



# The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the  
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 12 Issue 12

## Events December 2019

Details on Page 12

### In This Issue:

- Page 1 – [Feature Article](#)
- Page 6 – [Safety Talk](#)
- Page 7 – [Florida News](#)
- Page 11 – [Florida MSTA Apparel](#)
- Page 12 – [Florida Rides](#)
- Page 12 – [Future Florida Rides](#)
- Page 12 – [Regional Events](#)
- Page 13 – [Mystery Hyperlink](#)
- Page 13 – [Classified Ads](#)

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## Feature Article

# 1,386 Miles for Lunch

By Stephen Evans

A friend of mine, Eugene, who is 76 and an avid motorcyclist, had a bucket list item that he wanted to get checked off. He is a retired Major after 20 years in the Army and then taught for the Army for another 21 years. When Eugene was a young man and stationed at Fort Bliss (located in Texas and New Mexico near El Paso), he ate a meal at a restaurant in Las Cruces, New Mexico named [La Posta De Mesilla](#) and his meal was called Chili Relleno — thus the reason for the trip. It had been 50 years since he had this dish at this restaurant and he was going with his brother Larry and two other riders, Eric and Patrick. Larry is 68, previously an engineer for DuPont, is married with grown children and is now likewise retired.

When Eugene asked me if I wanted to come along, I thought about this for some time, putting at least 2 seconds of thought into this invite, and said, “of course, I’ll come.” It’s not every day when one gets to ride to New Mexico for lunch and besides I love Mexican food – not to mention a good margarita. Not only that but I get to “RIDE” which I’m very passionate about.



(L→R) Larry, Eugene, Patrick and Eric

Eric, who is 60, was a corporate lawyer and retired at the age of 47 and has been goofing off ever since (and I say more power to him). He’s married with grown children, his wife is a dentist, and they live in Tennessee up near the Kentucky border in a small town. Eric rides down to the Valdosta area where Larry and Eugene live on Friday (November 1<sup>st</sup>) and spends the night at Eugene’s house. Eugene and Eric met back in 1995 when they were doing the Iron Butt Rally that year (11,000 miles in 11 days). The next morning (Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>) as the three of them (Eugene, Larry & Eric) are leaving the

Valdosta area, I'm leaving Lake City and we are all going to meet at a Shell gas station in Tallahassee and head west.

The first night finds us in McComb, Mississippi and for me it was 548 miles - a little less for them. The second night finds us in Palestine, Texas (373 miles) where we hook up with Patrick who lives up north in Denton, Texas. Patrick is waiting for us as we pull into the motel in Palestine. Patrick is 65, had retired at the age of 60 by selling his construction business (steel buildings) in Dallas, and now lives on a 60-acre ranch up in the Denton area with his wife. He also has grown children as we all do.

The next morning, Monday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, the five of us are on the road at 0700 hrs. in a very sunny and brisk 52-degree day which beats the day before when it was only 42 degrees — but who really cares as we're riding and that's where we want to be. We decide to change the route somewhat and go to Fort Stockton (531 miles) way over in west Texas on I-10 between San Antonio and El Paso. Other than getting to Mobile, Alabama the first day on I-10, it has been all back roads, which is great. It's even greater in Texas as the speed limit is either 70 or 75 on these two-lane back roads because someone in Texas has a brain that works and realizes that there are long distances to travel and today's vehicles are not 6,000 lb. beasts with drum brakes as they were years ago. GOD BLESS TEXAS for their common sense is what I say. Add to that the fact that the shoulder is about 2/3 as wide as the lane itself and when you're coming up on a slower vehicle they pull off somewhat on to the shoulder to let you pass... I love these Texas people and am hoping they adopt me. 😊

