



Roadrunner News May 2013 Edition



President: Joe Hughes

Secretary: Susan Prichard

Vice-President: Dale Prichard

Treasurer: Valerie Nelsen

Editor: MaryAnne Balzer

National Rally Rep: Joe Hughes

Travel Thought for Today

“A trip...is an entity, different from all other journeys. It has personality, temperament, individuality, and uniqueness. A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike.” --John Steinbeck, *Travels with Charley--In Search of America*

President's Corner

What a wonderful get-together! The Alfa Pre-Rally (April 11 - 14) and the Annual Rally (April 15 - 20) provided many opportunities for catching up with old friends, making new friends, learning new techniques at the seminars, getting on-site service on our rigs, being introduced to new sports (pickle ball), improving old sports (golf) and many, many wonderful conversations and opportunities to share our lifestyle.

From coffee and health food (donuts, muffins) in the morning to catered dinners in the evening, we all were pampered at Palm Creek RV Resort in Casa Grande, Arizona. There were many sightseeing opportunities in the area, but to me Sky Dive Arizona in Eloy was at the top of the list. The entertainment of music, dancing, fashion show, and a Mentalist (How did he do that?), were second to none.

In between all this recreation, several business meetings took place. The Roadrunners elected a new slate of officers for the next two years. At the AOC meetings Mike and Lorraine stepped up to be Wagon Masters at next year's Annual Rally (April 7 - 14, 2014) at this great resort.

Doug and Wendy Ferguson volunteered to be Wagon Masters for the Roadrunner Quartzite 2014 Rally; and Charlie and Donna Musgrave are looking at a Fort Collins, Colorado Fall Rally in October 2013 (details to follow).

I would like to thank you all for making this family gathering such a wonderful event. We look forward to many more in the years to come.

Joe Hughes
President

Secretary's Report

Rallies are great social events with happy hour conversations, morning coffee and donut gatherings, plus catching up on the news and happenings of other Alfa owners who we have not seen for a while. We enjoy craft classes, dinners together, golf outings, and exploring the surrounding area's possibilities.

This year we had a very special event we stumbled upon at Sky Dive Arizona. We viewed an International attempt at a world record for the most people to form a free-fall pattern before parachutes were opened to let everyone land safely. It was a spectacular sight!

In order to allow the "fun," planning has to be done, and we have a process of electing officers and conducting business so our time together is organized. We even have By-Laws that tell us specifically how to do this. During the Rallies, two business meetings were held. The first was at the Sheriff's dinner at the end of the Pre-Rally, where we presented a slate of officers for the next year. We also reported on Rallies held during the year, and a financial report was presented and approved.

The second business meeting was held at our Chapter Dinner, during the Annual Rally period, on Friday, April 19. During the meeting, we officially elected our Officers and thanked those who made this gathering a success. The "gavel" was passed to the new President, Joe Hughes, and the other Officers who will lead the Roadrunners for the next two years.

In spite of the serious business that needed to be done, the membership of the Roadrunners made this a fun event because of their respect and liking for each other.

Val Nelsen,
Outgoing Secretary

Treasurer's Report

It has been my privilege to serve as your Treasurer for the past two years. As I leave this position, I thought I would give you a brief update on how the club currently stands, especially for those who were not at the recent Annual Rally.

At our end of year, we have 154 members (rigs). The numbers have fluctuated over the past two years, but remain strong as we continue to gain new members even though others are lost. We recruited 18 new members, lost 14, placed 10 on inactive status, and even reinstated three members!

The net worth of the club is \$5157.67, which includes inventory (Roadrunner shirts, pins, hats etc.) Of that, \$2962.71 is what we have in the bank. The money in the treasury pays for our storage unit in Quartzsite, web site and domain, office supplies, postage and provides seed money for our rallies.

At \$10/year, the dues are very reasonable and they go a long way to making our club viable.

There are currently 24 members who have not paid their 2013 dues. They now should be sent to **Val Nelsen at 4491 N. Ridge Road, Mears, MI 49436.**

Again, thanks for letting me serve as your Treasurer.

