

# The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 11 Issue 5

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## Feature Article

## **Moonshine Lunch Run 2018**

#### By Stephen Evans

[Ed: Steve submitted this article and the photos. Many thanks to him for his article.]

My game plan was to leave early Wednesday (April 11<sup>th</sup>) morning taking I-75 as far as Tifton, Georgia, followed by ALL back roads up to Casey, Illinois, and returning through Tifton back to Lake City Florida. The way back would be somewhat different than the way up as I had some more out-of-the-way curvy/scenic back roads to ride. The only interstate I planned to be on would be I-75 from Lake City to Tifton and Tifton back to Lake City – a total of 210 miles in all.

I wanted to get somewhere around Scottsboro, Alabama or Fayetteville, Tennessee for the night and the next morning take the Cave in the Rock Ferry across the Ohio River to Illinois Hwy 1 northward to follow some back roads over to Casey, Illinois. I would stay there on Friday and for dinner on Friday night, and on Saturday

morning have a Moonburger before leaving about 10 or 11 AM for a two day ride home. I believe this, with some give and take, is what I gathered Jim Park did according to his article in the May 2017 issue of this newsletter.

As with any trip I plan, I have options that I try to do as far as beautiful back roads that are full of curves, hills and scenery. If time and weather permit, I try to do them. I had some excellent ones picked out for day one. I was able to do all three of the ones I had picked out on the first day in Alabama and Tennessee. It was a beautiful day with clear skies and a high of only 68° with no wind to speak of. So I went out of my way to do some "option roads" and ended up in Lewisburg, Tennessee with 608 miles for day one. I found one to be like an extended Deal's Gap and another to be somewhat like a miniature Cherohala Skyway. They were all good.

Day two started out great, but the winds really kicked in around 10 AM. I was still on back roads and enjoying every single mile. While I was still seeing Mom and Pop America, just outside of Marion, Kentucky and 12 miles from the Cave in the Rock Ferry, I passed a sign that says FERRY CLOSED. Well, I can read but I thought that I'll go anyway just to see why. I was also thinking that maybe, just maybe they had forgotten to take down the sign. The sign ended up being correct as you will see by the attached pictures as the Ohio River



was WAY OVER its banks. I had never called as I "assumed" that it would be running but as I parked my bike at the water's edge and looked in the distance, I saw a water tower and a blinking red light which was likely the light on the dock, probably a half a mile away if an inch. I have never seen any flooding like this first hand – always just on the news. It was an unbelievable sight. Even 100 miles north of the Ohio River, there was flooding in many creeks, small rivers and also farm fields – I found it amazing.



At this point I had no idea which would be the shortest way to get across. I turned around for Marion where I met another rider on an FJR at a gas station who had been there four times already and had a way planned

around. So I ended up riding with him. He was from Niceville, Florida over on the gulf near Eglin Airforce Base. He suggested that we ride up through Evansville on US 41 and cross some quite old wooden bridges across the Wabash River to see some other sights that he'd discovered in his travels up to Moonshine over the years. So we did and also ended up stopping to see the old Mug Tree on Hwy 49 as well as at the Moonshine Store.

By this time it was Thursday night and I was at the Day's Inn in Casey which is only 14 miles from the Moonshine Store after 464 miles for the day and 1,072 for the two days. **However**, there was a **huge storm** coming my way. Not only was it coming through Casey on Saturday morning but I would also have it the entire way home to Lake City on Sunday. My first thought was to stay in Casey for the Friday night dinner and the actual function at the



Moonshine Store on Saturday morning before leaving to hole up somewhere on Sunday and arrive home on Monday. But that would not have worked out as I had a doctor's appointment at 7:45 AM in Lake City on Monday that I <u>must make</u> and then on Wednesday I must go to the hospital in Gainesville for what looked like will be two days. (Heart issue)

I had to make a choice and decided to go to the Moonshine Store on Friday morning at about 7:30 for a Moonburger and then head home. It turned out to be the correct decision for me, as the weather I would have encountered anywhere coming home on Sunday was forecasted to be 3-5 inches of rain, winds 15 to 25 with gusts to 40, severe thunderstorms with lighting and even some tornado warnings. After I was safely home on Sunday, I not only checked the status of that storm on the weather channel but experienced it firsthand here in Lake City. I realized it truly was a no-brainer to come home on Saturday. It was as bad as the forecast said it would be.