Tuesday morning we are off again at 0700. Instead of taking I-10 from Fort Stockton to El Paso and then I-25 to [Las Cruces](#) a distance of 284 miles, we stay on the back roads, riding 352 miles getting to the [La Posta De Mesilla Restaurant](#) at 1300 hrs. It was worth every mile as some of the scenery out in the desert was just beautiful. The restaurant is located in the historic section of Las Cruces and it's a very old part of the city which adds to its charm. Some 150 years ago it was called something else and was in part a hotel and a stopping point for the [Butterfield Stagecoach Line](#)



which ran from San Diego to San Antonio via Las Cruces, at the time the biggest city between the two. Back in that day, it had such visitors as Billy the Kid, Kit Carson and Pancho Villa and much later General Douglas MacArthur ate there. Then in 1939 a young woman with a lot of spunk named Katy Griggs Camunez took over and it became what it is today – a 17,000 sq. ft. restaurant called La Posta De Mesilla, which is known throughout the southwest as one of the very best Mexican restaurants around. Today it is run by Katy's great niece and her husband.

I will say this about the famous dish called [Chili Relleno](#) - I ate it all but was not blown away by it. I would have rather had an all-beef burrito with cheese, lettuce, tomato and sour cream. However that is just this one man's opinion and it means nothing in the scheme of things. I didn't think it was bad, I just thought it was



bland. Now some of you may be thinking that - gee, Steve rode all that way for a lunch that he didn't like but that's not correct. The Chili Relleno dish was on Eugene's bucket list, not on mine, and I was along for the RIDE which was a really nice one. I wanted to go for a ride and that's what I got to do. In fact my total mileage was 3,557 miles and I'd do it again in a NY second.

Over lunch we talked about where to go next and, with it getting dark earlier because of the time change, we decided to go to [Alamogordo](#), New Mexico some 70 miles to the northeast of Las Cruces for the night and decide there where to go next. Over dinner we talked about going north up into Utah and the Canyonlands National Park, but it seemed each of us had something to get home to. Thus we decided to cut the trip short and go home. I had left Linda in a rental house in strange neighborhood after only three days and felt I needed to get home to her and Jessie.

We decided that we'd visit [Roswell](#) in the morning since we were starting out on back roads and it wouldn't be out of our way. Roswell, not to be confused with [Area 51](#) in Nevada, is where some say a UFO crashed in July of 1947. Gee, I was born in 1947... — Do you think there's a possibility that maybe I was on.... — Na, it couldn't be. As the story goes, it crashed in Roswell and the government took all the debris and the occupants to Area 51 in Nevada.

The ride to Roswell was just beautiful (US-70 and US-380) as it took us up and thru the [Sacramento Mountains](#) and the [Lincoln National Forest](#) all while passing thru the [Mescalero Apache Indian Reservation](#). When we went over [Apache Summit](#) at just over 7,500 feet, the temperature dropped down into the low 40's and the scenery was just gorgeous. As we pull into Roswell we decide to go to the [Roswell UFO Museum](#) and check out the aliens - or maybe some of our family members. 😊



Although we knew that upon leaving Roswell, we were going to run into a cold front with some rain, we thought we could get by Plains, Texas before it really started around 1 PM (according to the weather channel). That wasn't going to happen. We weren't but maybe 20 miles east of Roswell with it being 11:30 when the skies opened up and we got hammered and I mean hammered. Eric and Patrick only had to get back to Patrick's house in Denton as they wanted to attend a seminar in Dallas the coming week. However, Eugene and Larry had to get to Valdosta and I needed to get to Lake City. Stopping in some small west Texas town to fill

up, they all decided to have lunch, but I wanted to go on and thus we said our good-byes. So for me, it was off to Post, Texas where I caught US-84 down to I-20, thru Sweetwater to Abilene for the night which put me at 445 miles for the day. I really needed time to dry out. I made the mistake of only wearing my rain jacket and not my rain pants out of Roswell and paid dearly for it as I was soaked. The rain was just unbelievable as it rained hard all day.

