



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 9 Issue 10

Events in October

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Feature Article

She's Open! Going to the Sun Road Glacier National Park

By Ken, [kenbob](#)

[Ed: This article was originally posted July 14, 2011 in the [Ride Reports - Day Trippin'](#) section of the ADVRider.com forum at:

<http://advrider.com/index.php?threads/shes-open-going-to-the-sun-road-glacier-park.706811/>

It has been slightly abbreviated and edited for publication. All photos by the author unless stated otherwise. Click on photos for larger versions.]

I checked the Park's website this AM, and it said the road is open all the way! We locals have been waiting a long time this year for it to open. I know a lot of tourists have been circling and waiting also.

Our weather here in Kalispell started out pretty crummy today - so I had some projects to get out of the way, and about 12 noon, I said I'm goin'!

Gassed up the ole ride, and headed up there. The Park entrance at West Glacier is only 37 miles from my shop, so it's an easy jaunt.

There was a lot of traffic goin' up - of course I was travelin' in prime part of the day! When I came back over the top, headed home - lot's less folks on the road. Some of the views as I start up....

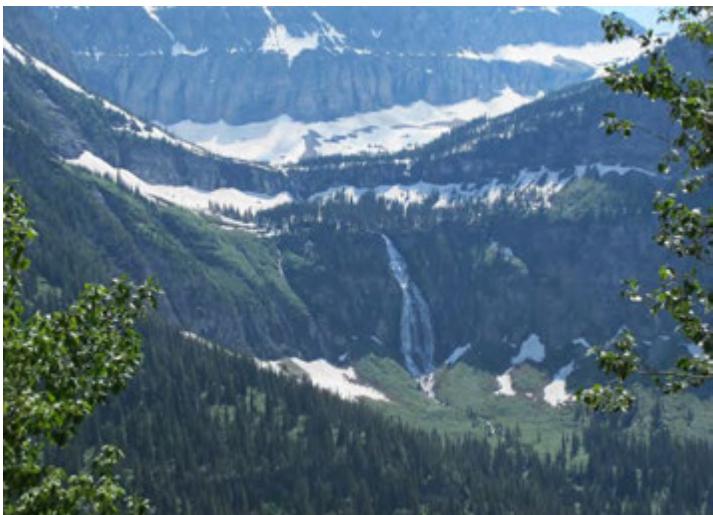


There is still a lot of construction, so sometimes you have to wait - Oh Darn!! Pretty spectacular place to have to shut off the bike and take photos....



Looking at things like “Bird Woman Falls.”

The strewn trees in the foreground are from an avalanche that happened a couple years back.



The “Weeping Wall” was fun to ride alongand under a bit! Then, waitin’ in line ...

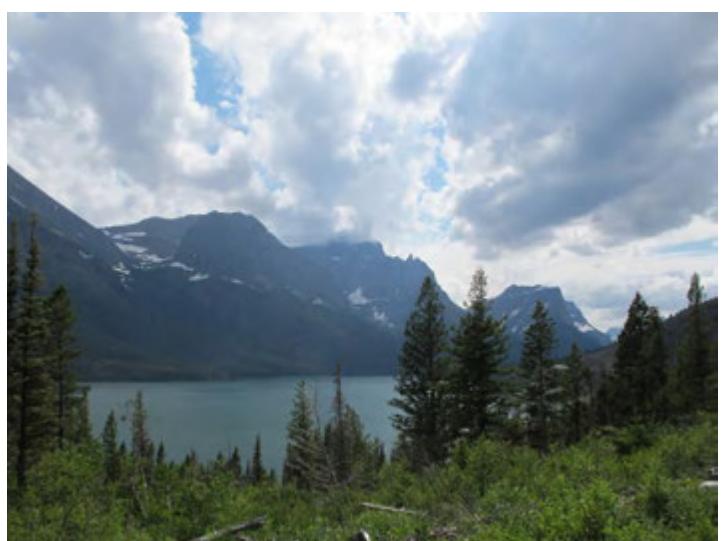


This is “The Big Drift” one of the last things to get plowed...



