



Rocky Mountain Country Coachers

Newsletter

April 2020 edition

Editors comments :

Our practice is to publish a newsletter after each rally. As you know the coronavirus pandemic changed our rally plans significantly cancelling both the Palm Springs and the Grand Canyon Rallies. The RMCC Board wanted to let you know our club is still alive and working hard to develop plans for new rallies as we move forward after the coronavirus is under control. Also we wanted to let you know the election results and changes in some of our committees and activities that were planned on being discussed at the cancelled business meeting.

This is our special edition to update all our members about your club's activities during this unpredictable time period.

Rod Woods

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Creede Rally, 2019

note: use slide bar to enlarge the picture



A message from our past president,
Bill Smith

It was about 16 years ago when it all began. Teri and I had purchased our first Country Coach in Tucson. We were told that one of the “extras” was a one-year membership in a recently formed RV club. It was called Rocky Mountain Country Coachers. That was the year that we completed our official move to Creede, Colorado, so there was some excitement about that name for us. However, we were pretty sure that an RV club relationship was not “our thing”. Not long after we took delivery of the new coach we needed to return it to Tucson for some warranty work and, as it turned out, we “happened” to be in Tucson when this new club was holding a rally. Since we were members already, and since we were there anyway, we decided to register and attend the rally. Well, folks, that decision changed our world, to say the least. The complexities of our lives, like yours, did not allow us to attend every rally but we put a lot of miles on coaches traveling to RMCC rallies.

RMCC has been the catalyst in the creation of MANY friendships with a lot of people over these years and it has been pure joy to be a part of this history as it was being created. As many of you know, Teri has been RMCC’s scrapbook keeper for years, creating a storehouse of memories of the good times had by all. I encourage everyone to take time to look through the collected photographs - it will stir your emotions. I have had the privilege of serving in various roles with RMCC, for which I am forever grateful. However, it is time for me to step aside and welcome new leadership in RMCC.

Yes, I do recognize that this may sound like a farewell message but, hopefully, that is far from the case. Teri and I may have been

hesitant about RV club participation many years ago, but that hesitancy has long-since vanished. There IS something very special - quite unique and invigorating - about RMCC. We now want to be a part of RMCC's future - a future that I truly believe will be very bright as Rick Reiss assumes the role of President. Rick and Debbie have been quiet RMCC treasures for a long time and their newfound "time" in retirement allows them to become even more significant - and well-known - in the life of RMCC. I look forward to that!

I cannot talk about the future without extending words of appreciation to others who have devoted SO much time and energy to RMCC.

Sharon Brandt has served as our Secretary for more years than she may want to admit. Please join me in thanking Sharon and Ron for their never-ending care for us - and for Ron's fish too!!! Sharon will be succeeded as Secretary by Linda Hays and we thank her for stepping up to these new duties.

Rod Woods has done more for RMCC than any of you can ever know and he has my everlasting gratitude for being a counselor who always had all of you in mind.

Gary Hays stepped forward at a critical time in the history of RMCC and he and Linda injected a renewed vitality into an organization that had lost many long-time, aging friends. We are SO Blessed to have them as part of the RMCC family - and that IS what it is - Family!

Mark Kapellusch has served us in ways that most of us never see. His latest "assignment" is to be our money man and I cannot overemphasize the confidence that I have in Mark in this role.

There are SO many more who have made huge contributions to RMCC over the years. That list is too long for this message but I want everyone on that list to know how much they are appreciated, knowing that RMCC thrives because of what you all did for us.

Are there others that I have left out of this list? Of course. Everyone who attends a rally is vital. Everyone who serves on a committee or hosts (or co-hosts) a rally or sets-up and takes-down or supplies "goodies" for our informal gatherings or shares their RMCC experience with candidates for membership or - well, you get the point as the list goes on and on and on.

