



FLMSTA Newsletter | August 2025

August 2025 | Volume 19 | Issue 8

Welcome to the **Florida Gator Tale Newsletter** from the Florida Chapter of the MSTa! We've updated the newsletter to make it easy to read on your phone or tablet. However, you can still download a .pdf of this newsletter and archived newsletters from the FLMSTA website [here](#). The **Florida Gator Tale** includes all the news about rides, feature articles, Florida state reports and safety information to keep you current with the Florida MSTa.



Rides

Florida Rides This Month

IMPORTANT NOTE: Always remember to check the and/or your email for updates on scheduled rides. Changes in times, dates, and especially locations are often out of our control and with short notice. Please check the [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

East Central Breakfast Ride

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

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

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

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

West Central Brunch Ride

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

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

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

Contact: Eve Blazsur, 6saturdaysretired@gmail.com

South Brunch Ride

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

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

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

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

Future Florida Rides

Note that the future ride events are included to facilitate longer term planning. The destinations and/or dates may be changed just before the

ride dates. Please check the [rides calendar](#) for possible updates.

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, September 6, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Old Dixie Cafe North**, 11189 SE Federal Highway,
Hobe Sound, FL (772) 245-8587 ([map](#))

Description: New-to-us destination, close for the Eastsiders, looks good!

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

East Central Breakfast Ride

When: **Saturday, September 13, 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM**

Location: **Sunnyside Cafe**, 300 Ocean Ave., **Melbourne Beach, FL**
(321) 733-5590 ([map](#))

Description: Member recommended. Delicious breakfasts & fresh-squeezed OJ. Many praise the generous portions & cleanliness! Friendly service.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

West Central Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, September 20, 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM**

Location: **Gloria's Restaurant**, 4816 US-17 N, **Bowling Green, FL**
(863) 375-9955 ([map](#))

Description: Eve will be your host for the last SUMMER ride for the Westsiders! We hope to have events for the October and November by

the end of August...

Contact: Eve Blazsur, 6saturdaysretired@gmail.com

MSTA STAR National Rally - Williamsport, PA

Saturday-Wednesday, October 4-8

Location: **Genetti Hotel**, 200 W. 4th St., **Williamsport, PA**

(570) 326-6600

Coordinator: Dennis Villarose, ipnman2002@yahoo.com

Contact: <https://ridemsta.com/star>

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see the Florida MSTA website's Events page.

The Florida MSTA chapter also has a presence on Facebook with upcoming events and past photos: [click here](#)

Feature Article

Editor's Request: you have ridden somewhere interesting at any time and would like to share your experiences and some photos from your journey with other riders, please contact editor@flmsta.org to publish an article. Thanks!]



The 2025 Big Lynn Lodge MSTA Rally in Little Switzerland NC By Tom Blake

As *The Clash* wondered in their 1982 hit "*Should I stay or should I go?*", I was pondering the same question leading up to the rally.

On the *stay* side, weather forecasts for the rally were absolutely dismal with 70%-90% likelihood of **storms** every day. And, thanks to last September's Hurricane Helene, many of the roads were still closed, in bad condition or had temporary patches. Not good.

On the *go* side, riding in the mountains can be just flat out exhilarating. And coming from Florida, the cool, fresh mountain air hugely attracts.

The Lodge, at 3,100 ft., is also a great place to stay, especially with their complimentary meals and grand views. And, I enjoy reconnecting with the other riders. This is one of my favorite events. Besides, my friends Ken (central NC) and Tulio (FL) were planning to be there.



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The deciding factors then: We already had a cottage booked from last year, and Rose wanted to go.

Surprisingly, the weather mostly cooperated with sunny mornings turning partly cloudy in the afternoon and then dropping some spotty precipitation late in the day Thursday. On Friday we got soaked nearing the Lodge. Then it was over. Nothing Saturday or Sunday. Forecasters are way overpaid.

Then there were the roads.... The event's GPS routes from previous years surely included some that were best not attempted. But, Chris Parker, the event organizer, put together some routes for this year which he pre-rode and knew were good. Getting them transferred to our GPS's was another matter.

