

# Western Road Runner



Is a publication of the Chinook RV Club



October 2005

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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.

## Clang Clang Clang Went the Trolley... Chula Vista and Beyond — 2005 Rally

Yes, and "Ding Ding Ding went the Bell...." This was our primary transportation after we arrived early at the Chula Vista RV Resort and Marine Park on Sunday, Sept. 11th.



The Resort was easy to reach from the freeways. Our Rally Co-Chairs, Barbara/Ole Jensen and Jane/Jerry Earley had planned everything down to the last detail. We were handed a packet that included all the details of the Rally including three-day tripper passes and even a restroom key. The facilities were excellent and managers cordial.

Sunday night was on our own, however, we used the opportunity to meet and greet all the early arrivals.

Monday the 12th we met early, took the Metro transit system bus (the trusty 406A) a short distance to the red trolley and then went to the downtown San Diego station. Walking a short distance to the waterfront we boarded for a two-hour Bay tour. The weather was



excellent and we were able to see

the Ronald Reagan and Abraham Lincoln nuclear aircraft carriers tied up to North Island Naval Air Sta-



tion piers. The Lincoln was pushed out by four tugboats, cleared the security barriers and sailed out the channel for Washington. Going under the Coronado Bridge, seeing the numerous ships and waterfront views was a great way to kickoff the Rally.

We arrived back at the RV Park and heard an informative presentation by Jack Byrne, Interim President of Trail wagons/Chinook. He has been retained to bring the Company back from a severe financial downturn; a return to quality and profitability is paramount. If the company is sold, it will be important that the new buyer have the resources to deliver on the promise of the brand and continue the quality that been so important over the years.

Then it was time to play horseshoes until dark. There were some standout "pitchers" that put some of us to shame. Afterward we enjoyed a catered BBQ catered dinner



### ***DAY 2, Tuesday:***

Early rise and a trip via bus/trolley to Old Town San Diego State Park. All morning

was spent on visiting the shops and taking in the sights. One of those was a person playing the role of an entertainer from the 1850s. After walking our dogs off, we went to the nearby Café Coyote. After a cooling drink or two, the staff served us a delicious multiple course lunch. Kudos for the planners again.

Following lunch we went to the corner and boarded two chartered

Old Town Trolleys. They took us on a very informative 90 minute tour through downtown San Diego, by the Zoo, and then on a thrilling ride across the Coronado Bridge with a stop to view the harbor. Then we zoomed thru the town, by the Hotel Del Coronado. We returned to the RV park via the Silver strand Highway.

That evening we had a hors d'oeuvre potluck. Everyone including the hosts went out of their way to provide food, desserts, beverages, spirits, munchies, stories, and pictures. Then, there were drawings for gifts.

### ***Day 3, Wednesday:***

We were at it again early and went by Bus/trolley to the Waterfront. It was a short walk to the U.S.S Midway and small group guided tours. Then it was lunch on our own. Some elected to return to the RV Park and others walked to the shops and eateries in Seaport Village.

That evening we bussed and troll eyed our way to the Black Angus in Chula Vista.

Following a great



dinner, the annual meeting and election of officers was held. The illustrious Jerry Earley was elected President. Barry Prentice, not to be removed entirely, was retained as a "President Emeritus" at the request of Jerry Earley.

### ***Day 4, Thursday:***

A "going away" breakfast was provided in

part by of Holland Motors. We gossiped for awhile and then posed for this group picture. Many of our group packed up and went on their way. A few stayed longer.

*There were 21 coaches and 43 attendees; a nice gathering!*

Wrap-up: This was one great Rally. Our thanks to the co-hosts shown seated and holding the banner below; they arranged all the minute details. Everything "clicked."

**THANKS!!!**





## Report on the Tiger Run Mini-Rally, Summit County, Colorado

June 22 through 26 (+/-) 2005

According to all who attended, our first Tiger Run Mini-Rally was a great success. Club members came from as far away as Missouri to enjoy an extended stay in the cool beauty of the High Rockies near Breckenridge, Colorado. Although each coach arrived at a different time, virtually all stayed until Sunday before heading on to their next destination. When they arrived, Club Members were greeted with a long list of activities and sights to see in and around Summit County, so there was never a lack of things to do for those who wanted to leave the relaxation of their Tiger Run site for adventure in the mountains.

