

Red Knights

Mass Chapter 2 — Winter '03

<http://www.redknightsmc.org/mass2/>

Loyal to Our Duty

From the President's
Desk

Dear Chapter Members and Friends,

It is with a lot of thought that I have made this decision. I have decided not to seek re-election as Chapter President this fall.

I want to share my thoughts with you about this decision. In January of this year I was home with a medical problem (Doing a-ok now). I have had a little time to look back at things going on in my life. It was very hard for me to decide if this was the right thing to do or not. We all come to a point in our lives when we have to do something we don't really want to do, but that we know is the right choice. In October of 1988 I took office as your chapter Vice-President. Then ten years ago when our past president, Phil Jordan, decided to step down as President it was then that I knew it was my time to step up and run for President of this great chapter. I will have put in 15 years as an officer of Mass-2 as of this fall, 10 of those years as Chapter President. I have had the time of my life, but it is now time for new leadership.

I hope you understand where I'm coming from when I say I think it is time!!
I'm not leaving, just stepping back a little. I will always be there for support of the chapter.

I've seen how hard our past president and all the officers have worked over the years to start and keep this chapter running. In the early years there were periods that it was hard to keep everything going. As the years have passed new people have become involved and it became a lot easier to get things done.

A very special thanks to each and every one of you members for your hard work and dedication to this chapter over the past years. We now have one of the best and biggest chapters in Massachusetts.

I'm only one person in the organization. The officers are the backbone of this organization and they need everyone's support to keep the chapter strong. In the last few weeks I have had the time to look back at what I have been doing. My job as Chapter President has been made much easier thanks to all your help, but as the Chapter President, I'm ultimately responsible for everything that needs to be done. When I took over as International President, I knew I would have my hands full. Little did I know just how full they would be. I spend over three hours per day just doing International business and I don't want the chapter to suffer because of the time needed for International responsibilities.

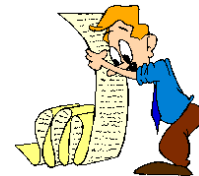
As the International President I'm ultimately responsible for everything that needs to be done at that level. There I have about 3,000 people to report back to in that position. I would like to have a little more time for Peg and myself. I will be coming up for re-election this year and I am running again for International President, hoping to serve for another two years. It is my intent to try to stay on as International President until we have our Red Knights Memorial dedicated. Then it will be someone else's turn to take those reins as well. I hope you see where I'm coming from and will try to understand why I am not seeking re-election as chapter president. **I hope there will be a person that will step forward to take over this great Chapter so it can continue to grow.** I will always be there to help. I love each and one of you and cannot thank you enough for all the love and support that you have given Peg and myself. You are some of my dearest friends!!

Sincerely, Ed & Peg



Spring Business
Meeting and Pot-
luck for Mass-
Chapter-2

- Sunday, April 12
- 5:00 p.m.
- The Laford's at 276 West Road, Petersham



- Please RSVP to Bob and Diona Laford (and if you need directions)
978-724-3270

Bring your appetite, some stories to tell, and your favorite dish to share and we'll start off the spring right with our RK friends.

Look for the 2003 Ride Schedule for Red Knights – Mass-2 included with this newsletter.

2003 – the year you become a better rider!

The Red Knights encourage all its members to take a Motorcycle Safety Foundation Rider Education Course. Ask anyone who has taken the training – no matter how long you have been riding, you will learn something that will make you a better rider. Make 2003 the year you improve your riding skills.

Sharpen and enhance your skills with an Experienced Rider Course! The program covers such topics as:

- Rider and motorcycle preparation
- Street riding strategies
- Traction factors
- Braking and cornering techniques
- Swerving techniques

Not only will you become a better rider, but Students successfully completing either the beginners or experienced Rider Course will receive a MSF course card which entitles you to a 10% limited Massachusetts motorcycle insurance discount and tuition reimbursement

IMPORTANT CHAPTER BYLAW VOTE!

The chapter will vote on the "vest color" issue at our Spring meeting on April 12. If you have an opinion on this issue, please be at the meeting! More details about the proposed bylaw changes and the meeting are in this newsletter.

