



ALPINE COACH  
ASSOCIATION

# A View From The Summit

Volume 15 Issue #6 March 2009

ACA MEMBERS,  
CHECK OUT IMPORTANT RALLY  
INFORMATION ON PAGE 5.

## Desert Rat Rally VIII by Renée Perrault — Newsletter Editor



One picture is worth a thousand words. Beautiful sunny day, Alpine coaches as far as the eye can see and Alpine Owners out having fun playing games in the desert. Basil and Sue Shannon, with the help of Louie and Linda Burch, put on a fabulous rally. Planning meals and entertainment for 220 Alpine members, 110 coaches plus visitors, takes good organizational skills and a lot of patience. Members comment most often heard was "Best Desert Rat Rally we've ever been to." Highlights of the Rally were our traditional heavy hors'dourve night, International food—a catered Mexican lunch and an Italian dinner, a drive in movie, games, a potluck dinner, a drive in movie night and of course, fireside chats. Our friends at Guaranty sponsored the wine and cheese party, Ray and Chris Schemanske came up with a game plan to keep the group entertained, see the picture above and I hear there were a few wild card games going on. A huge bon fire completed each evening with the group milling about to visit and watch the Space Shuttle fly overhead. The skies were so clear, with every star visible, making it easy to see the shuttle whizzing by. It's always fun to reconnect with our Alpine friends and to meet new members. Thank you Basil and Sue Shannon, Louis and Linda Burch, your hard work was much appreciated.

## Alpine Coach Steering Issues

By Mike Fleming aka Engineer Mike



At the Desert Rat Rally VIII we examined about 30 rigs for front steering issues. Dale Gerstel, owner of a 2007- 40FDTS, posted this thread on iRV2: <http://www.irv2.com/forums/showthread.php?t=1077>

On page 3 of 9 of that thread, Dale posted three short but excellent videos of his bracket bending. You can ignore any discussion on that thread by that boob, Engineer-Mike, about measurements. He should have known static measurements wouldn't reveal anything about an exclusively dynamic loading.

These three short video shots were taken while the coach was stationary on a hard surface, and a willing accomplice steered the front wheels left to right & back again. You can see in the video a fair amount of bending in the steering bracket. Dale's bracket was missing two Left-Right (L-R) welds attaching the inner stiffener brace to the outer bracket front & rear faces, and had a vertical stress crack at the upper end of the rear flange fold (where two Huck-bolts attach the bracket to the chassis). On page 5 of 9 of that thread, Dale posts photos of the fix his chassis guy installed, including installing the internal L-R welds, and welding over the vertical stress crack. Also within that thread is a link to another thread warning of bracket failure in a 2004 Alpine Coach.

At DRR VIII and of course, fireside chats, we found the following conditions (Note: Anything that sounds even vaguely like a recommendation is purely my seat-of-the-pants guess as a coach owner, is not in any way substantiated by any engineering analysis, does not constitute a policy or recommendation of ACA or the Officers or Board of ACA, and should be taken only in the spirit in which it is offered, namely with a shot and a beer):

1) There were 3 bracket designs employed by WRV over the years. The initial bracket, version 1.0, (1997 to ??) was very compact and therefore very durable, and showed minimal bending from operating the steering. You can expect some stress cracks in the internal L-R welds which varied substantially, from quite small to ~3.5" (about half the length of the weld by the time the coach has 75-100K miles). The bracket material is 5/16" thick. Periodic service should include inspection of these welds; IIWM, I'd have them cleaned, V-grooved and re-welded if the crack exceeds 2" in length (a qualified welder will know what that means; make sure of his/her qualifications), and then repainted which will aid in later detection of any re-cracking. Otherwise these early brackets appear free of the significant movement Dale's video documents.

2) The next design, Bracket 2.0, was also of 5/16" material, and was used from ?? till ~2003. The change-over to Bracket 3.0 happened when the adjustable pedals were added, so it may not precisely coincide with model year change. If your brake pedal actuates thru the floor, not thru the firewall ahead, then you have one of the 1.0 or 2.0 designs. Another way to verify the bracket design you have is to locate your brake master cylinder; if it is under the driver's floorboard area, you have 1.0 or 2.0; if it is mounted left-to-right in front of the firewall (visible w/gen slide open) you have 3.0. Again, this v2.0 5/16" bracket has the internal L-R welds, although the "box" is larger than v1.0. And again, Bracket 2.0 didn't bend dramatically while operating the steering. Similar to v1.0, stress cracks develop particularly in the rear L-R internal weld, and IIWM, I'd treat the condition the same as per v1.0 above (periodic inspection, then fix as above weld if >2").

