

VIRGINIA RIDER

Serving the Riders of Virginia & West Virginia

MAGAZINE

**APPALACHIAN
BACKROADS**

FREE

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GREAT PLACES TO RIDE

APPALACHIAN BACKROADS

APPALACHIAN BACK ROADS In The Heart Of Appalachia

Heartfelt stories along ABR from a husband-and-wife team.



A few weeks ago, Jason and I had one of those motorcycle rides that ended up meaning a whole lot more than you expected.



We rode over to St. Paul, found a wonderful little restaurant called Mamaw's Place that we absolutely will be visiting again, finally tried The Coffee Station, and then headed toward Dante.

Dante holds so many memories for me. I learned to ride a bicycle in Straight Holler. I rode dirt bikes all over Dante with my uncle...dirt paths, main roads, wherever we wanted to go, I was along for the ride! It was the 80s, so naturally I was wearing a T-shirt, shorts, and no helmet. I did earn myself a pretty impressive tailpipe burn when I was about five, so apparently we weren't completely immune to consequences.

I remember going to that little store with my Momaw and riding with her to the post office to check the mail. I can still remember how the Dante post office smelled. I remember having supper with the Catholic Sisters who lived in Straight Holler. Christmas in Dante was special, too, with Santa giving away treat bags at what is now the Dante Museum and the Santa Train coming through with goodies! When I was a teenager, my aunt and uncle owned a little store in Sun, and I spent so much time there during the summers. They had hand-dipped ice cream, including this incredibly creamy vanilla called Superman that was swirled blue, red, and yellow. I can still picture it...and taste it!

Driving, or now riding, through there, I don't just see buildings and roads. I see all the lives I've lived there.



So much has changed. Buildings that were full of life when I was a little girl are empty now. The post office has flooded and isn't being used, although that beautiful old woodwork is still there. The Dante I rode through with Jason isn't quite the Dante I remember, but somehow, I can still see both.

But one thing hasn't changed: Dante's story reaches far beyond those mountains. So many families who once called that little coal town home have moved on, but they took pieces of Dante with them. Generations of families carry with them the work ethic, stories, traditions, opportunities, and sacrifices of the people who built their lives there. I'm part of what Dante produced, too.



We stopped at the Dante Coal Miners Memorial, where my Popaw's name is carved in stone. That one got me. My Popaw worked hard in those mountains. Eventually, complications from black lung would take his life. But that work also provided for his family, and generations after him.

Years ago, he and Mamaw gave Jason and me the land where we live today. The land where we've made our home. The land where we're raising our boys.

Standing there looking at his name, I couldn't help but think about what that really means. In a very real way, that land was bought by a man going back into a mountain and mining coal, work that ultimately cost him his health and, eventually, his life.

I don't take that sacrifice lightly. We are all built, in one way or another, on the generations that came before us. My Papaw and Mamaw gave us something to build from, and I hope Jason and I can do the same for our boys, give them a strong place to start, so they can build something even greater for the generations that come after them.



I hope Papaw and Mamaw would be proud of the life we've built and the way we're raising our boys.

There was something especially meaningful about riding back into Dante on a motorcycle with my husband, too. All those years ago, I was a little girl riding dirt bikes through those same mountains with my uncle. Now I'm riding through them with Jason, stopping at the places that helped make me who I am and remembering the people who made the life I have possible.

I think that's what struck me most about riding through Dante that day. So much of it has changed, but every few minutes I would see something, and suddenly I was right back there. I could remember exactly what a building used to be, who lived somewhere, something that happened on a particular road, or a person I loved who isn't here anymore.

It's funny how a place can change so much and still hold so much of your life. And sometimes a name carved into a piece of stone reminds you just how much of your story began there.

One little detail about where we took these photos that I thought you might appreciate: the spot where Jason and I are standing is where Hazel Mountain and Trammel meet. My Momaw was born on Hazel Mountain, and my Popaw was born in Trammel (Wetzel's Circle, where the old road used to run). We didn't really plan it that way, but it felt like the perfect place to take the photo for this story.

About our contributor. Tara, and Jason reside in Russell County VA. Dedicated parents, active in their community, rooted in their faith, and entrepreneurs in the region. When they are not on their land spoken of, enjoying family time, you may see them on their BMW touring motorcycles on ABR routes in the Heart of Appalachia!

For more great places to ride, please visit us at:
<https://www.appalachianbackroads.com/> and
<https://heartofappalachia.com/>



Hello friends! It's great to have you all with us this fall as we start enjoying the cooler temperatures, the autumn breeze, and, best of all, the fall foliage color show Mother Nature puts on for us each year. Since the weather has stayed warmer a little later this season, the leaves have had a late start getting into their altered state to start their annual performance. But by the time this edition reaches you, the leaves should be well on their way to being all they can be for your viewing pleasure. On your bike, you have a front-row seat to these incredible views, so enjoy every moment while it's here!

Do you like to write stories of your rides and adventures? If so, we would love for you to share them with us and send along some pictures too. Every ride is an adventure no matter whether it's for 30 minutes or 30 miles... it's never boring when you're out for a ride.

We'd like to say a huge THANK YOU to all of YOU, our subscribers/viewers, who are with us each month, and to our friends on Facebook who help keep us up to date on what's happening throughout Virginia and West Virginia and share our posts with friends and fellow riders. We are here for all of YOU, so if you need anything or just want to say hello, we'd love to hear from you! Thank you to all of our supporters who make it possible for us to bring each issue of Virginia Rider to you, our readers. We are so grateful to have them with us ❤️

We hope you get out and ride as much as you can to enjoy this beautiful fall season. Be safe on the road, friends & always stay awesome! Until we meet again....

Hugs,

Kelly



ON THE COVER

The CP99 can be found on Ride with GPS for digital mapping purposes. It is also branded the Heart of Appalachia bicycle route. This is an amazing 99-mile route from Berks Garden, Virginia, to Saint Paul, Virginia, 40% gravel, 60% asphalt, meandering through the National Forest wilderness area's 10,000-acre cattle ranch and Clinch River Valley Farm.



IN THIS ISSUE



THE MOUNTAINS ARE CALLING

There's a certain mystique about riding in the mountains, especially in the fall, when fresh air, scenic vistas, and open roads are at their very finest, calling you to the higher elevations waiting for you to enjoy.



GETTING READY FOR THE FALL TIME CHANGE

Rolling clocks back in the fall means an extra hour of sleep for many people, which does have its benefits. Unfortunately, it can interrupt your body's circadian rhythm and cause other issues that you'd never expect.



THE BIKE SAVER

John continues to work on his beloved 1972 CB350 Four as he both welcomes the fall season and laments the fact that its arrival also means that he will have fewer hours to spend working on bikes in his garage.

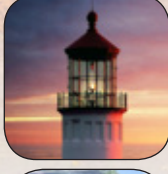


MUSIC AND MOTORCYCLES

"Leader of the Pack" was written by Ellie Greenwich, George "Shadow" Morton, and Jeff Barry. It became a number-one hit for the American girl group The Shangri-Las in 1964.



CAN YOU SEE ME NOW? One of the statements made after a collision involving a motorcycle is, "I didn't see the motorcycle." Your best defense on the road is to help drivers see you. Your riding gear choices, the lane you choose to ride in, and more can make all the difference for your safety out on the road.



THE LIGHTHOUSE

This month brings us two stories. The first is a comparison of the Christian life to the light of a candle in a carved pumpkin. The second story is about how one solitary life changed the world.



GREAT PLACES TO RIDE

This is the story of one couple's return to their childhood home, where they share memories of many favorite places, and the Dante Coal Miners Memorial where a relative is honored.