The visitor center was a madhouse with people!
I just rode thru, lookin’ for a photo op.

St. Mary Lake



Rolled in to the town of St. Mary about 4 PM and went to my favorite place for grub. This is the Johnson family’s café - it’s up the hill, just north of town.

The menu said something about “LD’S - BLT”sooo I asked the super friendly waitress chick, if I could get a BLT and a bowl of soup and she said “today is your lucky day” – “LD is cookin”!!

Let me just say, it was huge and good!!



Lookin' over the top of town, back up in to the park.



St. Mary Lake - as I'm headed back now



Yep, it rained; I stopped and just put a rain top over my 'stich. It really made everything smell very good!! We have sooo many wildflowers this year - as it has been a very wet spring.

By now the visitor center was cleared out pretty good - this was at 6 PM.



Lots of water coming down!



Saw this scraggly little Mountain Goat on the way down - half in her winter coat and half out!



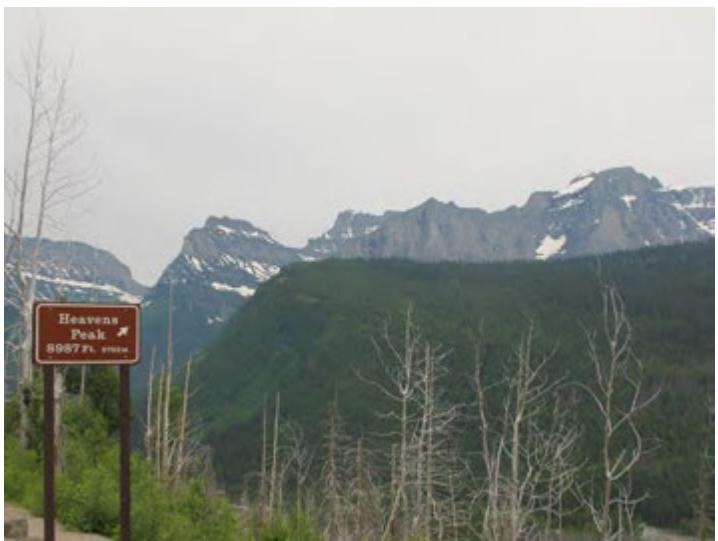
This is the part of the road that a lot of folks wound their overhead campers on!!! When the road was carved out in the thirties, rigs were so much smaller! If you have a large overhead camper on your truck, you really need to use part of the other lane here - or you are gonna be sad!



Triple Arches



Heavens Peak



McDonald Creek



Right after this is started raining again I still had my rain top on; my gloves were just starting to dry from the earlier showers.....oh well

By the time I got to West Glacier and pulled on to Hwy 2, it really got with the program - one of those deals where, if you stop for more gear - you gonna get wetter than if you just forged on! So that is what I did. I just plowed on thru it!

When I got out of Badrock Canyon and into Columbia Falls, the sun was shining and it was warming up.

I pulled in to my shop right at 8 PM. So my very nice little ride lasted about 8 hours - and I put 186 miles on the bike. There was so little traffic in the park on the return trip that I turned around several times and went back and forth up and down the pass, taking pictures. So I ended up with a few more miles.

What a wonderful way to spend an afternoon! Even though I have been up there hundreds of times, I am still in awe every time I go up! The beauty of the park and the road construction that took place, which allows us to just drive up there, is really something special.

Glacier National Park

There really is a reason they call it

“The Crown Jewel of the Continent”

Thanks for following along,

Ken

P.S.

If you would like to see many photos of Glacier National Park at different times of the year, here is the link to their Flickr site:

flickr.com/photos/glaciernps

Now this is some extreme plowing! Thousands of feet down. If you screw up, it would be the longest, scariest ride of your life

flickr.com/photos/glaciernps/25943372244



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.

