



# Red Knights

Mass Chapter 2 — March 2012

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

*Loyal to Our Duty*

From the  
President's Desk

What are your plans for 2012? I hope that some of the highlighted dates on your calendar include some time with the Red Knights. Last year we averaged 12 to 15 members and friends on each of our events. Were you in that tally? If you have not been at a Red Knight event in the last few years, consider marking one in RED on your calendar and come join us.

Ask any of our regular attendees; no matter if it is one of our pot-lucks, ice cream rides, weekend rides, or other events, we have fun. Even if you come in 4-wheels, that's OK! Just come out and have some fun with us. I know there are a number of members that I have not met, and I have been a member since 1988. So I think it is about time that we get to know all our members!

This year the Red Knights celebrate their 30th anniversary. For any organization to last that long in our busy world, it takes its members. Our officers and their spouses work hard to come up with a schedule and to plan events, but it is the members' participation that keep the Red Knights and our chapter as

strong as it is. Each of you has a role to play with the Red Knights. If you have a special organizational skill or some other personal strength that would help the chapter stay strong and vibrant, step forward and let us know how you would like to help! And the biggest part of your help is to come out and join us.

*You know the feeling. I'm talking about, the feeling that comes when I see my reflection in a bank window while at a stoplight. I'm talking about the feeling I get when I pass a carload of kids in the family wagon, and I can see the envy in their eyes and the animated longing as they point and stare.*

*When they wave and nod at us they do not see the Dockers-wearing, shirt and tie, day-planning teacher, student, or professional [or firefighter]. They see the same thing I see when I see my reflection in the bank window. They see a motorcycle rider.*

*Let's ride — wherever the road takes us!*

Roadbike Magazine  
(with some paraphrasing)

One event that we have had on our calendar the last several years is our Spring Skills Day. It's a day to work together, have some fun, and scrape some of the rust off our skills — together!

The AMA reminds us all that April is **"Get Out and Ride"** month. So let's set the goal that 2012 — the 30th anniversary of the Red Knights is the "Get Out and Ride" year — and we'll see all of you at one of our many chapter gatherings this year!

Ride safe, and Ride often!

Follow us on 

[facebook.com/RKMASS2](https://www.facebook.com/RKMASS2)



Saturday, March 31.

**To Boston for a walk along the Freedom Trail in the North End, Mother Anna's, and more!**

Meet at the North Leominster train station at 9:00 a.m. and we'll be carpooling to the Green-line at Riverside.

We will be walking the section of the Freedom Trail that takes us through the North End.

And before we are through we will enjoy the tastes of our favorite Italian restaurant... and dessert at *Mike's Pastries!* (And if you want to try out a place to eat other than Mother Anna's, that's OK too!) Plus we'll enjoy the walking tour together, seeing what kind of fun we can find!

*Call Bob L. by Monday, March 26 if you plan to go so we can give John a heads-up at Mother Anna's and look for you at the train station.*

Because of the fee changes on the commuter rail we will be carpooling to Riverside to take the Green-line into Government Center. This worked well for us when we went to the bike show in January... so come along, and bring your walking shoes and appetite!

## When's your birthday?

If we are out for a ride (or other event) on your birthday... we'll treat you to an ice cream (or something). Yes, it is another ploy to get everyone to come out and ride with us!



*On the road with our friends...*

- We had a dozen of us gather with our snowbirds Marty and Cliff for a New Years Eve of cards, dice, laughter, and of course food! They were up visiting family for Christmas and then were able to slip away just before the cold temperatures moved in!

There is still time to reserve a room at the Yankee Inn for our **Spring Weekend away in the Berkshires!** There are plenty of great roads in the western part of the state that we do not get to very often. So take a look at the Spring Flyer for specific details and make your reservation to head out for a fun weekend!

- We had ten people meet up for our MBTA trip into Boston for the Northeast Motorcycle Expo at the World Trade Center. It was a gorgeous day with sunshine and temps in the upper 40's and we saw riders pass by when we were in the city! Seeing all the bikes, vendors, and wares on display made us all wish we were cruising the byways ourselves! Then we met up with some members from other chapters that were at the show and had lunch at the nearby Atlantic Beer Garden.



- We had 17 people and a lot of food for our Winter Pot Luck last month. It is always great to get together — and it is even better when it is to talk about the rides that will be happening in the new riding season!

