

GMC

MOTORHOMES INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER



Founded in 1982 by Ralph Luby

SUMMER 2014

ISSUE 128

CHAPTER STATUS

Membership now stands at 1138.
We have 38 new members since the last newsletter.



2014 FALL CONVENTION

Northern Wisconsin State Fairgrounds
Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin
Friday, Sept. 26 - Thursday, Oct. 2

The convention brochure and registration form is available by clicking here.
For your convenience download the interactive registration form, fill it out on your computer and print!
So get those registrations in early!

2015 SPRING CONVENTION

Patterson Civic Center
Patterson, Louisiana
Friday, March 27 - Thursday, April 2



Mark your calendar for the Spring 2015 Convention in Patterson, Louisiana!

BETWEEN NEWSLETTERS

Keep informed by checking out the GMCM I website at
www.gmcmi.com under "Latest News" and/or
visit our facebook page at www.facebook.com/GMCM I.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Starting to write this, I realized that this would be my last message to the members as President.

In September, there will be an election of officers at our fall Convention. A new President will be elected to replace me. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all the Board Members and the members of GMCMI over the last two years and seeing many of you at our National Conventions.

Another change for the club is that, as of June 30, Billy Massey is no longer the Member and Publications Services manager. He has served the club well since the fall of 2007. We wish Billy the best in his future endeavors. Kimberlea Weeks has agreed to assume responsibility for the balance of the year in addition to her Convention Manager role. The Board of Directors will decide at our September meetings what we will do for 2015.



A few things stand out as important changes we have made in the last couple of years.

First, is setting up the category of Associate Member in addition to our regular membership. The main differences are that Associate Members have decided not to be members of FMCA and therefore they cannot attend our conventions due to the insurance provided by FMCA for members. This action allowed many GMCers to remain in the Club.

Secondly, a new membership benefit is in the making for members of GMCMI. The Board has approved putting the GMCMI Parts Interchange in electronic format in the Members Only section of our website (www.gmcmi.com). This is in the process of being implemented and should be completed by next spring. Many members have requested that we do this. The printed version will continue to be sent to all members as most of us carry it in our motorhome when we travel.

In addition, last year we had totally redone the format of the GMCMI website to incorporate much more information and to make it easier to use. This was followed by a responsive version that will detect that the user is on a smart phone and will automatically format itself to make it easier to view on the smart phone.

We also incorporated GMCMI Motorhomes International. This will provide greater legal protection for the club. We remain a not for profit organization for tax reasons.

Please continue to provide your Area Vice Presidents with your suggestions on how we can improve the club and provide members with innovative changes they desire.

I hope you all have a great summer and I look forward to seeing many of you at our Fall Convention in Chippewa Falls, WI, next September and, hopefully, at many future conventions.

Emery Stora | Frederick, CO | 1977 Kingsley

ENGINE BELTS

Fred Hudspeth | Tyler, TX | 1978 Royale

While there have been several articles published on engine belts for the motorhome, this is to confirm that replacement belts should be 11MM wide. That width will result in the belts being flush with the top of the pulleys. When buying belts, take both 10MM and 11MM open-end wrenches for use in checking belt widths. The 11MM wrench should fit snugly over the belt width while the 10MM wrench will not. The 11MM wide belt will have the correct angles for proper contact with the pulleys. Not so with belts of less than 11MM.

Lengths from the GMCMI Parts Interchange Index:

Alternator belt: 57.0"

Power Steering belt: 45"

Air Conditioner belt (455): 62" and (403): 60"

Additional information found in the GMCMI Parts Interchange Index between pages 11 & 12.

GMC MOTORHOME DISTRIBUTOR SERVICING

Dick Paterson | Springfield Ignition
705-325-4554 | www.springfield-ignition.com

I want to revisit the distributor servicing situation for our GMC's. Usually when I get a core back it is seized in the full retard (which kills exhaust valves-power and mpg) or full advanced position (which pings and breaks parts).

When working on a distributor, lube the internals with synthetic grease, as it will live and lube through more heat cycles than conventional greases.

There are two key areas that require a lube touch-up. First, twist the rotor and see if it works against a spring tension, wanting to return as you release it. If it doesn't move or it moves very slowly and drags back to its starting point, then fixing that requires taking the distributor apart.

Let's do the easy one first. This one can be looked at annually and does not require removal of the distributor. Just the cap and rotor to expose the pivot pins (posts) under the rotor, that the fly weights pivot on.

Remove a spring and weight – 'one at a time' – so they don't get crossed up going back on. Lube the pin and lightly the spring contact ends where they loop over their locating pins. Use a slight dab at the point of contact between the center cam and the toe of the weight. Moving the weights out with your finger will show you where the contact is taking place.

Now we'll get into number two. Where the distributor has to be pulled out of the motor for disassembly. This usually seems like a daunting task, but it's not.

