

# The Florida MSTA Grapevine

You heard it through the Grapevine...

Volume 4 Issue 12

## Events in December

*Details on page 11*

## In This Issue:

Page 1 - Feature Article  
Page 1 - Editor's Monthly Note  
Page 8 - Safety Talk  
Page 9 - Florida News  
Page 11 - Florida Rides  
Page 12 - Mystery Hyperlink  
Page 12 - Classifieds  
*(Don't miss a couple of good sales!)*

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## Feature Article

Attending the MSTA Just-for-Fun Non-Event

Nov 11-12, 2011 in Alachua, FL

by Don Moe

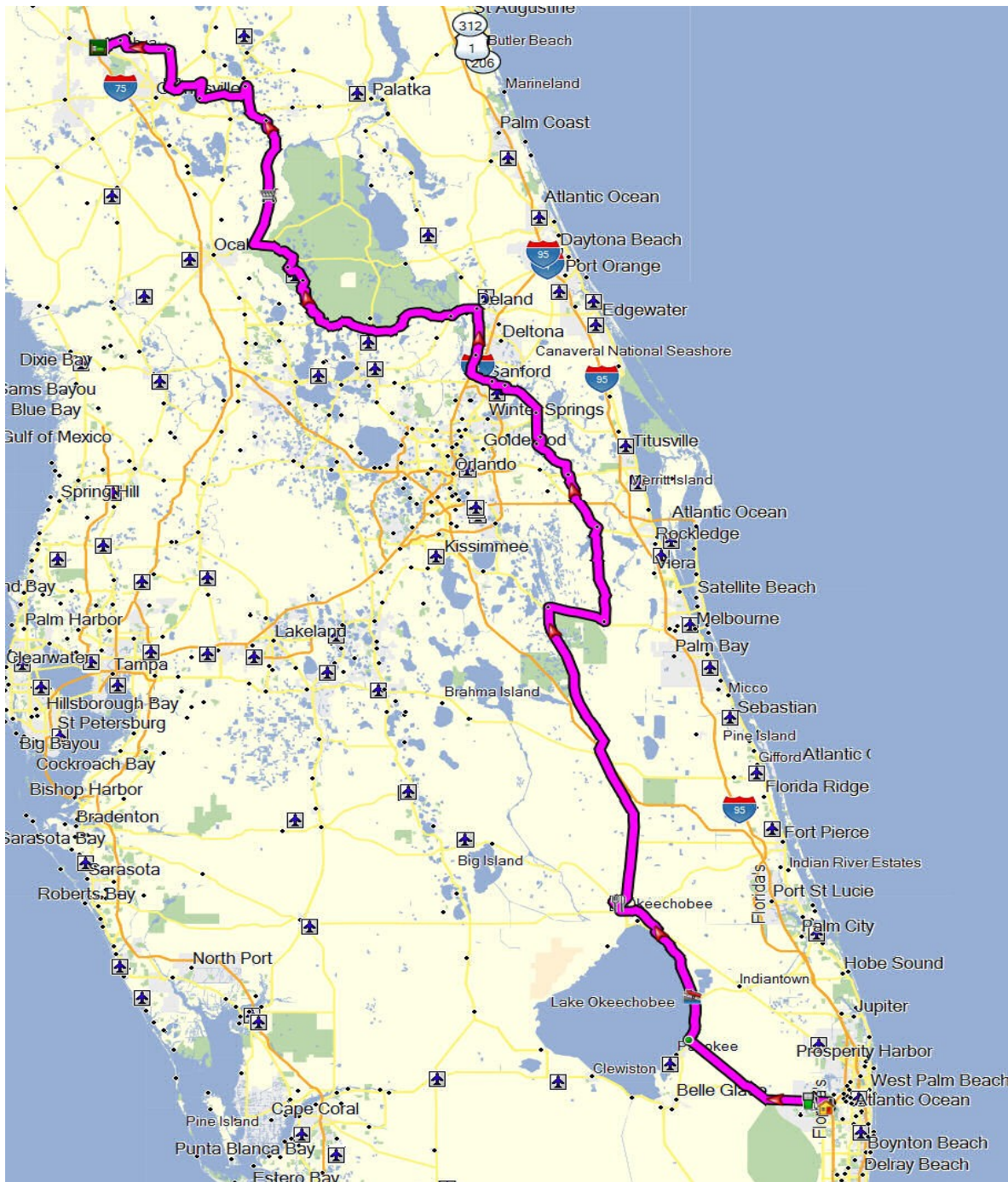
Several people, who could not attend this event, requested that I write up a report for our monthly newsletter. The following is a synopsis of the event from my perspective.