They have these signs out in west Texas that say – “Caution road may flood” - and I found those signs to be very true not only out on the highway but even more so in the small towns at the intersections. I had to go thru some dips at intersections that had to be 4 or 5 inches deep and the water would splash upwards covering me from the hips down. Did I mention to you that I failed to put on my rain pants? By now, I’ve got some really nasty lightning around me and some is just a little too close by. So as I pass thru [Tahoka](#), Texas, I spot a building with an overhang and pull off. As I pull up under the overhang, a woman comes out tells me to pull further up closer to the building, which I do. It’s 59 degrees and I’m wet and cold with a slight shiver - make that soaked with a slight shiver - and I need to use the bathroom. She directs to the bathroom and on the way out an older gentleman offers me a hot cup of coffee. It turns out that I’m at a store called the John Witt Butane Gas Co. (Farmers co-op) which was founded years ago by John Witt who has now passed on. The gentleman who gave me the cup of coffee is Guy Witt, John’s son, and he 83 years old and the woman who told me to pull further is Pam and she is Guy’s daughter. Not only did I get to use the bathroom, get a cup of hot coffee and warm up, but I also got to talk to these people and a few others as I stayed for about a half hour. I could not express enough gratitude to Guy, Pam and her two grown kids as I had a wonderful time and it was Texas hospitality at its best. While there a man came in with his son (5) and he started telling us all about the hogs on his daddy’s farm. Then he and I started making snorting sounds to one another like hogs do. We had everyone laughing and most of all, the boy – he was a cutie and loved to laugh. When I left, he came to the door and watched me leave and waved goodbye - just a really sweet boy. It was a wonderful stop in time and it would have never happened if I were in a car. Even though the weather was nasty, I had a great memory come out of that storm and I intend to send Pam and Guy a short thank you note with a copy of this story.

It seemed to have lightened somewhat as I left, but I soon found out that Mother Nature was pulling a fast one on me as within a half hour it was worse than before. It became extremely dark, as if it was almost night time, and raining so hard it was difficult to see. Everyone was slowing down to around 30 mph and running with their emergency flashers on as visibility was next to nothing. Then miles on down the road I could see some light, almost like a sunrise, and then I was coming out of the storm. Also at this time I could see three areas where the clouds were starting a downspout but it never materialized. Looking back on it now it was all quite amazing.

Most everything I had on went into the dryer at the hotel in Abilene and, using a blow dryer in the room, I did my gloves and boots, both of which were rainproof although nothing works as it should in the weather I was in. I was surprised the blower still worked as I had it doing overtime duty that night and used it again the next morning. Now it’s Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup> and as I get on the road guess what – it’s still raining although not as hard as yesterday. I know I need to get thru Ft. Worth and Dallas and I’m hoping I have two things in my favor. One is I know I-20 goes south down around both cities as I-30 goes straight thru them and I hope to be

there early enough where I only have the beginning of rush hour and not the peak of it. I get lucky as everything works out and nothing was as bad as it could have been – like the accident (an 18 wheeler on fire) on the west bound lanes that had traffic backed up for just over six miles, and yes I measured it. Plus the rain had now stopped and it stayed that way 'til I got into Mississippi. So now it's on to Shreveport on I-20 and then I-49 south down to I-10 thru Baton Rouge where I stop in Gulfport, Mississippi with 807 miles under my belt for the day. The good news is that I'm dry as I got dressed for the weather from the start and it didn't rain as long or as hard as yesterday.

All is good on the morning of Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> as I've got less than 450 miles to get home. Chances are that I'll have no rain but I dress for it anyway. Although no rain came my way, the wind gusts did and one tends to get blown around somewhat on a bike which can wear one out. However, I'm on the home stretch and can see the light at the end of the tunnel, so Mother Nature can bring whatever she so desires. I arrive home at exactly 1 pm with 435 miles for the day.

