



Southeast Bus Nuts Newsletter

Summer 2017

Blast from Bryan

Hi fellow Bus Nuts. Well it's a wrap. Another hugely successful rally is in the books for our 2017 spring event. Kudos, big thanks and 'atta way' go out to all our Mayberry rally hosts. I'm certain all attending found the campground cozy, the area welcoming, and the overall package a great, relaxing, fun-filled journey. It is obvious the planning done by **John** and **Tara Mellis**, **Tom** and **Karen Hamrick**, **Mike** and **Kathy Mingus** and others....was well coordinated and packed plenty for our small rally fee.

One moment caught, as one for the memory books, is our own beloved in-house locksmith **Manny Montesino** climbing through the 10" wide driver seat window to rescue Mom and Dad (**Beverly** and **Syl Bowman**) from their lock-out when the entry door lock on their Prevost decided to introduce those well known RV gremlins. Our hero started removing clothing layers (in the rain) to get himself ready for the squeeze job....eventually accomplishing success in resolving the lock-out.

Another highlight (literally) was the mountain top welcome we received at **Lou** and **Renée Kirk's** place. They laid out a warm welcome to their beautiful development with all the trimmings. Anyone looking for a picturesque mountain property that welcomes your rv / home should consider this great investment opportunity.

Other happenings included a big thank-you for our former FMCA National Director **Anke Fisher** for her role and representation the last few

years, and more thank you's to **George Showman** for accepting that same post as our current National Director. Those two have had, and will have, an eventful next few months, for by now you have heard about the board's upcoming vote to consider non-motorized units into FMCA membership at this year's National Rally in July. Our chapter discussed and has voted to follow the recommendation of the current FMCA leadership and recognize that, without some changes to our member model, financially the FMCA is in trouble. More news to follow on this subject.



Shown here are 10 of the 31 buses and rigs that joined us at the May 10-14 SEBN Spring Rally at the Mayberry Campground in beautiful Mt Airy, NC. We had great weather!

On another note, when we all get together in Hoboken in November, I want to get **Howard Best** to tell us about the real life, spooky, SNAKE STORY that happened recently to one of his family members.....gotta be in Hoboken to get this....no cheating, don't call Howard or Ellen before hand. And speaking of upcoming rallies, VP **Craig Bowen** and myself are shooting for

the Punta Gorda, Florida area for the New Years rally, traditionally hosted by your officers. **Marty Nixon** has stepped up and is throwing in his name as host for our Spring rally and early plans look like that is headed toward the Hilton Head Motorcoach Resort. We are still looking for volunteers for a few of the other 2018 events that are just around the corner. Grab a friend, step up and volunteer to host a rally for YOUR chapter.

Finally, around home, and on Facebook, the
(Cont'd)

See page 7 for new dates on the
Autumn/Veteran's Day Bus Nuts Rally

Blast from Bryan (Cont'd)

word is getting out that Mom and Dad have accepted Rockdale County's offer to purchase our family home place of the last 35 years, Costley Mill Park. The Bus Nuts have had the good fortune to enjoy several rallies at this lovely creekside, beachfront private park over the years. Recognizing that the natural beauty of this place should be shared with the public, Mom and Dad have been in talks with the county on and off for years. The current county leadership sees the potential to keep the park historic, and bring into their park system one of mother nature's gems. Y'all wish us luck as we pack up 35 years worth of bus parts, barns, buildings and goodies.

Is it getting hot at your house yet? June is bringing low 90° and high humidity to our area here near Atlanta, so the game plan for Suzanne and me calls for a road trip to the mountains of Tennessee for a little action-packed RZR riding, followed by a journey with fellow RVers to Michigan during July. Then off to the GRAND CIRCLE canyons trip later in September. Hope to see you guys on the road soon.

As always, please contact me with any ideas, comments, feedback, or suggestions for our Bus Nut family.

Bryan Bowman, President



Secretary's Report

A meeting of the SEBN convened at Mt Airy, NC on May 13, 2017 by President Bryan Bowman, who welcomed Eagle Club members to the joint rally. Guests recognized were Vicky Cates, guest of Secretary Daniels and Vice President **Craig Bowen**'s brother John. **Bertha Showman** was extended a warm welcome.

President Bowman recognized members that are sick, **Carol Heron** had colon cancer surgery but is now improving, **Syl Bowman** is on a feeding tube but improving. President Bowman asked that we keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

Secretary Daniels reported we have 65 members, comprised of 52 regular members and 13 honorary members. He further reported the

sending out cards to **Suzanne Bowman** in the loss of her father, to **Ray Cox** for his recent surgery, to **Lila Ashe** in the passing of Leroy, and **Brenda Phelan** in the passing of Bill. The club also made a donation to Hospice in Lakeland, FL. In memorial to Bill, and a donation to the American Cancer Society in memorial to **Junior Showman**. Secretary Daniels reported sending out several dues reminders by e-mail and of the loss of approximately 20 members who have not renewed SEBN dues and / or FMCA dues. Daniels further recognized and thanked **Linda Karlsson** for sending out personalized letters to new members of FMCA in the Southeast US inviting them to join SEBN. He said we received a letter from FMCA of the club's certification and of being in good standing based on documentation submittals. **Marty Nixon** shared information of a possible up-coming rally at Hilton Head Island being considered for May, 2018, and **George Showman** shared details for the Fall rally, 2017 to be held at Hoboken, Ga. in conjunction with the annual county wide flea market. He stated the rally will be held on Veteran's Holiday weekend and will have a Veteran's theme. George stated his brother, mother and sister will all be helping him plan and host.

