



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 10 Issue 7

Events in July 2017

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Feature Article

Rides during STAR 2017:

Royal Gorge Bridge

By Don Moe

This article describes the first ride at STAR 2017 that Van (Florida MSTA Co-Director) and I made on Sunday, 6/11/2017. Over the next few issues, we expect to bring additional reports from our week in Colorado. *[Photos and map by Don Moe. Click for larger versions.]*

For STAR, Van and I had decided to share a room at the [Hotel Elegante](#) in [Colorado Springs](#). Due to his demanding work schedule at home, he had opted to “fly and ride” instead of riding or trailering his Huyabusa across the country. Fortunately he was able to reserve a relatively new, blue BMW R1200RT from [Eagle Rider](#) in Denver, coincidentally with a Florida license plate, which he picked up after flying into Denver. After making the 75-mile trip on I-25, he arrived at the hotel late on Saturday afternoon.



Since he was quite eager to ride the RT in the mountains, we decided on a relatively short ride based on two routes suggested by the STAR advance team. This map shows the GPS track of our path starting from Colorado Springs along US-24 towards the northwest through [Manitou Springs](#) to [Woodland Park](#). Due to road construction at the junction of I-25 and US-24, our departure in this direction was delayed nearly every day of STAR.

From Woodland Park we rode southwesterly, passing through the towns of [Cripple Creek](#) and [Guffey](#). After enjoying numerous twisties on very good roads, we arrived at the junction of CO-9 and US-50, near the entrance road to the [Royal Gorge Bridge](#) located just eight miles west of [Cañon City](#).

During this ride as well as others during the week, I took numerous photos to capture the scenery and some of the action using my [Canon SX710HS](#) camera. This first photo, an over-the-shoulder shot, shows Van following me and the view towards the north shortly after we turned southward on CO-67 from US-24. Although the clouds looked ominous at times, they soon cleared away.



As we approached Cripple Creek just after noon, the CO-67 crosses a ridge at 10,200 ft elevation before descending into the valley where the town is located. This next photo shows the view from the highway towards the town with the mountain range in the distance.



Upon reaching the town, Van and I decided to stop for lunch. After parking next to another BMW bike with a Florida tag, we discovered that our friends and fellow MSTA members from Okeechobee, Dennis and Dorothy Anderson, had likewise ridden to Cripple Creek and had already enjoyed lunch. I took this group photo of them with Van.



Following a nice lunch at [Ralf's Break Room](#), we continued on our journey after the lunch break of nearly 1½ hours. Around 2:45 PM we arrived at the entrance road to the [Royal Gorge Park](#), which is privately owned and operated as “theme park” and thus charged entrance fee. With the “senior discount” I



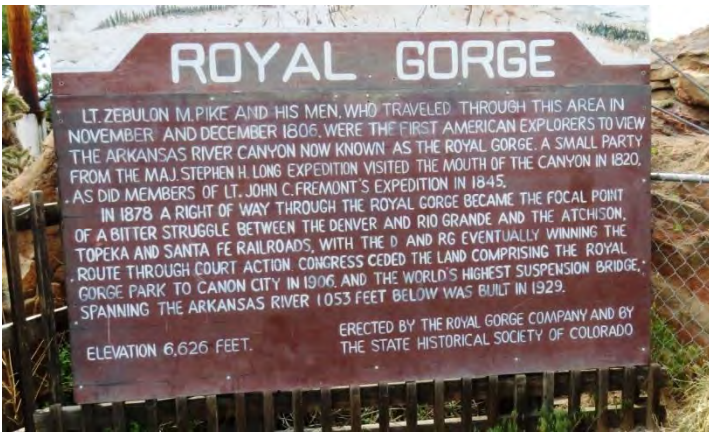
paid only \$23.

Outside the entrance, an old steam engine is on display. Van asked me to take his photo with the engine in the background. Inside the park, there is a balcony overlooking the gorge. Van again posed for this next photo.

From this same balcony, I took this next photo of the bridge.



We then walked to the short distance to the bridge, coming to this sign with historical information about the discovery of the gorge.

