

Immediate Past President– Phyllis Britz

Here in Pennsylvania, autumn is well under way, with leaves getting close to their peak color. It's been a busy and sometimes hectic time since the last newsletter. My husband, Eric, and I drove over 2,700 miles to attend the 109th FMCA International Convention. We had a nice trip out, choosing to travel the northern route to Oregon. We left Pennsylvania on July 24 and arrived at Deschutes County Fair Grounds on August 9, 2024. August 14, 2024, was the Governing Board meeting. Prior to the meeting, the Eastern Area held its caucus meeting as well as the National Directors briefing and workshop. The Governing Board was presented with many challenges related to FMCA's financials. The Board elected to keep the magazine at 6 issues a year, although it's been losing money, and to keep medical evacuation insurance coverage for members. The medical travel evacuation coverage was not supported by the Finance Committee. The Board also voted to increase dues, which have been held at \$50 since 2015, except for a brief time after the Minot Governing Board meeting. It's still great value for the money!



Evening entertainment



Eastern Area Caucus meeting



Swearing in of FMCA Officers



Celebrating Penny Gortemiller's Birthday with Danielle Powell and Gil Raye



Betty and Brad Brown, Eric and Phyllis, and Steve and Gil Raye at the FMCA booth, Hershey RV Show.

The Eastern Area participated in the Chapter Fair, and I think that a Tennessee couple joined the Happy Tennessee Travelers! We unfortunately didn't have many people from the Eastern Area at the convention. After the Redmond Rally, we made a direct, minimum-stop trip home. This was necessary since we were Scheduled for the Hersey RV show and because the tow vehicle needed a transmission. The Hershey RV Show ran September 11 through the 15th at the Giant Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Three couples worked every day of the show; Brad and Betty brown (Elizabeth River Going Strong) Stev and Gil Raye (Penn Coachmen, Full Timers, and RV Basics), and Eric and me. I had limited time to recruit others to work on the show, so I turned to Penn Coachmen Chapter members as many lived nearby. These folks volunteered: Bob and Lynda Bucklew, Jen Bowman, Bud and Carol Beidler, Vicki and Randy Hower, Marge Cohn, Alan Silberstein, and Olga Cabral. The team recruited 145 new joins, 11 were Pathfinders and 57 renewed their membership.



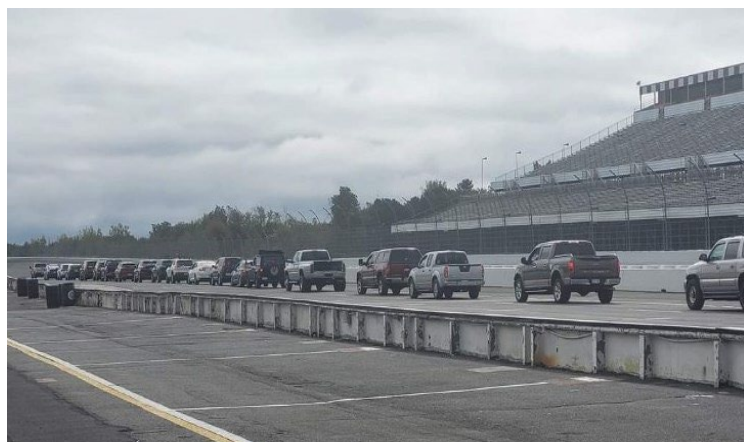
Picture of the racetrack with RVs on the infield

The parking crew got drenched on Wednesday Eric, Steve Mahanes, and Gary Cipa.

80 RVs parked on the infield. Tented Area was here the coffee was available weather permitting



Almost everyone at the rally took to the racetrack in their car or truck. Several folks took advantage of a free Raceway tour given by Michael Ravert, a Penn Coachmen member and employee of the racetrack.



