



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 7 Issue 4

Events in April

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Feature Article

Throwing Down the Gauntlet

by Bill "The Navigator" McDaniel

For only a fleeting moment I see it: a flash of blue streaking around a corner before disappearing behind the shoulder of a mountainside. Two bends in the road later, I see it again, but this time a prodigious amount of lean angle to the left has been added to the picture before me. I am deep into an exciting ride dubbed "[The Gauntlet](#)" and there is a smile on my face and a twisting throttle under my right hand. That flash of blue? That's my riding buddy, Mr. Sarcasm (a.k.a. Boyd Harrell), astride his Triumph Trophy SE and he is wringing out every ounce of goodness that the twisting, turning, undulating "Gauntlet" has to offer.

30 Hours Earlier

It's six in the morning and darkness still envelops the land as I ride north on I-75 from the Tampa area. My goal for the day is to make it to Blairsville, Georgia, and the [Copperhead Lodge](#), where I am slated to spend several days exploring the area and experiencing a loop-ride that has been dubbed, "The Gauntlet."

As the minutes and the miles tick by, I see the first signs of the rising sun off to my right; a thin sliver of light traces the horizon and backlights flat, featureless land east of the highway. Off to my left the mist of early morning ground fog clinging to the bases of trees like cotton batting. Sunrise is never so beautiful as when seen from the saddle of a motorcycle.

By ten in the morning our little band of motorcycle travelers is crossing the state line into Georgia. This trip is in full swing as we are officially out of Florida and my thoughts drift ahead to visions of twisty asphalt and scenic mountain vistas. Motorcycle riding may be about the journey, but this time it is the destination that beckons to me like a siren's song calling me closer and closer to a place where my soul will be renewed by cool

Editor's Monthly Note:

Again I ask everyone to 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.

To be added to or removed from the newsletter mailing list, please contact [Choon Gan](#) at MSTA National.

We wish you all safe and fun rides!

Don Moe, Editor

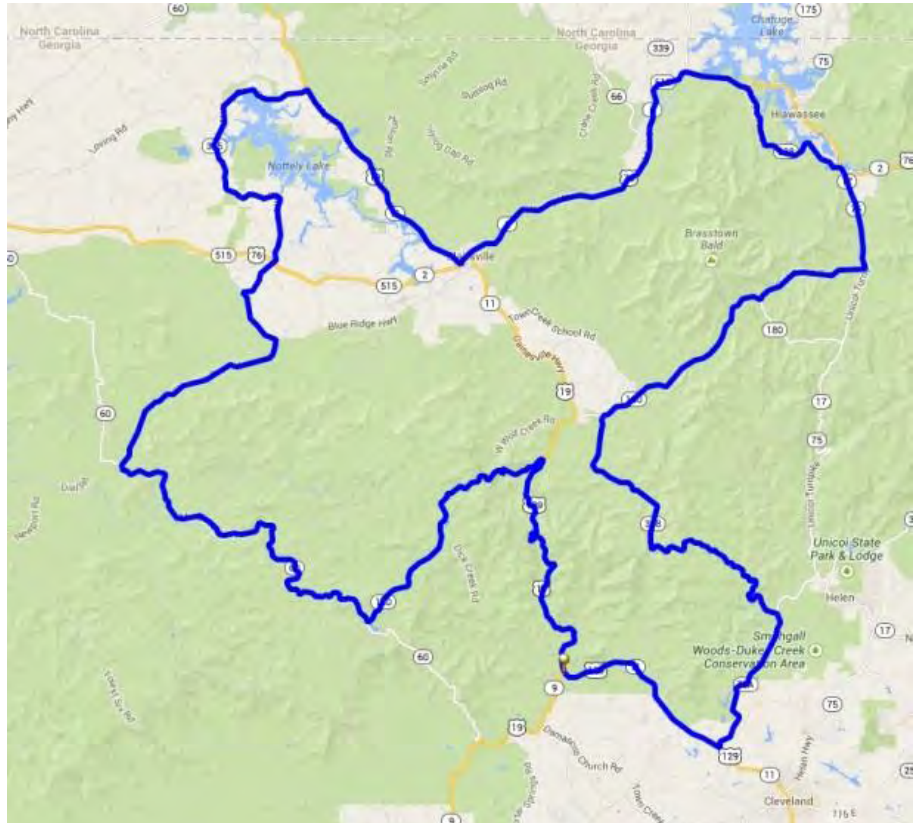
air and curvy roads.

