



FLMSTA Newsletter | May  
2025

## May 2025 | Volume 19 | Issue 5

Welcome to the **Florida Gator Tale Newsletter** from the Florida Chapter of the MSTA! We've updated the newsletter to make it easy to read on your phone or tablet. However, you can still download a .pdf of this newsletter and archived newsletters from the FLMSTA website [here](#). The **Florida Gator Tale** includes all the news about rides, feature articles, Florida state reports and safety information to keep you current with the Florida MSTA.



## Rides

### Florida Rides This Month

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Always remember to check the 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. Please check the [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

## West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, May 3, 10 AM - 12 PM**

Location: **Wooden Spoon Diner**, 712 S. Collins St., **Plant City, FL**  
(813) 652-8192 ([map](#))

Description: OK, kids, Eve has volunteered to host this West Central **BRUNCH** ride at the Wooden Spoon Restaurant in Plant City. Note this is a change from the Lakeland Wooden Spoon Diner. The home-cooked food looks scrumptious!

Contact: Van, [busavanfilmsta@gmail.com](mailto:busavanfilmsta@gmail.com) or (561) 386-2594

## South Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, May 10, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Lightsey's Seafood Restaurant & Fish Co.**, 1505 S. Parrott Ave., **Okeechobee, FL** (863) 763-4276 ([map](#))

Description: Always a favorite! Join us to see why!!

Contact: Van, [busavanfilmsta@gmail.com](mailto:busavanfilmsta@gmail.com) or (561) 386-2594

## East Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, May 17, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Olympic Restaurant**, 504 US-27, **Avon Park, FL**  
(772) 918-8220 ([map](#))

Description: Greek and American food, pastries and desserts. Roomy, good for groups and has ample paved parking.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

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## 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 [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

## South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 7, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Rosé Café**, 12 North Desoto Ave., **Arcadia, FL**  
(863)-993-0111 ([map](#))

Description: New to us place in historic Arcadia. Fantastic breakfast/brunch menu from blueberry banana pancakes to steak sandwiches. Looks good!

Contact: Van, [busavanfilmsta@gmail.com](mailto:busavanfilmsta@gmail.com) or (561) 386-2594

## East Central Breakfast Ride

When: **Saturday, June 14, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM**

Location: **Mulberry Lane Cafe**, 3440 N. Harbor City Blvd.,  
**Melbourne, FL** (321) 426-7149 ([map](#))

Description: Not only a café - a bakery, too. Paved parking. We had very good breakfasts here last year.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

## West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 21, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Hitchin Post Cafe**, 10903 Lithia Pinecrest Rd, **Lithia, FL**  
(813) 737-4026 ([map](#))

Description: Omelettes, skillet and large sandwiches for a hearty breakfast/brunch. Can't wait to try it - highly recommended.

Contact: Bob Shields, [boju29@msn.com](mailto:boju29@msn.com)

## Just For Fun MSTARally - Red River Gorge Rally

**Friday-Sunday, June 6-8**

Location: **Comfort Inn**, 105 Stone Trace Drive, **Mt. Sterling, KY**  
(859) 498-4050

Description: The 2025 edition of the Red River Gorge Rally - A Just for Fun MSTA Rally with no rally fees. No meals provided.

Coordinator: Patrick Mogavero, [patrickmogavero@gmail.com](mailto:patrickmogavero@gmail.com)

Contact: <https://ridemsta.com/ky-rrgorge/>

## MSTA West Virginia Canaan Valley Rally 2025

**Friday-Monday, June 27-July 1**

Location: **Canaan Valley Resort**, 105 Stone Trace Drive, **Davis, WV**

Description: Head for the Mountains! The mountains of West 'almost heaven' Virginia! Experience some of the best twisty roads to be found anywhere and some of the best adventure riding to be found in the eastern US. Registration required.