3) Version 3.0, starting about model year 2004, is made of 1/4" plate, so the steel is 20% thinner than 1.0 or 2.0 designs. The internal brace consists of a single bent plate, where in earlier versions the internal brace was of 3 pieces, all welded together at their edges. Remember on Dale's coach, this internal brace was not fully welded to the outer "box" of the bracket. We found one coach with the same situation, i.e. L-R welds missing; all other coaches inspected had the L-R welds. However, bending of that one bracket did not vary significantly (remember, only a visual analysis was performed) from other, fully welded, v3.0 brackets. And **all the 3.0 brackets behaved like Dale's video**. Additionally, several of the rear L-R welds showed varying lengths of stress crack, though none exceeded ~2".

Continued Page 4

## Jeepin' To The Desert Bar by Kathy Nichol森 and Linda Wilkins

On Friday morning we gathered near the fire pit to head out to the Desert Bar traversing through the rugged desert in lieu of the more traditional route, a highway. We met near a gas station at 10:30 a.m. where we were told to "air down" the tires. Tire pressure was reduced to approximately 14 psi to make the tires soft to be more pliable over the big boulders ahead. Starting elevation on this beautiful sunny Arizona day was 358 feet above sea level.

Leading the caravan of 11 rigs was Jamie Jamison. The first portion of the trip we followed single file. Jamie took a slight left turn and headed straight up in the air on what I thought was a rather impassable looking steep rutted road. Our driver, Paul Wilkins, in his shiny black 4-door 2007 Jeep Sahara, followed. From the vantage point of the backseat, it felt like going up a 70 degree slant with a view that was all sky. Once the back wheels hit the top, I could not see over the hood of the Jeep to the ground. I was hoping Paul's 6 ft. 3 in. frame had his eyes on the road. This was not your typical Friday afternoon drive!

Jamie advised the group to split in two groups. One group was stock 4-wheel rigs that traveled the main route. The other group who had invested sums of money on oversized off road tires; suspension lift kits; and body armor traveled the "extra credit" route. "Extra credit" in off road lingo is the more difficult and challenging alternate route to the same location. It was going to be slow going over this rugged route so we left the comfort of our Jeep and walked ahead with cameras in hand.

The boulders were huge and at one point the road was just a bit wider than the vehicles. The left front tire turned outward to climb the wall while the right front tire attempted to maneuver straight ahead over boulders.



Jamie Jamison talking a Jeep through a difficult section as his wife Donna supervises!

It was interesting that the wheels did not have to act in tandem. If the driver did not get the correct angle he had to back up and try again. It was extremely interesting to see the deflated Jeep tires pick up and carry boulders that a strong man could not move himself. It was also likely that one rig would move or rearrange boulders so the next Jeep coming through would have a different arrangement of obstacles. Thank goodness for all those expensive toys and trinkets outfitting the rigs!

Jamie first traversed the road then got out of his vehicle to provide directions for the five rigs following on this leg. It was interesting that while Jamie provided visual and verbal directions the drivers of the rigs had their attention and eyes on Jamie for precise information.

This was definitely ..... **DO NOT ATTEMPT THIS ALONE KIDS!**

We met the other five rigs down the road where the two routes became one.

The highest elevation traveled was 1087 ft. above sea level. This little excursion took us nearly three hours. We ended up at the Desert Bar at an elevation of 900 ft. above sea level. Seeing the bar was like coming across an oasis. After a hot, grueling day in the desert, it was such a treat to come upon the Desert Bar with live music, plenty of cold beverages and hamburgers and hotdog. We didn't even mind the hour in line!

