



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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Feature Article

Tales of Two-Wheel Terror - The Fire Pit

By **Ethan Powsner**

[Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the Sep-Oct 2023 edition of On The Level, published by the BMW Riders Association.]



photo: On The Level, Sep-Oct 2023, BMW Riders Assn.

The Library is a calming oasis in the heart of the business district, catering to folks working in nearby offices and those who prefer urban living. The cocktail lounge's brick walls are hidden by bookshelves filled with hundreds of old hardcovers. Ornate planters displaying vibrant greens rest on half-height walls of carved woodwork repurposed from estate homes and old churches. Dark green upholstery covers the comfortable chairs and banquettes while restrained lighting fills the discrete, hushed atmosphere.

Jim Thompson, a financial analyst with a large insurance company, walked through the front door looking anxiously for his best friend Hank. He gave a quick wave to their favorite waitress, Greta, and headed for the sanctuary of his special booth, the one where he'd had his first date with his now ex-wife. Once seated he couldn't stifle his obsessive thoughts about this past weekend. *Was it a dream? It had to be a dream! But if it were a dream, how would I know her name?* Round and round, his mind spiraled faster and faster as he became convinced he was losing his mind. Greta, noticing Jim's rapidly tapping heel, "Hi Jim." No reply, "Hi Jim, the usual?" He snapped out of his trance, "What? Oh, yeah, make it a double, and why don't you bring Hank a Manhattan - he should have been here already."

What's taking him so long? Jim repeated until his lawyer friend Hank finally arrived. Heads turned in Jim's direction as he called out "Hank" a little too loudly while waving "Over here, over here." Jim began before Hank sat down, "Thanks for coming on such short notice." Hank, politely commenting on Jim's haggard appearance added, "And, your text was pretty intense even for you, what's up?" Jim leaned in, "I know, I know, but you won't believe - hell, I don't believe - what happened at the rally." Greta brought their drinks, arching an eyebrow knowingly at Hank. Settling back while grabbing his cocktail he gestured to Jim, "Go on."

Jim started and stopped a couple of times, he hadn't been this tongue-tied since his DUI arrest after the homecoming dance. He'd trusted Hank ever since they'd become friends in junior high, relying on his calming influence for over 35 years. Hank gestured, "Take your time." Starting before the beginning, Jim admitted that

he should never have tried making the long ride in one day but at least he had gotten there before registration closed. After a cold shower, he walked over to the food trucks to order a couple of tacos where he'd crossed paths with an old rally-friend who invited him to hang out at the fire pit.

Walking back with his Styrofoam container, Jim wasn't sure he had the confidence to meet up with anyone. While he'd always enjoyed fire pits - people laughing at each other's jokes, swapping tales, and commiserating about tough rides in lousy weather - the long ride had left him drained, making room for his anxiety to flare up. Sitting beside his tent, he wolfed down his dinner while debating whether to stay and read or to go and talk.

The tacos, refried beans, and beer were not settling peacefully, so he said to himself, "Screw it. I didn't ride here to sit in my tent." He grabbed his Kermit chair and cooler to join the conversations. In 12 hours, he'd be wishing he'd stayed put.

After a couple of hours of feeling bloated and pretending to be having fun, Jim's long ride and four cans of beer caught up with him and he nodded off, chin to chest. Waking up after midnight, he sat for a few minutes gathering his thoughts. The flames had quieted down and embers throbbed in the swirling air currents as he stood gathering his things. "Hello!" He looked up, wondering if he had just heard something. "Over here," a raspy voice called out from the other side. Turning around, he squinted and saw the rider sitting across the fire pit. He did a double take when he realized it was a woman with medium-long blonde hair, a well-worn armored jacket, and some awfully distressed riding pants.