Coordinator: Patrick Mogavero, [patrickmogavero@gmail.com](mailto:patrickmogavero@gmail.com)

Contact: <https://ridemsta.com/wv-canaan/>

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](#)

## Feature Article



### MSTA North Georgia Classic 2025

By Tom Blake

*[Editor's Request: 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](mailto:editor@flmsta.org) to publish an article. Thanks!]*

The mid-April NGC, headquartered in Dillard at the Mountain Valley Inn, kicked off this year's MSTA rally season. Chad Barker was the host and did another commendable job. In addition to getting us a good deal on a block of rooms at the MVI, he had several preplanned routes available for GPS and arranged for a Saturday dinner at the Valley Café including easy QR-code sign-up. Besides all that, he laughed at both of my jokes!

The rally was Thursday to Sunday but my riding pal, Ken, and I checked in early. I hate to travel nearly 600 miles and only get in three days of mountain riding – something sorely missed in Florida.



The Inn provided continental breakfasts, but the Cupboard Café was within easy walking distance and their breakfasts were excellent. Lunches were at places we liked along the routes. Our favorite was the Rivers End Restaurant along the Nantahala River on US-19. Dinners were mostly in Dillard though we had a few early meals elsewhere. There were two Mexican restaurants within walking distance. We preferred La Cabana's *light* entrees. The Vally Café across the main road was very good. We saved it for the rally dinner on Saturday which was well attended.



Florida had a good turnout including Terry, Jay, Wayne, Mike and another fella, whose name escapes me, from the southeast... and me, of course. There may have been more. Ken and I hooked up with Terry and Jay Friday afternoon at TWO in Suches. Then we got in some spirited riding that afternoon and all-day Saturday.

Temperatures ranged from the 30's overnight one or two nights to the 60's and 70's daytime although Friday and Saturday got



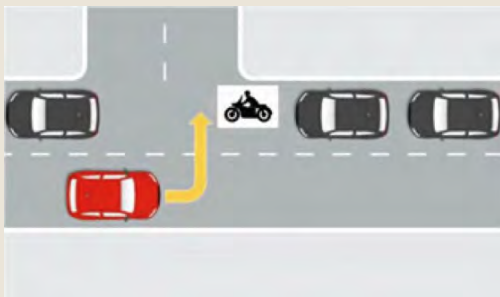
warmer. It was still very chilly when we got on the road most mornings. Precipitation and humidity were non-issues. Just about perfect, I'd say.

My second day was marred by a flat rear tire. Had a 2 1/2-inch screw in it and was totally flat when I first got on the RT that morning. I plugged it and went through 3 air compressors to get it aired up but it was still leaking. Thanks to Ken and Mike for their help. An automotive tire shop just over the NC line put in a good plug and, when I asked about where to get a new tire, suggested **Teem Motorsports up in Franklin, TN** – less than a half hour north. They had the tire I wanted and said come on up. I did. They took it right in, promptly swapped tires and charged a very fair price. Then I caught up with Ken and Mike at the Rivers End Restaurant for lunch.

Later, Ken got concerned about the wear on his rear tire and the same shop replaced it right away when he showed up. I recommended the shop to Chad in case he knew of anyone else who might have tire or other bike issues. Teem's was an excellent find and worth remembering.

[Read More](#)

## Safety Talk



### Coping with the Left-Turn Menace by Doug Westly

*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.*

*[Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the November 2020 edition of the FLMSTA Gator Tale.*

We've all seen it and talked about it. So why does it still happen? Why do we continue to lose so many riders (and sometimes friends) to the left-turning vehicle that violates our right-of-way? According to statistics, more motorcycle- involved multi-car accidents occur at/in intersections than anywhere else on public roads (*Source: MSF*).

There are lots of factors involved in left-turn car/motorcycle crashes. The most obvious one is the inability of the driver to visually recognize the approaching motorcycle in the oncoming lane. Whether it is a distracted driver, someone trying to squeeze through a perceived "hole" in the traffic, etc. the result is usually bad news for the motorcyclist.

So how do we cope with this all-too common traffic menace? Here are just a few thoughts, collected from various sources, riders and just plain old experience.

- First off, we just have to make the assumption that NOBODY sees us on the road. Just because you're wearing hi-vis everything, from underwear to a one-piece, day-glow orange, LED-lit billboard suit, do not expect that to protect you. SOME drivers may see it. Ride like you're invisible.
- Treat every intersection with caution. That doesn't just mean the ones with lights, stop signs and so on. Remember, every driveway emptying onto your road is an intersection. Every side street off your path of travel is an opportunity for a driver to turn in front of you.