## Alpine Coach Steering Issues (continued from page 2)

If I had a coach that was missing the L-R welds, I'd have these welds added. You can see in photos on the above iRV2 thread the difference between Dale's internal bracket support & others (e.g. Wayne R's lower photo @ bottom of page 2 of 9), and then the added L-R welds when he posts his fix. Periodic inspection of this bracket seems like a good idea. With all the miles on all the Alpine Coaches, and only the one 2004 coach known to have come apart in service, this does not appear to me to be a source of panic. It is easy to check the bracket. Some photos of your rear dual-Huck-bolt flange and any L-R weld crack would be good references for comparison during future inspections.

However, I'm cogitating on a design for a bolt-in stabilizer bracket to add to my rig. Keeping the rear face of the bracket box from a lot of bending up/down seems to me like a good safety measure. This would do the same thing as the upper 3-bolt-plus-weld addition shown on Dale's fixit photo. Eliminating the up/down bending would stop the prying action that caused Dale's stress crack, and allow me to sleep better while driving. When I get to something definitive on a bracket, I'll post it on the iRV2 thread. If anybody else gets excited and makes a bracket revision, please also take a photo, or better yet high-def video, and post that as well. Mike Fleming ACA2005777



### **MEMBERS BENEFITS—Got a Problem?**

#### **Who do you Call???**

#### **Our Own Resident Expert, Mark Harrah**

We don't have Ghostbusters and sometimes those coach problems can be haunting. Who do you call???. Mark Harrah. Mark has contracted with ACA to field questions from members and help guide them to a solution. So far, in three months, he has replied to 178 emails and approximately 90 phone calls. Emails range from simple part questions to trouble shooting gen slides and Vansco questions. Mark's suggestion for owners with 2004 or newer Alpines, with any electrical problem, is the first thing to do is reset the Vansco system. This can be done by turning the chassis disconnect switch off and then back on.

When contacting Mark, he prefers a detailed email to start; email him at: [racer\\_s10ss@yahoo.com](mailto:racer_s10ss@yahoo.com) This is a service for ACA members only, include your name and ACA Membership number in your email. Please remember that Mark is doing this as an addition to his regular job and will return your call ASAP but on his off hours. Also keep in mind he is on the West Coast so a call at 7:30 am in the east will probably interrupt his sleep and affect the quality of his answer.

Mark can be reached at 509-901-2015

**Editors Note: See Fred Royce's article on page 7 about using Mark's services.**

## ALPINE RALLY CALENDAR 2009

**Time to start planning your travel route so you can attend as many rallies as possible this year.**

April 17—19 2009	Outdoor Resorts Ranco CA RV Resort Aguanga, CA	SoCal	Jerry & Becky Farrow <a href="mailto:Bfarrow@cox.net">Bfarrow@cox.net</a> Russ & Lois Thomas <a href="mailto:russ@seeing-green.com">russ@seeing-green.com</a>
May 13—17 2009	Wildhorse Casino Pendleton Oregon	NoWACA	Doug and Debbie Hallendar <a href="mailto:dchdrh@easystreet.net">dchdrh@easystreet.net</a>
May 15-22 2009	49er Village Plymouth, Ca. (Gold Country)	SoCal	Jim and Polly Klinko ( <a href="mailto:jpklanko@aol.com">jpklanko@aol.com</a> ) Noel and Carol Peck ( <a href="mailto:noelpeck@aol.com">noelpeck@aol.com</a> )
July 15—19 2009	Bowling Green, Ohio FMCA Pre Rally	ACA	Contact Louis Burch for information or to volunteer. <a href="mailto:labsr@aol.com">labsr@aol.com</a>
July 22 –26 2009	1st Annual “Fred Sez” Rally Port Townsend Wa.	NoWACA	Fred & Carol Royce Mike & Charlotte Gamble Larry & Barbara Smith For info email: <a href="mailto:nowacainfo@yahoo.com">nowacainfo@yahoo.com</a>
September 14-18 2009	Sea Pirate Campground Long Beach Island, NJ	ACE	Harry & Nancy Jensen 973-202-7229
September 25-26 2009	Prosser	NoWACA	More info to come
September 25 –27	Club Royal Oak Kingsburg, Ca.	SoCal	Tom and Patty Dietrich, <a href="mailto:tpdietrich@sbcglobal.net">tpdietrich@sbcglobal.net</a>
September 29th— October 5th 2009	ACA Heritage near San Diego CA Site to be determined	ACA	Contact Louis Burch for information or to volunteer. <a href="mailto:labsr@aol.com">labsr@aol.com</a>
November 7—9 2009	Newport Dunes Newport, Ca.	SoCal	Bill/Patty Figge <a href="mailto:figgebp@mac.com">figgebp@mac.com</a> Jack/Linda Giddens <a href="mailto:crazysingerkg@yahoo.com">crazysingerkg@yahoo.com</a>

