



FLMSTA Newsletter | Sept 2026

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Welcome to the **Florida Gator Tale Newsletter** from the Florida Chapter of the MSTA! We've updated the newsletter to make it easy to read on your phone or tablet. However, you can still download a .pdf of this newsletter and archived newsletters from the FLMSTA website [here](#). The **Florida Gator Tale** includes all the news about rides, feature articles, Florida state reports and safety information to keep you current with the Florida MSTA.



Rides

Florida Rides This Month

IMPORTANT NOTE: Always remember to check the rides 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. Please check the [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

East Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, September 12, 9:00 - 11:00 AM**

Location: **Sunnyside Cafe** 300 Ocean Ave., **Melbourne Beach, FL**
(321)733-5590 ([map](#))

Description: **NOTE: NEW 9:00 AM start time** for East Central Brunches. New-to-us destination! Member recommended. Delicious breakfasts and fresh squeezed orange juice. Friendly service. Many praise the generous portions and cleanliness. Paved parking.

West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, September 19, 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Gloria's Restaurant** 4816 U.S. 17-N, **Bowling Green FL**
(863) 375-9955 ([map](#))

Description: **NOTE: NEW 9:00 AM start time** for West Central Brunches. This is the last SUMMER ride for the Westsiders! We hope to have events for the October and November. **Look for details in our Ride Announcements!!**

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com or (561) 386-2594

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, September 26, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Eggshells Kitchen**, 204 NE 7th Ave., **Okeechobee, FL**
(863) 623-4124 ([map](#))

Description: We were treated so nicely here last year! Deserves a repeat visit!!

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com or (561) 386-2594

MSTA Fall Colors Rally

When: **Thursday-Sunday, September 24-27**

Location: **Quality Inn, Lewisburg, WV**

The Fall Colors Rally has been a long running tradition in MSTA. Lewisburg, WV, has proven to be a great location- easy to reach from all directions and close to lots of great riding. We have been fortunate to have a good relationship with the Quality Inn hotel, which has provided us with a reasonable cost and good accommodations for many years. Event coordinators **John Smith** and **Chris Shoop** want you to have a good time and have a great collection of routes from Doug Pippin and others.

Contact: For information and registration: <https://ridemsta.com/wv-fallcolors/>

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 [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

West Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 3, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **TBD**

Description: **TBD - We are looking for a host and/or destination suggestion for the West Central Ride in October.**

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com or (561) 386-2594

East Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 10, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Wild Turkey Tavern** 2751 U.S. 27 South, **Avon Park, FL**
(863) 452-5284 ([map](#))

Description: Back to lunch rides. This place looks fantastic, with camo outside and dark wood, redneck-country vibe inside. Great food and service. Paved parking.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

South Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 31, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Nav-A-Gator Bar & Grill**, 9700 SW Riverview Cir., **Arcadia, FL**
(941) 625-4407 ([map](#))

Description: Back to lunch rides! Revamped, new owner and great reviews!! It's been a l o n g time since we were here!! Join us, won't you??

Contact: Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com or (561) 386-2594



MSTA STAR 2026
October 17-21
Springdale, Arkansas

We are officially just 66 days away from the **2026 MSTA STAR Rally in Northwest Arkansas!**

STAR (Sport Touring Association Rendezvous) is the annual national gathering of MSTA members and friends, a multi-day celebration of great roads, good company, and unforgettable memories. Whether you're a longtime member or attending your very first STAR, this is the event you won't want to miss!

This year's STAR for promises to be an incredible week of riding, friendship, and fun in the Ozarks. Experience the magic of the Ozarks like never before. STAR 2026 brings you some of the best motorcycle roads in America—smooth sweepers, technical twisties, and breathtaking mountain views around every corner. Whether you're carving through pavement or tackling adventure routes, every mile offers a new story to tell. With both road and ADV options available, your perfect ride awaits right here in the heart of Arkansas.

STAR is more than just a rally—it's a family reunion for riders who share the same passion for two (or three) wheels. Meet old friends, make new ones, and join a community that welcomes everyone. From the New Members Ride to the Ladies of the MSTA Meet & Greet and countless impromptu



conversations in the parking lot, you'll find that connection is what makes this event truly special.

When: **Saturday-Wednesday, October 17-21**

Location: **Holiday Inn, Springdale, AR**

Contact: For information and

registration: <https://ridemsta.com/star/>

STAR Coordinators: [Jerry & Jamie James](#)

MSTA Fall on 2 Wheels Rally

When: **Friday-Saturday, October 23-25**

Location: **The Lodge at Two Wheels of Suches, GA**
(706) 973-1671

Our fourth year of gathering at one of the motorcycle Meccas in the U.S. Situated perfectly in the Suches Valley, all roads leading in and out (both paved and unpaved) are simply spectacular for motorcycling.

Reserve your spot fast as this event has limited lodging and sells out VERY quickly, if nothing is available, keep checking with the resort as reservations do open up intermittently!!

Contact: For information and registration:

<https://www.ridemsta-ga.com/events/rallies/fall-on-two-2026>

For additional Florida events and information, 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.

