

AUTOMATE RV CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Ed Vukonich

We are back and better than ever. WOW! What a great fall rally. Many special thanks to the committee of Mick and Judy Serra, Ross and Julie Stewart, Chuck and Sandy Creevan, for their hard work because it sure paid off. Also a special thanks to Lori and Gary Wermuth for the special breakfast, to Eddie Robinson for his camera work and to Irv Baptist for all the coffee and the folks who helped Irv with the parking. Great job folks! I know the spring rally will be ever so good with Jim and Sharon West in Lodi, California on April 17th thru the 20th. In keeping with my commitment to increase rally attendance, I am sending out invitation letters to many of our members. I also solicit any of your ideas to help our goal for attendance. So send those cards and letters.

Bette Perry has paid our liability insurance and our Automate web site changes. Our fiscal position is positive and your annual dues for 2008 will remain at \$20.00. A reminder they are due by April.

Evette Dilley, our secretary has asked that anybody who has not given her your email address to please do so. This will save a significant amount of money for postage sending out the newsletter. Just a reminder, Evette is always seeking articles for the newsletters. Anything you might want to share? Let Evette know.

There is a last minute newsflash that our fall rally will be held in Sonora, Ca. at the Mother Lode fairgrounds on October 9, 10 and 11th, 2008. We have made arrangements to come early and stay late. In addition, the band we all liked "the Barndawgs" will be there on Friday. Bring those "dancing shoes" with you again. The last rally had a

WHO TO CONTACT

Change of address	Evette Dilley
Payment of dues & Rally fees	Bette Perry
Sunshine Committee	Laurie Wermuth
Newsletter	Any of 3 Editors
General Inquiries & Issues	Ed Vukonich

silent auction which was fun and raised money for our treasury; however I am soliciting any ideas for the evening activity.

Thanks a lot for your consideration and be safe wherever your travels may take you this winter. We will see you in Lodi.

Ed Vukonich

FALL RALLY 2007 SONORA, CA

Little by little 44 rigs made their way to Sonora, California for the annual AutoMate Fall Rally. The event began Thursday evening with the wine and cheese get-together.



Friday night we were served a delicious pork loin dinner. After dinner we were entertained by the Barn Dawgs Band, with a new flair.

Dick Schimmin, one of our new comers, had brought along his washtub and joined the band in a song.



Thanks to President, Ed Vukonich and his wife, Roma for finding the band.



The committee had decided on a Western theme for the rally and thanks to Sandy Creevan for designing the centerpieces and décor which lent to the atmosphere of being in an old gold mining town.



Keeping with the theme, many members came dressed in Western garb, adding to the fun.

Saturday morning, Laurie & Gary Wermuth prepared a great breakfast spread of granola with fresh fruits and yogurt and homemade breads so that members could make their own breakfast parfaits. YUM YUM



Later that morning some the members enjoyed a good exchange of questions and answers at the Tech meeting while others (the shoppers) strolled the flea market, next to the Fairgrounds and the quaint town of Sonora.



Saturday evening started with a special treat as Dick Schimmin had brought some of his own “musical” instruments from home and somehow was able to convince Marianne Boneck, Jerry Richichi and Ed Vukonich to accompany him in a rendition of “You are my sunshine”.

The silent auction winners were then announced before everyone enjoyed the tri tip dinner that was served.

The garlic mashed potatoes were a big hit, as you can see by the look on Donna Miller’s face.



Once it was discovered that we had newlyweds in our midst, with Barbara & Mel Schroeder, married for 2 years,



we also found that Ida & Paul Cheek were still looking happy and in love and celebrating 61 years of wedded bliss.



Arlene & Irv Baptist celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary with us on Friday night. Congratulations to you all.



None of this would have happened without the committee members.

New members attending their first rally



Joyce & Dick Schimmin, Donna & Jim Miller and Jean & Leonard Mello.



Our worker bees, Sandy & Chuck Creevan, Arlene & Irv Baptist, Laurie & Gary Wermuth, Judy & Mick Serra and Julie & Ross Stewart. A big thanks to them all.

The rally was a wonderful success and during free time everyone enjoyed the activities as well as excursions to the surrounding gold mining towns. Some members discovered the Wood Creek Café in Jamestown and found that it had the most outstanding “home cooking”. Even with all these activities, Don Bonek still found time to pick some walnuts.

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR AUTOMATE ?

Now that the AutoMate factory has closed down, RVers are having to come up with different ways to find the AutoMate of their choice. Here are some interesting ways some of our newer members came upon their “new” AutoMates.

Joyce & Dick Schimmin had bought their first AutoMate 15 years ago and they decided that it was time to update to a newer model. So Dick kept watching the RV ads in the local newspaper. Sure enough an ad for an AutoMate finally appeared in the paper. And now they are the proud owners of a “new” AutoMate.

Jean & Leonard Mello had been camping buddies with the Baptists and the Checks, so they knew about AutoMates RVs. When they decided that it was time for a bigger rig, of course they asked Irv and Paul to keep an eye out for an AutoMate for sale. The time came at the 2007 Spring Rally, when Irv called Leonard to say that there was a flyer telling of a rig for sale. After the rally Irv went to King City with the Mellos to take a look at it and within 5 days the Mellos were Automate owners. Jean says that the seller had left not only the manual but all past club newsletters. After reading through the newsletters she decided that it sounded like we had way too much fun at the rallies and she wanted to be part of our club.

