



Roadrunner News

November 2011



President: Mike Lynch

Secretary: Judi Lasater

Vice-President: Gene Lasater

Treasurer: Lorraine Lynch

Editor: MaryAnne Balzer

National Rally Rep: Rick Short

Travel Thought for Today

Travel and change of place impart new vigor to the mind.

–Seneca (1st century A.D.)

President's Corner

Lorraine and I are just leaving the October "No Frills, Just Fun" Campout held at Emerald Cove Resort in Earp, CA where we joined 16 other rigs for a WONDERFUL outing! While it was advertised as a no frills outing, wagon masters, Joe Hughes and Val Nelson, put together a fun-filled, action-packed 5 day event! They also recruited a new Alfa member, who was staying in the park! A BIG "Thank You" for your efforts!

The next big event is our annual Quartzsite Campout January 21 - 29, 2012 to be hosted by co-wagon masters, Avery & Deena Gentle and Karla Noble. (See the attached information flyer)

By now you should have received e-mails regarding the Annual Rally being held at Canyon Vista RV Resort in Gold Canyon, AZ from April 12 - 17, 2012. The Pre-Rally will be held in the same park from April 8 - 11. Larry and Shirley York, from the South Loafers, have volunteered to be wagon masters for the event. They have assigned a variety of tasks to the other chapters. We need volunteers to assist in our tasks which include: the Pet Parade, Golf Cart Drivers to pick up participants requiring assistance, recruiting vendors and seminar presenters and helping with the golf tournament.

Through our travels this summer, we encountered many Alfa rigs, and took every opportunity to introduce them to our chapter and what it has to offer them. Some were very receptive, some not, but the effort was made. There is a handout on our web site that we have printed up and have ready to give to a prospective member. We encourage each of you to do the same. It is always fun meeting new people.

As we reflect on the outing we just attended, we are reminded of how important these events have become to us. We hope we can continue to have a variety of rallies/campouts in the years to come. To make this happen, we need YOUR help by stepping up to be wagon masters or assisting at the outings.

With the holidays fast approaching, we want to take this time to wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year! We also wish you safe travels and look forward to seeing you on the road!

Mike

Vice-President's Corner

Time flies and it's not too early to start thinking about the Quartzsite rally. We had a great turnout last year with absolutely perfect weather. It was the first time Judi and I tried extended dry camping but with the help of all the "veteran dry campers" we soon got the hang of it and had a great time. Plan to come this year and experience an unforgettable time. It's really something special!!

As I travel around I keep running into two groups of ALFA owners that concern me. First, there are those that aren't associated with any ALFA organization. As time goes on we will dwindle in numbers. Keeping our organization going will depend upon recruitment of new members. The second group is the inactive Roadrunners. "It's been a long time since I attended a rally" or "I've never been to a rally" folks. We need to encourage them to join us in one of our outings. We're fun people and I know if we can get them out to one of our functions they'll want to attend more. Download some of the forms from the web site and have them available to give to those poor unfortunates that haven't had the pleasure of the fun at one of our rallies.

Judi and I send everyone our best as we approach the holiday season. We look forward to seeing you at one or all of the upcoming rallies. Safe travels.

Gene

Rally Report

(Editor's Note—A special thanks to Jean Bass for the following report on the Fall No-Frills Rally. Sounds like it was great fun all around!)

Most of the 16 Alfas attending battled the strong desert winds as they rolled into Emerald Cove Resort in Earp, CA for the Fall No-Frills Rally on October 26, 2011. Everyone recovered from the ordeal by sharing their travel adventures at Happy Hour in the Clubhouse that evening. It was the beginning of an eventful week.

Each day thereafter brought wonderful weather and provided many opportunities for members to get acquainted with other Alfa Roadrunners, rekindle friendships, share stories, jokes, and laughter, and of course FOOD. Coffee and Donuts were served each morning to gear everyone up for the day's activities.

On the first day, eight golfers enjoyed a six hour round of golf at Emerald Cove Golf Course. After Happy Hour, everyone met at the Blue Water Resort and Casino for a Free Buffet Dinner and \$10.00 worth of free play in the machines. Some were lucky enough to leave with money in their pocket.

The next day, there was a Tag-Along trip on the Parker Dam Byway to the Dam and Buckskin State Park. Everyone then gathered together at Bobby D's Diner for a wonderful lunch.

