



Southeast Bus Nuts Newsletter

Spring 2017

Blast from Bryan

Greetings fellow Busnuts, hope this writing finds you all well.

Wow! Is how I must start off after the success of our recent Valentine rally. For those of you that were able to attend, you know we had an outstanding experience. From the many activities, to the food, music and especially the fellowship, I believe its fair to say an enjoyable time was had by all. Sincere thanks go out to **Darlene** and **Manny Montesino** and my lovely bride, Suzanne, for all their hosting efforts.

But the really wild adventures were after the rally for Suzanne and I as we headed further south. I had prearranged an appointment for a "detail" job on my coach at the Willow Lakes golf resort in Titusville. We had been dealing with intermittent failure of the electric side of our Aqua Hot system for weeks, and the detail guy was also an authorized Aqua Hot mechanic, so this little trip made sense to knock out the two birds.

After two full days of EXCELLENT detail work, the mechanic began working on the AquaHot about 4 pm Saturday. Right away he found a thermostat problem and waa-laa thought he had her fixed within 15 minutes. Sadly, however, it would now heat up.....but not cut off.....after about two more hours of work, he

stated he "would need a part, so cut everything off and I will return tomorrow"....so that's what I did.....(here's where the adventure part starts).

About 3:30 am Suzanne and I both jumped straight outta bed when our CO detector started blaring with all it had. We had been awakened to a bus filled solidly with white smoke that smelled like an electrical burn. We literally could not see four feet for the thick smoke. We both grabbed a robe, our wallets, passports and of course the puppy, and escaped the smoking bus.

Outside, I could see that the same smoke was rising about 20-30 feet over the top of the bus. But no

flames.....I knew it was time to call 911 and get help on the way reporting it as an apparent RV fire. Within three minutes we hear the sirens heading our way. In the meantime, I recall my Aquahot service and opened that bay to discover THIS is the source of the smoke.....sirens still coming....first sheriff's deputy arrives.....now I'm opening all bays looking for flames.....he suggests I get back, the first fire truck pulls up to the

"gated" entrance of the resort, and lays on the siren.

I'm telling the deputy (3:40 am) please ask them to come in silent.....lets not wake the entire resort....he tells me the gate should open automatically upon "hearing" the siren....ok.....by now, I have my head up in the bay and can see the AquaHot is definitely the cause

(Cont'd)



Ocala Sun Rally: Some 24 coaches attended the recent Winter/Valentine's Rally at Ocala Sun RV Resort. In Jack Campbell's aerial shot you can see we took up the whole center section of the campground, alongside the remodeled clubhouse.

See pages 3 and 8 for details on the upcoming Spring Bus Nuts Rally

Blast from Bryan (Cont'd)

of the smoke.....and its not smoke....but rather STEAM...and the smell is the crimped "over temp" hose melting....Two more fire trucks pull up, a battalion chief, and two firemen are headed for my



bus with an axe ready to get to work. Another one is charging up the water hose. And finally, one is suiting up in a full breathing apparatus....by now, I'm going whoa, whoa! No fire! It is just 50 feet of climbing STEAM, rolling out every orifice of my coach.

The fire chief instructs me to get back....I try to tell ANYONE that would listen I know the source of the smoke...and its not a fire. Neighbors are emerging in their PJs...police and fire radios are blaring....and I got an overheating Aquahot. 4:00 am now....finally a station chief listened to me and determined imminent danger was minimal....now they want to "tear out" the panel in front of the Aquahot.....

For the rest of the story you will have to join us at the Mayberry RV Park for our May rally.....

SAFE TRAVELS to all in the meantime.....and make sure your CO and smoke detectors are working!

Bryan Bowman, President

Secretary's Report (Minutes of Ocala membership meeting)

Business meeting called to order by President, **Bryan Bowman** at 9:02 AM. Invocation given by **Beverly Bowman**, followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

It was reported by co-host Bryan Bowman that 24 coaches are present.

In Secretary Daniels' absence, the Secretary's Report was given by **George Showman**.

*82 Active members

*New members, **Charles & Elaine McGairty** and **Eric Johnson**, and both of whom are attending this rally.