• Twenty-three people were all smiles when we gathered for our February Breakfast Club. It was sunny, about 30 degrees, and the week ahead saw temps in the 40's! Always good to see sun and warm in February! AND Steve rolled into breakfast on his bike. He was all toasty-warm thanks to Mr. Gerbing!

**Breakfast and Ice Cream**

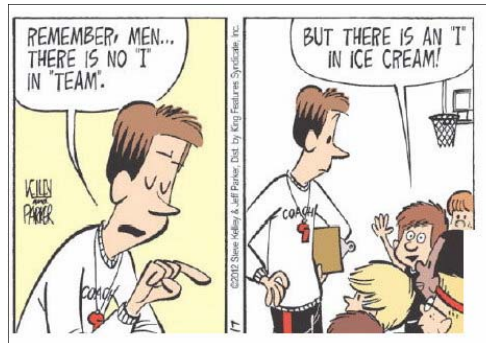
Don't forget that our **Breakfast Clubs** still have a few "gatherings"!

**Every third Saturday** from October through April we gather for breakfast and fellowship. Meet at the Westminster FD for 9:00 a.m. and we will discover a different breakfast haunt for the month. March 17 and April 21



A little snow is not going to stop us! In January, 16 trudged out into the falling snow for another great breakfast buffet at the Glen Café in Winchendon. (Psst — that's where our Christmas party is going to be in December as well!)

**Starting in May, join us for some Ice Cream**



Each 4th Wednesday from May through September meet up at the Westminster FD ready to leave at 6:30 pm and we'll try a different ice cream place each month.

Wednesdays: May 23, June 27, July 25, August 22, & Sept. 26

Long-time members Dick and Betty Blodgett were recently recognized for their 25 years of membership with the Red Knights.



It was a full house for the Chili and Pulled-pork cook-off at Monadnock Harley in Swanzey. We all had our own favorites, but it was all good!

## Are you headed to the 2012 Convention in Gettysburg? - August 16-19, 2012

We can talk about the convention and who has plans to go when we get together for our Americade Planning Pot Luck at E & P's. Come for the info, come for the friends & fun, come for the food... it does not matter why, just come! Sunday, March 25 – 2:00 p.m.

PA Chapter 12 is your proud host for the 2012 convention of the Red Knights International Firefighters Motorcycle Club. They are sure you will enjoy historic Gettysburg and the surrounding area.

They have arranged exclusive events with Harley Davidson's York Plant, the Harrisburg Fire Museum, the National Fire Academy and The National Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial.

They will also be offering national park service guided motorcycle tours of the battle fields and so much more. Visit their detailed web page for a quick overview of the schedule. Each event has links to additional information.

A downloadable registration form that can be completed online and printed or printed and filled in by hand is available through their webpage at <http://www.redknightspa12.org/>.

**C**ongratulations to this year's recipients of our **Motorcycle Safety Training Scholarships** through the Central Mass Safety Council.

Receiving scholarships for the Beginner Rider's Course are: Elizabeth Raymond, daughter of Athol Firefighter Jeff Raymond, Melinda Jack, wife of RK member Erik Jack (and an Athol Fire Captain), and Joyce Eichmuller of Ashburnham. The ERC scholarship goes to Marcia Marjomaa.

A big thank you goes out to our committee; Bob Shakarian, Don Hurme, Maury Lizotte, and Marcia Marjomaa for their work over the past few months. And thank you as well to the Central Mass Safety Council for their continued support of our scholarship program.

## If it's June... it must be Americade!

If any of you have heard the story of how Bill Dutcher started Americade, it is remarkable that thirty years later it is still going strong — and has become a main staple of the Red Knights' riding year. I believe that I am safe saying that once you go to Lake George and enjoy Americade it becomes one of those events that you strive to return to year after year. And although most of us were not there for the first Americade, the Red Knights have become partners with Bill and all the Americaders in helping make it a special week of "Motorcycle Nation" in the Adirondack Mountains!

We know that the RKMC has grown since it was first concocted by six founding members grousing about riding clubs at a local bike shop.

And Bill Dutcher's initial idea was most probably met with skepticism as well. He had lost his job working for Harley Davidson and found a nearby factory job close to his Lake George area home.

He knew that was not what he wanted to do and one night sat up in bed and woke his wife Ginny from a sound sleep to tell her what a great motorcycling marketing idea he had. I bet that at 2:00 a.m. she was hugely supportive of his new idea!