Overall it was a GREAT trip and for many reasons, but then to me all motorcycle trips are great. Some are just more so than others. I cannot express how much I love to ride on two wheels and taking trips. Bad weather is just something that one must adapt to as you're going to get wet, cold and blown about, but it's still all good. I've ridden in four snow storms and the next day life was good and all was beautiful. A long distance ride on a motorcycle is no different than life itself if you think about it. There's a start and a finish and in between you're learning new things, meeting new people and having to adjust on a daily basis to what life throws at you. When you're on two wheels life is very enjoyable. 😊



Enjoy the pics and maybe YOU will see a family member - in the group pic its (L-R) Larry, Eugene, Patrick and Eric.

I hope this story finds everyone in good health and happy.

Steve



## SAFETY TALK

**IMPORTANT NOTICES:** Ultimately, the safety of motorcycle riders and their passengers is their own responsibility. Nothing presented in the column supersedes, negates or relieves a motorcyclist and/or passenger from assumption of personal responsibility for their actions and safety.

Due to his busy schedule with Honda, Doug Westly has decided to discontinue his safety columns in our Florida MSTA Newsletter as well as in STARreview. We sincerely thank Doug for his many years of excellent articles. Until another rider steps forward to volunteer to prepare new safety-related articles, we will republish Doug's previous articles, with his permission.

### **You and Your Motorcycle – It's a Zen Thing**

[Ed. Note: This article was previously published in the February 2012 edition of The Florida MSTA Grapevine.]

You've probably reached it at some point in your motorcycling career. It is that time in your riding where you and the bike cease to become separate entities. Instead you feel like you and your mount are interconnected.

How do you know when you've reached that point? It is actually very easy to describe. It is the point where you don't even know you've been shifting but somehow you are suddenly in sixth gear. It is the point where you are looking far around the corner, but still know exactly where you are on the road. You can feel the traction of the tire on the road surface. You know exactly how much lean angle you have in the tight, decreasing radius curve, and how much farther you can push the bike. You forget about shifting by the tachometer, or checking the gear position indicator. You shift by feel and sound.

Instinctively you know when you are in the middle of the power band. You and the bike are truly one. If you haven't yet achieved this higher state of motorcycling consciousness, you're in for a treat when it finally happens.

So what does this have to do with safety? Again, it is pretty easy. When you reach the stage of mind melding with your metal steed (*Forgive me, Mr. Spock*), it frees your mind and eyes to reach out and understand the riding environment.

We can focus on the traffic and road conditions around and ahead of us. If we're in traffic, it allows us to search ahead and hopefully predict what the other drivers and vehicles may do (*right out of the MSF manual, only hopefully even at a higher level*). It lets us see and feel the riding environment, understanding it almost instinctively.

So how do we achieve this higher state of motorcycling consciousness, and add to our safety margin? Once again, it is not difficult. We ride...and ride...and ride. It doesn't happen just taking the bike out for a weekend spin. A Saturday afternoon jaunt to the local poser hangout won't do it. You need to spend time with your beloved mount. Ride in all weather conditions. Learn your true limits as well as those of your bike. Get advanced training. Pick the brains of other riders. Most will be only too happy to oblige! **Just get out and ride!**

**Doug Westly – Safety Editor (Retired)**

See our [Mystery Hyperlink](#) for further information on this topic.



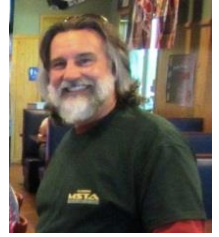
**Bike pointed in one direction, rider in another, but both in sync.**

## Florida News

### South Director's Report

#### Ah, Florida living...

Watching the news and weather reports outside of Florida, you'd think all hell is breaking loose almost everywhere. Now, I know the moving pictures on the maps are really there to sell ad time. I still can't help but notice that our quiet part of the country hardly gets a mention this time a year. Oh, good news is no news... 😊



Van VanSteelant

So, we just keep a-riding down here and send our condolences to our northern members and friends!! We had modest turn outs this month to both lunch rides. Tom's report on Gator Joe's is below. The annual return to the OK Corral Gun Club worked out as planned.

