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from the editor's desk

Welcome friends! It's so great having you here with us for another edition of Virginia Rider. We can't believe that the year has flown by so quickly. Many people think that the riding season ends after Halloween but I have to say that more & more riders are saddling up during the late fall & winter months & loving it! Other than ice & snow on the road, what would keep you from riding if you were bundled up nice & warm? Over the next couple of months we'll be bringing you lots of useful information that may turn you from a "fair weather rider" to an "ALL season" one!

This time of year often brings thoughts of reflection & remembering times from throughout the year that we're thankful for. We try to not lose track of the time and to be thankful every day. We all get so busy with our lives and jobs that days turn into weeks, weeks turn into months & here we are in the final months of 2023 wondering, where has all the time gone? Virginia Rider has come such a long way since we first started in 2019 & even with the bump in the road (covid), we made it through the storm and are still rolling along.

I'd like to take a moment to say THANK YOU from the deepest part of my heart to some truly amazing people....the angels in my life, both my family & friends & my staff, who I consider to be a part of both of those. When Virginia Rider was born, it was very scary starting a brand new magazine even though I had been publishing magazines for other brands for nearly 15 years at that point. But I believed in what I was doing & most of all, I had a few people who believed in it as well. We love our motorcycle communities & to be able to publish an independent free magazine for Virginia motorcyclists was a dream come true. I couldn't have done it without these special people.

A huge THANK YOU to my amazing staff, who I've worked with on my former publications and they have been an integral part of Virginia Rider... Warren, who has been my incredible layout person and graphic designer for over 18 wonderful years....the dynamic duo, Marc & Rose, who have done such a phenomenal job hosting our Great Places To Ride feature for so many years.... John Peterson, who has been the awesome host to our Bike Savers feature since Virginia Rider began. What would I do without you all??? You all are an amazingly talented staff who are also great friends, my right hand (& sometimes my left too!) I LOVE you guys!

These are the people who had faith in me, kept the encouraging words flowing, & they never gave up on me. I would have to write a book to share all of the incredible stories with the constant peaks & valleys of my life as a magazine editor & all of the angels who watched over me. I am truly blessed to know such wonderful people & to have them in my life. Thank you for all the Love & support.

I'm SO grateful for ALL of the rider-friendly businesses who have supported us with their advertising throughout many years, especially my old friends from Tom McGrath's Motorcycle Law Group, Tidewater Motorcycles, ABATE of Virginia, Sherri Parker Memorial Poker Run & Bike Show, South Central Bike Fest, Lee's Garage & Allstar Lodging..all who have supported all of my magazines throughout the years since I started this journey back in 2005. I couldn't have done it without you!

THANK YOU to all of our readers – YOU are the reason that we do what we do & we enjoy every minute of it! We look forward to bringing you another year of fun & excitement on the road for 2024!

Enjoy your holiday feasts & eats with your family & friends. We can smell those pumpkin pies & Christmas cookies baking already!

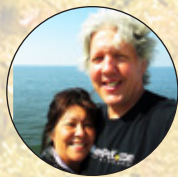
Love is the reason for the season. We'll see you next time around!

Stay warm, stay safe & stay awesome,

Kelly



IN THIS ISSUE



GREAT PLACES TO RIDE Marc: Robert Redford's character in "Three Days of the Condor" described November as, "Not autumn, not winter, in-between." For many riders, this is the time for storing our bikes until next year's spring. I cringe at the thought of it. So, please enjoy some pics from our colder rides over the years. They were all memorable adventures.



COOL vs. SAFE It's the Cool Factor that draws us to making stupid decisions, like smoking when we were teenagers, or donning no helmet at all when we hop on a bicycle. Something weird happens in the frontal lobe, the part of the brain that controls judgment, when we are presented with a safe vs. cool decision.

GOOD FOR YOU

GOOD FOR YOU As you gather around the table with family & friends during the holidays most people tend to "pig out". It's good to know that if you have any of the following foods on your table this holiday season, you should feel good about the fact that you're also improving your health so give yourself a big pat on the back in the name of healthy eating. Seconds are officially approved!

FIT FOR THE ROAD

FIT FOR THE ROAD One of the gifts of the Fall time change is that it encourages an earlier bedtime for many people, which allows the body added rest and repair time. Riders need a good night's sleep to restore their bodies and be all they can be physically and mentally when they head out on their bikes.



RIDE LIFE HACKS The riding life presents some unique challenges as well as opportunities to make use of the resources all around us to "hack" some common issues riders face. Here are some helpful tips & suggestions that we found from fellow riders who seem to have some great ideas... but please, use at your own discretion.



THE LIGHTHOUSE There are times when awe and gratitude overwhelm us, whether we're seeing a sunset, watching a child laugh, riding with the wind in our faces or just appreciating a special moment. These are the moments when we just want to thank God for the good things in our lives, and praise God for the amazing world around us.



TOM MCGRATH'S MOTORCYCLE LAW GROUP

The clothing you wear when you're riding is a matter of personal preference. For many riders it depends on the weather, what's most comfortable and the level of protection they want while on their motorcycle. The majority of frequent riders aren't deterred by weather, which is why there are a lot of gear options for motorcyclists facing all types of temperature extremes.

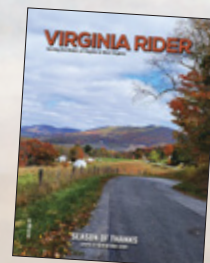
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ON OUR COVER

The beauty of the fall season is in full swing. It's time to give thanks for the many wonderful places available to us for riding and enjoying.



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2023 MOTORCYCLE EVENTS CALENDAR

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Start planning your riding season adventures today!!!

