



# The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of  
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 7 Issue 7

## Events in July

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## Feature Article

### First Ride at STAR 2014

by Don Moe

Since only eleven members from Florida attended STAR 2014 this year, I thought I would share some photos from one of my rides there.

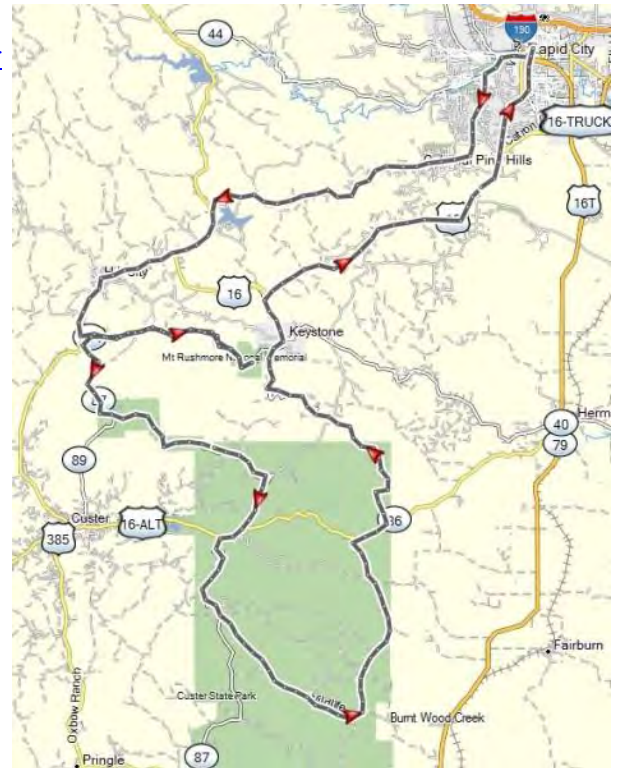
Due to the rainy weather over the first weekend of STAR in Rapid City, the first good opportunity for riding in the Black Hills during good weather came on Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. The adjacent map shows

the route through the [Black Hills](#) and [Custer State Park](#), including the [Needles Highway](#).

For this ride, I joined Norm Kern and two

friends of his from Ohio, with Norm leading. We started out towards the southwest along the Sheridan Lake Road to US-385. Upon reaching the intersection with Hwy-244, Norm unexpectedly turned east towards [Mount Rushmore](#). He and one of the other riders had decided to insert a visit to Mt. Rushmore. When we reached it and they turned into the parking entrance, I decided to skip it as I had already visited Mt. Rushmore on a prior trip.

When heading west from Mt. Rushmore, there is a spot where the profile view of Washington's sculpture on Mt. Rushmore can be seen.



### 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

After returning to US-385, I continued along the intended route and turned onto Hwy-87, the [Needles Highway](#). For those of you who haven't yet ridden this highway, it is quite twisty and snakes through some quite tight spaces where only smaller vehicles and motorcycles can pass. Sections of the road lack any lane markings.

These next several photos show some of the scenery along this road. Click on an image to see a higher resolution version from my website.



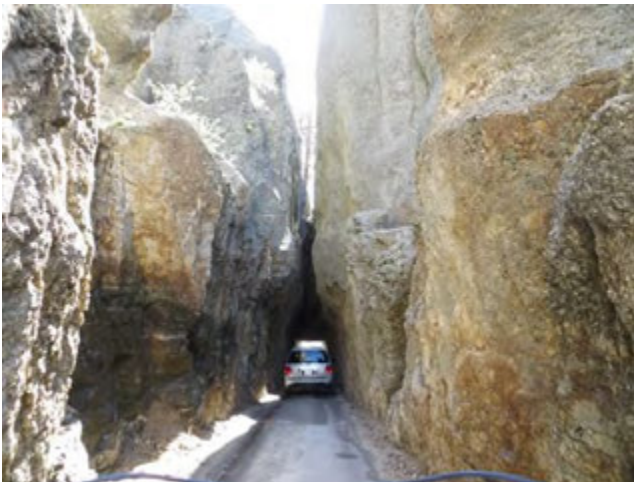
[George Washington's profile on Mt. Rushmore](#)



[View of the rock formations that give the Needles Highway its name](#)



[One of the one-lane tunnels](#)



[This narrow one-lane tunnel squeezes between huge rocks](#)



[Another view of the Needles formations](#)





Continuing along the Needles Highway

Approaching another tight switchback

On the road beyond the tight Needles rock formations, I stopped at an overlook with a view of the [Cathedral Spires](#) to take this photo of my motorcycle.

Continuing along through Custer State Park, I turned onto the road called “Wildlife Loop.” During my prior visit to the park in 2011, I rode through this same area and saw numerous buffalo, some actually on the highway blocking traffic, as well as several pronghorn antelope, and wild donkeys. This time the buffalo were not as evident, nor as close to the highway, although I did take a photo of a sizable group on a nearby hilltop. No antelope anywhere.



View of the Cathedral Spires formation

At one point in the Wildlife Loop, several wild but docile donkeys often wait along the road to entice tourists into giving them treats, despite the numerous signs admonishing the visitors not to feed any animals.



