



FLMSTA Newsletter | June 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.

North Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 6, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Florida Cracker Shamrock's - Irish Tavern**

8343 E. Orange Ave., **Floral City, FL** (352) 726-6414 ([map](#))

Description: Make your way to this quaint little place! They'll be expecting you...Highly recommended!!

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

East Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 13, 8:00 - 10:00 AM**

Location: **Mulberry Lane Café**, 3440 N. Harbor City Blvd.,

Melbourne, FL (321) 426-7149 ([map](#))

Description: BRUNCHES are back!! A great place for breakfast. Not only a café, a bakery, too. Paved parking.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 20, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **The Drawbridge Restaurant at Torry Island**,

3300 W. Canal Street N., **Belle Glade, FL** (561) 722-0783 ([map](#))

Description: Some place new...Some place close...A "who knew" destination for us!!!

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

West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 27, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Hitchin Post Cafe** 10903 Lithia Pinecrest Road, **Lithia, FL**

(813) 737-4026 ([map](#))

Description: Omelettes, skilletts and large sandwiches for a hearty breakfast/brunch. Make your way here - highly recommended!!

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

MSTA Red River Gorge Rally

When: **Thursday-Sunday, June 25-28**

Location: **Comfort Inn, Mt. Sterling, KY**

Description: The 2026 Red River Gorge Rally will be held at the COMFORT INN, Mount Sterling, Kentucky on JUNE 25-28, 2026. An MSTA-sanctioned rally that is open to all motorcycle riders, regardless of club affiliation.

Custom suggested routes will be available for download to GPS devices. The location was chosen to take advantage of the abundance of twisty and scenic roads that are found in the eastern part of the state.

Contact: For information and registration: <https://ridemsta.com/ky-rrgorge/>

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 Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, July 11, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Mulberry Cafe** 113 W. Badcock Blvd., **Mulberry, FL**
(863) 943-4181 ([map](#))

Description: The menu is to die for... Bring your appetite! **Look for details in our Ride Announcement!!**

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

East Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, June 18, 8:00 - 10:00 AM**

Location: **Country Ham 'n Egg Restaurant** 478 US-1, **Sebastian, FL** (772) 589-4845 ([map](#))

Description: Popular eatery with a nice selection of breakfast and lunch items.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, July 25, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Lures Bar & Grill**, 3330 N. Indian River Dr., **Jensen Beach, FL**
(772) 208-5974 ([map](#))

Description: New-to-us destination! Simple place, great menu and wonderful reviews!! Be sure to double up the bikes in parking area!

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

MSTA Brick's Backyard Boogie Rally

When: **Thursday-Sunday, July 9-12**

Location: **Big Lynn Lodge, Little Switzerland, NC**

Description: The Big Lynn Lodge is located on a mountain ridge right next to the Blue Ridge Parkway, a few miles south of Spruce Pine, North Carolina. It is one of the most beautiful settings you will find for a place to stay. There are fantastic roads in every direction from the doorstep of the lodge. Every guest has breakfast and dinner included with their room and everyone dines together for both meals. Food is healthy and tasty with soft drinks and desserts, which include homemade pies. This area has some exceptional technical routes, both pavement and dirt, created by Doug Pippin. They are some of the best you will ride anywhere, ever. As if all of that is not enough, there will be entertainment on Friday night. Almost Vintage will play out on the back porch. Once again, the BLL Ride will have available Anne-Marie LaFrance, a professional massage therapist, so attendees can sign up for a free 20-minute massage on Friday and Saturday afternoon.

Contact: For information and registration: <https://ridemsta.com/nc-biglynn/>

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

The Florida MSTAs chapter also has a presence on Facebook with upcoming events and past photos.



Lovebugs - A Few Facts, Myths & Tips By Jim Park

[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!]



Flip down your visors, riders, as our Lovebug Season is upon us!

Florida riding always has its share of bugs, but hands down, the Lovebug takes first prize for all of the flying critters we typically encounter on a ride.

Each year, between April and May and again in August and September, these adorable little creatures descend upon us by the millions. Their squashed remains are difficult to remove; they stink and for the motorcyclist they taste...well let's not talk about their taste.

