



MAGA: Anti-Gay/Anti-Drag/Anti-Trans/Anti-Women

More than 300 drag performers and allies gathered in Tallahassee on 24th April to protest a slew of bills that take aim at the LGBTQ+ community, now moving fast through Florida's statehouse.

In polished pumps and a sea of red T-shirts that read "The show must go on," the effervescent crowd marched half a mile from Cascades Park to the Capitol building, brandishing signs bearing pleas for protection.

They rallied in Tallahassee "to protest against continued attacks on the LGBTQIA+ community by Gov. DeSantis and other Republican state legislators."

Hundreds of drag performers and allies rallied in Florida Tuesday afternoon against recent legislation that organizers say is attacking the LGBTQ community. The rally drew advocates from across the state to Tallahassee for a march to the state Capitol, where speakers included state Sen. Shevrin Jones.



Gia Rivellini holds a sign that reads "drag shows are safer than churches" while chanting inside the Florida Capitol.



"First of all, I want to acknowledge your existence," Jones said in his remarks. "I also want to acknowledge and to affirm to you all, that you are supposed to be here and there's nothing wrong with you."

The march comes nearly a week after the Republican-led state Legislature passed a bill banning children from adult-

live performances, which LGBTQ advocates say targets drag shows. SB 1438, known as the Protection of Children Act, would allow the state to fine, suspend or revoke the food and beverage licenses of businesses that admit children to any "adult live performance."



EZPass Enforcement Actions

some content by 1010 WINS, adam warner, darius radzius and brian brant

MTA Bridge and Tunnel officers seized the vehicles of 63 drivers who owed a combined \$1.5 million in unpaid tolls in their latest crackdown, officials said Wednesday. A man is taken into custody at the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge on 11 April 2023.

The two-day blitz targeted scofflaws on the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge on Tuesday and the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge last Thursday. The worst offender was a Lexus RX4 driver stopped on the Verrazzano who owes \$86,111.82 in tolls and fees, according to the MTA, which calculated the debt down to the exact cent. The runner-up was a 1998 Honda Accord driver who owes \$66,763.02, the MTA said. The drivers' vehicles were towed, and their registrations have been recommended for suspension by the state DMV.

"In a perfect world, everyone pays their tolls – their fair share," said Richard Hildebrand, the VP and chief of operations for Bridges and Tunnels, in a statement.

During the latest crackdown, another driver was arrested and charged with possession of a forged instrument for trying to cross the Verrazzano in a Mercedes-Benz SUV with a fake Georgia license plate.

In January, Bridge and Tunnel officers busted 17 drivers at the Verrazzano with a total of \$420,000 in unpaid tolls and late fees. One driver owed nearly \$60,000.

Last year, the vehicles of 1,800 toll violators were intercepted at MTA bridges and tunnels. Those scofflaws accounted for tens of millions of dollars owed in tolls and fees, the agency said. A driver was busted with fake Georgia plates at the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge on April 11, 2023. The MTA said it's expanding its crackdowns on toll scofflaws at bridges and tunnels.

Transit authorities seized 29 cars in the last 24 hours, including 17 at the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, breaking their one-day record.

Drivers skipping out on paying tolls at MTA tunnels and bridges should be aware that transit authorities are cracking down.

Bridge and Tunnel officers pulled over 17 people at the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge on Wednesday "for continuous toll evasion," the MTA confirmed.



According to the agency, the drivers had crossed the bridge "scores of times" while ignoring their toll bills, accumulating a total of \$420,000 in unpaid tolls and late fees. One driver owes nearly \$60,000.

Transit authorities seized 29 cars in the last 24 hours, including 17 at the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, breaking their one-day record. Photo credit Darius Radzius

The officers seized their cars from the bridge and impounded them. Twelve additional vehicles were also seized at area crossings in the past day, officials said.

The impacted drivers were allowed to continue their journeys without their vehicles.

EZPass and Motorcycles

If you remember correctly, the last few years we've been trying to gather affected persons for a class action lawsuit against EZPass because they occasionally misclassify our motorcycles as trucks or other vehicles, and/or in some cases, fail to read our EZPass tags resulting in a higher "midrange" toll. We never got enough parties in our class action lawsuit and we have dropped it without prejudice, which means we could kick it back off again at anytime should we choose.

Due to the nature of the way the EZPass system will penalise somebody if their transponder is not read properly but the number tag is (midrange tolling), our road captain recommends the following for motorcycle use: Remove your EZPass transponder and place it in a faraday bag in your pocket when you travel. We recommend the telephone-sized faraday bag from <https://godarkbags.com/> (Please note: The bag in which your transponder arrives which is allegedly a faraday bag is not a faraday bag!)