October 2026

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Virginia Rider Magazine, 1385 Fordham Drive, Ste. 105-270, Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Email us at virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com or call 757-822-4700
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DON'T THROW AWAY PUMPKINS AFTER HALLOWEEN

Find woods or a field near you, smash them open and leave for the wildlife to eat. Pumpkin is safe for animals to eat and the seeds act as a natural dewormer. (Be sure to break them up so the deer don't get their head stuck inside!) 2.5 billion pumpkins produced, only one fifth gets reused. The rest end up decaying in landfills creating methane gases that harm the environment. So give those pumpkins to local wildlife, ask a wildlife rehab, or ask a local farm if they want them for their cows or pigs. Recycling plus a food source for hungry animals is a win-win.



THE MOUNTAINS ARE CALLING

How beautifully leaves grow old. How full of light and color are their last days.
- John Burroughs. American

Ahhh, the beautiful colors of fall. This magical annual event, courtesy of Mother Nature, often draws more riders to the mountains than during any other season. The fresh air, scenic vistas, and open roads are at their very finest, calling you to the changing elevations that create sweeping, multi-layered color displays and cooler, comfortable weather just waiting for you to enjoy.

What is the big draw?

- Expansive Vistas: Mountain terrain and high overlooks give you a wide, panoramic view of colorful forests instead of a flat horizon.
- Staggered Peak Times: Leaves change at high altitudes first in late September, then slowly move down to lower valleys through November. This creates a much longer season to view the colors.
- Tree Variety: Mountain regions often feature dozens of native tree species—like maples, oaks, and birches—that turn bright shades of red, orange, yellow, and purple.

Comfortable Weather and Outdoor Fun

- Crisp Air: Cooler temperatures replace summer heat and humidity.
- Better Visibility: Lower humidity and less haze in the autumn air mean you can see much further from mountain overlooks.

Of course, riding on mountain roads takes a different set of skills from riding in the city. After all, they have steep inclines, sharp turns, and sweeping curves that can challenge some riders. If the mountains are calling you, here's some great information to know before you go.

CHECK and PREPARE YOUR BIKE - Driving up mountains will be taxing on your bike, more so than normal city roads. So make sure your motorcycle is in good condition. First, check the brakes, as you'll use them the most. Make sure the brake fluid is topped

up and check the pads themselves to make sure you have at least 5-6 mm of brake pad material between the disc and metal caliper before heading up. Also check your tires and tread levels. Ensure they're at the recommended pressure and tread depth. Tires below the recommended pressure will put extra strain on your engine and transmission.

LINES THROUGH A CORNER - Compared to roads in a flat country, roads in mountain areas have far more corners, and those corners are often really tight.

Start on the outside. In the mountains, the line you ride through a corner is very important. Always start on the outside: in a left corner, start on the right side; in a right corner, start on the left. If the road is narrow, you can even use the part of the road for oncoming traffic. The advantage is that you will see oncoming traffic earlier than when you stay inside the corner.

LOOK THROUGH THE CORNER - Hold on to the outside line for a long time. There will be a moment when you can look through the rest of the corner in one straight line. That's the point where you turn in for the second time, and then ride along that straight line. That will be the only time that you touch the inside line through the corner. Try not to reach the lane for oncoming traffic in a left turn. In that case, you'll have space if you need it, and you'll also train yourself to ride tight corners. And in a blind corner, you should expect not only cars, other motorcycles, or trucks, but also animals crossing the road, such as cows, horses, chickens, sheep, or even goats!

TAKE CARE! - On really narrow roads with hairpins, don't start in the lane for oncoming traffic; in that case, you might not have enough time to get back to the right side of the road when a local arrives from the other side. Try to keep your head inside your own lane, especially in left corners. An advantage of riding through high mountains is that the landscape becomes barren, without trees. That sometimes lets you look far ahead.

LOOKING AHEAD - Before entering a hairpin or switchback, always look up or down, so you know in advance what you will encounter during the turn. Often, you can see through more than one corner (even when the corner before you itself is blind). The more you try to see what is in front of you on the road, the more you know about oncoming traffic and where to expect it.

STAY ALERT - Try to count oncoming cars, so you know how many you will encounter at *least*. Never suppose that you have seen them all! Sometimes, a car may leave a parking place that was invisible and suddenly appear without you seeing it in advance.

You will probably have learned to push the bike down while sitting upright in tight corners, motocross- (or supermotard-) style. The problem with that style in hairpins is that your feet or steps will hit the tarmac very easily, and you will not have more space to tighten the corner when that's the case.

LEANING IN - So it's better to lean with the motorcycle, the way you are probably used to in fast corners. Especially in hairpins, you often need all the ground clearance that you can find, because there may be huge height differences in the stretch of road that you ride.



BE CAREFUL - Especially in hairpins, start far out on the outside: otherwise, the corner may become so tight that you will be forced to come to a stop mid-corner.

ON THE THROTTLE - Always try to keep the throttle open (a bit) during a corner. The corner will certainly be easier that way. When going up, keep the speed above the minimum needed to avoid stalling, because you don't want to stall in the middle of a hairpin, and squeezing the clutch while going up won't help either. If you descend, keeping the throttle open often is difficult, but do try, as it will make life easier.

STALLING - When your motorcycle is going to stall mid-turn, let it stall. *Don't* pull the clutch: the motorcycle will go backward, down, and you would be pulled along.

UPWARD: REAR BRAKE - When you ride upward, you can use the rear brake during turns; it stabilizes the bike and lets you keep the throttle open during the turn.

DOWNWARD: FRONT BRAKE - But downward, the rear brake is of no use: the rear wheel carries almost no weight, so it will stop turning very easily when you apply the rear brake. If you ride steep downward and you have to brake, use the front brake. Why no rear brake downward? When you ride downward, almost all the bike's weight is on the front wheel. Therefore, it is very easy to lock the rear wheel when you use the rear brake. In that case, the rear wheel will try to get past the front wheel, which will take you and the bike down. Try to brake with engine compression, and when you need more braking, use the front.

DOWNWARD Preferably with the throttle open! - Riding up is not a problem, most of the time; it is riding downward that is the most difficult. Try to use the engine brake: shift downward until you have the right speed without the throttle, or with a bit of throttle. In a turn, open the throttle a bit. When it is so steep that your speed is too high, even in the first gear, you will have to use the brake as well (the front, that is).

FEAR OF HEIGHTS: Look in front of you! - Do you have fear of heights, and do you get dizzy when looking down? Then don't! Concentrate on the road ahead, and look forward: far, far forward.

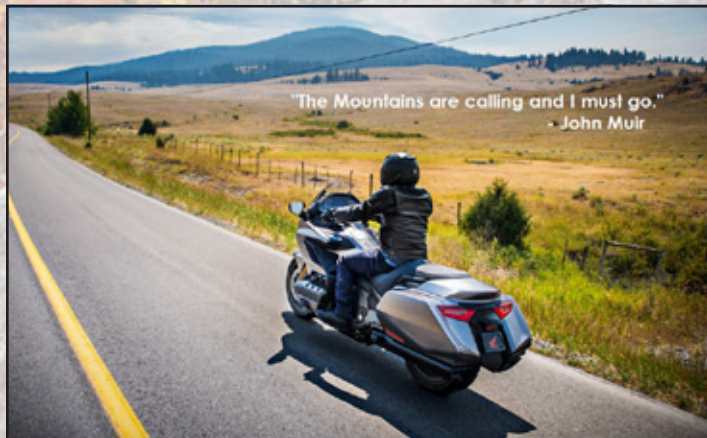


STOPPING and GETTING AWAY

Upward - If you have to come to a standstill while riding upward, you can keep your foot on the rear brake. Keep the bike in first gear, and it's easy to ride away again. When the road surface is a bit loose, let the clutch out slowly until you feel the bike push into the springs. At that moment, open the throttle a bit and let go of the rear brake. Remember that you can easily pull a wheelie this way, especially when you are loaded with gear or with a pillion. So pull away *gently*.

Downward - Downward, you come to a standstill with the front brake. You can even pull away without the engine.

