



Congressman: Strip the AFA's Tax-Exempt Status!

The AFA (American Family Association) are some of the most hypocritical, discriminatory, anti-GLBTQ organisations in the United States. They are the people (along with the Liberty Counsel, a bunch of far-right, conservative Christian lawyers) that helped N.O.M. push through Prop 8 in California, attempt to defend discrimination against GLBTQ folk under the guise of "religious liberty" or "religious freedom". In fact, they are just terrible people who want to control everyone's behaviour, relationships, sex lives and reproductive systems. If given a chance, they would force all people that do not conform to their beliefs or lock them all up.

As the Equality Act passed the House and has been sent to the Senate to be read and voted upon, I can guarantee you that it is unlikely that any republican will vote in favour of it, so we need all democrat senators and the Vice President to stand up for us when it comes up for a vote.

The AFA is terrified of the Equality Act because it will make existing state laws illegal on a federal level. These blatantly anti-GLBTQ laws were put in place through much lobbying and effort by the AFA and Liberty Counsel. Their mass-mailing to their followers shows Nancy Pelosi riding a wrecking ball into the American Flag with "Religious Liberty" and "1st Amendment" written all over it. Don't be fooled: this is a full-frontal attack on GLBTQ persons from getting EQUAL rights and protection from discrimination.

I hope you join me in writing letters to your elected representatives in the House and the Senate imploring them to vote in favour of the Equality Act and to have the IRS strip the AFA from its tax-exempt status as they are attempting to influence political affairs (which is clearly not allowed under IRS law).

On the next page is one of the letters I crafted to one of my elected representatives. Feel free to use it as a template to write to yours.

It's vital that while the democrats hold the executive branch, the house and the senate that we all work to repair the damage of the outgoing administration, replace the anti-GLBTQ persons put in positions of power, and rebalance the Supreme Court so there is an iota of fairness, liberty and equality when important cases like Roe v Wade (the right for a woman to control her own reproductive system), Obergefell v Hodges (the right for same sex couples to marry and enjoy the same benefits as like heterosexual couples) and others which are upcoming... Just because Twitter has calmed down does not mean we can take our eyes off the prize. There are literally thousands of Americans who wished we were all dead.



Please forward this to your family and friends.



If the Senate were to pass Speaker Pelosi's bill and Democratic President Joe Biden were to sign it into law, it would unleash radical liberals to attack those whose faith teaches that marriage is only between one man and one woman and that the sexual identity of males and females is a fixed, biological fact.

By government edict, business owners, employees, and customers alike will be subject to a radical LGBT agenda:

- Female business owners, customers, and employees would be forced to share spaces in restrooms and dressing rooms with men who claim to be women.
- Women's sports would be forced to open up to the participation of men who claim to be women.
- Health care providers and professionals would be forced to perform gender transition procedures (sex changes) and provide medical services (hormone therapy) that would violate their moral and religious convictions.
- Adoption and foster care agencies will be forced to place children into same sex households and into the homes of individuals suffering from gender confusion.
- College and professional sports stadiums would be required to open their restrooms to either sex.

The Democratic Party has clearly laid out its intent to force Christians to submit to radical sexual deviancy. The Party's platform stated, "We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate."

My letter, feel free to use as appropriate to craft your own:

Dear Honourable [representative],

I am a married gay man and have struggled to help advance equal rights so that I may marry my husband and live without discrimination in this country. I also keep a watchful eye on various organisations who wish to strip me and my friends of equal rights under the guise of "religious liberty".

I understand that 501(c)(3) and religious organisations are DISALLOWED from political involvement, yet I have counted at least dozen e-mails sent to the subscribers of the "American Family Association" in where they are ACTIVELY POLITICKING, encouraging their members to call senators and house members in an effort to prevent the Equality Act from passing, as well as attempts to take away my equal rights as a citizen of the Unites States.

What can you do to encourage the IRS to STRIP this hateful organisation from its 501(c)(3)/religious tax-exempt status? As a taxpayer, allowing the IRS to waive their tax responsibilities could be perceived as the government taking my tax dollars and giving it to them to persecute me and my fellow gay Americans.

