

Ramblin' NoDaks

August 2017



DUES NOTICE

Our 2017 Rally Season is fast coming to an end. Just a reminder that the 2018 Dues are due by December 31st. Please take a minute to do this. If you have a question if you are due now, please contact me.

Thanks!

Pam Meier, Treasurer

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RALLY IN ABERDEEN

SEPTEMBER 7-12

Our last Rally of this season is going to be held in Aberdeen SD with Bill & Becky Somers and Mike & Shirley Sommers as our hosts! You will find all the information you need about this Rally elsewhere in this newsletter. Most of us made our campground reservations quite some time ago and are looking forward to being together one last time before we go our separate ways for the winter.

Please be sure to get your reservations sent in to Shirley Sommers by **AUGUST 31ST.**

This will be an important rally as we will have our election of officers for the coming year. I am still hoping that someone will step up to the plate and take on the job of editor of the Newsletter. I would like to thank President John, FMCA National Director Duane, MAC Representative Gene, Secretary Becky, Treasurer Pam and everyone else who contributed to the Newsletter. I could not have done it without your help!

I am writing this as we are in the Black Hills of SD ...listening to thousands of Harley Davidson cycles roar by constantly! Yes, it's Sturgis Rally time, but we are staying close to the campground and out of the commotion. By the time I get this newsletter ready for publication, we will be on our way to Kansas! But we'll be back in SD in time for the Aberdeen Rally ☺ See you all there!

Margaret



OFFICERS FOR 2016—2017

President	John Meier
Vice-President	Gene Grimm
Secretary	Becky Sommers
Treasurer	Pam Meier
Parliamentarian	Karen Grimm
FMCA National Director	Duane Hellman
FMCA Asst. Director	Larry Gjerstad
MAC Representative	Gene Grimm
Wagon Master	Duane Hellman
Security	Bill Sommers
Chaplains	Jenean Baumann, Alice Gunter, Shirley Sommers
Nominating Committee	John Ringland, Ardell Lynne, Karen Grimm
Web Master	Pam Meier
Newsletter Editor	Margaret Gjerstad

OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

go out to Sharon Sigurdson and family on the recent death of Ron.

And also to Edna Ackerman, who has suffered from a stroke. She is in a swing bed in Hazen for rehab. If you would like to send a card, this is the address:

Edna Ackerman
c/o Dee Madche
301 4th Ave NE
Hazen, ND 58545

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS
AT THE ABERDEEN RALLY**

PRESIDENT JOHN'S WORDS TO US!

Greetings from SW North Dakota,

Due to harvest, we weren't able to make the Bottineau Rally. We've heard that it was a very good rally. Thanks for all those that made it and thanks to our hosts, Wettlaufers and Lynnes. Harvest is a slow process this year. There isn't much to reap and the weather hasn't really cooperated.

Our deepest sympathy to Sharon Sigurdson and family on the loss of Ron. Sharon & Ron are Charter members. We wish them peace and comfort in the coming days.

There will be one more rally this year for the Ramblin' NoDaks. It will be held in Aberdeen on September 7-12 with Sommers and Sommers hosting. More information can be found in this newsletter or on our website.

We will have election of officers at the September Rally. I know that it was supposed to be in August, but three of our five officers were missing and our Nominating Committee was having trouble finding people, so we decided to wait another month. Please step up if you feel you are able. We are looking for Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, National Director and Newsletter Editor.

I received word that the 17th International Area Rally will be held in Tucson, AZ on February 5-9, 2018. Put it on your calendar in case it is something that you are able to attend.

The 98th International Convention is going to be held in Gillette, WY on July 18-21, 2018. It may be a good time to set up a rolling rally if there is enough interest! If you would be in favor of that please let myself or your future President, Gene Grimm, know. Mark your calendars.

Just a reminder to utilize our website:

www.ramblinnodaks.com

There is a wealth of information on there. Just about anything you need to know about our club.

We are still in need of rally hosts for next year. We need hosts and venues for the months of July, August and September.

I think that's it for now. Stay safe and God Bless.

John Meier, President



A LITTLE HUMOR FROM JOHN

Farmer John lived on a quiet rural highway. But, as time went by, the traffic slowly built up at an alarming rate. The traffic was so heavy and so fast that his chickens were being run over at a rate of three to six a day.

