



Southeast Bus Nuts Newsletter

December 2014

Charlie Chat

Gee, time just flies by when you're having a good time. It's time for me to pass the flag on to my successor, President –Elect Ed Fisher, at the end of the year. I certainly appreciate all of you giving me the privilege of serving you for the last four years. It did give me the opportunity to bring administrative procedures into the 21st century. The main achievements were to simplify rally hosting by transferring finances and promotion to the staff and leaving the host to only manage the venue, meals and entertainment.

Another mission objective was to get out of the rut of going to the same places all the time. Our hosts at Hoboken and Palmetto Cove were and are outstanding, however we weren't exploring new places. After all, we built these fine travel machines to explore our country. Of course, as we become more mature, we tend to lose some of that interest, but the younger folks still want to travel. The trick is find a campground that is as ideal as Twin Oaks yet have some activities nearby. President Elect Fisher indicated he would like to send out another survey to check on current feelings on our venues as well as activities at our rallies.

The results of the survey I sent out four years

ago indicated that you want to move around, while still visiting the old places we enjoyed every 2-3 years. Another factor is to control the costs, so we may have some relatively inexpensive rallies as well as some more expensive ones.

The recent rally at Hoboken was certainly reasonable enough, while the one in Kissimmee last year was on the high side, but attendance was as good as anywhere else. The next rally is the one in Arcadia, medium priced, while the following rally in Myakka at the Lipizzaner ranch will certainly be on the cheap side.

Again, thanks for your support and involvement in the SE Bus Nuts chapter's affairs.

A toast to our chapter!

Charlie

Secretary's Report

Membership:

Current membership is at 89. This is made up of 77 regular members and 12 honorary members. We currently have 59 regular members who's 2015 dues are now up for renewal. We can most likely expect that not all of them will renew, so if we don't get some new members soon, our regular membership will continue to drop.

Dues Renewal:

Treasurer Marty Nixon and Charlie & I collected 2015 dues from several members following the general meeting at the Hoboken Rally. Cash and credit cards were accepted on site. If you are still unpaid, simply go to our secure website and pay by PayPal or credit card.



Outgoing chapter president Charlie Bukoski (l.) is presented with a citation from his officers and advisory board expressing appreciation for his four years of leadership. Newsletter editor Mike Heron bestowed the award.

See page 7 for details regarding the Arcadia Rally, set for Dec. 29th through Dec. 31st

●Secretary's Report (Cont'd)

Current Snail Mail: eight members get hard copies of the newsletter and roster, however we are now printing newsletters in B&W to reduce costs. The most recent pictorial roster has been published (thanks again **Linda Karlsson!**), and will be sent out to these eight members.

Health Report:

June:

Get well card sent to **Syl Bowman** (*Editor's note*: since the Autumn rally Syl has also been in and out of the hospital fighting pneumonia)

Sympathy cards sent to: **Bill Johnson** (Martha's death), **George Showman & Showman Family** (Fran's death)

July:

Sympathy card sent to **Tom Mason** (Dad's death)

October:

Memorial gifts of \$50 each were sent to:

Hospice in Charlotte, NC (In Memory of **Martha Johnson**)

Hospice in Marietta, GA (In Memory of **Fran Showman**)

The Stable (A facility that helps troubled teens) in Robbinsville, NC (In Memory of **Arthur Griffith**)

***** PLEASE call or E-mail me if you hear of any deaths or members ill or having surgery so I can send cards and coordinate memorial gifts.

Here's a heads-up regarding the FMCA Southeast Area Rally, which will be in Sarasota this time instead of Brooksville, FL where it has been held for many years. It just happens to coincide with our February Rally in Myakka City FL, so this makes its very accessible to those who attend our rally.

It's like a win-win, since a casual schedule will allow you to spend time at both rallies. More information will be forthcoming once our Myakka Rally details are firmed up. We hope to see you there.