I understand 501(c)(3) organisations are important for worthy charitable organisations; however, the American Family Association is recognised by the Southern Poverty Law Centre as being a HATE GROUP, and allowing them to attack segments of American Citizens through political manipulation is revolting.

As my representative in congress, I beg you to look into this situation on behalf of the GLBTQ community, which is a disenfranchised minority to begin with. I am willing to help in any way possible, just let me know what I can do.

We need to ensure that religious organisations and tax-exempt organisations are NOT involved with politics in any wayfor the sake of the country.

I thank you for reading and responding to this urgent plea, as the Equality Act (H.R. 5) is in the Senate now, and we cannot afford to lose even one democratic Senator's vote.

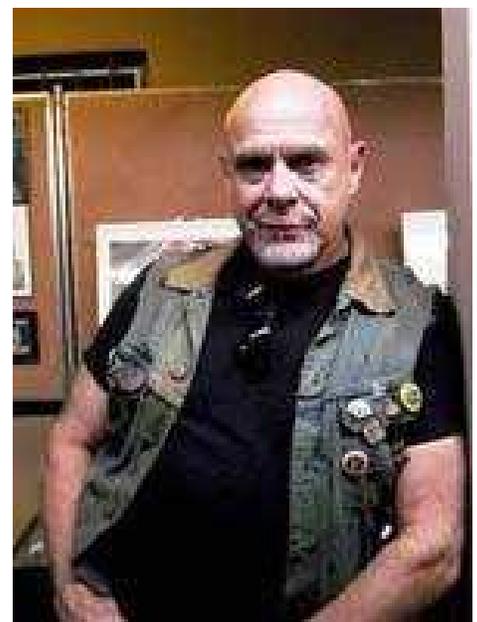
Sincerely,
[my full name and address]

The Old Guard: Classical Leather Culture Revisited (Part I)

by Guy Baldwin

I am continually surprised at how frequently conversation in what I'll call "leather circles" turns to "The Old Guard." Whether it is on the Internet, at any of the various leather conventions held all around the country nowadays, at contests, in bars, or even over a card game, the Old Guard seems like the topic that will not die. Even more interesting to me is the fact that, except for rank novices, almost everyone seems ready to offer comment on it. When I occasionally turn up at leather events, I am quizzed endlessly and carefully about it. The longish essay I published about it back in the late 80's remains one of the most frequently quoted things I've ever written.

Stranger still is the fact that the Old Guard is usually talked about by people who weren't part of it as though it were some kind of monolithic, behemoth... homogeneous and static, neither of which was the case... is the case, because yes, the Old Guard is still around and still functioning, although the passage of time pretty much seems to guarantee that it is slowly being transformed into myth and legend as ever fewer and fewer of us are around to offer real descriptions of it. Perhaps the reason it remains a topic of interest is that attempts to describe it as a rigid and dead thing rather than an evolving, living cultural entity will always be doomed to failure. And so, I've decided to try to shed a bit more light on the Old Guard, perhaps by trying to talk about it in some different ways.



The Golden Age of Leather

At the risk of annoying bunches of people, I feel safe in saying that the first Golden Age of Leather occurred from about 1972, when the war in Vietnam ended, till about 1982. Depending on where one lived, it began a bit earlier (in the bigger cities) and ended a bit later (in smaller cities). But by 1983 it was clearly in decline as disease began to rear its ugly head, first with reports of rampant intestinal diseases (mostly parasites and something that was called "Gay Bowel Syndrome"), and then with early reports of the "gay cancer," which gave way to GRID (Gay-Related Immune Disorder), and finally to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). By 1985, the party was over or ending in most places. The wind had been knocked out of the sails of the leather world as we had known it, and we began to hunker down for the long night's journey toward daylight, which may only now be dawning. The jury is still out on that one, however.

