

Look for Coach House's Web site at www.coachhousesrv.com

Letter From The President

By **Pauline Stevens, President**

We just returned home from the Homecoming Rally in Sarasota. We had a good turnout, 43 coaches. The campground staff was very helpful, the campground facilities were excellent and the food was great.

We had a good time at the Jungle Gardens and the moonlight cruise on Sarasota Bay was great. The weather was perfect.

On Saturday, we had a couple of hours playing mini-golf, shuffleboard, horseshoes and bocci. We had a round robin of the games, so each time you changed games you changed partners. This helped us get to know each other better. Wes Knadle worked out all of the details and everyone had a great time.

Our thanks go to Coach House for making the rally so special.

New officers were elected. The only changes were Marlene Wolsky, Secretary and Treasurer, and Shirlee Goddard as Alternate National Director. After a close study of the bylaws by the Board of Directors, we discovered that anyone can hold office until voted out. I am retaining my office for another year, but I hope by year's end we can get someone to take the office. We would like to have some new people on the Board of Directors.

Future rallies are being planned. If you have some ideas or would like to host one, please let us know. We will be there to help you. Bob and I are looking forward to the Fish Fry Social at our home in Myakka City, Fla., in February 2005. If you would like to attend, or just want more information, please call me at 941-322-2003 or email me at srqbobs@

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RV rally participants enjoy visit to Sarasota's Jungle Gardens for tour and shows.

Annual Homecoming Rally Offers Fun, Food, Friendship

By **Paula Bailey**

Sarasota's Sun-N-Fun RV Park was the location of this year's Annual CHOC Homecoming Rally.

This resort is a huge facility with everything from the norm — lakes, swimming pools, etc. — to (of all things), its own beauty parlor and Post Office!

Being a "first timer" for any type of RV rally, I didn't know exactly what to expect. However, from the moment I drove into the campground, I was greeted by friendly, enthusiastic club members, who made me feel welcome and right at home.

At registration each attendee was given a wonderful rally welcome kit and "goody bag" filled with very useful items for our RVs.

The rally began on Thursday afternoon with a wine and cheese welcome reception at the Cypress Room, our "headquarters" for all of our meetings and meals at the resort.

This was followed by a delicious barbecue dinner, which was catered by the resort's restaurant.

CHOC's Annual Business Meeting followed with the election of officers for the coming year, along with other matters of business pertaining to the club. Future rally locations were discussed: the Schneiders' Dry Camping Rally at their place in Myakka City, Fla. in February; the Charleston, S.C., Rally in April; and an FMCA Rally in Lebanon, Tenn., in May.

Tickets were sold for charity donations to be given by the club, and door prize drawings were held throughout the weekend for several lucky winners.

Each day began with a continental breakfast, and on Friday, everyone was taken by bus to Sarasota's Jungle Gardens, the area's only zoological gardens, where we saw thousands of exotic trees, shrubs and flowers along with many different types of birds

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RallyNews

Welcome Mat Out at Our First CHOC Rally in Decatur

By Julie and Pete Bertrand

We purchased our Coach House Platinum in September of 2003, but were not able to go to a rally until the CHOC Fall Rally in Decatur, Ala., on October 1st through 3rd.

Pauline Stevens made us feel welcome even before we arrived, through her communications with us on the internet.

When we arrived at Point Mallard Campground, she and Bob came over immediately to greet us and then introduced us around to everyone.

The first night we had a potluck dinner with many great dishes. Then we had a Yankee Swap Meet, which was great fun.

This Fall Rally was sponsored by Hood Tractor and RV of Decatur. The company brought out a new 27-foot Platinum for everyone to look at.

We were all impressed. In fact, two of the our club members, Ed and Bobbie Coxwell, have already put in an order for one.

Saturday morning, Hood provided a delicious breakfast. The breakfast quiche, made by Patti, was fabulous.

Hood had arranged for us to be picked up by bus after breakfast and taken to the Space and Rocket Center at Huntsville for an enjoyable and interesting day.

When we returned in the afternoon, we had time to rest and then gathered at the clubhouse, where they had arranged for entertainment and a delicious barbecue dinner complete with homemade chocolate and coconut pies.

After dinner there was a drawing for prizes, and each rig took home a prize.

'Hugs and goodbyes were exchanged and we left these wonderful friendly people, feeling as if we had known them for a long time.'