Why are we recommending use to your transponder? Since MTA/Thruway have put in cameras and have removed toll gates from all toll plazas, let their cameras capture your motorcycle licence tag as it should. Oops? Motorcycles have only one number tag (therefore, a 50% chance less of being read than a car), motorcycles have smaller tags (harder to read/capture), also travel bags, luggage racks and other items sometimes obscure your number tag from cameras, but not from plain view! Avoid intentionally covering your plate in a manner that looks like it was done intentionally! Place a jacket on your luggage rack bag and if the sleeves happen to cover the number tag with the bungee cord, oh well: plausible deniability.

A word of warning: DO NOT obscure your number tag as that's what the police are looking for when you cross the bridge in the crackdowns you see above. Obscureification includes: covering up your number tag, positioning it in an "illegal manner" (i.e. under the wheel well, bent up/folder, mounting vertically rather than horizontally, placing items that block your number tag intentionally such as a leaf, or other items like a sticker. Make sure if you are covering up your plate in any way that it's completely and totally A manner in which you have plausible deniability so you can apologise and avoid a ticket. Of course, pay your EZPass bill in full so they have nothing to nab you on.

If the cameras luck out and actually capture your number tag, that's OK because they will cross reference it with your easy pass tag and you will get a discount from the full fare, paying the same price as midrange. I have been personally riding like this for the past few years and I can report that I am only charged tolls in New York State about 30% of the time but in New Jersey I'm paying 70% of my tolls through the automated system. I guess their cameras are better in New Jersey.



UPCOMING EVENTS & RIDES

Some Featured Rides & Events from our calendar:

Fri 12th – 14th May: EVENT: Bear Albany Presents " Black & Blue" (Albany, NY). More information at <http://www.bearalbany.com/>

Wed 17th May, 20:00 – 21:00: SOCIAL MEETING: Empire City hosts a social teleconference on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. All interested parties are welcomed. We discuss ride and event ideas, current events, other useful stuff. <https://bit.ly/ECMC-Social>

Sat 20th May, 09:30 – 16:30: RIDE: Ride the Hawk's Nest (good weather only!) Meet up at McDonald's (Broadway & 170th St) on the Broadway Side, aiming north towards 171st St. Please come with a FULL TANK and EMPTY BLADDER. Kick-Stands Up at 10:00 Sharp!

Sun 21st May, 10:00-17:00: RIDE: Distinguished Gentleman's Ride in NYC! Register at <https://www.gentlemansride.com/>, then meet up on the 21st at Peck Slip Plaza, Peck Slip, New York, NY 10038 on the ray of the ride – we'll ride through most of NYC's boroughs!

Fri 25th – Tue 30th May: RIDE: ECMC's 12th Annual Motorcycle Weekend (New York City, Philadelphia, Harrisburg & Pittsburgh!) Details and Run Application are attached to the last pages of this newsletter!

Sat 3rd June, 12:00-17:00: EVENT: Franklin, TN Pride / Franklin, TN Anti-Anti-Drag Protest? In discussion with event coordinators.

Wed 7th June, 20:00 – 21:00: OPEN GENERAL MEETING: Empire City MC's monthly Open General Meeting is held the first Wednesday of each month from 8pm to 9pm by teleconference at: <https://bit.ly/ECMC-Meeting> All interested parties my attend.

Thur 8th – Sun 11th June: EVENT: Fire Island Bear Weekend in Cherry Grove. Cherry Grove, Fire Island, NY, USA. Presented by Shane Tate, Beards & Bears Take Over Fire Island. For details, visit: <https://www.fireislandbearweekend.com/>

Fri 16th June, 18:00-21:00: EVENT: ECMC Bike Blessing

Sat 17th June, 09:00-17:00: RIDE: ECMC's 59th Annual *FREE* Biker Picnic (Admission by motorcycle only!)



Interested in any of these events or rides? Call Chaz, the Road Captain of Empire City MC to find out more, or RSVP.

In Empire City MC, the Vice President (Gary P) oversees coordinating all EVENTS (designated with the word "EVENT" in the calendar), and the Road Captain (Chaz A) is in charge of all rides/travel and accommodation (designated with the word "RIDE" in the calendar).

Chaz is happy to act as a conduit to arrange your involvement with any of our events/rides with a simple voice phone call to +1 212-212-CHAZ (2429) – hours for live assistance are 9am-10pm, 7-days a week. Voice only: No texts are allowed on this number at this time [we're working on that]. If you get voice mail, please leave a message.