Sue Cipa, President of the Penn Coachmen Chapter accepts the FMCA Anniversary certificate and check from Clarissa Sherrow, Northern Regional VP of the Eastern Area,

A little more than a week after the Hershey Show, September 23 to October 2, we were at the Pocono Raceway in Long Pond, Pennsylvania, for the Penn Coachmen "open" rally where the chapter celebrated its 55^{-year} anniversary as an FMCA chapter. The weather was a challenge, with all the rain, drizzle, fog, and wind. That didn't dampen anyone's spirits. There was enough dry time to allow folks to take their personal vehicles on the racetrack for a couple laps, take a stock car "ride along" drive the stock cars on the tracks, attend seminars, do crafts, pet some reptiles, eat lots of good food and enjoy social time with friends. About 80 RV's were in attendance.

Sadly, GEAR 2024, scheduled for October 23-27, had to be cancelled due to the destruction and devastation caused by Helene to Western North Carolina. The Area is still, four weeks into the recovery, looking at overwhelming loss with rescue efforts continuing. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those who have been displaced and to the families that have lost loved ones. Financial donations to the organizations listed below aid in purchases, housing, and distribution of what is needed most in specific areas.

[NC.gov/donate](https://www.nc.gov/donate) - North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund
[Samaritanaspurse.org](https://www.samaritanaspurse.org) - Samaritan's Purse Disaster Relief Fund
[Redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) - American Red Cross - Hurricane Helene Relief Fund
[Give.helpsalvationarmy.org](https://www.givehelpsalvationarmy.org) - Salvation Army

David Fowler
Eastern Area Vice President

What a busy and hectic summer and early fall this has been. Jan and I put much energy into acquiring entertainment and sound for GEAR. Our sound man quit, and we were scrambling to find a replacement. Along came Gary Cipa Thank You, Gary! EAMA ended up buying three small PA systems to use in the seminar rooms and contracted with the entertainment to provide their own sound. We would have saved money and had the systems to use in the future. Honey wagons are a disappearing service. After many phone calls and a lot of "We don't do that," Ed Herbert came through with a very rare honey wagon. I'm grateful for Ed's perseverance.

EAMA had an organizational meeting at the Western North Carolina Ag. Center in August with most of the chairpersons and EAMA officers in attendance. Everything was going very well except the parking, which was going to be a challenge for the parking committee.

In the meantime, Phyllis's term as President of EAMA ended and I took over the position until we could elect a replacement. Gary Lyons, of the Carolina Drifters, stepped forward as the only nominee. The election results for the EA president should be revealed on November 14.

Suddenly everything was thrown into chaos with the arrival of Hurricane Helene. Asheville and the surrounding area were completely devastated, including the West North Carolina Agricultural Center.

I called an emergency meeting of the EAMA board for October 1. It was voted unanimously to cancel GEAR. This has put a burden on Berkley to write all the refund checks and post them. Everyone else got busy cancelling contracts. Thankfully, we won't lose that much because of the cancellations.

On a lighter note, I along with the Southern Area VP Chris Holtzman, attended the 20th Anniversary rally with the Carolina Pelicans at Willow Tree RV Resort in Longs, South Carolina. Chris and I presented Carolina Pelicans President Jerry Dickinson and the entire chapter with the 20th Anniversary Certificate. Both Chris and I are members of the Pelicans, and it was a great honor to present them with the certificate. I have been a member of the Pelicans for 10 years and I can't think of a better group of RVers.





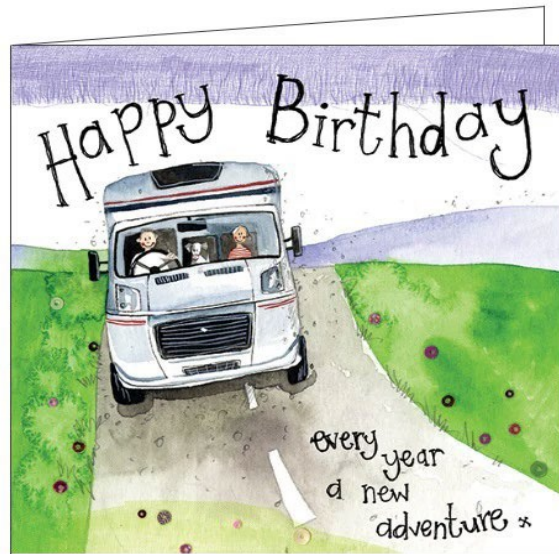
Dave Jerry Chris



Always Food at rallies



And who could forget the cooks!