- Pay attention to vehicles as they approach or are facing you in the oncoming lanes. If they are stopped or are slowing, expect them to turn...and not see you in the process.
- Can we catch clues about their intentions? Watch the driver. See where they are looking. Oh, and just because you make eye contact with them, don't assume they actually see you. Catching a theme here?
- Another effective tactic, particularly at controlled intersections where vehicles are waiting to turn, is to watch the front tires. If they start to turn or roll, you can guarantee the driver intends to GO.
- How about announcing your presence? Modulating headlight systems seem to work well and are legal in all 50 states, provided they are activated only during daylight hours. On the other hand, flashing your high beams can be a two-edged sword. The other driver may think you're indicating for them to proceed with their turn. Be careful about signals!
- Finally, a last thought...SLOW DOWN for those intersections and situations where an unwanted physics lesson with another vehicle is a real possibility. Remember to SCAN AHEAD for traffic and possible danger. Don't forget the MSF mantra: SEARCH-EVALUATE-EXECUTE (SEE)! (It really does work...)!

***Ride safe! – Doug Westly***

## Florida News



### Florida News

**Summer's coming!!  
Make the most of your riding  
opportunities!!**

Good News: Eve and Bob  
have stepped up, so we have

the West Area Brunch / Breakfast Rides covered. We will continue to offer three rides in the lower half of Florida. But come October, we're back to square one.

**WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR WEST AREA AND NORTH AREA REP(S) FOR REST OF 2025 AND BEYOND.** Contact Van for details. We can entertain a flexible schedule(ing) where 1-4 different members could organize events throughout the year. **THIS IS YOUR CLUB, MAKE IT INTO WHAT YOU WANT IT TO BE!!**

Meanwhile, enjoy what we've assembled for you this month!! In addition to attending the North GA Classic, Tom hosted the East **and** West Central rides. His reports are below!

We are considering a revamping for the Gator Tale in the coming months. A few suggestions have been made, and a more diligent review of newsletters from other States will likely freshen up our own version.

The South Lunch ride returned to a stunning location, open air under an enormous Tiki-style roof on the Caloosahatchee River. The Boathouse treated us well, setting us up comfortably distant from a talented "one-man-band" so we could gab away and enjoy the music in the background! They even have bike parking for 12 or more, including Spyder spaces!! We had Jay from Port St. Lucie, three Eastsiders, Denny and Mike rep'd the Westsiders, and low and behold, Carl made his way from Ft. Lauderdale!! Good to see all of them on a gorgeous day for a ride!!









*South Ride to the stunning Boathouse on the Caloosahatchee*

## What's Next?

On May 3rd, Eve will host the West Central event!! It's our first BRUNCH ride of the summer season to the Wooden Spoon Diner in Plant City. Van will head up the South Lunch Ride to a perennial favorite, Lightsey's Seafood Restaurant in Okeechobee on May 10th. And Tom will host the East Central Lunch Ride to the Olympic Restaurant in Avon Park on May 17th. Please join us, one and all!!

We have inserted an email response "button" to our announcements to assist our coordinators with the reservation headcount. Click on the green "button", then hit the send arrow. The pre-loaded email will be on its way!! Easy peasey!!

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## 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...

This month, we welcome **Pat Mogavero** as our new **MSTA Membership Director**! He has hit the ground running, having been involved for a few years behind the scenes with the tortured transition to the new online-based registry. We will be adapting to the new presentation of monthly data over the next few months. Please see the updated membership stats below. Also, **please note below the NEW procedure for renewing your membership and updating your membership profile ONLINE.**

**These Florida memberships have recently renewed:**

- Samuel Beloof
- Eve Blazsur
- Joy Melton
- Dianne Park
- Jim Park
- Carlyle Swofford

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

- Robert Croot
- Robert Fisher
- Larry Solomon
- David Sumner
- Michael Yandel

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 **NEW MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM** at <https://ridemsta.com/membership-account/membership-levels/> or simply visit the **MSTA Website** at [www.ridemsta.com](http://www.ridemsta.com) and **LOG IN** and then click on **MEMBERSHIP**.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please direct them to the **MSTA Website** at [www.ridemsta.com](http://www.ridemsta.com). 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.