What is my reason for saying all of this? Much of it is to say Thank You for the joy of it all. More importantly, PLEASE do NOT fail to share in this pure joy by actively participating - offering your services when the "fit" is right. You will be Blessed and RMCC will be even better! See y'all down the road - as soon as the road opens up again.

Bill



Rick Reiss

Newly elected president of
RMCC

“ALL DRESSED UP AND NOWHERE TO GO “

The coach is washed and waxed. Improvements have been made for satellite and over-the-air television reception. The propane tank is full as is the fuel tank. The floors are vacuumed and everything is dusted.

And I’m sitting in the driver’s seat ... in my driveway ... at home!

I like to say “We are all dressed up and nowhere to go.”

In January, I would not have guessed RMCC would cancel our Palm Springs Rally, not have a Business meeting, that we would also cancel our Grand Canyon rally (and the Grand Canyon National Park would be closed as well), that there would be our first on-line election, and that I would be elected President.

Ninety days have brought about a lot of changes at RMCC. First, I would like to thank Past President, William “Bill” Smith for his service to the club. He made a lot of difficult decisions and left me with nothing to do!

Thank you to Sharon Brandt for many years of service as Secretary of the club. Since we did not have the opportunity to get together, she has not been able to hand over the big binder of official minutes and reports to FMCA. Linda Hays will do a great job in her new role as Secretary. And thanks to our Treasurer, Mark Kapellusch, who assumed the position mid-term and agreed to continue for another 2 years. Jim Andrews and Ron Brandt will keep us informed of FMCA issues and member benefits.

I really hated to miss the 2 rallies. Jill Andrews, Marcel Malenfant, Rod Woods and others worked hard to prepare two great rallies. It was the cancellation of these rallies that made me realize that the really important part of our club is just that – Rallies! And more importantly, that Rally Hosts are the heroes of our club.

With that said, I am dedicating my term as president to the Rally Hosts and the Rallies we all enjoy. I believe the Yellowstone Rally will be spectacular. I look forward to the March Business Rally possibly in Las Vegas next year. I hope for a “spontaneous” rally or two just to help us get back together and enjoy each other’s company.

I worked on loading past newsletters to our web site and am currently working on moving the scrapbooks on-line as well. I enjoyed reviewing the many rally locations from the past and confirming that the rallies truly are the focal point of our club. There are many places I would not have visited without the rally hosts planning a meeting in spots like Coos Bay. There were many I wished I had been able to attend, including Pismo Beach with a tour of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. I enjoy the games and party events at our meetings like the “Murder at the Deadwood Saloon” murder mystery. (Boy, we looked good all dressed up in western attire!)

I hope all who attended the Santa Fe Rally that I co-hosted with Jim Moreland enjoyed themselves. As a Rally Host, it is very satisfying to introduce our members to places they may not have been before. Even if they have been there, it is fun to visit a restaurant, museum or majestic mountain view that is off the beaten path. I encourage all of our members to consider being a Rally Host. You will be glad you did.

I look forward to a return to normalcy and trips to places we can visit as a club. I have a lot of faith in our Rally Coordinator, Gary Hays, to identify new “Rally Heroes” and wonderful rally locations.

Rick Reiss

President RMCC



VP of Rallies Gary Hays and new club Secretary, Linda Hays.

Linda Hays, being a business minded and experienced business owner is an excellent choice for Secretary. She is a go-getter and leaves nothing uncompleted. A proud mother of two, grandmother of five and great-grandmother of three, her devotion to family is outstanding. She loves to travel to see places and meet new friends.

Greetings Rocky Mountain Country Coachers

As you are aware, the Palm Springs and Williams rallies have been cancelled. The Yellowstone Rally is still in the works and hopefully will stay that way. A great deal of work has and is being put into these events, so a great shout out of thanks to the Woods, Andrews and Malenfant for their efforts. Rob Brown and his team are continuing to work diligently on the Yellowstone event.

These are unprecedented times and as VP of RMCC rallies, I just wanted to encourage you to stay well and be ready to put your wheels in motion when this crisis subsides. Americans have always demonstrated stamina during times of trouble. I believe this will be no different.