Feature Article



Our First STAR: Was It Worth the Trip?

By Jerry James

[Editor's Note: This article is a reprint of one that appeared in the August 2021 Florida Gator Tale. Please note that Jerry James is the organizer for this year's STAR in Northwest Arkansas. This article describes his fun experience at his very first STAR in West Virginia.]

Editor's Request: If you have ridden somewhere interesting at any time and would like to share your experiences and some photos from your journey with other riders, please contact editor@flmsta.org to publish an article. Thanks!]

We were so excited to attend our first STAR. When the decision was made that 2021 would be held in Canaan Valley in West Virginia, Jamie and I were all in. We signed up early and started to look at how we could make it a good 10-day vacation. The wheels were put into motion and the planning started.



After a few days of planning, we decided that we would head out to STAR on Thursday June 10th after I got out of work. We would continue early Friday morning and get into Canaan Valley sometime around late

afternoon. This would be easy to do as we made the choice to trailer the bike. We wanted to be able to camp during our stay and this is the easiest way to do that.

Black Water Falls SP was our destination for the rest of the week. We would camp there and spend the rest of the week exploring the West Virginia landscape. The stage was set for an epic journey, so let's ride!

THURSDAY JUNE 10: THE ADVENTURE BEGINS.. AFTER WORK OF COURSE!

It is always a long day when you start vacation at the end of a work day. The good news was, the day went by quickly. Jamie met me at the store around 3 pm and we were ready to hit the road. We rolled a few hours down the road and stayed at a hotel in Rolla Missouri. Looking back on it we probably could have driven a few more hours and had gotten closer to our destination. We ate a quick dinner and made it an early night, as we wanted to get going early the next morning.



FRIDAY JUNE 11: WEST VIRGINIA HERE WE COME! THE RAIN JOINED US AS WELL!

We got up early, grabbed some coffee and was in the Jeep headed to Canaan Valley by 6 am. We beat the

Friday morning traffic in St. Louis and enjoyed a nice drive across Missouri, Indiana and Kentucky. We did not stop much as we were making great time. Jamie and I love road trips. It is a great time to chat and solve all of the worlds issues. The weather was great until we rolled in West Virginia. As soon as we crossed the border the skies opened up and it rained... HARD, for the next 5 hours! We were very happy to be in the nice dry confines of our Jeep. There are times when a trailer is awesome, and this was one of those times.

We arrived at the [Canaan Valley Resort](#) around 7 pm, wet and a little stressed out after driving hours in some of the hardest rain we have seen in a long time. We left the bike on the trailer since it was still raining and more importantly we were starving! The rooms were decent at the hotel, but the lounge was awesome. It was open, served cold beer and had some pretty darn good pizza. It was not a long night. We had been on the road all day and the visions of great roads were in our heads. We slept very well.

SATURDAY JUNE 12: TODAY WE RIDE! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY!

I got up bright and early to grab a cup of coffee before heading down to the jeep to unload the Versys. We slept very well, and we were excited to hit the road. We had set up a ride on Facebook earlier in the week. We did not know who would be coming, but it really did not matter. We wanted to enjoy the wonderful sights and smells of West Virginia.



We wanted to enjoy the wonderful sights and smells of West Virginia

[Read more...](#)

Safety Talk



Cooperation
by Doug Westly

[IMPORTANT NOTICES: 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.

Editor's Note: We think Doug's safety tips merit repeating. This safety article is a repeat from the October 2021 issue of The Gator Tale.]

MSTA is all about our common interest in motorcycling, particularly our love of sport-touring. This means we ride a lot and we ride together. Here are just a few thoughts about group rides....

Riders need to understand that the group rides safely when everyone conforms to a set of either verbalized or understood guidelines. This is one of the most challenging parts of participating in a group ride. Very few riders handle a motorcycle exactly the same way. The exception may be two riders who have ridden together for years. However, generally groups are informal and rarely composed of the same riders from ride to ride. Different riders with varying skills, attitudes, equipment and riding goals tend to have differing techniques. How a group integrates those differences is key to safety and having a fun ride.

Along those lines, here is the first step to always follow, which establishes the rules for a group ride: The pre-ride meeting. Before the group ride, the group leader, whether appointed informally or formally, needs to take control of the ride and establish the ride guidelines. He or she needs to specifically verbalize how the group is going to ride, discuss the route, destination(s), planned stops, emergency procedures, riding formations, etc.

It is up to the group to participate in the meeting and all to agree on these guidelines. If an individual doesn't want to adhere to the rules, or is concerned about them, then he or she needs to speak up.

Once the ride is underway, now it is time to pay attention, not only to your bike and riding conditions, but to the group's performance as well. If the group adheres to the rules, then all should flow smoothly. If someone isn't playing by the rules, it is time to notify the group leader, or in extreme cases when the

group can't solve the problem (or is the problem), then maybe the rider needs to make the courageous decision to simply bow out of the ride. If this becomes necessary, then riding etiquette dictates that you inform the leader of your concern and decision not to further participate in the ride.

