



From the
President's Desk

Red Knights

Mass Chapter 2 — January 2008

<http://www.rk-mass2.org>

Loyal to Our Duty

Not all who wander are Lost. That is a great saying and could be the mantra of the Red Knights. We definitely have it in our blood to wander AND to have a great time while we are doing it! And just because we have entered the winter months does not mean that our gathering and wandering have drawn to a close. 2008 marks the 25th anniversary year for our chapter—so warm weather or cold - wet or dry, come join us for some fun and enjoy the friendships in the Red Knights!

A good rider never "get's lost." Instead we "investigate alternative destinations." Diona and I took off on the bike for a few days around my birthday. We probably put on around 250 miles of wandering before returning home. Just as we turned onto West Road to head back to the house the bike clocked 44,000 miles... on my 44th birthday.



So that is a good sign for the next year. We are going to have some great riding with members of the chapter in 2008. Won't you be part of that effort to find "alternative destinations" next year? If you have any ride ideas, please let the officers know. Come join us for some of our events and take a look at the ride schedule when it comes out. We would be happy to boast that all our members joined us in a RKMC event during 2008.

Best wishes to all of you for a blessed and happy new year!

The third Saturday of each month through April we are meeting for breakfast (8:00 a.m. @ WFD) and coming up are several February events including our winter pot luck and the boy's day out in Boston.

The fall month always offer a variety when it comes to weather and this fall was no different. October was warmer than normal and November & December colder than average—but there were still times to ride. Ed B. showed up to our afternoon of curling on his bike (it was chilly) and I got to go for a ride on Thanksgiving day. Then the snow and ice came!

But when the weather sends the bikes into hibernation it is not only a good time to get together to share our friendships it is also a good time to think about improving your ride and your riding skills. Take a look at what new safety gear is available for you, and what resources may be available to help improve your skills once we are back on the road. And don't forget about what your bike may need once the warm weather returns and plan for that TLC for your two-wheeled companion.

Take the time now to think about how best to be ready for the next riding season... and that will help make it another great year wandering the countryside with the Red Knights.

Please come and enjoy the fellowship of the Red Knights all through the year. I know that Diona and I are looking forward to being on the road with our friends in 2008, and hope that each of you will join us.

Ride safe...

Mass Chapter 2 Motorcycle Safety Foundation Rider Education Scholarship

The chapter is again providing MSF Rider Scholarships for 2008. We will be giving out two basic rider course scholarships that are available to anyone and two experienced rider course scholarships that are available to our members.

Deadline for submission is March 1, 2008 and the scholarships will be awarded in April. An application for the scholarship is enclosed and they are also available on the webpage.

Please share the scholarship information with someone who would benefit from the training program.

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Please help us get the word out about the Red Knights and our scholarship program by posting the scholarship flyer (enclosed) at your local fire department and your favorite local bike shop!

*Congratulations* to Bob Laford on his re-election as chapter president and to Moe Lizotte on his election as chapter secretary. Congratulations also to Larry Robinson and Terry Atwood for accepting positions as Assistant Road Captain.

A special thank you also goes to Steve Mickle for his many years of service to the chapter as chapter secretary and his service as RKMC Mass State Rep. Thanks also to Donna Moreau, Bob Shakarian, and Don Hurme for continuing on as members of the Scholarship Committee for 2008.

*On the road with our friends...*

October is always a popular time for motorcycle rides—whether it is us or all the others we see on the road! Our Apple Pie ride is always well attended and this year was no exception. We ended up with 16 bikes (one from northern Vermont!) and two four wheelers that enjoyed breakfast at the Jaffrey FD and the ride to Dummerston for some apple pie—and even more of our members met us in Vermont. It was 29 degrees in 2006 for the ride, but this year's weather was much more moderate in the 60's!



*A picture with Smokey Bear at the Jaffrey Fire Station*

To close out fire prevention week we had a small but brave and bundled-up group that went to Amherst (Mass) where the fire department was running a pancake breakfast. The temperature was about 30 degrees with a good frost in the valley's fields—but the live entertainment of a Dixieland band helped warm us up at the breakfast!

October was our first *Breakfast Club* ride of the fall season. The rains came overnight and the clouds started to break up as we met. The warm temperature and wonderful fall foliage made for a great day's ride. After breakfast we stopped in Boylston for a special moment at the Red Knights' Memorial. Then it was off for some more miles under the October skies with a stop at Hebert's Candy Factory.



We had a dozen bikes (16 people) come out and enjoy a great day for riding on our Polar Bear ride in November. It was sunny and in the 50's and we had a very enjoyable ride out to Brimfield for lunch at the Apple Barn Café... a very fine stop indeed!

## Winter Potluck

- **Saturday, February 9**
- 1:00 p.m. for Outdoor fun, 4:00 pm for a sleigh ride, and back to the farm (6 p.m.?) for more food and more fun!
- Come dressed for outdoor sledding (snow mobile?), and an evening hayride or sleigh ride!

We'll be meeting at the Farm in Ashby, on Bennett Road, again this year, thanks to the hospitality of our hosts Wayne and Linda Stacy. Come between 1:00-2:00 to play in the snow and then we'll head out together for our sleigh.

