# **DOAI 2010 national rally on horizon**

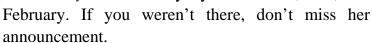
Tf you consider that this issue has a publication date of LJuly 1, you have just 51 days to get your registration for the national rally into the hands of the rally registrar, **Buddy Reynolds.** DOAI members in Autumn in the Smokils the southeast region have lined up seminars, tours, activities, and events to make it very worthwhile loading up our Discovery motor homes and going to Tennessee this September.

Frank Cason, rally master for this year's annual DOAI event, has more information for everyone, beginning on page 5. You will find a map with photos on page 4, so it will be easy for you to get to River Plantation RV park. Included on page 6 is information on the quilts that have been created by women across the country and which will be raffled off during the rally for a good cause.

# Good stuff waiting for you inside this issue!

Gary Bunzer, the RV Doctor, is back again with an article on five things you can do to make your visit to the service shop less stressful and enable your down-time to be as brief as possible. Good advice from the doctor and it all starts on page 16.

**Toni Calzone** has an important announcement on page 2 regarding the materials from Camp Discovery held at Lazydays in Seffner, Fla., last



Bob Cook's helpful article on email is on page 8, and Marshall Godwin has supplied information about next year's southeast region rally on page 11.

Several regions and most of the chapters have reports in this issue, and we've updated the rally opportunities list on page 9. Don't miss Dick

Snyder's article on page 7 with more information about his topic (2011 national rally hosts) by Joe Stewart on page 12.

There are many more articles just waiting for you inside! Sit back, relax, grab a cold lemonade, and read 'em all. See you in Tennessee!

### July issue highlights

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### **DOAI** membership sponsors

We extend thanks to these Discovery dealers who support DOAI by paying for a year's membership for each person who purchases a **new or used** Discovery motor home:

Hayes RV, Longview, Tex	888.429.3778	www.hayesrv.com
Lazydays® RV Center, Inc., Seffner, Fla	800.500.5299	www.lazydays.com
PPL Motor Homes, Houston, Tex	800.755.4775	www.pplmotorhomes.com
Tom Raper RVs, Richmond, Ind./Fairfield, Ohio	800.727.3778	www.tomraper.com

If you would like to join this elite group, or have questions, please contact DOAI Membership Director **Portia Williams** toll-free at 888.594.6818.



### **Camp Discovery materials available**



If you were unable to attend the 2010 southeast region rally in Florida, and regretted that you would be unable to

access the helpful information shared with the attendees, fear not – your worries are over!

We now have 2GB flash drives (with DOAI logo) on which is 500MB of information on Discovery coaches, along with extra copies of the handouts.

These items are available to DOAI folks at the small cost of \$30. This charge covers the cost of the flash drives, the printing of the hard copy material, and the postage to send it to you. You will need to supply a three-ring binder, but these can be easily found at places like Walmart, Office Depot, Target, etc.

Additional blank 2GB flash drives (also with the DOAI logo) are available for \$10 each.

If you are interested in purchasing this extremely helpful and complete material, send an email to **Toni Calzone** at <a href="mailto:antonia.calzone@verizon.net">antonia.calzone@verizon.net</a>. She will send you the form you need to sign and the specifics on how to make out the check and where to send it.

Toni is currently working on a summary folder of last minute Camp Discovery information. When that is complete, she will send an email to you, letting you know where it is posted online. Those who attended Camp Discovery will also get an email about the location of this extra information. 
\*Submitted by Toni Calzone



Assistant webmaster Toni Calzone

# Toni's RV tips

I've received a number of calls recently, saying the generator is running, but nothing works. Before panic sets in, check out those circuit breakers on the generator and make sure they are in the ON position. Even shore power events will cause those breakers to switch to the OFF position. If you have a polarity tester in an outlet, you can power to the coach from the generator. Before firing up the AC, be sure to wait a

couple of minutes before activating the AC. If you have a bank of outlets not working, be sure to reset the GFI breaker at the outlet before you go further into why no electricity to a bank of outlets. Try not to over-think a problem. Think simple first, and then work your way in to the complicated thought process. Lastly, here are some helpful YouTube videos:

■ 120 Volts RV

www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpdoab50f7I&feature=related

- RV refrigerator operation www.youtube.com/watch?v=cy1W-uWvR9U&feature=related
- RV roof maintenance www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiIG-c339Lk&feature=related
- RV rubber and TPO roof care www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXVwG9uJl5Q&feature=related
- RV roof repair and vent maintenance www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYwxEX3SBK4&feature=related

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#### **Newsletter Editor**

Nina Soltwedel 4736 Harwich St. Boulder CO 80301-4217 303.530.0775; 303.570.2736 doaiexpress@discoveryowners.com

Contact DOAI membership director as soon as any of your contact information changes; i.e., mailing address, telephone number, email address, etc.

If you wish to access the newsletter electronically instead of receiving a hard copy, contact the membership director for details.

#### Membership Director

Portia Williams
P. O. Box 95
St. George UT 84771-0095
Toll-free 888.594.6818
doaimembership@discoveryowners.com

DOAI Website www.discoveryowners.com

DOAI Yahoo! Group

groups.yahoo.com/group/discoveryownersassociation/

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### President's message



President Marshall Godwin

Itrust this edition of the newsletter finds all of you in good health and good spirits. It is the middle of the camping season, so I hope all of you are taking advantage of opportunities to travel and enjoy your Discoverys. There are many folks who would like to do what we do on a regular basis. Let's get food and clothes on board the coach and go camping.

I intended to do just that today, only to find a tire with low air pressure. My roadside assistance provider dispatched a service truck that didn't even have the correct socket for the lug

nuts. Since it was a slow leak, I decided to drive to a local truck tire shop rather than take another chance with roadside assistance. Fifty dollars later, all is well. We delayed the trip till tomorrow.

Today's events are a good example of the unlimited "adventures" that accompany the RV experience. When you have a condo that travels at freeway speeds, there's bound to be an occasional issue. Some problems, like a hole in a tire, are fairly simple. Others can be difficult and hard to correct. When these things arise, often the best resource we have is the corporate knowledge of other DOAI members.

I am continually impressed by how our members help one another. At chapter and major rallies, I often see people collaborating to solve technical problems or just providing an extra set of hands to get a job done. Since we attend rallies for a limited time, the primary methods for members to help each other are through our egroup and the DOAI bulletin board. Often, in just a matter of minutes, a member can get detailed answers to technical or RV lifestyle questions. These resources are a very important and valuable benefit of DOAI membership. Having said that, I don't know why a large number of our members fail to use these resources. I strongly encourage each of you to join the egroup and bulletin board. Get connected and get help when you need it. If you don't need help, perhaps you can assist others.

I thank our board members, directors, and chapter officers for all they do to make this a great organization. **Steve Masterson**, northeast region vice president, has purchased another brand of RV. His board position is now vacant. Steve provided many helpful suggestions while serving our association. He is a good friend and we will miss his participation in DOAI.

**Becky** and I look forward to seeing many of you at the national rally in Sevierville, Tenn. Take care and God bless.



### **Congratulations!**

We extend congratulations to Frank and Isabel Cason and Dick and Brenda Snyder! Both couples have earned a year's free membership because they encouraged three Discovery owners each to join our merry band of RVers.

You, too, have the opportunity of earning a year's free membership. When

you see a Discovery in a campground, don't hesitate to knock on their door to find out if they are DOAI members. If not, hand them a complimentary copy of our newsletter, or a copy of our membership brochure. Tell them about this great club. When they fill out the application, ask them to put your name in the "who recommended membership to you" slot. This really works!

## **Driving directions for 2010 national rally location**

Those of us in the southeast region are sure looking forward to welcoming you to the 2010 national rally at River Plantation RV Park in Sevierville, Tenn., in September.

Here is the map to help you get to the park, and here's how to interpret it:

On I-40, take Exit 407 and proceed east on Tennessee highway 66 approximately nine miles where you will have to make a right turn. As you go through the town of Sevierville, position your D in the left lane. There will be three lanes of traffic going east through town, and hanging in the center of each traffic light will be a mile marker. These markers tell you how far you are from Gatlinburg.

When you make your right turn (and this is the *only* way you can turn) this light will be mile marker 15.0. The next light will be mile marker 14.8. As soon as you pass this traffic light, you will be turning *left* at the *second* left turn (the first turn is for a helicopter ride, and you can do this later).

Signs will be posted at mile marker 15.0, as well as at the turn to the campground to assist you.

Once you arrive at the RV park, you will be greeted by the parking group, which will escort you to your site.

\*Submitted by Frank Cason





Google Earth view of Sevierville, showing Hwy 66 through town to RV park. Down arrows indicate road; two facing right arrows show turns (see other two photos).



Google Earth close-up showing right turn onto Parkway.



Google Earth close-up showing left turn into RV park.

### Details ... details ... details

What you need to know before you go ... to the national rally, that is!