It turned out very well. When I arrived at the store early Friday, the only other people there were the local farmers – just as you see on Facebook or YouTube. I sat right down with them and we all talked for about a half an hour before I even ordered my Moonburger with cheese. I could not have had a better time being with these locals and also the lady who runs the place. After the locals left, she and I sat and talked for a while. I would have never got to do this on Saturday morning. To me it was special as I like to hear the stories that people have. These folks were so refreshing vs all the BS people we see on the news every



day. In short – I had a <u>GREAT</u> morning. I got one Moonburger with cheese, two T-shirts, two stickers and two fridge magnets and I was on my way at 10 AM.

I took the back roads northeastward to I-70, east to Indianapolis, I-65 down to Louisville, I-64 over to Lexington and I-75 south. I spent the night 10 miles north of Chattanooga which allowed me to get straight through Atlanta on a Saturday morning vs during Friday afternoon rush hour traffic – a world of difference. The only drawback on the trip home was taking all the interstates since I had to make time to beat the storm. However, all in all I had a wonderful trip and would not hesitate to go again. Although this was scheduled to be the last Moonshine Lunch Run, riders will still continue to come on this date. Everyone I talked to said the same thing. The lady who owns the place told me that on any given Saturday during the summer they will serve at least 1,000 Moonburgers if not a few more. She also said that the Labor Day Weekend is like a mini Moonshine Lunch Run. Hint-Hint for all you MSTA members.

I'll leave you with this: We should all be extremely thankful to live in Florida and have the roads we are blessed to have as the winters just beat the roads up north to death. Bump after bump, pothole after pothole and tar-snake after tar-snake. Night and day from down here.

I hope everyone enjoys the story and pictures.

#### **Editor's Request:**

If you have ridden somewhere interesting at any time and would like to share with other riders your experiences and some photos from your journey, please contact me at <a href="editor@flmsta.org">editor@flmsta.org</a> to discuss publishing an article. I can offer assistance in preparing your article. Thanks!



#### 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.

## It's Your Path

Right now, Becky and I are in Ohio, working yet another motorcycle event. We took time out for dinner and were sitting at the local chain dining establishment when it happened.

As we were looking out the window at the parking lot, we saw a rider pull in, astride a (Not Further Identified) large, V-twin motorcycle. You could tell he was a new rider. Both feet were paddling at slow speed, he was looking down...all of the signals were there. Then he tried to back his huge "potato-potato" beast uphill into a parking spot. That didn't work for him; go figure. Then he tried going forward, downhill. He almost lost control as he tried to turn at the same time, still looking down at the pavement. Look there long enough and you will go there. He just managed to save it. The drama went on until he managed to get his behemoth parked.

There is a time and a place for everything and every motorcycle. Unfortunately, lots of riders either don't understand the potential consequences of selecting the wrong motorcycle, or at least one that they are either not ready to handle, or physically can't manage.

This doesn't just apply to the new rider, captivated by his purchase of the tool for entry into the bad boy lifestyle. I've witnessed older, much more experienced riders struggling with larger, heavier bikes, just because they have an expectation to meet, either personal or community.



Graphic: RideApart

So how do figure out what bike is right for you? I am not about to touch that one, other than to say what the heart wants, it wants. However, there are lots of signs pointing to selecting or riding the wrong motorcycle.

The aforementioned event offers up just some of the signs. Here are some more:

- if you can't put your bike on its center stand (if it has one), you're on the wrong bike.
- â If come to a stop and are balancing on your tip toes, you're definitely in the wrong dimension.
- ★ If you've bought your bike because all your friends ride the same kind/brand/size, rather than considering what you really want to ride, you may be riding the wrong steed.
- If you look longingly at another bike passing you by, and feel your mount is somehow inferior, you probably have not achieved motorcycling self-fulfillment.