Were it not for the arrival of disease on the erotic landscape, it is entirely possible that we would not have the Old Guard as an issue, or perhaps even as an entity today. My guess is that if it had not been for HIV, the process by which our leather "children" were socialized into the world of leathersex might have continued just as it had for decades, evolving in the more-or-less orderly way that it had done since the 50's. Each new and slightly different generation of newcomers would have been uniquely assimilated into the existing fabric of leather culture, just as it had always been.



And with this remark I mean to suggest that the world of leathersex might best be viewed as a culture — a subculture if you will — into which people are led by our gonads, ever in search of a deeper and unique erotic adventure and fulfilment. Prior to this subculture's shattering encounter with HIV, a gay man in search of his kinky identity and fulfilment would eventually cross a threshold into leather space (leather bars, gay motorcycle events, special parties) for the first time. He soon became aware that there was a social order which influenced to a large extent just how both information and experience might become available. That social order is what has come to be called the Old Guard. To think of it as merely sexual is to miss the scope of it entirely.

When I first ventured into leather space back in 1965, I was certainly aware of it, but at that time, it had no name other than, perhaps ... "The Leather Scene"... or simply, "The Scene." And in leather space, there were clearly those who were "in the scene" and those who were not, and it was usually possible to make that distinction just by looking around and being observant.

Some guys in leather space wore what I'll call "the uniform" and others did not. In between were guys who wore parts of the uniform to one extent or another; the more parts of the uniform one wore, the more closely identified with the scene one was, in general. The parts of the uniform included: boots; faded Levi's; plain black leather belt; plain T-shirt; a gather of keys (displayed on the right or left hip); leather motorcycle jacket; a jacket overlay (denim) with or without motorcycle club "colours"; leather cap;

leather gloves; leather chaps; and leather pants. These were the basics of the uniform in approximately ascending order of significance, although the caps and pants tended to be worn far more often by Dominants than by submissives of any description. And black, always.

Leather vests were rare. Body harnesses and arm bands were still unheard of; the hankie code had yet to be invented; and one never saw a whip in public. Even the display of handcuffs was rare and was considered to be pushing the boundaries of good taste. The 50's after all, were close behind us. But these were just the parts that were visible to the naked eye, and only one third of what it took to be fully in the scene. The uniform was the easy part, in spite of the fact that there were only a tiny handful of stores in a few cities that catered specifically to our needs. There were also no leather magazines, no organizations other than the bike clubs, and no title contests. There was nothing but that insistent urge and the heady sex-energy that permeated what few leather bars did exist back then.



The second part of being in the scene consisted of entering the network of interpersonal connections among the uniformed men who were already a functioning part of the local leather scene. Forging these connections was the true gateway into the leather scene and the part that was (and I think remains) the main challenge for those with these erotic interests. This piece has always been the tough part because unless one had the right social skills and/or the right appearance, entrée into the scene could be daunting. Yet I suppose the same could be said for gaining entrée to a great many sorts of human groups.



Those with a few connections but not the uniform were perceived to be groupies or wannabes, and those with the uniform but no connections were either outsiders, loners or outlaws, depending on their behaviour.

Lastly, one had to behave properly in three arenas: out in the general public; in the social leather public, that is to say in leather spaces; and in erotic situations. The last two parts of this information were simply not available unless one had previously made the right connections to the men already in the local leather scene.

And what “properly” meant out in the general public was to behave like an “officer and a gentleman.” It must always be remembered that the early leather scene included a significant number of military veterans who had recently returned from World War II. Their military exposure socialized them into an understanding of the stratification of authority, the manners of a good soldier, and the preservation of what is known as esprit de corps... loosely translated as “the spirit of the group.” Today we might refer to it as “the maintenance of group cohesion and identity” based on the shared values of loyalty, honour, trust, masculinity, and fraternity.



And what the word “properly” meant in leather social situations and erotic encounters was that one had to follow what has recently come to be called “the Protocols.” These consisted of the rules of encounter between leathermen based on status in the community, or on your erotic orientation (Master or slave — Top or bottom), or on what I suppose I have to call marital status, i.e., who your partner of the moment was.