So one day Farmer John called the sheriff's office and said, "You've got to do something about all of these people driving so fast and killing all of my chickens"

"What do you want me to do?" asked the sheriff.

"I don't care, just do something about those crazy drivers!" So, the next day he had the county workers go out and erect a sign that said: SLOW-SCHOOL CROSSING.

Three days later Farmer John called the sheriff and said, "You've got to do something about these drivers. The "school crossing" sign seems to make them go even faster"

So again, the sheriff sends out the county workers and they put up a new sign: SLOW—CHILDREN AT PLAY.

That really sped them up. So, Farmer John called and called every day for three weeks. Finally, he asked the sheriff, "Your signs are doing no good. Can I put up my own sign?" The sheriff told him, "Sure thing, put up your own sign." He was going to let Farmer John do just about anything in order to get him to stop calling every day to complain. The sheriff got no more calls from Farmer John. Three weeks later, curiosity got the best of the sheriff and he decided to give Farmer John a call. "How's the problem with those drivers? Did you put up your sign?"

"Oh, I sure did. And not one chicken has been killed since then. I've got to go, I'm very busy." He hung up the phone.

The sheriff was really curious now and he thought to himself, "I'd better go out there and take a look at that sign. It might be something that WE could use to slow down drivers." So, the sheriff drove out to Farmer John's house and his jaw dropped the moment he saw the sign. It was spray-painted on a sheet of wood:

NUDIST COLONY—GO SLOW

AND WATCH OUT FOR THE CHICKS!



Remember to check our website for information and forms. It has been recently updated. If you have forgotten the password, please contact our webmaster, Pam Meier, to receive it.

www.ramblinnodaks.com

BOTTINEAU RALLY

Hi Everyone! Since I announced last month that I was writing my last newsletter report from your National Director, Margaret asked if I would do a report on our rally last week in Bottineau....so here we are!

But first let me say that this was a bit of an exciting time for us as this was our first time this season with the motor home. A couple of days earlier our grandkids came by and helped us load the motor home with everything except the last-minute essentials. What a great help they were. So Wednesday afternoon, after my cardio rehab session (I have them 3 days a week) we are heading out. Now everyone knows how dry it has been in ND, right? Well, we are loading our last few things with our rain jackets on. We go to Gateway Mall lot to hook up our tow vehicle. By the time we finish we were pretty well soaked with this "much-needed stuff", but we need it so we didn't even say "darn"!!! We drove in some pretty heavy steady rain for about the first 80 miles. South of Minot the sun came out and stayed until we were parked and hooked up for the night at the Granville Campground, which is next to my Army buddies house where we are going for "happy hour". When we were ready to leave the coach, it started to pour (1.2") for about 20 minutes, but then it led into a great weekend all the way through Sunday. When we got close to Bismarck on our return trip it started to rain again and by the time we got unhooked, we were pretty-well soaked again. But it is still dry out, they say!!

Thursday we got to Bottineau and were greeted by our host Gordon and co-host Ardell as we drove in. They had a fantastic spot saved for us right next to the main building, with 220 electric even. Thanks, guys.

Gordon & Adeline and Ardell & Vivian did a great job of planning everything for the entire time we were there. Many Thanks for your hard work.

That evening there were car races at the local speedway, which was near by and several of our group attended and said it was a great show.

Friday morning after our first great breakfast we were on our own. The City had Crazy Days, Merchant Side Walk Sales, Food Vendors, Music in the Park, Classic Car Cruise and much more. Dick & Alice drove over by car and some of us had lunch with them. They stayed for awhile at the Camp area and later Judy Boe also came by with a big pan of bars. They were good, Judy! So, we had nice visits with them. Later in the afternoon we were treated to a pretty heavy rain, but that didn't interfere with our ham & bean (with all the trimmings) supper topped off with hot fudge (made by Adeline) sundaes.

