



Volume 9 Number 2



TREK TRAVELS



March 2022

President's Message

Well here we are in what we hope will be the year of the end to COVID. I am not sure that will ever happen but the situation is looking up. Vaccination numbers are up, Case numbers are going down, and currently it looks like mask mandates are set to expire soon.

We have three NWTFC rallies scheduled for the year and the FMCA Welcome Back Rally in June at Coos Bay. Look for more information in this newsletter. This looks to be a good year for the club, and the rallies all sound like great events. Please try to attend as many as you can, and support the members that are putting on these Rallies.

Our club is still in need of volunteers to take over positions on the Executive Board and a Webmaster. Please consider stepping up to help NWTFC stay in existence. None of these positions are big time consumers, but they require a commitment. The best way to enjoy the club is to become involved.

We have been staying close to home this winter and the motor home is winterized. The weather has been very spring-like lately and I was thinking of filling the water tanks and getting it ready for the season but the forecast calls for lows in the teens next week! Our flowers that are popping open are in for a shock. It is still February so I guess I was

pretty optimistic. It will be spring soon though. Yay!

I hope this finds you all well
Mike Ashbridge

President

RALLY SCHEDULE 2022

May 19 – 23 Viking Fest Rally
Poulsbo, WA
Gary & Irva Cooper

June 18 – 21 Rally on the Lake
Pre-rally
Osprey Point RV Resort
Lakeside, OR
Al & Elaine Zimmerman
Scott & Carolyn Carpenter

June 23 – 26 FMCA NW Area Rally
Mill Casino
Coos Bay, OR

August 2 - 7 Port Townsend Rally
Ron & Mary Mahugh

August 24 – 27 FMCA Intl. Convention
Lincoln, NE

Fall Rally possibilities?

NWTFC's goal
is to have 3 – 4 rallies each year.
Be a Wagon Master & share the fun!

RALLY COORDINATOR NEEDED

A goal of NWTFC is to have 3 – 4 rallies a year – one of which may be the pre-rally to the FMCA NW Area Rally. For everyone's planning it is helpful to have an annual rally calendar established by March of each year.

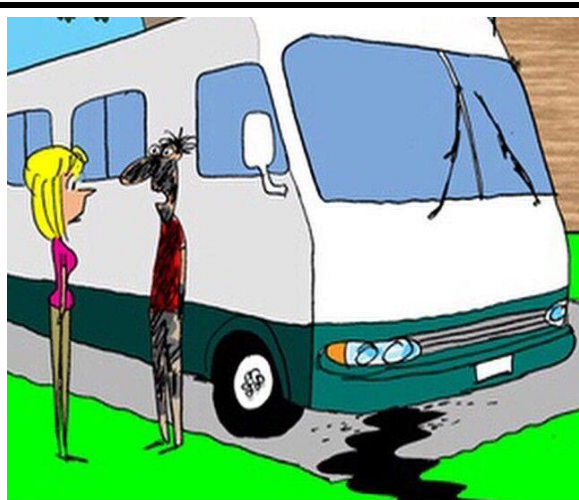
The Rally Coordinator oversees rally schedules and provides guidance and support to wagon masters. He/she is to be ...

- Positive encourager
- Planner
- Recruiter
- Helper to wagon masters to find rally sites and provide hints for to successful rallies.

There are many helpful materials for rally planning and mentors to assist wagon masters.

Everyone appreciates the Rally Coordinator and his/her role in helping the NW Trek Fun Club have fun. This could be a great opportunity for you to help support the Trek club.

For a copy of the full job description, go the NWTFC website in the members section, about the club. If you are interested or have questions, send a note to Mike Ashbridge, president.
mikeashbridge@comcast.net.



*"I thought I'd give the RV a tune-up.
After a technician fixes all the damage
I caused, we can leave."*



Welcome Back NW Rally

FMCA NW Area Rally
June 23 – 26, 2022
Mill Casino, North Bend, Oregon

The NW Area Rally has not been held for a couple years because of the Covid virus. Now it is back and planning is underway.

- Seminars & Exhibits
- Salmon dinner
- Ice cream social
- Entertainment
- Hot Dog Bash
- 50/50 raffle
- Wine Walk
- Swap meet

NW Trek Fun Club will be staffing the FMCA store which will be located in the vendor area. **Volunteers are needed.** It is fun to meet people from across the country. Selling FMCA merchandise is easy. Join the fun and volunteer to help staff the store. With more team members, we can do more and reduce everyone's time commitment.

