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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY DARREN SCHMALTZ

Members, just a quick recap of the annual business meeting held March 18-22 at Yuma, Arizona. Obviously this year there was an election of officers for the position of President and Vice President I guess we know the results for the President and your new Vice President is Bill Smith. Mark Kapellusch is the new FMCA representative.

The business meeting was rather long and somewhat undirected as your new President was not prepared. The fact that there is no Spring Rally scheduled was noted and a variety of discussions regarding rallies and the declining membership were discussed. One idea that was mentioned during the board meeting was to use some of the clubs money to reduce the cost of future rallies. This was discussed but it was decided to use the money to increase new membership. A three person committee was appointed to explore how to increase membership. The committee members are Rod Woods, Paul Craig and Mark Kapellusch. There was a discussion as to where we would like to have future rallies. Duane Hays recorded the many suggestions made by those present. I will try to list them in a future letter. However, our bylaws state our authorized area to function in is the Rocky Mountain Area. Bill Smith and Sharon Brandt are going to review our bylaws regarding our name change, area of operation and what is needed to change to allow membership to all coach brands.

Yuma was a great rally. Your rally hosts Don and Linda Kammerer did a fantastic job scheduling interesting venues to visit, some on a very short notice as the stern wheeler tour was canceled with no notice. The food was outstanding and plentiful. Of course one of the highlights of the business meeting is the auction with the proceeds going to the New Life Center. Every year the amount of money that is raised at this event is

a real tribute to the generosity of our members. The total was \$16,000. Everyone at the Yuma rally deserves a big round of applause for making the auction an unbelievable success.

Our next rally is scheduled for September 25-28 in Alamogordo, New Mexico. At this time, this is the only rally on our schedule. This is very alarming to me; I know as president I'm to designate a time and place for the annual meeting. I have not made a decision yet and would like your input. If you think Moab, Utah would be a rally you would attend in late March, let me know.

As we all know this club's existence is to further the fellowship and enjoyment of the organization, to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas and experiences of motor homing and to represent ourselves as good, careful and responsible motorhome owners and operators. We do this by having rallies. To have a rally we need members to volunteer to host or co-host; without this the club will not be able to exist. All members, please, consider being a rally host or co-host. At this time our bylaws state that we rally in the Rocky Mountain area, so until our bylaws are changed I think we should abide by this limitation.

As mentioned above, a committee was formed to look into increasing membership. I feel the future success of the club is dependent upon this; no club will exist without new members. I attended the Family Motor Coach Association (FMCA) rally in Pomona, California March 26-29. There was an estimated 950 coaches at this rally. In 2005 the FMCA rally in Pomona, California between 5000 and 6000 motorhomes were in attendance. I think this illustrates the decline in membership in motor homing and why we need to aggressively pursue new members.

I want to thank everyone for all the help you put in to make our rallies a success. Please consider hosting or co-hosting a rally; it really can be fun.

Look forward to seeing you in Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Daren Schmaltz

President

RMCC

Past President's Message

Vern Weldy

The last 2 years went by very quickly. I think the annual auctions have been the most amazing thing that has happened in the RMCC club. Raising funds for the New Life Center has surprised the Center as well as the members of the club, thanks to the generosity of the bidders, Reggie the auctioneer, Jim and the margaritas and the items donated for the sale. To present a check for \$16,000 this year was surprising to me.

I remember when Jack Kelly suggested the club pick the New Life Center for the clubs charity. I never thought it would raise this amount of funds. Thanks to Jack for getting this started. I think most club members have enjoyed the auctions. Unfortunately, Jack passed away before this year's auction, but I hope he was able to watch it.

The club has lost some members due to age, health, and not being able to travel. I hope we will be able to attract new members to fill the gaps. I would also encourage all members to get involved in the rallies and the management of the club.

I want to congratulate Daren Schmaltz as the new President and Bill Smith as the new Vice President, and the new board member Mark Kapellusch, as the FMCA Representative. I am sure they will continue operation of the club for the members' enjoyment.

Lastly, thank you to the club for allowing me to be your President the last 2 years. We look forward to the continued rallies and the one coming up in September this year.

