



Cuomo Signs Recreational Marijuana into Law

After three years of fits and starts, New York lawmakers on Tuesday legalized a recreational marijuana market that is expected to become one of the largest in the country with projected revenues of nearly \$2.5 billion by the program's fourth year. The Assembly passed the bill in March 2021 by a vote of 100 to 49, while the state Senate earlier approved the bill by a margin of 40 to 23. Cuomo signed the measure into law Wednesday, and sales could start as soon as a year after enactment.

We were also alerted that the New York Police Department (NYPD) on Thursday sent a memo to officers updating them on new policies for marijuana after the governor signed a legalization bill into law this year:

Among other changes, police can no longer arrest adults 21 and older for simply using marijuana in places where smoking tobacco is permitted—and that includes “on sidewalks, on front stoops and other public places,” the document states. “As a result, smoking marijuana in any of these locations is not a basis for an approach, stop, summons, arrest or search.”

As prescribed under the law, adults can now possess up to three ounces of cannabis and also gift marijuana to other adults “so long as no compensation is exchanged,” NYPD said. Home cultivation will eventually be legal as well, but not until regulators issued rules allowing it.



The department clarified that nobody, regardless of age, can drive while impaired from cannabis. However, “the smell of marijuana alone no longer establishes probable cause of a crime to search a vehicle,” whether it's burnt or unburnt.

Therefore, Cops cannot legally arrest you for smoking a joint on the sidewalks of NYC!! New Jersey also legalised recreational marijuana this year, which will significantly increase happiness in the area!

Please be responsible and DO NOT DRIVE WHILE HIGH.



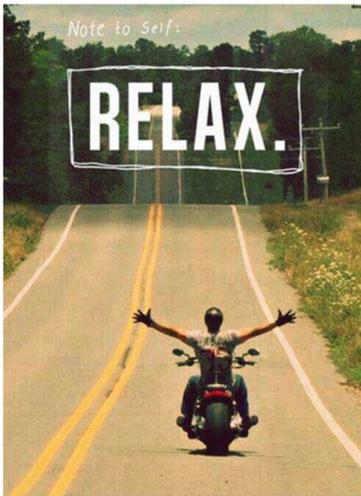
New Neurobiological Study Finds Riding a Motorcycle Can Decrease Stress and Improve Mental Focus

The results of a neurobiological study, today published in *Brain Research*, yielded pioneering scientific evidence revealing the potential mental and physical benefits of riding a motorcycle.

Researchers recorded participants' brain activity and hormone levels before, during, and after motorcycling, driving a car, and resting. While riding a motorcycle, participants experienced increased sensory focus and resilience to distraction. Riding also produced an increase in adrenaline levels and heart rate, as well as a decrease in cortisol metrics – results often associated with light exercise and stress-reduction.



“Stress levels, especially among young adults, continue to rise, and people are exploring pathways to better their mental and physical health. Until recently, the technology to rigorously measure the impact of activities like motorcycling on the brain didn't exist,” said Dr Don Vaughn, the neuroscientist who led the research team. “The brain is an amazingly complex organ and it's fascinating to rigorously investigate the physical and mental effects riders report.”



Results Highlights:

- * Riding a motorcycle decreased hormonal biomarkers of stress by 25%
- * Sensory focus was enhanced while riding a motorcycle versus driving a car, an effect also observed in experienced meditators vs non-meditators
- * Changes in study participants' brain activity while riding suggested an increase in alertness similar to drinking a cup of coffee

“While scientists have long-studied the relationship of brain and hormone responses to attention and stress, doing so in real-life conditions such as these is rare,” explained Professor and senior team member, Dr Mark Cohen. “No lab experiment can duplicate the feelings that a motorcyclist would have on the open road.”

“The differences in participants' neurological and physiological responses between riding and other measured activities were quite pronounced,” continued Dr Vaughn. “This could be significant for mitigating everyday stresses.”

Research Overview

The research team monitored participants' electrical brain activity and heart rate, as well as levels of adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. The Harley-Davidson funded study, entitled “The mental and physical effects of riding a motorcycle” measured the biological and physiological responses of more than 50 experienced motorcyclists, using mobile EEG technology.

Study Disclaimer

Study of healthy, experienced adults, riding their own motorcycles on a designated 22-minute route, under normal conditions. Provided for informational purposes only. Sponsor makes no guarantee that you will experience similar results; actual effects will vary based on equipment, driving conditions and age/health/experience of rider. See research summary here. Views expressed and conclusions reached are solely those of the author, Dr Don Vaughn, in his personal capacity, and do not necessarily represent the views of UCLA.