The Protocols, depending on from whom, when and where you learned them, or whom you were with at the moment, might cover any number of things, including: making eye contact with others; restrictions on physical touching; where you stood; how you walked with another man; the use of honorific titles like “Sir” or “Master”; how you dressed; how you could sit; your appearance; whom you could speak directly with; how you took a piss; table manners; how you had sex; and what might be expected of you in any given situation...and a number of other things as well.

... to be continued in April’s Rumblings

This article is written by Guy Baldwin on the Old Guard and appeared in Issue #20 of International Leatherman (now defunct) in October 1998. This article is being re-published here for educational purposes under the fair-use doctrine (17 U.S.C. § 107).



Empire City MC's 10th Annual Motorcycle Weekend

Attached to this newsletter (also on our website at EmpireCityMC.com), you'll find this year's Motorcycle Weekend Application. As we've mentioned before, this will be the last Motorcycle Weekend at "The Ranch" in Hemlock, NY; however, it won't be our last! We're already discussing other locations to host it at in the coming years.

Albert and Dan, owners of "The Ranch" have been more than generous with their home since they bought it many years before Empire City MC started hosting Motorcycle Weekend there... The (now defunct) local Rochester club, the Rochester Rams MC hosted many events at The Ranch in cooperation with the "Ranch Hands", including CanAm Weekend, Canada Day/4th of July, Leather Homecoming and New Year's Eve (also known as Albert's big birthday party).



We're all getting older and frailer and quite frankly, there are fewer and fewer younger, able-bodied persons coming in to step up to the plate to lend a hand or take over all the work that goes on behind the scenes to make a place like The Ranch operate, so all the events that traditionally happen there are winding down. A lot of grass needs to be mowed, playroom stocked and cleaned, the pool and hot tub need to be maintained, the bar needs to be stocked and operated, food has to be purchased, prepared and cleaned up, towels, linens and beds need to be made, unmade, cleaned, etc. That's a lot of work – and that's only what I can think of off the top of my head. At the end of this event, we will have held our event at The Ranch for ten years. That's a long time to volunteer your home for free to do all of this. The run fee for Motorcycle Weekend is only to cover the food, beverage and incidental expenses associated with that, Al and Dan don't see a penny – they host us out of the kindness of their hearts.

So, as we enjoy ourselves one last time at The Ranch, please express your appreciation to Al & Dan and don't be sad, remember all the good times we've had there and all the new places we will so in the coming years. If you prefer to write a card or letter to them, please send it to: Al Rizzo & Dan Marty, 4872 Blank Rd, Hemlock, NY 14466.

Is COVID-19 ending?

It's not time to relax about the coronavirus! Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has a stark warning for the country — "the virus is not done with us" yet.

- Get vaccinated and encourage others too as well
- Wear a proper mask covering your nose and mouth
- Wash your hands frequently and correctly
- Avoid touching your face



Empire City MC has been lucky that we have not lost any members to this disease, partially because most of us remember the onset of AIDS and take this shit seriously, but mostly we've been careful and lucky! At the Motorcycle Weekend, we will enforce the same COVID-19 protocols as last year: Constant IR temperature checks. Outside shoes left in entryway at The Ranch. Handwashing upon entering or whenever hands are dirty. Face masks worn in public spaces (i.e. when we visit local haunts).



New York City is slowly re-opening and has been constantly expanding indoor dining as we slowly vaccinate nine million people. Our new officers' Installation Dinner was delayed from January to April due to COVID-19 and the Gay Pride March is CANCELLED once again in 2021 due to concerns of a super-spreader event with too many unvaccinated persons.

Tread carefully. Be safe. We want to party with you again VERY soon, so get your jabs!

UPCOMING EVENTS & RIDES

Some Featured Rides & Events:

Wed 7th April, 20:00 – 21:00: MEETING: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month now hosted via teleconference due to COVID-19. All motorcyclists are welcome to participate. Attend our Open General Meeting with your computer at: <http://bit.ly/ECMC-OGM>

Sat 17th April, 18:00 – 21:00: EVENT: 2021 Empire City MC Installation Dinner. This event will be held in New York City with indoor dining. NYC COVID-19 protocol for indoor dining shall be enforced. For an invitation to this event, please contact your favourite full member of Empire City MC for the secret meet-up location and details!

