



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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Feature Article

Getting To Know You

By Stephen Evans

[Ed: Edited for publication. Photos by author. Contact Stephen at sl.evans@comcast.net]

Just like taking a new girl out for a dinner date, there's no better way to get to know your new motorcycle than to take her up into the mountains. On the way up you're have time on the interstate, and once there in the mountains, it will be all twisty and curvy roads with elevation changes thrown in just for added fun. You'll find all you need to know about how she handles, leans, brakes, accelerates, decelerates and where the red line is (the Super Ténéré doesn't have an actual "red line"). The [Honda NC700X](#) (1 of 2 bikes) that I traded in on her didn't have one either. You'll also find out your true gas mileage which is amazing on this bike. Interstate mileage (75 mph - 85 mph) was 46 to 48 mpg. In the mountains keeping high revs in 2nd, 3rd, or 4th gears while tearing up the curves or riding long

straights mainly in 5th gear (it has 6), it was 53 - 54 mpg. All this with a 6.1 gallon gas tank makes a rider very happy.

After I purchased this new [2018 Yamaha Super Ténéré ES](#) three months ago, I rode up into the north Georgia Mountains on April 1st for a quick three-day trip and was able to ride so many of the good roads (i.e. TN Hwy 68, Cherohala Skyway, Deals Gap (Dragon), Foothills Pkwy, Little River Road, and BRP). On May 2nd I went back up there again for a more extended ride. My goal was to meet up with three friends for the [BMW Mountain Rally](#) held in Hiawassee, Georgia every year. I met one of them (Ken) up in Georgia at 6 AM and we rode straight up I-75 thru Atlanta and Dahlonega to [Two Wheels of Suches](#) arriving at about 12:30 PM. We took a short break and then proceeded to hit all the best that north Georgia had to offer. From Suches we took Hwy 60 up to Morganton, returned back thru Suches on 60 to US 19 and headed north. US 19 joins US 129, going up and over Blood Mountain which has some really good sweepers up to Hwy 180



Kenny's and my bikes at Suches

(Wolf Pen Gap Road) where we took a left to come back to Suches. We did the loop for a second time going further north and took Hwy 180 east. This allowed us to connect with Hwy 348 ([Richard B. Russell Scenic Hwy](#)) down to Hwy 75 and into Helen. We caught Hwy 356 on the outskirts of Helen over to Hwy 197 which took us north up to US 76 and then west into Hiawassee where we had lodging at the [Lake Chatuge Lodge](#) located on [Lake Chatuge](#), right next to the fairgrounds and the rally headquarters. Before checking in Ken and I stopped at a restaurant just a block away from the hotel for some wings and a couple of soda pops. Climbing back on my bike, I completely forgot about the hotel (1 block away) and just started riding west, not only passing the hotel but straight out of town. The next thing I know, I see a sign that says Young Harris (the next town) six miles and Ken is beside me blowing his horn telling me to go back. I was really enjoying that ride, however, it was decided later that evening that I could no longer have any soda pops BEFORE check-in as who knows where I would end up. ☹️ Later that evening we met up with our two other partners in crime (brothers) Eugene and Larry for a few more soda pops (in the safety of our hotel room) to discuss our riding plans for the next day.

Probably 95% of all Saturday mornings, I'll be in Lake Park, Georgia (50 miles north) having breakfast with 15 to 25 other guys. They range in age from 58 to 85 with the 85 year old just retiring from racing (KTM 390), and yes, he was a national champion in his age group. Most of them are BMW riders and members of [BMWMOA](#); others are members of a local group called [Ole' Spokes](#) (gotta love that name) and still others are members of [COG](#) and ride the Kawasaki [Concours](#) motorcycle. Not only am I a member of [MSTA](#) but also a member of BMWMOA and COG, allowing me to meet more people and to attend more rallies, which works out really well for me. This year I attended a BMW rally at Camp Blanding, FL; the BMW rally in Hiawassee, GA; in June the MSTA "[STAR](#)" in Bristol, VA; in July the MSTA regional at [Big Lynn Lodge](#) in Little Switzerland, NC; in August it will be the [Road Runner](#) event in Snowshoe, WV; and the COG rally at Two Wheels in Suches, GA during September (that I go to every year) called "[Run with the Wolf](#)".