So, Thursday Ken, Tulio and I rode north for a few hours towards Tazewell, Virginia. The route was curvy and great fun with only a few iffy spots. Our Sena comms worked perfectly, helping us safely deal with potholes, broken or missing pavement, loose gravel and oncoming vehicles in curves. We rode one of Chris' routes on Friday. These roads were in great shape. One that stood out was called, "The Snake" which is US 421 from Mountain City TN north.



Saturday, we parked the bikes early and just enjoyed the quietude and scenic vistas at the Lodge.



Anne-Marie LaFrance, an especially talented professional massage therapist from nearby Morganton, has been providing relief to riders at this rally for years – mostly pro bono. Tulio was absolutely beaming after his treatment. I got a wonderful full-hour session Saturday evening while the local band, *Almost Vintage*, was setting up on the outdoor patio. Once outside, the music was a good excuse to down some adult beverages (thank you, Rick) as we looked on trying vainly to sing along – our toes a tapping.

Road repairs are expected to last into 2027. But they're working them 24/7, and significant additional progress should be made by this time next year. Plus, Chris will have more time to test out routes and update GPX files. I've already booked a room for 2026.



And finally on a somber note...Some of you may remember Dave Brickner – *Brick*. He was the MSTA president for many years as well as being responsible for the Big Lynn Lodge rally. Brick was involved in a bad wreck a few years ago and never fully recovered. Seems that while riding with some other rally-goers, a 91-year old man inexplicably pulled out of a side street straight into Dave who was in the middle of the group! And then more recently, he was diagnosed with throat cancer. He passed away earlier this year and was cremated. His ashes were put into what looked like rolls of quarters and brought to the lodge so that his many MSTA friends could scatter them. His daughter flew in

from San Francisco, and a nice service was held in Morganton with local friends and MSTA members. Thank you for your service, Brick. May you rest in peace.

Beginning next year, the rally will be renamed *Brick's Backroad Boogie* at Big Lynn Lodge. I hope to see you there. –Tom

Safety Talk



Summer Heat by Doug Westly

IMPORTANT NOTICES: Ultimately, the safety of motorcycle riders and their passengers is their own responsibility. Nothing presented in the column supersedes, negates or relieves a motorcyclist and/or passenger from assumption of personal responsibility for their actions and safety.

[Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the June 2016 edition of the FLMSTA Gator Tale.]

It's that time of year again. Becky and I rode back yesterday from the Riding Into History vintage bike gathering in St Augustine. On the way home, the ambient temperature readout on Becky's new VFR1200FD told her it hit 95° as we rode through the Ocala forest. Our trip home was 4 hours in the Florida heat.

Every year starting about this time and for the next 4-5 months, all of us in Flatistan (central and south Florida) face this same challenge...the heat.

There are lots of ways to combat the heat. Some motorcycle owners just say the heck with it and don't ride. I discount them as fair weather riders. The real answer is to recognize the heat factor and plan for it.

For short rides, pick the right time. If you can ride first thing in the morning, you can usually get in several hours of bearable temperatures from dawn to about 11 AM or so. The same thing applies for the afternoon and evening hours. After about 4 PM, riding becomes fun again.

If you want to ride in the middle of the day during our hot season, there are a couple of strategies to help you out.

First off, don't think that riding in a t-shirt and shorts will make you feel cooler. The blazing sun on your skin will only cook you

like a Thanksgiving Turkey. Besides that, you have pledged to wear ATGATT, right?

Armored mesh gear is the way to go. The air flows through it and the gear keeps the sun off.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. If you wait until you're thirsty to stop for a drink (of water!), then you're already dehydrating. Drink early, drink often. If you're riding longer distance and don't want to stop, invest in a Camelbak® or other water supply system that you can draw from on the ride.

There are lots of commercial cooling vests, rags, etc, on the market. There is even an electric a/c system available for motorcycles. I've tested it and it works, but it seems bulky and a little impractical, at least for my riding style.

Want some easy, low-cost A/C while you ride? Take a bottle of cold water and pour it over your shirt, then immediately put your mesh jacket on and ride. The air flowing through the jacket turns that wet t-shirt into a cooling vest. Even in 95° weather in Florida it will keep you cool for at least 30-45 minutes. The jacket keeps the sun off the shirt and that combined with our humidity prevents the shirt from drying out too quickly.