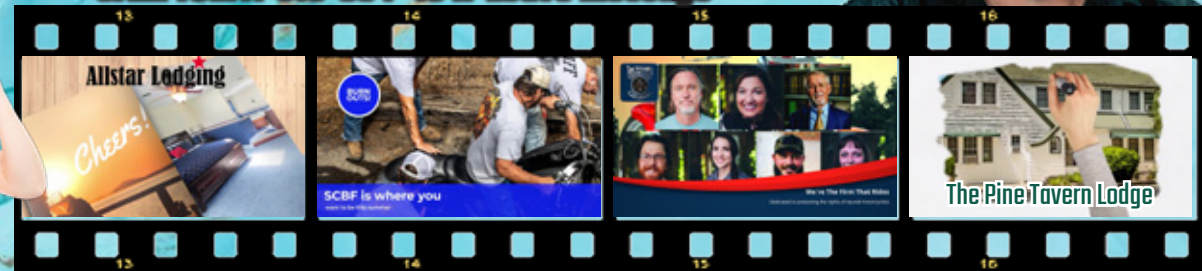


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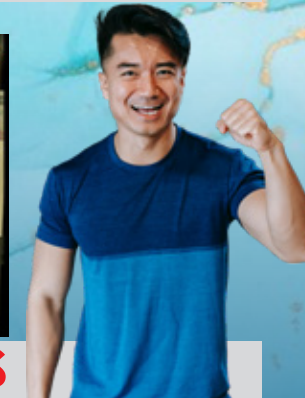
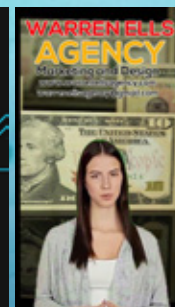
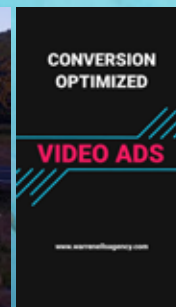
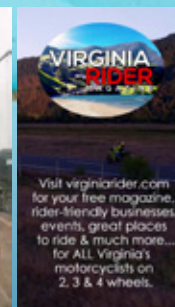
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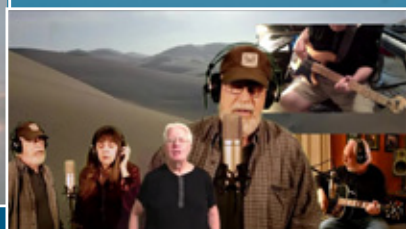
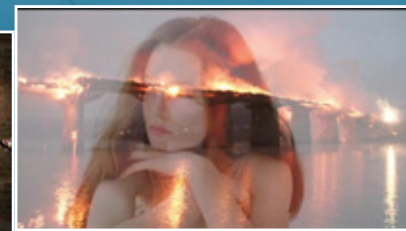
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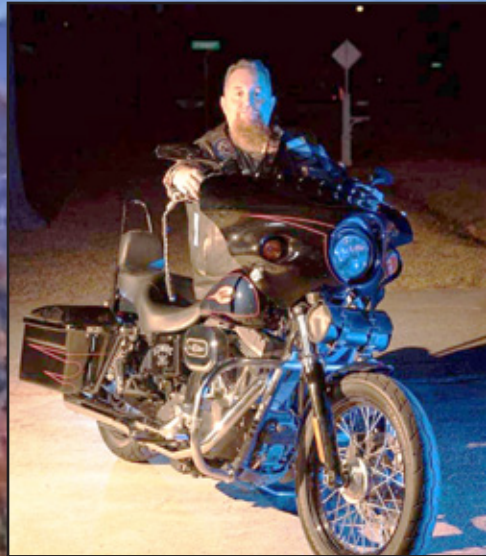
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GREAT PLACES TO RIDE

The Other Season

with Marc Ritchie and Rose Grant

Robert Redford's character in "Three Days of the Condor" described November as, "Not autumn, not winter, in-between." For many riders, this is the time for storing our bikes until next year's spring. I cringe at the thought of it. But I can understand why so many hang up their jackets and gloves for more inviting weather. I mean, who wants to ride in cloudy and 50s on a good day, just to stare at bare trees, and likely never feel as warm as when they left the house? Before heated gear, I might have done the same.

It's not an easy proposition for many. First, there is the expense. It ain't cheap. And not only will you need a liner, but also gloves. And then there are all of those wires to hook up to your bike if you decide to shy away from the remote battery type. These may be deal-breakers, but not entirely insurmountable. Chances are, you ride with someone who is completely at home with installing a power cord, and happy to do it. And think about all the gas you'll save, especially if you commute, and drive an SUV or pickup to justify the cost.

There are other factors besides the cold. One thing many might find outside their comfort zones is riding by themselves much of the time since many of their crew have parked their bikes for the year. And that's just recreation. Imagine leaving in the dark for work, and returning long after sunset, seeing more deer than other bikes. Yeah, it might be best to take the Jeep, especially if you work in a place like McLean or Arlington and live 50 miles away. No? Well, by all means, please keep reading.

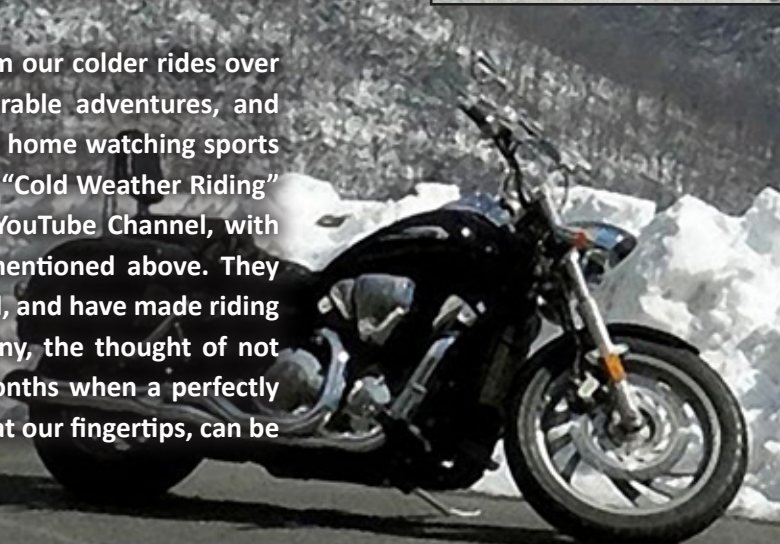
Then there are all of the other pieces of the puzzle to consider gear-wise, that can be the difference between a comfortable ride or a miserable one. Many draw the line when it comes to a full face helmet. But one with a chin curtain, paired with a neck gaiter and a jacket with an adequate collar goes a long, long way to keeping your head and torso warm. And socks, if you don't go the heated route, your feet will still be happy with some thick wool ones with insulated boots.

I ditched my chaps a long time ago for a set of textile riding pants and couldn't be happier. Many brands package versatile features such as: a removeable liner, reflective piping, waterproof shell, venting, knee and hip armor and padding. These features also work quite well on a jacket. And the best thing about the pants is, your happy place stays warm. And whatever you wear around the house, can be what you are already wearing under your gear when you take it off.

