

Volume 37 Issue 1

Western Area FMCA

Peter Jautaikis - Editor

Winter 2023

## President's Message



Winter is here. As I'm writing this, it is wet outside and it is supposed to start snowing in a few hours. We are expecting temperatures down to the low 20's so hopefully I did a good job of draining all the water from the motorhome. I have the heat on, set to 48 degrees just in case.

Before I talk about our rally in Indio, there were a few things happening before we got there. December found us attending

two chapter Christmas rallies. First was the Gold Dust Travelers annual Christmas rally in Bakersfield at the River Run RV park. A highlight was their Christmas Pajama Parade. Debbie was determined to make a grand showing for this and spent several shopping days finding matching pajamas for me and her to wear along with blinking lights. Not to be outdone, Northern Vice President James McDaniel and his wife, Janie did the same. At the end, the McDaniel's and us were tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place.

With the rally over it was time to make our way to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas rally over in Paso Robles. No such luck. If you remember in October we fell victim to the DEF sensor failure and were stranded in Barstow for nine days. This time, upon engine start the dreaded "Check Engine" light was on again. After a couple of phone calls it was determined to be a "NOx Sensor" failure. Worse yet, this failure can also cause the engine power to derate and limit you to 5 MPH. It took three days to get us scheduled in for the repair and luckily they had the part in stock. Later that day we were finally off to Paso Robles for the California Coasters annual Christmas rally at Wine Country RV. We missed the first day of the rally and also that night's dinner and music. We arrived at 6:30 in the dark to find our parking space. The festivities were still underway and the food was still out so we just parked the motorhome and went over to have dinner and listen to the band. We were able to enjoy the last day of the rally, including the grand finale dinner and gift auction, a very fun event. Now it was time to head home and celebrate Christmas. This would be a

very brief celebration as we would be heading to Indio right after Christmas to get ready for our great rally.

Indio. The name says it all. To anyone who has been around a long time, the name Indio means one thing, the best area rally in FMCA. After a false start (motorhome wouldn't start, but that's another story) we arrived in Indio to start preparations.

We had many challenges for this 33<sup>rd</sup> annual rally that were new to us. First was the fact that it had been three years since the last rally (2020). Anytime you stop an event it is extremely hard to get it going again. We had new fairgrounds management to work with who really had no idea of what our event was like. We had a new electric contractor to provide all the electric power for our RVs. We also had a new provider of golf carts. On top of this, we had many new captains who had never worked the rally before and some WMHA officers for whom this was their first time at bat running the rally.

Despite these challenges, we pulled it off and had one terrific event. We received many compliments and thank you's and very few (if any) complaints. Also, minimal "goat heads", a source of many complaints in past years. Our hats off to the fairgrounds maintenance people for working to eradicate these thorns.

A large percentage of attendees were "first timers". Glad to see that and hopefully they will be back. Many that I talked to had no idea that an event such as this took place – they were impressed. There were many highlights. The parade, always a fun event showcased chapter creativity. Four of



us (including me) bought our scarecrow costumes at the same place. Debbie dressed as Dorothy and we borrowed our friends little black dog to be our "Toto" in the parade.

## President's Message [Continued]

There were lots of display RVs to look through. We had great donuts and coffee each morning. I was told the Western Area serves the best donuts. The Ladies Luncheon was a hit and a "sell-out" at that. Evening entertainment was terrific although some, I guess, were not Creedence Clearwater fans and did not care for the Saturday night show. There was a moment of panic on my part before the Saturday night entertainment. I was working with Joan, our emcee, on the evening agenda when I got a call that the band's drummer was a no-show (stuck in Phoenix)! Did I happen to know a local drummer? The only one I knew was the drummer from the Flashback Boyz who performed on Thursday night. The problem was, they already had a gig for that Saturday night. I called anyway and as luck would have it, their performance was rained out so their drummer was now available. He rushed over and with no rehearsal time, he went on stage and everyone agreed he did a fantastic job filling in.