We wish safe travels this summer to all members as they enjoy their motor homes.

Vern Weldy

SPRING FLING DRESS-UP RALLY

West Wind RV Park – Yuma, AZ

March 18 – 22, 2015

This was our first rally in Yuma and our hosts, Linda & Don Kemmerer and Marie & Darren Schmaltz, provided us with interesting events, good food and plenty of fun. Many of us arrived early to take advantage of the Military Tour – Behind the Big Guns at Yuma Proving Ground on Wednesday morning. To fortify us for the long day, the prior evening, which was St. Patrick's Day, we had a dinner of corned beef and cabbage. Margie Moreland provided the corned beef and Sharon Brandt provided the cabbage, carrots and potatoes and somehow they cooked all that food. Everything was tender and so good! Thank you Margie and Sharon!

After we returned from the Tour on Wednesday, we registered and relaxed before heading to the Coyote Room for Happy Hour and Pizza where RMCC President, Vern Weldly, welcomed us and turned the evening out to our hosts. The "Dress-Up" for the evening was our favorite Traveling Outfit. Susan Frost's very relaxed and comfortable ensemble won her the prize for the evening. On Thursday we were supposed to go on a boat tour on the Colorado River, but the business went out of business. Our hosts did not falter; plans were made to go to Martha's Gardens Date Farm or to Castle Dome, a fabricated ghost town after a hot breakfast. We needed that hot breakfast since we had an unusual weather phenomenon for Yuma – RAIN! Not only did it rain, but it was cold for Yuma. Maybe the Mexican Weather gods were offended because we didn't pour enough offerings to them the previous night or could it be that Ken and Karan had their coach washed and waxed the day before? Who knows? The dress theme for that evening was Hawaiian and many of the members, especially the ladies, were stylishly dressed in various Hawaiian fashions. Terri Smith won the prize with her Hawaiian skirt that was here and there. We also had the Purple Pumpkin. The questions were very easy on purpose because Reggie wanted to get rid of odds and ends of prizes that she has been accumulating over the years. So, everyone got the right answers and received a prize; some were better than others. We had a catered dinner of chicken and pork and we all enjoyed it. Later in the evening, we played Card Bingo – it was FUN! – Hopefully, we'll play it again at a rally.

After a yummy breakfast on Friday morning, we car-pooled to tours of the Quarter Master Museum and the Yuma Territorial Prison. In the evening, to get into the Fiesta mood, a few of the ladies fortified themselves with tequila shooters washed down with margaritas, but we forgot the salt and lime. We wore party hats and Charlie Ganone won the prize wearing his "floppy ears" hat. The same chef who prepared our other meals served us Mexican Food in the evening. Corrine, from the New Life Center, spoke to us about the work of the Center and answered questions. We were surprised that she drove all that distance just to speak to us – not so, her parents and family live in Yuma. It was time for the Reggie and Barb show, aka the auction for the New Life Center. We had so much fun laughing not only at the antics of others, but at ourselves. We raised \$16,000. Multiple pats on the back to all who contributed by giving items to be auctioned and to the winning bidders.

Our Business Meeting was held on Saturday morning after another good breakfast. Vern opened the meeting with a "Remembrance of Jack Kelly". A few of the members spoke of their personal interactions with Jack. Vern then turned the meeting over to the new President, Darren Schmaltz. Topics discussed are noted elsewhere in the newsletter. We spent the rest of the day relaxing, although a few might have gone shopping. We gathered at Julianne's Restaurant for dinner. We were seated outside at long table in a relaxing patio – once the loudly squawking parrots were taken to their evening quarters. The peacock strutted around silently, no females were present for him to boost to. The food was excellent, salmon or prime rib. The dress theme for the evening was Western Dude. Sandy Kapellusch was the winner with a light denim blouse and skirt and silver and turquoise accessories.