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

by Guy Baldwin

Contrary to popular belief, there was tremendous variation in the Protocols... and still is. Part of the reason for this variation is the fact that Dominants of any sort (Master, Top, Dad, Coach...what have you) can alter or suspend the Protocols for themselves and the submissives they are with at any time within certain limits. The Protocols were sort of like what we might call the "default" settings on our erotic behaviour, and they varied by locale and from network to network.

Since so much of what we enjoy about leathersex has to do with power and its expression as authority, the Protocols offered us a way to make that all happen that had a reassuring structure to it. The need for this comfort is most likely the reason why the Old Guard Protocols have endured for so long-they feel good to so many people.

Through the 50's, 60's, 70's, and into the 80's, each city that had a leather scene usually included two nobilities; initially they were pretty much one and the same, but as time passed, they became more and more distinct from each other. They were the Old Guard and the Motorcycle Club scene.

I don't want to take a lot of time with the details of the bike club scene here in spite of the fact that the club network was a central feature of the leather world from its inception in the late 1940's right on into the 80's. We must never allow the mainstream gay and lesbian community to forget that the gay bike clubs which fanned following WWII were among the first gay organizations in the U.S., or that the first gay fund-raising arose when the clubs raised money to support those members who became injured. As far as I've been able to learn, the elected officers of those clubs were among the first elected gay leaders in this country.

For my purposes here, it is important to say that the clubs sponsored events called "runs" which were motorcycle road trips to campout locations, usually over a long weekend, at which the members and guests partied... and played. Before many cities had a leather bar, there was a bike club, and its events provided the first real leather space for a great many guys of those early eras, including myself.

Many of the members and guests of these bike clubs went in for what we called rough sex at the time, and some of them were also leather fetishists into bondage and SM. It is not difficult to see how the influence of those who had military backgrounds made mixing authority with sex relatively easy. The club leaders had some status in their areas and became a sort of temporary nobility and revolving role-models for leather men, depending on their character, which itself had often been influenced by military service.

But not all the members were interested in what today we would call leathersex, and in time, those who were interested in this sort of sex slowly began to segregate themselves out of the bike club scene, unless, of course, they were avid motorcyclists. The guys who craved the leathersex experience were the primordial soup in which the Old Guard was first born. Early on, they were very much part of the bike club scene, and progressively less and less so as time wore on.... Today, they are almost entirely distinct entities, especially in larger cities.

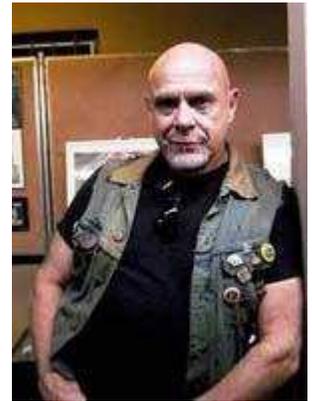
It seems somehow ironic that in many places, the bike clubs actually gave rise to the leather bars... but once the bars took hold, the bike clubs were no longer the only game in town. Slowly support for them began to dwindle, with the result that in most places now, only the avid riders are still involved in club life.

The Old Guard Feudal Nobility

One of the easier and more useful ways to imagine the Old Guard is to imagine each city with a few leather "barons." ("Baron" is just a word I'm using for the purpose of clarity; I could just as easily have chosen duke, or earl. There were no titles these guys had except in a couple of cities where the title "Grand Master" was and still is rarely used.) These were men who had been in The Life for a while, understood the rules of behaviour, had experience and were level-headed village elders. Each of these elders functioned essentially as a sort of godfather, and had what could loosely be called "families," or "clans."

Based on his own background, each of these had a set of his own traditions which those in his family were expected to observe as a condition of participation in his family. The most important thing to remember here is that there were some traditions the clans had in common, and there were other traditions that were specific to each particular lineage. It was possible to participate in the clan-circles of more than one of these barons at a time as long as the barons themselves were on friendly terms with each other or ignorant of each other.

So, for example, Joe Blow in Kansas City might have come of age in the leather scene in New York City and then later established himself in KC, along with the traditions he knew and understood. He most often added some Protocols to suit his own taste, and



deleted or modified others ... especially if he was a Dominant. If he was sexually active and “family minded,” he would soon come to the attention of others in the community. In time, he would have his own clan with its satellite members, and be accepted as an equal by other local barons. Very big cities might have as many as ten to fifteen such men, whereas smaller ones like Denver might have only three or four in 1965.