Donna & Jim Miller were at an estate sale that had an AutoMate for sale. The Millers googled AutoMate and found our website. They also found Jim Stephenson's name and got in touch with him. Jim Stephenson told the Millers what a great RV the AutoMate is. The Millers made an offer and it was accepted. After getting it home, Donna said the odor was overwhelming when she open the door and found rotten food in the fridge and a rig that had not been cleaned for some time. She spent many hours cleaning the upholstery, carpeting etc. and airing it out for several days before it was livable. After all that she still feels it was a terrific find.



At the rally, Bob Lindsey is witnessing Jim Stephenson and Jim Miller meeting in person for the first time.

ON THE ROAD ... by Mary Stephenson **Another Story About Some Stairs**

I read with interest about the Dinsmore's step problems. It is a fact that if you own an RV and the stairs are not in working order, then you are in a major bind, unless, of course, you can jump like a kangaroo from the ground straight into the rig. For us ordinary folk, you have to find a stool or a ladder of the appropriate height and hope you don't slip. Our step problems began in Mexico, not due to any mechanical problem like the Dinsmores; it was simply an error in judgment, or as my husband would say — a major screw-up. The Pemex gas stations in Mexico are noted for their wide and roomy access bays. You can do something a thousand times the right way, and then it can all go wrong in a second. As we pulled away from the gas pump and made the turn to get back on to the highway, we heard a horrible crunching sound. That's when we noticed the large metal post. Jumping from the truck, we saw the damage; both the front and rear skirtings were caved in and the steps were crammed in tight against the RV wheel. Two gas station attendants rushed over with a crowbar and were able to maneuver the steps forward so that we could drive.

When we arrived at the Miramar RV resort in San Carlos two days later, Jim asked the manager if he knew of anyone who could fix our steps. "Do not worry," the gentleman replied. "We have repairmen right here in the campground." This was very good news, indeed. Waiting around Camping World in Tuscon while new steps were installed, was not high on our list of how to spend a few days. By the time we had the rig parked, the repair guys were there with a crowbar and a sledge hammer. Jim loaned them a bottle jack to make the job easier. After a couple of hours of pounding, the stairs emerged from their prison. Next came the job of straightening them out. The din was incredible, but the job got done. Last came a guy with a welder to repair a couple of broken brackets. The cost was 600 pesos, about 60 dollars. Jim gave them a 20 dollar tip for a job well done.

We repainted the steps and declared them almost perfect. If you look closely you can see that they are a little bit crooked. But they do what steps are supposed to do — get us in and out of the rig, so we are content. Besides, we saved ourselves some money for more interesting adventures and we didn't have to sit in the parking lot at Camping World.

RV PEOPLE ARE THE BEST

by Mary Stephenson

ONCE UPON A TIME... there was a little baby boy named Christian, who lived in Celestino Gasca, a small fishing village about 30 miles north of Mazatlan, Mexico. His father, whose name was Chofe, worked as a general handyman at a nearby beachside RV resort called Villa Celeste. His mother, Isabella, made tamales, which she sold to the RV residents to earn extra money. There was only one blot in this happy picture. Christian was born with club feet, so his prospects of living a normal life were bleak indeed.

And then an amazing thing happened. One of the campers at Villa Celeste, who just happened to be a Shriner from San Diego, offered this family a ray of hope. He set up an appointment for Christian at the Shriner hospital. The only cost to the family would be the airfare to San Diego and back for the boy and his mother. This was a daunting prospect for a young couple, who had no extra centavos lying around. The owners of the RV park set aside half of Chofe's salary, then matched it and then some. They rallied the park residents to support Chofe and his family, but we didn't need any prodding. Soon Chofe was overwhelmed with extra jobs like washing rigs and trucks for which he was blatantly overpaid. Last April, Christian underwent successful reconstructive surgery and can now walk and run like all the other little kids.

Christian's story touched everybody. The residents of Villa Celeste started to take a closer look at the small village of Celestino Gasca and wondered what we could do to help. One of the RVers, an electrical genius from British Columbia, donated his expertise to get the power running in the school. One couple donated pencils, pens and paper to the students, another used clothing, which the priest distributed

Doing good things is contagious. This winter we will donate a computer, which is too slow and ancient for our needs, to the school. I will take my grandson's toddler bike and give it to Christian, who will now be able to ride it. And I will offer free tutoring services to any student who is struggling with English. Nearly everyone returning to Villa Celeste next winter will come bearing gifts for the people of Celestino Gasca. We cannot erase the poverty, but we can make a small dent and show the people of the village that members of the RV

community have kind and generous hearts. I'm proud to belong to such a group.