"Hey," he called back, "It's been a long day, and I must have dozed off. You want a beer?" "Nah, I just came to stare at the fire." A piece of wood popped and hissed as Jim folded his chair. The rider called over, "Wanna hear a ghost story?" Jim remained still for a moment, the scratchy sound of her voice bringing back memories of some of the rough and tumble bars he'd been to over the years - the late nights of smoking and drinking and talking over loud music. As tired as he was, he liked the idea of hanging out with an attractive woman — maybe he'd get lucky. He began carrying his things over to sit by her, "Sure."

A sharp knock resonated through The Library as Hank all but dropped his glass on the mahogany table. Leaning in he said, "No way! Didn't you learn the first time?" Jim turned red as memories of his "luck" at the western-states rally flooded in. The fallout from cheating on his wife was never ending. Jim blasted back, "Thanks for bringing that up, buddy." Hank backed off, "You're right... my bad, I shouldn't have mentioned that. So anyway, what's this lady rider's deal?"

Jim, remembering every detail, wasn't sure how to explain how he and the rider, Jenny Fishburne, sat alone at the fire pit as a strong westerly muscled scattered clouds past the moon. How she shared a little too much personal information, describing the fight with her fiancé over her attending the rally and how she asked Jim if her sister and brother were right when they cautioned her about marrying a man who didn't ride — would it always be a sore point in their relationship? How he noticed a distinct bruise on her jaw and wondered if she was a fighter, a victim, or both? Instead of that, he told Hank, "Her name is Jenny Fishburne, and I liked her independent spirit, plus it was obvious she had been through a lot."

Jim caught Hank stealing a side glance at his watch, "You just got here!" Hank gave a sheepish look, "I'm sorry, but I really need to be working on a contract." Jim panicked—he needed time to tell all the details, to explore all the angles, otherwise he'd never escape the turmoil raging in his head. Insincerely, he gave Hank a don't-worry-about-it smile while figuring out how to compress the story into something that the preoccupied Hank could follow. He put it this way, "Jenny was taking the slow roads to the rally and didn't have a motel reservation for the night. She got tired and the first couple of motels were full. When it got dark she didn't see a piece of tire in the road, ran over it, and crashed."

Hank perked up. "That's an impressive summary, you could have been a trial lawyer." Jim gave Hank the stink-eye and continued summarizing her tale about how her cell signal was low and she couldn't Google for a towing service, her camping gear was lying underneath her bike, and there was no way she was going to

walk for miles along a dark country road, so she flagged down the first car that came her way. Hank was impressed, “That takes guts.”

“Yes, but,” Jim then explained that the car that stopped was a Sprinter van being driven by a guy named Mike who owned a local powersports shop. Mike offered to load her bike and give her a lift to his shop, out behind his house. She thought that was a little fishy, and asked whether he could drop her off at a nearby motel. He said they were too far out of his way, but that she could spend the night with him and his wife. She accepted. Hank shook his head, “That’s independent spirit for you. I’d never stay with total strangers.” Jim shrugged, “Think of it from her perspective—Mike seemed normal and, if he were a psycho, he already knows where she is stranded.”

The Library’s grandfather clock was chiming on the half-hour as Greta wandered over to their table, “You boys seem preoccupied tonight. Any more drinks, or are you still working?” Jim could tell that Hank was considering another round and interrupted, “Hank’s got work to do, but I’ll take another.” Hank piped up, “I’d like to order some take-out.” Greta handed him one of the elaborate green faux-leather menus from a nearby table and then hurried away to handle another customer.

While they waited for Greta to return, Jim acknowledged, “I know this is dragging on, but you’ll see why in a few minutes.” Hank said, “Don’t worry about it, now it’s heating up—she doesn’t have a motel reservation, gets drowsy, doesn’t see the tire in the road, crashes, can’t camp, flags down a car, and accepts a ride to a stranger’s house to spend the night. What happened next?”