After twelve hours and 566 miles, we pull into the parking lot of the Copperhead Lodge. It is time for some much needed rest. Thankfully, getting settled at the Copperhead Lodge is a non-event. We are greeted by the friendly staff, who is expecting us and have all in order for our arrival. Within minutes I have keys to a cabin, a map of “The Gauntlet”, and a full briefing on what’s available for dinner in the Copperhead’s restaurant. I smile to myself as I realize that I have arrived at a place where the people not only understand motorcyclists, they are motorcyclists, and they use that shared perspective to ensure their guests will have an enjoyable and satisfying stay.

The Gauntlet

Following a tasty and filling breakfast at the Copperhead Lodge, we roll out early the next morning to challenge this route called “The Gauntlet” that we have heard so much about. My expectations – along with my standards for what makes a good ride – are high.

As a veteran of many motorcycle excursions to the mountains, my frame of reference reads like a Who’s Who of twisty roads: the [Dragon](#) that stalks US 129 north of Robbinsville; the [Cherohala Skyway](#) twisting above the clouds toward Tellico Plains; NC 80 from Marion to the [Blue Ridge Parkway](#); NC 226A, a road so twisty legend says it makes NASCAR drivers squeal like little girls; and, “[The Snake](#)“,



Gauntlet Map ([click for full-size](#))

(Credit: [Sunday Morning Rides](#))

that serpentine section of US 421 slithering across the mountaintops from Shady Valley to Mountain City, TN. These are the experiences that will inform my time on “The Gauntlet.”

GA 60

Within minutes of leaving the Copperhead Lodge we are riding southbound on GA 60 toward the community of Suches. The road between here and there is a tasty medley of mountain meadows, sweeping curves, and a nice sprinkling of twisty turns to hold your attention. This stretch of highway is as smooth as it is undulating and its looks to have been recently paved as shiny black asphalt and bright yellow lane markings are on display. The smooth, defect-free asphalt is a joy to ride on.

Riding along and enjoying the curves, I can’t help but notice the views as well. This stretch of the Gauntlet offers up some beautiful vistas that consist mostly of open fields giving way to mountains rising in the distance, as well as farmland and natural scenes that are as impressive as they are foreign to this born-and-raised flatlander.

At one point a pair of deer run across the highway about a hundred yards ahead of me; a good reminder that this part of the country is home to a sizable population of these “forest rats” and that I would do well to adjust my riding habits to suit. I watch the deer bound across an open field as I pass through the spot where only seconds earlier they crossed the road in front of me. For the few seconds the road will allow, I marvel at the speed and the grace with which deer can cover large expanses of open ground.



Author and Boyd Harrell riding the Dragon on their Triumphs

(Photo credit: [Killboy](#))

Arriving in Suches, we pull off into the parking lot of the Woody Gap Elementary School for a quick break and to let the slower riders in our little entourage catch up. The break is a good idea for several reasons, not the least of which is that a much more challenging section of the Gauntlet lies directly ahead.

Wolf Pen Gap Road

Turning left off of GA 60 onto [Wolf Pen Gap Road](#) (GA 180), I start to get a bit giddy with anticipation of what lies ahead. You see, I passed this way once before in 2005 on my way to the Honda Hoot in Knoxville, TN, and that first encounter with Wolf Pen Gap Road is still etched deep in my memory. Today’s ride will only serve to confirm and renew those memories of serpentine goodness.

The first few miles of Wolf Pen Gap Road are pretty sedate from this side of the run. Passing through some residential areas the road here is benign and gentle, belying what lies just ahead.

Rolling downhill into a hard left turn onto a narrow bridge we have arrived at the Lake Winfield Scott Recreation Area, and it’s time for another stop to take photos while enjoying the scenic vistas that lie aside the bridge. Fall color is present and the fiery leaves look especially inspiring as they are reflected by the still waters of the lake. The silent beauty here is broken only by the sound of digital shutters snapping open and closed as we all do our inadequate best to capture the beauty on display before us.



