



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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Events in October 2017

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Feature Article

The Art of Travel

By Jim Park

There is an old saying that the acorn doesn't fall far from the tree; such is my case. *[Photos provided by Jim Park unless otherwise noted.]*

By the time I was 13 years old I had seen over 70 percent of the United States and a portion of Canada and Mexico. My father loved to travel. He was of modest income but most summers during my youth he would manage to find a way to take our family of four on a road trip. We traveled in a Chevrolet [Corvair](#) packed full of camping gear, including a cook stove and a small amount of space allotted to each of us



Chevrolet Corvair Monza

Photo: [wikicars](#)

for clothing. Months in advance of our trips he would ponder over

travel articles and Texaco road maps planning how far we could go on his limited vacation time and budget.

As his years of service increased as Part Manager of a Chevrolet dealership, so did his vacation time, a rare perk in those days. With these additional days came additional miles on the road and more sights to see. My father's excitement for our next trip was infectious and our entire family shared equally in his enthusiasm.

Although I have never traveled around the world by sailboat, I think I can strangely relate to those that have. Traveling in a small car with no air conditioning, completely packed (along with the four of us) required careful planning, tolerance and individual responsibilities. It was no surprise that this didn't always work but for the most part we traveled well as a family. My mother took care of arguments between my sister and me by simply relocating the duffle bag of dirty laundry to the rear seat between the two of us! When we arrived at a campground, my father and sister would assemble the tent; I would unpack the sleeping bags and inflate the air mattresses (for sleeping not floating), while my mother would prepared us a hot meal on the camp stove.



Young Jim Park

Our fellow campers would watch in amazement as this entire process would usually take less than 30 minutes. Soon after we completed this routine, we would head out to visit the local sights....our reward!

I continued to travel and camp throughout my twenties but eventually gave up the camping for the comforts that go along with staying in a hotel. As my wife and I often say, “roughing it” for us is having a room without Wi-Fi or HDTV.

Today I plan our trips much like my father. I’ve found that those lessons I learned on how to pack our family Corvair translate well into how to pack a motorcycle. I still use travel articles for ideas and carefully plan our routes and sights along the way. However, with today’s Internet, GPS and mapping software, technology has made travel planning much easier than back in those days of our family vacations.

Today our trips begin months before we leave our driveway. I begin by reading travel articles and books to get my ideas. One of my preferred sources is

[RoadRunner Motorcycle Touring & Travel](#). This magazine is packed with rides throughout the United States with feature articles in other parts of the world. If you subscribe to the magazine, free GPS files are available for download for most of the articles. Another source is [Rider Magazine](#).

Rider also provides articles on travel routes and locations primarily here in the States but sometimes outside of the country. I also purchase travel books for reference. I have learned to avoid travel books that focus on roads and sights throughout an entire country. These kinds of books tend to give you a general idea of routes but leave out details of routes and points of interest that can be just a few miles from their recommended highway. I purchase books that limit their content to a region or State. There is a series of books that are entitled “[Motorcycle Journeys Through...](#)”.

This series typically includes not only detailed route directions but sights, restaurants and accommodations with full color photography in most editions. Another great three part series of books for the Appalachian Mountains area is [Motorcycle Adventures](#) by Hawk Hagebak. This series not only gives great details on the back roads of the Carolinas and Virginia but includes some solid advice on the do’s and don’ts of two wheel travel. Good sources for information that may not come to mind are travel books for bicyclists. I have found that these books translate well for motorcyclists travel as they definitely seek out those less traveled byways. One that I have used is [Bicycling the Natchez Trace](#) by Glen Wanner, but there are many more written for various parts of the country.

If your travel time is limited, Florida offers some nice weekend places to explore on two wheels. There are many informative books that will help plan a weekend trip: [Best Backroads of Florida](#) by Douglas Waitley, [Visiting Small-Town Florida](#) by Bruce Hunt, or even [Oddball Florida](#) by Jerome Pohlen for something a little different.

Whatever your time and budget allows invest some time in a little pre-trip planning it may create memories that will not be forgotten.



Our current preferred means of travel!

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.