The Eastsiders brought 8 of the 13 attendees. Brand new member Mike Shooks, from Del Ray, met the rest at our starting point. We enjoyed a few of our favorite curves and sweepers, despite the erratic winds. On the up side, we had brilliant sunshine and clean roads! With just an hour's ride, we made good time! Upon arrival, we found the some of the Broward County and Melbourne area members already settled in and enjoying the Taco Buffet!! Unfortunately, our west and some central members were MIA...

Our 50/50 raffle was well supported, and our winner, Karl, took home \$33! Our fund total is now \$463.00. Again, a BIG THANK YOU to all who participate. And as happens now-a-days, most everyone had pressing matters to cut and run to right after our feasting. So, I took to the Wobble Deck alone and nicked more clays than I missed. Just barely. 😊

#### What's Next??

We have decided to run a combined statewide lunch ride for *EVERYBODY* on Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> to **Jay Bees** in Lake Wales. With other holiday events always crying for our attention, we decided to pick a destination central to most of the membership and large enough for 30-40 hungry patrons!! Mark your calendars NOW!

We also have one other destination left on the FLMSTA website... The resurrected January 1<sup>st</sup> lunch ride to **Peck's Old Port Cove** in Crystal River!! Last year's event was a great success and we anticipate another good turnout! Be sure to click on the event description, as Tom has done his homework and provided you with lots of info to act upon!

#### Membership News

If you are receiving the *Gator Tale*, but not my announcements, **PLEASE** email me ASAP to correct my files. I believe I'm up to date...

My heartfelt THANKS to Don Moe for his efforts EVERY month to bring our Florida membership up to date with all the news about our new and renewing members!!

#### Here's what we know today...

No new Florida riders have joined the MSTA recently.

We thank these Florida members for recently renewing their memberships:

Stephen Albert	Douglas Farnham	Hugh Palmer
Thomas Blake	Paul Heydemann	

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

Richard Danieri	Stephen Evans	Don Mroczenski	John Randolph
Carlyson Delgado	Michael W Ewanus	Stephen Phillips	Phillip B Ridgdill

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and to continue supporting their MSTA. If you have a question about when your membership expires, please contact the membership committee at [membership@ridemsta.com](mailto:membership@ridemsta.com). Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at [PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew](http://PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew) or [PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin](http://PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin) respectively. If you use a pre-printed form from STARreview or an ITR, be sure to mail it to the new member of our new membership team, **Scott Snedden, 5380 Old Bullard Rd, Suite 600-315, Tyler, TX 75703**, who replaces the retiring Beth Hemstreet, and not to the address of any prior membership director.

If you only want to update your phone, email, bikes, or other details, you can do so quickly via [PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate](http://PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate). Please include enough unchanging information to assure the correct member is updated in the database.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please pass along one of our Invitation-To-Ride quad-folds! For each new member you recruit and who provides your name and/or membership number on the application, you will receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for the motorcycle drawing at our next STAR event. Any new or current member who joins or renews as a Sustaining Member will likewise receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for each year of the new membership term.

### **Random Ramblings!**

The fall/winter riding season ahead promises to be worth your time! Look for lunch rides to old favorites and several new destinations. *We are working to expand our reach a little further north in Florida... a small start to be sure.* The return to Peck's for our New Year's Kick Off is set to go. Our Just-For-Fun Weekend around Bike Weeks is in the final planning stages. The Bike Week Lunch is set. And we have a few new places to try out... Keep sending your recommendation to Tom or myself.

Thank you all for your continued support of our Chapter!! Please reach out to your riding friends and acquaintances and invite them to one of our upcoming rides. If you don't ask, they'll never know what they're missing...

Ride well! Ride often!! Do it safely!!!

ATGATT Van  
MSTA Florida State Co-Director



## Central Director's Report - November 2019

MARION COUNTY-OCKLAWAHA-GATOR JOE'S, GOODRICH'S SEAFOOD, KNEE, PECK'S OLD PORT COVE

I got to wondering what kind of people give a name to an alligator. That led to a bunch of research. To wit...

