



Matterhorn

Alpine So Cal

A Chapter of FMCA

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT JOE DARLING



The first two months of 2014 were very busy for the members of Alpine SoCal. We began with the FMCA Rally in Indio, CA., then on to Quartzsite for our Spot Rally in the desert, then on to Lake Havasu for the Winter Blast, one of the most spectacular fireworks displays you will ever see. They started before dark and as the night got darker the fireworks became more and more spectacular for the next 5 days and nights. In some cases they appeared to be directly over our heads and the night sky became daylight. Now, for the best part for those of you who wish to attend the Lake Havasu Winter Blast next year, we are going to have a repeat in February. All information will be forthcoming soon. In April we then traveled to Long Beach for another great rally hosted by Mac & Anne McDougal and Sandy & Debi Johnson.

Many good rallies are ahead, so stay tuned, as Bill Figge, Acting Rally Master, and the SARC committee, comprised of Anne McDougal and Ramona Escamilla, are in the planning stages for 2015 and beyond.

Tom Cook, President of Alpine Coach Association contacted me and asked if we would CO-HOST a Pre-Rally in March 2015 just prior to the 91st FMCA International Family Reunion Birthday Celebration which will take place in Pomona, CA. Mary & Joel Langord and Carolyn & Tris Swan will act as Co-Wagon Masters. As of this date their planning is well ahead of schedule and promises to be another great rally.

I am very pleased to announce that Jim Archer has taken over the duties of Web-Master replacing Dave Hernandez. Dave has given much to our club over many years as a very dedicated SoCal member. Dave is always there to lend a helping hand regardless of the task and in most cases successfully. Dave built our great website and now is stepping down but will continue to be there to assist one and all with their questions. Please go to our new web site and enjoy the work of Jim Archer.

As an aside, I have asked both Dave Fernandez and Mike Fleming if they would write a Technical Article, which would appear in each issue of the Matterhorn. We never get enough of their knowledge and are looking forward to their technical advice.

Our Matterhorn Editor, Marcia Morrell, is stepping down as our Matterhorn Editor as she and husband Frank may sell their motorhome. Please join me in thanking Marcia for all of her hard and excellent work and wishing them safe travels. Please welcome Patti Warren who will be replacing Marcia as our new Matterhorn Editor. I am sure you are familiar with Patti's photography on the Alpine Owners Club page of Facebook. We are looking forward to her becoming our

new Matterhorn Editor.

Our Napa Rally, which took place in May, was one Rally we will never forget. Bill & Patti Figge and Phil Binley & Trudy Greenlaw did an exceptional job in putting this Rally together. Several of the attendees said it was one of the best and well organized Rallies they have ever attended and wanted to go back in a few years. Well done to our Napa Wagon Masters.

Micki and I are looking forward to seeing all of you at our next Rally in Pismo Beach in November. Wishing you good health and safe travels.....

FROM OUT 1ST V.P. MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR MARY LANGORD



Alpine So Cal has achieved vast rewards from its' members who actively support the chapter and each other. We are remaining a vibrant chapter through the dedication of our members. As your membership chairman, I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you. I also want to introduce you to our newest members:



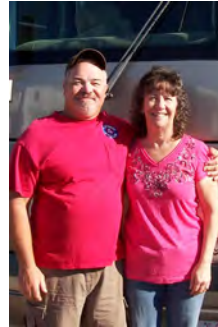
Paul & Katie Lisec

Paul & Katie live in Tehachapi, CA. They became members while attending the WMHA/FMCA Rally in Indio in January. Their Their Alpine was parked near the NSoCal group, so a knock on their door with an invitation to join our festivities started a neat chain of events. They also attended the Fireworks rally in Lake Havasu City.



Bob & Mary Roberson

Robert (Bob) and Mary Roberson live in Granbury, Texas. They also attended the WMHA Rally in Indio, and then joined us for the Lake Havasu Fireworks Rally where they became members.



Dean & Susan Vargo of Ramona, CA.

Dean & Susan were introduced to Alpine SoCal by Mike and Mike Collins last year in an RV park. They later visited with the Archers at the racetrack near Phoenix, and then attended the Long Beach Rally as new members. They are not yet retired, but are counting the days.

] While at the weeklong Rally in Napa the good news kept coming. We were very pleased to welcome two new members.



Tom & Nancy Polk of Redding

Tom & Nancy live in Redding, CA. Tom and Nancy have been heavily involved in both ACA and Alpine NorCal, and are experienced Alpine Owners.



Bruce & Caryn Pflieger of Placerville, CA

Bruce & Caryn are brand new Alpine owners who just recently purchased their coach. They appreciated all of the technical support rendered at the Gearhead Session as well as in conversations with all of our rally attendees.