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## Random Ramblings

You've registered for STAR '25 by now, right?? I am!

Keep on coming out to enjoy all the rides we have planned this year and bring a friend!

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 safely!!!*

**ATGATT Van**

**MSTA Florida State Director**

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**East Central Ride**

**Drifter's Riverside Bar  
& Grill, Astor**

**Tom Blake**

Having set an 8:15 departure time from West Melbourne, seven of the local riders had other commitments, one was a last-minute cancelation and there was one I hadn't heard from. I considered just waiting until 9 o'clock and then booking it up I-95 to SR 40. But then I thought... well, maybe someone will show up. That someone was Jay B from way down in Port St Lucie, of all places. So I took Jay on a journey across roads he never knew existed. Going up was also very pleasant with temps starting in the low 70's.



*15 riders enjoyed the view of the St. Johns River at Drifters on the East Central Lunch Ride.*

When we pulled in at *Drifters Riverside Bar & Grill* in Astor, the big parking lot was packed with motorcycles. Many were Harleys, which didn't surprise me – this is a popular place and they serve liquor! Some were ours, however, and then a group of about seven from the Villages and Ocala pulled in. All told, we became a group of fifteen. I had alerted Drifters that we might have as many as twenty show up – last year it was nineteen. So they arranged to seat us upstairs. Never been up those tall steps before. The view of the St Johns River was quite nice even if the tabletops were a bit tacky.

Chuck W and maybe some others from The Villages had just gotten back from Austin, TX. So they had stories about the bike races, including of Marc Marquez unbelievably going down with a 2-second lead in one of them. It sounded like they had a great time.



The food took a while as I'm sure the kitchen was swamped with all the people there. But it got to us eventually and was quite tasty, everyone agreed.

The 50/50 netted \$30 for Jim R – one of The Villages riders, I believe. Jay was our LD champ, easily nosing out Mike C from Sun City Center who nosed me out by two miles!

On the way home, I treated Jay to another route back totaling, for me, about 160 miles of largely curvaceous back roads. And then he had another 60 miles to go. So a pretty satisfying day on the road even with the upper 80's temps after lunch. Getting near the coast cooled things down a bit.

**Up next:** On May 17th, it's the *Olympic Restaurant* in Avon Park. See the Rides section here and online and the email announcement about a week prior for details. Please, if you plan to come, let us know by clicking on the green button in the email announcement to open an email response to the appropriate coordinator (Van or me). And then select Send.

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**West Central Ride**  
**Giovanni's Main Street**  
**Kitchen, Wauchula**  
**Tom Blake**

On the 26th, 5 West-Central riders and 4 of us from the East Coast headed to *Giovanni's Main Street Kitchen* in Wauchula for lunch. I volunteered to host this one to give Van a break and was pleased to see everyone. The restaurant was ready for us and put us in dining room #1 (my designation). #2 was larger and nicer but also noisier – lots of little ones. It was actually a very nice place next to the city park. Wauchula, as it turns out, was a lot bigger than I expected, too.

Their menu was quite extensive – appetizers, pizzas, pastas, entrees, sandwiches, a soup and salad bar, desserts and more.

And they had specials. I tried their Italian sausage sub which was good. A couple folks went for the soup and salad bar. Jeff opted for a calzone, and when they sat it down in front of him, it was about the size of an armadillo! So were his eyes. But most of that turned out to be hot air, and he managed to down the whole thing in seemingly short order. The only negative I heard was that their drinks were a tad weak. I had a water and coffee, and they were just fine! We skipped the 50/50.



*5 riders from the West and 4 riders from the East coast had a great time at Giovanni's in Wauchula for the West Central Lunch Ride.*

Afterward, Bob took us East-siders on a fun rip through some curvy roads south and east of Zolfo Springs including Sweetwater Rd (I believe it was) and Crewsville Rd. When we got to SR-66, he turned left and we turned right. 66 took us to the south end of Sebring where it turned in US-98 – one that we're familiar with.