So what does all this have to do with safety? It's actually very simple. The wrong bike means you may not be comfortable with it. You may be struggling to maintain control. The motorcycle may have performance parameters you are either not comfortable with, or are even scared to experience. This list again goes on.

No one should tell you what you should ride. Sometimes bigger is not better. Sometimes simpler is more enjoyable. You need to assess your own skills and riding desires, not just join the crowd.

Motorcycling is about being one with the bike and the path. If someone else wants to come along, that's fine, but it's your journey.

Choose wisely.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor



#### Florida News

## **South Director's Report**

#### WELL, WELL. THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN...

As you'll read in Tom's expanded report this month, not everything we planned for went as planned!! But, we are a flexible bunch of road warriors, so we made the best of every situation! With big smiles too!!

Van VanSteelant

As for me, I was fortunate enough to make it to the Central Lunch Ride. We had a great time. (see above and the great pics on our PHOTO page!) And then, I had to bail on the South Lunch Ride. With my head swollen with a spring cold and congestion, I was in no shape to ride. Being a flexible bunch, the South

Ride was led by James, picking up riders along the way!! And, you just have to hit our **PHOTO page** to see the *drone* pics from the Lone Cabbage Ride, courtesy of James as well!!





Our two rides also netted two lucky winners of our 50/50 raffle! Don Moe took home \$35 from the Central Lunch Ride, and Budd Breheim picked up \$28 from the South Lunch Ride!! "Our" half of \$63 brings our total to \$1004.00. As always, I **THANK** all of you who regularly contribute to our coffers.

I had mentioned that we might see some additional billings from Go Daddy for our revamped website. So far, nothing. We'll see over the next few months. **DRUM ROLL PLEASE...** I am happy to announce that we have released our NEW AND IMPROVED Florida website!! A HUGE THANK YOU to MSTA Member of Household and my significant other, Kim Longacre, for her expertise and hours of effort to convert our previous website onto Go Daddy's new, more sophisticated platform. The upgrade makes it far more friendlier for users of mobile devises. So, check it out!!! Just one note about the RIDES calendar. The default display is the month-at-a-glance. Click on the **AGENDA** link, and you will find the familiar announcement page that we have had from day one.

#### What's Next??

Be sure to check our RIDES calendar often to insure you never miss one of our events!! FLMSTA.org The Central Ride destinations and dates are now set through December! The South Ride locations and dates are set for the year as well. We have some new ideas and places in mind!! Read on...

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the Central Lunch Ride heads to the *Lake Harris Hideaway*, on 11912 Lake Park Rd, in Tavares!! We have moved the start time to 11:30AM, to ensure we all sit together. This is a long standing favorite for us. If you haven't been here before, (what??) join Tom and gang for a terrific lunch on the deck!!

A week later, on May 12<sup>th</sup>, the South Lunch Ride will have an added attraction. A fellow member recommended a side trip for us a while back. We had to wait for the owner to move his collection into a new building. So, for lunch, we make our way to **Beef 'O' Brady's**, on 1105 Co Rd 765A, in Punta Gorda. We want to get there a little early so we have extra time to make it to MUSCLE CAR CITY LLC, on 10175



If you just want to drool over pretty bikes, plan to attend the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Riding Into History Concurs Show! There's simply too much info to share here... Visit their extensive website for everything about this stunning show. RidingIntoHistory.org

So, if you just don't know what to do or where to go... you know what to do next... hit up our **NEW WEBSITE**... <u>FLMSTA.org</u> Yes, the address is the same, but the site has been "remodeled".

