

GMC

MOTORHOMES INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER



Founded in 1982 by Ralph Luby

SUMMER 2015

ISSUE 132

Notes from the VP of Administration

>> CHAPTER STATUS

Membership stands at 1006.

We have 21 new memberships since the last newsletter.

>> UPCOMING EVENTS

2015 Fall Convention

Central States Fairgrounds
Rapid City, South Dakota
Fri, Sept. 25 – Thurs, Oct 1

2016 Spring Convention

National Peanut Festival Grounds
Dothan, Alabama
Fri, April 8 to Thurs, April 15

The “Great Summer GMC Motorhome Rally”

Sat, June 25 to Fri, July 1, 2016
Branson KOA & Convention Ctr
Branson, Missouri

2016 Fall Convention

Fri, Sept 30 to Thurs, Oct 6
Richland County Fairgrounds
Mansfield, Ohio

>> BETWEEN NEWSLETTERS

Keep informed by checking out the GMCMI website at www.gmcmi.com under “Latest News” and/or visit our facebook page.



Let's be friends.
Join us at [facebook.com/GMCMI](https://www.facebook.com/GMCMI)



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dave Blackshear | Davidsonville, MD | 1973 Painted Desert

Summer is surely upon us with record heat in the Northwest, major flooding with loss of life in Texas and multiple tornados in the Midwest may have affected some of our members and their relatives and friends. We should all be looking forward to much calmer and cooler conditions as we focus on our upcoming Fall Convention in Rapid City, South Dakota. I am hopeful that as you read this you will give serious thought to joining us in September. Using Rapid City/Mt. Rushmore National Park as a central focus, there is so much to do and see in the region. You'll want to see Badlands National Park, Wind Cave National Park, Jewel Cave National Monument and Crazy Horse Memorial. Custer State Park is world famous. Check out blackhillsbadlands.com. If you're up for more long distance scenery, Yellowstone National Park is only a day's drive away and gorgeous Glacier National Park is only another day's drive. Y'all Come!!!!

There are numerous topics that will be discussed at the convention. It will be time for election of board members and three new

concepts will be presented by Kim:

- The much-discussed Electronic Parts Interchange will be formally introduced. This will be a second way to find GMC parts, in addition to the paper copy we all cherish.
- You'll see new marketing aids that you will be able to use when you elect to attend car shows and similar events.
- We'll talk about a new Summer Rally experiment in Branson, Missouri as a test location. This would not replace our Spring and Fall Conventions and its focus would be an opportunity for the “younger set” (couples who teach school or have kids in school, for instance) who cannot ever attend our Conventions could come and learn about the GMC coaches and be encouraged to buy one and be a part of us. Us old codgers with grandkids might be interested too.

We will all hope to see three of our regular convention attendees who have struggled with surgery since we saw them last: Dave Lenzi and Carol Baxter with heart surgery and Emery Stora with back surgery. I know there are many other of our members who have or had serious health problems and we wish them our best.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

Selling your GMC Motorhome?

Members receive a free listing in the GMCMI newsletter, an expanding listing and photos (up to nine) on the gmcmi.com website, PLUS an announcement on the GMCMI facebook page and GMCNet when placed on the website.

Current GMCMI members that are selling their GMC Motorhome can transfer the remainder of their GMCMI membership for the calendar year to the new owner!

THERMOSTATIC MIXING VALVE IN THE SHOWER

George Beckman | Colfax, CA | 1974 Eleganza SE

I have never been a fan of RV “campsite” showers. I remember slipping out of my flip-flops, as I tried to walk up an incline to the coach. I remember the shower that had a short chain requiring you to be in the stream of water while waiting for hot water. Ruth disliked the stock divider in the coach. She said it took one hand to try to regulate hot and cold, one to hold the wand and none left to wash. Not having a daily shower is worse.

I decided to install a thermostatic mixing valve...a device that takes hot and cold water and makes it “just right”. I happened to select a valve kit made by Hydrowand. The kit has a very nice on-off valve and a large knob to preset water temperature. The divider valve is not used

I put the unit in as a Christmas present for Ruth in 2012. She was a bit grumpy as she thought it was not a “personal” gift. Boy has she changed her tune!