The ride over was very pleasant with temps at about 80. Coming home it was pressing close to 90, but very low humidity kept it bearable especially when moving. But, the last 15 miles was a struggle for me. As much as I enjoy meeting up with the West Coast crowd, I just don't think my body is up to it anymore when things heat up.

Bob and Eve will be alternating as your hosts for the summer brunch and/or breakfast months. They're doing it for all of you. I'm sure they'll come up with some really worthy destinations for your riding, eating and socializing enjoyment. So get together and have a good time.

## Florida MSTA Apparel



## Florida MSTA Apparel

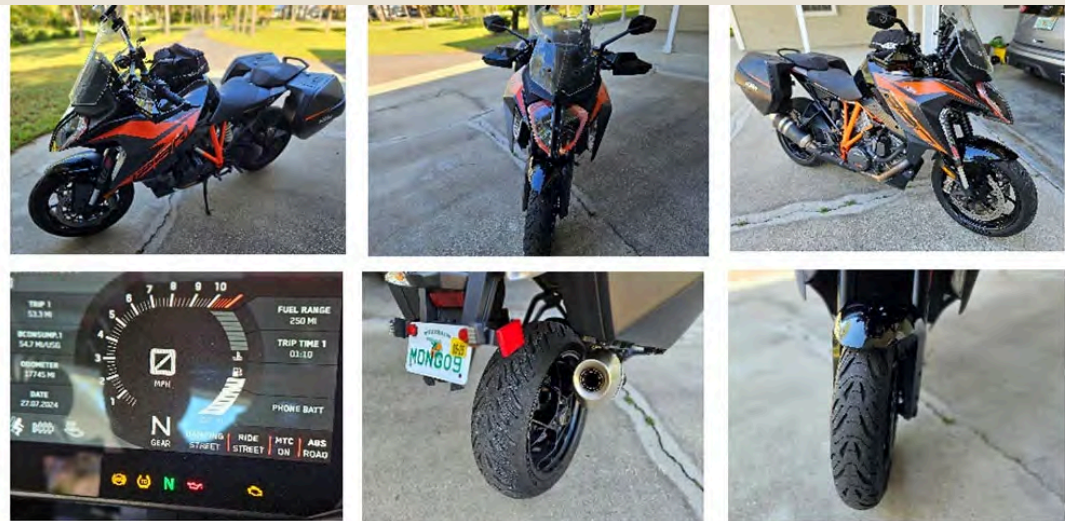
As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to [mstaflorida.qbstores.com](http://mstaflorida.qbstores.com). We have made arrangements with the supplier for our National Gearbox to allow our State membership to buy shirts, hats, etc. with our State logos 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!! 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>.

## Classified Ads

### 2019 KTM Super Duke GT For Sale - \$11,500

Contact: Tom Blake at 321-794-6147



Purchased new in May 2019  
Current mileage: ~18.3K  
(Approx 3,600/yr.)  
All maintenance per KTM specifications  
New Michelin Pilot Road 6's at 15,869 miles  
Battery replaced April 2022  
Factory electronic cruise control  
Heated seats and grips  
Electronic suspension, selectable preload and damping

Selectable ABS, Motorcycle Traction Control  
TPMS  
Quick shifter  
Adjustable wind screen height  
Quick mount/release tank bag  
Large removable rear seat bag (24 – 36L)  
Removable panier bags  
Hyperlite brake flasher set  
R&G Crash Protectors

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

## Contact Information

These MSTA websites have extensive event information:

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

**SE Regional MSTA:** [MSTA-SE.com](http://MSTA-SE.com)

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

We're also on **Facebook:** [facebook.com/FLMSTA/](https://facebook.com/FLMSTA/)

More contact information:

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[editor@flmsta.org](mailto:editor@flmsta.org)

**P. "Van" VanSteelant, FL State Director**

[busavanflmsta@gmail.com](mailto:busavanflmsta@gmail.com)

(561) 386-2594

**Tom Blake, East Central Area Rep**

(321) 794-6147

[tblake1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:tblake1@cfl.rr.com)

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### FL MSTA

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