

# **AUTOMATE RV CLUB**

## **NEWSLETTER**

Issue # 35 Fall 2011

Editor: Evette Dilley

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<b>General Inquiries &amp; Issues</b>	<b>Neil Zinn</b>

### **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

By Neil Zinn

My lady Helen and I just returned from Oregon following a get together with college buddies, a family reunion AND The Good Sam Rally in Redmond, Oregon, just north of Bend. We didn't get a final count on the number of rigs but it was between 3 and 4,000. It was quite a large group. The best part for us is that we were just five rigs down from Ross and Julie Stewart and their AutoMate. Boy! Did we have fun together. We discussed in detail the merits of some fine Oregon wine and snacked to our hearts' content. Big changes are coming within the Good Sam organization. The new CEO for the organization has been bumped up from head of their Camping World organization to the overall position. Most interesting was a major speech highlighting changes to the organization from one wholly oriented to business and profits to a business that wants to put member's interests back into a priority position. They were exceedingly generous in the gifts they made to members present. One member received a \$12,000.00 check, representing a year's payments on his new RV. Life members will no longer need to pay the \$20.00 annual membership fee to be able to take advantage of the price breaks at Camping World for President's Club members. That is now a benefit. If you are members of Good Sam, expect to get some credit for life membership when you upgrade. I would expect that Good Sam's publication will be detailing these changes in the near future. While in Redmond, we took advantage of the portable weighing service that provided us weight information on our tow vehicle, overall weight of the fifth wheel, weight on each tire, and tongue weight. The purpose of this exercise is to assure

that we were towing within specifications, that our load was balanced and had proper inflation of the tires according to our weight. Curiously, the weighing service wouldn't tell us (on advice of counsel) how much to inflate our tires and instead, referred us to Goodyear. What a crazy world where everyone is afraid to be accountable. Tip! If you are in Southwestern Oregon and near Cave Junction, stop in at Taylor's Sausage and Deli. They also have an outlet in Bend. Talk about some good sausage and jerky. They are every bit as good as our favorite sausage shop in Lockford, California, on our way to Sonora. Taylor sausage is as outstanding as our Lockford shop, and Taylors have an on-site deli as well. Now there's a thought; we could have a sausage feed sometime! Helen and I will be back on the road in about four weeks, headed for Oregon for a high school reunion, then on to Idaho for some quiet time along a quiet stream, and the balloon festival in Reno, Nevada before returning home.. We'll be gone several weeks. In the meantime, we hope you all can get out and about and that your slides will go in and out when you want them to! See you in Sonora.

## **MISHAP WITH THE TRAILING ARM**

by Bob Howe

I wanted to share this with other members to see if anyone has experienced this problem. We have a 2000 26' Automate bought new. This rig has been from the tip of Baja to the northern part of Newfoundland, on a ferry to Alaska and around that state, returning via the Alcan highway. It has made three cross country trips to Rhode Island (my home state) and traveled in many other states. I would estimate it has almost 60,000 miles on it. This has been one hell of a rig. Last summer came with a major problem. Heading south in Georgia, we stopped for a driver change at which time I noticed the right side of the rig was sagging badly. We pushed on that afternoon to a campsite where I could inspect the undercarriage more closely. Sure enough, the air bag was collapsed but other things didn't look right. Thankfully we carry the manual the club put together some years ago and contacted Bettes (Firestone air bags) in California to see if they knew of someone who could help. They gave me the name of a Freightliner facility in Ocala FL. I called

there and they were quite willing to take a look. We cautiously limped south to Ocala arriving at 4 pm on a Friday. What they found was a fractured trailing arm. No problem they said and ordered a new air bag from Firestone, removed the broken trailing arm (apparently an Automate Mfg. Part) and welded it together with reinforcing plates. The shop foreman was one fantastic guy making the job go smoothly and getting us back on the road in just one day. He advised that the repaired arm was probably stronger than new. Has anyone else experienced this kind of failure? Feel free to call or contact me.

And then there was the blowout on the Tamiani Trail in Florida. Another long story...

Bob and Nancy Howe  
(858) 453-2658 or bobnancyhowe@gmail.com  
San Diego

## **EXCELLENT REPAIR SHOP**

by Frank Williams

On the recommendation of club member, Richard Clark, I took my AutoMate to:

Elite RV Collision and Repair  
4027 E. Therese Ave.  
Fresno, Cal. 93725  
(559) 834-1616  
Contact Person: Andy.