PARKING - Mind the other traffic. Remember: when you park to enjoy the views or take a picture, park your motorcycle where it can be easily seen from both sides. Sometimes you find a spot that seems perfect for parking, but it's actually a spot to let cars pass each other on narrow roads. Those spots are there for passing, so don't use them!





SLOPING SURFACE - While parking, you will notice the three dimensions in the mountains: where you would normally feel the surface with your foot, there may be nothing... the surface is sometimes farther away than you are used to. So look where you stop, and check which foot to use to carry your weight.

FOOT ON THE BACK BRAKE - If you stop while riding upwards, you should make sure that your right foot can stay on the peg, because you need the back brake in that situation. Try to park your bike with its front pointing upwards; otherwise, it might ride off the side stand. Also: keep it in first gear.

THE SIDE STAND - If you have to park with the front of the bike pointing downwards, the bike could fall, even when parked in gear, because sometimes gravity pulls harder. Always check the situation before riding away again. In principle, it is no big deal to let the bike drop a bit at first, but if you have to turn it at the same time, getting away could become a bit of a problem.

THE WEATHER - Change of weather. You may experience huge temperature changes when riding up or down in the mountains. So always carry something warm, and especially something that keeps out the rain. You may also ride in sunny weather and suddenly, after a corner, enter thick fog. The weather high in the mountains can change very suddenly, from summer to winter, from thunderstorm to clear skies, from snow to fog. So carry warm clothes, a jacket to keep the rain out, and sunglasses.

SLIPPERY - Above a mile elevation, it may even be below 0 during summer, which means slippery roads or even black ice.

DARK - Mind tunnels. Not all tunnels have lights inside. When you enter such a dark tunnel, with your sunglasses on from the blazing sun, you won't be able to see anything. Some of these dark tunnels also have a very narrow curve! The road in a tunnel is often wet. So really watch out when it's freezing! Only use your horn when it's absolutely necessary (most of the time there will be a sign asking you to use your horn in such a case).

BEING POLITE - Allowing people to pass. When you are experiencing your first mountain miles, your speed will probably be much lower than the speed of people who are used to riding or driving in the mountains. Especially people who live there will know each corner and can ride certain passes blindfolded. Don't be tempted to try to keep in front of them. Try to maintain your own comfort speed, and let faster riders pass in corners.

KNOW THE RIGHT OF WAY - There may not be many intersections on mountain roads, but right of way still applies. In this case, cars and bikes going uphill always have the right of way. This is because going uphill takes significantly more power and preparation. It's also why most steep grades are typically two-lane for overtaking while the downhill side is just one. You may encounter a vehicle in your lane going uphill. If he is overtaking a slower vehicle, he has the right of way. So slow down a bit and give him/her room to overtake.

Don't open the throttle after each corner to make up for a slow corner; instead, use straight stretches to slow down so people can easily get past you. As you get used to mountain riding and your speed increases, you will notice some people let you pass the same way, and you will be grateful. So, check your mirrors often!

ONCOMING TRAFFIC - The same politeness also applies to oncoming traffic. Try to determine for whom it is most easy to stop (which will often be you, the motorcycle rider). When you see a bus, don't enter a hairpin thinking the bus will have to wait because you have as much right on that hairpin as the bus; instead, find a place to pull aside. Most people who ride and drive in the mountains are very courteous, as you will notice, and it is a pleasant feeling to be one of them.

LESS OXYGEN - If your motorcycle doesn't have injection, you may experience a badly running engine at heights. The air becomes thinner, and your bike gets less oxygen while the fuel stays the same, so the mix becomes too rich. Some motorcycles will protest. The fuel consumption rises (with a well-running engine, fuel consumption will decrease in the mountains), and the engine seems to want to give up.

MILES IN A DAY - When planning your trip, keep in mind that you will cover much smaller distances in the mountains, especially when you go up and down through hairpins. A distance of 30 miles doesn't mean that you will be there in half an hour! It applies even more to the distance on the map: on the road, you will cover vertical miles as well. Also keep in mind that gas stations on top of mountain passes are rare. **PLAN AHEAD!**

The mountains are calling....are you going?

Happy Fall ya'll...Stay safe out there!



VIRGINIA RIDER MAGAZINE

SAFETY TIPS FOR RIDING YOUR MOTORCYCLE IN THE DARK

As we get closer to “falling back” for daylight saving time on November 1st, many late-day riders have been seeing the sun go down on them and often find themselves in unfamiliar territory... complete darkness. Here are some safety tips to help you navigate the roads after sundown and travel safely to and from wherever you are headed over the next several months...

At some point in your time as a motorcycle owner, you'll probably need to ride in the dark. Traffic jams, unexpected weather conditions, and other delays can hold you up — before you know it, the sun is going down, and home is still miles away. Whether you love or hate night riding, it's important to be prepared. By increasing visibility, it's easier to manage risks and arrive safely at your destination.

Increase Your Motorcycle's Visibility



Motorcycles are smaller and shorter than most vehicles on the road, so they're naturally less visible. After dark, it's even harder for other drivers to see your bike. Increase visibility by adding reflective strips to your panniers, forks, and wheel rims. Stay legal and make sure that the tape colors match standard vehicle lighting rules (such as red at the rear and amber/yellow on the sides) and do not mimic official traffic signs or lights. This helps other drivers visualize the size and shape of your ride, so they can give you plenty of clearance.

Wear Reflective Gear



Reflective gear is a great way to signal your presence to other people on the road. Invest in a high-visibility jacket or vest with built-in reflective stripes or panels on the sleeves, back, and chest. These pieces often feature neon colors that improve daytime and nighttime visibility. Reflective vests are an affordable alternative that you can keep on hand for unexpected night rides. Don't forget about your helmet — since it sits high above the road, it's an important visibility booster. If you don't have the budget for new gear, buy a roll of reflective tape and affix it to your jacket, helmet, and boots.

Seeing Clearly After Dark

When the sun goes down, your visibility automatically decreases. Before you hit the road, make sure your headlights are clean to ensure the brightest possible light. Wipe down your visor before

you ride. If oncoming headlights are compromising your vision, look to the white line on the side of the road. Make



sure to bring your nighttime riding glasses. The best glasses feature clear or yellow/amber lenses with an anti-reflective coating and a foam-sealed or wrap-around frame to block wind and debris.

Adjust Your Speed and Riding Style

Any time you're on the road after dark, it's important to slow down. You're relying on your headlights; they reduce your range of vision. When you ride slowly, it's easier to spot obstacles and potholes in time to avoid them. Nighttime is not the time for showing off — use caution, increase your following distance, and take corners gently.

With extra care and caution, night riding can be a fun and relaxing experience.

Source: <https://www.tracymotorsports.com/blog/safety-tips-for-riding-your-motorcycle-in-the-dark--39111>





National Wreaths Across America Day 2026 takes place on Saturday, December 19, 2026, at over 5,500 participating locations across all 50 states, at sea, and abroad. You can find local ceremonies, register to volunteer, or sponsor a remembrance wreath through the Official Wreaths Across America Website, www.wreathsaacrossamerica.org. (See below for the WAA motorcycle rides scheduled for Virginia and West Virginia motorcyclists)

What began in 1992 with a trailer load of wreaths, decorated by volunteers and laid at the graves of fallen soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery, has now become a national organization focused on the mission to Remember - Honor - Teach.

Morrill Worcester, owner of Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, Maine, was a 12-year-old paper boy for the Bangor Daily News when he won a trip to Washington, D.C. His first trip to our nation's capital was one he would never forget, and Arlington National Cemetery made an especially indelible impression on him. This experience stayed with him throughout his life and successful career, reminding him that his good fortune was due, in large part, to this nation's values and the veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

In 1992, Worcester Wreath found themselves with a surplus of wreaths nearing the end of the holiday season. Remembering his boyhood experience at Arlington, Worcester realized he had an opportunity to honor our country's veterans. With the aid of Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, arrangements were made for the wreaths to be placed at Arlington in one of the older sections of the cemetery that had been receiving fewer visitors with each passing year.