We have not used an RV camp shower since the installaton. There are of course a couple of caviots: 1) you must have hot water, so you have to wait for it like any other shower, 2) you must have coolish water to mix with engine temperature water.

The on-off valve fits nicely on the forward-bottom of a '74 water heater rack. Once adjusted we have never turned the temperature knob and it is lying on the wheelwell, behind the vanity shell under the sink. I should do better with that!

<http://hydrowand.com/product/thermostatic-valve-kit/>



FRONT WHEEL BEARING INNER SEALS

John Nicholls | Cantonment, FL | 1976 Birchaven

In the 2015 GMCMI Parts Interchange on page nine it addresses a problem with front wheel bearing inner seals. I ordered a NAPA part no. 25515. The one they offered was made by SKF and had the rolled edge which we don't want. A set ordered from O'Reillys' were the National/Federal Brand 5123 and they were correct for our use.

INITIAL START-UP OF NEWLY REBUILT ENGINES

Fred Hudspeth | Tyler, Texas | 1978 Royale
(based on recent exchanges among GMCNet contributors)

Prior to initial startup of a newly rebuilt GMC engine, the engine oil cooler and oil cooler lines must be unmistakably clean (i.e., no residue of any kind from the engine formerly in the frame). Failure to achieve this could be one explanation for the reduced service life of many rebuilt engines relative to OEM engines. The OEM oil cooler lines on 455CID engines are mounted perilously close to the passenger side exhaust manifold and could result in some inside coking due to manifold heat. The most secure way to avoid compromising the service life of a newly rebuilt GMC engine is to replace the radiator/oil cooler and oil cooler lines. An alternative to replacing the radiator/oil cooler is to reroute the engine oil to an air-cooled heat exchanger mounted in front of the air-conditioning condenser. GM acknowledged the less than optimum routing of the “455” cooler lines by re-routing the lines for the successor “403” along the passenger side frame rail. Similarly-routed lines are now available for the “455”. Consult vendors who provide replacement oil cooler lines.

DID YOU GET THE TZE? WHERE DID YOU SEE THE COACH? WAS IT FOR SALE? WHAT WEB SITE?

John Shotwell | Ridgeville Corners, OH | www.gmcmmhregistry.com

These are just some of the questions I ask daily in the pursuit of the elusive GMC Motorhome.

Since I assumed responsibility of maintaining the GMC Motorhome Registry in May of 2011, there have been close to 500 NEW listings to the data base – coaches that had never been accounted for. As of this writing, the number stands at 8,562, a hair over 66% of the 12,921 units built! Not bad for an old gal, wouldn't you say?

And thanks to Gail Bennett's digging, there seems to be about 17 GMC owners in Australia. The Canadian contingent is over 500 listings, and there are numerous coaches around the world. The Registry has also recorded hundreds of ownership changes.

The Registry is, and always has been about the GMC Motorhome. Yes, it asks who you are, where you live, how and when did you acquire your GMC, and who owned it before you. But it's more concerned about accounting for each and every coach and getting the TZE number in the data base. So if anyone sees a GMC sitting in a field, or on a lot, or anywhere, it really helps to send the TZE in to the Registry!

So, if you're a new owner (as there seems to be in the younger crowd), or someone that has had their coach from the beginning of its life, please check to see if it's listed. Go to the Registry web site at: www.gmcmmhregistry.com and send me a note – I'll check it for you. We're working on a way that you can do this yourself – stay tuned.

GMCMH HEADLINER OPTION

Bob Dunahugh | Cedar Rapids, IA | 1978 Royale

The previous headliner material in our GMC was similar to a vinyl contact paper. It had started to come loose from the plywood along the outside edges and was hanging down. While pulling off the loose material, thinking that the remainder of the material would come down fairly easy, we quickly realized an inaccurate assumption. A long-time friend, previously in the upholstery business, suggested to leave the solid vinyl in place and cover over it. I questioned that thought, but he's never steered me wrong and we are pleased with the final results.

