



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 11 Issue 6

Events in June 2018

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Feature Article

Travel Planning

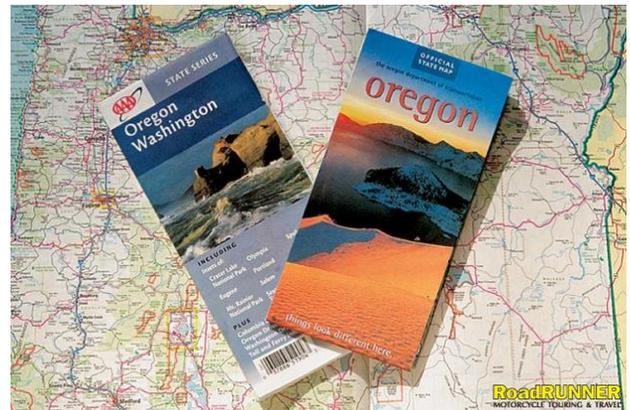
By Jim Park

[Ed: As the summer touring season kicks off, Jim requested that we republish his article from the June 2015 edition of the newsletter.]

It's that time of year again. The ice and snow have gone away up north, the trees and plants are starting to green and kids are getting out of schools for their summer break. In other words, it's time to ride!

Pre-planning is key to a great road trip. Granted, some of the best rides have been when you were lost, but spending a couple of weeks "lost" will get old real fast and you may miss the good stuff.

Knowing in advance where the great roads and sights along the way are located will greatly enhance any road trip, especially if you have limited time.



I always carry State Highway maps with me while on the road. However, I use my GPS and related software to plan my rides and to navigate my route. My personal choice for a GPS unit is *Garmin* and their related *BaseCamp* software but note that this is an expanding market and there are several choices available to the consumer.

Motorcycle GPS Units:

🏍️ Garmin: buy.garmin.com/en-US/US/cOnTheRoad-cMotorcycles-p1.html

🏍️ Tomtom: tomtom.com/en_us/drive/motorcycle/products/index.html

I usually begin my planning by going to the Internet for nearly all of my information. I start with State Department of Tourism sites. Most States provide a wealth of information at no charge in either a digital format or better yet, maps and brochures can be mailed directly to you. Note that it may take up to six weeks to receive this information in the mail from some States, so order early!

State Department of Tourism sites:

🏍️ statelocalgov.net/50states-tourism.cfm

🏍️ usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel-Tourism/State-Tourism.shtml

The next step in the planning stage is the nitty-gritty stuff; the twisty roads, the State and National Parks or even the unusual or weird stuff along the way. I have accumulated several sites that work as a planning tool to aid and enhance your trip.

Let's start with roads. Most of us know about the Blue Ridge Parkway, Natchez Trace or the Skyline Drive but there's a lot more, less-traveled highways out there. A good source for those off the beaten path roads are rider's forums. Sites like our own ridemsta.com/mstaforums will have members that have a wealth of information on local back roads. More often than not, they will email you their favorite routes in a GPS file format so you can simply incorporate the route into your trip. Also, if you subscribe to *RoadRunner Motorcycle Touring & Travel* magazine (roadrunner.travel) you can download the GPS & printed routes of their monthly articles. Here are but a few sites to consider when you are doing your route research:

🏍️ Blue Ridge Parkway: blueridgeparkway.org (there are lots more sites)

🏍️ Natchez Trace: nps.gov/natr/index.htm

🏍️ Cherohalla Skyway: cherohalla.org/motorcycles.html

🏍️ Skyline Drive: visitskylinedrive.org/Home.aspx

🏍️ Lincoln Highway: lincolnhighwayassoc.org

🏍️ DOT Scenic Byways: fhwa.dot.gov/byways/

🏍️ Motorcycle Roads US: motorcycleroads.us

🏍️ Mohawk Trail: mohawktrail.com/driving-tours.html

🏍️ Cabot Trail: cabottrail.com

🏍️ Alaska Highway*: milepost.com/highway_info/alaska_highway_bellsalaska.com/myalaska/alaska_highway.html

* Get a copy of "The Milepost" at your local bookstore for this trip!