Of course, a properly setup bike cannot be left out of the equation. Having ridden my fair share of miles on a naked cruiser on cold, dark days, I couldn't wait to get my butt on a touring bike, especially riding two-up. At first, I tried turning mine into one: fitting it with a windshield, bags, backrest, luggage rack, and LED lights. I always thought they'd be too heavy and slow, but after I finally rode one, I was sold. It doesn't really matter which brand it is, or whether it's new or not. The market is flooded with them, especially now. Some of the spoiling improvements include: abundant storage, heated grips, seat, ABS brakes, electronic suspension and locks, and a killer stereo. Like a bear that has tasted meat, I would find it hard to go back to bugs and berries, traveling long distances this time of year.

So, what does this have to do with Great Places to Ride? Well? Everything imho. The place is in the seat, especially with Rose. Those who ride year round may find this preaching to the choir. While I may be guilty of that to some, I wish I had discovered these things a long time ago. There are some paradigms that have outlasted their usefulness in the motorcycle world of late. At or near the top of that list is a "Grandpa Bike." And yeah, a 1200 CC motor with a first generation fairing and an AM/FM radio with the option for a tape deck might apply. But not anything coming out of the factories the last several years. Just ask the sports bike crowd what they thought of getting passed by a colleague and his K1600 at a recent track day in NC.

So, please enjoy some pics from our colder rides over the years. They were all memorable adventures, and certainly preferred over sitting at home watching sports on TV. Also, be sure to check out "Cold Weather Riding" on our Virginia Rider Magazine YouTube Channel, with links to some of the products mentioned above. They are all things we use or have used, and have made riding much more enjoyable. To so many, the thought of not being able to ride for several months when a perfectly capable machine is waiting right at our fingertips, can be like a prison sentence.



continued next page



And yes, there are risks and obstacles to overcome. And cost is at the top of many enthusiast's list. But when faced with the alternative, what I used to say when I sold bikes was, "What price do you put on your freedom?"

Cheers and thanks for reading!
Marc Ritchie
Photos and my Snow Bunny: Rose Grant



Veterans Crisis Line Fact Sheet



Confidential crisis help for Veterans and their families

The Veterans Crisis Line is a toll-free, confidential resource that connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) responders.

Veterans and their loved ones can **Dial 988 then Press 1**, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat), or send a text message to **838255** to receive free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA health care.

The responders at the Veterans Crisis Line are specially trained and experienced in helping Veterans of all ages and circumstances—from Veterans coping with mental health issues that were never addressed to recent Veterans struggling with relationships or the transition back to civilian life. Veterans Crisis Line responders provide support when these and other issues—such as chronic pain, anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, anger, and even homelessness—reach a crisis point. Some of the responders are Veterans themselves and understand what Veterans and their families and friends have been through.

Since its launch in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line has answered more than 6.2 million calls and initiated the dispatch of

emergency services to callers in crisis more than 233,000 times. The Veterans Crisis Line anonymous online chat service, added in 2009, has engaged in more than 739,000 chats. In November 2011, the Veterans Crisis Line introduced a text-messaging service to provide another way for Veterans to connect with confidential, round-the-clock support and since then has responded to more than 253,000 texts.

In 2011, the National Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline was renamed the Veterans Crisis Line to encourage Veterans and their families and friends, who may be the first to realize a Veteran is in emotional distress, to reach out for support when issues reach a crisis point, even if it is not a suicidal crisis.

As of July 16, 2022, Veterans and their loved ones in the U.S. can Dial 988 then Press 1 to reach the Veterans Crisis Line.

VA is working to make sure that all Veterans and their loved ones are aware of the Veterans Crisis Line. To reach as many Veterans as possible, VA is coordinating with communities and partner groups nationwide, including community-based organizations, Veterans Service Organizations, and local health care providers, to let Veterans and their loved ones know that support is available whenever, if ever, they need it.

Whether you're a Veteran or a friend or family member concerned about one, confidential assistance is only a call, click, or text away.

For more information about the Veterans Crisis Line, visit [VeteransCrisisLine.net](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net).
For more information about VA's mental health resources, visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov.



Confidential crisis chat at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](https://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat) or text **838255**



U.S. Department
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DRESS RIGHT FOR YOUR NEXT MOTORCYCLE ROAD TRIP

The clothing you wear when you're riding is a matter of personal preference. For many riders it depends on the weather, what's most comfortable and the level of protection they want while on their motorcycle. The majority of frequent riders aren't deterred by weather, which is why there are a lot of gear options for motorcyclists facing all types of temperature extremes.

Winter Riding Clothes

One good thing about the cold weather during late fall and winter is you have an excuse to wear a lot of protective clothing. Leather jackets, riding gloves and jeans are standard clothing for many riders at all times of year, but that gear can be especially comfortable when the temperature is on the brisk side.

There's an incentive to wear warm clothes that aren't too thick or bulky when you're riding, as bundling up too much can potentially restrict your range of motion. Puffy jackets or too many layers can make it difficult to make quick, precise motions at a moment's notice to avoid a potential collision.

Modern science and specially designed thermal textiles have been a real boon for riders. These advanced materials trap body heat and wick away moisture. There are a variety of clothing types, like thermal socks and base layers, that you can wear underneath your normal riding gear.

- Some common cold-weather motorcycle gear tips include:
- Wearing your rain suit if you have one
 - Getting a solid pair of GORE-TEX boots or boots made of a similar waterproof, breathable material
 - Using waterproof rain gloves
 - Wearing a warm balaclava, neck gaiter or ski mask
 - Carrying chap stick or lip balm if the cold, dry air causes your lips to crack

Is Heated Gear Worth It?

A lot of riders who like going on road trips (and those who commute on their motorcycles daily) during the fall and winter, especially those who live up north or in high elevations, swear by heated gloves, vests and jackets. Heated gear isn't as expensive as you may assume. There are heated jackets and gloves available for as little as about \$150 to \$250. You can also purchase relatively affordable heated jacket liners that can fit into your existing gear. Much higher priced heated clothing options

are available if you're ready to drop \$600 or more on a jacket, but if you're looking for something utilitarian that will get the job done you can find heated gloves, jackets or liners that won't break the bank.