Jim wouldn’t rush this part of the story. He took a breath, and turning back to Hank, vividly described how the moon and dark lumpy clouds took on a sinister appearance while nighthawks swooped and circled. He recounted Jenny’s description of Mike’s all-American red brick ranch, the warm welcome from his wife, and the late meal of soup, bread, and wine. He then explained how Jenny started to get nervous during a brief tour of her hosts’ home—the far wall of the dimly lit family room was decorated with antique portraits of religious figures, each in a frame hand carved to look like ivy vines entwined with writhing snakes. Jim shuddered as he got to the part where Jenny learned that these were all paintings of patron saints of death and that the pride of her hosts’ collection was a small, gilded frame displaying a postage stamp-sized piece of leather—that they proudly bragged was a piece of flesh from one of the saints!

Hank almost choked on his drink, “What? That’s disgusting. Are you sure these folks weren’t serial killers?” Jim nodded, “Yeah, I know, it’s crazy. I’m telling you, I’ve never heard a story like hers - I was glued to my chair. Anyway, since you’re in a hurry, let me get back to it.” Jim recapped how Jenny had slept with one eye open and her pocketknife at-hand. Nothing happened overnight, and the next morning Mike looked into repairing the crash damage and found out that a couple of parts were on back-order. He called a friend of his with four bikes, including an R 1150 RT like Jenny’s, and that guy was willing to let Mike do a parts transplant as long as he could keep the new parts when they came in.

The Library was filling up as the dinner crowd started drifting in. Greta came around to hand Jim his drink and take Hank’s to-go order. Hank looked at his watch again, “Hate to be a jerk, but you might need to speed this up a bit.” “Alright, damn it,” Jim said, “let’s just wait until you aren’t distracted.” Hank, trying to walk back on his comment, “Can you tell the rest in 15 minutes?”

Jim waited a couple of beats, “So, Jenny is OK with the parts transplant idea but wants to see the donor bike first. It turns out that Mike’s friend is an undertaker, and they drive over to his funeral home where his extra bikes are stored. The friend is in the middle of preparing a body for a visitation and—get this—he keeps working on the departed while they’re all talking. Jenny’s standing on the other side of the casket lid because she doesn’t want to see the corpse.”

“I wouldn’t either,” said Hank, looking up as The Library’s general manager, Phil, came over to thank them for dropping in and to ask about Hank’s family. After Phil moved on, Jim jumped right back into it, not realizing that his heel had started tapping again. “While Jenny’s been laying out this long story, I’ve got to go to the Port-a-John and I don’t know how much longer I can hold it in. I’m just about to interrupt her when she says

that the undertaker tells her he's OK with Mike's transplant idea if she pays all the costs, and then offers his key. As she walks over to take it from him, she can't help herself and looks into the casket - it's her - she's the dead body in the coffin!"

Hank choked on his swallow of whiskey, "What? Did you just say she saw herself in the coffin?" "Yep," said Jim, "and then she tells me the best punchline ever - 'Everything went black and the next thing I know, I'm sitting here around the fire pit with you.'"

A cool breeze from The Library's air conditioning washed over the booth as Hank swirled his glass, started to take a sip, but instead looked at Jim, "I don't get it. You wanted to see me because this Jenny person told you a ghost story with a great punchline?" Jim said, "Trust me, you had to be there, it really was spooky the way she told it with all the details. And anyway," Jim continued, "all of that was just the set up for the weird stuff that I haven't gotten to yet." Hank let out an audible groan, "Don't you remember, I've got to get back to work?"

Jim promised that he could finish by the time Greta returned with the take-out. "By the time Jenny told me the end of her story, I couldn't wait any longer and rushed over to the bathroom, but when I came back, she was gone. The next morning, I wanted to invite her to ride with a few of us over to the restored grist mill and maybe get her to tell her story again. I figured I could track her down with some help from the registration volunteers. A woman named Pam helped me. I told her I was looking to see if an acquaintance had registered, Jenny Fishburne."

Jim glanced at his watch and pressed on, outlining how Pam couldn't find Jenny's name and then said she'd ask Steve, who in turn suggested that she could take Jim's number and call when Jenny registered. Pam peeled off a Post-It note and before Jim could get past the area code, there was a piercing metallic screech—a chair leg scraping hard against the concrete floor. Steve called out, "Pam, hold on a minute."