Although our National and State Parks are getting loved to death and often over crowded, it is still worth the time to make them a part of your trip. These are a few of the sites that I reference for maps, food and accommodations within the parks:

🏍️ America's State Parks: stateparks.com/usa.html

🏍️ State/National Park Directory: touristinformationdirectory.com/parks/state_park.htm

🏍️ National Park Service: nps.gov/findapark/index.htm

Finding sights along the way or even making that side trip will add to any road trip. I often refer to these sites for a diversion to my travels:

🏍️ Waterfalls: allstays.com/Special/waterfalls-map.htm

🏍️ Lighthouses: lighthousefriends.com/maps.html

🏍️ Ferry Crossings: howderfamily.com/travel/united_states_ferry_map.html

🏍️ Covered Bridges: find.mapmuse.com/interest/covered-bridges

🏍️ Points of Interest (note there is a small fee for bulk downloads): poirectory.com/poifiles/united_states

Then there's the part of your trip where you see the unusual or even weird stuff. Usually you just stumble upon things like the "world's largest ball of twine" but there are actually books and websites that will give you the details on these sights. So if you are into the weird, here you go:

🏍️ Roadside America: roadsideamerica.com

🏍️ Back on Tack: gethep.net/road

I sometimes pick up a travel book that tweaks my interest. I tend to stay away from those books that tackle the "best roads" for the entire country as they tend to leave out details and side trips that the regional travel books include. Here is a recommended list of just a few:

🏍️ *The Milepost* - an Alaska Travel Planner – Published annually

🏍️ *Motorcycle Journeys Through New England* *– by Martin C. Berke

🏍️ *Motorcycle Journeys Through Atlantic Canada** – by Rannie Gillis & Ken Aiken

🏍️ *Motorcycle Journeys Through Appalachian*s* – by Dale Coyner

* There are a series of these "Motorcycle Journeys Through...." books. I have found them to be well written and informative.

🏍️ *The Ride Guide*, America's best motorcycle guide (Appalachian edition) – by I. Michael & Barbara Ring

🏍️ *Roadfood* – by Jane & Michael Stern's

There is virtually an infinite amount of information available today for planning that perfect road trip. There are books and Internet sites that not only list such things as lighthouses, caves or wineries but also provide detailed directions and/or GPS coordinates. Bottom line is to do your homework before you travel and make the most out of your trip.

Ride safe!

–JEP–

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 editor@flmsta.org 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.*

Statistics for Mature Riders

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (iihs.org) just published its accident statistics for 2016, and there are some interesting, and ugly numbers in it for some motorcyclists.

You can find a lot of data in the statistical charts, but here is one set that really caught my attention...

In 2006 (10 years ago by the data), the largest group of motorcyclists, by age group, involved in crashes was the 29 and under category, comprising 32% of all incidents. The over 50 and over category comprised 24%. In 2016 those percentages have reversed themselves. The 29 and under category is no longer the largest percentage of crashed riders. They now comprise 29% of the total, while the 50 and above age category is 36%. So what does that tell us?

Well, we know that motorcyclists in general are an aging demographic. No one knows that better than the OEMs, who are in a current effort to attract younger riders into the sport.

However, could there be other factors as well. We could argue that older riders shouldn't be as overly represented in the statistics, since theoretically they have more experience and could also be expected to exercise more mature judgement and caution. But is that the case?

Mature riders often comment that they don't take the chances on two wheels that they did in their youth. I'm going to dispute that, at least a little. I've seen some older riders doing some brave, bold and even stupid stuff on their bikes. Could it be a case of the motorcycle being an outlet for aging riders attempting to recapture their youth?

Another thought is one of attention and reflexive response. Well established facts say that as we age, our attention focus can diminish, and our reflexive response time can increase. If we continue to ride at the pace and level we did when we were in our 30s, are we leaving enough response and recovery time when things start to go bad?

Endurance is another issue. I didn't do my first Iron Butt ride until I was in my 40s, but I had the stamina to pull it off. Now that I'm older than that (by more than a little), I find that my endurance on two wheels has fallen off. A 500-mile day is about the most I want to take in on a regular basis.

As older riders, we have to consider what time does to us, our mental and physical capabilities. While we may not want to admit we're slowing down a little, reality can be a hard slap, particularly if it involves an impact on pavement.

All mature riders (and yes, I'm including myself) should take a good hard look inward, with regards to our riding activities. We need to ask ourselves are we pushing too hard? Is it time to adjust our riding, maybe just a little? Is that 800+ lb. motorcycle still right for me? You know the questions...

Maybe by asking these and heeding honest replies, more mature riders can increase their safety and extend their riding enjoyment long into the future.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor



Graphic: [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Florida News

South Director's Report

THAT JUST DOESN'T HAPPEN...

Well, I guess the crybabies are done fussing about the drought index and wild fire threats... All they had to do was wait a week or two for the start of the rainy season around these parts. What's that... their roads and yards are flooded...

Consequences... You must drop down to Tom's splendid report below before finishing mine... I'll wait.

So, Tom made the Central ride, and was a happy man for doing so. I also made the South Ride, up to the starting point. I too faced a wet weather decision. While standing at the 7-11 for 30 minutes, alone, reviewing the best weather prognostications known to mankind, I made the decision to ride home. I contacted the restaurant, who graciously altered the table arrangements, and announced by email that I had bailed on the ride due to weather. In my nine plus years of South RTEs, I can think of only one other time I personally bailed on a ride for weather issues. That just doesn't happen...