- Register for the FMCA NW Rally
- Register for the Dune Country Pre-Rally
- Caravan together to the fairgrounds on June 21.
- Camp together and enjoy times of fellowship.

Registration is now open online. Sign-up for 30 amp electric and we will be parked together.

Viking Fest Rally

May 19 – 23, 2022
Poulsbo, Washington

Wagon masters

Gary & Irva Cooper
tennis4yu@msn.com

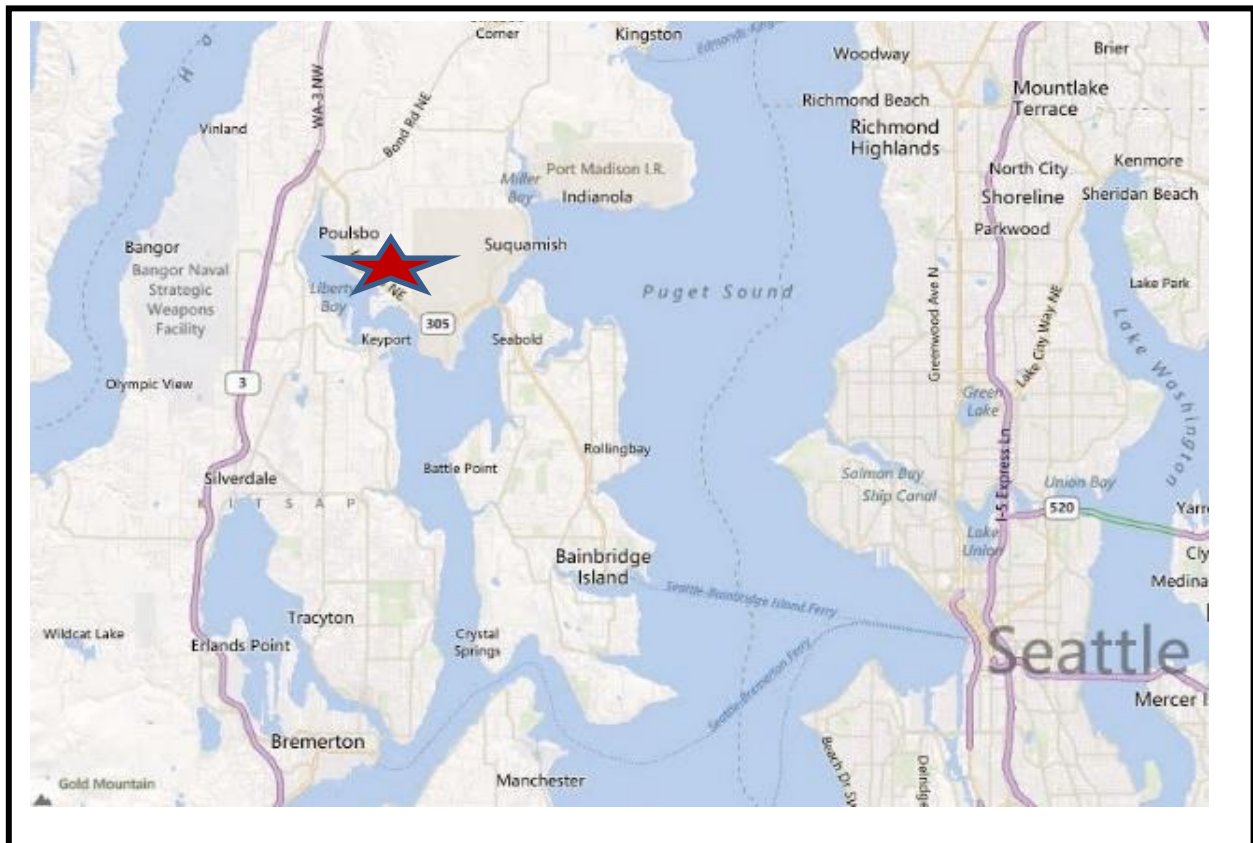
Some activities will occur at the Cooper home in Poulsbo.

Campsite Location Suquamish Clearwater Casino Resort

Suquamish, Washington

From Olympia or Tacoma, take WA 3 north from Bremerton to WA 305 thru Poulsbo to the casino.

- Resort features 5 restaurants, 18-hole golf course, spa, and more.
- Resort celebrates Suquamish people and Chief Seattle.





