



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the
Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

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In the September 2021 Issue:

- Page 1 – [Feature Article](#)
- Page 3 – [Safety Talk](#)
- Page 4 – [Florida News](#)
- Page 6 – [Florida Rides](#)
- Page 7 – [Future Florida Rides](#)
- Page 7 – [Florida MSTA Apparel](#)
- Page 8 – [Classified Ads](#)

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Feature Article

The Art of Travel

By Jim Park

[Ed. Note: This article was previously published in the October 2017 edition of The Florida MSTA Gator Tale. Photos by Jim Park unless otherwise noted. Hyperlinks have been added.]

There is an old saying that the acorn doesn't fall far from the tree; such is my case. By the time I was 13 years old I had seen over 70 percent of the United States and a portion of Canada and Mexico.

My father loved to travel. He was of modest income, but most summers during my youth he



*Chevrolet Corvair Monza
Photo: wikicars*

would manage to find a way to take our family of four on a road trip. We traveled in a Chevrolet Corvair packed full of camping gear, including a cook stove and a small amount of space allotted to each of us and our clothing. Months in advance of our trips he would ponder over travel articles and Texaco road maps, planning how far we could go on his limited vacation time and budget.



Young Jim Park

As his years of service increased as Part Manager of a Chevrolet dealership, so did his vacation time, a rare perk in those days. With these additional days came additional miles on the road and more sights to see. My father's excitement for our next trip was infectious, and our entire family shared equally in his enthusiasm.

Although I have never traveled around the world by sailboat, I think I can strangely relate to those that have. Traveling in a small car with no air-conditioning, completely packed (along with the four of us), required careful planning, tolerance and individual responsibilities. It was no surprise that this didn't always work, but for the most part, we traveled well as a family. My mother took care of arguments between my sister and me by simply relocating the duffle bag of dirty laundry to the rear seat between the two of us! When we arrived at a campground, my father and sister would assemble the tent; I would unpack the sleeping bags and inflate the air mattresses (for sleeping not floating), while my mother would prepare us a hot meal on the camp stove.



Our fellow campers would watch in amazement as this entire process would usually take less than 30 minutes. Soon after we completed this routine, we would head out to visit the local sights...our reward!

I continued to travel and camp throughout my twenties but eventually gave up the camping for the comforts that go along with staying in a hotel. As my wife and I often say, “roughing it” for us is having a room without Wi-Fi or HDTV.



Our current preferred means of travel!

Today, I plan our trips much like my father. I’ve found that those lessons I learned on how to pack our family Corvair translate well into how to pack a motorcycle. I still use travel articles for ideas and carefully plan our routes and sights along the way. However, with today’s Internet, GPS and mapping software, technology has made travel planning much easier than back in those days of our family vacations.

Today our trips begin months before we leave our driveway. I begin by reading travel articles and books to get my ideas. One of my preferred sources is [RoadRunner Motorcycle Touring & Travel](#). This magazine is packed with rides throughout the United States with feature articles in other parts of the world. If you subscribe to the magazine, free GPS files are available for download for most of the articles. Another source is [Rider Magazine](#). Rider also provides articles on travel routes and locations primarily here in the States but sometimes outside of the country.

I also purchase travel books for reference. I have learned to avoid travel books that focus on roads and sights throughout an entire country. These kinds of books tend to give you a general idea of routes but leave out details of routes and points of interest that can be just a few miles from their recommended highway. I purchase books that limit their content to a region or State. There is a series of books that are entitled [Motorcycle Journeys Through...](#) This series typically includes not only detailed route directions but also sights, restaurants and accommodations with full color photography in most editions. Another great three-part series of books for the Appalachian Mountains area is [Motorcycle Adventures](#) by Hawk Hagebak. This series not only gives great details on the back roads of the Carolinas and Virginia but also includes some solid advice on the do’s and don’ts of two-wheel travel. Good sources for information that may not come to mind are travel books for bicyclists. I have found that these books translate well for motorcyclist travel as they definitely seek out those less traveled byways. One that I have used is [Bicycling the Natchez Trace](#) by Glen Wanner, but there are many more written for various parts of the country.