Early on Friday morning, November 11<sup>th</sup>, I rode my 2010 Kawasaki Concours 14 from Jupiter to Port Mayaca on the eastern shore of Lake Okeechobee, where I joined the south Florida group led by Jim Park.

Jim had plotted out a GPS route to northern Florida that would maximize our riding enjoyment with as many non-straight roads as possible in this state, while avoiding the large cities and traffic as much as possible. The purple track on the adjoining map graphic shows our route.

**Editor's Monthly Note:** This month's Feature Article is provided by our incoming Newsletter Editor, Don Moe. As you can see from the great write-up and photos, we're lucky he has volunteered to take over the job as our group's Head Scribe.

This month's newsletter also marks the start (well, except for that whole Turkey Day thing) of the Holiday Season. While we're celebrating with our family and friends, let's not forget our Servicemen and Servicewomen who are overseas, and not able to be with theirs for the holidays. It is their selfless sacrifice that ultimately protects our way of life.



### Jim's GPS Route...

Our first stop was the [Landing Strip Café](#) at the Okeechobee Airport, where we enjoyed a very good breakfast along with nice conversation. We resumed our ride north along US-441 and then jogged east along US-192 to Deer Park Road. This route passes through Fort Christmas, avoiding the congestion closer to Orlando. However, we did pass through Sanford along the shore of Lake Monroe and entered Deland along

US-17/92. That was the only section of the route that involved significant city traffic and congestion.

Our second stop was at the [Dublin Station](#) Irish pub and restaurant, where we met up with Bob Shields and his son Bobby from Lakeland, who had arrived earlier. We enjoyed an excellent lunch while sitting outside in the beautiful weather. We resumed our trip by heading west from Deland along CR-42, which is a very nice road on the south side of the Ocala National Forest. Just past Eustis, we turned north on 182<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to bypass both Ocala and Gainesville. We finally arrived in Alachua at 5:30 PM, checked into the Quality Inn and, after discussing it with others, made plans for dinner at the Sonny's BBQ across the highway from the motel. Sitting at the bar while waiting for a table to become available for our large group, we sampled some of their draught beers without concern about driving.

The weather forecast for Friday night and Saturday morning promised very chilly temperatures, even dropping below freezing to around 27°. In the morning we found our bikes coated with significant layer of frost. Everyone therefore agreed to delay our morning tour of the area until later, when it would warm into the 50's.

We finally started out just after 9:30. In all, eleven motorcycles and thirteen riders participated in the Alachua event. Phil Ridgill led us on a nice tour of northern Florida on very well maintained roads through heavily wooded areas. The road had numerous nice sweepers and other opportunities to carve some curves. The gray line on the adjoining map shows our route, as captured by my Garmin Zumo 665.

### The Northern Tour



During the ride we pulled in at the lakeside park in Lake Butler in order to take a break. It was a very nice location, as you can see in this photo:



### **The Lake Butler Break**

A new aspect of the area for me, not being a hunter, was the seemingly large number of hunters we spotted alongside the road, usually in pairs, wearing camouflage and standing next to their trucks. One time we spotted a probable deer in one of the trucks. Whenever we approached a hunting party near the road, the group leader slowed down in case any animals might dart out from the woods and present a hazard. Thankfully we never had to deal with that, nor with any police.

Our guide had made arrangements for us to have a delicious buffet lunch at the [Telford Hotel](#) located very close to the Suwannee River as it meanders around White Springs, which is on US-41 just to the northwest of Lake City. As is customary practice according to our guide, we parked our bikes on the sidewalk across from the hotel, as shown in the photo.



### **Parking for the Telford Hotel!**

After lunch, several of us walked to the nearby bridge over the Suwannee and discovered that the water level was so low that the river seemed to be nearly stagnant. We then gathered on the steps outside of the hotel for the obligatory group photo, taken by Jim Park with the help of a tripod.

The return ride to Alachua went just as well, although the roads seemed straighter than in the morning. We all very much enjoyed our outing, which went totally without incident except for sunglasses left behind at the hotel. Thanks to radio communications in our group from south Florida, we were able to alert the group leader to pull over briefly to let the forgetful one catch up.

For dinner, we had a reservation at the [Great Outdoors Restaurant](#) in High Springs, just a short drive northwest of Alachua along US-441. Despite our large group, the staff was able to take good care of us with some very good dishes.

Although we returned to our motel in Alachua well after dark, several of us decided to pay another visit to the Sonny's BBQ for a beer, since many of us had avoided any alcoholic beverages at dinner. After our first round, the manager gave us a second round on the house, for which we were definitely grateful.



Standing l-r: Don Williams, Bob Shields, Bobby Shields, Steve Phillips, Don Moe, Sandy Spice, Roger Spice, Carmel Ridgdill, Phil Ridgdill, Jim Johndro, Bill Bishop. Seated: Jim and Dianne Park.

