



# The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of  
the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 7 Issue 8

## Events in August

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## Feature Article

### Overdue Kudos!!!

by Dianne Park

Sometimes reflecting is a good thing. I tend to put the past in the past and focus more on the present and future, but there may be some benefit in taking a look at some of the things we have done as a Florida MSTA group in the last several years. Maybe there are things we can learn from those activities and/or possibly repeat some – to stay active, have more fun, AND strengthen our numbers!

While not every member can or does participate in every event, I think I can safely say that those who have participated have truly added to their motorcycling related experiences. One of my favorites was the weekend in Lakeland when a number of MSTA members around the state took advantage of Bob Shields's efforts in locating

and then motivating us to do **the Lee Parks Rider Course**. We had fun and learned some approaches and techniques that have been very beneficial ever since.

We have had a number of **Just-For-Fun Events** over the last several years:

- ✓ A number of years ago, Sam Ulbing and Jim Park suggested a ride to **Thomasville, GA**, and a sizeable group made the trip and enjoyed it so much that we did it again another year.
- ✓ And while Ocala really disappointed with both rain and freezing temperatures one February (did you see the smiley face scratched in the frost on my bike



2007 Thomasville Just-For-Fun

### 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

mirror?), there actually was a big turnout at Jim's **Ocala Just-For-Fun Event** and included members from neighboring states as well.

- ✓ Phil Ridgill is infamous for the fabulous Just-For-Fun weekends in **northern FL** that he has planned several times. He always gets us on enjoyable roads and dazzles us with the best, most unique restaurants – breakfast, lunch, and dinner – every day!
- ✓ For several years, Jim Park, and more recently, Bob Shields organized a Just-For-Fun event at **the Annual Barber Vintage Motorcycle Festival** near Birmingham, Alabama in October. Quite a few of us have had a fabulous time at this really memorable, outstanding event – with their world class museum, vintage races, and big name vendors.



2011 Alachua Just-For-Fun

### Promo Events:

- ✓ We are overdue for a Just-For-Fun event in Florida. Oh, speaking of ... we have one, of sorts, coming up this October with the exciting [AIMExpo](#). This event fits into both categories - a Just-For-Fun Event (out of town) as well as a Promo Event. Attending as spectators last year was so enjoyable and worthwhile, that the MSTA has committed to a 10 X 10 booth right next to Öhlins on one side and Metzler Tires on the other this October, open to spectators on the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> at the Orange County Convention Center! We will be there rubbing elbows with and meeting dealers and vendors in efforts to promote the MSTA – explaining our riding style, uniqueness as a club, and enticing new members.
- ✓ Jim Park and Van coordinated all details for the MSTA to have a booth, complete with an impressive FL MSTA banner and necessary supplies, at the **first Vintage Motorcycle Show** in downtown West Palm Beach last winter. Several local members joined Jim and Van – thanks to Don Moe, Steve Phillips and Ellen Kocher for your help manning the booth.
- ✓ For three years, several MSTA members gave their time and efforts taking part at **Riding Into History at the World Golf Village** in the St Augustine area. It's a beautiful setting, a top notch event and very enjoyable. The downside was that after having a



2014 Vintage Iron Motorcycle Show



2009 Riding Into History

booth representing the MSTA for 3 years ... to my knowledge, those efforts unfortunately did not generate a single new member, at least none that were directly attributed to the event. You test what might work and unfortunately sometimes it just makes more sense to move on when you have given it your best effort and it doesn't bring results.

You know, ... we have a lot to be proud of with our Florida members. To list those who quickly come to mind:

#### Newsletter Editors:

- ✓ So many kudos go to **Bill Royal** for all of his contributions for so many years – repeatedly winning (earning) the national award for best Newsletter Editor, single handedly maintaining the FL website, as well as repeatedly planning and leading super successful lunch and brunch rides.
- ✓ **Don Moe**, for stepping up to the plate as newsletter editor and also earning the national award his very first year. Don does a very thorough and impressive job with the newsletter every month.