- A 50/50 drawing will be conducted Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday nights. There will be one winner each night. The remaining proceeds will be donated to the Shriner's Hospital for Children.
- We will be supporting the Sevierville Food Bank. Please bring plenty of non-perishable items to donate to the food bank. Try to bring a minimum of four items. Remember that Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Here in Tennessee, lots of people depend on the food they receive from the food bank. A four- or six-pack of can goods would be super. Just imagine how many families we can help as a group.
- A golf outing will take place on September 22. We will be playing at Eagle's Landing Golf Club. The course is about five miles from the RV park. Eagle's Landing has an 18-hole, par-72 championship layout. All construction has been completed, so those who played the course in 2009 will see a different course. Yes, it is a demanding course. If you enjoy a good round of golf, make sure you sign up on your registration form.
- We will have Gary of Kool RV Sunscreens onsite for those who need sunscreens for their coach. Gary has asked that you give him a call if you are interested in sunscreens. That way, he can have them ready to install upon your

- arrival at the rally. Gary can be reached at 886.545.9614 or at <a href="https://www.koolrvsunscreens.com">www.koolrvsunscreens.com</a>.
- Camping World is located at Tennessee RV in Knoxville. They are located at exit 398 off I-40, Strawberry Plains Pike. The facility is approximately 20 miles from the RV park.
- I am working with **Leland Wagner** of Chilhowee RV Center to have 2010 Discoverys present at the rally. He has committed to bring what he has on his lot in September. Who knows there could be a 2011.
- Onsite RV maintenance service is available at the RV park from two different repair centers.
- For those who may need propane, it is available at the RV park.
- Sevier county has declared Walmart as a no parking zone for overnight motor homes. Therefore, **do not** include a night's stay at the Sevierville Walmart in your travel plans. If you do, be prepared to pay a hefty camping fee.
- Early check-in will begin at 12 noon on September 19. Should your plans change after you submit your registration form and decide to come in early, be sure you have a check to pay for the early arrival day. We will not accept cash nor credit cards.

# Special t-shirts for national rally



Merchandise director Dick Tracy

**Dick Tracy**, DOAI merchandise director, will be taking orders for special *Autumn in the Smokies* t-shirts. Everyone registering for the national rally at Sevierville, Tenn., will receive an email providing the details on these shirts and must reply to the email to order their shirts. This will ensure that we obtain and have the proper size shirts for everyone.

These special *Autumn in the Smokies* t-shirts will only be available through this special ordering process. They will be available for pick up by making payment at the registration desk at the rally.

In the event you do not want shirts, Dick is asking that you reply to the email and indicate you don't care to order any t-shirts just so he is sure the email was not missed.

The shirts will be made of quality 50/50 fabric, will feature the *Autumn in the Smokies* logo of fall leaves, and will cost \$10 each. A sample photo will be included in the emails Dick will send out.

If you have questions concerning the shirts, feel free to email Dick at <a href="mailto:dtracy@ptd.net">dtracy@ptd.net</a>. As always, we will have a variety of other DOAI logo clothing for sale at the *Autumn in the Smokies* national rally.

### Good for you!

DOAI members report on positive experiences with dealers and service providers.

Haden: "I had a very good experience with Suncoast Designers, Inc. while at the southeast region rally in Seffner. I had a fogged window and made contact with them for a replacement. Located in Hudson, Fla., it was an easy trip from the campground. I was there at 6:30 a.m. They removed the fogged window, completely rebuilt and resealed it, and then reinstalled it, all for a very fair price. I was back at Camp Discovery by 1 p.m. Good people!" ❖



## Handmade quilts in the spotlight at the rally

Those who attend the DOAI national rally in Tennessee this coming September will have the opportunity to participate in an event whereby three people will go home with a handmade quilt.

Over the past ten months, 18 women have been busy creating three distinctly different quilts. Shown here, only one is completed at this time; the other two are in process of being quilted, backed, and bound. Those involved in this project, led by Donna Barker, are Hazel Allen, Kathy Baker, Barbara Brady, Judy Jo Bruton, Evelyn Fuller, Sarah Hallum, Linda Hargest, Sherry Klungseth, Lucy Lewis, Louise Mauck, Freddie Perry, Della Quinn, Elsie Sikes, Doris Smith, Nina Soltwedel, Roberta Trent, and MaryAnne Weinberg.

The quilts will be readily visible when you arrive at the rally. Tickets will be sold by the quilters; \$1 gets you one ticket; \$5 gets you six tickets. There will be a ticket receptacle for each quilt. Put your ticket stub in the receptacle/s of your choice. If your ticket is drawn on Saturday night, you've won that quilt! **One hundred percent of the ticket sales** will go to help Nashville families put their lives back together after experiencing a 100-year flood in May.



Finished size will be full plus. When photo was taken, final border had been added.



Finished size will be close to full size. When photo was taken, final border had not yet been added.



This quilt is finished, and measures approximately 60 inches by 48 inches.



Membership director Portia Williams

# **Membership director's report**

Welcome to our new members!

Please extend the hand of welcome to these new members. We look forward to meeting them face to face at upcoming rallies.

Lawrence/Anne Adam, Sarver PA Ted/Dianne Allan, Standard AB Edwin/Jan Bagley, Canyon Lake TX John/Julie Barry, Seneca SC Kevin/Lisa Bellek, Whitehouse Station NJ

John/Jane Bledsoe, Lindale TX Paul Bower, Missouri City TX Tim/Karen Bowman, Export PA Charles/Donna Boyce, Lawton OK Dan Boyer/Jean Pendleton, Grinnell IA Steve/Teresa Boyett, Columbia TN Joe/Betsy Byerly, Greensboro NC Malcolm/Susie Campbell, Lebanon OR Richard/Jeannette Clarke, Provo UT Jack/Teresa Clements, Brooksville FL Terry/Dianna Darby, Garland TX Bruno/Nancy DeLeo, Donaldsonville LA Pierre Dion, Trenton ON Sheila Eastman, Gallipolis OH Matt/Kim English, Canby OR Al/Donna Etue, Stanwood WA David Foster, Aspen CO Robert/Beverly Frank, Waupun WI Huey/Patricia Garvin, Cartwright OK Scott/Cynthia Giroir, Braithwaite LA Dale/Sarah Godwin, Queen City TX Terry/Sue Goggans, Fort Payne AL Dan Graves, Spencer IA Carey/Joyce Graybill, Dubuque IA Ray/Susan Gutierrez, Goodrich MI Tim/Cheri Hales, Murrieta CA Dave/Diana Hamm, Pearland TX Gary/Jane Heckman, Mountville PA Michael/Linda Holder, West Lafayette OH Leonard/Mary Holstin, Pensacola FL Joe/Heidi Hornung-Scherr, Hickman NE Tom/Martha Hundley, Eden NC

Larry/Patricia Isaacson, Tillamook OR Alfred/Lena Johnson, DeSoto TX Kevin/Pat Kelly, Astor FL Gerald/Sandra Keys, Jonesboro GA John Kravic/Carol Wooley, Stormville NY Randy/Denise Kuhnert, Eau Claire WI Robert/Rita Landrum, Highland Village TX Jerry/Misty Laws, Las Cruces NM Michael/Becky Magee, Ionia MI Wayne/Barbara Mahaffey, Decatur AL Terry/Bonnie Merrion, Green Cove Springs FL Derek/Denise Mitchell, Corpus Christi TX Robert/Sharon Moon, Ashland NC Bill/Patty Murray, Helotes TX Frank/Nancy Nutter, Wimauma FL Thomas OBoyle/Marilyn Bowen, Eaton Center NH Chuck/Jessica Penn, Keithville LA David/Kathy Piontek, Brighton MI John/Carol Pulaskie, Freehold NJ Robert/Nancy Ratay, Indiana PA Charlie Robertson, Depauw IN Tom/Jane Rosnagle, Kingwood TX Jon/Carol Roth, Stafford VA Michael/Shari Ruff, Orlando FL Barrie/Dawn Sanderson, Thunder Bay ON John/Linda Saunders, Chester IL Vinny/Lisa Schettino, Pompano Beach FL Thomas/Debra Schmidt, Comstock WI Gary/Sherry Sievewright, Hales Corners WI William/Martha Smith, Hermitage PA Donald/Janet Spivey, Port Orange FL Larry/Leanne Steele, Kenmore WA Richard/Lynn Swanson, Beverly Hills FL Greg/Shari Tordoff, Powell OH Richard/Sarah Tormey, Menifee CA John/Rebecca Vanek, Endwell NY Bill Ward, Boyce LA Todd/Natasha Whittom, Mascoutah IL Matt/Sharon Wilson, Sherwood OR James/Patricia Wishon, Hampton TN Tom/Donna Woods, Kennewick WA Austin/Helen Zappala, St Augustine Beach FL Michael/Lynn Zimmer, Selma OR



National rally master Dick Snyder

# National rally master shares news

The 2011 national rally will be held in the I south central region instead of the northeast region.

With our rotation of the six regions, the northeast region was scheduled to host the 2011 national rally. Steve Masterson, former northeast region vice president, had spent much time organizing, finding a site, and a planning a date for this rally. After

extensive communications between Steve, Jerry Call, the Midwest Discoverers chapter president, and DOAI president Marshall Godwin, we all came to the agreement that it would not work to hold the 2011 national in the northeast region. The chapters in the northeast are not interested in hosting it.

Therefore, I recommended the next region in the rotation, which is the south central region, serve as the host of the 2011 national rally.

Joe Stewart and John Baker from Texas had already been working on plans for the 2012 national rally. Since moving it up one year, they have been checking sites and dates and will be giving more information soon.

The southwest region is now scheduled to host the 2012 national rally, and it could be held in Las Vegas, Nev.

I hope to see you all at the 2010 national rally in Tennessee this coming September. \*

Webmaster **Bob Cook** 

### Webmaster shares email information

End your email hassles

For most of us, email is a savior – it allows us to easily keep in touch with friends and family. But for RVers, it can be a special challenge. This article will explore email alternatives that can greatly simplify your

Most of us use the email address that is provided by our Internet service

provider (ISP). However, most of us change our ISP several times, either when we move or when we upgrade to faster service or a better deal. That can be a hassle, as we now have to advise our friends, financial institutions, newsletters, clubs, etc., of our new email address.

