



Empire City MC's 56th Annual Holiday Party and Gift Drive to benefit Rising Ground Children's Services

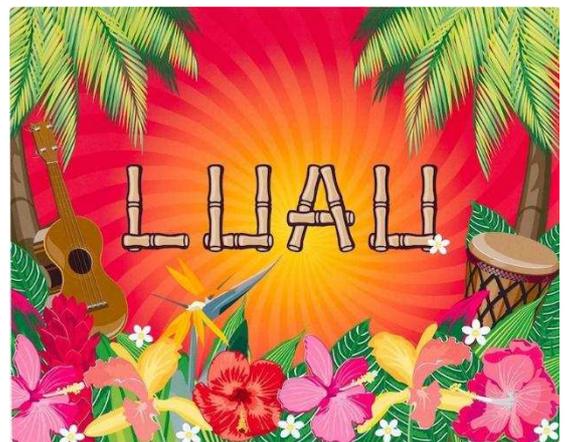
Saturday, 7th December 6-9pm
at the Historic Stonewall Inn
53 Christopher St, NYC

Admission is an unwrapped gift, suitable for a child or teen plus \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door! This year, as we're having our event on Pearl Harbour Day, we're going to have a Hawaiian Luau themed party!

Join us for:

- Fantastic door prizes
- Cash bar
- Plenty of light fare all night!

[Rising Ground Children's Services](#) (formerly known as Leake & Watts) is a New York City based non-profit organisation that helps families discover their own strengths and build upon those strengths using evidence-based models with proven records of achievement. They work with each family and family member to resolve the conflicts that brought them to a crisis point, working toward a belief that change is possible. Then they work together to create plans that become the roadmap to the family's — and each family member's — success. As families set their own goals, we also guide them to any additional resources needed, such as food, housing, or healthcare. The work isn't just about helping families address momentary crises. They equip them with communication skills, knowledge of resources and a network of support.



For more information about our event, or to donate a door prize, please contact us by e-mail at: ecmc@empirecitymc.com

Tickets are on sale online now at: <https://ecmc-56th-xmas.eventbrite.com/>

Boy Jack the Bootblack's Back Story

I can't even describe how discovering leather and motorcycling changed my life! Even more so, it was a fluke! I have been "out" since I was 14, and I started checking out the scene at 21. You would think that since we're all under the same marginalized rainbow, we would be more brotherly and empathetic to each other. Sadly, that was the *furthest thing* from the truth (from my experience). I was over 200lbs (91kg) and I had no abs, no fashion sense (I still don't) and no confidence. If you didn't have the perfect Adonis body, the trendiest fashions, and the right amount of money in the bank, you "didn't belong" in the gay world. The plethora of "Next", "Out", "Odyssey" and other magazines strewn with nearly-nude gym bunnies did not help in the slightest. For years, I struggled with my weight and sense of being a part of something bigger than myself. I was even in a relationship solely for the sake of being in one. That didn't help, either.

Around 2012, and after dropping almost 60lbs, I started getting more involved in the community. I started volunteering at SAGE, and attending more gay social events, notably gay gaming groups and the New York Bear Den (NYBD). A year later, my life truly began to change.

Chaz (of Empire City MC) and I got briefly acquainted at the NYBD, but we never got to know each other beyond the basic niceties. Around May 2013, I received an e-mail from him asking if anyone wanted to join his motorcycle club for its annual Memorial Day weekend ride up to "The Ranch" in Rochester. It turns out, he accidentally sent the email to both NYBD and Empire City Motorcycle Club (ECMC), of which, he was president at the time. Being up for new opportunities, I inquired about joining; my emails between Chaz and I went something like this:

Me: "I'd love to go, but I have never ridden on a motorcycle before. Is it possible to ride the back of someone else's bike?"

Chaz: "How much do you weigh?"

Me: 155 lbs (This was back in the day, and he didn't know I was messaging him.)

Chaz (Finally realizing who it was): "I'll take you for a trial ride on the back of my bike, and we'll see how you like it."

So we took a ride around parts of NJ and upstate, stopping for ice cream at Haverstraw (we both love ice cream and we continue to bond over it). Three hours later, he dropped me off in the city, at which I responded, "We're done already?" Also, a lady in the cab behind us stuck her head out the door and vomited all over the street (Gotta love NY! The city's just so alive!). Regardless, he knew I was ready. So, we took the eight-hour ride up; this whole time, I'm shaking nervous. I don't know anyone else, and I don't know what to expect. Then again, that's what taking chances is all about. I was welcomed with open arms and shown a home where men can be men. We broke bread, kicked back a few, and just palled around. It was the first time in my life I had felt comfortable being my own man who happens to be gay.

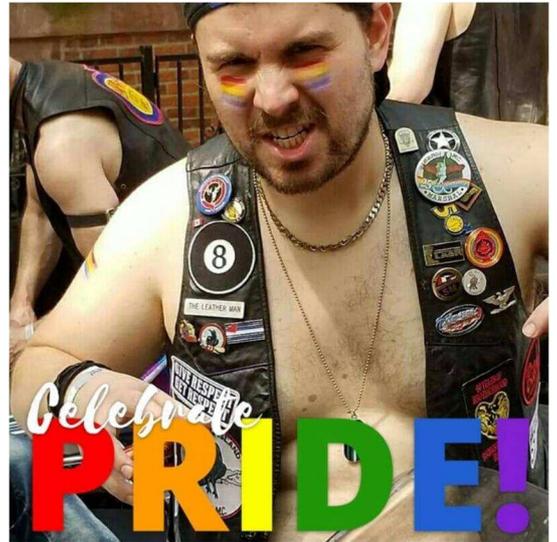


Since then, more opportunities opened; I got my passport for my first trip to Canada, I got my driving license after failing my test when I was 17 and I purchased a motorcycle. The journey hasn't always been easy; I've laughed, cried, made great decisions, and not-so-great decisions. However, I've learned through it all. I've travelled and met men who taught me to "remember your worth, and don't let anyone make you feel otherwise" (that includes myself). My colours are decked with pins and patches full of stories I've listened to, and every leather event has made me a better man than I was yesterday. Aside from leather, I've been inspired to get the most out of life; I've been shown how to be a successful man and how to have a healthy relationship. I would even go as far to say that I wouldn't get married unless I saw my relationship emulated most of the couples I've met. Most

