bright, and not being controllable using the wonder wheel, being its most



significant negatives. On the other hand, since all of my routes are stored online within the MyRoute-app system, every route I have is always available, without having to download any of them, and I can connect photos to specific spots on a route while I'm riding the route.

Another feature of the MyRoute Phone App is the ability to reverse a route. I have frequently longed for that ability on my Nav VIs. However, you need to be careful when creating routes or the reverse feature can bite you. When you put shaping or waypoints on a divided highway, they will not switch sides when you

reverse the route. So the route can end up instructing you to make 2 U-turns to hit the point on the other side of the road.

These are just a few of the benefits of the phone app but they are the ones I find most valuable.

Ironically, just as I was beginning to get comfortable with the features of both MyRoute-app components, and enjoying the new capabilities, I tripped on the solution to Garmin Express' communication problem. A software update had, behind the scenes, changed a system setting to deny Garmin Express access to external devices. A simple click of a switch deep within the computer settings and I could go back to my old familiar ways.

OR...

Now that I could continue to update the maps in my GPS, I could continue to use the web-based component of MyRoute-app to create my routes and download them directly into my GPS. No more Base-Camp. *AND*, I would always have the phone app component as a backup for when the Garmin NavVI started ghosting. I'm currently on my 6th Nav VI, so I know it is inevitable.



Yes, that settles it. I like the MyRoute-app capabilities. So I'm staying with them. I will move all my routes from BaseCamp into MyRoute-app web, use it to export to my GPS, and always have my phone app if needed.

Hold On There...

Life isn't that simple. If you read the **Downsize...Scale Up** article, also in this program, you know that a few short months later I traded bikes. My new F800 GS straddles the fence of technologies utilized by BMW Motorrad. It has both, a TFT display with BMW Connected App capabilities, *AND*, a Garmin GPS Cradle. The GPS cradle could hold, and control via the wonder wheel, a Garmin Nav IV or later GPS - OR - the new BMW Connected App GPS device. This was my first Connected App bike.

Admittedly, I have never heard anyone say they liked the Connected App. However, they all cited the same issue. Everyone said that when they stopped they had to reestablish the connection to continue. In fairness, at that time I didn't have a bike with that capability, so I didn't really question the issue further. But now that I was evaluating the options, I need to look into all of them. Who knows. Maybe BMW had resolved all the issues. It had, after all, been several months, if not a year, since I had heard anyone mention it.

So I reached out to Lenny, who I thought had mentioned it in the past, for details. He said he had never actually used it and referred me to Larry Dengler. When I contacted Larry he said the issues were too numerous to type in an e-mail. So we would need to get together to discuss it. However, he suggested that I check out some YouTube videos in the meantime.

All to the videos I had seen were posted by BMW or were instructional videos on using the app. But once Larry told me there were videos covering the issues, it didn't take long to find them. And, it didn't take long to understand the issue everyone had mentioned, and its cause.

The issue, in the simplest terms, is that the motorcycle is a wi-fi hotspot with its own network. It also has Bluetooth capabilities. When everything is operating as intended, your cell phone is connected to your motorcycle using both Bluetooth and wi-fi. The motorcycle is using its connection to your phone to gain internet access. It needs internet access to operate all of the connected-app functionality.

Your phone is designed to stay connected to the internet, via cell data or wi-fi, at all times. When it loses a wi-fi connection, its default setting is to search for and connect to the strongest wi-fi signal possible. So, when you shut off your motorcycle, that is exactly what happens. The motorcycle wi-fi shuts down and is therefore lost. So the phone immediately connects to the best wi-fi it can find. When you start your motorcycle again, your phone still has a wi-fi connection and therefore doesn't try to reconnect back to your motorcycle.

The way to resolve this issue is to change the settings on your phone to NEVER connect to another wi-fi network. Of course that will require you to change the settings back after your ride. (note: you will not see your motorcycle as an available wi-fi network. It doesn't announce itself. So you can't pick it yourself. The BMW Connected app knows how to find and connect to it) One video actually suggested that you might consider having a separate phone dedicated to the motorcycle and the connected-app. Brilliant!!!

In addition to changing your phone's wi-fi settings, you also need to have the phone forget any Bluetooth connection to your helmet. You simply connect your helmet to your bike and the bike will handle all of the communications between the three. If there is a helmet connection in your phone it will likely connect before the bike and then prevent the bike from connecting.

Just as I got my mind wrapped around the wi-fi/Bluetooth issues, Larry sent an e-mail pointing out that the connected app navigation will also be lost if you get a phone call while riding. Wonderful!!!

So... As I was saying... MyRoute-app...

Wait, There's More...

I was texting with Jim Allen about several rally related planning items. Since I was working on this program at the time, I mentioned this whole situation. I thought he might have some insight and if not he would probably find it interesting. What I got instead was another log on the fire.

Jim says *"well, you know, I've been seeing references to an Apple CarPlay device which fits in the GPS cradle and is controllable by the wonder wheel. And, the MyRoute-app works in Apple CarPlay along with all the usual features you have in your truck. And, it's 50% off now"*. A few seconds later an internet link arrives.