Judy Bukoski, Secretary

●Treasurer's Report

Current balance, which includes all Hoboken income and expenses, stands at \$x,xxxx. (to come)

Hoboken Rally Report

Donnie Wilson and **Howard Best** were excellent co-hosts for the 32 coaches that attended our return to Twin Oaks Music Park November 5-9. We shared the meeting and cooking facilities with about 18 RVs from the Friends of Twin Oaks bluegrass club. All activities were held at the newer function hall on the south side of the campground. SEBN did the meals for Thursday and Friday, and FOTO did a turkey dinner Saturday.

Donnie is a marvelous cook, and he went all out this time. His first breakfast was home-made biscuits and sausage gravy, along with scrambled eggs and all the fixin's. That night he did hotdogs with his special chili.

The second breakfast featured Howard's buttermilk pancakes and Don's homemade waffles, along with sausage and bacon. Don's second dinner was his famous 'one-bowl meal' of Jambalaya over rice. Yum! Not much left over.

Because of the great talent available, there was wonderful bluegrass music available all three nights. SEBN member Linda Karlsson was a regular member at all sessions, playing the bass fiddle.

On Friday we held our annual meeting and election of officers. Incoming president is long-time member **Ed Fisher** of Urbanna, VA, with **Brian Bowman** of Covington, GA as VP. **Marty Nixon** will continue as Treasurer, and Ed's wife **Anke Fisher** will serve as Secretary and FMCA delegate/director. Outgoing president Chas Bukoski was presented a special citation for his unprecedented four years of leadership as President.

In an unusual treat, all rally attendees were able to browse and shop the large "Big Z" garage sale that was set up near the old function hall and surrounding grounds of Twin Oaks.

Recent Rally Attendance / Coaches

Valentines 2013 (Kissimmee)	16
Spring Rally 2013 (Stone Mountain, GA)	17
Halloween 2013 (Costley Mill GA)	21
Arcadia (General Meeting) 2014	32
Valentine's 2014 (Lazy Days, FL)	25
Spring Rally 2014 (Charleston)	23
Autumn 2014 (Hoboken)	32

Arcadia Snapshots

Editor's Note: Thanks to **Linda Karlsson** and **Judy Bukoski** for the photographs



Howard Best flipped over 100 pancakes while **Don Wilson** did homemade waffles!



Good weather greeted, from left, **Pam Maichuk**, **Ken Siems**, **Jack Campbell**, **Ray Cox**, and **Howard and Ellen Best**.



From left, **Bertha Showman**, **Peggy** and **Ray Cox**, and **Ellen Best**.



Impromptu bluegrass jamming with **Kirby Karlsson** (l.), **Syl Bowman**, **Donnie Wilson**.



Left photo: **Linda Karlsson** was a steady presence on the bass during three separate evening music sessions.



Right photo: Rally co-Host **Donnie Wilson** dishes up his famous chili to top off a grilled hotdog at the rally's first planned dinner.

More Arcadia Photos



Debbie Spear presented a gift to Secretary Judy Bukoski for her four years service.



Candy and Al Kline raised their hands for more dessert while Herb Bates declined (ha ha!).



Maureen and Norm Scanapico's Prevost had suffered a bent rod before the rally. All better now!



Lively dinner conversation, from left, Howard Best, an unidentified FOTO guest, Jim Conway and Ed Fisher.



Jackie Britt browses the Big Z garage sale Saturday.



President-Elect Ed Fisher won the 50-50 on Fri.

Member Spotlight

A recurring feature of this newsletter is a brief profile of a newer member couple and a more long-term coach couple - an effort to get us better acquainted with each other!

Newer Members

Kevin and Camellia Clark, of Oviedo, FL, had been RVing for years as they enjoyed their hobby: radio-controlled car racing competitions. They had an Allegro then a Southwind. But an MC-7 owned by neighbor **Leonard Jelkren** really piqued their interest, so a deal was made.