Amazingly enough, the Lovebug's life cycles is linked with celestial seasonal cycles of Earth. Adult Lovebugs die after their late summer breeding season, but their young live on. New small larvae will emerge as adults after the spring equinox. If we are fortunate enough to have a few cold fronts pass through the Sunshine State or a low amount of rainfall it may reduce the birth rate of the bugs so we may experience a few less on our roadways. Unfortunately they are not limited to appearing in large amounts in just the spring but reoccur during their mating season in late August and September but usually in smaller numbers.

Perhaps you've heard that Love Bugs originated from the laboratories of either the *University of Florida* or *Florida State University*. Not true! The Lovebug, which is actually a fly whose scientific name is *Plecia nearctica*, migrated naturally from Central America along the Gulf of Mexico. It was first identified in southeastern Texas in 1940 and has since spread through the Gulf Coast states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, as well as Georgia and South Carolina.

[Read more...](#)

Safety Talk



Florida Summer = Rain 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 August 2017 issue of The Gator Tale.]

Yep, it's here...the rainy season. I was riding home from my local shop just the other day, and it happened. I had beautiful sunny weather for the ride to the dealer and was there in about 20 minutes. I walked out to my bike, and the storm clouds were already gathering. During the 12-mile ride back home, it was in succession sunny, cloudy, dark, drizzle, pouring rain, wet

roads with standing water, then bright and sunny again.

Welcome to Florida in the summertime.

We could spend an entire afternoon telling war stories about Florida rain. What I would like to pass along here are what I think are the most critical parts of this enduring FL summer riding malady:

- **Rule 1 - It's going to rain.** Accept it and just think of it as a way to cool off. The best part is seeing the riders trying to ride in the pouring downpour - those that aren't wearing a helmet or gear.
- **Rule 1a - When you pass them, make sure your wave... :)**
- **Rule 2 - When the roads first get wet, the water pushes all the oil to the top.** The roads get SLICK. Be super careful. (If you can) Turn up the traction control. Turn down the power delivery. Stay out of the lane centers where all the oil and grease accumulates.
- **Rule 3 - Increase your following distance.** Enough said.
- **Rule 4 - Watch out for the crazy cage drivers.** A lot of them have no clue what reduced traction on wet roads even means.
- **Rule 5 - Watch the clouds.** Dark is bad. Black is worse. I've changed directions more than once to avoid the oncoming Black Wall of Death.
- **Rule 6 - A GPS with weather radar is worth its weight in, well at least silver.** It can tell you which storm fronts you can ride through and when you need to apply Rule 5 above.
- **Rule 7 - Rain is one thing. When you start hearing thunder, that's something else.** I once had a bolt hit the tree I was riding by at the time. The concussion pushed me almost off the road. And that one didn't even hit me. Avoid noisy storms when at all possible!
- **Rule 8 - Want to avoid all the rain? Ride in the early mornings.**
- **Rule 9 - Rule 8 doesn't always work...**
- **Rule 10 - Riding in the FL summer rain is an exercise in caution.** Focus on your riding techniques, traction, traffic

awareness, etc. If it gets too bad, seek refuge. Chances are the weather will change in 5 minutes anyway.

Year-round riding is one of the reasons we all live in this awesome state. With it comes a few challenges, one of them being the summer rains. Take it in stride, make sure you realize the safety precautions required when the raindrops start to fall, and ensure you always Ride Safe!

***Ride safe!** – Doug Westly*

Florida News



Florida News

Here comes the rain, hopefully without the "wind"...

Ah, that time of year again for the Floridians... Prepare for the worst, hope for the best! And check out our Safety Article for wet weather riding tips! Catch Tom's East Lunch Ride report below. I've added a few words about the ride in my report as well! And seven Westside riders enjoyed brunch at the Wooden Spoon over in Plant City. The Western summer rides are off and running!!

We bunched our rides into the first three Saturdays, so all could enjoy their Memorial Day Weekend with friends, family and memories of lost ones who served our Nation.