The next morning, after a Continental breakfast – the likes of which we have never had before, of homemade granola, fresh fruit, delicious Greek yogurt, muffins and cinnamon rolls – all the bakery

BIG GUNS TOUR YUMA PROVING GROUND

By Paul Craig

Kudos to Don Kammerer for doing an excellent job of setting up the tour for us. The bus was on time and the tour went off as advertised – must be a military thing. We were extremely fortunate to have the retired base commander as our guide. He was well spoken, knowledgeable and humorous. It was a close up tour and we started with an inspection of the Main Battle Tank (MBT) and the Bradley Fighting Machine. Experts were on hand to more fully describe the capabilities of the fighting mobile units. The MBT weights about 70 tons and can move up to 60 mph and fire its main gun in any direction while moving up to 45 mph. The MBT is powered by a gas turbine and the Bradley Fighting Machine is powered by a Diesel engine. The Bradley is armored and has the ability to defend itself with a small cannon and machine guns. Its primary purpose is as an armored troop carrier. A Bradley was in the repair shop and we were given a chance to inspect the interior (tight, noisy and hot). This unit was of special interest to Paul and Barb since their granddaughter's fiancé was fatally injured when it rolled over an IED in Iraq.

YPG is a parachute testing facility. Parachutes tested here range from one person parachutes to large and multi parachutes designed for space capsules. We saw two Jeep-like vehicles being prepared for a drop. Collapsible cardboard is extensively use for absorbing energy on impact and computers are installed to control the landing to a predetermined site. This permits the cargo plane to be vectored far away from the drop zone to conceal the intended site. We saw several troops descending in parachutes as we drove in the area. The colonel commented that YPG's terrain and environment are very similar to that of Afghanistan according to returning soldiers.

Lunch was provided with the tour and it wasn't anything fancy, but it was "stick to the ribs" food – large meal loaf servings, mashed potatoes, gravy and a salad. The colonel

said that this was his fifth tour and every tour was served the same food. If you ever return for another tour, take notice if the meal is the same.

After lunch, we attended a lecture in the library facility. The room was very quiet, cool with dimmed lighting and the speaker was knowledgeable and interesting, but after a large lunch a few of us might have rested our eyes for a few minutes. A few of his comments were that if the YPG was the size of the lecture hall that we were in, Rhode Island would be the size of the lectern. General Patton first looked at the area for his troops. He defined the required area as being from Poway, CA (north of San Diego), to Las Vegas and all the land to the Mexican border. He wanted it large enough to fire big guns in all directions without bothering any residential areas. Our allies, British, French, Canadians, etc. also use the site for their testing, but for a fee. It is even used by commercial companies – GM tests their cars there.

The last stop of the tour was the museum. It contained exhibits pertaining to WWII, Vietnam, The Holocaust and 9/11. The exhibits have personal items from people who have been there. On the way home, the bus took us by the “bridge to nowhere”. It is a replica of the Golden Gate Bridge scaled down to cross a small river. The river flooded a few years ago and the highway department decided to rebuild the road in a different path, improving the road, but leaving the bridge with nowhere to go – thus the name, the “Bridge to Nowhere

CASTLE DOME LANDING

Castle Dome is a ghost town in the Castle Dome Mountains of Yuma County in southwestern Arizona; it is also known as Castle Dome City. It was first settled as a transport depot and mining camp in 1863. The Native Americans had engaged in mining in this area years before and had backpacked the ore 18 miles to the processing site. In the early 1860's, there were numerous mining camps along the Colorado River and even some silver and gold was found. In the 1880's the population peaked at over 3,000 people and rivaled Yuma in size, but the full time residents were only 50. The town had its ups and downs until 1978 when all the mines closed and most of the residents left.

In 1994, Allen and Stephanie Armstrong bought the town and mining camp, including the mines. They turned the area into Castle Dome Mines Museum. The Museum site contains 23 restored and recreated buildings. There are seven original buildings of the town and the rest are period representations built mostly from locally scavenged materials. Each building, among them, a saloon or two or three, a hotel, a mill and a blacksmith shop is staged to look like it might have looked in the town's heyday (doubtful), about 100 years ago. Everyone enjoyed walking through the building even though the rain put a damper on the day.