## **Membership News**

I have caught up with the latest membership print outs. I should have successfully culled the expired, and added the new members to my contact info. If you are receiving the Gator Tale, but not my announcements, PLEASE email me asap to correct my files. The last 12 months presented membership challenges for everybody in the Club. Because of the tenacious efforts of the Membership Committee, we should be starting 2018 with a clean slate and smooth riding!!

My heartfelt **THANKS** to Don Moe for his efforts EVERY month to bring our Florida membership up to date with all the news about our new and renewing members!!

#### Here's what we know today...

No new Florida riders joined the MSTA in April.

We thank these five Florida members for renewing their memberships in April:

Alan Berry Rebecca DeShazo-Westly Doug Westly

Frederick Christ Pete Kauk

These six Florida memberships will expire soon or have recently expired:

Douglas Christensen David Gerber Robert 'Bob' Shields

Robert Fischer Michael Porter Ed Zaslow

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and to continue supporting their MSTA. If you have a question about when your membership expires, please contact me at <a href="membership@ridemsta.com">membership@ridemsta.com</a>. Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at <a href="membership@ridemsta.com">PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin</a> respectively. If you use a pre-printed form from STAReview or an ITR, be sure to mail it to Beth Hemstreet, 5560 Stone Church Court, Loveland, CO 80537, and not to the address of a prior membership director.

If you only want to update your phone, email, bikes, or other details, you can do so quickly via <a href="PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate">PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate</a>. Please include enough unchanging information to assure the correct member is updated in the database.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please pass along one of our Invitation-To-Ride quad-folds! For each new member you recruit starting in 2018 and who provides your name and/or membership number on the application, you will receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for the motorcycle drawing at STAR in Wisconsin. STAR Bucks coupons have been discontinued and members still holding coupons should plan on redeeming them at rallies or other MSTA events before the end of 2018.

## **Random Ramblings!**

I really hate being sick...

STAR Registration and the Raffle Bike tickets are fully activated and ready for you!! Just do it, now!! Read this article that appeared in STAReview #3604. (PDF)



Ride well! Ride often!! Do it safely!!!

ATGATT Van
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

## Central Director's Report - January 2018

April kicked off with a ride to *Don Jose's Mexican Restaurant* in Sebring. It's a good area easily accessible by everyone but those north and northeast of Orlando. And for most, it entails miles of rural riding.

Speaking of rural riding, I noticed two Honda CB500X adventure bikes in the parking lot with dust-coated, very aggressive dual sport rubber. That was unusual.



**Tom Blake** 

Turns out, Doug and Becky rode them from the Tampa area staying mostly off road the whole way! How about that? We are a diverse and talented group. [All photos by Tom Blake.]



CB500X's



Don Jose's Mexican Restaurant - Sebring, FL

Apparently, there was consternation among some of those arriving early about whether or not Don Jose's was even going to open. There were signs of construction work in the patio area and they still hadn't opened by

11:30. Turns out they just don't open until noon. But as soon as they did open, our group of twenty were first in and we were all seated together, followed by a sizable but smaller Blue Knights group in the same room. It did not take long for the whole place to fill up – obviously, a popular spot.

The place has a lot going for it. First, it's a colorful and attractive property. The restaurant and the paved parking area are sizable. It's on the lake with a great view. They offer a menu to satisfy nearly all tastes. The menus



All of our bikes with Lake Jackson in the background



themselves were bound in embossed leather – a notch above. The food hit the spot and I thought the cooks and servers did a great job considering the huge crowd jamming in right from the get-go. Dining inside was fine, though a little noisy. All said, they treated us well. The patio should to be available next time.

Newsletter editor Don won the 50/50 and \$35. The same went to Van to add to the club's coffers. It looks like Van was at the top of the podium for the longest ride over at 206



Yea, yea - the gang's all here

miles followed closely by Don M at 198 and tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> were editor Don and Ray H at 188 each. Thank-you all for coming. I hope you enjoyed your ride and had as much fun as I did dining with friends.