*The Red Knights Ladies will be meeting at Peg's house on **Monday, May 21** at 6:30 to plan for our week's supplies and related logistical needs.*

*...since the ladies will be out of the house, the guys will meet at 2 & 202 in Orange at 6:00 and fend for ourselves at some local eating establishment (with a ride of course!)*

But as history has proven—with the Red Knights, with Americade, and with many ideas in our country — that enthusiasm and commitment has turned those ideas into something very special that we all enjoy.

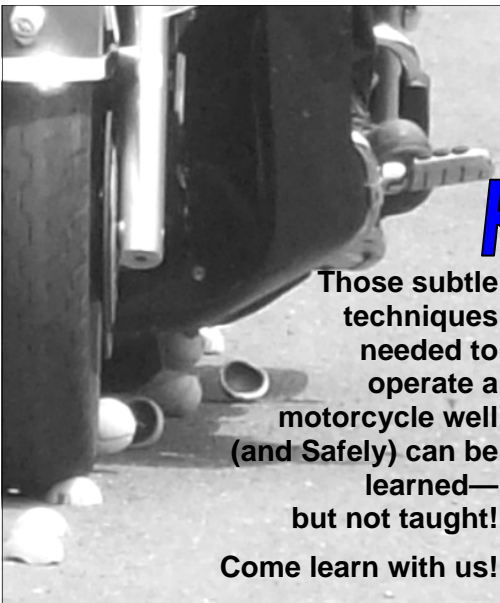
So come join us and have a great time celebrating the 30th annual Americade and the 30th Anniversary of the Red Knights with all 60,000 of our motorcycle friends in Lake George!

Please think about door prizes to help the Red Knights International at the Wednesday evening dinner at the Fort William Henry Conference Center at Americade. We had 70 door prizes to award dinner attendees again last year... and that has been far more than ANY of the corporate sponsors involved with Americade!

**2012 will be the last of the Red Knights sponsored dinners** as a corporation at Americade. In the ten years we have hosted the dinner we have given away 926 prizes. Wouldn't it be a great parting shot to say the Red Knights have given away over 1,000 prizes! Help us with a donation or two. *(And thanks to all of you because MANY of those door prizes have been from our chapter members).*

# It's time for KNIGHT SCHOOL!

## RED KNIGHTS SKILLS DAY 2012



Those subtle techniques needed to operate a motorcycle well (and Safely) can be learned—but not taught!  
Come learn with us!

Come join us for our annual Spring Skills Day for 2012 on Saturday, May 19. Meet at the Shell Station at Routes 2 & 202 in Orange (Exit 16) for 9:00 a.m. and come enjoy a few hours of skills practice with us. It is time to help build confidence—and the only one you are competing against is YOURSELF!

If you have never been, it is NOT meant to point fingers or embarrass anyone. It is a day of fun scraping some of the rust off our skills (not the bikes) and getting us to think about safe riding techniques as we begin our season. The laughter we share is aimed at all of us together! Come join us.

And of course, there will be a “post-education” ride with a food stop!

### TAR SNAKES!



You're on some innocuous piece of asphalt that is not offering anything out of the ordinary to test your skills — and then — tar snakes! Those squiggly black lines of tar used by highway workers to patch cracks in the pavement. These dark slices of patch are like black ice in the right conditions. And those conditions can be either wet or dry, hot or cold! Here are some pieces of advice when encountering that snake whose waiting to strike at your heel:

- Continually scan your vision and keep the tar snake in your mind as a hazard to avoid.
- If you do hit a tar snake, don't panic; most tar snakes present only a brief interruption of control.
- Avoid any sudden correction; keep the bars steady and your grip firm.
- Do not chop the throttle or apply the brakes (if you can help it); maintain momentum.
- If you must do so to avoid a collision or crash, hold your line and gently roll off the throttle and/or use minimum braking.

### Spring Into Action -- Checklist for a Trouble-Free Return to the Road

The arrival of warmer temperatures in spring means a long-anticipated return to the road for a number of winter-weary riders. For those climate-challenged enthusiasts forced to store their ride over the winter months, the first ride of the season should be preceded by a thorough check-up.