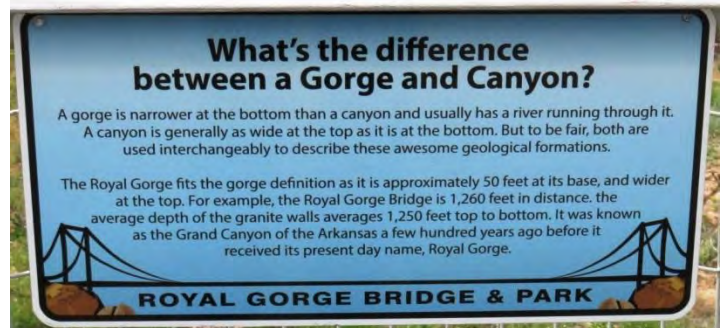


As we walked across the bridge, we saw flags from every state in the U.S. attached to the suspension cables. We took turns posing with the Florida flag. Here's the one of Van.

This next photo shows the view eastward from the bridge into the gorge. Below next to the Arkansas River is the single railway track.



Another information panel described the differences between a "gorge" and a "canyon".



There are two other attractions crossing the gorge for those willing to challenge their acrophobia: a gondola and a zip line. Although they doubtless offer spectacular views also, we opted to just take photos of them from the relative safety of the bridge. The first photo shows a young man sitting in a chair suspended from the zip line.



These next two photos show the gondola in perspective and also telephoto closeup.



Following our excursion onto the Royal Gorge Bridge, we mounted up and rode eastward through Cañon City to CO-115, which we followed back to Colorado Springs. This highway passes along the western side of the [Fort Carson Army Base](#). We arrived back at the Hotel Elegante at 5:15 PM after riding 160 miles in six hours, along with stops totalling nearly three hours.

The next day, Monday, we joined Jim Park, Mike Tissandier and Luis Santiago on a ride to the top of Pikes Peak. Here's a teaser photo from our ascent. More in the next installment.



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.

Overtaking Another Bike

Here is something we've never talked about, yet it happens all the time. How do you handle overtaking another motorcycle traveling in your same lane?

This scenario occurs frequently to us when we're out for our weekend rides, or on longer trips in congested bike touring areas. I don't want to suggest we ride faster than most, but there are times when we find ourselves closing on another rider in front of us. So, what to do?

There are a couple of thoughts here. Under most cases, we will need to treat the motorcycle in front of us as a typical vehicle on the road. That means if we're on a multi-lane highway, we can pass the bike after moving into the left-hand (passing) lane.

If we're on a two lane road (one lane in each direction), then we simply wait for a safe and legal passing zone, signal, move into the empty on-coming lane and move around the bike in front of us. Again, we want to be careful not to be too close either before or after executing the passing maneuver.

The challenge comes when we get "trapped" behind the bike in front. Everyone has probably experienced it. For whatever reason, the rider in front of you just isn't riding at the speed that you intend. There is no safe passing zone, no 2nd passing lane, and maybe the sightline for passing is severely restricted. Now what do you do?

Rule #1 is that the motorcycle ahead of you has the right-of-way, both legally and for safety. The safest course of action is just to relax and wait for a safe passing zone to appear.

Sometimes the rider in front will see you and recognize that you want to pass them. If they are polite, then may even move over in their lane and wave you by. Now what? Should you pass them in the same lane?

Here is where a couple of other considerations come into play. First off, is passing another vehicle (specifically one motorcycle past another) legal in the particular state? As a motorcyclist and licensed driver, it is your responsibility to know the law. As they say, ignorance is no excuse. Since we're in FL, here are the rules you have to know:

FL Statute 316.083 says "...shall pass to the left at a safe distance...". 316.209(2) says "The operator of a motorcycle shall not overtake and pass in the same lane occupied by the vehicle being overtaken." However, 316.209(4) says "Motorcycles shall not be operated more than two abreast in a single lane." I interpret all this to mean that while you can ride two abreast (Sorry, there is no legitimate reason to do this either, and every



Photo: BikeBandit.com

safety reason not to), No, you cannot pass another motorcycle ahead of you, in the same lane, even if they pull over and wave you by.

Even more important, is it safe to do so? Certainly, it is safer not to attempt this maneuver. Even if the rider ahead is aware of your intent, and may have waved you by, it is safer to wait until there is a safe, legal passing zone. On the other hand, in states where it is legal (If there are any) and the rider ahead has motioned you by, then executing a safe pass in an area conducive to the maneuver, by giving the overtaken bike a wide berth and carefully moving around the bike may be reasonable.

