



AutoMate RV Club



Diana Storm, Newsletter Editor

April 4-7, 2002

WE NOW HAVE 222 MEMBERS!

2nd Annual Rally Held

The second annual rally for the AutoMate RV Club was held from April 4th to April 7th, 2002. 111 members/rigs attended (there were 116 rigs signed up but 5 had to cancel and 24 new people/rigs became members.

We want to welcome all the new members and we hope that you enjoy the club as much as the rest of us do.



SPECIAL THANK YOU'S go out to Carla Wyrick for all the hard work she did both before we arrived and during the rally to make our stay as comfortable and enjoyable as possible; and to Ray Hoyal and the entire Parking Committee for ensuring that we all got parked and set up in a very timely manner so that there was very little (if any) congestion on the day of our arrival.



By the way, the Hoyal's have their AutoMate for sale. If they succeed in selling it before our next

Spring Rally we will need a volunteer to head the Parking Committee.

President's Corner:

Greetings from the road. As I write this, we are in Phoenix working our way east for the next three months.

Perhaps we'll see you down the road.



This trip started with a bang - - the Spring 2002 Rally! 111 rigs and about 235 people attended our most successful rally yet. Thanks largely to the efforts of Carla Wyrick, we enjoyed a fantastic steak dinner, served by a great crew on Friday night and danced to a great band on Saturday night. The parking crew kept things moving well, there was virtually no waiting. The weather cooperated, the company was great, and almost everything was perfect (I'll be sure to order more pizza next year).

We have already booked the fairgrounds for next year. The rally will officially begin on Thursday April 3rd. However, next year we DO have permission to come in a day early for those who wish to do so. And of course, we are already booked in at Flying Flags for this coming October. If you missed it last year, try to make the next one; Buellton is a fantastic place to vacation. Also at Buellton, we will be appointing a nominating committee for next year's election.

Finally, I want you to know that your officers are hard at work completing our "living" tech manual and Club brochure. We will distribute the manual at the October rally.

We'll be looking for you down the road...Bob Cohen



Activities included: On Thursday evening the Wyrick's hosted a wine and cheese party so that all the members could get reacquainted with each other and welcome both the new and prospective new members. On Friday evening there was a wonderful sit down steak dinner and later those who wanted to, stayed and played nine games of Bingo. The prizes were all gift certificates of various denominations to Camping World with the largest being \$50.00. On Saturday night there was a pizza party, ice cream sundaes, a band played music from the 50's until 11:00 p.m. and the final door prize of \$100.00 (a gift certificate to Camping World) was won.

Dan Wilson of Auto Mate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. held his now famous (and much in demand) seminar. He had Bruce Morris a local propane dealer tell us about the new federal regulations regarding propane tanks and explain the workings of the propane within those tanks.



Illegal Valve



Legal Valve

Dan then held a question and answer period. Most of the questions were given to Bob by members ahead of time. Bob then gave them to Dan so that he could research the answers before the seminar so that he could give us complete and through answers.

The "coo-de-gras" to Dan's seminar was that he has come up with a Recommended Annual Maintenance Schedule for AutoMate owners. However, he warned that if you want to have the factory do everything for you on this list the expense will be substantial. Bob tried to get the membership to agree that they would make appointments ahead of time and take their rigs to the factory for this Maintenance checkup. Bob reminded the members that unless it is profitable for the factory they can not justify hiring/training and having on hand employees for this sole purpose. The membership would not agree to anything until they saw both the list and the prices. A committee was formed to break the list down into six different financial/working categories. If it is possible we will include all six lists and prices with this Newsletter. If it is not possible we will be putting the lists and their prices in the Maintenance/Troubleshooting Manual.

Business Meeting was held on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. - please see the enclosed Minutes. Bob Cohen is asking for volunteers to head up a nominating committee to meet in January (it can be done via e-mail) because we have four positions up for election next year - President, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor and Wagon Master.

MAINTENANCE/TROUBLESHOOTING MANUAL: Bob showed the membership a "hard DRAFT copy" of the brand new Maintenance/Troubleshooting "Living" Manual which is being developed by your Board of Directors and members of the Club. He told the group the following:

(1) We will try and have the manual to all members who attend the fall rally this year and

those of you who can't make the rally, we'll snail mail it to you.