If anything, be spontaneous in your travels. If you can attend a RMCC rally, do so. If not, book your favorite place and invite club friends to join you. You can find a member directory on our new and improved website RMCCoachers.com. Enjoy each other's company, have a few drinks and continue conversing about life.

Many of you responded to our rally survey. Thank you for doing that. I wanted to give you a quick review of the results. Most of the respondents indicated that location was a very important when considering attending a rally and driving more than 800 miles was not a problem. The rest of the results indicate that what we are doing, the cost, activities and food, are the right direction for us. As far as location, most indicated that the southwest is still a good place to have rallies – ALTHOUGH- the sign ups for Yellowstone indicate otherwise. We'll use your responses to help us plan our future rallies.

Next year's rallies are in the planning stage and need board approval. Preliminarily we are considering Las Vegas for our spring business meeting rally. Those who attended our last rally there remember the great time we had. I swear Elvis never gets old!

Branson is being considered for our early summer rally. This will be a first for our club, but I'm sure there will be plenty of activity there as well.

For our fall rally, we are headed back to Albuquerque for the Balloon Fiesta. Two years ago, we gathered at the Hays RV resort and had the whole place to ourselves. Great fun! We will stay in touch with updates.

Just a word about hosting a rally. We keep encouraging anyone who might be interested in hosting to let us know. Hosting is simple and rewarding. We even have all the information you will need to help you organize your project. And do not think that you need to "outdo" the previous rally. We're in for the fellowship and enjoyment of each other's company. Co-hosting with someone else is a great way to get your feet wet.

I pray that everyone stays well and we hope to see you down the road,

Gary Hays

VP Rallies



Coos Bay, Oregon

VP of Communications– Rod Woods

Approximately a year ago, the VP of Communications was set up as a second VP position. The first VP position was responsible for the Clubs rallies. Gary Hays leads this position and is working hard to get our rallies in place for next year.

I was assigned to the new position for the club. It is a support function for most of our club's activities. These activities are membership, communications, and marketing. Each of these are discussed in more detail.

Membership

Membership is a key function for our club. Without members we do not have a club. We now have a membership committee led by **Betty Woods** which focuses on new members, our club directory, membership renewals, and mentoring new members into their first rallies. Helping Betty is **Teri Smith** who is our club photographer and scrapbook manager. **Jill Andrews** assists Betty with her many tasks. This is a fun area to participate in the club and Betty would love to have a couple additional members to assist her. Its a great area to meet all our new members and help them to successfully integrate into our club. Please contact Betty if you would like to volunteer to work in the membership area of the club.

Communications

Communications has two key components that are used in our club. They are our website and our newsletter. Following is an overview about each one.

Website

The website is the heart of our communication capability. In the past it has been used to register for Rallies, provide information to our members, and integrate a directory with information about our members. In the future we plan to add to this capability by providing a path for potential members to have access to parts of our site encouraging them to become a member. These potential members will be guided to our site when they search for rv clubs or other key search words on the internet.

Rob Brown has accepted the position of Web Master. He has an excellent background of working on websites and is now familiar with our new website, Wild Apricot. Please feel free to contact Rob with any questions you may have in regards to our web site.

Newsletter Editor

Our newsletter is another key piece of our communications plans. In the past it has mainly been used to provide lots of details for internal use such as rallies and a presidents message. They will continue in the future. We are also looking at using the newsletter as a key tool in our

marketing plans in the future.

Jill Andrews has accepted the role as Newsletter Editor. Jill has been both an assistant rally host as well as a rally host for our club. She knows how our club operates and is a master of opinions and words to express it. Please feel free to discuss with Jill topics you wish to read about in our newsletter.

Marketing Committee

The marketing committee was started a few years back. Its focus was on how to grow our club's membership. It has been dormant for a few years and is now being re-energized with two specific purposes.