STEP ONE: Finding the Material

Finding the material ended up being more of a challenge than anticipated. After visiting several fabric and upholstery shops, we just couldn't find a material that didn't look like something that didn't belong there. The goal was to find a material that offered sound deadening plus looked attractive.

What do the manufacturers of motorhomes and trailers use? At a local Winnebago dealer we proceeded to look at motorhomes and trailers to get an idea of materials utilized. The sales lady patiently took us around looking at everything. She may have thought we were fairly strange, as we seemed to have a fetish about headliners. We proceeded to write down the names of the models and vin numbers of the headliners we liked. We found out that during production, more than one type of headliner can be used for a particular model, which required us to also get the vin number. By contacting Winnebago directly, we were informed of the part number and proceeded to purchase the material through the local dealer. The material comes in eight foot widths. We ordered a piece that was 25 feet long. The cost was approx. \$125 plus \$85 for shipping. But they mentioned, if we could wait for about two weeks, the material could be shipped with their standard dealer order, "free of charge". We took that option. To our surprise, the headliner arrived in six days.

STEP TWO: Preparation for Installation

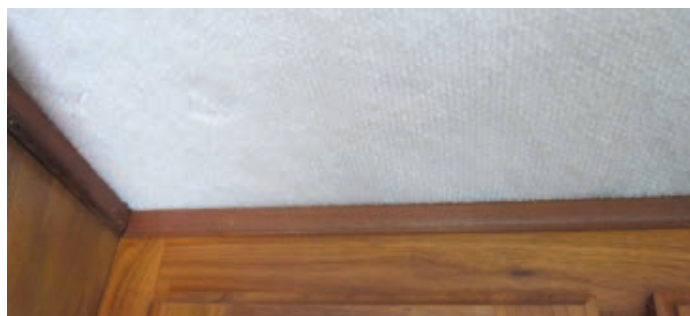
We began the preparation by making sure that only securely attached old headliner remained. Then proceeded to lower the front of the overhead cupboards about one inch and leaving the backs attached to the wall. The walls that went from ceiling to floor, such as the dry bath and refrigerator, we left as is. Then proceeded to remove the roof air conditioner covers, fan frames and light fixtures.

STEP THREE: Applying the Material

Much thought was given on how to keep the headliner perfectly square while cutting-to-fit and apply glue to the material. To accomplish this feat, we marked a center line on the coach ceiling and on the headliner material. With the assistance of two additional people, we draped the material over a 2 by 4 that was 8 feet long, six inches of center line. Then raised the headliner up to the ceiling while matching the two marked center lines on the ceiling and material. We used plastic push pins to hold the headliner to the plywood along the center line. Starting at the front, we began randomly placing push pins into the headliner to hold it in position. Once this was completed, we tucked and trimmed the headliner



to fit. After the entire headliner was cut to fit, the push pins were removed from the front to halfway to the back. Then starting close to the side door and the marked center line, we started applying 3M's Spray Trim Adhesive to the plywood and the back of the headliner material. (The 3M adhesive is a contact type of adhesive.) When the adhesive had dried enough to hold the headliner material, we started applying the headliner to the ceiling. While doing about two feet at a time while having someone at the front to keep the two center lines aligned. After the front half was completed, we repeated the same process for the rear. As a precaution, during the installation of the headliner, randomly placed push pins we used, just in case the adhesive hadn't set entirely.



On permanent walls where tucking was not possible, a piece of wood trim along the walls was installed. (Our choice of wood was walnut.) We are very pleased with the end result and the great job the material offers in sound deadening.