First, bump the motor over on the starter until the timing slot on the harmonic balancer (behind front lower pulley) lines up about with 0 (zero) on the timing tab, this will put the #1 cylinder on the TDC (top dead center). The piston will visit TDC twice on a 4 cycle motor – it can be on #1 or on #6 – to verify it is correct, follow the #1 plug wire back to the distributor cap and mark its post with masking tape. Set the cap back on the distributor and put a small piece of tape (marked as tape #2) on the distributor housing directly below your #1 plug wire terminal (post). Next, put a third tape tag (#3) on the block 'directly' in line below your #2 tape. Now tip the cap back and see if the rotor tip is pointing to the #1 post (which is marked with the #3 tape on the base).



If it is not, then that tells you the rotor is pointing at #6 and the motor has to be 'bumped' over one more time, slowly until the timing slot comes back in line with the timing tab.

As another reference, you can put a small piece of tape or mark on the firewall where the vacuum advance can is pointing.

Now we are ready to line the distributor up. If its seized in place, soak the base with carb cleaner or penetrating oil and leave it (overnight is best). You should then be able to rotate the housing back and forth to loosen it up.

BIG CAUTION – NEVER TRY TO PRY IT UP – IT WILL BREAK THE ALUMINUM HOUSING

Now, as you lift it 'straight up', the rotor will turn about 1". Note where the rotor tip is now pointing and place a piece of tape (#4) or use a marker pen to mark the distributor housing directly below the rotor tips new location.

This step works for you in reversing the sequence when you re-install the distributor. You will lower it down with the rotor pointing over tape #4. The housing gets lined up with tape #2 directly over tape #3. Lower in place, engaging the hex and the rotor will rotate back the 1" and the rotor tip will be over tape #2. Bingo! You are back where you started.

Now, we have the distributor out and need to take it apart. Drive the roll pin out of the gear "with the correct size punch (drift)". Pull the shaft out, lube with carb cleaner and work it – if it won't come out.



Take each weight off and wire its spring to it (so they are married). Remove the two clips from the pins that stick up through the **center cam**. Remove it and the pole piece (with the 8 teeth) will slide down and off the shaft. Clean up and re-grease the top grease groove on the shaft. Re-assemble. Put on the center cam **numbers facing down (repeat numbers down)**.

Lube shaft, slide back into housing. Hold the rotor on in place and put on gear **orienting the 'dimple' on the gear** below the rotor tip. Drive in roll pin.

Put the weights with their companion springs back. (**Numbers down. Repeat after me numbers down!**)

Now, put it back into the motor as described earlier and set the timing 'only with a timing light' and the motor running at about 750 rpm.

Your done. Check the rotor twist 'trick' again in a few years. Call me if you get tangled up.

TRIMETRIC BATTERY SYSTEM

David Blackshear | Davidsonville, MD | 1973 Painted Desert

I believe many GMC Motorhome owners use their coaches in all sorts of places. Of course our GMCMI semi-annual Conventions and Chapter rallies may be at the top of the list, and certainly camping trips to state parks and commercial campgrounds are popular. One characteristic that is pretty constant is the availability of shore power – the pedestal connections that keep our machines fully useful throughout our camping activities.

Do you engage in “dry camping” – with no available shore power connections? We can do without water and indeed many camping locations such as the state parks of many states in the Northeast have no water connections at each campsite so we use our on-board water tanks and generally do fine. But power – that’s another story.

Our 1973 Painted Desert (23’) is set up with an 115VAC household refrigerator that we have to keep cold around the clock. We are set up with four 6V Golf Cart batteries with an appropriately sized inverter to run the fridge. While we use the generator for things on an infrequent basis for air conditioning, induction cook top and convection oven, much of the time we just depend on the batteries. On the road, we use the Boost Switch from time to time to recharge the batteries from the coach alternator, and of course the generator will do that, but it takes awhile. Soooo, battery condition/state of charge/state of discharge is an important factor and we’ve added a piece of equipment to do that.

We installed a Bogart Engineering “TM-2025 Trimetric Battery System” – a device that keeps very accurate track of the house batteries and a basic track of the starting battery. As the manufacturer says, the unit is designed to monitor:

- “Percent Full” (“State of charge”) of your batteries, so you can see if you need to charge them more, or check that overall usage is less than your charging resources.
- Volts of the batteries, for example to check that they are being charged at proper voltage.
- Energy going in, or out of your batteries, measured in amps or watts, so you can see that your charging sources are charging properly, or how much current your loads are using.
- How many days since the batteries were fully charged: to remind you to not wait too long between fully charging your batteries to maximize their life.
- The voltage only of a second battery, such as a starting battery, or possibly also the input voltage of a solar array

The unit is relatively small (4.5 x 4.75 x 0.9 deep) and is nice looking. Since our inverter and shore power connections are just below our fridge, we mounted it on the adjacent wall.