There's a huge music hall located on the fairgrounds that was the meeting place on both Friday and Saturday nights. On Friday they had all-you-can-eat chili and on Saturday night they had "cook your own steak" along with a live band, which was all included in the registration price of \$55.00. If you're interested in this rally you can contact the [President of the BMW M/C of Georgia Susan Benson at 678-576-6376](#).

Over the next two days, Eugene, Larry, Ken and I did our very best to tear up all the roads we could in the North Georgia Mountains. Larry and Gene, BMW riders forever, have been going to this rally for almost 20



Lake Chatuge from the lodge



L→R: Larry, Gene and Kenny



A wild antique store that's like a Man Cave with a caboose that can be rented overnight
Black Bear Creek Antiques along US-76 near Clayton, GA

years straight and thus were able to take Ken and me on some roads that I didn't know of. As many times as I've been up there, I thought I knew them all. Since Larry has some racing experience and Gene, Ken and I have all done track days, so to say we rode at a very spirited pace would be an understatement. I would drag a foot peg now and then on the Super Ténéré which was a surprise to me being the type of bike it is. Gene rides a R1200RS, Larry a R1200RT, and Ken a K1300GT. We had to stop at around 2 PM on Saturday as a storm was moving thru. All in all we had a wonderful time of riding and some great BBQ for lunch. When Sunday morning came, my three riding companions started heading back to the Valdosta area and we say our good-byes as I'm heading north for more curves and fun. They left at 8 and I at 9 with all of us in full rain gear. The storm that morning was moving NE, as was I, and it was a large one. I had plans to stay in a very old and beautiful B&B in Damascus, VA that night and it rained all day up until I was about 15 miles from Damascus. In fact it stopped when I was at the [Shady Valley Country Store](#) in Shady Valley, TN. The good news is that I was completely dry as the gloves, rain gear and boots all worked.

I had a wonderful route picked out to do from Hiawassee to Damascus that Sunday and it was everything I knew it would be, but riding was slowed down due to the rain. I left Hiawassee on US 76 East which has some very nice curves over to US 441 North up to US 23/US 74 over to I-40 and Exit 50/US 25 which put me on the Blue Ridge Pkwy. From there it was the BRP over to Little Switzerland and Hwy 226 North up to Bakersville where I caught Hwy 261 up into Tennessee where it becomes Hwy 143, on past [Roan Mountain](#) to Hwy 19E which took me over to Elk Park and Hwy 194 to US 421 North up to Shady Valley. From there it was Hwy 133 North up to Damascus and the [Mountain Laurel Inn](#) 276-475-8822 owned by Drew and Kathleen. I can't say enough about these people and this place; Kathleen is the perfect hostess. The house, which sits on three acres, is over 100 years old with workmanship that is unbelievable being done in a bygone era with all hand tools. The house is very beautiful as are the furnishings; be sure to stay for her breakfast and to say "hi" to JoJo, the family dog, who is also a sweetheart.



Mountain Laurel Inn in Damascus

A funny story here, one of which I don't have to tell, but will anyway. I'm in nasty weather but still decide to take the Roan Mountain route which because of the elevation becomes even nastier. It's really raining and has even become a little foggy. I park my bike for a photo in front of the Carvers Gap sign (base of Roan Mtn). As I dismount, some small rocks placed there as a landscape border cause me to trip and fall over one of the rocks. If that wasn't enough, as I get up I trip over another rock and go boom again. Please note here that I'm in full riding gear with a rain jacket, pants and helmet and thus not only look like the Michelin Man (in yellow and black) but also move somewhat like him. Now I'm lying on my back looking up at the rain remembering how athletic and coordinated I was in my youth and wondering whatever happened. At this point I'm thinking of that commercial where they say - "Help, I've fallen and I can't get up". Upon getting up, and more importantly remaining up, I looked around to see how many people were pointing at this idiot, but there was no one there. It's always good to laugh at yourself and that's exactly what I did. I guess you really had to be there. 😊