*A sympathy card was passed for signature for **Lila Ashe** whose husband and longtime SEBN member Leroy recently passed away, and a get-well card was passed for signature for **Ray Cox** who had had a recent operation.

Treasurer's Report given by **Charlie Bukoski**: Current total of both PayPal and checking accounts is \$6300, *before* Ocala Rally expenses.

National Director's Report: **Ed Fisher** provided an abbreviated report on the new FMCA proposals which are based primarily on recruitment efforts. In essence, the proposals would favor allowing members to join who own non-motorized RVs, such as 5th Wheels and travel trailers. A straw poll was conducted that favors the proposals, and discussion followed for clarification of the proposals. President Bowman asked that a copy of the letter, including the new proposals, be sent out to our members.

Upcoming rallies were announced as follows: *Spring Rally*: Mt. Airy, NC, May 10-14. Hosts **John & Tara Mellis** with **Tom & Karen Hamrick** and **Mike & Kathy Mingus** co-hosting. This will be a Veteran's themed rally. As part of the event, **Lou Kirk** will be hosting a social at his nearby mountain retreat. *Fall Rally*: Hoboken, GA, Nov 9-12. Hosts **John & George Showman**. The annual Twin Oaks flea market will be on that weekend also. Members can bring items to sell and place in front of your bus or motor home.

Old Business: Our recruitment efforts continue. A sample informational card that can be given out to prospective new members is being reviewed by the membership. Once a design is agreed upon, we will proceed with printing them, possibly in time for the Spring Rally.

New Business: A copy of the new FMCA proposals will be sent out to our members for their review.

Meeting adjourned at 09:50 AM.

Minutes submitted by **George Showman**, in the absence of **Secretary Ron Daniels**

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer **Charlie Bukoski** reports that the chapter treasury balance, *prior to* Mt Airy Rally obligations, is \$5,838.

Spring Rally in Mt Airy, NC

Rally hosts **John** and **Tara Mellis** report that reservations are filling up nicely for the May 10-14 event; some 27 coaches have signed up! Cut-off date is April 10th. **Instructions for simple, on-line registration are on p. 8.** Act now—only 18 spaces remain available to us. John is very pleased to note **Tom & Karen Hamrick** and **Mike & Kathy Mingus** as co-hosts are busy tending to the duties that will make this a great rally!

This is a four day event, and arrivals on *Wednesday* will be treated to sausage fajitas. John is a well-known wild game processor, and these will be very special! Afterwards John and some of his musical friends will lead us in a fun Karaoke Night.

After *Thursday's* breakfast we will 'Invade Mayberry' and tour the town that inspired the Andy Griffith Show. Several restaurants will



Mayberry Campground is near the Blue Ridge mountains and is nicely terraced with full hook-ups. It's just 100 miles north of Charlotte.

be available for the mid-day meal including the Snappy Lunch, home of the famous pork chop sandwich! That afternoon will feature a car ride up Fancy Gap and the Blue Ridge Parkway to visit the Blue Ridge Music Center. Live music! Back at the campground there will be a home-cooked dinner. Then Past President Heron will entertain us with a highly participatory 'Mike's Fun Night'.

Friday will feature a tour and luncheon at nearby Shelton Vineyards. Then back at Mayberry Campground, a tech talk, "Gadgets and Gizmos". For those bringing their motorcycles there will also be instructions for optional rides along the Blue Ridge Parkway. Friday dinner will be an

excursion to Cody Creek Depot for a Dutch-treat event. Then back at the campground we will entertain ourselves with 'firepit' bus stories.

Saturday afternoon is special: we will be guests of members Lou and Renea Kirk's St Cloud Estates for a tour and wine & cheese reception. This is a gorgeous mountain-top community that is just for RVers. Back at the campground we will be treated to a local specialty: a "Bock Bock" evening meal. Intrigued? Come find out! Afterwards there will be some outside entertainment.

Of course, every morning there will be a breakfast, and some time for business meetings of Eagles International and the SE Bus Nuts.