Chris, and I also attended a rally with the Carolina Drifters at Palmetto Shores in Summerton, SC. The rally was small but the people more than made up for the low attendance. They are really a group of wonderful people. I have been working on GEAR 25 along with my wife, Jan. We secured 300 sites at Ocean Lakes Family Campground in Myrtle Beach, SC. This will be a different type of rally, and we are excited to be planning it. At the October 15 Zoom meeting, Jan and I accepted the position of Rally Masters for GEAR 25. I certainly could not do it without the help and support of Jan. We have secured 400 tickets for the Alabama Theater Christmas Show on Friday, November 7, at the 1:30 matinee. The tickets will be on sale with the GEAR registration form. I couldn't complete this newsletter article without saying something about Phyllis Britz. Phyllis has given me support all the way. We spent so much time on the phone that I think Jan and Eric were getting jealous. She is very detailed and committed to FMCA. I am sorry to see her go. The next time you see Phyllis, give her a BIG thank-you for all she has done for FMCA and the Eastern Area.!

Dave Fowler
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Eastern Area Newsletter 2024 Fall/Winter edition

Southern Region VP

Chris Holtzman

The air outside certainly has a hint of fall in it but fall to a lot of our members in the western part of North Carolina lingers with not bright-color leaves but destruction, downed trees, flooded homes, loss of power and water, and just plain misery. For some of our chapter members in western North Carolina, their loss was significant. With the help of God and a lot of volunteers, we will put it all back together again. With that storm we also lost our GEAR rally in Asheville. The Asheville area was really torn up and the fairgrounds are being used for emergency use rather than 300 RV's.

In late September, we had a chance to get together again at the Willow Tree Campground in Longs, South Carolina, to celebrate the Carolina Pelicans' 20th anniversary. We were sorry our past AVP Phyllis was not able to attend but we realized she was in Pennsylvania doing a 55- year anniversary. The Pelicans did a great job with this rally, and it was a big and memorable event. Thanks, Pelicans.

In October, we had a chance to visit a new campground in Summerton, South Carolina, or I should say Santee, South Carolina with the Carolina Drifters. Dave Fowler and I visited with this chapter at this rally. This chapter's president is our new Area President, if all goes well in November and he is elected. I am looking forward to working with Gary in this role.

Many thanks to Dave Fowler and his wife, Jan, for the extra work they have put into handling the AVP load since Phyllis retired. The monthly Zoom meetings have been a big help and are well attended.

November will find Nancy and I going to Blacksburg, South Carolina, to attend a rally with our newest chapter, The Over the Mountain group. I am looking forward to working with Nancy Craig and this chapter. Then we will go on to Gaffney and the annual maintenance trip to Freightliner.

The holidays are upon us, Nancy and I want to wish everyone a blessed Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas. Enjoy time with your families and attend the church of your choice. Just remember, it's still all about having fun. Keep Gary Milner and his wife in your prayers.

Chris F Holtzman F388492
VP EAMA Southern Region
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Northern Region VP

Clarissa Sherrow

Hello FMCA Family:

We didn't get to camp with all the FMCA families we had anticipated. Life just seems to get in the way sometimes.

We got to spend time with the Penn Coachmen at the Pocono Raceway in Long Pond, PA in September. They celebrated their 55th year with food, games, and a racetrack ride-along, we even got to take our personal cars on the track. As always, it was a great time.

