



Red Knights Motorcycle Club Massachusetts — Home of the Founders

Spring 2014
<http://massredknights.org/>

The Spring 2014 State meeting was hosted by Mass-15 in Waltham on Sunday, May 18.
The Fall 2014 meeting will be hosted by RK Mass-13 in Ayer.

From the desk of the State Rep

Greetings all Massachusetts Red Knights.

This is the sixth edition of the Massachusetts State Red Knights Newsletter.

Assistant State Rep. MA-2 Bob Laford is the editor and publisher and we all owe him a resounding "Thank you" for his tireless work and dedication to the flow of information we have for our state Red Knights.

I was elected to this position at the 2011 fall meeting and this fall it will be time once again to elect a State Representative.

To that end, I would like to continue as YOUR state Representative.

Voting for the position will take place at the fall 2014 state meeting scheduled to be hosted by MA-13 and I would appreciate your vote.

Anyone else who would care to run for the office of Massachusetts State Representative should email their biography and "intention to run" notice to Bob Laford no later than August 31, 2014.

That will give him time to get their bio out to all the chapters so they can decide how their representative should vote at the fall state meeting.

I am dedicated to this position, as well as all of you, and promise to continue keeping you informed, to maintain the Massachusetts State Red Knights as the best state organization in the International Red Knights community and tirelessly work toward the betterment of all.

The ongoing "political" issues involving our state and my position as your representative continued through the fall of 2013.

That being the question of whether the Massachusetts State Representative would be treated as though he or she was the representative of a state association. This problem has been on going over the past few years and I believe it has finally been settled once and for all by the International Board of Directors. Going forward, any

Massachusetts State Representative will be treated the same as the representative of a state association. The political wrangling has been brought to an end.

As per a vote at last years fall meeting, I applied for and was granted a TMLA for, and subsequently purchased a "MA State Red Knights" banner. It will be displayed at any convention where we have state representation whether it is brought there by me or someone in my stead. In addition, I applied for and was eventually granted a "Clothing" TMLA. That TMLA allows the

Massachusetts State Representative to purchase and wear any article of clothing that bears the Red Knights name or logo. This is not a "personal" TMLA. It covers the Massachusetts State Representative now and in the future.

MA-1 Charter / life member Norm Beausoleil, our Region 1 Director, and I have a very good

relationship and continue to work well together.

If you have any issue that you think should be brought up at any International Board meeting feel free to contact me and I will see that Norm is informed.

Your Assistant State Representative, MA-2 Treasurer Bob Laford, and I shall continue to strive to keep Massachusetts on top.

If you have something you would like to see added or included within future newsletters feel free to send it to us for publication.

I hope you enjoy the newest offering from your state representatives.

Regards to all,
MA-3 George Colby



Just a Ridin' in the Rain

Re-printed from RoadRunner Magazine's On-line Touring Tips

Many, if not most, of us consider riding in the rain a necessary inconvenience when we're caught out in it while going from point A to point B. The experience is frequently made more burdensome because of: inadequate riding gear, reduced vision of scenery and road hazards, loss of traction, increased navigational challenges, and fogged glasses and face shield—just to name a few. Often we discover too late that we forgot to pack defogger, rain mittens, Rain-X, or some other item critical to reducing the discomfort and increased risk of riding in the rain.



It's my contention, however, that riding in the rain is often less pleasant than it really has to be, partially because we avoid doing it unless forced to ride in the wet. But like most of motorcycling's other acquired skills, practice almost always leads to a better riding experience. In that vein, here are my top ten tips for improving your rain proficiency and, yes, even enjoyment:

1. **Expect Rain:** Even if the sun is out, and there's not a cloud in the sky before leaving home, expect the possibility of rain during any ride that lasts more than a couple of hours. That means riders should almost always pack rain gear. And, by the way, most textile riding gear that says it's rain resistant, or even waterproof, usually isn't in a long, soaking rainfall.
 2. **Trust Your Tires:** One of the biggest phobias of inexperienced riders, once pavement becomes wet, is that their tires will rapidly lose traction. The soft rubber composition of motorcycle tires (especially compared to car tires) means that most of them retain about 80-percent of their traction on wet pavement. The presence of oil, antifreeze, or any one of a number of other chemical substances on rain-slick roads, however, can significantly compromise traction. If wet asphalt appears to have a reflective sheen, these chemicals may be present. One way to evaluate a road surface is to lightly drag the sole of one riding boot to determine if pavement is actually slippery.
 3. **Avoid Plastic Strips on Pavement:** Pedestrian crossings and some other road markings are actually white plastic strips adhered to the concrete. These strips become slippery when wet. The same is true for metal road surface coverings, tar snakes, wooden planks at railroad crossings, and other similar road materials not made of asphalt or concrete. If these hazards cannot be avoided, then ride over them at a right angle, at moderate speed, with the bike perpendicular to the road surface.
 4. **Treat Your Face Shield:** Recently I was caught in the rain without any treatment for my face shield. The rain accumulated in drops, diminishing my ability to see down the road in what, already, was a low light situation. On a face shield treated with Rain-X (which works better on glass than it does on plastic) or some other chemical that increases surface slipperiness, wind will largely clear the raindrops from view. It's also not a bad idea to
- treat your shield before beginning any ride. If your shield fogs up, don't open it completely, because that will enable rain to deposit on the inside, which is hard to clear without stopping and removing the helmet to do so. Make sure all helmet vents are open and only crack the shield slightly to increase airflow and exhaust condensation.
5. **Inspect Rain Gear Integrity:** Over time rain gear can lose its ability to repel water. I learned this lesson once, the hard way, when my dated rain gear began leaking during a daylong ride in heavy rain. The combination of riding wet in the wind caused me to lose body heat, become chilled, and then sick enough that I couldn't continue riding the next day. Now I replace worn rain gear and buy suits with heavier gauge material.
 6. **Be Visible:** I will never understand why some companies make black rain gear, particularly the jacket. It's hard enough to see riders in rainy, low light conditions without making them virtually invisible to human sight. If your rain gear top isn't especially colorful or visible, wear a hi-viz vest over it. Because most other vehicles will have their lights turned on in the rain, reflectors also will improve other motorists' ability to see and avoid you.
 7. **Slow Down:** Although a relatively small amount of traction is lost on clean wet pavement, it still makes sense to ride more carefully in the rain by avoiding: (1) excessive speed; (2) steep lean angles; (3) close proximity to other vehicles and (4) aggressive stopping maneuvers.
 8. **Don't Push Your Luck:** It's one thing to ride in rain, but quite another to ride into a thunderstorm or even a heavy downpour. Because your riding risk factors are already heightened in rainy conditions, know when to get off the road and take shelter. Remember, your rubber tires won't provide any protection in the event of a lightning strike and there's nothing between you and flying debris picked up by high winds. Common sense should tell you when it's time to "fold 'em."
 9. **Practice:** Here's a radical idea: go riding in the rain, even when you don't have to! As is true with most other motorcycle riding skills, practice improves ability, confidence, and enjoyment of the experience. The same is true for riding in the rain. Practice effective rain riding techniques close to home so they will be second nature when you need them on a road trip.
 10. **Learn to Enjoy the Experience:** The rhythmic pitter-patter of raindrops, while ensconced in a warm dry cocoon, can be both enjoyable and relaxing. It only can be so, though, after mastering tips one through nine above. I've heard of some motorcyclists who enjoy rain riding so much, they actually look forward to rainy days in the saddle.
- Long story short, a rainy day doesn't mean that your two-wheeled adventure has to stop being fun.

Chapter email address and 2014 Voting –

The International Board has set up RKMC email addresses for each chapter under “redknightsmc.com” If you need assistance with your official chapter e-mail contact your state rep for guidance.

For 2014, the positions that we are voting for are International Vice-President and International Secretary. Nominations have closed and the current Red Knights holding those posts will be running un-opposed. That means that there will be no electronic ballot to cast this year.

When was the last time that your chapter email account was checked for in-coming messages from the International or others?

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Mass-15 will be undertaking an “*Alphabet Ride*” for the Red Knight Grand Tour beginning on June 2 and ending at Americade on June 5. The alphabet tour visits fire stations starting with each letter of the alphabet and they will be traveling through many states to find the “X” and “Z” departments. They will be using this ride as a fundraiser for the Lt. Walsh/FF Kennedy Fund. Anyone wishing to participate or make a donation please contact President Troy Osgood.

There’s an “APP” for that!

In a recent column in Motorcycle Consumer News Fred Rau listed out several Smartphone “Apps” that he found useful while on the bike. Below is a synopsis of Fred’s column and recommendations in case some of your computer savvy riders may be interested! His list is specifically for Droid phones, but as he mentioned in the column, the I-store has similar “apps” as well.



Our state rep got a late start for this year’s western adventure. But once Mother Nature gave him the OK, he and Al were on the road.