Why It Goes Wrong

So it happened. You weren't hurt, but your motorcycle is now lying on its side, with its tongue figuratively hanging out. As you pick yourself up, you start wondering what happened.

Motorcycle crashes are rarely the outcome of one factor. Regardless of whether it is a single vehicle crash (only the motorcycle and rider involved), or a multiple vehicle crash involving the bike and rider.

Analysis of motorcycle crashes indicates it is usually a combination of factors that results in the incident. For instance, a decreasing radius curve doesn't call a crash. However, a curve with a decreasing radius, combined with excessive entry speed and/or improper braking can certainly result in the rider and bike going down. In fact, crash statistics tell us that the majority of single vehicle motorcycle crashes occur in curves or turns.



Crash near Beallsville, Ohio 2012

Photo: [Don Moe](#)

At intersections it is usually the left-turning vehicle intercepting the motorcycle's path of travel that results in the crash. But again, it is not just one factor that results in the incident. Was the motorcyclist paying attention to possible hazards before and during the intersection travel period?

When we start looking at motorcycle crashes, there are certainly those that are truly accidents. Maybe the motorcyclist rounds a corner and in the middle of the turn hits a patch of oil on the road that he/she can't see. Maybe the deer simply jumps out of the woods without warning. There is little we can do about these types of events.

However, a lot of crashes could be prevented if the rider simply paid attention to the surrounding riding environment. If they recognize a dangerous curve is imminent, then takes appropriate prior action, such as slowing down, taking a proper entry line, using their head and eyes to follow through the turn, etc., it may prevent an incident. When the rider is approaching the intersection, are they paying attention to the other vehicles in or approaching the intersection?

When it comes down to it, we participate in a risk-intensive sport. There are inherent dangers that exist every time we get on our motorcycle. If we are going to be safe on our bikes, then it is incumbent upon us to take advantage of training and experience, as well as focusing on our riding and the surrounding environment.

The next time you get on your bike, think about not only where you are going and how you are going to get there, but also how you are going to remain safe on the road. Make sure you are focusing not only on the route, but also your surrounding riding environment. Try to predict potential dangers. Stay alert to cues that may indicate a potential threat. Remember that if you can eliminate just one or two of the contributing factors, you may just prevent the crash that could be waiting for you.

Ride Safe!

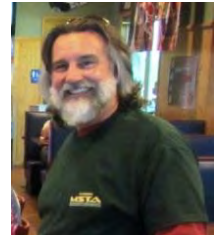
Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Florida News

South Director's Report

WELL, WELL, WELL... ALONG CAME IRMA, AND SHE HUFFED, AND PUFFED, AND...

I do hope all of our Florida members have been able to put "her" behind you by now. No matter where you live, I know you all have your own stories about how the storm ruined some 10 days of your life. I'm thankful that we collectively made it through another major storm without the aftermath of a Katrina or Andrew. New building codes, a far more aware population, (save my numb-nuts neighbors...), even better scientific understanding of hurricanes, and a concerted effort by the utility companies to "harden" their infrastructure have made these storm seasons a bit more tolerable! Now, let's have another decade of storm-free years... AND, if you can, send \$something\$ to the Red Cross, or other favorite.



Van VanSteelant

As a result of Irma, our Central Brunch Ride was wisely canceled. Dammit. But fear not, we have rescheduled the ride to the [Red Wing Restaurant](#), on 12500 FL-33, in Groveland!! Remember, we are back to LUNCH rides in October. So, plan now to make it to LUNCH by 11:30 Noon on October 7th.

Surprisingly, the South Brunch Ride was also seemingly affected by Irma, or, rather, her long aftermath... Or, was it the random storm cells predicted to run over south Florida... Regardless, four of us met up at our new starting point, and enjoyed a very pleasant morning ride to the [Lakeside Grill](#) in Okeechobee. And though that area was much closer to the eye of the storm, they too managed to get by with mostly landscape damage. Pockets of damage were few...