Lastly, but certainly not the least I want to recognize a group that without them we would not have our Western Area rally and that is all our volunteers. They work tirelessly at their job to ensure attendees have a wonderful time at our rally. Volunteers often miss opportunities to attend seminars, shop the vendors, walk through the coach displays or even have time to just relax. A big heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you.

Spring is around the corner and we are looking forward to it. Seems the cold of winter got to us more this year than in the past. Is that a part of growing older?

Safe travels to you all,

Bob Golk, F316752  
Western Area National VP of FMCA  
WMHA President

## Senior Vice President's Message



If you didn't attend our Rally, you missed one great event. Not because of the three nights of entertainment, seminars, crafts, or vendors, but watching and being part of the camaraderie of nearly **400 volunteers** eating pulled pork sandwiches, potato salad and an éclair. Not a glamorous meal, but being with fellow rally attendees, swapping tales of travel, discussing the latest headache an RV can give its owner, is something you don't get every day. This is the FMCA family experience. Additionally, as more attendees arrive and we gather for **FREE** coffee and donuts, the experience continues.

Anyone find a "goat head"? Not all that long ago that was the talk of the rally. Yes, there were a few here and there, but I think the days of goat heads covering the bottom of

our shoes, sticking in your pet's fur, or the floor of your RV, might be a thing of the past. A big thanks to the fair-ground's ground keeping staff.



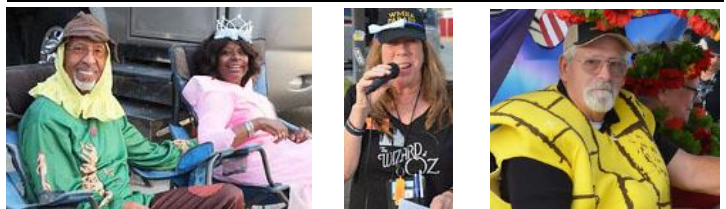
I heard many compliments about the electrical power provider during the rally. Constant, reliable, and good service if difficulties occurred. You probably saw chevrons with 50amp service connections. Plans are underway to make 50amp service available at our next rally, "Arabian

Nights".

What can we expect at our next WMHA rally? I'm betting on a bigger and better rally! The word will spread on how fun and satisfying "The Land of Oz" was. This positive energy will create a snowball, synergism effect. **BE A PART OF IT!!!**

Dave Franke, F443367  
Senior Vice President WMHA

## 2023 Indio Rally Parade



## Central Area Vice President's Message



Hello all and welcome to 2023. Paula and I hope and pray that everyone will have a safe and wonderful new year.

We just returned home from the 33rd annual Western Area RV Rally held on the Riverside County Fairgrounds at Indio, California.

All of the attendees were treated to great seminars and awesome entertainment. The first night was the Flashback Boyz, night two was comedian Jim Pelley and the last night was a tribute to Creedence Clearwater Revival. All three performers were on their A game. Everyone that attended the performances was well pleased.

I would like to give a big thanks to all of my volunteers for their dedication and hard work. Thank you to our greeters, express tram drivers, tables and chairs crew, golf cart crew, arrival area crew, parking crew, coffee and donuts crew and Andy Balogh for operating the water truck and the crew from Outdoor Resorts of Palm Springs. Without your help the event would not happen. THANK YOU!!!

This year's theme was "In The Land of Oz" and all were treated to a great parade. All the participants were dressed in costumes and had a great time.

Paula and I are heading to Laughlin, Nevada to attend the Beat The Odds chapter rally for more fun and excitement. There is still time to sign up, so contact Alice Bernard for more information.

Again many thanks to all of our volunteers and the first timers that attended. We hope to see you all in the near future at a chapter rally.