Note: several rally registrants have put in for extra days, either before or after our big event. The area has lots of additional attractions. The camping fee for extra nights is \$30, payable as part of our on-line registration.

We all hope to see you there!

Recent Rally Attendance / Coaches

Arcadia (General Meeting) 2014	32
Valentine's 2014 (Lazy Days, FL)	25
Spring Rally 2014 (Charleston)	23
Autumn 2014 (Hoboken)	32
Arcadia (General Meeting) 2015	34
Valentine's 2015 (Myakka City)	13
Spring Rally (St Augustine)	15
Halloween Rally 2015 (Brunswick, GA)	28
Arcadia 2016 (General Meeting)	20
Wimauma—Winter meeting 2016	18
Spring Rally 2016 (Palmetto Cove)	33
Halloween (Hoboken) 2106	27
Arcadia Rally 2016 (no general meeting)	18
Post-New Year's Rally 2017 (Titusville)	12
Valentine's Rally 2017	24
Spring 2017 (Mt Airy)	?

We are saddened to report that long-time SEBN member **Bill Phelan** has passed. Bill and wife Brenda ran the annual "Bussin" event at Arcadia for several years, following Jack Conrad. Declining health forced Bill to give it up two years ago. Notes of sympathy may be sent to Brenda at 615 W Dees Road, Lakeland, FL 33809.

Ocala Rally Photos



The weather in Ocala was mostly mild and enjoyable for the weekend. Very spacious campsites & full hook-ups.



Thursday's Dutch treat dinner was at Stumpknockers in nearby Dunnellon, famous for catfish, etc.



Impromptu socials once again proved popular. This was Thursday afternoon.



Friday's main daytime event was cruising in a glass-bottomed boat at historic Silver Springs.



The springs are now a protected wildlife sanctuary. Lots of wildlife: fish, birds, monkeys and gators, some of which were hungry!



Friday night's activity was a spirited game of Bingo, called by chapter president Bryan Bowman.

More Ocala Photos



John Mellis, right, was a bingo winner, and Pres. Bowman presented a gift mug.



Tom Hamrick and Norm Scanapico, center, loved the dragsters at the Garlits museum.

Photo credits: Linda Karlsson, Craig Bowen and Mike Heron



Saturday's business meeting was well attended, and we learned of the FMCA move to allow 'towables' into membership.



Saturday's art class for the ladies was a big hit. It was arranged by Darlene Montesino, left.



Saturday night's fun was provided by 'The Old 'Hippies', who really reached their audience.



The musical duo covered hits by Janis Joplin, The Eagles, etc. and got many up dancing.

Ocala Rally Report

by Manny & Darlene Montesino

What a great rally we had in Ocala! We were so thankful to secure a beautiful spot 1/2 mile from I-75 in Ocala. The rally SOLD OUT with 25 coaches in attendance, some coming from the Carolinas and Virginia, and we even had a brand new BusNut all the way from Ohio with his Eagle, who found out about us online. **Eric Johnson**, we welcome you!!!

It was a great location for a rally because Ocala has so many things nearby to offer. We kicked off the rally at Stumpknockers Restaurant Thursday night. The food was delicious (some even tried the "gator meat") and everyone had a great time. Friday we took a 90 minute boat tour on one of the Glass Bottom Boats at the famous Silver Springs Park. Saturday - the men and some of the women visited the Don Garlits Museum. That was a big hit with those that attended! Many have heard about Don Garlits before and even driven by, but most had never gone in. Lots of history and a variety of dragsters AND classic cars, too.

The ladies who didn't attend the museum chose instead a delicious lunch at the Ivy House and then a fun painting session at Painting with a Twist, and each one went home with their beautiful creation called "Mystic Moon".

Thanks to the budget allowed we were able to have some really nice meals catered in for Friday and Saturday nights' dinners, and "The Old Hippies" band that performed Saturday night was AWESOME! So awesome that everyone stayed 'til the end.

Darlene and I would like to thank everyone who came out to support this rally and to all those who offered to help us in any way they could. A special thanks to **Bryan** and **Suzanne Bowman** for co-hosting with us and helping every step of the way. Bryan's Bingo Friday night was a lot of fun and Suzanne's Pancake and Sausage Breakfast was DELICIOUS!

