

# **AUTOMATE RV CLUB**

## **NEWSLETTER**

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Editor: Evette Dilley

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### **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

By Neil Zinn

#### **Tempus Fugit**

As we watched our television sets showing the effects of the Yosemite Rim Fire, who would have expected that it would be the cause of having to cancel our Fall Rally? I'm hard pressed to consider what causes the most damage, fire or floods? There was just no other choice; even though the fire might be contained at last, the effects would be longer lasting as those displaced and fire fighters continued to use the fairgrounds until some semblance of normalcy was achieved. Our thanks to all our volunteers who spent time in planning for this event, only to have it snatched from their grasp. Helen and I just returned from a trip to Phoenix and Tucson. It was originally intended that we would pull our AutoMate to Arizona but as we watched the weather patterns we decided against it. Too darned hot and it doesn't cool down at night. The old California maxim of "it's dry heat" just didn't cut it for us. It turns out to have been a good decision. I know there are quite a few of us who just love the desert; in fact, Helen and I drove through Quartzite to see what that was all about this past year. Sorry, you won't find us there. Give us mountains and trees or at worst, ocean. Forget the dust and heat. As a good Californian, I "celebrate diversity" but you can have our share of the dust and the heat.

We did have a great time in Tucson, however. We had seen most of the local attractions before, the Biosphere, the desert museum, the Titan missile silo, the Boneyard, Pima County air museum, but I did double back through the Boneyard and air museum for a second look and to take an elderly old

friend through them who had not been there before. We skipped old Tombstone because everything to see carries a nifty price of admission. Not to digress, but elderly friend is almost redundant as I am elderly and so is just about anyone I know. Except you all, of course, because you are out there doing it.

For the trip home we decided to see Hoover Dam (Boulder Dam) as Helen had never been there and the new automobile and passenger bridge had opened since I was there. We recommend you revisit the area if you have not seen the latest improvements. The dam is amazing and similarly so is the bridge. It is all an amazing piece of engineering.

Enroute home we drove Highway 395 but cut over on to 98 to Monitor Pass to Tahoe and home through Placerville. So after toasting nicely in Phoenix and Reno, we hit snow on Monitor Pass. That was interesting and a preview of coming attractions. By the way if you are over on 395, consider visiting Lone Pine, home to many western movies that were made there when we were growing up. They do hold film festivals to celebrate their movie connections and it may interest you. The Alabama hills nearby were used over and over for filming purposes. You can visit them and see that old rock that you swear the posse went by time after time as they chased the bad guys. Enough rambling I suppose. All seems to be under control within the club. Remember that our Spring Rally is our business meeting and if you have matters that you want to bring forward that would require a vote, bring them to your officers attention so that due notice thereof can be provided.

Plan on a great time in King City, there are some mighty fine wineries to tour in the area.

## **FALL RALLY 2013**

I have never been superstitious but I have to admit that the year 2013 turned out to be a bad luck year for our Fall Rally, not to mention all of the unfortunate people that were effected by the Rim Fire. Now through no fault of their own, the people of that area that depend on tourism to make their living have been dealt another blow with the government shutdown and the closing of the Federal Parks keeping away tourist. So to say I'm sad that we had to cancel our rally makes me feel selfish.

At the very least we were inconvenienced but we'll be fine. We'll get together again in a few months and look back and say "oh well, it's been a while but here we are together again". But many of the people in that area are trying to figure out **how** to keep going and when and where will their next paycheck come from. So with that I ask you all to keep them all in your thoughts and prayers.

We will see you in the spring in King City and the Perrys and Dilleys and all the crews that were going to do the 2013 Fall Rally have decided to give it another go in 2014 . The Fall Rally of 2014 will be in Sonora at the fairgrounds, Sept. 25th to 28th. Good Lord willing and the creeks don't rise, we'll see you then, too.

## **SPRING RALLY 2014 HELP ASAP**

The 2014 Spring Rally committee needs your help. Due to the cancellation of the Fall Rally, the committee was unable to obtain sign-ups for the Spring Rally at King City's San Lorenzo Park on April 24, 25, 26 & 27, 2014. Thus we need AutoMate RV Club volunteers to head up the following:

- Table Decorations
- Thursday night (April 24) "Welcome social"
- Friday (April 25) Breakfast
- Saturday (April 26) Breakfast
- Friday (April 25) Dinner  
Rick and Sharon Delmos have volunteered to chair this dinner but need four (4) people to help with the dinner.
- Saturday (April 26) Dinner
- Saturday night clean up