And, the four of us enjoyed our brunch... at one table!! We were the only ones to make the ride!! Sort of... As Jim and Dianne and James and yours truly set to leave, Rich Peabody made his way to our parking spots! He was very delayed by the rubbish removal in his development. He lives in Venice, which dodged the worst of Irma, but still created large piles of shorn vegetation!! We left him with a few menu recommendations, and made haste to beat the incoming rain cells, visible on the horizon to the east. We all made to within a few miles of our homesteads before enduring a brief downpour. My bike was dry by the time I rolled into the driveway...

Two weeks after the Central Lunch Ride, the Southies make their way on October 21st to [Solomon's Castle](#), on 4533 Solomon Rd, in Ona! We'll be sure to confirm that it is open for business prior to the usual ride announcement. No matter where we want to eat, the area was affected by Irma! Since it has been a while between our visits here, I do hope that we will be welcomed with their usual "unusual" character!

And, if you still have some unsatisfied wanderlust, the [Texas Hill Country Rally](#) wraps up the end of October with neat roads and pleasant weather in a unique part of the U.S.!

Membership News

I'll say this for 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!!

Here's what we know today...

Although no new Florida riders joined the MSTA in September, several riders did renew their memberships.

Mary Crawford

John B. Hunt

Tom & Lynn Trieschmann

We also welcome a former Ohio member who relocated to Melbourne and in September renewed his MSTA membership as a Life Member.

Doug Baumgartner

These Florida memberships will expire soon or have recently expired:

Cecil Broome
Terry L. Brown

David Cassell
Buck Jones

Don Later
Rick Sapir

Roger Spice

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 me at membership@ridemsta.com. Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew or PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin.

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 applications, 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.

Random Ramblings!

I'm counting on leaving my storm prep materials right where I put them back... for many years to come!!

We are closer to our "winter" riding weather...

If you have purchased anything motorcycle related that has blown you away with its features or price or performance, send me and/or Don an email with a short write up and website. We'll try to include a "Member's Promo" each month...

STAR 2018 is "just around the corner..." *[It will be in La Crosse, Wisconsin in June.]*

Count your blessings that you chose to live in Florida rather than the eastern Caribbean...

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report

Central Florida October Lunch Ride:

Saturday, **October 7th**, 11:30 PM – 1:30 PM

[Red Wing Restaurant](#)

12500 FL-33

Groveland, FL 34736

☎352-429-2997

September Central Report by Tom Blake for Teresa Vipond:

Due to Hurricane Irma preparations and the resulting increase in congestion on our roadways, especially by highly distracted drivers, the August Central brunch ride to Red Wing Restaurant was cancelled. Despite the magnitude and viciousness of the storm, many surprising stories have emerged of slight or no damage and only minimal or no loss of electricity in areas where these things seemed impossible. We hope all of our riders and families made it through safely and are getting back to a more normal existence.

Tom Blake
Acting Central Brunch Ride Coordinator

Teresa Vipond,
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 Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **October 7th**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Where: [Red Wing Restaurant](#), 12500 FL-33, Groveland, FL 34736 ☎352-429-2997 ([map](#))
Description: This is a great little restaurant just a few miles south of Groveland that we've enjoyed many times before. And there are good roads to get you there.
Contact: Teresa Vipond, termayn@gmail.com, or ☎713-504-5763

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **October 21st**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: [Solomon's Castle](#), 4533 Solomon Rd, Ona, FL 33865 ☎863-494-6077 ([map](#))
Description: Always a favorite!! It's been some time since we enjoyed this one-of-a-kind location!! Join the Southies as we transition back to LUNCH rides!!
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 Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **November 11th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: TBD
Description: Place holder.
Contact: Teresa Vipond, termayn@gmail.com, or ☎713-504-5763

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **November 21st**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: [Squid Lips Overwater Grill](#), 1660 Indian River Drive, Sebastian, FL 32958 ☎863-494-6077 ([map](#))
Description: Join us at a new-to-us location. We'll dine over the water of the Indian River!! Ah, Florida living...
Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

There are no AMA-sanctioned MSTA events scheduled for October in the southeastern region of the US.

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 there are three good Mystery Hyperlinks related to the safety article:

[Mystery Hyperlink 1](#)

[Mystery Hyperlink 2](#)

[Mystery Hyperlink 3](#)

CLASSIFIED ADS

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