Bring a dish to share and something to wet your whistle and we will share stories from the past and look ahead to the new riding year.

We will have the ride schedule for 2008 printed and ready for distribution – so don't miss out!

Give Linda a call to let her know that you will be coming, and to ask for directions if you are unfamiliar with where the farm is. 978-386-7915

...as we did in 2007, the horse-drawn hayride will be at a cost of \$5 per person and the chapter will pick up the rest of the cost.

### Membership news...

Congratulations to Skip and Megan Nolan on the birth of their son Ian! Is he going to have a ride on the horses or the bike first?

Congratulations to Caitlin Barclay on her acceptance to UMass-Amherst. Now on those nice spring days will she choose to study and go to class or call the Campus Safety Officer and play hooky to go riding!?!



...and congratulations to Jim Barclay as well on his appointment as Emergency Management Director for the town of Royalston.

The ghosts, ghouls, goblins — and Betty Boop — all had a great time at Kevin and Lori's back in October. We had a lot of fun laughing at each other's costumes, and there was a lot of food. Kevin had caught an alien in the back yard and surgically dissected him for our main course. Peg and her Knight brought some brain and "finger foods" too! Join us next year.



## HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THE 2008 CONVENTION YET!!

This year's convention is in Sandusky, Ohio and is scheduled for August 21-25

During this time of PMS (Parked Motorcycle Syndrome) Ed Brouillet (and others ) have begun thinking about the convention and what the chapter should do for the journey to and from Ohio. So it seems that discussions about the convention, those interested, curious, or somewhat intrigued about the possibilities, should get together for a chapter pot-luck planning meeting to talk about Ohio!

Ed is taking the lead on both the pot luck and the planning process and says that he would like to make it a nice trip and take about 4 days going out. There are some great roads in Pennsylvania that would be fun to try. But that will depend on who is going and what we want to do. It's about 650 miles going direct to Sandusky — *(BUT who likes to go direct!)*

A long-range possibility would be to leave around the Saturday before the convention. Come lend your opinion and thoughts... and food for the pot luck.

**Join us at Ed and Peg's on Saturday, January 19 at 5:00 p.m. 326 Minott Road— Westminster**

The convention will be held at the Kalahari Water Resort in Sandusky, Ohio. The discounted room rate is available beginning on the Sunday before the convention. The Ohio Association of the Red Knights, this year's hosts, have announced that there will be an "early bird" drawing. All members who send in their registration before March 1st will be entered in the drawing to have their room free for Thursday-Sunday of the convention.

Whether you are sure you are going to the convention, still on the fence, curious about plans, or just nosey and want to come for the pot-luck—come on over (and bring food)!

If you have paid your dues for 2008 (Thank You) and have not received your membership card yet it should be enclosed with this mailing. If you have not paid your dues yet for 2008 (oops) there is final notice enclosed (We must have our dues to the International shortly).

If you have any questions, please contact Treasurer Tim Kilhart.

## GUY'S DAY OUT IN BOSTON 2008

The Boston Motorcycle Show is the weekend of February 9-10 at the Bayside Expo in Boston.

It is always a great time looking at all the bikes, vendors, and wares at this show. Come join us on **Sunday, February 10**. We will meet at the Leominster train station about 9:00 a.m. for the ride into Boston and see if we can find our way — and always with a smile and a laugh! Let Bob know if you are coming so we can look for you along the way.

Don't forget that our **Breakfast Clubs** have started up again!

**Every third Saturday** from October through April we will gather for breakfast and fellowship. Meet at the Westminster FD for 8:00 a.m. and we will discover a different breakfast haunt for the month.

January 19, February 16, March 15, and April 19

We had 23 members and friends meet up at the Petersham Curling Club to learn new skills on the ice... and to eat! What a great time we all had under the watch of the Curling Club folks. Along with another great Red Knight Pot Luck meal, we had lessons on how to Curl and held several matches between the members.



**WOW!** Can you believe the turn out we had at the Christmas party! It might have been cold and snow was on the way but even without the bikes we had a turnout of forty-seven people. That is a record! There was a lot of food — thanks to our friends at the Apple Hill Farm— and the food was just fantastic!

There were display boards of pictures from the year, plenty of stories, a gift swap that seemed to have a never-ending pile of gifts, and a lot of laughs. We even had two friends from northern Vermont make the trip to join us.

Les made a remark about the best fun is with bikes, food, and laughter - and we have all of those every time we are together! It was a great way to round out a fun year.

Thanks to everyone's generosity we also donated 42 gifts to the Fishes and Loaves program to help underprivileged kids have a better Christmas.

Thanks to Caitlin and Jim Barclay who have agreed to serve as our chapter auditing committee and to review the treasurer's books and records for this scheduled evaluation.

On a rain-soaked Saturday in late October I had the very humbling opportunity to participate at a soldier's funeral with the Patriot Guard Riders.