On the downside, I am sorry to report that we are losing two longtime members who have recently sold their Alpine coaches. Jerry & Rebecca Farrow and Gary & Mary Bohinc will no longer be members, but will always be Alpine SoCal Friends. Several others in our Chapter currently have their coaches up for sale. I'd like each of us to try to enlist the new Buyers to join us whenever possible. We should continue to knock on Alpine doors when we see them in campgrounds or at rallies. We certainly meet the neatest Alpine owners that way. Our current membership total as of June 1, 2014 is seventy (70). Keep up the good work in spreading Alpine SoCal news and events to ALL Alpine owners.

RALLY NEWS

SARC (SOCAL ALPINE RALLY COMMITTEE) BY ANNE McDOUGAL

We are currently spending a week in Portland and having a great time. We are at the Columbia River RV Park that is easy access both to downtown (15 minutes) and the Columbia River Gorge (20 minutes).

The 8-day rally in Napa was our first stop on a seven-week journey that will include Seattle, Eugene and the coast from Florence, OR south to Fortuna, CA. There could not have been a better way to jump-start our trip. Many, many thanks to Bill & Patti Figge and Phil Binley & Trudy Greenlaw for hosting a marvelous rally. Several members volunteered to write articles for the Newsletter so I won't go into detail other than to say again WE HAD FUN.

Just a reminder that SARC is a temporary solution for the 2nd VP position of Rally Director. Our club would still welcome someone stepping forward as Rally Director but in the meantime Bill Figge, Ramona Escamilla and I will continue to recruit Wagon Masters and assist as requested in helping you put together a rally.

Happily, we've had several volunteers step forward as Wagon Masters for **2015**. Joe & Micki Darling and Nick & Ramona Escamilla will host Winter Blast at Lake Havasu City, AZ. That relieved Joel and Mary Langord to work with Tris and Carolyn Swan on the ACA pre-rally to the FMCA Convention at the Fairplex in Pomona. At the Napa Rally, Mike & Donna Hambarian volunteered to work with John & Gail Stacy at the rally in Las Vegas and (drum roll for a new rally)

Helena Mazzocco agreed that she and Bob along with Rick & Judy Fisher will host a rally at the Springs at Borrego in the Fall. Please see the Rally Schedule for dates.

While all of those wonderful volunteers are helping to fill out our Rally Schedule, we still have openings for 2014, 2015 and we are entertaining ideas for 2016. We would like to have another rally this coming Fall. Putting together a large rally at this late date could be a challenge; but here is another idea. October is a beautiful month in Southern California and the RV Parks are not as crowded. Perhaps someone could host a SPOT rally. If you are planning to go to a Park, select your site number and invite other SoCal members to join you. All you have to do is let me know and I will get the word out. Everyone makes and pays for their own reservation and there are no "formal" activities, simply the fun of being with other Alpine friends.

2016 is wide open but it is not too early to start thinking about it. Ideally one plans a rally about one year in advance. That early planning gives you more choices in locations and thus the ability to have a larger rally. For 2015 we are still looking for Wagon Masters for a **weeklong** rally in May, June or early September and for another "**weekend**" rally in the Fall. Rally forms are now up on the Alpine SoCal website. To get started you might want to print out the "Rally RV Park Questionnaire." That form will remind you of questions to ask and help you organize your information about the park. Note: Our weekend rallies are now 3-5 days long and the Board has approved 3 nights' park fees for Wagon Masters and we continue with 5 nights for weeklong rallies.

WE ARE ALL LIVING OUR DREAMS. HAPPY TRAILS.

LONG BEACH RALLY APRIL 4 – 7 GOLDEN SHORES RV RESORT By Anne McDougal

The rally began Friday evening with a social hour followed by a catered Greek dinner from George's Greek Café. Everyone agreed the food was fabulous and we had substantial leftovers for our Saturday night Pot Luck Dinner. Only Joel & Mary Langord and Tris & Carolyn Swan who made the special effort to be on hand for the Board meeting joined us Friday evening. Talk about conscientious!!

Friday and Saturday started with a Continental breakfast followed by free time to pursue chosen leisure activities. Several of us visited the Long Beach Aquarium. Our new members, Dean & Susan Vargo took a 16 mile bike ride to the Bisby Knolls

neighborhood. Others spent time walking the beach areas and/or investigating the many places for lunch. The bike paths and walking paths adjacent to the park are wonderful and Long Beach is now known as a bike friendly city. Some spent time at the Long Beach Museum of Art and included lunch at Claire's at the Museum. Jerry and Toni Smith stayed over an extra day to visit and explore Catalina. It was their first time and they now want to go back for a longer visit. You are missing a special treat if you have not visited Catalina at least once. Others visited the Battleship Iowa in San Pedro.

In between outings we enjoyed visiting, relaxing, reading, napping and playing games thanks to the thoughtfulness of Milo & Janet Prodanovich for bringing theirs to the rally. We had our usual lavish array of dishes for our Pot Luck Saturday night.