Saturday we enjoyed a beautiful sunny day all ay. After breakfast, Gene Grimm hosted an unofficial, "off the cuff" meeting with a contribution from Brian Paquin. After that we all went on a guided tour of "Annie's House" - a huge wonderful facility at the Bottineau Winter Park just a few miles NW of the city. Ann Nelson, whom it was named after, is a native of Stanley, ND, and when she was 30 years old, she died in the Twin Towers 9-11 Disaster. The office she worked in was on the 104th floor of one of the Towers. If you Google "Annie's House" you can get all the details of this facility and how it came to being. It is now an adaptive recreational facility in partnership with the Anne Carlson Center for individuals with disabilities. Our tour guide (I forgot her name) was excellent. She was one of those that you knew right away loved to do what she is doing.

Back in town we were treated to a huge car, tractor, motorcycle, snowmobile, truck display that lined both sides of the main street for more than 2 blocks plus it filled a large vacant lot that Gordon said we could buy from him as he has it for sale! While looking at the displays, we met a couple from our park in Mesa. They are Ken & Cleo Peterson, who have a farm several miles from the city. They were displaying their beautiful red Chev Caprice convertible. Back at the Camp we had a wonderful pot luck supper followed by more visiting and games.

Sunday morning there was more good food, just what a guy like me, on this heart-healthy, no sodium diet, needs. This time we had eggs and sausage with all the trimmings. Following there was a short prayer service without music, as Adeline didn't bring her piano.

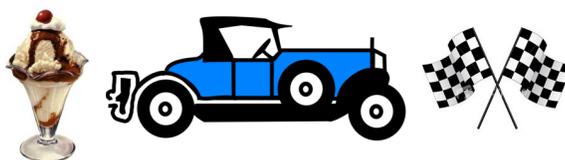
When it was all done, we had ended up with 9 coaches with ND license plates and 7 units with Canadian plates. What a great group of people to be with.

One of our members, (Gordon W) is in possession of that famous trophy with the likeness of a donkey on top (dumb ass award) and he tried his darndest to pass it on all weekend. He even tried to "create" situations, but he failed, so he still has it.

A plug for the upcoming rally with the Canadian Northern Lights Chapter—September 1-4 at Shady Oaks, close to Sidney MB. There will be a Bluegrass Festival and it will be dry camping.

Again I want to say Thank You to our great hosts Gordon, Adeline, Ardell & Vivian for a great rally. We all had a great time and appreciate all you did for us. And also to all that attended, what a great group of people to spend a few days with. Our plans are to attend the Rally in Aberdeen ... hope to see all of you there.

Duane Hellman





Family Motor Coach Association

Enhancing the motorhome lifestyle!

Hello Fellow FMCA Members!

It was such an honor to fill in for Duane Hellman at the 2017 Convention in Indianapolis. Once again, rain set in on parking day and made it a challenge for those volunteers. Rain that we were so envious of! We were thankful with our volunteer choice of helping with the ice cream about that time.

There were two main topics, as Duane reported in the July Newsletter, that needed to be addressed. We have a new National President, as Jon Walker replaces Charlie Adcock. Charlie addressed how this is a bittersweet time for his wife Gloria and himself. He said he served 4 years of living and breathing FMCA 24 hours a day. There were several standing ovations as everyone showed their appreciation for those dedicated 4 years.

Elwood "Jack" Mayberry from AZ was nominated from the floor for the National Senior Vice President. However, he did not come through with enough votes as the tally came in at 185/87. Therefore, Errett A "Rett" Porter III won as Senior Vice President. He proves to come in with very good recommendations.

Next there will be a change in the National Treasurer position. John Reynolds won in a very close race as the tally was 139/135 against Frank Tabor. You can imagine both brought excellent credentials to the table. Gaye Young remains as the National Secretary. So these are the board standings.

In an effort to minimize the Governing Board Meeting length, they held a National Director briefing the day before our meeting. This was meant to give members a chance to voice their opinion with unlimited mic time on the topic of letting towables join FMCA. On Wednesday, at the Governing Board Meeting, you were only allowed to speak twice at a minimum of 2 minutes on the topic. I think this was a very wise choice as it kept the meeting in check. After much discussion on the definition of an RV, how to handle the many kids that this will involve and venues that can hold numerous coaches and towables, we were ready to vote. With 271 present there were 226 yes votes and 45 no votes. Therefore, there will soon be an individual member ballot made available. They stressed that they will do everything they can to make sure everyone will be able to vote. There will be individual ballots printed in the magazine and also made available to each Chapter.