As Tom's East Lunch Ride to Vero Beach was within reach of several Southies, I set up a scenic route up the barrier islands from Palm Beach to Indian River Counties. Peter K. joined me at the Wawa on his new-to-him Triumph 400 Scrambler. A good choice for our 2-lane adventure. We rendezvoused with two others at the Cumberland Farms pit stop. I managed to make the ride even more scenic as we pattered through two city parks that abut the restaurant but not connected to it... Seems a little more route research would have put us almost at the front door right off US 60! As Tom reports, we had a terrific lunch. Peter chose not to run his single cylinder hard on I-95,

leaving Larry and I to punch it home southbound in the rising temps. Glad to have made the extra ride!!

A week later, eight of us left the Shell Station headed for Lightsey's Seafood Restaurant in Okeechobee. We were blessed with the presence of two long-time absentees - James S. and Joe G.!! And on his first ride with the Southies, Bruce G. rolled in on his proper scooter. Remember, it matters that you ride, not what you ride! And Bruce thoroughly enjoyed his time with the group - Harley, BMW, Kawi, and Suzuki among us! He's new to the area, from MN, and opted to do more sightseeing after lunch. Despite the presence of luv-bugs, Mike C. rode over, and Eve drove over from the Westside. Fortunately, we had minimal encounters with the bugs on our routes.

As usual, we were treated right, starting by sitting indoors at a table comfortable for the 10 of us. Tall tales and lots of gab kept us laughing all through the lunch. And our 50/50 raffle netted \$22 for James S.(!) who donated \$20 back to the Club! So, the East and South total for May was \$72, for a new total of \$1,373. Always a **BIG THANKS** to all who participate!!



South ride to Lightsey's in Okeechobee - lots of laughs and gab and good food during lunch

What's Next??

Registration is **OPEN** for **STAR 2026!!** Go to <https://ridemsta.com/star/> This is the comprehensive webpage for the entirety of STAR '26!! Peruse the website, and then click on **Register Today**. Everything you need to know can be found here!! Sign up today!!! I'll see you in Springdale, Arkansas, in October!!

We have **FOUR** rides planned for June!!

The North LUNCH ride, June 6th, and West Central BRUNCH ride, June 27th, will be self-hosted! I'll ensure the restaurants know you are 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 announcements to see who might be considering the ride-to-eat!!

Tom will host the East Central BREAKFAST on June 13th at the Mulberry Lane Cafe in Melbourne. On June 20th, Van will host the South BRUNCH at a new-to-us location. The Drawbridge Restaurant at Torry Island, in Belle Glade.

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.

FLMSTA welcomed a new member in May - Mark Hey of Palm Coast. Welcome!

The following MSTA memberships have or will be expiring soon:

- **Larry Solomon**
- **Donna Villarose**

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!!

Hope you're out riding this season... you know what's coming!!

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



May 2026
East Central News
Tom Blake

Hoping to stay cooler and mostly lovebug free, the EC lunch was held at the Riverside Café in Vero Beach on May 9th. Larry S rode up to Palm Bay to meet up and ride back to Vero for the occasion. So I treated him to a jaunt down Fleming Grant Road in Micco and Little Hollywood. Then we had a little trouble finding the restaurant but eventually located it and found six Southies and Mike from way over in Sun City waiting for us.

We arranged to be seated in the bar area which had a good river view and comfortable A/C. Staff helped us shove enough tables together to be comfortable. Everyone found something on the menu they thought was appealing and in no time the food was delivered. My Buffalo chicken sandwich was massive and de-lish. I struggled to eat most of it. Heard several compliments. So maybe it will come back onto the agenda again next year.

The 50/50 raised \$40 and Larry S had the winning ticket. He graciously donated \$10 back. Thank you Larry and thank you all for your continued support of our club.

No one thought to snap a picture. So I'll just give you the names and let you visualize: Rick A, Mike C, Van, Joe T, Larry G, Peter K, Brian V, Larry S and me.

And coming home I was reminded what 95° feels like on a motorcycle!

Next up: EC will be back to 8:00 breakfasts in June. Mulberry Lane Café on US1 in North Melbourne is on tap for the 13th. Everyone praises their breakfasts.

Safe Journeys, Tom



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:

Kim Longacre, Newsletter Editor

editor@flmsta.org

P. "Van" VanSteelant, FL State Director

busavanflmsta@gmail.com

(561) 386-2594

Tom Blake, East Central Area Rep

(321) 794-6147

tblake1@cfl.rr.com

FL MSTA 217 SE 3rd Street, Boynton
Beach
United States of America



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