Lake Winfield Scott from Wolf Pen Gap Road

Back on the bike and rolling eastward once again, my heartbeat quickens as the curves tighten and the road begins to demand more and more lean angle from me and my Triumph. Yes, my memories were honest ones; this is a challenging and enjoyable stretch of road. My riding buddy, Mr. Sarcasm, is making the most of it and

I marvel at his ability to sling his heavy Triumph through these demanding curves with an ease normally reserved only for the best of dancers.

This section of the Gauntlet has us riding the shoulder of Blood Mountain. Some say that the name of the mountain comes from a long ago bloody battle between the Cherokee and Creek Indians. What is known for sure is that Blood Mountain, at 4,458 feet, is the highest peak on the Georgia section of the much vaunted Appalachian Trail. And that geography serves to inform this fantastic stretch of motorcycling bliss as the asphalt pathway struggles to follow the contours of this impressive mountainside.



Triumph Trophy SE coming through a curve on the Gauntlet

All too soon Wolf Pen Gap Road comes to an end as it intersects with US 129. According to the map provided to us back at the Copperhead Lodge, it's now time to turn south and ride downhill off of Blood Mountain to continue our exploration of this twisting, turning route they call "The Gauntlet."

Beyond Blood Mountain

From Wolf Pen Gap Road, the Gauntlet turns south to follow US 129 down to GA 75A, which is used to pick up GA 348, also known as the [Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway](#). The highway was named in honor of Senator Richard Brevard Russell, Jr., in March, 1969. Russell, who died in 1971, served nearly 40 years in Congress, was twice a Democratic candidate for President of the United States, and, at the time of his death, was the senior-most member of the Senate.

The "scenic" in this highway's name is accurate and this stretch of the Gauntlet's route would prove to be one of my favorites. Between the views, the sweepers and the twisty curves, and some freshly laid asphalt, GA 348 is motorcycling bliss.

In fact, this stretch of the Gauntlet is so good you may want to allow extra time to traverse it in both directions... more than once! The only downside about this road is that it is very popular with cagers as well as motorcyclists



View from atop Brasstown Bald

and you have a better than average chance of getting stuck behind a slow-mover just as you are feeling the need to lean through the twisty bits. Patience is definitely a virtue when it comes to enjoying the Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway.

Brasstown Bald

At the end of the Richard B. Russell Scenic Highway, the route for the Gauntlet takes you easterly on another section of GA 180. This stretch of riding leads to the entrance to a national park that encompasses the highest point in all of Georgia, Brasstown Bald. While not officially a part of the Gauntlet, the side trip up to Brasstown Bald is well worth the couple of hours it will take to enjoy the park and the stunning views of the Georgia countryside.

The road to the park entrance is well maintained, fully paved, and very twisty. Admission to the Brasstown Bald park is \$5 per person. After paying your admission fee, you are ushered into a large, paved parking area that allows easy access to the visitors center, restrooms, and even the opportunity to buy a hotdog from a sidewalk vendor. Thankfully, the visitors' center is also where you can catch a tram ride rather than having to finish what would be a strenuous climb to the top.



Visitors' center and observation deck atop Brasstown Bald

At the top of the mountain you will be delivered to a large complex that houses a museum, more restrooms, and a large observation deck affording 360-degree views of the mountains of northern Georgia. The experience and the views are akin to what one finds at the summit of Mount Mitchell in North Carolina, but here, at 4,784 feet above sea level, the landscape is a gorgeous combination of mountains and lakes. And, if you are fortunate to visit on a clear day, you can even see the skyline of Atlanta out on the horizon some 70 miles away!

Back to the Gauntlet

Leaving Brasstown Bald we turned northerly from the terminus of GA 180 at GA 17/75. The next section of the Gauntlet's route takes you through a mix of open country and more developed areas. One thing that is consistent, though, is that every mile of the Gauntlet is good riding in one way or another.

Drawing closer to the end of the official Gauntlet route, we turned onto Gum Log Road, which proved to be another really nice stretch of highway. This time, however, it wasn't so much the curves or the scenery, but the combination of the two along with glimpses of life in rural northern Georgia that gave me a sense of being "behind-the-scenes," so to speak.