SPRING RALLY 2008

Save the dates; **April 17, 18, 19 & 20, 2008**

Don't miss out on the fun. The spring rally will be held at the **Lodi Grape Festival Grounds, 413 Lockerford St., Lodi, CA.**

Jim West and his helpers are busy working on setting a schedule of events. He would welcome anyone who would like to assist him in any way. If this sounds like something you can do, please contact Jim West @ (559) 275-2387

FALL RALLY 2008

Mark your calendars

More dates to save for more fun times

Oct. 9, 10, 11 & 12, 2008

Mother Lode Fairgrounds

Highway 49

Sonora, CA

CLUB NAME BADGES

Can be purchased from

JV CRAFTS

CUSTOM LASER ENGRAVING

8555 S. Wolfe Rd.

French Camp, CA 95231

(209) 993-7820

Fax (209) 983-1885

e-mail: jvcrafts@hughes.net

Members who wish to order Club name badges may do so directly from JV Crafts. The price is \$11.00 per name badge which includes tax and shipping. For the same price you can choose from clip-on, pin-on or magnet type.

CLUB DUES

Just as a reminder that the yearly dues for our AutoMate RV Club fall **due in April of each year.**

Our President, Ed Vuknoich has announced that the dues will not need to be raised in 2008 to meet expenses so they will remain at \$20.00

So that you will be ready, please use this coupon when sending in your dues.

Send to:

Bette Perry

20863 Alfalfa Rd.

Crows Landing, CA 95313-9757

Here is my 2008 Dues check in the amount of \$20.00, **made out to The AutoMate RV Club.**

Name _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check here if you can receive your Newsletter by email

NEWSLETTER MAILING

In order to keep down the expenses for the Newsletter and for the club, we try to email as many Newsletters as possible.

As an example, for the last Newsletter, 70 copies went out in the mail. The printing and postage for that came to a little more than \$90.00. Again for this Newsletter, 70 copies will be going out in the mail plus this Newsletter will be bigger because of the complete roster within it. While we look around to find the best deal for the printing, the costs are still going up. In order to keep expenses down, to those of you who are getting the Newsletter in the mail, if it's at all possible to receive it by email please allow us to do so. **If you want to start receiving your Newsletter by email, please contact Evette Dilley at emdilley@sbcglobal.net**

AUTOMATES FOR SALE

2002 AutoMate 32', 2 slides, electric/hydraulic brakes, air hitch, air ride, gel coat siding, under mount generator, rear living room, 2 TVs, 2 furnaces, 100 gallon fresh water tank, convection/microwave, 3 burner stove/oven, custom cover, NON-smoking.

Meticulously maintained & always covered.

Located in Austin, Texas \$31,500.00

Contact Gary or Diana

(512) 249-0219 or thecottrells2@sbcglobal.net

Photos available upon request

2004 AutoMate, 32', 2 slides, panoramic rear kitchen, Corian counters, wood floors, 180 watts of solar, hydraulic disc brakes, air ride suspension, air ride kingpin box, tons of upgrades.

Perfect condition – less than 4,000 miles.

No pets or smoking \$37,5000

Contact Bob or Paula Peterson

(209) 369-3729 paulalynnpeterson@sbcglobal.net

Can email pictures

2002 AutoMate 37'+, 3 slide-outs, center kitchen, full awnings, optional gel-coat side panels, Microwave-vent hood, 3 burner Atwood cook top (flush mounted) & oven, large custom marine reefer (4" insulation - remote compressor-condenser), runs 24/7 on one of four 120w solar panels on custom HD swivel mounts, Solar Boost 50 controller, 2,500W inverter, six 6-volt deep cycle batteries, shelved pantry, spice cabinet & full-height pull-out pantry, ceiling fan, Corian counters, 2 TVs, Ent. Cntr. incl. custom speakers (LR and BR) & amp/receiver, air ride/auto leveling, Electraulic disk brakes, 16 ply G rated tires & 16" chrome wheels on 7,000# axles, trailer hitch/bike rack receiver, great storage in & out; custom dual-pane windows, ducted AC & FA furnace + built-in vented catalytic bed-bath heater ("PlatCat") with remote thermostat (vents CO and CO2), three 3-speed Fantastic Fans with Aero-Flow ext. vent covers, skylight, queen bed, sliding-mirror wardrobe doors, raised panel oak doors & drawers, dual Flex Steel swivel recliners, "jackknife" sleeper couch, porcelain pedal-flush toilet, Day-Night shades. No smoking / pets, Ideal full-timer, city or country. **Excellent condition.** Currently in so. Cal. E-mail for more info or photos. (Over \$85,000 spent asking \$47,900 or best offer. Contact Bob at 714-478-4672 or nokaoimarine@yahoo.com

SPRING RALLY REGISTRATION FORM

April 17, 18, 19 & 20, 2008
Lodi Grape Festival Grounds
413 E. Lockerford St. Lodi, CA

Mail to:

Bette Perry

20863 Alfalfa Rd.

Crows Landing, CA 95313-9757

Cost \$135.00 per rig with 2 persons, \$105.00 per rig with 1 person

Deadline for registration, April 1, 2008

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

I will be arriving on _____ There will be _____ people in my rig.

Any extra nights camping will be \$15.00 per night & need to be paid to the AutoMate RV Club.

I need handicapped parking.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

_____ Phone _____

e-mail _____