

# LOOKING FOR BBQ THAT WILL ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS IN THE CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY

*Robert Laford*

The Connecticut River Valley of Massachusetts is a lush green valley home to generations of farmers and Native Americans before that. Each of these generations came to know the beauty and bounty that abounds in the valley. Riding through the valley rewards the senses as the motorcyclist follows the majestic Connecticut as it weaves through western Massachusetts on its way to its namesake and the Atlantic Ocean.

This particular Saturday morning dawned with bright blue skies, crisp air, and low humidity. And after a week of ninety-degree days with overwhelming humidity it did not take much coaxing to find a small group of friends willing to meet on two wheels and make a visit to the Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts.

The circle starts just north of the Massachusetts border in Brattleboro, Vermont. Nestled in the southern foot of the Green Mountains, Brattleboro is a revitalized mill town that offers visitors many reasons to pull off nearby Interstate Route 91 to enjoy the shops, scenery, and community. Brattleboro is also a perfect rallying point for a motorcycle ride because roads in any direction offer wonderfully twisty rides with great views.

Today we head back across the river into Hinsdale, New Hampshire to pick up Route 63 and head south into Massachusetts. Restful images of farms and rolling fields of green dotted with grazing cattle and golden corn or other produce awaiting harvest, Route 63 wanders alongside the Connecticut. Rolling along you pass through small quiet New England towns still holding Norman Rockwell's paintings as their own.



About a mile west of where Route 63 crosses under Massachusetts Route 2 is the French King Bridge. The steel deck arch bridge spans 782 feet across the Connecticut River between Erving and Gill, Massachusetts far above the river's reach. With parking available on the river's west side of the bridge, a walk across offers a breathtaking view of the Connecticut River below.

## 2006 AMA/FIM International Women & Motorcycling Conference "A World of Adventure" Presented by Harley-Davidson and Buell



### WHEN IS IT?

- June 30 - July 3, 2006

### WHERE IS IT?

- Athens, Georgia

### WHAT'S PLANNED

- Opening Ceremonies
- Seminars and Panel Discussions
- Demo Rides
- Guided and Self-Guided Tours
- Parade and Street Party
- Vendor Midway
- Selected Meals with Special Guests
- Riding Skills Day at Road Atlanta Raceway
- Women & Motorcycling Exhibit from the Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum
- And Much More!

### Conference Rules,

**Guidelines, Phone registration**  
Some restrictions may apply. For conference rules, guidelines and to register by phone contact the American Motorcyclist Association at 1-800-AMA-JOIN or [www.womenandmotorcycling.com](http://www.womenandmotorcycling.com)

### OFFICIAL REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** A separate form must be submitted for each individual.

I do not wish my name to be published in the event directory.

### Conference Fees

If You Register By 3/31/2006:

- \_\_\_ \$189.00 includes AMA membership
- \_\_\_ \$150.00 AMA Members

If You Register After 3/31/2006:

- \_\_\_ \$214.00 includes AMA membership
- \_\_\_ \$175.00 AMA Members

### Optional Programs:

- \_\_\_ \$150 for Skills Day and lunch at Road Atlanta
- \_\_\_ \$25.00 lunch with AMA President, Robert Razor \_\_\_\_\_ Sat. or \_\_\_\_\_ Sun.

AMA# \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_

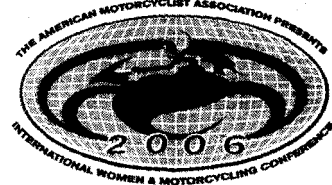
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Type of card \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant fees are not refundable. By signing below or by applying by telephone, I agree to abide by the rules and conditions above and by those of the AMA, the Classic Center and the City of Athens, Georgia. The AMA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all applications. The AMA, the Classic Center and the City of Athens, Georgia are not responsible for injury, death or property loss or damage.