The Excuse

Just yesterday Becky and I were in the truck (we had to go pick up some tires, so travel on two wheels was contraindicated), headed out to our local dealer. As we stopped at the first red light, there was a biker in front of us, wearing dress pants, dress shoes, a short sleeve shirt and with a full face helmet strapped to the top of his passenger backrest. Sigh...

I'm sure he could offer a dozen excuses for why he wasn't wearing the helmet. What amazes me is that he had the helmet on the bike at all. Becky has her own theory on this phenomenon. She thinks this situation occurs when the rider promises a significant other or family "Yes, I always wear a helmet when I ride", then stops and takes it off as soon as they are out of sight of home.

Personally, I don't care anymore. I'm tired of tilting at the windmills of idiocy. What now goes through my mind when I see this type of irrational riding thought process is "Hmph. Darwinism at work."

Riders can offer up all kinds of excuses not to wear safety gear. Here are some of my favorites:

- "I'm a great rider. I can control the situation and won't get hurt."
- "I'm only going to the local store."
- "Traffic is light. There won't be any problems."
- "It's too hot out for safety gear."

We won't bother going into the discussion regarding the fallacy of any of these pseudo-justifications for not protecting yourself when you ride.

What drives me even more nuts is when the excuses are institutionalized. Here is the most egregious of all: Police motor cops.

We've all seen them in their short sleeve shirts, half helmets, tall jack boots, and bloused pants. Yes, they are usually wearing their bullet-resistant vests under their shirts, but that's not for crash safety. I asked one officer once about it and he said it was "Tradition. This is how motorists expect us to look. And, the half helmets allow the public to see our faces, which makes us more approachable." Sorry, I'm throwing the flag. Go look at most European motor cops. Full armor, full face modular helmets they can flip open when dealing with the public, etc. They get it. Of course, Europe gets motorcycling, too.



This weekend is the annual "Distinguished Gentleman's Ride", a now popular event in the U.S. and many countries. Each is an individual local ride promoting health research. The only problem is that participants are encouraged to (and the majority will) dress up in formal, non-safety attire as a major draw of the ride.

REALLY? An event started to promote HEALTH research, but encourages unsafe riding to participate? Just another excuse. Oh, and I refuse to participate, just on the grounds of event hypocrisy.

There are lots of excuses for not wearing safety gear when you ride. But no matter what, it is just an excuse.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Florida News

South Director's Report

AH, FALL IS UPON US... THE LEAVES ARE TURNING... A DEEPER SHADE OF GREEN!! WHO ARE THEY KIDDING!!

We are at the tipping point of our two riding seasons. From hot and sticky to "this is why we live and ride here"!! We've been kicking around some ideas for Daytona Bike Week recently, and that brings to mind that many of our northern members will be braving the coming winter months in anticipation of making their way to Daytona to start their riding season... And by that time, we will be there with 1000's of new miles on our steeds!! We all make choices...

Back to hot and sticky! We had two terrific brunch rides this month to close out our summer concession to the heat. The Central gang enjoyed themselves at [Waller's Restaurant](#) in Bushnell. A week later, the Southies were treated to a fine day for riding AND a wonderful brunch at Beef O Brady's! The Saturday dawned just a little cooler and bit less humid than usual. The traffic lights stayed green almost for the whole ride over!! We had 10 riders join up at the 7-11, making for the largest group ride in quite some time. This included Steve's friend, and first-timer, Dayna, who rides a wicked KTM sport bike!! Thanks to an excellent tail-gunner, we all made it without incident and through every traffic light!! The road gods were on our side!!!



Van VanSteelant



A very full house at Beef O'Brady's in Clewiston, FL

Photos: Don Moe

Once there, we had a blast! We had a total of 22 riders, coming from Port St. Lucie to Lake Placid to Venice to N. Miami!! We had called ahead and planned on 15+, and the staff jumped right in to accommodate the overflow! In fact, the whole restaurant team did a FANTASTIC job handling our group, as well as the rest of the patrons. There was a wait for tables at one point, so they were at full throttle all morning!! This is the third time we've been there, and we have been treated equally well every time!