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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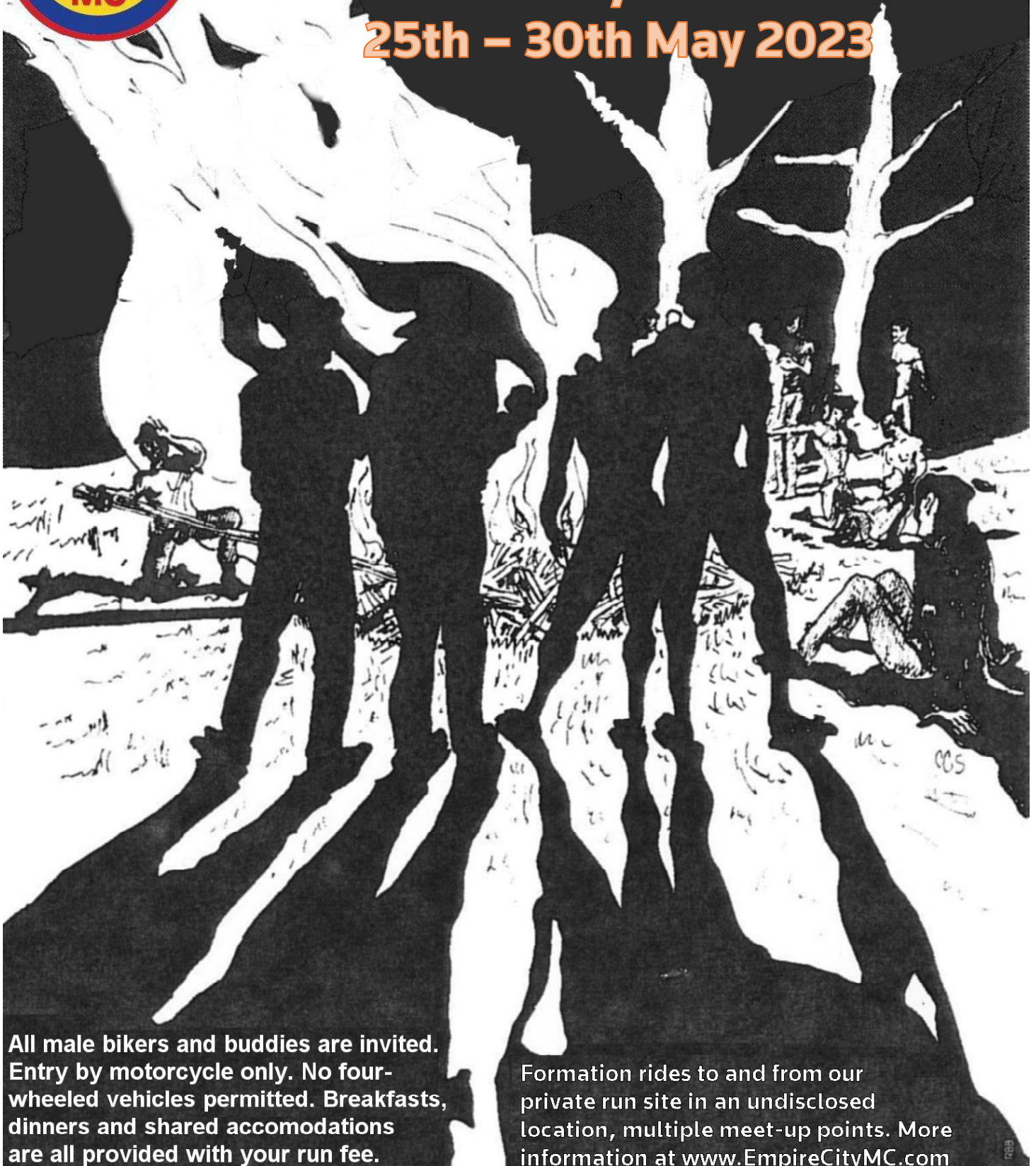




Empire City MC's

2023 Motorcycle Weekend

25th – 30th May 2023



All male bikers and buddies are invited. Entry by motorcycle only. No four-wheeled vehicles permitted. Breakfasts, dinners and shared accommodations are all provided with your run fee.

Formation rides to and from our private run site in an undisclosed location, multiple meet-up points. More information at www.EmpireCityMC.com



Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend 25th – 30th May 2023 - Information

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! Come join the fun!

Due to distance from New York City, we split the ride there and back into two days; however, you can meet up with us anywhere along the route!

We'll spend a night in Harrisburg, PA as our half-way point on our ride to way to Coal Centre. On the return, we'll stay over in Philadelphia, having brunch in Philadelphia, returning to NYC on Tuesday. You may join up with us anywhere along the route! Note: Hotel reservations, dinners/drinks in Harrisburg/Philadelphia are not included in the run fee. This is to allow the most flexibility for those wishing to participate:

THU 25 MAY - Meet up in NYC and ride to Harrisburg, PA. We'll spend the night at "Crowne Plaza Harrisburg-Hershey" in Harrisburg, have dinner and meet up with The Pennsmen at their home bar, Brownstone Lounge.