On Saturday there was another Tag-Along to the Desert Bar which is situated about 5 miles on a primitive road in the Buckskin Mountains on land that was an old mining camp. Everyone gathered together on an upper level deck for lunch. It was a unique experience for all. You can read all about it at <http://thedesertbar.com>.

Saturday evening, after Happy Hour, the group moved over to the Clubhouse for a Halloween Dinner prepared by the resort staff. It was a great way to end another wonderful day.

The rally ended with a two hour Pontoon Trip up the scenic Colorado River to Parker Dam and back. It was a great Sunday afternoon activity. Afterwards everyone donned their red Alfa shirts and met for the last Happy Hour, then on to the Sheriff's Dinner at the Clubhouse. Sheriff Wendy Ferguson collected the fines for infractions during the week.

A business meeting was conducted by our President Mike Lynch. During the meeting, Don and Patty Rowe donated \$200 to the treasury for the betterment of the club. Everyone thanked them for their generosity.

Joe and Val Hughes were great Wagon Masters. They worked hard before everyone arrived, planning the many activities for the week. Because of their good planning the rally was a big success. And I'm sure they appreciated Mike and Lorraine Lynch's help as Assistant Wagon Masters.

At one of the Happy Hours, Joe presented all the women with a beautiful red rose just because.....At another Happy Hour David and Carol Welling celebrated their 44th Wedding Anniversary. They requested that everyone share how they had met and how long they had been married. It was amazing at how many had been married more than 50 years. And it was interesting to take a peek into everyone's lives. The group helped George Hall celebrate his birthday at another Happy Hour. And new members were welcomed to the club.

President Mike Lynch reminded everyone of the Quartzsite Campout in January and the National Rally in April. After saying their goodbyes on Monday morning (Oct. 31) everyone moved on to another adventure down the road.

Jean

Member's Matter

Say hello to Wayne and Jean Dunn in your travels. They hail from the San Francisco Bay area and have been fulltimers since July 2005. The Dunn's purchased a 2005 Alfa and took delivery right off the production line. And they have hardly looked back since.

The Dunn's spend Novembers to April in the Yuma Arizona area. And they travel to Denver Colorado for periods of time visiting a son in the Littleton area. When last

we spoke they had a goal of finding a summer residence in that area to be close to their son. Otherwise they enjoy traveling around to new places that interest them. They especially wanted to pass on a few important points of information to fellow U.S. Alfa travelers to Canada.

Jean experienced a costly surprise with a health emergency in Canada. She discovered straight Medicare would not pay the hospital bill. Jean reports that unless a traveler is on a path to Alaska, they must have some type of supplemental insurance to have medical coverage in Canada. She suggests checking with your Medicare supplement carrier regarding travelers insurance; or FMCA (Family Motor Coach Association) for their traveler's insurance program. That program charges a small daily fee. Other than the insurance snafu, the Dunn's report Jean received excellent care in the Canadian hospital. They were in fact very impressed with care and service. "They bent over backward", Jean said, to be helpful.

The second recommendation from the Dunn's is to be sure to check your credit card regarding international exchange rates. They suggest maybe having a special card for international travel.

Another recommendation is to be sure to contact your cell phone carrier prior to your trip to Canada. International calling fees can be extremely high. The Dunn's suggest you discuss a short term international plan with your carrier as a less expensive option. However, they were happy to report their On Star service functioned seamlessly; and they were actually able to use it for some communications to the U.S.

The Dunn's have been back on the road after the Canadian adventure in 2010. Let's hope to see them again soon! And thanks so much for the 'heads up' travelers' information!

Future Events

Date	Event	Location	Hosts
Jan 21 - 29, 2012	Quartzsite	BLM LaPosa North Quartzsite AZ	Deena & Avery Gentle; & Karla & Terry Noble
April 8 - 11, 2012	Roadrunner Pre-Rally	Canyon Vista RV Resort, Gold Canyon AZ	Mike & Lorraine Lynch; & Gene & Judi Lasater
April 12 - 17, 2012	Alfa Annual Rally	Canyon Vista RV Resort, Gold Canyon, AZ	Larry & Shirley York (Sun Loafers)
Dates?	Next Rally	???	Your Name Here

Chef on Wheels

(Editor's Note—Thanks to Judi Lasater for this flavor-filled holiday recipe!)