Poulsbo, WA
Festival Dates
May 20 – 22, 2022

For over 50 years Poulsbo has been celebrating Viking Fest – a celebration rooted from Norway's Constitution Day of May 17. In Norway, it is a festival of flags and colorful processions, where children walk to the music of marching bands. Traditional Norwegian costumes are a prominent and common part of the celebrations. Festivities include a parade, food & vendor booths, as well as a carnival with rides.



Viking Fest Rally • May 19 – 23, 2022

REGISTRATION

Rally fee: (includes 4 nights camping, 3 continental breakfasts, 2 dinners including catered dinner.)
Also 1 Heavy hors d'oeuvres potluck and 1 potluck dinner.

Total Rally Fee \$ 250 (Couple) \$198 (Single)

Make checks payable to NWTEC. Mark check for
Viking Fest Rally. Mail completed registration and check to:
Irva Cooper, 15705 Cedar Grove Road, Poulsbo, WA 98370

17 Sites Reserved
Hotel rooms may
be available –
contact Irva soon.
206-295-1058

Registration and funds must be received by April 1, 2022.

Pilot _____ Co-pilot _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ FMCA# _____

Email _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____

Emergency contact (name & phone #) _____

Do you have any special need we should be aware of? Y or N (i.e. food allergies, etc.)

Trek Model _____ Year _____ License# _____ State _____

Are you towing a car? Y or N If yes, are you able to help transport others? Y or N



Wagon masters
971-645-0767
Al & Elaine Zimmerman
Scott & Carolyn Carpenter

RALLY ON THE LAKE SCHEDULE

Saturday, June 18

6:00 pm Dinner – heavy hors
d'oeuvres potluck
After dinner – Taboo, LRC games

Sunday, June 19

9:00 am Continental breakfast

6:00 Dinner – Chicken a la King
Coos Bay – then, now & the future

Monday, June 20

9:00 am Breakfast -omelets

11:00 – 3:00 pm Secret Safari

6:00 pm Asian dinner – Sumin's
Business Meeting

Tuesday, June 21

9:00 am Continental breakfast

10:30 am Caravan to NW Rally

RALLY ON THE LAKE

Pre-rally Gathering

June 18 – 21, 2022

Location

Osprey Point RV Resort
Lakeside, Oregon
US 101 12 miles S of Reedsport
14 miles N of North Bend
Go E on Airport Way into Lakeside
Right on 8th St., Left on N Lake Road

Helping staff the FMCA
store booth at the FMCA
NW Rally is fund & a great
way to get to know fellow
Trekksers.

SECRET SAFARI?

It's a secret! Where are we going?
What will we see? What will we do?
It's a secret!

Bring a sack lunch, comfortable shoes
for a walk, and a sense of adventure.
You will be amazed and have
something to tell others about.

COOS BAY

What was – What is – What is to come

Helen Mineau is a port commissioner.
Her family has been involved in the area
for many, many years.

- Largest natural deep-water port
between San Francisco & Seattle
- Once world's largest lumber shipping
port
- Shipped coal to San Francisco
- Potential intermodal container port
- Railroad makes Coos Bay vital
- Vern Gorst – transportation pioneer &
founder of United Airlines



Rally on the Lake 2022 PRE-RALLY REGISTRATION

Rally fee: (includes 1st night camping, 3 breakfasts, 2 dinners including catered dinner).

Total Rally Fee

\$ 126 (Couple)

\$88 (Single)

Make checks payable to NWTEC. Mail completed registration and check to:
Al Zimmerman, 875 Seabreeze Terrace, Coos Bay, OR 97420

Registration and funds must be received by April 30, 2022.

Pilot _____ Co-pilot _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ FMCA# _____

Email _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____

Emergency contact (name & phone #) _____

Do you have any special need we should be aware of? Y or N (i.e. food allergies, etc.)

Trek Model _____ Year _____ License# _____ State _____

Are you towing a car? Y or N If yes, are you able to help transport others? Y or N

Volunteering to help staff FMCA store at NW Area Rally ____ Yes ____ No ____ # Volunteers



QUARTZITE • ARIZONA 2022

The 2022 annual no host no cost gathering of Treks was held in Quartzsite, Arizona January 20 - 23. Covid again depressed the attendance numbers and demanded some behavioral and procedural changes. Even with Covid, 35 Treks attended accompanied by about 5 SOBs (some other brand).

We kicked off our 2022 gathering with the Thursday afternoon Welcome to Quartzsite heavy hors d'oeuvres social get together. Once again we learned that about 30% of our Trekkers were first timers at Quartzsite. There were Trekkers in attendance from every corner of the United States. Nobody went back to their Treks hungry, you can be sure of that. A few new multimeters (voltmeters) found new homes as well.