If you observe a rider who is not adhering to the established group riding rules, then make sure you speak up! Nothing will endanger a group ride faster than someone who doesn't follow the agreed-upon ride guidelines.

Finally, for group leaders: It is YOUR responsibility to ensure a safe ride. You agreed to this when you stepped up and assumed the mantle of group ride leader. If a ride isn't going as planned, then YOU need to fix it. If a rider isn't following the group's riding style, then you need to address it immediately, to ensure the group enjoys the ride and most importantly, for safety.

If this all sounds a little direct, that is by design. Group riding is about enjoying riding and fellow motorcyclists. We do that by riding safely and by the rules.

Ride Safe!

—Doug Westly

Florida News



Florida News

Well, the Atlantic is behaving... Halfway to the end...

So far, hanging out in Florida has been prudent compared to most everywhere else!

Hope you enjoyed the reprint of the 2021

Feature Article from Jerry James' first STAR. He's this year's organizer of STAR in Springdale, AR!! Be making your final plans **NOW!** Look for Tom's East Brunch report below. He had a few struggles at the end of his Rhine River boat cruise... And the self-hosted Western Brunch rides are working out just fine!!

Five Westies and Alan S. from the Eastside enjoyed The Blueridge Grill on the 15th!



The South Brunch Ride began as an easy-peasy ride to LaBelle. Three rode out from the Wawa meet up and found the Red Roaster ready for us.

The menu was huge, the food and service was good, and we enjoyed the vibe and each other's company. The real adventure started when we departed for home. The predicted rain events were piling up along the coast as we ventured further eastward. Timing is everything, as we only encountered wet roads, having missed the passing showers. Within 10 minutes of each of our home arrivals, the skies opened up!

Member Promo!!

If you have purchased anything motorcycle-related that has blown you away with its features or price or performance, send me and/or Kim an email with a short write-up and website. We'll include a **Member(s) Promo** each month that you send something in...

What's Next??

You *are* making plans for STAR '26, right?!?! Registration is open, the hotel is taking reservations and Jerry has a substantial website up and running! Get with it!! I'll see you in Springdale, AK, in October!! <https://ridemsta.com/star/>

We have **three** rides planned for September!! Tom will host the East Central Brunch ride, September 12th, at the Sunnyside Cafe, in Melbourne Beach.

The West Central Brunch ride, Sept. 19th, will be self-hosted at Gloria's Restaurant, in Bowling Green. I'll ensure the restaurant knows you're coming, and those who attend can enjoy each other's company and share some seriously good grub! This would be a great time to email some of the contacts at the

bottom of our announcement to see who might be considering the ride-to-eat!!

On September 24th, Van will host the South Brunch at the Eggshells Kitchen, in Okeechobee!! Always check the Rides Calendar on our website for last minute changes!!

We have inserted an email response "button" to our announcements to assist our coordinators with the reservation headcount. Click on the green "button", then hit the send arrow. The pre-loaded email will be on its way!! Easy peasey!!



Membership News!!

If you are receiving the *Gator Tale*, but not my announcements, **PLEASE** email me ASAP to correct my files. I believe I'm up to date...

Pat Mogavero is our MSTA Membership Director! We have adapted to the new presentation of monthly data over these last few months. So far, Pat has introduced several improvements with a few more tweaks to come. **Big Thanks!!** patrickmogavero@gmail.com Contact him directly with any membership issues.

The following MSTA memberships have or will be expiring soon:

- **Vince Heilman**
- **Michael Kwon**
- **Robert Miller**
- **Brian VanScoy**

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and continue supporting their MSTA. If you have a question about when your membership expires, please contact the **NEW MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM** at <https://ridemsta.com/membership-account/membership-levels/> or simply visit the **MSTA Website**

at www.ridemsta.com and **LOG IN** and then click on **MEMBERSHIP**.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please direct them to the **MSTA Website** at www.ridemsta.com. For each new member you recruit and who provides your name and/or membership number on the application, you will receive a coupon for a **raffle ticket for the motorcycle touring package 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.

Random Ramblings!!

Don't stop riding this season! Get up earlier and bring some water along!!

Smile every morning that you see yourself looking back in the mirror!!

Hoping you're living the life you love, and loving the life you live...

When you can...

Join one of our monthly rides!!

And invite a friend to ride along!!

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

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Director



July 2026
East Central News
Tom Blake

Unfortunately, I was en route home from Frankfurt, Germany, when the EC brunch took place on the 8th. I was supposed to

have gotten home on the 7th, but flight delays pushed it out a day.

Next up: *Sunnyside Café* in Melbourne Beach at 9:00 AM on September 12th.

Safe Journeys - *Tom Blake*, East-Central FL Area Rep

Florida MSTA Apparel



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!!

Classified Ads

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to editor@flmsta.org. Don't trash it, recycle it! One man's trash is another man's treasure!

Contact Information

These MSTA websites have extensive event information:

National MSTA: RideMSTA.com

SE Regional MSTA: MSTA-SE.com

Florida MSTA: FLMSTA.org

We're also on **Facebook:** facebook.com/FLMSTA/

More contact information:

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