

Western Road Runner



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To the members

- Thanks for your support and attendance at the Rallies
- Please contribute articles and photos to this Newsletter. Send or E-mail them to the Editor, Phil Beautrow. His address is on the last page. His E-mail address is in the Directory.
- The web link for the club is:
www.chinookrvclub.com

President's Corner



I know there is a lot of concern out there regarding the future of Chinook. As you all probably know, the County Trustee sold the property that previously housed the Chinook Company. However, it appears that Gary has not given up on trying to sell the name and molds to another company. It is my understanding that there is a lot of interest out there. We will keep you apprised of any information that we receive on this end. Good Luck Gary and lets hope you are successful. As always we wish the best for you and

Mary.

The date for the Third Annual rally is fast approaching and having gone through the process of organizing a rally (Jane and Barbara did most of the work) I have to give a lot of credit to Al and Lucy for all their hard work. Jane and I hope to see as many as possible come to the rally. Remember, it is your club and we are there for each other. The plans for the 2007 rally in New Mexico are shaping up and Lena and Barry are already working hard on that one as well.

Finally on a sad note Rosie wrote to say that Jim Russell passed away on April 2. The Chinook club sends their condolences to the family.

Jerry/Jane



Upcoming San Juan Annual Rally

By now everyone has received the latest information on this event. They seem to get better every year. Our thanks to Carole "CB" Davis and her fine associate who prepared the flyer. As you know, the hosts are Al and Lucy

Enriquez. Please make sure you have sent in your reservations and enclosed the proper fees.

Also, don't forget that you are responsible for making site reservations direct to "Pioneer Trails."

See you there!!!!

**"We decided that we
were in love with our
"Little Chinooks"
and would not trade
them for anything."**

Pomona Mini-Rally (FMCA)

March 18th, Saturday

Those attending were Barry and Lena Prentice, Carol and Ray Skillings, and Bill and Dolores Graham. We met at Wal-Mart in Covina so we could drive in together. Jane and Jerry Earley, and Ole and Barbara Jensen live nearby in Covina. Jane had a supper for all of us at her house and we had lots of food and a good visit.

March 19th, Sunday

We thought we would have a long wait to get into the fairgrounds, but we drove right in and were able to find good spots. It is a huge fairground and all the seminars were so far apart. Thank goodness for the trolleys that came by every 10-15 minutes to take us to different areas. We had a snack at Barry and Lena's Chinook before we went to the evening's entertainment. It was a program called: "One Nation Under God", and presented by different FMCA chapters. It was very well done.

March 20th, Monday

We all went to different seminars; very cold and windy.

March 21st, Tuesday

Same as the day before. We went to the large stadium and saw a group called "Reunion." They were all men who had entertained at Disneyland when they were young. They got together and played instruments; very entertaining. Arthur Duncan from the Lawrence Welk show also performed.

He was a very great tap dancer. It rained a lot and was cold.

March 22nd, Wednesday

They opened the exhibits and the motor homes today. Everyone ended up at the exhibit buildings at different times of the day. Jerry and Jane bought a day pass and come to look at the motor homes and exhibits. Skillings and Grams booked a tour of downtown Los Angeles and Hollywood. It was a very informative tour. The bus driver took us down Rodeo Drive, Sunset Boulevard and stopped at the Farmer's Market for lunch. What a variety of food they have there and we had to choose what to eat. Got back on the bus and went to Mann's Chinese Theater and the Kodak Academy Theater. Last thing of the day was Olivera Street, the birth place of Los Angeles by the Mexicans. Barry and Lena took two different tours. One was to the Getty Museum and the other to the Ronald Reagan Library. In the evening, we attended the Debbie Reynolds show. She can still belt out the songs, and it was a good show. The weather cooperated better and it was in the 60s.

March 23, Thursday

There were lots of big, big motor homes on display and we all went through them. We decided that we were in love with our "Little Chinooks" and would not trade them for anything. In the evening we went to the Bobby Vinton show, and it

was another great program. It was a fun rally even though we were small in number.