importantly, I've learned the definition of "family." I have chosen brothers and even chosen fathers all across the country with whom I can talk to and spend time; I can always count on them for advice and the occasional kick in the ass. I'm the first to admit I need to be checked time-to-time.

I've found a leather daddy whom I think the world of, and I've been more comfortable with myself physically, emotionally, mentally, and sexually. I don't know where the journey will lead me, but I can't wait to get there. Love, leather, respect, and big hugs! I'll see you on the road.

- Boy Jack the Bootblack





U of R 50th Anniversary

This past October was my graduating class from the University of Rochester's 50th anniversary. I have lots of memories from back then...

I came out during my junior year up there and there was very little support for gay culture. The only time I've ever been mugged in my 72 years has been in Rochester while exiting a gay bar.

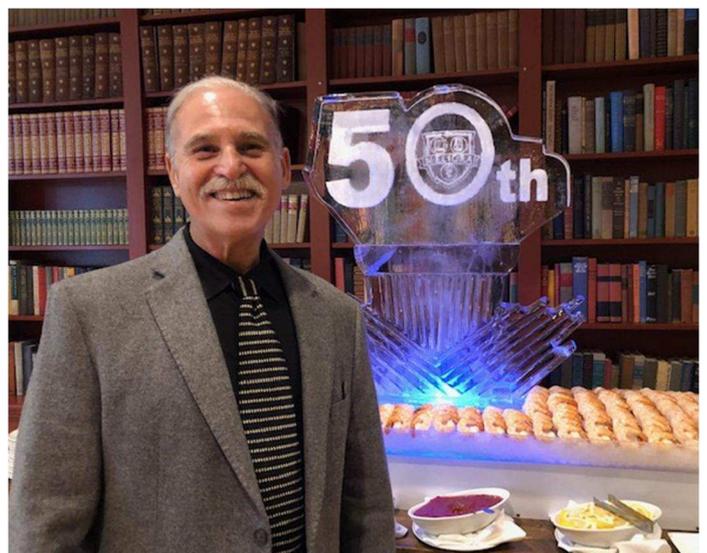
Homophobia existed quite openly back then. Once a group of my so-called friends from the University came in to a gay bar in which I was present and saw me. From that night on, I was ostracized and avoided by a lot of people on campus.

This made attending this reunion done with much trepidation. It wasn't until virtually my last day there that I began to feel more connected and comfortable with my gay motorcycle identity.



Since then the campus has come a long way with the department of diversity LGBTQ housing and numerous discussion groups.

I attended a workshop on 50 years since Stonewall and again felt more connected.



So my conclusion is that the world is changing – some of which is actually good! I was surprised at the support of anti-trump discussions since we are located up there in the heart of conservative Republican land.

There's hope for us all yet!

Riding the Twistys with the Gotham Riders!

Empire City MC joined up with the Gotham Riders MC for an adventure last month! We rode from the Holland Tunnel to High Point Park in New Jersey (the highest point in the state), followed by two trips through the exciting twisty roads of the "Hawk's Nest" near Port Jarvis, NY. Although it was cool, it wasn't freezing and we all had a great time!



UPCOMING EVENTS & RIDES

Wed 4th December, 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're in. Nominations for officers!

Fri 6th December, 22:00 – 00:00: Empire City MC attends Excelsior MC's Annual Trim-A-Tree at The Eagle NYC (554 W 28th St, New York, New York 10001) – go to <http://i.mp/Trim-A-Tree-2019> for more information about this FREE event!

Sat 7th December, 18:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's 56th Annual Holiday Party and Toy Drive at Stonewall Inn – tickets are on sale now – save \$5 on the "at the door price" of \$30 when you purchase online. Go to www.EmpireCityMC.com to order them!

Wed 8th January 2020, 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're in. Elections for officers! Please note that this meeting is on the SECOND WEDNESDAY due to the New Year's Day Bank Holiday on the 1st Wednesday.

Sat 18th January, 17:00 – 19:00: Empire City MC's 56th Installation Dinner with special guest, ECMC Associate Member "Evil" Ed Caraballo. This will be held at VaPiano, 113 University Pl, New York, NY (Union Square area), completely dutch treat, as every person gets their own card to bill their food choices to – so easy.

Wed 5th February, 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're in.

Wed 4th March, 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're in.

REMEMBER: There are plenty of other events and rides added to our official calendar on a regular basis, especially day rides! Bookmark our official calendar at calendar.EmpireCityMC.com and come along with us on some great rides!

Our physical mailing address is: **Empire City MC, 10 W 15th St, Suite 609, New York, NY 10011-6821.** Empire City MC is a member of the Atlantic Motorcycle Coordinating Council.

For membership information, visit <http://empirecitymc.com/membership.php> to view/download our constitution, bylaws and membership application. We're on facebook at <http://facebook.EmpireCityMC.com>

Please send any articles, photos or letters to the editor at newsletter@EmpireCityMC.org

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