FRI 26 MAY - We will have brunch at the Crowne Plaza and then ride to Coal Centre, PA, arriving by 5pm.

SAT 27 MAY - Brunch at The Farm, then a motorcycle ride on Rt 250 in West Virginia (windy mountain highway), stopping in Moundsville to tour the defunct West Virginia State Penitentiary (\$14), then back to The Farm for a buffet dinner with Three Rivers Leather Club, the party barn will be open!

SUN 28 MAY - Brunch at The Farm, then a motorcycle ride up to Pittsburgh with lunch on the road. Dinner will be "dutch treat" at Four Points Brewery, a short ride from The Farm.

MON 29 MAY - Pack up, Brunch at The Farm, then we head to Philadelphia where we'll check into various places, have dinner. After, we'll find some trouble in town!

TUE 30 MAY - Brunch at the very anti-MAGA Sam's Morning Glory Diner, then we will ride back to NYC!



Run Application

RUN FEE: Early bird (before 30th April 2023) \$40 per person, afterwards, \$50/per person.

This is a motorcycle only event! No four-wheeled vehicles are allowed! We understand there are riders from many places that would like to participate in this event; therefore, we have several meet-up points and times specified in the map. Included for your run fee: Accommodations at The Farm, two dinners and three breakfasts, open bar all weekend. Each person attending must complete a run application (this form) and send it in with payment in full. It's vital that your motorcycle is in good working order and you are on time to your respective meet-up location.

Name _____

Club Affiliation (if any) _____

E-Mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

I will meet up with the group at (see below): A, B, C, D

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), "The Farm", 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 ECMC, "The Farm" 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 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: Empire City MC Motorcycle Weekend, 10 W 15th St Suite 609, New York, NY 10011-6821 or by PDF to Road-Captain@EmpireCityMC.com

Meet-Up Point "A" – Thursday, 25th May

9:30AM Breakfast at Lexington Candy Counter, 83rd & Lexington, NYC

10:30AM Kickstands Up & Depart NYC

Meet-Up Point "B" – Thursday, 25th May (if you'll be staying the night with us)

4PM Check in to Crowne Plaza Harrisburg-Hershey, 23 S 2nd St, Harrisburg, PA 17101*

Meet-Up Point "C" – Friday, 26th May

9:30AM Brunch at "Restaurant23" at the Crowne Plaza Harrisburg-Hershey, 23 S 2nd St, Harrisburg, PA 17101,

10:30AM Kickstands up & depart Harrisburg

Meet-Up Point "D" – Friday, 26th May

5PM Arrive at The Farm for housing assignments and dinner

* Please note that if you are staying overnight on Thursday night at Crowne Plaza Harrisburg-Hershey, you must make your own reservation(s) and pay for your room separately from the Run Fee. To make hotel reservations, refer to the next page, where there is hotel reservation information. If you are intending to stay overnight in Philadelphia Monday night, please contact the Road Captain.



HARRISBURG OVERNIGHT HOTEL RESERVATIONS



If you would like to stay overnight with us in Harrisburg, PA, please make your own accommodation reservation. We'll be staying at Crowne Plaza Harrisburg-Hershey, 23 South Second Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Call the front desk to make a reservation: +1 717 234 5021, or make it online <https://bit.ly/20230525hotel> or any other travel website

We're checking in on 25th May and checking out 26th May.

We will ALL meet-up for brunch at "Restaurant23" at 09:30AM (the hotel restaurant), kick-stands up at 10:30AM.

To discuss room-shares, discuss online: <https://mewe.com/join/empirecitymc>

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BRING?

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

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| - bike tool kit | - extra bungee cords | - rain gear |
| - driving license | - motorcycle paperwork | - mobile phone charger |
| - medications | - dry clothing | - club colours/banner |

OTHER REMINDERS & NOTES

- The Farm has 'play space' as well as a pool, bar, nature trails and more!
- This is a MOTORCYCLE EVENT and only those arriving by MOTORCYCLE will be allowed to participate.
- There is ample tent space for those who wish complete privacy.
- The run fee pays these meals: Breakfast Saturday through Monday and Dinner on Friday and Saturday.
- All other meals and on-the-road meals are your own financial responsibility.
- Your run fee is due upon registration. The run fee is \$50 per person; however, prior to 30th April, you only pay the 'early bird' rate of \$40. Your run fee pays for your food and beverages at The Farm.
- You may pay your run fee by personal cheque (no money orders please!) enclosed with your run application, or by transmitting your run fee through Zelle by e-mailing your payment to zelle@empirecitymc.com
- After registering, we will send you a confirmation letter with further details.
- If you have any questions, please e-mail Chaz at road-captain@empirecitymc.com