Summer Motorcycle Riding Clothes

If you do want additional motorcycle accident injury protection and comfort in triple-digit temperatures there are an array of mesh, perforated and airflow-optimized jackets and riding pants that provide both armor and breathability. These jackets and gloves are available at an array of price points. Higher end stuff will undoubtedly set you back a few hundred dollars, but there are some mesh jacket options available for around \$100.

Moisture-wicking shirts and underwear, ventilated gloves and boots and mesh or vented jackets can still provide better protection than a t-shirt even though they are made of lighter weight and more breathable materials than heavier armors or leather.

Some riders prefer full-length gloves and long-sleeve shirts or jackets for added sun protection. Light-colored clothing is usually a plus for reflecting heat rather than absorbing it.

Base layers that are both stretchy and snug fitting also provide a bit of compression, which promotes better circulation. You might be surprised how much the light compression can help you feel more alert and stave off fatigue. If what you're wearing helps you stay more alert, you may also feel less inclined to consume a lot of caffeine, which will help prevent caffeine-induced dehydration.

Another piece of gear that will help stave off dehydration are the hydration packs popular with hikers and runners. If you want to minimize stops on your ride, these little backpacks can be a lifesaver.

Some riders also like racing gear, like motorsports one-piece mesh suits, for their simplicity, strength and breathability. These suits cover your whole body, so you don't have to worry about wearing a bunch of extra layers or other protective clothing if you don't want to. The mesh versions of these one-piece suits also provide great ventilation and protection from sunburns.

What you wear when you ride is up to your personal preference. There aren't really laws requiring you to wear leather jackets or jeans, so wear what makes you comfortable from both a temperature and safety standpoint.

Road Trip Gear

Riders embarking on long road trips, especially cross-country trips that will include a lot of environment and elevation changes, may need to be prepared for both hot and cold temperatures. Packing light and dressing in layers is always a plus. A lot of your riding clothes can function in both hot and cold weather scenarios – just peel off layers as things get hotter and put some back on when the temperatures drop.

The more clothes you have on you the less room they'll take up in your saddlebags, just don't wear so many layers that your movements are restricted.

It's also a good idea to keep some kind of waterproof nylon or polyethene bag in your saddlebags so you can separate wet top layers you remove from your dry clothes.

No Amount of Protection Will Prevent All Motorcycle Injuries

Protective gear may be able to reduce the severity of motorcycle accident injuries in some circumstances, but there's only so much clothing can do. If you or a loved one have been involved in a motorcycle accident while riding in Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, West Virginia or Georgia, the motorcycle accident lawyers at the Motorcycle Law Group will fight for the compensation you deserve.

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RIDE LIFE HACKS for Motorcyclists

Here's some helpful tips & suggestions that we found from fellow riders who seem to have some great ideas... but please, use at your own discretion

STOP YOUR BIKE FROM FALLING OVER



We've all seen it happen – a kickstand isn't on stable ground and the next thing you know BOOM! Your bike has fallen over. It's so easy to keep this from happening – just create a barrier. There are products you can buy for this purpose, but to be honest you can use just about anything to give the stand a little more stability. Crushed pop can, credit card, hotel key, hockey puck – take your pick.

BABY WIPES...FOR EVERYTHING



I know what you're thinking – weird piece of advice. But trust me, it's a good tip! Baby wipes can clean literally anything, and on a motorcycle that can be the difference between life & death. As any experienced rider knows, it is extremely important to keep your bike AND your riding gear in good condition. Baby wipes are a perfect solution to clean your bike in a pinch, and they are also great for cleaning your leathers. They'll even keep the hide moisturized and stop them from cracking.

NEWSPAPERS



When you left for your cruise with friends it was warm, right? Now you're headed home and it's downright frigid. Stuff some newspaper in your jacket! They're easily available at almost every gas station, and lining your coat with newspaper will help cut the wind and also act as insulation.

ALSO.... If you were forced to drive on a wet road and got your boots wet, you don't need to air-dry them to remove the moisture and unpleasant odors. Instead, simply put the newspapers in your boots and leave them. To make things even better, replace newspapers every couple of hours, and your boots will be moisture-free and odor-free after one night.

INVEST IN A BUNGEE NET



You can strap anything to your bike with a bungee net. Seriously – anything. A bungee net is the cheapest, easiest and safest solution to carrying something on your bike. Doesn't matter the shape or size, and they only cost around \$15!

PREVENT WATER ON YOUR VISOR WITH A POTATO



Potatoes are starchy. Water doesn't like starch. Cut a potato, rub the inside over your visor and you won't have to worry about water droplets obscuring your vision ever again. Added bonus – no chemicals to strip away any anti-fog or anti-scratch coating.

DUCT TAPE VISOR



Possibly the oldest trick in the book, but it's still worth a mention here. Put a strip of tape across the top of your helmet's visor to block the sun. There is nothing worse (or more potentially dangerous) than blinding late evening sun directly in your eyes. When sun isn't an issue, stick the tape on the back of your helmet.

TURN TRASH BAGS INTO AN EMERGENCY RAIN GEAR



If you find yourself in a situation where you don't have proper rain gear and you don't want to get soaked, you can improvise with trash bags. Simply tear the holes for your head and arms and turn an ordinary trash bag into a windproof and rainproof jacket, which will not only protect you from the rain but also preserve your body temperature. It may look ridiculous to other people, but believe us, you'll be grateful to have it on you.

ZIP TIES



They won't take significant space, but they can come in handy and you'll be grateful to have them. From securing cables that may come loose to fixing other pieces of your gear or securing the luggage, there are no limits when it comes to zip ties.

There are probably plenty more great ideas and hacks floating around that could help make your life as a rider just a little bit better. If YOU have any rider hacks that you'd like to share, please drop us a line at virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com.

Stay safe out there & enjoy your ride!



If Yuo're Albe To Raed Tihs, You Might Have Typoglycemia

Our brains process all the letters of a word simultaneously and uses the letters as context for each other. This is why we also can read words that have NUMB3RS 1NST3AD OF L3773RS.

The numbers' similar appearance to letters, as well as the overall context, overpowers their individual status as numbers.

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53RV35 7O PR0V3
H0W 0UR M1ND5 C4N
D0 4M4Z1NG 7H1NG5!
1MPR3551V3 7H1NG3!
1N 7H3 B3G1NN1NG
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Marc Ritchie's "When Magic Fills The Air" is indeed filled with "Extraordinary Tales on Two Wheels". Marc, along with Rose's photographs, brings unique and fascinating glimpses into the magical world of motorcycling.