In addition to the "un-hosts", Lena and Barry Prentice, these Chinook RV Club Members participated in the Mini-Rally: Ray and Linda Blackburn, Barbara Browne, Bob and Barbara Diehl, Bill and Dolores Graham, Bill and Lori Hoffner, Al and Eva Molina, Jim and Linda Spencer and Jim and Marnie Weidmaier. On his way east on I-70 through the Rockies, Member Gary Apple saw "all those Chinooks" converging on Tiger Run, so he stopped by to spend a night with us.

In addition to the traditional pot-luck dinner, we also shared in another dinner featuring barbecued meat with all the "fixins" that Lena brought from the local favorite eatery, "Q-4-U". Each morning, Lena set a sumptuous continental breakfast where all the Members gathered to plan out their destinations for the day. Some went sightseeing, others went bicycling (there are over 100 miles of dedicated bicycle paths in Summit County – even extending over Vail Pass to the Town of Vail). The climax of the stay for most of us was a visit to the Annual Frisco (Colorado) Barbeque Cook-off. Every year, the Town of Frisco, five miles down the road (or down the bike path) from Tiger Run, closes off Main Street for three days to host a Barbeque Cooking Contest that draws contestants from as far away as Texas, Alabama and Georgia. Everybody who went said that, "next year we've gotta do this again!"

So, **put these dates on your calendars for next year: June 21 through 25, 2006!!**

In fact, we recommend that you come early to acclimate to the altitude (9,100 feet) and have even more time to enjoy the beautiful scenery. If you don't believe us about the scenery, just look at the pictures with this article on Page 15! The toll-free number for Tiger Run Reservations is 800-895-9594. Don't miss out on the fun, the food and the scenery.





## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors

of the Chinook RV Club  
Chula Vista, California

September 12, 2005

President, Barry Prentice called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Present were Board Members Lena Prentice, Carole "CB" Davis and Bert Wall. In the absence of our elected Secretary, Club Member Marta Newcomb-Wall offered to take notes for these minutes. Phil Beautrow, our Newsletter Editor was an invited guest.

The first topic for discussion was that of our attempt to establish a thread of continuity in the Club leadership. Barry had hoped to have received a nomination for his replacement as President from those who were appointed to the Nominating Committee at last years Annual Rally, however no one who agreed to serve on that committee showed up at this Annual Rally, and their Chairman never submitted a name for a Presidential candidate. So members of the Board who were present at this meeting offered to set about recruiting a "volunteer" to "run" for President of the Club. They would report back the next day on their success.

Discussion of the need for continuity then turned to an idea proposed by several of the Club Members that we make the Immediate Past President a member of the Board of Directors so that their experience could still be available to help the new members of the Board. We decided that one of the Board Members would so move at the Annual Meeting so that the assembled Membership could vote on this change to our By-laws.

We then agreed that Bert Wall, in his capacity as Treasurer and CB Davis, as Vice President – Rallies would meet with Barbara Jensen tomorrow to get an update on the financial aspects of this Annual Rally so that we could better plan for the future.

CB Davis then reviewed the tentative Rally schedule for next year. We are looking forward to Bert and Marta's hosting a "threepeat" of the Annual Pahrump Mini-Rally in early April, then Lena and Barry will, once again, host the Tiger Run Mini-Rally in June. Finally, Al and Lucy Enriquez are busy planning and preparing for hosting the 2006 Annual Rally on Anacortes Island in Puget Sound in September.

The Board had heard suggestions that the 2007 Annual Rally be held in Albuquerque in conjunction with the Annual Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Lena, being from New Mexico, volunteered that she and Barry would return home from this Rally via Albuquerque to check out the feasibility of pulling this off. We agreed to bring up the idea at the Annual Meeting to make sure that this is something that the Membership would be interested in participating in.

