

## The VOID or 'Turned It Off'

The VOID rally (think southeast USA scavenger hunt) was held 7-8 OCT 2016 or as I like to say Hurricane Matthew weekend! The Rally starts were from three locations, Reading, PA, Tifton, GA, and Columbia, TN. I started in Columbia on a beautiful cloudless Friday morning with pleasant riding temperatures. However, I knew that was going to change before the Rally Finish in Fredericksburg, VA, 31 hours later.

But let's talk about the good times. My planned route shown below: Can you see my mistake?



In previous VOID Rally's I rode a more direct easterly route, BUT to avoid Hurricane Matthew I decided take a more northerly route, besides a more northerly route had been the winning route on several VOID Rally's, so what the hay, I'll score points and miss the rain, was my route planning thinking.

As I said, a beautiful START day, following a delicious pre-rally dinner the night before with my fellow rally'ers.

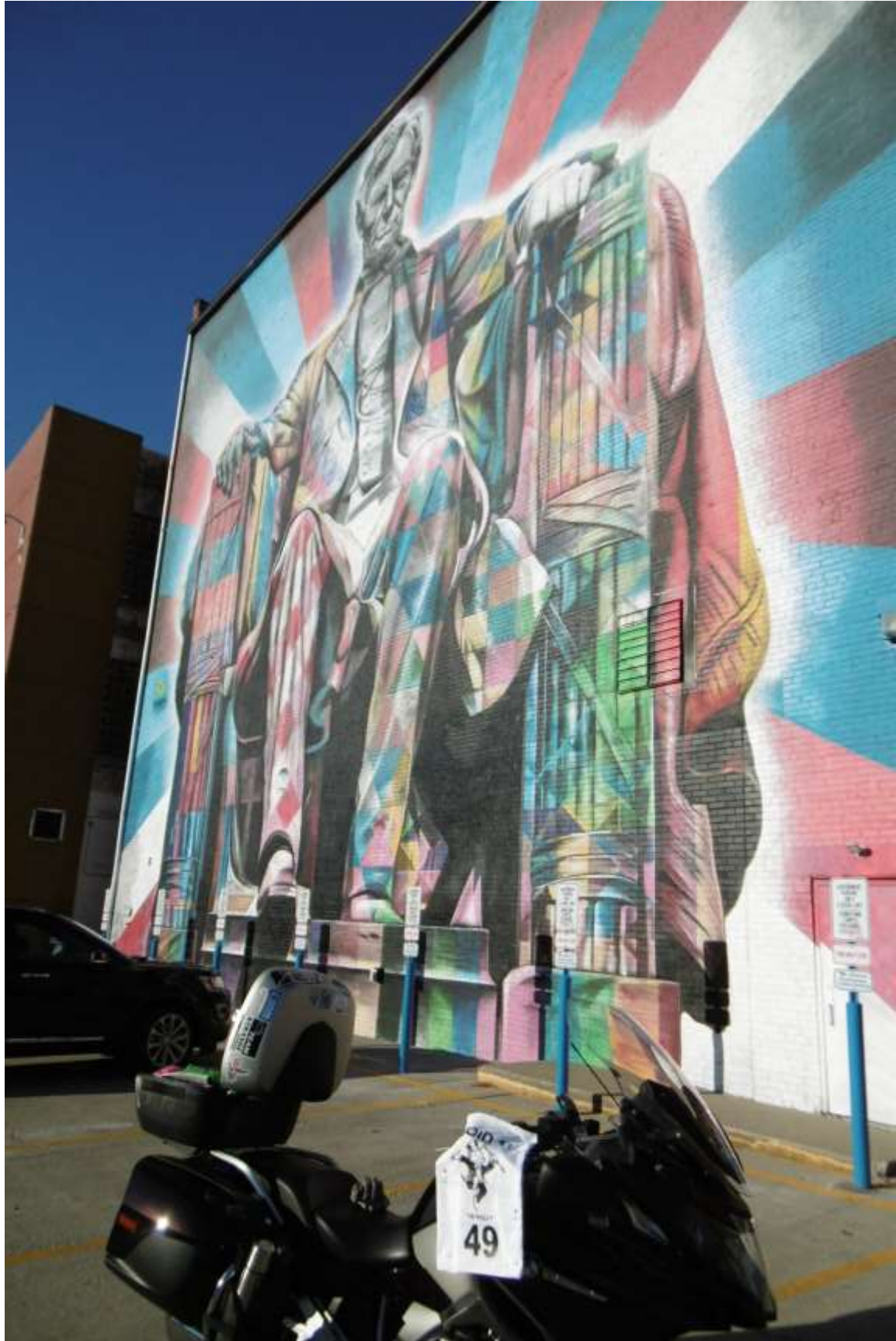
This year's rally theme was VOIDonopoly with President's so leaving Columbia my first bonus was the William Taft Post office in in Taft, TN. I modified the suggested route BaseCamp gave me, and I found out later that was a wise decision because another rider said the BaseCamp routing took him down a gravel road. I had enough of gravel road riding the IBA Texas World Capital SS1000 the week before. Next bonus was the Lincoln Cemetery in Fayetteville, TN. See below:



