



Southeast Bus Nuts Newsletter

April 2013

Charlie Chat

The weather here in Central Florida couldn't get much better. The snowbirds are loving it, but some of us southerners think the cold days are a near death experience.

My opening comment for the last newsletter was that the expected Armageddon over the Federal budget came and went without as much of a whisper. Y2K was the same and now the sequester hit us without the trauma that we were told to expect. So much for predicted high dramas.



16 coaches came to Tropical Palms for the Val's Rally

The Valentine's Rally at Kissimmee went off as planned and as a matter of fact, there were comments that it was the best Valentine Rally in recent years.

There was an unexpected event that reduced the participation somewhat. Bryan Bowman's nephew was killed in an automobile crash a few days before the event.

Our hearts go out to the Bowman family as the nephew was a son of Syl & Beverly's daughter, Kay, who died a couple years ago.

Since Bryan and Suzanne couldn't attend the rally, Judy and I picked up where they left off. Bryan and Susanne spent a lot of time and effort setting up the

rally details leaving very little for me and Judy to do, but monitor the activities. Kudos to you two!

That brings us to the Spring Rally at Stone Mountain, May 16-19. It promises to be another great gathering, considering the events available. The price again includes three nights of camping and a laser show on the side of Stone Mountain Saturday night, pizzas Thursday night, and a catered meal Friday night. Saturday gives us many activities such as Duck amphibious rides and a theme park, leaving us on our own for dinner. Needless to say there are myriad activities in the Atlanta area.

State of the Chapter: FMCA tells us their numbers are dwindling and many chapters are

barely hanging on. Our local chapter, Mt. Olive Shores, can't even come up with a quorum to hold a meeting, so they are turning in their charter. We're doing better than most with 111 members, but expect that to go down this year with a possible loss of about 15.

However, with higher prices everywhere for everything and the uncertainty of the immediate future, it causes one to think about the next rally. The Valentine rally was \$199 with the optional Al Capone outing costing another \$64 a couple. I didn't hear any complaints about the cost, and all but two couples

**Spring Rally Info, fee & schedule—
See pp 8 & 9.**

Charlie Chat (Cont'd)

went to the Al Capone event. Our spring rally in Stone Mountain is priced the same, as the camping fees are high. Speaking with other chapters, it appears that a \$200 rally is in line.

The following rally, Halloween, will be at Costley Mill where Beverly & Syl won't charge much if any for nightly camping, keeping the price down. We will most likely return to Twin Oaks in the next year or two, but Ira Crews, the owner, tells me the hookup fee is going to be at least \$25, bringing that rally to \$150 or more. So that's the way it's going.

Charlie

Recent Rally Attendance / Coaches

| | |
|---|----|
| Arcadia 2011 (President's Reception) | 20 |
| Valentines 2011 (Titusville) | 27 |
| April in Carolinas 2011 (Palmetto Cove) | 55 |
| Halloween 2011 (Hoboken) | 32 |
| Arcadia (President's Reception) 2012 | 32 |
| Valentine's 2012 (Lake Okeechobee) | 18 |
| April in Carolinas 2012 (Palmetto Cove) | 33 |
| Halloween 2012 (Hoboken) | 35 |
| Arcadia (President's Reception) 2013 | 40 |
| Valentine's 2013 (Kissimmee) | 16 |

Secretary's Update

Secretary Judy Bukoski reports that current membership is at 111, including some 18 members who have yet to renew for 2013. Unfortunately several of these are expected to lapse. Some of this is age related, and some is due to the economy, cost of fuel, etc.

We did pick up one new member family, Cal and Susan Arter of Lakeland who hope to make it to our spring rally at Stone Mountain, GA. In February get-well cards were sent to members Leonard Jelkren and Jackie Britt. Also, a sympathy card was signed by all Valentine Rally attendees and sent to

the Syl & Beverly Bowman Family at their home in Costley Mill, near Conyers, GA.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Marty Nixon has reported that the current club balance, after all Kissimmee Rally expenses were paid, is \$4,245.

Kissimmee Rally Notes

There was lots to do in Kissimmee for the hearty 16 coaching families that turned out (we would have had another six coaches but we lost several due to the death in Syl and Beverly Bowman's family, and other illnesses and unexpected obstacles.).

The catered dinner on arrival night (Thursday) was very good—roast beef with all the fixing's, followed by a Valentine's party and dance with a live duo that Tropical Palms Resort put on for the whole campground. Good fun!

The resort itself was nearly full, but thanks to the planning of rally hosts Bryan and Suzanne Bowman most of our coaches were grouped together.