As The Library's clock chimed the quarter-hour, Jim paused. Looking Hank in the eyes and lowering his voice, he continued, "Steve motions me to a quiet area off to the side and says, 'Sir, I'm sorry, but I just put two and two together - Jenny Fishburne was the rider killed in an accident on her way to last year's rally.'"

Jim paused as Greta approached with the neatly packaged take-out order. Hank thanked her and gave her his credit card. Jim, dying for some affirmation, waited until Greta stepped away before asking, "Well, what do you think?" Hank shifted in his seat, "Are you BS-ing me?" Jim shot back, "No, I swear. I had to sit down on the floor for half an hour before I could think clearly." Hank rubbed his chin, "You know, I believe you, it's just hard for me to focus on this right now. Let me finish that contract and we can talk more this weekend." Jim slumped back in his chair, Hank's tepid reaction said it all—he shouldn't have sent Hank that panicked text.

Jim stewed, his mind a whirlpool of self-doubt. A whispered "Hey friend" drifted into his ear. "What?" Jim spun around but no one was there. He turned to Hank, "I gotta get out of here." As he started to rise, Greta arrived with Hank's card and bill tucked into an elegant green folder. Jim sat down, heel tapping as Hank attended to the paperwork. "You OK?" Greta asked. Jim shrugged, reaching for a copy of the bill as Hank reminded him to Venmo his share. While Jim was setting up the payment, Hank picked up his card and began putting it into his wallet. Before Greta had walked out of earshot, he called out "Greta, this isn't mine!"

Hank's hand shook as he passed the card to Jim, who stared at it in disbelief and dropped it on the table as if it were on fire - the name embossed on the Visa was "Jennifer Fishburne."

[The End]

[Editor's Request: If you have ridden somewhere interesting at any time and would like to share your experiences and some photos from your journey with other riders, please contact editor@flmsta.org to publish an article. Thanks!]

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.*

Warning: Slippery Corners!

By Doug Westly



Just a little while ago, I was told of an incident where a group of riders were negotiating a corner on one of the backroads in Florida. The lead rider saw some debris in the middle of the corner and steered through the worst of it by adjusting his line of travel. Unfortunately, the second rider in the group didn't see the debris and once his tires encountered the material, he was instantly down. Some damage to the bike, but fortunately the rider was unhurt.

Corners can be tricky. They can be off-camber or decreasing radius, uphill or downhill, or any combination thereof. When we add any type of other factor, such as debris causing a further reduction in traction, the outcome can become quickly dangerous.

First, a little refresher. Anytime we enter a corner and lean the motorcycle, we are working with reduced available traction for other control inputs. In basic terms, it takes more traction (available friction between tire and pavement) to corner than it does to travel in a straight line. If you recall your basic motorcycle training, recall that we view traction as a pie chart, with only 100% available. If traction requirements exceed 100%, something has to give. For instance (hypothetically), in a corner, if you're using 85% of traction just to get around the curve, you've only got 15% left for braking or anything else you want to do with the bike at that particular moment. In fact, many new motorcycles now have what's termed "cornering ABS", that take into account reduced traction when a bike is leaned over into a corner or turn and adjust the available anti-lock brake system support accordingly. How that works is for another time...

Now comes the problem. Even if you're up to speed on cornering traction, etc., what happens when even that reduced traction goes away, *i.e.* you add surface debris into the mix? It doesn't matter if you're in Florida, California or anywhere else. We encounter reduced traction conditions everywhere. Wet roads. Sand in the corner (we get A LOT of that here). Leaves in the Fall. Worse, wet leaves...in the Fall...in shaded corners where your vision is limited. Freshly cut grass blown into the road. The result can be an instant loss of traction as soon as your tires hit the debris.