Remember to smile and have fun

Rick Ammerman, F442485  
Central Area Vice President



WMHA Senior Vice President, Past President & President

## Northern Area Vice President's Message



Hello FMCA/WMHA Family,

I hope your New Year is off to a great start and that you are all on track with your New Year resolutions. I pray your first resolution was for good health and that everyone is working off any additional pounds gained over the holidays.

Our WMHA Indio rally has ended and I am pleased to say that we had yet another successful and enjoyable event. Each of the volunteers did a fabulous job. I personally would like to give a shoutout to everyone for their valuable time and hard work. The rally could not have happened without volunteers like you. Thank you!

Our rally goers were full of excitement about being back and being able to attend seminars, engage in our entertainment activities, including the ladies' luncheon, playing bingo, participating in the parade, buying products for their RV, visiting with old friends, meeting new ones and of course, getting those morning donuts and delicious, hot cups of coffee.

A special shoutout and a huge "Thank You" to Dave Shinn and his entire stage crew for their long and hard task of creating our In The Land Of Oz backdrop. It was beautiful! The backdrop came alive as the colors glowed in the light.

We had a large presence of first-timers attending the rally this year. Please remember that during next year's rally we expect our first-timers to return and we'll need to continue to make them feel welcome and included. Hopefully, they too will join our rank of volunteers.

I was excited to host a social meeting with the Northern Chapter Presidents, designee and guest at the rally. We were honored to have Rett Porter, FMCA National President and Gary Milner, FMCA National Senior Vice President attend our meeting. The group had a lively discussion regarding what is working or not working within their respective chapters and how to get others involved in hosting outings plus recruitment of younger members.

Rett and Gary shared FMCA challenges to attracting younger members by comparing what FMCA has to offer in benefits compared to other organizations. While it was clear that FMCA has several benefits to offer, the younger RVers don't see the need for FMCA's specific benefits the same as FMCA's older members. FMCA is, however, working on various platforms to create ways to attract and retain new and younger members. One of our challenges is figuring out how to adapt our activities at outings to be more appealing for younger RVer's, thus encouraging them to join our chapters. We had some suggestions about updating, refreshing, and making the WMHA website more appealing. Some suggestions were voiced that the website includes FMCA benefits, be kept current and up to date. The website chapter newsletters, presuming

## Northern Area Vice President's Message [Continued]

they publish a newsletter, should capture outing photos, types of activities, have personal testimonies and provide contact information for those who have questions. We need to try and meet younger people where they are, such as on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, etc.

If you have any thoughts or ideas about how we can attract younger members, please send me an email or give me a call.

Our 2024 WMHA Rally is scheduled for January 10 -14, 2024. Our Theme will be "Arabian Nights". Please mark your calendars and share with others during your travels. We are expecting to have yet another great turn out for our 2024 rally. Be Safe and Happy Traveling

James McDaniel, F371784  
Northern Area Vice President

## Southern Area Vice President's Message



Our 2023 Indio Rally for Western Motor Home Association was a great success. We were still in need of volunteers but we did have people who stepped up at the last minute. I am hopeful we can count on these same folks next year.

Everything from the volunteer dinner to the entertainment was great. Some of the symposiums

were canceled or times/locations needed to be changed at the last minute. The weather was somewhat cooperative this year, but a little cold for me. Of course, since I live in Southern California, temperatures below 70 calls for sweaters and coats. We are really looking forward to next year and anticipate a lot more people attending with a lot more vendors.

On other news, my haunted RV continues its strange behavior. The day I arrived at Indio, I did the usual setting/ hooking up. However, I needed to level my rig with 2'x4's under the front wheels. For some strange reason, the rig slipped off the wood and I bent one front leveler and broke the other. I'm told the wood I used was too narrow. "No Way"!!!! I have always done everything PERFECTLY WITH NO ERRORS OF ANY KIND!! (Yeah, I know. It sounded stupid coming out of my fingers).

Please have a good year and try to make 2024 Indio. As always, stay safe, stay positive and stay on the road. Really, I mean it. Between the lines please.

