



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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Feature Article

From Two Wheels to Three

By Dorothy and Dennis Anderson

Three years ago, when Black Beauty was nearly ten years old, we began the talk about our next motorcycle. We keep things forever...and when we purchased Black Beauty in 2009, we thought she would be our forever motorcycle. But our riding style and maturity, as well as Black Beauty's maneuverability, caused us to begin thinking differently.



*Rachel, the Arachnid, our 3-wheel
2021 CanAm Spyder*

I have ridden behind Dennis for thousands of miles on several different motorcycles: a 1977 Goldwing, a 1987 Yamaha Venture Royale, a 2006 VStrom, and Black Beauty, a 2009 BMW K1200LT. When we met and I began riding behind him, I thought I wanted to learn to drive the motorcycle, but he didn't fancy the idea. Years later when he thought it might be a good idea, I was perfectly content to be the passenger. So I've never had my endorsement. Occasionally, I felt a bit concerned, wondering how I would get us to help in case of an emergency. That was always my only twinge of anxiety in all the thousands of miles we've travelled together on two wheels.

Riding two-up isn't common among MSTa'ers. I don't really fit in the group of other women that ride and Dennis didn't really fit with the men who ride sportier, lighter, one-up models. However, we have always felt welcome and included. We've made many life-time friends and hundreds of acquaintances in MSTa.



*Black Beauty, our 2-wheel
2009 BMW K1200LT*

Let's get back to the story.

Black Beauty has always been top heavy, especially when loaded with our long-distance travelling stuff and us. She's a gem once you get up to speed but getting started, turning around, long waits in the hot sun at a stop light, getting stuck in interstate construction or mishaps...not so much. In 2018, the conversation and exploration of different motorcycles began. At that time, we checked out smaller, sportier, lighter BMW's, a Goldwing, and a Spyder. The smaller bikes were too wide for me to mount, let alone comfortable enough for me to ride more than around the block. The first Spyder we tried was like driving a

truck—not very attractive, rough riding, and hard to steer. So, for another active riding year and through the pandemic, Black Beauty was our ride.

Then Canaan Valley, STAR 2020 happened. We opted for lodging at an airbnb, two miles from the host hotel. It had a long pea-gravel driveway, with brick columns on each side at the entry point, accessed from a county road that was washed out and way off camber. Each time we returned to the house, I hopped off about ¼ mile from the driveway to make the motorcycle easier to maneuver into the driveway. As we were ready to depart, I geared up, walked out onto the county road to be sure the coast was clear then hopped on again, once Den was safely out of the driveway. Then there's trying to do all that in the rain. It was a struggle and getting to be no fun for either of us, even though the West Virginia roads are among some of our favorites to explore. In the hotel parking lot, we'd noticed more Spyderys than in previous years, by the way. And we had conversations with other MSTAspyder riders about their experiences. Most of our conversation on the return trip to Florida was what to do. What to do about a new ride?

These are some of the questions we asked ourselves:

Could we admit we needed something different? We both have a special attachment to Black Beauty. She's the only new motorcycle we've bought together, and we've made new friends, joined MSTA, adapted to full gear all the time, ridden long distances (70,561 miles), and made lots of happy memories on her. Not only do we have an emotional attachment to Black Beauty, admitting that we are no longer strong enough to do all the things we did a few years ago is nearly impossible for either of us to accept.

After considering the options, even if we found another two wheel that was acceptable to both of us, how long would we be comfortable on it? How long would Den be able to squire us around on it? Then what? Even though many drive their first two wheel motorcycle after age 60, at 68 years young, I am not ready to learn to do that. The lawnmower is enough of a challenge for me!

Would we still have the respect of our organization—the MSTA—and other riders?

If we went to three wheels, would we wear less gear? The quick and easy answer to that is NO WAY! Even though we might have an extra wheel, other vehicles and their drivers are our biggest threat on the road, in our opinion.

Would we still be able to park under the shelter at hotels?

Would we feel as free as we do on two wheels?

Bottom line: Would we still have as much fun as we do on two wheels?

Before we got home, we reached a major decision...we'd visit the nearest Spyder dealer as soon as got home.

Early the next morning, we tossed our gear into the car and headed for Route One Motorsports. There we met Mike Simpson, a nice young man with whom we shared several interests. As a Spyder salesperson, he'd taken the CanAm safety course and was highly knowledgeable about the motorcycle. He answered all our questions, including whether we should buy now or wait for the new model year. As with many things these days, 2021 Spyderys are in short supply and there is no promise when 2022's would be available.

We took the demo Spyder for a long ride, including several miles on Interstate 95 to get her up to speed and to a big parking lot to see how nimble she was and/or if she could be tipped or dropped. With the 2021 we didn't

notice many of the issues we'd found with the older model we'd tried earlier. We were pleased with the performance, even though the Spyder is quite different than the BMW.