Signature Required: \_\_\_\_\_



Return this application with check or money order (Payable to AMA) or credit card info to: AMA/FIM Int'l. Women & Motorcycling Conference, 13515 Yarmouth Dr., Pickerington, OH 43147

**CT RIVER VALLEY BBQ**

*(Continued from Page 47)*

Back on Route 63 we ride through Montague where we change to Route 47 to remain at the river's edge. Each turn brings us a new perspective of the region's agricultural history and economy. The numerous farm stands along the route offer us early season vegetables. Farm fresh produce includes summer squash, peas, cucumbers, lettuce, and early corn on the cob - but the seasonal treat for those of us who stop this day are the big, red, ripe, and juicy strawberries - waiting to surrender themselves to my wife's warm biscuits and to be topped with ice cream! The roadside farms are filled with strawberry pickers hunched over gathering the sweet red fruit. Throughout the warm summer weather such agricultural sites delight and excite us.

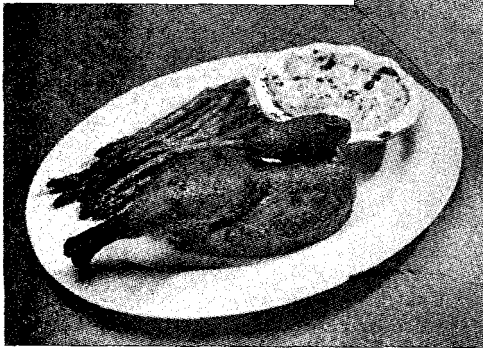
A few miles south of where Route 47 crosses Route 9 we venture off our route and into Skinner State Park and up Mountain Road to the summit of Mount Holyoke. Formed cooperatively between a volcano 200 million years ago and the glaciers of the ice



also reaches over 80 miles to New Hampshire's Mount Monadnock to the north. From the summit house's deck we can see the Calvin Coolidge Bridge where Route 9 crosses the



age, Mt. Holyoke offers breathtaking views of the valley below. Mt. Holyoke marks the western end of the Holyoke Mountain Range and rises more than 800 feet above the meandering Connecticut River below. With clear skies the view takes in more than the picturesque communities of the Pioneer Valley below; it



# Backroads SPRING BREAK 2006

FRIDAY MAY 19 THRU MONDAY MAY 22



Friday 5/19  
Bavarian Inn

64 Shepherdgrade Rd • Shepherdstown, WV 25443  
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Sat. & Sun.  
5/20 & 21  
Natural  
Bridge Inn

Natural Bridge, VA 24578 • 800-533-1410  
[www.naturalbridgeva.com](http://www.naturalbridgeva.com)



Monday 5/22 • Hilltop House Hotel  
400 East Ridge Street • Harpers Ferry, WV 25425  
800-338-8319 • [www.hilltophousehotel.net](http://www.hilltophousehotel.net)

• • JUST ADDED • •  
**RIDER's Stayin' Safe**  
Larry Grodsky to join  
Backroads' Spring Break

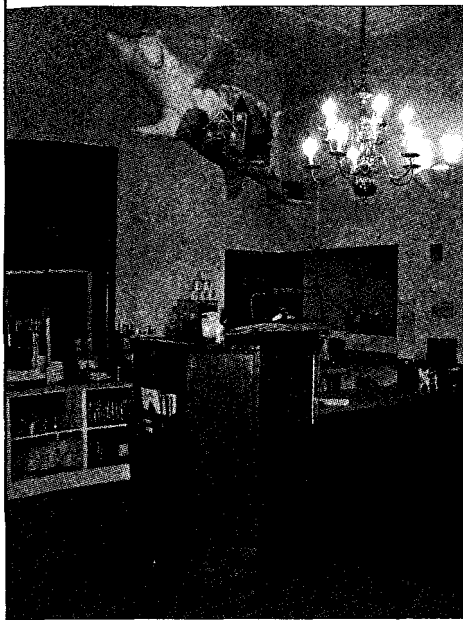
Larry Grodsky will offer an abbreviated version of his 100-Alpine training tour on Sunday, May 21. Pupils/instructor ratio will be 5-1. Fee for course is \$175, with \$25 discount if booked before Feb. 15.  
[www.stayinsafe.com](http://www.stayinsafe.com)  
Larry will also be giving a talk on safety Sat. night.

**Reserve Today! Rooms available now through April 1 - NO KIDDING! • Look for more details as they develop.**

Friday we'll meet and take a spirited ride south through the farmlands of Pennsylvania and cross over the Mason/Dixon Line into Maryland. By late afternoon we'll pull into the Bavarian Inn, in scenic Shepherdstown, West Virginia. This wonderful Inn will blow you away, and you'll almost feel like you have ridden into a small German village (no - you don't need a BMW!) Their restaurant is one of the best in the region and their wine list even has Brian & Shira salivating!