**For answers to questions and advice from other Alpine Coach owners visit [www.IRV2.com](http://www.IRV2.com) and click**

**Have a suggestion for the ACA Newsletter?  
Send it to:  
Renee Perrault—Editor  
[reneegary@msn.com](mailto:reneegary@msn.com)**

## From our President—Paul Sullivan



**Dale & Paul Sullivan**

Dear ACA Members,

Many of you attended a really successful Desert Rat Rally in Quartzsite in January. Basil and Sue Shannon hosted over 110 coaches and supplied us with great weather and a wonderful opportunity for the fun and conviviality for which ACA is famous. This begins the Rally Calendar that shows three more ACA events through the end of 2009 and DRR again next January. Take a look at page 5 and our website [alpinecoachassociation.com](http://alpinecoachassociation.com) for full information about these upcoming events. I think you will see we have great plans for all of us this year.

1. Louis Burch and Tris Swan have been appointed to the Board as FMCA National Director and Assistant National Director respectfully.
2. Our agreement with Mark Harrah to provide telephone technical support has been extended until February 2010. (see article on page 4)
3. We approved the new standing rules as provided by Fred Royce's Committee.
4. The Treasurer's report states that we are financially very sound (probably the only report of that this year), and the board has agreed to provide \$25.00 per Member Coach for each rally from the treasury to help pay for one event or extra meal.
5. Carol Schock volunteered to take over as historian....thanks Carol for volunteering and a big thanks to Barbara and Bud Simonson for their years of service in that capacity.
6. We asked for volunteers for the Rally and Members Benefits Committees, headed by Renee Perrault and many of you responded...thanks everyone for volunteering.

I closed the meeting with the following observation, "Our Club has come through a rough patch. We see smooth sailing ahead. If we're doing wrong, tell the Board; if we're doing well, tell those who dropped their membership!"

In my November Letter to the Membership I mentioned the agreement that I made with Bob Tiffin for support at our Rallies. This month, at the Pre Rally for the Perry GA FMCA Rally, Tiffin Motor Homes provided service to the attendees. This adds value to our rallies, and gives us a leg up on the other "orphans" out there. I'm working with Louis Burch for an evaluation and then talking to Mr. Tiffin about how we can improve our position re: parts and perhaps factory service.

I look forward to your suggestions as to how to make ACA more of an asset to our members. My phone number is 619-392-8775.

### Need to Contact a Board Member?

Name	Board Position	Cell Phone	Email
Paul Sullivan	President	619-392-8775	sobersully@hotmail.com
Earlene Bloomquist	Membership Director	509-969-2503	jebloom@earth-comm.com
Frank Halasz	Secretary	505-263-1930	fhalasz@swcp.com
Andy Lewis	Special Projects Director	702-682-5278	Firemans@embarqumail.com
Debbie Bragg	Treasurer	817-994-3998	dbragg@swbell.net
Fred Royce	Director	360-460-0154	fhroyce@olypen.com
Louis Burch	FMCA National Director	214-534-0399	labsr@aol.com
Tris Swan	FMCA Assistant National Director	714-357-0505	swansnest2@earthlink.net

# THE ALPINE COACH ASSOCIATION BOARD



## Earlene Bloomquist—Membership Director

Hello everyone hope you are having a wonderful winter.

As of today 3/2/2009 our ACA Membership is 350, which includes 8 renewals and 2 new members since Jan. 14, 2009. I was pleased we had such a nice turn out at the Desert Rat Rally at Quartzsite in January.

**Earlene & Jerry Bloomquist**

Jerry and I will be in Alaska this summer and will return in time to attend the San Diego Rally. Hope we have a great turn out and wish to see many of you there.