By the way, here is a potential cornering obstacle you've never realized. In some states, dividing lines (between lanes and on edges) are not painted on (which can be a problem, although most of this paint has an added traction ingredient), but rather consist of plasticized tape rolled onto the road surface. What happens when plastic gets wet? Not really an issue for cars or trucks, but motorcycles? I once saw a Gold Wing in front of me, pulling a trailer put both its tires on one of those wet, plastic lines while leaning over into a connecting ramp between two interstates, at 60 mph. The next thing I saw was the belly of the Gold Wing, literally six feet in the air after it slid off the line and caught traction again on the outside, high-siding the bike, trailer, and both rider and passenger. Both (very good friends of mine) were hospitalized but luckily survived, solely to ATGATT, most importantly, full-face helmets.

In most circumstances an instant loss of traction while cornering will occur first to the front tire, as it encounters the no-traction environment before the rear tire. If that happens, it generally (initially) generates what we term a "low-side" crash, meaning the front tire skids out from under the bike in the direction of travel, and the bike (and rider) falls to the side its already leaning. Doesn't mean its going to stay like that, though, because a low-side crash can then generate a flip of the bike (become a high-side) if it regains traction once the slide has begun.

Or, the front tire can maintain a minimal amount of traction through the debris, only to have the rear tire enter the debris field and now the entire traction effort on both tires fails simultaneously, causing the whole bike, as opposed to just the front end, to slip to the inside and low-side. Same potential end results, just even more dramatic.

Worst possible outcome? The entire bike loses traction but stays minimally upright at first, sliding to the outside, through the debris field, only to have both tires catch traction afterwards, now “high-siding”, meaning the bike pitches over towards the outside, simultaneously launching the rider (and passenger) off the bike in a high arc as well. End result predictably less than optimal for both bike and rider.

So how do we avoid the wet leaves in the shaded corner? Can we avoid them?

Well, obviously the first step is riding awareness. If it’s the middle of fall, and you’re riding on your favorite tree-lined backroads, you need to tell yourself, “Ok, watch out in the corners for those dastardly tire-nabbing leaf piles.” Or, here in Florida, “The whole state is a beach. It only depends on how far you are from the water. There could be sand anywhere.” Actually, sand is pretty easy to predict around here. Anytime you approach a corner, entry to an unpaved driveway, parking lot, etc., simply expect the surface debris to be on the pavement. Awareness is our best defense, always!

What happens if you do see the wet leaves, dirt, manure pile, sand, etc., in the middle of your corner and at the last few seconds? You have a couple of options, PROVIDED you aren’t in the middle and last moments of max traction just getting through the corner.

First off, reduce speed, again provided you can do so safely. This will allow you to use less cornering traction AND possibly stand the bike more upright, giving you more available traction and less sideways energy that would push the tires out of line. Quickly examine the debris to determine if there is a path through that is cleaner than the main pile and adjust your line accordingly.

Can you safely maneuver into the opposing lane of travel to avoid it altogether? Assuming you can see all the way through the corner and beyond, assuring there is no on-coming traffic? I make it a point to never break the double yellow lines around corners, simply because (in addition to being safer) its more challenging, particularly when you’re apexing towards the opposing lane of traffic. However, there is one particular backroads corner that I consistently ride which consists of a 10-mph, 90°, off-camber, uphill, decreasing radius curve. In the middle of that curve is a dirt/sand driveway to the outside, and there is ALWAYS sand in the outside lane of travel. Since I can see through the curve and WAY up the road, and when I know its clear, I have no qualms about breaking my no-crossing-the-double line rule. If there is on-coming traffic, I can see that in advance as well and I have no problems slowing down and tip-toeing through the corner.

Oh, and as for our original story, where the second bike in line went down? Maybe a little bit more spacing between bikes would have allowed the first rider time to signal a warning, and/or the next rider time to see the debris would have helped? When groups get into those kind of riding environments, it may be time to space out a little bit more and give yourself more reaction time and maneuvering space. Maybe, instead of staggered formation, it’s time to go single-file and give yourself more maneuvering room.