Evidence of ancient cultures as well as of the earliest encounter between European explorers and historic indigenous peoples has been found in Marion County.

Archeological excavations from a quarry there have unearthed artifacts in deposits below those of the Paleo-Indians – meaning from an even earlier period - some going back 26,000 to 28,000 years. Ocala or *Ocale* is the Timucuan name for a major village or chiefdom. Hernando de Soto mentioned this place in his 1539 expedition through the area. Also, the community of Ocklawaha takes its name from the nearby Ocklawaha River. Ocklawaha is a corruption of *ak-lowaha*, a Creek word meaning *muddy*.

The US took possession of Florida in 1821. A flood of settlers came in during the 1840's for free land offered under the Armed Conflict Occupation Act. What became Marion County attracted a large number of South Carolinians and was named after Francis Marion, called The Swamp Fox, a Revolutionary War hero from South Carolina.

Ocklawaha lies just 18 miles southeast of Ocala, just west of the Ocala National Forest and Ocklawaha River and along the north shore of Lake Weir. Ocklawaha got its own post office in 1884 and remains unincorporated. The lake is the largest one in Marion County and its waters are clearer than most. What apparently attracts people is lakeside living away from the crowds... but not too far away to commute. The lake's large size and water clarity are pluses as is proximity to the national forest and river.

A large alligator well known to locals as *Gator Joe* prowled the lake from 1930 to 1952. It achieved notoriety when a letter mentioning it by name was discovered at Arthur 'Doc' Barker's arrest in Chicago on January 8, 1935. Arthur was one of 'Ma' Barker's sons and a member of the notorious Barker-Karpis gang. The FBI traced it to Ocklawaha where on the morning of January 16<sup>th</sup>, they surrounded the "country retreat" that the gang had rented under an alias. Ma and her youngest son Fred were killed in an hours-long gun battle. The remaining gang members had left town 3 days earlier.

### **Still with me?**

Okay. [Gator Joe's Beach Bar and Grill](#) was established in 1926 at Johnson Beach and is about 1/8<sup>th</sup> mile east of the *retreat*. They tout themselves as a family friendly restaurant with a laid-back casual atmosphere and island cuisine. The *Gator Joe* moniker obviously adds to the allure. We found the hype to be largely correct. It's one of those places that you don't mind riding for hours to get to.

Fourteen of us thoroughly enjoyed socializing and eating out at the end of the dock. Those of us who rode up from south Brevard had to endure about a half hour of light rain and mid-60's temps to start the day. Those who rode down from Lake City,



Tom Blake



Jacksonville and Gainesville didn't see rain but had much crisper temps – in the mid-40's, I'm told. Several reported no rain but still wet roads. By mid-morning, it was all blue skies and temps in the low 70's. What more could a sport touring rider ask for?

I was especially pleased to see folks who've been away for a while. **Hugh Palmer** and **Keith Harrison** usually spend their summers elsewhere. Haven't seen **Budd Breheim** since (I think it was) March.

**Roy Clark**, a past MSTA member, tries to make all of our northern rides as does **Jim Beyerl**. Always happy to see both of them. **James Siler** and **Nir Frucht** were in the area and surprised us by dropping in. Glad to see them as well.



**Ed Clay** is a newbie. He just moved to Lake City from West Virginia where he was an MSTA director and would now like to get something positive going for our north Florida riders. That seems like a good thing. We haven't had a north Florida director since Sam Ulbing from Gainesville hung up his riding gear quite a few years ago.

And then the 'regulars' - **Carl Swoford**, **Hal Smith**, **Dale Hall**, **Eckert Schneider** - and me, of course. **Dennis Villarose** is becoming a regular now that he's back in the state.



Thanks to all for coming and enjoying some delicious *island cuisine* with all the friendly camaraderie – not to mention some really fine motorcycling for most of the day.

Photos: Top, left: Hugh and Hal. Above, right CW: Keith, Ed, Dale (red T), Eckert & Roy. Above, left CW: Budd (standing – looking at a bird flitting around in the rafters), Dale, Dennis, Tom, Jim & Hal. James and Nir joined us after the photos were taken. Thanks to Carl for the shots.