As often as not, one baron would have limited (or extensive) connections to one or more barons in the same or in different cities. These connections were often used to make formal introductions for traveling members of their clans, and to give either recommendations or warnings about local players. It has been my impression that detailed exchanges between them about the Protocols were not common. Respect for privacy would probably have been cited as the reason.

These leather clans were the basic mechanism by which newcomers came to be socialized into the Life. In some places, the local barons might have a more formal process for this socialization, and in others, it was less formal.

Certainly one of the miracles of this process was that “baronage” was not necessarily role dependent. In the leather family in which I came out as a leatherman, the people at the top of the pyramid were mostly bottoms who had years of experience. In such a situation, it would be easily possible for the godfather or baron to be a smallish bottom in his early 40’s, and for the newcomers to be Tops ranging in age from early 20’s to mid-to-late 40’s. But more commonly, the barons were Dominants—either Masters or Tops.

These clans supplied many of the things we couldn’t get from our own families of origin, including advice for love life and sex life; a home-life with our own kind; information about how leathersex worked; a place to barbecue on weekends; information on who were the responsible players in the community and who was best avoided; the very important Protocols, of course; and general mentoring.

When I moved to San Francisco after college in 1971, the clan circles I moved in tended to be headed by Masters or Tops, but the more senior bottoms or slaves were always deferred to by younger or less experienced Dominants of any description. This central fact of the pecking order of these clans makes it clear in retrospect that the objective, even though it was unspoken, was always the socialization and acculturation of newcomers as well as support for the elders. This is what I believe made it tribal in nature.

To most of us at the time, it just felt like we had a great circle of friends that functioned as family, but it was much, much more than that when viewed through the perspective of decades... there was more love there than I realized at the time, although I doubt we’d have called it that back then... I wish we had, but it was a different era.

It was in such a setting that I learned the rules of deportment (the Protocols) for a well-rounded weatherman. As I began to get a more secure feel for how things worked, I was given limited mentoring responsibilities for guys less experienced than myself. Years later, I began to realize that I had taken my own place as an elder, but that had been true for a while before I was willing to admit to it.

The Nobility Begins to Unravel

All but the most sophisticated and worldly barons handed down their sets of Protocols, the forms of behaviour, as if they were both traditional and universal, when in fact they were not. It was the approximate equivalent of having 12 Emily Posts or Martha Stewarts (May the Leather Gods protect us!) dictating how table manners should be done. The result was that in time, considerable differences of opinion slowly began to emerge about exactly how certain things were supposed to be done. “Earning” one’s leathers happened in a very formal way in one clan, but not so formally in another, for example. In some ways, this was a dim reflection of the inter-service rivalries that existed between the Army and the Navy, for example, during World War II, and still exist to some extent. And this may be why some people become so passionate about the right way to do things in the leather world. Tradition, after all, had to be respected and preserved!

My first clue that the rules were not standard came to me in the form of a surprising conversation that a clan elder had with me when I was planning my first visit to the East Coast from Denver — I was 20 at that time. I was taken aside and it was very carefully explained to me that in the East, Masters and Tops “dressed” on the right side — wore their keys on the right hip, and not on the left, as was the standard west of the Mississippi. The fact that he even knew about this variation qualified him as “one of the knowledgeable ones” in my young eyes, but I was stunned by his information. (By now, the West Coast standard has become world-wide, and Dominants wear their markings on the left side.)

... to be continued in May’s Rumbblings

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).

Voter Suppression in Georgia

By Douglas A. Blackmon (@douglasblackmon)

So, you're asking if I actually can explain how the new Georgia voting law discourages voting – especially in minority & lower income communities and sets up ways for the legislature and exec branch to tamper with elections the way President Trump tried? Okay, if you insist.

The most dangerous part of the Georgia voting law is that it removes from the State Election Board the vote of the Secretary of State – even though under Georgia Constitution, the Secretary of State oversees elections. It also puts the board under the control of the legislature. The election board can suspend and replace any local election official basically anytime they want, for just about any reason – like having an honest election. If that had been the law in

November, a state board controlled by the Republican legislature would have been able to do exactly what President Trump illegally wanted – firing election officials in counties, like Clayton, DeKalb and Fulton, that voted big for Biden and then sending in carpetbaggers to declare fraud where there was none, and fraudulently throw out thousands of African-American votes.

There are even more ways that the new voter suppression law is designed to make voting harder in Georgia: You can still vote absentee for any reason, but now it's illegal for officials to send absentee applications to every voter. The law also reduces how much time a voter has to request a ballot and blocks any organizations that help people get absentee ballots. It also requires every absentee voter to jump through extra hoops that a voter at the polls do not have to.

