

Sportchassis Owners Association, International

FALL 2014

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope this newsletter finds everyone in good health and enjoying the opportunity to use your truck and camper to travel safely around our beautiful country. Jeri and I hope to use our rig more in the coming year.

The 2014 Sportchassis rally has come and gone. If you were not able to make this year's rally you missed a great time. Those in attendance had a good time getting better acquainted with new friends, catching up with old friends while experiencing the beauty, attractions, and culture of Southern Illinois. We had eight rigs in attendance which was an impressive sight for the campground and the residents of Marion. We even had some of our tour guides come to the campground to check out the rigs. One of them even had her picture taken with one of the trucks. She said, "I plan to show this picture to my children and tell them that I have already spent their inheritance." She got a big laugh from all of us!

Being a wagon master is truly a rewarding endeavor. Jeri and I even traveled to a few places that we had never been (and we have lived here all our lives). I must confess that if it was not for Jeri, the rally would not have been the success it was. She put in numerous hours researching, planning, and executing the rally. Jeri said that her mother used to tell her and her sister that they would send her and her Dad to the poor house. She said that she always thought it was just a saying of her Mom's and did not know that there really was a Poor House in Marion. During her planning for the Rally, Jeri learned that a Poor House really existed and she set up a tour for us so we actually visited the "Poor House". Like I said, we have lived in this area all our lives but we learned more about our local heritage by being Rally Masters and it was fun for both of us. I also would like to extend a big thank you to Marvin & Shirley Oetjen for their help and assistance in planning the rally and for the great rally program that Shirley designed and printed for all attendees. A big thank you to both of them for providing the delicious homemade apple dumplings for everyone which they purchased from a local orchard.

We tried something new with this rally which received high praises from everyone. We rented a 15 passenger van for the week. This allowed everyone to be together, visit, and relax while traveling to each activity. I was the chauffer for the week and enjoyed listening to the conversations and the laughter as we explored southern Illinois and also Paducah, KY. In some areas caravanning in the trucks might have been a little difficult so this worked out great.

I would like to welcome three new members to SOAI. We got to meet Bill and Dorothy at this year's rally and we all are hopeful we will get to meet the other two couples in person next year at our annual rally. The new members are:

Wayne & Carolyn Fry – Titusville, Florida

Bill & Dorothy Ryan – Ullin, Illinois

Patrick & Agnes Johnson – Lorette, Manitoba, Canada

I want to thank Dottie Kappers for her 14 years of faithfully serving on the SOAI Board of Directors. Neil and Dottie are life time members and she has held many positions to support SOAI, the latest position being Member Representative #1.

I would like to welcome newly elected Ron Francoeur to the Board of Directors as Member Representative #1. He and his wife Linda are full timers who are based out of Livingston, Texas.

Sue Steverson was re-elected as Secretary and I was re-elected as President.

The 2015 rally, will be held August 9 thru August 16, 2015 in Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada. The wagon masters are Lionel & Carmelle LaBelle. They have been busy already planning the rally to coincide with a yearly Winnipeg festival. They covered some of their plans for the rally during our annual meeting. Further details will be forthcoming as soon as details are finalized. This will be a fun filled, entertaining rally, so please plan to attend. A reminder to our US members, you will need to have a passport to attend this rally.

We are all looking forward to getting together again next year. Hope to see you in Winnipeg.

Randy

FROM THE EDITOR

I have had more than my share of computer related problems over the past two years. I no longer have the Publisher program so this issue of the newsletter looks a lot different. I bought Microsoft Office 2013 and will be using Word to prepare our newsletters. I am still in a learning curve with the new Word so this is definitely a “no frills” edition but I am hopeful that future editions might have a little more class. It has been far too long since I have put out a newsletter so it is time for me to play “catch-up” and bring the membership up-to-date on what has happened over the last two years.

Membership numbers are falling. Quite a few of our members have given up traveling and have sold their rigs. The main reasons seem to be age, health issues, and the economy. We are sorry to see so many drop from our roles. Sportchassis Owners Association has provided all of us the opportunity to meet people from all across the USA and Canada and enjoy a special bond of love of travelling and our trucks. It is amazing that in one week each year we developed some fantastic friendships.

We have had two fantastic rallies in 2013 and 2014. But then again, haven't ALL of our rallies have been fantastic? We have a tendency at each rally to say that it will be hard to beat this rally. But, then we get together the next year and say the same thing! We always seem to have terrific rallies giving us the opportunity to see new places, make new friends, and renew old friendships.