Finding ourselves holding back a little but still very interested, we continued to talk with the salesperson and found that there was one new 2021 in the back room waiting to be put together...only one...in the color we thought we wanted. During the discussion, I sat in the driver's seat of the demo and experienced something akin to a shock and a feeling of "at home." 😊

We learned that CanAm offers their safety course for \$99/person...it's a weekend event that culminates in approval for drivers license endorsement for those who successfully complete the course.

The rest is history. We made a deposit on the new Spyder and signed up for the course as soon as we were home. Even with his 55 years' experience on two wheels, Den wanted to support me in learning to ride, and thought he might learn some useful things for operating the Spyder more safely and easily.

Of course she needed a name...Rachel, the Arachnid, is a perfect fit. She's been in our garage for more than two months...she's taken us on several short rides, as well as longer rides to Big Lynn Lodge in Little Switzerland, NC, and to northern Ohio. At 6,000+ miles, she's nearly ready for her second oil change.

Oh, and me? I passed the safe driver course and got my endorsement. Although I'm not ready to take any solo trips or drive in traffic, I do enjoy tooling around our neighborhood, and I know I can get us to help in case of any type of emergency. It's great peace of mind.

On our Ohio trip, Den told me he finally felt "at one" with Rachel. That's also a huge deal for him.

We are pleased with our choice. We still get lots of waves from other riders. Every time we stop, regardless of where we are, we are complimented and questioned about Rachel. On the way home from the CanAm safe riding course, we met a group of Spyder riders and enjoyed tagging along with them for a bit. The Florida MSTA "Southies" have been very accepting of our new ride. We have not been denied access to the hotel shelter any place we've stayed when Rachel is our transportation.

There's lots of nostalgia attached to Black Beauty. She still hasn't found a new home. But when we travel on three wheels, it's easier to pack. We ride with assurance through pouring rain or bright sunshine. Rachel is easy to mount and dismount for both of us. Our Sunpass works great, mounted on the inside of the "frunk," and she is a really good looking ride! Wait in traffic? No problem. Unpaved road? No problem. Turn around? No problem. Hot sun? Oh, yes, there's still that.

See you on the road!!

–Dorothy and Dennis Anderson

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 2016 edition of The Florida MSTA Gator Tale.]*

Cooperation By Doug Westly



Photo: Jim Park

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



South Director's Report

Ah, we're in the last quarter... Fall temps are sure to arrive...

And do we have some fun in store for you all!! The best piece of news concerns the North membership and our new Co-Director, Roy Clark. He set up the first lunch ride for the area in years, and you'll find his event report below. We are off and running with a successful first outing! And the Central ride to Gator Joes on 9-11 was well attended with proper remembrance. Carl's report follows below. A huge THANKS to both Co-Directors for their support of the membership and continued efforts on all of our behalfs!!



The gang's all here at Rick's



Ellen enjoying a cup of java at Rick's

For the second month in a row, the South Brunch ride headed to a new location. Rick's Diner in Port St. Lucie was a mixed bag of good and bad. For the 4 Southies who met up at the Shell Station, Ellen, Jim, Buck and Don M., the ride north was briefly entertaining along the curvy section of Citrus Blvd., just south of PSL. Then, we encountered a rather more urban road environment than usual. Navigating the stop lights, we arrived early enough to work with the staff to accommodate our expected group of 10. Despite the phone calls and arrangements, we waited until 10:05 to be seated... The growing crowd included Dennis and Dorothy from Okeechobee, Brian from Sebring, Tom from Malabar, AND Joe from Jupiter. By the time we were seated, we were ready to order!!

Fortunately, the service and food was outstanding!! I even heard suggestions that we keep this place in mind for future eastside rides! It was between bites of deliciousness that I suggested that Dennis and Dorothy contribute an article about their transition from 2 to 3 wheels. Dennis agreed that Dorothy would be the perfect candidate for the project!! Be sure to read her efforts in this issue! And wouldn't you know it, Dorothy was our \$20 winner of the 50/50 raffle as well! I think she made Dennis pay for both of them anyway...Our new total now stands at \$757. A few bills are coming due, so a follow-up email will soon let the members know where we stand.

After brunch and admiring the luggage capacity of the Spyder, nearly everyone made their own way home.

What's Next??

NOW HEAR THIS!! We will have a **Just For Fun Lunch Ride on Black Friday, November 26th**. Tom Blake has stepped up for this one, and we'll feature a promotion in the next Gator Tale!!