Another topic that was discussed in length was the 2019 Convention locale. A motion was finally made to allow the Executive Board to negotiate for a suitable location in the western portion of the continent. And I believe this is how it will stand.

To end the meeting, Genny Jennings will be awarded the Kenneth T. Scott Pipe Dreams Award. As many of you know, she has been a member since October 1963. Her FMCA number lists as L26. President Jon Walker and Charlie Adcock were going to be hand-delivering this award to her personally.

Jackie and I thank the club for this opportunity to serve the Ramblin NoDaks. If you have any other questions on the meeting, please give us a call.

Submitted by Wayne Bohnet

MAC (Midwest Area Cooperative) RALLY

Wed Aug 9 Great to arrive at Amana after a windy trip from North Dakota. Under windy conditions, our M/H is a hand full to drive and is extra noisy. During the evening opening session, event organizers previewed activities for the up-coming event. A presentation by a representative from the Amana Colonies discussed some history of the colonies as well as information on the current operation. Some of his highlights: The colonies consist of 7 Villages. The original group split off from the German Lutheran Church. Individuals not associated with either the Lutheran or Catholic churches in Germany were discriminated against through higher tax assessment and other negative actions. In order to escape this harassment, the group moved to Hesse, Germany; Buffalo, NY; and finally to Iowa where they found land similar to their former riverside homes in Germany. The 1200 individuals consisted of both rich and poor people. They pooled their money to cover the high travel expenses. To keep the group together in Iowa it was decided to operate as a commune. Seven villages were set up so that each worker would be very close to their assigned duties. Homes were built without kitchen facilities since all meals were served at communal dining facilities. The communes operated with the latest and best equipment available. Commune businesses included: farms, woolen mills, wood fired bakeries, basket & broom making, beer and wine making, appliance manufacturing, meat processing and other businesses. Members were not paid for their service, but did receive meals, clothing, housing and other needs plus an allowance to

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buy purchased items such as oranges, apples, etc. Residents attended church eleven times each week. Elders always sat in the front while the men and ladies sat on opposite sides of the church. The church leaders were residents with a special calling. Church attendees sat quietly and meditated or read scriptures while awaiting the start of services. Communal life required personal sacrifice. As a result, some members left for greener pastures. Many later requested re-admittance to the commune. Some, but not all, were accepted back into the commune. A major restructuring took place after a vote in 1932. The communal lifestyle was replaced by a capitalistic structure. Stocks were issued to members based on years of service and other factors. The stocks could be used to buy homes and other properties. There were no more communal meals, so homes had to be modified to include kitchens. To get by, many purchased hot plates to cook their meals. During WWII, Amana residents volunteered for restricted (only within the US boundaries) military service for the first time. Today all Amana businesses continue to operate on a "for-profit-only" basis.

Thur Aug 10 Karen & I volunteered to work with a Nebraska group in serving breakfast and coffee/donuts on the following two mornings. A presentation on a windshield mounted camera showed how a \$179 camera could produce high definition videos of your trip which could provide useful evidence in potential legal situations. A holding tank maintenance class suggested several ways to keep your tanks and the level gauges functioning properly. For instance, waiting until tanks are at least 3/4 full prior to emptying produces more swirling action and ultimately more complete emptying of the tanks. Another tidbit—solid soap bars tend to reconstitute in the waste tanks leaving build up on tank walls, monitors, etc. Liquid soaps are better.

Total coach count for this rally is **179**. Evening entertainment provided by Barefoot Becky and the Ivanhoe Dutchmen—dynamic and entertaining.

Fri Aug 11 National President, Jon Walker Presentation: FMCA is a non-profit organization (unlike Good Sam). For years, membership had been in a state of decline. This directly translates to reduced revenues to operate FMCA. Previous management were using FMCA savings accounts to continue operation. Four years ago, then new-President Charlie Adcock and Vice-President, Jon Walker, made some difficult decisions to stop the bleeding. Staff numbers were reduced and belt-tightening measures were enacted. Since then, no savings account funds have been spent. A management company was hired to help develop more professional planning. Membership losses were professionally analyzed. How many were first-year members? How many were long-term members? How are we recruiting new members? FMCA was losing 6000 members per year. Our organization is now gaining 1000's of members each year. In 2003 there were 120,000 members. There are currently 173,329 members. The average age of FMCA members currently stands at 72. Lowering that number requires a recruiting effort on the part of all members. A point to remember is that each club contains a wealth of membership talent. A challenge before us will always be to harvest that asset.