They did over \$1,200 worth of repair to my AutoMate, including a new A/C. I am very pleased with their workmanship, customer relations and the cost of the repair. I have plans to return in September to have some additional work done.

I recommend them to all AutoMate owners. There is a discount offered for your first visit.

Frank Williams

## **FALL RALLY**

### **September 29 – October 2, 2011**

It's almost time for the Automate Fall Rally and you won't want to miss it this year. The location of this year's rally is the Mother Lode Fairgrounds in Sonora California. Our event at this time is the only one at the fairgrounds, so we will have lots of parking for everyone. We'll begin the rally with a wine and cheese welcome hosted by Ed and Marlene Webber and Helen Zinn. There will be a fun game led by our own Paul and Idalina Cheek, great breakfasts by Irv and crew and Jerry and Pam Richichi plus Florie Matthews. You'll be treated to a delicious spaghetti dinner on Friday hosted by Jim and Sharon West plus Joleen and Dale Clark. Saturday night's dinner will be catered by Pickle Patch. There will be entertainment on Friday night so you might want to bring along your dancing shoes. Oh, and don't forget your item for the Silent Auction....one per rig please! See you then!

Some of the events going on in the Sonora area during the time of the Rally are:

Sep 30 - Oct 9, 2011

Bach Festival - Sonora - (209) 536-6330

Oct 1, Calaveras Wine Alliance "Grape Stomp" - (209) 728-9467

Oct 1 Fiddle & Bango Contest in Columbia State Historic Park - (209) 536-1672

Oct 1 - 2 Oktober Fest - Twain Harte's 6th Annual (209) 586-4482

Oct 1 - 9 Sierra Repertory Theatre "A Delicate Balance" - (209) 532-3120

Oct 2 Happy 120th Birthday Yosemite - Closing Ceremonies –

Sept 30 - October 23 A DASH OF ROSEMARY at The Fallon House in Columbia

Sept 9 – Oct 9 Stage 3 Theatre:

"Tuesdays with Morrie" - (209) 536-1778

Oct 1 Grape Stomp, Murphys - (209) 728-9467

Oct 1 Walking Tour of Historic Murphys - (209) 728-3517

10am, leaving from the Old Timers Museum across from Murphys Historic Hotel. Free. Please call to confirm dates or to set up a group tour of 12 or more.

Dragoon Gulch Trail Hike: Located in the City of Sonora.

The Dragoon Gulch Trail provides its visitors with a unique opportunity to stroll through the Mother Lode's oak woodlands. The Dragoon Gulch Trail is a system of trails creating a 2 ½ mile loop. The trails travel along a natural creek up to the vista that provides a spectacular view of the City and its surrounding mountain ranges. The trails vary in difficulty making it perfect for the casual walker and for those who want a strenuous hike or jog.

As usual there will be a lot of things to do and see while at the Fall Rally so don't forget to fill out the registration at the end of the Newsletter to reserve your spot at the rally.

## **AUTOMATES FOR SALE**

2000 40' AutoMate

Three slides, rear living room with office, center kitchen and stand alone dinette, rear bay windows. Corian counter tops, 12cu. Ft. refrigerator with ice maker, 2 leather recliners, Onan 4000 LPG generator with less than 2 hrs use. Washer/dryer combination, 2 air conditioners, 2 furnaces, 4 window awnings, awnings over all 3 slides, electric step, air ride suspension, disc brakes, satellite dish. \$24,500

Roma Vukonich (408) 391 9466

rcv15200@yahoo.com

FALL RALLY REGISTRATION FORM

September 29, 30, October 1, 2, 2011  
Sonora Mother Lode Fair Grounds  
220 Southgate Drive (Highway 49)  
Sonora, CA 95370

Mail to:  
Pam Richichi  
25 Schooner Lane.  
Modesto CA 95356

Cost \$160.00 per rig with 2 persons, \$140.00 per rig with 1 person

Any extra nights camping will be \$20.00 per night & needs to be paid to the AutoMate RV Club.

**Dead line for registration September 19, 2011**

Here is my check made out to **AutoMate RV Club** in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_.

I am also paying for \_\_\_\_\_ extra nights @ \$\_\_\_\_\_ each night.

I will be arriving on (Date)\_\_\_\_\_ I will be leaving on (Date)\_\_\_\_\_

There will be \_\_\_\_\_ people in my rig.  I need handicapped parking.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_