



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

June 2023 - Volume 16 Issue 6

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Feature Article

From 2 Wheels to 3 Wheels

By Ellen Kocher

I learned to ride in the mid-1980's, mostly on shell rock roads in the town of Suwannee, Florida. My husband and I had a "fixer-upper" small house there and we spent holiday weekends and often Spring break weeks there with the kids for many years. Yamaha motorcycles (TT200 and XT250) were our motorcycles of choice in Suwannee where pavement was minimal.

After riding my husband's Yamaha 650 in and around West Palm Beach, he said I should get a BMW so we could go touring on our motorcycles. Andrew also owned a BMW R100RT then. That's when I acquired my own first Beemer, a 1986 R65. While helping me put the first 600 miles on the R65, Andrew decided it would be a good idea for him to have a similar bike. Haha! What an excuse to add another motorcycle to the stable!

Here's a photo of me in June 1987 leaving the motel in Belfast, Maine. I was hooked on motorcycle touring since this was a hundred times more enjoyable than riding pillion on the R100RT with my husband, as we'd done previously. That summer trip in 1987 led to another summer trip in 1988 that included not only New England states again but riding to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In 1989 our R65's took us to a number of national parks in the Southwest as we traveled in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and elsewhere.



Ellen on her first Beemer R65 in Maine

The photo of our R65's was taken at a rest area in New Mexico where teepees covered the picnic tables!

Fast forward from 1987 to 2022. 35 years of traveling on 2 wheels and attending BMW rallies (MOA and RA) and now MSTa and STAR events – how could I not enjoy the scenery, curvy mountain roads, and lasting friendships with other riders. Oh, yes. Let's not forget a fabulous Edelweiss trip in 1990 to Germany, Austria, northern Italy, Luxembourg and a side trip to the races at the Nürburgring. Competitors back in 1990 included Wayne Rainey and Kevin Schwantz.



Teepee-covered picnic tables at a rest area in New Mexico

Now it's 2023, and I'll never be taller than 5'2" (even with higher boots). I came to realize that a motorcycle with 3 wheels would be a major safety feature and eliminate all the tip-toeing I've done for the past 35 years when maneuvering in parking lots, stopping and starting on hilly surfaces, and even simply moving my motorcycle out of my garage! With encouragement and advice from MSTA members Dennis and Dorothy Anderson when I inquired about their Can-Am Spyder, I knew this was definitely an option for me. After searching online, watching YouTube videos, and reading various reviews, I was ready to head to the dealer.



*"Charlotte" my new ride
a 2022 Can-Am Spyder RT*

Enter "Charlotte" my new ride, a 2022 Can-Am Spyder RT. The photo in my driveway was taken the day it was delivered to me by Broward Motorsports. I'm still getting used to the differences in handling (no leaning in curves), but with each ride I know it was the right decision for me. I signed up for the 3-wheel motorcycle riding course which required a 5-hour online MSF eCourse and then two weekend half-days of riding the range to develop plenty of maneuvering skills.

Motorcycling has given me some of my finest experiences. With my 28" inseam, it has been a challenge through the years riding my Beemers (R65, R1100RS, F650GS and R1200R). They have all been fantastic motorcycles, but I'm ready for new adventures on my Spyder now. I'm looking forward to future rides and making more memories!

-Ellen

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. [Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the February 2019 FLMSTA Gator Tale.]*

Downsizing for Safety and Fun

By Doug Westly

Why do so many riders think that unless they have the biggest, fastest bikes around, they are somehow less of a rider?

I surmise that like in a lot of other industries and enthusiast venues, we have been brain-washed by the “experts” who tell us that more horsepower equals more excitement and fun. The bigger the bike, the more we are perceived as a “real rider”.

The reality is very different for a lot of riders. Yes, an experienced and capable few (probably less than 10%, in my estimation) can expertly handle that 150+hp, 600+lb, 34” seat height adventure bike (you may substitute touring bike, sport tourer, cruiser, etc. here as you wish). A larger percentage can safely ride it to less than its full performance envelope the majority of the time. Then there is another large percentage who want/need/must have it simply because it is the newest, fastest and “coolest” bike out there. In the process, those latter two categories of riders may be sacrificing fun and safety. By the way, this refers mostly to male riders. I think it has something to do with them equating the size of their bike to the size of...well, you get the point. I will point out that this doesn't eliminate the female gender, though. I've seen some of the same struggles there as well.

There is also the challenge of aging. As riders get older, just handling a big bike can be taxing.

Too many times I've attended informal bike gatherings where I watched a rider struggle with a bike that was obviously too big or heavy for them. I'm not referring to simply backing up a motorcycle in a gravel parking lot. Almost everyone struggles a little with that at times. I am referring to riders who are challenged in just picking the bike up off the side stand.

If a rider has difficulty managing their bike under the most benign conditions, what is going to happen in an emergency situation?

Perhaps some riders should consider an alternative. Instead of struggling with the biggest, fastest, heaviest bike they can barely manage (and can't lift if it were to simply fall over), maybe a smaller, lighter mount is the way to go.