Carvers Gap where I couldn't seem to stand up. It was a really funny moment

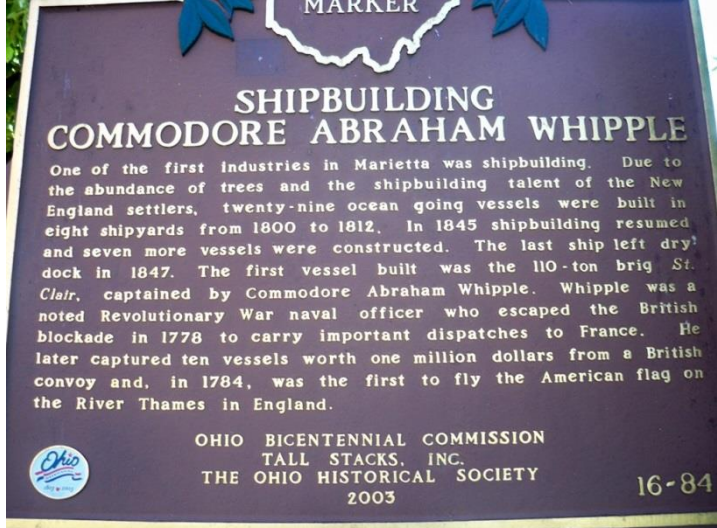
It's now Monday May 6th with cool temperatures (high 50's) and clear and beautiful skies with no chance of rain today. My lodging tonight will be at the [Lafayette Hotel in Marion, Ohio 740-373-5522](#), which is located right on the Ohio River and decorated in a Riverboat theme. So it's Hwy 91 North out of Damascus, VA up to US 11 and over to Marion where I catch Hwy 16 North from Marion to Tazewell and beyond. The stretch of Hwy 16 from Marion to Tazewell is called the [Back of the Dragon](#) and is 33 miles long with 438 curves of all kinds stretching over 3 mountains. This will be my 3rd time going from south to north. In a few days I'll be doing it for the 1st time from North to South, but more on that later. Continuing on past Tazewell up to US 52 West, I ride up thru West Virginia and across the Ohio River into Ohio, where I catch Hwy 7 known as the Ohio River Scenic Byway. Please allow me go back here for a minute to say that even beyond Tazewell, Hwy 16 is still full of curves as are parts of US 52; it was really good riding. The sad part here is that both of those roads take you thru some very poor areas of West Virginia where people are struggling to make ends meet as seen by their living conditions and the small towns in general. It made my heart sad and at the same time made me appreciate how lucky I am and have been in life. But now it's Hwy 7 along the Ohio River and I'm working



Ohio River at morning



Lobby of the Lafayette Hotel



Plaques in a park on the river in Marion, Ohio outside of the Lafayette Hotel

my way north thru Gallipolis, a beautiful little town with a gorgeous and very well maintained city park right on the Ohio River. It has a walkway along the river with big shade trees, monuments for our Veterans and plaques about the town's French heritage. The Bob Evans Farm (of restaurant fame) is located just outside of town. On towards Little Hocking where the fun will really begin as I break off of Hwy 7 to ride some of [Hwy 555](#), affectionately known as the "Triple Nickel". Hwy 555 is one of nine roads in SE Ohio known as the "Windy 9" ([Windy9.com](#)), which Ohio says has close to 1,000 miles of pavement to ride. Although they advertise to use Athens, Ohio as your base, Marietta only 50 miles away works very well also. I've ridden seven of the nine and trust me here, they're all good with Hwy 555 my favorite. So it's [Hwy 555](#) north up to Ringgold where I catch [Hwy 78](#) (both are part of the Windy 9) over to McConnelsville and Hwy 60 back down into Marietta. It was an excellent way to finish off an already great day of riding.