As plans were underway, a number of other individuals and organizations stepped up to help. James Prout, owner of local trucking company Blue Bird Ranch, Inc., generously provided transportation all the way to Virginia. Volunteers from the local American Legion and VFW Posts gathered with members of the community to decorate each wreath with traditional red, hand-tied bows. Members of the Maine State Society of Washington, D.C. helped to organize the wreath-laying, which included a special ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The annual tribute went on quietly for several years, until 2005, when a photo of the stones at Arlington, adorned with wreaths and covered in snow, circulated around the internet. Suddenly, the project received national attention. Thousands of requests poured in from all over the country, from people wanting to help with Arlington, to emulate the Arlington project at their National and State cemeteries, or to simply share their stories and thank Morrill Worcester for honoring our nation's heroes.

Unable to donate thousands of wreaths to each state, Worcester began sending seven wreaths to every state, one for each branch of the military, and for POW/MIAs. In 2006, with the help of the Civil Air Patrol and other civic organizations, simultaneous wreath-laying ceremonies were held at over 150 locations around the country. The Patriot Guard Riders volunteered as escorts for the wreaths going to Arlington. This began the annual "Veterans Honor Parade" that travels the East Coast in early December.

The annual trip to Arlington and the groups of volunteers eager to participate in Worcester's simple wreath-laying event grew each year until it became clear the desire to remember and honor our country's fallen heroes was bigger than Arlington, and bigger than this one company.



In 2007, the Worcester family, along with veterans and other groups and individuals who had helped with their annual veterans wreath ceremony in Arlington, formed Wreaths Across America, a non-profit 501-(c)(3) organization, to continue and expand this effort, and support other groups around the country who wanted to do the same. The mission of the group is simple: Remember - Honor - Teach.



In 2008, over 300 locations held wreath-laying ceremonies in every state, Puerto Rico, and 24 overseas cemeteries. Over 100,000 wreaths were placed on veterans' graves. Over 60,000 volunteers participated. And that year, December 13, 2008, was unanimously voted by the US Congress as "Wreaths Across America Day".

In 2014, Wreaths Across America and its national network of volunteers laid over 700,000 memorial wreaths at 1,000 locations in the United States and beyond, including ceremonies at the Pearl Harbor Memorial, as well as Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, and the sites of the September 11 tragedies. This was accomplished with help from 2,047 fundraising groups, corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping, and thousands of helping hands. The organization's goal of covering Arlington National Cemetery was met in 2014 with the placement of 226,525 wreaths.



The wreath-laying is still held annually, on the second or third Saturday of December. WAA's annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery has become known as the world's largest veterans' parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veterans' homes and communities all along the way to remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach.

Wreaths Across America also conducts several programs to honor our veterans, including the popular "Thanks a Million" campaign, which distributes cards to people all over the country to give veterans a simple "thank you" for their service. WAA participates in veterans' events throughout the year and has a veteran liaison on staff to work with local veterans organizations.

WAA is committed to teaching younger generations about the value of their freedoms and the importance of honoring those who sacrificed so much to protect those freedoms. The organization offers learning tools, interactive media projects, and opportunities for youth groups to participate in the events. They also work to create opportunities to connect "the Greatest Generation" with the "Generation of Hope", passing on inspirational stories from World War II veterans to the leaders of the future.

Wreaths Across America would not be successful without the help of volunteers, active organizations, and the generosity of the trucking industry, which offer invaluable support to WAA's mission to remember the men and women who served our country, honor our military and their families, and teach our children about our freedom and those who protect it.

To sponsor a veteran's wreath or to volunteer at or attend a wreath-laying ceremony at a cemetery near you, please visit www.wreathsaacrossamerica.org.



- The 2026 Virginias' Motorcycle & Ceremony Details:
- Virginia Veterans Cemetery at Amelia** - Saturday, December 19, 2026; ceremony begins at 12:00 PM, with arrivals starting at 11:30 AM. 10300 Pridesville Rd, Amelia Court House, VA 23002 - (855)485-8387

Poplar Grove National Cemetery - Saturday, December 19, 2026 at 12:00 PM. 8005 Vaughan Rd, Petersburg, VA 23805 - (804) 861-2488

West Virginia National Cemetery – Saturday, December 19, 2026, at 12:00 PM (wreath placement immediately follows the ceremony). 42 Veterans Memorial Ln, Grafton, WV 26354 - (304) 265-2044



LET'S DO SOME SHOTZ!!!
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THE BIKE SAVER

with John Peterson



Fall

I spent a long time trying to come up with something to name this month's screed but ultimately decided that one word sums everything up: Fall. As in, "Fall is here." Because that about sums it up - Fall is officially upon us, and that made me pause in the midst of pouring my morning coffee.

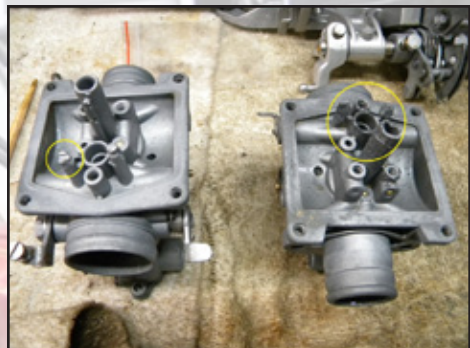
I'm not a big 'Fall' guy. Oh, sure, the leaves turn, and it gets chillier and prettier, and the nights are made all the more 'fall-y' with the scent of wood smoke from some far-off fire, lending a bit of an exotic perfume to the air; but for me it also means that the timer is running down on the hours I get to spend in my garage working on stuff before it gets too cold to work out there. The sun will soon be gone by five in the afternoon, and I won't see it again until nine the next morning - for MONTHS! I am aghast.



Be that as it may, last month I was telling you about all the fun I had trying to shoehorn the carbs back into their place on this 1972 Honda CB350 Four I'm working on; and it's come along way, but unfortunately, it's not back on the road yet. I have gotten it to fire, but it won't stay running for some reason - a reason I am still trying to figure out, and which is driving me crazy.



Here's the carb rack after I finished rebuilding it. This is actually the product of two different CB350 Four carbs that I was able to patch together after I found the insides of the one that was on the bike were in absolutely horrible shape, as the following pics attest; this was after I cleaned them...ere



The one on the left has a broken float mount, and the ones on the right are simply not there! Check out the one on the right - - Time has eaten away all the metal in the jet housings. Granted, almost all these old carbs are made out of a pot-metal zinc/aluminum alloy mixture, but 'Holy Planned Obsolescence Batman!'

I managed to cobble together a working set, and even when I bench-tested them using the clear-tube method (which simply measures the height of fuel in the carb bowls), they sealed up fine, i.e the fuel stopped flowing into the carbs where it should have stopped, about one or two millimeters below the carb bowl seam, so I was pretty happy with that. Put 'em on the bike, though, and their true nature was revealed in gas coming out of three out of four of the overflow tubes in the bowls!

Here's a pic of the inside of the carburetor bowl - this is the original shape I found these carbs in when I first opened her up. Like, "ewwww"! Each of the yellow squares shows where each set of floats lies within the carburetor bowl. (Don't forget, you're looking at this upside down...).



The yellow circles are where each of the carburetor bowl overflow tubes are - except for the last on the right; it was bent over and GONE!



Here's a view of the overflow tube in the carb - when the carb is together, the floats hang down into the bowl, attached to the float valve needle and seat, as seen in the carburetor jet diagram below.