2003 120-Club

For the past few years we have run a 120 Club raffle as our yearly fund raiser as opposed to a Poker Run and it has been very successful. It offers the club some funds to disperse to worthy organizations and people with relatively little work compared to the Poker Rides.

Tickets for this year's event will be distributed at the April Pot-Luck and Business Meeting being held at the Laford's. If you are not going to be able to attend the meeting, please contact Raffle Chairperson **Marty Eldridge** to get your tickets. All unsold tickets **MUST BE TURNED IN** by the end of May so they can be taken to Americade and sold before our drawing. **(To be drawn after the Chicken BBQ ride on 21).**

This fundraiser is very important to the chapter as it helps keep our dues low, allows us to make donations as a club, and helps cover chapter operating expenses.

Thank you to everyone who has helped make

Americade Dreamin' – It's never too early to begin thinking about Americade! Just think of being on your bike, in the beautiful Adirondack Mountains with 50,000 of your closest friends. While this week-long procession of riders is ultimately all about motorcycles, that's not what sticks in most people's minds. If you've been to Americade, think back over those precious few days. What we most remember are the smiling faces of our fellow motorcyclists. That is what this event is all about. So why not add your smiling face to that crowd and come enjoy Americade with the Red Knights.

Not counting what the Red Knights do together at Lake George (LGFD open house, 3-Course Dinner at Roaring Brook, Stoney Creek for a great ride and great food, great hospitality at the "cabins", etc.) Americade has so many things to see, do, and ride that you can't do them all.

What can you do and see? More Organized Activities at Americade than at any other motorcycle event in the world. Take your choice of: 16 Boat Cruises with on-board buffets, A day at New York's Largest Theme Park with buffet, A day at Saratoga Harness Track with buffet, A 3-course Dinner with Live Music (sponsored by the Red Knights on Wednesday evening) at the Event's Social HQ, 10 different organized MiniTours each day, 10 different Self-Guided tours each day, Demo Rides from 12 different Manufacturers, World's Largest Touring-Focus Trade Show – TourExpo, Fashion Shows with \$3,000 in Door prizes, 84 Seminars on Different Topics (including a Red Knight seminar this year), Motorcycle Stunt Show, Drill Team Shows, Bike Judging, Dozens of Social Events, Field Events, Fun Contests, and much more.

Anyone who has gone will admit – once you've gone to Americade once, you'll want to come back each year. Just check out the Americade web pages at www.tourexpo.com and visit the message board online. You will find that Americaders all over are dreaming about going to Lake George all year long. If you're planning on heading to Lake George let an officer know and we'll get together soon to talk about the trip.

"I always feel a bit blue leaving Lake George at Americade's end. Perhaps it is that, for one week at least, I was living in a motorcycle nation. We lived, breathed and loved riding. We found old friends and made new ones. We laughed too much and rode real far. It was Americade....the world's best rally." (Brian Rathjen, *Backroads magazine*)

Come join us at the Annual Red Knights New England Regional Cape Cod Weekend on Friday, MAY 2 through Sunday, MAY 4, 2003

We are again staying at the HERITAGE HOUSE HOTEL in downtown Hyannis. Both the back buildings have been reserved for the attending Red Knights! This year's prices are \$49.90 per room per night single or double occupancy and add \$10.00 per person for a triple or quad room (same as last year).

Some people are considering extending the stay through until Monday morning. The hotel *will* honor the Red Knight rate for the third night.

Call the Heritage House *today* to reserve your room. Remember to mention you are with the **Red Knights**. Telephone: (508) 775-7000. All room reservations must be in by April 2, 2003. After that time, leftover rooms will be released for reservations to the general public. (Past years there was a golf outing staying at the hotel the same weekend, so book your room soon).

The byways of Cape Cod offer riders great scenery and fantastic rides in "unguided fashion" if you choose throughout the weekend.

The *business of state* was handled in January when reps from all the active chapters in Massachusetts got together. (About 25 people representing Mass Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, and 12 were in attendance). So this means there is no need to have a business meeting on the Cape — more time for socializing and riding!