Fall is here. Leaves will be on the road. Wet leaves will be in the shaded corners. Sand is everywhere, always, just waiting to grab you. Turn up your rider radar. Warning: Corners Can Be Slippery!

Ride safe! – Doug Westly



South Director's Report

Ah, fall has arrived in Florida... so long to 90° highs!!

With three LUNCH rides to entice you all, we are the envy of much of the national membership! You'll find the usual reports from Tom and Doug below. BTW, I had a great solo ride to Kiki's Eggs even though we added a West ride invitation for the Southies. Be sure to catch Tom's, as it will add to the significance of Doug's Safety Article about traction...

The Southies started off the lunch rides, heading to the LaBelle Brewing Co. on October 7th. Van, Buck and James were joined by new-to-Boynton Beach rider, Bill Rawson. The Boynton Boys (yes, all 4 of us reside here!) took off for LaBelle, enjoying the roads and wonderful weather!! Upon arrival, we met up with other Southies Dennis and Dorothy, Ellen, Don M, & Gary kicking tires along with Larry and Tom from the Melbourne area, along with central area riders Rick A. and Roger S. We haven't seen Roger at a RTE in quite some time!! Good thing we asked for a table for 10-15, as our 13 filled up the corner of the dining room nicely. All we're impressed by the new-to-us destination! Decor, service and food were terrific! Lots of gab and plenty of good grub!! If you're comfortable sipping a brew with your dinner, you should check this place out when on four wheels...



Good turnout for the South Lunch Ride



Décor, service & food were terrific at LaBelle Brewing Co.

We were able to dust off the raffle tickets for the South ride and split the \$74 pot with winner Don M., adding \$37 to our total. And again during the West Area ride, adding another \$15 to our total and \$15 to Sam B! Our new yearly sum is \$266.00. A BIG THANKS again to all who participate!!

Now that we've wrapped up our Brunch rides in September, we will kick around the idea of Dinner rides for next summer's RTEs. Several state groups have experimented with the concept as a way to beat the heat, and still have members gather. Of course, some may choose to 4-wheel it for a variety of reasons. Remember, all brands and tire counts are always welcome!! Feel free to chime in with thoughts and suggestions. The goal of course is to increase participation among the membership!

One option may be to hold 4-5 events all over Florida, to shorten the drives and make the gatherings more local, hoping to grow pockets of new members from the casual "meet ups" that are promoted through multiple social media connections...

AND NOW FOR OUR HOLIDAY LUNCH RIDE PROMOTION

We'll be heading to a new-to-us destination for our **Statewide Holiday Lunch Ride on December 9th!!** We have reserved tables at the Lake Wales Family Restaurant, in **Lake Wales!!** Easy to find, lots of parking, friendly staff and centrally located for most of our members.

AND... Doug has added some fun and frolic to the event! His plans follow...

MYSTERY SCAVENGER HUNT! - You'll want to join us for the **December Florida MSTA Statewide Holiday Lunch Ride!** Along with the lunch, there will be a Mystery Scavenger Hunt for members while on their way to the restaurant! Hidden in the Central FL countryside (all within a 25 mile radius of Lake Wales, covering all four compass points) will be tokens, redeemable for prizes at the luncheon. Clues to all will be posted the Friday before the meeting. **BE SURE TO CHECK YOUR EMAIL FRIDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 8TH!!** Solve the riddle, find the token and claim a prize (and bragging rights)! We will offer gift cards as prizes, funded by the proceeds from our 50/50 raffle.

Stay tuned for further info and possibly an additional prize announcement!! Expect a few emails and one last promo in our December *Gator Tales*...

What's Next??

We have three **LUNCH** rides set up for November! We continue to spread out the destinations to entice as many of you as we can!! On the **4th**, the East Central Lunch Ride heads to **Renegades On the River in Crescent City!!** Another new-to-us destination!! On the following **Saturday, the 11th**, join the Southies for a lunch ride, as we also head to a new-to-us location, **Paul's Kitchen, in Wauchula!** The next **Saturday, on the 18th**, join Doug for the West Central Lunch Ride, which heads to the **Upper Deck in Spring Hill.** This rounds out a month of new-to-us destinations!!