HOT BUTTERED RUM

1 lb. butter

1 lb. brown sugar

Blend

1 lb. powdered sugar

1 tbs. cinnamon

1 tbs. nutmeg

Mix with butter and brown sugar

Add 1 qt. of Vanilla Ice Cream

Put in a container and freeze. Don't worry if a little lumpy.

For Hot Buttered Rum put one tbs. of batter and 1 jigger of rum in a cup of hot water or milk. If you prefer without the rum, the batter and hot milk are delicious.

Tech Tip

(Editor's Note—Thanks to Gene for sharing his information in this thorough article.)

OK, I'll admit I'm not the world's greatest mechanic but here's one that I haven't heard at any of the rallies. My engine was starting to overheat so I pulled into a respectable RV repair shop where after analysis it was determined that new thermostats were required. In talking with the mechanics they recommended replacement of our thermostats every two years. This applies to both Cat and Cummins engines.

(ed note: And now for Gene's remodeling job, installing a household refrigerator)

During a recent visit to Dick Albritten's we felt our refrigerator, which was having trouble cooling and had both doors fall off, had reached its end. Dick had converted to an electric unit. After some discussion we decided to also go ahead and install a new household refrigerator.

Finding the refrigerator was no problem. Dick suggested the 21.7 cubic foot side by side Whirlpool (Mdl ED2VHEXVB01) which Lowe's stocks, as one he knew of that fits with minimum alteration. Price \$999.00.

Installation started by removing the slide window over the dining area. This particular refrigerator fits so closely into the old refrigerator compartment that everything including the electrical outlets must be removed from the compartment walls. Of course, the propane lines must be capped off and not wanting to mess with the breaker box, the shelf over the old refrigerator has to be removed.

Once the area had been prepared Dick brought in a fork lift and took the old unit out through the window, loaded the new unit on the forklift and "very carefully" slid it into the motorhome. The Whirlpool is heavy and getting it in by manhandling will be quite a job.

As I said the refrigerator fits very nicely into the space. There will be approximately a 5" gap at the top that will need to be finished off. Placing the refrigerator as far back in the compartment as possible leaves the unit extending out into the passageway approximately 7" (including handles.) Coaches with the walk-through bathroom have a slightly wider hallway than the enclosed bathroom models so the unit doesn't restrict the "walk thru" hallway as much.

Some of the newer coaches may have two electrical outlets in the refrigerator compartment. One of these provides 120V only when the coach is plugged in; the other is 120V off the inverter. The inverter plug is the one you want to use. For the sake of brevity I have kept this simple, I'm sure if Dick reads this he'll say "Yeah, I wish it was that simple."

As anything we do with our coaches there are always pros and cons. Certainly the extension into the hallway needs to be considered. Another thing which is not immediately evident is that the refrigerator door will not fully open when the big slide is in. It opens wide enough to allow you to reach in and get drinks and anything located on the front of the shelves. Also, sitting on top of the breaker panels makes the upper shelves hard to reach for shorter people without using a step stool. Conversely the ice and water dispenser in the door is really nice. The automatic defrosting feature is definitely a plus as is the fact that the freezer freezes ice cream to a solid brick. The ice dispenser is large and dumps ice about every 50 minutes (take your choice crushed or cubed.) The biggest plus we feel is the elimination of a serious fire hazard that the old unit posed.

Battery capability to support the unit may to be a concern to those who do a lot of dry camping. Dick, who does not have solar panels, recently got back from a trip to Alaska where the majority of time they dry camped. He didn't address solar panels but said he bought a 2K Honda generator; pig tailed his motorhome 50 amp cord down and was able to keep his batteries sufficiently charged to support the coach.

Editor's Corner

We had quite a bit of information to share in this edition of the newsletter! My thanks to our contributors. A special thank you to the several members who have volunteered to help with the newsletter. A rally report provided by Jean Bass is in this issue. The extra hands should provide us good coverage for future editions.

Remember the Quartzsite Rally upcoming in January. At the end of the newsletter is the information for sign up.

As Mike and Gene so well discussed, membership is the responsibility of all of us. We should all reach out and connect with our fellow Alfa owners as we travel on down the road. There are great new members out there just waiting for our 'howdy'.

Have a wonderful holiday season everyone. Wishing you all peace and joy; and to all a good night!

MaryAnne