MARTHA'S GARDENS MEDJOOOL DATE FARM

By Betty Wilcox

The Gardens were founded in 1990 by Nels and Martha Rogers. The family cleared the desert land, installed a drip irrigation system and used common and natural fertilizers. Nels planted 300 Medjool date shoots – suckers reaped from the base of a mother date tree. Almost every year since then, he's added hundreds more. Today the family grows about 8,000 trees on 130 acres or up to 65 trees per acre.

The weather is perfect in Yuma, but even with perfect weather it is not easy to farm date palms. Date farming is very labor intense and each process is done by hand. Each female flower is pollinated by pollen gathered from the male palms. After the flowers, when the seeds are formed, the seeds are thinned to allow the growth of larger dates. As the dates mature, they are thinned out again. Cotton bags are placed over the dates to keep off dust, insects and birds. No pesticides are used and each tree is separately irrigated and receives up to 180 gallons of water daily during the hottest months. "The trees live as long as you keep watering them." but, "The only problem is they get too tall to harvest." according to Nels. At the end of the tour was a gift shop, where a variety of dates were available for sale.

A few facts about Medjool dates – They originated in Morocco and were reserved for the Royalty and elite, five dates contained more potassium than one banana and they are called "nature's candy" because of their sweetness.

YUMA QUARTERMASTER DEPOT STATE HISTORICAL PARK

By Jean Grabman & Paul Craig

The Yuma Quartermaster Depot was established by the US Army in 1864 to store and distribute supplies to the frontier army posts in the Southwest. Supplies came to the Depot from San Francisco around the Baja Peninsula and up the Gulf of California to Port Isabel, Sonora and up the Colorado River to Yuma on river steamers. The purpose of the Depot was to ensure that a six month supply of goods such as ammunition, food, and clothing was available at all times. The supplies were shipped to the army posts via river boats and overland on mule team freight wagons. The Depot's stable housed up to 900 mules. A crew of teamsters resided at the Depot to handle the mules.

The soldiers were not allowed to bring their families to Yuma, but the commanding officer was permitted to have his family with him. The commanders' wives wanted to find the "ugliest maids in town" to take to Yuma to prevent the maids from being courted and married, but it didn't work.

The living quarters of the commander is the oldest house in Yuma constructed in 1859 for a private person, but was taken over by the Army. The house has 2 feet thick adobe walls, high ceilings, a central breezeway and a detached kitchen to reduce the heat in the main house. In 1870, the US Army Signal Corps also occupied one portion of the building for operating Yuma's first telegraph line and weather station. With the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad to Yuma in 1877, it signaled the end of the Depot. After the supply depot was terminated by the Army, the Signal Corps remained until 1891. Also at that time the Weather Bureau became a separate agency and civilian employees occupied the quartermaster's office until 1949. The property served many functions until it became a state park in 1997.

YUMA TERRITORIAL PRISON STATE HISTORIC PARK

The first seven inmates entered the prison on July 1, 1876 and were locked into the cells they had built. The prison was Arizona Territory's first prison. It was criticized for being a "country club" because the inmates ate well, received medical care, learned a trade, many even learned to read and write and even had a library. The only punishments were the dark cells for inmates who broke prison regulations and the ball and chain for those who tried to escape. A total of 3,069 prisoners, including 29 women, lived within the walls during the prison's 33 years of operation. By 1907, the prison was severely overcrowded so the convicts constructed a new facility in Florence, AZ. The last prisoner left Yuma on September 15, 1909.

RMCC "Tour of Albuquerque" Rally

American RV Park, Albuquerque, NM

May 15-19, 2014

Mary & Charlie Granone – Hosts & Dan Durham – Co-Host

Albuquerque's warm days and cool nights welcomed 26 RMCC members to the Rio Grande Valley for touring from Madrid in the north to Mountainair in the south. Mary and Charlie Granone, with their side-kick Dan Durham, provided a wide range of outdoor activities, history and vistas for the group to enjoy. Of course food and beverage kept the participants nourished and hydrated.

Arriving Thursday afternoon, Happy Hour got off to a whirlwind start – the tent cover for the group was caught up in a dust devil and tossed to the ground. Moved to a shady spot, the group enjoyed catching up and a few snacks before dinner.

