

I left for Tally on the Friday before the Freedom Rights Run to the Capitol. The route taken contrasts greatly from my last rider story. This is Low Country characterized by flat roads and flat land, Lands usually covered in water. The route thru the west central part of the state has the roads lined with pink and lilac native wildflowers; peppered with yellow and tiny white ones. I stopped at Bar-B-Q Bills in Chiefland for lunch. They have pretty good chow and a great salad bar with endless glasses of sweet tea.



After lunch I continued north on US 27 thru Perry. Most of us stop at the big tree just outside Perry for a rest and bathroom break from drinking all that tea. There is a 60 ft. Chesnutt tree. My weekend journey takes me thru towns that have peculiar names; usually with 2-3 vowels; used more than once. (Panacea, Wacissa, Waulkeeneh, Aucilla) This part of the journey ends with 323 miles.



The reason I go to Tally on Friday, is so I can go to the Sopchoppy Worm Grunting Festival. Yes you heard correctly; worm grunting. There are several videos on you tube (<http://www.wormgruntinfestival.com/>). This is primarily a fun event for the kids, but there are numerous vendors selling crafts, hot sauces, honey, etc. The kids get a chance to try worm grunting and there is a contest for the biggest and the most captured. The Florida Fish and Game have a display there too. This is where I learned that Florida has a cavern, located in Marianne. It's a state park. There is also a waterfall in Florida, but when I went the water was just trickling. That's south of Chipley. Both of these are short distances west of Tallahassee.



The ride back from Sopchoppy was thru the Apalachicola National Forest. Now there does not seem to be anyone living out there, but there are mailboxes and trash cans lining the road, but you never see anyone or any houses. Also the road thru the Forest does not have painted lines and is narrower than other roads. Doesn't matter, I saw no cars on my 35 mile journey to SR 20.



I had heard about the best burger in Tallahassee was at Wells Brothers, so that's where I headed. They have about 20 different varieties and you can make your own. I had the Gator-Hater. My apologies to Florida Gator Fans, but come-on now, you are in the heart of FSU territory. Later in the day I hooked up with Dave and Richard and we went to dinner in Monticello at the Ranche Grande. The place was packed, but considering that Monticello rolls up the sidewalks at 6PM; it's the only game in town. The service was very good and the food is excellent. There are generous portions too. This was an easy 123 mile trip today.



The next day I headed out for another trip on the forgotten highway in Florida; US 98. This road winds around the big bend area hugging the gulf and bay waters. If the road was any lower; one

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would be riding thru the bay and gulf waters. The highway is dotted with tiny towns; each dependent on the bounty of the waters of the bay and gulf. It's kind of like going thru the Keys. I ended my journey in Panama City Beach. I have never been to the 2 bike fests they have there. This is a resort town. There are many hotels and condos lining the beach. There is only a small public area where you can view the beach.



This is heavily commercialized. This was a longer ride to and from the hotel; 319 miles. Next morning is the Freedom Rights Ride to the Capitol.

On Monday morning we all gathered at the Monticello KOA campground with KSU at 9AM. The ride takes us down US27 to the Capitol, escorted by Tallahassee Police. The ride was particularly slow; about 35 mph. If you have never made this run, the view riding up to the Capitol is spectacular. The ceremony begins with the flag and flag



bearers, followed by prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to The United States of America.



A short message by Doc Fish was followed by the reading of the names of lost members and the tolling of the bell for each name. Doc also had some words and encouraged us to visit our legislators. Unfortunately, **ALL** our legislators had gone home for the Easter

holiday.

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I left Tally and headed for Blackshear GA, (191 miles) on my way to Hilton Head SC to visit a friend. I should have made the entire trip to HH because the next morning there was a monsoon from Blackshear to Hilton Head. I rode 119 miles in the rain; little bitty stinging rain. I did get to go over the Tallmadge Memorial Bridge near Savannah, GA. When I got to my hotel and checked in, I left a big puddle of water at the front desk. I put all my wet clothes in the dryer. I did not put my boots in the dryer though. They are still wet. I went out and bought another pair of boots and some gloves. I did have two dinners and lunch with my friend. I left from Hilton Head at 615 AM Thursday and after 3 stops (409 miles); got home at 3PM (1546 total miles).

