

# **RKMC Mass-2 40th Anniversary Celebration**

**Saturday, August 19, 2023**

Templeton Fish and Game Club 1:00 pm  
(Club Road, Templeton MA 01468)

*Come help us celebrate 40 years as a  
Red Knights Chapter! All are welcome!*

*Enjoy Red Knights friendships with RKMC members  
from across the area. We'll have food, fun, prizes,  
and comradery to make more memories!*

**\$10 per person**

**RSVPs must be received by  
August 1 for a head count!**

(Email [treasurer@rk-mass2.org](mailto:treasurer@rk-mass2.org))

**1983-84 E-Board**



Officers of the Fitchburg chapter of the Red Knights are (l. to r.) Maurice Lizotte, secretary; Philip Jordan, president; George Fregeau, vice president; and Cliff Eldridge, treasurer.

**Mass-2 Presidents**



PHIL JORDAN  
1983-1993

ED BROUILLET  
1993-2003

BOB LAFORD  
2003-2013

KEVIN MARTIL  
2013-Present

**2023 E-Board**





# Red Knights

Mass Chapter 2 — Summer 2023

[www.rk-mass2.org](http://www.rk-mass2.org)

facebook

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

*Loyal to Our Duty*

*From the Desk of the President*

Greetings Red Knight Members,

Here we are halfway through the year, how's the riding going for everyone? I haven't heard from anyone about the rides you've been on or taken outside of the chapter. I have heard that most of the attendance has been a bit smaller than past rides. Is there anything we can do to get more of you out there or is everyone so busy you just haven't been able to get out and ride with your Red Knight family?

I know we're getting older and some of us are experiencing medical issues that have reduced our ride time on the bikes, but four wheels is still acceptable to come out and join us. I know I'm just as guilty not coming out as often as I should. As most of you know I have a double medical issue that has prevented me from attendance at some of our events, all mostly due to physical therapy and doctors appointments for the two of us, but I do see a light at the end of the tunnel and hope to get out to more events during the rest of the year.

I also heard that Americade was just *ok* this year, most probably due to the change in dates. Well, they've decided to keep those dates so maybe more of you will consider going next year since you have more than enough time to set your plans in motion.

Yankee Rally next year will be held closer to our area, as it will be held in Keene NH! So mark your calendars now and let's see if we can have a big showing of our chapter for the 2024 Yankee Rally.

Our next chapter event will be a co-ride with NH Chapter 9 next Saturday June 24th. Meet at 2/202 for 9am.

Asking everyone to keep Social Member Kellie Sharkarian and Cam in your thoughts for a speedy recovery. Kellie went down at the Yankee Rally (and Cam watched from Shaky's trike). She sustained a few minor injuries and just received word her bike has been totaled. If you hear of anyone selling a decent bike check with Kellie to see if it's something she might be able to get into.

Lastly I hope you all have August 19th down as a save the date for our 40th anniversary party at the Templeton Fish and Game. We would like to see a good turnout for this event, to help us celebrate past and present members and all the fun those 40 years have held.

Thank You,

Stay Safe and keep riding.

President Martin



Join us for our  
chapter Summer  
Cookout!

