Progressive Laconia Motorcycle Week®: 96 Years in the Making

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LACONIA, N.H. (PRWEB) May 11, 2019 -- This June, Laconia Motorcycle Week returns to New Hampshire for its 96th year, leaving some wondering how this popular, time-honored event first started. Don’t try doing the math – because there’s a bit more to it than just counting back 96 years… The rally actually started in 1916, organized by local motorcycle dealers in central and southern New England, with a couple hundred motorcyclists traveling north for a get together (dubbed a “gypsy tour”) at Weirs Beach. The tour was first sanctioned by the Federation of American Motorcyclists in 1917 and when the FAM disbanded in 1919, the Motorcycle and Allied Trades Association (M&ATA) took over the sanction until 1924, when the American Motorcycle Association (AMA) was formed. Back then, the weekend event centered around races and hill climbs. The number of participants grew each year as did the event’s duration. Over time, the rally blossomed into a week-long event, eventually suffering in attendance and popularity after getting wrapped up in the upheavals of the 60’s. The rally reverted to a 3-day weekend and would remain so until 1991, when organizers revived the week-long event after seeing the success of Sturgis’ 50th Anniversary Rally in 1990. Laconia Motorcycle Week reclaimed the support of local businesses and the AMA as a week-long rally and the oldest gypsy tour in the country.

Today, Laconia Motorcycle Week® is a much-expanded version of the early “gypsy tour” years offering attendees lots of fun, food, music, racing, spectator-friendly hill climb competitions and, of course, a forum to share in their passion (big or small) for riding. Over 250,000 riders are expected to descend on the Lakes Region for the Rally, holding the honor of the oldest of the three national rallies with Daytona and Sturgis being Laconia’s sister rallies. Sure, the rev of motorcycles and sight of leather (lots of it) may be intimidating, but don’t be fooled. Behind those leather jackets are just regular people; a multi-generational group of enthusiasts, from all walks of life, who all just happen to share in the exhilaration and liberation that come with riding.

“It’s a rite of passage,” says organizer Jennifer Anderson, “This is the one week of the year when riders get to hang out with thousands of other people, from all around the U.S. and world, who enjoy the very same thing they like – getting out and riding. The Rally offers us all a chance of camaraderie while still having fun, packing on the miles, and even raising money for much deserved local charities.”

And its boundaries have expanded, too. You’ll notice an uptick in motorcycle traffic throughout the state (not just limited to Laconia, Weirs Beach, or Loudon). Motorcycle enthusiasts come to the state to enjoy the scenic riding as far east as the seacoast and as far north as the picturesque Kancamagus Highway, proving half the fun is getting here.

So be a part of the continuing history. Plan a ride to New Hampshire for this year’s Motorcycle Week (June 8 - June 16). Whether it’s your first or 96th visit, you’ll find the passion for riding, around which this event was founded, has never changed.

Laconia Motorcycle Week® gives great appreciation to all of our sponsors, especially our Presenting Sponsors: Progressive, AMSOIL, and American Iron Outfitters as well as the State of New Hampshire for their large financial support of our rally each year.

Ride Safe and Keep Away from the Centerline!

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