

WheelPeople **Special Edition**

Newsletter of the Charles River Wheelmen

On the roads of New England since 1966

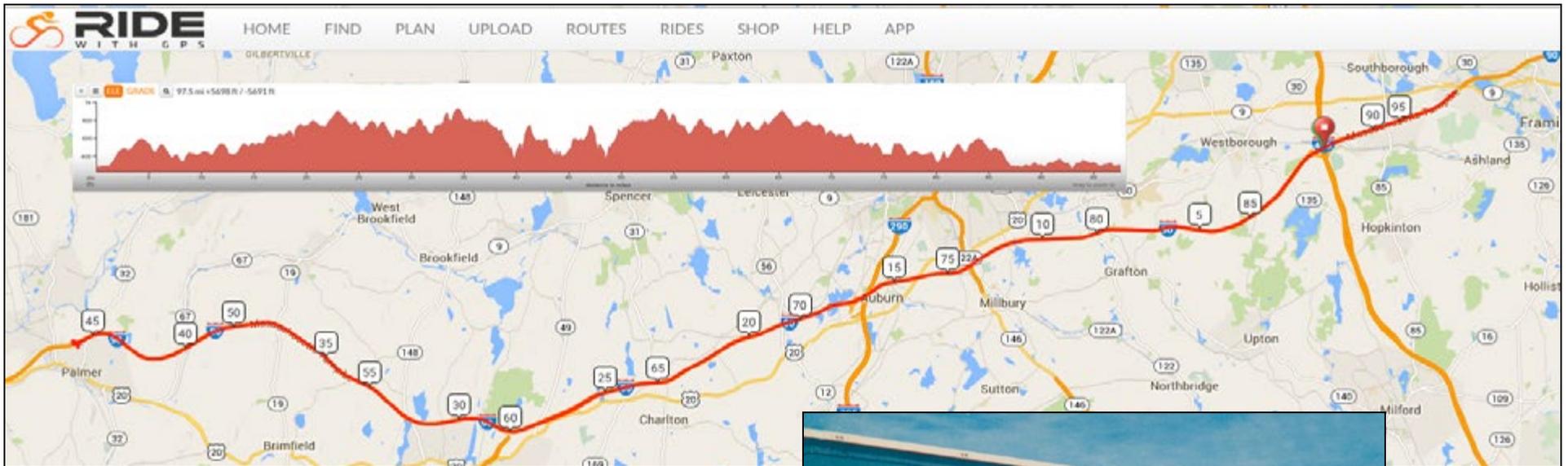
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Ride the MASS PIKE



In a stunning diplomatic shocker, CRW was successful in its negotiations with the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority and the 2015 Spring Century will run on the Mass Turnpike. The Pike will be closed to all but emergency vehicles allowing century riders use of four full highway lanes unencumbered by vehicular traffic. This is a first for Massachusetts, and possibly the nation, in closing a major interstate toll road for the exclusive use of cyclists. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, not to be missed, as it is certain to become a legendary event in the annals of cycling. You will ride New England roads and not worry about engaging automobiles. Think about the implications of taking one of the busiest highways in the northeast and devoting the space exclusively to cyclists. While this is an arrangement for a single event it could become the framework for an even more ambitious plan to reshape how cyclists are prioritized in sharing the road with motorists.

Last year we accommodated 600 riders on the Spring Century as we were limited by parking at the high school start. We face no such limits on the Pike



and our goal is to sign up 10,000 riders making it the largest bike event ever recorded. We are still fine tuning the [route details](#) but it looks like we will start at the I-495 Exit and then head west to Springfield and back. The rest stops on the Pike will be open to century riders on a free, all you can eat basis. For many this will be new territory west of I-495 and riders will appreciate the ease of navigation on a straight road with not a curve or turn in sight, although there are some climbs when you get out to Sturbridge. We will organize training classes for riding in massive headwinds and in 1,000 rider pace lines extending for miles. And please do not relieve yourself roadside as state troopers will be on patrol and we can't protect you from indecent exposure arrest. We also will be the first to use a new technology developed by the Turnpike Authority to surreptitiously catch speeders. Each rider will have an electronic chip attached to their

bike which will record their performance with results posted online. In actual use these chips will be applied to vehicles by high intensity infrared beams as they go through toll booths.

Of course this plan has come under criticism from taxi drivers and automobile user groups who feel the Authority is catering to cyclists. We will be mounting public relations counter measures and know we can count on your support, as we will fight back if we encounter opposition or road rage from those who can't abide bikes and feel they are second rate transportation.

We plan to raise in excess of \$250,000 from this event and that amount will allow CRW to provide substantial new services for its membership and also do good deeds to serve the greater cycling community. There are a number of options under consideration which include: free roadside assistance for your bicycle if it breaks down, includ-



In 1975 the Howard Johnson chain had more than 1,000 restaurants, but they have virtually disappeared from the American scene. An anonymous donor is providing the distinctive orange roof for this event so we can all celebrate the past.

ing transporting you and your bike back to the ride start, a free Garmin GPS unit with membership so we can dispense with arrowing and all can navigate seamlessly on their own, a porta-john at every ride start, and building a covered Velodrome* for winter riding and training purposes. We will give priority to

proposals with long-term benefits so future generations can appreciate what we accomplished. See you on the road and be sure to sign up soon.

* A velodrome is an arena for track cycling. Modern velodromes feature steeply banked oval tracks, consisting of two 180-degree circular bends connected by two straights. The straights transition to the circular turn through a moderate easement curve.