When fuel flows into the carburetor, it fills the bowl, making the floats rise; the float valve needle sits in the float valve jet (seat) and is attached to the floats by a little tab; as the fuel rises in the bowl, the float valve needle eventually goes into a little hole in the float valve jet(seat) and cuts off the flow of fuel. As the fuel level drops (when the bike is running), the floats drop, and the jet needle drops too. It lets in more fuel, and the process repeats itself, supplying fuel to the engine and the bike runs.

You can't really see it in the above picture, but that brass tube is even with the inside lip of the carburetor bowl. If the floats stick and fail to rise with the incoming fuel, that leaves the jet needle in a 'down' position, leaving the needle jet(seat) open and allowing more fuel into the bowl. If the floats do NOT rise and insert the float needle into the needle jet, that brass overflow tube allows the excess fuel to drain out, hopefully before it flows into the throat of the carburetor and into the engine where it can hydro-lock the cylinders. Fluid cannot be compressed, so if enough gas gets into the engine, the engine won't turn over. (Whew! Did you get all that??)

And if you're REALLY unlucky, that gas drains past the rings and into the oil pan, which means you have to dump all that oil and put in fresh oil - and these days that can get pricey.

It's easy enough to fix, though - as long as your rings are in good shape, all you have to do is take out the spark plugs and crank the engine over to push the excess fuel out of the cylinders. Just be sure to NOT be standing in front of the plug hole when you do this - it comes out of there with some force; ask me how I know! Yah - Good Times!

But ultimately I did manage to get her started (first time in forty years! Whoo-Hooo!), but she didn't want to STAY started. Every time I tried to rev it, she would die, and this just Would Not Do! I could nurse it past the idle with a little judicious manipulation of the throttle, and she would rev up but take my hand off, and she died. Here's the YouTube link if you want to check it out: 1972 CB350 Four Weird Hesitation

Hmmmm; What To Do....

I hemmed and hawed and bitched about it for a while, but the answer was obvious: I was going to have to take the carbs out AGAIN and go through them AGAIN! So that's what I did.



Oh, it wasn't that bad, I guess; mostly just a PITA to unhook everything, especially the dang manifold boot bands, which have a screw located underneath that's a pain to get to, but in the end it all came out fine, I guess. It's funny how you do something a few times; the easier it gets. But it's a good thing I did, too, because regardless of my previous attempts to clean these things, I discovered that the #1 carb jets were rather "degoulassé", as the Belgians say. It has no direct English translation, but it's somewhere between 'gross' and 'disgusting'.



This pic is obviously not the parts I pulled out of the carb - this is an aftermarket set I'm using here to give you a better idea of what I'm talking about. See those two brass tubes on the left, there...? Those are, respectively (L to R), the #35 idle jet and the main jet emulsion tube, with the #75 'main jet' itself all the way to the right. (The numbers are the jet sizes. The main jet on the far right sits on top of the emulsion tube in the carburetor and is responsible for mixing the fuel with air on its way up the tube to the carb throat, where it gets sucked into the cylinder via the valves and piston rings and gets ignited by the spark plugs, and the bike moves.

That idle jet and emulsion tube have a lot of tiny holes in them to help mix the fuel, and I discovered that despite my best efforts at cleaning them previously, they had become clogged again, which contributed to my weird throttle-off/dying problem I was having, not to mention

being unable to synchronize the carbs because I couldn't keep it running. And you can't do just one carb; you have to do them all! AGAIN! It's tedious, painstaking work, but truth be told, I didn't really mind. Throw some Johnny Hodges on the CD player and dig in. I like working on carbs.

Long story short, I went through all the jets with some fine wire and threw them in the 'ol ultrasonic and let them bake for a good ten minutes, went through the carb holes, put them all back together, and got them on the bike - but this time it wouldn't run AT ALL! GAAAH!! Oh, it would fire or try to, but it wouldn't run. It's all good though - I remembered that I had set the carburetor slides to their fully closed position when I had it on the bench, and of course the bike wouldn't run because there was no way for the gas to make it to the cylinders! DOH!!



See how tightly that slide is all the way down in the carb throat? Yeah, that's my bad - there should be a bit more of a gap there. I should have bench-synced it better, but I didn't, and that caused (easily solved!) problems. I adjusted the slides and was happy to report that with a little throttle she fired right up and idled and revved well. I was psyched! I love hearing a bike that hasn't moved in forty years fire up; that's the payoff for me.

I still have to throw a carburetor tuner on her to get her dialed in. I was going to tune it, but one of the cheap plastic adapters on my tuner broke off in the #1 manifold (!), causing me some serious momentary stress, but it was made of plastic, so I was able to get it out pretty easily, thankfully. I have some hardier brass ones on the way.

Remember: if you're trying to save an old bike - it's the little things.



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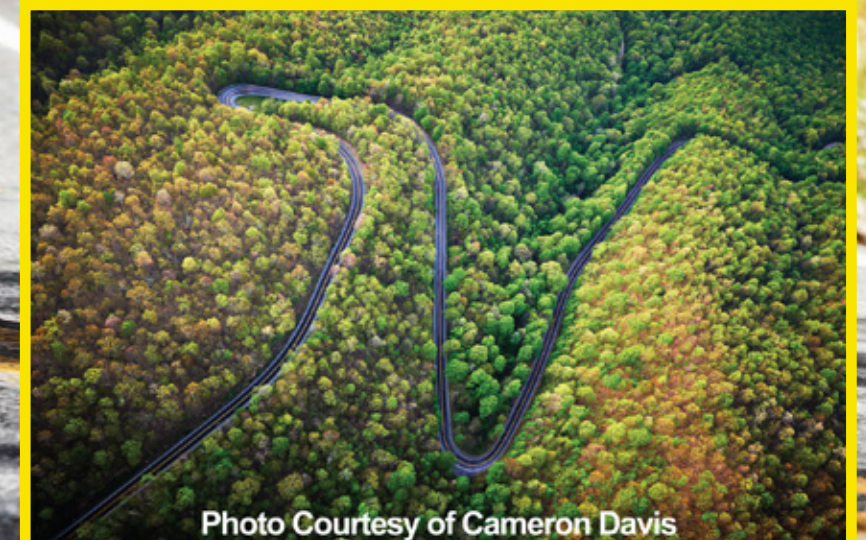
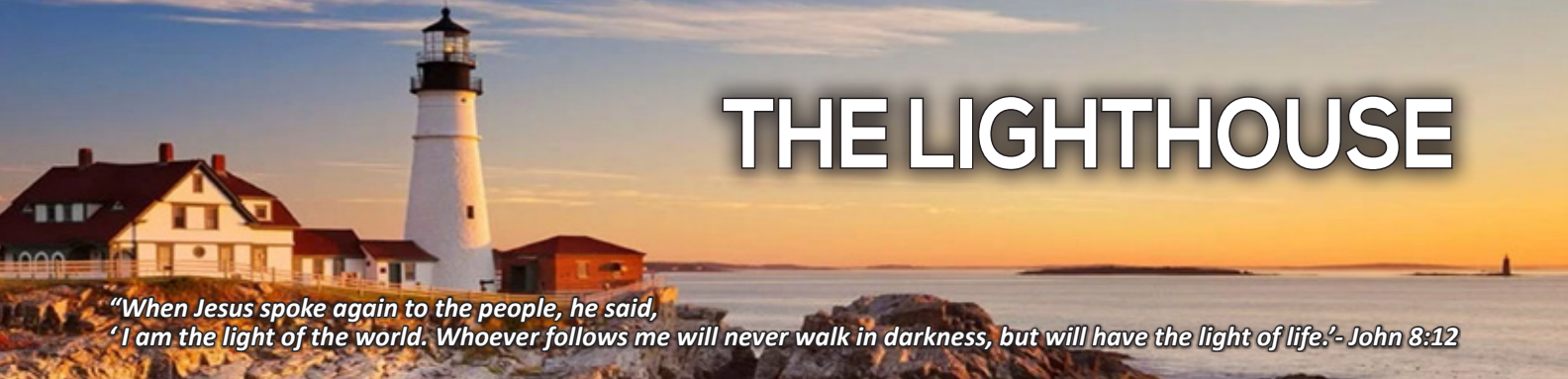


Photo Courtesy of Cameron Davis

Motorcycle & Sports Car Travel Routes



What is it like to be a Christian?