On Sunday morning, my south Florida group left on its own to make a quick run down I-75 and the Florida Turnpike in order to get home in time for a ball game. In contrast, I decided to take the opportunity to stop by nearby Cedar Key, located on the Gulf Coast west of Ocala, since I had never before been to that area. This town is the venue for the Wizard's Wild Weekend from December 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> that I would not be attending.

The adjacent map shows my route from Alachua to Cedar Key and then to Ocala, where I joined the heavy traffic heading south on I-75.



### **My Cedar Key Detour**

After attending this event, I am looking forward to visiting northern Florida again over the next few months. So many good riding opportunities on the numerous rural roads make the area a worthwhile destination while we wait until spring permits us to travel further north.

All of us enjoyed our brief tour of northern Florida and I thank Phil Ridgdill for making the arrangements and for being our tour guide.

## SAFETY TALK

***IMPORTANT NOTICE: 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 own actions and safety.***

### After The Crash

***(Ed. Note: This article was suggested by Becky DeShazo-Westly, who recently had a good friend involved in a single vehicle, motorcycle crash.)***

OK, so it has finally happened. One minute you were upright, having a great ride. The next moment, or at least the next one you can remember, you're lying on your back on the highway, looking up at the clouds. Your beloved bike is wadded up in the grass, having slid 50 yards farther down and off the road. Fortunately you were wearing ALL your gear (Remember: ATGATT!), so it's just bumps and bruises. What happens now?

We're not talking about the immediate post-crash activity. What happens after you're home, everything is taken care of, and you begin the process of post-crash introspection. What happened? Could it have been prevented? ***Do I still want to ride?*** It is this last question we want to explore for just a moment.

First off, no one can predict how they will react to motorcycling after a significant crash event. Some want to get back on the horse immediately. Others aren't sure. Still others may decide to give up the sport. If you are the one facing this question, the only right answer is what is right for you.

In the case of the crash which suggested this article, the female rider was out on her own, riding the back roads on a high performance motard, when she went down for reasons we still can't determine. She is back on her bike now, but still tentative and working back to her previous riding level. And before we get into the whole female vs. male discussion, this particular rider's bona fides includes race school, track riding, etc. So let's put that one to rest immediately. Gender is not an issue, period. It could be anyone, including you.

The important point here is that NO ONE can or should tell you what to do after the crash. You must evaluate your own situation and decide what is right for your riding future. Maybe you want to park the bike for awhile and work through your thoughts. Perhaps its time to go back through a level of formal rider training, to help rebuild your confidence. For some, getting back on the horse is the answer. Or, maybe you decide that motorcycling is not in your future, at least at this point. No matter what you decide, it is your decision. Make sure of that.

Oh, and one more thing...for everyone. If it is not you lying on the road that day but someone you know, please don't presume to do more than just offer support for whatever decision your friend makes about their riding future. Our sport is all about friendship, camaraderie and mutual respect. Don't try to force a friend onto a path they may not want to journey. Encourage their thought process and be ready to support their decision about their future motorcycling efforts. That's what friends are for...

The MSTA Group Leadership

## Florida News

### North Director's Report

Two nice rides for November are in the books. Starting out early on Nov 5th, the Central ride was to the Perfect Spot restaurant at the DeLand Fl airport. We had folks from far and wide, despite a chilly start to the day. Roughly a dozen or so made it as had a great time.

The following weekend was Phil Ridgdill's Alachua weekend which could not make but I believe Van may have so I hope to see a write up on it.

Lastly, the next weekend was the South ride to Capt Hiram's Inn in Sebastian FL. A real sweet spot, right on the inter-coastal waterway on the East coast, about 15 miles north of Vero Beach. Again, we had a little smaller turnout of approx a dozen, perhaps due to the scattered showers mostly around the east coast. That didn't deter much of the West Palm crew from making the trip, nor a few of us from the Tampa area..

I know the holidays are upon us but don't forget to treat yourself to a little fun and a break from the shopping. There's nothing better than a nice motorcycle ride to clear the head and make you smile!

Oh and in case you hadn't heard, registration for STAR 2012 is now open. I've already registered and so should you! Go to the National website or see the latest StarReview for details.

*Bill Royal - MSTA Florida State Co-Director & Webmaster*

### **South Director's Report**

Greetings One and All!! Hopefully, you all gave thanks for the winter riding season that is upon us this past Thursday!!

We had a great ride to Capt. Hiram's on Nov. 19th. Despite some threat of rain, we only suffered through four minutes of showers. Our Palm Beach County area riders made the scenic ride up the Intercoastal and barrier islands. What a variety of property uses!! From abandoned commercial enterprises to Jupiter Island mega mansions!! Never a dull moment on this ride up!!