Next it was on to the Van Buren County Line Sign in Rock Island, TN. Gathered that bonus and then on to Monroe County Post Office for a name legible photo. No problem, I was doing good and actually on schedule, because the next bonus was time sensitive, it required getting the National Parks Stamp at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS, visitors center. The visitors center supposedly closed at 1645. I said supposedly, because I got there at 1345 and the Rangers were telling the people the visitors center was closing at 1600. I also took this bonus photo of the NHS sign at the entrance. See Below, and note the NHS closing time change to 1630 versus the 1645. I hoped there weren't any riders counting on the published closing time, they'd surely be disappointed.



Next bonus was the Abraham Lincoln Mural in downtown Lexington, KY. And as you would expect I would be there on a Friday at rush hour traffic. See mural photo below:



I had accomplished all my first day bonus gathering, and it was time to head for my planned rest bonus in Wytheville, VA. With a planned ETA of 2230 and 6 hours of rest bonus. I had made a reservation earlier because the motel had said they were filling up fast with Hurricane Matthew evacuees.

This 160-mile leg between Lexington and Wytheville was my mistake, or heading southeast more specifically was my mistake. I was fine until Charleston, WV, until my turn onto I-77S. It was night and the rain bands of Matthew had arrived. I have a GPSMAP 478 with the Sirius Sailor NEXRAD Radar package and starting in Charleston the entire radar screen was bands of rain, yellow rain. After the rally another rider turned north, and he wasn't rained on at all until the next day!

Normally when traveling I use the radar to guide me around troubling weather, BUT in this case I was committed. I kept looking at the GPS screen and I realized all I was doing was giving myself anxiety, so for the FIRST time ever I switched page mode i.e. 'Turned It Off', and didn't watch the weather I was going to have to ride through.

I slowed down because of the night, and rain, but the roads never really got too wet, but slow and careful was the ride mode. Arriving at Wytheville, I treated myself to a great dinner at the truck stop near the motel, and fell asleep quickly. Awakening the next morning it was raining, but it was daylight and green, or light rain.

