



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 8 Issue 1

Events in January

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Feature Article

Riding Around Florida

By Dan Cone from Boston, MA

[Ed: This article was found in the forum of motorcycle-usa.com and condensed. Additional photos are [here](#). Many of our Florida members will recognize the areas Dan visited and may be encouraged to visit Bike Week in Daytona in March or the Kennedy Space Center.]

In 2012 I made a week-long trip to Florida. My main reason for going was to attend a few days of Daytona Bike Week but I had a much larger experience than that. Because of a few obligations, my friend Norm was unable to attend bike week with me but he did generously allow me to use his FZ1 for an entire week. My good



friends Bill and Vicki allowed me to stay with them a few days and we explored bike week together. I have a few photos to share from around Florida as well as some additional bike week photos. The roads around Florida are mostly flat and straight but when you get to central Florida they become more interesting with enough curvy tarmac and slight elevation changes to make for a bit of spirited riding.

Arriving at Port St. Lucie, I picked up my loaner bike from Norm. He was gracious allowing me to choose between the Concours-14 or the FZ1... I picked the FZ1 and it was a good choice!

Editor's Monthly Note:

Happy New Year to all of our readers! Please submit articles, stories, sale items and other information of interest to *The FL MSTA Gator Tale*. We rely on you to make this newsletter interesting and informative.

We wish you all safe and fun rides in this New Year! Please contact us using our new email address: editor@flmsta.org.
Don Moe, Editor

The only time you get an elevation change in southern Florida is when you are crossing a bridge. This next photo shows the US-1 bridge in Stuart.



This red fire truck was my visual marker to find my way back to Bill and Vicki's house.



On Hwy-42 heading towards Daytona Beach. Fun road, a lot more twisty than is shown here. Check out my overstuffed tail bag. That carried everything I needed for one week.



Daytona Beach. This is the main street. Bill knew some great place to park so we didn't have to ride in the mess of traffic downtown. Lots of shops, food and drink up and down this strip. What is interesting about bike week is that there really isn't one central location but events, groups and activities scattered all around the Daytona Beach area.



People watching was a great deal of fun.



Don't know if the helmet is DOT approved.



This custom orange trike really got my attention.



A group of kilt-wearing riders rolled passed us.



Along the boardwalk they had a custom bike show. I love the look of this orange one, in particular the whitewalls. Nicely done.



Look at the seat on this one!



I'm a sucker for any bike painted in a red/white/blue combo.

A nicely done up Cushman.



What great lines and detail on this bike.



We stumbled upon a photo-shoot amongst the custom bikes.



Back at the speedway. Some of the best bikes were parked in the parking lot. I love the old Interceptors.



The unusual could be found too.



Yamaha had this neat display of one of their supersports with a cut-away view of the motor.



At the custom trike display they had this beauty. I just think it is a stellar paint job.



A quad Wing. I'd prefer a Mini Cooper convertible.



This is the Ryca Cafe Racer. You buy it as a kit and use a Suzuki S40/Savage as the base. Neat looking.



At another part of town Bill and I saw three of these guys motoring by. I found it interesting as it is the only trike I'm aware of that has a steering wheel instead of handle bars.



On one street they were displaying this motorcycle camper. Look at the white box in the middle. Everything folds down into that. When expanded half the camper is standing space and the other half is covered by two elevated twin mattresses. Plus you get a nice little canopy out front. I don't know if I would ever want to pull a trailer but that looks like a neat design.

Moving on towards the south, I shared the road with a lot of other riders. Most were very friendly.



I arrived at the Space Center, Yay!!! I couldn't enter this model of the space shuttle because of some kind of classes/training going on inside, Boo!!!



The rocket garden at the Kennedy Space Center. All the cool rockets are here, the Mercury Redstone, Gemini, Atlas and more.

Next is the Vehicle Assembly Building, essentially where the rockets are built. It is the tallest/largest single story building in the world. It stands over 500 feet tall and those large louvered grey panels on the side are doors, which are about 460 feet high. To give you a bit of perspective on its size, notice the American flag painted on the side of the building. The blue field of the flag is just a bit larger than an official NBA basketball court. The tour guide said they could put Yankee Stadium on the roof including all the parking. The tickets were sold out to tour the building that day which is a shame because either Atlantis or Discovery were inside getting prepped for displays at the Smithsonian and the Space Center.



This was a neat display. It is the actual launch control for the Apollo mission. They do a great show recreating the launch by having all the systems operation and then lights spotlighting the different workstations during the countdown. Of course it ends with a thundering boom of the Saturn V rocket launching.