Nationwide Insurance offers the following "First Ride" checklist for motorcyclists heading back out on the road:

**Tires.** Look carefully for signs of weather cracking and test the tread depth in several places. If your tires are cracked or worn, invest in new ones. Also, be sure to check the tire pressure. If your tires are the originals, inflate to the pressure specified in the owner's manual. If they aren't the originals, it is best to consult the tire manufacturer's recommended pressure on the sidewall of the tire.

**Wheels.** Check your wheels for loose spokes or bent rims.

**Lights.** Check for cracking and condensation in the lenses. Test your headlamp, turn signals, tail and brake lights to ensure they are in working condition. Replace failed bulbs.

#### Battery.

Make sure your battery's fully charged. Replace it if the case is bulging. Clean battery terminals before installing.



**Fluids.** Check the levels of your engine oil, hydraulic fluid, brake fluid, coolant and fuel. Replace or refill those that need it. If your bike didn't get an oil and filter change prior to winterizing, take care of it now.

**Controls.** Ensure the throttle twists freely and snaps back in the off position. Examine cables and hoses for damage and be sure they don't interfere with suspension and steering.

**Brakes.** Inspect your brake pads and liners, and replace them if they are worn.

**Supplies.** Examine your tool kit and first aid kit to make sure you have the items necessary in the event of an accident or breakdown.

**Review your insurance policy.** Be sure your policy is up-to-date and you're covered for any valuable accessories you added during the winter.

## 2012 is here - come out and ride!



The officers worked up a great schedule for the riding season. We hope to see all of you at events throughout 2012. The Red Knights are fun because of all the individuals that make up our RKMC family.

### Here are some upcoming rides and events in the near future!

**Saturday, March 3. Galactic Bowling (In the dark) and Pizza.** Come join us at the Gardner 10-Pins on West Broadway for a few strings of Chapter Bowling with their glow-in-the dark "Galactic Bowling." (6:30 p.m.)

**Saturday, March 24. RK Massachusetts State Meeting.** Hosted by MA-1 in Boylston. Contact a Chapter Officer if you would like to attend.

**Sunday, March 25. Americade Pot-luck Planning Meeting.** Are you planning on going to Americade in June? Come to Ed and Peg's (in Westminster) at 2:00 p.m. and bring some food to share too.

**Saturday, April 28. Spring "Dust-Off" Ride.** Meet at WFD for 10:00 a.m. and for a ride to *who knows where* — just because we need a ride!

**Motor Officer Blessing and Rodeo is on May 20 not April 15 as previously listed** — The event includes a bike blessing, bike games, a motorcycle rodeo, food, music, raffles and more. Meet at WFD for 9:00 a.m.

**Sunday, June 17. Father's Day Ice Cream and Fantasies** — Meet at WFD at 10:00 am and we will head out for a ride to UConn for a stop at their Puppet Museum... and of course ice cream at the UConn Dairy! <http://bimp.uconn.edu/>



If you are looking for something besides a ride on Father's Day, the Holden Firefighters' Association annual Firefighters Muster is held that day starting at noon.

### Who's in the middle?

In a recent edition of Wing World Magazine there was an article that discussed group riding positions. They discussed the lead bike and the "tail gunner" responsibilities — but they also had a section of the article dedicated to "the middle." I know that the first time I took the lead of a ride I was nervous, but as the author says, all of us, even those "in the middle" who are just along for the ride have a role to play in ensuring we all enjoy a safe ride.

*Those in the Middle — Up to this point we've only been discussing two people in this team. There is also something everyone else who rides in a group needs to remember: We all need to keep in mind that even those of us in the middle of the formation have responsibilities. We are responsible to pass on the hand signals from the Lead, such as for single file, stagger formation, pointing out potholes and road kill, sand in the corners and other types of hazards, etc. We also need to be aware of who we are riding with (their needs, skills and more). The burden is not all on the Road Captains!*

*In other words, we can't "sleep" simply because we ride in the middle of the pack. We need to remember things like maintaining safe spacing with the other bikes around us. And, most importantly, we need to ride our own ride. We also must stay alert because hazards don't always just appear in front of the Lead bike, sometimes they come at the riders in the middle of the group; we need to keep aware of our surroundings and always be prepared to react to the unexpected at all times.*

*So we must remember that, just because our Road Captain is leading us, we are not excused from thinking for ourselves and riding our own ride. We are all responsible for our own safety at all times so never give that responsibility away to someone else. Though it's nice to have someone willing to help look out for your safety, ultimately it is your life so guard it wisely and be sure to ride your own ride even when riding in a team!*

By Bruce and Melissa Thayer,  
Wing World, February 2012

### Membership news...

Congratulations to Cliff Eldridge on the purchase of a Suzuki Boulevard to be kept down south so he has two wheels with him in Florida!