The next morning, Hood provided another great breakfast. Everyone prepared to leave, as we did.

Hugs and goodbyes were exchanged and we left these wonderful friendly people, feeling as if we had known them for a long time.

We had a great time, and we left looking forward to being at the Coach House Homecoming Rally at Sarasota, Fla., on October 28 to see all of you again. ■

Back Newsletter Issues Available on Internet

Back issues of CHOC Talk for approximately two years are available on the internet.

Go to www.coachhouserv.com, click on Owner's Club and the available issues will be listed.

Adobe Acrobat software is necessary to read them. However, if you don't have it, you can download it at no cost from the Adobe Web site at www.adobe.com. ■

Homecoming

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and animals, which were donated or rescued from adverse conditions. There were shows throughout the day featuring these different animals.

That evening, we climbed aboard buses to take us to Sarasota Bay for a sunset cruise. We enjoyed delicious food and a gorgeous sunset, and later, a beautiful full harvest moon.

After breakfast on Saturday, several of us loaded onto trolleys for a trip to the Coach House factory in Nokomis and a tour of the facilities.

At the plant, we were shown a new honeycomb flooring material that is being installed in all new models. This is stronger and lighter weight than the previous material used.

Our group was one of the first to view the new Platinum 261, which boasts a greatly improved and enlarged bathroom with a linen closet and more cabinets and storage space throughout.

This model has one slideout, and Coach House has added a window on each end of the slideout.

On Saturday afternoon, we participated in some fun and games at the park. There were four events — shuffleboard, miniature golf, horseshoes and bocci — and there were instructors at each event. Each person participated in all four activities. It was a great way to meet new people and was a lot of fun.

Our dinner on Saturday evening was again catered by the resort's restaurant and was followed by a wonderful speaker, Steve Savage, who is co-editor of Motor Home Review Online and a technical instructor in the Life on Wheels Program. Steve shared some very important information about motor home maintenance and was able to answer many of our questions about maintaining our vehicles.

After breakfast on Sunday, farewells were said and folks left for their various destinations with fond memories of new and renewed friendships and of a very fun and informative weekend.

Thanks go out to Pauline and Bob Schneider, to Wes Knadle of Coach House, and to all those involved in planning and executing such a wonderful time for us all to enjoy! ■

Future CHOC Rallies

February 2005 CHOC Social and Fish Fry, Myakka, Fla. For more information and to make reservations, call or email Pauline Stevens.

May 3-6, 2005 FMCA 6th International Area Rally. Lebanon, Tenn.

April 2005 CHOC Spring Rally, Charleston, S.C. Dates to be announced later.

Fall 2005 CHOC Fall Rally, Lake George, N.Y. Dates to be announced later.

Club*News*

New Members

The President and the Board of Directors welcome the new members who have joined the Coach House Owner's Club since August 2004. We invite them to come to our rallies, meet our members and take part in our activities.

- **Florida:** Ralph and Sally Posey, Eric and Nancy Kuehlelm, Jim and June Manis, Paula Bailey and Marilyn Voland.
- **Texas:** Enoch and Peggy Authement
- **Pennsylvania:** George and Corrine Mone-smith
- **Tennessee:** Franklin and Martha Canada
- **Illinois:** David Brown
- **Mississippi:** Pete and Julie Bertrand
- **New York:** Gloria May Rosenblum
- **New Jersey:** Marilyn Heflich

President

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aol.com.*

Our thanks to Steve and Andra Savage. They gave us many tips on the maintenance of our coaches. I know we all learned a lot. I would also like to say thanks to Armando for the many hours of work spent fixing all the small things (gratis) on our 43 coaches.

We welcome all new members. We hope that all new Platinum owners will join our club and come to our rallies. Our prayers go out to those who are ill or have lost a loved one. ■

From the National Director

By Bob Schneider

At the Homecoming Rally, I reported to the group about the National FMCA Rally I attended at Redmond, Ore., in August. We attended classes and seminars outlining the duties and responsibilities of Chapter National Directors. It was very informative and impressed upon us how important the National Director is to our Chapter and FMCA. We discussed and voted on many aspects of FMCA business. We also voted in the new FMCA officers for the coming year.

I want to welcome Shirlee Goddard as my new Alternate National Director and I want to thank Marlene Wolsky for her help last year. ■

Getting Your Platinum Ready for the Winter

By Bill Huston

A very good method for winterizing your Platinum is explained in the Galley Section in the Coach House Owner's Manual.