Also, your ISP likely limits the size of your inbox. As an RVer, you may not have a chance to download your email for several days. When family or friends also send pictures, your inbox quickly becomes full. If your inbox is full, new

messages get bounced back to the sender. If you are on a listserver such as the DOAI egroup, you won't get any new messages until you reset your account.

Then there is the issue of spam, and you know I don't mean the canned meat variety. Some ISPs do a fair job of blocking spam, but increasingly this is the responsibility of you, the user. Many folks don't want to mess with trying to filter spam messages themselves.

There are some great free alternatives that will solve these problems. The most popular are Google Mail (GMail) and Yahoo Mail (YMail). Both of these services are Web-based meaning that you must be connected to the Internet to be able to use them. (However, version 3 of Firefox will reportedly allow offline viewing and composition of GMail.).

With GMail or YMail, your email address will never change when you change ISPs. No more missing emails or newsletters.

> GMail offers almost 8GB (and keeps increasing) of mailbox storage and YMail offers unlimited storage. You won't have any more undelivered messages due to a full mailbox. There is another great advantage - keep your DOAI egroup messages in your inbox and you will quickly and easily be able to search all of the messages the next time you need to find out something about your D.

Since both GMail and YMail are web-based, all of your email is available on any computer that has Internet access. No more hassles with moving messages between computers.

Both Gmail and Ymail do a great job of filtering spam so you don't have to. Get Yahoo Mail at http://mail.yahoo.com and GMail at http://gmail.google.com.Try them out and see which one you like better!

**Member care report** 



lease keep these good people in your prayers and send kind thoughts their way:

Patty Velasquez, whose mother passed away April 6.

Marilyn Keyser, whose husband passed away earlier this year. **Sarah Wallace**, who had double bypass surgery in March. She has had a rough time – allergic to many things, so pain killers weren't an option. As Sarah said, open heart surgery isn't for pansies! She still has pain, but is in good spirits.

Wanda May, who had a heart attack and stroke in March, and then took a bad fall in April. She is in a rehab facility, and it's going to be a long road ahead for her recovery.

Larry Carstensen, who underwent successful colon cancer surgery earlier this year, and is well on his way to full recovery.

Carl Dykman, who fell recently, breaking his nose and incurring other facial injuries necessitating surgery. He is recovering nicely, and wife **Teri** is having a hard time making

him take it easy.

**Harry Bruton,** who had a stroke while at a Discovery Texans rally in May. The damage was minor, and his prognosis is

good, according to wife **Judy Jo**. Sandy Fields, whose husband, Tom, died from pulmonary pneumonia on May 11 after a long illness. Tom was active in Discovery Texans chapter and the national organization, serving in many capacities over the years.

Clyde Dennis, whose father passed away in May.

Donna Reid, who became ill with sepsis at a Louisiana Mudbugs Tom Fields rally, was taken to the hospital, and is recovering at home.



Please let our newsletter editor, **Nina Soltwedel**, know of any member needing a care card or sympathy card. Send an email to doaiexpress@discoveryowners.com.

### **Rally opportunities**

Jump in – meet new friends and see new places via the chapter lifestyle. Other Discovery owners are waiting to welcome you!

#### July 2010 -

6/29-7/1 Desert Rats, Chula Vista, Calif.

#### September 2010 -

3-8 Discovery Pioneers, Breezy Point, Minn.

20-26 DOAI national rally - Autumn in the Smokies,

Sevierville, Tenn.

#### October 2010 -

14-17 Desert Rats, Paso Robles, Calif.

14-19 Blue Ridge Discoverys, Marion, N.C.

19-24 Blue Ridge Discoverys, Dillard, Ga.

27-11/1 Texas Disco Road Runners, Tyler, Tex.

#### November 2010 -

4-10 Dixie Travelers, Gulf Shores, Ala.

11-13 Discovery Texans, Hempstead, Tex.

11-14 Desert Rats, Temecula, Calif.

#### January 2011 -

20-22 Discovery Texans, Victoria, Tex.

30-2/3 Southeast region rally, Seffner, Fla.

#### March 2011 -

17-19 Discovery Texans, New Braunfels, Tex.

#### May 2011 -

19-21 Discovery Texans, Lakehills, Tex.

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#### October 2011 -

27-11/1 Texas Disco Road Runners, Tyler, Tex.

#### November 2011 –

10-12 Discovery Texans, Tyler, Tex.

#### Looking toward the future -

2011 DOAI national rally, South central region

2012 DOAI national rally, Southwest region

2013 DOAI national rally, Southeast region

2014 DOAI national rally, Northwest region

2015 DOAI national rally, North central region

2016 DOAI national rally, Northeast region

Consolidated rally schedule at www.discoveryowners.com

## **Helpful contacts for Discovery owners**

•	
Allison Transmission, GM Corp 800.252.5283	Interstate Rest Areas <u>www.interstaterestareas.com</u>
Atwood Mobile Products	Kidde Safety Products 800.880.6788
Camping/Traveling in the U.S. $\dots \underline{www.roadnotes.com}$	Kwikee Products 800.736.9961
Caterpillar RV Engine Support 877.777.3126	Magnadyne 800.638.3600
Carefree of Colorado 800.621.2617	MCD Innovations www.mcdinnovations.com
Carriage Carpets (Shaw Flooring) 877.706.3054	Michelin North America 800.847.3435
CCI Controls	Norcold, Inc
Cummins, Inc	Onan
Denso (call Fleetwood) 800.322.8216	Power Gear 800.334.4712
Discovery Parts:	Riverpark
Sullivan RV Sales & Service (Indiana) 800.720.0484	RV Dump Locations <u>www.rvdumps.com/dumpstations</u>
Walt's RV Supplies (California) 909.823.0563	RVP (Coleman) 316.832.4357
Dog-friendly Campgrounds <u>www.rvingwithdogs.com/</u>	RVP (Suburban)
Dometic Corp	The Sign Man ( <b>DOAI badges</b> ) 407.365.3722
Fantastic Vent 800.521.0298	Spartan Chassis, Inc
Find a Campground <u>www.campingroadtrip.com</u>	Splendide 800.356.0766
Fleetwood RV, Inc., Decatur, IN 800.322.8216	Thetford Corp 800.521.3032
Freightliner Custom Chassis Corp 800.385.4357	Trojan Battery Co www.trojanbattery.com
General Electric <u>www.geappliances.com/geac/</u>	Velvac 800.783.8871
Goodyear Tire & Rubber 800.321.2136	Winegard
Intellitec	Xantrex Technology 800.670.0707

# DOAI board of directors, chapter presidents, committee chairmen and founder/president emeritus

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Marshall Godwin, 8071 Windsor Dr, King George VA 22485-5210; 540.663.3725; 540.379.6767; marshall@megodwin.com

#### Executive vice president

John Baker, 8419 Clover Leaf Dr, Rosenberg TX 77469-4867; 281.341.7177; 281.814.0004; bakerjohn@swbell.net

#### Vice president for development

Bob Soltwedel, 4736 Harwich St, Boulder CO 80301-4217; 303.530.0775; 303.513.8548; bob.soltwedel@gmail.com

#### Secretary

MaryAnn Crowell, 207 County Rd 3000, Lott TX 76656-3828; 254.584.2400; 254.644.6225; relxn1@aol.com

#### Treasurer

Pete Palasota, 8106 Knottingham Dr, Waco TX 76712-3406; 254.772.3791; 254.722.2653; petenmarthapal@aol.com

#### Vice treasurer

David Blomstrom, 7503 Foster Creek Dr, Richmond TX 77469-9766; 281.341.6962; 713.907.5022; <a href="mailto:davidlemstrom@aol.com">davidlemstrom@aol.com</a>

#### National rally master

Dick Snyder, 411 Alexander Dr, Seymour IN 47274-8633; 812.522.4535; 812.521.0137; rdsnyder4@gmail.com

#### Past president

Phil Yovino, 214 Fairfield St, Shoreacres TX 77571-7155; 281.867.1809; 713.203.3114; pdyo@sbcglobal.net

# North central region vice president (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD, WI, MB, NU, ON)

Charlie Richardson, 3219 County Road 461, Poplar Bluff MO 63901-6126; 573.785.8703; 573.429.4884; cer\_ejr@yahoo.com

Northeast region vice president (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, NB, NL, NS, PE, QC)

Position is vacant.