Most seemed to agree that the highlight of the rally was our Gondola ride through the canals of Naples Sunday evening. The homes are beautiful. We had 12 people on one Party gondola and 10 on the other. Three kinds of pizza, salad and garlic bread served for dinner and they corked our wine for free. Our Gondoliers were knowledgeable about the area and they even sang to us. It was a special treat that will linger in our memories. The weather cooperated the whole time we were there and we all enjoyed our rally.

Mac and Anne hosted this rally along with our wonderful co-Wagon Masters, Sandy and Debi Johnson. We could not have done it without them. If you ever have the chance to co-host with Sandy and Debi, you will be more than pleased





These are very impressive and accommodate 28 to 64 guests, and include indoor and outdoor seating as well as a bar and food area. This is the way to watch a race, whether NHRA or NASCAR! But, be sure to bring your wallet if you want to invite family and friends! The bigger suite is a small donation of \$60,000, not including catering. EEEK! Even so, they are always sold out for a race weekend. While we were there, they were painting one suite purple in honor of FedEx (presumably the next occupier of that suite), and they said as soon as the race is over, they'll paint it back to a neutral color.

From there we went up yet one more level to the area where all of the race officials and announcers sit. From here, you can see all of the drag strip and nearly all of the road racetrack, which dips and curves around the hills in the complex. We were told that the officials watch every single car that is racing to ensure there are no improper actions that could be detrimental to another driver or cause an accident. The officials have the right to disqualify any driver that commits an infraction, and their judgment is final.

Then, we loaded up two large vans, which were followed by about a half dozen cars since we were such a large group. We drove up to the highest part of the track for an awesome view of the complex. We went from there to the go kart track, where an Indy car was parked for close-up view, and motorcycles were zooming around the short road race track used by the go karts.

While there, we learned that there are a few different areas reserved for motorhome parking, with fees ranging from \$250 to \$3,200 for the race weekend. Of course, those most costly are right along the track where you can watch in the comfort of your coach. However, be forewarned that the noise level is WAY up there! We were told that the "cheap" spots are in a field where they actually organize movies, concerts and the like for evening entertainment. An interesting tidbit is that they use a flock of 3,000 sheep to "mow" the surrounding fields, and move them around depending on where they are most needed. The entire complex is 1,600 acres, so the sheep looked pretty well fed to me!

All in all, a very interesting and informative tour!

NAPA RALLY – PHIL BINLEY

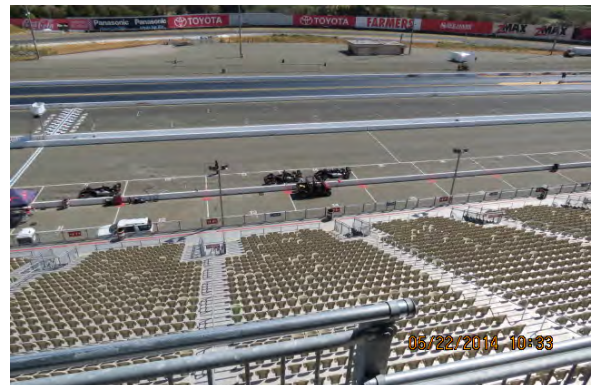
Hello So Cal Alpine Club members, you are about to read a series of articles describing the Memorial Day Napa Rally. Each article is written by a different author/club member. Each author is reporting on a different day's event. Each author brings a unique set of life experiences and each author will surely have a different perspective. There is no editor, so expect different writing styles. This is not a contest, there will be no prizes, just an opportunity to gain a little insight into some of the happenings at this rally and an appreciation for the person who is likely to be your next door neighbor at the next event. As you read remember, your turn is coming."

Thanks for your efforts

SONOMA RACETRACK TOUR - GAIL STACY

Our tour began with a terrific presentation by our own Phil Binley, who must be a foremost expert in auto racing. He told us about the types of tracks, races and cars. Who knew there were so many permutations?!

Following Phil's presentation, the tour guides led us up to the top level of the grandstands to the corporate suites.



Day 2 of the Napa Rally – MICHELLE COLLINS

This is what *I'm* talking' about! Mike and I and thirty-two of our closest [Alpine] friends were there for the Hopper Creek Winery Tour and Tasting on Tuesday, May 20. At eight and one half total acres, the winery is what is known as a small "boutique winery", but really a lovely place. We were greeted by one of the winery dogs, Duncan, and our host for the vineyard and production tour, Joseph, Assistant Winemaker and son-in-law to the owner. Joseph was quick to tell us that growing wine grapes is farming at its best and its worst, meaning that, as with any farm, there are good years and not-so-good years and not nearly as glamorous as it sounds. It was a hands-on tour of the Cabernet, Merlot, and Malbec vines. Joseph explained that, based on the weather and soil conditions, Napa Valley is most well suited to growing these reds. (Note: Sonoma is only a couple of degrees cooler on average and 80% of the acreage is planted in Chardonnay.) He showed us how to identify the different plants by their leaves, explained about grafting, cloning, growing, as well as trimming and shaping the vines and harvesting. Here's some trivia: Did you know that the reason Thomas Jefferson couldn't grow grapes on his property was because the eastern seaboard had a bug in the soil called phylloxera? Phylloxera was spread to Europe and, eventually, to the west by cuttings from the east being taken there. Consequently, all grape vines are now hybrids of phylloxera resistant vines. For more information, just Google it! Moving right along...