~~Fri 30th April – Mon 3rd May:~~ EVENT: ~~Great British Bear Bash 23/24: Studio Fiftytwo (Manchester, UK)~~ **CANCELLED**

Sat, 1st May: RIDE: It's May Day! Come on our "Rusty Rider" ride, a gentle and easy-going ride designed to get us back on our bikes and working any problems out. Meet up at the northbound Mobil petrol station on the Palisades Interstate Parkway, just north of the George Washington Bridge at 12:30. KSU at 13:00 with full fuel tank and empty bladders. (Rain date 2nd May, same time)

Wed 5th May, 20:00 – 21:00: MEETING: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month now hosted via teleconference due to COVID-19. All motorcyclists are welcome to participate. Attend our Open General Meeting with your computer at: <http://bit.ly/ECMC-OGM>

Sun, 23rd May: RIDE: The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride, a police-escorted ride around New York City to benefit prostate and testicular cancer awareness. Pre-register now at www.gentlemansride.com and prepare yourself to ride dapper!

Fri 28th – Mon 31st May: RIDE: Empire City MC's 10th Annual Motorcycle Weekend. Save the date and come celebrate our 10th (and last) Annual Motorcycle Weekend at The Ranch! Run application is attached to the newsletter and online at EmpireCityMC.com

Wed 2nd Jun, 20:00 – 21:00: MEETING: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month now hosted via teleconference due to COVID-19. All motorcyclists are welcome to participate. Attend our Open General Meeting with your computer at: <http://bit.ly/ECMC-OGM>

Fri 18th Jun: EVENT: Empire City MC's 57th Annual Bike Blessing!

Sat 19th Jun: RIDE: Empire City MC's 57th Annual Biker Picnic!

~~Sun 27th Jun:~~ ~~RIDE: Empire City MC leads the Gay Pride March beside our sister club, the Sirens MC!~~ **CANCELLED**

Thu 1st – Mon 5th Jul: RIDE: Canada Day / Independence Day Weekend

Fri 13th – Mon 16th Aug: RIDE: Montréal Pride Weekend

REMEMBER: There are plenty of other events and rides added to our official calendar on a regular basis, especially day rides! Be sure to bookmark <http://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.**

For membership information, visit <http://empirecitymc.com/membership.php> to view and download our constitution, bylaws and membership application. We're on social media at <https://mewe.com/join/empirecitymc> where you can chat with us.

Please send any articles, photos or letters to the editor at newsletter@EmpireCityMC.org
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Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend
28th – 31st May 2021
Information and Run Application

With the help of many friends and the dedication of ECMC members, we're excited to announce another great Memorial Day Weekend riding experience including some meals, accommodations and more! Won't you join ECMC for Motorcycle Weekend?

- Fri 28th Ride with us to "The Ranch" in Hemlock, NY through various highways and byways with multiple breaks/pick-up points (outlined on reverse).
- Sat 29th Explore upstate New York's Finger Lakes region!
- Sun 30th More exploration of upstate New York's Finger Lakes region!
- Mon 31st Ride with us back to New York City (with various break-off points).

In order to best prepare and accommodate everyone, we ask that you carefully review the ride as outlined and submit your completed application with your run fee to Empire City MC. Space is strictly limited to 20 bikers/buddies!

RUN FEE: Early bird (before 30th April 2021) \$50 per person, afterwards, \$60/per person.

This is a motorcycle only event! No four-wheeled vehicles are allowed! We understand there are riders from all over that would like to participate in this event without having to enter New York City; therefore, we have several meet-up points and times specified in the map on page two. Included for your run fee are: Accommodations at The Ranch, three dinners and three breakfasts, open bar all weekend at The Ranch. Each person must complete a run application (this form) and send it in with payment in full.