Dinners for the rally were catered at American RV Park in the club house. With plenty of room to meet and eat, the dinners were ample with salads, main course and desserts. We received a nightly report of the activities planned for the next day and status reports on various club members in route or with us in spirit and the up-coming Rally in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho September 4-9, 2014.

Friday found us in Albuquerque's Old Town, enjoying an included lunch at Church Street Café. Walking Old Town and visiting many shops and historic buildings made for a nice afternoon. The Old Town Plaza can be traced back to 1250 AD when Tiwa-speaking Pueblo Indians settled nearby. The Spanish first visited in 1540 and continued efforts to colonize through the 1700's. A villa and church were built and eventually Apache and Comanche raiding made it necessary to build a more defensible center and the Plaza began to take form. The arrival of the railroad one and a half miles from the Plaza in 1880 caused the "New Albuquerque" to spring up. The plaza became "Old Town". Now shops, galleries and restaurants occupy the buildings and homes surrounding the San Felipe de Neri Church.

Live old time country music was provided during dinner on Friday and Sunday. The one-man band with his electronic backup singers, orchestra and steel guitars had everyone tapping their



feet to the rhythm and singing along. A little bit of dancing was observed on the parquet floor in the back! It was nice to listen and enjoy a relaxing private concert.

Madrid, NM is north on the Turquoise Trail. Saturday's activities included a Blues Festival, shopping, food vendors and ice cream for the club members who visited the mining town. Artists, the mining museum, the original tavern and soda fountain compliment the music festivals produced each year.

Sunday the club headed south to the Salinas Pueblo Missions. The drive through Tijeras to Mountainair was pleasant with changing landscape as we ventured from the forested mountains to the pinion trees on the plains. The Salinas Pueblo Missions, a National Monument, is comprised of three missions built in the 1600s in a valley near salt lakes – which is the origination of the “Salinas” valley name.

We visited the Quarai, Gran Quivira and Abo Missions, all of which were within 30 miles of each other. Our first stop at Quarai proved to be very impressive with the tall walls of the church ruins evident. The churches formed the center of the Spaniard's efforts to convert the Pueblo Indians to a new religion. The pueblos were thriving communities when the Spaniards arrived, trading with Plains Indians and others such as the Zuni and Mogollon Pueblos.

The strife between the church and the state, mixed with the Inquisition period creates an interesting history, buildings and changes in the interaction between the Spaniards and the Pueblos. Drought and famine caused the missions to be abandoned in 1672.

The rally was even paced, relaxing and interesting. Most important however, was the fellowship, warm reception of new members and those who had not been seen in quite a while. Renewing friendships and sharing tales is a bonus to all who participate.

Coeur d'Alene Rally September, 2014

Hosts : Jim & Margie Moreland and Ken & Karen Burnett

Quite a few came in early for the rally. Tuesday was an informal happy hour with hamburgers under the trees. The Morelands and Burnetts were chefs for the evening. Because of rain and chill on Wednesday, everyone gathered in the small rally room across the park for happy hour and pizza.

Thursday was registration and a wonderful dinner at the Cedars floating restaurant within walking distance of the park. Huckleberry desserts were definitely the highlights of the evening. Because of the nature of the area and because many have been here before, the rally activities are unstructured and "do it yourself" for the most part. Friday morning after

breakfast many went to the Sand Point area and explored. Sand Point has a small, but very informative museum, restaurants and a winery. Dinner on Friday night was barbecued chicken and ribs with trimmings catered by Red Lion Barbecue in Spokane. The Margarita machine was also busy. Saturday was another explore on your own day. On Saturday morning there was an impressive farmer's market in Hayden. Fresh produce and many other goodies were available to purchase. Saturday night we gathered at the beach for happy hour. A highlight of that gathering was a Skype call during which all had an opportunity to talk with Jack Kelly. Thank you Roger Herr. A fish dinner was served in the rally room. Fish fare included smoked tuna, grilled tuna and black rock fish prepared 3 ways. Sunday, after a brief meeting, we were on our own for the day. Many went exploring the area again and some stayed at the park and got ready to head out on Monday morning.