Joseph took us through the production area and the process of making and aging wine. The vineyard produces three to five tons of grapes per acre and about 2000 cases of wine per year. Hopper Creek doesn't distribute their wine and it is only available for purchase directly from the winery. Here is a link to their website: www.hoppercreek.com Truly, it was quite a comprehensive tour. It made us all thirsty so on to the wine tasting!

Darren Witcher was our host for the wine tasting. He was trained at UC Davis in the

80's in winemaking, beer-making, and distillation. He urged us to think of wine as a food product and started out by pouring us wine and urging us to look at, as well as smell, the wine before tasting. By looking at the color one can judge how old the wine is and what it might taste like, what fruit or other element to expect. He also showed us how to "age" wine by laying the glass in our palms and rotating. It's one way of tasting how that wine would age in the future.

Darren led us to noticing acidity in the wines. More acidic wines, those that cause us to salivate on the *bottom* of our tongue, are to be paired with food, while less acidic wines are more well suited to drinking as a cocktail. When you salivate on the *top* of your tongue, that acidity is the tannins found in red wine and may be the reason if you don't like red wine.

Smell the barrel from above the glass? It was fermented in a new barrel and is most likely a more expensive wine. Less wood aroma or really have to get your nose in it? Fermented in an older barrel, less expensive but can still be a very nice wine. Trivia #2: Rose wine is made from merlot grapes picked about three weeks early.

We had a lovely lunch at the winery, an opportunity to talk with Darren and Joseph and, of course, bought some great wine. Good wine, good food, and good people! Thanks to Phil Binley for arranging this tour - it was great!





Jack and I took a ride on the Wine Train out of Napa and enjoyed the whole experience. We boarded a tour bus at the train station and it took us to the Raymond Winery where a young lady greeted us when we arrived. She led us into the tasting room and of course poured our first taste of wine. After telling us about the winery, she led our group out into the gardens and told us why they had many of the flowers and vegetables planted. As we made our way through the vineyard she carried a metal basket consisting of four bottles of the tastings yet to come.

Along this tour we came upon a small fenced area where goats and chickens were housed, the goat had given birth the day before to twins, they were cute and looked like puppies.

Along the tour we saw where the grapes were processed, the stainless steel tanks, and tasting rooms set up for dinners. This was one of our favorite tours of a winery while in Napa.

After we ended our visit here, we boarded the bus again, and it took us to another winery where we waited for the Wine Train to arrive. After we boarded and were seated at our table for the lunch, we were given a glass of wine and the waiter took our orders. The lunch consisted of a four course meal which was wonderful, the presentation was excellent, and the beautiful scenery going by was so enjoyable. The train ride back to Napa lasted two hours, and during this time we were able to view the kitchen where our meals were being prepared and free to walk through the other cars.

We highly recommend taking this tour when in Napa.

We would like to thank Bill and Patti and Phil and Trudy for selecting such a beautiful area to host the weeklong rally and giving us the opportunity to visit a part of California we hadn't been to.

THE WINE TRAIN TOUR BY LINDA GIDDENS

We have just returned home from the Napa Rally and what a great week it was.



Mike Grgich is 91 years old and still hangs out at the winery!



**Tour and Demo ---- Greystone
Culinary Institute of America (CIA)
St. Helena, CA
By Toni Smith and Ann Fleming**

GRGICH WINERY – DAVE & NICOLE GUHSE

While we were at the Napa Rally, Nicole and I took a tour of the Grgich Hills Estate Winery. We were very fortunate to meet Mike Grgich. He made our day when he signed the wine we purchased and took a photo with Nicole. What a great day in paradise.



The castle-like structure located on the western hills of the Napa Valley in St. Helena is a beautiful and historic building. Situated on 30 acres it currently home to the Greystone Culinary Institute of America (CIA).

Greystone cellars' building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. William Bowers Bourn II had it built from 1886 to 1889 with local Chinese immigrants and first used it as a cooperative winery for growers in the Napa Valley. You might remember it as the Christian Brothers Winery as they purchased it and used it for their sparkling wine production from 1950-1989. In 1993 the building was sold to The Culinary Institute of America and after \$15 Million to renovate the building, work completed in 1995, and the school established a branch campus. The other CIA schools are located in San Antonio, New York and Singapore.