With such a crowd, our 50/50 raffle was well received. We split the pot of \$100 with our winner, Ellen Kocher... who graciously donated her winnings back to the club!! A big THANKS to Ellen!, and to everyone who participates!! Our total now stands at \$839.50.

What's Next??

We get back to our LUNCH ride schedule!! These destinations allow us to plan for longer rides and often, water front settings! The Central gang will feast at [Tortilleria La Mexicana](#), in Haines City, on October 8th!! The South Lunch ride takes place on October 22nd, at [Harpoon Harry's](#) in Fishermen's Village, in Punta Gorda!! Remember, our lunches start at NOON!

In between our lunch dates, be sure to attend the [AIMExpo](#) in Orlando!! You all received my email with details about the event, AND the MSTA Social Gathering at Don Pablo's on Saturday night, Oct. 15th. This is THE bike show of the year, and we had a blast at Don's last year!! Details about the show (look for Teresa and Tim at their booth!), our social event, and our lunch rides through the end of the year are at [www.flmsta.org](#) If you're inclined to attend the Orlando happenings, drop me an email by Friday, Oct. 14th. We'll need to give them some idea of how many of us will park ourselves at the trough!! busavan@flmsta.org

And, if you keep scrolling through our calendar, you'll see a couple of events already on the books for next year!! You just received my email about the Sport Touring Track day at Jennings... We have a Just For Fun Event just prior to the start of Bike Week, in Ocala... And we will host another Daytona Lunch ride during Bike Week!!

Membership News

I am still working on securing a major update from him. Stay tuned, as it's a matter of technology and time at this point. You all will be the first to hear from me with any new news!!

Meanwhile, be sure to forward any new email addresses or changes to Michael Tissandier membership@ridemsta.com He then forwards the info to the various State Directors, VP's, and EC, as well as our newsletter editor. *[Ed: Since the management of MSTA membership is currently being transferred to other MSTA members, there may be some delays until new and/or renewed memberships or other changes are processed.]*

Random Ramblings!

We are entering "our" season for riding. This also means many more "out of towners" making their way here for the "winter". If you have sat out most of the summer riding opportunities, be sure to brush up on your skills. And give your ride the once over, as there may have been some "issues" that you put off fixing until the weather changed, and still need to be attended to!

Our RIDES calendar is already filling up with great events! Some of these involve over night stays, and/or a weekend commitment. Get in the habit of checking for new additions regularly. Don't count on an email announcement from me, nor a once-a-month update in this newsletter. We are fortunate to have several members who step up and plan out these events, secure discounted hotel rates, etc. Take the time to plan ahead, and join us for the fun and frolic!!

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report

Upcoming Central Brunch Rides

Central Florida September Brunch Ride:

Saturday, **October 8th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM,

Tortilleria La Mexicana

701 E Hinson Ave,

Haines City, FL 33844

☎ 863-422-1227 ([map](#))

They specialize in gourmet Mexican food, including homemade ice cream & natural Mexican beverages that you won't find elsewhere.

Teresa Vipond, DeLand
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Special Offer

Teresa received this special offer from a representative of *RoadRUNNER* magazine for our members:

I came upon FLMSTA on the internet and would like to introduce you to *RoadRUNNER* magazine. It's a bi-monthly magazine, dedicated to touring and traveling on motorcycles. We features tours from U.S. and abroad, entertaining and informative editorial to read, with breathtaking photography and detailed tour information. Our tank bag maps are most popular, and make it easy to follow the highlighted routes. GPS files are also available to subscribers to download for these tours.

We would like to offer you and your members a special rate for a subscription to *RoadRUNNER*. To redeem this offer, go to www.roadrunner.travel/special and sign up for the \$20 for a 1-year subscription offer. The regular rate is \$29.95, that's a saving of 30%. Please share this link with your members to benefit from this opportunity.