Lorraine Lynch
Outgoing Treasurer

Alfa Pre-Rally at Palm Creek

Alfa Roadrunners gathered beginning Thursday April 11 for a fun-filled four-day Rally prior to the Alfa Annual Rally.

Events included fun get-togethers over coffee and pastries in the morning and happy hours in the afternoon. Roadrunners enjoyed some fine eating this rally: The Welcome Dinner was a very tasty spaghetti feed with all the fixins. One morning we enjoyed a yummy pancake breakfast.

And, of course, the Sheriff's Dinner was a great success; and catered by the resort. Sheriff Pat Pintus kept us all laughing while we were being fined for all our infractions committed during the Pre-Rally. The money raised was donated to Wounded Warriors.

In addition, we learned a new fun exciting game, LRC (Left, Right, Center)—a fast-paced game using chips and special dice. Entirely a game of chance. What a hoot!! Gene Bratner won the evenings' pot. Thanks to Lorraine Lynch for introducing it to us.

Friday, a sizeable group of Roadrunners carpooled and caravanned to the Eloy Airport to watch skydivers. Eloy is a hot bed of skydiving activity. And as our luck had it, the day we were there a large group of skydivers was gathered from all over to do a mass formation jump in an attempt to set a new all time record. We understand that due to some high clouds, the attempt fell short. But it was amazing for us to be there for such a huge jump event!! Fabulous road trip!!

During the Pre and Annual Rally, numerous members worked on sewing up Roadrunner red vests to attach our Rally and other patches and pins. How nice to have a place to display and show off our Alfa Roadrunner pride!! And, all who participated in the awesome sewing room at Palm Creek had a great time.

Be sure to read the Pet Parade report below by Lorraine Lynch. Now that was fun!!

During the Pre-Rally, the Roadrunners also conducted club business and the first of our meetings. At the next business meeting, held in conjunction with our Chapter Dinner during the Annual Rally, new Officers were elected to move our group forward for the next two years.

MaryAnne Balzer
Editor

The Pet Parade

The Pet Parade was a huge success! Twenty-four pets participated in this year's event. As the participants strutted their stuff, our five conscientious Judges, Bob Kermode, Lynne Handy, Jerri Sedio, Leon Montambault, and Val Nelsen, took copious notes to ensure the best decision would be made in the end.

Some of our contestants included: Schnauzers, Chihuahuas, Bichons, Westies, Scotties, and Mixes of all kind. They twirled and whirled, sat pretty, played dead, and rode in a stroller. Costumes included "men in black", camouflage pink gear, sunglasses, tutus, kilts and a variety of other outfits. Spectators "oohed and aahed" as the dogs performed for the Judges. Some dogs were more interested in visiting or playing with other dogs than they were in impressing the Judges.

Each participant received a Top Dog Award "goodie bag". The eight categories that each dog was judged on were: performs best tricks, best tail wagger, best talker, best costume, best personality, owner look alike, and two Judge's choice since there were no non-canine entries this year. All in all a fun time was had by all both human and canine!!

Lorraine Lynch

Pet Parade Chairperson

Alfa Annual Rally Report

Rally Seminars and Vendors

Win Win is how to describe the seminars and vendors at the Annual Rally. Alfa owners learned how to better maintain and upgrade their motor homes and fifth wheels. The cornerstone of our rally is Alfateers. They worked endless hours repairing and improving our rigs, including an emergency repair when Joe Hughes' slide would not retract as he tried to leave.

Mac "the fire guy" taught us how to fight fires and, new this year, how to use the emergency escape exits. Alfa Owners, Vonis Spencer and Ed Burrows provided inside information on upgrading and maintaining our RVs. Redlands Truck and RV were very busy improving our rigs – what a difference the new Koni shocks made to our ride! Joe Colvin, "the glass guy" repaired "a zillion" windows, and many had their rigs weighed at each wheel by RV Weigh.

Janet Trannum taught us how to clean our rigs using microfiber cloths and made Lorraine, and many other ladies, look so much better after she applied permanent cosmetics. We even know how to properly cook in the microwave/convection oven thanks to Dee Dee (see Cook's Corner for some helpful information from Dee Dee).