It is like being a pumpkin that is carved into a jack-o'-lantern.

God picks us from the pumpkin patch and brings us in from the field. The Bible says He selects us out of the world. We are in the world but no longer of the world. Jesus said, "As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." (John 15:19)

God washes all the "dirt" off the outside that we received from being around all the other pumpkins. All the outside influences of our former life must be cleaned up.

God carefully removes all the "yucky stuff" called "sin" from the inside. He then changes us from the inside out by the Power of His Word. That's why it is important to meet with the church and learn God's Word.

He carves a new smiling face. Our countenance is changed by the power of His presence in our life. We then become so grateful. It can even show on our face!

Finally, God puts His light inside of us to shine for all the world to see.



One Solitary Life



Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village. He worked in a carpenter's shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.

He never owned a home. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put His foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself...

While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth - His coat. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen long centuries have come and gone, and today He is a centerpiece of the human race and leader of the column of progress.

I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life.



LEADER OF THE PACK



"Leader of the Pack" was written by Ellie Greenwich, George "Shadow" Morton, and Jeff Barry. It became a number-one hit for the American girl group The Shangri-Las in 1964. The track is famously remembered as a premier example of a "splatter platters" teen tragedy song, recounting the story of a girl named Betty whose father forces her to break up with her biker boyfriend, Jimmy, leading to Jimmy's fatal motorcycle crash

Leader Of The Pack

"Is she really going out with him?
"Well, there she is, let's ask her"
"Betty, is that Jimmy's ring you're wearing?"
"Mmm-hmm"
"Gee, it must be great riding with him"
"Is he picking you up after school today?"
"Mmm-mmm"
"By the way, where did you meet him?"

I met him at the candy store
He turned around and smiled at me
You get the picture
"Yes, we see"
That's when I fell for the leader of the pack

My folks were always putting him down (down, down)
They said he came from the wrong side of town
(What you mean when you say that he came from the wrong side of town?)
They told me he was bad, but I knew he was sad
That's why I fell for the leader of the pack

One day, my dad said, "find someone new"
I had to tell my Jimmy, "we're through"
(What you mean when you say that you better go find somebody new?)
He stood there and asked me why, but all I could do was cry
I'm sorry I hurt you, the leader of the pack

He sort of smiled, then kissed me goodbye
The tears were beginning to show
As he drove away on that rainy night
I begged him to go slow, whether he heard
I'll never know (know, know, know, know, know, know, know)
Look out, look out, look out

I felt so helpless, what could I do?
Remembering all the things we'd been through
In school, they all stop and stare
I can't hide the tears, but I don't care
I'll never forget him, the leader of the pack

Ooh-ooh-ooh (gone, gone-gone-gone-gone-gone)
The leader of the pack, now he's gone (gone, gone-gone-gone-gone-gone)
The leader of the pack, now he's gone (gone, gone-gone-gone-gone-gone)
the leader of the pack, now he's gone (gone, gone-gone-gone-gone-gone)

GOOD FOR YOU

Get Your Body Ready For The Fall Time Change

For some people, it can be difficult to adjust to daylight saving time. Lessen the impact of the time change on health by preparing for it in advance.

The clock is ticking on the end of Daylight Saving Time, which takes place at 2 a.m. on the first Sunday in November. Setting our clocks back by an hour that day means the sun will set at 4:40 p.m., and it will be dark an hour earlier than we're used to.

For some people, it can be difficult to adjust to the sudden shift in daylight hours. The body's circadian rhythm, the internal clock that helps control sleep and other biological processes, can be disrupted by rapid changes — causing a host of health problems.

The health effects of the fall time change are generally less than in the spring, when clocks are moved forward one hour. The spring change has been associated with increased risk of heart attack, stroke, traffic accidents, and other injuries, fatigue, and mood changes. Rolling clocks back in the fall means an extra hour of sleep for many people, which does have its benefits. However, it can also cause issues such as sleep disruption, daytime fatigue, depression, and weight gain from changes in metabolism.

You can lessen the impact of the time change on your physical and mental health by preparing for it in advance. We offer tips that will help get your body and mind ready to “fall back.”

Gradual Change Is Key

Making gradual changes to the times you go to bed and wake up during the few days leading up to a time change is critical. This gives your circadian rhythm time to slowly adapt to the new schedule.

On the nights leading up to the fall time change, it's helpful to go to bed 15 to 20 minutes later each evening. Likewise, set your alarm clock so that you wake up 15 to 20 minutes later each morning. Here's an example of how to make the gradual change, if you normally go to bed at 10 p.m. and wake up at 6 a.m.:

- Wednesday: Go to bed at 10:20 p.m. and wake up at 6:20 a.m.
- Thursday: Go to bed at 10:40 p.m. and wake up at 6:40 a.m.
- Friday: Go to bed at 11:00 p.m. and wake up at 7:00 a.m.

On Saturday night, set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed. Then go to bed at 10 p.m., like you normally would, and wake up at your usual time of 6:00 a.m. Your body will already be on the new schedule, and you'll avoid waking up too early. It also helps to adjust your meal times during the days leading up to the time change.



If you have kids, don't forget to gradually adjust their schedules. Let them stay up later in the evening and sleep later in the morning. They should feel less drowsy once the clocks are set back an hour and be better prepared for school on Monday morning.

Gradually adjusting your sleep schedule can also ease the return to Daylight Saving Time in the spring. To prepare for setting our clocks forward by one hour, you'll want to go to bed and wake up 15-20 minutes earlier each day, in the three or four days before the time change.

Other Helpful Tips

In conjunction with gradually adjusting your sleep and meal schedule, here are some additional things you can do to help your body adapt:

Get extra sunlight. The circadian rhythm is driven by our exposure to daylight, so spending more time outside in the days following a time change will ease the transition. Plan some outside activities Sunday morning after the time change to help realign your circadian rhythm. If you can't get outside, sitting near a window will be beneficial as well.

Take it easy for a few days. People often experience daytime drowsiness after a time change because of the disruption to their sleep patterns. Plan for this in advance by keeping your schedule light on the Sunday and Monday after the time change. Also, try to avoid long drives on those days to prevent a drowsy driving accident.

Practice good sleep hygiene. You should always practice good sleep hygiene, but it's even more important to prioritize sleep hygiene on the nights before a time change. Adjusting to a new schedule is easier if you're well-rested.

Take a nap. Normally, you should avoid napping during the day if it interferes with your nighttime sleep. However, a quick nap may be helpful in the days following a time change, if you are experiencing significant drowsiness because your sleep patterns have been disrupted. Limit naps to 20 minutes and don't take them in the late afternoon or evening.

Avoid caffeine late in the day. Caffeine can stay in your system for more than 10 hours, which means consuming foods and drinks with caffeine late in the day can make it harder for you to get to sleep. Don't drink coffee after 2 p.m.



Wear a sleep mask. If you don't usually wear a sleep mask, you might want to try one for a few days after a time change. Blocking out the light can help you avoid waking up too early.