Mass-8 is again planning our weekend in their backyard with a ride around the Cape visiting more of the Lighthouses (that we didn't see last year).

If you have not been to the Heritage House, it is located at 259 Main Street in Hyannis. It is a 143-room facility and offers a heated indoor pool, saunas, whirlpool, and a restaurant. Non-smoking rooms are available. If you have any questions about the weekend, please contact State Rep Steve Mickle.

Begin planning today for
the 20th Annual
RK Convention
AUGUST 7-10, 2003
*"Le Rendez-Vous" in
Laval, Quebec*

[http://
redknightsquebec3.tripod.com/
convention.htm](http://redknightsquebec3.tripod.com/convention.htm)

If you are interested in discussing a *longer trip* for the 2003 Convention, contact Bob Laford. During the Spring those interested will gather to share details about a possible trip to Nova Scotia and the Cabot Trail.

If you think you may be interested, let Bob know.

On the road with our friends

- It seems like old man winter came calling early this year. Our Polar Bear Ride was vvvvvery cold and before Thanksgiving we saw snow on the ground more than once! Hopefully the early cold will mean an early spring and we will be out on the road again soon.

But just because the bikes are away waiting for the sun and warmth to return doesn't mean the Red Knights are hibernating too. We have been together several times during the winter, and we'll be **starting our Breakfast Club on Saturday February 15**. So there are always things to do, even in the winter — take a look throughout this newsletter to see what's going on.

- January had some temperatures that were lower than anything we have seen in recent years! But that doesn't stop us. Just recently we were together again, this time at the Apple Hill Farm in Leominster for one of our Pot-luck dinners. It is always great to be together as friends even if the bikes are hibernating away for a few months. Another special outing is the train ride to Boston. Look for details in this newsletter. Don't miss it!

Rides for '03

The Chapter Officers met in January to begin developing our ride schedule for 2003, and met again with the Mass State Rep and other Mass Chapters this winter to discuss the upcoming year.

Enclosed is the proposed ride schedule. If you have other ideas, or just have a spare day to do a ride, never hesitate to call some one to share your thoughts. Our schedule is not engraved in stone and we have tried to vary the dates, times, ride distances, and ride destinations so everyone can join us sometime during the year.

Some of our upcoming events in for 2003 include:

- Boston Train Ride
- Breakfast Rides
- Ice Cream Rides
- Wright's Chicken Farm
- Whitewater Rafting
- Molly Bish Ride
- Ride and Stay Weekend to Vermont with CT-2
- New England Ride for Kids
- Pot-lucks, BBQs, and Steamers and Lobster in Maine
- Apple Pie Ride

Your chapter officers have decided that at each event when the chapter gathers we will hold a 50/50 raffle. At the end of the 2003 season the monies raised from these raffles will be donated to the Red Knights Memorial Fund. Plans are that the memorial will be constructed in Boylston and dedicated during our 25th anniversary year in 2007.

Know before you go

The pre-ride inspection. Sure we love to ride, and we're often in a hurry, but it takes only a moment to perform a pre-ride check. Here are some quick checks to perform daily, and others on a weekly basis.

If you were at the Baldwin House in December



for our RK Christmas Party I think you had a good time!

We had 25 members and friends join us in December for our holiday party and we had a great time. As a thank you to everyone in the chapter who has helped make the past year a success, the officers decided to let the chapter treasury pick up the tab for our wonderful meal. Thank you everyone for a fantastic 2002

DAILY

- Fuel supply: That it is adequate, and that the petcock(s) are turned on.
- Engine oil supply: That it is adequate for proper lubrication according to your dip stick or oil sight glass.
- Inflation of both tires: Use an accurate gauge to check that inflation is within the range stated in your owner's manual, but does not exceed the maximum pressure listed on the tires' sidewalls. Always check inflation when the tires are cold.
- Brake master cylinder: Check the fluid level via the see-through sight.
- Clutch master cylinder: Check fluid level.
- Headlight, taillight, brake light, turn signals, horn: Check operation

WEEKLY

- Battery level: Check electrolyte level in each cell; add distilled water if necessary. Check terminals for corrosion; clean if necessary. While on tour, carry an old shampoo bottle with a tight-sealing lift-up top that forms a narrow spout; it is perfect for shooting water into the battery.
- Clutch adjustment: Check per owner's manual, and adjust if necessary.
- Wheels, including spokes if so equipped: Notice if wheels are out of round or damaged.
- Drive Chain: Adjust and/or lube according to owners manual (if so equipped).
- Cables: Check for fraying and broken housings. Lubricate when needed, and replace when necessary — *before* they break!

