

AUTOMATE RV CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Issue # 12, Summer 2005

Editor: C J Golden



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It is VERY IMPORTANT to UNBLOCK your e-mail for the officers above and put the word AutoMate in the subject line.

WHO TO CONTACT:

- Change of address Teresa Gaucin
Payment of Dues and Rally Fees Gary Wermuth
Sunshine Committee cards Kathy Noble
Fall Rally Don and Cheri Klusman
General Inquiries & Issues Dale Clark

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

by Dale Clark

The Board of Directors held an all day meeting on Saturday, April 16, 2005 during a weekend retreat. All attendees paid their own expenses, with no cost to the club. We focused on defining and coordinating our roles, responsibilities and goals for the coming year. We developed several policies along with a budget that keeps expenses within our means. Here are the highlights of our meeting.

Club Financial Status

Rallies shall be priced to be self supporting. All rally registrations shall be prepaid. Refunds, minus a \$10.00 cancellation fee, will be granted to the extent that the club does not incur any expense on behalf of the canceling party. Any such incurred expenses, plus the cancellation fee, shall be deducted from the amount of any refund. There will be no refunds for cancellations made within 14 days of the rally. Refunds for cancellations made 15 or more days prior to the rally shall be calculated and mailed after the event. Additionally, no one except the Rally Chairperson is authorized to make or change financial arrangements with facilities or suppliers.

Policies, Programs and Budget

Members are invited to attend board meetings held in conjunction with rallies. There will be four newsletters this year. The expense for all four newsletters is budgeted at

\$1065.00. Total budget to update and maintain the web page is \$545.00. Rally photos are posted on our website www.automatervclub.com. Click on rallies, then click on photos.

The membership roster is being mailed with this newsletter to current members. Per existing policy this roster is not to be used for commercial purposes or given to non-members for any reason.

The Fall Rally will be social only and will be held October 13th - 16th at the Yolo County Fairgrounds in Woodland, Ca. Don and Cheri Klusman are chairing the event.

The Spring Rally, 2006, will be held March 30th - April 2nd at Lodi Fairgrounds, Lodi, Ca. Vice President, Jim West is chairing the event.

AutoMate Owners, Teresa and Mario Gaucin will chair the Outreach committee this year, \$50.00 was budgeted for their expenses. Sunshine Committee, Kathy Noble will continue to chair this committee, \$50.00 budgeted.

Nomination Committee, five members will be appointed by the president and the committee will be asked to finalize their nominees by publication time of the winter newsletter

Non rally expenses are budgeted at about \$4700.00, including \$1925.00 for liability insurance and maintenance manual expenses of \$1205.00. At the time of the board meeting we had over 200 members so with approximately 100 members paying \$20 a rig, those members attending the 2005 Spring Rally received new manuals at no extra cost, and 100 members paying \$30.00 a rig including a new manual, extra \$10.00, to cover postage and handling. The total is \$5000.00.

The time and place of the next proposed board meeting, is Friday morning, October 14, 2005 from 10:00am to noon in the meeting hall at Yolo County Fairgrounds.

In closing, I want to thank the board and their spouses who worked all day at our meeting to accomplish all the above objectives. Thanks to Betty & Dave Pollack, Jim & Sharon West, Gary Wermuth, Teresa & Mario Gaucin, and Connie & Chuck Golden.

I always welcome your comments. I can best be reached at joda@pocketmail.com. I can also be reached by phone or U.S. mail at the address listed in the roster.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Only for members to use.

King Pin Replacement

Russ & Sharon Richardson

The King Pin on our Fifth Wheel was showing wear and we wanted to replace the pin box, but there were no markings indicating the manufacturer or model. Rest of article in newsletter for members.

WANTED – AUTOMATE RV

David Orcott wants to purchase an Automate 5th wheel 2000 or newer, 30 – 32 feet with 2 slides, one in the bedroom with a rear entertainment center. Contact him at 530.273.1304 or 11506 Lower Circle Dr. Grass Valley, CA 95949.