Jesse Bassford, F44869  
Southern Area Vice President

## Membership / Chapter Fair



Finally we were able to have our WMHA rally again after two years. The attendance was down, so the participation in Chapter Fair by our Western Chapters was not as large as in previous years. Those chapters that did participate were able to pick up some new members and there seem to be a number of people interested in the chapters that were there. **Thank you** people who did take part and spent time talking with the people who were interested in finding out about the chapters. Hopefully, we will have more of our chapters participate in 2024.

I would like to mention that when the information is e-mailed to the chapters in 2024, that if it goes to a person who is not the president or contact person for your chapter that you forward it to them. Please let me know if your chapter contact person changes during the year so that when it comes time to send the e-mail out in the Fall, I will have the proper information. I usually put information in the Byways in the fall about getting in touch with me to update the information about your chapter. It is important that I know if you plan on having someone interested in doing the chapter fair so I can make sure that we have enough tables set up for those interested. It is better to have a table or two more than I have planned on, than to try and set up more when it is actually time for the fair.

I have had a few requests for information about chapters in certain areas – that is why it is important to keep me advised about the information on your chapter. I have a list that I can e-mail to people who are looking for a chapter in a certain area that I send out – I like to have the current information for these people. Thanks to you folks who handle the membership information for your chapters – the best way to keep members is to get them interested in a chapter.

Alice Bernard, F79098  
Membership & Chapter Fair Captain  
Volunteer Coordinator





# CHAPTERS

## **For Many, Chapter Membership is considered the best part of FMCA**

Did you realize when you joined FMCA that you not only became a member of the premier RV association in North America but also one of the largest networks of RVers in the world? That's right, the FMCA family includes thousands of RV enthusiasts who, like you, not only have a zest for travel but also hobbies and interests off the highway. What better way to meet folks who share your "likes" than to become involved in one or more of FMCA's chapters? FMCA chapters have get-togethers at chapter rallies, area rallies and conventions to share stories, talk about issues that involve the RV community, assemble for social activities, and have a great time!

Joining a Chapter is a great way to make lifelong friends and maximize the enjoyment of your motor homing lifestyle. Please feel free to contact any of the Chapters below. They will be happy to have you join them for an outing.

### **WHMA Southern Area Chapters ... Jesse Bassford Vice President**

Alpine SoCal  
California Chapter  
Camping Squares  
Cruisin' Condos  
Discovery Club of California  
The Dolphins  
Frustrated Maestros

GMC Pacific Cruisers  
Outdoor Resorts Palm Springs  
Overland Trailblazers West  
Rockwood West  
Southern California FMCA Elk  
Southern Bus Nuts

Open phone camera and Scan QR Code for detailed Southern Area Chapter information at the Western Motor Home Association website: [wafmca.com](http://wafmca.com)



### **WHMA Central Area Chapters ... Rick Ammerman Vice President**

Beat the Odds  
California Coaches for Christ  
California Coasters  
California Heartland  
Golden State Trackers  
Komfort Kreuzers

Midweek Wanderers  
Roamin' Catholics Southwest  
Romers  
Safari of Southern California  
Valley Cruisers  
Western GM Coach

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### **WHMA Northern Area Chapters ... James McDaniel Vice President**

Alpine Coach Norcal  
California Capitals & Bay Area Liners  
Crafty Crafters  
Diablo Ramblers  
Freedom Rollers  
GMG Forty Niners  
Gold Diggers  
Gold Dust Travelers

Golden Spike  
Monaco NorCal  
Northern California FMCA Elk  
Safari R Us  
Sierra Hi Rollers  
Sierra Ramblers  
Thousand Trails West  
Western Bus Nuts

Open phone camera and Scan QR Code for detailed Northern Area Chapter information from the Western Motor Home Association website: [wafmca.com](http://wafmca.com)



This Chapter information, along with the contact's mailing address, is posted on the FMCA website - FMCA.com. It is to be used only for chapter-related inquiries. Any other use of this information is expressly prohibited.

