

December 2017 Tiffin Travelers Member Newsletter

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Greetings

As we end a busy year, we look forward to an even busier 2018. Please keep an eye on our web site (tiffintravelers.info), particularly the "Rallies and Gatherings" link. We have already placed five (5) chapter rallies on the calendar for you to add as placeholders on your schedule. We've posted the information for you as early as possible, but have not yet nailed all the details you will be interested in. Rest assured, when we know it, it will be updated on the web site. We operate under the mantra, "If we are doing it as a group, or thinking about doing it as a group, it is on the web site. Conversely, if it isn't on the web site.....that's right.....we don't have a group activity in the works". The known chapter rallies are covered later in this newsletter. The April 1 rally is now taking reservations. Please make your reservations early for any posted rally which shows the rates and reservation phone number. We had members miss out on rallies in 2017 because they waited too long to reserve a site, and site allocations had already filled.

To quickly summarize 2017, we had 3 well attended chapter rallies as follows: February at Lazydays Resort in Tampa/Seffner, Florida; June at Whispering Hills Resort in Georgetown, Kentucky; and, October at Hilton Head Island Motorcoach Resort in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Thank you to the respective hosts: Tom and Yours Truly Fonner; Geary and JoAnn Herndon; and, Don and Debra Beck.

We "gathered" for social time at 4 other events as follows: February FMCA SEA in Lakeland, Florida; June Allegro Club in Lewisburg, West Virginia; July FMCA International Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana; and, October FMCA GEAR in Lewisburg, West Virginia. Thank you to Marge Mazzone, Carol Mandik and their respective husbands Ron and Lou for standing-in in my absence to host the social in October at GEAR.

Later in the newsletter, I will list a reminder of a few early-in-the-year 2018 FMCA events which are not chapter rallies. Yours truly will not be available to attend them, but I encourage you to do so if they can be worked into your schedule. I would be there if I weren't going to be on a "slow boat" sailing the entire route around South America (i.e., a cruise ship). However, I will be back to see you at the first chapter rally of the year, April 1st in Florida.

As the holiday season is now upon us, many of us begin moving to our winter digs or for shorter stays with or without family in our favorite holiday spots. Although Treasurer Tom and I are southerners and don't require wintering, we do annually enjoy the Christmas season at an extended stay at Fort Wilderness in Disney World. For this and other reasons, we sent early notice of the chapter's annual dues renewal period. The specifics of

renewing will be mentioned below. Thank you to those who will send their renewal checks this week, before our mail goes into a holding pattern with the USPS.

Tom and I wish all of you good health, a happy holiday season, a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and peace on earth. We hope to see you several times in 2018.

Thanks

Repeated thanks are always in order, so.....

Thank you to Marge and Ron Mazzone; and, Carol and Lou Mandik for co-hosting the "All Tiffin Owners" social at GEAR in October.

Thank you to the Allegro Club of Tiffin Motorhomes, Inc., and their co-presidents Sally and Kelly Moore for the \$200 contribution toward the "All Tiffin Owners" social at GEAR in October.

Thank you to Don and Debra Beck for hosting the chapter rally in October at Hilton Head Island Motorcoach Resort in South Carolina. It was their second time hosting a Tiffin Travelers rally, and they have offered to host again in the future.

And, thank you to those you have already volunteered to host chapter rallies in 2018. Linda and Dave Spindle are working with others on the April 1st rally in Florida. Ann and Nick Paul are hosting a two-part rovin' rally beginning May 20th in Virginia and moving to the outer banks of North Carolina on May 25th. Mary and Ross Halbleib are hosting a September 17th rally in Michigan. And, Yours Truly and sidekick Tom are hosting a St. Augustine, Florida rally for after Thanksgiving-pre Christmas.

Membership and Dues Renewal Period

It is now time for annual renewal of your chapter dues. All members in good standing near the end of 2016 experienced a free 2017. There was no billing process conducted at this time a year ago. Treasurer Tom is back in mode and has issued a billing status email to all members (Either you received notice of being paid for 2018, or you received notice of owing for 2018). Please send your renewal check now, to allow receipt and processing this week before he puts his USPS mail in holiday hold status.

If you misplaced his email bill and remittance instructions, please inquire at tiffintravelers@gmail.com. He will respond promptly. It is important you have the mailing address correct to help avoid the possibility of your remittance going astray in the postal mail.

We are steadily receiving renewal checks (thank you) and have also received a few requests for withdrawal from membership. These withdrawals are expected after a prolonged period of no billing. People have either switched brands; or, no longer own an rv; or, are no longer traveling; or, have decided our chapter isn't a good fit for them.