**Sunday, July 2**  
**4th of July**  
**Celebration**

**1:00 pm at the  
Oliver's in New Salem**

~~~~~

Let's get together for  
some great company and  
good food!

The grills will be ready!  
Bring some food to share  
and enjoy the afternoon  
with us.

## Thank you for MA-1 Challenge

A number of our members were at the forefront in the initial fundraising and ground breaking of our memorial in Boylston. Then again, a group of our chapter members stepped up when a down payment was needed to secure the memorial hall purchase (those names appear on the display as you enter the house). And once again, our members have stood to the challenge made by MA-1 to again support the Memorial with additional donation with 97% of our members participating!

Because of the overwhelming generosity of our members, more than 100% equivalency in donations was made by our chapter and a check for \$1600 was sent to the International Treasurer to be placed against the principle on the mortgage on behalf of our members.

Thank you all who have supported the Red Knights memorial throughout the years with your time, talent and treasurer!



At the annual business meeting for our chapter, scheduled for October, the officer positions of President and Secretary will be up for election/re-election.



If you are interested in running for office, please contact nominations chair Joe Hopkins (by September 28th).

### **Saturday, October 28 — Annual Chapter meeting.**

We will be meeting at the Rec Center at the Millers Woods, on Daniel Shays Highway in Athol at 10:00 am.



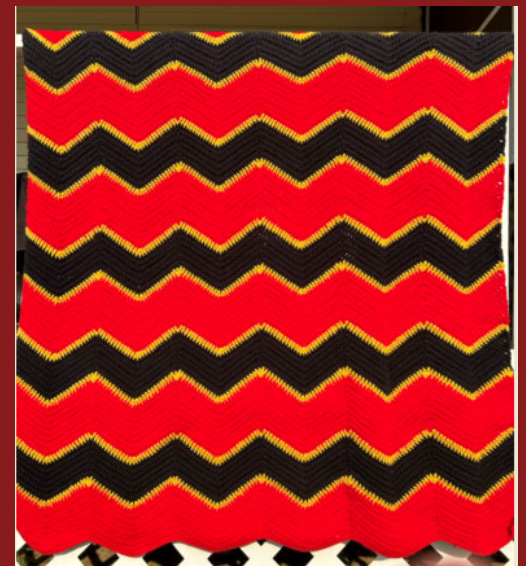
**Hopefully**, you did not miss this deadline, but motorcycle inspections in Massachusetts were due by May 31.

### **Afghan (donation) and raffle**

Mary Barclay put one of her many talents to work and made this beautiful Afghan to be raffled off to support the memorial in Boylston (THANKS MARY!)



Another great meal (and a great turnout) for the RK MA-1 annual Spaghetti Dinner in Boylston. We heard a rumor that it may be the last one!



We will be selling tickets (\$5 or 5 tickets for \$20) throughout the riding season and will have the drawing at our annual meeting this fall.

**Smoke and Fire  
Chevron Afghan**  
Crocheted from 100% acrylic yarn

One of our ride ideas made it across the pond!



Red Knights International Firefighters  
Motorcycle Club, Inc. ©  
Chapter Switzerland 1

## EINLADUNG

## BUG-Ride - Challenge

Sonntag 16. Juli 23

Start ab 10.00 Uhr Clubhouse

Ankunft, spätestens 15.00 Uhr

Startgeld zu Gunsten unseres Charity-Projektes:  
die Brandverletzten-Station des Kinderspitals Zürich

Sfr. 15.- pro Pers.



Thank you to Rick Oliver for taking on the Afghan Raffle marketing and sale at the Yankee Rally. He sold over \$200 in tickets! He could not convince people that the Afghan was his handiwork, though.

(And Rick will be taking some of our decals to Austria with him to sell in Europe at the Convention, too!)



## Shop-talk for our Spring Skills

We did not hold a parking lot practice Spring Skills Day, but our Road Captain and resident master mechanic, Jeff Hamberg, did prepare some shop topics for discussion at the April Breakfast Club.

Including in the round table were topics including tire construction, care, and plugging a puncture, brake service, cable care and adjustments, chain care, tune up items like plugs and filters, and lighting and bulbs.

Topics and information that was well received and appreciated. Thanks Jeff!



## Breakfast Clubs start up again this fall —

A late winter's day in March with dry and sunny weather brought a big crowd to Bob and Diona's in Petersham.



April's Breakfast Club was a beautiful day and we had six bikes take the scenic route to Southwick for brunch at Jeff and Faith's. We ended up with a baker's dozen of members and had a great time (and a great ride).

The November breakfast club will be at Tim and Darlene's in Athol.

## On the road with our friends...

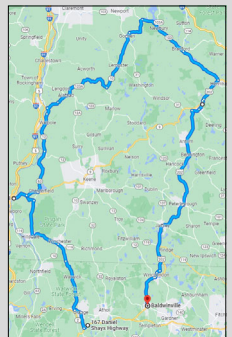
- It was not riding weather but the chili kept us warm with our stop at Monadnock Harley for their annual chili cook-off in March. It was snowing (again) when we headed home (and no one bought a new bike while at the shop this year).



- A handful of members made their way to Waltham with other RK members for the spring state meeting in April. It started as a damp ride along Route 2, but the ride home via Route 117 was a nice ending to the day! Along with our Mass brethren, recently elected Region 1 Director, Ken May, was also in attendance. Minutes of the meeting and the state newsletter were shared through President Martin's communications pass-alongs.