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HIGHLAND COUNTY, VIRGINIA



Located at the western edge of Virginia in the Alleghany Mountains, Highland County enjoys the highest mean elevation of any county east of the Mississippi River. Called "Virginia's Little Switzerland," with roughly 2300 residents, it is also one of the least populated eastern counties. The region is named Virginia's Western Highlands and is part of the Shenandoah Valley region of Virginia. Monterey, the county seat, is located 45 miles west of the intersection of Interstates 81 and 64 in Staunton. The annual Highland Maple Festival draws upwards of 50,000 visitors and is designated a "Local Legacy" by the Library of Congress. Highland County is the site of The Battle of McDowell, the first victory of Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign. The county is 416 square miles of spectacular mountain terrain.

Motorcycling

Highland County's quiet, winding roads welcome motorcyclists from around the country. Check out our Sweet Rides Brochure featuring local motorcycle routes. For a longer adventure, the Mid Atlantic Backcountry Discovery Route travels through the eastern portion of Highland County in Section 3. Need a place to camp? The Allegheny MotoCamp is a campground for motorcyclists just a few miles south of Monterey. No matter where you go, enjoy the freedom and solitude our mountains have to offer!

Highland County offers a wide variety of activities to experience elevated mountain living. After just one visit, don't be surprised by that feeling to return! With scenic views, lodging, shopping, restaurants and so much more, explore all of the wonderful offerings that this amazing county in Virginia has waiting for you. Visit <https://www.highlandcounty.org/> to start your adventures to a great destination.

Photos by Marc Ritchie



THE LIGHTHOUSE

"Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things." —Psalms 107:8-9

A Heartwarming Thanksgiving Story

Do you see what I see....



A blind boy sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He held up a sign which said: "I am blind, please help."

There were only a few coins in the hat.



A man was walking by. He took a few coins from his pocket and dropped them into the hat. He then took the sign, turned it around, and

wrote some words. He put the sign back so that everyone who walked by would see the new words.

Soon the hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the blind boy. That afternoon the man who had changed the sign came to see how things were.

The boy recognized his footsteps and asked, "Were you the one who changed my sign this morning? What did you write?"

The man said, "I only wrote the truth. I said what you said but in a different way." I wrote: "Today is a beautiful day but I cannot see it."

Both signs told people that the boy was blind. But the first sign simply said the boy was blind. The second sign told people that they were so lucky that they were not blind. Should we be surprised that the second sign was more effective?



Moral of the Story: Be thankful for what you have. Be creative. Be innovative. Think differently and positively. When life gives you a 100 reasons to cry, show life that you have 1000

reasons to smile. Face your past without regret. Handle your present with confidence. Prepare for the future without fear. Keep the faith and drop the fear.

