



FLMSTA Newsletter | July
2025

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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 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 Breakfast Ride

When: **Saturday, July 5, 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM**

Location: **Backwater-Wickham Road**, 5555 N. Wickham Rd. #101, **Melbourne, FL** (321) 600-4335 ([map](#))

Description: Unique and comfy spot for breakfast, including create-your-own pancakes! Friendly and attentive service, cool atmosphere and reasonable prices.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, July 19, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Mulberry Cafe & Coffeehouse**, 113 W. Badcock Blvd., **Mulberry, FL** (863) 943-4560 ([map](#))

Description: Bob S. will be your host for this event!! Join him, won't you?!? The menu is to die for... Bring your appetite!

Contact: Bob Shields, boju29@msn.com

South Brunch Ride

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

Location: **Happy Chef Restaurant**, 1506 US-27, **Lake Placid, FL** (863) 465-2443 ([map](#))

Description: Favorite destination, new-to-us restaurant! Simple fare, home-cooked goodies!

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

Just For Fun MSTA Rally - Big Lynn Lodge Ride

Thursday-Sunday, July 10-13

Location: **Big Lynn Lodge**, Highway 226A, **Little Switzerland, NC**
(828) 765-4257

Coordinator: Chris Parker, chris@roadwolfdesign.com

Contact: <https://ridemsta.com/nc-biglynn/>

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.

East Central Breakfast Ride

When: **Saturday, August 2, 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM**

Location: **La Crepe de France**, 707 East New Haven Ave.,
Melbourne, FL (321) 837-3760 ([map](#))

Description: Their crepes are delicious, though a tad pricy. Be there by 8:00 - that's when they open, and they fill up fast with limited seating. On street parking only.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

West Central Brunch Ride

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

Location: **The Original Mike's Grill**, 1037 N. Broadway Ave.,
Bartow, FL (863) 800-3130 ([map](#))

Description: Join Eve as she hosts this brunch ride to an oldie but goodie!!

Contact: Eve Blazsur, 6saturdaysretired@gmail.com

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, August 16, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

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

Description: New-to-us, locally owned, and the menu looks terrific!!

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

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](#)

Feature Article

Editor's Request: 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!]

Ural with Sidecar in Paris by Ellen Kocher

Yes, that's Paris, France. It's not Paris, TX, TN, KY or elsewhere. In May of this year my daughter Jennifer and I were on vacation in France. Back in August of 2024 we had signed up for a guided group tour in Normandy. Since we were flying into Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris, it was decided we'd spend some time in Paris prior to our Normandy tour.

Jenn and I worked together to get the timed tickets to some of the museums and attractions we planned to visit, but Jenn was keeping the schedule for our itinerary because she needed to update it on a

somewhat regular basis depending on availability. When our departure date grew near, I noticed an entry on Saturday morning, May 10th, that read “surprise for Mom.” Hmmm...I wondered what Jenn had in mind but knew I had to be patient and simply wait and see. On that morning, we went to Square Laurent-Prache next to Saint Germain des Pres church, and I waited for my surprise.

Turns out that my Mother’s Day surprise was a ride through the streets of Paris for 1 ½ hours as passengers on a vintage Ural motorcycle with sidecar. Retro Tour supplied us with open face helmets with goggles and gloves. We put our purses in the storage area behind the seat of the sidecar. Gregorio, our driver, asked if we had a preference for areas of Paris we’d like to see. My daughter said we’d already done a walking tour of Montmartre and a walking/food tour in the Le Marais area, so whatever else he might want to show us was fine.

Greg said we’d ride around awhile and then stop and change seats (from the “bucket” as he called it to the passenger seat behind the driver). I opted to sit in the sidecar initially so I could easily take pictures with my phone. Jenn was the motorcycle passenger.

What a thrilling ride we had as Greg maneuvered and weaved through the traffic! We waved

and spoke to other riders when stopped at the same traffic lights. The majority of motorcycles are smaller, but we did observe a few BMWs that sure seemed more suited for highway riding instead of the congestion of Paris. There were lots of scooters and bicyclists sharing the roads though. Greg drove us on streets that provided us with a view of the Seine and narrated about where we were, although sometimes it was a bit difficult to understand because of his French accent and the noise from the street. The Ural, however, was fairly quiet. We rode past Notre Dame and notable Paris landmarks.