Whatever you do, watch for the signs of heat-related illnesses. Don't overdo it. Take frequent breaks.

Finally, watch out for each other as well as yourself. Let's all take care as we ride during the hot summer months!

***Ride safe!** – Doug Westly*

Florida News



Florida News

If you're following the national weather scene, it seems we're hanging out in one of the few parts of the country not making national news every night!! And only 4 more months of hurricane season...

Reminder... We have **THREE RIDES EACH MONTH** scheduled through to September. After that, **WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR WEST AREA AND NORTH AREA REP(S) FOR REST OF 2025 AND BEYOND.** Contact Van for details. We can entertain a flexible

schedule(ing) where 1-4 different members could organize events throughout the year.

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

And you've likely noticed we have a feature article this month!! A big THANKS to Tom for sharing his take on the Big Lynn Lodge event, and the remembrances of Brick.



Also, be sure to catch Tom's breakfast ride report below. Backwater is quite the experience!! And Bob hosted his second West Central Brunch Event at the Mulberry Cafe in Mulberry(!) on July 19th! Four rode in to join Bob, who ended up enjoying his pre-brunch romp over the mine roads solo, as the heat seems to have kept others from taking him up on his offer to "show the way". We have a shot of very satisfied

diners enjoying the A/C (see photo) before the rides back home! Look for more West Central rides hosted by Eve or Bob this summer!!

The South Brunch Ride on July 26th to the Happy Chef Diner in Lake Placid attracted 12 riders. Buck, Peter and Van met up, and were joined by Larry at the Love's Station. Leaving the straight roads, we enjoyed our Venus-bypass route to lunch. Nearly all of us rolled in together, and met up with two early arrivals who stayed overnight in order to take in the famous 34th Annual CALADIUM FESTIVAL & Annual Car & Bike Show.

Our Happy Chef choice turned out to be fortuitous, as we did not have to fight the show crowds! Though plain-Jane looking, the staff and food were terrific and very appreciative of our patronage! Note, the locals also know about this gem-in-the-rough, as there was hardly an empty table while we were there! Meanwhile, we also had a winner of the 50/50 raffle! Jeff took home \$20, netting \$20 for the Chapter. A **BIG THANKS** for a summertime addition to our sum, now at \$1,203.



NOW HEAR THIS!! Eve has a stash of new MSTA Tri-Fold hats! And now in TWO color options!! See the details under FLMSTA Apparel below.

Last, but not least, to all of you who take the time to send your comments and suggestions to me/us!! They are most welcome!! Remember, this is YOUR club, and to make it better often lies with the membership rather than the leadership. I thank you all for your support!!

What's Next?

On August 2nd, join Tom for the East Central Breakfast at La Crepe de France, in Melbourne!! Be sure to join Eve on August 9th as she hosts the West Central Brunch ride to The Original Mike's Grill, in Bartow! And the following week, on August 16th, the Southies head to a new-to-us location in Okeechobee - Eggshells Kitchen!

We have inserted an email response "button" to our announcements to assist our coordinators with the reservation headcount. Click on the green "button", then hit the send arrow. The pre-loaded email will be on its way!! Easy peasey!!



Membership News!!

If you are receiving the *Gator Tale*, but not my announcements, **PLEASE** email me ASAP to correct my files. I believe I'm up to date...

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

FLMSTA added a new member this month - Robert Frey of New Port Richey - Welcome!

These Florida memberships have recently renewed:

- Bruce Genck
- Dell Haverland
- Dennis & Dorothy Anderson
- Ellen Kocher
- Kim Krzywicki
- Michael Kwon
- Carl Mobley

These Florida memberships will or have recently expired:

- Robert Miller
- Lynn 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 **NEW MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM** at <https://ridemsta.com/membership-account/membership-levels/> or simply visit the **MSTA Website** at www.ridemsta.com and **LOG IN** and then click on **MEMBERSHIP**.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please direct them to the **MSTA Website** at www.ridemsta.com. For each new member you recruit and who provides your name and/or membership

number on the application, you will receive a coupon for a **raffle ticket for the motorcycle touring package drawing at our next STAR event**. Any new or current member who joins or renews as a Sustaining Member will likewise receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for each year of the new membership term.