Kirk Ault, from Freightliner in Tolleson, AZ, talked to us about the benefit of going to a Freightliner Oasis dealer, one that has a separate division for RVs. He also covered the hot topics affecting our chassis.

The other winners are the speakers and vendors who also like our Rallies. Alfa owners are committed to their rigs and are eager to learn how to not only maintain them, but how to improve them. Every seminar was well attended by interested people with good questions, and the vendors had appreciative customers. They, like us, look forward to coming back next year.

Mike Lynch
Vendor Chairperson

Ladies Luncheon and Fashion Show

The Annual Ladies Luncheon was a gala affair complete with beautiful black and white decorations, a scrumptious meal, and a fabulous fashion show sponsored by Dillard's.

Lorraine Lynch acted as Master of Ceremonies and our fashion models were ladies chosen from each of our Alfa Chapters. They included: Val Nelsen and Celine Carroll from the Roadrunners, Terry Scott and Vonnie Beard from the South Loafers, Betty Withers and Judi Kirkland from the Sun Seekers, Karen Chase from the Mavericks and Elouise Boling from the Lonestars.

Lorraine started the Luncheon by thanking Darlene Stevens and Nina Fields, who in conjunction with Diane Gaines and her staff from Palm Creek, hosted this wonderful event. After Lorraine shared a couple of humorous stories, the resort's friendly staff efficiently served lunch. We were treated to assorted wraps, potato salad, fruit and delicious cupcakes that were prepared by a local baker.

Diane Gaines introduced each model and shared a little tidbit about each of them as they wound their way around each of the ladies' tables so all could get a good look at the outfits they were wearing. Each lady had the opportunity to model two outfits, one casual and one dressy and they looked absolutely incredible in them!

The afternoon concluded after several prizes were given away. It was declared that this was one of the best Ladies' Luncheons!

Lorraine Lynch
Ladies Luncheon Chairperson

Food Recap from Annual Rally

Buffet Lines – forget it. The staff and volunteers at Palm Creek gave us awesome service and beautiful presentations of our meals throughout the Pre and Annual Rally. From donuts and coffee served in the pavilion to the ice cream social with a really good brownie, no complaints from this camper.

Our evening meals were beautifully served and abundant (lots of foil handed out for take-homes). The variety ranged from stuffed chicken, ham steaks, lasagna, turkey and pork loin with wonderful sides and even more wonderful desserts. The “grab n go” bags for our day of departure were an added touch and much appreciated. The staff and volunteers and all residents were very friendly and professional throughout the rallies. Only complaint – too much good food!

In addition, let me not forget the cool but delightful evening by the pool served up by the Alfateers – freshly cooked burgers and brats including a variety of salads. This was accompanied by music and dancing under the stars. Don't you just love this lifestyle!

Susan Prichard
Secretary

A Special Note Received by Joe Hughes:

Joe Hughes, President of the Roadrunners,

I would like to thank the Roadrunners for the Chapter Basket. I was so surprised when my number was called. As you see, I'm usually one of those who would say, "I never win anything," but I did win something, your basket.

When my husband, David, and I got back to our rig, we tore right into the terrific, blue Arctic Zone bag. As we pulled things out, we'd say, "Oh look at this or look at that." We were so surprised at all the wonderful, useful, things that were stuffed in that bag. We really liked the \$75 Visa card...always very useful! The wine was great. We've already shared 2 bottles. The salami and different crackers are a must for our picnics. We've already started using the Air Wick air freshener. It makes our rig smell so good. Flashlights and wine bottle openers are a must in any rig. Rest assured, everything in the bag will be used with much appreciation.

Anyway, we just wanted to thank you for your thoughtful basket.

Judy Sabol
South Loafers President

Member's Matter

Meet Our New Roadrunners Vice-President, Dale Prichard

Born in Alexandria, Louisiana, my family moved about until we landed in Key West, Florida in 1958. I have an electronics/mechanical background. I worked in the paper industry in the late 1970's, installing and maintaining computer controlled process systems. From 1982, until I retired (April 24, 2013) I worked for a major aerospace company, where I designed test cells used by US Navy, and Air Force. I was a Program Manager, Project Engineer and lastly a Test Engineer.