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

Florida is still near the top of most of the COVID statistics. Nearly all restrictions have been lifted for restaurants and bars. With that combined with the slight reduction in statewide hospital occupancy, I doubt any new warnings or mandates will be forthcoming. I will continue to contact the restaurants to listen to how they are operating. I will send out the usual email announcements after my research.

We have **THREE RTEs** on deck. The **Central ride on October 9th** will be a LUNCH ride to Don Jose Mexican Restaurant in **Sebring**. Look for a few Southies to be there too! The **South ride on October 16th** will be a LUNCH ride to a new-to-us location in **Clewiston**. The Staghorn Kitchen looks inviting, and ought to pull lots of our southern most members! AND the **North ride on October 23rd** will be a LUNCH ride to Corky Bell's Seafood in **East Palatka!!** Come on, mark your calendars now so nothing else fits on your schedule!!

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 a new member – James Faulkner from Ocala.

These Florida memberships have recently expired or will expire soon:

Steve Albert Tom Blake Brian Dickerson Mike Halburnt
Dennis Mitchell Michael Shooks Diana Dickerson Harry Smith

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

Mike Ewanus Brian Van Scoy

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 newly released guidelines regarding the opportunities for vaccinated people to mingle safely, I do hope to see more riders roll up their sleeves for a shot asap. Most of us will qualify for the booster shots as they are reviewed and approved.

We are aware of the recent developments with the Delta variant and will monitor the recommendations from the CDC and other responsible agencies. Despite the recent setbacks, please do your small part to keep any positive momentum going!!

When you can...

Join one of our monthly rides!!

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

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director



Carl Swofford

Central Director's Report

September Central Ride – Gator Joe's, Ocklawaha

September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. A day that, along with December 7, 1941, will live in infamy. But our nation survived, and life goes on. On this 9/11, the Central Florida MSTA had a Lunch Ride to Gator Joe's Beach Bar and Grill located on the north shore of beautiful Lake Weir.

The morning was overcast but no rain. Two of us met in Altamonte Springs at 09:30 for a 1 ½ -hour ride via backroads north to Gator Joe's in Ocklawaha. The ride was pleasant with no harsh sun beating down. We arrived at 11:00 to find our new North Florida Co-Director, Roy Clark, and Jim waiting in the shade of a big live oak. Soon four more riders joined us. We chose outdoor dining overlooking the lake.



Gator Joe's on the north shore of beautiful Lake Weir. Great menu, really good fellowship and a lovely vista.

Gator Joe's has a great menu, and the food is well prepared and delicious. We ate and enjoyed really good fellowship with a lovely vista. We departed about 01:00 PM in order to beat the afternoon rain. We missed the rains and had a good trip home via the same backroads. It was a really good ride.

My thanks to Roy Clark for stepping up and taking the North Florida Co-Director position.



Roy Clark

North Director's Report

September Northern Ride – The Meet, The Ride, The Eats

I'm a rider not a writer and thought I'd given up reports when I retired, but let's cover the North's first calendar event in quite a while. I'd like to thank Van, Carl, and Kim in even pulling off the posting and notifications of the last couple weeks regarding the North area, as they did not even have the ride info until after Labor Day and I was trying something different. Also, thank you to all who thanked me for stepping forward.

Saturday morning of the 18th arrived after a week of watching weather predictions that we would be in the rain all day. I did, however, decide things were looking much more hopeful and left the rain gear in my top box as I headed out at 7:30 am for the 9:00 am meetup above Live Oak for the ride.

The Meet: I had one person meet me there, but it was one of my favorite riders in the world, Dave Doolin out of Jacksonville. For seven minutes of relaxation and a look at how Dave and I used to ride the Dragon 15 years (and hundreds of thousands of miles) ago, check out the legendary Yellow Wolf's video of Dave set to Creedence Clearwater and Bruce Springsteen on YouTube titled, *Deals Gap ST1300*. We talked about the bikes we've had - for instance, he sold his ST at 180,000 miles and now has an RT and a Goldwing. We ran way past kick-stands-up, and he had to run back to Jax for an appointment.

The Ride: I was now behind on getting to the Rev Café by 11:30 but the good news was I would now ride these beautiful 22 roads across far northern Florida at my own pace. I made it at 11:25 am and parked feet away from our eight-person reserved table, outdoors and under a roof on the square in Monticello. If you find yourself wanting to head toward Tallahassee, take this route <https://maps.app.goo.gl/1KSsiVaAsRhp42ms5> “The Ride” to Monticello then head north to 149 over to Miccosukee to ride the Seven Canopied Roads of Tallahassee.

The Eats: Although this is not a “fancy” restaurant, it’s great with chef-quality food. I had Venison Sliders and Venison Chili. Service is excellent and friendly.