The unit is available from multiple dealers, some with better prices than others, but around \$150 plus a shunt in whatever size you determine is appropriate for your particular rig. More information is available from the manufacturer at www.bogartengineering.com.



RV SMOKE & CO DETECTORS

Jim Galbavy | Lake Mary, FL | 1973 Custom

Something to think of: RV smoke & CO detectors are made to a higher different standard than those designed for a house. Make sure that there is a label on the back that states that it was approved for RV use. Also, once a year take the detectors down, replace with fresh batteries and blow out the dust from the back perimeter. Otherwise it will go off in the middle of the night trying to tell you the coach is on fire. Most RV service centers have the RV approved models, the big box stores don't. The house detectors are not recommended for use above 85% humidity or above a range above 100 F. The inside of a coach can get hot while in storage. Just a few things to think of.

Click here to read more about it fire prevention at www.macthefireguy.com.

MICROSOFT STREETS AND TRIPS

On July 1, Microsoft made the announcement on their Facebook page that they are discontinuing Microsoft Streets & Trips. This retirement will not affect software already installed. Current users may continue to use Microsoft Streets & Trips to plan their travel adventures and can access online support until July 2015. They encourage everyone to visit www.bing.com/maps/ online and download the Bing Maps app via your PC or Windows Phone 8.1.

THE “WILD CARD” IN YOUR BRAKES

Jim Bounds | Cooperative Motorworks
877-275-4462 | www.gmccoop.com

As our coaches age, we find parts that would not normally need replacing cause problems when renewing systems. As far as brakes, the wild card part we have found needs replacing every time we touch them is the combination meter valve.

Brake fluid attracts water thus any steel parts are caused to rust. Brake components like steel lines do not normally need replacing on late model vehicles but as time goes on, these steel components rust, clog and basically become unreliable. The original brake combination valve is also made of steel. It is located on top of the frame just behind the front left (driver side) wheel. The steel lines from the brake master cylinder go to this combination valve, from there the pressure is “metered out” to each wheel.

Today, when doing brake work on our classic GMC, you must figure to replace this component no matter what as you replace other parts to renew the brakes. Whether you have original brakes or rear discs, this combination valve will not allow your brakes to work properly if it’s clogged up. Being made of steel, the insides of these valves have been eaten away. There is no need to try and “rebuild” this parts as some have suggested – it is not serviceable and there is no “rebuild kit” for it. It’s made of untreated steel, humidity rusts steel and this combination valve needs to be replaced with a new brass reproduction. Most of the GMC specific dealers offer this valve. If we touch brakes, we replace this part automatically. A clogged combination valve will not allow the technician to properly bleed the brakes so the system cannot work as it needs to.

Today, a good update on your brakes should include just about every part of the brake system to include this combination valve. Of course along with these components, replacing front and rear rubber brake hoses front and rear, wheel cylinders, calipers, master cylinder along with the usual brake shoes and pads are a must. Do not cut yourself short and make more work for your technician. Replace all of these parts all together to give yourself the best chance at good brakes for your GMC motorhome.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Carol Swartzendruber | crdruber@gmail.com



I’m hoping that sunshine is shining for each of you this summer along with just the right amount of rain. We have welcomed 26 new members to our club since the last newsletter and that includes 39 people. At least 10 cards have been sent for various reasons to our members along with numerous emails. Several members are still struggling with healing and wholeness, but we continue to wish them well. Sadness came as we said goodbye to Bob Drewes in May and to Marie Mesarchik and Harold Kennedy. I appreciate all those who keep me informed and, unless you tell me, I can’t pass on caring wishes to those who need to know that GMCMI and its membership is there for them. Email Carol Swartzendruber at crdruber@gmail.com. Sending GMCMI Sunshine, Carol



Family Motor Coach Association

Enhancing the motorhome lifestyle!

FMCA CORNER

National Director, John Smyrski

As a FMCA member you have benefits! International travel, Michelin Tire Program, Travel Assistance and Medical Evacuation, campground discounts and more. Check out additional benefits at www.fmca.com.

2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION

Redmond, OR – August 13-16

AREA RALLIES

Midwest Area	Eastern Area	South Central Area
Aug. 27- 30 Lincoln, NE	Sept. 24- 28 Asheville, NE	Oct. 1- 5 Shreveport, LA

THANKS FOR CONTRIBUTING

David Blackshear	Jim Bounds	Jim Galbavy
Fred Hudspeth	Dick Patterson	Jeff Sirum
John Smyrski	Emery Stora	Carol Swartzendruber

Please send article contributions and newly found part number crossovers to the editor for publication.

DISCLAIMER

Newsletter articles are contributed by members and are published as a service to members. Accuracy is not guaranteed. Independent verification is urged.

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