As Susan describes below, we started RVing early in 2000's, exploring the RV life style, and decided this was the way we wanted to spend our retirement.

Meet Our New Roadrunners Secretary, Susan Prichard

Born and raised in Central Illinois, I raised my Son and Daughter in the Western Chicago suburbs where they still live with their spouses, each with one child. I became an Arizona transplant in 1997, met, and married Dale 01/01/2000. I have a professional background in Human Resources and Real Estate.

We began RVing in early 2000's so we could enjoy travel with our 4-legged family-- currently an 11-year-old Chocolate Lab--Della and a three-year-old Maltese/Poodle---Tilly. We have enjoyed many weekends and short vacations in our 2003 Alfa See Ya since we purchased it in 2006.

We sold our home and began full timing in the spring of 2012. May through September of 2012 found us camp hosting at the Spillway Campground/Woods Canyon Lake, Arizona, the only National campground on the water in Arizona. We then spent another six months in the Phoenix area prior to retirement.

As I write this we are headed toward South Dakota to establish our domicile and then continue our first big adventure with some quality time with grandkids in Illinois, re-skin/paint of the Alfa in Indiana, fall colors in the Northeast, coastline of the Carolina's, holidays with family in Florida and journey back towards Arizona through the lower states early 2014.

I am looking forward to serving the Roadrunners as Secretary for the next few years and running into many of you as we all travel around in our rolling homes.

Future Events

Date	Event	Location	Hosts
? October 2013 ? TBD	? Fall Rally ? TBD	Ft. Collins, Colorado	Charlie & Donna Musgrave
Jan 2014--- Dates TBD	Quartzsite Boondock	BLM, La Posa North Quartzsite, AZ	Doug & Wendy Ferguson

April 3 – 6, 2014	Alfa Roadrunner Pre-Rally	Palm Creek Golf & RV Resort, Casa Grande, AZ	Joe Hughes & Val Nelsen
April 7 – 13, 2014	2014 Alfa Owners Club Annual Rally	Palm Creek Golf & RV Resort, Casa Grande, AZ	Mike & Lorraine Lynch

Chef on Wheels

Microwave Chef extraordinaire Dee Dee Czarnowski presented an information packed two-hour seminar during the Alfa Annual Rally. Her enthusiasm was energizing. Her information sharing was nonstop. Dee Dee packed an amazing amount of practical, useful and common sense information into the time allotted. I would certainly attend future seminars!

Dee Dee ‘demystifies’ the microwave. As she says, “The microwave oven is the most convenient and versatile appliance...Most microwaves are grossly under-utilized.” A very passionate speaker, she has been teaching microwave skills for over 20 years.

Dee Dee’s hints included a seemingly simple training—reheating coffee in a microwave. She stressed not re-cooking the coffee by ‘nuking’ it on high. She suggested instead we reheat the coffee using a medium setting. I quickly tried this simple hint in our rig. What a difference it made to the taste of my coffee. The coffee was not burned tasting, but nicely re-warmed!

“Cook it, don’t nuke it” is Dee Dee’s catch phrase. She described how modern microwave power is actually in excess of what is needed for good cooking. Food more quickly burns in an 1100-watt oven than a 900-watt oven she said. In fact, Dee Dee stated her favorite is 700-watts.

So, Dee Dee provided the attendees with a conversion chart for recipes to help manually reduce wattage for improved cooking. One hint in converting recipes, say, from stove or oven cooking is to use the same cooking range as stated in those recipes. For instance, cook in a 350degree oven = 50% microwave. Warm on the stove = 10% microwave power.

Another simple but incredible piece of information was the use of aluminum foil in a microwave. She demonstrated that amounts of foil may be used in wrapping the thin end of a potato to prevent overcooking

for part of the cooking time. Another was actually making hard-boiled eggs in a microwave. I also tried this hint at home—and made the best hard boils I have ever made!!