Ann and Mike Fleming made reservations for the Greystone tour and the culinary demonstration at this famous landmark for 12 members of our Alpine group attending the Napa Valley Rally hosted by Phil Binley-Trudy Greenlaw, Bill and Patti Figge (*fabulous rally*)



Tour Guides



Party of 12

Tour Guides – Sylvia and her assistant, Bertrand Pluziose, new student of 3 weeks, native to Haiti, started in the Atrium, which is decorated with flags from all the cities in which institutes are located. The three states where these cities are located are New York, Texas and California. (***Nicole Guhse, one of our attendees, really enjoyed talking with Bertrand because they both could speak French.***)

Greystone programs include associate degrees in culinary arts and in baking and pastry arts, a 30-week culinary arts certificate program, a 30-week wine and beverage certificate program. Approximately 300 – 400 students attend with some boarding at the campus.

Included in the tour was the Corkscrew Museum, which included the very smallest corkscrew and some very large corkscrews, the Breitstein Collection of fine California wines (David and Judy Breitstein presented the first exhibit in the U.S. devoted to the history of California wine). We viewed the CIA Teaching Kitchens, which cover a 15,000-square-foot of stainless steel, granite, stone, tile and wood with varied appliances such as rotisseries, induction cooking, and even a stone hearth. Also viewing of art in the Art Room, all art provided by culinary students and viewing of the Baking Kitchen...The Rudd Center for Wine Studies was not open on Sunday.

The school has 3 major restaurants. The Bakery Cafe by illy, which is run by Baking and Pastry Arts Certified Students. Many in

our group grabbed a sandwich, cookie, or beverage here during the break between the tour and the demonstration. The food was excellent. But if you are not hungry you can also browse the kitchen store in the same area (***Make sure to have a couple of credit cards available***). The second restaurant is The Wine Spectator Greystone run by students in the Associated of Arts program, where you can experience memorable cuisine perfectly paired with wine. And the third restaurant is the Conservatory Restaurant. It is operated completely by Students of American Food Studies: Farm to Table – these are Students from the New York Hyde Park Campus 4 year program.

On to the Cooking Demonstration

This group found fun and entertainment in the food demo. Chef Josh Anderson did a great job of holding our interest by showing us how to cut and chop and even a few tricks to make it all easier. His secret was to prepare his ingredients -- ***“Mise en Place”*** meaning Everything in it's place Everything is ready. (***Don't we all do that before we turn the key to start the motorhome?***)

The completed dish was an Indonesian - Style Potato Salad made with white or thin-skinned potatoes. Sauce for the potatoes included a spicy red chili paste, made from scratch, coconut milk and a creamy peanut butter with fresh snap peas and shredded carrots, green onions added to the salad. He served this with grilled chicken marinated in the same sauce as the salad, and paired this tasting with a chardonnay from Greystone Cellars. ***Yummy & Very Tasty.***

If you have a passion for food and wine, and enjoy learning, you must go visit the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in Napa California.



Chef Josh Anderson



Our Sampling

P.S. Be sure and buy a CIA hat (Culinary Institute of America) because people will think you are with the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency)

HUMOR ON THE ROAD (TRAVELS WITH MIKE AND MIKE)

Mr. Mike was talking with Bill Figge one day at the Napa campground about a little road trip from Napa up to Glen Ellen. Bill told Mike that we should try the deli, in the market, on the curve, at the turnoff to ... well, Mike forgot that last part. So, the Mike's and Dave and Nicole Guhsé pile in the car and drive up to Glen Ellen. We drive slowly through town (it's about 3 blocks long) and we're looking for signs like "deli", "sandwiches", "market", etc. We're also looking for a curve. Mr. Mike is busy eyeballing everything (except the very large "market" on the right cause he sees a sign pointing to London Ranch on the left. Was that the landmark that Bill had mentioned?)

After our slow northbound trip to and through town, we 'hung a youie' and went back south. Mike saw what might be a sandwich place but it was closed (for good). He pulled into a parking lot and did what all men dread, he asked Mrs. Mike to phone Bill and ask him for directions. Here's where it gets funny...

Dave, being the helpful kind of guy he is, said that he had his number on his cell phone, so he dialed and handed the phone to Mrs. Mike. The phone rings and is answered and she says something like "Hi, it's Mikey, just where is that store with the deli?" The voice on the other end sounded perplexed and Mrs. Mike wisely suspected something was amiss. She asked "Who is this?" And the voice says "It's Engineer Mike!"

We bade EMike a good day and continued driving south. In about a block we found a **curve** with a store. Mr. Mike whipped into the lot and found a shady parking spot right next to the bridge (with the requisite winos and lottery scratchers hanging out drinking from paper bags). "Hi guys". Wow, this brings back some memories...

We all troop into the store and look near and far, right and left, and there it is: one little 5 foot wide refrigerated case with some pre-packaged sandwiches and sliced Kraft (not craft) cheeses. We are far less than enthused and Mr. Mike is wondering how he's going to tell Bill what a *wonderful little deli* he sent us to. Mrs. Mike is giving Mr. Mike the look that means "no way, you are not gonna get me to eat here!" The girl behind the register must have recognized our lost look (or was that our dumbfounded look?), and asked if she could help us.