President Bowman shared that the post-New Years rally will be hosted by club officers in Punta Gorda, Fl. This rally will be held the weekend *after* the Arcadia

rally. Also, the club is seeking a host for the 2018 Winter/Valentines rally. President Bowman updated the membership on the 'windshield card' being printed to place on potential member windows as an effort to attract new members and promote the club.

Ed Fisher updated the membership on FMCA's up-coming vote on July 12, 2017 to amend the constitution and by-laws to allow RV families as members rather than restricting membership to those of motor homes only. A majority of present SEBN members voted to support the change in membership requirements. Membership present also discussed the current practice of "Honorary Membership" status. **Judy Bukoski** explained that upon the death of a member's spouse they are given the option to remain as a full member with voting rights or to select to become an honorary member without voting.

Secretary's report (cont'd)

The majority of current honorary members are inactive. It was suggested that an upcoming newsletter include a request that all honorary members respond to the Chapter if they desire to continue their membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Ron Daniels, Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer **Charlie Bukoski** reports that the chapter treasury balance, following payment of all Mt Airy Rally obligations, is \$4,622. The rally ended up in the black!

Mt Airy Rally Report

by **John Mellis**, Rally Host



We enjoyed having 31 coaches in attendance at beautiful Mayberry RV Park in Mt Airy, NC. Sorry I didn't count how many of each type. Wife Tara and I were greatly assisted by rally co-Hosts the **Hamricks** and the **Minguses**.

Check out this report from Eagles International, with whom we shared the spring rally:

"For those that didn't attend, you missed a fun rally in Mt. Airy, North Carolina! **John & Tara Mellis**, **Tom & Karen Hamrick** and **Mike & Kathy Mingus** hosted and did a terrific job! The Mayberry Campground in Mt. Airy was a quiet, scenic place for the 31 buses, motor homes, etc. that attended. It seemed like every kind of bus conversion was present; Flexibles, GMs, Vanhools, MCIs, Prevosts, Neoplans and of course Eagles.

"Mr. Airy is home to a granite quarry that began operation in 1889 and is still productive today. The quarry is seven by four miles wide and around 6,000-8,000' deep. There is enough granite to last hundreds to thousands of years. The recent World War II memorial in Washington, D.C. is made

from this granite. Impressive!

"The first evening of the rally we were treated to **John Mellis's** 'famous sausage fajitas' followed by a few brave souls who entertained us with karaoke. The 2nd day started with a gathering for coffee and doughnuts. We then headed to downtown Mayberry. There are many things in this small town that were the inspiration for the Andy Griffith show. Andy was born & raised in Mt. Airy. Floyd's Barbershop was one landmark that was in the show. A relative of the 'original owner Floyd' operates the barbershop today. **Eric Brown** got a famous haircut there. Most of us had lunch at the town's oldest eating establishment and another landmark that was in the show, the Snappy Lunch restaurant. It is home to the 'famous pork chop sandwich' which was very tasty.

"A potluck dinner was on the agenda that evening and as per usual, there were plenty of delicious dishes to choose from. After dinner we played a "Bus Nuts Lost On The Moon" game. Some of the Bus Nuts members, especially **George Showman**, were better at this NASA-inspired challenge than we Eagles!

"The 3rd day started off with coffee and doughnuts. We then drove to the beautiful Shelton Vineyards in Dobson for a winery tour and lunch at the vineyard's Harvest Grill restaurant. Dinner that evening was at the Cody Creek Depot Restaurant in Dobson. It was a breathtaking place with a covered bridge, a lighted gazebo and beautiful landscaping.

"The 4th day began with the hosts serving us pancakes, sausages and 'eggs in a bag', then some proceeded to **Lou Kirk's** place in Hillsville, VA for a tour. Lou provided wine and snacks as he told them about the availability for lots in the area to build a nice home and room enough for a bus barn too! Some of us ladies opted to 'go shopping' downtown. A delicious catered chicken dinner was served that evening and we bought tickets 'by the arm length' hoping to win the 'pot of money'. Miscellaneous door prizes were also handed out.

"The 5th day most everyone said their goodbyes and headed down the road. I think everyone had a good time, met some new friends, caught up with old friends and enjoyed all of the planned activities. I say 'thank you and a job well done' to the hosts!"

Lin Schell

Eagles International Chapter, FMCA

Mt Airy Rally Photos



George Showman, holding gift card, and his team won the NASA exercise Thursday.



The Eagles International Chapter joined us at the Mayberry Campground in Mt. Airy, NC.