Gauntlet Scenery

The final leg of the Gauntlet routed us around Nottely Lake on GA 325. Once again, the road and the scenery were topnotch. Catching a glimpse of the lake with mountains as the backdrop is always an inspiring sight, and there was no shortage of inspiration on this final section of The Gauntlet.

Back at the Copperhead Lodge

Very conveniently, the last leg of the Gauntlet returned us to the Copperhead Lodge where we dismounted after a full and satisfying day of riding through roads and scenery as diverse as they were beautiful.

We had rolled out at eight o'clock in the morning to start a ride that returned us to our starting point at five o'clock in the afternoon, with 150 miles showing on the trip odometer. Of course we did add about two hours with our visit to Brasstown Bald, but any way you slice it, the Gauntlet is a full-day's adventure.



Our cabin and garage at Copperhead Lodge

Adding to the sense of convenience was the fact that once back at the Copperhead Lodge, we had everything we needed to finish out the day in spectacular fashion. Our cabin was just up the hill and our bikes would be sheltered from the elements in the garage sitting right next to our accommodations. Back down the hill at the Lodge, a hot and tasty dinner was just minutes away. And, now that we were off the bikes, some of the Lodge's tasty adult beverages could be added to the evening agenda.

And that's exactly how we closed out this awesome day of riding. Dinner was excellent burgers enjoyed fireside in the Copperhead Lodge's main dining room. Cold beers were enjoyed as part of the day's closing ritual, as well. After dinner we strolled the short distance up the hill to our cabin where we all retired for a goodnight's rest while we dreamed of doing it all over again the next day.

Bill McDaniel

P.S. Several additional photos are viewable in the author's gallery on Picasa [at this link](#).

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 Distracted Driver

Just the other day, I pulled up alongside an individual texting while driving. I was directly beside her driver's door for a good 20 seconds, and we were moving at about 45-50 mph in four-lane suburban traffic. For that entire 20 seconds, she alternated between texting and occasionally glancing up. I tried an experiment and attempted to get her attention. She was so focused on the texting that I couldn't get her to see me, right alongside her! I honked, waved, adjusted my position, opened my face shield and yelled. There was no response at all. I thought about just leaning over and pounding on her window, just to scare the-you-know-what out of her, but obviously that was not an option. She never did see me and I finally gave up. Amazing!

About a year ago I came to a stop at a red light, at a four-lane intersection. I was in the right lane and saw an SUV coming up behind me in the left lane. The driver never saw the red light until it was too late, slammed on the vehicle's brakes and went sliding past me, right through the intersection. I saw him still holding the phone up to his face as he slid past me. Incredible!

It happens all the time now. People are so wrapped up in social media, talking and texting that they have quit paying attention to their driving. Sometimes I'd like to just reach in the window, grab the phone and throw it, just to watch their reaction.

So how do we combat this potentially deadly issue? Well, first off we can help lobby for better no-texting-while-driving laws. Let's face it. Florida's current law is a joke. It is not a primary offense; it doesn't apply while sitting at a red light or other stop, etc. What are our lawmakers thinking? I guess they really do lobotomize politicians immediately upon winning the first election!

All we can really do to protect ourselves is to watch out. You can recognize the distracted driver. The vehicle is wandering all over the road. It is moving (and probably slowing down) way slower than the posted limit. The driver's head and eyes are down, or the phone is up against the face, and/or in line with their vision.

This is particularly scary at intersections. Make sure as you are coming to a stop to check behind you. Just a year or two ago we had a female rider killed in the Tampa Bay area because she stopped for a red light and the SUV (go figure) never saw her or the light. The driver was distracted.

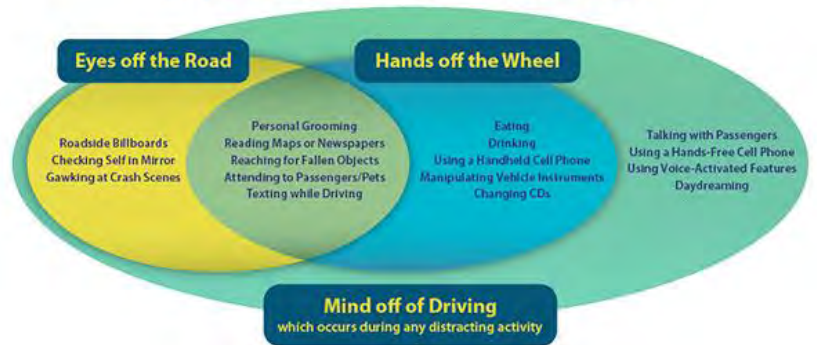
Don't become a statistic! Stay focused out on the road. Watch for the other drivers doing stupid stuff.