## WMHA Executive Board 2023

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**Secretary:** Carole Hazeltine F376336  
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e-mail: [dickhazeltine@yahoo.com](mailto:dickhazeltine@yahoo.com)

**Treasurer:** Roger Larsen F447206  
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**Immediate Past President:** Lon Cross F233066  
Cell (661) 886-5077  
e-mail: [loncross1225@att.net](mailto:loncross1225@att.net)

## WMHA Appointed Offices 2023

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Western Motor Home Association Website

<http://wafmca.com/>

## 2023 Indio "In The Land of Oz" Rally



## A Glimpse Behind The Scenes ... In The Land of Oz Rally Stage Painting

The **33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Western Area Rally** was recently held at the Riverside County Fairgrounds in Indio, CA. Those attending were privileged to see the wonderful stage painted by a talented and dedicated group of volunteers. The stage paintings are a culmination of many hours of hard work by a team led by Dave Shinn, the artist who created the drawings. Let's take a walk down the Yellow Brick Road and see just what it takes to pull this all together.

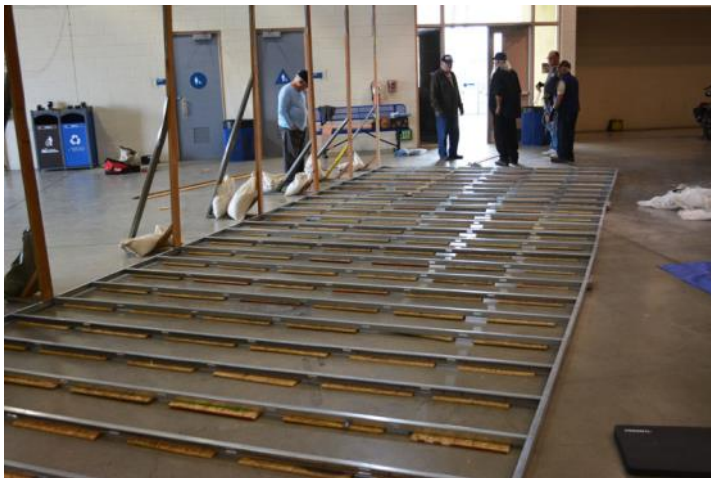


Once the Rally Theme is chosen, Dave starts researching and planning, creating the drawings for the project. In November, Dave, along with his wife Alicia and club members Chuck and Vickie Smith, travel from California's central valley to Indio. The couples have 3 days to draw the scenes on 4x8 cardboard panels. A total of 27 of these panels were used for the Land of Oz.



The panels are stored until the club volunteers arrive at the fairgrounds on Dec 27 to assemble the stage walls and start painting. Lyle Lemp, construction captain, led a team of 10-12 men who retrieved the stage pieces from a storage area. Each piece is laid

out on the auditorium floor in order of assembly. Once that is done, a bucket lift and a scissor lift are used to build the stage walls. The men bring their own power tools, ladders and extension cords to complete the job, doing so in 2 ½ days. Record time!



In the meantime, Dave and Vickie start preparing paint colors, and briefing the painters on the design. A total of 15 volunteers belonging to the **Gold Dust Travelers, California Heartland, The Beavers, California Chapter** and **The Pacers Northwest** from the Northwest area, spent 2 weeks painting the panels, working 8-9 hours daily.



## A Glimpse Behind The Scenes ... In The Land of Oz Rally Stage Painting



This project could not have been completed successfully without the wonderful volunteers who gave so much of their own time. All of them deserve a BIG THANK YOU for a job well done! You are the best!

Enjoy the pictures included with this article giving a glimpse into the process from start to finish.

Once completed, the construction crew attached the panels to the stage wall taking care to ensure panels were in order and level. Rally attendees enjoyed the stage and numerous pictures were taken in front of Munchkin Land. On Sunday morning, the last day of the rally, the construction crew began the arduous task of dismantling the stage walls. They had it down and back in storage in 4 hours. Another record!