Tuesday, May 7th, is once again cool (high 50's), sunny and clear with no chance of rain. I'm out of Marietta on Hwy 26 East which runs along the Little Muskingum River and thru the [Wayne National Forest](#). Without a doubt, they could call it the Windy 10 and add this Hwy 26 to the group - a wonderful road with beautiful scenery. In Woodsfield, I catch Hwy 78 over to Hwy 7 again and it's up and over the river on Hwy 872 into Moundsville, WV where it changes to Hwy 2. I follow US 250 South, which is full of some really nice curves, but unfortunately it's also full of some large slow moving trucks. Add to that the fact that some areas of US 250 are in dire need of repaving, making it not the riding experience I was looking for. However that was all on the northern part out of Moundsville. Once further south near Cameron, the trucks were gone and the pavement was better. I stayed on US 250 thru Hundred, Philippi and into Elkins. (On another trip, I took Hwy 7 from Hundred west to Veto, then Hwy 20 back east to US 19 to Hwy 131 to US 50 East, back to US 250 making for a wild and crazy loop.)

At this point my original plan was to stay on US 250 as I wanted to end up in Covington, VA for the night and to do sections #2 and #1 (in that order) of the [MABDR](#). However after talking to four riders from North Carolina at the BMW Rally (that had been off-road there), I was advised not to do it for two reasons: 1) I did not have the correct tires as mine were still the stock ones, which are 90/10 or 80/20 at best and I should have 50/50; 2) by the time I got to the MABDR my tires would have over 7,200 miles on them so the tread would be quite worn and not good at all for mud/dirt. The last time I was really riding off-road on a dirt bike, I was in my early twenties after getting out of the Army. Thus I took their advice and changed my plans in Elkins. I now

switched from US 250 to US 219. Although US 219 doesn't have the curves that US 250 has, it does have excellent pavement, beautiful scenery and made for a great ride that afternoon. I'm down past Snowshoe (where I'll be for the Road Runner Rally in August), Marlinton and into Rich Creek, then along US 460 West to Princeton, WV. There I find a Quality Inn, an Exxon and an Applebee's all on the same corner – no need to say more. I sat at the bar for dinner in Applebee's among four other people and we all had a very humorous and good conversation which I enjoyed very much. After dinner and my two soda pops, I'm done for the night. So with a full tank of gas, a full tummy, a soft bed and dreams of what tomorrow will bring, I enter into never-never land.

Wednesday, May 8th, and again it's clear, cool (high 50's) and sunny with no chance of rain. I was having outrageous weather these past few days and was loving it. I had planned to be home on Saturday because of the MABDR, but now it looks like Thursday as I'll probably make it to Clayton, GA (350 miles) or Athens, GA (425 miles) tonight. Those mileage figures are both a WAG as it will be all back roads and thus I'm unsure. Athens is 305 miles from Lake City, FL so I'll probably leave that for Thursday – at least that's what I'm thinking at 8 AM as I head out of the parking lot.

I'm on US 460 West which will become one with US 19 and take me straight into Tazewell, VA some 40 miles down the road. Then I'll be doing the Back of the Dragon (down to Marion) which should get the morning off to a rock and roll start. I finished doing the Back of the Dragon and I believe it may be my last time. It's my 4th overall and there are some problems with the road that I consider unsafe (only my opinion). Yes, it's a "motorcycle road" and everyone should do it, but when I was going north a few days earlier, there was a lot of gravel in the high elevation curves, as there has been in past runs, and also some rock chips that had fallen off the cliffs, some of fist size. If you're an aggressive rider going into a blind switchback with gravel and rock chips, it can be nerve racking. I found that not all the gravel was to one side or the other as in some cases it was just spread out. Hitting a rock chip with your front tire will, as everyone knows, make your bike jump sideways. Add to that when coming southbound (the road is so narrow to begin with) in those same curves that your mirrors are across the yellow line as you're leaning into the curve which would not be good time to meet an F-150. There is no "Motorcycle Maintenance" on this road like there is on the Tail of the Dragon. To ride the Back of the Dragon at 10 mph is just something I don't care to do. That being said, there are just so many roads to ride all over the SE United States that it will not be missed.