Here is the big one, the Saturn V rocket from the Apollo program. I could only get the first stage in the photo but they have the entire rocket supported along its side in the room and it is huge. Each stage is separated so you can see the tanks and rockets along the way. What was noted during the tour is that this is an actual Saturn V rocket and not a model so all the parts are real. They said when operational there are over two million parts that had to be in working order to get the astronauts to the moon and back.



A lunar rover. Curious how it breaks down in order to pack onto the rocket to reach the moon.

An Apollo capsule. Much larger than the Freedom Mercury capsule but still small.



EV suits... you know the astronauts were ATGATT.

The Mars rovers from Pathfinder on the right, Spirit & Opportunity in the middle and Curiosity on the left.



The Space Center coexists as a natural park and as such has no fences for wildlife. Take a close look at this photo, in the center is a very large alligator. It was eating something at the time so all the kids on the bus were shrieking. Because there are no fences and the waterways are close to official buildings, NASA employees are told to check out under their cars before approaching, just in case.



Heading out to Lake Okeechobee. The sky was threatening rain that day. Made for some very dramatic clouds and some windy conditions. The FZ1 looks awesome in this shot.



I arrived at Lake Okeechobee in about an hour. Kind of unimpressed, first they have what seems to be a man-made earthen wall about 20ft. high that surrounds the lake so you can't really see it unless you pull into a park. The lake itself isn't very pretty but it is quite large. I would guess it would take about three to four hours to ride around it's perimeter at speeds of 55 mph.



I do like riding along the palm tree lined roads and highways.



The Kanner Highway back home from the lake. Very long, flat straightaways are common here. I saw another alligator alongside the road but he swam away before I could get my camera out. Also there are no gas stations between the entrance to the highway along the lake and back to the town of Stuart. I was riding very low on fumes not knowing this.

I spent my last day riding along the barrier islands on the east coast of southern Florida.



Coming back from Jupiter Island.



And finally, a parting photo of the Atlantic. So beautiful.



I know this was a lengthy ride report and if you made it this far, thanks for reading.

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.*

New Year's Resolutions

Everybody makes them. Sometimes they are kept, sometimes not. How about some New Year's Resolutions that could save your life?

These are mine...

- 🏍️ I will always check my bike before I ride. That includes checking the tires, tire pressures, brakes, drivetrain, lights, controls, etc. I will also check my wife and riding partner's bike, as that is part of our agreed division of pre-ride duties. Nothing is more important to me than her safety! (Yes, she cross-checks me as well.)
- 🏍️ I will also check myself. Am I ready to ride? Is my mind on my riding, and not distracted? Am I rested and not tired? I promise to walk away from a ride if I am not ready. I have nothing to prove.
- 🏍️ I will always wear All The Gear All The Time (ATGATT). I will routinely inspect my gear, particularly my helmet, to ensure it will protect me if needed.
- 🏍️ I will ride responsibly and safely. That means cooperating with other traffic. I will not be a squid on the public streets.
- 🏍️ I will carefully decide with whom I ride. My riding partners should demonstrate the same care towards riding that I do. I will not ride outside my comfort zone. I will ride my own line and ride.
- 🏍️ I will practice good riding techniques. I will focus on my riding. I will stay alert to possible hazards (Remember the MSF's Search-Evaluate-Execute strategy?).
- 🏍️ I will seek out more rider training in 2015. For me, that means my annual RiderCoach refresher and this year probably another track school!
- 🏍️ I will always maintain my motorcycles. That means following the maintenance schedule in the Owner's Manual. It means regularly cleaning my bike, not just to show it off, but also as a means to detect possible problems or maintenance issues.
- 🏍️ I am an experienced rider. I recognize that newer riders may look to me or watch how I ride. I will do my best to present a good example of a mature, safe rider. At the same time, it is also my responsibility to show newer riders that safe riding is also fun riding.
- 🏍️ If I see unacceptable riding behavior or unsafe riding techniques, I will take it upon myself to address these issues. I will do it politely and positively. I recognize that, as much as possible, we should all watch out for each other.



Ok, none of us are perfect. I'm sure there will be times when I'll forget something. The important part of this is that I recognize how much motorcycling is a part of my life, and how I want to be able to continue riding. These resolutions are how to make that happen.

How about you? Ready for another year of riding in 2015?

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Florida News

South Director's Report

Whew, I Couldn't Eat Another Bite... Well, Ok, Just One More Cookie...