Venison Sliders and Venison Chili at the Rev Café

About 12:15, just after receiving this delicious food and thinking I had no shows, a very friendly rider (Vance Paul), who had emailed me about hoping to attend some North rides, pulled in on his Multistrada. He also owns an ST1300 and is out of the Enterprise Alabama area. Although he appeared to be a little late, he made excellent time because he had to cross the time zone to attend and ride 159 miles which beat my 147. Vance and I had excellent conversations including Little River Canyon which is in the picture of me clinging to the precipice at the start of this report. Vance was also quick to offer help and is going to consider what lunch spot may help us include the Fort Walton Beach, Niceville, Crestview, and Pensacola members.

So, with only three people involved with the day’s events, I consider it a raging success as I rode fun roads and talked great subjects with people I very much enjoy and expect to ride with in the future.

I also didn’t get wet. Everybody knows to ride safe ... I have signed off for years with:

Ride fun.

Roy

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, **October 9th, 12:00 – 2:00 PM**

Location: **Don Jose Mexican Restaurant**, 4731 Lakeview Dr., Sebring, FL ☎ (863) 385-9326 ([map](#))

Description: We are back to LUNCH RIDES!! This place keeps bringing us back!! Waterside patio, central location (beware of a Southie invasion) and a few good roads to enjoy!! FYI - They open the doors at NOON, with the waiting line forming 15-20 minutes earlier!!

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **October 16th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

Location: **Staghorn Kitchen**, 728 E. Sugarland Highway, Clewiston, FL ☎ (863) 301-3310 ([map](#))

Description: A new place for us!! And a lot closer to our Southern-South Florida members!! The menu looks terrific, and they have outside seating in case we get an early break with the temps! Join us for a little adventure...

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

MSTA Florida North Meet and/or Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **October 23rd**, 11:30 AM – 1: 00 PM

Location: **Corky Bell's Seafood at Gator Landing**, 185 US 17, East Palatka, FL ☎ (863) 301-3310 ([map](#))

Description: Great food, great setting. Let's get some of North's members or interested Sport Tourers from Northeastern and North Central Florida together for the first time in a while. (FYI Central Group, this is only 24 miles further up route 17 than 3 Bananas in Crescent City, and if you know the roads west of 17 in that area, they can be quite fun!!)

Contact: Roy, rmkc99@gmail.com or ☎ (352) 363-9348

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 MSTAs [Event Calendar](#) for any updates.

MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **November 6th**, 11:30 am – 1:30 PM

Location: **Goodrich Seafood & Oyster House**, 253 River Rd., Oak Hill, FL ☎ (386) 345-3397 ([map](#))

Description: We are back to LUNCH RIDES!! We're going back to a waterside location!! An old favorite that always delivers! Right on the Indian River, Goodrich Seafood & Oyster House features oysters, po' boys and Southern-style seafood and a back patio.

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

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Saturday, **November 13th**, 11:30 AM – 1: 30 PM

Location: **Gator Shack Restaurant at Babcock Ranch Eco Tours**, 8502 FL-31, Punta Gorda, FL ☎ (800) 500-5583 ([map](#))

Description: Just a little off the beaten path...A new place for us with a history and added value for those who just want to know more about old Florida!! This place is for eats and tours. Check out www.babcockranchecotours.com for all the options. The history link alone is worth the website visit!!

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

MSTA Black Friday Lunch Ride

When: Friday, **November 26th**, 12:00 – 2:00 PM

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

Description: We will once again offer you an escape from the melee of frantic shoppers...And we'll head inland to an old favorite of ours! It's been quite some time since we stopped in for LUNCH here. Bring your appetite and good cheer for a wonderful afternoon of good grub and great gab!!

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

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) 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: [click here](#).

Florida MSTAs Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTAs-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](#) has extensive event information.

[National MSTA RideMSTA.com](#)

[Florida MSTA FLMSTA.org](#)

We're also on Facebook:

facebook.com/FLMSTA/

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Classified Ads

Yes, Van's Busa is looking for a new home!

Fresh oil, new battery, just 2500 miles on Dunlop Roadsmart 3 tires. Adult-owned from new. 112,575 miles. Stock motor and pipes. Runs like a 'busa should. Handles even better.

An excellent entry into the hyperbike realm. You know I sport toured it to Avon, CO and back, right?



Asking \$3,500. Let's talk.

Van – busavanflmsta@gmail.com

561-386-2594



Upgrades:

- Progressive Suspension front springs
- Penske rear spring and shock
- EBC discs and HH pads
- Suzuki Gel seat
- Corbin custom rear seat with backrest
- Loud dual horn
- Genmar 3/4" bar riser

- Frame sliders
- Mirror extenders
- S/W rear mount and universal rack

Still have these from stock:

- Seat
- Rear grab bar
- Rear seat cowl
- Owner's manual and tool kit

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!