Random Ramblings

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

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

Please send your recommendations to any of the ride coordinators.

Hoping you're living the life you love, and loving the life you live...

When you can...

Join one of our monthly rides!!

And invite a friend to ride along!!

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

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Director



Backwater-Wickham Melbourne Tom Blake

Backwater – Wickham was quite the interesting eatery. Thanks, Larry F for suggesting this one. The dark wood walls were absolutely covered with plaques and signs. A huge unlit chandelier made of three tiers of fake white alligator skulls hung amongst fern-like flora was suspended from the ceiling. The substantial tables along one wall all had built-in griddles and most were occupied by parents with little kids excitedly cooking up colorful pancakes.



Clockwise from left: Ken, Hal, Alan, Terry, Tom, Doug and Andy at Backwater-Wickham in Melbourne

The seven of us elected to sit at non-griddle tables which generated no heat. Our friendly servers were quick to get us much needed coffees and waters and kept them filled. The menu included such delicacies as Okeechobee Ice Cream, the Boss Hog, the Southern Breakfast and a variety of Benedicts including FGT (fried green tomatoes), Bayou, Hambone, Pulled Pork and Cuban. Everyone highly praised the delicious food which came in plentiful portions and the coffee was pretty good, too. The one downside was that it was a tad hard to hear one another due to the music which was not muted at all by all the hard surfaces. But we managed to enjoy all the gab, nevertheless. I guess the plus side was that we couldn't hear anyone else.

Up next: We head back to *La Crepe de France - Downtown* on New Haven Ave in Melbourne on August 2nd. Had a great time there last year – the crepes were the best. They have just on-street parking but there's plenty of it at 8 AM.

Safe journeys, *Tom*

Florida MSTA Apparel



Florida MSTA Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTA-branded apparel! Go to mstaflorida.qbstores.com.

We have made arrangements with the supplier for our National Gearbox to allow our State membership to buy shirts, hats, etc. with our State logos directly from the source!!! No muss, no fuss!! Order yours today!! They offer both embroidery and digital print options. Click onto the Embroidered Apparel or Shop By Logo for each option. Don't hesitate to contact Queensboro directly with any and all questions. They are very customer friendly. They also offer Polo shirts and T-shirts with pockets!!



MSTA Trifold Hats

MSTA has made MSTA trifold hats available again. We now have 2 colors from which to choose. If any FLMSTA member wants one, Eve Blazsur will have a supply of hats at the West Breakfast Ride on August 20th in Bartow. Price is still \$20 each (cash).

Classified Ads



2024 Yamaha Tracer 9 GT + For Sale - \$14,000

Contact: Stephen Evans at sl.evans@comcast.net

Current mileage: only 6,000 miles

Over \$3,000 of after-market items, not to mention a ton of OEM items/electronics:

Garmin Zumo XT GPS in a lockable GPS mount w/ a Ram locking knob (bike also has its own OEM GPS)

SW-Motech Crash Bars (27 mm)

2 sets of Clearwater "Darla" lights w/ extra amber lenses

2 Tank Bags - (1) SW-Motech Day Pro Tank Bag & (2) a SW-Motech Trail Tank Bag & both use the same lockable mount

SW-Motech Kickstand Extension Foot

Lic Plate Frame w/ Brake & Turn Signal Lights

Piaa Slim Line 500 HK Sports Horn

Radiator Guard - Universal Hwy Pegs

Heated Grips

Quick Shifter & Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC)

Battery Tender Hook up

Chain Adjustment Wrenches

Nelson-Rigg Cover



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

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

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

Well cared for and
maintained

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

Battery replaced April 2022,
maintained with Battery
Tender

To find a buyer for your motorcycle items, please send your ad and pictures by email to editor@flmsta.org. Don't trash it, recycle it! One man's trash is another man's treasure!

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:

Kim Longacre, Newsletter Editor

editor@flmsta.org

P. "Van" VanSteelant, FL State Director

busavanflmsta@gmail.com

(561) 386-2594

Tom Blake, East Central Area Rep

(321) 794-6147

tblake1@cfl.rr.com

FL MSTA 217 SE 3rd Street, Boynton
Beach
United States of America



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