We were a bit nervous being hosts for the first time, but with everyone's support it was actually a lot of fun. We look forward to seeing all of you at **John** and **Tara Mellis's** Rally in North Carolina. Looks like it's going to be another GREAT ONE you won't want to miss!!!

Not 'IF", but "WHEN" by Craig Bowen

If you drive a bus, you know the quotation. After 14 years of travel, ours came 15 miles short of the Ocala rally. Never good to see transmission fluid coming from the breather. Once the coasting stopped, we were on the hook. We bought our pride and joy from Ray Cox in 2010, so naturally my first call was to check on our warranty options. I'm still haunted by his laugh. So, it was off to Allison and a rebuild. Thanks to the McGairtys for taking us in for the rally. Not all busing is positive, but it is all *Memorable*.

Key West Anyone?

A few weeks after the Ocala rally, **Charlie** and **Judy Bukoski** made their eighth trip in their coach down to Key West. They have visited the Keys as much or more than most Bus Nuts. They report that there are many attractive and exciting things to see and do (and eat), especially in the town of Key West. The trip down there measures about 160 miles from Miami, about four hours in the coach. The drive itself is beautiful as you travel across several bridges and causeways that make you feel you are at sea.

For any Bus Nuts contemplating this exciting trip, here are a few things to keep in mind: campgrounds are few in Key West and advance reservations are a must; expect to pay about \$100 per night for a cramped site. But once there and settled, the scenes and sights are plentiful. Mallory Square at sunset is a 'must-see', and strolling along Duval Street with its tropical bars and restaurants makes for a cheap trip to the Caribbean.

When asked their favorite aspect of KW Charlie and Judy cite the privilege as retired military of being able to park at Trumbo Point (US Naval Air Station) within walking distance of downtown.



Key West Pink shrimp and conch chowder!

Member Spotlight

An occasional feature of this newsletter is a brief profile of a newer member and a more long-term coach couple—an effort to get us better acquainted.

Newer Member

Eric Johnson lives in central Ohio, and caught the bus bug from his 30 years experience as a sound engineer for concerts, which involved a substantial amount of road time. And his mechanical confidence to work on a bus stems from restoring a old Jeep CJ-5 when he was only 15.

Eric bought a 1981 Eagle Model 10 just three months ago. It had been crudely converted by two previous owners, the last of whom did little in the way of maintenance. But the mechanics of the conversion such as the tanks, gen set, inverter, hot water heater are all like new. And the DD 6v92 runs strong.

Starting about six weeks ago, Eric plunged in to make the bus road worthy. He sold his large house, bought a warehouse (with room for four buses!) and made our Ocala rally a goal. He had heard about the SEBN rally on the internet and thought it would be a challenge to get the bus on the road to a warm place by mid-February.

The central Florida area has some appeal, and since he is self-employed and can set his own schedule, he plans to stay down for an extended trip, and to visit one or two bus repair garages to keep bringing his Eagle along.

Eric doesn't have any one big bus trip in his future, but plans to enjoy the freedom to go somewhere on impulse and explore wherever his nose leads him.

One trip that is firmly in his plans is the Mt Airy Rally on May 10th—there will be lots of fellow Eagle enthusiasts there!



Longer term members

Renea and Lou Kirk have been members of the SEBN since 2009. They were in a campground in Jacksonville, FL when long-time member **John Showman** stopped by to introduce himself and talk buses. He mentioned the Southeast Bus Nuts, and the big Arcadia Rally coming up over the holidays, and Lou and Renea joined up.

They actually own three RVs, including a classic, like-new 1985 Airstream *motorhome*. Although they came to the Ocala rally in their beautiful 2008 Prevost H3-45, their favorite coach is their 1988 Neoplan, which they converted themselves over two solid years of effort. Their maiden voyage in this beautiful coach was an extended trip from their home in St Cloud, FL up through Eastern Canada, the Gaspé Peninsula, and Maine.