The Tropical Palms clubhouse, very tropical indeed!

Friday afternoon was an open time for sight-seeing, and the weather cooperated. Some folks shopped, some toured. The shopping was excellent at Old Town, which abuts the park. Some went to see historic old Kissimmee, and others went to the nearby attractions. Universal, Disney and SeaWorld, all are only a mile or two from the campground.

Kissimmee Rally Notes—Cont'd

Friday night the Bowmans made impeccable arrangements for the entire rally group to enjoy dining *al fresco* in nearby Celebration, FL. We were seated on the patio of the beautiful Market Café on Front Street in the downtown area, and everyone had a pre-printed Southeast Bus Nuts menu at their place, with special salad and entrée selections. It was great fun. And the town of Celebration is quite a piece of work. It's a Disney owned, master-planned community of 3000+ houses built on tree-lined streets. The art deco and *moderne* homes all have sweeping front porches and sidewalks, a throw-back to turn of the century small town living. Worth a visit!



Dining al fresco in Celebration, the Disney community.

On Saturday afternoon there was more sightseeing. Some folks went to the nearby Atlanta Braves baseball spring training complex in Lake Buena Vista, and others stayed in the park and visited. That evening most of the group bought the extra ticket to the dinner theater at Al Capone's. This was great fun, with audience participation and gangsters running wild. One attractive feature was the all-you-can-eat buffet, with unlimited beer and wine. A fun evening.

After the dinner theater many of the Bus Nuts rushed back to the adjoining Old Town village, where every Saturday night there is a free Cruise of classic cars and hot rods. In fact it is billed as the largest Cruise in the states! If you like old rods and classic rock 'n roll, this was the place!

Sunday morning was a time for sad good-byes. But each of the three mornings Judy

Bukoski laid out a nice continental breakfast with fresh strawberries from nearby Plant City.

It was a smaller rally, but many said the size contributed to the friendliness and made for better visiting. Thank-you Bryan and Suzanne Bowman!!!

MFH

For additional Valentine's Rally photos, please see pp. 4 & 5.

Member Notes

Debbie and Luther Delp recently attended a book-signing by Iraq war veteran J R Martinez, the Army infantryman who sustained burns over 34% of his body. His book is entitled *Full of Heart, My Story of Survival, Strength and Spirit*. Martinez came to national attention when he competed and won the Dancing with the Stars TV show. Debbie reports that Luther continues to do well in his recovery from a catastrophic motorcycle accident several years ago.



Luther Delp gets an autograph from inspirational author J R Martinez. Debbie is standing behind him in the green blouse.

Tom and Karen Hamrick and Gary and Linda LaBombard are Bus Nuts from the Carolinas who are planning to weekend in Palmetto Cove, near Cleveland, SC, over April 12-14th.

Doc and Leona Engel took their MC-8 on its first trip in many months since Doc's back surgery last year. They went over to Jetty Park on the Atlantic, near Melbourne, FL. Doc said it felt so good to be behind the wheel that he intentionally took it slow to prolong the good vibes. Doc has been under the doctor's orders to not do any heavy lifting. Hooking up the tow car was a potential issue, but it went smoothly. However it will be many more months before he's back crawling under buses, changing oil.

Kissimmee Snapshots, February 2013



Happy St. Val's rally participants: clockwise from lower left, Blake and Linda Wright, Ellen and Howard Best, Herb Bates and Reen Kukon, Norm and Maureen Scanapico, and Ed Fisher.



The St. Valentine's dinner and dance was great fun, and the food and music were very enjoyable!



Steve Siem, center, anchored a table at the dinner on Thursday night at the clubhouse.



Linda and Blake Wright danced the two-step after dinner on Valentine's Day.



Two full tables were eating outside at the Friday dinner at the Market Café in downtown Celebration.



John and Lynne Silver handled the 50-50 tickets at the Saturday evening event.

More Kissimmee Memories—February 2013



The Al Capone Show was a fun affair, and the dinner theatre was located just a few minutes from the campground. All but two couples at the rally went to the affair.



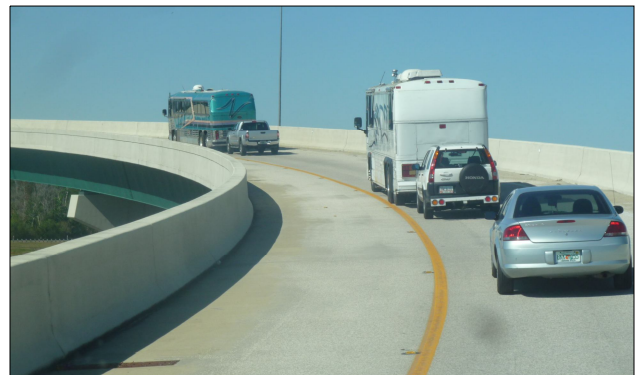
Flapper Judy Bukoski worked closely with the Bowmans to see all went smoothly. Past President Gerald Ensley was not able to attend the February rally—but his hat did! (President Bukoski is a dead ringer, no?)