## Debbie Bragg—Treasurer

Hello from the sunny warm desert of southern California. DRRVIII was fabulous with the best weather Jim & I have ever experienced there. Hope you were there. Since then we have traveled through Las Vegas and Pahrump to settle for the last several weeks in the Palm Springs area.

Our treasury is still quite healthy although we are slowly reducing the funds through benefits to the members such as the ACA calendars and the services of Mark Harrah. Be sure and give Mark a call if you have any coach issues.



**Debbie & Jim Bragg**

## Fred Royce - Director



**Fred & Carol Royce**

### ACA Technical Support Program Paid Off

Have you ever experienced that sinking feeling when told brake lights on the rear of your coach do not work and you are in Mexico? Add to that you can not disengage the cruise control when depressing the brake pedal. Initial reaction was do we have to have repairs done in Mexico? Inspection and some common sense however, pointed to a possible defective electrical switch installed on the brake pedal.

An email was sent to our technical support consultant, Mark Hannah, who provided information on the electrical switch and had Engineer Mike search his information file. The result was that others had experienced a similar problem. Since the switch was not defective, the solution was to provide a shim between the switch and the brake contact point. Result; brake lights work and cruise control can be disengaged.

Having this resource available more than paid my annual ACA dues. It pointed out to me the importance of ACA promoting a technical support system. The service is available to all ACA members. In my book this is a strong incentive to be a part of ACA and to promote membership for all Alpine Coach owners.

## ACE at The Tampa Super Show By Sandy Munsil

Our Spring rally was held at the Tampa Super Show in Tampa, Florida. Twelve coaches were present. After everyone was parked, we met at the Rumberger coach for orientation then off to the Sweet Tomato for dinner. Bill & Judy Bilodeau invited the club to join them for lunch at their home in Lakeland on Wednesday. It was great to spend time with them. Bill is working hard and making progress on his road to recovery from the stroke he had last year. Our thoughts and prayers are with them during for his continued improvement. Thursday, we toured the county jail in Tampa. They have a program there that puts some of the inmates to work supporting the jail. They farm, sew their clothing, raise fish, grow plants for sale, and cook meals for the staff. Friday was our business meeting followed by a lunch of pizza, provided by the club. Saturday everyone was free to enjoy the RV show on their own. We gathered at the Bacome's coach in the afternoons for social hour, and in the evenings the RV Show provided entertainment. We gathered on Saturday morning for coffee and donuts and to say goodbye to everyone. Our next rally will be at Sea Pirate Campground, Long Beach Island, New Jersey on September 14 – 18, 2009. We hope to see you there.

### REGION CONTACTS

<b>ACE</b> East Coast	Tom & Peggy Bacome 731-935-2303 <a href="mailto:pjbacome@aol.com">pjbacome@aol.com</a>	<b>NorCal</b> Northern California Northern Nevada	John & Barbara Knox 408-356-5267 <a href="mailto:jdknbak@verizon.net">jdknbak@verizon.net</a> Cell 408-218-8192
<b>Fulltimers</b>	Maureen Dahl 425-466-1445 <a href="mailto:wandern.two@verizon.net">wandern.two@verizon.net</a>	<b>NoWACA</b> Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana	Larry & Barbara Smith 360-437-2913 <a href="mailto:tysmith@olympen.com">tysmith@olympen.com</a>
<b>Midwest</b>	Ted & Kay Watts 636-926-0024 <a href="mailto:themowatts@aol.com">themowatts@aol.com</a>	<b>SoCal</b> Southern California Southern Nevada	John & Gail Stacy 702-858-0400 <a href="mailto:gistacy@cox.net">gistacy@cox.net</a>

Many ACA members belong to local regions to participate in activities closer to home. We encourage and support our Regions but please remember, the Alpine Coach Association provides benefits such as Tech support and the Technical Library that are open **only** to Alpine Coach Association Members. Maintaining your ACA membership gives you added benefits and support. A big bonus is 2008 dues are good through 2009! If you have friends that have left ACA let them know about the 2 years for 1 and tell them to rejoin.

### New Alpine Coach Association Members—

Let's extend a big a big ACA welcome to our newest members. Already these new members are out and about joining in ACA Rallies. We look forward to seeing other new members at rallies in 2009.