Feel free to contact me with any question you might have.

Kind Regards,

Ben Weathers - Marketing

RoadRUNNER Motorcycle Touring & Travel

206 N Spruce Street, Ste 2B, Winston-Salem, NC 27101

P: (336) 765-7780 x116 | E: ben@roadrunner.travel | W: www.roadrunner.travel

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 8th, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: [Tortilleria La Mexicana](#) – 701 E Hinson Ave, Haines City, FL 33844 ☎ 863-422-1227 ([map](#))
Description: They specialize in gourmet Mexican food, including homemade ice cream & natural Mexican beverages that you won't find elsewhere.
Contact: Teresa Vipond termayn@gmail.com or ☎ 713-504-5763

AIMExpo

When: Thurs.-Sun., **October 13-16**
Where: Orange County Convention Center - North Concourse, 9400 Universal Blvd, Orlando, FL 32819, USA ([map](#))
Description: This IS it!! Once a year, we get to enjoy having the entire motorcycle industry come to Florida for four days of fun and frolic!! Get yourself to Orlando on Saturday and Sunday to check out what's new and coming to a dealership or website near you!! Arrive as the doors open to make sure you get to see everything on your hit list!!
Go to www.aimexpousa.com for EVERYTHING about the show. The header holds all the links/info you could possibly need... Two items here – the event is in the NORTH HALL this year, so no shuttles or waiting to go to the exhibitions NOR to the outside demo rides!! You park and the world is at your feet!! Second, they currently have slightly discounted tickets available! This is a HUGE event that you should not miss!!
Note that only commercial attendees are allowed into the exhibit hall on Thursday and Friday. All are welcome on Saturday and Sunday.
Now hear this!! Our very own Teresa and Tim Vipond will have their AMSOIL booth set up again!! Visit them at booth #1464. It's in the "Made in America" section!!! They offer 25% off retail prices to MSTA members!!!

MSTA Social Gathering at AIM Expo

When: Sat., October 15th, 6:00 PM ...
Where: [Don Pablo's Tex-Mex](#) – 8717 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819 ☎ 407-354-1345 ([map](#))
Description: Here's where all the cool people will be after the show... We found this place last year, and we had a blast!! Good drink prices, lots of room for our boisterous group, and good food!! One of our intrepid members did the leg work on this Just For Fun event, and has set up the entertainment schedule below.
Social Hour: 6:00 – 7:00 PM
Dinner: 7:00 PM until ????.
If you're inclined to attend, drop me an email by Friday, Oct. 14th. We'll need to give them some idea of how many of us will park ourselves at the trough!!
Contact: Van busavan@flmsta.org or ☎ 561-386-2594

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **October 22nd**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: **Harpoon Harry's** – Fishermen's Village, 1200 W. Retta Esplanade #55, Punta Gorda, FL 33950
941-637-1177 ([map](#))
Description: We are back to LUNCH rides this month!! So, we have a RIDE planned for lunch!! Off we go to water front dining in Punta Gorda overlooking the Peace River and Charlotte Harbor!!
Contact: Van busavan@flmsta.org or **561-386-2594**

Future Florida Events

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 5th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: TBA
Description: Place holder for the November lunch ride.
Contact: Teresa Vipond termayn@gmail.com or **713-504-5763**

Non-MSTA Special Event: The Long Riders Digital Scavenger Hunt 2016.

When: Sat., **November 5th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: **Quality Inn & Suites**, 30307 Cortez Blvd, Brooksville, FL 34602
Description: Florida 10-hour mini endurance rally. This is a 10-hour mini-endurance rally which will be run on November 5, 2016, 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. It should be a low-key, fun event for novices, and challenging for the more experienced. The registration fee is \$50.00 single rider, \$75.00 two up and includes Friday and Saturday night dinners.
Important information: floridadigitalrally.com
Contact: skyking96w@gmail.com