I am happy to report that three members did make the Lunch ride, and the table was ready for them!! A hearty "good on ya mate" to Rich Peabody, and Brian and Diana Dickerson!! They caught my email, and sent me photographic evidence of their efforts. A good time was had, and they made their own ways home afterward.

What's Next??

Be sure to check our RIDES calendar often to insure you never miss one of our events!! www.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...

With the summer heat nearly here, we shift to a *9:30AM start time for butts in the chairs*. As a rule, we try to move our destinations to mostly center-of-the-state locations. There will be exceptions, but we try to keep the travel time to the restaurants to no more than 2-2.5 hours for most of our members.

Be sure to make the June 2nd **Central BRUNCH Ride!!** Tom has picked a new venue for us. Make your way to the *Four Seasons Restaurant*, at 5298 Hwy 27, in Frostproof, FL. It looks to be just our kind of place – good food, good prices, easy parking and reachable by most everybody.

Near the end of the month, we have the **South BRUNCH Ride!** Ride with us on June 23rd to the *Marsh Landing*, in Fellsmere. Great service, good food, historic building, easy riding... Join us!!

AND IN BETWEEN, WE HAVE A LITTLE SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD BE ATTENDING!! BE IN LA CROSSE, WI FOR OUR ANNUAL STAR RALLY!! JUNE 10TH TO JUNE 13TH.

You can register online, or even in person right at the rally!! You've seen the articles in STARreview; you've received the emails; you can view thousands of photos from previous events on our website; you've heard us talk about how terrific these annual rallies are... STAR truly is one of the best benefits of membership. Just think, hundreds of skilled riders getting together to ride, eat, sleep and repeat!! Please also check the STAR 2018 page on Facebook: facebook.com/groups/wisstar/



Van VanSteelant



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 May.

We thank these two Florida members for renewing their memberships in May:

Robert Fischer Robert Shields

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

Douglas Christensen L. Dee Cramer David Gerber Ed Zaslow
Louis Clark Ken Ford Michael Porter

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 membership@ridemsta.com. Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew or PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin respectively. If you use a pre-printed form from STARReview 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 PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate. 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!

In just 3 weeks of never ending rain, I've forgotten what the sun looks like 😊

STAR Registration and the Raffle Bike tickets are fully activated and ready for you!!

Just do it, now!!

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

ATGATT Van
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report - June 2018

Don't let a bad forecast deprive you of having a great day!

Mother Nature had been showing signs of cooperation all week long with a dry, sunny day expected Saturday and rain holding off until Sunday. I was eagerly anticipating a nice two-and-a-half-hour ride to [Lake Harris Hideaway](#) in Tavares using some of the best roadways central Florida has to offer. But Friday evening's report moved the 60% chance of showers ahead to Saturday, with more to come Sunday. Nuts. Here we go again!



Tom Blake

Part of me wanted to send an e-mail to everyone right then and there stating I was pulling out. And then I could lazily sleep in Saturday morning. But I've sworn not to do that. Besides, it occurred to me that conditions would probably be just fine for riders coming in from other areas. Folks would show up. And besides, it was just showers. I've been rained on before. Okay, I'll take another look in the morning.

The early Saturday TV forecaster talked about off shore showers working east-to-west with the greatest impact being to the central east coast (where I live). My weather app's radar wasn't showing anything eminent. The hourly forecasts for various locations along intended routes were showing rain chances at 0% until mid-afternoon or later. Worst case, then, was getting a little wet on the way home. I'm good with that.

Lifetime member Doug met me at the rendezvous place near Melbourne and we headed west taking Hickory Tree Rd - with its half-dozen or so **really** nice sweepers - and other backroads into not yet congested Kissimmee. After a brief break, we pressed onward through Champion's Gate and across curvy Deen Still Rd to Hwy 33. This time we didn't get stuck behind slow traffic so Deen Still was great fun. Same for 33. In Groveland we turned north again on Villa City Rd, with its really enjoyable curves, undulating terrain and ultra-pleasant scenery, to Hwy 27. That got us quickly to Hwy 19 and then onto Lane Park Rd to our destination. All in all, it was a very satisfying morning's ride.

Eleven riders showed up, which, under the circumstances, was gratifying. The place was just getting going so we pulled enough tables together to make one long one that we could all sit around together. The servers were Johnny on the spot, taking our drink and food orders right away. I barely had time to sell 50/50 tickets before the food started arriving. Carl brought along a couple newbies from the north Orlando area who



Ten of our group of eleven at the Hideaway including the back of Dennis' head. (That's what he gets for riding 590 miles to get there!) Sorry Dennis but the lighting and background were not the best for a front view.

decided on becoming members. Carl (again) then won the raffle – taking home \$21 with the other half heading to Van.