Darrel & Marcia Wilber	Lakewood	Wa
Ron and Lera Roark	Farmerville	LA
Chris and Sonjua Cratch	Chatsworth	CA
Earl and Anneta Prawdzik	Rocklin	CA
Ron and Linda Harvey	Sioux Falls	SD
Dick and Jan Thompson	La Crescenta	CA
Larry and Debi Heaward	Melbourne	Fl
John and Carol Randolph	Apache Junction	AZ
Milton Chambers and John Naylor	Long Beach	CA

## ALPINE COACH CORNER

### \$1,000 REWARD

I am offering a \$1000.00 Reward to the Club or Club Member that helps me find a Buyer for either of two remaining new 2008 Alpine coaches. We were extremely disappointed at Western RV's decision to exit the RV business as we believe the Alpine coaches are among the best driving and best handling coaches in the world. We have two remaining new Alpine Limited Series that **we are willing to sell at a loss** and we are including Four Year Service Contract with each coaches. We'll trade for most anything, the price is right, the Reward's for real! Call John Cathey, Dealer, at 828-312-0056 for more information. PS: Both coaches are in pristine condition.

2008 (New) Alpine Limited Series, Stk # 3343, 36' lg, 2 Slides,  
425 Hp Cummins, , MSRP 343,748,  
**Will sell below original Factory invoice.**

2008 (New) Alpine Limited Series, Stk # 3326, 34' lg, 2 slides,  
400 Hp Cummins, MSRP \$346,236,  
**Will sell below original Factory invoice.**



Carolina Coach & Camper I-40 Exit 135 Hickory, NC

More details at  
[www.carolinacoach.com](http://www.carolinacoach.com)

### FOR SALE BY OWNER

#### 2009 ALPINE LTD SE 34' FD DS

Cosmopolitan Exterior (Black & Gold)/Tuscan Maple Cabinets  
425 HP Cummins ISL, Allison 6-Speed 3000MH, HWH Automatic Leveling,  
Tan Ultra Leather EZ Bed, Recliner, Pilot & Co-pilot Seats, Booth Dinette,  
Ceramic Tile, Central Vac, 32" & 26" LCD-HD TVs with DVD Home Theater, 8KW Gen, Power Cable Reel, All  
Standard Alpine Features Plus 14 cu ft Side-by-Side Refrig, Tire Monitor System, Remote Control Sensor  
Awning, Rear & Side Color Cameras, 100 Watt Solar Panel, GE Convection/Microwave, CB Radio, & More.  
No Pets, Non-Smokers, 9,400 miles. Like New!  
MSRP - \$352,000. Buy for \$230,000.

**Bob Sherrill ACA Member, AZ 520/722-6268, Cell 720/232-1301**

#### A New Alpine Coach Association Historian

Thank you Carol Schock for stepping up to the plate and becoming our new Alpine Coach Association Historian. We appreciate you volunteering!



## Habitat for Humanity Builds by Rita Lewis

*Editors note: Gary and I ran in to Rita and Larry on the road as they were on their way back from building homes for Habitat for Humanity. I asked Rita to share their experiences. ACA is very proud to have members like Larry and Rita giving back to communities in need.*



**Start of floor**

One hot day we were nailing a floor deck on and by the end of the day it took all of our remaining strength to lift the beer to our mouths. On another day it was snowing and we put heaters in the houses so we could paint. We framed, hung cabinets and painted. That's what it's like to build for the Habitat for Humanity.



**Rita and Larry Lewis**

Volunteering for the Habitat for Humanity started out as something to keep my type "A" husband busy when we started out on retirement. We have enjoyed meeting all the people associated with Habitat for Humanity. It has been rewarding for us to know that

we have helped people, plus we have fun at it.

We have only done 2 builds so far. The last one we did was in Thibidoux, Louisiana on Bon Jovi Boulevard. Thibidoux is located about 60 miles Southwest of New Orleans. We worked on the last houses being constructed on the street. It all started with Jon Bon Jovi donating a million dollars to Oprah's Angel Network to get things going. Most builds are 2 weeks. There were about 10 young adults from the Americorp group. Two men from the Americorp you could say were the Superintendents and there was a Construction Manager that was employed by the Habitat Association. They would decide what was to be done on a daily basis. Also we had a volunteer coordinator who made sure lunch was supplied to us everyday. There were 4 couples from the RV Care-A-Vanners to start the build and 15 Canadians. We stayed at the RV hookups and the Canadians stayed in what was called the volunteer house. At dinner one night we found out that the Canadians pay \$1,500.00 a piece out of their own pockets for working there a week.