Oh, and if you ever do get the chance to just reach in and grab their phone...just kidding!

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Understanding Distraction



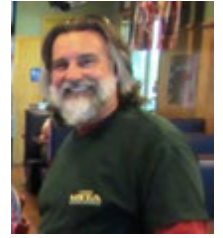
Graphic Credit: [AAA](#)

Florida News

South Director's Report

Spring has Sprung!! Fairwell to Winter!! We Can Finally Get Out and Ride...?!?!?

Do you know, as I scribble this report, it's in the 30's in NYC, Minneapolis, and Cleveland?? And they are still looking at a chance of snow!! Just this past weekend, we rode in brilliant sunshine and the mid 80's!! We'll just have to grin and bear the awesome responsibility of keeping the MSTA rolling along during these awful times for our northern brothers and sisters! It's a tough job....



Van VanSteelant

Here's what we enjoyed about last month. We rode to a new place for us on March 8th. Our scout found a hidden gem in Venice, FL, the [Snook Haven Resort](#)! Though it's located at the end of a quarter mile of hard pack driveway, we had zero problems making our way to lots of parking and multiple dining arrangements around the restaurant. If you wanted live music with your lunch, done. If you wanted indoor or outdoor dining, done. If you wanted riverside dining, done! Eight of us enjoyed a wonderful meal and great conversation riverside, with a little background music from the other side of the property!! We had five riders clock 115 to 190 miles one way to share in the fun! I'm not sure anybody took a longer way home to check out the Aerostich sale, as that would have added nearly 90 more minutes to the ride! But, if they did, they had perfect weather to do so! I rode solo from Boynton Beach, and was glad to have worn my electric jacket, as I averaged 52 degrees clear across the state! (My apologies to our non-Floridian members – 21 years down here has “thinned” the blood!!) You know, the wind chill on a ‘Busa is bit higher than on a ST....



In between the weekend lunch rides, we had a special event organized by our own Phil Ridgdill. Check out the separate report from Jim Park on page 11! I heard from several members that the event could not have gone any better!! A big THANKS to Phil! Your participation in these events goes a long way to ensuring that they will continue to be repeated!!

We moved the lunch ride to [Jay Bee's](#) to March 22nd to make sure we maximized the turnout at both Daytona and Lake Wales! Always check our website for this kind of change up!! And the plan worked!! Perfect weather greeted 22 riders from across the state, who filled a third of the parking lot!! Fourteen members rode over 100 miles one way; seven of them over 150! As always, this place rocks for lunch!! They set us up with two long tables, making conversation easy! Good times!! We had another fruitful 50/50 raffle, raising \$64, with half going to our winner, Don Moe! He graciously donated back a portion of his winnings, adding \$52 dollars to our funds. We now have \$302.00 in the kitty. THANKS! to all who participate!



Large turn-out at Jay Bee's. More arrived after these photos were taken.

What's Next??

We have two more lunch rides set up for April!! The first will appeal to all members in our Central area, and those on both coasts looking for a “real” ride to lunch! On April 12th, make your way to [Gator Joe's](#) in Ocklawaha, FL. This place is located on the edge of Lake Weir, with decks and screened dining areas for stunning views and great eats!! The next weekend, April 19th, make your way to [Harpoon Harry's](#) at Fisherman's Village in Punta Gorda, FL. It's been some time since we ate here, and a recent scouting report makes us wonder why we waited so long to go back!! As always, check our website for details on each location. Looking ahead, we will hit [Solomon's Castle](#) in Ona, FL on May 3rd and hit the east coast with a ride to [Capt. Hiram's Inn](#) in Sebastian, FL on May 17th. I suspect that a lot of the conversation at these RTEs will center around our plans for STAR!!