THE "B'S & B'S"

Jim Bounds | Orlando, FL | 1975 Transmode
Cooperative Motor Works | 877-275-4462 | gmccoop.com

Forget worrying about your P's & Q's, watch your "B's & B's" with your GMC motorhome. That's Bearings and Brakes. Each time you stop when driving on the road, go to each wheel and either touch each at the same place or shoot the same place with a heat gun. Compare the two fronts, the two middle and two rear wheels, each should be about the same temperature as it's corresponding wheel. If one is higher, drive another five miles and check it again. If it continues to rise have it checked out right away. Your wheel will heat up from bearing or brake issues long before a failure. A good temperature would be at 160 to 220 degrees F. If one is hot but stays together be sure to have that wheel checked when you get home.

SUNSHINE REPORT

Carol Swartzendruber | Syracuse, IN | crdruber@gmail.com

Fixing, refurbishing and replacing are things that are being done not only to our GMC's but also to the owners of our GMC's. As the Sunshine Lady, I have been responsible for encouraging and supporting our friends and members during some of these trials. I have sent cards to Emery Stora, Carol Baxter, Tom Bessler, Dave Lenzi, Glyn Trimble, Willard Murdock, Jeff Faisure and several others who are working at keeping their "coaches" in running shape. Several are still working at recuperation and especially keep Emery and Michelle Stora in your thoughts and prayers as rehab has been difficult. Mark Elmer was sent sympathy since his wife Beth died.

On a very positive note, I have sent welcome letters to 21 new memberships that span from California to New York and Maine to Georgia and Michigan. We are an ever changing group! May the sun continue to shine on you and the wind be behind your back.

FMCA CORNER

National Director | John Smyrski | Hastings, MN

As I am writing this column, I am getting ready to go to the FMCA National Convention in Madison, Wisconsin – July 29 to Aug 1. I will report about happenings in the next newsletter about it.

Just a reminder that being a member of the FMCA does have its benefits.

Towable Vehicles

FMCA offers an annual compilations of vehicles that can be flat-towed behind a motorhome. Great resource.

FMCAassist Emergency Medical Evacuation and Travel Assistance Plan

FMCAassist, an emergency evacuation/repatriation and emergency medical reunion benefit, is an association-paid member benefit. No sign-up required. Print your FMCAassist member I.D. card today.

Highlights of FMCAassist include:

- emergency evacuation/repatriation
- emergency medical reunion
- return of mortal remains
- return of dependents
- RV/vehicle return (limited to North America)
- pet return

FMCAassist coverage is available to members worldwide as long as you are more than 100 miles from home. You can be traveling in a motorhome, car, plane, ship, or motorcycle to be eligible for this benefit. If you are a full-time RVer, you are always considered 100 miles from home. Some exclusions and limitation amounts pertain to this benefit.

Check out these and additional benefits at www.fmca.com.



2015 FMCA National Conventions
Madison, Wisconsin – July 29 to Aug 1
Perry, Georgia – March 17 to 20, 2016

ACCIDENT PREVENTION STEP – REPLACE REAR TAIL LIGHTS WITH LED

Tom Whitton | Paducah, KY | 1973 Custom Glacier

On a sunny day, have someone follow you in your GMC going down the road. The other person will be amazed at how poor your rear lights are! As an accident prevention step, put on the top of your "to-do-list" change out rear tail lights to LED.

Tom Whitton has written a paper illustrating how to do that with pictures. Check it out at www.gmcmi.com/technical-presentations-papers/.

BLACK LIST UPDATED

Billy Massey | Brownwood, TX | 1976 Palm Beach
(as reported on the GMCNet)

Thanks to the several new members for those update submissions to the Black List. To download your copy, add your name or update your information go to www.bdub.net/Black_List/.

WHY DO WE HAVE GMC'S?

Rob Mueller | Sydney, Australia | 1975 Avion
(as noted on the GMCNet)

To put it succinctly:

GMC = great coach

GMC Owners = THE BEST!

THANKS FOR CONTRIBUTING

George Beckman

Dave Blackshear

Jim Bounds

Bob Dunahugh

Fred Hudspeth

Billy Massey

Rob Mueller

John Nicolls

John Shotwell

John Smyrski

Carol Swartzendruber

Tom Whitton

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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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Please submit articles, tips, recalls and
newly found part number crossovers to:

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