

Wing Ding 35
Submitted by Robert Steiner

The trip to the GWRRA 35th annual Goldwing event was held in Greenville, SC. This event is called Wing Ding and attracts 80-100k GWRRA members. The event is held over the Fourth of July in a different city each year. GWRRA is much like AAA and offers nearly the same perks, but for bikers, mainly Goldwing owners. You do not need to own a Goldwing to become a member. The event has much to offer; from poker runs and 50-50, seminars on just about anything related to motorcycling, dinners, comedic acts, stage shows, light parade, judging and awards, top gun competition, drill team exhibition, manufacturer demo rides, a trade show that fills the convention center, the list is nearly endless, and the grand prize; a chance to win a new Goldwing.

My trip started from Melbourne at 5AM, June 29th, with a morning destination of Jasper, FL where I met with fellow member Cheryl Hansen to continue our journey to the first night stop in Commerce, GA; some 542 miles.

On Sunday we rode to Tallulah Gorge. The most impressive site in GA. From here we rode to Lakemont and GA 197, around a picturesque Lake Rabun. I was so impressed that I researched properties along the lake and found that lots sold for \$2 million and up. Moving on we rode to GA 76 to US 28 to Highland NC



where I missed the turn to Franklin NC. I stopped and ask for directions and he told me how to return to my original route, but he also told me of Buck Creek Road.

Man, this road is every bit as challenging as the Dragon. After arriving in Franklin and lunch we decided to go back to Highlands because I wanted her to see Bridal Veil and Dry Falls. Dry Falls is



aply named as you can walk behind the falls and not get wet. At Bridal Veil Falls,



you can drive your bike behind the falls for a photo op. We continued to follow US28 to NC143 and our destination for the day, Robbinsville NC. (216 miles)

On Monday, we planned to "Slay the Dragon", so we headed for Deals Gaps Resort. After some shopping and a pre-trip discussion about the Dragon, we set off. I brought along a video camera and recorded the run. I made many videos of our trip but that would make this doc too large. Near

the end of the Dragon there is an area for to pull off and catch your breath before continuing. The overlook has a dam.



After the Dragon, we stopped at a Harley shop near the foot of the Dragon, did some browsing and shot this pic of a metal Dragon. We continued onto an intersection where there is a repair, sandwich and gift shop.

After lunch we headed to NC411 to get to the Cherohala Skyway, but rain held us for about 30 minutes. The ride to the TN side of Cherohala at Tellico Plains was short. We got some gas before heading over the Skyway. The climb was slow as the roads were very wet. When we got to the summit, it was very foggy. Near the end of the Skyway there is a convenience



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store, Thunder Roads. The owner is very colorful. Nearly everyone stops here for gas, restrooms, hot coffee, (the temp at summit was in the 50s), etc. The day ended with pizza. (134 miles)



The next morning we headed for Cherokee NC and the southern entrance to the Blue Ridge Parkway. On this end of the BRP is the highest point of the Parkway. We have been fighting the weather for the last two days, so the views from the overlooks were not good. There are several tunnels on the way to the top. Nearly every rider stops at this location for a photo op and I was no different.

The destination for the BRP was Wagons Gap and SC276 which will take us into Greenville SC. SC276 from Wagons Gap to Brevard SC is very challenging also as it has "declining radius turns". Your exit point is over/under your entry point, so you feel like the curve is never gonna end.



When it gets done going one way it goes the other. After lunch in Brevard, we continued on SC276 and more of these particular type or "twisties". After the road straightens out a bit we ran across Looking Glass Falls. It is very close to the roadway and many stop to view the Falls and swim in the waters below the Falls. Now we're talking 50 degree water here. Not



me, no. The road continues on to Travelers Rest and Greenville. We got to our hotel, checked in, and unloaded the bikes. (179 miles)

Some of the event started that evening, but most would be over the next 4 days. I had planned to make a two day return trip, leaving Friday, but the weather...was out-of-hand. The Fourth brought monsoon like rains that flooded areas from Ashville to Greenville. I delayed out departure till Saturday and made the 552 mile, 12.5 hour trip in one day. Next year's Wing Ding is in Madison, Wisconsin. Maybe we will see you there.