



Roadrunner News

February/March 2012



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 is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness.—*Mark Twain*

President's Corner

Lorraine and I are taking it easy in Mesa, Arizona after attending the Alfa SeeYa Pre-Rally and the FMCA Rally in Indio, followed by the Roadrunner annual event at Quartzsite. As you can see, we really enjoy getting together with our fellow Alfa owners. Karla and Terry Noble assisted by Mike and Linda Rees did a great job as Quartzsite Wagon Masters. We had approximately 30 rigs and everyone had a good time with the wonderful food the Noble's coordinated, shopping for all those things we cannot live without, and the camaraderie shared around the campground.

April 8th starts the Roadrunner Pre-Rally to the Alfa Annual Rally at Canyon Vistas RV Resort in Gold Canyon, Arizona. We have a great line up of presenters for the event including: Alfateers representatives, Mac "the fire guy", Vonis Spencer and Ed Burrows (both experts on Alfa systems), Kirk Ault (Service Manager for Freightliner in Tolleson, AZ) and a class on Microwave/Convection cooking. The campground is beautiful and located in a great area. We will have lots of fun things to do for both the Pre-Rally and the Annual Event.

As much as we enjoy these events, things are changing. Larry York, from the South Loafers club, is the Wagon Master for this annual rally. Also, this year the Annual Rally workload is divided up among several chapters instead of just the host club. The questions the Alfa Oversight Committee is struggling with are: how to manage future Annual Rallies, who will be Wagon Masters, will anyone volunteer, or in fact will there even be an Annual Rally?

These problems are similar to the ones we Roadrunners face. Organized rallies do not occur without volunteer Wagon-Masters, and the club cannot continue without volunteers willing to serve as Officers. Our thanks to Sharon and Sven Novion who volunteered to be Wagon-Masters for the Quartzsite Rally next year. However, we are still looking for Assistant Wagon Masters for this rally.

In addition, we would also like someone to Host a rally in the fall like our "No Frills" Rally in October 2011. This is an especially easygoing loosely formed rally. Please let me know if you would like to host this casual event.

As I have mentioned before, the last slate of Officers served for four years. Convinced this was too long, the Bylaws were changed. A new team should be elected every year to serve as Vice-President and Secretary or Treasurer. The Vice-President will then move up to President. I was elected as President, and Lorraine as Treasurer, for one year to get this started. Gene Lasater was elected as Vice-President and Judi Lasater was elected Secretary.

Unfortunately, Gene's health continues to be an issue forcing them to resign from their positions. If the membership agrees, Lorraine and I will continue in our positions for ONE more year. The problem is we are going to be on the east coast for about nine months starting this April. At the Annual Rally, we need to elect a new Vice-President and a new Secretary.

Bottom line, we need volunteers to fill these positions and keep the organization alive. If everyone contributes a little, we can have a strong organization with several fun gatherings throughout the year. On that note, we would like to thank Don Rowe for volunteering to handle the inventory while we are back east so there will be shirts etc. available at the rallies.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual Rally. If you have not signed up and want to go, please contact us and we will try to get you a spot.

Travel Safe.

Mike

Vice-President's Corner

There is no VP report this issue. Please keep Gene Lasater in your prayers for a speedy recovery. –Mike

Rally Report

The Quartzsite rally in January was a great success! Thanks Wagon Masters Terry and Karla Noble for your terrific work in supporting our roaring good time. And special thanks to Mike and Linda Rees for stepping into the Co-Wagon Master roll at the last minute. That was terrific volunteerism.

As is usual with the Quartzsite rally, Roadrunners began arriving early and numbers of us remained for some period after the rally. Weather was pretty good this year. Not too cold and no gully washers. Just the usual few windy dusty days.

And speaking of wind, it blew in over two dozen coaches for the start of the rally on Saturday January 21. The Wagon Master's dinner in fact was postponed due to the windy conditions. But it certainly did not affect the fun we all had the following

evening when the popular Hobo Stew was assembled. It was quite tasty and with fixins' and then brownies for dessert, it was a great feed.

Also on Sunday, about 20 members coordinated a trip to the well-known Nellie E Saloon, aka the Desert Bar, located in the Buckskin Mountains five miles off the Cienega Springs Road exit on Hwy 95. That puts it about five miles north of the town of Parker. It is an old mining camp and open only on weekends (and not at all in summer) from high noon to sunset. The road is older and on the rough side, so drive with care if you go. The bar has both indoor and outdoor spaces. According to Roadrunner Fran Kurz prices are reasonable. Food is your basic hot dogs and burgers. Great country music plays for entertainment. Quite a fun experience to see the eclectic use of recycled material too. Certainly a fun side trip!

