



FLMSTA Newsletter | Oct 2026

October 2026 | Volume 20 | Issue 10

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

West Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 3, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Giovanni's Main Street Kitchen** 221 W. Main St., **Wauchula, FL** (863) 767-5300 ([map](#))

Description: **NOTE: 11:30 AM start time** for West Central Lunches. Join Eve at this favorite destination!! And thank her for hosting!!!

Contact: Eve, 6saturdaysretired@gmail.com

East Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 10, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Wild Turkey Tavern** 2751 U.S. Hwy 27 South, **Avon Park, FL** (863) 452-5284 ([map](#))

Description: **NOTE: 11:30 AM start time** for East Central Lunches. This place looks fantastic, with cammo outside and dark wood, redneck-country vibe inside. Great food and service. Paved parking.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

South Brunch Ride

When: **Saturday, October 31, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Nav-A-Gator Bar & Grill**, 9700 SE Riverview Circle, **Arcadia, FL** (941) 625-4407 ([map](#))

Description: Revamped, new owner and great reviews!! It's been a l o n g time since we were here!! Join us, won't you??

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



MSTA STAR 2026

October 17-21

Springdale, Arkansas

We are officially just 16 days away from the **2026 MSTA STAR Rally in Northwest Arkansas!**

STAR (Sport Touring Association Rendezvous) is the annual national gathering of MSTA members and friends, a multi-day celebration of great roads, good company, and unforgettable memories. Whether you're a longtime member or attending your very first STAR, this is the event you won't want to miss!

This year's STAR for promises to be an incredible week of riding, friendship, and fun in the Ozarks. Experience the magic of the Ozarks like never before. STAR 2026 brings you some of the best motorcycle roads in America—smooth sweepers, technical twisties, and breathtaking mountain views around every corner. Whether you're carving through pavement or tackling adventure routes, every mile offers a new story to tell. With both road and ADV options available, your perfect ride awaits right here in the heart of Arkansas.



STAR is more than just a rally—it's a family reunion for riders who share the same passion for two (or three) wheels. Meet old friends, make new ones, and join a community that welcomes everyone. From the New Members Ride to the Ladies of the MSTA Meet & Greet

and countless impromptu conversations in the parking lot, you'll find that connection is what makes this event truly special.

When: Saturday-Wednesday, October 17-21

Location: Holiday Inn, Springdale, AR

Contact: For information and registration:

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

STAR Coordinators: [Jerry & Jamie James](#)

MSTA Fall on 2 Wheels Rally

When: **Friday-Saturday, October 23-25**

Location: **The Lodge at Two Wheels of Suches, GA**
(706) 973-1671

Our fourth year of gathering at one of the motorcycle Meccas in the U.S. Situated perfectly in the Suches Valley, all roads leading in and out (both paved and unpaved) are simply spectacular for motorcycling.

Reserve your spot fast as this event has limited lodging and sells out VERY quickly, if nothing is available, keep checking with the resort as reservations do open up intermittently!!

Contact: For information and registration:

<https://www.ridemsta-ga.com/events/rallies/fall-on-two-2026>

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.

East Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 7, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Lake Harris Hideaway** 11912 Lane Park Rd. **Tavares, FL**
(352) 343-3585 ([map](#))

Description: One of our favorite destinations. Attractive covered deck seating looking out on Lake Harris.

Contact: Tom (321) 794-6147

West Central Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 14, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Sora Eatery** 3900 Don Emerson Dr., Suite 201 2nd Fl,
Lakeland, FL (863) 337-5587 ([map](#))

Description: Eve has picked a wonderful place for lunch!! Located inside the Lakeland Linder International Airport!! Wonderful menu and great views from the 2nd floor!!

Contact: Eve, 6saturdaysretired@gmail.com

South Lunch Ride

When: **Saturday, November 21, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Riverfront Grill**, 1682 Indian Hills Dr., **Moore Haven, FL**
(863) 885-4644 ([map](#))

Description: Another new-to-us destination, off the beaten path!
ON the Caloosahatchee Canal, great vibe and lots of parking!!

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

MSTA Black Friday Ride

When: **Friday, November 27, 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM**

Location: **Cherry Pocket Steak n Seafood**, 3100 Canal Rd., **Lake Wales, FL** (863) 439-2031 ([map](#)).