If your travel time is limited, Florida offers some nice weekend places to explore on two wheels. There are many informative books that will help plan a weekend trip: [Best Backroads of Florida](#) by Douglas Waitley, [Visiting Small-Town Florida](#) by Bruce Hunt, or even [Oddball Florida](#) by Jerome Pohlen for something a little different.

Whatever your time and budget allows, invest some time in a little pre-trip planning. It may create memories that will not be forgotten.

– Jim Park

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 December 2018 edition of The Florida MSTA Gator Tale.]*

When to Say No

By Doug Westly



We were scheduled to head out on a ride yesterday morning, and at the last minute I decided to cancel it. I just wasn't in the right frame of mind to be on two wheels.

Motorcyclists often use their passion for two wheels as an escape from everyday life. Riding can help clear our minds, take our focus off of frustrating daily issues, and just generally make us feel better. Sometimes however, it is those very issues that may (and should) preclude us from putting on our gear and getting on a bike.

Have you ever noticed that your riding reflects your current feelings or state of mind? If you're happy and content, you find yourself singing inside your helmet? (Yeah, I do that. It's not pretty...) On the other hand, if you're frustrated or angry, does your riding become more intense?

Our physical riding skills and capability are dependent on a number of factors. Training, experience, frequency of riding, recent riding time, bike type, condition and riding environment all play a part in how we ride. However, our mental capabilities and specifically our state of mind also have a large impact on how we ride.

Even though we may use riding as an escape from our daily routines, if we're not in the right mental state to focus on our riding, AND our emotions may get the better of us while we're on the bike, then it may be a better idea to not strap on a helmet and go roaring off onto the public streets. The question becomes...how do we know when it's not the right time to get on the bike?

I'm not a psychologist, and I am certainly not qualified to issue hard and fast guidelines about when or when not to get on a motorcycle. On the other hand, here is my personal approach to the problem.

If I find that I am not looking forward to riding just for the enjoyment of being on two wheels, then I start questioning my motivation. When I realize that I'm thinking of the ride as more of a task than a pleasure (other than for work), then I start to wonder if I'm doing the right thing by going for a ride. If I am upset about an issue, and the focus of my thoughts is the issue rather than the ride as I start getting ready to head out, then I know I'm distracted and shouldn't be on the bike.

The bigger challenge is not only recognizing that you're not focused on the ride, but actually making the decision not to ride. It's easy to say "I don't care. I'm going to ride." It's a lot harder to make the decision not to ride.

Safe motorcycling means being focused on your riding. You can't be distracted by other issues. You can't allow your emotions (other than being happy and carefree!) to rule how you ride. Being a safe and responsible motorcyclist means knowing when to make the decision not to ride, no matter how nice the weather is, or whether or not your riding group expects you to be there.

Know when to say no...to yourself.

Ride safe! – Doug Westly



South Director's Report

Hooray! We're halfway there...

Here's what I mean. We usually hit the 80's in May, and wait until sometime in November for daytime highs to regularly drop below the 80's. "Summertime" in Florida is a little longer than Memorial Day to Labor Day! So, a few more months of BRUNCH rides ahead of us...

This month's rides dealt with another compensation due to weather. The Central ride was moved to the same day as the South ride to avoid what looked like a certain tropical storm. Two days after the decision to move the ride, we escaped the worst of the storm and enjoyed a rather nice weekend after all... 😊

Our South Brunch ride this month led us to a new destination for us in Arcadia. Myshelly's Kitchen was a pleasant surprise! And having Steve Phillips join us at the meeting place was equally so! Buck and I were set to go when Steve rolled in on a new-to-him FJ-09. The previous owner had set the bike up for just the kind of riding we do, so Steve was thrilled to have only a minor bit of labor to make it all his own.