At the time the billing notices started, our chapter roster was at 189 coaches. Thus far during 2017, we added 29 new members to our roster. It is our hope that our existing and prospective members realize the benefits of membership in our chapter, particularly in light of the full calendar of rally opportunities we have put forth for the coming year. We strive to move our rallies around geographically in the hopes of snagging rally attendees from our widespread membership. (This is where I insert an aside.....If we haven't had a rally close enough for your comfort, why not offer specific park suggestions for a good rally spot closer to you? We are the Tiffin TRAVELERS and variety is the spice of life.)

Just one benefit of our chapter membership is the opportunity for each coach to recoup up to \$10 of a chapter rally fee. That bonus carries no limit on the number of chapter rallies attended. Based upon a 4-rallies-per-year schedule, a member coach could receive up to \$40 credit toward chapter rally fees. No matter how the math is applied, that knocks a more-than-big hole in a once-a-year \$12 dues assessment.

April 2018 Tiffin Travelers rally in Webster, Florida

Registrations are now being accepted for the Tiffin Travelers rally to be held April 1, 2018 at Florida Grande Motorcoach Resort in Webster, Florida. www.floridagrande.com This is a great opportunity for our snowbird members to get their last southern-climate mingle with other chapter members before having to head back north for the thaw. (We know you are not wild about heading north too soon. So don't roam off before you rally one more time in the south!) And, because we have a number of members with permanent-resident status in the southeast, we can have quite a big end-of-season mingle at this resort.

Here is a brief rundown: Call (352) 569-1169 to reserve your site. Be sure to mention "Tiffin Travelers Rally" to get our chapter member reduced site rate of \$37.50 per night. At your option, request early arrival and/or late departure at the preferred rate. After making your reservation, **it is VERY, VERY important that you email the co-hosts** so that they will have your contact information for any rally details they need to share back and forth with you as the rally date approaches. Email your names with arrival and departure dates to both of these addresses: dhspindle@yahoo.com, ccroom@idriverv.com.

There will be four nights of rally activities beginning 4/1/18. **Deadline to reserve a site is March 15.** Reservation information can also be found at the link on our Rallies and Gatherings web page of our web site tiffintravelers.info. Rally hosts are Linda and Dave Spindle, Frances and Clay Croom, Marty and Bob Whitney and other Florida Granders. (The chapter office will be off the internet the two months leading up to the rally, so these hosts and their email will be your rally contact. Make sure they know you are coming!)

I've already made my reservation for six nights and I hope see you there!

May 2018 Tiffin Travelers rally(s) in Williamsburg, VA and Kill Devil Hills, NC

Registrations are now being accepted for the Tiffin Travelers Rovin' Rally to begin May 20th at American Heritage RV Park in Williamsburg, Virginia. www.americanheritagervpark.com On May 25th, the rally moves to OBX Campground in Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina. www.obxcampground.com Ann and Nick Paul will be your hosts for this two-part event.

Each stay will be 5 nights. You can register for one or both stays. These dates are at the beginning of prime tourist season for these areas. We are very fortunate to have these opportunities which approach and overlap the Memorial Day holiday period. Site availability is limited to the first 15 coaches reserving. **Deadline to reserve a site is April 15, but do not hesitate to call long before then.** We expect sites to fill fast. Reservation information can be found at the link on our "Rallies and Gatherings" web page of our web site tiffintravelers.info.

September 2018 Tiffin Travelers rally in Petoskey, Michigan

Registrations are now being accepted for the Tiffin Travelers rally to begin September 17th at Hearthsides Grove in Petoskey, Michigan. www.hearthsidesgrove.com/gallery This resort is among the finest in the country. Former members Mary and Ross Halbleib will be your hosts for this event. And, isn't it outstanding to have friends put forth the effort to host at this fabulous resort, even now that they are no longer members of our chapter! (Another aside.....Membership in our chapter is not a requirement to be a rally host. We truly appreciate our fellow FMCA friends willing to show us a good time.)

There will be five nights of rally activities. **Deadline to reserve a site is August 1.** After this date unsold sites will be released to the public. Reservation information can be found at the link on our "Rallies and Gatherings" web page of our web site tiffintravelers.info.

December 2018 Tiffin Travelers rally in St. Augustine, Florida

Pencil-in December 5, 2018 as the first night of your St. Augustine Nights of Holiday Lights rally. This time of year in the south will begin again the influx of snowbirds and is also high-season for holiday tourism in St. Augustine. Your hosts for this event, Yours Truly and Tom Fonner, have confirmed there will be a rally. We are working out the

details with the resort management. When the fine points are nailed, we will post reservation information on our tiffintravelers.info web site. Stayed tuned to the "Rallies and Gatherings" link, and we will also issue an email to the full membership when you can begin calling for site reservations.