AUTOMATE RVs FOR SALE

37FT. AUTOMATE AND TRUCK FOR SALE
1998 Custom AutoMate 5th. Wheel with 3 slides. Cost new approx. \$72,000. Has everything! Including after market tinted windows and 2 inch wooden blinds. D/W, W/D, electric steps, air ride, central Vacuum, alarm system. extra clean. We owe \$50,000 but will sell for \$39,500 OBO. MANY options too numerous to mention here. Contact John & Marjorie Semensow (760) 863-1881

1997 34.5' AUTOMATE 5th WHEEL

Fifth wheel with 3 slide-outs. A/C heat pump in LR, plus 2 separate heaters in LR and BR. Hardwood flooring, Solar power with 2000 watt inverter. Air ride suspension and lots of other great features. Only \$39,850. Contact Paul & Marilyn Simonson at (541) 767-9198 or simo5@gte.net.

RVing THE ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY

By Betty Pollack

Last summer we spent a month traveling the Alaska Marine Highway in our AutoMate including four ferry rides with our AutoMate and two side trips as foot passengers. We thought perhaps other AutoMaters might be interested in the pros and cons of taking a rig on the Alaska ferries.

After spending several weeks on the mainland of Alaska we drove to Haines. Haines is a lovely uncrowded town, a far cry from over touristy Skagway. From Haines we went as foot passengers for a Saturday trip to Skagway in order to take an all day 1940s era steam train to Lake Bennett. What an experience; not to be missed!

This particular trip takes place only on Saturdays and advance reservations are essential.

In Haines we loaded our rig onto the fast ferry to Juneau—easy on-easy off. Since the only route of the fast ferry is Haines-Juneau there is no backing on or off. We assume that would be the same for the fast ferry between Juneau and Sitka. Thus the extra expense of the fast ferry is well worth it. We left our AutoMate in Juneau and went as foot passengers to Sitka for 3 days. Sitka is well worth a few days. In Juneau went on a day boat trip to the glacier at Tracy Arm, which is fabulous. Then we took the ferry to uncrowded, non-touristy Wrangell. One of the highlights of that stay was a visit to the Anan bear observatory where we saw several bears including mommas and cubs close up. Much, much better than Hyder, Alaska! From Wrangell we took a ferry to Ketchikan for several days and did an incredible side trip to Misty Fjord. Our final ferry took us to Prince Rupert, BC. It is also possible to take a non-stop ferry from Ketchikan to Bellingham, Washington.

We were lucky on all four runs; we never had to back our rig on or off any ferry, nor did we experience any extreme tides at embarkation or disembarkation. What we learned is that the local ground staff at each port control how each ferry will be loaded after they see all the rigs lined up. It helps to talk politely to them about not wanting to back on or off the ferry. But that does not always work. In Petersburg we watched a rig back up a ramp with a 90 degree turn on the ramp! It was hairy! We heard stories of folks backing on or off in Sitka and talked to a full timer with a 38' rig who spent 45 minutes backing off a very steep ramp. The ground staff expertly guide each rig onto the ferry, and RVers frequently have to back into a tight position once on the ferry. But that means you get to drive forward to disembark.

It is wise to make reservations as soon as possible. A deposit is required at the time reservations are made, but there is a liberal refund policy. The schedule for each summer is usually set in early November. We checked the Alaska Marine Highway website www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs/ and called them at 1 800-642 0066. Rates are based on total length of the combined rig and truck. Rigs are measured at each point of embarkation and the fee adjusted if not accurately reported at the time reservations are made. You do not get a refund if

you measure less than you reported, so measure carefully.