**Saturday, June 24. Co-Ride with RK NH-9.** NH-9 has planned a route for us with a Co-Chapter Ride to help celebrate our 40th anniversary. We are meeting at the 2/202 Shell Station in Orange, and then re-grouping with them at the Shell Station in Chesterfield on Route 9.

They have a lunch stop planned at High Tide in Henniker NH. Around 160 mile loop planned for us.



## RK CT-2 is also celebrating their 40th anniversary! Sunday, August 6

Connecticut Red Knight's annual picnic is open to all Region-1 members and chapters — and is celebrating this 40-year milestone. The event is at the Four Town Fair Grounds on Egypt Road, Somers, CT.

- Meet at picnic grounds at 11:00am
- KSU at noon for a short ride.
- Hotdogs and hamburgers served at 1pm.
- Cost is \$15.00 per person.

RSVPs required to Tom Gill. (He asks that one caller per chapter with total head count—please contact Bob Laford if interested). This is also date of Day #2 of MA-2 Grand Tour ride)



# AMERICADE 2023 - Changing Again

The last several years we have experienced some significant change in Americade and 2023 was no different! The two biggest changes were the rally's move to Memorial Day week, and second was the diminishing number of our members who were able to participate in Americade activities. Mass-2 was not the only RKMC members that had reduced numbers. There was a noticeable reduction in Red Knights throughout the shortened and early event. (The 2024 Americade will remain Wed-Saturday of Memorial Day week).

There is  
nothing so  
stable as  
change  
*Bob Dylan*

NY 3 hosted a Red Knight Ride with 53 bikes participating and the open house at the LGFD, hosted by NY 12, had about 40 people in attendance with 23 bikes participating in the Founding Fathers' Ride.

Americade's vendor area was moved to Beach Road in front of the fort (with Beach Road closed to vehicles). The vendors were similar to what was on hand for 2022. There were a good number of motorcycle manufacturer's on hand, as were some rally staples like seminars, guided and unguided rides, and comedy shows and entertainment.

Warrensburg vendors were disappointing with only about 6 tents.

Bob Laford again presented in the seminars for the 20th year — and had a good crowd of 25 riders attend his talk.

What will Americade be like in the future? We will have to wait and see.



## International Voting

Nominations for international positions closed on June 11. For our chapter, there are no contests and there will be no ballot to cast. Running unopposed is Spike Ostiguy from MA-4 for President, Ken May from NJ-19 for Region-1 Rep, and Scott Ryan from PEI for Treasurer.

Bylaw change proposals will be announced 45 days before September's annual meeting date (in July). Once that list is released, if there are any controversial bylaws that will need to be voted on by our attending members, we will share information for input from our members.

Attending the convention in Austria in September are MA2 VP Rick Oliver, Assistant Road Captain Tim Kilhart and Darlene, and Sergeant-at-Arms Ian Hurley.



Lyman Signs on Route 2A in Phillipston now has our "Minuteman" digitized files for embroidered clothing. They also have the file for our full-color "heat transfer" that can be done on-demand in both the minuteman logo and the standard Red Knight logo.

If you are looking for clothing you can stop by and order your Mass-2 clothing from them!

They will also prepare clothing that you provide. Please contact them for details.

Just a reminder that we have (a few) iron-on applications of our chapter insignia — both small for the front of shirts and larger for backs. Contact Bob Laford if you are in need.



Spring 2023

### MA State Red Knights meeting

Detailed minutes from the spring state meeting were shared via email in April.

Our new Region-1 Rep, Ken May, was in attendance and spoke about the Region-1 Mayday Fund. If you know a Red Knight that is in need of some assistance, please let an officer know.

Our state rep has had several discussions with MA-8 about the possibility of a Cape Cod weekend this year, but so far there is no plan.

MA-4 is changing vendors for the red leather vests they are providing. The quality of the new vendor's vests and the ordering timeline look to be an improvement from the past vendor.

