



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 11 Issue 11

Events in November 2018

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Feature Article

Adventures at 2018 AIM Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada

By Jim Park

[Photos by Jim Park.]

“What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas”.....not if our Florida MSTA Newsletter Editor gets after you to write an article on your experience!

Vegas is the playground of the world and such was the case at this year’s AIM Expo having lots of toys for those of two wheel interests. This year’s event boasted of being the largest event to date with 8 dealers providing demo rides of their new products and over 500 exhibitors in the hall at the Mandalay Bay Resort Convention Center.

We had a small but aggressive group of MSTA members attending this year’s Expo. Kentucky members, Bob and Wendy Burckhardt, (Wendy is the new MSTA Advertising Director), Minnesota

members, Carl and Denise Wieman (*Dan Clark Safety Program Coordinators*), Nevada member, Nicky Zarras (*local resident and MSTA StaReview Editor*), and Florida members Becky Westly (part of Team Honda demo rides) and Dianne (MSTA PR Director and wife) and myself.

Our goal was to canvas the event and introduce exhibitors/dealers to the MSTA, sell ad space for StaReview, get product discounts for our members, door prizes and vendors for our next STAR and just have some plain fun! I believe we met our goals!

Meeting Nicky for the first time in person was a personal treat. We have had numerous phone calls and emails over the years while coordinating photos for *StaReview* but never met in person. Though brief, we finally had some time to visit and exchange our thoughts. Carl and Denise were constantly on the go



L→R: Bob & Wendy Burckhardt, Nicky Zarras, Jim & Dianne Park

and I'm sure they covered lots of ground! While Wendy and Dianne "tag teamed" the vendors for some high pressure ad sales, Bob and I examined all of the new bikes and products....a dirty job but....!

All of us were busy at AIM but still were able to make an enjoyable MSTA evening out for dinner at the New York/New York Casino on the Vegas Strip.

This year was the fourth AIM event we have attended, the first three being in Orlando. Other than this being the largest, I guess one of the differences was the presence of the Chinese motorcycles. While still producing a small displacement bike, the fit and finish and styling has vastly improved from past years. Please note that I did not demo these bikes nor do I endorse the longevity of their products, it is just my impression that they have the potential of being a player in the industry.

While I feel there were significantly more than enough ATV products for a "motorcycle" expo, there were still lots of vendors with new products. The mini-video cameras particularly caught my eye and I actually purchased an [INNOVV K2](#) camera(s)/front and rear mount for my bike at a nice show discount. I plan on a follow up review article of the camera early next year.

If you have never attended an AIM Expo, wear good walking shoes! Several of us loaded a walking app on our phones and discovered we were well over 20K steps per day and on hard concrete floors you eventually feel those steps by the end of the day!

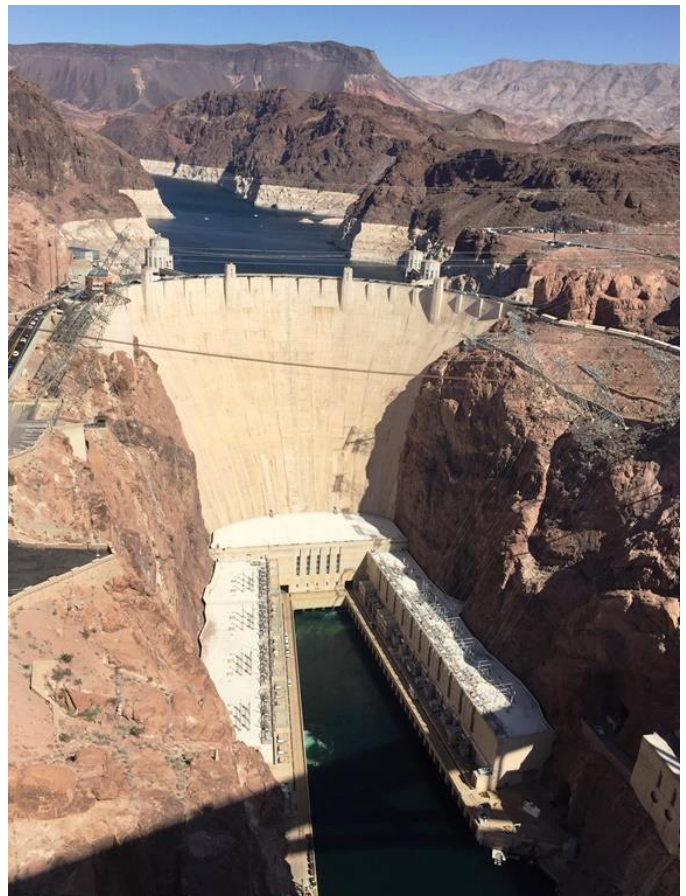
Nearing our last day in town we decided to take a break



Dianne & Wendy in a [Vanderhall](#) three-wheeler



Pirate Ship at [Treasure Island Hotel](#)



[Hoover Dam](#)

and shared a rental car with the Burkhardts. They had never been in the Las Vegas area so we took a drive out to Hoover Dam for the tour followed by a leisurely drive through the desert along Lake Mead. It was a nice diversion from the big city!