Finally, Barry volunteered to investigate the feasibility of providing more permanent name badges for the Club Members. We discussed the concept of a plastic "laminated" badge with a common Club logo silk-screened across the top and the Member's name engraved below.

The meeting was adjourned after an hour to reconvene in two days at the Black Anguish immediately before the dinner that would precede the Annual Meeting.



## Minutes Of The Second Annual Meeting

of the Chinook RV Club

Chula Vista, California

September 14, 2005

The Annual Meeting was called to order by President, Barry Prentice, at 6:00PM.

Barry started the meeting by thanking all the loyal Members, some of whom traveled great distances on very expensive gasoline to attend this Rally and Annual Meeting.

He then thanked Marta Newcomb-Wall for once again agreeing to act as Secretary for the Club and take notes for the Minutes.

Vice President-Rallies, CB Davis then took the floor to thank Barbara and Ole Jensen and Jane and Jerry Earley for the outstanding job that they did in planning and carrying out our Second Annual Rally. Both Barbara and Jane worked tirelessly for over six months checking out the RV Park and the many activities that we were offered and all had enjoyed over the three days that we had spent in Southern California. Then Barbara and Ole Jensen greeted each coach as we arrived making sure that everyone got "situated" all right. Jane and Jerry Earley acted as our "in town" guides, making sure that we all got on the right busses and trolleys to meet our various field trips. Through their efforts we didn't lose anyone in the big city Regional Transit labyrinth. Well done, Jensens and Earleys!

The Minutes of the last Annual Meeting were approved as published in the Western Road Runner issue of November 2004. Next on the Agenda were the reports from our Officers, beginning with Lena Prentice, our Vice President-Membership. She reported that our membership now stands at Ninety-eight (98) and continues to grow. She reminded those present that our Newsletter, the Western Road Runner, is posted on the Chinook RV website for access by anyone having internet access. Those few who don't have internet access can receive a black and white paper copy of each Newsletter, if they will give their mailing address to Phil Beautrow, the Newsletter Editor.

In concluding her report she recognized Phil Beautrow for his work in producing our fine Newsletter. She also recognized Gary and Shirley Grant for bringing Gary's mother, "Mom" Grant (92 years young) to the Rally, and she complimented "Mom" for being such a good sport and hiking all around downtown San Diego to accompany us youngsters on our various expeditions.

The next Officer's Report was presented by our Vice President-Rallies, CB Davis. She started by noting that we had 23 coaches at this Rally. She again thanked Barbara Jensen and Jane Earley for their outstanding job putting together this Rally. She then encouraged the members to consider "hosting" a Mini-Rally. She offered her help and advice should someone be interested.

She continued by laying out the proposed Rally schedule for 2006 and the Annual Rally for 2007. We will start 2006 by holding another "Rally-Within-A-Rally" at the annual Western Region FMCA Rally in Indio, California. Bert Wall has agreed to be our "Man on the Ground" for this rally, with Barry agreeing to do the publicity and mailings. This will follow the same routine that we employed so successfully two years ago when we all met at a predetermined location in Indio and "convoyed" into the parking grounds so that we could all park together. Next spring, in early April, Bert and Marta have agreed, once again, to host the third annual Pahrump-Death Valley Mini-Rally. Then from June 21<sup>st</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> next year, Lena and Barry will be "un-hosting" the second annual Tiger Run Mini-Rally in Summit County in the high Rockies. Next year's Annual Rally is slated for early September at the beautiful Pio-



neer RV Park on Whidbey Island in Puget Sound. It is being planned by Al and Lucy Enriquez who already have a very interesting program put together.

Finally, CB mentioned that several Members had suggested holding the 2007 Annual Rally in Albuquerque in early October in conjunction with the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Lena (who was born and raised in New Mexico) and Barry volunteered to return home to Colorado by way of Albuquerque and research the feasibility of holding our Annual Rally there. The Members present all agreed that this would be an attractive event on which to "piggyback" our 2007 Annual Rally. Lena and Barry had their "marching orders".

Finally, we were able to hear from our Treasurer, Bert Wall who reported that the club was in sound fiscal condition. He reminded everyone that the fiscal year ends on September 30<sup>th</sup> and dues for 2006 are due by October 1<sup>st</sup>. He will provide a year-end financial statement to the Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the October edition of the Western Road Runner.