On Monday just at the end of Heavy Hors d'oeuvres night, the rains opened up and sent members scrambling for cover. It did not last long though thank goodness. And the fun returned. Then Tuesday we had fun with Breakfast in the Bag and any number of ingredients and condiments added to the eggs. Cooking eggs that way sure creates a soft tasty 'omelet' everyone agreed. That afternoon, Mac the Fire Guy presented a fire safety talk to the members. Be sure to see what he had to say under Tech Talk.

Each morning of the rally we were provided with coffee, tea and hot cocoa to enjoy along with those great Quartzsite made daily donuts. They sure taste good on those cold mornings around the stovepipe fire. During the evenings, Treasurer Lorraine kept the camp store open for purchases of Alfa insignia items and our red shirts.

Wednesday President Mike conducted our business meeting. Please see the Roadrunner website for minutes of the meeting.

Inviting all Military Veterans, Christian Eck conducted an informational meeting on S.M.A.R.T. Short for Special Military Active—Retired Travel. This is a social organization for veterans who are RVers. The group is nationwide and have active chapters in all states. They hold "musters" and have a newsletter. Caravans are also available. If any veteran or spouse is interested you may look up the web site at www.smartrving.org. Christian's email address is smart10236@gmail.com and cell phone 501-626-4237. He was National President in 2010 - 2011 so certainly a good contact if you are interested in the organization.

Dan Sheppard an instructor with the RV Driving School presented a seminar on driving tips on Thursday. He and wife Jenny own a 2004 SeeYa, so he knows about our driving and handling issues first hand. And they are Roadrunner members.

A few of Dan's many tips included: prior to each driving day we do an inside and outside inspection (make sure those bin doors are latched). He also advises when the key is turned to start the ignition, set the control on fast idle using cruise control for quicker warming in cold weather (not to exceed 10 minutes per the Cat manual). Dan also informed the group on inspecting the tires for wear and learning how to read the manufacture date. Look for four digits. The first two are the week of the year the tires were made and the second two are the year. And change out your tires at the five to six year age regardless of miles. Dan also offered numerous tips on turning skills, lane changing and freeway entrance as well.

Dan offers driving classes for singles and couples. He is located in Yuma during winter months. Dan can be reached email at Sheppard4@hughes.net or by phone at 206-399-2333. The school web address is www.rvschool.com.

Following Dan on Thursday was the always-popular Tech Talk, sharing information and advice among members. That evening was the Weenie Roast with fixins' and loads of fun around the campfire.

Friday morning the Pancake Breakfast again brought us all out of our coaches early and hungry. Nothing like hot cakes off the grill in the desert! Yum. Thanks to Bud Serpa and Sven Novion for their flapjack flipping skills. Your efforts were greatly appreciated and enjoyed guys!

Sheriffs Dinner was a fabulous potluck event on Saturday. Everyone brought their quarters to pay up for "transgressions" real or imagined by the Sheriff. This year's well-kept secret Sheriff was Bud Serpa. Bud caught some of us and the rest caved in and confessed with volunteered quarters. Again this year, the collection was donated to the charity Sew Much Comfort. The organization sews clothing items for accommodating injuries and amputations in military personnel.

Sunday was a day of farewells until next year. Memories and friends made to last. A great event and already looking forward to January 2013!! Thanks to the Novion's for volunteering to Wagon Master that event. It would be great if others would volunteer to help them as well. Many hands make light work, I believe is how the saying goes. Members interested in helping out Sharon and Sven with Co-duties or specific events, please be in touch with them at email novionss@live.com or their phone 724-799-0327. Thanks in advance for your help!!

MaryAnne

Member's Matter

Say hello to Fred and Margaret Watkins of Kimberley, British Columbia, Canada. They enjoy their 2003 model year 40 foot SeeYa that they have owned for going on three years. They found it at a dealership in Saskatoon. They have been so pleased with it they just know they would not be happy with any other coach. They gave their prior RV to a daughter and her family.

Fred and Margaret's home area is about two and a half hours drive north of Kalispell Montana. And they welcome visitors. They have space for RVs to park on their land. At 'home' they still live in their coach. They live and travel with their two cutie-pie Pugs, Max and Oscar.

Family is very important to Fred and Margaret, as well as the desire for travel. Their children are very attached as well, so large amounts of travel may not be in their future. Family is two daughters and a son plus eight grandchildren.

We certainly wish these Canadian Roadrunner friends the best for future adventures and travel dreams come true!

Future Events

Date	Event	Location	Hosts
April 8 - 11	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—As usual, our group cooked up a storm for the Quartzsite rally. There were so many fabulous dishes shared. Thanks to all for your skills and tasty vittles! One particular recipe, from Arlene Harris, was such a hit, that I was able to obtain it from her to share with the members. This meatloaf tasted fabulous, and what a surprise at the healthier ingredients!

