

A Golden Year

President's Message

"We're only as good as our history!"

April 10, 1965 to April 10, 2015

As we reflect on MWC's year, we find a year packed with celebration and history taking us back to the founding of our Chapter in 1963 and becoming a charter FMCA chapter in 1965. Many have stated that "you're only as good as your history", and that "this history is a prediction of the future."

In that case, MWC is rich in its past and epic leadership over the past 53 years. Let's take a moment and reflect on the past year and recollect the activities and events that will forge our future years. Many thanks to all the members who have contributed to our success and those waiting to lead us into the next 50 years.

We began the year in the chilly April weather at the Crawford County Fairgrounds with **Bud and Wanda Trash**, in Bucyrus, Ohio. This rally was our initial, 2015 start which would prepare us for the next celebration rally in May in Wauseon at the Fulton County Fairgrounds. Planning went on for nearly two years, along with the Michigan Knights of the Highway for this event. A record number of coaches attended from both chapters as well as FMCA and GLAMA officers who were also in attendance at the 50th anniversary celebration. **Doug Erman and Donna, Ty and Terrye Kolbe and Marilyn and I** served as hosts along with **Glen and Karen Perkin and Sally and Bob Sutton**, from the Knights.

We reminisced about the past with our first President, **Mr. Charlie Owens and his wife Jean**. Charlie and his son produced a CD of pictures of the early years of MWC and FMCA, which was shared with those members attending. Also attending was MWC's first Treasurer, **Don Marsh and his wife Molly**. FMCA and **Jane Roush**, GLAMA President and now a MWC member, presented certificates recognizing the 50 year milestone for the MWC, Michigan Knights and the Northeastern Chapters. Marilyn and I were personally very proud of our chapter and the leadership that had preceded us, by our past Presidents, to make this celebration a very special event. Special 50th anniversary polo shirts were made available for members to commemorate the

celebration. What a great event for all three FMCA chapters and it will be recorded in our history with great significance.

At our June rally, at Glamarama 2015, in Goshen, Ind., we enjoyed a super rally with our celebration continuing. Chapter officers served cake and ice cream to all attendees and our 50th anniversary banners hung high in recognition of the 50 year feat. Again a proud moment for MWC and also success at recruiting new members at the Chapter Fair held that weekend. **Bud and Wanda Trash and Marilyn and I** served as rally hosts.

July took us to Kandel's Resort in Walnut Creek Ohio with **Jerry and Phyllis Griesen** serving as our hosts. It was a newer campground located in the heart of Amish country. Great company, new guests, who decided to join Midwest Coachmen, and lots of places to visit and eat in the Amish communities. Nice facilities and food too, but the friends always are the real deal. The Griesens know how to plan a rally.

August's rally in Middle Point, Ohio at the Huggy Bear campground with **Doug and Donna Erman** as our hosts, saw garage salers relish over the annual HWY 127 Garage Sales running from Michigan to Alabama, over 650 miles. Several members traveled part of the route over the weekend picking through the multitude of items for sale looking for bargains. We enjoyed meals in Delphos, Ohio and the sense of community by its residents.

In September, we experienced "urban camping" in the city of Dayton at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds with **Fred and Kay Dudding**. We were introduced to a new "closeness" in camping with units, often-times inches apart. Our own firestarter, **Ray Bowen**, had us continuing that closeness with well attended fire ring sessions at night. Urban camping included the close proximity to helicopters, ambulances, police vehicles and others seeking business at the Miami Valley Hospital across the street. The activities and meals were great and those who visited the Wright-Patterson Air Force base and museum were treated to a world of flight. MWC donated money to the Wright Brothers Family Foundation for the lecture provided by Steven Wright, the great grandnephew of Wilbur and Orville Wright. A great time was had at the Engineers Club in downtown Dayton.

October's year-end rally takes us to Burton, Ohio and the Geauga County Fairgrounds hosted by **Dick and Pat Christenson**. The annual Apple Butter Festival will highlight this rally, along with some home-cooked meals provided by our hosts. This will end another year of rallies, until the Christmas Dinner on Dec. 5 at the Dutch Valley Restaurant near Walnut Creek.

Of significance this "Golden" year, was the addition of seven new members with another two expected by year-end. Unfortunately, several members sold coaches or moved to

warmer climates, as we would expect with our membership demographics. We will miss **Lynn and Mary Gilmore and Harley and Sandy Bowser** as they move forward with their future plans. We hope that they will continue as Associate members and come visit when they can.

This year, we published a 50th Anniversary Edition of our membership directory, thanks to **Alan and Sharon Jackson**. This special edition highlighted the history of MWC going back to its birth on October 19, 1963 at Whitewater State Park near Liberty, Indiana. So we are really 53 years young this October! A great job and salute to the Jacksons for taking on this major endeavor each year.

At the RV/MH Hall of Fame in Elkhart, Ind., we memorialized Past President, **Tim Fowler**, and the 50 year celebration of MWC, with engraved bricks placed in the walk of fame outside the building entrance. When you are in Elkhart, please stop and visit these memorials,

Pat Gottfried, our Newsletter editor and **Lynda Kiliany**, our webmaster, continue to do an excellent job getting information out to our membership. Continue to check our website at *midwestcoachmen.com* for the latest info. on our club's activities. **Pat Bisson** has kept us abreast of sick or injured members throughout this year. **John Bisson** makes an effort to make a personal contact to all new FMCA members to inform them about our chapter with much success.

Our Treasurer, **Doug Erman**, has done yeoman work with his involvement in the 50th celebration and serving as the financial point person, and keeping our chapter's finances in balance as our treasurer. Vice-President, **Terrye Kolbe and Ty** handled the food and games at the 50th celebration and did an excellent job, enjoyed by all. **Martha and Roger Boice**, our Secretary work to keep our minutes and record our history for the future.

Wanda and Bud Trash, our National Director, stepped down this year after many years as our representative to the FMCA national organization. They traveled many miles without reimbursement to national rallies to represent us. The position is currently vacant. **Steve and Gerry Juliano**, our rally coordinators and 50/50 ticket seller, ensure that our rallies are planned, that we never run out of supplies and that there are winners at every rally.

You can see that it takes many members to make our chapter work and continue to be one of the best in FMCA. Our appreciation to everyone that volunteers their time to make this happen.

We are also on Facebook and 23 members use this social media to communicate. I attempt to duplicate things in our newsletter and website on our Facebook page for those folks. If you haven't joined, it is a member's only site and you must be approved to access the site.

Don't forget the Christmas dinner on Dec. 5, 2015 at the Dutch Valley Restaurant near Sugar Creek hosted by the Jacksons. More on this dinner will be posted on the website and newsletters.

Thanks to all for making our Golden Year a great one! See you all at our Christmas Dinner Celebration in December.

Pres. Ken