After the reports from the Officers, we went on to Old Business. There had been some confusion after the last Annual Meeting about whether the annual dues were \$35 or \$36. So, to clear up this confusion, Bert moved, and Marta seconded that the Annual Dues be set at \$35. All present voted yes and the motion passed.

Under New Business, Jerry Earley mentioned that he had asked Jack Byrne, after Jack's presentation on Tuesday, what we as Club Members might do to help promote the Chinook name and perhaps even aid in the sale of new units. Jerry is going to follow up with Jack to see if Club Members could be an asset at RV shows in their area to lend "user credibility" to the sales efforts of those dealers who display and sell Chinooks at these shows.

Next, it was moved and seconded that the position of Immediate Past President be added to the Board of Directors so as to add continuity to the governance of the Club. There being no negative votes, the motion passed unanimously.

Barry volunteered to review our By-Laws over the next year with an eye toward making sure that they are truly up to date and reflective of the way the Club has been operated. The revised By-laws will be circulated to all Members for their consideration prior to the 2006 Annual Rally so that they can be voted upon at that event and adopted late next year.

Barry also announced the decision of the Board of Directors to research the issuance of engraved plastic name badges to all Club Members who have participated in at least two Rallies. After this initial issue, every time a Member becomes eligible by attending their second rally, they will be issued an engraved plastic name badge.

The next, and final, order of business was the Election of Officers for the coming year's). All of the current Officers had agreed to serve another year except for Barry who felt that some replacement should take place in order to establish continuity of leadership for the Club. Thus, we had planned, since the last Annual Meeting to hold an election to replace Barry as President. There being no nomination from the Nominating Committee that had volunteered at last year's Annual Rally, (none of them showed up at this year's Rally), members of the Board had stepped in and successfully recruited Jerry Earley to stand for election. Being unopposed (what else would you expect?) he was elected by acclamation. Jerry graciously accepted his new position and promised to give it his best shot.

There being no other business to be brought before the Second Annual Meeting of the Chinook RV Club, the meeting was adjourned by President Earley at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marta Newcomb-Wall, and

Barry Prentice





## PHOTO GALLERY































**CHINOOK R.V. CLUB  
BALANCE SHEET  
SEPT. 30, 2005**

**ASSETS:**

CHECKING ACCOUNT	<u>\$6,826.58</u>
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**MEMBERSHIP EQUITY:**

SEPT. 30, 2004	5,113.06	
INCOME FOR FISCAL 2005	<u>1,713.52</u>	
		<u>\$6,826.58</u>

**INCOME STATEMENT  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPT. 30, 2005**

**INCOME:**

MEMBERS' DUES	2768.00
RALLY FEES	7156.75
INTEREST INCOME	<u>5.10</u>
	\$9,929.85

**EXPENSES:**

RALLY COSTS	7426.98
PRINTING & REPRODUCTION	441.08
POSTAGE & DELIVERY	243.19
SUPPLIES	105.08
	<u>8216.33</u>

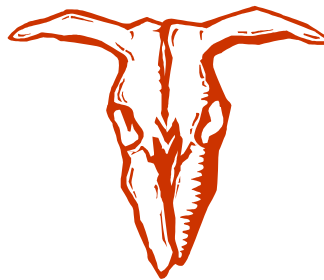
<b>INCOME OVER EXPENSES:</b>	<u>\$1,713.52</u>
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### **Chinook RV Forum available**