A large group of buffalo graze on a hill near the highway

Wild donkeys seek handouts from the tourists

Once again STAR was held in a part of the country with some beautiful scenery. Despite the rained-out first weekend, I again enjoyed my time riding in that area as well as the camaraderie with the other attendees.

## ***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.***

### ***Subtropics***

I always get a chuckle when northern or western riders come to Florida in summer and ask “How do you ride in this weather?”

We are now in the middle of summer. I saw 97 degrees outside temperature indicated on my GS instrument panel the other day. Even our cats refuse to go outside during middle of the day. So how do we cope with the hot weather riding?

First off, pay attention to the cats. If they aren’t going out when the sun is high in the sky, maybe we shouldn’t be hopping on our bikes at that time, either. The easiest way to beat the heat is to ride first thing in the morning and/or late afternoon into evening. Mid-afternoons in Florida should be re-served for naps, boating, and BBQs...in that order. I never get past the first one.

Next: Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. If you wait until you’re thirsty to start drinking water, you’re too late. If you know you’re going to be riding, start hydrating well before that.

Let’s all know the symptom of hyperthermia, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. I won’t go into all the medical information here, as it would take the rest of the column, but if you’re going to be out in the Florida summer sun, make sure you bone up on the medical safety aspects.

Choose your gear wisely. I saw at least one rider this past weekend in full, non-perforated race leathers, riding on the street in the heat of the day. While I applaud him for his views on crash safety, I question his common sense. Part of safety is understanding the relationship between your gear and the environment, and encapsulating yourself in a leather sauna suit, in 95+ degree weather for a street ride is probably not an exhibition of understanding. That’s why they make perforated leather, armored mesh, etc. Good undergarments that wick sweat can help. If you need to, soak down your t-shirt and your gear, then get back on and ride. It will turn your gear into an air conditioner.

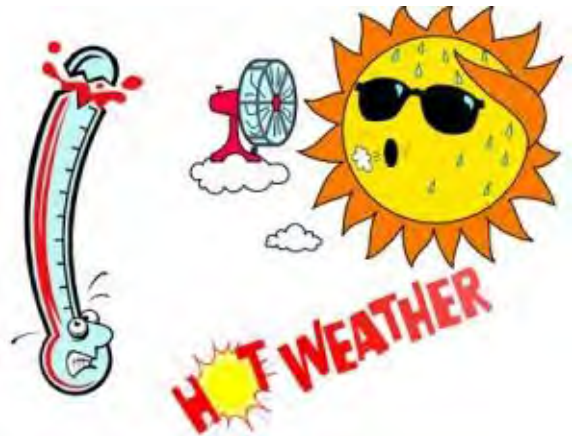
Whatever you do, DON’T say to yourself, “It’s too hot for gear. Just this once I’ll only ride in...” Don’t do it. Fail.

If you’ve decided to go ahead and ride in the heat of the day, make sure the environment is part of your ride strategy. Limit yourself to short rides, or short stages in a longer ride. Take lots of breaks. Keep up the fluid intake. Wear a backpack reservoir and sip regularly throughout the ride.

Finally, watch out for each other as well as yourself. Let’s all take care as we ride during the hot summer months!

**Ride Safe!**

**[Doug Westly](#) – Safety Editor**



Graphic from [Shooting Star Bike Works](#)

## Florida News

### South Director's Report

#### AH, THE HEAT IS ON!!

Not those guys in Miami, but the kind that lets you know what time of year it is!! “Summer time, and the living is easy...”

We had two rides for your enjoyment this month. The lunch ride to The Hayseed Cafe in Webster was barely noticed by you all! Three members made the event, and had a good time!! More buffet for them!! On the contrary, the brunch ride to Main Street America in Lake Placid was a big hit!! We had 14 riders make it to one of the best places for brunch!! We had brand new members, salty dogs, and a few prospects as well!! Most rode over a hundred miles to join the fun! The service was OUTSTANDING, the food SPECTACULAR, and the praise was heard up and down the table. We had another new winner of the 50/50, with \$16 going to prospective member, Alan Berry!! More than half of his membership dues right there!! Our club tally stands at \$348. THANKS to all who participate!!



Van VanSteelant

#### What's Next??

We have two BRUNCH rides on tap for July! These start at 9:30 AM, so set your alarm clocks! The first is the Central Ride to [Pappy's Grill](#) in Winter Haven, on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Check out the local roads and the pancakes!! The next weekend, July 19<sup>th</sup>, hosts the South Ride to [Marsh Landing](#) in Fellsmere. This is quite the institution, and has been a big hit with us for several years now. As usual, the details are at [www.flahsta.org](http://www.flahsta.org). BTW, we are a little behind on the release of the new website. Have faith, the wait will be worth it!

#### STAR 2014

Well... I did not win the raffle bike after all... waaaa! But, I have been to the MSTA National site and there are dozens of pictures already posted from the event. Many of them are from Jim Park and Don Moe! Go to [www.ridemsta.com](http://www.ridemsta.com). Click on Photos/MSTA Photo Archive>STAR>[STAR 2014](#) to see what we missed!!