If you followed his on-line escapades the question that remains is, “did he ever ride with two hands on the handle bars?!”

National Ride to Work Day

Monday,
June 16, 2014
www.ridetowork.org/

New England Fire Chief’s Show June 20-22 In West Springfield

The RKMC will have an information booth at the Fire Chiefs Show.

Contact Steve Mickle for more information
Redknight@myfairpoint.net

Field Trip-“Your guide to the cool, hidden, and unique things in the world around you,” according to Google, and I agree. Field Trip runs in the background on your phone. When you get close to something interesting, it pops up a card with details about the location. No click is required. And if you have a headset or bluetooth connected, it can even read the info to you.

Hotel Tonight - I first heard about Hotel Tonight through Time magazine. Though the network doesn’t come close to covering all the hotels that might be available in your area, what it does is put you in touch with some awesome discounts at some very nice properties that usually aren’t a part of any chain. Subscriber hotels list their unsold rooms for that day through Hotel Tonight, which often means there will only be one or two rooms available and only for that very night. But if you are in the area and click on the app, you are likely to be able to grab a last-minute, super-good deal at a really nice property.

RadarNow - For pure practical functionality, especially on a long tour, I don’t think I use any other app half as much as I do Radar Alive Pro. Quite simply, Radar Alive uses your phone’s GPS to pinpoint your location, then accesses the local Doppler radar sites and brings up a fully-interactive weather map on your screen. You can look at the current weather situation, zooming in and out as you desire, or click into a time loop of the past 15or 30 minutes to see how a storm is developing and tracking. If you spot a bad storm in your area, you can simply tap on it and a readout will pop up telling you how far away it is, what direction it is traveling, and at what speed.

Gas Buddy-Unlike the other apps here, Gas Buddy is what is known as a “community,” relying on everyone who uses it to report current gas prices that they find. For me, it means that when I roll into a town I can simply tap the Gas Buddy icon and see the current fuel prices at all the stations within a chosen radius of my position, complete with distance and directions to that station. Granted, the price differences from low-to-high in any given area are usually no more than 8-10 cents per gallon, but when you ride as much as I do that can add up to about \$200 per year in savings.

What's up in 2014?

What are you planning for 2014 for your chapter? Do you have some *great* ride ideas that you would like to share? Do you have a charity event that you would like other chapters to come out and support?

It's time to blow your own horn and tell us all about them. Post any events of interest on the RKMC Massachusetts Ride Page.

Visit the state web page at <http://massredknights.org/> and click on "MA Red Knights Ride Calendar" or send them to George for publishing on our state web site.

Ride and Event Information:

Saturday, June 21. Vermont-2 Paul's Ride. Our brothers to the north host a charity ride each year to buy gas cards for families providing transportation for cancer treatments. Registration at the Vernon, VT. Recreation Area, 607 Pond Road beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, August 3. RKMC CT-2 Summer Picnic. Scheduled for the Portland Fire Dept Picnic Grounds on the Conn River. Last year's costs were \$10.00 per person with a short ride before the cook out. Contact CT State Rep Dana Robertson for more info.

Sunday, October. Fire Prevention Breakfast at Jaffrey (NH) FD. You will be overwhelmed with the variety of food that the Jaffrey firefighters put out for the beginning of Fire Prevention Week. Enjoy a ride into southern New Hampshire and a *great* breakfast!

Sunday, October 12. Dummerston Apple Pie Festival. Ride to Vermont to see what thousands of pieces of Apple Pie look like!

The Wall is coming to Winchendon, Massachusetts on June 5. The Moving Vietnam Veteran's Wall will be escorted from Colonial Hotel on Pearl Street in Gardner to the GAR (Civil War) Park at in Winchendon at 9:00 a.m. that day. If you would like to participate in the escort, contact WFD Deputy Fire Chief Ricci Ruschioni at WFDHarley@comcast.net for more information.

I don't care if you ride fast. I don't care if you ride slow. Just don't ride like you are late for work.

Anything that distracts you from the task of riding is an impairment. The underlying concept is that preoccupations and distractions are impairments. If you are late for work, your mental energy is being diverted from the task at hand: Riding that motorcycle.

There are many things that cause impairments. We all know that alcohol and drugs—even over-the-counter drugs like cold medicines and anti-histamines cause impairment and effect our mental and physical abilities. Some common causes that we may not routinely consider are Ego, Fatigue, and Distractions.