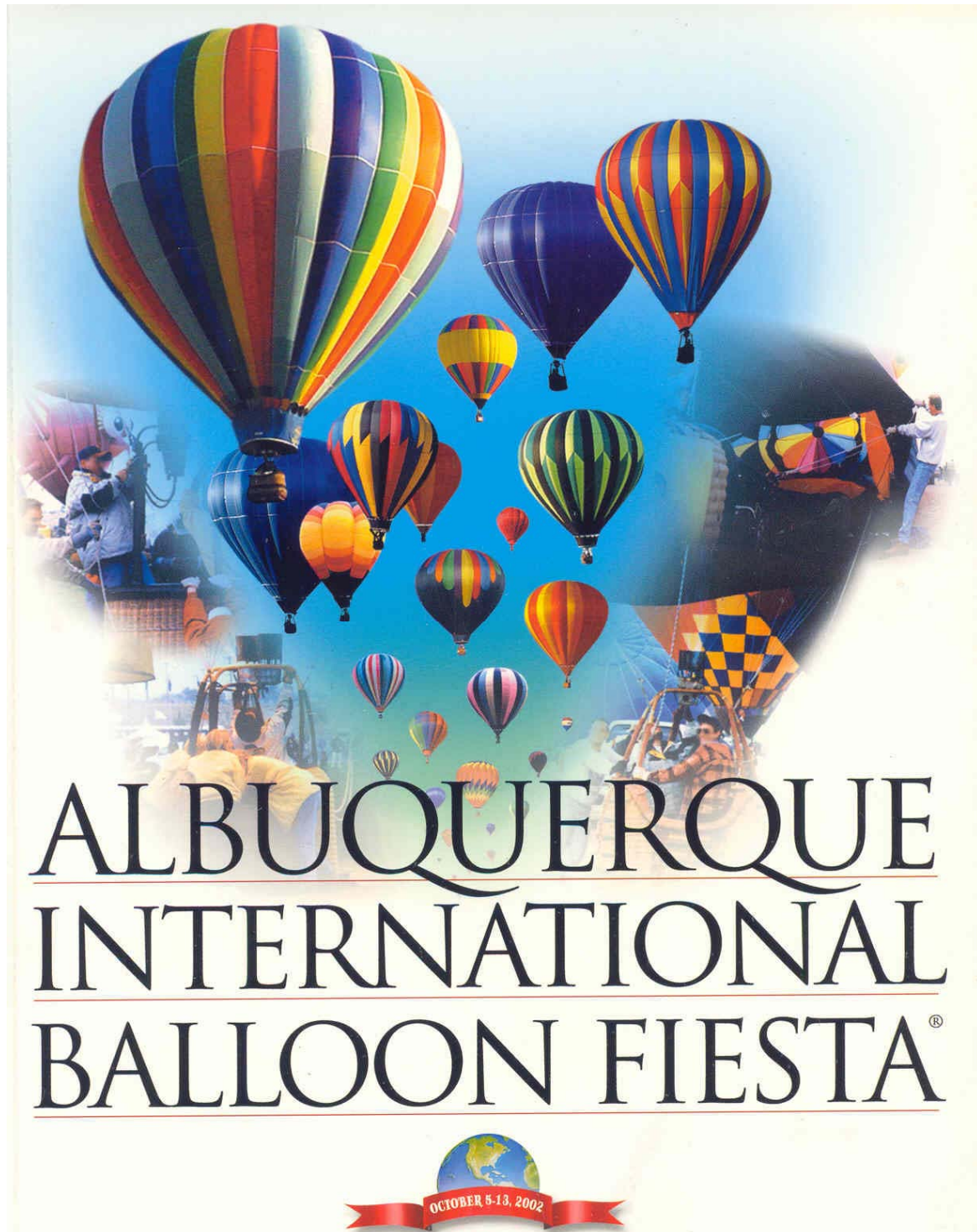
If you would like to chat with others and review issues, check out photos, etc. Yahoo has a forum set up specifically for Chinook owners. Go to: <http://groups.yahoo.com/> A page comes up: Under "Find a group" type in: "Chinookrvs" and click. A new screen comes up with group "Chinookrvs" listed. Click on that and it should take you to a place where you can join the group. Since this is a "members" group you will have to give a name and set up a password. But it will be worth it.