At the southern tip of the Dragon, I stop for a quick exploration of [Hungry Mother State Park](#) and Visitor Center (great story about how the park got its name). Then it's on thru Marion continuing south on Hwy 16 (very pretty road) thru Volney, Mouth of Wilson and into North Carolina. I took Hwy 194 (a very nice road as is Hwy 88) over into Boone and then US 221 into Blowing Rock where I stopped for lunch at a little wine and cheese place that makes the best sandwiches. From there I chose to stay on US 221 South instead of the BRP due to the curves that US 221 has plus it would be, I thought, somewhat faster. It's now down to US 70 near Marion, NC, then Hwy 9 from Black Mountain to Bat Cave, and US 64 over towards Franklin. I break off from US 64 in Highlands and take Hwy 106 over to US 441 South which is just north of Dillard and Clayton, GA. Although it's well into the later afternoon hours, I'm now thinking, for the 1st time, of making it all the way home today. I can save another night in a hotel but more than that - Home is where the Heart is - and that is so

true in my case. When I'm gone, I miss HOME. It's where Linda is, Jessie is and all my comfort both physical and even more importantly mental. It's peace, comfort and love all wrapped up in one sweet bundle. So the decision is made, somewhere around 4 PM, that I'm going home tonight. Although I intended to go home entirely on back roads, I now realize that won't be happening as there is no way I'm riding down US 441 in rural Georgia and Florida in the pitch black (I did that once before). I'm only about 80 miles from Athens, add about 95 to Macon, about 215 from there to Lake City and I'm looking at somewhere in the neighborhood of 380 (+/-) miles. I believe I'm looking at a little more than five hours of riding plus some time for a quick meal, gas, and using the old fashion method of math (counting my fingers), I'm thinking I'm home by 10 PM. So I fill up in Eatonton, GA, where US 441 and US 129 split, and take US 129 down to Macon to I-16 to I-75 South. I pull into my drive at exactly 10:10 PM. I ended up doing 742 miles that last day with over 500 of it being on back roads. The good news here is that being a Wednesday, I had zero traffic on I-75 coming home. It was almost a ghost town.

So if you're thinking of making a purchase of a Yamaha Super Ténéré ES, I would say to go for it. The bike did everything I asked it to do and then some. It's an all-day, sport-touring machine and can go off road, depending on your ability, anywhere you want. I've seen on YouTube how some riders handle this bike as if it were a 250cc dirt bike, however, their abilities are far better than mine.

So now I'm home with a little over 8,500 miles in three months and will be getting some new shoes for my girl as in a pair of [Heidenau K60](#) (50/50) tires. Next month I'll be up in Pennsylvania for a one day off-road school followed by attending the MSTA STAR in Bristol, Virginia. I should be able to do some off road riding since the MABDR starts in Damascus, Virginia, which is only 26 miles away.

Hope all is well with everyone and remember to [Venture On](#) as money returns but time does not.

SAFETY TALK

IMPORTANT NOTICE: *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.*

Wildlife!

No, we are not talking about all night bar runs by packs of V-twin riders. This is the real wildlife, those critters that find their way into your path of travel. Here are some thoughts and possible courses of action.

First off, deciding what to do about the wildlife that has suddenly appeared in lane pretty much depends on the animal. Different sizes, types and attitudes demand different responses. You don't respond to a squirrel that can't make up its mind the same way you react to the deer which appears on the road.