Some classic signs of impairment include:

- Your bike seems to be shifting roughly and the brakes are twitchy.
- You're getting antsy in traffic or yelling at other drivers.
- You leave your turn signal on for several minutes.
- You forget to switch your headlight from high- to low-beam.
- You cannot maintain a steady speed.
- You're nodding off in the saddle.
- You're having difficulty making decisions.
- You suddenly realize you're miles further down the road and missed an exit.

Do any of these sound familiar? The key is to recognize the signs of impairment and act on them accordingly. There's no one answer for the proper solution when you recognize these signs - it varies depending on the level impairment and the situation. For some, it may only require increasing your space cushion and following distance. For others, it might mean taking an extended fuel break and grabbing something to drink while you rest in the shade.

Some might need to find a quiet spot to nap for 20 minutes. And for those who recognize that their judgment is compromised, getting off the bike getting some real sleep is the only answer. But all the solutions begin with recognizing the signs of impairment early.

(Snippets taken from "Signs of Impairment" by Jeff Earls, that appeared in the Fall 2013 issues of Iron Butt Magazine)



This year, the New England Ride for Kids is out of Framingham, with a marshalling point at the Bose Corporation facility—Mountain Road, on Sunday, August 17. More information is available at www.rideforkids.org.

There are now around forty Ride for Kids motorcycle rides a year around the country bringing in over \$4 million annually, making the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation the largest non-governmental funding agent for Pediatric Brain Tumor research in the country.

From developing improved treatment options to offering college scholarships to brain tumor survivors, Ride for Kids is dedicated to making a difference in children's lives with the help of thousands of motorcyclists.



Governors' report: Motorcyclist fatalities fell 7 percent in 2013

PICKERINGTON, Ohio -- For the second time in five years, motorcyclist fatalities are projected to decrease, according to a report released May 6 by the Governors Highway Safety Association, the American Motorcyclist Association reports.

Dr. James Hedlund of Highway Safety North, a former senior official with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, authored the "Spotlight on Safety" report, which projects that the motorcyclist fatality total for 2013 will be 4,610, compared to 4,957 reported in 2012.

Compared with the first nine months of 2012, motorcyclist fatalities decreased in 35 states and the District of Columbia, increased in 13 states, and remained the same in two, the report states. All 50 states and the District of Columbia provided preliminary motorcyclist fatality counts for the first nine months of 2013, according to the governors' association press release.

The GHSA reported 4,469 motorcycle fatalities in 2009, which represented a dramatic 16 percent decline from 2008.

"The decline in rider fatalities is encouraging news, particularly during Motorcycle Awareness Month when so many motorcyclists are riding," said Wayne Allard, AMA vice president for government relations. "And we hope that these reported declines signal a positive trend in rider safety on nation's highways.

"But the 'Spotlight on Safety' report is short on hard data regarding the factors contributing to the decline," Allard said. "That is why the AMA is helping fund a comprehensive study of the causes of motorcycle crashes."

The motorcycle crash causation study is being conducted at the Oklahoma Transportation Center, an independent and well-respected research facility at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla.

Funding for the study comes from the AMA, the Federal Highway Administration and the NHTSA. A final report is expected in 2015.

The GHSA is a nonprofit group representing the highway safety offices of states, territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Its members are appointed by their governors to administer federal and state highway safety funds and implement state highway safety plans.

Help paint Americade RED!



Americade and the Red Knights have walked side-by-side through history together since 1982. No matter the year, Canada Street in Lake George and all the Americade venues is somewhere that Red Knights congregate and enjoy time together.

Whether you are new to Americade or a veteran to the World's Largest Touring Rally, each Americade week is full of friends, fun, and many miles.

As has been the case for the past few years, the Ft. William Henry complex is the center of the rally activities with the vendors at nearby "Tent City" at Million Dollar beach.

Join the RKMC family at the annual open house on Thursday afternoon at 4:00 at the Lake George FD. Several hundred Red Knights turn out to meet and greet with our RK hosts from the state of NY.

This year's Friday night activities, including the fire works, take place in the vicinity of the beach — so downtown Lake George will be the place to be all week long, from June 2—7th. Hope to see you there!

Don't forget your Fire
Helmet so you can be
part of the RKMC team
leading Saturday's
parade!



Massachusetts Riding

Out for a cruise around the Quabbin Reservoir this year? Stop at the New Salem General Store on Route 2 to say hello to Rick.

If you are sporting Red Knights regalia (vest, shirt, patches, etc.) the coffee is on Rick.



Thank you to all those that helped with the spring clean-up at the Memorial in Boylston.