Chapter VP Tom Gulya Shares His Thoughts

Once again, our chapter VP Tom Gulya was invited to share his thoughts with you:

First of all Carol and I want to wish you all the Happiest of Holidays. We certainly have a lot to be thankful for. After all, we do own Tiffins and we do belong to the best FMCA Chapter... "Tiffin Travelers".

This year we have had some terrific rallies. We were able to have a good time, make new friends and renew many friendships. We had lunch on the Starship Yacht as we sailed Tampa Bay; Paired Wines at Keel and Curley Winery; sipped Bourbon along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail; biked on Coligny Beach; and, chased the Sunset on the Salty Dog cruising in the Calibogue Sound. A special "Thanks" to the hosts who volunteered to organize these great events.

If you missed these, you missed the best part of being a Tiffin Traveler. You can have another chance as we already have some great hosts stepping up for more motor home comradery in 2018.

Just a reminder that a couple of great FMCA rallies are coming up, which give us a chance to have some of those great happy hours we are famous for. SEA will be at Lakeland FL in February and FMCA's Convention will be at Perry GA in March. Be sure to volunteer at these rallies. Volunteering is the heart of being a FMCA member.

Tom

The Vote is in Regarding "Allowing 'Towables' Into FMCA Membership"

On 12/1, FMCA issued the email which is copied and pasted below for your reading:

The Vote Is In

Results are in for the recent membership vote. Members have voted to welcome owners of self-contained RVs:

Total votes: 9,801

In favor: 6,820

Opposed: 2,981

Per FMCA's governing documents, the paperwork is being filed to make the vote official. Until the paperwork is finalized, we cannot accept membership applications from owners of self-contained RVs. So feel free to tell the news to your friends who own travel trailers and fifth wheels, but please let them know we are working on the details! We will tell you as soon as we are ready.

In the meantime, we have gathered a list of questions you may have:

Read FAQs at <https://www.fmca.com/membershipvote> (note: you may be required to first sign-in to the FMCA web site as a member)

I want to reassure everyone, regardless of how you voted, that the things you know and love about FMCA aren't going to change! This is a chance for our RVing family to grow.

Jon Walker, F268778

FMCA National President

During the October Hilton Head rally, I collected ballots from members and forwarded them to the accountant handling the tabulation process for FMCA. In the packet were votes in favor and also votes opposed. Thank you to all who submitted a vote at the rally and to all others who voted from home.

The total of votes received and tabulated by the accountant (9,801) represents approximately 14% of FMCA's membership. Still a sad reflection of participation and interest, but more than TEN (10) times the responses received on a related vote at this time last year.

One question often asked of me is answered in the FAQ's at the link inserted above. As stated in previous newsletters to you, the passing of the vote means "towables" will be allowed into FMCA membership. It does not mean that towables must be allowed into all FMCA chapters. Chapters will retain their right to limit their membership by specifying unique, but not discriminatory, attributes such as is done by our chapter and many others. Our chapter bylaws limit full membership to Tiffin motorcoach owners only.

Post-Event Comments about the October rally in Hilton Head Island, SC

Hilton Head Island Motorcoach resort was the lush setting for our October 11th chapter rally hosted by members Don and Debra Beck. Thirty-one (31) of our shiny member coaches and 1 non-member coach attended this event. The resort's social/hospitality club did a fantastic job of providing an arrival day dinner; a continental breakfast; a full breakfast including scrambled eggs, meats and waffles; and, a final night array-of-delights dinner which included chicken, pork and fish.

Attendees as a group enjoyed a beautiful sunset cruise on the Sound onboard the Salty Dog while enjoying live music and optional libations. The group also enjoyed a private tour of the Honey Horn Coastal Museum and grounds. As individuals, many biked the beaches and paved trails; dipped their toes in the ocean; visited the harbor and lighthouse; shopped; dined out; played court sports at the resort; relaxed and refreshed at the resort pool; and, lazed at their coaches. The weather was great for all activities!

Thank you to Don and Debra, who have offered to host us again at Hilton Head.

In keeping with the chapter's standing rule to donate \$100 to a charity in the area of a rally, Hospice Care of the Lowcountry was selected.

Post-Event Comments about the October Gathering at GEAR in Lewisburg, WV

Chapter Secretary, Carol Mandik, and chapter National Director, Marge Mazzone, were at GEAR with their hubbies to do a super job of representing the chapter. Marge was once again coordinating all the seminar monitors. Carol sat in for yours truly at the first annual GEAR Presidents' breakfast and the first annual GEAR Presidents' Roundtable Discussion. I am very thankful for Marge and Carol stepping-in to also cover me in hosting an "All Tiffin Owners Social". The social was attended by more than 100 people, including the FMCA national officers and two area vice presidents. Cost of food provided at the social was covered by our chapter and a donation from Tiffin's Allegro Club. Five new members were added to our chapter roster.