Reprinted from Motorcycle Touring and Travel by Bill Stermer.

It's been a long and cold winter for us in the North East. I know I can't wait to get the bike back out once the temperatures and the road conditions improve — but remember that your bike has been dormant for a while and should have some TLC before you venture off for that first well deserved ride in 2003.

Le "Rendez-Vous" in Laval, Quebec The
Red Knights 20th Annual Convention —
August 7-10, 2003

"Experience the International
Quebec Flavor".

Where you can already smell and taste the flavour
of all different dishes!

In 2003, Laval will be the Place to Be for
our 20th annual convention.

- Room rate: \$129.00 Canadian
- Convention registration fees: \$115
Canadian

Hôtel Sheraton Laval

2440 Autoroute des Laurentides, (this is Highway
15 North, exit 10),
Laval, Québec, Canada, H7T-1X5 Phone: 450-
687-2440

For reservation (Hotel Direct): 1-800-667-2440

Reservation: Please mention Red Knights
Convention, upon reservation, at the above
number only.

Sheraton Laval: <http://www.sheraton-laval.com/>

We will not have another newsletter in the mail until around Americade – but of course we will be riding together between now and then even though the road and weather conditions don't look too favorable right now!

Here are a few details on events that appear in your ride schedule:

- **March 22. Take the Train into Boston.** Meet at the Fitchburg Train Station for 9:00 a.m. and we'll head off for some walking, eating, and a lot of laughs.
- **May 2. Meet up to head off to the Cape.** Meet at Burger King in the K-Mart Plaza in Fitchburg for 9:00 a.m. and we'll have a great time riding the shore with friends from all over New England.
- **May 18. Ride to Wright's Chicken Farm** in Rhode Island for dinner. Meet at the Westminster Fire Station at 10:30 a.m. with your appetite! (Last year's May Ride was cancelled because of about 6 inches of snow. So keep those snow chains ready).

Check out the dates and times for the **Breakfast Club and the Ice Cream rides** that are planned

Several years ago Fred and Lisa Leblanc and Bob and Diona Laford were on a ride out through parts of western Massachusetts. It

was a great summer's day and they were cruising along *Route 66* west of Northampton when they came across some road construction. Nothing too serious at first, just a little work on the side of the road... then the pavement ended... then it turned to drainage rock... and then it turned to sand... and then it turned to mud! We never came across any road crews and warning signs until we were in the sand and the mud sweating profusely as we mired through the construction site worried about our riding partners and our bikes!

Occasionally we all run out of pavement and we must ride on less than perfect roads. That happens to be what a section of Ron Ayers' book Going the Extra Mile covers, and I thought I would share some of that with you.

What are the keys to staying upright when things beneath your tires become a bit sloppy?

First, until you gain some experience and confidence riding off-road, ride very cautiously. Traction is unpredictable in the dirt and if you become overconfident after riding through some tightly packed dirt, you may be taken by surprise when the surface changes.

A second tip is to loosen up on the controls. Don't grasp the handlebars in a death grip when the going gets tough. A moving motorcycle will tend to stay up by itself. Stay relaxed.

Reduce your speed and shift your weight to your foot pegs. Standing transfers your weight to the foot pegs, thus lowering your center of gravity and making it easier for you to control the bike.

It's also a good idea to use a mid-range gear when you are riding on unpaved surfaces. By keeping the motorcycle's RPMs a little higher, you can use the braking power of the engine to slow down rather than relying on the brakes, which is more likely to result in a skid.