(2) The manual is a "living document". This means that it will always be in need of updates and revisions as new products come out and new tips are tested and found to be good by the membership.

(3) This manual is being written by AutoMate RV Club members for AutoMate RV Club members. No one affiliated with the Auto Mate Recreational Vehicle, Inc. organization had or has anything to do with the making of this manual.

(4) There are legal questions that must be answered and a formal disclaimer will have to be written by an attorney before the manual can be given to the membership. Which means the Club will be incurring legal fees this year.

DMV REGULATIONS - Bob told the group that about seven years ago the California State DMV came out with new regulations for people who drive recreational vehicles, pull noncommercial recreational trailers and 5th wheel trailers. If you **do not** adhere to these regulations and you get into an accident even if it isn't your fault you can be held responsible. There is also a very good chance that if you do not adhere to these regulations and you incur damages to either yourself, your passengers, your tow vehicle or your rig - your insurance company could refuse to pay for those damages. To avoid confusion we have gone to the following web site: www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/d1648/d1648pt2.htm and have obtained the following information:

IF YOU HAVE A: Class A Drivers License

YOU MAY DRIVE: Any legal combination of vehicles allowed to either Class B or C drivers

YOU MAY TOW: Vehicle with GVWR of more than 10,000 lbs; More than one vehicle, with endorsement; Any trailer bus with endorsement

IF YOU HAVE A: Noncommercial Class A Drivers License

YOU MAY DRIVE: Any vehicle allowed to Class C drivers

YOU MAY TOW: Travel trailers over 10,000 lbs GVWR or 5th wheel over 15,000 GVWR when not used for hire **NOTE:** Any 2 axle vehicle weighing less than 4,000 lbs unladen cannot tow any vehicle or trailer over 6,000 lbs

IF YOU HAVE A: Class C Drivers License

YOU MAY DRIVE: Any 2 axle vehicle with a GVWR of 26,000 lbs **or less**; Any 3 axle vehicle with a GVWR of **less than** 6,000 lbs; Any house car

YOU MAY TOW: Single vehicle with a GVWR of 10,000 lbs or less (including tow dolly); Vehicle weighing 4,000 lbs or more unladen, a trailer coach or 5th wheel under 10,000 lbs GVWR (when not for hire); A vehicle weighing 4,000 lbs or more unladen, a 5th wheel trailer exceeding 10,000 lbs but under 15,000 GVWR when not for hire and **with endorsement**

To obtain an original Noncommercial Class A License, you must: Complete an application; pay application fee; pass the basic Class C law test (unless you have qualified for a Class C within the past 12 months); pass the Noncommercial Class A Vehicle test; Submit a Health Questionnaire dated not more than two years prior to the date of your application; pass the skills test and pass a driving test towing the type of vehicle you wish to tow.

Examinations include: Law test, Pre-Trip Inspection Test (we've been told this is where most people fail); Skills Test; Driving Test; and Health Questionnaire

Since most Auto Mate owners are driving trucks that weigh more than 10,000 lbs and our rigs usually weigh more than 10,000 lbs Bob suggests that we update our driver licenses.

Vendor's - we had vendors regarding Braking systems; Sanitation Products; Amsoil Lubricant; Emergency

Medical Services; and Tow Vehicle Upgrades at this year's rally.

Trivia: The oldest AutoMate came off the line in 1985 and is owned by Larry and Dee Lankford



The newest AutoMate owners are John and Loma Dies (pronounced Deez)



The AutoMate that traveled the furthest to be with us was from Florida and is owned by Robert Ackert.

For Sale: *members have asked that this column be limited to only AutoMate 5th Wheels, AutoMate Trailers and the trucks that pull them:*

1995 AutoMate 5th Wheel with 15' slide; in excellent condition with many upgrades, asking \$17,000.00 please call (805)964-4129 if interested;

1998 AutoMate 5th wheel, 31' 8" in length, rear kitchen, 16" tires and rims Goodyear G159 (June 2001), two slides, built with dry camping in

mind, many more extras, non smokers, asking \$37,000, truck is also for sale. Call Ray Hoyal at (949)366-0241 or shoyal@earthlink.net to get complete details;

1999 AutoMate 5th Wheel, 36' 8" in length, loaded, custom built, immaculate, non-smokers, no pets. Please contact Bud or Anita Harris at (775)267-9592 or hoharris@earthlink.net for complete details.