Description: New owner has "fixed" this lakefront destination on the north shore of Lake Pierce. This will be our third return visit!! Good roads nearby and great vibe! Varied menu and reasonable prices. Paved motorcycle parking around back.

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

For additional Florida events and information, 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.

Feature Article

[Editor's Request: If 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!]

There is no Feature article this month.

Safety Talk



Safety and the Road Less Traveled 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: We think Doug's safety tips merit repeating. This safety article is a repeat from the April 2017 issue of The Gator Tale.]

Just yesterday Becky and I were in the truck. So you want to go do a little ADV riding? Nothing serious, you just wonder what is down those dirt roads that you always speed by. Here are some thoughts on safety if you ever decide to take that left or right turn onto the dirt/sand/gravel road.

First rule of thumb: Traction, traction, traction. Street tires aren't made for off-pavement adventures. They aren't made to grip the soft surface and if your off-road path is anything more than hard pack gravel or dirt, you're asking gravity to take over.

Heavy bikes don't work well off-road in Florida. All of Florida is a beach; it just depends on how far you are from the ocean. That means unless you are up in the Panhandle, you're riding on sand. Heavy bikes sink in this stuff, so unless the road or trail under you is hard pack, be extremely careful. For our off-road riding conditions, simple, lightweight ADV bikes work far better than the latest heavy-weight, monster-powered ADV wonders. You don't need power, you need traction and maneuverability. Besides that, it means you can pick it back up by yourself, when you discover just how soft our sand can be.

If you're going to ride off-pavement, and especially if you are by yourself, *repair (both you and the bike) and safety*

equipment are critical. As a minimum, basic tools, a tire repair kit with inflator, a good first aid kit, and a way to call for help should be your minimum standards. Particularly if you are by yourself, consider carrying a SPOT transmitter. This should be on your person, NOT mounted to the bike.

Be aware of changing surface conditions if you venture off the pavement. A gravel road can change to hard pack or soft sand almost instantly.

A few quick riding techniques to help out...

- Watch for changing surface conditions by changes in the surface colors, undulations in the path, puddles, and even the tracks made by other vehicles.
- If you get into soft sand, push your weight back on the bike, allowing the front end to lighten and ride up or float on top of the sand. Be very careful about your front brake in reduced traction conditions. Getting your front tire turned in soft sand will almost guarantee a front-end tuck and gravity taking over.
- Even on hard pack and gravel, your front end will want to wander. Let it and stay loose on the handlebars, guiding the front end in a straight line, but don't fight the little front-end wandering.
- In deep sand, find the passable rut and use it, as long as it isn't too deep. Sometimes, riding all the way on the path's shoulder will find you some harder ground.
- If you don't know how deep the puddle is, don't try it! There is a big difference between a 6-inch hole and a 2-foot hole.
- As the path gets worse and if you're not sure about your skills or your bike's capabilities, TURN AROUND. Bruising your ego is a lot less painful than bruising or breaking your body or bike!
- IMPORTANT (for all riding): Let somebody know where you're going, and establish check-in times and procedures.

Finally, once you do venture off-road, you're going to find a whole new world for two wheels. If you get the bug, find an

off-road riding course. You'll be surprised how fast you can adapt, and how much fun the off-road world really is out there!

Ride Safe!

–Doug Westly

Florida News



Florida News

We are just weeks away from STAR '26!!

Jerry confirmed that the routes are now posted, along with links to help you download them into nearly any device you may be using. Note that there are several dual-sport routes included as well as the usual sport touring options. Be sure to read up on Doug's Safety Article regarding the road less traveled!! And catch up with the latest email blast from the EC regarding the hotel arrangements. Be making your final plans **NOW!** Some additional planning help may lie in online links to Road Runner and Rider Magazine articles. I know, old school... Here's more! www.butlermaps.com has the country covered in heavenly routes printed on waterproof material!! ***I'll be looking for the Florida members who confirmed their attendance!!***



Find Tom's East Brunch report below. Good times and good eats! And the self-hosted Western Brunch rides are working out just fine!! Eight Westies and Alan S. from the Eastside enjoyed