Carol Skillings



Pahrump "Kick-Back" Mini-Rally

March 30, 2006 Thursday

The 3rd. annual Chinook Rally at Parumph,NV was held on Thursday.

There were 11 Chinooks that attended the rally. They were Bert & Marta Wall, Jerry & Jane Earley, Mike & Margie Froess, Jan Olmstead & Kathy Bailey, Gary & Shirley Grant, Mary & Jean Wilson, James & Jan ace Still, Barbara Todd, Dick & Ann Sanders, Ole & Barbara Jensen, Dan & Susan Boeschén. Ray and Carol Skillings also attended but stayed in a park that they have a membership close by. The first night everyone had dinner on their own. Some of us went to Terrible Herbst to eat and others ate in their motor homes

March 31, Friday

Nothing was planned so everyone did their own thing until the Social Hour at 4:30. Lots of different snacks were brought plus wine and soft drinks. Everyone was wearing all the warm clothes they had available and covering up with blankets. It was cold and very windy.

We all retired early to our warm Chinooks. Early in the day Ole made Able skivers (round Danish Pancakes) and shared with others for breakfast.

April 1, Saturday

Around noon some of the gang went over to Charleston Peak Winery, where the Skillings stayed. They were Jan & Kathy, Jane & Jerry, James & Janice. The resort was serving ham-

burgers and trimmings so we ate lunch there. Then we went to the winery and gift shop to buy wine and gifts to keep or give to others. The weather turned out to be a little better and less wind for the pot luck supper. The food was delicious and we have some great cooks. It was suggested that we make up a cook book of all the great recipes. We also had some invited guests that drove into Charleston Peaks Resort . They were given an application to join our club. Their names are Dave & Lori Devine. It was fun even with the cold weather and hope to carry on the tradition next year and years to Come.

Carol Skillings



**"There were 11
Chinooks that
attended the rally."**

Please see the pictures on Page 8

Tiger Run Mini-Rally - Colorado

Although the “official” start of this year’s Tiger Run Mini-Rally was set for Wednesday, June 21st, the participants started arriving as early as the Sunday before when Bob and Barbara Diehl came in from Texas (perhaps to get a head start escaping from the heat?) Then, on Tuesday Steve and Sue Gilbert came in from their eastern odyssey, and Clem and Connie Verdeur checked in. It was on Tuesday that Lena and Barry Prentice came up from their home in Longmont where they had gone for two days to stock up on supplies for the breakfasts during the Rally. Then on Wednesday, Stan and Kit Olivera, Bill and Lori Hoffner and George and Nancy Poulsen completed the guest list for the 2006 event.

On Wednesday, Lena took Connie V. and Barbara D. to Vail to prowl the shops and have lunch there while Bob, Clem and Barry “tweaked” the leveling system on Bob and Barbara Diehl’s new Glacier. We are proud to report that by the time they left, their coach was staying on the level.

Wednesday evening all enjoyed the traditional Pot-Luck dinner with bountiful servings of epic culinary creations.

On Thursday, Lena took a carload of Chinookers to Copper Mountain for a ride to the top of the mountain

on the chairlift. The Gilberts took their dogs for exploratory hikes on several of the trails that cross Tiger Run, and Barry and Barbara Browne bicycled to Dillon to make copies of Chinook component manuals.

For Thursday evening everyone wanted to go to Breckenridge to eat Mexican food at Mi Casa, on the banks of the Blue River. The consensus was that the food and atmosphere was worth going back for next year.

On Friday, Lena took Connie and Clem Verdeur, and Bob and Barbara Diehl for a ride to the Barbeque Cook-off in Frisco via the “long way around” over the Swan Mountain road and around Lake Dillon for a preview of the annual festivities. Barbara Browne and Barry bicycled from Tiger Run to Copper Mountain and back with a stop at the Barbeque Cook-off in Frisco mid afternoon. There we met several other folks from our Rally who had driven over to the event. As usual, everyone who went to the Cook-off, enjoyed the festivities and the great Barbeque. In spite of having “previewed” barbeque during the day, everyone voted to have Lena go in to Frisco and bring back Barbeque from “Q-4-U” for Friday evening dinner.