I will offer one other thought here. Under NO circumstances do you want to try and pass another rider who may not know you are behind him or her, particularly passing close by and/or in the same lane. You don't know how that rider is going to react if they see you in the last moments before the pass, and that unpredictability becomes a recipe for disaster. Just don't do it. Make sure the rider ahead knows you are there, and you give them clear indication of your intention to pass.

It comes down to what is safe, legal and reasonable. Be considerate to other riders, and treat them as you want to be treated on the road.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor
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Florida News

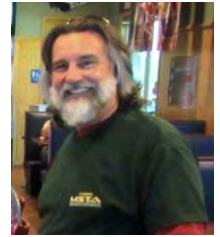
South Director's Report

“HE CLIMBED CATHEDRAL MOUNTAINS, HE SAW SILVER CLOUDS BELOW...

THE SERENITY OF A CLEAR BLUE MOUNTAIN LAKE...

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH, COLORADO. ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH...” JOHN DENVER

Ahh, STAR 2017 in Colorado Springs was TERRIFIC!! I'll share a teaser here now, and follow up with a full article next month. The weather was perfect! I rode 1300+ miles in 7 days. The Total Control Class Level 2 was challenging. I rode to the top of three mountains, where the average temp was in the mid-40's!! The Lunch ride was one of the best since 2012!! The Hotel worked out very well. The raffle bike winner once again was “in the house”! AND THE ROADS WERE AMAZING!!! Don Moe must have taken 2,000 photos... AND DON MOE TOOK NEWSLETTER EDITOR OF THE YEAR.... AGAIN!!!!



Van VanSteelant

Back to Floridian reality... We scheduled two BRUNCH rides for June, as it's get'n hot out there. We didn't plan on a horrific early season storm to hit perfectly on the first one!! Despite our best efforts, the Central Brunch Ride was canceled. Unfortunately, the announcement team did not cover all our bases, and some of you may not have received the notice. Rest assured, all manner of coordination has been put in place, and we will not leave any of you out of loop again. Of course, Mr. Murphy's “law firm” caught us out first!

As if to swing the pendulum back to our favor, the South Brunch ride went astoundingly well! We Southies arrived at [JR's Runway Cafe](#) with 8 bikes and 9 riders! We caught and followed another 7+ bikes and riders from the Melbourne area as they turned into the Sebring Airport! All told, we had 20 members and friends take over the noisy end of the restaurant!! As we had called ahead, they were staffed to handle all of us, and we all enjoyed great food and gab!! With a group this large, the 50/50 raffle was well funded!!



Our winner, new member Doug Christensen, had the right numbers... And, then donated his half back to the Club!! He's fitting in just fine!! Doug's generosity means we add \$64 to our \$610.00 for \$674.00. Remember, The Florida Chapter of the MSTA donated \$500.00 to the Dan Clark Safety Fund during STAR. A lot more about that next month!!...

It was heartening to see that most riders rode over 100 miles for this brunch, with several over 150!! Despite the necessarily early start, we had a great turn out!! Let's keep it up all summer long!!

What's Next??

As I promoted last month, we have our RTE dates set for the whole of 2017!! Realize that nothing is set in stone, so, be sure to check our RIDES calendar often to insure you never miss one of our events!!

www.flmsta.org

On July 8th, join the Central Gang at the [Osteen Diner](#), on 195 S. State Road 415, in Osteen! We have enjoyed good food and service here in the past, and expect the good times to keep on coming!! Remember, our

BRUNCH rides start at 9:30AM! The very next weekend, the Southies head to an old favorite, for lunch or brunch!! If you haven't made a ride to the [Marsh Landing Restaurant](#), on 44 N Broadway St, in Fellsmere, you've missed out on a terrific destination!! Join us on July 15th!!

We scheduled these brunches back to back so some of you could make the treks to either the Big Lynn Lodge or River City Rides. Or hit both!! Big Lynn Lodge runs from July 21-23. The River City runs July 28-30. If you haven't made it out of Florida for a while, these would make for great destinations!!

Membership News

I'll say this the rest of the year... 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!!

OK, TIME TO BRAG!! ON DON MOE!! AGAIN... HE WAS AWARDED THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD THIS YEAR FOR HIS ASTOUNDING EFFORTS TOWARD THE REORGANIZATION OF OUR NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP RECORDS. YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW HIS EFFORTS, AND THOSE OF THE OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS, HAVE RESURRECTED OUR ROLLS AND RESTORED TRUE MEMBERSHIP SERVICES!! THE WHOLE BANQUET CROWD APPLAUDED DENNIS' CHOICE!!