Ah Shit!!!, I love Apple CarPlay in my truck. And just talking to Google to get directions, and all my music, etc. etc. And, I've really gotten to like MyRoute-app.

Well, in the interest of thoroughness, I had to check it out. Sure enough, it has a very high rating and includes all the expected features. Plus, like a Garmin GPS and unlike a phone, it can handle the elements (heat, cold, rain) and doesn't need to be stowed away in typical Florida weather.

Following an appropriate amount of research I decided to give the Apple CarPlay solution a try. If it all works out as hoped it will be the best of all worlds. So I ordered the highest rated one I could find. The MotorTablet Pro Max BMW.

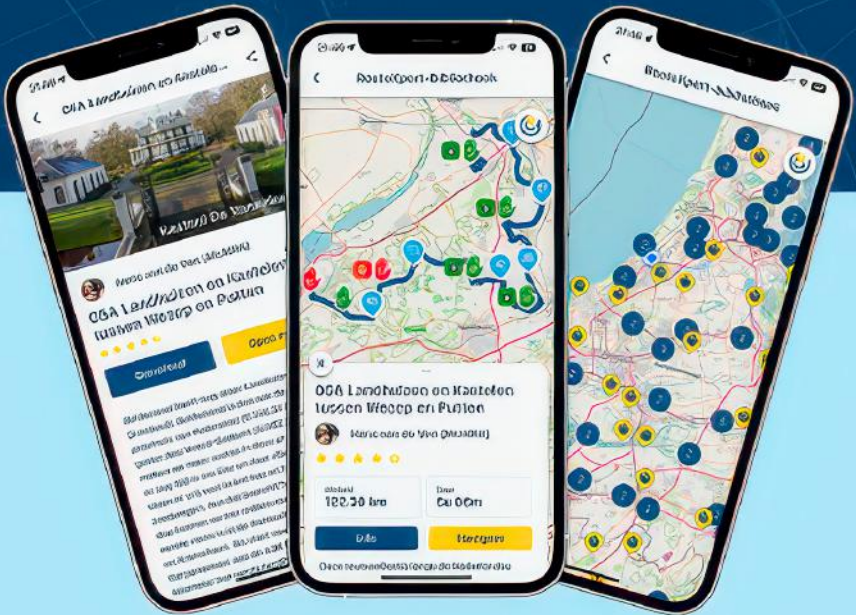
The MotorTablet fits the bike's GPS cradle, is fully controllable using the wonder wheel, displays all the available motorcycle information, includes Apple CarPlay features for iPhone users and Android Auto features for Android users. MyRoute-app is available in Apple CarPlay. Some features of MyRoute-app need to be selected using the phone but once you have selected the route you want, map control features can all be handled using the wonder wheel. Also, its 7" diagonal screen is an inch larger than the Nav VI and just as bright.

When the MotorTablet arrived, it took about a week to get here, I took it out of the box, snapped it into the bike's cradle, and it instantly displayed the dashboard with the motorcycles information. Then I paired it with my iPhone and as soon as they connected Apple CarPlay came up on the display. Everything just worked. The phone and helmet were already connected to the bike so when I started my music using CarPlay the bike still controlled the volume and song selections, etc. Then, I started a route in MyRoute-app and I got exactly what I had hoped. Music playing, navigation with voice prompts, and my route displayed. I later installed a Micro-SD card for storage.

So... Again.. As I was saying... That settles it. Apple CarPlay and MyRoute-app. All my routes available without downloading, stored & organized online, easily sharable with friends or publicly. Truly the best of all worlds. Thank you Garmin or Apple for throwing that computer switch. ■

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Questions

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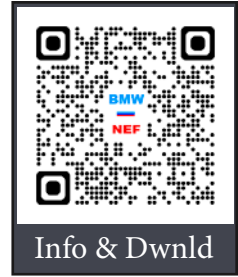
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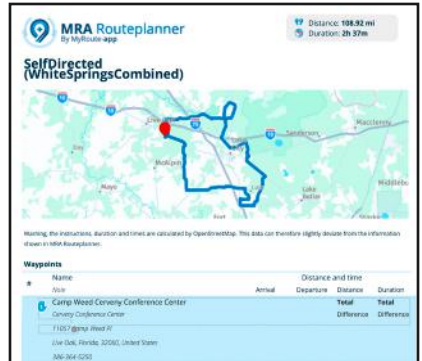
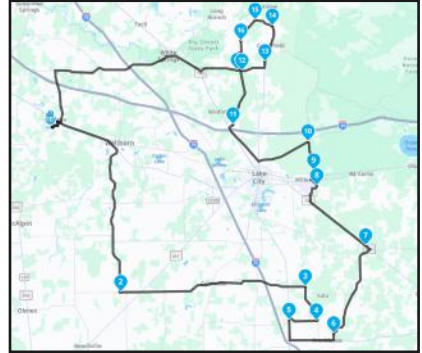
A Route Map suitable for printing and placing in your tank bag for quick periodic reference.



A PDF file with small route map, waypoints w/ (name - address - distance - time), and turn-by-turn instructions



A GPX code file suitable for a phone gpx app or importing into a wide variety of navigation devices like garmin, tom-tom, etc.



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