**The 2023 fall MA State Red Knights meeting will be hosted by Mass-4 at the Huguenot Museum in Oxford on Saturday, September 9.**

### Membership News Briefs...

Congratulations to Caitlin Barclay (now Renzaglia) on her recent nuptials (in Hawaiian, too!). We cannot wait until Caitlin is brave enough to have Kevin meet her Red Knight family!

Our condolences to Rick and Lori Oliver on the passing of Rick's mom.

We are glad that Kellie Shakarian is doing OK after her incident while at the Yankee Rally.

Welcome to Mark and MJ Clark, from Phillipston, our two newest members. They will be joining us on rides on their Slingshot, please welcome them when you see them.



Congratulations to Chris Conrad on bringing a new (to him) Goldwing home to his stable. And congratulations as well to Joe and Donna Hopkins for the new Indian that made it to their garage this spring.

Congratulations to Jason Scott on his promotion to Captain with the Petersham Fire Department.

Congratulations to grandpa Kevin Martin (and Val) on the birth of a new granddaughter, Agnes and to Marcia Marjomaa on the birth of granddaughter #6!

Congratulations to Doug and Linda Dupell on their new place in Ft. Myers where they can winter in style!



**The 2023 Yankee Rally.** With the changes we saw at Americade this year, more of our chapter chose to plan their riding vacation around Yankee Rally and the Finger Lakes, rather than Lake George, and so did 409 other Red Knights!

There were 18 states, two Canadian Provinces, and four members from Germany that made up the sea of Red in Seneca Falls (and 16 of those came from MA-2).

There were four separate hotels to house all the Red Knights. Two were close to the host hotel, and one was a ten minute ride. That balanced out for those who were at the further hotel, because that facility was right on the lake! It was a beautiful location and our members that were there will tell you that it more than made up for the commute!

As always, there was a lot of socializing with friends and the making of new friends. The Finger Lakes region was also great riding and many people took advantage of those miles of secondary roads and vistas. A number of our members even made it up to Niagara Falls (as did other Red Knights). Tim and Darlene put on more than 1,700 miles!

The hosts had two group rides, one on Thursday that brought the entourage to a local dairy bar for dinner, and the Saturday ride was to the Glenn Curtis museum <https://glennhcurtissmuseum.org/> and included a cookout at the adjacent American Legion. The museum was full of bikes, motorcycles, cars, boats and airplanes — WOW!

The Region-1 meeting was brief, and all thanked NY30 for all their work done in providing the successful rally. Saturday evening included a great BBQ and drawings for the raffles. It was a lot of fun! Come join us in 2024.



**Our own personal ice cream truck in the hotel parking lot!**



**The 2024 Yankee Rally is being hosted by New Hampshire — June 5-9, 2024 in Keene, NH!**

**It won't be a long ride (well, we could make it a long ride) but we should have a lot of MA-2 members in attendance! If you have never attended a Regional Rally, this is a great opportunity to see what a great time it is — with 300+ other Red Knights! Join the 2024 Yankee Rally Facebook page to be kept up-to-date on information. (Maine 8 will be hosting 2025)**



## Mass-2 Cover Bike

*In this edition of our newsletter we thank Fred LeBlanc for sharing his two-wheeled and Red Knight thoughts with us.*

What the Red Knights have meant to us. Our journey with the Red Knights Motorcycle Club started in the mid 1990's. My first exposure to motorcycling was on a Kawasaki trail bike in the early 80's. That didn't last long, since we had a young family and the thought of riding trails was not conducive to safe riding at the time. But as a member of the Leominster Fire Department since 1979, my first ambulance partner was Cliff Eldridge who is a Charter member of MA Chapter 2. His motorcycle got my interest even after I gave up the trail bike. Often, he talked about various rides and events he would go on and that seemed to be something I would want to do at some point.

So around 1995 I purchased a 1982 Goldwing 1100 and joined MA 2. Lisa came on board as a Social Member once she realized many wives participated in rides and events. The 82 Wing was not comfortable so we upgraded to a Goldwing 1500 not long after joining.