As you read this in December, several of us will have ridden to [Goodrich's Seafood](#) in Oak Hill (between Daytona and Titusville) on Black Friday for some well-prepared seafood. This place is becoming a favorite. It's clean, country-ish and sits alongside Mosquito Lagoon which provides great views. There are no shopping centers around there. And it's just about the right distance for a pleasant *Goldilocks* ride (not too long, not too short) for many of the east-central and central state riders. More about this in my December report as Don has asked for November inputs by Thanksgiving Day!

You may have heard that I've been having severe pain in my right knee when riding. Consequently, I haven't been riding much. It started after attempting 40 squats in September as part of a lower back muscle

strengthening regiment. Prior to this, I rode to Bristol, VA in June and then to Little Switzerland, NC in July with no issues. Prescription strength Aleve provided no relief. I won't do opiates, so drove the car to DeBary and Lake Wales in October.

A recent injection, however, has helped. I was able to do the Gator Joe's ride which totaled over 6 hours, albeit with breaks. Also had to hang my foot off the peg frequently to relax the knee but the pain was much less intense. The plan is to do a series of non-steroidal injections. If successful, I can continue to be your Central director for a time longer. The picture should be clearer in December.

Lunch at [Peck's Old Port Cove](#) is definitely a **GO** for **January 1<sup>st</sup>** – even if I have to drive the car. It's that special. We had a nice crowd of 43 last year. There's room for more. Their food, service and atmosphere are outstanding. I don't think you'll find a twistier road in Florida than [Ozello Trail](#) leading out to Peck's. Past Central director Bill Royal started this event and made it an annual tradition. Hopefully, a large crowd of us will see him there again this time.

Please note all upcoming rides below and on our website. We try to find places with good food in interesting settings. Most offer opportunities to hit some backcountry roadways. Each is a great excuse to ride and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow riders. Membership is not required – you are welcome to bring along non-member friends. Also, if you have a destination to suggest, depending upon its location, let either Van or me know. We're always looking for fresh ideas.

Safe Journeys,

*Tom Blake*

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

### **Central Florida December Statewide Lunch Ride**

Sat., **December 7<sup>th</sup>**, 11:30 PM – 1:30 PM

[Jay Bees](#), [\(map\)](#)

8625 FL-60,

Lake Wales, FL 33898

### **Northeast Director Needed**

If you would consider taking the position of Northeast Director, please contact Van, [busavan@flmsta.org](mailto:busavan@flmsta.org).

### **Florida MSTA Apparel**

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to [mstaflorida.qbstores.com](http://mstaflorida.qbstores.com). We have made arrangements with the supplier for our National Gearbox to allow our State membership to buy shirts, hats, etc. with our State logos directly from the source!!! No muss, no fuss!! Order yours today!!

They offer both embroidery and digital print options. Click onto the Embroidered Apparel or Shop By Logo for each option. Don't hesitate to contact Queensboro directly with any and all questions. They are very customer friendly. They also offer Polo shirts and T-shirts with pockets!!





## **Florida Rides This Month**

### **Important Note**

Always remember to check the Florida MSTA [Event Calendar](#) and/or your email for updates on scheduled rides. Changes in times, dates, and especially locations are often out of our control and with short notice.

### **MSTA Florida Statewide Lunch Ride**

When: Sat., **December 7<sup>th</sup>**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Where: [Jay Bees](#), 8625 FL-60, Lake Wales, FL 33898 ☎863-696-1901 ([map](#))

Description: WE ARE TRYING SOMETHING DIFFERENT THIS MONTH!! With holiday plans and parties in abundance, we are consolidating our December rides into one destination. Our best hope is to revisit an old standby--Jay Bees!! We know it's a stretch for those in Lake City or Miami, but it is about as centered as we could find. And we know we'll be treated royally! Join us for our own collective Holiday Party!!