Nearly everyone commented about how beautiful the view was out across the covered deck and though the Palm and Cypress tree-bracketed channel to the lake. The building doesn't look like much from the road. But they surely make up for it on the water side. We all totally enjoyed the Hideaway's ambiance, good service and food. And, of course, there was great comradery among us riders. Can't wait to do it again.

Jim rode down from the Jacksonville area. But I think Doug and I were the only central, east-coasters there. And, yes, we got well rained upon heading home - mostly approaching and going through Sanford. We both looked like dripping wet puppies when we stopped just east of town for a break. At least it was a warm wet. By the time we gassed up, took the break and put on some rain gear - the rain, of course, stopped.

The rest of the way home was under partly sunny, partly cloudy skies with temps in the low-to-mid 80's and **rainless**. We were essentially dry by the time we got home – or at least I was. So out of five hours of riding, only about a half hour was wet. That's just 10%. The other 90% was exactly what you would want for an early May ride. And as mentioned, the Hideaway and comradery were fantastic. It was unquestionably the right decision to go. And to think - I almost let a bad forecast deprive me of a great day.

Looking ahead... On June 2nd, we head to the **Four Seasons Restaurant** at 5298 Hwy 27 in **Frostproof** for the first **9:30 AM brunch** of the year. This is a new place for us. The on-line ratings are pretty good. It's in a good location. Don't expect fancy - just generous portions of home-cooked comfort food with good service and plenty of paved parking. Should be a good one. See you there.

Van is holding his June 23rd brunch at Marsh Landing in Fellsmere. So, if Frostproof is too much of a stretch, do make plans to head to Fellsmere.

Safe journeys,

Tom Blake

Central Florida June Brunch Ride

Saturday, **June 2nd**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

[Four Seasons Restaurant](#) ([map](#))

5298 Hwy 27

Frostproof, FL 33843



Looking out from the deck onto Lake Harris
(Picture from the Hideaway's webpage)



Our line-up of bikes with riders Jim (background) and Tom preparing to take off (Doug on camera)

Florida MSTA Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to mstaflorida.qbstores.com. 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 [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., **June 2nd**, 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 23rd**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Where: [Marsh Landing Restaurant](#), 44 N. Broadway St, Fellsmere, FL 32948 ☎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 ☎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 [Event Calendar](#) for possible updates.

MSTA Florida Central Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **July 7th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Where: [Goodrich's Seafood and Oyster Bar](#), 253 River Road, Oak Hill, FL 32759 ☎386-345-3397 ([map](#))
Description: Casual dining in the [Canaveral National Seashore](#) along Mosquito Lagoon. This restaurant has some really good food, great service and great views. Parking is unpaved, so you might want to bring a kickstand support just in case. But do not let this distract from an otherwise great experience. This is an exceptionally cool place. And we can leisurely walk some calories off under the big oaks at [Seminole RestHistoric Site](#) just down the road.
Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎321-723-2857

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Sat., **July 28th**, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Where: [Two Peas Cafe](#), 870 W Hickpochee Ave #500, LaBelle, FL 33935 ☎863-675-2891 ([map](#))
Description: Join us for a return to our Labelle-feasting-roots!! In the tradition of the beloved Flora and Ella's, the Granddaughter of Ella and her lifelong friend have opened their own restaurant to carry on the good old home style cooking we know and love!! We were treated like royalty the last time we visited here!!
Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

Rally of Historical Proportions

When: Fri.-Sun., **July 6th – 8th**
Where: [Microtel Inn and Suites](#), 111 Darby Drive, Georgetown, KY 40324 ☎855-213-0582 ([map](#))
Description: AMA Sanctioned regional event. Just a heads up. Check out ridemsta.com for more details as the event gets closer.
Contact: Patrick Mogavero, patrickmogavero@gmail.com or ☎859-620-6352

Big Lynn Lodge Ride

When: Fri.-Sun., **July 20th – 22nd**
Where: [Big Lynn Lodge](#), Highway 226A, Little Switzerland, NC ☎828-765-4257 or 800-654-5232 ([map](#))
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 riding is what I go there for but the scenery and the location is what has me staying. The Big Lynn Lodge is located 300 feet off the Blue Ridge Parkway on [North Carolina Highway 226A](#).
Contact: Dave Brickner, dwbrick@gmail.com or ☎828-448-8429
Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/BLynn

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.

Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

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

[Mystery Hyperlink #1](#)

[Mystery Hyperlink #2](#)

[Mystery Hyperlink #3](#)

CLASSIFIED ADS

2009 Honda ST1300

- 🏍️ 5,600 miles
- 🏍️ Metallic red
- 🏍️ Heli-Bars
- 🏍️ GPS
- 🏍️ Runs perfectly
- 🏍️ Garage kept.

Located in Port Orange, FL.

Contact: Gary Williamson

☎️ 386-322-3622 or

✉️ garyhere73@gmail.com



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