Friday saw an impromptu gathering of Trackers and Samurais, a very popular toad. Quite a bunch were in attendance and a lot of heads were seen stuck in hoods. This was followed by our traditional Tech Talk where a number of topics of interest to Trekkers were covered. Bret Medbury quickly covered the benefits of converting your Trek to LED interior lighting and of upgrading to "Smart" fuses that Glow When they Blow. Big Al gave a great presentation on upgrading to Lithium batteries – their charging systems and properly managing them. Brad Tubner spoke on the flaw that exists in and failure mode of some of the later electric awnings. He generously volunteered to repair/upgrade any



present. Lee Buckley gave a presentation on the latest and simplified version of upgrading the Hydroboost brake booster to a more potent unit.



The technical stuff was appropriately followed by our afternoon social/cocktail gathering. This Happy Hour was special as we were also treated to a presentation by Redlands Truck and RV informing us of the services they provide and the goodies they offer for our Treks.

Saturday Lee Buckley hosted a group to caravan to The Desert Bar. The Desert Bar is totally off grid, a fair ways from any civilization, and a very unique experience. [Nellie E Saloon \(thedesertbar.com\)](http://thedesertbar.com) Saturday also was the day the Quartzsite RV Sports & Vacation Show (AKA The Big Tent) opened. Many took advantage of the big tent and also prowled the flea markets etc., available in the area.

We had absolutely wonderful weather with one exception. We had our potluck scheduled for 4:30 on Saturday and at about 2:00 the skies began to darken, turned angry by 3:00, rain by 3:30. By 4:00 it was a downpour and we had to call it and postpone the pot luck to Sunday noon. Dick Kreutzer and Bret Medbury went door to door with the sad news and got wicked wet. At 4:30 the rib fairy showed up at each Trek door with a huge platter of the most luscious pork ribs any of us had ever had, wow. The "Rib Fairy" was Pat Larson and her husband David doing the lugging. Her story was the ribs were done and they had to leave in the morning so here. The ribs really were world class.

Anyway, by 5:00 the rain had stopped, the sun was shining, and folks started showing up with pot luck food. Shows how well they listen huh? In fairness the folks at the Desert Bar had not been back at 4:00 and by 5 they thought they were late. So, in typical resilient Trekker fashion there was an impromptu pot luck. Sunday at noon we had another great Trekker potluck. To me, it is just amazing the fantastic food Trekkers can prepare out in the desert and also do it on a flexible schedule.

Sunday morning was our traditional Flea Market where a number of Trek related and non-Trek related items found new homes. This is also the day when at least some of our Trekkers must move on down the road. Now though they are loaded down with new friends, new information, new ideas, something fixed (maybe) and fresh lies to tell around campfires. There were lifetime friendships sparked here, priceless.

This year was an experiment where we attempted to improve internet connectivity by moving to a new location that seemed to offer improvement, however the new site was not all we wished for in multiple ways. The new location was checked last year by multiple folks using multiple services, BUT we were fooled because signal strength (number of bars) is not the same as bandwidth (speed). In addition, these checks were done last year when due to Covid there was far less crowd in Quartzsite. We had full bars on our T-Mobile/FMCA hotspot, but speed was less than 0.5 MBPS. The same was true with almost all providers, although Verizon was slightly better.

Laura and I traveled all over Quartzsite with our T-Mobile/FMCA hotspot and saw absolutely no improvement in bandwidth anywhere even sitting directly under three different towers. The system simply cannot handle it when a town of 2,000 jumps to well over 10,000 and 99% of the increase are users are dependent of the cell towers.

The bottom line is that unless the providers do something to increase bandwidth in Quartzsite the connectivity is really bad no matter where you are. If you are a Verizon user a booster helps at the original gathering site because the signal is weak, but all other services that we were able to check have plenty of bars and a booster can frequently be a liability.

If we want to preserve our traditional Quartzsite experience, I would like to request that all of our Trekkers contact their cell/data providers and Quartzsite Chamber of Commerce to lobby for better bandwidth at Quartzsite during January and February for the benefit of their businesses. If customers refuse to come, the businesses, including the big tent will be hurt. This is especially important if you are using the FMCA promoted T-mobile hotspot since so many FMCA members (including all their officers) go to Quartzsite.