Name _____

Club Affiliation (if any) _____

E-Mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ - _____ I am: Buddy Rider / Rider

I will meet you at (see map on page 2): A, B, C, D, or E

Emergency Contact Person _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number (_____) _____ - _____

I, _____, certify that I have attained at least twenty-one (21) years of age and that I, based upon mutual covenants and considerations, will not hold Empire City Motorcycle Club, Inc. (a.k.a. ECMC), Al Rizzo/Dan Marty (a.k.a. The Ranch) nor the individual and collective officers, members, servants, agents, employees thereof liable for any injury to my person or property during the period of Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend. I further agree to indemnify, save harmless and hold harmless Empire City Motorcycle Club, Inc. (a.k.a. ECMC), Al Rizzo/Dan Marty (a.k.a. The Ranch) or the individual and collective officers, members, servants, agents, employees thereof from any and all liability, serious injury, economic loss, and any other loss arising from whatever event, source, manner and/or nature which they may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments against them, individually and/or collectively, arising out of their individually and/or collectively granting to me the privilege of attending and participating in part and/or whole of Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend.

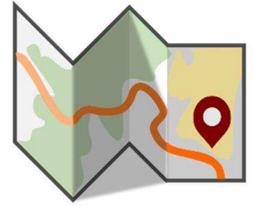
Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail this application in to our Run Chairman for processing. Bed space will be assigned on a 'first registered, first served' basis, so don't delay! Please read the directions carefully and return this page with payment by mail to:

Empire City MC Motorcycle Weekend
10 W 15th St, Suite 609
New York, NY 10011-6821



Don't forget to tick the box on page one to let us know where you're meeting up with us! Furthermore, it's vital that your motorcycle is in good working order and you are on time to your respective meet-up location.



Meet-Up Point "A" (Mobil Fuel on Palisades Parkway, just north of the GW Bridge)

10:30 – 11:00 ... Meet in the rear parking lot of Mobil Palisades Pkwy North, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
 11:00 – 12:00 ... Kickstands up from Mobil and ride 66 miles (60 min)

Meet-up Point "B" (LUNCH STOP at Quickway Diner, 68 NY-17K, Bloomingburg, NY. Exit 116 off NY-17/I-86)

12:00 – 13:00 ... Quickway Diner for lunch, then a fuel stop at Citgo, next door
 13:00 – 14:15 ... Kickstands up and ride 81 miles (75 min)

Meet-up Point "C" (Mirabito Convenience Store & Fuel, 360 NY-10, Deposit, NY. Exit 84 off NY-17/I-86)

14:15 – 14:45 ... Gas up, bathroom/snack break (Wendy's next door if you like)
 14:45 – 16:00 ... Kickstands up and ride 93 mi (75 min)

Meet-up Point "D" (Speedway, 3301 Chambers Rd, Horseheads, NY. Exit 51A off NY-17/I-86)

16:00 – 16:30 ... Speedway, 3301 Chambers Rd, Horseheads, NY 14845
 16:30 – 17:45 ... Kickstands up and ride 72 mi (75 min)

Meet-up Point "E" (The Ranch, 4872 Blank Rd, Hemlock, NY 14466)

18:00 Arrive at The Ranch and get your first meal!



What do you need to bring?

A bed, clean linens and towels will be provided by The Ranch, but for your safety and comfort, we recommend you bring the following:

- bike tool kit
- driving license
- mobile phone charger
- dry clothing
- extra bungee cords
- motorcycle registration
- medications
- club colours (vest)
- rain gear
- motorcycle insurance card
- motorcycle insurance card
- favourite sex toy 😊



IMPORTANT NOTES:

You may view/tweak our interactive route map online at: <http://bit.ly/ECMC2021MW>

The Ranch has play space as well as a pool, hot tub, bar, nature trails and more! Read more about The Ranch at <http://j.mp/TheRanch>

We will provide gourmet meals at The Ranch on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

All lunch-time meals and on-the-road meals are your own responsibility.

This year will be our last year at The Ranch, so be sure to thank Albert and Dan appropriately for the ten years of free accommodations, entertainment and booze! They've been great all this time to put up with the likes of us!

After registering, we will send you a confirmation letter with further details.

If you have any questions, please e-mail Erik at road-captain@empirecitymc.com