Almost before it began (or so it seemed) it was time to get ready and say good-bye



Next Rally is scheduled to start on October 7, 2002 in Buellton, we hope to see you there.

Pictures Say A Thousands Words:



Minutes of the AutoMate RV Club Annual Meeting Held on April 6, 2002 (*which will have to be reviewed and approved at the next Annual Meeting*)

President Bob Cohen called the meeting to order. The minutes of the March 2001 annual meeting were read and approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Treasurer Ellie Watts presented the financial report showing \$22,148.75 received, \$11,270.70 paid out for a balance (on April 1, 2002) of \$10,878.05. She mentioned that, after the expenses for the current rally, the treasury would have approximately \$4,000. The report was approved as written.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the bylaws, the positions of Vice President and Secretary were up for election. The current officers, Bob Livesey, Vice President, and Barbara Luthin, Secretary, were reelected. The position of Wagon Master is still vacant. Bob Cohen has assumed these duties and will continue until a willing person is found. A nominating committee will be formed to help with next year's election of officers. They will meet in January 2003 to make suggestions for President, Treasurer, Wagon Master and Newsletter Editor.

WEBSITE

The current website was generously set up by Jeannette Kaufman, however she does not have the time to maintain it. Discussion followed. The Club would like its own website independent of Geocities and free of advertising. Ideally, the website should be linked to the AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. site and should be interactive. Bob will approach the creator of the AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. site regarding meeting our needs.

OWNER'S MANUAL

Diana Storm, Newsletter Editor, has been working on a Maintenance/Troubleshooting Manual with input from: Discussion forums held by Dan Wilson of AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc.; current AutoMate RV Club members; and information from product suppliers.

In draft form the manual currently runs 50 pages without pictures. The manual will be under constant construction (a living document) because of changing products and information. However, the first edition, with appropriate black and white photos, should be ready for publication before the October rally. There is a possibility of including schematics for the slide-outs. An attorney's opinion will be sought to cover any possible liability or copyright infringement before publication. All members of the Club will receive a hard copy suitable for placing in their own three ring binders. *It is understood that this is an AutoMate RV Club Owners Manual made by AutoMate owners for AutoMate owners. Except for the notes taken by owners at the Dan Wilson discussion forums AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. had **no** input into this manual.*

GUEST POLICY/ANNUAL DUES

The Board of Directors recommended that an AutoMate owner be allowed to attend one rally without paying the annual dues of \$20.00. If an AutoMate owner joins the club after July 1, they will pay half dues (\$10.00) for their first year. The Club approved these recommendations.

MAINTENANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

A committee has reviewed the list of annual maintenance items furnished by Dan Wilson. They have broken the list into six different packages and submitted them to Dan for pricing. It is the hope of the Club that AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. will offer routine maintenance at a reasonable cost for those who deserve it.

CLUB IDENTIFICATION ITEMS

Members of the Club voiced a desire for hats, patches, flags, shirts (polo and T) and jackets. Bob Cohen will get prices and report back to the membership via the Newsletter. The people who did the screen print for the hats and visors have supplied the fabric items at their cost. Bob will try to get further items under the same arrangement.

SUGGESTIONS

Publish a one-page flyer for distribution to prospective members at the factory and through current members.

Contact Trailer Life for possibility of publicizing the two annual rallies

Look into Liability Insurance coverage for both the Club and its Officers

Develop Standing Rules, which would allow the Board to make minor decisions

Plan an informal gathering in Quartzite in January or February (if interested, e-mail Bob Cohen regarding best dates, length of stay, etcY)

Plan seminars of interest to women during the rallies

Consider more than one meeting per year

Try to avoid the Sacramento RV Show weekend for our annual rally so that AutoMate Recreational Vehicles, Inc. management is more accessible to members

Plan the 2003 Annual Rally around the Escapees rally, which will be held in Lancaster from April 6-11, 2003

UPCOMING RALLY DATES

2002 Fall Rally: October 7, 2002 at Flying Flags in Buellton, CA

2003 Spring Rally: First weekend in April 2003

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Luthin, Secretary