The kitchen in the hall has a large stove, griddle, large refrigerator and a butcher block. There is a very nice large bar-be-que pit just outside the hall. To volunteer, respond to Chuck or Sandy Creevan (925) 455-1705. We are an equal opportunity employer. The committee would appreciate responses by December 1, 2013 so that we can continue in planning the rally. Thank you in advance for your help.  
Chuck & Sandy Creevan  
Bob & Barbara Fugate

## PROPOSED BYLAW WORDING CHANGE

(This is a repeat of the same piece put in the last Newsletter)

At our last Spring Rally, President, Neil Zinn appointed Chuck Creevan and Mick Serra as a committee to change the wording in the bylaws of the club to include persons who have a non-AutoMate RV and would be interested in joining our club. Such a change would hopefully allow for an increase in our declining membership.

According to the bylaws now, "all current and former owners of AutoMate recreational vehicles shall be eligible for membership upon payment of annual dues". This committee met and with their wives help came to a decision and proposed wording to change the bylaws.

The committee's idea was for a member (sponsor) to invite other RV owners (guest) to on of our rallies. If the guest owner then decides to join the club, they could and would pay dues and thus become a member. This is the way the new wording of the bylaws could be under Article 3, section 1 "all current and former owners of AutoMate recreational vehicles and sponsored guest owners of a recreational vehicle shall be eligible for membership upon payment of annual dues".

The committee only asks that the membership think and talk about this among themselves and action will be taken at the next Spring Rally April 24 - 27, 2014. If anyone has any ideas on this it can be submitted at the Spring Rally or submit them to Chuck Creevan or Mick Serra and they will present them at the Spring Rally.

Sincerely, *Chuck Creevan*

## ALASKA BY LAND & SEA

by Bob Howe



Life wouldn't be complete without seeing the big State of Alaska. We made reservations in the early winter of 2003 to take the Alaska Marine Highway through the inland passage to the town of Haines. To save a little money, we chose to depart from Prince Rupert, BC, driving from San Diego via I-5 (sooo boring) then following Route 97 from Weed to the Canadian border at Osoyoos. From there it's straight north to Prince George, BC where we took the Yellowhead highway due west to Prince Rupert. We departed in mid May and a week later, boarded the ferry by backing down a long ramp and being swallowed up in the hold, dwarfed by logger trucks and the like.



(Dwarfed in the Ferry's Hold)

With our Labrador in the coach and proceeded to the main deck for the first short leg to Wrangell Island where we disembarked to spend two nights at a primitive camp on the bay, and the days exploring the small island and, of course, stopping at a fabric shop for Nancy, who is a quilter.

The next short hop took us to Mitkof Island and it's main town of Petersburg. The weather turned gloomy, but we nevertheless enjoyed touring the small island in the rain, leaving the Automate at the one and only barely adequate RV park. Boarding the ferry this time was a different experience; this was a "side loader" accessed in the forward direction down the long ramp. A brake failure would result in us exiting the port side opening in the vessel ending up in the drink!



(The Side Loader)

The sail from Mitlof Island to Juneau was the longest leg of the inland passage voyage so we opted for a “stateroom” with bunk beds, private bath and non-open-able porthole. Dinner as usual was in the on-board cafeteria, and alas we did not sit at the captains table.

We spent more time than planned in Juneau due to illness, but nevertheless enjoyed two days of wellness, visiting the well known Mendenhall glacier before embarking on the final destination to Haines on the mainland. At last we were able to take off exploring the big state. We followed AK Highway 2 to Tok, several hours north of Haines. then continued northwest to Delta Junction.



(A view from the Denali Highway)

Instead of continuing to Fairbanks, we turned south on the Richardson Highway (AK 4) south to the junction of the Denali Highway (AK 8), a well maintained gravel road which ends some 100 miles later at George Parks highway to Denali National Park.

There we took the afternoon bus ride some 10miles into the interior, viewing the elk herds and views of Mt. McKinley. Denali was not a particular highlight of our trip since one could not drive far into the interior. Additionally, our truck transmission started acting up. With our fingers crossed, we made the one

day drive to the Anchorage Ford dealer.

Fortunately, our RV park was close to shopping and

a COSTCO. We rented a Cheap Heap Chevy to get around and make a day trip down to Whittier, a major seaport and cruise ship terminal on the east Kenai peninsula. The weather again was raining and foggy, and on the return back to Anchorage, we thought the Chevy would fail as well. Without rain the Whittier area would be a great place to explore. With the repair completed, we headed south to Homer at the tip of the Kenai. Our primitive camp site on the beach and was perfect. The weather turned great for our day at sea for halibut fishing. We ended up with about 30# of steaks which were promptly vacuum sealed and stowed in the trailer’s portable 12volt freezer.



