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Letter From The President

By Pauline Stevens, *President*

As I write this, we are on the road again. We both feel good and it's great to be back in the Coach House again. We have had a great summer so far. We went to the International FMCA rally in Buffalo, N.Y. with Pierre and Shirlee. While at the rally we both traded for a new Platinum. From there Bob and I headed to Prince Edward Island for the Northeast FMCA Rally. Karin and Inga; Bill and Joan joined us along the way to PEI; it was fun traveling with other club members. The folks in the Northeast Area really know how to put on a fun rally. One day we had all the mussels you could eat, and another day it was clam chowder. The entertainment was also good, all local talent. After spending a couple of days in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick we headed back to Massachusetts to pick up our new coach.

We have come up with an idea for a rally like nothing we have done before. We would leave after the rally in Decatur and head West! We would travel through Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico, ending up at Lake Tahoe, Calif. We will be joined by some of our western members who we haven't had the chance to meet before. If you are interested, please contact me either by e-mail or phone.

I expect a good turnout for the Homecoming Rally in October, where we will have elections for the Board of Directors for the coming year. We need volunteers to run for these positions. The Board of Directors has taken pride in our club these past five years, and now we need

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On Top of the Smokies

Joe and Barbara Kedanis enjoy lunch along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Club's First 'Rolling Rally' Attracts 31 Attendees

By Bill Johnson

The Rolling Rally along the Blue Ridge Parkway September 14–18 was enjoyed by all who came. About half of the folks showed up on Saturday, so we had a nice visit that evening along with an impromptu social hour.

By Sunday evening, Sept. 14, there were 31 of our members gathered for dinner, games and a brief membership meeting. The main interest at the meeting was how we can communicate more effectively with our members (see President's Letter). The evening wound down around a bonfire with toasted (burned?) marshmallows.

Monday night after dinner we were entertained by a couple who played guitar and harmonica and sang. As many of the songs

they performed were old tunes that we knew, the group joined right in. Our own Karin Peuhsner joined in for a duet on a couple of German songs.

The rest of the week went pretty much as planned, with each party doing their own thing in the daytime and gathering each evening for social hour and dinner. We wound up on Thursday evening, Sept. 18, with dinner and entertainment in downtown Cherokee.

My thanks to all who came along on our first rolling rally — you made it a success. Also, a very special "Thank You" to Gerry and Barbara Killam for all the work they did in making the two days in Boone so special.

Our next rally is the CHOC Homecoming Rally in Nokomis, Fla, in October.

ClubNews

2,000-Mile Journey Is One to Remember

By Wally Antoine

In the early summer of 2002, we had a very wonderful experience traveling nearly the entire length of the Mississippi River. To qualify the 'nearly': We had traveled the Delta and visited New Orleans several times in the past. As it would take another week to do this again, we decided the trip would start at Natchez, Miss., about 100 miles north of New Orleans.

We first went to Houston and a short visit with our daughter Carolyn and her family. We celebrated Mothers Day with them and the next day we headed for Natchez and the Great River Road.

The River Road stretches nearly 3,000 miles from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border, following the Mississippi River from New Orleans to the headwaters at Lake Itasca in Minnesota. Sometimes the River Road is on both sides of the river. We preferred the east side, where the bluffs are located.

Natchez is a very interesting city. The large visitors center includes a museum along with many exhibits and travel help. They showed us a movie on the history of Natchez and answered our many questions. As it was late in the day, we decided to hold off sightseeing until the next day. We went across the river to a campground in Vidalia, La. The Riverview Campground was right on the Mississippi, and only a mile from the visitors center. It is a very modern campground with full facilities, including cable, and we were able to get our e-mail there. After supper we walked around the campground, then sat out and watched the barges coming and going on the river. We found Riverview Campground to be a very relaxing and interesting place.