Delicious menu and a fun time at Myshelly's Kitchen in Arcadia

The three of us rolled into Loves Travel Stop to meet up with Don M and Larry G, who was giving his Speed Triple a workout! Gassed up and away we went to Arcadia, arriving with time to kick a few tires after parking right in front of the restaurant! By 9:30, we had the Dickersons from Bartow, Tom and Eckart from Malabar, Rich from Venice and Dennis from Bowling Green. As usual, Don M from Tamarac enjoyed the most miles ridden! The staff was more than ready for us, with a long table and a couple of servers keeping us happy. Their delicious menu allowed for a lot of happy stomachs. Only a little SNAFU with the checks kept our visit from being perfect. We'll keep this place in mind for a lunch ride in the future as well.

We had enough interest in the 50/50 raffle, and Brian D took home \$23! Our new total now stands at \$737.00. A few bills are coming due, so a follow-up email will soon let the members know where we stand.

With the hot weather holding, the ride home offered us a few alternatives. Larry needed to get back to PSL and Steve P wanted to do a little exploring around Desoto County. Buck, Don and I opted for the Venus bypass south of Lake Placid. Way fun! And our stop at the Tropical Village Market in Clewiston for some cooling ice cream was very welcomed! Though it was mid afternoon by the time we all rolled home, the fun factor overcame the sweaty gear issue!

Of course we had a Central Brunch ride as well. Read Carl's report below!!

What's Next??

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

Florida has moved to front and center in the COVID statistics. Though nearly all restrictions have been lifted for restaurants and bars, new recommendations and possible rule changes may 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 our usual two RTEs on deck. The **Central Ride on September 11th** will be a **LUNCH ride to Gator Joe's Beach Bar & Grill, in Ocklawaha**. The **South Ride on September 18th** will be a **BRUNCH ride to a new-to-us location in Port St. Lucie**. **Rick's Diner** looks inviting! 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:

Carlos Albuerne Alan Hartzog Brian Van Scoy

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

Dell Haverland Carl Mobley Bob Summers Tom & Lynn
Richard Peabody Tulio Suarez Thillet Trieschmann

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.

We are aware of the recent developments with the Delta variant and will monitor the recommendations from the CDC and other responsible agencies. By the time of our rides, we may have to return to only outdoor restaurant options, and/or park settings. 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

August Central Ride – The Cup Diner, St. Cloud

After a postponement because of the threat of a tropical storm which, thankfully did not materialize, three of us met in Altamonte Springs for a brunch ride to The Cup Diner in St. Cloud. The morning was cool and comfortable. Since we were departing at 07:50, we decided to take I-4 to US 441 to US 192 which is the most direct route. None of the three of us has ridden US 441 in years. We normally ride miles out of the way to avoid riding through Orlando.

At that time of the morning, traffic was light and riding I-4 through Orlando was pleasant. We exited I-4 onto US 441 South and only encountered two red lights all the way to US 192. That should be entered into Ripley's Believe It or Not! The last time I had taken US 441, once one got to Gatorland and Tupperware, it was wide open country all the way to Kissimmee. Alas, now it is city all the way.

We arrived at The Cup Diner in St. Cloud at 08:50 and even found parking places in the shade of an oak tree. One other member from Sebring joined us, and we were seated at 09:30. The Cup was crowded, but the service was quick, friendly and efficient. The food was delicious, and the fellowship excellent.

To avoid Orlando in the heat, we rode east taking backroads to pick up FL 520 and go through Oviedo. We did take a break in Chuluota for a cold drink and some a/c. I had hoped for a better turnout, but I know the cancellation and rescheduling caused problems for several riders who had previous plans for this weekend. That is life in Florida's tropical weather.

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, September 11th, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Location: **Gator Joe's Beach Bar & Grill**, 12431 SE 135 Ave, Ocklawaha FL ☎ (352) 288-3100 ([map](#))

Description: Yup, we are sneaking in an early season LUNCH ride!! Back to Lake Weir!! We'll dine on the north shore at an old favorite. Lots of good grub to accompany the gab out on the deck overlooking the lake!!

We have decided to drop the park locations for the remainder of 2021. With the summer heat and the significant vaccination rates for our cohort, we think fewer of you will still consider a picnic table over restaurant service.