Our stopping place for Jenn and me to change places was at Parc du Champs de Mars which afforded us a view of the Eiffel Tower. We assumed the tourist stance, and Greg took photos of us there. I had already taken photos or videos of us riding down the Avenue des Champs-Elysees on our way to see and ride around the Arc de Triomphe (some bumpy

cobblestone streets there), and other areas of Paris.

[Read More](#)

Safety Talk

Florida Riding - Not for the Faint of Heart 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: This article is reprinted from the February 2023 edition of the FLMSTA Gator Tale.]

Van says...Adding 500,000 new residents to Florida last year, we have many more potential "Hazards" to contend with. Doug's words ring ever more true...

As we rode home from the latest MSTA lunch gathering, it only took two miles from the restaurant to experience Florida riding hazards! I almost got hit twice by inattentive drivers. Really? Anyway, that got me thinking about some of the different hazards we face in Florida, compared to the rest of the U.S. riding areas...

Hazard #1 - Older drivers. You know them. They have achieved their life's goals. They have retired, moved to Florida, bought a big car and are driving to their pickle ball appointment, usually slow and in the left lane. Beware the pickle ball driver, as they have no clue, change lanes without warning, and will skewer you before they even realize they have wandered.

Hazard #2 - Foreign drivers. I am all for legal immigration and opportunity. However, when a foreigner brings their (usually atrocious) driving habits with them, the result is serious danger to all of us on 2 wheels. To them, a red light is a mere suggestion. My hat is off to our MSTA brothers in SE Florida. I don't know how you do it. I refuse to ride in the Ft Lauderdale/Miami area, except to carefully and quickly scoot through on the way to Key West!

Hazard #3 - Wildlife. Alligators, wild pigs, buzzards, LARGE turtles, deer, turkeys (yes, the wild ones will fly)...you name it, we've got it. If you ride in the rural areas of central Florida, be prepared for the indigenous, non-human residents.

Hazard #4 - Local Idiots. OK, these are everywhere in the U.S. However, it seems we've got more than our fair percentage of them. You can usually tell them by the age and condition of their vehicle. If there is a gun rack in the back window, especially if it's being used at the time, I advise caution.

Hazard #5 - Other Bikers. Notice I didn't characterize them as "Motorcyclists." I draw a distinct difference between the two. Motorcyclists, regardless of the brand loyalty, understand the sport, are considerate of other riders (again, regardless of the brand), wave a friendly greeting and even say "hi" at motorcycle gathering spots. "Bikers" on the other hand are interested in themselves and how their bike enhances...well, whatever they are trying to enhance. This is where I apply my own "Chrome Rule". The more chrome (or carbon fiber; the two are identical for this purpose), the more suspicious I become of their riding intentions. Maybe they just love chrome and they are actually accomplished, considerate motorcyclists. On the other hand, pass or be passed with caution when the Chrome Clown appears.

It simply comes down to this: We may not have the best roads in the country to ride, but we do get to ride them year round. There are good roads everywhere. Unfortunately, with our wonderful riding weather and good pavement also comes other highway users. It's up to everyone to keep a wary eye for that older, foreign, idiot

weaving all over their lane, with their cell phone in their hand (almost forgot to mention that one!). Remember, just because you think you're an accomplished rider doesn't mean the idiot won't come for you! Pay attention out there, wherever and whenever you ride!

Ride safe! – Doug Westly

Florida News

Florida News

You know it's summer when the weather reports include what's going on in the tropics...

Reminder... We have rides scheduled through to September. After that, **WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR WEST AREA AND NORTH AREA REP(S) FOR REST OF 2025 AND BEYOND.** Contact Van for details. We can entertain a flexible schedule(ing) where 1-4 different members could organize events throughout the year.

THIS IS YOUR CLUB, MAKE IT INTO WHAT YOU WANT IT TO BE!!

And you've likely noticed we have a feature article this month!! A big THANKS to Ellen for sharing her big Parisian adventure with us! Made me nostalgic for my own scooter story from back in 1973...