We did many rides with the Chapter and in 1999, and along with Cliff and Marty Eldridge we went to the International Convention in Daytona Florida. We trailered the bikes part way then rode from Georgia into Florida and ran straight into Hurricane Irene. To say we got wet would be an understatement, since pouring a bucket of water over your head was light in comparison to the drenching we took. Luckily, we found a Hampton Inn at the bottom of a barely visible exit and took shelter for the rest of the storm.

I think stories like this are what makes being a member of RKMC so special. The friends you make, the places you see, and the adventures you take part in could fill a book. Another benefit I value the most is being around those who are in the fire service or are affiliated and support the fire service as part of their lives. This is a special bond that crosses all races, genders, religions, politics, and many of the challenges we all face. We are truly brothers and sisters with common interests. In 2005 we upgraded again to a new Goldwing 1800.

Retirement came early for me in 2006 when heart issues caused from various exposures on the job, forced me to end my career in the Leominster Fire Department after rising to Chief of Department in 2003. During a dark time for me, the Red Knights was one outlet that kept me looking forward and positive in spite of no longer doing the job I loved. In 2016 we decided to move south to Myrtle Beach South Carolina. Once we got to Myrtle Beach we had the Goldwing triked and thought this was going to be an improvement. It wasn't, and Lisa said why don't we go back to two wheels. So we did, after coming across someone who had a 2014 Harley Davidson Ultra Classic that he wanted to trade for the trike. This was like a dream come true, since I always kind of wanted a Harley, but never really pursued it. We've even trailered the Harley up north for summers. We have stayed members of MA2, and whenever we can we try to take part in an event during the summer. We always look forward to seeing old friends and new friends. This past year we finally hooked up with South Carolina Chapter 1 of RKMC. Just like MA2, you make friends easily and we have started on new adventures with that group. MA2 will always be our home chapter as we watch this new SC1 grow and take hold of the same values we always cherished. Bottom line is, the Red Knights are the same no matter where you are geographically located. Good hearts, sincerity, and love of the wind in your face. Stay safe and loyal to your duty.



## Upcoming Chapter Rides & Events:

### Sunday, July 16. **Co-Ride with RK MA-1.**

We will be Meeting MA-1 at the memorial in Boylston and joining them on a ride under their lead. Meet at the Westminster Dunkins for 9:00 am. Plans are for a brief ceremony to remember past friends at the memorial before our ride.

### Saturday, July 22. **Co-Ride with Mass-4.**

Riding with MA-4 we will have lunch at the Speedway Raceway at Thompson Speedway. Meet at Westminster Dunkins at 10:00 am.

### Saturday/Sunday, July 28 and August 6.

**Grand Tour—Thing One and Thing Two.** Double days of riding to do a Grand Tour around central and southern New England. If you cannot make the entire ride both days, get the stops you can with the group and you have to the end of the riding season to complete the station stops you need. Meet at the 2/202 Shell Station (both days) 10:00 am.

**Sunday, August 27. Bug Ride.** We'll each have "targets" mounted on the front of our bikes. We'll meet at the **Dunkin Donuts in East Templeton** at 4:00 pm and take a ride around that stops in Belchertown for ice cream. The target with the most bugs wins a free ice cream!

### Saturday, September 2. **Co-Ride with RK VT-2.**

We will be venturing up Route 100 for a picnic ride after we meet with VT-2. Meet at 2/202 Shell Station in Orange for 9:00 am.

### Sunday, September 10. **Non-Convention Ride.**

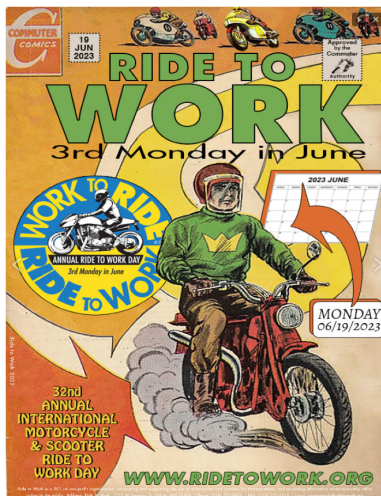
To be in sync with those touring in the Alps, let's meet up for an afternoon ride. Meet at the Westminster Dunkins for 11:00 am. Plans are to head north into southern NH for some BBQ at the Alamo Texas BBQ in Brookline, NH!

### Saturday, September 23. **Co-Ride with RK MA12.**

Our "**Dam Ride**" postponed from 2022 is back on the schedule as one of Co-Rides, this time with MA-12. We'll stop at the Granville Country Store to pick up some sandwiches for lunch and ride to the Saville Dam for a picnic. Meet at 2/202 Shell Station in Orange for 9:00 am, and we will meet up with MA12 further south.

## Let's Play Hooky

It seemed like forever, but the weather finally improved and our first Hooky Ride (in May) saw temps in the 70's with lunch at the Alamo BBQ in Brookline, NH. (And a contingent of MA-4 members out for the ride with us!)