Lou came to the US from Canada in 1978, where his parents owned and operated campgrounds. In fact he and Renea, together for 26 years, actually met in a campground! In the US he became a real estate developer and mortgage lender. His current project, St Cloud Estates, is a gated, RV-friendly community in Hillsville, VA, near the location of our Mt Airy Rally. They have generously agreed to host a reception and tour there as part of the May rally.

This summer they plan to make a big circle trip out west in the Neoplan with Virginia neighbors (and fellow Neoplan owners) **Steve Seims** and **Harriet Chaires**. Before the trip Lou wants to finish upgrading the TVs and the satellite system in the coach.

On a final note, Renea says she has driven all three coaches!



Southeast Bus Nuts

May 10-14
●
Register now for
a
Joint Rally!



Eagles International

- The Eagles International chapter of FMCA is joining the Southeast Bus Nuts for their annual spring rally. Several Eagle coaches from the West and Midwest are expected to join us! The rally is hosted by SEBN members **John & Tara Mellis** (also members of Eagles International) and co-hosted by **Tom & Karen Hamrick**, and **Mike & Kathy Min-gus**, of SEBN.



Mayberry Campground is a beautifully terraced park that caters to big rigs.



Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains, Mt Airy is picturesque.

- Join us at Mayberry Campground in Mt Airy, NC, 100 miles up I-77 from Charlotte in the Blue Ridge mountains! Check it out: www.mayberrycampground.com
- To get your name on the list, visit www.sebusnuts.org Click on the rally button, and use either PayPal or a credit card. Note the buttons for optional "Extra Nights" at \$30 each, either before or after the four day rally.

- This is a four-day rally. The town of Mayberry was the inspiration for The Andy Griffith Show. The weather is usually warm and sunny in mid-May. See article on p. 3 for more specific information on rally agenda, etc..



Shelton Vineyards is a large operation that offers tours and luncheons in an adjoining restaurant.



St Cloud Estates, developed by SEBN member Lou Kirk, is a beautiful gated RV community with spectacular views! The rally has a reception and tour there Saturday, May 14.

- Your \$200 registration fee includes all camping, three breakfasts, one brunch, one hosted reception at St Cloud Estates, three dinners, and several nights of entertainment. Plus unlimited fellowship and the company of fun loving busin' enthusiasts!

- Save the dates! -

Autumn/Halloween Rally

Twin Oaks Bluegrass Park,
Hoboken, GA



We will return for the second year in a row to the traditional site of the annual SEBN Halloween Rally. Our Hosts will be **George, John and Bertha Showman**. Dates are November 9-12. *One week later this year!* Our recent rally there after a year's absence drew 27 coaches.

New hosts for 2016-17, **Bill Miller and Tisha Howard**, drew close to 100 coaches to the traditional Arcadia, FL site, including some 18 SEBN members. Bill is fully onboard to doing it again for the 2017 holiday season. Likely dates are December 28-31st. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for additional information and details.

New Year's Rally



Winter 2018 Rally

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The chapter is currently looking for a host and co-host for the annual Winter/Valentine's Rally. Past rallies have been held in Ocala, Wimauma and Myakka City, FL. The chapter takes care of all finances and publicity, and a rally manual is available to make it as easy as possible.

Contact President Bryan Bowman if interested...

bbowmanga@gmail.com

Hey folks, We really need someone to step up and take our 2018 Valentine's rally...Please grab a co-host and its definitely not too early to start preparing for next February...Thanks

Pres. Bowman

Valentine's Rally, 2018

?

Southeast Bus Nuts Leadership

Chapter Officers

President— Bryan Bowman bbowmanga@gmail.com
Vice-President—Craig Bowen CBowen3117@gmail.com
Treasurer— Charlie Bukoski chasjudy@bukoski.net
Secretary—Ron Daniels ncrealauctions@frontier.com
FMCA Nat'l Dir –Ed Fisher aandedfisher@gmail.com

Advisory Committee:

(in addition to Chapter Officers)

Judy Bukoski
Ed Fisher
Mike Heron
Beverly Bowman, Chaplain

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, Duane Britt, Charlie Bukoski and Ed Fisher. (* 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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Southeast Bus Nuts
c/o Bryan Bowman, President
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