**Looking ahead**, on **May 5<sup>th</sup>** the Central lunch moves to **Lake Harris Hideaway**, 11912 Lane Park Rd southwest of **Tavares**. Since they don't take reservations, the start time is moved up to **11:30** to get us ahead of the noon rush. The focus moves to the area west, north and east of Orlando. Van has the south covered later in the month with a ride to Punta Gorda. But if you're up for it, south riders are certainly welcome.

The Hideaway has been one of our more popular destinations over the years. It's a motorcycle-friendly restaurant in a somewhat secluded setting on the Harris Chain of Lakes. They have a beautiful outside deck where you can sit and enjoy the serenity as well as the gorgeous water views. Mark your calendar now and make plans to join us. (map)

Safe journeys,

Tom Blake







#### **Central Florida May Lunch Ride**

Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM Lake Harris Hideaway (map) 11912 Lake Park Rd Tavares, FL Tom Blake MSTA Florida State Co-Director

#### **Member Comment**

Rich Peabody submitted the following email to the newsletter in hopes of locating others who might know a thing or two about the event mentioned and any subsequent developments.

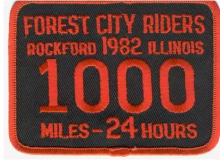
From: rpeabody@verizon.net

**Subject:** Iron Butt

Pics from the time that we rode from Cleveland to New Orleans....I promoted it in my newsletter and seven from the store participated, including me. Frank and I rode 1,076 miles in 16 hours, 13 minutes....







The group, Forest City Riders, was from Illinois and had a process whereby we signed out and in to certify. Referred to as an "Iron Butt" ride...

As far as I can determine, there was no "Iron Butt" association then.

My friend Gary Patterson, owner of Montgomeryville Cycle Center in PA was real interested (always read my newsletter, and wanted me to work for him). Gary and I got together over the winter and outlined a ride sponsored by his store, and he named the event "Iron Butt". We plotted a triangle course and he staffed two places (24 hour diners) to hand out verification. He promoted the event heavily (radio and TV even) and drew around FIFTY entries! Great fun! Almost half dropped out (none of my group that started dropped out....in fact, all made the 1,000 miles in 24 hours!). Gary made it an annual event and it drew about 50



riders in 1984, but the finishing percentage rose. Sadly, Gary was charged with some sort of criminal activity and forced to sell the place and most of his nifty promotional activities were curtailed by the new owners.

Today there is an Iron Butt web site and "official" organization.....and there are a BUNCH of rides. There is even a "history" section with records back to 1984. I have seen a bike that regularly participates in these long distance rides: besides an extra fuel tank, the forward view resembles a 747 cockpit. Three GPS units, two phones, front and rear radar detectors and time-distance computer. We did it with maps and Frank and I got a bit lost in New Orleans....

I am curious if Gary coined the phrase "Iron Butt"? The Forest City Riders appear to have morphed into an off road/dual sport club, sponsoring no street rides.

Of the guys pictured, Frank is still with us, but hasn't ridden for 20 years or so, Joe Pallotto still has the same Rickman and is riding still. I have lost track of the others and I'm happy as if I had sense with my ST-1100....

If anyone can provide further history on Iron Butt stuff, I would appreciate it.

Have fun!

Rich Peabody
From Paradise!

\$\mathref{\textit{241-6781}}\$ (Home) or \$\mathref{\textit{201-669-2605}}\$ (Cell)

\$\frac{1}{2}\$ rpeabody@verizon.net

## Florida MSTA Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to <a href="mailto:mstaflorida.qbstores.com">mstaflorida.qbstores.com</a>. We have made arrangements with the supplier for our National Gearbox to allow our State membership to buy shirts, hats, etc. with our State logos directly from the source!!! No muss, no fuss!! Order yours today!!



They offer both embroidery and digital print options. Click onto the Embroidered Apparel or Shop By Logo for each option. Don't hesitate to contact Queensboro directly with any and all questions. They are very customer friendly. They also offer Polo shirts and T-shirts with pockets!!