We were looking forward to a great time in Fletcher, North Carolina, for GEAR. We are saddened by the devastation in North Carolina and Tennessee, our thoughts and prayers are with them. One of the food vendors for GEAR's hometown was highly impacted by the storm. I have sent seven trailer loads of supplies and contributed things for a tractor and trailer to be sent down in the area. We truly live in a great community.

Now is the time to start planning for the 2025 rallies. Remember, rally masters are always needed. It is a lot of fun, please consider helping.

GEAR 2025 is in the planning stages for Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Make sure to make your reservations early. 2026 GEAR will be in Lewisburg, West Virginia. I'm looking forward to both!

Chapters, remember to do your 990's and file the necessary paperwork.

Larry and I are planning on attending holiday lunches with several chapters. Remember to check out the website www.fmca-ea.com

We hope to see you "down the road."

Safe travels,

Clarissa Sherrow
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**Western Region VP
Garnetta Mallory**

Well, it has been a fall of disasters of all different kinds. Asheville and surrounding states and counties have had horrendous flooding. Our winter home in Florida had a similar event. People of all ages have stepped up and did what they could and needed to do. We have survived this! Not all people did, but those that did "pulled up their britches" and moved on. In turn, so has GEAR.

Next year's GEAR will be a great year of a "new" type of rally, and I am looking forward to it. David Fowler has been working hard on this new venue. Reservations are now open at Ocean Lakes Campground for GEAR 25', which is November 4-8, 2025.

I look forward to seeing the Kentucky and Tennessee chapters this coming year, so please send me your rally schedules. If you are in central Florida for the winter, please let me know. If you are interested in a chapter or starting your own, again please contact me.

Take care of yourself and others. Time is a precious commodity.

Garnetta Mallory
Western Region VP
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DID YOU KNOW??

RV BASICS will be offered at the FMCA International Convention and RV Expo at Perry GA March 9-11, 2025.

Back by popular demand, **RV Basics**, a part of the FMCA Academy and is a must for all RVers. This course will focus on RV preparation, operation, and maintenance to help with trouble-free RV travel. The course is great for those just starting out in the RV lifestyle or the seasoned RVer. Tips on current technology, equipment and aftermarket upgrades will be covered.

This popular course is offered to members and non-members.

NEW RV BASICS ADVANCED MARCH 16-18, 2025.

RV Basics Advanced picks up where the original RV Basics class leaves off. The Advanced program will include additional instructors for "up-close-and-personal," hands-on experience. While the RV Basics class provides general knowledge covering many aspects of RVing, the Advanced curriculum is focused on what RV owners can do to get back on the road when the unexpected occurs. Instruction includes lectures and labs, so be prepared to get your hands dirty.

This course is only offered to those who complete RV Basics.

Go to [RV Basics Workshop - Education | FMCA](#) for additional information.

**FMCA'S 110TH
INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
& RV EXPO**
MARCH 12-15, 2025
**GEORGIA NATIONAL
FAIRGROUNDS & AGRICENTER**
PERRY, GEORGIA
SEMINARS • INDOOR EXHIBITS
RV DISPLAYS • GAMES
ICE CREAM SOCIAL • ENTERTAINMENT

Eastern Area- 2024 Annual Business Meeting

To be held December 10, 2024. There will be an election for the Eastern Area positions including Secretary, Central Regional Vice President and Southern Regional Vice President. Please consider joining the EAMA Executive team! If you or someone you know would like to step up and submit your resume for these positions, that would be great!



This is an excellent opportunity to serve the organization using your skills while having FUN. The most important skill needed is enjoying camping with others.

Interested members contact the nominating committee.

Bill Mallory: 4windsacres@gmail.com

Dave Fowler: david.fowlereavp@gmail.com

Leon Witt: leonwhitt323@aol.com

Any questions, please email David Fowler at: david.fowlereavp@gmail.com

or call him at: (843) 833-3197

Thank you!



GEAR 2025
Great Eastern Area Rally
November 5 - 9
Ocean Lakes Family Campground
Myrtle Beach, SC