# Northwest region vice president (AK, CO, ID, MT, OR, UT, WA, WY, AB, BC, NT, SK, YT)

Bob Williams, 1103 W Eclipse Dr, Saint George UT 84770-8027; 435.817.3172; rgwilliams@sisna.com

### South central region vice president (AR, LA, OK,

Joe Stewart, PO Box 9100-176, Bandera TX 78003-9100; 830.535.6633; 830.460.0683; retafwx@aol.com

# Southeast region vice president (AL, DE, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)

John Ricciardi, 477 The Gardens Dr, Crossville TN 38555-0301; 931.707.9831; 252.619.7198; john.l.ricciardi@gmail.com

# Southwest region vice president (AZ, CA, HI, NV, NM)

John Bujnovsky, 8129 Bay Colony St, Las Vegas NV 89131-6707; 702.360.9718; 702.528.2877; johnshirley1@embarqmail.com

#### CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

#### Arizona Discovery Owners (AZ)

Wanda May, 5545 N 83rd Ave, Glendale AZ 85303-5001; 602.872.1306; <u>may4774301</u> @aol.com

#### Blue Ridge Discoverys (GA, NC, SC, TN)

Frank Cason, 1917 Stone Dam Rd, Chuckey TN 37641-4876; 423.639.4079; 423.552.5257; cason.frank@gmail.com

#### California Goodtimers (CA)

John Bujnovsky, 8129 Bay Colony St, Las Vegas NV 89131-6708; 702.360.9718; 702.528.2877; johnshirley1@embarqmail.com

#### Desert Rats (NV)

John Bujnovsky, 8129 Bay Colony St, Las Vegas NV 89131-6707; 702.360.9718; 702.528.2877; johnshirley1@embarqmail.com

#### Discovery Pioneers (AZ, CO, KS, NM, UT, WY)

Chuck Brock, 759 S Arrowwood Way, Mesa AZ 85208-6311; 218.330.4632; bass640770@aol.com

#### Discovery Texans (TX)

Claire Weber, 15814 Pebble Bend Dr, Houston TX 77068-1210; 281.537.0804; 281.772.3630; ec.weber@att.net

#### Dixie Travelers (AL, MS, GA, FL)

Ted Misenheimer, 5160 Rockford Ln, Stockbridge GA 30281-5239; 770.507.1615; 770.827.4601; tedm66@bellsouth.net

#### Florida Discovery Rolling Gators (FL)

Bill Katterhenry, 10319 Waterbird Way, Bradenton FL 34209-3029; 865.408.9103; 941.504.1662; w.katterhenry@hotmail.com

# Heartland Discoverys (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD, WI)

Bobby Simpson, 129 Ivy Ct, New Tazewell TN 37825-5399; 423.626.8038; 765.860.3591; <u>simy36</u> @aol.com

#### Louisiana Mudbugs (LA)

Anthony Verdin, 2100 Suwannee Dr, Marrero LA 70072-4822; 504.341.7673; 504.416.5348; <a hree="mailto:anverdin@aol.com">anverdin@aol.com</a>

# Mason-Dixon Discoverys (DE, MD, NJ, NC, PA, VA, WV)

John Ricciardi, 477 The Gardens Dr, Crossville TN 38555-0301; 252.619.7198; john.l.ricciardi@gmail.com

#### Midwest Discoverers (IN, KY, MI, OH, PA)

Jerry Call, 6825 County Road 16, Butler IN 46721-9417; 260.868.2580; 269.927.5397; jcallnorthpond@netzero.net

# Nor'easters (CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT, NB, NL, QC, ON)

Dorie Baker, Cypress Woods RV Resort Lot B-99,5551 Luckett Rd, Fort Myers FL 33905-5509; 717.487.8879; dorieann@aol.com

# Northwest Adventurers (AK, ID, OR, MT, WA, AB, BC, NT, SK, YT)

Gilbert (Wally) Wallington, 1729 S Fairway Dr, Pocatello ID 83201-2311; 208.237.4655; gwallington@juno.com

#### Texas Disco Road Runners (TX)

Jay Keneson, 404 Cypress Springs Dr, Spring Branch TX 78070-4640; 830.885.6043; 210.827.1855; jayk@gytc.com

# COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND FOUNDER Founder/President emeritus

Jim Devine, 102 Rainbow Dr #242, Livingston TX 77399-1002; 970.209.4757; f195810@gmail.com

#### Membership director

Portia Williams, P O Box 95, Saint George UT 84771-0095; toll-free 888.594.6818; doaimembership@discoveryowners.com

#### Merchandise director

Dick Tracy, 6 Cambridge Ct, Fleetwood PA 19522-1018; 610.207.2016; <a href="mailto:dtracy@ptd.net">dtracy@ptd.net</a>

#### Newsletter editor

Nina Soltwedel, 4736 Harwich St, Boulder CO 80301-4217; 303.530.0775; 303.570.2736; doaiexpress@discoveryowners.com

#### Webmaster

Bob Cook, 876 Higgins Ave, Deltona FL 32738-7971; 386.860.8274; webmaster@discoveryowners.com

#### Assistant webmaster

Toni Calzone, 118 Monroe Dr, Apt 404, Rockville MD 28050-2549; 301.424.3118; 240.422.9189; antonia.calzone@verizon.net



# 2011 southeast region rally planned

Mark your calendars now. The 2011 southeast region rally is tentatively scheduled for Lazydays RV Campground, Seffner, Fla., starting Sunday, January 30, 2011. The fivenight rally includes three meals with entertainment.

Some of the planned seminars and training sessions are: Battery care, 12V system; battery control center; inverter, 120V system; plumbing system; slide-outs; leveling jacks; computer security; Internet connectivity; GPS mapping programs; furnace; water heater; refrigerator; tire and weight safety; driver confidence course; and presentations by manufacturers and vendors.

A stay at Lazydays RV Campground includes free breakfast and lunch, WiFi, cable TV, morning newspaper, heated pool with Jacuzzi, and the added convenience of an onsite Flying J, Cracker Barrel, and Camping World.

The rally registration form will be available on the DOAI website after final costs are determined and the board approves the budget. Initial estimates show the rally cost will be approximately \$280 per coach for two people.

It's always great to be in Florida during the winter months. Plan to join us for a very informative and entertaining time with other Discovery owners. You will be glad you did! Submitted by Marshall Godwin

### News you can use

If you've read through the helpful contact information on the bottom of page 9 in the past, you might want to take another look. Three new contacts have been added:

#### www.campingroadtrip.com/

This is a great site loaded with information to help you enjoy the trip. CampingRoadTrip.com Because the site lists more than 10,000



campgrounds and RV parks, the claim is that the site can replace all those heavy campground directories taking up space in your RV. The site includes a wealth of information on area-specific RV tours. For example, the focus on May 1 was Oklahoma, complete with single- and multi-day tours, lots of links, and some excellent photos. You can register for free to get an informative monthly newsletter. The site administrators promise to not sell your email address and they respect your privacy. You might want to check it out.

#### www.rvingwithdogs.com/

This could well be the best link to come along in quite some time. The site, as of May 1, lists 303 campgrounds across the



U.S. that are dog-friendly. More campgrounds are being added weekly. Got a dog? Want to know if that campground or RV park you've been told about will welcome your pooch? Check it out online! The homepage has a map of the U.S. You simply click on the state you will visit, and the list pops up instantly. In addition to the list of campgrounds and parks, the site hosts a forum and an archive of helpful tips and travel articles.

#### www.mcdinnovations.com/

Several DOAI members have replaced their "string" shades with MCD



shades, a significant upgrade in shade quality and longevity. In April 2010, MCD announced that Fleetwood has chosen their American Duo Shade System as original equipment on 2010 Discoverys and selected other Fleetwood models. MCD has also placed an ad in this newsletter, and their link is included on our website's Links page. For more information and to review the benefits and features of the MCD American Duo shade technology, contact MCD at 800.804.1757 or check out their website.

### Did you know?

#### A DOAI member reports on her home dryer experience

The heating unit went out on my dryer. The gentleman who I fixes things around the house for us said, 'Let me show you something.' He went over to the dryer and pulled out the lint filter. It was clean. (I always clean the lint from the filter after every load clothes.) Then he took the filter over to the sink and ran hot water over it. The lint filter is made of a mesh material – I'm sure you know what your dryer's lint filter looks like – and the hot water just sat on top of the mesh! It didn't go through it at all!

"He told us that dryer sheets cause a film over that mesh and that's what burns out the heating unit. You can't see the

film, but it's there. It's what is in the dryer sheets to make your clothes soft and static-free (and that nice fragrance, too). You know how they can feel waxy when you take them out of the box? Well, this stuff builds up on your



clothes and on your lint screen. This is also what causes dryer units to potentially burn down your house!

"He said the best way to keep your dryer working for a very long time (and to keep your electric or gas bill lower) is to take out that filter and wash it with hot soapy water and an Continued on next page...

### Did you know?, continued

old, soft toothbrush (or other soft brush) at least every six months. He said that makes the life of the dryer at least twice as long. How about that!? Learn something new every day! I certainly didn't know dryer sheets would do that, so I thought I'd share.

"After he left, I tested the filter. I ran warm water over it, and some water ran through, but most of it stayed on the screen. I then washed it with warm soapy water and a nylon brush – took about 30 seconds. As I rinsed it, all the water ran right through the screen. That repairman knew what he was talking about."

How does this relate to our Splendide washer/dryers if there's no filter one can remove? It means that the sensor inside the machine can become coated with this film and that can cause the machine to fail or need expensive repairs.

Another DOAI member wrote: "Regarding the new 3-in-1 sheets for laundry – please **do not** use this product in your Splendide washer/dryer! I paid a \$96 repair bill after using this product a few times. One of the sheets had gone into the pump. Not good! Would like all Splendide owners to know it can cost you."

Bottom line? In your RV, use those dryer sheets and 3-in-1 sheets somewhere other than in the Splendide.

# **DOAI** regions report to the membership

Southeast region



Southeast region vice president John Ricciardi

The southeast region is busy getting ready for the DOAI national rally in Sevierville, Tenn., September 20-26. **Frank Cason** is busy preparing for a great time. There are numerous tours and shows on the proposed schedule and I'm sure it's going to get even better.

We have had a harsh winter and a wet spring, including some flooding in our region, but this hasn't dampened the spirits

of our chapters. They have had several rallies already and more are already planned and scheduled.

We are really a great region. We have warm weather areas in the winter and cool weather areas in the summer; we have the ocean and the mountains. This makes it easy for us to have rallies all year.