After seven years of solid part-time conversion work, they gave up and looked for a bus that was already finished. (The MCI was sold to BusNut **Laurier Poirier** who lives nearby.)

A finished '90 Prevost caught their eye out in Indiana, and after a flight there to inspect, they became proud owners. It was beautifully done, and was a very low mileage conversion. Ironically, it turns out that it was originally owned by SEBN member **Ken Siems!**

Kevin and Camellia own a concrete recycling business in central Florida, and Kevin has been working around big diesels and heavy equipment for 30 years. So maintenance and upkeep on their bus is no problem—almost like therapy, he says. The bus is very practical as they travel around the state to various bicycling events. Kevin is an ardent biking enthusiast.

They haven't taken any huge trips yet, but the 'bucket list' includes Colorado where they have family, and a trip to Alaska, possibly as part of a caravan, as sort of a retirement present.

The Clarks enjoy fraternizing with SEBN members, especially when gathering tech tips and sharing expertise. "It's a great group of people!"



Longer term Members

Cindy and Jim Conway, of Dunnellon, FL, are on their second bus conversion. Jim and his first wife, Marge, were impressed with past president **Gene Brotherton's** MCI in 1996. Two years later they were driving around in their own MC-7, which Jim converted himself. Some time after Marge lost her battle with cancer, Jim found himself in the hospital with a severe case of kidney stones. The nurse in charge was Cindy, and the rest is history.

Jim and Cindy retired and moved from New Hampshire to Dunnellon FL in 2005. They bought a wide body MC102-A3, and worked side-by-side to make a beautiful conversion out of it. Cindy did the layout and décor.

The bus takes them on a long trip to New England every summer to visit family and friends. He started decades ago in the Busin' Buddies, a N.E. bus conversion chapter, and has remained friends with many members there.

But a big trip out west has eluded them, and remains on their wish list. They were going to go west as their new FL house was being built, but the contractor assured them it would be done before the end of the summer. That turned out to be optimistic and they slept in their bus on their lot watching a very slow construction process—they could have gone to Seattle and back and seen all the sights!

Cindy has driven the bus herself, and is proud of a 180 mile stretch she did in the Carolinas, but she's happy to let Jim be the pilot!

Fuel prices in SEBN Land

Members of the SE Bus Nuts are enjoying the lowest diesel prices since 2008!

According to the website truckmiles.com, the following are fuel averages as of November 26, 2014, starting with the least expensive in the South:

South Carolina	\$3.30
Alabama	\$3.37
Georgia	\$3.42
North Carolina	\$3.44
Florida	\$3.55

(All prices have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a cent.



As is often the case for us BusNuts, the best diesel prices are often to be away from the Interstates at independent and

Mom & Pop stations. Upon returning from the recent Hoboken rally, several of us found \$3.299 diesel at an independent dealer in Tifton, GA.

The state-by-state prices above are on average about \$.37 cheaper than November, 2013 according to the US Energy Information Administration. For contrast, the highest average price for diesel recorded in your editor's state of Georgia was \$4.85 in July, 2008. The biggest reason given for the price drop is the glut of crude coming from Saudi Arabia and, yes, the US.

Here are the price components of today's diesel:

Taxes	13%
Distribution and marketing	21%
Refining	11%
Crude oil	55%

So come on, BusNuts, what are you waiting for? Tank up and hit the road, and take advantage of the current fuel market. The Arcadia Rally is looming on the calendar! And wherever you go, it makes sense to top off your tank before putting the old gal back in the barn. Lock in more of these low prices, and avoid winter condensation in an partly empty fuel tank!

House Batteries

Your editor made the big move to AGMs and bit the bullet and went for the best. Lifelines, of San Dimas, California. Got 'em through a guy who cuts special deals for the Prevost Owners' Group and other Bus Nuts, 'Tom' of Trans-Specialists. (www.trans-specialists.net and phone 770-634-7530)

I paid only \$526.88 each for L-16s where other prices on the web varied from \$550 all the way to \$600+. Also I paid NO core charge and NO sales tax. You do have to arrange shipping, but I was able to pick them up at the trucking terminal, saving a substantial amount.