And once again, we have our **Black Friday Ride on Friday, the 24th!** Make your way to **The Roost at Four Seasons in Frostproof.** Since our last visit a few years ago, it's been renewed and improved! So, get away from the shopping madness, and settle in for a tasty lunch!!

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...

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 added returning member, Matthew Sturgis of Cape Coral, to the FLMSTA. Welcome!

These Florida memberships have recently renewed:

Robert Holder Jamie Rohrbaugh Michael Shooks Roger Spice

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

Stephen Albert Richard Alleman Tom Blake Mike Halburnt Buck Jones
Dennis Mitchell Norman Nelson Hugh Palmer

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and 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 done quickly and securely 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 the new member of our new membership team, **Scott Snedden, 11484 Waterwood Dr., Tyler, TX 75703**, 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. **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 brand-new **Invitation-To-Ride Tri-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 touring package 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!!

How can you not like the "winter" down here... Cooler temps and longer rides await!!

With 3 rides a month, you have plenty of chances to invite a friend along and introduce them to our group!! More ITRs are available now... You know what to do...

We've had a great year trying out new-to-us locations! We will continue to support our local, small business restaurants. Please send your recommendations to any of the ride coordinators.

Hoping you're living the life you love, and loving the life you live...

When you can...

Join one of our monthly rides!!

And invite a friend to ride along!!

Ride well! Ride often!! Do it

ATGATT Van

*Good turnout for some
pretty good food at
Kountry Kitchen in Vero*

safely!!!

MSTA Florida State Director

East-Central Ride – Goodrich's Seafood, Oak Hill, FL – Tom Blake

A family reunion came up and I had to move our lunch up a week. And following Van's lead, I figured why not give Sunday a try. Saturday's weather was supposed to be hot and rainy while Sunday's would be cooler and dry. Should work out pretty well.

Three of us met in West Melbourne. We headed up through Merritt Island and got onto a road with a few curves and not much traffic. In one 90° right-hander, I noticed a lot of sand had washed across the road, adjusted my line toward the thinnest accumulation (right tire track) and got through it with just a couple little wiggles. I wanted to alert the other guys but was at a loss as to how. Normally, we pump a foot on the side where the problem is. But they could only see my right foot, and I did not want them to steer left. As I watched my mirrors, the rider behind me started into the curve mid-lane! Oh boy, that's where it was the thickest. And he went right down! It happened fast. The bike went down, flipped to the other side, and then he was just standing there next to it. Fortunately, we weren't going fast, and there was no other traffic.

I'm happy to report he was unhurt thanks in part to ATGATT. But his bike was not rideable. The left bar end was severely bent. But even worse, the handlebar stem was just flopping around in the steering head. He tried MOA roadside assistance. It was a long and tedious process, and then they said he'd get a call back once they found a tow company. We waited and waited... no call back. So he called a motorcycle tow company in Palm Bay that he had a card for – Custom Cycle Rescue Florida (321-503-5050, www.CustomCycleRescuefl.com, CustomCycleRescuefl@gmail.com). They could be there in about an hour – roughly the drive time between Palm Bay and our location.

We had already been standing around for almost an hour. The third rider said he was definitely going to stay until the tow arrived. At this point, my presence was not value-added. So, with everyone's agreement, I headed on up to Goodrich's Seafood in Oak Hill. Got there at noon, a half hour late and, SURPRISE, only Jim B from the Jacksonville area was there!

But... I always enjoy Jim's company. We had a good meal and then, since the weather was so nice, we swapped leads several times heading well north of Deland. We finally split up at Cody's Corner above SR40. Jim headed west to pick up US17 and went north. I headed east to US1 to go south. Despite it all, Jim and I still managed to get in long and satisfying rides. But I wish it would have been all four of us.