Sometimes we forget that smaller bikes can be just as much and often more fun than the latest OEM behemoth. A smaller, lighter bike means more control in those ungainly moments. It means not having to worry which foot you have to put down when the pavement falls away on one side, at traffic lights. In emergency maneuvers they pretty much turn on a dime.

You may also find a smaller, lighter bike is actually more fun to ride. I certainly do. One of my favorite rides in the garage is a Honda CB500X, a full 150 lbs. lighter than my big ADV touring machine.

Smart riders know what they can safely handle. They also know how much fun (and less work) a smaller motorcycle offers. Sometimes good things do come in small packages...

Ride safe! – Doug Westly



South Director's Report

The solstice is coming, the solstice is coming...

The Finns go all out in their appreciation of Juhannus as a National Holiday. Lake Worth has the largest despiria of Finns, and they do know how to party... my lips are sealed as a condition of my participation, despite my Belgian ancestry!!

Meanwhile, we had lots of fun this past May!!

The Southies squeezed in one last lunch ride before the summer heat, heading to Lightsey's Fish Co. An annual favorite, we attracted 21 riders/drivers. I did 4-wheel it, as I had MOHS surgery for a non-malignant skin cancer, so the forehead wasn't helmet ready! Jim Park took over ride leadership and brought 4 along. Riders from further south, greater Tampa and around Melbourne, helped us take over their "back porch"! Special mention to Rob Croot, who joined us after a few years of absence; and Carl and Ilse, who two-upped on Carl's new-to-him Triumph that replaced his previous one, which was lost in the accident a few months ago. Both are nearly fully recovered!!



We took over the "back porch" at Lightsey's Fish Co.



Good vibes and good grub at Lightsey's

The good vibes and good grub made for a great event! The weather remained pleasant and the Luv-Bugs remained hidden!! Our 50/50 raffle was well funded, and our winner, Jim Park, donated his half back to the Club, adding \$90 to our funding. The East Central Brunch Ride and the West Central Brunch Ride also added \$21 and \$20 respectively. So May totaled \$131. Against our April total of -\$8.00, we begin the summer with \$123.00!! As always, a BIG THANKS to all who participate in our raffle!!

Be sure to catch up with the East and West Central ride reports below. Now helmet ready, I managed to ride to both. Over 500 miles and lots of smiles!! Both locations were terrific and well attended!

And one more nod of condolences to Steve Phillips' family and all his friends for their sudden loss of truly one of the GOOD GUYS in our lives...

What's Next??

We have three rides in June. On the 3rd,, join us for a South Brunch Ride, when we head to an old favorite, Marsh Landing in Fellsmere. With STAR this month, we moved the East and WestCentral Brunch Rides to the same day, June 24th. The East ride heads to the Osteen Diner in Osteen!! The West ride heads to the Breakfast Station. We kept the locations 2+hours apart to make sure everyone can enjoy their place of choice!

I hope to see a bunch of you at STAR '23!! You can still make a last minute decision and register onsite if you have a change of plans... You know it's in Knoxville, right!?!?

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...

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...

We welcome two new FLMSTA members this month: Thomas Longo of Fort Lauderdale and Elaine Kendall of St. Augustine. Welcome!

These Florida memberships have recently renewed:

Dennis Anderson Dorothy Anderson Robert Fischer Mike Smith

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

Douglas Christensen Kim Krzywicki Bill McDaniel Robert Miller

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 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!!

We have lots of **BRUNCH** rides for the next several months. With 3 rides a month, you have plenty of chances to invite a friend along and introduce them to our group!! More ITRs are available now...

We will continue to support our local, small business restaurants. Please send your recommendations to any of the ride coordinators.

We've had a terrific year sharing good grub and lots of great gab!! Our new personnel are making 2023 even better... 😊

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

East-Central Ride – Mrs Mac's Fillin' Station, Vero Beach, FL – Tom Blake

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WOW! Mrs Mac's Fillin' Station in mainland Vero Beach was our first brunch destination of 2023. It's not a large place, but it's very popular. So, I dropped by for a face-to-face over a week in advance. They had two dining rooms, one larger – both very clean. Otherwise, the place was a seasoned motorhead's paradise with black-and-white checkerboard tablecloths, lots of old car things like old license plates, signs, oil cans, an old gas pump outside and an old gas pump nozzle for a door opener. Classy. Couldn't wait.

They were holding tables for us when most of us got there at 9:00 AM, so we filed in early. Carl and Ilse, flashing big smiles and looking very chipper, showed up late and had to settle for a table away from the rest of us. Our sixteen riders took up about a third of the larger dining room. Actually, there was a seventeenth, but he had to leave unexpectedly before everyone got seated.



FLMSTA and Space Coast BMW riders made up the 16 riders who enjoyed excellent food and coffee at Mrs Mac's Fillin' Station.