Vickie Smith & Dave Shinn

Article written by Kathy Kelly & Vickie Smith



### Pickleball Craze: What's it All About



Have you heard of pickleball? It's likely to have been tossed around in conversation or come up on a news headline over the last year. In fact, according to a report by the Association of Pickleball Professionals, more than 36.5 million people played pickleball from August 2021 to August 2022. Needless to say, the sport's popularity is growing.

### Break it Down

Let's start with the basics. We're all familiar with tennis, ping-pong, and badminton. Pickleball essentially combines all three sports. While pickleball is a tad slower-paced than tennis, in which balls are flying at warp speed across a 78-foot court, it makes for a great entryway for beginners, or people who want to improve their hand-eye coordination. The ball is similar to a wiffleball, perforated with holes, lightweight and made of plastic material, and the paddle is said to be easier to handle because it is shorter and lighter than a tennis racket. You can play singles or doubles—just make sure your teammate is of equal skill level as you!

### Why the Craze?

Naturally, the Covid pandemic spurred the desire for people to find something new, different (and sociable, at a distance). Most of the die-hard pickleball players tend to skew older, but the fastest growing segment of casual players are under 30!

Experts say the spike in popularity is due to a couple of factors: it's relatively easy to learn and play, it's an inexpensive sport, and it's quite a social pastime. If you're looking to burn calories and get a good workout for about 30 minutes, pickleball is a solid option. And the level of intensity can vary based on your preferences. Besides, what else are you going to do to burn off the calories from that bacon cheeseburger you had for lunch?

And being more affordable than tennis or golf just adds to the appeal. (Shall we remind you of how much a country club membership costs?)

### Pick up a Paddle

Because the nets can be set up virtually anywhere with a hard surface, the game is quite accessible. After a quick explanation and a 10-minute practice round, you'll be well on your way to getting it down pat! There are a handful of rules to keep in mind:

- **The ball must stay inbounds.** If your ball goes out of the lines, your opponent gets a point, and they can serve the ball for a new round.
- **One bounce per side.** The ball must bounce at least once on each side of the court.
- **Serve at the baseline.** Baseline is towards the back of the court. Only underhand serves are allowed (which are easier to receive than overhand).
- **Your serve can't land in the no-volley zone.** This particular area is the lines box approximately seven feet from the net. When serving, your ball can't land there, but after the first serve, this area is green-lit.
- **Game point is at 11—but also 15, or even 21 points.** Once a person or team reaches 11 points, the game is usually over. But the winner must win by at least two points. So, if one team has 11 and the other has 10, the game continues. Given this, scores can be extended to 15 or 21.

Article By Kendal Lambert  
Source: [tinyurl.com/28z3xher](https://tinyurl.com/28z3xher)

### Meet the Editor

My name is Peter Jautais and I am the Editor of the Western Motor Home Association (WMHA) Byways quarterly Newsletter. I have strived to make each newsletter informative, easy to read and enjoyable.

My wife, Karen, and I have been married for 50+ years. She is and has been my rock all these years. Karen proof-reads all my work and her ideas and suggestions inspire me to keep the newsletter brisk. We both retired on the same day almost 15 years ago. We really enjoy traveling, meeting, and socializing with old and new friends while on the road in our RV. FMCA International Convention & RV Expos, Area Rallies, and Chapter Rallies give us ample opportunities to travel and socialize. Our travels, however, are not limited to rallies. This great Country of ours is so beautiful and we are blessed to have seen a good portion of it. But there is so much more to see & enjoy.



Along with my duties as the newsletter Editor I am also the Indio Rally Program Captain, the Program Advertising Captain, and the Assistant Web Master for WMHA Web-site. Send your comments to [newsletterwmha@gmail.com](mailto:newsletterwmha@gmail.com)