



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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Contact Information:

South Florida Director:

Van VanSteelant – busavanfilmsta@gmail.com

Central Florida Director:

Carl Swofford – carltr6@hotmail.com

Florida Gator Tale Editor:

Kim Longacre – editor@flmsta.org

Feature Article

The Home of the Fighting Terriers and Other Scenic Destinations

By Steve Phillips

[Ed. Note: This article was previously published in the March 2014 edition of The Florida MSTa Gator Tale. Hyperlinks have been added.]

We are hitting the way-back button!! Please enjoy revisiting Steve's article about "going home again"!! Mind you, a few improvements have come to Titusville since 2014. Like all of the recent launches by SpaceX, which has rekindled the excitement of witnessing men and women returning to space!!]

Recently the subject of team mascots came up while socializing with fellow riders, and I proclaimed my high school

mascot was one of the most fearsome of all creatures, the Terrier. Yes, sports fans, I graduated from Titusville High School, the home of the fighting Titusville Terriers. After being met with looks of disbelief and laughter, I tried to explain to my incredulous friends that the Titusville Terrier is not your ordinary run-of-the-mill terrier, but a bull terrier, a dog with an egg-shaped head that is sometimes referred to as the "gladiator of the canine race". At any rate this experience got me thinking about a return trip to my old high school.



*Steve's alma mater –
Titusville HS, home of the
fighting Titusville Terriers*



*1988 FXSTS Harley-Davidson
Softail*

My fellow alumnus and friend, Jeff, had also wanted to return to the area after I told him how much I enjoyed stopping off at the Canaveral National Seashore on my way back from Daytona Bike Week in March. Although we had both ridden motorcycles while we were in high school, Jeff had been instrumental in getting me back into riding motorcycles in 1995. Jeff had purchased a Harley-Davidson shortly after his divorce and repeatedly advised me that I too needed a Harley to enjoy life and occasionally escape from the tedious dullness of my suburban existence. This eventually resulted in my purchase of a 1988 Harley-Davidson Softail Springer, shown in the sample photo (left).

Jeff and I decided to make the ride up to Titusville on Saturday, January 18, 2014. A cold front had come down the state, and the skies were cloudless. The temperature was hovering around 50° when we left at 8 AM and headed north on I-95 from West Palm Beach. I was on my ST1300. Jeff had remained loyal to the Harley-Davidson brand and was riding a CVO Electra Glide. When we pulled into the gas station on Highway 50 some two hours later, I confirmed on my phone's weather app that it had not gotten any warmer and that, while it was expected to warm up to the mid-60's in West Palm Beach, another cold front was on its way down the state, and Titusville would have a low of 38° and a high of 56° that day. Although I was fairly comfortable in my ATGATT and full-face helmet, Jeff looked a little frozen after riding two hours with his open face helmet and short windshield. After topping up with fuel, we decided that our next stop would be the old high school.

While driving through town it became sadly apparent that Titusville had been badly impacted by the cancellation of the shuttle program and general downturn of the economy. I lived there in the late 60's and early 70's when men were landing on the moon, and the space program was at its peak due to the Apollo program. One of my extracurricular activities, besides playing football and surfing, was being involved with the Civil Air Patrol. During the Apollo launches, the town's population would literally swell by hundreds of thousands of people, and we would assist in traffic control. People would begin arriving days before the launch and park wherever they could along the banks of the Indian River, which separates Titusville from the launch pads on Merritt Island. It has been estimated that over one million people gathered on July 16, 1969 to watch the Apollo 11 launch.

Upon arriving at the old alma mater, we took some obligatory pictures (see above). We then decided to drive by our respective old houses before having lunch at one of the remaining great attractions of Titusville, [Dixie Crossroads Seafood Restaurant](#). I'm sorry to say that I had never been to Dixie Crossroads before although I had heard about it many times. That day it was cold, and I wanted some good seafood gumbo to warm me up. I was a bit disappointed when I didn't see it on the menu. However, my disappointment did not last long as the waitress informed me that their soup of the day was New Orleans-style chowder, a/k/a seafood gumbo. It was fantastic and made the trip worthwhile by itself. I suggest if you have never been there, go. It is not expensive, at least not for lunch and worth the ride. It is also big enough to handle a large group, so I also recommend it as a ride-to-eat destination for group rides.