Avoid hitting a deer on your motorcycle

Photo: [Revzilla](#)

There are a few rules to follow:

- 🦉 **Rule #1 - Squirrels.** Do not try to swerve for them. They don't know where they're going either and you're just as likely to swerve into one as it dodges at the last moment.
- 🐢 **Rule #2 - Turtles.** DEFINITELY swerve. They don't have a passing gear, and hitting one of those hard shells can almost guarantee an upset in your trajectory. As an aside, if you can and it is safe, please try to stop and either scoop up or escort the little fellow across the road. They are just trying to stay alive, too. Turtle rescues are good karma!
- 🦅 **Rule #3 - Vultures.** These are usually on the road in flocks, enjoying a fresh meal of the squirrel that couldn't make up its mind. Slowing down and blowing the horn will usually scatter them before you get there. Just remember to miss the squirrel...
- 🦌 **Rule #4 - Deer.** You never know when one will bound across the road in front of you. Try your best to avoid and remember; where there is one, there is probably another right behind the first. Don't believe the old "dusk and dawn" danger times. Deer are out at all hours of the day and night.
- 🦨 **Rule #5 - Skunks.** Just don't. You'll probably survive, but wish you hadn't...for several days.
- 🦉 **Rule #6 - Possums, raccoons, rabbits, etc.** The general rule is that if the animal is small (and not a hard-shell turtle or even an armadillo), your bike will probably have enough mass and momentum to carry you through the impact upright. A firm grip on the bars before the moment of contact, to keep the steering centered will help.

I once (unfortunately) hit a dog that ran out at the last second to chase my bike. I was traveling about 45 mph and couldn't really slow down, as close as he was. He ran right in front of me, weight around 12-15 lbs. and maybe 8-10 inches tall. All I had time to do was instinctively roll off the throttle. My front tire hit him dead center, he bounced off the skid plate of my ADV bike, and then the rear tire got him. While it was a couple of good hard bumps, the bike never wavered in its trajectory. Unfortunately the dog didn't fare as well and I still carry a guilty conscious about it, even though after replaying it over and over, there just wasn't anything I could have done. The bottom line is that your bike carries a lot of energy in its mass and momentum, and most small animals just don't carry enough mass to deflect that energy. Your conscious, however, tends to suffer mightily, so I guess you can call that karma as well.

The bottom line is to be prepared. Running through possible wildlife collision scenarios in your mind can help you with that preparation, so if the time ever comes, you'll have trained yourself mentally to respond to the possible threat.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor

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

Florida News

South Director's Report

YA KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN OUR "WINTER" IS WARM AND RAINY....

LUV BUGS... Those infuriating fornicators have been very prevalent the last three weeks! Over the first weekend of May, 65 riders and friends made their way to Kevin Healey's Wizard's Wild Weekend in Cedar Key. Nobody escaped a thorough coating of bugs and guts. The hotels were very kind in setting up wash stations for the road warriors! For all the proof, head to [our photo website](#) and click through the photo gallery posted by James and others. Cedar Key is quite the hang out, with more "down home" local charm than Key West, and it's 5% of the size! You'll also see pics from the Just For Fun Lunch Ride to Peck's. Unfortunately, despite proper planning, there was a scheduling and room assignment SNAFU that led to many riders enduring a l-o-n-g lunch time. Of course, with so many well-traveled attendees, lots of time means lots of stories were brushed off and shared with new audiences!! Kevin's weekends ALWAYS leave you feeling better about the world!! 😊



Van VanSteelant



View of Cedar Key business district

Photo: James Scott S

By the following weekend, the wild kingdom was just as bad. Tom's report below covers the facts, but rest assured, he canceled the Central Lunch Ride with a scowl and furrowed brow!! As pure luck would have it, just a week later, the South Lunch Ride was scheduled for a coastal location ([Capt. Hiram's Resort](#), Sebastian).

Who knew how fortuitous our plans made in December would turn out to be! And I think many riders decided to make the most of the opportunity!! We had 11 riders meet up in West Palm and meander our way along the coast and the shores of the Indian River. Perfect weather, nary a bug to be hit, and light traffic made for a great group ride!! A total 16 of us crowded into the motorcycle only parking, right at the front door, and took up our usual "table" right on the edge of the river. A superb breeze blew through the open windows. Our servers were wonderful, the food was typically tasty, and the dolphins appeared on cue for our entertainment!! They were in pursuit of their own sushi lunch of local bait fish! A delightful couple of hours passed by before any move was made to head home...