How do I do this delicately? If I say 'we were looking for a deli', she'll point at the case and say 'there it is'. But, we can't eat here and we can't eat this! I ask her where the little deli is hiding in this tiny town. She explains that it is a very short ways south, just around on the other side of the "S" curve we are on! Her store is on one side of the "S" and our deli is on the other side of the "S"! We troop back to the car, salvation almost at hand, and wave 'bye' to the bridge

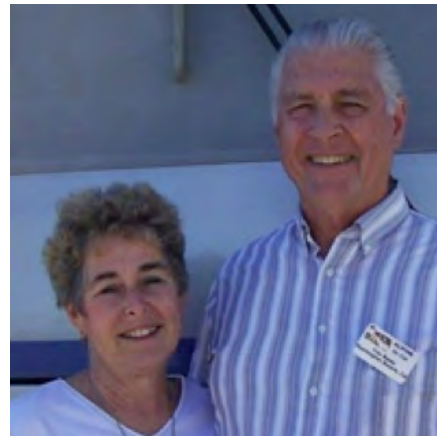
lurkers and drive about 300 feet south. There it is, the Glen Ellen Village Market.

Their deli menu is extensive, they've got a huge salad bar, and it's a full-on grocery store! Whoopee!

So, we order up our sandwiches and buy a bottle of wine to share. They have an indoor seating area and we got 4 plastic cups for the wine (no paper bags here)! And the Mike's, Nicole and Dave sat down and enjoyed a delightful mid-day meal.

Thanks Bill, for the hot tip on the deli. Next time maybe I'd better take notes on the directions!

FROM CAROLYN SWAN, FMCA NATIONAL DIRECTOR



We have just returned from a fantastic week in Napa at the weeklong Rally there and are preparing to fly to Portland tomorrow for our 3rd grandson's graduation from high school. I want to remind you that the upcoming FMCA 90th Family Reunion and Showcase at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds & Expo Center in Redmond Oregon, August 13-16, 2014, early bird registration is until 6/23/14 and you will save \$30. Registration with 30 amp Electric is \$370 for 2 people and they are looking for Volunteers to drive the Trams. There may be a few slots still open for the ACA Pre-Rally in Portland. Contact Tom Polk at tomvending@msn.com right away if you are interested. It is not too early to start planning for next year when the winter FMCA Rally will be

back in Pomona for the first time in 6 years, March 27-30, 2015. Mary Langord and I will be doing the ACA/SoCal Pre-Rally at the Valencia Vacation Resort from March 19-24, 2015. Watch for details coming out soon!

FMCA UPDATES:

Richard Gibbs was voted in as Western Area President and FMCA Area Vice-President, replacing out-going President Robert Ricordati.

Penny Gortemiller is the Director of Membership and Chapter Services at FMCA.

FMCA not only encourages you to recruit new members, but also if you come across FMCA members, whose dues have expired, be sure to encourage them to renew! The FMCA.com web site is a valuable tool, also. Don't forget to direct members and potential members to the web site for additional information. There are other tools available for you, such as chapter directories, advertising information, even a brochure that highlights the benefits we offer to Canadian members. Our membership numbers are still going down!

Lon Cross, Southern Area VP, WMHA, wrote to the National Directors stating that this month

Charlie Adcock announced two new benefits: FMCA RV INSURANCE: There will now be FOUR nation wide brokers working together for FMCA members. Each request for quote will generate a token amount to FMCA (and they will shop for each member's best deal). FMCAssist: Two proposals which will be presented to the Governing Board at Redmond (which will need to be voted on) will offer FMCAssist as a free member benefit. Be sure to look for these benefit details in Charlie's article.

Other benefits found on the FMCA website:

- [Motorhome Trip routing](#)
- [NASCAR Racing Experience and Mario Andretti Racing Experience](#)
- [Costco Wholesale National Membership Program](#)
- [Sam's Club Gift Card](#)
- [FMCA International Travel Insurance](#)
- [FMCA Rewards Accident Insurance Plan](#)

- Passport America discount
FMCA maintains a partnership with Passport America, a 50 percent discount camping club. As a Passport America cardholder, you can stay at more than 1,800 campgrounds across the United States, Canada, and Mexico at 50 percent off the regular rate.
- UPS shipping discount - FMCA members can save up to 28% off UPS Express air and international shipping by enrolling in the UPS Savings Program.
- Car rental discount with Avis & National

Did you know that:

[Office Depot has a National Discount Program?](#)

FMCA members can save up to 80 percent on office and school supplies through Office Depot's national discount program. You can save on pens, paper, toners, computers and accessories.

Hope to see you in Portland and Redmond this summer! Drive safe and have fun!

FROM MICKI DARLING

When Joe and I signed up for the 2014 Winter Blast, we had no idea what we were in for.