Canaveral National Seashore

Following lunch, Jeff and I decided to head out to the [Canaveral National Seashore](#). For those of you who are not familiar with it, the Canaveral National Seashore is located on a barrier island that is accessed from Titusville to the south and New Smyrna Beach to the North (see map). The southern part is known as Playalinda Beach, (Spanish for “beautiful beach”), the middle section as Klondike Beach, and the northern section as Apollo Beach. Unfortunately, A1A does not run the entire length of the seashore. For that reason, if you want to access the southern part of the park traveling from the north you will have to enter via the Kennedy Parkway (Florida State Road 3), which intersects with US 1 just south of Oak Hill. The area became a national park in 1975. p a larger version of the adjacent map: <https://www.nps.gov/cana/planyourvisit/upload/CANAMap1.jpg>.

It's easy to get to the Canaveral National Seashore from Titusville. We were already on Garden Street where Dixie Crossroads is located, so all we had to do was head east over the causeway and then connect with Highway 402. There is a manned gate and a charge of \$15 dollars for motorcycles (valid for 7 days) to enter the park.

Playalinda Beach is in fact a beautiful beach, as I hope the accompanying photos show. It wasn't a national park when I used to go surfing at the beach in high school, but it was occasionally closed for security reasons when there was a launch. If you visit the beach, you can clearly see the VAB (Vehicle Assembly Building) and the historic launch pads 39A and 39B used in the Apollo and Space Shuttle programs.



Playalinda Beach

After taking a few photos of the beach, Jeff and I decided to take the Kennedy Parkway (Florida State Road 3) north to pick up US 1 at Oak Hill before heading back south to West Palm Beach. The Kennedy Parkway is an enjoyable road since it passes through an uninhabited area and has very little traffic. The only potential stop occurs if the bridge is up at the Haulover canal that connects Mosquito Lagoon with the north end of the Indian River. I have included a picture taken last year when I actually caught the bridge on my way back from Daytona Beach. We were only on US 1 for a few miles before picking up I-95 north of Titusville and heading back south.



(l) Tracking station with Mosquito Lagoon
in the background
(r) Haulover Canal Bridge

Overall I would say it turned out to be a great day with good weather, riding and food. What more could I ask for except maybe a different name for my high school mascot?

–Steve Phillips

Safety Talk

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. [Ed. Note: This article was previously published in the February 2018 edition of *The Florida MSTA Gator Tale*.]

Solo Riding – Best Recommendations *By Doug Westly*



Photo: lostadventure.com

As I prepare for a Saturday solo ride of about 400 miles, it occurs to me that MSTA riders are a strange bunch. While most motorcyclists are happy always being in a group, we occasionally (and for some, always) like to get out by ourselves. And I am not talking about a ride around the block, either. It may be across the state, or in my case down to the Everglades and back, just for lunch, or even across the country with nobody to keep us company except the bike.

There are entire books, online forums and seminars where you can find tips and hints on long-distance, solo riding. Long distance riders all have their own tips and techniques. Here are a few of mine:

A thorough bike check. You are going out there, depending on your mount to get you to your destination. Before you go, do a thorough inspection of the bike. I don't mean a once-over. I am talking about putting your hands on every nut, bolt, fastener, cable, line, light, spoke, etc. Don't just check air pressure. Rotate the tires and inspect the tread. Do I even have to mention oil? Well, I did, anyway. Find it before it finds you, otherwise luck could mean you're stuck on a backroad in the middle of nowhere. And do this check at least a week in advance, so you have time to order, repair, replace or fix anything without having to rush at the last minute.

Make a riding plan. That means route, gas stops, meals, nightly stops if it is over-night, etc. Take a look at the weather fore-cast and plan, plan, plan. Once you make the plan, stick to it. Oh, and tell someone the plan. That way they know where to go look if the worst were to happen.

Check-in. With today's communications, there is no reason to ever be out of touch. Enable your location finding for your significant other. If you are going to be way out there, then get a SPOT or other type of satellite communications. It's easy, fairly inexpensive and means you can always reach out if you need. Don't let your loved ones worry.