# Special Places

*By Marion & Phil Beautrow*

We have traveled all over the USA, first in our 1989 (18 Plus) Chinook, and then in the present 1999 Concourse Model. Here are a few of the "special places" that we thought you might like to visit. (As of this writing, the "Fiesta" is planned for the 2007 Rally)



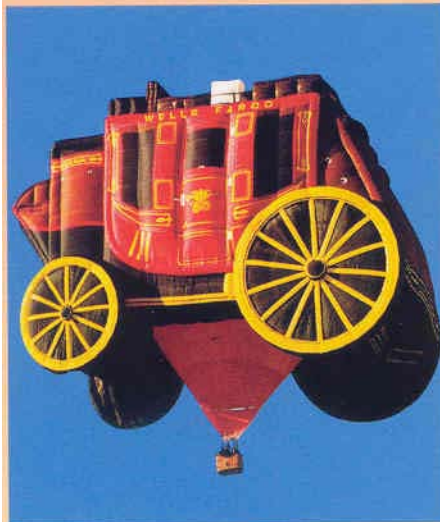


This event is probably the most spectacular thing you will ever see. Thousands of hot-air balloons entered from all over the world. Although it is too late for this year perhaps something can be planned for early October in the future. Here are a few pictures of the unusual shapes. Note how small the gondolas look.



Note how small the gondolas look.

This is one of the few public events where you are allowed to go right down in the launching areas. An official dressed in a referee shirt directs each launch and blows a whistle to clear bystanders out the way! What a thrill as you dodge the ropes.







# Technical Tips

*Hosted by Barry Prentice*

As a continuation of columns we would like to share some suggestions for better maintenance of your Chinook:

## Electrical System Unmasked

During discussions at the last Rally there were a lot of issues relating to electrical systems. Here are some plain explanations as they relate to the typical '99 **Concourse/Premier**:

- The solar panel charges the coach batteries and automatically shuts off when they are charged.
- The engine alternator charges all batteries and has over-voltage protection.



- The generator charges the batteries via the converter when operating.

- The Magne-Tek electronic power con-

verter charges the coach batteries when shore power is plugged in or when the generator is running.

Wow, with all that charging something can go wrong, right? Well, the Battery Separator, AKA as the "Smart Solenoid" makes sure that

both battery sets are working together to assure that neither one is discharged by the other. It is located under the hood on the driver side. It also allows you to start the engine from the coach batteries by using the cab overhead "vehicle boost start" switch.

The Low Voltage Disconnect, AKA as "LVD" is buried behind the drivers seat under the outside wall molding. You really have to stand on your head with a flashlight to find it! The LVD sounds an alarm when the coach batteries are low and will disconnect them to avoid complete discharge.

The converter/charger near the bath door has a circuit breaker specifically for the charger section. When you are plugged in and storing the coach for an extended time, why don't you flip the charger breaker off? The solar panel will keep the coach batteries charged. Also, you could use a timer on the shore cord set to turn on a few hours per day. That

way you can avoid possible "boiling" of the batteries. Also become familiar with the row of fuses to the





right of the breakers.

One last thing...if there is some major problem with the electrical system there is an 80 amp circuit breaker under the hood of the car near the battery that may have kicked out. Try resetting it by pushing the red button. Lets hope you don't have any problems



with this so called "State of the Art" electrical system!





## A Very Expensive Lesson In . . . Batteries 101

The person that coined the phrase, "Lack of experience leads to bad judgment - bad judgment leads to experience," must have been looking over my shoulder during my all too many encounters with the batteries in my Chinook **Glacier!** After having spent nearly a thousand dollars prematurely replacing *all* of the batteries in my coach, I feel compelled to write of my experience so that, hopefully, others will not have to "experience" what we have gone through.

There are two important rules that all RV owners should understand and obey at all times, lest they unnecessarily contribute to the profits of the battery suppliers. The first rule is, "**Do not ever overheat (let alone boil) your batteries – a sure sign that you are overcharging them.**" The second rule is **never repeatedly discharge your chassis battery (as in running it down to the point where you have to "jump start" your engine.)**

### CHAPTER ONE

In "Chapter One", I would like to share how we learned the lesson of Rule One the hard way. Our soap opera goes back to a day when our coach was only two months old, and I pulled the coach ("house") battery racks out to check on the level of electrolyte in our four, six-volt Interstate U2400 "house batteries". The "experience" that followed included making two separate trips to the grocery store to purchase distilled water,

then between the four batteries pouring in *two gallons* to bring the levels of electrolyte in each cell up to the proper depth! Anyone with even the skimpiest knowledge of batteries will tell you that under proper conditions, we should never have had to add this much water. As time went by and I periodically checked on our house batteries, I noticed that whenever we were plugged into shore power one battery in particular would be hot – way too hot to touch. In fact I remember listening to that battery actually boil on several occasions when we were plugged into shore power. But wow, I thought, those house batteries sure would recharge in a hurry when we did plug in!