Once again, the Captain did not disappoint! If you were there last March, you know what you missed this time around. Though we did not see any dolphins making their way, the clearing sky made for a variety of water colors right off the end of our table! Sweet!! The food was good, the company great, and we all had a real good time!! We were 12 strong, with 6 from PBC area, 2 from mid state, 2 from mid coast, and 2 from Tampa way! A good showing given the size of the weather front that came through. I know that the majority of the group made haste on the way home, and had a marvelous ride down I 95 under clear skies. Don and I split off from the Tampa boys at Yee Haw Jt. to ride the long way home via Okeechobee. Good decision, as the road was virtually ours, and the afternoon clearing made for wonderful riding. Even if you've ridden down 441 hundreds of times, when the weather's nice, the road is yours, and you're in good company, all is good with the world!!

Looking forward, we have a great winter planned. In December, we will have two lunch rides. Bill will announce his choice shortly. As for the Southern ride, we will be heading to Mike's Grill in Bartow. Now, the place is great, but Bartow itself isn't famous as a destination. What makes this place a must-do are the mine roads in the area. These are a wonderful play ground for us sporty-tourers!! And our resident expert has agreed to meet up with an early crowd of riders and show us around the best bits! Look for further ride info next month from both Bill and Van.

There are a few "Just For Fun Ride" ideas being explored as you read this. We are also looking to hook up with a few local dealers/equipment retailers. By supporting the locals who support us, we will have a place to both drool over the next best thing, and a place to actually buy it and have it serviced!! With a few months before any of the National Events start up again, we intend to keep you all entertained and riding while the rest of the MSTA can only dream and polish their rides!! We will have more details in the next newsletter.

And by the end of next month, the lunch/brunch schedule for the first half of the year will be posted to the local website. You do visit there often, don't you?!?! Bill established this site years ago to benefit the whole Fl membership, and it remains THE place to see what's coming up, who's been where, and peruse past newsletters!! Check it out!!

Hope to see you out and about, and wish you all the merriest of holiday seasons!!

*ATGATT Van*

## **Florida Rides This Month**

### **MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride**

When: Sat, December 10, 12pm – 1pm

Where: Hayseed Cafe - 599 N Market Blvd Webster, FL 33597 ([map](#))

Description: Another new venue for us. Plenty of paved parking, lots of tables and a choice between menu or buffet! Contact: Bill Royal RideFL@flahsta.org or 813-633-8155

### **MSTA South Lunch Ride**

When: Sat, December 17, 12pm – 1pm

Where: Mike's Grill, 1590 N Broadway Ave, Bartow, FL ([map](#))

Description: This is new place for most of you, but a few of us had a great lunch here last year after our weekend at Lee Park's Total Control class. Great food, loads of options, great service, and near some amazing mine roads. Plan to ride a few of the roads both before and after lunch. You'll be glad you did!!

Contact: Van at 561-386-2594 or busavan@flahsta.org

### **Stagecoach XV**

When: Friday, Dec 30, 2011

Where: Stockton, AL ([map](#))

Description: <http://thelastrideoftheyear.com/>

**For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see Florida MSTa web site Events page.**

**MSTA web site information on "Just For Fun Events": [click here.](#)**

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*National MSTa* [www.sporttouring.us](http://www.sporttouring.us)

*Florida MSTa* [www.flahsta.org](http://www.flahsta.org)

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*11 of 12 Florida MSTa Grapevine*  
*December 2011* <http://www.flahsta.org>



# Mystery Hyperlink of the Month

If you haven't been to this website yet, make sure you put it on your Favorites list. Lots of good information here, to help keep you current in the world of motorcycling....and...it's free!

## More Contact Information

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*ALL GRAPHICS WERE PROVIDED BY THE CREDITED AUTHOR, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.*

## CLASSIFIED ADS

*(Ed's Notes: Keep those For Sale/Wanted/Give Away Ads coming!)*

### BIKES FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 2011 Suzuki DL650A V-STROM \$7250 - ABS, white, 2200 conservative adult miles, perfect condition. Better than new with initial service completed, stock & Sargent saddles, front fender extender and stock as well as tall Givi windscreens. List including extras - \$8635. Suggested retail for average condition: ~\$6900 per NADA & KBB. No issues, just doesn't fit me ergonomically. 321-723-2857 Melbourne area.

For Sale: 2007 Honda ST 1300 - Grey with matching large and small GIVI top boxes, 7784 miles, garage kept, HELI bars for comfort, electrical outlet for GPS, ABS brakes, NADA \$10,865. (813)677-3213, Andy Gattone