Our group at Capt. Hiram's table.

Photo: Don Moe

Our 50/50 raffle once again put a smile on our winner's face. As Tom and I do not participate in the raffles that we manage, we do contribute when we are "just hanging around" the other's lunch table. I won the pot back at the Westgate Lunch Ride, and Tom took home the winner's share this time around. True to form, he did donate back part of his take, and we added another \$50 to our total. We now have \$1,772.00 to consider for our

donations. A **BIG** thanks to all who join us and participate in our events! I look forward to your responses to our suggestions.

What's Next??

With STAR 2019 happening at the end of June, we have front loaded our first **BRUNCH RIDES** of the season!! Tom and the Central members start off with a previous destination on June 8th – the [Four Seasons](#) in Frostproof!! The description on our website says it all!! I'd expect a few of the Southies to show up for this brunch ride...

A week later, the South Brunch Ride returns to an old favorite... [Two Peas Café](#) in LaBelle. Family owned, cosy and always welcoming! Remember, **BRUNCH rides start at 9:30AM!** And more details are always on our website www.flmsta.org.

Demo rides at STAR start on SATURDAY, JUNE 22nd in Bristol, VA. Our very own Doug & Becky will be on hand taking very good care of us!! The opening ceremony for STAR 2019 happens at 6:00PM SUNDAY, JUNE 23rd. You'll want to get there early, just because... 😊

Look for a few emails from me leading up to STAR.

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...

We welcome two new Florida riders who joined the MSTA in May:

Budd Breheim Michael Engestrom

We thank these three Florida members for renewing their memberships in May:

Douglas Christensen Robert Fischer Pete Kauk

These five Florida memberships will expire soon or have recently expired:

Alan Berry L. Dee Cramer Robert 'Bob' Shields
Robert Bourbon Bill Royal

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. Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew or PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin respectively. If you use a pre-printed form from STARreview or an ITR, be sure to mail it to Beth Hemstreet, 5560 Stone Church Court, Loveland, CO 80537, and not to the address of a prior membership director.

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!

Well, STAR 2019 really is THIS MONTH! You know what to do... Register, buy bike raffle tickets and secure a room!! If you are new to the MSTA, you REALLY want to attend this STAR as it is located in the middle of spectacular riding. And with years of prior experience, the Executive Committee is well practiced at organizing these complex events. This year's event ought to be amazing!! You know they are giving away a GOLDWING this year???

On a local note, a BIG THANK-YOU to all of the participants who have turned out for the first five months of riding events!! It's truly rewarding to see the parking lot full of bikes and the tables full of smiling faces!! And we have had several new faces to look at too!! If you have recruited a new member, thank you!!

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

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report - May 2019



Love bugs! By the morning of our Central ride, the heavy swarms had diminished locally, but those randy little rumpy-humpies were still around. Some areas were thick with them, others not so much. It was hard to believe they wouldn't be out en masse around the St John's, which I could not avoid. And I'd have six hours of them by the time I got home. Under the circumstances, turnout was virtually assured to be low. So... for the first time, I pulled the plug. Some good did come of it though.

As it turned out, our friends Roy and Peter missed my early morning cancelation and enjoyed a nice ride down from Gainesville. They didn't see any other sport-touring types at [Lake Harris Hideaway](#). But they stayed for a good lunch and had a pleasant ride home. Roy reported just a few splats for the whole trip. The week before, he said they were thick.

Carl, Hal, Budd and Alan had an unplanned



Tom Blake



Tillies to the left



L-R: Alan, new member Budd, Hugh, Hal and Carl (Pics by Carl)

lunch at the Hideaway the previous weekend. Then, having seen my email, opted to ride up to Eustis and have lunch with Hugh, who is recuperating from shoulder issues. They ate at a place called [Tillies Tavern and Grill](#), just down the street from the [1884 Restaurant](#). In their opinion, the menu was better and portions more plentiful than at 1884. They reported excellent service and delicious food and recommended Tillies for a future MSTA ride. It is on my list – for early 2020.