#### State Directors:

- ✓ Again, Bill Royal for many years of hard work and successful results.
- ✓ And doing a truly outstanding job presently holding down the entire state as State Director, **Van** (Paul) VanSteelant (and not like he is retired or anything) ... and if I heard correctly – works something like 50 hours a week at his regular job as well as working many weekends and evenings doing side jobs. And while at the brunch and lunch rides that Van is able to attend, ... he is busy trying to generate some revenue for future fun with the 50/50 raffle tickets. And on top of all that, I guess he got bored because recently Van & Kim created the impressive [new FL website!](#) Check it out if you have not already [www.FLmsta.org](http://www.FLmsta.org). Van and Kim have also been involved with planning a successful look for our booth at the AIMExpo. And Van is still accepting volunteers to man our booth there on Saturday and Sunday.
- ✓ Many thanks to both **Phil Ridgdill** and **Robert Shields** who both graciously stepped in (possibly after some fairly strong arm twisting!!!) as Northern and Central State Co-Directors, respectively. Unfortunately, both Phil and Bob have had to step down so currently both of these positions desperately need leader type personalities to put just a little time and effort into simply selecting locations for brunch/lunch rides and sending out email reminders for those rides – not an impossible job guys (and gals). Wouldn't you just love to do this??? I'm certain that it is fun!!!

**STAR:** Kudos to so many more of our Florida members, not just for attending STAR in big numbers, but also for all their involvement while there:

- ✓ **Eve Blazur** for all the hours in the registration room, for welcoming arriving members and handing out water, covering the door prize room year after year, and being there whenever I needed moral support!!! ☺ Thank you, Eve!
- ✓ **Don Moe** for your computer help at the GPS table as well as all your other contributions there.
- ✓ **Doug Westley** as a STAR speaker with your safety presentations.
- ✓ **Jim Park** for making sure all of the banners were hung in appropriate places and in a manner that they would stay in place for more than the next 5 minutes after being hung!!! And for having the right answers to my gazillion questions in planning STAR and your continual support in making STAR a success.



## T-Shirts:

- ✓ **Jim Park** and **Van** were involved with creating a cool design, taking orders, and delivering MSTA Florida T-shirts. Then they created a second design and did it all again a couple of years later!!!

## STARreview:

- ✓ **Doug Westly** for his safety article in every issue of our publication.

## Pictures:

- ✓ **Jim Park** is constantly taking pictures, on local rides and at STAR so the entire membership can re-live the special moments. I can also vouch for the fact that weeks and weeks are spent after STAR with his efforts to produce the darn good looking STAR group photo, DVD's, and 750+ photo shopped professional looking memoirs from our annual rally. **You're the best!!!**



While I know that there were great activities prior to those mentioned in this article, I have simply covered the ones with which I was the most familiar in the past several years.

A very special thank you to everyone mentioned in this article. And if I neglected to mention your efforts, ... I apologize and truly want you to let me know. Just do it nicely, ok? ☺

Looking ahead, there are current efforts for:

- ✓ **Experienced MSF group classes** for our members – on both FL coasts,
- ✓ The **AIMExpo** event with national participation from both our president, Dennis Villarose and Vice President, Ann Redner,
- ✓ and any other **outstanding ideas** our valued members might submit.

One final comment: Did you notice the trend/pattern with the efforts expended to make our state more successful within MSTA? It has been the same several people. We all have some degree of “responsibility” as members of our great group – from simply showing up and enjoying the event ... to joining in on the efforts to make things happen. Putting forth effort has its rewards. And the more you contribute, the more fun it becomes. Give it a try!!!

## ***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.***

### ***Merge***

We were recently making one of our routine rides from the house over to a local dealership on the other side of town, using the Tampa freeway / Interstate system, when I experienced a traffic management epiphany. It is something we all do, probably almost every day. It's a technique as simple as merging into traffic on a controlled-access highway.

Here's the problem and generic solution. How do we safely merge into moving traffic on the freeway or interstate, from the dedicated entrance lane? The obvious answer is we accelerate to the traffic speed, select an open area in the lane nearest the merge lane, and insert our vehicle into that spot.

There are some techniques you can use to enhance safety while performing the maneuver. First, make sure you start observing the traffic flow as soon as possible. Often you can see the traffic flow from a long distance away, before you ever reach the turn into the merge lane from the local streets. Also, don't wait until the last second to start looking for that empty spot in the traffic. Find it early, and then monitor it to make sure it doesn't disappear, accelerate or slow down, or get filled.