The Saturday dinner-theatre at Al Capone's club had its share of melodrama.



Several members went to the weekly Cruise-In at Kissimmee's Old Town. Over 125 hot-rods and classics were on display, then in a parade. Shown here are Vice President/Treasurer Marty Nixon and Debbie Spear.



After the rally there was a mini-caravan back to Mount Olive Shores, FL. For the most part the rally weather was cool but nice.

Member Spotlight

An occasional feature of this newsletter is to profile both a newer member couple and a more long-term coach couple, an effort to get us better acquainted with each other.

Newer Members

Bob and Sandi Thomas of Mt Olive Shores, retired as pilot and flight attendant from Northwest Airlines, had a significant background in the bus industry before becoming RVers.

While still flying, based in Chicago, Bob and Sandi bought a couple of GM-4106s, and redid the seated interiors to make them more luxurious executive coaches. Fewer and larger reclining seats, a galley, coffeemaker, flushable toilets. They were popular and profitable with visiting executives on factory tours.

Their first RV coach was a '95 Foretravel, which they got in 2002, and just loved. But they always admired the Prevosts, and never stopped looking for the right one.

They finally found it late last year, a beautiful, high-end 1998 Prevost converted by Vision Coach (formerly Pacific Coach) out in Santa Ana CA. It was originally a show-coach. They were so sure they'd like it they sent a deposit and drove their car all the way out there to complete the deal. They had some important work done out west to be more road worthy, then they brought her home to Florida. It's a big 45-footer with a Series 60, and all the bells and whistles, pushing the scales at 51,000 pounds.



Sandi and Bob Thomas. The Thomases are full-timers who have been prior members of both the Northwest Bus Nuts and the Southwest Bus Nuts. It was a no-brainer to join the SEBN when they decided to make FL their base. Their big trips are often on a whim, like a recent jaunt to Las Vegas or another to Oregon. Their favorite feature of the coach? That independent front suspension. "It handles like a dream!"

Longer-term Members

Herb Bates has been a member of the Southeast Bus Nuts since 1994. But he and his late wife Joann had been RVing for years before that in a Winnebago. He was friends with former SEBN member Ben Fortner who introduced them to the idea of a bus conversion. Big and safe – built to commercial standards.



Herb Bates and Reen Kukon live in Lakeland, FL

He started looking and found a great MC-7 coming out of service in Miami. The conversion effort took three years, but he really enjoyed the process, from designing it to being one of the first to install a household-type refrigerator!

In the succeeding years Herb has had the bus in 49 states, and would've taken it to Hawaii had there been a bridge! One of their favorite trips was joining Howard and Ellen Best on a summer-long trek to Alaska, a memorable experience. They saved money by boondocking in Wal-Mart's and gravel pits. Not many campgrounds were available then.

Although Herb lost his wife some years ago, he and his companion Reen still put the coach to very good use, making several SEBN rallies a year, and usually making one big summer trip. Last year they spent considerable time in Denver and Ft Hood, TX.

Without a doubt the best feature of his MC-7 is the spiffy Series 50 Detroit Diesel he had installed about a year ago. "You can barely feel it shifting gears it's so smooth!"

When asked about any unusual road fixes, he mentioned he lost his starter in Ohio, but still had a big Cadillac hooked up as a tow vehicle. He had Joann in the Caddy give him a push, pop the clutch, and off they went, all the way to Niagara Falls. There's no substitute for ingenuity!

More Member Happenings...

Sad news from **Ed and Ann Gallant** of Bostic, NC. After decades of happiness both in the Bussin' Buddies and the SEBN, they have decided to sell their venerable GM-4903. (See ad below.) They have recently purchased a Gulfstream motorhome, with Cummins engine and Allison transmission, and are very happy with it - a recent trip to New England got them 10 miles to the gallon! They do plan to remain in the Southeast Bus Nuts, but as 'associate members'.

Jim and Cindy Conway of Dunnellon, FL took a nice bus trip last year in their MC-102a3 when they spent several days on the gulf near Mexico Beach, FL. Jim is just finishing the restoration of a '39 Chevy pick-up truck which he is giving to Cindy to run errands in. It's all original except for brakes, suspension and air conditioning. These are all modern.