Even though we are not avid gamblers, we had a great time in Vegas. If you have the opportunity to make it to an AIM Expo show, do it! You won't be disappointed.

-JEP-

2018 AIMExpo Event Recap Video, presented by Nationwide:

<https://youtu.be/XIaecDwgTjM>

New York/New York Hotel & Casino: Gonzalez y Gonzalez Restaurant:

<https://www.newyorknewyork.com/en/restaurants/gonzalez-y-gonzalez.html>

INNOVV K2 motorcycle camera system:

<https://www.innovv.com/innovv-k2>



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.*

Changing of the Seasons

This is the time of year when the colors change, although in Florida that means the colors of the license plates on cars and RVs heading south for the winter. Nevertheless, we do have nature adjusting to the slightly less tropical heat of the Fall and Winter months, even here.

I was headed to my local dealer the other day; a simple task of dropping off a bike for service. The road out of my neighborhood is lined with overhanging oak trees. I actually saw the acorn falling, just before it hit my glove...between the armored knuckle areas, of course. We can do the math, but suffice it to say a falling acorn impacting a rider's hand while the bike is doing roughly 40 mph...well, it HURT!

Of course, one falling acorn can't really do much, can it? A few leaves falling can't do much, can they? Well, maybe.

Fall brings different riding challenges. Roads can get coated with leaves, and wet leaves in corners could mean reduced traction...or no traction. I've had at least one biker friend who wadded up his beloved sport tourer on a wet leaves-coated turn in the mountains. He was fine (can you say ATGATT?), but the bike was a write-off. One acorn is no big deal. A few dozen of them sitting clustered in the middle of a bike's path of travel through a turn become a road surface of ball bearings.



Photo: [Travefy](#)

How about something as simple as the temperature change itself? Colder morning temperatures change tire pressures. Cold road surfaces, added to those cold tires, change traction conditions.

As a general rule, tire pressures change (approximately) by about 1 psi for every 10 degrees F. That means if your tires (cold) were at 36 psi in 70 degree weather, then at 40 degree weather they are now at 33 psi. Make sure you always check tire pressures!

The change of seasons means we have new riding considerations before and during our ride. In Florida we are usually more concerned with staying cool, but even in the Sunshine State, sometimes layering is a good strategy. A 35 degree morning can turn into an 80 degree day, and pretty quickly once the sun pops up. (BTW, that also means your tire pressures went up about 4.5 psi...)

How about something as simple as rider hydration? If it's cooler out, we don't think as much about staying hydrated. After all, we can't dehydrate when we're trying to stay warm, can we? As it turns out, winter dehydration is accelerated by things like wearing extra clothing, respiratory water loss, and even the rapid evaporation of sweat. So the answer is "Yes". You can dehydrate in the cooler months. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate.

The bottom line is to remember that as we move into the cooler riding months, we need to remain aware of the changing conditions. We need to take different riding challenges into consideration before and during our ride.

Ride Safe!

Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Florida News

South Director's Report

WELL, I FOUND MYSELF TAKING MY OWN ADVICE THIS MONTH.

The week leading up to the South Lunch Ride found me fighting a significant cold. By Saturday morning, I had to make the decision to pass on the Lunch ride to [Miceli's Restaurant](#) over in Matlacha. There was no way my head was going inside a helmet for 6+ hours of riding...

As it turned out, except for Don Mroczenski, the rest of the Eastsiders bailed for their own reasons as well. I'm sure Don was wondering where the group was while hanging at the Marathon Station... His perseverance garnered him long distance honors for the day!!

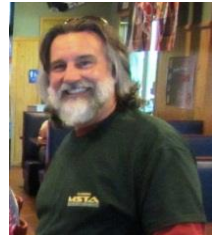
I did rearrange our reservation in time for the eight plus riders and friends to have a great time! Brian and Diana, with friends, made it from Bartow. And without my sign-in cheat-sheet, I don't have the rest of the names to go with the faces... **EXCEPT** for the "blast from the past" in the front row!! Yep, that's Bill Royal in the flesh! You know I had some 'splainin to do when he made BOTH lunch rides this month, and I was home blowing and coughing... Word is, we are likely to see more of our past State Director down the road! (If you look real closely, you'll pick out a bit of Eve just behind Bill.)