The Holiday Season will be behind us by the time you read this, and now it's time to make up for lost time away from our bikes!! A new year, and a reset of our priorities!! Florida sunshine, mild temps, and places to go!!



Van VanSteelant

And away we went to Gator Joe's on Lake Weir and the Lone Cabbage Fish Camp outside Cocoa!! You can read about Gator Joe's elsewhere in this issue. The Dec. 13th ride to Lone Cabbage was spectacular!! We left early from West Palm Beach, heated gear engaged! (I know we'll hear from our northern friends about that!!!)

Our threesome became four in Indiantown, and we enjoyed the empty roads, blue sky, and The Pace! Jim Park had shaken his AM sluggishness; Prior Powers, Don Moe and yours truly were in the zone. We added Bill and Nicole Rorke at our final pit stop, and REALLY enjoyed the last 35 miles to the restaurant!!! Five other members made their way as well, and we dined outside, waterside!! We had another good 50/50 raffle, with the winner, Jim Park, donating his half back to the club! We added \$30 to our total, now at \$466.00. Thanks to all who participate!! It was past 2 PM before we could tear ourselves away from the good times and perfect weather!! Ahhhhh.....



What's Next??

We have two lunch rides scheduled for January!! Teresa has picked the Castaways Bar & Grill in Astor, FL. for our next Central Lunch Ride on Jan. 10th. We follow that two weeks later with another waterside destination. On Jan. 24th, join us for the South Lunch Ride at the Tiki Bar at Roland Martin's Marina and Resort in Clewiston!! There's lots of info and suggestions for these two RTEs at our website: www.flmsta.org

We are always looking for unique lunch spots for the next few months. As long as they can handle 10-20 riders at once, we want to hear from you!! AND know this; we are looking for members to share anything that interests them with the rest of the gang!! Favorite roads traveled recently; travel photos; why your ride is the best; what your first ride was; recent training you've completed and your "a-ha" moment; best advice you've ever heard about motorcycling; new gear purchases; new parts, farkles, accessories that everybody else should know about; promote your motorcycle biz or product that we all should know about... You get the idea, so, send your idea to me and we'll see what/where/when we can enjoy your presentation!! The more the merrier!! Don't worry about how long you need to entertain us! Two minutes or twenty, it won't matter! If we could do this at every ride...

We are in the final stages of scheduling all of the 2015 lunch/brunch rides. The dates and places for Feb.-May will be posted by Jan. 4th. The rest of the dates-only will also be posted by then, so you'll be able to mark your calendars and be sure to line up those pesky "honey dos" around the reality of what's really important....

Random Ramblings!

You know that you earn \$5 STARBUcs for each new member you recruit to the MSTA, right?!? You can use them for MSTA products, event registrations, membership renewals, etc. Be sure to get your supply of our **new** ITRs (Invitation to Ride) quad folds at our next RTE, or email me and I'll send some along to you!!!

It's that time of year to get your Dan Clark Safety Fund reimbursement requests into headquarters!! Go to the MSTA National website on [this webpage](#) to get all of the details. Hurry, you have until January 31st to get your requests in for your purchases in 2014.

Did you see all of the tremendous end-of-year "wish list" ideas in the cycle magazines this year?? I even bought some....

It seems the manufacturers are finally over the Great Recession!! I've lost count of the new models and major updates that have been released over the last few months. And it seems more are still to come!! My favorite trend: semi-active suspensions. Not just easily adjustable pre-sets, but real time reaction/adjustment to road conditions!! You cruise pillow soft on the interstates, and instantly "tighten up" for the exit ramp to the twisty bits!! My custom suspension can only whimper in amazement!!

Be sure to check our [National Event Schedule](#) for the latest schedule of sanctioned events for 2015. I counted ten, including STAR. That doesn't include the "Just-For-Fun" events that will pop up during the year!! Many of them are listed in [the Upcoming Events section](#) of the forum. We have sooo many opportunities to ride with our club!!

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report

Tom Blake provided this info about the recent Central FL December ride....

"Larry Fitch, Steve Marcum and Tom Blake rode up to Gator Joe's from Melbourne. We took the scenic route through Deer Park, Christmas, Chuluota, Geneva, Sanford and Weirsdale. The best part of the ride was once we got west of Sanford on 46a and beyond. We sort of saw-toothed north and west onto CR 42 to Weirsdale and finally CR 25 up to Ocklawaha. Melbourne may have more moderate winter temperatures. But the general area north and west of Sanford surely has the nicer scenery and roads. CRs 450a and then 450 through Umatilla are two bits of serpentine, adrenaline-pounding two-lane we forgot to take advantage of. But next time...."