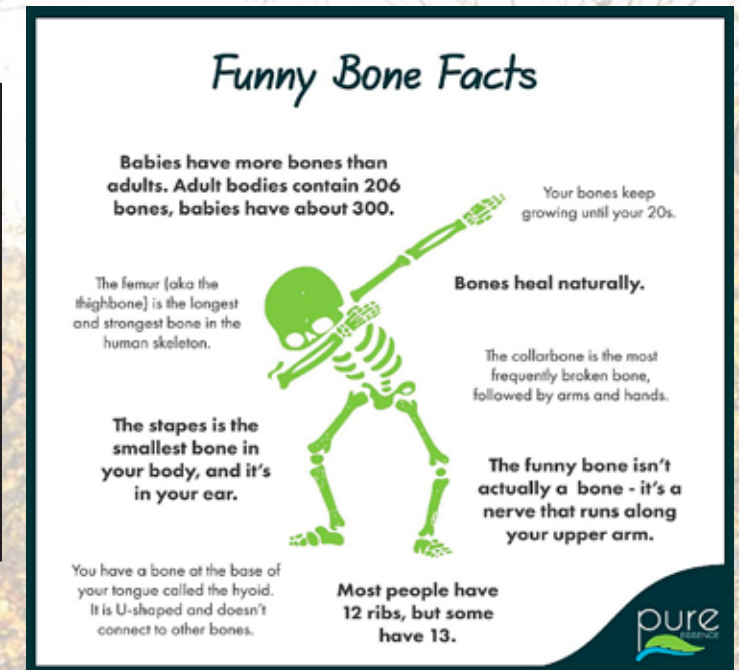
Exercise to boost mood. Exercise releases chemicals in your brain that make you feel better and boost your mood. Getting plenty of exercise on the days after the fall time change will help counter any negative feelings you have about it getting dark earlier.

Helping You Move Forward

Shifting our clocks by an hour only happens twice a year, thankfully. Many people feel tired and out of sorts after a time change until their body adjusts to the new schedule. A few people can experience serious health problems. We hope these tips will help you minimize the impact of the time change on your health and keep you moving forward instead of falling behind!



Source: <https://www.bluecrossvt.org/health-community/blog/listing/get-your-body-ready-fall-time-change>



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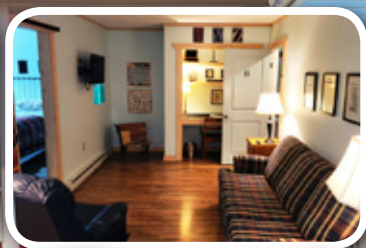
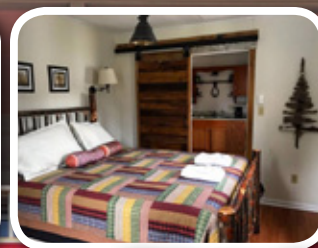
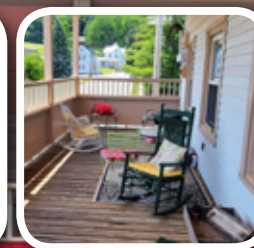
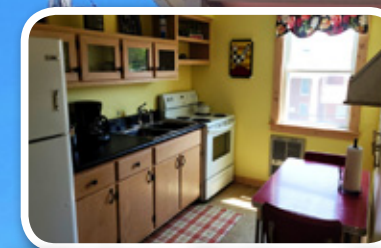
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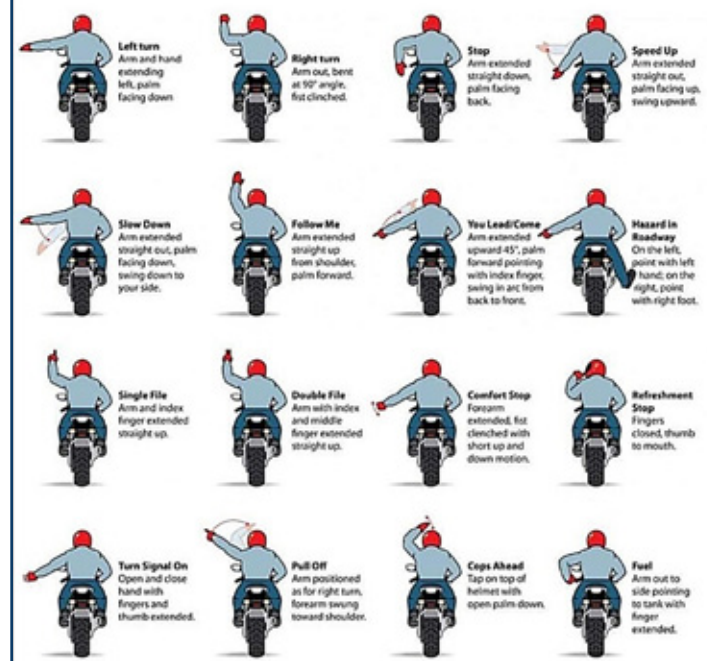
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CAN YOU SEE ME NOW?



Wearing all black while riding a motorcycle has long been a popular look for motorcycle riders. Although it may look “cool” to some folks, it’s actually one of the most dangerous ways to dress because it significantly reduces your visibility to other drivers. Studies on motorcycle safety show that dark or black clothing blends into asphalt and shadows, increasing collision risks by up to 47% compared to wearing bright or fluorescent colors. Because many motorcycle accidents happen when drivers fail to see a rider, low-visibility gear removes an easy way to stand out. With shorter daylight hours, it’s especially important to be extra visible while riding in the dark.

Black fabric absorbs more radiant solar heat when you are stopped in traffic, raising the risk of fatigue or dehydration on hot days

How to Be Seen on a Motorcycle: Visibility Tips That Help Prevent Collisions

The best way to be seen on a motorcycle is to combine bright, reflective riding gear, proper lane positioning, an illuminated headlight, and defensive riding techniques. While these measures improve your visibility, never assume another driver has seen you—especially at intersections where many motorcycle collisions occur.

One of the most common statements made after a collision involving a motorcycle is, “I didn’t see the motorcycle.” Most drivers aren’t intentionally ignoring riders. Instead, they simply fail to recognize a motorcycle in time to avoid a conflict.

Making yourself more visible—or conspicuous—cannot guarantee that every driver will notice you. It does, however, increase the likelihood that you’ll be recognized early enough for another road user to make a safe decision. One of the most effective ways to improve your conspicuity is by choosing a lane position that makes you easier to see.

Why Motorcycle Visibility Matters

A motorcycle presents a much smaller visual target than a passenger vehicle. Drivers scanning an intersection or preparing to turn often expect to see cars and trucks, not motorcycles. Safety researchers describe many of these crashes as “looked but failed to see” collisions.

We often refer to these as SMIDSY (“Sorry Mate, I Didn’t See You”) crashes. Understanding why they occur helps riders appreciate why visibility and defensive riding must work together.

Wear Bright and Reflective Riding Gear



- Dark riding gear may look good, but it offers little contrast against asphalt, trees or other traffic.
- Wear fluorescent yellow, orange or lime colors to improve daytime visibility.
- Choose jackets, pants, gloves and boots with reflective material for riding after dark.
- A brightly colored helmet often attracts attention before the rest of the motorcycle becomes visible.
- Fluorescent materials are most effective during daylight, while reflective materials work best when headlights illuminate them at night.

Choose a Lane Position That Improves Visibility



Your lane position should do more than avoid hazards—it should help other drivers see you.

- Avoid riding directly behind large vehicles where you disappear from view.
- Stay out of other drivers’ blind spots whenever practical.
- Adjust your position within the lane to improve your visibility through intersections and in mirrors.
- Maintain adequate following distance so drivers ahead have more opportunity to notice you.

Use the Entire Lane

Motorcyclists are entitled to the full use of a traffic lane. Riding too close to the curb may encourage unsafe passing or lead other drivers to assume there is room to squeeze by.

Choose the lane position that provides the best visibility, the greatest margin for error, and an escape route if another road user makes a mistake.

Intersections Deserve Extra Attention

Many serious motorcycle crashes occur when another driver turns left across the rider’s path or pulls out from a side street.

As you approach an intersection:

- Reduce speed if necessary.
- Cover your brakes.
- Watch the front wheels of waiting vehicles for signs of movement and avoid lingering in blind spots as you approach the intersection.
- Don’t rely on eye contact as proof that you’ve been seen.