Sunday night after happy hour and Purple Pumpkin, we boarded a bus and headed across the lake for a boat ride around the lake and a very good dinner on board. Monday morning was continental breakfast and good byes.

Submitted by Sharon Brandt

Alamogordo, New Mexico

Alamogordo, NM is in the Tularosa Basin and has been inhabited for at least 11,000 years. There are signs of previous inhabitants in the area such as the Clovis culture, the Folsom culture, the peoples of the Archaic period and the Formative stage. The Mescalero Apache were already living in the Tularosa Basin when the Spanish came in 1534. The city of Alamogordo was founded in June 1898, when the El Paso and Northeastern Railroad extended the railway to the town. The city was founded as a company town to support the building of the railroad. Initially, its main industry was timbering for railroad ties. Today, there is very little manufacturing in the town and has a primarily service and retail economy, driven by tourism, a large nearby military installation and a concentration of military retirees. It is the nearest city to Holloman Air Force Base. Also, it is known for its connection with the Trinity test, the first explosion of an atomic bomb and for the Atari video game burial of 1983. Places of interest are the New Mexico Museum of Space History, Flickinger Center of Performing Arts, Alamogordo Museum of History, American Armed Forces Museum, The Shroud Exhibit and Museum and Alameda Park Zoo. With the German Air Force training at Holloman AFB, they host Oktoberfest in late September.

NEWSY NEWS

- New Officers:
 - President : Darren Schmaltz
 - Vice-President : Bill Smith
 - Secretary : Sharon Brandt
 - Treasurer : Jim Moreland
 - FMCA Rep : Mark Kapellusch
- There is an excess of money in the treasury. Methods were discussed to reduce this amount. Matter is being investigated.
- To increase RMCC membership, we would open membership to all FMCA members, but there is a possibility that we would have to change our club name.
- Rod Woods is heading a committee to study ways to increase membership and advertise our club.
- Next Rally – Alamogordo, NM - late September – Bill & Terri Smith and Jean Grabman
- Christmas Campout – Second weekend in December
- A wish list was started of locations where we would like to have rallies. If you have any ideas, please contact Darren Schmaltz. Remember, no hosts, no rallies.
- VERY IMPORTANT! When you register online for a rally, make sure you have signed in as a member. If you want to pay by credit card, follow the pay option which will allow you to choose a credit card. If you want to pay by check, register online and send the check to Jim Moreland or just send the check to Jim Moreland and he will register for you when he receives your check. Jim Moreland, 950 Cedar Ave, Rocky Ford, CO 81067. This will give the Treasurer a better knowledge of cash flow.



Rocky Mountain Country Coachers
Organized March 2003

The main purposes of the Rocky Mountain Country Coachers Club are to promote the aims and objectives of FMCA and, through creative activities, to further the fellowship and enjoyment in the Club, to provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas and experiences of motorhoming, and to represent ourselves as good, careful and responsible motorhome owners and operators.

The specific purposes shall be to: Promote and further good fellowship and cooperation among our Club members, promote periodic rallies that will effectively provide for the exchange of information for the common good, and carry on such business activities as deemed necessary on behalf of members at periodic meetings.

Rocky Mountain Country Coachers area includes: Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Montana and Wyoming.

FROM THE EDITOR

Jack Kelly

November 23, 1938 – February 14, 2015

Jack will be greatly missed by all who knew him and there are so many. Not only was he active in RMCC since the conception of RMCC by hosting rallies, starting the Christmas camp-outs, planning trips to Rocky Point, holding office and many other behind the scenes for RMCC, but he was active in the communities of Avondale, Litchfield and Goodyear. If you were with him in the tri-city area, everyone knew him. His charity work with the New Life Center for abused women and children inspired RMCC to adopt the Center as our club's charity. He was brought to tears with the generosity of RMCC's members at our auctions. On October 21, 2014, Jack and Wanda were honored by the New Life Center with a plaque commemorating their service and RMCC's at the entrance to the Center's craft room. Later that day, at lunch with club members, Jack and Wanda were presented with a plaque designating them as honorary life-time RMCC members. We will miss Jack very much and hope Wanda will find comfort in the continuing thoughts and prayers of RMCC members.