



Volume 10 Number 4

September 2023

President's Message

We have just returned from the 35th Anniversary Rally for Safari International in Silverton OR. Lee Buckley, with a lot of support from the membership, put on a great rally. NWTFC membership was well represented with 13 coaches. More details in this newsletter.

Safari International is having membership numbers decline and a lack of persons willing to volunteer for leadership positions. It leaves the organization in an uncertain position. Our club was facing those same issues, but the situation looks considerably better at the moment.

NWTFC has an exciting slate of officers willing to step up. They bring a lot of positive new energy to the club. I am looking forward to seeing the club continue to thrive and bring in new members.

Our club has a 20th anniversary in 2024 and a celebratory rally is definitely called for. The 10th anniversary rally set a very high bar with a lovely dinner at Timberline Lodge and camping near Mt. Hood. I am researching venues and taking suggestions so please let me know your thoughts.

This will be my last submission as club president to this newsletter. It must be time to reflect. I have filled the position of President for six years and have seen the club membership grow and shrink. The pandemic certainly took a toll on the
(Continued on page 2)



Elections in October

Ballots will soon be sent by email to the membership for the 2023 elections. Each candidate will serve a two-year term.

President – Rebecca Edens
Secretary – Kathleen Walczak
Natl. Director – Al Zimmerman

RALLY SCHEDULE

(To be Wagon Master for a rally, contact Mike Ashbridge, president, at mikeashbridge@comcast.net)

2024

March 20 – 23 FMCA Convention
Tucson, AZ

Spring ??

August 10 – 12 Central OR Roundup
Pre-rally to Redmond Convention
Culver KOA

August 14 – 17 109th FMCA Convention
Redmond, OR

Fall ??

Be a Wagon Master & share the fun!

Contact Kathleen Walczak, Rally Coordinator

President's Message continued

club activities but participation this year has been great. Let's keep it going.

I remember feeling like an outsider at the first club rallies I attended, but by the second event, I had people from the club I looked forward to seeing and catching up with. That hasn't changed. The numbers of persons just keep getting larger. I was encouraged to become involved in the club by the friendliness of the members and their willingness to share knowledge and experience with others. I would like to encourage everyone to step up and become involved with the club activities and leadership. It pays dividends in so many ways.

Thank you all for your support and willingness to help me stumble through my terms as President. We have such great members and I am proud to have been involved in the leadership group.

Mike Ashbridge - Soon to Be Past President

Faithful RVer

An RVer was driving along a California beach when suddenly the sky clouded above his head and, in a booming voice, the Lord said, "Because you have TRIED to be faithful to me, I will grant you one wish."

The RVer pulled over and said, "Lord, please build a bridge to Hawaii so I can drive there in my RV."

The Lord said, "Your request is materialistic... think of the enormous challenges for that kind of undertaking. The supports required to reach the bottom of the Pacific! The concrete and steel it would take! It will nearly exhaust several natural resources. Take a little more time and think of something that would honor and glorify me."

The RVer thought about it for a long time. He pondered for several weeks. Finally, one day, he prayed for something different.

"Lord, I wish that I could understand my wife. I want to know how she feels inside, what she's thinking when she gives me the silent treatment, why she cries, what she means when she says 'nothing's wrong,' and how I can make this woman truly happy."

There was silence. Then the Lord replied,

"You want two lanes or four on that bridge?"

From the Rally Coordinator



Greetings Trek Fun Club Folks! We just returned from the 35th Safari International Rally, and it was certainly fantastic. I wanted to give you an update on my efforts as your Rally Coordinator to give us 3 rallies in 2024.

- At this time, we have one rally booked: The FMCA Pre-Rally August 9-12, followed by the FMCA Redmond Convention August 14-17.
- Did you realize 2024 is the NWTFC's 20th Anniversary? Mike Ashbridge is working on a venue for our own splashy Anniversary rally & party.
- Additionally, Roy Miller is working on a boondocking rally in southern Oregon.
- Carolyn Carpenter is exploring a 2024 or 2025 rally on the east side of Washington somewhere.
- Rebecca Edens and John Herold are exploring a 2024 rally near Tillamook.
- And, lastly, I have a tentative booking for Hoquiam to round us up to 3 if necessary.

One thing I've been hearing over and over from those I've spoken with regarding being a Wagon Master is the concern they don't have the experience. My response is that there are many of us that will help if they can locate the venue. My short experience with this club is that we're all kind, friendly, and want to help. We can do this!

Kathleen Walczak, Rally Coordinator

FMCA Receives Research Report on Prospective Members

Marketing General Inc., a major data research firm, did a study of the perspectives of RV owners who are not members of FMCA. In other words – what are the needs and wants of the general RV world that has not rushed to join FMCA? The study had four objectives:

1. Determining perceptions of FMCA and its brand.
2. Understanding what prospective members would want from a membership in FMCA.
3. Identifying preferences of prospective members regarding communication and association.
4. Determining attitudes toward FMCA's governing structure, chapter membership, and voting rights.