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

MSTA Florida South Brunch Ride

When: Saturday, September 18th, 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Location: **Rick's Diner**, 466 SW Port St Lucie Blvd #101, Port St. Lucie, FL ☎ (863) 993-2337 ([map](#))

Description: Another NEW destination for the Southies...We have a few routes to consider...SW Citrus Blvd. will definitely be one of them!

We have decided to drop the park locations for the remainder of 2021. With the summer heat and the significant vaccination rates for our cohort, we think fewer of you will still consider a picnic table over restaurant service.

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

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, **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 Brunch 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

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>.

North Director Needed

If you would consider taking the position of North Director, please contact Van, busavanflmsta@gmail.com.

We welcome articles and comments from our members for publication. Contact the editor at: editor@flmsta.org.

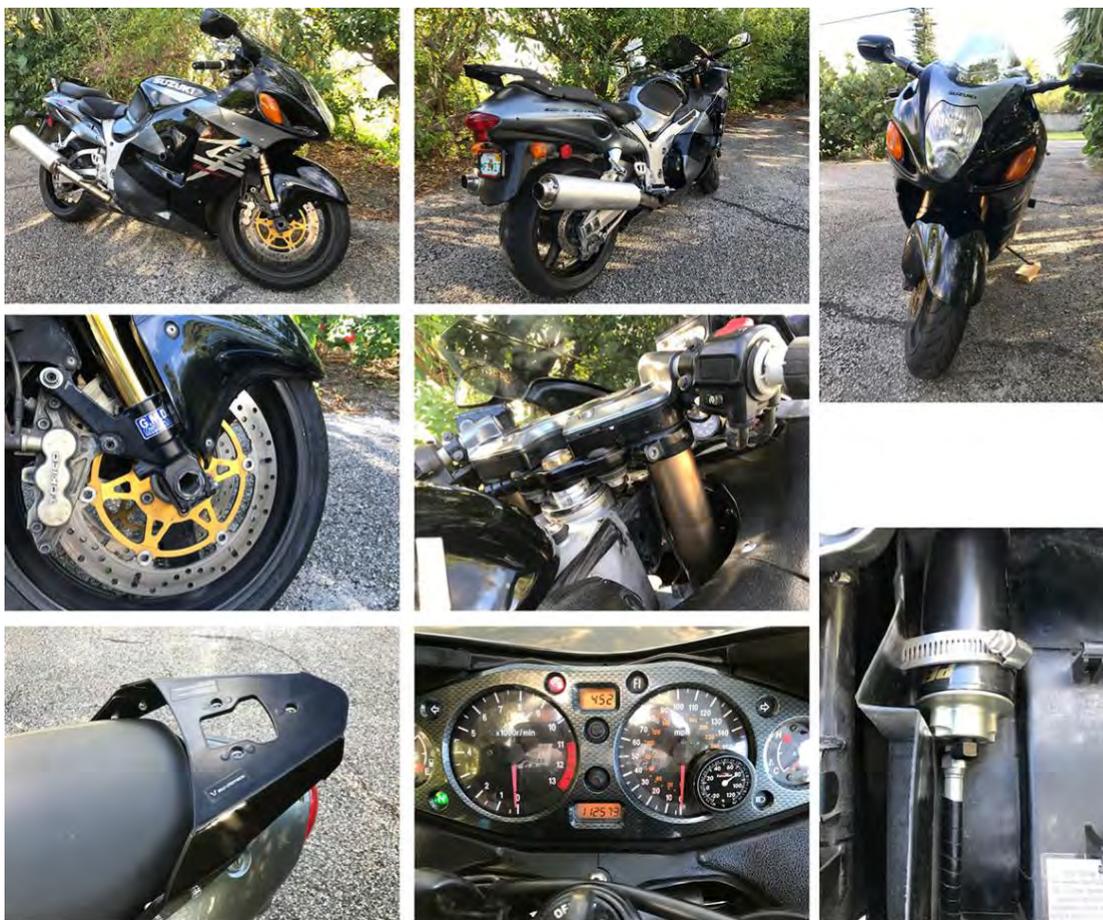
The MSTA National [website](#) has extensive event information.

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Classified Ads

Yes, the 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!