The only place we know of with bandwidth was at the Tyson Wells (Big Tent) area itself. I have contacted the RV Travel Newsletter people at rvtravel.com and the Quartzsite Chamber of commerce at QuartzsiteTourism@yahoo.com on the subject. I have yet to contact FMCA.

(OBTW Laura and I returned after the Big Tent was gone and the internet was not measurably better.)

A vote was taken of those that had experience at both gathering sites and nearly 100% voted

to return to the original gathering site. A date change was also suggested, however that does not appear to offer significant improvement in Bandwidth either.

The 2023 Quartzsite Trek Gathering will happen in the traditional location on the traditional dates. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.



SERVING FMCA & YOU
Tom Selvidge



Early in 2021 I was asked to join the FMCA Membership Retention Committee. So, what is the Membership Retention Committee? Our group is chartered with coming up with ways to make our FMCA membership better and more valuable. We review concerns members submit about benefits, lack of benefits, pricing, rules and regulations. I'm enjoying the opportunity to help better FMCA for all members, from travel trailers to 5th wheelers to motorhome owners. Many of the committee members, like myself, are members of other RV associations. We are helping build FMCA into a stronger organization for our membership knowing what is offered through those other associations. We want the best bang for our bucks and yours.

The results show FMCA was at the highest number of memberships back in 2004 with 129,189 members. Over the years and for a number of reasons, FMCA's membership declined to 70,154 by 2016. A number of steps, including the additional benefit of FMCAssist (medical evacuation assistance program) helped the membership begin to increase again. By 2019 it was realized that financing the FMCAssist program by dipping into financial reserves was no longer feasible. At the 2019 Minot Governing Board meeting steps were taken to increase the dues to cover the cost of the FMCAssist benefit. This dues increase (and other factors) resulted in a drop in membership numbers. In 2020 FMCA found a new provider for the FMCAssist benefit program, making it possible to reduce our membership dues back to the former amount of \$50/year (pre-2019). Since the beginning of January 2021 FMCA's numbers are steadily increasing. Because the FMCA office staff are over loaded implementing new benefits and the membership numbers are going up, our committee has been asked to work with existing vendors to create better options. We are also analyzing our current programs and suggesting ideas to our leadership. It is a work in progress.



EXPLORING NEW WINTER SPACES IN THE REGIONS BEYOND

Al & Elaine Zimmerman
Tom & Jolyne Selvidge

Many members of the NW Trek Fun Club head south for the winter. Some leave in October when the rains begin. Others wait until after the holidays are spent with grandchildren. Many seem to gravitate to Arizona – Apache Junction, Mesa, or Yuma. Some enjoy the Arizona state parks. Other adopt a community for 2 – 6 months. Some prefer the “freedom” of Quartzite and other boondocking area.

There is a whole wide world beyond the comfortable and familiar areas. Our motorhomes are made for traveling. So, this year the Zimmermans decided to head east and venture into south Texas. We had heard about the area from some fellow-travelers. The Selvidges have been on a cross-country trip and were planning to be in this same area. However, our paths never crossed.

We left Arizona and traveled I-10 (southern route) for most of the trip. There is a lot to see in Las Cruces. The White Sands Missile Range Museum is nearby along with the White Sands National Monument. Unfortunately the missile range was closed this year. The old Mesilla Villages takes one back to a time



when this was old Mexico. The town plaza is typical with a majestic Roman Catholic church building with shops surrounding a central park.

Crossing the border from New Mexico, one soon learns how big Texas is. Miles and miles of driving and not much to see. Our destination was San Antonio. Here is another area filled with its own beauty and history. The Spanish governor's house, the Alamo, the Riverwalk, La Volita historic village, and lots of wonderful food. We spent a full day in the Texas Hill Country. Fredericksburg was settled by mainly German immigrants, so there are lots of opportunities for good German food. Fredericksburg's most famous person is

Chester Nimitz, WWII commander of naval forces in the Pacific. The Museum of the Pacific War is a tremendous historical presentation. Part of the museum is in the Nimitz family's hotel. The LBJ ranch is just down the road in Johnson City.

Selvidges began their winter journey staying at a Christian camp. They volunteered on a Christmas train in Alvin, Texas. What a way to serve – most nights it was in the 70's and a couple of 80's. Then a cold front came through and it was the first night I could not wear sandals. The Christmas Train is a unique holiday experience in Houston. Families enjoy an old-fashioned train ride in open air coaches while enjoying hundreds of lights and displays. Tom had the job of seating the families in the train, taking their family photos, and playing conductor. Jolyne prepared pizzas and popcorn. This volunteer project was with the Sowers organization.