A survey was conducted among RV owners identified through a purchased list. The significance of this study was that the results were data-driven (not opinions), independent, and relevant. Here are some study findings.

70% of RV owners typically travel less than 300 miles in year with their RV.

Half of participants use their RV for 30 days a year or less.

The **FMCA emblem** (goose egg with the 1953 bus) is outdated and doesn't reflect their type of RVing. The name **Family Motor Coach Association** suggests the association only welcomes or caters to motor home owners.

Participants were asked to rank 37 potential benefits that would entice them to join an RV association. Top 10 benefits were:

1. Campground discounts
2. Fuel discounts
3. Campground finder/reservation system
4. Roadside assistance plan in dues
5. Discounts on parts or service
6. Campground reviews
7. Mobile app for trip planning;
8. Free dump stations
9. Rapid response when help needed
10. Unlimited mobile hot spot WIFI plans

Bottom 10 benefits – not of primary interest

37. Ability to influence association
37. Affinity groups (chapters) based on interests
35. Association sponsored service projects
34. Chapters based on regional areas that have rallies
33. Advocacy on behalf of RVers
32. Regional or national rallies (conventions) with workshops/vendors
31. Medical insurance program for full-time RVers
30. Ombudsman to help resolve problems with manufacturers
29. Means to connect with RV owners for gatherings
28. Medical evacuation program (FMCAssist)

Key conclusions from the study:

1. Most RVers own towables – FMCA must emphasize towables over motor homes.
2. Most RVers do not travel far from home and do not use their RV more than 30 days a year.
3. FMCA emblem does not relate to typical RV owners.
4. FMCA name and reference to “motor coach” is a hindrance to growth.
5. Discounts and roadside assistance are key benefits desired.
6. RV chapters and medical evacuation program are not incentives to stimulate membership growth.
7. Hanging out with friends and meeting new people is what RVing is all about.

A similar report from **Membership Corporation of America** (MCA) provided recommendation to move FMCA forward. Some insights from their report:

- Current branding presentation does not align with prospects expectations of what an RV association should look like.
- Options should be explored regarding governance to include the 84% of members who are not in chapters.
- There is a misalignment of current member benefits to what prospects are looking for in an association.
- Social media represents the #1 way FMCA can create awareness in the broader RV community.



788 registered RVs gathered in Gillette, WY for the 107th FMCA Convention. 228 of these were first-time attendees. As always, there were many helpful workshops to help RVers enjoy their rigs more.

The Governing Board (GB) met on

Wednesday, and this meeting turned out to be long one – it lasted from 9:00 am to 6:20 pm.

The research report by MGI (see page 3) was one of the first presentations. This was followed by the adoption of Planning for FMCA's Future (strategic plan) proposed by the Long Range Planning Committee. This is the first strategic plan to be implemented since 2003.

Several constitution and bylaw changes (some related to the strategic plan) were adopted: Constitution changes will need to be brought before the entire membership.

- FMCA may choose to operate under an assumed business name and a process was identified for approving a dba.
- A new mission and purpose statement were adopted.
- A new "Pathfinder" category of membership was created and defined as someone who has not purchased an RV, but is in a research phase and planning to buy an RV.

As always there were several policies and procedures that were brought before the body.

- The emblem (goose egg) will remain.
- A process for adopting a logo for marketing purposes was identified. Approval of a new logo rests with the Executive Board.

Election results:

- President – Gary Milner
- Vice President – Paul Mitchell
- Secretary – Pamela Richard
- Treasurer – Barbara Smith (re-elected)

Evening entertainment featured some Wyoming music.

- Wednesday night featured dueling pianos and a request sing-a-long.
- Thursday featured the Leadslingers who brought tunes from the 1980s – 2000s and featured country, rock and more.
- Friday was a "Good Vibrations" chapterfest with food trucks and live music.
- Saturday night featured a group called the "Pillage People" who provided a fresh take on familiar tunes.

FUTURE FMCA CONVENTIONS

Fiesta del Sol!

March 20 – 23, 2024

Pima County Fairgrounds
Tucson, Arizona

Rarin' to go to Redmond

August 14 – 17, 2024

Deschutes Cty Fairgrounds
Redmond, Oregon

Hosted by FMCA NW Area
Many volunteers will be
Needed!



HOQUIAM RALLY

July 10 – 12

Wagon Masters
Wojo & Kathleen Walczak
Mike & Lynn Ashbridge

Hoquiam RV Park turned out to be an excellent location for this rally. The weather was great and the river and various trails were scenic - and they had an awesome clubhouse. There were 36 Trekkers present with 20 RV's (including several SOB's). Upon arrival, each coach received a welcome package which included the program, key rings, cup koozies, and a NWTFC decal for their coach. We had a great representation of old and new members and this created a great synergy and lots of conversations and laughs. The usual discussions on repairs and upgrades to each other's vehicles was heard over and over.