The new law sets up requirements for early voting – like not allowing it after 5pm, making it harder for working people to vote. It also eliminates mobile voting stations, except in an emergency—like hurricanes or alien invasion – and only if the governor says to do it. It also puts huge limits on local officials allowing extra “drop boxes” for absentee ballots, another way of increasing the odds of long, long lines at the regular polls. Altogether, the law's discourage absentee voting and make early voting less effective. The intent seems to be causing much, much longer & slower lines at the polls, which, again, will mean large numbers of working class, elderly, and sick voters who just give up and go home. And if anybody who comes along to offer a bottle of water or a Ritz cracker to a voter getting thirsty or tired? Well, as everyone has heard, now that simple, kind gesture will be a crime, thanks to our state elected officials.

Bottom line: Georgia had an incredibly close and fair election, in which officials – most of them Republicans – did a great job encouraging every legal voter to vote. Almost five million people voted – the most ever – and Joe Biden surprisingly won by a tiny <12,000 margin.

There was NO evidence of voting fraud, and barely even any apparent human error. The only thing that supposedly “went wrong,” was that the losing party was sore that it lost the presidential election and two U.S. Senate seats.

Why did the Republicans lose the presidential vote in Georgia? And the Senate slots? Primarily because thousands of women in the suburbs and smaller cities who had been solid GOP voters were disgusted by Donald Trump's lunatic comments, denials, and lack of concern about COVID.

Why did they also vote against the two GOP senators? Because many Republican voters had grown nauseated with the ethical failures of GOP elected officials as they went along with President Trump ignoring reality as the virus killed more than 500,000 Americans.

Finally, there was one other reason Republicans lost those three races: first, their candidates were deadly uninspiring. So they ran the ugliest, often blatantly racist, kinds of campaigns – exactly what was already turning away thousands of GOP voters.

They lost because the election correctly reflected that by a tiny margin, the majority of people in Georgia didn't want Trump, Perdue or Loeffler. That's the only reason Georgia's election law was changed – to make it possible to prevent an outcome the ruling party dislikes.



UPCOMING EVENTS & RIDES

Some Featured Rides & Events:

Saturday, 17th April, 18:00-21:00: EVENT: ECMC's delayed 2021 Installation Dinner! If you would like to attend, please speak with any member of Empire City MC. This will be held in a private room at a Manhattan restaurant for a fixe price of \$45 + your beverages.

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>

Saturday, 7th May: RIDE: 'Rusty Rider' Ride. 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. We will ride up the Palisades Interstate Parkway for a bit, then tool around in the vicinity -- cross over the Bear Mountain Bridge and ride the "Goat Trail" to the roundabout, which will bring us to the Parkway to come home to Manhattan... Folks from N.J. can split off to take the Tappan Zee Bridge (Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge) to avoid the G.W. traffic. If the weather is unusually cold or wet, the rain date is 8th May.

Sunday, 23rd May: RIDE: The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride. Please note: THIS EVENT MIGHT BE CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19: PLEASE CHECK OUR ONLINE CALENDAR FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION

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! Details coming soon...

Wed 2nd June, 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 June: EVENT: Empire City MC's 57th Annual Bike Blessing!

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

Sun 27th June: RIDE: ~~Empire City MC leads the Gay Pride March beside our sister club, the Sirens MC!~~ Sadly, the 2021 Pride March has been cancelled due to pandemic concerns.

Wed 7th July, 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 10th July: RIDE: Mel & Jose's Annual, Invitational 4th of July BBQ Party [tentative]

Fri 13th – Mon 16th August: RIDE: Montréal Pride Weekend. Interested? Ask an ECMC member!

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)

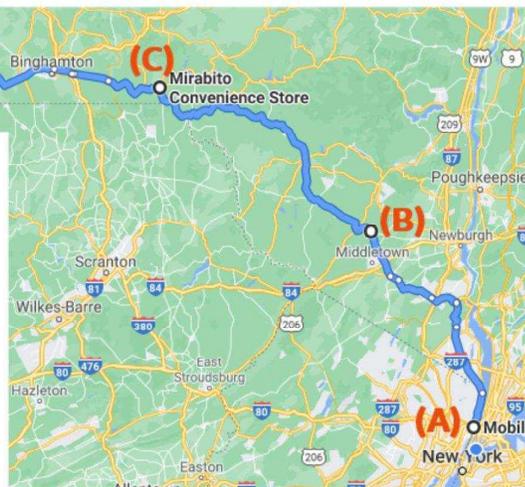
18:00 Arrive at The Ranch and get your first meal!



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