Jack and Jackie Campbell have had to spend the last six weeks in their bus at his rental property up on Lake Norman, north of Charlotte, NC. In preparation for new tenants he has had to complete a fair number of structural repairs, plus paint and general renovation. At least the weather has been cool. He remains very happy with the recently transplanted Series 50 Detroit in their MC-102a3.

Lester Durgin and his girlfriend **Patty Keane** were at the Valentine's rally in their MC-5. He confessed that because of the price of fuel they decided to leave their bus in Florida each summer when they relocate to his native New Hampshire. The price of fuel makes it difficult to go the 1,500 miles economically, he says.

Howard and Ellen Best, veteran full-timers, report that their new bus barn in Kingston GA is mostly finished and makes a great place to get in the pit, do his annual maintenance, etc.

For Sale

From time to time, the newsletter is asked to post notice of members' buses or bus-related equipment for sale. Address submissions to mikeheron@bellsouth.net

GM-4903, 1969, fully converted, recent engine rebuild, automatic Allison, six new tires, too many features to list. Asking \$15,000. Contact Ed Gallant at edannbus@aol.com

Shore cord, 50 amp, 40 feet, used. Very heavy duty. \$20. or best offer. Also two stock right and left MCI 96a3 side mirrors, \$10 each. Call 404-423-7919 or grammie_60@bellsouth.net

MCI parts, 4.10 differential from MCI 12, \$1500 plus shipping; also ProHeat system and pump, will tie into bus heat system, \$250 plus shipping. Jack Campbell at 863-206-3838 or e-mail jack.campbell1090@gmail.com

01 Eagle, converted in the '90s, and beautifully outfitted, powered with a DD Series 60 engine (62,000 troublefree miles), electronic transmission, Eagle Model 15 dash with complete ultra instrumentation, beautiful interior, solid surface counters, hardwood floors, hydraulic jacks, 15 kW generator, good tires, Imron paint. Asking \$40,000. Ed Fisher 804-370-4066, or aandefisher@gmail.com

Remco, drive shaft disconnect for S-10 Chevy Sonoma pickup truck. \$280. Judy Bukoski, Phone 863-670-3993.



Bus Nuts Spring rally at Stone Mountain park is sure to bring a smile to everyone's face. With plenty to do, or just do nothing! Camping sites are premium sites, that are all level lots and have all utilities including water, sewer and 50 amp electrical, cable and WIFI. Also each site has a wooden deck, picnic table, grill and fire pit

**May 16 thru 19th
2013**

Total cost for the whole weekend (3 nights) including catered "local BBQ meal" is **\$199 per coach**. Go to the Bus Nuts website

<http://www.sebusnuts.org>

And click on the PayPal button to sign up and reserve your weekend.



Available at the campground Pool, laundry, camp store, playground, volleyball & horseshoes, propane, paddleboat & canoe rentals, Hiking trails, Shuttle bus to attractions (handicap accessible)

Planned activities

Thursday night: Pizza dinner

Friday Morn: Coffee, pastries, or cereal.

Friday: Visiting with others and visiting park attractions during the day.

Friday evening: Catered Local fair Bar-B-Q
Everyone dress in your best 50s and 60s Rock and Roll attire. (50/60s Music or Movie afterwards)

Saturday morning: Coffee, pastries, or cereal.

Business meeting: at 10 AM Sat after breakfast.
Saturday: More visiting with others, and visiting park attractions.

Saturday evening: "Amazing Music and Laser show" at the rock...Free Shuttle(handicap accessible) van available from the campground.

Sunday: Coffee, pastries, or cereal. Sad farewells, and pack up to leave.

Southeast Bus Nuts Leadership

Chapter Officers:

President– Charlie Bukoski chasjudy@bukoski.com

VP / Treasurer– Marty Nixon nixonmarty@aol.com

Secretary--Judy Bukoski judy@compzrs.com

FMCA National Director-Bertha Showman
jrbmshow@aol.com

Advisory Committee:

Howard Best

Jack Campbell

Dorothy Ensley

Mike Heron

Leah Johnson

Chaplain: Beverly Bowman

Past Chapter Presidents: Art Hempen, Gene Brotherton*, Russ Drummond*, Howard Best, Mike Jackson*, Lewie Hinman*, Bill Zibell, Andy Metro, Ray Stiltner, Gerald Ensley, Jack Campbell, Mike Heron, and Duane Britt.
(* denotes deceased)

Visit our website:

www.sebusnuts.org

This newsletter is now posted on the above website, FYI.

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Please send stories, updates and photos to:

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