All our areas call out to you to come and have a great time. Hope to see you at the DOAI national rally in September. ❖



North central region vice president Charlie Richardson

#### North central region

The Heartland Discoverys started off the season with a rally in Branson, Mo. We had eight coaches meet for a small but fun and exciting rally. We attended several shows including "Noah" at the Sight & Sound theatre. This is more than the everyday show. If you haven't seen it, you must.

We discussed our yearly rally plans and decided to meet at Renfro Valley, Ky., for a pre-rally to the September national in Sevierville, Tenn. We also have **Jim and Pat Gravel** and **Elfers and Sally Marzahl** 

routing us a rally to the Wisconsin Dells and the Upper Peninsula. This will be a great rally. Can't wait.

After the national rally, several of the north central members are planning to attend the FMCA rally in Shreveport, La. If anyone is interested in going, please contact me.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at the national and hoping everyone has fun and safe travels.

### South central region



South central region vice president Joe Stewart

As I sit here, mentally composing this input, I am wishing that part of it did not have to be done! I have just learned that an original member of the DOAI has passed away, as **Tom Fields** went to his much earned and just reward on Tuesday, May 11. Not only did he devote much time and energy to DOAI from its beginning until ill health forced him to fade into the background, he also served his country through his Air Force career until his

retirement. Tom was much loved by his fellow members of the DOAI, his chapter, the Discovery Texans, and other members of the south central region. He will be missed!

**Justine** and I are currently in Cascadia, Ore., accomplishing our summer commitment as campground hosts in the Oregon state park system. For those of you who may be looking for something to do, we recommend you consider doing this. This is the seventh summer we've volunteered. If you have ever visited south Texas in the summer, you will understand why we prefer the western slopes of the Cascades!

Enough of that. The major news from the south central region is that we have been asked to move our national rally hosting from 2012 to next year as the scheduled region hosts withdrew their commitment. I asked the chapter presidents to survey their membership for their thoughts and comments. After discussion between them and me, it was agreed we would accept the responsibility for hosting the 2011 national rally. Fortunately, we had already begun discussions for 2012; the "when" and "where" were the most important items discussed.

I believe that the major consensus is that the rally will be centrally located nationally versus regionally. We have five locations under consideration; two in Oklahoma, one in Arkansas, one in Louisiana, and one in Texas.

Continued on next page.....

### Regions, continued

John and Felesa Baker, along with Justine and me, on separate trips, checked four or five locations in Arkansas. The Bakers are going to check a couple in Oklahoma before a final decision is made. At the current time we do not have chapters in either Arkansas or Oklahoma. It will be quite a task for current Texas and Louisiana members to make it work. However, I've been assured that our members will go the extra

mile to make it so.

To those of you in Oklahoma and Arkansas who are members of DOAI, how about you stepping up and volunteering to help? Maybe you can even form a chapter; all it takes is **five** members to do so. If interested, my email and cell phone number are published on page 10 of this issue. Let me hear from you!

### **Reports from DOAI chapters**



Chapter president Frank Cason

Blue Ridge Discoverys

The state of the Blue Ridge Discoverys is strong. Our membership continues to grow and we have more and more members attending the chapter rallies.

Our June rally was held at Lakeview RV Park in Bluff City, Tenn. This is a beautiful park with views of Boone lake. We had 42 members attend the rally. A welcome party on Wednesday evening

with hamburgers and hot dogs was prepared by our hosts, the chapter officers. On Thursday, 11 of the attendees played a friendly round of golf, while many of the co-pilots had a meet-and-greet round table discussion.

Several of us took our bikes on Friday and rode the Virginia Creeper trail, which stretches 35 miles from Abington, Va., through Damascus, Va., to the North Carolina state line near Whitetop, Va. The trail is open to hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Friday evening we all went out to a super meal in Johnson City. Saturday was a day of sightseeing with a visit to the Bristol Motor speedway. Saturday evening's meal was pulled pork with all the trimmings. It was a great rally.

In October we will do something different. We will have an 11-day rally in two different locations. The first portion of the rally will be in Marion, N.C., at Tom Johnson's RV Center, October 14-19. This portion of the rally is for those who require maintenance of their D. The second leg of the rally will be in Dillard, Ga., October 19-24. This will be our election of new officers rally. As soon as they are available, registration forms will be provided to members.

**Don't forget the national rally in September!** Let's get those registration forms filled out and mailed.

For chapter members to really get to know other members and to enjoy DOAI and their chapter membership, they must attend the chapter rallies. A great time is had by all at each rally.

Thanks for all the support I have received from the chapter officers and members. Let's continue to improve our chapter and **have fun.** See you at the next rally.



Chapter president Chuck Brock

### **Discovery Pioneers**

The Discovery Pioneers had two rallies this spring: one at Usery Park near Mesa, Ariz., and another in Silver City, N.Mex. Two new members joined us at Silver City as we welcomed **Trish and John Maris** from Cañon City, Colo., and **Clarence and Joyce Connor** from Artesia, N.Mex., to the club.

The Usery Park rally was a small group, but we were busy seeing many things in the Phoenix area including a lake

cruise, the "Howdy" western dinner show, and the famous Organ Stop Pizza show.

At Silver City, we had seven member coaches and three guest coaches. We stayed at the KOA, where the owners and staff made sure we had a good time. We enjoyed both their cowboy breakfast and their great barbecued brisket and chicken dinner. We were entertained by a combination western singer/cowboy poet, who really did a good job keeping us applauding all evening. It was a wonderful time sharing experiences with our friends. There are many things to see and do in the Silver City area, and we recommend it to everyone.

Our next rally will be over Labor Day weekend in Breezy Point, Minn. We'll gather September 3-8 at Highview Campground and RV Park on Lake Ossawinnamakee (try saying that fast three times!), which is owned by DOAI members, **Terry and Sherry Klungseth**, and happens to be the summer home of chapter president and his wife, **Chuck and Vie Brock.** If you'd like to join us, contact Chuck as soon as possible (bass640770@aol.com). We are making plans for a winter rally in Spring 2011.

Chapter president Claire Weber

### **Discovery Texans**

The Discovery Texans say, "Howdy, y'all!" We held our third rally of the year in late May in Bandera, Tex., the Cowboy Capital of the World. We will report on that rally in the next newsletter.

Our first rally of 2010 was held in Mason, Tex. In addition to great food and games, we visited Fort Mason (1831-1869). It was one of the frontier forts built to protect pioneers. Mason has two great

Continued on next page...

### **Chapters, continued**

museums, one of which was originally the Mason grammar school. Along with the museum, the building also contains a library and civic activities.

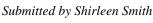
In March, we gathered in Elm Mott (just north of Waco). There were so many activities in the area, we had to split into several groups. We visited the Dr. Pepper museum, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame, Heritage Homestead, and the Waco Mammoth site. Tournaments for Jokers and Marbles and Toss Baseball were played in the evening.



Front: Shirleen Smith, Felesa Baker, Martha Palasota, Kathy Henderson, "Bert" Trent, Eloise Spears, Walter Spears. Back: John Baker, Pete Palasota, Hank Smith, Dudley Henderson, Clayton Trent.

Many of our members will be attending the national rally in Sevierville, Tenn., in September. The Discovery Texans are always well represented.

November 11-13, we'll be attending our last rally of the year in east Texas at the Red Oak RV park in Hempstead. This area of Texas has many historic sites such as Washington-onthe-Brazos state park, and living history farm. We always enjoy a rally in this area. If you will be in the area, feel free to give us a call for more information about joining us at the rally. Shirleen Smith, the Discovery Texans secretary, can be reached at 830.714.7199.





Chapter president John Bujnovsky

#### Desert Rats

e welcome our newest members to the Desert Rats chapter, Michael Lacey and Robert Brown, who recently joined DOAI. We now have a total of 15 coaches in the chapter. We are looking forward to meeting Michael and Robert, and their participation in our rallies.

In January, we had a board meeting and the officers of the chapter will remain the same. We set up the rallies for this year.

Our first rally was April 2-4 in Laughlin, Nev., at the Riverside Resort. We had a total of five coaches at this rally, which is the most we ever had and are hoping this is a new

trend for our chapter. Jerry Timberlake and Becky Guilliams were returning from the southeast region rally in Florida and gave us an excellent report of that rally. It sounded like a great rally and we all wished we could have been there.

Our second rally of the year was held June 29-July 1 at Chula Vista Marina, Chula Vista, Calif. We will report on that rally in the October newsletter

Our last two planned gatherings for 2010 are:

- October 14-17 in Paso Robles, Calif. The actual campground is yet to be decided.
- November 11-14 at Pechanga in Temecula, Calif.

As you can see, two of the four rallies will be in the beautiful wine country of California. so we hope we will have all of the Desert Rats attending. We welcome anyone from outside our chapter to join us at any of the above rallies.

Shirley and I left the end of May to travel to Alaska. We plan on being in Alaska until about August 15 and expect to get home sometime around the beginning of September. We have been wanting to do this for the past several years and the opportunity has now presented itself, so we are looking forward to it.

We wish everyone a great summer. Stay happy and healthy and travel safely.



Chapter president

#### Dixie Travelers

ring had finally sprung and members Of the Dixie Travelers looked forward to attending their spring rally at River View RV park in Vidalia, La., which began March 27. A total of ten coaches enjoyed just getting reacquainted after such a long and cold winter. The weather was beautiful. It was great to have Kenneth and Alice Stanley back with us after several months of Ted Misenheimer illness. Some toured old homes in Natchez while others shopped, etc. President Ted

Misenheimer selected a nominating committee for election of officers for the upcoming year.