You will probably remember watching fireworks as a child on the 4th of July and ooh-ing and ah-ing. As an adult, you have probably seen beautiful fireworks at Disneyland and other special events. But what we saw at the Winter Blast display put all fireworks in the past to shame.

The Western Winter Blast Pyrotechnics show, held in Lake Havasu City, AZ February 12 - 16, is presented by the Western Pyrotechnic Association, an organization of professional fireworks manufacturers, distributors and showmen. The fireworks manufacturers create and display their most spectacular creations for buyers, and the public is invited to watch.

The Alpine So-Cal group, numbering about 16 rigs, camped at the Rodeo Fairgrounds

along with hundreds of other RVs. Although we were about ½ mile away from the stadium, we had a great view of the fireworks displays. Beginning around 5:30 and ending around 11 p.m., there was “free shooting.” But the crown jewel each evening was the professional 7:30 - 8:30 show. It consisted of overlapping dazzling displays lighting up and covering the skies. Most of the time, it seemed we could reach up and touch the huge and incredible arrays, although they were ½ mile away! That’s because many of the fireworks shells used here are from other countries and are unavailable in the United States. In addition, many are 200-pound “monster shells”, which are rare in this country because only a few locations have the room to shoot them.

Words cannot describe the wonders we saw each evening, so I am including some photos. Unfortunately, my iPhone camera just wasn’t up to the task, but here are a few photos it captured:



Our hats go off to Mary and Joel Langord for putting together this awesome rally.

FROM JIM ARCHER

Over The Air TV Reception

Many of us have satellite TV systems to provide programming for the televisions in our coach. But as we all know, occasionally we are in amongst the trees, and we can’t get reception on the dish. If you are a serious couch potato like me, you need to have contingency plans! Options include watching DVD’s or previously recorded programs on your DVR, using the cable system in an RV park, or relying on local over-the-air (OTA) broadcast stations. This is the reason our entertainment centers are so complicated. This is what they were designed to do.

Congress required all full power TV stations to switch from analog to digital broadcasting effective in 2009. The result is digital television (DTV) that offers superior picture and sound quality than was possible in the past. Many times this DTV picture is in high definition, with quality that can actually exceed the quality of cable systems and even satellite systems! For free!! Most medium sized or larger cities will likely have DTV stations available.

The Winegard Sensar antenna, affectionately known to many of us as the Batwing antenna on many of our coaches, is a very good antenna for DTV broadcasts. However it is somewhat limited in its ability to pick up UHF signals, over which many

DTV stations are now broadcasting. But this can be remedied rather cheaply. You can purchase a Wingman Sensar antenna upgrade that improves UHF reception for around \$25 to add to your existing Batwing, or you can replace the existing Batwing head with the Sensar IV head, which has the Wingman built into it, for around \$50. Both take about 15 minutes to install.

The Batwing antenna needs 12 volt electrical power to operate. The easiest way to check to see if your antenna is getting this power is to disconnect the coax connector at the antenna head, and check the coax for 12 volts DC. If you don't have this voltage, you have a problem that must be addressed if you wish to receive OTA broadcasts. The Batwing antenna is considered a "directional" antenna. It receives the best signal if it is properly aimed at the broadcast tower. A simple method is to check to see if your neighbors have their batwing antennas cranked up, and if so, make note of the direction they have it pointed.

Winegard sells a SensarPro TV Signal Strength Meter for around \$75 that replaces the booster switch mentioned above. This will aid in properly aiming the antenna. If you plan to use the OTA antenna frequently, this item is probably worth the cost. I have one, and it is excellent.

Finally, it is important to note that with the conversion from analog broadcasts to digital broadcasts, you must re-scan for stations each time you move to a different location. The station identification numbers will change from market to market, and are not interchangeable. For example, channel 7.1 in the LA area will not be the same as channel 7.1 in Phoenix.

Mary's Spring Musings

Joel and I have been very fortunate. Our travel plans have allowed us to spend three weeks in one of our favorite spots at Big Bear Shores. The weather has been

magnificent....mid to high 70s during the day with bright sunshine, and low 30s at night; just right for open window snuggling in a down comforter. Ah, "life is good".

Springtime can quickly bring lot of changes; so let me say that we did have two to three inches of snow overnight. Hopefully the newly planted spring flowers will hang in there. They have to tough though, because we suddenly have a very hungry rabbit who thinks we planted the flowers just for him.

Spring offers us a new look at everything that is important in our lives. After a long winter's nap, the trees are bursting forth with new life. Spring bulbs of tulips, daffodils, irises, and lilies are all at work waking up to a new day with glorious color. What is nature trying to tell us? Wake up and smell the roses? Slow down and enjoy telling us that life has so much mystery, so much wonder, that we need to appreciate the changing of the seasons. Maybe, just maybe, it is telling us that life offers us a new day, each and every day, to move forward with joy and thanksgiving.