Monday, June 19 is Ride to Work Day. The weather may or may not be the best for riding — but whether you are still going to work or you are enjoying your retirement, consider getting out for a ride!

We hope to have a June **Let's Play Hooky** ride, so keep an eye on your email and when weather and schedules allow, let's get together mid-week before the end of the month!

We saw that on another chapter's webpage they listed out what bikes were in the stables of their members. That's a great idea, so we did a survey of our members. What do you have in the garage now? And what has been in your garage in the past? And these statistics show that we are a very diverse crowd! Thank you for everyone that participated in our fun survey.

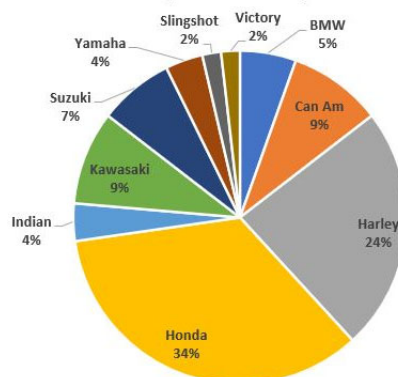
### Currently Owned:

BWM-3 CanAm-5  
Harley-13 Honda-19  
Indian-2 Kawasaki-5  
Suzuki-4 Yamaha-2  
Slingshot-1  
Victory-1

### Previously owned:

BMW BSA  
CanAm Ducati  
Harley Honda  
Indian Kawasaki  
KTM Montessa  
Suzuki Royal Enfield  
Triumph Victory  
Yamaha

Motorcycles Currently Owned





## What tools are in your tool box?

Revzilla's "Common Thread" column had an article about building your collection of tools for your own motorcycle care and feeding. I won't post their article (you can search for it by googling "Assembling a motorcycle maintenance tool kit for less than \$500") but below is the list they put at the end of their article recapping what they talked about throughout the article. Are you missing anything... or is there something you have in your toolbox that is indispensable?



### MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE TOOL KIT REFERENCE LIST

|                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| A model-specific shop manual   | Tire-pressure gauge                  |
| Combination wrenches           | Degreaser                            |
| Adjustable wrench (eight inch) | Chain lube                           |
| 3/8-inch drive deep sockets    | Multi-purpose lube                   |
| 3/8-inch drive shallow sockets | Multi-purpose waterproof grease      |
| 3/8-inch socket rails (two)    | Chain brush                          |
| 3/8-inch drive ratchet         | Nitrile gloves                       |
| 3/8-inch drive torque wrench   | Rags                                 |
| 3/8-inch drive breaker bar     | Oil-filter strap wrench or socket    |
| 3/8-inch extensions            | Sealable drain pan                   |
| 3/8-inch socket adapters       | Funnel                               |
| Screwdriver set                | two-foot length of 3/16-inch ID hose |
| JIS #2 screwdriver             | Magnet-on-a-stick                    |
| Plier set                      | Magnetic parts tray                  |
| Vice-grip plier set            | LED flashlight                       |
| Snap-ring pliers               | Zip-ties                             |
| Hex key set                    | Razor knife                          |
| 3/8-inch drive hex sockets     | Tape measure                         |
| Dead-blow hammer               | Tool box                             |

Proceeds from our Blessing of the Bikes went to Home Base, a Red Sox foundation that serves our veterans and their families. Here is an excerpt from the thank you letter we received from General Jack Hammond, Executive Director at Home Base.

*Thank you for your recent gift to Home Base, a Red Sox Foundation and Mass General Program. With your gift, Home Base will continue to provide life-saving clinical care and support services to Veterans, Service Members and their Families.*

*Home Base operates the largest private-sector clinic in the nation devoted to healing invisible wounds of war. Since 2009, Home Base has served over 30,000 Veterans of all eras, Service Members, Military Families and Families.*

*Your gift comes at a critical time for our warriors and their families. The rate of military suicides continues to rise by 20%, and over 125,000 have taken their lives since 9/11. It is your generosity and belief in our mission that enables us to help heal the invisible wounds of war, at no out-of-pocket cost to our patients.*

What a fantastic spring afternoon we had for our **2023 Blessing of the bikes!** A bright blue sky and 75 degrees greeted us and our guests on the Petersham Common.

We had members, not only from MA-2 but also MA-1, MA-4, MA-12 and CT-2 & CT-11.