The next day we returned to the Visitors center and caught a trolley to tour downtown Natchez. It is a very clean and restored city. The trolley lady gave us a complete description of all the places we were passing. The tour gave us a good orientation of the downtown historic area. We weren't allowed off the bus, so later we returned in our Platinum. We leisurely visited many sites, including a tour of the Catholic cathedral. After roaming the

downtown area a bit we took off for the Longwood Plantation House. This house is located just outside the city. Construction of this magnificent antebellum mansion commenced in 1859.

The four-story building, totaling 30,000 square feet, was never completed due to the outbreak of war in 1861. The war ruined the cotton trade for the owners as well as the entire South. The house was completed only on the outside, and the family lived in the spacious, luxuriously finished basement. The tour gave us a great insight into southern living and the effect of the Civil War on their lifestyle. The South depended on cotton and slaves. There were hundreds of plantations and great antebellum mansions. Slaves cost as much as \$2,000.00. The south had many millionaires who had a great downfall due to the war.

We left Natchez and found the Natchez Trace Road towards Vicksburg, Miss. The Trace is a route followed by the settlers and tradesmen heading west in the 1800's. Now it is a beautiful parkway with no billboards, shopping centers, restaurants or gas stations. Halfway to Vicksburg, we took a side trip to the river and the Grand Gulf Military Park at Port Gibson, Miss. There is an excellent campground there with concrete slabs and full facilities. We stayed for two nights and caught up with ourselves. They encouraged washing the RV, so Wally washed the Platinum and Edna organized and cleaned the inside. We met a lovely lady named Catherine at the Museum, and she gave us the history of Port Gibson. The port was the site of a naval battle in the Civil War. Seven Union ironclad vessels engaged the Confederate forts, attempting to allow Grant's army to pass over the Mississippi from the west side to make an attack on Vicksburg. After five hours of shelling, the ships retired and Grant came across farther south.

Years after the war, most of the town was washed into the river. Now there is hardly anything left of Port Gibson.

We continued our drive north on to Vicksburg and a self guided tour of the Vicksburg National Park. The park is dedi-

cated to the Union and Confederate soldiers who fought in the great battle of Vicksburg. Like Gettysburg National Park in Pennsylvania, Vicksburg has monuments donated by the states with troops involved. Massachusetts was the first state to erect its monument, in 1901. It comprises a Minuteman atop a base of granite mined in Quincy, Mass. Edna was born in Quincy, also the home of the Presidents Adams.

We purchased an audio tape describing the battles throughout the 18 miles of monuments. The troops fought within ten feet of one another and talked over the bunkers at night when there was no fighting. Here is where the Union really took over the war. The Confederates did well, but Gen. Palmerton's call for reinforcements was never met.

We found a casino campground and Edna went to the casino and donated. I caught up with my napping. The next day we found the Coca-Cola museum. What a dump. It was the first place to bottle Coke. The result was to franchise the bottling rights all over the U.S. The museum is not kept up and we don't recommend it.

Continuing north along the River Road, we went to the Great River Road State Park Campground located near Rosedale, Miss. This beautiful park is out of the way due to the interstates replacing the River Road traffic. A ranger named Calvin greeted us. The facilities are great. The headquarters, a raised building, houses a museum and a restaurant as well as a meeting room. Ranger Calvin gave us a personal viewing of a slide show featuring the history of the area and the river. Calvin told us he would welcome groups and provide catered meals and a meeting place at a very reasonable cost. The park adjoins the river and there is a lookout tower for use of the guests.

We continued north on the River Road, which took us to Memphis, Tenn., where the entire path of the Mississippi is laid out in bronze relief on Mud Island. Then on to Missouri. We passed the great arch at St. Louis. We resurrected some fond memories of a convention we attended in St. Louis when

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Rally*News*

Homecoming Rally Set for Late October

Load up the Coach House and meet us at the Encore RV Park South in Nokomis, Fla., for our fifth annual Homecoming Rally from October 30 to November 2, 2003.