The MSTA accounted for seven of the sixteen and the Space Coast BMW Riders most of the remainder. On hearing about the Dan Clark Safety Fund, one of the BMW guys decided to join MSTA on the spot via his phone. So, Herman Greinstein, welcome to the MSTA. There were two others also showing interest. We are not in competition with one another. It's just that each club operates a little differently and has its own appeal. Several of our members belong to both.

Van won the LD honor with 125 miles, barely eking out Carl and Ilse's 121 miles. That's really pressing the envelope for a brunch ride! Alan was also above the century mark at 105 miles. We appreciate everyone who showed up. Some of the BMW folks didn't participate in our 50/50, so only \$20 went to the winner, Mike DeMario.

One thing's for sure, Mrs Mac's food and coffee were excellent. The hostess got most of us seated quickly, our waitress was great, and the kitchen did a really good job of turning the orders promptly. Lots of friendly chatter was going on. It did get a bit warm back in our corner. People lining out the front door waiting to get seated, and the early heat and humidity outside probably didn't help. All in all, I think we all enjoyed the destination and camaraderie.

The next East Central ride is on June 24th to the Osteen Diner on SR 415 in Osteen, just south of Maytown Rd from Oak Hill. Breakfasts any which way, decent prices, paved parking. Hope to see you there!



Great riding and food at Johnny's Egg House in Frostproof

West-Central Ride – Johnny's Egg House, Frostproof, FL – Doug Westly

What a great turnout at Johnny's Egg House in Frostproof! We had 13 riders, from the west, east and south! Johnny's was extremely supportive, as always, and gave us their private back dining room. Everyone stayed a little longer than usual, and the riding stories flowed! The weather was beautiful for the ride, with blue skies and perfect temperatures. With STAR next month, we've doubled up the East and West Brunch rides, on June 24th. Since they will be 2 hours apart on the East and West coasts, there will be a spot for all the central FL MSTA'ers. Hope to see you at one or the other in June!!

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 South Brunch Ride

When: Saturday, **June 3rd, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

Location: **Marsh Landing Restaurant**, 44 N. Broadway St., **Fellsmere**, FL ☎ (772) 571-8622 ([map](#))

Description: Yep, back for brunch!! The Central rides left this place out, so the Southies will take up the slack! It will be an early departure, but the destination is worth the effort!!

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

MSTA Florida East Central Brunch Ride

When: Saturday, **June 24th, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

Location: **Osteen Diner**, 195 State Rte 415, **Osteen**, FL ☎ (407) 323-6469 ([map](#))

Description: We haven't been here in many years. It's one of those small-town, comfort-food diners that's always busy. That means the food's good and reasonably priced. Plus, its easily accessed via SR 415 (N-S) or the Osteen-Maytown Rd from Oak Hill.

With STAR this month, we have doubled up the Central Area Brunches for June. Given they are nearly 2 hours apart, the East/West members will be well served either way!

Contact: Tom, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎ (321) 794-6147

MSTA Florida West Central Brunch Ride

When: Saturday, **June 24th, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

Location: **Breakfast Station**, 1242 S Broad St, **Brooksville**, FL ☎ (352) 593-4906 ([map](#))

Description: A new-to-us destination! The menu looks to die for!!

With STAR this month, we have doubled up the Central Area Brunches for June. Given they are nearly 2 hours apart, the East/West members will be well served either way!

Contact: Doug, flwingrdr@msn.com, or ☎ (813) 928-1663

MSTA STAR 2023

When: Saturday-Wednesday, **June 10-14, 2023**

Location: **Holiday Inn-Knoxville West, Cedar Bluff Rd**, 9134 Executive Park Dr, **Knoxville, TN**
☎ 865-693-1011 ([map](#))

Description: STAR is the annual national rally for the MSTA. In addition to great riding opportunities, there will be a full schedule of fun activities, including: Welcome Ceremony, New Members/First Time Attendees Meeting, New Members Ride, Ladies of the MSTA Meet & Greet, Annual Members Meeting, Lunch Ride, Mike Morris Snipe Hunt, Closing Banquet & Awards, Annual Bike Raffle- a Canyon Red 2022 Royal Enfield 650 Interceptor, Event T-Shirts, Vendors, Seminars. There will be a wide selection of routes and extras.

Contact: MSTA <https://ridemsta.com/star/page5.html>

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 South Brunch Ride

When: Saturday, **June 3rd, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

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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>.



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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Classified Ads



FOR SALE:

2003 Honda Gold Wing 1800 cc

Stream Silver Metallic

Original Owner

34,500 miles

Garage Kept

CB radio, fog lights, rear luggage rack, driver back rest, highway footrests, cruise control, trailer hitch

Very clean. Bike has just been serviced. New tires, battery, air filter, fuel pump, fuel gauge sending unit, drain and clean tank, oil and filter change, clutch fluid flush, brake fluid flush.

Bike runs great and is ready to ride. Title in hand. Asking \$5,995.00

Contact Neal at 561-703-5056 / mejenkins@yahoo.com



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!