STAR 2014

You know [registration](#) is OPEN and they have picked an awesome bike for the raffle give-away, right?!? The sooner you sign up, the sooner you can begin your trip planning! Hit the [National site](#) for more information and also the [Forum](#) for other member input and possible riding partners. If you are on the fence about whether Rapid City is worth the effort – GO!!

Within 100 miles of the hotel, you have several real reasons to go, including the [Black Hills](#), [Mount Rushmore](#), and [Devil's Tower](#).

You can even see [Sturgis](#) without the rowdiness or take a tour of a decommissioned [Minuteman Missile](#) launch facility. Stretch out to the [Badlands](#), and you have all the reason you need to get your arse out of Florida and into the upper Plains!! The EC took into account a lot of member input when they picked this destination. This is a terrific place to hang out for a few days of rallying!!

In this newsletter on page 11, John Boyd provides information of interest to adventure riders going to STAR. *Rider* magazine has article on 2013 STAR in the April issue and a notice for 2014 STAR in the May issue.

Membership News

As we often receive updates about our current state membership after we “go to press”, we don't always welcome our new Florida members as soon as they sign up!

This month we can welcome the following new member:

- Charles Anoff – Sarasota area



Mount Rushmore

As a heads up to all, be sure to forward any new email addresses or changes to Choon Gan at membership@ridemsta.com. He then forwards the info to the various State Directors, VPs, and EC, as well as our newsletter editor. We have had an uptick in bounced emails lately, and most likely it's a simple fix to get back in the loop.

Random Ramblings!

Attention Members!! The Ride-For-Kids have a ride planned for April 13th, a Sunday, centered at Quiet Waters Park in western Broward County, Deerfield Beach. This charity is near and dear to the MSTA. Though I can't commit to organizing anything for our east side members, I do hope the entire membership will all go to www.rideforkids.org to see how you can at least donate to the cause. If you've ever been to one of the MSTA's regional or national events, you know that somebody always collects donations for this cause. And if you find yourself with the time to organize a presence for our chapter, or just a few friends and members, GO FOR IT!! Email me, and I'll promote the heck out of it!!

A recent perusing of the AMA American Motorcyclist magazine finds our STAR rally as one of only four National Touring Rallies listed on page 44 of the latest issue!! Our PR department is on their game!!

I heard good/bad about the vendor situation at Daytona this year. Seems the trackside set up had enough to keep the ST crowd occupied, but the pickings were slim at Destination Harley, which was really good years back. All the more reason to be looking to join us at the [AIMExpo](#) in Orlando in October. We are currently scouting hotel options and hope to have a weekend "package" ready to promote no later than June. Stay tuned!!

We are mid-way through the redesign of our website. So far, so good. That's all I'm allowed to report!!

We did get a strong response to the email about a group training opportunity. We are working with training staff, location options, and scheduling, to put together a course in May for the east side members. Don't fret if you sent your request and don't live "over here." We are also planning to run a class for the Central/Western areas in Oct./Nov. when the weather calms down again. Be aware that these courses are run by certified instructors, on certified ranges, with liability concerns covered by standards and practices to keep everybody safe. So it takes a little longer to get all the pieces together and make this a MSTA-friendly education opportunity! Did we mention that this class will qualify for the Dan Clark Safety Program?!

A thanks to Jim Park for contributing to last month's and this month's edition of the Gator Tale! Did you catch his "profile" last month? Don't be bashful, send in your info and let the rest of us know a little bit about you!

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report

We are still in need of a member to take of the position of Central Director. Please contact Van if you are possibly interested.

Northeast Director's Report

If you would consider taking the position of Northeast Director, please contact Van.

Member Reports

2014 Bike Week Lunch Report by Jim Park

Great weather, great food great turnout was the combination for the annual MSTA Bike Week lunch.

Once again Phil Ridgdill picked an excellent location overlooking the beach at the South Beach Grill in South St Augustine.

MSTA members started arriving at 11AM for lunch but spent lots of time socializing in the parking lot and enjoying the perfect weather conditions both prior to and after lunch. The Florida members were outnumbered (or at least matched) by those folks from out-of-state down here to beat the northern temperatures. We had a nice turnout with 29 members and guests.