The below long link will take you to the November FMCA Eastern Area newsletter recently posted at their web site. Or you can stroll there by first going to easternarea.net and looking for the "News Center" link.

http://s3.amazonaws.com/emma-assets/9xybb/417f98a79ea5cda4779236fec38dd745/Eastern_Area_Newsletter.pdf

FMCA Eastern Area Information (a repeat of some information previously published)

Although our chapter was formed/chartered in the Eastern Area of FMCA, we operate under the premise that we are not bounded by geography. Our membership is spread throughout North America (which includes members in

Canada). We will gather and rally wherever and whenever our members care to convene. That being said, we should know a bit more about the Eastern Area of FMCA.

Bill Mallory is the Eastern Area president, email address bmallory@fmca.com. The Eastern Area web site is: easternarea.net. The Area leadership publishes a newsletter several times a year. They are engaged in efforts to get those newsletters regularly posted to their web site, as we do with ours, so that they are available on demand for anyone to read. The majority of any topics of widespread interest touched upon in their newsletters over the past two years have been also covered in our chapter's newsletters.

The Eastern Area encompasses D.C. and nine (9) states: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Kentucky. The Eastern Area annual rally, a/k/a GEAR, is usually held in late September or early October. This year's GEAR was held in Lewisburg, West Virginia. GEAR 2018 will be in York, PA on October 3rd.

New (and old) FMCA Benefits

As FMCA benefits go, much focus is given to the "FMCAassist" medical emergency and travel assistance program. But numerous other benefit goodies are available to FMCA members and can be found in the monthly "Family Motor Coaching" magazine and at the "Benefits" link on the fmca.com web site. Two new benefits pertain to internet access: FMCA Tech Connect+, provided by Sprint; and, Verizon 4G MIFI. Take a read of ALL the benefits offered by FMCA membership and maximize your money-saving potential.

Future Events (East of the Mississippi)

- February 7, 2018 is the first official night of the FMCA Southeastern Area Rally (SEA) in Lakeland, FL. Information and registration is available at fmca.com. There are not yet any activities planned for our chapter, but usually dozens of our member coaches are in attendance at SEA.
- March 15, 2018 is the first official night of the FMCA 97th International Convention to be held in Perry, GA. Information and registration is available at fmca.com. There are not yet any activities planned for our chapter, but usually dozens of our member coaches are in attendance at Perry.
- April 1, 2018 is the first official night of our **chapter's rally** at Florida Grande Motorcoach Resort in Webster, FL. Information is on our web site.
- May 20, 2018 is the first official night of our **chapter's two-part rally** to begin at American Heritage RV Park in Williamsburg, VA. Information is on our web site as the "Coastal Historic Rovin'" rally.
- May 25, 2018 is the beginning of part two of the aforementioned **chapter rally**. Members will convene at OBX Campground in Kill Devil Hills, SC. Information is on our web site as the "Coastal Historic Rovin'" rally.
- June 6 is the first official night of FMCA Great Lakes Area Rally (GLAMA) to be held in Allegan, MI. It will be a while before FMCA opens registration for this event.
- September 17, 2018 is the first official night of our **chapter's rally** at Hearthside Grove Motorcoach Resort in Petoskey, MI. Information is on our web site.
- October 3, 2018 is the first official night of FMCA GEAR to be held in York, PA. It will be a while before FMCA opens registration for this event.
- December 5, 2018 is the first official night of our **chapter's end-of-year and holiday rally** to be held in St. Augustine, FL. Additional location and registration information will be posted on our site when it is available.

Closing Remarks

Boy howdy can I type! There is indeed repetition above, but repetition is all too often necessary to drive a point home. But, 'nuff said for now.

As always, remember to periodically visit our tiffintravelers.info web site for possible updates regarding upcoming "Rallies and Gatherings". In red font at the top of each event page is a notation of the date the page was last

updated. For those less motivated to surf the site's pages, we are updating the lower center of the Home page with the same "last updated" information for each subpage of the web site.

You know the drill.....I type. You read. PLEASE.

If you have questions about events on the calendar, please contact the point person for that particular event as indicated on the web site. If no point person is listed, you can email tiffintravelers@gmail.com for assistance.

Merry Christmas. Happy New Year. Stay safe and well. We hope to see many of you April 1st at Florida Grande.

See you down the road!
Frances Fonner, President
Tiffin Travelers