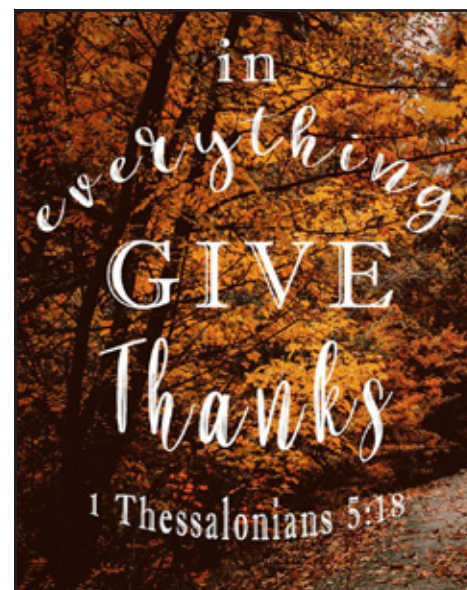
The most beautiful thing is to see a person smiling. And even more beautiful, is knowing that you are the reason behind it!

~~~

There are times when awe and gratitude overwhelm us, whether we're seeing a sunset, watching a child laugh, riding with the wind in our faces or just appreciating a special moment. These are the moments when we just want to thank God for the good things in our lives, and praise God for the amazing world around us.

"It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things that you lack."  
— Germany Kent

Wishing you every blessing of this bountiful season. May the blessings of Thanksgiving fill your heart and home with joy everyday.!!



 **Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

**24/7, confidential crisis support  
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loved ones**



**“  
JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE IT  
DOESN'T MEAN IT'S NOT THERE.**

**If you are a veteran in crisis or know of a veteran in crisis contact  
the Veterans Crisis Line to speak to a trained responder 24/7.**





# IT'S COOL TO BE SAFE

The first night of my rider training course, the instructor asked the class: “What color helmet are you going to buy?” Three-quarters of the class said black. Then he said that’s the worst color possible because it’s the same color as asphalt. The most common thing a driver says to a motorcyclist lying on the road after being wiped out is “Sorry, man. I didn’t see you!” When the trick to staying alive is being visible, it would seem a no-brainer, so to speak, to get a colorful helmet.

What color is the instructor’s helmet? Black, he admitted. What color is mine? Black.

Yeah, it’s the Cool Factor that draws us to making stupid decisions, like smoking when we were teenagers, or donning no helmet at all when we hop on a bicycle. Something weird happens in the frontal lobe, the part of the brain that controls judgment, when we are presented with a safe vs. cool decision. It’s like the neuropathways short-circuit to cool, by-passing all the good reasons for choosing safe.

Let’s admit something. Motorcycles are cool. They’re fun, sure, but they are also pretty cool and part of the attraction of riding is that extra attention we get on the road. Drivers stare, pedestrians turn, dudes nod, kids wave. Suddenly we’re special, and all we had to do was buy and ride this dangerous machine. Now why would we want to pull the red carpet out from underneath our boots by sporting a hi-viz helmet?

But it’s not just about the helmet. On one of my first rides in road practice I saw cruise through my peripheral vision at 120 clicks what appeared to be two naked obese people on a Harley. I did a double-take and it turns out they were wearing swimwear, she rockin’ a string bikini. My imagination flashed to what all that flesh would look like if they ever went down. Don’t they know that the implement for removing gravel from under flesh is a wire brush? Not cool.

Or there are the guys on sport bikes with their T-shirts blowing half up their backs, riders with no gloves (even a tip-over at parking lot speed will take flesh down to the bone), passengers in flip-flops, bare arms, legs, etc. etc. Like being in the Canadian bush in June, any exposed skin is potential disaster. Why do we take such risks in the interests of being cool?

Why did I choose a black helmet? Honestly, because it was 30% off and all the store had in stock, and 30% of \$800 is not nothing. I used the store credit to buy kevlar jeans which completed my gear (I already had jacket, gloves and boots) from fingertips to toes, so I know if I do go down I’m at least protected to some degree from road rash. Then I went looking online for hi-viz stickers I could add to the helmet. Not all reflective stickers are the same, I discovered, and the ones I

bought comply with NFPA requirements; if they’re good enough to reflect in a dark and smokey building, they’re good enough to illuminate me in a dark tunnel. And being fluorescent yellow-green, they are pretty eye-catching even in daylight. No one is going to have the excuse they didn’t see me.

“You won’t find any stickers on my helmet,” one of the younger riders in my club said. Maybe you have to be over 40, already resigned to the loss of a good portion your coolness, before safety starts to make sense. Maybe it’s because you start to value the years you have left all the more that you want all of them and are willing to trade a little coolness to shift the odds that you will. Maybe it’s how you define “cool” that shifts.

When I see riders in shorts and T-shirts, I can’t help thinking “Amateur Hour”; serious riders wear ATGATT (All the Gear All the Time). Besides, my Joe Rocket leather jacket with its CE approved shoulder pads makes me look like the football player I never was, and the knuckle armor of my Five gloves turns me into James Caan in Rollerball. Now that’s cool!



VIRGINIA RIDER MAGAZINE

Source: <https://650thumper.blog/2016/06/05/safe-vs-cool/>

**Fool's Gear**

- HEAD:** Considered precious by sensible people, never exposed by the gear. When fully in view, allows immediate identification of unsafe persons and enables others to help. Hard hat rider education who is right.
- EYES, EARS AND FACE:** Exposure leads to scattered eyes, noise distraction, scattered, and distracting impacts from bugs and road debris.
- HANDS:** An natural tool for things. Known to lock into correct position when exposed towards road generally avoided to scattered debris.
- BARE LIMBS:** A phenomenon seen only to riders who think it's other people who crash. Subject to ridicule in riding circles.
- FLIP FLOPS:** Terminology for what sandals, toes and feet do upon contact with road surfaces, cloth shoes, loose pedals, no footrests.
- BOTTOM LINE:** Fool's gear identifies an unsafe rider. Users have no sound understanding, vehicle and injury while gaining valuable skills and knowledge by completing an MSF RiderCourse™.

**Cool Gear**

- HELMET:** Most important piece of protective gear a rider can use. Protects against head injury, concussion, cold, and flying objects. Full face helmet recommended.
- FACE SHIELD:** "Saves face." Any rider who's been hit in the face by stones, insects, or debris can tell you the benefits.
- GLOVES:** Keep hands comfortable, functional, and protected. There's an infinite variety for all seasons.
- JACKET AND PANTS:** Long sleeves and sturdy trousers resist abrasion and protect against weather, dehydration, or hypothermia. Some riders wear padded gear with "body armor" for more protection. Light colors in the daytime and reflectivity at night make it easier for car drivers to see you.
- BOOTS:** Provide protection against foot and ankle injuries and give you a good grip on footrests or road surfaces.
- BOTTOM LINE:** Dress for the ride as well as for the crash. Proper riding gear allows you to enjoy the ride in comfort and helps minimize injury.

800.446.9227 or [www.msfsa.org](http://www.msfsa.org)

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# VIRGINIA RIDER

Serving the Riders of Virginia & West Virginia

All of the articles & pictures in Virginia Rider are contributed which helps us keep the magazine FREE for our readers to enjoy great content & awesome photos.

We greatly appreciate it when riders share their photos of being out on the road for our SHOTZ pages that are featured in every issue. Sometimes we are so taken by them that we will place them on our front cover! This was definitely the case when we received a picture from our own Marc Ritchie which appears on the front of our current edition. Thanks a bunch Marc for sharing your amazing photo with us!

If you have pictures that you'd like to share with us, we'd love to see them! You are welcome to email as many pics as you want, as often as you'd like. Our email address is [virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com](mailto:virginiaridermagazine@yahoo.com). We look forward to seeing your fun and adventures of the road soon!