"At Gator Joe's we met up with about 8 other riders – some familiar faces and several new (Don Moe passed around the sign-in sheet). We sat out on the deck overlooking a beautiful, round Lake Weir watching boaters dash about and even a sea plane came in for a landing. The weather was absolutely perfect. Lots of banter.



Good times.

“Afterward, we rode about a ¼-mile west to see the old two-story, wood-frame house where Ma Barker and son Freddie were gunned down by Feds in January, 1935. It’s claimed that over 1500 rounds were poured into the house over a four hour period in the longest gun battle the FBI was ever involved in!

“Then it was time to head for home – about 3 blissful hours away. It was pretty much a dawn to dusk, beautiful MSTA day. I can’t wait to ride up there again.”

Tom also mentioned in a previous message that they enjoy the roads around Umatilla, so I’ve chosen a lunch spot for the Feb. 21st ride....

The Umatilla Inn & Restaurant
605 Central Ave. (Hwy. 19)
Umatilla FL 32784

We’ve been there. They have good service, good food & plenty of seating. There’s also an ice cream shop next door.

Teresa Vipond
DeLand, FL
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Member Comments

- ✓ In late October, the Federal Appeals Court in Washington, DC ruled that the EPA regulation for E15 in gasoline can proceed. Read the full article at [this link](#) on Yahoo and be careful when fueling your motorcycle or other small engines.
- ✓ On Saturday January 31, 2015, the 9th Annual Dania Beach Vintage Motorcycle Show will take place in Frost Park, 300 NE 2nd Street, Dania Beach, FL. Registration to display is from 7 AM until 11 AM. The show runs from 10 AM until 5 PM. Visit [this webpage](#) for details and further information.

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, **January 10th**, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Where: [Castaways Bar & Grill](#) – 1575 W. SR 40, Astor, FL 32102 ☎386-749-4407 ([map](#))

Description: They have an outdoor seating area overlooking the St. Johns River. We highly recommend their specialty - lobster bisque. There is good riding with low traffic on the roads through the Ocala National Forest going west & north from Astor.

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat, **January 24th**, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Where: **The Tiki Bar** – Roland Martin Marina Resort, 920 E. Del Monte Ave., Clewiston, FL 33440 ☎863-983-3151 ([map](#))

Description: The Tiki Bar and Grill at the World Famous Roland Martin Marina & Resort offers a full lunch and dinner menu and is located right on the water and the docks at the marina, so you can enjoy Florida's best weather and our tropical atmosphere. The Tiki Bar is a favorite for bikers traveling through South Florida.

For those inclined, you can check out the Marina side of the business at: rolandmartinmarina.com. They have accommodations, fishing guides, boating info and a variety of resources about the lake and the surrounding area!!

Contact: Van - busavan@flahsta.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, **February 21st**, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Where: **The Umatilla Inn & Restaurant**, 605 Central Ave. (Hwy. 19), Umatilla, FL 32784 ☎352-669-1325 ([map](#))

Description: We've been there. They have good service, good food & plenty of seating. There's also an ice cream shop next door.

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat, **February 28th**, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm

Where: **T.B.A.**

Description:

Contact: Van - busavan@flahsta.org or ☎561-386-2594

Member Profile

We would like to publish profiles of our members, on a strictly voluntary basis of course. If you would like to participate, please send an email (or a letter) to the [editor](#) of our Florida newsletter and answer as many of the following questions as you feel appropriate. Please send an attachment with a suitable photo of you with your primary or favorite motorcycle. If you prefer to send by regular mail, please find the mailing address [on page 16](#).

Member Profile Questions:

Hometown/State?

What was your first motorcycle?

Current motorcycles?

What is your all-time favorite motorcycle?

How long have you been riding?

When did you join the MSTA?

How did you hear about the MSTA?

Who or what was your biggest influence in motorcycling?

What are your favorite places to ride?

Describe a memorable motorcycle adventure?

What is the best motorcycle advice or tip learned over the years?

What turns you on about motorcycles or riding?

What do you get out of your MSTA membership?

What are your hobbies and interests outside of motorcycling?

Thank you for your participation.

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see the Florida MSTA website's Events page.

MSTA website information on upcoming sanctioned events: [click here](#). For Just-For-Fun events: [click here](#).

National MSTA www.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](#) suggests several New Year's Resolutions.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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