Contact: Tom Blake, [tblake1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:tblake1@cfl.rr.com), or ☎321-723-2857

## **Future Florida Rides**

Note that the future ride events are included to facilitate longer term planning. The destinations and/or dates may be changed just before the ride dates. Please check the Florida MSTA [Event Calendar](#) for possible updates.

### **MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride**

When: Sat., **January 11<sup>th</sup>**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Where: [Tillies Tavern & Grill](#), 31 E. Magnolia Ave, Eustis FL 32726 ☎352-602-7929 ([map](#))

Description: Hugh, Carl and several other northern Orlando guys tried this place out a few months ago and thought it was even better than the 1884 Restaurant that everyone else thought was so good. So we'll give it a try. They're just down the street from 1884.

Contact: Tom Blake, [tblake1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:tblake1@cfl.rr.com), or ☎321-723-2857

### **MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride**

When: Not yet announced. Please check the ride schedule at [FLMSTA.ORG/rides](http://FLMSTA.ORG/rides) after January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Contact: Van, [busavan@flmsta.org](mailto:busavan@flmsta.org), or ☎561-386-2594

## **Regional Events**

### **MSTA Florida Statewide Lunch Ride**

When: Wed., **January 1<sup>st</sup>**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Peck's Old Port Cove](#), 139 N Ozello Trail, Crystal River, FL 34429 ☎352-795-2806 ([map](#))

Description: Here we go again!!

NEW YEAR, NEW MILES!!! Start 2020 off in a (Bill) Royal sort of way with a lunch ride to one of Florida's best gulf coast seafood restaurants near the end of one of Florida's twistiest roads. Meal time is at noon.

Peck's Old Port Cove is old Florida charm at its very best. They are located out in the Gulf's marshes between the towns of Crystal River and Homosassa Springs. Nine miles of twisty Ozello Trail gets you out there from US98.

Everybody raves about Peck's seafood. In addition, the waterside property is clean and comfortable and the whole staff at Peck's is extremely accommodating. We expect to reserve the 50-seat dining room – and fill it. There's plenty of parking.

Long distance riders may wish to get near by December 31<sup>st</sup> (or earlier). We're not reserving rooms and don't have any activities planned. However, the [Equus Inn](#) at 3434 SW College Rd, Ocala 34474 is suggested (previously a Quality Inn, they have a 4 star rating with Trip Advisor and others). We've used

them in the past during Bike Week. They offer comfortable rooms at reasonable rates with complimentary breakfasts and in-room coffee, microwave & frig, etc. More importantly, very good restaurants and watering holes are just a short walk away. And in the morning, it's only about an hour's ride through mostly rural Florida to Peck's. You can phone the hotel directly at (352) 854-3200. Verify cancellation policy and book early.

Contact: Tom Blake, [tblake1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:tblake1@cfl.rr.com), or ☎321-723-2857

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see the Florida MSTA website's Events page.

The Florida MSTA chapter also has a presence on Facebook with upcoming events and past photos: [click here](#).

We welcome articles and comments from our members for publication. Contact the editor at: [editor@flmsta.org](mailto:editor@flmsta.org).

The MSTA National [website](#) has extensive event information:

🏍️ To join the MSTA or renew your membership: [click here](#).

🏍️ For the Events in 2019: [click here](#).

National MSTA [RideMSTA.com](http://RideMSTA.com)

Florida MSTA [FLMSTA.org](http://FLMSTA.org)

### More Contact Information

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*ALL GRAPHICS WERE PROVIDED BY THE CREDITED AUTHOR, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.*

# Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

This month's [Mystery Hyperlink](#) is related to the safety article.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to [editor@flmsta.org](mailto:editor@flmsta.org)

### Editor's Request:

If you have ridden somewhere interesting at any time and would like to share with other riders your experiences and some photos from your journey, please contact me at [editor@flmsta.org](mailto:editor@flmsta.org) to discuss publishing an article. I can offer assistance in preparing your article. Thanks!