## Florida Rides This Month

#### **Important Note**

Always remember to check the Florida MSTA <u>Event Calendar</u> 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., May  $5^{th}$ , 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Where: Lake Harris Hideaway, 11912 Lake Park Rd, Tavares, FL \$\mathbb{\alpha}\$352-343-3585 (map)

Description: This is an old favorite that we never seem to get tired of. It sits at the edge of Lake Harris with on-deck

seating and a gorgeous view of the lake. They carry a good selection of appetizers, burgers, sandwiches,

melts, salads and sides at reasonable prices.

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or \$\mathbb{\textit{a}}321-723-2857

#### **MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride**

When: Sat., May 12<sup>th</sup>, 11:45 AM – 1:45 PM

Where: **Beef 'O' Brady's**, 1105 Co Rd 765A, Punta Gorda, FL 33950 **2**941-505-2333 (map)

Description: Here's the deal. We are going to dine at one of our favorite chains. Get there a little early, so we have time

to head to MUSCLE CAR CITY LLC, which just down the road at 10175 Tamiami Trail, right in Punta Gorda. They have moved to new digs this year. They have a vast collection of pristine go-fast cars from

the '40s to the '70s, and LOTS more!! Hit their website for lots more info MuscleCarCity.net.

Entry fee is \$12.50+tax... Just a little something extra for your enjoyment!!

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or \$\sim 561-386-2594\$

## Future Florida Rides

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 <u>Event Calendar</u> for possible updates.

#### **MSTA Florida Central Brunch Ride**

When: Sat., **June 2<sup>nd</sup>**, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Where: Four Seasons Restaurant, 5298 Hwy 27, Frostproof, FL 33843 863-635-2951 (map)

Description: This is a new venue for us. On-line reviews are very favorable. It's not fancy. Just generous portions of

inexpensive, good, home cooked food with great service. The 'go to' place in this centrally located neck of

the woods with plenty of paved parking.

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ₹321-723-2857

#### **MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride**

When: Sat., June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Where: Marsh Landing Restaurant, 44 N. Broadway St, Fellsmere, FL 32948 \$\mathbb{\alpha}772-571-8622 (map)

Description: We are back to a perfect BRUNCH location!! No matter when we travel here, we have a great time!! If

you don't know why we love this place, join us for a fine day of grub and gab.

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or \$\infty\$561-386-2594



## **Regional Events**

## **Riding Into History Bike Show**

When: Sat., **May 19<sup>th</sup>**, 10:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Where: World Golf Village, 305 WGV Blvd., St Augustine, FL 32092 \$\mathbb{\text{2094-940-6150}}\ (\text{map})

Description: Once again, the big show comes to St. Augustine!! Information: The event webpage is available at RidingIntoHistory.org

#### **MSTA Tri-STAR Rally**

When: Fri.-Mon., May 25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>

Where: Alleghany Inn, 341 North Main Street, Sparta, NC 28675 2336-372-2501 (map)

Description: A regional favorite!! Special room rate. We'll have a cookout Friday night, a catered dinner Saturday

night, and make a trek down to the Mexican restaurant at the other end of town for dinner Sunday night.

Location: Sparta, NC – Excellent street riding in Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina.

Contact: Geoffrey Greene, <a href="mailto:hawkgtrider@aol.com">hawkgtrider@aol.com</a> or \$865-659-4755 (c) or 865-922-9887 (h)

Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/tristar

For additional Florida events and information, click here to see the Florida MSTA website's Events page.

The Florida MSTA chapter also has a presence on Facebook with upcoming events and past photos: click here.

We welcome articles and comments from our members for publication. Contact the editor at: editor@flmsta.org.

The MSTA National website has extensive event information:

**To join the MSTA or renew your membership:** click here.

• For the Events in 2018: click here.

National MSTA RideMSTA.com

Florida MSTA FLMSTA.org

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





This month's Mystery Hyperlinks are related to the safety article:

**Mystery Hyperlink #1** 

**Mystery Hyperlink #2** 

**Mystery Hyperlink #3** 

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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