On Saturday, some “went back for seconds” at the Barbeque Cook-off, while

others began preparing to go home. Last to leave were Connie and Clem Verdeur who said good bye on Tuesday.

Barry Prentice

“The consensus was that the food and atmosphere was worth going back for next year.”

The “Group”



The Participants were:

Front Row, left to right: Steve Gilbert, Sue Gilbert

Middle Row: Kit Olivera, Nancy Poulson, Lori Hoffner, Lena Prentice, Renny Prentice, Barbara Browne, Barbara Diehl and Connie Verdeur

Back Row: Stan Olivera, George Poulson, Bill Hoffner, Barry Prentice, Bob Diehl and Clem Verdeur.

Please see more pictures on Page 9

Special Places

Cabo San Lucas, Mexico

1. Gasoline is readily available throughout the Baja and is going for \$2.25 a gallon for regular. Only caution here is to count your change. They were sometimes a little slow in giving back all of your change. Also it is customary to tip the fellow who puts the gas into your tank and cleans your windows. I usually tipped a buck each time. (Approximately 10.5 pesos.)

2. The roads are in good repair all the way to Cabo. However they are narrower and sometimes there are no shoulders or guard rails. Just keep 2 hands on the wheel and watch your speed. Also watch out for the "Topes" (speed bumps) as you approach the small towns.

3. Three cautions in regard to driving. Don't drive at night. Keep your speed under 55mph. Give the trucks plenty of room on the curves. (Also, make sure you have Mexican Auto/RV insurance.)

4. Lots of free camping opportunities on the beaches. Also some beaches have a family or an individual who picks up the garbage and keeps the beach clean. Cost \$5 to \$7 a night.

5. Camp grounds are inexpensive and generally provide hot showers, flush toilets, hook-ups and security. Costs ranged from \$10 to \$15 a night.

6. Did not experience any hassles coming back into the US or with the military inspections when you head back north.

7. Costco and Home Depot are in Ensenada and Cabo. Super Ley and Mega supermarkets are also good places to stock up on food and supplies.

8. And most importantly, I highly recommend you take along a copy of Mike and Terri Church's "Travelers guide to camping Mexico's Baja". It is very informative and helpful. It provides excellent descriptions of where the campgrounds

are located and what type of facilities they provide. Information is also provided regarding the free and lets say "rustic" campgrounds on the beaches. Great guide book!

9. Would also suggest that you take along a copy of AAA's Baja California" and Lonely Planet's "Baja & Los Cabos". They also provide good information on campgrounds and things to see and do, places to eat. AAA's Baja California map is a good one.

Perhaps the best part of the trip was all the different types of people we've met on the beaches and campgrounds.

Stan Olivera, Santa Ana, CA

"Camp grounds are inexpensive and generally provide hot showers, flush toilets, hook-ups and security."

Technical Tips

Coach Batteries Discharged

If you are disconnected from shore power and are running your refrigerator on propane your coach batteries could be drained before you know it. This little gremlin is called a "Climate Control Heater." Its purpose is to evaporate water droplets that form between the freezer and the food compartment. The warning in the Dometic refrigerator instructions is: "NOTE: The climate control will draw 12 volts DC power **continuously** when in the

ON position. It should be turned OFF when a charging



Climate Control Switch

source is not available."

The switch is located in the upper right corner of the freezer compartment door. In case you have never found it these pictures should help.

A fully charged battery should read 12.7 volts.