Mount Rushmore

And a big THANKS to the following members who represented Florida this year: Jim and Dianne Park, Dennis and Dorothy Anderson, Tim and Teresa Vipond, Don Moe, Don Williams, Buck Jones, Eve Blazsur, and Robert Fischer!! I look forward to hearing about their adventures!!

#### 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!

If you know any the following riders, please let them know that their MSTA memberships have recently expired or will expire at the end of May, June or July:

- Drew Dill
- William Manint
- Ronald Outwater
- Alan Singer
- Sam Ulbing
- John Hallman
- Fred Melino
- Bobby Shields
- Terri Singer
- Bill Wilder
- Dell Haverland
- Larry O'Blander
- Robert Shields
- Lee Ulbing



I apologize to any of the above members who may have renewed recently. I received an extensive list that covered several months of expirations. I usually err on the side of too much info, rather than find that I missed somebody!

As a heads up to all, be sure to forward any new email addresses or changes to Choon Gan at [membership@ridemsta.com](mailto: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!**

Well, the T-shirt checks are still trickling in!! I now have enough confirmed and paid for orders to contact our vendor and proceed with the "phase one" of the process. I'll be sending on last reminder email to make sure everybody gets their shirt! We will be an impressive site in our new shirts. Stay tuned.

AIMExpo info! Another email with booking info for our event hotel will follow the T-shirt email. Be looking for both before the end of the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend!!

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.

## **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, **July 12<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Where: [Pappy's Grill](#) – 2073 Highway 92 West, Winter Haven, FL 33881 ☎863-268-8240 ([map](#))

Description: Pappy's is a great breakfast spot in the Auburndale/Winter Haven area. It is located at the Winter Haven Airport and its right near some fantastic roads located around the Fantasy of Flight. Check out Old Lake Alfred Road and Cass Street. Also: Huge pancakes!

## [MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride](#)

When: Sat, **July 19<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

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

Description: We are going back, because we like it here!! Great food, 80+ year-old building, surrounded by some of Florida's oldest farms and ranches. And if you are interested, you can skydive just down the road at the Sebastian Airport!

Contact: Van - [busavan@flahsta.org](mailto: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, **August 9<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Where: [Redwing Café](#) – 12500 State Road 33, Groveland, FL 34736 ☎352-429-2997 ([map](#))

Description: This is an awesome breakfast spot that will serve up some quail eggs and hash if you like. It's been around since the 1940's and is easy to get to from all directions. There are some very nice country roads to the east and to the west of the restaurant. Check out 561 from SR 33 to SR 50 and beyond.

## [MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride](#)

When: Sat, **August 16<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Where: **Alva Country Diner** – 21200 Palm Beach Blvd. (SR80), Alva, FL ☎239-728-3366 ([map](#))

Description: We're trying some place new! Actually, this place has been around awhile, and it's time for us to check it out! You can ride N. River Rd. (CR 78) west out of Labelle, or east off SR 31, and cross back over the river on Broadway St. in Alva. A quick right on SR 80/Palm Beach Blvd. and then left into the diner.

Contact: Van - [busavan@flahsta.org](mailto:busavan@flahsta.org) or ☎561-386-2594

## [Future Regional Events](#)

During the Summer riding season, you may wish to attend popular regional MSTA events being held in areas with fantastic riding on nice, twisting roads through some beautiful scenery, including the Blue Ridge Parkway.

## [MSTA Big Lynn Lodge](#)

When: **Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Where: [Big Lynn Lodge](#) – Box 459 Hwy 226-A, Little Switzerland, North Carolina 28749

Description: The Big Lynn Lodge is located in/near Little Switzerland, NC and is literally hanging on the side of the mountain right on NC-226A. You will be AMAZED at the view and you will be ASTONISHED by the roads! The Big Lynn Lodge has a unique "formula" in that their nightly room rate INCLUDES an excellent home styled cooked meal and a full Breakfast for each person! Special motel rates and additional information are available at [msta-se.com/BLynn](http://msta-se.com/BLynn).

Contact: "Brick" Dave Brickner – [brick@ncwireless.net](mailto:brick@ncwireless.net) or ☎828-448-5429

## 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 [below](#).

### Member Profile Questions:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Hometown/State?                            | Who or what was your biggest influence in motorcycling?           |
| What was your first motorcycle?            | What are your favorite places to ride?                            |
| Current motorcycles?                       | Describe a memorable motorcycle adventure?                        |
| What is your all-time favorite motorcycle? | What is the best motorcycle advice or tip learned over the years? |
| How long have you been riding?             | What turns you on about motorcycles or riding?                    |
| When did you join the MSTA?                | What do you get out of your MSTA membership?                      |
| How did you hear about the MSTA?           | 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 MSTA web site Events page.

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

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National MSTA [www.ridemsta.com](http://www.ridemsta.com)

Florida MSTA [www.flahsta.org](http://www.flahsta.org)

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

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## Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

This month's [Mystery Hyperlink](#) is in keeping with our safety article.

Also check out [this other article](#) on the same topic.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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