So, I did miss a great day for riding, and the new-to-us destination offered good food and excellent service. My thanks to all who attended and made the most of the first South Lunch Ride of the season.

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 and South Ride destinations and dates are now set through December! We have some new ideas and places in mind!! Read on...

We are in "holiday" mode, so our rides are front loaded over the next two months. First up, the Central Lunch Ride happens at [Gator Joe's in Ocklawaha](#). Be there Nov. 10th, a little earlier than usual. Tom will see you at **11:30AM**. The next weekend, join the South Lunch Ride for our return to true favorite! Be ready for grub, gab and guns at the [OK Corral Gun Club in Okeechobee](#)! We are planning for a lunch event on Nov. 17th. I'll be in touch with their event planner and see if we can add a spin to our visit. Check out the website www.flmsta.org to see what we have planned for December!!



Van VanSteelant



Don Mroczenski on left and Bill Royal on the right.
(Sorry, others not identified.)

Photo: Bill Royal

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 are running through 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 October.

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

Thomas Blake	Brian & Diana Dickerson	Stephen Phillips
Terry L Brown	Dennis Mitchell	Rick Sapir
Richard Danieri	Hugh Palmer	Michael Sistrunk

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 the membership committee 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.

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 our next STAR event. Any new or current member who joins or renews as a Sustaining Member will likewise receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for each year of the new membership term. Since STAR Bucks coupons have been discontinued, members still holding coupons should plan on redeeming them at rallies or other MSTA events before the end of 2018 when they will expire.

Random Ramblings!

Please vote! It does matter. We have buried literally millions of soldiers around the world for over 250 years who died protecting our right to freely vote. You can't tell me how much you respect our military and their sacrifices, and then not vote. This isn't about R's and D's. This is about upholding your citizenship.

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

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report - October 2018

The images of Hurricane Michael's destruction in the Mexico Beach and Panama City area were horrific. Many of you may have been wondering how our members in the panhandle made it through. I've been in communication with all five families and can report that they are all fine. So, a big sigh of relief. We all live to ride another day. Many up there were not so fortunate and the road to recovery will be lengthy and costly.



Tom Blake

As to the October Central lunch - the [St Johns River Grille](#) near Deland was on tap for the 6th. I could not get through to make reservations - busy signals. It took a drive up there on the Monday before to find out their phone system was out of order.

Anyway, a nice group of twelve showed up (see photo). We were glad to welcome Keith and Roberta back from their summer in the far north. And of special note – our past and long-time Central Director, Bill Royal, showed up with friend Sally! This is the first time I've seen Bill in years. He was looking fit and happy – thanks in large part, I'm sure, to Sally. (Now we know why he's been spending a lot of time in Tallahassee.) I hope they will make our rides a habit. Thanks to all for attending and contributing to another enjoyable Central gathering.



Hal with a bicycle on his bike.



Early arrivals Carl, Alan, Doug B, Hal and Budd.



CW: Sally, Bill, Jim, Dale, Alan, Hal, Carl, Doug, Tom, Roberta, Keith and Budd

For the Grille's part, they provided good service and tasty food. Keith and Roberta said they've eaten there a couple times and thought the food was great. The consensus was that they did a pretty good job. The setting was certainly a plus as it was right along the scenic St John's. In fact, we were a little startled to see a large yacht pop suddenly into view thru the window. It was so close and so large. Then it just slowly glided past as it headed from the docking area out into the river. Yeah, we'll call this place a keeper.

Bill Royal told me that he used to schedule New Year's Day lunches at Peck's Old Port Cove every year. Heard that before and the idea is very appealing. So, beginning on **January 1, 2019** (a Tuesday), let's plan on a resumption of that annual event (doubling as the January Central ride). I vote that we call it the **Annual Bill Royal New Year's Day Lunch at Peck's**. Maybe we can hype it into a state-wide or even larger event. Peck's had been on the schedule for November 10th but experienced damage from Hurricane Michael. They and the Ozello Trail should be in great shape by January.

Special note: Just got word that Hal Smith and Doug Farnham are officially new members from central Florida. Welcome aboard guys. You've made a very good choice.