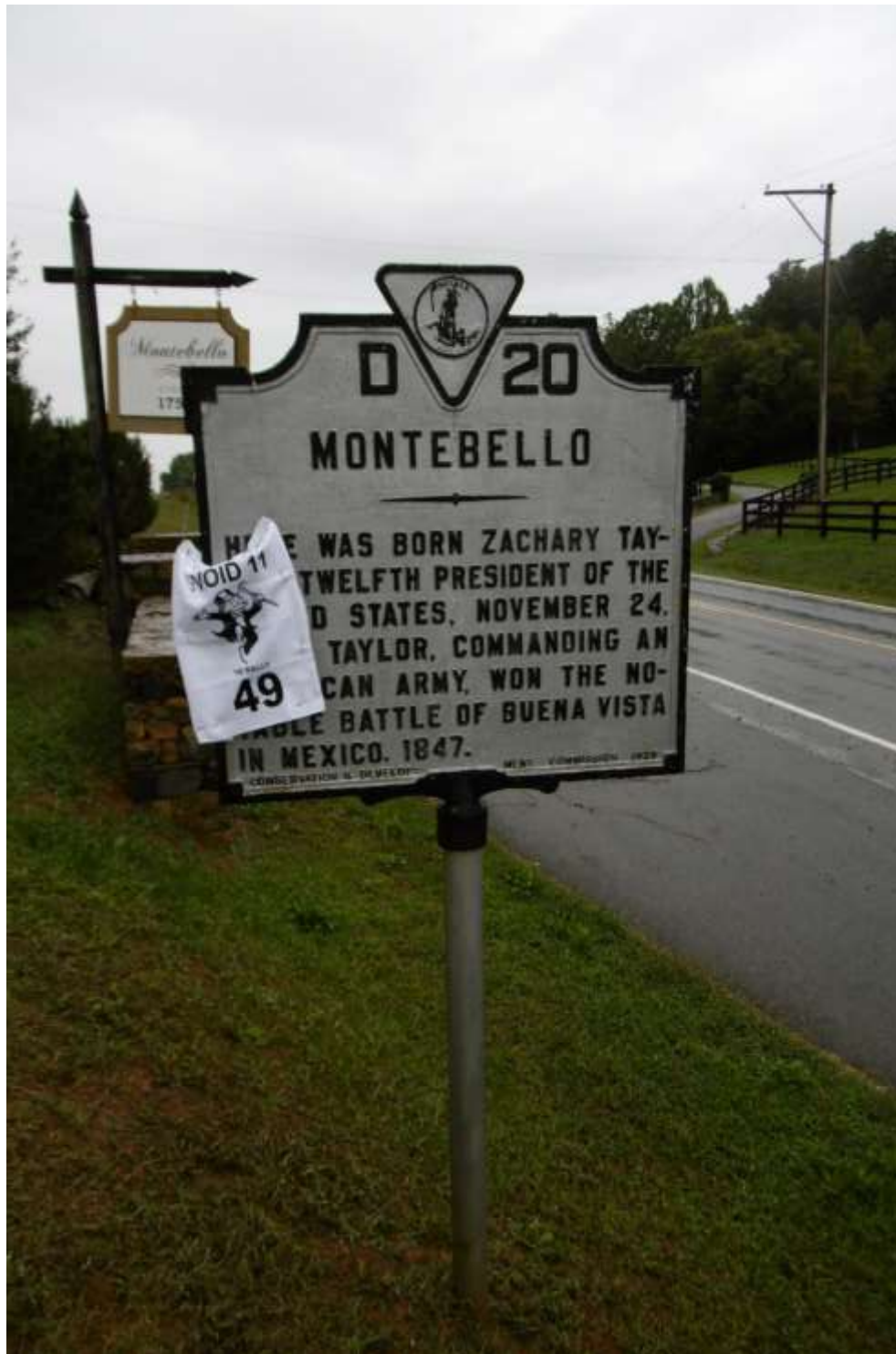
New day, new bonuses to gather, first up was my old nemesis HHM at Washington and Lee University. I had searched for this HHM before and it took me a long time to find it, because I was there during homecoming at VMI, and the roads were jammed with traffic and the GPS coordinates were off. See Below:



Next bonus was the HHM of Jefferson's Birthplace in Charlottesville, VA. See Below:



Next up, Zachary Taylor's birthplace HHM Montebello. See Below:



This was my last bonus of The VOID 2016! It was a fun rally and the Rally Master's had a great theme VOIDonolpy. It rained, but it also sun shined and the temps were wonderful even for the ride home. As always Ride Safe. Robert