Here's what we know today...

We welcome one new member from Florida into the MSTA who joined in June:

Louis Clark - Lakeland

Looks like we need to spread around a new batch of our Invitation-To-Ride quad-folds!! Remember that for each new member you recruit and who provides your name and/or membership number on the application, you will receive a \$10 STAR Bucks coupon that you can use towards event registration fees and membership dues until 12/31/2018. The MSTA Executive Committee decided in March to discontinue issuing STAR Bucks after the end of 2017 and issue coupons for raffle tickets in 2018.

We thank the following Florida member for recently renewing his membership:

Bill McDaniel

These Florida memberships will expire soon or have recently expired:

Dennis & Dorothy Anderson
Mary Crawford

John B. Hunt
Ellen S. Kocher

Steve Phillips

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and to continue supporting their MSTA.

Random Ramblings!

WOW, Colorado... Curves; glacial lakes; deer/elk at the side of the road; mountain tops; "I can see for miles and miles and miles..." (P. Townsend); GPS routes that really worked; curves; CR 77; no rain, anywhere; vistas; curves.....

We also congratulate Don Mroczenski from Tamarac for winning the long-distance award at STAR 2017, which was also his first STAR event since joining the MSTA in late 2016.

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report

Central Florida July Brunch Ride:

Saturday, **July 8th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

[Osteen Diner](#)

195 S. State Road 415
Osteen, FL 32764

Teresa Vipond, DeLand
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Florida MSTa Apparel

We have recently released the link for our Florida State Storefront!! 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., **July 8th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: [Osteen Diner](#), 195 S. State Road 415, Osteen, FL 32764 ☎407-323-6469 ([map](#))

Description: This nice small-town restaurant has been around for a long time and is very popular. We've eaten there before and found the food to be very good and the servers were pleasant and friendly

Contact: Teresa Vipond, termayn@gmail.com, or ☎713-504-5763

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

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

Where: [Marsh Landing Restaurant](#), 44 N Broadway St, Fellsmere, FL 32948 ☎772-571-8622 ([map](#))

Description: We just can't resist this landmark setting and terrific restaurant!! If you haven't joined us here in the past, make up for what you've been missing...

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., **August 12th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Where: [Grills Seafood Deck & Tiki Bar](#), 505 Glen Cheek Dr., Cape Canaveral, FL 32920 ☎321-868-2226 ([map](#))
Description: Waterfront dining at Port Canaveral. Enjoy the cruise ships and other port activity while you eat. Cape Kennedy is just across the port. Exploration Tower is nearby offering a birds-eye view of the port and surrounding area. Each floor features a different aspect of the area (space, sea, nature, history). Nice gift shop of the bottom floor. A unique and interesting attraction.
Contact: Teresa Vipond, termayn@gmail.com, or ☎713-504-5763

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **August 19th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Where: [Main Street America An Eatery](#), 22 S. Main Ave, Lake Placid, FL 33852 ☎863-465-7733 ([map](#))
Description: Another can't-miss location that we have visited year after year!! The local roads and the delicious food make a brilliant combination!!
Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

Big Lynn Lodge Event

When: Fri.-Sun., **July 21-23, 2017**
Where: [Big Lynn Lodge](#) – Hwy. 226A, Little Switzerland, NC ☎800-654-5232 ([map](#))
Description: Another regional favorite!! The Big Lynn Lodge is located 300 feet off the Blue Ridge Parkway on [North Carolina Highway 226A](#) in/near Little Switzerland, NC and is literally hanging on the side of the mountain right on NC-226A. You will be AMAZED at the view and you will be ASTONISHED by the roads! The riding is what I go there for but the scenery and the location is what has me staying.
Location: Little Switzerland, NC – Excellent street riding in Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina.
Websites: msta-se.com/BLynn and ridemsta.com/srblog/big-lynn-lodge-ride
Forum: ridemsta.com/mstaforums/big-lynn-lodge-ride/
Contact: David Brickner, brick@ncwireless.net, ☎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 sanctioned events: [click here](#).
- 🏍️ For Just-For-Fun events in 2017: [click here](#).

National MSTA ridemsta.com

Florida MSTA www.flmsta.org

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

Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

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

This second [Mystery Hyperlink](#) (PDF) may also be of interest since some of us probably haven't read this in many years.

CLASSIFIED ADS

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to editor@flmsta.org