Don't overextend yourself. Make sure your riding plan is realistic. Take more frequent stops. Long distance riders tend to want to just keep riding. There is a difference between fun long ride and an Iron Butt challenge.

If you haven't done a lot of long distance days, try this. Instead of thinking about it as one long ride, imagine it as a number of short rides, from one planned stop to the next one. Mentally that makes it a lot easier to absorb and manage.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Start before the ride. If you wait until the morning of the trip, you're too late. Your body needs time to absorb and process. Once you're on the road, stay hydrated. Use a hydration system. That way you can take sips during the ride, and not depend on stopping to get a drink.

Finally, go out there and enjoy the solitude. I do some of my best thinking when I'm on a long, solo ride. Maybe an epiphany will strike you as well, while you're alone on the road.

Ride safe! – Doug Westly

Florida News



South Director's Report

Ah, another year better than the last!!

As we continue to deal with COVID 19 and the myriad of variants, we can still look back on a year that was much more fun than 2020! If we can just get to 90-95% vaccination protection, I'm sure 2022 will be even better.

We began the year as we ended 2020. A park and restaurant location for each ride as the vaccine rollout struggled to gain a footing. As the counties and pharmacies took the lead in inoculation arrangements, more of us got the jab and looked to share our meals back in the restaurants.

Summer came with a decline in misery, and we brunched!! STAR 2021 was a big success with just a few concessions to social distancing and fist-bumps rather than the usual hugs. With health-related restrictions and mandates outlawed in Florida, fall and now winter find us still enjoying the hospitality industry, but a little more cautiously. I think the recommended booster shot many of us received has contributed to our comfort levels.

The **Statewide Holiday Lunch Ride in Winter Haven** in December was very well attended! 20 riders from all over the state made their way on a beautiful day to the Flightline Restaurant. Mike, Buck and Van made good time to meet up with Brian at our gas station rendezvous north of Sebring. From there, we were able to hang on CR 17 most of the way to Winter Haven. A few miles of unavoidable 4-lane highway riding and we were looking at a "parking lot" full of planes!



Great turnout for the Statewide Holiday Lunch Ride in December at the Flightline Restaurant at Winter Haven Airport.

With a full restaurant, service was a bit slow. Seems to be a new-normal...Nonetheless, we had plenty of distractions with planes arriving and departing. Even had a G-9 whoosh its way in! Most of us enjoyed the pulled-pork special the chef whipped up for our group. As usual, good grub and great gab!! Tom Blake made off with a share of the 50/50 raffle, leaving us with a total of \$877.00 for 2021. (An accounting for our Web-based services from GoDaddy was sent out in December. January 2022 begins with \$566.00)



Beautiful day to eat outside and watch the planes arriving and departing

With 190 miles left to get home, our group was thankful for the wonderful afternoon weather. Retracing our route home made for good times and served as a blessed reminder that we were still here, and enjoyed another year of riding and camaraderie!

What's Next??

Ok, I intend to support and encourage everybody's decision on whether to ride, eat and be merry. I am leaving the LUNCH rides as scheduled WITH CONDITIONS!!

All restrictions have been lifted for all enterprises across Florida. No new warnings or mandates will be forthcoming. We will continue to contact the restaurants to listen to how they are operating. The latest variant news will likely cause some concern in the near future. I will send out the usual email announcements after our research.

On **January 15th**, head to Westgate Smokehouse Grill in River Ranch for the **Central Lunch Ride**. A week later, **January 22nd**, join us for the **South Lunch Ride** to a new place - Cowpoke's Watering Hole in Sebring.

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...

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...

The Florida MSTA welcomes one new member – Michael Lombardo of Jupiter. Welcome!

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

Tom Batchelor	James Beyerl	Frederick Blackall	Raymond Harcourt	William Hart
Kevin Healey	Brian Johnson	Judy Powers	Prior Powers	Bob Shields
Alan Spears	David Sumner	Van VanSteelant	Dennis Villarose	Donna Villarose
Jeffrey Withrow	Ilse Zeigler			

These Florida memberships have recently renewed their membership in the MSTA:

Stephen Evans	Don Moe	Don Mroczenski
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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 membership committee at membership@ridemsta.com. Renewing or joining can be done quickly and securely 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 the new member of our new membership team, **Scott Snedden, 11484 Waterwood Dr., Tyler, TX 75703**, and not to the address of any 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 brand-new **Invitation-To-Ride Tri-folds!** 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 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!!