Be sure to catch Tom's report below, along with the cute plaques! Bob hosted his first West Central Brunch Event at the Hitchin Post Cafe in Lithia on June 21st! Seven rode in to join Bob on 4 wheels. He was at the end of his recovery period from recent surgery, and was released to ride this week!! We have a shot of satisfied diners ready to get home before the heat of the day! *(photo)* Look for more West Central rides hosted by Eve or Bob this summer!!

The South Brunch Ride on June 7th to Rosa Cafe in Arcadia also attracted seven riders. Buck, Tulio and Van met up, and were joined by Jay at the Love's Station, to make the straight-road ride to lunch. Lounging outside in the shade, Eve, Dennis and Jeff were awaiting our arrival. Just a heads up - SR 70 (Hickory St.) through Arcadia is STILL under utility construction, and is STILL a bumpy 1-lane affair.

This was a new-to-us location, and we were all impressed! Like other restaurants recently, we ordered and paid first, then enjoyed our scrumptious entrees delivered to us in their spacious dining area. We all agreed that next year, a return ride for lunch here needs to be scheduled!

Buck, Jay, Jeff, Dennis, Eve and Tulio on the South ride to Rosa's Cafe in Arcadia

As promised, here's our 50/50 sum as we start our summer rides. As of July 1st, we have \$1,183. We paid \$23 in February to GoDaddy for our domain name. Our website bill, covering 3 years,

was paid last year. And our current email marketing service is free, as we are under their usage threshold. A big help compared to GoDaddy's \$144/year! We may be in a good position to make a charitable donation once again this year. The Dan Clark Safety Fund comes to mind... Presented during STAR in October? You all will have a say in where our Chapter funds end up.

What's Next?

On July 5th, join Tom for the East Central Breakfast at Backwater in Melbourne!! Be sure to join Bob on July 19th as he goes back to back with a West Central Brunch ride to the Mulberry Cafe, in Mulberry! And on July 26th, the Southies head to a new-to-us location in Lake Placid - Happy Chef Restaurant!

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 *Officially* our new MSTA Membership Director! We will be adapting to the new presentation of monthly data over the next few months. We may have a periodic "catch up" month announcing new members and who are about to expire.

FLMSTA added a new member this month - Jason Malek of Port St. Lucie - Welcome!

These Florida memberships have recently renewed:

- **Kim Krzywicki**
- **Nate Laney**

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

You've registered for STAR '25 by now, right?? I am!! And I have my hotel reservations!

Keep on coming out to enjoy all the rides we have planned this year and bring a friend!

Please send your recommendations to any of the ride coordinators.

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

Mulberry Lane Cafe

North Melbourne

Tom Blake

So, we're back to 8 AM summertime breakfasts this month. This one was at the *Mulberry Lane Café* in North Melbourne – a repeat from last summer. *Good food, good friends, good times.* That's what a sign at the restaurant rightly proclaims. Locals Larry, Doug & Carol, Andy and I were joined by Alan from Winter Park, Lance and Rick from PSL and Mike, from way over in Sun City Central, for a lot of good-natured gab and some really good food.

Though they don't take reservations, they did have tables pulled together for us back away from the east-facing front window through which the morning sun can be distracting when still low. I thought we were treated very well.

Up next: I'm looking forward to this one, too. It's called *Backwater*. They're on Wickham just south of the Pineda Causeway Road. It's a very attractive place with unique food offerings and great service. Some tables have their own pancake griddles. And there's plenty of paved parking.

Safe journeys, *Tom*

Clockwise: Carol, Doug, Lance, Tom, Mike, Alan, Rick, Andy and Larry at the Mulberry Lane Cafe in North Melbourne

Florida MSTTA 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!! Shopping finds online...We found some fun motorcycle t-shirts you can order online. Click the image for this particular t-shirt. There are other fun motorcycle t-shirts online at

<https://teespring.com/shop/motorcycle-tshirts>.

**2019 KTM Super Duke GT
For Sale - \$10,500**

Contact: Tom Blake at 321-794-6147 or
email tblake1@cfl.rr.com

Current mileage: ~18.3K
(Approx 3,600/yr.)

Well cared for and maintained

New Michelin Pilot Road 6's at
15,869 miles

Battery replaced April 2022,
maintained with Battery Tender

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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