Our fall rally will be held November 4-7 at Island Retreat RV Resort, 18201 Hwy 180 West, Gulf Shores, Ala., phone 251.967.1666. The sites will cost \$25.60 per night, including tax. We welcome those who may be interested in joining us. Call Kenneth Stanley (662.231.0846) or Jean Salter (205.542.0990) for further information. Submitted by Peggy Misenheimer

### Bill's hints

Sometimes you have to roll up an awning while it is still wet. Remember to extend it later to dry the canvas and prevent mildew from forming.

Bill Bryant is a 40-year veteran RVer and author of two helpful books: "Motorhomes Made Easy" and "Trailers & Fifth Wheels Made Easy." Both books are available from the RV Bookstore at http://www.rvbookstore.com.

### Chapters, continued



Chapter president Bob Simpson

### **Heartland Discoverys**

Winter is over, and the Heartland Discoverys are coming out of hibernation. Some of us did not hibernate, however. We were in Florida and Texas. Wanda and I had the pleasure of being with several of our Heartland and DOAI friends at Lazydays and Davenport. Although the weather was not up to the usual Florida standards, we still had a nice time.

Our chapter had a rally at Treasure Lake RV resort in Branson, Mo., May 12-16. A report on that rally will be in the October newsletter. We also had a rally at the FMA gathering in DuQuoin, Ill., in June.

As always, we welcome any DOAI members who would like to join us!



Chapter president John Ricciardi

### Mason-Dixon Discoverys

The Mason-Dixons have been a busy group planning rallies. We just had a great rally in Charleston, S.C., at the James Island county park campground. What a beautiful campground.

While there, we all enjoyed the fellowship and company of each other. We had such a good time, we even enticed two Discovery owners to join the Mason-Dixons. Welcome, **George and Pat Beiers** and **Tom** 

#### and Martha Hundley.

While at the rally, our member, **Julie Barefoot**, led the Mason-Dixons in a Relay for Life luminary ceremony honoring our cancer survivors present, and remembering those less fortunate. It was a very touching event. Thank you, Julie.

The Mason-Dixons have been called upon to put the



Cancer survivors, left to right: Julie Barefoot, Hank Haden, Sonny Blackwell, Alice Kiebler, Marie Money, guest Ellen Simpson and new member Martha Hundley.

southeast region rally together again, this time for 2011. It will not be a *Camp Discovery*; just a simple rally. More on that as plans progress. Safe travels to all.



Chapter president Anthony Verdin

### Louisiana Mudbugs

Hi, all! Summer started early here in Louisiana with hot weather and very little rain but the Louisiana Mudbugs have been busy with three great rallies.

The first was at Poche's RV park in Breaux Bridge, in the heart of seafood country. We all enjoyed some really great food, culminating with a steak dinner cooked

by our rally hosts, **Anita Scott, Howard Campbell,** and **Anne and Johnny Gros,** along with several terrific helpers. Tours were taken through the local meat processing plant and everyone sampled the stuffed chicken, sausages, etc. The boneless, stuffed chicken, which is a specialty in the area, was served at one of dinners and we all enjoyed the meal.

Our March rally was held in Madisonville at the Fairview state park with our illustrious chapter president, **Anthony Verdin** and company as hosts. It looked as though everyone was anxious to rally 'round – many arrived very early in the week. On Thursday, an impromptu crab boil including smoked sausage, onions, corn on the cob, mushrooms, potatoes, and a delicious bread pudding with rum sauce made by Anthony's sister, **Debra**, was enjoyed by all. On Friday, everyone went to Café du Monde near Covington for café au lait and beignets, and then to Morton's for dinner and fantastic food. We took a tour of the Abita Brewery, and then went to the "Whole Town" garage and street sale. Our Saturday potluck turned out to be very special with a Cajun fish fry with crawfish cream sauce. We certainly have some wonderful cooks among us and we all do love to eat!

In May, we met at North Toledo Bend state park in Zwolle, and after two busy rallies, had a very "hot" laid-back rally. This was a busy time of the year for a lot of people – graduations and such - so it turned out to be a small one. On Thursday, we all went to a local fish restaurant called the Captains Galley and had a wonderful meal. One of our members, **Donna Reid**, became very ill and was rushed to the hospital in Alexandria. All has turned out well, thankfully, and she is home now. We also experienced our past life when we had as a member of the group a ten-week-old baby, the grandchild of Carolyn and Keith Barnes. Needless to say, by the end of the rally, Lauren had nine new grandparents. After our usual wonderful potluck, our rally was culminated with a barbecue dinner provided by one of our local catering groups. We all hated to say good-by and return to our other lives, but we'll meet again in September.

Submitted by Jan McIlvaine

### **Chapters, continued**



Chapter president Jerry Call

Midwest Discoverers

Hello all from northeast Indiana! The Midwest Discoverers held their spring rally June 3-6 at Lampe campground in the waterfront district of Erie, Penn. More information will be forthcoming in the next newsletter. Virgil and Donna Diver were the hosts and they did a great job. There were 12 rigs at the rally, and everyone had a good time. Entertainment included gambling, golfing, Erie zoo, Erie art museum, the bicen-

tennial tower, plus lots of shopping.

I am enjoying myself as president of Midwest Discoverers and working with the other officers.

If you are in area of our rallies, we hope you will join us. I thank all the members of Midwest Discoverers.



Chapter president Jay Keneson

Texas Disco Road Runners

Our rally adventures and good time together!

In March we visited Fort Clark in Bracketville, Tex. This historic fort was the last active cavalry post in the US Army and home to both the Seminole-Negro Indian scouts and 25th Infantry's buffalo soldiers. During WWII, a large POW camp for

captured German soldiers from north Africa was located there. The primary reason for the Army selecting the site was Los Moras creek and the springs that burst from the ground, turning an area that is surrounded by desert into an oasis. The fort's

location on the great eastern Comanche war trail effectively blocked the Indian raiders and reduced their activity in the area. Most of the original fort buildings still exist and are in use as privately-owned homes, guest quarters, a museum and community support activity buildings. We enjoyed a docent-conducted walking tour. Other features of interest include a golf course, bird watching, tame wildlife (deer, turkey, etc), hiking trails and streams.

The old western town built for the John Wayne film, "The Alamo," is nearby. Visits and tours may be arranged. Fort Clark is highly recommended as a campout choice. If you visit during the hot weather, don't miss a refreshing dip in the spring-fed pool!

In May we held a great rally at the Rivera, Tex., state park. This is a revisit from last year as requested by several members interested in touring and seeing more of the famous King ranch, as well as the great museums, and enjoying fishing in the Gulf of Mexico (no sign of the oil slick) and delicious seafood.

We are saddened by the death of beloved DOAI member **Tom Fields** on May 11, following a long illness. He and **Sandy** were members of both the Discovery Texans and our chapter. They were unable to attend our rallies for some time. However, they remained in contact with activities via newsletters, telephone and the Internet. We all miss him so very much.

Our next planned get-together will be the DOAI national rally in September. After that, we will have a chapter rally October 27-November 1 in Tyler, Tex., at the Whispering Pines RV resort. Please come and join us!



RV Doctor Gary Bunzer

### The RV Doctor

Five ways to assist the RV service facility: things you can do to make your visit to the service shop less stressful and enable your down-time to be as brief as possible

Has this ever happened to you? Maybe not this specific problem, but this scenario

in general. You're on the third day of that much anticipated and much needed vacation trip when, out of the blue, while stopped for lunch, you realize your generator will not start. No problem, you say, there's an RV repair shop just two miles back. As you pull into the service drive, another coach pulls in behind you. You explain

your problem to the service writer, sign the repair order, proceed to the customer waiting area (aptly named), grab a cup of coffee and wait. And wait, and wait, and wait. Then after that, you wait still longer.

As you audibly (it seems) hear your vacation clock ticking

away, you finally come to realize the coach that had pulled in behind you is long gone as are all the rigs that pulled in behind him. You catch a quick reflection of yourself as you pass by the glass-walled service office and wonder when you grew that beard. And just who is that older woman with you, anyway? You glance out and see your generator in what appears to be hundreds of pieces scattered around the service bay. You swallow hard and shudder. Finally, at about closing time, the

service manager informs you your coach is ready. "Funny," he says, "it was just a loose wire behind the dash switch."

After six hours of pacing and daydreaming about that large bass calling your name while you grow old in a customer waiting lounge, all the technician found wrong was a loose wire? Is that

it? Why did it take so long? C'mon, a loose wire? He had the generator completely disassembled! Your frustration level grows even more when you find out that the coach that had pulled in behind you had a much more difficult and more

Continued on next page...

### **RV** Doctor, continued

technical problem, and he's been back on the road for over four hours. What gave him the edge? Why was it that his "harder-to-find" problem was diagnosed and repaired in a third less time than your relatively simple problem? And why is this guy charging you \$240 to tighten a loose wire?

Just maybe that previous customer provided a little insight and direction for the service writer and technician. Quite possibly he supplied enough clues to enable the repair shop to pare minutes, if not hours, off the troubleshooting time. Unless this is your first exposure to RVing, you know that within the realm of RV repair facilities, time equates to dollars, especially for those non-warranty, or customer-pay invoices. It stands to reason then, if there is anything you can do to help speed up the diagnostic and repair time, you, the coach owner, will save in the long run.

But what can you do? Certainly you cannot be called upon to perform highly technical, diagnostic procedures on every component on your RV. No, most professional service technicians even have a hard time with that. What follows, however, are five items that you can do that will not only benefit you and your recreational investment, but it just might provide enough of a road map or direction for the service shop to follow when performing troubleshooting procedures. At a minimum, it will help eliminate areas that need not be looked into during the diagnostic tasks.