**Picture of the Habitat Homes**



**RV Park where Habitat workers stayed.**

Home buyers have to work so many hours for the Habitat organization as one of their requirements for acquiring their home. From time to time they would join our work force. Meeting these people made you realize that you were working on a home not just a house.

On this build the other couples were from Michigan, Wisconsin & Wyoming. All retired. Their occupations were Dancers, Accountants, and Clergymen & Teachers. We butted heads from time to time deciding on the right way to do something but things worked out in the end. At the end of the 2 weeks, we could look at the floor decking and the houses we had painted and feel a sense of accomplishment.

If you do not think you have anything to give, you do. If you do not think you are good enough, you are. The nicest thing that was said to me was "Any nail that you nail in is one less than I have to nail".

# ACA RALLY IN FT. BENNING, GEORGIA

March 10-15, 2009

By Peggy Bacome

Twenty-one coaches arrived at Ft. Benning, four went to water and electric and the rest of us roughed it with dry camping. It was wonderful because we had the whole dry camping area to ourselves. Some of us even saw deer traveling through the camping areas

Louie Burch and Jim Fivian cooked brocks and chicken on the grill to go with our Hors d' oeuvres Tuesday night. This was the beginning of some really good eating while we were there. The caterers that Jim hired fed us breakfast Wednesday at the activity building at the campground, lunch Thursday at the Officers Club, and supper Friday at the Officers Club. There was always too much food and we had wonderful fellowship while we filled our bellies.

Thursday morning, everyone that was interested in watching the parachute training followed Jim Fivian through the base and to the training area. What a privilege it was to watch these young men and women in the various steps of training and knowing they will be the ones protecting our great country. I told Jim and Linda and Louie that I was glad I couldn't find a campground for the rally because it was worth the dry camping to be able to get this close to the action. Sometimes during the day and at night we could hear them in the woods shooting and doing their combat training. Jim also led us to the old museum where they had old military vehicles, big guns, and monuments. Wilma Egg found a monument of a ship that had gone down that her uncle was on and his name was on the monument, which made it special for her.



ACA Members watching training at Ft. Benning

After lunch, Louie and a couple of the others brought some of their used books to the ACA tent and we all took loads of books to our homes and Louie got rid of them out of his. Be sure and ask him to show you his new reading TOY he got from Amazon online. Later that afternoon, Louie and Linda set up the magnet darts and we were all assigned to a non-spouse teammate and the games began. Lon Mixell's mom Arlene (SOB) is the only one that threw her dart over handed and she and her partner, Jim Munsil, came in second. Kay Watts and Jim Green came in first. Linda Fivian and Buck Cole came in fourth and Sandy Mixell and Tom Cook came in third.

After the exciting contest we all gathered behind Jim and Linda Fivian's coach and Tom Bacome brought over his portable fire pit and Jeanne Kapp demonstrated her girl scout "One

Match" fire starting abilities and it worked. As we were sitting around socializing, Tiffin Tech's drove in with their trailer of parts and started fixing small items on everyone's coaches. They worked Thursday night and Friday and made a lot of ACA members very happy. Tiffin Tech's were very impressed with the knowledge everyone had of their coaches and they were told that was because of all the "Tech Talks" and "Gear Head" sessions at ACA Rallies.

Friday night some of us sat around Sandy & Jim Munsil's gas fire pit telling stories and lies.

Saturday morning we started through Ft. Benning with our coaches for the 100-mile trek to the "Blue Bird" plant in Ft. Valley, Georgia to rendezvous. Duncan and Shirley Bellinger joined us at the Blue Bird plant, which made 18 coaches caravanning into Perry, Georgia for the FMCA rally.

We want to give Jim and Linda Fivian a great big "THANK YOU" for planning this rally for us. Everything was wonderful and we all had a great time. What a wonderful experience.



c/o Renee Perrault—Editor  
2520 Park Place North  
Renton, Wa. 98056