I later sold my worn out Rolls L-16 wet cells to a recycler for \$.25 per pound. More than pocket change.

So far the AGMs are more than meeting my expectations, holding a great charge when boondocking overnight. I am really looking forward to not having to add distilled water two or three times a year, plus no corrosion or out-gassing, which my inverter (in the same bay) will certainly appreciate!

More as it develops!

The AGM batteries make for a clean installation. And aside from periodically checking the tightness of cables, you can forget about them.



MCI Trivia

Most SEBN members are familiar with the MCI line of coaches, and most of us have converted an MC-5, MC-7, MC-8, MC-9 or newer. But not everyone knows about the rare MC-6, which had a number of 'firsts' in MCI history. Only 100 of these were produced. They were 102 inches wide, had three levels to its roof line, and came with a 12 cylinder DD. It also had a 12 foot high roof, the highest ever for MCI. It was only built for one year, to compete with SceniCruisers. It was a special order from Greyhound.



Arcadia Rally



This is the largest bus conversion rally in the country. An independent rally, it is hosted by SEBN members Bill and Brenda Phelan

December 29th - 31st

The Southeast Bus Nuts will gather for the annual president’s reception on Tuesday, December 30th, at 3:00 p.m. at Charlie & Judy Bukoski’s bus. Bring a chair and a beverage of your choice. Dry nibbles provided.



The Turner Agri Center is the location of the 15th consecutive bussin’ event. It’s in Arcadia, FL, approximately 46 miles east of Sarasota.

To register, go to www.arcadiarally.com and check the box “Registration”.

New this year:

- Full hook-up sites have been enlarged and improved
- Live entertainment all four nights
- Additional meal—Pizza and Story Tellin’

Registration fees:

Rally fee, includes ice cream social, four dinners, coffee & doughnuts each morning, live entertainment, and seminars:	\$95. one coach, two persons
Full hookups	\$27.25 per night
Water & electric hookup	\$16.35 “ “
Dry camping	\$ 5.45 “ “

For additional info, or questions, contact Bill or Brenda at bphelan340@gmail.com

2015 Rallies—Please Save the Dates!

Valentine's Rally

February 12-15, 2015

Herrmann's Royal Lipizzan Ranch

www.hlipizzans.com

Myakka City, FL (about 21 miles due east of Sarasota)

For questions: Charlie & Judy Bukoski at

chasjudy@bukoski.net

(Dry camping, with a \$20 per night charge. Thanks to Andy Metro for liaison with the Ranch!)



Spring Rally

April 30-May 2, 2015

Bryn Mawr Ocean Resort

www.brynmawroceanresort.com

In historic St Augustine, FL

For questions: Ed & Anke Fisher

aandefisher@gmail.com

(Limited to 25 coaches)

One of the few RV resorts directly on the Atlantic!



Halloween Rally

October 27-November 1, 2015

Coastal Georgia RV Resort

Brunswick, GA

www.coastalgarvresort.com

For questions: mikeheron@bellsouth.net

Close to Jekyll and St. Simon's Islands

Scheduled for the weekend before the Friends of Twin Oaks gathering at Hoboken—just 40 miles down the road.



Southeast Bus Nuts Leadership

Chapter Officers:

President– Charlie Bukoski chasjudy@bukoski.com

VP / Treasurer– Marty Nixon nixonmarty@aol.

Secretary--Judy Bukoski judy@compzrs.com

FMCA National Director- vacant

Chaplain: Beverly Bowman

Advisory Committee:

(in addition to Chapter Officers)

Beverly Bowman

Bryan Bowman

Pam Daniels

Mike Heron

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.

Newsletter Editor: Mike Heron

Please send stories, updates and photos to:

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