As for the lusty little love makers, we've had a few okay years and forgot how miserable they could get. I've read that love bug season usually lasts four to five weeks in April and May and again in August and September. That works against those of us who do rides early in the latter of those month-pairs. Consequently, I'll be looking to move future Central rides out to near the end of May and September.

On **June 8th**, join us for a **9:30 brunch** at the **Four Season's Restaurant** on Hwy 27 near Frostproof. See the **Florida Rides This Month** section of the newsletter for the address and full description. Also, consult flmsta.org/rides for late updates. Clean. Decent food. Ample seating and paved parking. Convenient location. **No love bugs**. Join us.



Safe Journeys,

Tom Blake

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Florida June Brunch Ride

Sat., **June 8th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

[Four Seasons](#) ([map](#))

5298 Hwy 29

Frostproof, FL 33843

Florida MSTA Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to 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 Central Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **June 8th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: [Four Seasons](#), 5298 Hwy 29, Frostproof, FL 33843 ☎863-635-2951 ([map](#))

Description: **FIRST BRUNCH RIDE OF THE SEASON!!**

It's not fancy. Just generous portions of inexpensive, good home cooked food with great service. The 'go to' place in this centrally located neck of the woods with plenty of paved parking. Get out of town and enjoy a relaxing country ride to and from this place.

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎321-723-2857

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **June 15th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: [Two Peas Café](#), 870 W. Hickpochee Ave #500, LaBelle, FL 33935 ☎863-675-2891 ([map](#))

Description: A perfect BRUNCH destination!! Old school goodness, family owned and easy to get to from everywhere!!

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

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 Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **July 13th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: [Camelot Country](#), 351 North US-1, Oak Hill, FL 32759 ☎386-345-0352 ([map](#))

Description: New-to-us, here we have a smallish diner in front of the Oak Hill flea market. But inside it's roomy enough for our purposes and immaculate. The food is plentiful and VERY reasonably priced. Service is excellent. Plenty of parking. Let's do it!

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎321-723-2857

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **July 20th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: [Dimitri's Pizza Kitchen](#), 2710 Kenilworth Blvd, Sebring, FL 33870 ☎863-385-7323 ([map](#))

Description: I KNOW. I KNOW. **THIS IS STILL A BRUNCH RIDE!!**

This is new-to-us, though highly recommended. One look at their menus, yes, plural, and you'll know why we are heading here for BRUNCH!! If you pine for those Greek/Italian diners up north, you have found your siren call!

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

2019 Kentucky Red River Gorge MSTA Rally

When: July 12 – 14, 2019
Where: [Ramada Limited Mount Sterling](#), 115 Stone Trace Drive, Mt. Sterling, KY 40353 ☎859-497-9400 ([map](#))
Description: Info at: ridemsta.com/mstaforums/index.php?topic=2697.0
Contact: Patrick Mogavero, kyszrex@aol.com or ☎859-620-6352

Big Lynn Lodge MSTA Rally

When: July 18 – 21, 2019
Where: [Big Lynn Lodge](#), 10860 Hwy 226A, Little Switzerland, NC 28749 ☎828-765-4257 ([map](#))
Description: This is the 8th year that the [MSTA](#) has held this regional event. Come for the roads and stay for the view. If riding curvy mountain roads are your thing this event is for you! With limited room availability and million dollar views with some of the best roads anywhere! You must also register with the MSTA for this event.
Info at: msta-se.com/BLynn or facebook.com/events/776978822664067
Contact: Dave Brickner, dwbrick@gmail.com or ☎828-448-5429

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.

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

Florida MSTA 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 Hyperlinks are related to the safety article.

[Hyperlink #1](#)

[Hyperlink #2](#)

[Hyperlink #3](#)

[Hyperlink #4 \(Humorous\)](#)

CLASSIFIED ADS

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to 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 to discuss publishing an article. I can offer assistance in preparing your article. Thanks!