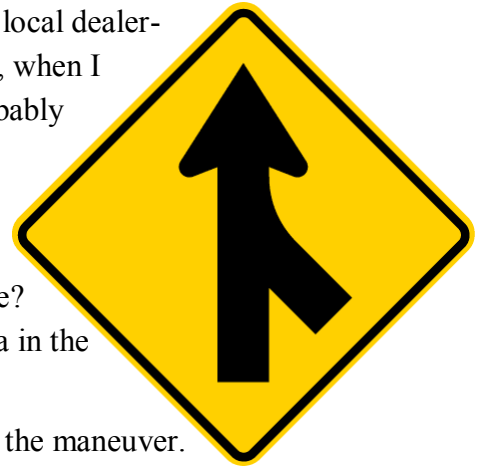
Here is the epiphany part, and it has to do with our speed. As riders (or drivers) we want to match our speed to the general traffic flow and the movement of our selected empty spot in the traffic. What I recognized that day is something that I had been intuitively doing, although not through any conscious planning. As we merged onto one controlled highway from another, using a dedicated merge lane, I realized we were accelerating up to a couple of mph over the traffic flow's general speed. Let me emphasize this acceleration was not excessive, but just enough to allow us to then easily slow and insert our bikes into the selected empty spot in the traffic. I am also not advocating speed in excess of the posted limits.

So how is this different than just speeding up to meet an open traffic spot, or pacing the traffic as you begin your merge? Well, if you have to speed up at the last minute, it may be difficult to match the traffic speed. You run the possibility of overshooting the aimed-for spot, or having to then brake once in traffic to avoid the car in front. This tends to irritate the drivers behind as well. If you simply pace the traffic and empty spot, it will work as long as the spot doesn't alter its pace in the flow, based on varying speed rates of surrounding vehicles. It is a lot easier to simply be moving just a couple of mph faster than the traffic flow and then gently slow to fit into the selected spot. The maneuver is more seamless and seems to work well in most situations involving the described merge circumstances.

Remember this is just one potential technique, to be utilized when appropriate to assist in rider and traffic safety. As always, YOU are responsible for your own safety and that of your passenger!

**Ride Safe!**

**[Doug Westly](#) – Safety Editor**



## Florida News

### South Director's Report

#### MUST BE SUMMER IN FLORIDA...

Our rainy season has hit... Could be worse...we could be in the real tropics, with twice as much rain...EVERY DAY!!



Van VanSteelant

We had two rides for brunch this past month. The first was to [Pappy's](#) in Winterhaven on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Between 8 and 10 riders enjoyed a fine day for riding. I've heard from 3-4 of the attendees, and they all had a great time! Jim Cavanagh enjoyed his ride over from Sun City Center, and was pleasantly surprised that he could order lunch for brunch!! That hamburger never had a chance!! Glenn Monroe shared this: "As usual, the food at Pappy's was great, especially the huge pancakes. Boyd Harrell came along to visit with the group, although his broken leg currently restricts him to riding in the back seat of a car. FYI, Boyd is now in Lakeland Regional Hospital recovering from surgery to mend that leg. His banged up KTM is still in Cody, Wyoming awaiting shipment back to Florida for repairs." We all wish Boyd a speedy and full recovery!! I'll let Tom Blake have the last word. "Even before we left the parking lot to go inside, it was apparent that this was a different group of riders from the ones who made the previous ride to Lake Placid. Pappy's turnout were mostly Honda ST1300 owners while the Lake Placid group included a large percentage of Triumph's. [Ed: Tom's a Trophy owner!] Still, we all got on and off our bikes the same way and we all enjoyed hearty breakfasts with lots of banter. Pappy's is famous for their pancakes, which are huge. No one went away hungry, that's for sure. And the service was friendly. We all ate and talked for quite a while. It must have been around 11 when we split up for our treks home."

The second destination was to [Marsh Landing](#) in Fellsmere on July 19<sup>th</sup>. A beautiful day greeted 15-16 riders and prospects, who made their way to a bit of Floridian history! The staff set us up in the "big room", which worked out wonderfully. The service and food were up to their excellent standards! We had the pleasure of hearing from Ken Ford, MSTA, and SE Representative on the AMA Board of Directors. He is up for reelection, and collected signatures for his renomination. We also had a chance to get some straight talk about the AMA and what's going on for our benefit. As with Pappy's, the conversations went on long after our plates were cleared. And we had a great 50/50 raffle, with \$27 going to our winner, Tony Osborne, and the same to our chapter! We had to pay for one more year of hosting for our existing website – \$58.00. So, our current total is now \$317.00. A big thanks to all who participate!

#### What's Next??

It's still summer... So, we have two more brunch rides planned. On August 9<sup>th</sup>, make your way to the [Red Wing Restaurant](#) in Groveland!! Another historic place to dine and it's surrounded by nice country roads!! The next week, be at the Alva Country Diner, in of all places, Alva, FL! This is a new place for us, though it's been around for a while!!

There are some routing hints and full info at [www.flahsta.org](http://www.flahsta.org) AND at [www.flmsta.org](http://www.flmsta.org) That's right! We launched our new website this month!! I've heard from some of you, and it seems we've done alright by you!! Be looking for some fine tuning and additional links in the very near future!