Riders were also on hand from Rolling Thunder, Fire and Iron, and the Legion Riders.

There were 41 motorcycles, and 5 bicycles that stopped by and a total of 60 people (12 from MA2)! We did have a couple of dads stop by with children in tow to walk through looking at the bikes... you know, because the kids wanted to see the bikes!

A big thank you to Pastor Geoffrey Smith, Chaplain with the Petersham Fire Department and Pastor of the Congregational Church in town, the Petersham Police Department, and Maple Valley Ice Cream.

The local public safety folks brought up the oldest piece of apparatus, a 1929 Model A Fire Engine, and their newest piece, a recently delivered mini pumper. We also got to see a couple of other pieces of apparatus as they responded by us enroute to a brush fire. A couple of our local attendees (including member Jason Scott) had to leave the blessing to tend to that incident.

We collected donations from the attendees and made a donation of \$250 to Home Base (a Veteran's Support organization).

After the event completed and everyone had their fill of ice cream, Assistant Road Captain Tim Kilhart took the lead for a ride for our members down around the Quabbin.

A huge success and thanks to all who participated! (As we were picking up, the fire department was just returning from the fire call, so we made sure our left over ice cream did not go to waste and was left off at the FD for them).





## Vermont-2 Ride to Remember

After 20 years of hosting "Paul's Ride" in memory of Dave Emery's brother, Vermont 2 started a new tradition with the morphing of their annual ride to a "Ride to Remember."

The basis of the ride is still to raise funds to buy gas cards to support those having to travel for treatments, but this year they offered each of us to ride in honor and in memory of those that have passed through our lives.

They had ribbons for us to wear, that we could put names on. MA-4 even made up shirts with names of chapter members they have lost.

Our chapter always makes it a point to participate in this ride and the worthwhile cause that VT-2 supports. They have been very generous with those gas cards and have helped members, friends and family in our chapter, and beyond.

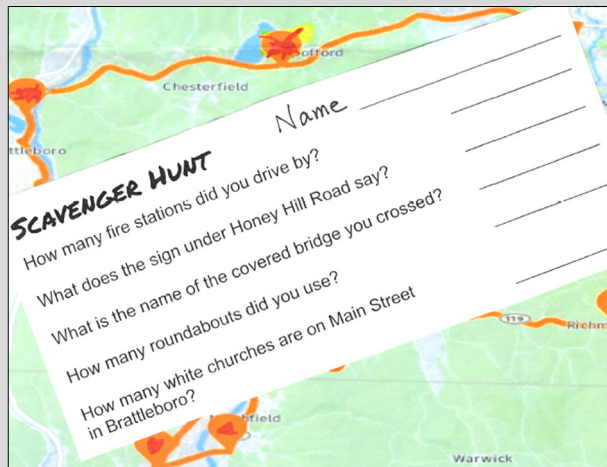


This year's forecast was a hinderance as it was drizzling when we left for Vermont, but there were still eight members of MA-2 who participated! Good form everyone!

MA-2 always has good luck with all the raffle prizes that our VT family has ready, and the weather and smaller turn out made our odds even better!

Tim K. won the 50/50, and most of us who traveled north went home with at least one prize!

We did not go on their planned ride, but have the map and the scavenger hunt clues from the route, so we can do that as a ride together later this summer!



## An alternative to the Polar Bear Ride



Every January for the past dozen or so, the Vampires Motorcycle Club out of Santa Cruz, California hosts the "Naked Ride." It is exactly what you think it is. Several dozen riders hop on their bikes in the nude.

The riders gather in the Vampires MC headquarters, the ReCycle Garage in Santa Cruz, doff some of their gear and most of their clothing, hop on their bikes and tour the city. Fear not, though; the clothing is bagged up and loaded into a chase vehicle so that the riders have something to put back on at the end where there is hot cider and a fire to warm back up. It is the motorcycle equivalent of the Polar Bear Plunge, only instead of swimming in freezing water folks ride naked through chilly California winter air.

Some friends in the MC describe it as "liberating" and "exhilarating." The initial gathering wasn't awkward at all, to one rider's surprise (Zee); nobody stood around naked and chatting. Everyone just took their clothes off and got on their motorcycles and rode, she remarked.

This year there were approximately 21 bikes, only one carrying two people. Two of the bikes served as route blockers; that is, they held up traffic so that the whole group of bikes could stay together. Of the riders 5 were women, and one woman rode pillion.

The group was well-received by surrounding traffic in Santa Cruz, a legendarily nudist-friendly city. Zee says that the group heard many whistles and cars honking. Passers-by took pictures and video of the group of naked riders. It is not illegal to be naked in Santa Cruz, by the way. It is illegal, though, to ride a motorcycle without a helmet. So that is what they do! Safety first, though; boots and gloves are acceptable too.