National Vice-President Porter presentation:

FMCA Assist is included with every membership! This is our number one benefit. Membership growth is vital to keeping our costs in line with this program. This program will transport people and equipment in numerous ways in the event of debilitating illness or injury or even death. To maximize the effectiveness of this benefit, be prepared! Make sure you have the required phone numbers programmed into your phone and your spouses phone. Make sure that any relatives or friends that might become involved understand the program and how it operates. If you have current medical conditions that others would need to know about, they should be listed and carried with you at all times. If your motorhome has unique properties that someone should understand before they can transport that vehicle, prepare a laminated sheet and post it in an accessible location in the motorhome. Include phone numbers and addresses for all pertinent contacts. The professional driver may refuse to transport any equipment that has safety or reliability issues. Remember that this transportation program applies even if you are not using your motorhome. Other benefits include trip routing and discounts for numerous items. International travel insurance and roadside assistance are programs available at additional cost. Note that the costs associated with these programs are very favorable since we are buying as a very large group.

Spouse of MAC President—Glenda Milner Presentation The FMCA University provides a valuable project tool. For instance, if you are trouble shooting your refrigerator you can pull up and save all related articles that have been published in the FMCA Motor Coaching Magazine. You can even save the articles under your name for future reference. This offers much more efficient use of your time compared to paging through all old magazine issues and cutting out the applicable articles.

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An **important point** from a towing seminar: When using a tow bar, the brake-away cable (brake application cable) **must be shorter** than your safety chains or cables. This will set your brakes in the event of equipment failure. If that cable is not shorter (or if it is attached to the piece that breaks away from the motorhome), major damage to the motorhome and towed vehicle will likely occur before you get stopped. A worse case scenario would be if your towed vehicle escapes and causes injury (or death) to others. It is unlikely that you can win a court battle that involves your negligence!

Sat Aug 12 As a member of FMCA you will soon be asked to vote on whether or not to allow owners of qualified towables to become members of FMCA. Ballots will be printed in the September, October and November issues of the FMCA Motor Coaching Magazine.

National Director Jerry Young Presentation: Some duties of the chapter president are to control meeting distractions and to motivate. The National Director for your local club should understand what is happening within your local club as well as in the FMCA national organization. He must be on the same page as the club president. Procedures for determining substitute National Directors was discussed. National funding is available for local recruiting efforts.

MAC Annual Meeting Current officers are:

President—Gary Milner	Vice-President—Bob Carani
Secretary—Glenda Milner	Treasurer—Myron Dagley

The MAC Reps voted to rescind the \$250 limit on travel expenses for MAC personnel and replace the reimbursement amount to \$0.53/mile for automobile travel or \$1.07/mile for motorhome travel. In addition, motel expense incurred would be reimbursed at face value (except when the motorhome was used as the travel vehicle). Those figures are the equal to those used by the federal tax department. In another area, a committee was appointed to look into adding four additional vice presidents to make visits to local MAC clubs more feasible. Annual expense limits for each VP would be determined. The event planning committee has not come up with a venue for next year's annual MAC Rally that can compete with the Amana facilities (full 50 amp hookups, clean air-conditioned meeting rooms and multiple area touring possibilities for attendees.) Many fair ground facilities being considered would use barns that are just not 100% cleanable nor are they air-conditioned. Odds point to having next year's annual MAC meeting at the Amana Colonies for an unprecedented 3rd consecutive year..

Southwest Surfers: Following some spirited wrap-up speeches, we were treated to a dynamic band out of the Phoenix area. They are a noted Beach Boys tribute band, but also do a dynamic job on numerous other music styles. It was a fitting finale to a very good MAC Rally!

Respectfully submitted, Gene Grimm, Ramblin' NoDaks MAC Rep