Basically, it says to drain, then blow all the water out of the water lines and faucets, and then pump enough RV antifreeze into the lines so that it comes out of each faucet.

This is a good method if you are in a very cold area and your Platinum is going to be winterized, unused, for several months at a time.

I live in a moderate climate where we do get some freezing weather, but it generally only lasts for a few days or weeks at a time.

I use my Platinum all winter long except during a few of the coldest spells. And, I park it in my backyard when not in use, so it is easily accessible at all times.

Therefore, I use a different winterization method. Where I live, in Oklahoma, we have a lot of days when the daytime temperature is above freezing, but the nights get 5 or 10 degrees below freezing.

On those days, I just keep some heat in my Platinum during the night. When I expect the temperature to stay below freezing, both day and night, for a week or more, I will winterize it.

I find that it's best to start my winterization process before I leave the campground to go home on my last trip before a cold spell sets in.

First, I drain my waste water tanks, and then close the valves. Then I drain my fresh water tank as well as the hot and cold water lines, but leave the valves open.

I also open all the faucets for the sinks (kitchen and bath), showers (inside and outside) and prop open the toilet faucet and the kitchen sink sprayer.

I then drain the water heater and set the valves in the cabinet under the sink to bypass the water heater.

With all the faucets and drain valves open a little, any water left in the water lines and faucets will be sucked out as I drive home at highway speeds.

Just to be sure, when I get home, I generally close all the faucets and blow out the water lines and faucets one at a time as explained in the owner's manual.

But I do not add any RV antifreeze to the water lines. I do, however, add enough antifreeze to each drain so that some of it gets into the waste water holding tanks to keep any remaining water from freezing.

If I take another short trip in the winter, I close all the faucets and drain valves, then add water to the fresh water tank, but leave the water heater bypassed.

Such trips are no more than three or four days long so I can easily take a sponge bath and shave by heating some water on the stove.

Then, of course, I have to winterize it again at the end of the trip, but it doesn't take as long with the water heater bypassed.

Before I add water to the water heater in the spring, I use a garden hose with nozzle to flush all the residue (mineral deposits and scraps off the anode rod) out of the water heater, and install a new anode rod, if necessary.

The manual for the water heater says to install a new anode rod each year.

However, depending on the amount of mineral deposits in the water you have been using, it may not be necessary to replace it each year.

When I called Suburban (the water heater manufacturer) their technicians agreed that if more than half of the coating on the rod is still intact, it need not be replaced. ■

A Reminder: Club Dues Are Due

Please note that CHOC membership dues are due January 1, 2005. Please send your check for \$10, made out to CHOC, to Marlene Wolsky, Treasurer, 3480 Worth Circle, The Villages, FL 32162. ■

CHOC*Talk*

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Check Campground Power Before Plugging in Your RV

By Jack and Phyllis Kinkead

Power problems at campgrounds are rare, but as our experience shows, they are not unknown.

It is good safety practice to plug in a polarity indicator and a voltmeter prior to plugging in to shore power when arriving at a new campground.

Here's what happened to us.

Prior to the Decatur Rally, we were headed south after visiting our daughter in Nashville, Tenn., and Freeman and Emily Nevins were headed north, so we agreed to meet for a few days in Tunica, Miss.

They were there ahead of us and had already set up when we got there.

Having experienced electric power problems at RV parks years ago, we carry a polarity indicator and a small voltmeter with us. Upon plugging the polarity indicator in to the motorhome after connecting to shore power, we observed that the hot and neutral wires appeared to be reversed.

I stepped outside to ask Freeman about this when Emily noticed smoke pouring out

of the power box. The male end of our power cord had burned and melted. The outlet in the power box was burned and the fuse to our refrigerator was blown and melted.

It is difficult to understand how the receptacle could be wired wrong in a casino campground that has been there for a long time and is probably used most days by an RV camper.

However, my indicator was telling me this. The maintenance people at the park looked the situation over and, at first, said that the problem was ours, not theirs. But they rewired and replaced the outlet and replaced the male end on our cord.

This solved the problem, and I believe that they were finally convinced that the campground outlet had been improperly wired and it was their fault, not ours.

If there was a record of any recent work or rewiring in that power box, we don't know if anyone looked into it.

Nonetheless, we are convinced the wiring was wrong. ■