At a recent meeting the ladies in attendance presented a cake to the guys in recognition of the years of service that all our Red Knight members give to their local fire departments. The eight firefighters (and retired firefighters) present accounted for 265 years of service. A thank you goes out to *all* our members for the service they have given throughout their careers.

Motorcycle Fundraiser Sponsored By Marlborough Eagle Riders

# 1st Annual Olivia's Ride

July 17, 2003 - August 23, 2011

In Memory Of Olivia McGowan

\$20 Rider • \$10 Passenger

Public Welcome To Attend \$10pp Under 12 FREE!

## June 23, 2012

Food • DJ • Raffles • 50/50 • Cash Bar

To Get Your Pre Registration Form, Go To: [www.wtx.com/eagleriders/oliviasride](http://www.wtx.com/eagleriders/oliviasride)

Mail Checks To: Olivia's Ride • 18 Baldwin Ave • Marlborough, MA 01752

Make Checks Payable To: Marlborough Eagle Riders, Memo: Olivia's Ride

Any Questions Please Contact Jim at 774.245.0739 or Tina at 774.245.0740



a community fundraiser benefiting  
Children's Hospital Boston

All Proceeds Go To Children's Hospital In Boston

Registration At: 9:00am (coffee & donuts 9am-11am) Kick Stands Up At: 11:00am

Start Marlborough Eagles: 56 Florence Street • Marlborough, MA 01752

Ending @ Fish & Game: 1 Muddy Lane • Marlborough, MA 01752



GRAPHIC DESIGN: AEK DESIGNS LLC • Alexis Krieger Dascoll 774.279.1842 [www.aekdesigns.com](http://www.aekdesigns.com)

## Massachusetts Red Knights T-shirts



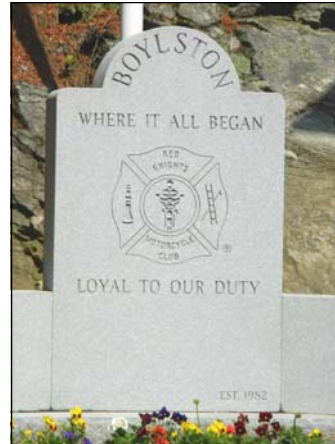
The state level of the RKMC is producing a Massachusetts T-shirt with our state and chapter locations on the back. Text will be in gold with locations as a Maltese Cross. The front will have the RKMC crest.

These shirts are ONLY \$10. If you want a shirt you must contact Bob Laford, and get a check for the amount (made out to RK-Mass-2) before Wednesday, 3/14 so they will be ready for the 3/24 State Meeting. *(Get your money and size info to Bob L.)*

And don't forget if you want to purchase a chapter Americade T-shirt, the order sheet and payment must be in by the Americade Pot-Luck Planning meeting scheduled for Sunday, March 25 (at Ed and Peg's).

*(If you misplaced your order sheet, see Bob)*

## Dedication of the 9-11 World Trade Center Steel at the Red Knights Memorial in Boylston



Mark your calendars for a very special and solemn day as the Red Knights offer a ceremonial rededication of our memorial in Boylston with the placement of the steel relic from the NYC World Trade Center Site.

Saturday, June 16, 2012

*(More details to follow as they are available)*



We know that many of you participated in the procession and ceremony last summer that brought this gift from the World Trade Center site back to Massachusetts. Throughout the winter months the planning committee and the architect have been working on the design for the placement of the WTC Steel at the memorial.



There will be a rededication ceremony at the memorial to unveil the relic at the site in honor of our 343 brother and sister firefighters, 60 Police Officers, and the nearly 3,000 people who perished that day.

During the year we will be having some 50/50 raffles at our rides with the proceeds going to the Ride for Kids. You should have received a flyer about the Ride for Kids in a previous mailing — and we hope that you will consider gathering some donations and joining us for a truly special ride this summer!



## Fighting Fatigue on Long Motorcycle Rides

*Excerpts from the Feb. 2009 issue of Motorcycle Cruiser*

Fatigue is definitely an issue for riders on trips of three days or more. It's something that you need to consider and prepare.