## 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 members:

- Scott Helbling from Ocoee, FL

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:

- Terry Brown
- Steve Golihugh
- Stephen Grasso
- Brian Gyoerkoe
- Ellen Kocher
- Lee Muschott
- Kelly Tickner
- Ron Wipp

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 big announcement about the MSTA involvement at the AIMExpo has hit our STARreview!! Dennis made it official in our last issue. He did mention that the FL MSTA will have the majority of the staffing responsibility! As Orlando is in our “back yard”, it’s only natural that we get to be the smiling face of the MSTA!! It might also be the result of my pestering the EC to consider participating in the largest motorcycle show in the country!! We are still looking for more help so as to make the weekend fun for all, rather than a struggle for the few! As an incentive, you’ll receive free entry for the day(s) that you are able to help at our booth! And we have made arrangements with a nearby hotel for reduced room rates!! Check out the links elsewhere in this issue. THIS WILL BE A SENSATIONAL EVENT. MARK YOUR CALENDARS RIGHT NOW!! REALLY, RIGHT NOW!!

Hey, consider sending in a Member Profile to our editor. Assuming you read this award winning newsletter all the way to end, you’ll find the info that Don would like to have to let our members know little bit about you!! I’ve met some very interesting people at our events, and I know that others would be equally impressed by the your riding history and accomplishments!! Go ahead, do a little bragging...

Ride well! Ride often! Do it safely!!

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

## Know someone wanting to learn to ride?

For a limited time the Safety Council of Palm Beach County is offering the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Basic Rider Course for just \$125. This also includes a new DOT approved helmet! Information at [www.safetycouncilpbc.org](http://www.safetycouncilpbc.org) or ☎561-845-8233

## Central Director’s Report

We are still in need of a member to take of the position of Central Director. Please contact Van if 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 Brunch 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 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 Brunch Ride

When: Sat, **September 6<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Where: [The Koffee Kup Restaurant](#) – 1407 13th Street, St Cloud, FL 34769 ☎407-891-1488 ([map](#))

Description: New spot! I have never been here but will try to check it out before the ride date. It gets very good rating on the internet, and everything on the internet is true!

#### MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Sat, **September 13<sup>th</sup>**, 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Where: **Sebring Diner** – 4040 US Hwy. 27S, Sebring, FL 33870 ☎863-385-3434 ([map](#))

Description: We conclude our BRUNCH rides with one of the best reasons to get out of bed - The Sebring Diner!! The roads leading to this shining stainless steel diner are worthy of the edges of your tires, just for added incentive!!

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



## **AIM Expo**

The [American International Motorcycle Expo](#), being held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, will be open to the public on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Several vendors will offer demo rides on various motorcycles and other vehicles. Additionally, there will be the inaugural “Retro Affair, Vintage Motorcycle Show” to showcase historic, restored and customized American, Japanese and European motorcycles built before 1984.

For further information, visit their website at the link above.

## **Future Regional Events**

During the Fall 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.

### **SE Rendezvous**

When: **Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014**

Where: [Copperhead Lodge](#) – 171 Copperhead Parkway, Blairsville, Georgia 30512 ☎706-835-7433

Description: SE Rendezvous is a “Just For Fun” MSTA Event. Formerly called SE Star, it was a sanctioned event and held for several years in Dillard Georgia. It is now a roving event with the new name “SE Rendezvous” and at a different location each year. Visit the [MSTA-SE website](#) for more information.

Contact: Eric Larsen – [vfrdude64@yahoo.com](mailto:vfrdude64@yahoo.com) or ☎678-584-3726

## **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 10](#).

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](#).

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

Florida MSTA [www.flmsta.org](http://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](#) is in keeping with our safety article.  
Also check out this other [webpage](#) on related topics.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

#### For Sale: **Corbin Saddle for 2013-14 Triumph Trophy SE**

I wish to sell a beautiful, nearly new [Corbin Dual Touring saddle with HEAT](#) in silver carbon fiber w/silver thread, vinyl (#T-TRY-13-E). I am also including the Corbin rider backrest (#02-SB). I bought this seat in April from another Trophy owner. After trying it out on a long weekend tour, I decided that it doesn't quite suite me.

List prices are \$593 for the seat + \$218 for the backrest = \$811.

I am asking only \$550 for seat with backrest, or \$500 for seat alone, including ground shipping within the US.



Click on photos for larger versions

Contact: Don Moe, ☎ 561-346-1009, ✉ [editor@flmsta.org](mailto:editor@flmsta.org)

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