If you are unfamiliar with the group, the patriot Guard first originated in the mid-west in 2005 when a local VFW post was looking for assistance after a group of people started protesting the U.S. government's policies by picketing at soldiers' funerals. In an effort to shield the family from this very inappropriate activity, the Patriot Guards was founded to produce a buffer of people and flags between the protesters and the grieving families.

Thankfully the protesters are few and far between at our military personnel's final services—but the Patriot Guard continues to be a vigilant presence at funerals of our service men and women around the country.

On my way en route to Belchertown for the service the rain continued to get harder and harder. I was wondering if anyone would show on bikes other than myself. I was very proud when we left the staging area for the funeral with over eighty motorcycles, most adorned with flags. When we arrived at the funeral we were each given a ten foot staff with an American flag and we lined the entrance way to the building. One military officer even broke ranks from his unit to stop and shake each of our hands as we all stood in the rain.

The Patriot Guard's mission statement says: *attendance at the funeral services of fallen American heroes, as invited guests of the family, to show our sincere respect for our fallen heroes, their families, and their communities.*

It was a very emotional day both at the funeral service and at the cemetery, where we all stood in formation with the flags, to show the family our support and gratitude. The most emotional part for myself was the ride from the funeral to the cemetery. The motorcycles led the procession and as we turned from the driveway of the high school, where the service was held, onto Route 202 to head to the cemetery the road was lined with people - all waiting in the rain to pay their respects to the fallen soldier and his family. And when we took the corner in the center of town each side of the road was lined with Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts holding flags and at attention as the procession passed.

At the cemetery the Patriot Guard, all en mass with the flags, stayed in formation until after the family had left the service. I thought of it as a silent tribute acting out the signs that many of the town's residents held along the procession—"we will never forget."

When the riders were dismissed from formation, the standard greeting seemed to be, "I hope we don't have to meet like this at another service."

Unfortunately, we know there will be more military personnel who will be in need of the Patriot Guard in the future. If you would like to learn more about the Patriot Guard or would like to participate in a mission when it becomes necessary, visit their web page at [www.patriotguard.org](http://www.patriotguard.org).



I give thanks for good roads that run straight through desert or field. For rolling roads that disappear over the horizon. For those that curve through canyon bottoms where golden aspens bend over fast-flowing streams and for roads that leap up the mountains in sweepers and hairpins to carry me high above and far away from daily life.

I give thanks for the way the concrete sings beneath my tires, the crunch of gravel, the smell of rain on hot asphalt.

I give thanks for the way my leg feels as I swing it over the saddle, the supple strength of gloves sliding onto my hands, for my electric vest in the cold and jacket vents in the heat. The way the zipper slides up my jacket. The way it feels, later, when I take off my helmet.

I give thanks for the long rides that stretch from morning to late afternoon and into the evening. For the miles and curves that vanish beneath my tires, those hours when time loses all meaning. For those days when I ride so long my throttle hand is sore and I walk a bit bow-legged when I finally park the bike.

I give thanks for the lean, for that delicious, exhilarating sensation where I realize I am one with the great laws of physics. I give thanks that I feel the acceleration in every part of my body.

I give thanks for road grime and the joy of washing it away. For the sensual way the soapy water washes over the tank and down the heads and slides off the fenders. For the way clean mirrors and windshield sparkle. I give thanks for that moment right after I'm done and I step back and look at my work.

I give thanks that I ride it enough to get it dirty again.

I give thanks for the gathering of riders, for being able to recognize friends' bikes approaching by their sound, for seeing good companions slow and turn into the lot. For the glad hugs and laughter, the banter, the growing impatience to be out on the road again.

I give thanks for that good company as I see them ahead of me drift to the outside then dip into the curve, one-two-three-four, like seagulls banking and then straighten up, one-two-three-four and fly on down the road.

I give thanks that I have had the opportunity to ride side-by-side in the pack. For long lunches and short breakfasts. For cold bottles of water and more laughter at a stop along the road.

I give thanks for the sense "of Being" that riding has given me, the freedom to be who I am no matter what others think. The sense of empowerment and control over my self and my life. The ability to take on risk and fear and triumph in challenge. To ride my own ride whether in that good company of bikers or by myself.

(Received in an email from Joy Ellis, Vermont 2)



When this picture arrived via email I was given strict orders that even though I was chapter president and newsletter editor that I was being over-ruled and that my Tuba talents in the Worcester Tuba Christmas performance (conducted by Francis Wada) should be published to show that your officers each have varied (mostly hidden) talents!

*As a chapter we always welcome any assistance you could bring to the fold with your "hidden" talents as well!*

We were contacted by the International Board about our chapter bylaws. There was one section, spelling out who is eligible to run for chapter office, that was in direct conflict with the International's Bylaws and we have had to modify the chapter bylaws to comply. The International also recommended some cosmetic changes that did not alter any intent within our document but brought it in line with what they are now requiring of the chapter guidelines.

If anyone would like to receive an updated version of the bylaws, please contact Secretary Lizotte.

**What's your mileage?** Vice-president Kevin Martin is making note of people's mileage on their bikes to see how many miles we clock as a club for 2008. Drop him a note with what the mileage is on your bike and we'll look again at the end of the riding year!