The next day we will have a leisurely Saturday morning romp down into Front Royal, Virginia where we'll pick up the famed and sun-filled (we hope) Skyline Drive and take this twisty route into the Blue Ridge Parkway, leading south we'll grab an easy barbeque lunch off the Parkway before finishing the day riding off the mountain peaks on the ultra-twisty Rte. 130 - along the James River before pulling into the historic Natural Bridge Inn, which will be our home for two nights. This place is a world unto itself. Between the Natural Bridge and the Museums located on the premises you'll have plenty to see and do. In addition to the wonderful setting, Larry Grodsky, Mr. Stayin' Safe, will be giving a short talk on safety Saturday evening, and offering an abbreviated version of his safety training tour on Sunday.

Monday we tour back north along the backroads of Virginia and to the historic Civil War town of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia for a final night on the road together!



Connecticut into Northampton - where our ride soon leads us to our lunch stop.

Backtracking north on Route 47 we follow Route 9 west over the Coolidge Bridge and into Northampton — a community with many art galleries, theaters, people and places to see, especially restaurants. Today's ride leads us just north on Route 5 to Hatfield and "Holy Smokes" Restaurant.

Along Route 5 resides a unique restaurant that has taken over a former Lutheran Church. Originally built in 1889, this architecturally pristine building rests under the shade of majestic hardwoods and offers a comforting view of nearby picnic tables that say, welcome. The sign that greets us as we park on Church Avenue reads, "Holy Smokes BBQ and Whole Hog House - The answer to your BBQ prayers."

Walking up to the main entrance we feel as if we are making our way into a small country church for services. The interior is warm and friendly. The staff are professional and enjoy their customers with a laugh or two - as noted by the flying winged-pig hanging from the ceiling. (Hence "when pigs fly.") Holy Smokes prides itself on using fresh, local ingredients in their dishes, whenever possible, and have a homemade approach to their menu which includes the "whole hog" approach every Wednesday, as they prepare the week's BBQ on site.

The service was quick, and the food heavenly. From pulled pork sandwiches with a variety of available side dishes to the racks of ribs and other BBQ delights, Holy Smoke will have you converted in no time! The portions are more than generous and there are even a few choices of dishes for those a bit more daring. With their excellent service and family-friendly

and relaxed atmosphere there is no doubt that this will be a stop for repeat visits.

For their "Amen-u" or for more information on this unique, fun, and worthwhile stop, visit

my bike thinking about God, then sitting in church thinking about my bike," Holy Smokes embodies a bit of the secular and the spiritual offering you great food and a fun atmosphere.

We passed on dessert, as there is always ice cream up the road. Before the end approaches we make another stop a few miles from our lunch stop along Route 5 in Deerfield, Massachusetts, the home of the Yankee Candle Company "flagship store."

Billed as the world's largest candle store, Yankee Candle is a candle lover's dream. With over 160 scents and other "accessories" as well as their candle-making museum and winter wonderland (including Santa's workshop), it is an unequalled shopping experience. However, the sense of smell or sight is not the only reason to stop. The flagship store offers us some mouth-watering delights as well with their bear claws and their creamy delicious fudge — a good stop to help settle that tasty BBQ before finally heading home. We continue north, along Route 5, through Greenfield, Massachusetts and eventually leading us back

to Brattleboro.

The Connecticut River Valley has given all our senses a workout: from the feel of a great riverside riding route, to the sights and sounds of the farmlands, to the tastes of wonderful BBQ, to the smells of the fragrant candle shop.

Such excursions wash away the memory of the week's work as they cultivate the pleasure of good company and happy thoughts of favorite rides.

**HOLY SMOKES BBQ  
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WEDNESDAY THRU SUNDAY 11AM - 9PM  
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## Cycle Gadgets

# Touring in Style

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Tired of hunting for a radio station? Listen to the music/talk/sports you choose...100 channels, Delphi XM Satellite Radio. Motorcycle and Automotive mounts available.

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