Our 2013 rally was held in Fairhope, Alabama and was hosted by Lee and Sue Steverson. Lee and Sue had a really busy year in 2013. They not only managed to make a big move into a new home, but Lee found time to work on upgrading our website and together Lee and Sue found

time to plan and host our rally. They packed a lot into our time and showed us real southern hospitality. Everyone had a terrific time. My only complaint was no matter how many times I asked, Lee couldn't manage to turn down the heat! It was hot but it was also sunny and beautiful and we had the opportunity to visit several different places and learn some history of the area. We also took a boat tour of the bayou area around Mobile and attended a 9-11 Memorial at the Pensacola Naval Air Station. We all enjoyed all the delicious southern food, especially our peach ice cream sundaes!

Our 2014 rally was held in Marion, Illinois and was hosted by Randy and Jeri Palmer. Again, Randy and Jeri packed a lot into our week in Illinois. Bob and I have been in Illinois in our previous travels around the country, spending some time near Chicago and just driving across the state on I-70. This was our first visit to southern Illinois and we fell in love with the area.

I think the best way to show you how much fun was had by our members at our last two rallies is with pictures. If you were there, I hope you enjoy the memories, if not, hopefully you will try to attend next year's rally.

The following pictures are from the 2013 Rally in Fairhope, Alabama:



2013 Rally Hosts Lee and Sue



2013 Rally Attendees



Having fun playing card games.



The group on tour of Ft. Morgan.



The group on tour of Ft. Morgan



Enjoying a ride on the Mobile Bay Ferry.



The guys relaxing while the women shop.



Carmelle and Linda shopping.

Scenes from the boat ride in the Mobile Tensaw Delta:



Bob finally got
his hands on an
alligator!





Carol on the deck of the USS Alabama



Soldiers at attention during 9-11 Memorial Ceremony at Pensacola Naval Air Station.



Jeri showing Carmelle how to carve a gourd.



Lionel, Randy, Marv and Lee relaxing.



Good Food!
GREAT Company!

The following pictures are from the 2014 rally in Marion, IL:



Rally Hosts Jeri & Randy Palmer



Our pavilion in the campground.



Randy with his crowd size smoker. He did a fabulous job smoking our pork steak dinner!



Prayer being offered by Lee before dinner.



Randy serving Linda and Ron. Lionel waiting his turn.



Dottie, Shirley and the crew behind bars!



Above: The group in front of the Williamson County Museum.



Left: The group in front of the lodge in Giant City.



Lunch at Giant City Lodge



Sue wasn't bored, she was just plain tuckered out!



The group in front of the Paducah Wall – beautiful hand painted murals of Paducah's past.



The group with Superman in Metropolis.

Neil and Dottie.



Randy and Jeri grew up in this area of Illinois but learned a lot more about the history of the area in setting up our rally. She thought her Grandmother was making idle threats when she said that she (Jeri) would send them to the poor house. She found out her Grandmother was right, there really was a "Poor House".



The group at Alto Vineyards, one of three stops of the Winery Tour.

We had a discussion at the business meeting about past, current and future rallies for our club. Everyone agreed that the members have always enjoyed the rallies and even though membership has declined, having six or seven rigs at a rally warrants continuing the tradition. We also agreed that a rally does not have to be in a high tourist area or be filled with activities every hour of every day. It is not a competition from year to year, it is merely a time for members to have a chance to visit different areas of the country and get together to enjoy themselves. Because participation has not been that large over the past four years, it makes it easier for the rally hosts to find a suitable campground, arrange restaurant outings and activities. Another thing that was discussed was the willingness of Board Members and previous rally hosts to help anyone willing to volunteer to host a rally. Our members enjoy each other's company and enjoy free time to just sit and visit with one another. We also enjoy having time to play games with one another, like Corn Hole (bean bag toss) Hillbilly Golf, and various card games. The President and Board Members would like your response to the following questions:

1. Where would you like to have a rally?
2. How far will you be willing to travel to attend a rally?
3. Would you be willing to host a rally?

Also, we discussed the officer positions. The President reminded those present that the offices of Vice President, Treasurer and Member Representative Number 2 will be up for election next year. Please consider becoming an officer. It really doesn't take much of your time but is a very rewarding experience.

Please contact one of our Board Members with your suggestions and comments. You can respond with a phone call or by email.

President: Randy Palmer – 618-727-2564 – jpalmer48@frontier.com

Vice President: Lee Steverson – 618-593-8329 – cle58@earthlink.net

Treasurer: Jeri Palmer – 618-727-2564 – jpalmer48@frontier.com

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Publicity Officer: Carol Little – 410-676-6199 – trikercarol@hotmail.com

Member Representative 1: Ron Francoeur – 337-515-8331 – ronandlindaf@yahoo.com

Member Representative 2: Marv Oetjen – 618-985-2010 – marv@kamperssupply.com

The Board would like to wish all members a very Happy Halloween, good health and safe travels.