Black Hills Adventure Ride by John Boyd

An adventure ride has been organized for the 2014 STAR. The Black Hills Adventure Ride offers a unique opportunity for MSTA members to have a memorable adventure ride led by experienced guides who are intimately familiar with the area. The ride will be limited to 24 riders on Saturday, June 7th, and 24 riders on Monday, June 9th. Each day will have a different route. In order to assure the needed guides (1 for every 6 MSTA riders), **registration ends on April 27th**. Information on the ride and the recommended bikes as well as online registration can be found at: planetreg.com/BHAR2014. The routes will take us places that won't be obvious from general maps of the area.

The cost is \$175 for one day and \$285 for both. Some points on the cost:

- ✓ Cost is actually a contribution to [Trail Preservation Alliance](http://www.trailpreservationalliance.com) (TPA), a tax exempt organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving adventure trails in three western states. Participants will receive a letter indicating the tax exempt portion of the fee that can be listed as a donation on their tax returns, reducing their direct cost.
- ✓ Experienced guides with an in-depth knowledge of the area will be provided for every six MSTA riders.
- ✓ TPA has a very close working relationship with the National Forest Service.
- ✓ Ride provides exposure to areas normally inaccessible to anyone not intimately familiar with the area.
- ✓ Lunch will be provided.

Mileage Log by Bob “Ninja Bob” Chappuis

I would like to invite all riders to participate in the online [Mileage Log](#) I have developed and am hosting at www.wfr-ridersclub.com. The idea for the mileage log dates back to one of the earlier HSTA/MSTA forums which included a page for users to record their riding mileage. This was a fairly popular feature with MSTA website visitors and came to be a daily stop for me as it was convenient for keeping track of my own mileage accrual. I also enjoyed checking to see how I compared with other riders in the club. Perhaps most of all it was nice little way to remind myself of how much fun I was having!

When the MSTA mileage log was lost to one of several website changes/crashes I coded a temporary replacement. As time passed and the MSTA server/forum issues continued and there was no return of the mileage log, I decided to develop an enhanced version. This version is intended to include all riders of all types as well as all clubs and groups. If we can get a wide variety of rider styles and clubs to participate I think it will be entertaining to see how we all compare.

As shown in the adjacent screen capture, the mileage log allows for selective display of either specific categories and/or groups or the entire roster. This feature will of

DISPLAY OPTIONS	SELECT RIDING CATEGORY	SELECT A GROUP	DISPLAYED	SPORT TOURER/MSTA			
SPORT ON LIFE MILES	2013 MILES	2014 MILES	*	SORT/SELECT			
Click your rider name link to update mileage of your profile.							
RIDER	MAIN RIDE	CLUB	LIFE MILES	2013 MILES	2014 MILES	2014 PER DAY	PROJECTED FOR 2014
NinjaBob	Kawasaki Concours 14	MSTA	415,488	26,623	3,772	44	16,009
dcsmoe	Triumph Trophy SE	MSTA	237,169	40,267	2,323	27	9,859
idgton	Kawasaki Concours 14	MSTA	557,976	17,951	220	3	934
TOTALS			1,210,633	84,841	6,315		

course only be useful once a significant number of riders are registered. For now the roster is populated with some fictitious entries for test and demo purposes, these will later be deleted.

This is an ongoing project and although tested extensively, there will surely be some bugs. These will be promptly addressed and bug reports, suggestions and comments will be appreciated.

Thanks for reading and I hope you will enjoy the mileage log!

Ninja Bob

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, April 12th, 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Where: [Gator Joe's](#) – 12431 SE 135th Ave., Ocklawaha, FL 32179 ☎352-288-3100 ([map](#))

Description: Year after year, one of our best ride locations. We typically have 20-30 riders attending. It's a hidden treasure near Ocala. Gator Joe's is on a dock on the lake with beautiful views in every direction. Try the Gator Philly Sub if they still offer it.

[MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride](#)

When: Sat, **April 19th**, 12 pm – 1:00 pm
Where: [Harpoon Harry's](#) at Fisherman's Village – 1200 W. Retta Esplanade, #55, Punta Gorda, FL 33951
☎941-637-1177 ([map](#))
Description: We are changing things up for our usual ride to the Punta Gorda area. This year, we will hit up Harry's!! We have been here many years ago, and had a great time!! One of our own recently paid a visit, and reports that it's still all that, and the bike parking is right up by the front door!! And it's right on the water, on Charlotte Harbor!!
Contact: Van - busavan@flahsta.org or ☎561-386-2594

Future Florida Events

Note that the May 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, **May 3rd**, 11:30 pm – 12:30 pm
Where: [Solomon's Castle](#) – 4533 Solomon Rd, Ona, FL 33865 ☎863-494-6077 ([map](#))
Description: This is another spot that is on the southern end of our Central Florida area, so we hope to see some of our South Florida riders attending. We will eat in an old ship wreck and some of us may choose to tour the art in the castle. This place is tucked away in the middle of nowhere... nothing but open roads. A popular motorcycle location.

[MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride](#)

When: Sat, **May 17th**, 12 pm – 1:00 pm
Where: [Capt. Hiram's Inn](#) – 1580 US Hwy. 1, Sebastian, FL ☎772-589-4345 ([map](#))
Description: It's been a while since we've been here and now's the time to correct that! This place is always a winner!! Great water view, lots of space for us to carry on, and great food and service. This will be our last LUNCH ride for now, as June begins our BRUNCH schedule!!
Contact: Van - busavan@flahsta.org or ☎561-386-2594

Future Regional Events

As the Spring riding season dawns, you may wish to attend these popular regional MSTA events being held in areas with fantastic riding on nice, twisting roads through beautiful scenery.

[MSTA North Georgia Classic](#)

When: **Friday, April 25th – Sunday, 27th, 2014**
Where: [Helendorf River Inn](#) – 33 Munich Strasse, Helen, Georgia 30545
Description: Special motel rates and more information for this event are available at msta-se.com/helen
Contact: Matt Thornton – thorn2wheels@yahoo.com or ☎864-979-3626

[MSTA TriSTAR](#)

When: **Friday, May 23rd – Monday, 26th, 2014**
Where: [Alleghany Inn](#) – 341 North Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina 28675
Description: Special motel rates and more information for this event are available at msta-se.com/tristar
Contact: Joe Thomas – Iguanajoe@bellsouth.net or ☎828-687-1462

Member Profile

Our third Member Profile was submitted by Steve Phillips. Thanks, Steve!

Hometown/State? I lived in Jacksonville, Florida; Charlotte, North Carolina and Titusville, Florida growing up. I would say Florida is my home state. Wellington is probably my hometown since I have lived here the longest.

What was your first motorcycle? Bridgestone 90.

Current motorcycle? 2007 Honda ST1300 and 2011 Suzuki DL650

What is your all-time favorite motorcycle? Probably my 1988 BMW R100RT

How long have you been riding? About 20 years. I started riding my Bridgestone 90 when I was 15 but stopped when I went away to college and didn't start riding again until I was about 40.

When did you join the MSTA? According to my membership card, April 2011.

How did you hear about the MSTA? Jim Park and Dennis Villarose gave me an MSTA flyer at Port Mayaca.

Who or what was your biggest influence in motorcycling? My Dad. He convinced my Mom it was ok for me to get a mini-bike when I was around 12.

What are your favorite places to ride? Smokey Mountains, N.C.

Describe a memorable motorcycle adventure? Star 2013 and the detour I took to Tellico Plains, Fontana Dam and other great roads in that area.

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

What turns you on about motorcycles or riding? I enjoy doing my own maintenance and modifications. I also enjoy riding motorcycles to different places and spending time with fellow riders.

What do you get out of your MSTA membership? Meeting and riding with new friends.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of motorcycling? Golf, but not very often since I have been riding more the last few years. Computers and Tech.



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 [15](#).

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 Florida MSTTA web site Events page.

MSTTA website information on upcoming events: [click here](#).

National MSTTA www.ridemsta.com

Florida MSTTA www.flahsta.org

More Contact Information

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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 in keeping with our safety article.

Also check out [this additional page](#) about the same topic!

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: 2007 Honda ST1300

Helibar Horizon bars,
Hyperbrite LED tail and turn
signals, HID headlights, aux
power circuit board, iridium
plugs, Synthetic oil and shaft
lube, heated Corbin seat with
backrest.

24,000 miles. Garage kept.
Needs nothing.



Contact: Andrew Marlowe, Sarasota, FL andymlow@gmail.com

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