Maintaining a safe following distance also gives you more time to respond if traffic suddenly stops or another driver makes an unexpected maneuver.

Even when a driver looks in your direction, they may not recognize your motorcycle in time. Understanding why this happens can help you make better decisions on the road.

Visibility Is Only Part of the Solution

One of the hardest lessons for new riders is accepting that visibility is never entirely under your control. You can wear the brightest jacket available, ride with your headlight on, and choose excellent lane positions, yet another driver may still fail to recognize you.

That reality can feel unfair, but it reflects how human attention works. People often notice what they expect to see and overlook what they don’t expect, especially when they’re busy scanning for larger vehicles.

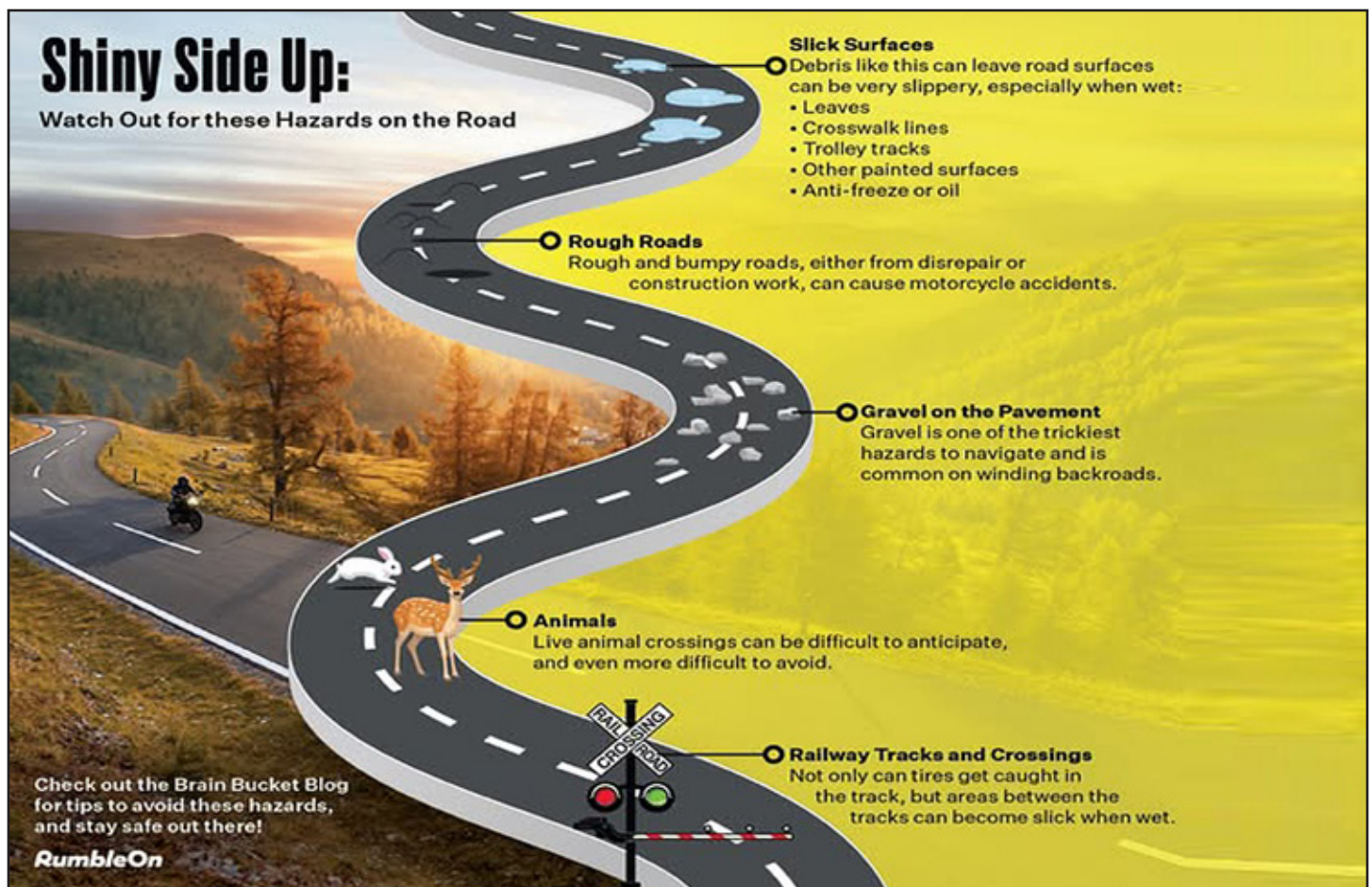
Experienced riders understand this limitation. They make themselves as visible as possible, but they also ride as though another driver may not have seen them. That mindset encourages earlier decisions, smoother riding, and more time to avoid a collision.

Improving your visibility gives other road users a better opportunity to avoid a collision—but it does not remove your responsibility to anticipate their mistakes.

Enjoy your ride and always stay safe!

Source: <https://www.drivesmartbc.ca/motorcycles/how-be-seen-motorcycle-visibility-tips-help-prevent-collisions-bc>





EASY DOES IT

WHEN IT GETS CHILLY, CHILI & SWEET CORN MUFFINS

Fall is the start of comfort food season! Although we love it any time throughout the year, 😊 as temperatures start to dip, heat things up with this simple chili that comes together in half an hour with just a few ingredients. And what better partner for chili than yummy sweet & moist cornbread! Settle in on those cold days with this delicious dynamic duo. It's like getting a big warm hug. Let's get to cookin!...

CHILI - Here's all you need:

- 1 pound lean (80/20) ground beef
- 1 (15-ounce can) tomato sauce
- 1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can chili beans, not drained
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- salt & black pepper to taste

Here's all you need to do:

- Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir ground beef in the hot skillet until browned and crumbly, 5 to 7 minutes.
- Stir in kidney beans, chili beans, and tomato sauce. Bring to a boil and stir in chili powder. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Top with shredded cheddar cheese, bacon bits, sour cream, chives, or any topping you prefer.

SWEET CORN MUFFINS - Here's all you need:

- ½ cup (1 stick) melted butter, lightly salted or salted
- 1 can (15-ounce) of creamed-style corn
- 1 can (15-ounce) whole kernel corn, drained
- 2 Tbsp sugar (or honey if you prefer)
- 2 (8.5-ounce) boxes of Jiffy Corn Muffin Mix
- 1 cup (8-ounces) sour cream (full fat)

Here's all you need to do:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Prepare a muffin tin by spraying with PAM baking spray or lining with cupcake liners
- In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well, making sure there are no lumps.
- Fill each cup with ½ to ¾ full of mixture & bake for 20 -25 min. Edges should be golden brown.
- Serve warm with butter & enjoy! Bon appetit! ❤️

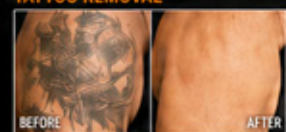


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Things That Make You Go



What? → That
Where? → There
When? → Then

Why is there a 'D' in 'fridge', but not in 'refrigerator'?

Why are goods sent by *ship* called CARGO, and those sent by *truck* SHIPMENT?

Why do doctors "practice" medicine?

English is funny – a 'fat chance' and a 'slim chance' are the same thing

Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.

If you replace "W" with "T" in the words "What, Where and When", you get the answer to each one....



A boy told me
I rode like a girl.
I told him if he rode
a little faster,
he could too.



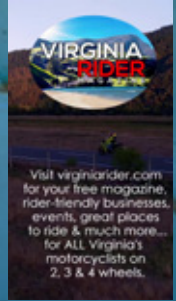
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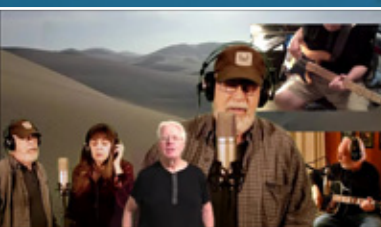
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