We made reservations the first day the schedule was published, resulting in obtaining reservations for three daytime runs and one early morning run. Why travel at night when the point is to see the Inside Passage! We traveled on several different ferries; each was quite comfortable, though the food was basic cafeteria. The views are identical to those on any large cruise ship and there are plenty of good, comfortable seats both inside and outside. None of the ferries we traveled was crowded. Folks with pets will be interested to know that you are allowed to go to your rigs and take your pets out at ferry stops along the way. Some ferries, at the discretion of the crew, set a brief timeslot en route for folks to visit their rigs to attend to pets. If you are able to spend several days in each port, it will be a lot easier to avoid the cruise ship mobs. When we arrived in Juneau there were seven cruise ships in town, each with about 2000 passengers—all headed to the same places. You can escape them if you go to the Mendenhall Glacier in late afternoon and avoid the downtown area until evening. Ketchikan, a town of 13,000 residents, gets over 21,000 cruise ship visitors on some days and only around 4000 on other days. This information is published in the local paper, so we confined our downtown visits to times when the throngs were gone. We were lucky that one of our days in Sitka was a 'no cruise ship' day. Likewise, we visited Skagway on a low cruise ship day.

There is a range of RV parks throughout the Inside Passage, including full hookups and state parks. We made advance reservations because we had a definite schedule and we wanted full hookup sites. We can recommend Haines Hitch Up, Spruce Meadows in Juneau, and Clover Pass in Ketchikan. The only RV park in Wrangell, Alaska Waters, has about 6 hookups and is adequate. Don't stay in Prince Rupert; it stinks from the pulp mill. We cancelled our reservation upon arrival and moved on. They understood!

In conclusion, if you plan carefully, traveling the Alaska Marine Highway in your AutoMate is very doable, and it sure beats retracing your way down the Alaska Highway. More importantly traveling the Alaska Marine Highway leisurely provides a lot more options, is more scenic, and is less expensive than a cruise ship.

The information on the following list of manufacturers who supply parts for Automate RVs was provided by Ross Stewart, Richard Clark, Richard Eckhart, the Richardsons and Chuck Golden. It is available to club members only. If you have additional information, please send it to the newsletter editor who is maintaining this list.

Available to club members only.

IT'S DUES RENEWAL TIME

Please fill out the information below and mail it with your dues to Gary Wermuth, 6235 Reba Drive, Granite Bay, CA 95746. Make check payable to AutoMate RV Club.

I want to continue my membership at the special dues rate of \$30 which includes my personal copy of the AutoMate RV Club Members Only Maintenance Manual.

I want to continue my membership at the regular dues rate of \$20.

I already have paid my regular dues of \$20. Enclosed are \$10 supplemental dues for the Maintenance Manual.

Last Name	First Name(s)		
Address	City	State	ZIP
Home Phone	Cell Phone		

FALL RALLY 2005 - RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW!!

Where : Yolo County Fairgrounds, Woodland CA
When: October 13th, 14th, 15th & 16th 2005
What: To have a good time with other Automate owners.

Cost: \$125.00 per rig to include 2 people Fill out form on next page and send to treasurer

Oct 13th Thursday Arrive 9:00 a.m. till ?
 Social time 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. with lots of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres

Oct 14th Friday 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
 9a.m. – 6 p.m. on your own
 6 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. Dinner
 7.30 p.m. - ? Bingo

Oct 15th Saturday 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
 9a.m. – 6 p.m. on your own (possible train trip)*
 6p.m. – 7.30 p.m. Dinner
 7.30 p.m. - ? Entertainment TBA

Oct 16th Sunday Depart

* The Sacramento River Train runs out of Woodland on an enjoyable 28 mile scenic journey to the Sacramento River and back. On Saturday Oct 15th the train ride is the Great Train Robbery. Included are outlaws on the trail, barbeque lunch at Elkhorn Park, Western characters, musicians, and a Wild West gunfight. The price is \$55.00 per adult. If we have enough people interested I will see about a group rate.

AUTOMATE FALL RALLY Registration deadline September 15, 2005

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Phone _____

Days we will attend _____

Number of people interested in going on train trip _____

Send registration form and check for \$125 per rig to : Gary Wermuth
6235 Reba Dr
Granite Bay CA 95746

IMPORTANT: Inside this newsletter there is a list of manufacturers who service and supply parts for AutoMate RVs. This list is an appendix to the new maintenance manual (Revised Spring 2005) which was distributed to attendees at the Spring Rally. It is to be used by Automate Club members only.

**Automate RV Club
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