How to hard-boil eggs in a microwave:

1. Boil sufficient water in a glass microwave safe container to hold the quantity of eggs you wish to cook fully submerged—for instance 6 eggs and 6 cups of water.
2. Wrap each egg fully in a small amount of aluminum foil.
3. Carefully place the eggs in the boiling water. If they float a bit, invert a microwave safe bowl over the top to hold them down.
4. Replace the container, with the eggs, in the microwave and continue to boil on high power for 10 minutes.
5. Leave the eggs in the water for 5 minutes.
6. Drain, cool, and peel

If you wish softer eggs, say for breakfast; simply reduce the cooking time to duplicate stovetop timing.

How does this work? The microwave boils the water and the water is what actually cooks the eggs. The microwaves cannot penetrate the aluminum foil wrapped around the eggs. Very cool! Enjoy!

MaryAnne Balzer
Editor

Tech Tip

Alfa Charging System Seminar Presented by Roadrunner Vonis Spencer

Well, to say the least, the best-laid plans of mice and men, can go astray and usually do. Vonis was all ready to present the internal working of the Alfa motorhome charging system. However, it soon became apparent that many individuals had issues, which needed more attention than his well thought out presentation.

Vonis spent the next 1 ½ hour helping the individuals work through the many questions. His presentation would have gone on indefinitely had the room not been booked for the next seminar. Vonis is a wealth of knowledge about the workings of the Alfa and its systems and we are lucky to have his expertise in our group. I would suggest, at the next Rally Vonis attends, he be allocated a room for two hours.

Freightliner Seminar Presented by Kirk Ault (Tolleson Freightliner Oasis)

Kirk explained the differences between a standard Freightliner shop and an Oasis. He explained that at the Oasis shops, Freightliner has on hand an RV specialist, an individual who had completed extensive training in the systems installed in RV's. He went on to explain how the Oasis system allows RV'ers, to stay on-site during maintenance of their RV's.

Kirk went into great detail on the various maintenance procedures a Freightliner chassis requires. During the question and answer period I was called away, however, here is a sample:

Question and answer period:

Question: Why is it that our rig's stoplights will stay on when the exhaust brake is engaged instead of flashing like a semi's do when going downhill.

Answer: How the stoplights work was based on design input from the Alfa factory, this included the requirement to inform vehicles behind the RV that the brake was being applied.

Question: Who designed the cooling system?

Answer: the engine manufacturer designed the cooling system.

This is just a small recap of the many informative seminars held on-site during the 2013 Alfa Annual Rally.

Dale Prichard
Vice-President

Editor's Corner

This year's Pre and Annual Rallies were terrific fun in the sun in beautiful Palm Creek Resort, Casa Grande, Arizona. About 100 rigs from around the country attended the Annual Rally. The Roadrunners and the South Loafers Clubs accounted for about three dozen rigs each. Other Clubs represented were the Sun Seekers, Lone Stars and Mavericks. The attendance made for a great gathering, a fun sharing experience packed with camaraderie and good times.

The Annual Rally seminars were informative and very well attended (SRO for the most part). The list of seminars available to us were:

Permanent Cosmetics by Janet
Redlands Truck and RV Service
Fire and Life Safety in Your RV
RV Weight and Tire Safety
Almost Heaven Microfiber
New Technology for Tire Monitors
Alfa Charging Systems
Keeping Your Aluminum Wheels and RV Looking Like New
Microwave/Micro-Convection Cooking
Questions and Answers from Alfateers'
Alfa Tech Talk
FCCC Freightliner Chassis with Kirk Ault
Emergency Escape Practice with Mac McCoy

What a fabulous list of offerings arranged for us by Roadrunner representatives Mike & Lorraine Lynch!! Thanks so much for all your work!!

An Open Coaches event was held (along with a Patio Sale). So many to visit, so little time!! Ray and I opened our coach. I lost count after about 40 visitors!! A great fun, and terrific learning and sharing, afternoon.

The Pre and Annual Rally activities kept us all very busy through both events. What a fabulous experience!!

For those who could not be with us we missed you and we hope you may be able to attend in 2014. You will be very glad you came!! Until then, happy and safe travels to you.

MaryAnne Balzer
Editor