With the latest surge of the scourge now in full gallop, I do hope to see more riders roll up their sleeves for a shot to regain any positive momentum!! Most of us qualify for the booster shots, which I gladly took. I did so because I know I'm surrounded by unvaccinated persons on a daily basis, who are adding and abetting the constant creation of COVID variants.

Enjoy the Holidays and be safe at the same time. We want to see you all riding next year!!

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 Co-Director

Florida Rides This Month

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: Saturday, **January 15th, 11:30 am – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Westgate Smokehouse Grill**, 3200 River Ranch Blvd, River Ranch, FL ☎ (863) 692-1321 ([map](#))

Description: This will be our 5th trip. It's definitely a unique property. And despite the SR 60 slog, it has been very well attended. We'll do the enclosed deck again since it's a little quieter, and they do have heaters out there. I suspect there will be a few Southies filling a table or two as well!

Contact: Carl, carltr6@hotmail.com, or ☎ (386) 793-0030

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **January 22nd, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Cowpoke's Watering Hole**, 6813 US-27, Sebring, FL ☎ (863) 314-9459 ([map](#))

Description: A new place for us to try in the New Year!! Member-suggested and in a fine location for lots of riders to come together for gab and grub!! Join us for some Florida "winter" with plenty of Tiki/outdoor dining!!

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

Dania Beach Vintage Bike Show

When: Saturday, **January 29th, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

Location: **Dania Beach Vintage Bike Show**, Foster Park, 200 NE 2nd St., Dania Beach, FL ([map](#))

Description: FINALLY!! It's back!! Over 250 antique bikes to be judged under the trees at Frost Park! Here's the link: <https://www.daniabeachvintagebikeshow.com>

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 any updates.

MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **February 5th, 11:30 am – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Tillie's Tavern & Grill**, 12 E Magnolia Ave, Eustis, FL ☎ (352) 602-7929 ([map](#))

Description: Hugh, Carl and several other north Orlando guys tried this place out and thought it was even better than the 1884 Restaurant. They're just down the street from the old 1884 location.

Contact: Carl, carltr6@hotmail.com, or ☎ (386) 793-0030

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **February 19th, 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

Location: **Seminole Casino Hotel Immokalee**, 506 S. 1st St., Immokalee, FL ☎ (239) 658-1313 ([map](#))

Description: Hot Damn!! The second annual **Rockabillaque Florida Car and Bike Show** hits the Casino grounds!! More info to follow. For now, we'll figure on all day attendance. Food is available in the Casino. Likely food trucks/vendors with the Show.

<https://www.seminoleimmokaleecasino.com/dining>

Here's the link for the Show: <https://www.rockabillaqueflorida.com>

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

MSTA Daytona Bike Week Lunch Ride

When: MSTa Lunch Ride – Thursday, **March 10th, 11:45 am – 2:15 pm**

Daytona Bike Week - Friday-Sunday, **March 5th – 14th**

Location: **St. John's Marina & Resort**, 2999 FL-44, DeLand, FL ☎ (386) 736-6601 ([map](#))

Description: This year, we're returning to St John's River just west of Deland. It's only about a half hour from the Daytona Speedway. As you approach the bridge on SR 44, turn right at the KOA sign and follow the paved road back and then along the river to the Grill. Great river and marina views. The food's not bad either.

Daytona Bike Week (Friday-Sunday, March 4th-13th) - Possible bike races: Flat Track, Supercross and Daytona 200 Road Race

Contact: www.officialbikeweek.com

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](#).

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>.



The MSTA National [website](http://www.msta.org) has extensive event information.

National MSTA RideMSTA.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 South Director ☎ (561) 386-2594 busavanflmsta@gmail.com	Carl Swofford Central Director ☎ (386) 793-0030 carltr6@hotmail.com

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!