Turkey Meatloaf

1 ½ to 2 pounds of ground turkey
1 onion chopped
garlic chopped to taste
4 egg whites (or egg white substitute)
1-cup salsa
chopped jalapeno to taste
¾ to 1 cup old-fashioned oats, uncooked
1 package of Knorr Vegetable Soup mix
¼ tsp fresh ground black pepper
½ cup ketchup (or another ½-cup salsa)

Preheat the oven to 350degrees. In a large mixing bowl combine all the ingredients, (except the ketchup) and gently but thoroughly combine. Press the mixture into a 9 x 5 loaf pan. Spread the ketchup over the top. Bake in the preheated oven until it is no longer pink in the middle and the juice is clear, about 60 minutes. (Editor note: if you use a meat thermometer, it should read 175 degrees for doneness per the USDA.) Enjoy!!

BONUS Recipe this issue!!

At the end of the Quartzsite rally, we had 5 donuts remaining from morning coffee time. Never one to waste good ingredients, I searched for a simple, not too sweet recipe to use them up. I found the following on the web at allrecipes.com. Post rally, four couples enjoyed this tasty dessert around one of the final campfires. Not a crumb remained.

Doughnut Bread Pudding

4 stale donuts (I used the 5 and it was fine)
½ cup raisins or other dried fruit (I used craisens)
2 room temperature eggs
12 oz can evaporated milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
¼ tsp almond extract (optional)
1 tsp grated orange zest
2 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground nutmeg

Preheat the oven to 350degrees. Lightly grease a small baking dish. Tear the donuts into bite-size pieces. Combine the pieces and raisins in the prepared baking dish. In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to blend the remaining ingredients. Pour this mixture over the donuts. Press down lightly to help absorption. Let stand 15 minutes. Or cover and refrigerate overnight. Place the baking dish inside a larger baking dish. Fill the outer dish with enough water to go about halfway up the sides. Bake the pudding about 35 to 40 minutes in the preheated oven; or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve warm. Enjoy!!

Tech Tip

(Editor's Note—Thanks to Mel Elfring for submitting the information for this article.)

Mac McCoy “Mac the Fire Guy” graciously presented an afternoon seminar on fire safety during the Quartzsite rally this January. He told the group we owners need to be more concerned about and prepared for a fire. Interestingly, he informed us, most RV fires are in diesel coaches. So information and education is essential.

Mac said we need to be prepared first by having **WORKING** fire alarms in the front, middle and back of the coach. In addition, we need to be sure to have **WORKING** fire extinguishers in the front and back of the coach. And do not forget a **WORKING** fire extinguisher in the car as well. The extinguishers should be able to handle class A, B and C fires.

Another very important part of being prepared in case of a fire is to have an exit plan for getting out of the coach. Mac strongly advised we take the time to plan this procedure and **PRACTICE**. Sounds like time for practice drills in all our coaches! Do you know where your emergency exit windows are and how to operate them? There should be one in the living room and one in the bedroom.

The group asked Mac lots of questions and as always Mac did not disappoint with providing as much information as he could in the time available. One important precaution he mentioned is always turn the propane tank to the off position when traveling. There are many opinions on this practice, but Mac firmly is considering our fire safety. Sounds like good advice.

Mac advised in case of a fire or emergency of any kind, we have a plan for surviving several days without the coach or access to belongings. He recommended women grab their purse on the way out, if possible. Importantly too, we should have a survival bag always packed and ready for use; stowed in the back of the car. We should include in this bag copies of important papers we may need.

Unfortunately, due to Quartzsite's windy environment, Mac was unable to conduct his fire demonstration. But according to Mel, he was every convincing bringing important attention to our need for fire safety and preparedness. Thanks Mel for your great report!

If you wish to contact Mac McCoy, he can be reached as follows:

web address: www.Macthefireguy.com

email address: Mac@macthefireguy.com

phone: 503-559-7623

Editor's Corner

As Mike so well discussed, membership is the responsibility of all of us. Participation and volunteerism are key. The more of us who pitch in, even a little, the better the outlook for an ongoing Roadrunner club and Annual Alfa rallies.

In addition, we should all keep in mind our membership numbers. With a finite number of Alfa's on the road, we need to welcome owners we meet along the way into our club. There are great new members out there just waiting for our 'howdy'.

In addition, with the Pre and Annual rally coming up quickly in April, I am reaching out for volunteers to help cover events at the rallies. There will be great activities and presentations. Anyone who would like to submit notes or an article for any aspect of the rallies please let me know by phone or email. We could even handle it as an I interview you format.

Over a year ago, I committed to a cruise opportunity with friends before the rally dates were determined. So unfortunately, I will not be able to attend. Thanks for your help and input! You can contact me at email: balzerfreepirit@gmail.com or phone: 303-589-5729.

Oh, and do not forget to check out the Roadrunner website for rally pictures (can you find yourself in some of them?); and membership applications. You may print out the applications in advance to give to potential new members.

MaryAnne