We have terrific tours, great food, fantastic door prizes and a great time waiting for you. You will enjoy three nights of camping with full hookups, three continental breakfasts, and three dinners. Our tours include the Mote Marine Lab and the Ringling Museum of Art. Special entertainment will be provided by Sundown and the magician Stevie Dee. All transportation and tours will be included.

However, time is of the essence. You must HURRY, HURRY, HURRY to register for this event. All reservations must be received by Oct. 17, 2003.

This Rally is for all CHOC and non-CHOC members. So what are you waiting for? Send in the registration form today

from the back page of this newsletter. Please determine the appropriate fee from the following chart:

Rally Fees

The following rally fees include three nights of camping, three Continental breakfasts, three dinners, entertainment and all transportation.

Coach House Club Members:

| | By Sept. 30 | By Oct. 17 |
|-------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 Unit, 2 People | \$260 | \$312 |
| 1 Unit, 1 Person | \$149 | \$179 |
| Additional Person | \$100 | \$120 |

Non-Club Members:

| | By Sept. 30 | By Oct. 17 |
|------------------|-------------|------------|
| 1 Unit, 2 People | \$280 | \$332 |
| 1 Unit, 1 Person | \$159 | \$189 |

Future CHOC Rallys

CHOC Homecoming Rally 2003

Nokomis, Fla., Oct. 30–Nov. 1

CHOC Pre-Rally and Fish Fry

Feb. 2–4, 2004, at Pauline and Bob's Home in Myakka City, Fla.

FMCA Southeast Area Rally

Feb. 4–7, 2004, Brooksville, Fla.

Decatur, Ala.

April 22–24, 2004. A reschedule of the 2003 Spring Rally in Decatur, Ala. Dates to be announced later.

Charleston, S.C.

September 2004. Dates to be announced later.

Spring Rally, Cape Cod, Mass

Dates to be announced later.

Complete information with dates and costs will be coming in future issues.

Journey Is One to Remember

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we toured the Arch and the Anheuser-Busch Brewery and watched a ball game at Busch Stadium from our hotel window.

Our next main stop was Hannibal, Mo. As you know, this is Tom Sawyer country. We toured Hannibal for a half day. We went aboard a landlocked riverboat and got all the dope on how they cruised the river. We also went to Becky Thatcher's house and watched a workman repair the painted fence.

Further north we visited a refurbished Mormon Tabernacle. Guests were welcome as the church had not been sanctified as yet. They have as many as 5,000 visitors on a weekday and twice that on weekends. The guides were very hospitable. They start the tour at a parking lot. Wagons holding about 30 tourists were pulled by large tractors to the tabernacle area. At the entrance they made us check our cameras and other personal belongings such as pocket books, etc. They had slippers to cover our feet during the tour. The tour took an hour and a half. The workmanship was very notice-

able — they had spared no expense on the place. They showed us several sealing rooms where marriages are sealed for eternity. Mormons have a civil ceremony at a local church and save for a later visit (with their grown kids) to a tabernacle to have their marriage sealed. Everyone wears white gowns at a sealing, and the guide showed the rooms stocked with white clothing.

On to Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

We passed Moline, Ill., which is known as the "Farm Implement Capital of the World." The John Deere Co. is headquartered in Moline. As it was early, we missed the J.D. Pavilion, a museum featuring the history of the area and the John Deere Co. We saw a freight train loaded with a variety of huge John Deere machinery.

Just north of Illinois we came to the widest part of the Mississippi, stretching nearly four miles across, near Clinton, Iowa.

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President's Letter

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some new people to carry on the tradition.

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URGENT! Would everyone who has an e-mail address send their information to Marlene and Bern Wolsky? We will use e-mail to contact members with information such as changes in rally dates and other updates between newsletters. Also, remember to advise them when you change e-mail service. Members without e-mail will be contacted via regular mail or, if necessary, phone calls.

Send you e-mail address to either of the following:

Bern Wolsky — bwolsky@mac.com

Marlene Wolsky — marl327@mac.com

Please keep Mary Ann Kennedy and Jack Kinkead in your thoughts and prayers.

*Travel safely.
Pauline*