#### 1. Record all identifying numbers

Here's a tip that is highly recommended whether you choose to follow the advice in this article or not. This step alone will help you to at least create a biographical sketch of your coach. It will be beneficial to you and any subsequent owner of your unit. By keeping, somewhere in the literature for your RV, a list of all brand names, model numbers, serial numbers and any spec numbers for all components that have such numbers, your dealer or service center will be able to rapidly transfer the necessary numbers to the repair order rather than go to the individual component to retrieve them; some may be located in hard-to-reach places. Additionally, the service writer will be able to identify those appliances or devices that may be under a subject recall, regardless of the reason for your current visit. Or, should you be required to contact the customer service representative of any product component, this reference list will come in handy.

What follows is a sample format you may want to use for this purpose. Remember, not every example of a component part that may have a model number is listed here. This is simply to give you an idea to follow for your own chart. You may need to add or delete many items in order to reflect the actual components found on your coach. Don't forget to add all of the automotive-and chassis-related items as well.

Component	Brand	Model No.	Serial No.	Spec No.
Refrigerator				
Water Heater				
Range				
Furnace 1				
Furnace 2				
Air Conditioner 1				
Air Conditioner 2				
Water Pump				
Generator				
Microwave				
Television(s)				
Converter				
Inverter				•
Other				
Other				<u> </u>

#### 2. Organize a repair history of the RV

Unless this is your very first trip after purchasing your recreational vehicle, you probably have gathered an assortment of papers, warranty forms, repair invoices, etc., for things done on and to your coach. If you are like most people, you've lost some, stuffed some in a storage compartment or glove box,

even allowed some to be washed and dried while in your shirt pocket, and maybe put some in a box somewhere subconsciously thinking you might need them someday.

Try to develop a plan for the safekeeping of these documents. At the very least, keep your repair order and *Continued on next page...* 

### **RV** Doctor, continued

installation receipts in a three-ring binder arranged in chronological order. Again, they may provide a clue that will ring a bell or jog the memory of the service writer. If he quickly scans your repair history and finds a specific failure pattern for a particular device that relates to your current problem, it may help speed up the repair time in the shop. Besides, it is felt by some that a detailed and chronological record of repairs and services adds to the resale value of the RV when you decide to trade up. It shows you have taken care of your coach.

#### 3. List all add-on components

Similar to the previous item, this one suggests you maintain a list of all aftermarket accessories that have been installed on your RV. Not only does it provide a detailed accounting of how you have increased the value of your rig, it could also save troubleshooting time while in the shop. Here's a real-life example:

A late model Class A motor home began experiencing intermittent electrical shorts in the 12-volt DC system. Electrical shorts, as you are probably aware, are difficult to trace and repair anyway, but the diagnostic task is further complicated when the symptoms are intermittent. (Is this akin to having that toothache miraculously disappear the moment you step into the dentist's office?)

While perusing the customer's list of installed accessories, the service writer noticed that the customer just had a roof rack with a rear ladder installed two weeks earlier; a fact the owner would have never even mentioned since it did not relate at all to the 12-volt short. He casually made a note on the repair order. The RV technician then read the note, made a deduction, attached a meter to that 12-volt circuit and started removing the screws that secure the roof rack to the roof. Sure enough, the third screw he started to remove confirmed the existence of a short. After removing that screw completely, the short disappeared. He then sealed the hole (the roof rack suffered no ill-effects with one less mounting screw), ran a few more tests, signed off on the repair order, and sent the finished coach to the outbound lane of the service department driveway. In and out in less than thirty minutes - minimum charge. Almost unheard of for any 12-volt short, especially one that is intermittent. Without the knowledge of the customer's recent accessory installation, it may have taken hours (days?) to find that single screw partially cutting through that 12-volt wire.

### 4. Look for the obvious

Once it is apparent to you that something is indeed not quite right with your coach and that it will be necessary to take it to the repair shop, do yourself a favor and perform a little inspection before taking it in. Look for obvious signs that something may be amiss. Later, during your conversation with the service writer, be sure to then mention any of these obvious signs you may have found. In fact, it is advisable to even jot the items down so they are not forgotten or overlooked. Some obvious items to look for during this inspection would include:

- Stains or discolorations
- Burned wires
- Water pooling or dripping
- **Broken** hardware
- ⊗ Fuel dripping
- © Disconnected or loose wires
- Missing components
- © Cracked fittings

#### 5. Document the exact specifics of the symptom

Of these five tips, this is probably the most valuable. However, this one takes a little more effort on your part. Ready? Whenever a symptom develops, begin to write down specific aspects that pertain to it. For instance, does the problem occur every time? Only at night? When the tank is full? Only after start-up? Only after shut-down? Only when it's hot outside? Get the idea?

Also note any and all geographical attributes at the time of the occurrence: high elevation, near the beach, steep incline, hot and dusty, at the lake, desert, mountains, etc. Some symptoms may be peculiar to one of these areas that will help the tech pinpoint the problem source, or at least narrow the scope of his search. Remember, these efforts are in your best interests.

Also note exact weather conditions at the time: windy, rainy, snowy, sunny, cloudy, dry, humid, air temperature, etc. These can all be applied to the mix when performing diagnostic procedures, especially on LP appliances and internal combustion engines.

Can you duplicate the symptom now? Can you override or bypass the problem? Is it intermittent or constant? By asking yourself these types of questions, the derived answers can be noted and given to the service writer. When compiled and translated by the service writer, then absorbed and applied by an astute technician, your input can greatly enhance the feasibility of spending the minimum amount of time in the service bay.

Additionally, use your product knowledge to further pinpoint a possible cause. For instance; if you are experiencing a refrigerator problem, does the problem exist during both gas and electric operation? While driving or only while sitting still? Or both? Only during the heat of the day, or at night also? Document the specifics. The more information documented, the better the chances of getting back to that vacation sooner.

By applying all five of these items, at the very least, your visit to the repair shop will be less stressful knowing you've contributed to the successful repair of your RV. You've done your part. During the course of your RVing season the additional time savings may also be substantial.

Continued on next page...

### **RV** Doctor, continued

Oh, that theoretical scenario mentioned at the top of this article ... here's what really happened. After realizing the generator would not start, the owner began an initial, cursory inspection, taking notes along the way while his wife phoned the service center. Here are the notes he handed to the service writer along with the brand, model and spec number of the generator.

- ✓ Generator no start, does not even turn over
- ✓ Fuel tank, over 3/4 full, no fuel dripping anywhere
- ✓ Weather mild, temperature about 65 degrees, partially cloudy, no wind
- ✓ Level parking lot, standing still, leveling jacks engaged
- ✓ Tried to start at generator instead of dash switch; started right up and ran fine
- No burned or disconnected wires visible in generator compartment
- ✓ Tried dash switch again, no click, nothing
- ✓ Total running hours: 27.3 no previous repairs

The service writer read the list then decided to check two items before writing the repair order. First, he opened the generator compartment and checked the remote cable connector. It was clean and tight. Next, he reached behind the dash switch and there discovered a wire that had vibrated loose. He connected the wire, started, then stopped the generator with no further problem. He thanked the customer for stopping by, gave him a company business card and sent him back to his vacation – no charge.

Because of the detailed set of notes (which took the owner less than 20 minutes to compile), it was clear the problem was not even in the generator itself. Rather, the condition existed somewhere in the harness between the generator and the remote start switch located on the dash panel. If it had not been that loose wire, it may have been a cut or burned section in that harness under the motor home somewhere, in which case, the service writer would have completed the repair order and sent the coach to the technician. Even then, because of the customer's input, the tech would probably have found the cause in a minimum amount of time anyway.

This is not to proclaim that all service-related and technical problems will be eliminated completely, but one would be hard-pressed to deny that if these five steps are employed, there is indeed a greater chance of a faster turn-around in the shop, allowing you to spend more of your hard earned vacation time enjoying the RVing lifestyle.



Gary's RV Doctor column has been published somewhere every month for over 33 consecutive

years. Visit his website, <u>www.rvdoctor.com</u>, for additional RV articles, technical information, and video tips. We extend thanks to Gary for allowing us to reprint his sage advice on RV matters.

### RV safety, part one

Safe summer travelin'

The air is warm, the lakes are sparkling and the cicadas are buzzing – the road always calls in the long days of summer. With the hottest months upon us, road travel has never been more popular. Whether you're just taking the cover off the RV for the first time this year or you travel year-round, there are some things to consider when traveling during the hot summer months.



#### Pre-trip checks

Before starting off on a long haul, check all hoses and belts for worn patches, cracking and blistering. Heat will only exacerbate these problems and eventually cause your engine to overheat. Make sure your tires are properly inflated and well balanced.

Hot asphalt and long distance driving can wear your tires faster than normal, so don't leave home with tires that are already worn. Checking the weight of the vehicle is also imperative – too much weight on tires in conjunction with higher temperatures puts you at higher risk for tire failures. Have your mechanic check your thermostat – if you've had the same one for more than three years, it's a good idea to replace it. A thermostat malfunction can result in engine overheating. They're inexpensive to replace and can save you a costly meltdown.

A summer trip is a good excuse to double-check your emergency supplies. Your travels may take you through less inhabited areas where service stations are few and far between. It's always good to have a quality spare tire in case you do need to drive a distance before you find a tire shop. You should always have water and coolant on hand to keep the engine fresh and an extra quart or two of oil. Hot weather can also shorten the life of your battery, so remember to pack your jumper cables.