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# EASY DOES IT

## Good Food Simply Made

### PERFECTLY EASY MASHED POTATOES

We wanted to bring you the whole festive spread in this edition but there's just not enough room on the page for all of that deliciousness. So we decided to bring you one of the ultimate costars (with the star being almost always Turkey) of just about every Holiday feast ... Mashed potatoes!

This creamy and buttery favorite side dish recipe will make it hard to stop at just one serving. Mashed veggie sides are always so yummy such as mashed sweet potato, mashed cauliflower or mashed butternut squash. But nothing beats a side of classic mashed potatoes that's ultra creamy and perfectly salted with a sprinkle of fresh herbs on top. Making mashed potatoes is pretty easy, but there are a few tricks to making this "the best" mashed potatoes you've ever had. You're only a short time away from making this delectable side dish so here we go!

**Here's all you need to do:**

- Peel and dice the potatoes. Peel the potatoes using a hand peeler (it's much easier than a straight peeler) and dice them into large chunks or cubes.
- Boil the potatoes. Fill a pot with water and bring it to a boil. Drop the potatoes in and let them cook for about 15 minutes, until they're fork tender.
- Warm the milk and butter. While the potatoes are cooking, melt the butter and milk in a saucepan until the mixture is warm. Alternatively, you could also melt and warm this mixture in the microwave. Then, drain the potatoes in a colander, place them back into the hot pot, and pour the butter milk mixture on top.
- Mix and mash. Start mashing with a hand masher until it's fluffy and creamy. If it's not creamy enough, just add a bit more milk as you go. Then, season it with salt and pepper. Remember to taste test to see if it needs more salt!

**Here's your EASY MASHED POTATOES starting line up:**

- 2 pounds russet potatoes: Starchy potatoes, like Russet potatoes, are best for creamy mashed potatoes. These brown-skinned spuds are naturally buttery and fluffy when cooked. But if you're not a fan of Russet, Yukon gold potatoes make a great alternative. They're also naturally creamy, and not quite as waxy as new potatoes.
- ½ cup milk, or more for a creamier texture: Whole milk is what makes these mashed potatoes extra creamy. The key here is to use warm milk to keep the consistency smooth and temperature of the potatoes warm. For a dairy-free option you can swap in your favorite plant-based milk (just know that it won't be quite as creamy).
- ¼ cup butter: For this recipe, it's best to stick to unsalted butter since we're mixing in salt and black pepper. Plus, unsalted butter gives you more control over how salty you want your potatoes. For a dairy-free option, use a vegan butter alternative.
- kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

**FLAVOR VARIATIONS**

Topping these creamy mashed potatoes with an extra pat of butter and a sprinkle of chopped parsley is the perfect finale! But here are a few more delicious ideas!...

Make it garlicky: Add freshly minced garlic into the warmed up milky butter so it infuses the mixture. You could also stir roasted garlic right in with the mashed potatoes towards the end.

Add bacon: Toss in crispy oven baked bacon bits, because it's never a bad idea to add more bacon, right?

Add some greens: Mix in cooked leafy greens such as cabbage or kale to turn them into colcannon (an Irish favorite). You could also chop fresh herbs and stir them in for a light and herby flavor.

Once you serve this to guests, you are sure to be on mashed potato duty for holiday meals from here on out! Have a wonderfully delicious Thanksgiving! 🍷 Bon appetit! ❤️

Source: <https://downshiftology.com/recipes/mashed-potatoes/>





# FIT FOR THE ROAD

## The Fall Time Change – Tips to Help You Adjust

*Daylight Saving Time ends the first part of November with the clocks getting turned back one hour for the remainder of the winter months and it gets dark by 5:30 PM (some areas are dark by 4:00 PM), making it feel like the “shorter” days drag on forever. And, for many people, the end of Daylight Saving time ushers in a time of depression, seasonal affective disorder (SAD), cluster headaches, autumn anxiety, and other concerns such as drowsiness and irritability. On the other hand, one of the gifts of the Fall time change is that it encourages an earlier bedtime for many people, which allows the body added rest and repair time. Riders need a good night’s sleep to restore their bodies and be all they can be physically and mentally when they head out on their bikes.*

### A Short History of Daylight Saving Time

*It was Benjamin Franklin’s idea. He actually suggested Daylight Saving Time back in 1784, as a way to economize on sunlight and burn fewer candles during winter mornings and nights; however, the practice did not become steadily official in the United States until Congress passed the Uniform Time Act in 1966, with the same intention of saving energy. Since that time, Congress has expanded the length of Daylight Saving Time three times, once in the 1970s during the country’s energy crisis, once in the 1980s, when April got brought under the daylight saving umbrella, and finally in 2007. Today, Daylight Saving Time goes from March into November.*

*“An extra yawn one morning in the springtime, an extra snooze one night in the autumn... We borrow an hour one night in April; we pay it back with golden interest five months later.”*

*Winston Churchill (about Daylight Saving Time)*

### Circadian Rhythm

Your body’s circadian rhythms tick away throughout the body every day, affecting hormones, brain wave activity, cell regeneration and other biological activities such as hunger levels and the desire for sleep. The body systems with the most prominent circadian variations are the sleep-wake cycle, the temperature regulation system, and the endocrine system (hormones). When these rhythms get thrown off-balance, even by just one hour, your body will definitely let you know.

One of the main health concerns as we adjust to the Fall time change is that many people will not, or unable to take advantage of this precious extra hour of sleep. The end result is the shift in the body’s daily sleep-wake cycle

can disrupt sleep for several days or more. Any type of disruption in restful sleep can bring down your body’s immune system.

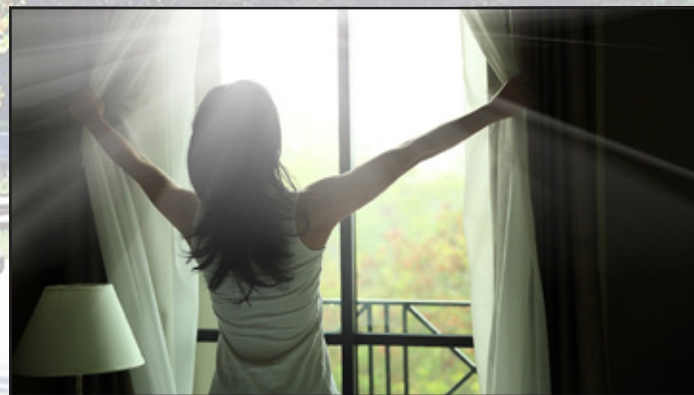
According to research the body’s circadian clock controls an essential immune system gene in mice — a gene that helps the body ward-off bacteria and viruses. “People intuitively know that when their sleep patterns are disturbed, they are more likely to get sick. “It does appear that disruptions of the circadian clock influence our susceptibility to pathogens,” study author Erol Fikrig, professor of epidemiology at the Yale School of Medicine, said in a press release.

### Tips for a Healthy Fall Time Change

**Get as much sunshine** - Get as much sunshine as you can during the coming weeks. Try to take a walk during the day or spend your lunch break outdoors to boost your mood and energy levels. 20 to 30 minutes of daily sun can make a huge difference.

**Exercise** - Mild exercise, such as a walk in the late afternoon or early evening, can help keep you from going home and crashing after work. Exercise actually releases the neurotransmitter serotonin in the brain which helps your body advance the clock and adapt to the time change.

**Ditch the naps** - Although a power nap during the day is tempting, especially on a cold, rainy day, don’t succumb to the temptation. If you get tired, take a walk or eat a healthy snack.



**Adjust the lighting in your home and office** - Adjusting the amount of light and dark in your home/office can help streamline your body’s circadian rhythm, making the transition to a change in time less difficult. Opening the blinds in the house as soon as you get up in the morning, and then dimming the lights at the same time every evening will help your body relax and know the time is coming for sleep. It’s also helpful to turn off computers, TVs and tablets at least one hour before bed.



### Sleep hygiene

Sleep hygiene describes actions you can do to create a sleep-friendly environment thus enhancing your chances of falling asleep, staying asleep, and sleeping soundly. Good sleep hygiene can include reducing or eliminating caffeine