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



Lou Kirk's beautiful Neoplan graced the driveway at a typical St Cloud Estates property on our tour.



Mayberry Campground was nicely terraced, and most coaches were close to the pavilion for activities.



Rally hosts John and Tara Mellis were 'guests' at Sheriff Andy Griffith's comfy town jail.

More Mt Airy Photos



Friday night's dinner was at Cody Creek Restaurant in nearby Dobson, NC. A fun place.



Many attendees took the Friday winery tour and followed with a luncheon at Shelton Vineyards.

Photo credits:
Judy Bukoski, Beverly
Bowman and Mike
Mingus.



Rally host John Mellis, left, confers with SEBN president Bryan Bowman.



Sheriff Andy and Deputy Fife always refueled their cruiser at Wally's Service and Comfort Center.



Locksmith Manny Montesino was called on to unlock Syl Bowman's Prevost. He squeezed through the side window!



Co-host Tom Hamrick belts one out during Wednesday's Karaoke Night.

Still More Mt Airy Photos



The rally weather was typical of springtime in the Blue Ridge—sunny and mild.



Our pavilion at Mayberry Campground was open and “airy” for rally meals and functions.

FMCA efforts to gain unlimited Wi-Fi derailed

In a message last week to all members, FMCA president **Charlie Adcock** informed us that despite months of negotiation and presumed progress with Verizon, their efforts to secure unlimited “on-the-go” internet coverage for all members had come up empty.

To read a bit of detail about how the negotiations collapsed, click here

<https://www.fmca.com/verizon/>

Apparently there was a very large interest among members in this proposed FMCA benefit, but while conducting a small sign-up test among members to get Wi-Fi, word of the benefit leaked out to other RV media outlets, and Verizon had to reconsider the volume they would be taking on.

Of course FMCA is disappointed at the collapse of negotiations (they had already printed up announcements, an article in the magazine, etc) but they remain committed to helping members stay in touch when on the road.

Editor's Note: Carol and I appreciate the outpouring of support and prayer to help her through last month's colon surgery. She is resolutely working her way through recovery, and is getting stronger every day. Her appetite is returning, and we are learning to cope with the new challenges this surgery presents. Carol also thanks the Chapter for the lovely cards and flower arrangement.

We are truly blessed with friends and supporters! Here's hoping we see you all at the Hoboken rally in November!

Mike Heron

Transitions...

Many members of the Southeast Bus Nuts are familiar with former bus nut **Nick Russell** who, with his wife Terry, has for decades edited and published *The Gypsy Journal*, a newspaper/periodical that illustrated their many travels, interspersed with RV tips and travel advice.

The Russells originally did their full-time RVing in a converted MC-8, and many of us saw or met them at Arcadia Bussin' or at **Howard Best's** occasional busnut get-togethers. The Russells later upgraded to a Winnebago Ultimate Advantage.

About a year ago Nick and Terry decided to get off the road as full-timers, and they bought a home in New Smyrna Beach, FL. Their plan was to spend the winters in their home, which they found to be very comfortable, and in spring resume their ventures in their coach for a few months. So the coach went into storage.

A few weeks ago they loaded up the Winnebago and headed out west. But they had multiple breakdowns, including blown air bags, a blown tire, a flooded bedroom, a broken serpentine belt, and a fresh tank of diesel contaminated with water. At one point they were marooned on the side of a busy interstate waiting 12 hours for a CoachNet truck to pull them to safety. Long-story short, they looked at each other and said “What the hell are we doing?”. They returned home and decided that their RV travels were *finito*.

Nick has given Bus Nuts and RVers everywhere years of great tales. Although they plan to continue their *Journal* and his daily internet blog, they are selling the RV and getting off the road. Sad.

Best of luck in the next chapter, Nick!

- Save the dates! -

Veterans Day 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 autumn rally. Our Hosts will be **George, John** and **Bertha Showman**. Dates are November 9-12. *About two weeks later this year!* Our recent rally there after a year's absence drew 27 coaches. This coincides with the Big Z garage sale throughout the entire area.

Chapter President **Bryan Bowen** and VP **Craig Bowen** are investigating the Punta Gorda, FL area for the club's own post-New Year's Rally. This would take place January 4th-7th, during the weekend following the annual Arcadia Rally New Years event. Stay tuned as details develop!

Post-New Year's Rally



Winter 2018 Rally

?

The chapter is currently looking for a host and co-host for the annual Winter/Valentine's Rally. The chapter takes care of all finances and publicity, and a rally manual is available to make it easy as possible.

Contact President Bryan Bowman if interested... bbowmanga@gmail.com

Member **Marty Nixon** is in negotiations for the SEBN to venture to the upscale Hilton Head Motorcoach Resort for the annual Spring Rally.

Projected dates are May 17-20, which is the weekend *after* Mother's Day weekend. Watch this space for further details. This marvelous resort is only one mile from the ocean, and includes a fantastic pool, manicured grounds, and well-equipped clubhouse.

Spring 2018 Rally



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 –George Showman gshowman@aol.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.

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