Gloria's Restaurant on the 19th! (see pic left)

The South Brunch Ride began as an easy-peasy ride to Okeechobee. Seven rode out from the Shell station meet up and found the Eggshells Kitchen ready for us. Another seven riders also made their way from points east and west!! With the unusually nice weather in our favor, we were able to dine



alfresco under their canopy and in the breeze! The menu was divine, the food and service was terrific, and we enjoyed the vibe and each other's company. We reluctantly departed after two plus hours... With 14

attendees, we were able to run a 50/50 raffle! Mike S. took home \$35, and we added \$35 to the prior sum for a new total of \$1408. Always a **Big Thanks** to all who participated!

Member Promo!!

If you have purchased anything motorcycle-related that has blown you away with its features or price or performance, send me and/or Kim an email with a short write-up and website. We'll include a **Member(s) Promo** each month that you send something in...

What's Next??

You *are* making plans for STAR '26, right?!?! Registration is open, the hotel is taking reservations, and Jerry has a substantial website up and running! Get with it!! I'll see you in Springdale, AK, in a few weeks!! <https://ridemsta.com/star/>

We have **three LUNCH** rides planned for October!! The West Central Lunch ride, on October 3rd, will be hosted by Eve at Giovanni's Main Street Kitchen in Wauchula. Bring an appetite!! Tom will host the East Central Lunch ride, October 10th at the Wild Turkey Tavern, in Avon Park. Likely a few Southies will show up as well!

After STAR, on October 31st, Van will host the South Lunch at the Nav-A-Gator Bar & Grill in Arcadia!! It's been awhile since we've dined here! Happy Halloween!! *A/ways* check the Rides Calendar on our website for last minute changes!!

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 our MSTA Membership Director! So far, Pat has introduced several improvements with a few more tweaks to come. **Big Thanks!!** patrickmogavero@gmail.com Contact him directly with any membership issues.

Please note that the Membership categories have been revamped, and you can only renew online through the National website. Do not use any older forms as they no longer conform with the latest updates.

FLMSTA added a new member in September - **Bernhard Echt of Jacksonville**. Welcome!

The following MSTA memberships have or will be expiring soon:

- **Vince Heilman**
- **Joy Melton**
- **Larry Melton**
- **Brian VanScoy**

The following MSTA members have renewed their memberships:

- **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 **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!!

Get your stuff together now so you can make the most of the upcoming "winter" riding season that more than a few northern Members head to Florida to enjoy!!

Smile every morning that you see yourself looking back in the mirror!!

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



September 2026
East Central News
Tom Blake

Terry, Andy, Alan, Joy, Larry and I showed up for the Sunnyside Café run on the 12th (see pic). Terry and I met in Palm Bay, rode down US1 and then detoured over to Fleming



Grant Rd north of the Sebastian River for some curves. Lots of dog walkers out and about. We met up with Larry and Joy in Wabasso and continued over

to and up A1A to Melbourne Beach. Andy had just arrived when we pulled in. Alan showed up several minutes after we went inside. Dude's riding a HD Sportster this month! Anyways, lots to talk about. We didn't get out of there until 11 o'clock. The Café was even nicer than I remembered from last year, and the chow was pretty good, too.

It was fairly humid but not at all uncomfortable getting to the Café. Made for a very pleasant ride – much of it along one side or the other of the wide Indian River Lagoon. Construction work was going on near the Sebastian Inlet bridge. Looks like they're putting in south bound "exit" and "on" lanes just south of the bridge. A big crane was positioned on the ocean side of the bridge on the north half, but we couldn't tell why. It was up to about 90° by the time we decided to go home. OK as long as we were moving. I rode the NT1100 straight home.

This concludes the EC breakfast/brunch rides for this year.

Next up: On October 10th, EC heads back to the Wild Turkey Tavern on US 98 south of Avon Park for an 11:30 lunch. Had a good time there last year, and I hope to see many of you there again.

Safe Journeys - *Tom Blake*, East-Central FL Area Rep

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!!

Classified Ads

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

Contact Information

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

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



You received this email because you
signed up as a member of the Florida
MSTA.

[Unsubscribe](#)