Increasing our membership still remains one of its key objectives. Left unattended, membership will drift backwards in numbers. Today we have a good sized club. It still needs to grow more to remain healthy and have good attendances at our rallies.

New will be finding ways to reduce our cost for our rallies. Our rally host have done a great job in keeping cost down. Still our prices have gone up due to ever increasing demands for a limited number of rv parks and the cost of services to support our rallies. In keeping with our current quality of rallies, our rally hosts have little choice but to increase the rally prices or reduce the quality of our rallies. The committee will be looking at ways our club can bring in additional support from other sources to help fund our rallies. This includes possible sponsors, advertisers in both our website and newsletter, and money raising events we can hold such as auctions.

Jim Andrews has accepted to chair this committee and both **Stan Wright** and **Jeff Helsing** will be committee members.

Lastly I encourage all of our members to participate in the above committees. It is fun, you will meet new friends, and most important your ideas are valued by our members. Please feel free to contact myself if you would like to participate in any of the committees discussed in this article.

Rod Woods, VP of Communications





Vanessa Hays

(shown on the left
side of the picture)

Interview with Vanessa Hays

Years ago, I had a very bad summer with my motor home. It broke down several times (4) during one summer's outing causing me to sell the motor home. We had just implemented Club Express as our web site and I was leaving the club since I no longer owned a RV. Vanessa agreed to become the new web master. She did an outstanding job as web master cleaning up the many problems I left her and enhanced the site to a first-class web site serving our members so well for many years. My personal thanks to Vanessa for doing an outstanding service to RMCCoachers!

I wanted to thank Vanessa publicly for her service to our club. I had her answer some questions in which I planned to abstract some information to share with you. After reading her response I decided to share them as written.

When you see Vanessa be sure and thank her for her endless support of our club. It was key to improving our communications we now have in place today..

Following are the questions I asked and Vanessa's response.

Rod Woods

Rod: Tell us a little about yourself and how you got into RVing.?

Third of four children, I grew up in a small town in Indiana, then after college and a few “side trips”, ended up living in Colorado Springs, Colorado. I’ve been here since 1983. I married the love of my life in 1999. We’ve worked together for nearly 37 years. I’ve always loved camping and travel, in fact, my father and his brother designed and built the first “motorhome” I’d ever seen in the early 70’s. They used a



hearse chassis (a vehicle my brother drove in college!!) Some of my hobbies and other favorite things to do include photography, golf, reading, crocheting and other hand crafts. Duane and I also keep busy with our four grandchildren ages 3 – 13.

Rod: : How long have you been in the RMCC club and been a web site manager?

We were introduced to RMCC in September of 2009 at the Creede, Colorado Rally by my brother, Daren (and Marie) Schmaltz. At the time, to become members of RMCC, one had to own a Country Coach. Since we drive a Holiday Rambler, we tagged along as Daren’s guest to many RMCC rallies. In fact, in September of 2010 when the rally came to Colorado Springs, one of the hosts had to deal with a medical emergency so we helped the Moreland’s. I think at some point, the club decided that since we were always showing up at rallies, the least we could do is start paying dues. Bylaws were changed and



we became the first SOB member (some other brand) in March 2012 at the Ft McDowell Rally. That’s also when I agreed to become the club’s “Official Greeter” or Membership Manager. Rod had to twist my arm, but I found it a great way to get to know all our RMCC members and I personally spoke with and corresponded with all subsequent new members to our club. I continued to serve in this position until Betty Woods took over again in 2017 .

In 2013-2014 when Vern Weldy was President, I agreed to become the website manager. Again, Rod was directly responsible for this! At the time, the Club Express-hosted website was relatively new to our club. In the beginning I remember that part of my responsibilities was helping members learn how to use the site, updating and sometimes creating directory data and uploading photos for everyone. As we all became more seasoned users, it was my goal to use the website to provide members with as much information as possible on the website – from an accurate directory to detailed rally information and on-line signup, to newsletters, photo albums and board / club documents. Lastly, the website became the vehicle to stay in touch. All emails and correspondence originated from the website.