(Homer Spit)

From Homer we drove to Seward on the east coast of the Kenai. We boondocked there, depending mostly on roof mounted solar panels aided by the generator. A short day-boat tour brought views of marine life in the bay.

Leaving Seward, we took the Glenn Highway to Wrangell Saint Elias National Park, dropping the trailer at an RV park and then driving the 60 mile long gravel road to the once prosperous town of MCarthy in the center of the Kennicott Copper mining area . It was once an enormous operation as witnessed by the tailings and multiple ore processing buildings. The road provides wonderful views of snow capped peaks as well as places where one can witness the subsistence salmon fishing by the native Americans.





(Kennicott Copper Mine)

Next, we made the short drive to Valdez obtaining an RV space at water's edge. Catching humpback salmon from this spot was no challenge. The next day we boarded a tour boat for an informative and scenic cruise viewing sea life and up close glaciers. From Valdez we headed back north to Tok, where the "Top of the World Highway" begins, This is a sparsely traveled but well maintained gravel road running east to the Yukon River and the mining town of Dawson in British Columbia. We stopped in the middle of nowhere at the famous? "Chicken" a near ghost town, consisting of a few buildings and of course the obligatory bar.

That night we camped on the Alaska side of the Yukon where, within a short walk were piles of junked river steamers; signs of bygone days and the gold rush. In the morning we boarded the "ferry" to cross over to Dawson. This vessel measured about 30 ft wide and 100 ft long and essentially was nothing more than a powered barge.

Securing an RV park space, we set about exploring the old town. We drove to the top of a hill overlooking Dawson and the Yukon with a glimpse of the Top of the World Highway (See below)



(The Yukon & Dawson)

Dawson is no longer a boomtown, rather it is a tourist curiosity. After exploring the shops and restaurants we downed a couple of beers at a real honky tonk saloon, with drunk piano player and dancing girls.



(Downtown Dawson)

On day two we toured one the enormous gold dredges abandoned when the gold ran out. Dawson proved to be another highlight of our journey. The next leg was the drive south through Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, through British Columbia and ending at Skagway a favored cruise line terminal. Our main interest here was the White Pass railroad tour into the former gold country. The tracks have been kept up to a point, and some of the bridges were reconstructed to avoid the dilapidated original portions of the route.



(Skagway)

Our trip home was via the Alaskan Highway through Watson Lake and Fort Nelson, ending once again at Prince George where the Automate required a complete brake job. A competent shop was recommended to us by the proprietor of the RV park.

This was a long trip but a fun adventure. Viewing a map of our journey revealed that we had seen less than 1/4 of Alaska. The rest of the state is not navigable by passenger cars. Small aircraft seem to be the best means of transportation. Being from San Diego makes the drive even longer, but we returned with fond memories.

### **AUTOMATE WANTED**

Want to purchase 28'-30' AutoMate, would prefer smooth siding. Willing to travel within a reasonable distance to see and or buy.

Contact Kay or Alden Hoover (209) 532-3728  
kayhoover@mac.com

### **AUTOMATE FOR SALE**

#### **27' 1997 Automate 5th wheel**

Located in the Okanagan area of British Columbia. It has been well cared for and maintained while traveling the last couple of winters to Arizona. Recently re-upholstered fold out couch with large storage drawer underneath, commercial vinyl laminate flooring, huge storage area under bed, large windows with night/day blinds, 13' x 39" hydraulic slide for quick in and out. A/C, Electric fold out steps, electric fireplace/heater, brand new tires, solid oak cupboards with pull out pantry in rear kitchen, Front outside compartment has gas lifts, entire front area is huge basement accessible from 3 sides with beer fridge inside, also new Dometic fridge inside (3 yr warranty) trailer/bike hitch on back. 4 independent lifts for easy leveling, "air-ride suspension" for rougher roads. 2 -30lbs propane tanks, trailer was propane certified tested last year. It only needs a TV. We are located in Oyama -2 blocks off the old Hwy 97  
\$8900

Delivery arrangements can be made.

Brian & Lillian Reese

Call us at 250-548-3525 for more information or pictures.

mailto:info@tweenlakesresort.ca

### **REMEMBER TO PLEASE CALL CHUCK AND SANDY CREEVAN TO VOLUNTEER TO FILL THE COMMITTEE SPOTS FOR THE SPRING 2014 RALLY**

**See article page 2 to see what spots need to be filled**