and alcohol at least three to four hours before bedtime, turning down all lights two hours before bedtime, creating calming rituals before bed to gradually relax yourself (taking a stress relief bath for example), making your bedroom cool and dark and wearing ear plugs and eye masks. Also important is going to bed and waking-up at the same time every day – including weekends.

Fall is such a beautiful season with all the wonderful colors, scents and activities. Unfortunately, the Fall time change can wreak havoc on the body and the mind. If you are sensitive to the Fall time change, implementing all or some of the suggestions above can help you get through the time change with minimal difficulty. Keeping your body healthy during every season is important and knowing what you can do to achieve this is extremely valuable to your overall well-being. Remember that knowledge is power and implementing that knowledge is pure gold. There’s plenty of riding left to be had in 2023 and we want to help you stay fit for the road so you can enjoy every moment on the road this fall and every season of every year.



Source:

<https://oawhealth.com/2014/10/22/adjusting-to-fall-time-change-10-tips/>

## ANNIVERSARY RIDE

**Took my wife out for a ride for our anniversary. It was a beautiful day. I even got to work on my Harley pose. It’s a work in progress. 😊 - Ian Hawks of the Charlottesville Motorcycle Community**





# GOOD FOR YOU

## HOLIDAY FEASTS

As you gather around the table with family & friends during the holidays most people tend to “pig out”. It’s good to know that if you have any of the following foods on your table this holiday season, you should feel good about the fact that you’re also improving your health so give yourself a big pat on the back in the name of healthy eating. Seconds are officially approved!



**Beets:** Beets are naturally rich in nitrates, which the body converts to nitrites (a precursor for nitric oxide). Nitric oxide is helpful for runners because it dilates blood vessels and therefore aids in the delivery of blood and oxygen to working muscles. Nitric oxide is also an important player in many intracellular processes such as muscle contraction. But enough about chemistry and biology—it’s the holidays, after all!



**Broccoli and Brussels Sprouts:** Cruciferous vegetables like these green gems prevent oxidative stress; contain a host of valuable metabolites, which are effective in chemoprevention of cancer; contain disease-fighting and immune-boosting phytonutrients;

and are rich in essential nutrients like vitamin A, vitamin C, and folic acid (while being low in calories, unless you coat them with butter and melted cheese). Broccoli is often served as a first-course soup, or you could roast some brussel sprouts and serve them alongside the bird. You might also include another cruciferous vegetable, cauliflower, mashed and mixed with potatoes (to bring down the calories of the dish while boosting the nutrient content).



**Cranberry:** Don’t forget to include this superfruit at your holiday feast. Coming in at less than 50 calories a cup, this filling, fiber-rich side will fill you up without filling you out.



**Kale:** With only 33 calories per cup, this nutrient-dense choice is chock-full of calcium (100 mg), iron (1 mg), potassium (329 mg), and antioxidant vitamins like vitamins A, C, and K. Kale is also a great source of eyesight-protecting lutein, which effectively protects the eyes against macular degeneration, oxidative

damage, and the harmful blue light that tends to surround us in our daily lives.

*Try it: Serve kale chips as an appetizer. Simply wash kale leaves, and toss in a mixture of olive oil and sea salt. Place in a 350 degree oven, and bake until crispy. Not into kale chips? Chopped kale mixes well with other salad greens.*



**Pomegranate:** Rich in inflammation-fighting antioxidants, this fruit also boasts antibacterial and antiviral properties, which means that it just might help you fight off your next illness without the need for modern medicine. Studies have also found that the pomegranate contains unique antioxidant polyphenols, which may be beneficial to folks working to control Type 2 diabetes. This leads me to wonder: Can this super-fruit prevent those blood-sugar spikes and drops that plague all of us after a heavy meal?



**Pumpkin:** No holiday table is complete until this humble gourd makes an appearance. A half-cup of canned pumpkin (easy enough to incorporate into soup or bread) contains only 42 calories but still offers 4 g of fiber to keep your digestive system healthy, 953 mg Vitamin A to protect eyesight, and over 250 mg of the electrolyte potassium, which is important for heart health and muscle function.



**Sweet potatoes:** Avoid adding lots of butter, sugar, and marshmallows to the traditional sweet potato casserole, and you’ll feel a bit better about indulging in all of the antioxidants and other nutrients sweet potatoes have to offer.



**Turkey:** Along with being rich in protein, turkey provides essential nutrients like energizing B vitamins, bone-boosting phosphorus, and all-important zinc (it’s hard to find a body process or body structure that isn’t impacted in some way by zinc). You might be wondering whether dark meat or light meat is a better choice. Ounce for ounce, either is a good choice.

Here’s some interesting info on the star of the Thanksgiving feast. Even though the turkey was passed over as the official national bird in favor of the eagle (despite Ben Franklin’s enthusiastic support), the turkey is too often relegated to a once-a-year meal. Ignored and virtually invisible eleven months of the year, it’s been a quiet few hundred years for the poor bird. Low in fat, inexpensive, versatile, and always available, the turkey has finally come into its own.

Not only is turkey a delicious source of lean protein, but studies show that it is linked to providing nutrients that prevent disease and promote a healthy lifestyle. Turkey is rich in nutrients and relatively low in calories and more importantly helps prevent diabetes, heart disease and some cancers. Skinless turkey breast is one of, if not the leanest meat protein sources on the planet.

From our Virginia Rider Family to yours,  
Have a Happy & Healthy Holiday Season! ❤️



# GOOD TO KNOW

Chinese takeout containers aren't just made to carry out your food. They are designed to have another useful purpose. They make great paper plates. Just unfold them, and you have a plate of Chinese food to enjoy.



**WE WANT YOU TO JOIN**

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Why should you join ABATE? For the preservation of your freedom to ride a motorcycle today and into the future. Meet other motorcycle enthusiasts in your community and join them to promote motorcycling through participation at State and Chapter meetings, meeting with Virginia legislators and local officials, chapter rides, rallies, benefit rides, bike shows and more.

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Check out the local chapter nearest you at [abateva.org](http://abateva.org)  
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Moto Mob Riding Academy

**“To inspire people, don't show them your superpowers. Show them theirs.”**

- Alexander den Heijer



**I told you I'm**

**Done buying parts**

**For my motorcycle**

**Ever notice that the people who tell you to calm down are the ones who got you mad in the first place?**



# THE BRAVE DON'T LIVE FOREVER

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*The cautious don't live at all*