That is the message I've "mused" on today. How very treasured is all that we see, all that we feel, all that we enjoy in nature. Maybe after a long winter's nap, I too, will wake to find new challenges, new deeds, new beginnings, and new friends. We humans are so blest!

I hope that you have found a very special place to welcome spring, and that you are all enjoying your Alpines.

A side-note to help you find more ways to enjoy and enrich your Alpine lives....check out the Alpine SoCal website, www.alpinesocal.com. There may be a surprise or two that will encourage you to get "out and about" in your home on wheels. Hope to see you "down the road apiece".

Consolidated Rally Schedule 2014-15

Revised 6/05/14

2014			
January 7 – 12	Riverside County Fairgrounds Indio, CA	FMCA* WMHA	Gail Stacy (caravan only) gjstacy@cox.net
Feb 14 – 17	25 th Winter Blast Fireworks Rodeo Grounds Lake Havasu City, AZ	SoCal	Joel & Mary Langord Langord@mac.com
March 17 – 20	Georgia Nat'l Fairgrounds Perry, GA	FMCA* Int'l Conv	
April 4 - 7	Golden Shore RV Resort Long Beach, CA	SoCal	Mac & Anne McDougal Mcdanne2@gmail.com Sandy & Debi Johnson Firecapt98@hotmail.com
May 19 – 27	Napa Valley Expo RV Park & Skyland Wilderness Park Napa, CA	SoCal	Bill & Patti Figge figgebp@mac.com Phil & Trudy Binley philbinley@yahoo.com
Aug 7-11, 2014 Aug 13 - 16	Portland/Fairview RV Park Redmond, OR	ACA FMCA*	Egg's & Polk's FMCA
Sep 28 – Oct 4	ACA Heritage Rally, Branson	ACA	Burch's & Cook's
Nov 14 - 18	Pismo Coast Village Pismo Beach, CA	SoCal	Mike & Mike Collins alpinemikes@2mikeys.com Jerry & Toni Smith Geraldsmith18@hotmail.com
2015			
Jan 6 - 11	Riverside County Fairgrounds Indio, CA	FMCA* WMHA	Gail Stacy (Caravan only) gjstacy@cox.net
Jan TBD	Desert Rat	ACA	
Feb 11 – 16	Winter Blast, Lake Havasu	SoCal	Joe & Micki Darling jdarling10@aol.com Nick & Ramona Escamilla ramona324@hotmail.com
Mar 19 - 24	Pre-Rally @ Valencia RV Park	ACA	Joel & Mary Langord Langord@mac.com Tris & Carolyn Swan swansnest2@verizon.com
Mar 26 – 29	Fairplex in Pomona	FMCA* Convention	
Apr 9 - 13	Las Vegas LVM Resort	SoCal	John & Gail Stacy gjstacy@cox.net Mike & Donna Hambarian GRBGMIKE.aol.com
Early NOV	The Springs at Borrego	SoCal	Bob & Helena Mazzocco bobnhelena@roadrunner.com Rick & Judy Fisher judyfisher@gmail.com

***Must register directly with FMCA.**

We will be celebrating the 26th annual Western Winter Blast with an Alpine SoCal RALLY. The Western Pyrotechnic Association has produced a network of fireworks' enthusiasts who put on a spectacular show. To celebrate their 26th anniversary they will again produce magnificent fireworks displays from dusk to 10:00 pm throughout the convention.

Dry camping costs on the Rodeo Grounds is \$100.00. Cancellation policy allows 100% refund until Oct 1st, 2014 and 50% refund until Jan 1st, 2015. No refunds after January 1, 2015

Reserve your site ASAP as spaces will go fast. You may make your site reservation on-line at havasurodeo.com When on havasurodeo.com, click on events, then fireworks. Make sure to include Alpine SoCal in your application, as we are holding sites.

You may attend all six days, five nights - OR just attend the Alpine SoCal Rally. Your assigned site will be available throughout the event.

Additional rally activities are currently being planned by your Alpine SoCal Rally Hosts. Be on the lookout for the registration forms. Evening fireworks displays, after-glow parties and the best of Alpine SoCal's "eats and treats" will make this a rally to remember.

For more information, contact

Joe & Micki Darling or Nick & Ramona Escamilla

FOR SALE

2000 Alpine Coach FDS-40. 350 hp 8.3 Cummins with 6 sp Allison transmission. Loaded with solar panels, Joey Bed storage compartment sliders, computer desk, custom overhead cabinets with 32" flat screen TV, King Dome satellite dish and much, much more. Also, 6 new batteries and 6 BRAND NEW tires. Coach has 64,000 mi and still has NINE months on full warranty. \$49,900.

Call: Jim Klinko @ 760-814-0070

*Western Pyrotechnic Association
26th Annual Convention & Show
Alpine SoCal "Winter Blast"
February 11 - February 16, 2015
Rodeo Grounds, Lake Havasu City, AZ*