After our lunch, I spent some quality time in the Blue Ridge Mountains of north Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee. While there, Hugh Palmer (staying near Hiawassee) led new member Doug Farnham (part owner of Crawford's Campground near Murphy, NC), and me (staying near Blairsville) over some new to us roads to [Bogart's Restaurant & Tavern](#) in Waynesville, NC. We had a Saturday lunch with our old friends Bill and Nicole Rorke (formerly of Vero Beach and now living outside Spartanburg), plus my old riding buddy from Goldwing days, Ken Worland (now living near Winston-Salem). Bogart's was centrally located and a great find. And the mountain roads that got us there.... wow! There's nothing like lots of curves and a bike that's capable of taking them. My tires once again have properly rounded profiles. And me? I am **still** all smiles!



Doug, Hugh, Bill and Nicole in Bogart's parking lot. Ken had already left.

In place of Peck's, for **November 10th**, we'll be heading to another old favorite – [Gator Joe's](#), 12431 SE 135th Ave, **Ocklawaha**, FL 32179 (just south of the stoplight). No storm damage for them. Our reservation is for **11:30 AM**. Last November we sat comfortably on the dock in shirtsleeves. Gator Joe's, for those who haven't been, is an iconic, rustic place on the north shore of Lake Weir. Some of Florida's better roads get you there. The food is typically pretty good. Same for the scenery.

Now the *story* goes... a stranger (one of Ma Barker's sons) had been seen shooting gators near there with a sub-machine gun! This unusual behavior was noted by the locals who contacted authorities. Humm. What is factual is that one of the longest shootouts in FBI history occurred on the morning of January 16, 1935. Agents surrounded the [Ma Barker Gang's](#) *hideout* and in four hours over 2,000 rounds were hosed into the house, just yards, I believe, from present-day Gator Joe's. Ma and her son Fred were killed in the shootout. The wooden, 2-story house still stands (amazingly). And the historic 5.5-acre lakeside property has been for sale for a mere \$889,000.



Safe Journeys,
Tom Blake

Central Florida October Lunch Ride

Sat., **November 10th**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
[Gator Joe's](#) ([map](#))
12431 SE 135th Ave
Ocklawaha, FL 32179

Tom Blake
MSTA Florida State Co-Director

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 Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **November 10th**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

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

Description: **In place of Peck's** for November 10th, we'll be heading to another old favorite – **Gator Joe's**, 12431 SE 135th Ave, Ocklawaha, FL 32179 (just south of the stoplight). **Our reservation is for 11:30.** We did this last November and sat comfortably on the dock in shirtsleeves. Gator Joe's, for those who haven't been, is an iconic, rustic place on the north shore of *Lake Weir*. Some of Florida's better roads get you there. The food is typically excellent. Same for the scenery.

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **November 17th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [OK Corral Gun Club](#), 9449 48th St NE, Okeechobee, FL 34972 ☎863-357-2226 ([map](#))

Description: Here we go again!! We'll line up some grub, guns and gab!! Last year was a stunning success!! For now, we'll leave this as a lunch. We'll keep you posted...

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 Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **December 8th**, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Where: [Swamp House Riverfront Grill](#), 488 W Highbanks Rd, DeBary, FL 32713 ☎386-668-8891 ([map](#))

Description: A new destination for MSTA. The Swamp House Grill overlooks the St. Johns River in DeBary where this amazing river looks as natural today as it did 150 years ago. On-line reviews are mostly excellent. Slightly pricey. Some of us have eaten there before and were favorably impressed. Start time is moved up to 11:30 to get us in ahead of the rush – better parking options and nearer the front of the food orders queue. Hope to see you there.

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **December 15th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Lashley Crab House](#), 150 Lashley Court, Punta Gorda, FL 33950 ☎941-205-5566 ([map](#))

Description: We always have fun in this area of Florida...

This restaurant has been a favorite of ours over the years. It's time to drop back in...

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

Annual New Year's Day Lunch Ride

When: Tues., **January 1, 2019**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Peck's Old Port Cove](#), 139 N. Ozello Trail, Crystal River, FL 34429 ☎352-795-2806 ([map](#))

Description: This is the resumption of the once very popular annual New Year's day ride originated and run for a decade by past Central Director Bill Royal thus fitting to have Bill's name in the title. It is the perfect excuse to put fresh miles on your bike as you usher in the fresh new year. Peck's is old Florida charm at its best, located out in the gulf's marshes between Crystal River and Homasassa. Nine miles of sometimes meandering, sometimes twisty Ozello Trail takes you out there. Everybody raves about Peck's seafood and rightfully so. In addition, the property is well maintained, clean, orderly and comfortable. The whole staff at Peck's is extremely accommodating. The New Year's Day Ride to Peck's lives again!

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

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](#) (PDF)

CLASSIFIED ADS

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