After a couple of years, I was encouraged to change the “look” of our website. I spent quite a lot of time developing a new theme – separate pages set up as “tabs” on the side of the home page, data on the benefits of FMCA (the travel assistance afforded to members), public (versus member only) access to all of our newsletters and photos, and adapted our Rally online sign-ups to accommodate the specific needs of the rally hosts – for example, reservations for days before and after the rally, license plate numbers and rig year and length for another rally.

Rod asked me if there were any major problems that had to be solved. I think, in general, having a vibrant, up – to – date website that serves the needs of the membership, as well as the President, Treasurer, Rally Master, and Communications VP means you have to be willing to adapt and be creative. One thing I don’t recommend doing again is offering free, future membership dues like we did for folks who attended the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta Rally. This was difficult to track, but thankfully, we were able to muddle through.

I served in the capacity of webmaster until this past summer when Rick Reiss kindly agreed to take over.

Rod: Any future plan you would like to share:?

So, what's next? During our tenure with RMCC, in addition to Membership Manager, Web Site Manager and Duane's service on the Nominating Committee and as Assistant FMCA rep, Duane and I have either co-hosted or been involved in 6 Rallies (Colorado Springs, Tucson (2 times) and Yuma (2 times)). We're looking forward to continuing our travel adventures and reconnecting with all our RMCC friends at future rallies.

Wild Apricot Website

As you know our new website is now on the air. Rick Reiss who was our web master, was instrumental in getting it up and running. Our thanks to Rick for his efforts.

Yes, Murphy's law did prevail and demonstrated to us "if it can happen it will happen". Membership renewal and time periods didn't work as we thought they would. These have now been corrected and no major problems are known at this time.

Due to the Coronavirus the website has been a major tool in our communications to our members and our recent board members election. As we move forward our plans are to open it up to assist us in growing our membership to our desired number.

Today our members can find our site by knowing its address, RMCCoachers.com. Soon we want to add to this capability for potential new members to find our site by using key search words. For example, when a user wants to find a rv club, he could type in "RV Clubs" into the web search field and our clubs name and link would be displayed. They could click on the link and go directly to our web site. At the site they will be able to learn about our club and who to contact for further information.

Other areas we will be working on for the website is the capability of allowing our supporters to advertise on the website where it has benefits to our membership.

I am happy to say **Rob Brown** has accepted the position of Web Master replacing Rick Reiss who is now the club President. Rob has a long background in working with websites and will support the website current capabilities as well as the new features required as we move forward. Please feel free to contact Rob with any issues about the website.

Rod Woods

Election Results

New this year is the first time our club has had a electronic ballot for voting for our officers. The need for this was created by the Coronavirus.

Our scheduled business meeting was planned for the Palm Springs rally. It was cancelled so we were exploring the possibilities of having the election at the Grand Canyon Rally, but it was also cancelled.

One of the features our new Wild Apricot website had was the capability of allowing all of our members to vote for our officers. It is a secure system allowing the voters to vote one time only. Once submitted the member can't change their vote just like a standard election. Also it shields the voter identity so no one in the RMCCoachers club can see the identity of who voted. Only the results are displayed to the election controller.

Our results were good having approximately 75% of our members responding with the following people voted into their respective offices:

Rick Reiss- President

Linda Hays- Secretary

Mark Kapellusch- Treasurer

Jim Andrews- FMCA Director

Ron Brandt- Alternate FMCA Director

As we move forward, we now have a very good tool not only for elections, but also for polls helping our board members to solicit information from all our members to assist us in our decision making. Our challenge is to get 100 % of our members to responding to our polls. They are easy to take and a single click sends the information to the proper WA representative. Your name is always anonymous and your inputs are necessary for our decision making. We appreciate your responses to future polls.

Rod Woods