In Houston we visited NASA where we learned about the space program. Especially interesting were the sensors and power supply modules – as well as all the exhibits. We visited the Houston Aquarium, enjoyed dinner with a fish show. On another day we visited the Houston Museum of Natural Science.

At the end of December we played on the beach near Galveston in 73-degree weather.



Leaving Houston, we went to Austin and then to the Gulf Coast. Tom enjoyed a day of fishing at Surfside Beach but did not catch anything.

Tom found a lake – possibly created by a distant relative in Brazoria, Texas. It is named Lake Selvidge.

Zimmermans - We stayed for a month near McAllen, Texas. To stay in a park for an extended time provides an opportunity to get to know people and participate in a range of activities. Many of the winter Texans are from Quebec and Ontario who have come south to escape the cold. Quebecers speak French and some also speak English. It makes for some interesting cultural exchanges.

What is there to do? As in Arizona, many of the parks have a range of activities. Bingo, dances, entertainment, swimming, card games, contests, pegs and jokers, and lots more. I even learned to play Petanque – a European game similar to Bocci ball that involves a jack (palomino) and balls are rolled as close to the jack as possible. This game was a favorite of the French Canadians.

South Texas provides many sights to see. This is a major agricultural area – sugar cane and citrus are the major crops (Texas pink grapefruit). Flea markets are entertaining, and we went to two of them. The Don West flea market had a variety of offerings from cheese, Corning ware, handcrafts, antiques, and vegetables. But the real market is the Mercado which is almost 10 times as large with row after row.

There were probably about 6 places where Mexican bands were playing. There were few gringos in the crowd. Progresso is a border town where folks go for prescriptions and dental work – just like in Arizona. Stay in the designated “tourist area” and you should be OK. We did not cross the border.



One of the highlights of our visit to Brownsville was to Elon Musk’s space port Space X where the rockets are assembled for launch. Unlike at Cape Canaveral in Florida, we were able to drive right next the assembly and launch facilities.

The Rio Grande is very near – and in some places the highway travels right beside the border wall. We even took a river cruise on the Rio Grande – one side was Mexico and the other was the U.S.A. For 3 miles there was a privately funded wall on the U.S. side. On the other side there were several Mexican recreation clubs where Mexicans could come for outings, family occasions, etc. Yes, the Border Patrol and the Texas Highway Patrol were active in the area. We also saw rafts and other items used by those trying to cross the border illegally.



Our next stop was Corpus Christi where we stayed at Mustang Island State Park. While in the area we toured the USS Lexington aircraft carrier and the Texas State Aquarium.

One clear difference is shoreline on the Gulf of Mexico. The shoreline is sandy (no rocky cliffs) and shallow. We just missed the Oysterfest at Rockport. The oysters were good and fresh, but not as good as those in the Pacific NW.



The Pit Salt Lick

Selvidges – While on the beach in Rockport it was 70 degrees. We enjoyed the Oysterfest in Rockport.

Our journey then took us north to Houston to visit family. The next stop was Austin where we visited the LBJ Presidential Library. Each presidential library provides insights into the events and accomplishments of that president’s term. Just outside Austin is the Salt Lick – it is BBQ like no other and Al’s favorite,

We are continuing our way west with stops in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico. We will be home in time for the FMCA NW Area planning meeting.

*Selvidges – We are heading to Mission, Texas in April to enjoy the Escapees South Texas Hop. This will be our last stop in Texas before we start our **trek** home. We look forward to touring several wildlife areas. We will also tour Carlsbad Caverns, and Moab National Park.*

Zimmerman - Would we travel to south Texas again in the winter? I am not sure. It was a long drive. Fuel prices are rising. However, we did meet some nice people, saw some historic sites, and learned to interact with people from many different cultures. It was a unique and wonderful experience. You might break out of your comfort zone and explore a different part of the country.

NWTFC OFFICERS & Committee Chairs

President – Mike Ashbridge
mikeashbridge@comcast.net

Vice President - **Vacant**

Secretary – David & Sue Pierce
suedavidpierce@gmail.com

Treasurer – Irva Cooper
tennis4yu@msn.com

Natl. Dir – Al Zimmerman
zimmeralz@gmail.com

Alt Natl. Dir – Tom Selvidge
tselvidge@msn.com

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

Rally Coordinator – **Vacant**

Webmaster – Mary Carlson
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Historian – Jeannette Block
ed.jnet@earthlink.net

Newsletter Editor
Al Zimmerman

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.