Before you head out on the highway looking for adventure, consider a few steps that you can take to avoid having one of your adventures involve falling asleep on your motorcycle.

**Rest:** Adequate sleep can be a bit hard to come by before and during a multi-day ride. During the ride plan to allow yourself to sleep late every two or three days, setting no departure time to catch up on any sleep deficit. And don't use alcohol as a sleep aid; it actually tends to reduce both the quantity and quality of sleep.

Experts say that you'll have "tired times" during every 12-hour cycle, most often between 3:00 and 5:00 (a.m. and p.m., your local time). You may want to plan to arrive by that point or stop for an early dinner.

**Physical Preparation:** Unless you ride your motorcycle almost every day or take rides of three hours or more almost every weekend, you may not be completely adapted to your bike. After a full day or two of riding, you will become acutely aware of muscles that you are using full-time to ride. Taking breaks every hour or two, especially during the first few days of a long ride, will help with this adjustment.

**Calm:** Extended exposure to wind and sun dehydrates and fatigues you much more than your routine two-hour weekend jaunt. Riding in a tanktop and open-face helmet may seem like the best way to deal with the heat, but will actually wear you out and heat you up much faster than if you wear a vented or mesh jacket and a helmet that protects your face from the wind. A windshield also reduces the amount of wind that's tearing at you but leaves enough to cool you.

**Quiet:** Wind noise (and exhaust noise if you have loud pipes) will not only permanently damage your hearing, it will fatigue you quickly. Even a full-face helmet won't attenuate these noise sources sufficiently on an extended ride, so you should wear earplugs as well. A windshield can also reduce wind noise.

**Clear:** Vision clarity can be an issue on extended rides too. If your windshield creates distortion, or if you have a faceshield or sunglasses that are optically imperfect, you should find a replacement or eliminate the problem.

**Caffeine and Alcohol:** A coffee or cola can briefly boost your alertness, but isn't a substitute for adequate rest.

**Good Habits:** Those boring admonitions about diet and exercise also apply to fighting fatigue. They increase your energy level, which makes you stronger and more alert. Of course, drinking adequate water is important too, especially considering that you are being dehydrated more rapidly because of your exposure to the wind.

Fighting fatigue provides benefits that go beyond safety. If you are alert and refreshed, the ride itself is more enjoyable, and you'll get more out of the sights and experiences that you came to enjoy.



The Massachusetts State Red Knights have once again been invited to ride in the Newton, MA parade. The date is Sunday, May 20, 2012. — Some Mass members rode last year and had a great time. (food and ice cream provided free) Photos posted on our state web site from last year are here: [www.massredknights.org/2011NewtonParade.htm](http://www.massredknights.org/2011NewtonParade.htm)

If you are interested, and have that date open on your 2012 ride calendar, please advise George Colby, RK Mass State Rep



State Rep George Colby (MA-3) and Assistant State Rep Bob Laford (MA-2)



# Join your Red Knight friends and family for a Spring Weekend in the Berkshires May 4-6, 2012

This year's Spring Weekend will be touring the Berkshires with the Yankee Inn in Lenox as our host hotel.

Termed the best of Massachusetts scenery by [motorcycleroads.com](http://motorcycleroads.com), the Berkshires offer a great riding experience with mountains, farmlands, rivers, villages, and no traffic! The roads offer some twisty Berkshire ranges to put a smile on your face, and local attractions include wineries, museums, parks and state forests and miles of great roads. It is a great way to start off the Spring with your Red Knight friends!



Visit the Norman Rockwell Museum

Find a new favorite road that you have not yet traveled...

7, 102, 41, 23, 43, 22

And visit towns you may not have been through before...

Otis, Montgomery, South Egremont, West Stockbridge, Great Barrington, or Monterey

Or visit some other noteworthy spots...

The Taconic Trail, Beartown State Forest, Mt. Greylock, or Stockbridge, home to Norman Rockwell.

The Berkshires and the eastern Hudson Valley await, Come join us!

Make your reservations today at the Yankee Inn by calling 800-835-2364 and tell them that you are with the Red Knights.

Special group rate of \$89 per night (plus tax)

Limited rooms at the group rate so call soon — Rate to be held until April 1. Amenities include indoor pool & spa, exercise room, cocktail lounge, and guest Internet station