I talked to the unfortunate rider by phone that evening. He's fine. The tow company showed up on schedule. He was very impressed with the people and their equipment. They delivered the bike and him to Power BMW in Palm Bay where his wife picked him up. He said he didn't even notice the sand but will be paying close attention in the future.

Looking ahead to the end of October... perhaps Jennifer Fishburne will make an appearance.

Saturday, November 4th is the last regular EC lunch ride of the year. Hope to see a few more riders at a new place west of Crescent City called **Renegades**. Comes highly recommended. And then there's the **Black Friday ride to Frostproof** – for most of us, a central location that should have no congestion due to seasonal shoppers.

West Central Lunch Ride – Kiki's Egg House, Fort Meade, FL – Doug Westly

FINALLY! A great turn-out for the Saturday West Central Lunch ride! We had 12 riders show up, from the south, east and west FLMSTA contingents, at Kiki's Egg House in Fort Meade. Kiki's had tables waiting for us. Lunch was great, the motorcycle tales were awesome, and everyone had a great time. Beautiful weather made for an amazing ride to and from lunch that day, no matter which direction you came from. By the way, Kiki's serves an awesome breakfast as well, so if you're ever in that area on two or four wheels, make sure you stop by.



Also, make plans to join the West Central group in **November**. We'll be headed to another new location, the **Upper Deck**, which overlooks the **Weeki Wachee River and Park!**

Florida Rides This Month

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 East Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 4th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Renegades On The River Restaurant**, 1171 County Rd 309, **Crescent City, FL**
☎ (386) 524-4052 ([map](#))

Description: Another new restaurant recommended by a north Florida member who's eaten there. It's a little west of Crescent City next to the St John's River. Pictures of the place look very promising. Lots of good roads up that way. We'll give Three Bananas a rest this year.

Contact: Tom, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎ (321) 794-6147

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 11th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Paul's Kitchen**, 116 N 4th Ave, **Wauchula, FL** ☎ (863) 773-0292 ([map](#))

Description: Celebrate Veterans Day with us! And another new-to-us destination!! Down home vibe and grub!!

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com, or ☎ (561) 386-2594

MSTA Florida West Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 18th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Upper Deck**, 5386 Darlene St, **Spring Hill, FL** ☎ (352) 340-5155 ([map](#))

Description: An awesome place!! And another new-to-us destination!!

Contact: Doug, flwingrdr@msn.com, or ☎ (813) 928-1663

MSTA Black Friday Ride

When: **Friday, November 24th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **The Roost at Four Seasons**, 5298 US-27, **Frostproof, FL** ☎ (863) 635-2951 ([map](#))

Description: We have our Black Friday Ride on Friday, the 24th! Make your way to The Roost at Four Seasons in Frostproof. Since our last visit a few years ago, it's been renewed and improved! So, get away from the shopping madness, and settle in for a tasty lunch!!

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com, 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 any updates.

MSTA Statewide Holiday Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, December 9th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Lake Wales Family Restaurant**, 109 E State Rd 60 West, **Lake Wales, FL**
☎ (386) 524-4052 ([map](#))

Description: NEW-TO-US destination! Reservations made, lots of parking, easy to get to, and centrally located for most of the membership. AND WE ADDED THE MYSTERY PRIZE HUNT!! DETAILS COMING VIA EMAILS AND THE GATOR TALE!!

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com, or ☎ (561) 386-2594

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](#).

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!! Shopping finds online... We found some fun motorcycle t-shirts you can order online. Click the image for

this particular t-shirt. There are other fun motorcycle t-shirts online at <https://teespring.com/shop/motorcycle-tshirts>.

These MSTA websites have extensive event information:

National MSTA RideMSTA.com *SE Regional MSTA* MSTA-SE.com *Florida MSTA* FLMSTA.org

We're also on Facebook: facebook.com/FLMSTA/

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Classified Ads

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to editor@flmsta.org. Don't trash it, recycle it! One man's trash is another man's treasure!