#### Air conditioning

Driving with the air conditioning on seems essential when traveling through the desert in the middle of August. However, it does put extra strain on your engine. While you're feeling cool and refreshed in the driver's seat, your engine may be getting baked and overworked in the heat. Keep an

eye on your temperature gauge and lay off the throttle. If you do see the temperature rising, the best thing to do is pull over and rest the vehicle for a while. A temporary fix is to turn the heat on for a few minutes, which will help draw the heat away from the engine. It may not be the most comfortable option for you, but it could save your engine if you're in a bind. You should also turn off the air conditioning when climbing a

Continued on next page...

### RV safety, continued

mountain grade. It steals horsepower from the engine when it's needed most and makes it work harder than it needs to, which could also lead to the engine's overheating.

#### When you get there

Summertime can make us yearn to visit our national parks, many of which are full of dry timber and forest fire danger. When traveling in areas that have fire-danger postings, be especially aware of activities that could start a fire. Be sure to park your vehicle a good distance from low branches



and dry grassy areas. If you use a barbeque or cook stove, watch for flying sparks and immediately stomp out any that land on the ground. Also ensure that any outdoor fires you start are thoroughly drowned with plenty of water before you leave them behind.



When you're out enjoying the sun, hiking or sightseeing, remember to take care of yourself and pack plenty of water. Heat, high humidity and exposure to the sun make it difficult for the body to regulate its temperature. Dehydration reduces the benefits of heat acclimatization

and physical fitness, increases the risk of heat illness, and reduces work capacity, appetite and alertness. If you're out in the sun, drink more than you normally would to replace fluids you're losing through perspiration.

If you leave pets in the RV while you're out, remember their safety can be in jeopardy when the temperature outside rises. In hot weather, if you have to leave a



pet unattended in your vehicle, leave air conditioning running. If that's not possible, do not leave your pet behind. Even moderate temperatures outside can result in stifling heat inside, especially if the coach is parked in full sun – this can quickly cause an animal to overheat and even die. You can purchase a Pet Safety Heat Alarm, which gauges the temperature inside your vehicle and will ring your cell phone if the heat gets to a level that may be a danger to your pet. This is an option to keep track of what's going on in the RV in your absence. Just remember that you're trusting the life of your pet to an electronic device that could malfunction.



Travel beckons to many people in the summertime. Keep in mind when you're driving during the lazy days of summer that your safety needs to come first. Stay on top of your maintenance, both for your RV and yourself, and you'll enjoy safe summer travelin'.

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### RV safety, part two

### Increasing your safety while driving at night

According to the National Safety Council, the number of traffic deaths is three times greater at night than during the day. Many people are not cognizant of the special hazards associated with night driving. Since ninety percent of a driver's reaction depends on vision, it is extremely important drivers make an effort to learn more about driving safely after dark.

First, it's critical to understand how age affects our night vision. As we age, our eyes require more light to see clearly. In fact, a 50-year-old may need twice as much light to see well as a 30-year-old. Another difference occurs with regard to light tolerance. Older eyes are more easily blinded with less light. It takes up to eight times longer for a senior's eyes to adjust after having been blinded by oncoming traffic lights than it does for a younger person's.

Following are nine tips to help you drive safely after dark:

#### Confirm all lights are in working order

Have someone walk around your RV before departure each morning to make sure all the lights are in working order. It is especially important to check the lights on towing and towed vehicles as well. When traveling at night, occasionally check all the lights on your vehicles.

#### Keep lights clean

Clean headlights, taillights, signal lights and windows once a week, and more often if necessary. Your ability to see ahead is greatly reduced if your light lenses are dirty. Also, remember that if the lens is covered with debris, the lights will be less effective.

#### Don't overdrive your headlights.

Overdriving headlights is one of the most common faults

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### RV safety, continued

associated with night driving. At 55 miles per hour it takes about 285 feet to stop a car – stopping an RV takes even longer. Your high beam headlights only illuminate an area approximately 250 feet in front of you, which means an obstruction ahead may not yet be visible, but could be unavoidable because of the stopping distance required.

#### Dim headlights

The generally accepted rule is that you should dim your headlights about 500 feet from an approaching vehicle. When overtaking a vehicle, dim your lights when you are within 250 feet of it. Common sense dictates that you dim your high beams when they start to catch up with the vehicle in front of you.

#### Halogen bulbs

Consider replacing your regular headlights with halogen bulbs. Halogen lights enable you to see farther because they are brighter. Keep in mind, though, they tend to have a narrower field of view. They also blind oncoming drivers sooner, so you should switch to low beams a little earlier than with standard bulbs.

#### Use a day/night mirror

In motor homes with a rear window and in automobiles, using a day/night mirror greatly lessons your chance of being blinded by a vehicle with high beams approaching from behind.

### Keep headlights accurately aimed

If other drivers are flashing their lights at you frequently when your lights are on low beam, it's a sign they are not adjusted correctly. Another sign of improperly adjusted headlights is when you cannot see the full road with your lights on high or low beam.

Check to see if your lights are correctly adjusted by pulling within 20 feet of a flat vertical surface, such as a wall. Get out of the driver's seat and, from a center position inside the coach, check the following:

- Do the main beams of both headlights hit at the same height?
- Are both headlights pointing straight ahead? Some manufacturers adjust the lights so the left beam points slightly to the right to keep from

blinding oncoming drivers. That's okay. If only one light is out of adjustment, you may be able to manually adjust it to the correct position.

If both headlights are out of adjustment, take it to an RV or truck dealer and have them professionally adjusted. Properly adjusted lights are too critical to the safe operation of your coach to do without.

#### Oncoming lights

If an oncoming driver's lights blind you, look to the right edge of the road, not directly at the lights. Flash your high beams one time, unless doing so is prohibited by law. Sometimes drivers forget they have their brights on. Do not retaliate by switching to your high beams – this can cause an accident or trigger road rage in the other driver.



### RV safety, continued

Avoid driving while smoking and/or under the influence of alcohol

Smoke's nicotine and carbon monoxide hamper night vision, making you more susceptible to having an accident. Drinking and driving is not only illegal, it's extremely dangerous. Just one alcoholic drink can induce fatigue and severely impair your driving ability. Alcohol is a leading factor in fatal traffic accidents and plays a part in about half of all motor vehicle-related deaths.

The National Safety Council recommends drivers observe night driving safety as soon as the sun goes down. Twilight is one of the most difficult times to drive because your eyes are constantly changing to adapt to the growing darkness. Due to the additional risk created by aging eyes, we strongly recommend you follow the night driving tips to reduce your chance of having a driving accident.

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### Dr. Dometic says ...

Cool, crisp keeping: maintaining your RV refrigerator

You've packed the RV, have travel plans in hand and are ready to hit the road. The closets are full, toilet paper is stocked and your refrigerator is keeping all your food cold ... or so you hope. To guarantee cool, fresh keeping during your travels and while parked, follow these suggestions.

A regular systems check can keep your refrigerator up and running for the life of your RV. The first step is to check the burner flame for proper appearance. The flame should be light blue. A yellow tip means it is burning incorrectly and should be serviced by a qualified technician. Check to make sure there are no spider webs, insect nests, soot or rust on or around the burner. If there is, knock it off with a small screwdriver and clean the area with compressed air or by blowing through a straw.

It is important to ensure proper ventilation by keeping the area behind the refrigerator clear. Check the upper and lower vents, and the area between those openings for any obstructions such as a bird nest.

Also check all connections in the LP gas system at the back of your refrigerator for gas leaks by applying a non-corrosive commercial leak detector solution to all connections. Do not use a flame to check for leaks. The appearance of bubbles indicates a leak. A qualified service technician familiar with LP gas should repair the leak immediately.

At least once a year, you should have a qualified service person run a quick check. He should check the 12-volt battery system and wiring. Battery problems can adversely affect your refrigerator causing intermittent operation or dim interior lighting. The technician should look at the battery terminals, electrolyte level, amount of charge, etc. A normal operating voltage is 10.5 to 13.5 volts DC. He should also look at the gas pressure, check for gas leaks, clean the flue tube and burner jet, and check the LP gas safety shutoff.

While RV refrigerators do operate somewhat differently

than home models, certain rules stay the same – especially when it comes to food storage and safety. For best results, cool the refrigerator before placing any food inside. Turning on the unit a day before you pack will be enough time to get it to optimal temperature. Be sure to never put hot food or drinks into the refrigerator. Cool them first.

When the unit is full, it takes longer for temperatures to lower. An over-crowded fridge will take longer to make ice, and a heavy load may cause defrosting. Be sure to not overpack. Instead it's best to buy food as you go instead of throwing out anything that may have spoiled or melted.

Air needs to circulate freely, so arrange food to allow for air movement. If the fridge is stuffed, the unit will have to work harder and will have higher cabinet temperatures. Large storage containers and

paper items can block circulation and reduce cooling efficiency. Frost can also reduce efficiency, so wipe excess moisture off items before placing them in the freezer compartment, and do not leave the unit's door open any longer than necessary.

Food storage is very important. Remember that food and drink items will be traveling, too, so keep all containers tightly covered. For older models without covered crispers, be sure to cover vegetables and lettuce to retain crispness. If bringing along your favorite highly-flavored foods – like onions, garlic, certain cheeses, etc. – be sure to store them in covered dishes, plastic wrap or aluminum foil. This will prevent food and odors in the unit and the RV.

RV refrigerators offer great home-style convenience when they are operating correctly. A few simple tricks and tips can keep your food fresh and stomachs satisfied.

An RV enthusiast and expert, Dr. Dometic has written a series of articles on important RV issues. Reprinted with permission of Dometic and BjThompson Associates.



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