If you encounter a short patch of sand, keep moving and open the throttle a little to shift some weight to the rear of the motorcycle to prevent the front wheel from digging in. Riding through extended areas of sand or very deep sand is a different matter. In this case your best alternative may be to slow down and paddle your bike through at less than a snail's pace. Shallow patches of gravel usually aren't difficult to deal with, but if the gravel is deep, the technique will be similar to riding in sand.

If you encounter a muddy patch pick one muddy rut and stay with it. If you're comfortable standing up, try to make it through that way, slow and easy, without making abrupt changes to the accelerator or the brakes.

These tips won't make you an expert off-road rider, but if you observe the pointers and take it easy you'll find it a lot easier to stay upright as you negotiate the occasional bad patch.

The Apple Hill Farm was a really nice place to have our Winter Pot-luck this month — and thanks to Donna Moreau and Bob Shakarian for being our hosts.

We were glad that a number of our members were able to attend (over 30) — and the day was spent talking about rides past and rides to come!

Make sure you take the Ride Schedule that you received (either at the dinner or in this mailing) and post it in a conspicuous place so you see what's going on with the Chapter during the year.

We hope to see everyone on the road sometime during the year.

The officers (and their spouses) tried to plan a varied assortment of rides, distances, destinations, and days for the different rides so that everyone has an opportunity to join us.

As you can see on your schedule, there are also several rides where we are planning on riding to other chapters' events to support them as well.

If you know of rides and destinations that you would like to see the chapter go on — please let the officers know so we can incorporate your ideas as well.

Membership News: Our condolences to Bob Szocik and his family on the recent death of Bob's mother.

One new member name that was omitted from our last newsletter by mistake was John Loiselle from Westminster. Welcome!

Also, congratulations to Kevin Martin and Lori Hembrow on their recent engagement and the (soon to be) purchase of their new home! And to Don Hurme for his recent retirement from the Townsend FD. (That means more ride time Don).

Join us for our annual **Train Ride into Boston** on Saturday, March 22.

Meet at the Fitchburg Train Station at 9:00 a.m. We'll see how many friends Steve can make on the train, have some fantastic food at Mother Anna's, visit Quincy Market, and take in "Quest for Immortality" (from the Egyptian Pyramids) at the Science Center.

If you're interested let Peg know by Monday, March 17 so she can book some reservations at the restaurant for us.



RK Angel Pins for sale. One of our on going fundraisers for the chapter is the sale of firefighter angel pins. Ed Brouillet is keeper of these pins and they can be purchased for \$6 (plus 75 cents shipping). Contact Ed if you would like one.

Red Knights Memorial Ride



During May of 2003 Clayton Thomas of Indiana-1 will be running the Four-corners Tour around the United States. He is leaving Indianapolis on May 6 and heading for Blaine Washington. From there he will go to San Ysidro, California, Key West, Florida, and Madawaska, Maine. All within the twenty-one day time limit.

Clayton is doing this trip as a fund raising endeavor for the Red Knights Memorial that will be built in Boylston in remembrance of members gone.

Clayton's plans puts him in New England and at his fourth corner around Memorial Day weekend.

Both Steve Mickle and Ed Brouillet have told us all how special it was for members and firefighters to meet them at their fourth corner of the tour (Blaine, Washington) when they did the run in memory of the Worcester 6.

They are planning on meeting Clayton in Madawaska, Maine and riding with him while he is in New England.

If you are interested in being in the group that rides with Clayton as he completes his tour, contact Ed for more details.

Whitewater Rafting in Maine!

One of the suggestions that we heard from members was a whitewater rafting weekend. And it's scheduled!

June 27-29 is the date and our Road Captain, Tim Kilhart is the coordinator.

The ride will be along the Kennebec River near Bingham, Maine. The North County Rivers guides will be our trip leaders. You can find them online at www.ncrivers.com

Basic cost for the trip will be about \$140 per person. This covers lodging and the raft trip.

ALL RAFTING AND LODGING RESERVATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY! MAKE RESERVATIONS AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE TO INSURE YOU LOCK IN YOUR PREFERRED DATES). WEEKEND SPACE IS ESPECIALLY LIMITED.