The food was truly delicious at every meal: Every morning we had a continental breakfast with the usual foods plus Kathleen surprised us with homemade cinnamon rolls the first morning, and homemade blueberry muffins and pumpkin muffins the other 2

days. Monday evening was our hors d'oeuvres potluck dinner. Tuesday evening was a general potluck. Wednesday, we had Mike's pork ribs (which were so yummy). Our members filled out the meal with salads, potato side dishes, baked beans, corn muffins and more. For dessert there was cheesecake with 3 toppings: blueberry, strawberry, and raspberry. Also 2 fresh strawberry pies and 2 banana cream pies, and frosted brownies.



We had our annual business meeting Monday night right after dinner and ended it with Haagen Daz ice cream bars. Tuesday daytime was free time. Some went to Westport, some to the nearby winery, and others relaxed. Tuesday night we played 5 rounds of Card Bingo with \$ winnings. We also sold 50/50

raffle tickets during the 3 days of our event. On Wednesday night we pulled tickets for a variety of giveaway gifts and the big 50 raffle prize which was half of our earnings (\$90).

Wednesday morning, we went on a tour of the Polson Museum in Hoquiam. It is inside a home built in 1924 for the Polson Logging Co. heir. It now houses a myriad of entertaining artifacts and displays. And in the barn, there were items from the logging camp: The '45' locomotive, Linn halftrack, Lamb SpeedTrak and other 'big stuff'. Everyone agreed the tour was well worth the \$5 admission charge. Wednesday afternoon folks relaxed and some played Pegs and Jokers. Thursday morning after breakfast folks headed out coach by coach.



Lynn & Kathleen provide a welcome to the rally



Lee takes a look at an old truck

– Kathleen Walczak, Wagon Master

SAFARI INTERNATIONAL
35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION RALLY
 Silver Spur RV Resort, Silverton, Oregon
September 5-9, 2023

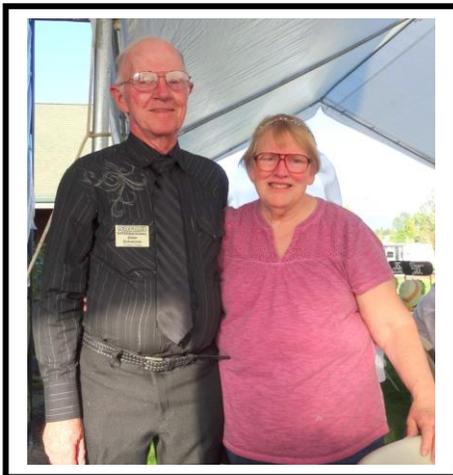


*35th Anniversary Rally
 West*

So Much FUN in Silverton!

Wagon Master: Lee Buckley, Safari International President

NWTFC was represented by 13 of the 34 coaches present at this memorable Safari rally. . . Ashbridge (2), Block (2), Buckley (1), Carpenter (2), Cooper 2), Edwards (1), Harris (2), Herold/Edens (2), Pratt (1), Ruby (1), Turner (2), Walczak (2), and V. Weaver/ G. Schweitzer (2). Other Safari clubs had members present as well, so it was a nice mix of friends and 'First Timers'. Several of our Trek club members had also been [Safari International](#) and Safari-So-Good members, so it was easy for the various couples to blend into a friendly, cohesive group.



On Tuesday, our members arrived throughout the day. Valeta & Glen had arrived days earlier, as they planned to be discretely married with close Safari friends present. Safari International (SI) distributed Safari bags to all attendees containing the rally roster, sites, rally schedule, campground map, S.I. lion lapel pin, zebra scarf, Safari patch – as well as a fine S.I. lion logo 35th Safari Int'l Anniversary coffee cup. We gathered for hearty hors d'oeuvres that evening, catered by 'Menu by Mary Lou'. This caterer was available right on the premises and served us wonderful breakfasts each morning and tasty dinners in the evening

following happy hour. The tables each had a fitting, animal print runner and jungle animal/pith helmet centerpiece. Lee Buckley spoke to us re: the rally agenda and about the many door prizes he'd be making available to lucky winners. Over the rally, there would be many little gifts like hats, place mats, a lap blanket, leather key fob, etc. – but also a pelleted travel-size smoker BBQ, \$\$ Visa or Mastercard for fuel costs, etc., \$ certificates toward RV work at Henderson's Line-Up, & 3 nights stay at Silver Spur RV



Rebecca discovers her goody bag



Meals provided by
Menu by Mary Lou

Park thru 2024. Wow. The Carpenters got a nice Safari boxed set of games for travel and an electronic bug zapper was also given away.