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **November 12th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Where: **Sebastian Beach Inn**, 7035 Florida A1A, Melbourne Beach, FL 32951 **321-728-4311** ([map](#))
Description: This month should be a fantastic time to make our way to this OCEAN front restaurant!! Watch the hearty beach goers and work on your winter tan while enjoying the ocean breeze!! Ahhh, “winter” in Florida....
Contact: Van busavan@flmsta.org or **561-386-2594**

MSTA/COG Street Bike/Sport Touring Track Day

When: Friday, February 24, 2017
Where: **Jennings GP**, 4960 NW Co Road 152, Jennings, FL 32053 **386-938-1110** ([map](#))
Description: This info came from MSTA President, Dennis Villarose:
We have a Street Bike/Sport Touring Track Day setup for February 24th, 2017 at Jennings GP Track (Rain or Shine). Ken Condon of “Riding in the Zone” fame will be the facilitator.
We have 25 slots available on a “first come first serve” basis.
I will start a waiting list for us, once it’s filled. A full refund is available if they cancel 30 days prior to the event.

Please have our members send a check for \$150, made payable to MSTA. Please mail to my home address below.

Dennis Villarose
32 Laurelcrest Lane
Travelers Rest, SC 29690
 561-329-3257

Daytona Just-For-Fun Event in Ocala!!!

When: Fri-Sun., **March 10-12, 2017**

Where: **[Quality Inn](#)**, 3434 SW College Road, Ocala, FL  352-854-3200 ([map](#))

Description: We have put together a GREAT weekend of fun and frolic for our members, far and wide!! This is a great lead in to Bike Weeks!! And, on the following Thursday, we have our MSTA Lunch Ride!

Don't delay in making your reservations, as this arrangement will expire sooner than you think. Read through the details below, secured by a couple of excellent planners!! A big THANKS to them, and we'll see you there!!

Stay tuned for further event details and ride ideas...

Room rates are greatly discounted for this time of year. We have a block of 10 rooms at \$99 a night, before taxes. This includes a hot breakfast, heated pool, 24-hour fitness center, Wi-Fi throughout the hotel, and cookies and milk from 8:00-9:00 PM each evening. ☺

We have protected the price (\$99) for March 9th in the event that anyone from out of the area would like to arrive on Thursday for a good night's sleep and an early start the next morning on Friday, the 10th.

Keep in mind that not only are these dates at the start of Bike Week in nearby Daytona Beach, it is also the heart of our tourist season so rooms may start to disappear quickly. Just call the telephone number above and reserve as soon as you know you can make it. You can cancel 24 hours prior to the date of your reservation. Any un-reserved rooms in the block of rooms will cancel on Friday, February 24, 2017.

Just refer to the MSTA block of rooms when you make your reservation.

Regional Event

2016 Tellico Plains Tennessee Just For Fun Dual-Sport/Adventure Event

When: Fri-Sun., **October 21-23, 2016**

Where: **[Cherohala Mountain Trails Campground](#)**, 32 Reliance Rd Tellico Plains TN 37385

 423-253-6061 ([map](#))

Description: "Cherohala Mountain Trails Campground specializes in offering outstanding accommodations and unparalleled hospitality for outdoor enthusiasts. Offering seven clean, comfortable cabins and over 5 acres of open level pristine tent camping. We have a tradition of assisting you in creating the most positive camping experience available when visiting Eastern Tennessee."

Our in-camp Concierge Service will make dinner a pleasure! We will ice your beverages, marinate your grill meats and have your dinner ready for the grill when you arrive. Also available is our personalized suggestions on places for you to play and Group in-house catering of the best camp cuisine to be had in Tellico Plains!"

Please contact Wayne or Kellie directly and let them know you are with the MSTA group when making reservations,  423-253-6061. Refer to the [announcement article](#) for further information.

Coordinator: Bill Wilson – yfrcauv@yahoo.com

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](#).

The MSTA National website has extensive event information:

- For the sanctioned events: [click here](#).
- For Just-For-Fun events in 2016: [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.



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

CLASSIFIED ADS

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