As our coach passed its second birthday, the endurance (ability to maintain voltage - charge) of the house batteries diminished noticeably. During this period I had been asking everyone whom I thought should be an "expert" on batteries, whether it was all right to boil them. Well, you guessed it, by the time I found out that **it is very bad to boil batteries** (it is probably the single best way to permanently and irretrievably damage them) I had ruined one of ours for sure, and another was on its way to total destruction. Another thing I learned that makes all of this experience even more painful is that when one or more batteries in a battery bank go bad, it is best to replace *all* of the batteries in the bank. When you only replace the one or two that are bad, the remaining weak battery (ies) just serve to bring down the new replacements that much faster.



This summer, as I was trying to figure out why our batteries were boiling, my diagnosis took me to the charger; our coach is an Iota brand unit mounted on the driver's side wall behind the back of the tall



ward-robe closet. To reach it, you have to remove the bottom panel (floor) of this closet followed by the

back panel. When I finally "uncovered" the charger I discovered the short jumper wire on a modular jack shown in this picture, plugged into the charger.

The label on the front of the charger, immediately below the socket for this jumper, reads as follows, "Insert Plug to Quick Charge @ 14.2 V. To avoid battery damage remove plug after Quick Charge is complete." You can clearly see it in the photo.

Needless to say, because of its inaccessible location and the fact that there was no information about it in our Owner's Manual, no one had ever removed it! No wonder we

had boiled our batteries! I immediately removed the jumper plug, and we are happy to report that we have not boiled a battery since, and the water levels in the world's oceans has stopped going down since we are no longer consuming so much distilled water.

Of course, it was too late to save our original coach batteries, so on our way south to the Annual Rally just before Labor Day, we stopped in at the Interstate Battery dealer in Portland and "ponied up" for four new house batteries.

The most important item(s) that I picked up at the Interstate Battery dealer, however, were twenty-five copies of the very informative Interstate Battery publication, "*Marine/RV Battery Maintenance*". This well written eighteen page pamphlet contains a wealth of information about the various batteries commonly used in Marine and RV applications. I handed out a copy to each Club Member coach that attended the Annual Rally in Chula Vista, and if you weren't there to get your copy, **I strongly recommend that you go by your local Interstate Battery dealer and pick up a copy.** If you can't find a copy nearby, you can call "800-Crank-it" and request a copy be sent to you in the mail.

In our case, the pamphlet clearly explained that we had been overcharging our batteries; the reason that lead to their costly, premature demise. As you can see, removing the jumper plug from our Iota charger dropped the charging voltage from

14.2 volts to 13.4 volts, enough to bring it within the proper range to charge the batteries completely in 8 to 12 hours as the pamphlet recommends.

## CHAPTER TWO

### (IS SUB-TITLED:) "COOL TOOLS FOR YOUR COACH"

In the photo to the right we have shown what we believe to be a most clever invention, especially for those installations where the batteries are not conveniently accessible for checking and refilling the electrolyte.

It is called a "ProFill" system, and we got ours at Camping World (this should not be construed as a specific endorsement of Camping World, but they are a handy source for this equipment and every RV'er knows the location of their closest store). They aren't cheap, but they really do save a lot of aggravation, and if they enable you to maintain your own batteries without having to pay a mechanic to do it for you, then they will pay for themselves in short order.

Squeezing the rubber bulb pumps distilled water from the jug into the molded plastic distribution "bars" on the tops of the cells. Each hollow plastic bar connects to three screw-in cell caps. Each cell cap is equipped with an internal valve that stops the flow of water into its cell when the level of electrolyte reaches the proper height. And all of this is accomplished without the need for a flashlight, mirror, back brace or kneepads!