On Wednesday many attended a seminar presented by Robert Henderson of Henderson's Line up of Grants Pass – "Suspension Upgrades/Optimization." 15 coaches had been signed up to receive complimentary inspections throughout the rally. On Thursday, after the delicious catered breakfast, Lee Buckley led a technical roundtable discussion re: LiFePo4/Solar/Inverter/ Upgrades, etc.

In our spare time, many took their toads to explore nearby Silverton, Silver Falls State Park, the Oregon Garden, the village of Mt. Angel, fruit stands, etc. Wojo made a hinged, wooden entry step cover for Herold's Trek and a group of project-minded Trekkers spent hours BS'ing while it was nicely installed with a latch. Their wives all brought lawn chairs and chatted in the shade of the coach on that warm sunny day.

One day we all gathered at the lodge for 'Card Bingo' – for 3 rounds of generous quarter winnings and one where we had each thrown a dollar into the kitty for a super win by one lucky soul! Two of our Trekkies won quarter jacks.

Because a 'quorum' was present to validate an S.I. business meeting, we all brought our lawn chairs and participated in some good discussions. One Safari couple on an RV trip from their home in Appleton, Wisconsin had provided the large TV screen in the side of their Phaeton coach for a ZOOM mtg. with the SI Executive Board.

Our final event aboard the Willamette Queen stern-wheeler riverboat at the Salem River Front Park couldn't go as scheduled due to a previous event exposing the staff to Covid symptoms. Our wagon master was notified ASAP! The caterer delivered our dinner to the S.I. rally instead. The immersive Murder Mystery dinner buffet with special guest artists took place right at the campground. It was an interactive & entertaining evening filled with suspense and surprises! A few of our Trek members (Dick Harris, John Herold, Jeanette Block and Lee Buckley) wound up being 4 of the costumed suspects who each seemed to have a motive to commit m-u-r-d-e-r! Evidence eventually led the detective and table teams to decide on the guiltiest suspect. It was a double murder of revenge – poison and a shooting. Turned out to be a woman — one of our own Trekkies! – as was one of the victims as well!

After the lodge was cleaned & tidy, most members had headed out by 10 am on Saturday, September 9th. Lee Buckley, as SI President, will also be attending the (Eastern) 35th Safari Int'l celebration rally in Branson, Missouri this fall.

Written by Jeanette Block

Photo credits: Kathleen W., Jeanette B., Mike A., John H.

NWTFC OFFICERS & Committee Chairs

President – Mike Ashbridge
mikeashbridge@comcast.net

Vice President – Wojo Walczak
wwojo52@gmail.com

Secretary – Kathleen Walczak
mcnamka@gmail.com

Treasurer – Marth Thomson
marthy68t@gmail.com

Natl. Dir – Al Zimmerman
zimmeralz@gmail.com

Past President – Steve Webber-
Plank
donwebberplank@mac.com

Rally Coordinator – Kathleen
Walczak
mcnamka@gmail.com

Webmaster – John Herold
NWTFCwebmaster@gmail.com

Historian – Jeannette Block
ed.jnet@earthlink.net

Newsletter Editor
Al Zimmerman
zimmeralz@gmail.com

Member Care – Nancy Harris
nmharris47@gmail.com

Feel free to contact
NWTFC officers or
committee chairs with
questions or suggestions.

NWTFC Website
www.nwtfc.com



The Northwest Trek Fun Club (NWTFC) was formed with the idea that Trek owners are people who are unique because the Trek design is quite unique. They are people who like to get out and visit the very beautiful sites and history of North America. However, they do not want to do it in a huge motor home. The Trek design gives us the comforts of home but still is small enough to get into those off-the-beaten-track sites.

NWTFC was established in 2004 and currently has about 80 coach members, including Treks spanning the 1991 Isuzu to the 2008 28RB2 and the 2016 Trek. We pride ourselves in fostering new friendships and knowledge of the Trek. We stress that our club's middle name is F-U-N.

We plan several rallies each year in several states and communicate with our members by email, newsletter, and through the club website. NWTFC territory covers WA, ID, OR, AK, MT, BC, Alberta, Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. All Trek owners, regardless of their home state, are welcome to join or to attend our rallies as guests.

Membership dues are \$10 per calendar year. See the website for a membership application.

When your membership is processed, you will be given a password access to the secure Members Only page of the NWTFC website.

NWTFC is a chapter of FMCA and very closely associated with SAFARI International.

Trek Travels is the official newsletter of the NW Trek Fun Club. If you would no longer like to receive this newsletter or email messages from NWTFC, please send an email to Al Zimmerman (newsletter editor) at zimmeralz@gmail.com stating your preference.