Back Door Rattles

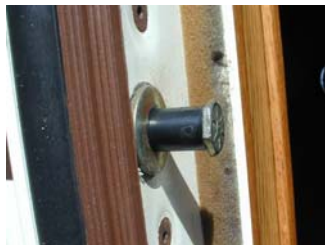
This is a problem that is endemic with some models of the Chinook. Here are some suggested fixes:

1. Unscrew the small Teflon strike plate at the lower left corner of the door and put a small washer under it. This shims it slightly so that it bears on the plate



under the door and gives more support.

2. Wrap Teflon tape or put shrink wrap over the latch pin. This will stop metal to metal contact.

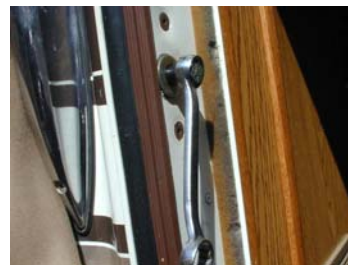


3. Make sure the screen door is held **firmly** to the back door either by magnets or Velcro.



4. Adjust the latch pin

with a 5/8" wrench to get good latching. This will take some practice. Whatever you do, don't loosen it completely or the backing plate will fall down inside.



Pete Carrothers, Clear Lake Shores, TX

" Back door rattles...Here are some suggested fixes."

Pahrump, Nevada



Tiger Run, Colorado



These are a few of the 130 pictures taken by photographers: Sue Gilbert, Steve Gilbert, Barbara Diehl, Connie Verdeur and Lena Prentice. If you would like to see others please contact them.

A Refrigerator Fire



I will try not to be an alarmist, but I almost burned my Concourse to the ground. It all started when I filled up my propane tank before leaving Houston. I went to a U-Haul place that I found in the yellow pages along I 45....I noticed when he was filling it that he kept "blowing off" excess and he was only able to put 10 lbs in when the gauges said it was below a quarter full. We drove up into Oklahoma and when we stopped for supper we noticed a propane smell inside the coach. The propane monitor/fume detector didn't go off...and I checked underneath the coach and couldn't find anything wrong...so I turned on the vent fan and decided because it was so hot that day that the tank had just vented.

We spent the night in a motel as is our custom and I got up early to take the coach over to fill up with gas. I didn't detect any fumes in the coach at that time. Just as I pulled into a "Flying J" truck stop two truckers walking across the tarmac started gesturing wildly and I stopped and rolled down the window and they yelled that I was "smoking in the rear"...I was about 30-40 from the fuel island, and I shut the Chinook down, grabbed the fire extinguisher and ran out and the grill on the refrigerator was in flames...not smoke, but flames...the smoke was billowing out the exhaust at the roof. The

fire extinguisher quickly put the fire out, but the entire side of the coach above the refrigerator vent is scorched, and the electronics/back of the refrigerator is totally melted, along with the vent on the roof. I immediately shut off the propane valve, and went back into the coach and pulled the dc fuse out.. I hosed out the back of the refrigerator with water and cooled everything down and thought about how I was going to go back to the motel and tell my wife, daughter and grand daughter that we could go on to Wyoming. And feel safe when I wasn't real confident of what had occurred and why.

We immediately stopped and bought two new fire extinguishers as from now on I want one in the front and one in the back. I taped a plastic sign over the gaping hole with duct tape and we have now arrived in Denver. I lost all of the wiring into the monitor/switches above the stove so I don't have the water pump either. Tomorrow morning I will take it into a local RV repair shop and have some emergency repairs done so we can continue on to Wyoming.

If any of you smell the least amount of propane, I would suggest stopping immediately and shutting off the propane tank even though it means losing the refrigerator. I

have no idea why the refrigerator continued to run all night and wait until the next morning to catch on fire. I did have the control unit replaced about six months ago from the Dometic to the Dinosaur version as I was having problems with the unit not switching over to propane when I wasn't on A.C. but that was many miles ago and the Dinosaur has been performing just as scheduled ever since.

Right now I am suspecting the U Haul guy over charged the tank and didn't bleed it off correctly and this must have caused a leak near the refrigerator.