50% DEPOSIT CONFIRMS YOUR RESERVATION - BALANCE DUE 45 DAYS BEFORE YOUR TRIP DATE ALL DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

MAKE RESERVATIONS EARLY TO INSURE YOUR PREFERRED DATE AS WEEKEND SPACE IS LIMITED (booking info from the company web site)

If you are interested, contact Tim to make a reservation and to get him the 50% deposit. **The balance of the funds need to be into Tim by our Cape Cod weekend.**

You can also go on the weekend even if you would rather not go on a raft ride. Maine offers some great scenic roads for motorcycles and lots of places to shop and sight see.

If you have paid your dues for 2003 and have not seen your membership card yet, it should be with this newsletter. If you have not paid your dues, this will probably be your last newsletter, because we have to have the updated rosters in to the International by March 1. If you have any questions, call Chapter Treasurer Cliff Eldridge.

Breakfast and Ice Cream

The last few years we have been having Ice Cream rides each 2nd Thursday from May through September. That has been so successful that we decided to keep up that type of gathering through the months we are not going for ice cream — but for Breakfast instead!

Join the Red Knights Breakfast Club

Each 3rd Saturday of October through April meet up at the **Westminster FD at 8:00 am** and we'll try a different breakfast place each month.

- February 15
- March 15
- April 19
- October 18
- November 15
- December 20

Join us for some Ice Cream

Each 2nd Thursday of 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

- May 8
- June 12
- July 10
- August 14
- September 11

Important April Meeting with proposed bylaw changes!

Our April business meeting is scheduled for Sunday, April 12, and will be at the Laford's at 276 West Road in Petersham. It will be a pot-luck get-together with a business meeting. Some very important bylaw changes will be discussed and voted on at that time. At the International Convention in August, International Bylaws were altered to allow the chapters to decide if they would be a "Red Vest Only" chapter or if other colors would be allowed for vests that bear the RKMCC Crest.

This decision was tabled from the November meeting because those present thought that the vest color issue is one of significant importance and should not be decided at a meeting with only a few members present. Think about the issue: *Should Mass-2 remain a Red Vest chapter or should that be changed so members can place the club crest on other colors or vest designs?* If you have an opinion you would like to voice, please be at the April chapter meeting.

Proposed Bylaw Changes – to be voted on at April 12, 2003 meeting.

To insert one of the following text options to Article 10 Section 4 of the Chapter Bylaws:

OPTION 1:

Section 4: Chapter Uniform. The uniform for the Chapter shall be a white uniform shirt and navy blue or black uniform pants with black shoes or boots. The International patch, chapter rocker, and membership rocker shall be worn on the left sleeve. The member may wear the flag of the United States on the right sleeve. The front of the shirt may have nametags and rank insignias of the individual wearing it. All other markings are to be in good taste and consistent with the image of the Red Knights.

Chapter Jackets. The club jacket of the Chapter shall be a baseball type jacket, red in color. The member may affix the International patch, chapter rocker, and membership rocker on the left sleeve, and the flag of the United States on the right sleeve if he or she so chooses. The back of the jacket, when marked, shall say "Red Knights Motorcycle Club Mass. Chapter 2."

Chapter Vests. Chapter Members wearing Vests bearing the emblem of the Red Knights Motorcycle Club **shall be limited to vests that are red in color**. The back of the vest may contain The Official International Emblem of the Red Knights Motorcycle Club with a top rocker showing membership status, and a bottom rocker that states "Mass. Chapter 2" may be also worn. (Another option that is available for a top rocker is one that says "Red Knight").

OPTION 2:

Section 4: Chapter Uniform. The uniform for the Chapter shall be a white uniform shirt and navy blue or black uniform pants with black shoes or boots. The International patch, chapter rocker, and membership rocker shall be worn on the left sleeve. The member may wear the flag of the United States on the right sleeve. The front of the shirt may have nametags and rank insignias of the individual wearing it. All other markings are to be in good taste and consistent with the image of the Red Knights.

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