In asking around, we have found that

many savvy owners, not only of motor coaches, but of all sorts of other equipment that depends upon wet cell batteries for power, use this clever system to maintain the proper level of electrolyte in their batteries.

## CHAPTER THREE

Finally, we want to discuss care of your



coach chassis battery (the one that starts your engine and lights your headlights and dash lights, among other things). We have been operating on a replacement chassis battery for almost a year now, again a premature replacement caused by mistreatment



of the original battery. If you consult the "[\*Marine/RV Battery Maintenance\*](#)" pamphlet that we referred to earlier in this article, in the back pages they talk about Engine Starting Batteries, as differentiated from Deep Cycle Batteries such as those used for house batteries. The main difference between the two is that the Starting Battery is designed to provide the high current (lots of power) necessary for starting an engine for a very short time while a Deep Cycle Battery is designed (as the name implies) to provide a much smaller amount of current over a much longer period of time while it is also capable of being discharged to a much lower percent of its capacity. This is where we refer you back to the second paragraph of this article and Rule Two, **never repeatedly discharge your chassis battery (as in running it down to the point where you have to "jump start" your engine.)** This is often referred to as a deep discharge, and starting batteries are not made to withstand



very many of these "cycles" before they just give out, never to be revived again.

When our coach was about a year old, we began to have intermittent trouble starting our engine. Fortunately, each time the chassis battery came up discharged, we

were able to use the "Jump Switch" in our Coach to "hook up" the house batteries to the engine starter and get it started that way. It wasn't until after many of these incidents that we finally discovered why the chassis battery wasn't getting charged by the alternator on the engine.

The reason that the chassis battery wasn't getting a charge was because the cable clamp on the positive terminal of the chassis battery was slightly (but definitely not noticeably) loose, and enough corrosion had built up between the clamp and the positive terminal post to "insulate" the connection and prevent current flow into the battery. The clamps on the chassis battery terminals in our coach are Ford OEM clamps. They are stamped out of sheet metal, and as such they distort easily. When Chinook built our coach, they loosened the setscrew on the positive cable clamp and inserted a secondary lead that goes to the Battery Isolator.

In tightening the clamp when they reinstalled it, it distorted and failed to make a solid connection. The photo below shows this clamp with the secondary positive cable attached.

So, in conclusion, we offer this advice so that you might avoid errors in judgment that lead to expensive

"experience: "

- Get a copy of the [\*Marine/RV Battery Maintenance\*](#) pamphlet from your nearest Interstate Battery dealer, if you don't already have one. Then read it and take its advice to heart.



- Know your batteries, their different characteristics and their different needs.
- Check their (all of them) condition often, both while *on* shore power and *off*.
- Check and maintain the electrolyte levels in those batteries which are not “maintenance free” (what a misnomer, anyway).
- Check the integrity of the cable connections, especially those that utilize clamps and setscrews.
- And, finally, we hope that this information will help you to enjoy your Chinook experience.





# 2006-07 Rallies

Please see the Attachment to this Newsletter if you have not done so.



# Western Road Runner



Is a publication of the Chinook RV Club

## Club Officers—2005

Jerry Earley, President  
Carol Skillings, Secretary  
Bert Wall, Treasurer  
Carole "CB" Davis, VP  
Rallies  
Lena Prentice, VP Mem-  
bership  
Barry Prentice, Immedi-  
ate Past President  
Al Enriques, Member at  
Large

For those with internet access the newsletter is posted on the site shown below. This will save the Club a considerable sum for publishing and postage. For those without internet access, we can mail you a black-and-white printed copy upon request to the editor (the old ink slinger):

Phil Beautrow  
120 Cedar Lane,  
Santa Barbara, CA, 93108 -1729

Thanks to those who have contributed photos and experiences in the past. Please send me arti-  
cles and photos for consideration in future issues.



We're on the Web:

[http://chinookrv.com/  
camp\\_west\\_news.html](http://chinookrv.com/camp_west_news.html)