Someone has posted that possibly the U Haul place where I had stopped the previous morning to have the tank topped off had forgotten to close the "vent valve" ...on my tank the vent valve looks like the type on a hot water heater...it's either flipped open and venting or it's closed. It was definitely closed...but I don't understand why the U Haul guy kept "venting" his connection hose as it was filling the container. I have only filled up the propane twice and I don't recall any venting the first time.

Both the service manager that is providing the estimate and the insurance adjuster say the fire was in the area just before the gas line enters the "flue or chimney" (looks like some type of valve or regulator or safety detector there) just before the flame. The insurance company (USAA) wants to take the old parts and have them analyzed and if they find the valve or whatever is defective they will subordinate back to Dometic. I'm sure that after I pay my deductible that USAA will pick up the balance under my comprehensive coverage.

Interestingly enough, I have found two other instances of Dometic fires when I search the RV Forum. I will probably continue to run on propane when underway, although I will most likely install a propane detector in the back of the refrigerator, as my propane detector inside the coach (which works) did not go off

There is a long technical piece on the RV Forum about the poor design of the Dometic control board and supposedly Dometic has known about the problem but elected to continue using the defective boards until they were exhausted. I'm sure my new Dometic will have their board in it and hopefully it will work better than the 2002 model.

Again, my advice is to get two fire extinguishers and keep one up front right behind the passenger seat...not strapped and also with a break-a-way safety switch. The extra 20 seconds it took me to go to the back of the coach, unstrap the fire extinguisher, run back forward and out the passenger door and then what seemed like an eternity. was trying to break the "seal" on the handle. Meanwhile, the refrigerator grill was a mass of flames and I could see flames and smoke pouring out the vent on the roof. I thought the whole coach was about to go up in another few seconds. Remarkably, the gel coat although scorched can probably be buffed out, and the Chinook striping is painted on and where it has melted can be repainted. I haven't seen the final estimate, but will go over tomorrow to review it with the RV repair shop.

Pete Carrothers, Clear Lake Shores, TX, 2002 Concourse.



Vintage



1978 Concourse—Restored



1976 "Newport" in Alaska

The way they were - 1999



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With a strong commitment to improve our community, our industry, and our environment.

Total Peace Of Mind

New Chinook owners enjoy our 3 year 36,000 mile Chinook workmanship and Ford Chassis Warranties. Also a Lifetime Guarantee on our 1-Piece molded Fiberglass body and 24 hour Roadside Assistance Program.



Unfortunately all good things come to an end. That is what happened this year. In a terse statement in the local newspaper, the Yakima Herald-Reporter: "The Chinook Business Park, site of the defunct Trail Wagons/Chinook manufacturing plant, sold on the Yakima County Courthouse steps Friday for \$2.9 million. The only bidder was Land America Default Services, representing the Chicago-based trustee for the company's lender. The property is at 605 and 607 E. "R" Street. In October, a court-appointed receiver, Inverness Partners of Bend, Ore., took control of the Chinook Business Park on behalf of LaSalle Bank National Association, trustee for the holder of mortgage certificates, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter Capital I. Inc. According to court records, Trail Wagons stopped making payments in May 2005 and defaulted in June. Last fall, the company owed more than \$3.6 million in principal plus interest and penalties."

The Last of the Line

Gary Lukehart designed the present day Concourse in 1971

There is a lot of followers and copiers in this industry. The unique one-piece shell designed by Lukehart will survive many years as a tribute to its inventor.



Forty-four years of producing quality RVs...quite a run for the ultimate two person coach.



A vanishing breed

Western Road Runner



Club Officers 2005/2006

Jerry Earley, President

Carol Skillings, Secretary

Bert Wall, Treasurer

Carole "CB" Davis, VP Rallies

Lena Prentice, VP Membership

Barry Prentice, Immediate Past President

Al Enriques, Member at Large



We're on the Web!
www.chinookrvclub.com

