



Bird Tracks

Presented by Blue Bird Chapter of FMCA,

Summer 2009



From the President

by Tom Bay



A lot of changes have occurred over the past two years that I have been President of the Chapter. The most significant change was the closing of the Blue Bird Coachworks factory in Ft. Valley, GA. The Blue Bird Chapter of FMCA, LLC will continue to function as in the past, but without factory support. We will hold the "Rally in the Valley" in Sevierville, TN at the River Plantation RV Park on October 5 - 9, 2009. A Business Meeting will be held on October 6, 2009 at 2:00 pm. in the Convention Center. The election of new Board Members by the membership is scheduled at this time. Everyone is encouraged to attend. We have three great rally hosts: Jimmy & Jean Cox, Tommy & Shirley Vance, Ross & Joann Dover. If you have not attended a rally that this trio has hosted, you are in for a treat.

I want to thank all of the Rally Hosts that have hosted rallies over the past two years and want to express my appreciation to all Committee Members for the countless hours that they have given to the Chapter. Additionally, I want to express my appreciation to each Board Member for the devotion to the leadership and management of the Chapter that each has provided.

Our new rally season starts immediately and we still have room for new Rally Hosts to host rallies for 2010. If you have an interest in becoming a Rally Host for next year, please contact any new board member or the new president.

Thanks to all of you Blue Bird friends, new and old. You have made the past two years very special for Sandi and me.

Here's hoping to see you, down the road, soon.

Tom and Sandi Bay



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More Family than Friends

BY NEAT SCOTT



Good News! We are the lucky ones! By chance, or by design, no matter where we roam we are likely to meet friends. Highways and byways are our neighborhoods. Once upon a time many people lived their entire lives and didn't leave their home towns for any length of time. If they were fortunate they went on a two week trip every few years. Now our close friends are located from the east coast to the west coast. They may be just about anywhere at any given time. Computers and cell phones have made such an impact on all of us. News is exchanged in a millisecond. I like that; bet you do too. We'd be lost without our toys. We love getting our hometown newspaper on line. Our television connections allow us to watch our hometown channels. You almost forget where you are. Cameras allow us to view family and friends back home. We needn't feel we're far away at all. Have you heard of the new Kindle 2 that allows you to carry an entire library on it? It holds something like 1500 books. I've heard good reports from those who have them. I now have one on my wish list. Hubby will be thrilled I am not loading the coach with all that reading material. I just have to rationalize spending \$350 and give up my hobby of going to used book stores. I think I can do that!

Very often as we pull into a resort for the night we find one or more acquaintances. If that isn't the case, odds are you will find if you visit long with a new neighbor, the two of you know some of the same folks. I recall a time when I thought it would be so wonderful if one could pick and choose one's neighbors. You would only live next to your family and friends. You could visit at will, eat together at one another's place or go out to experience a new restaurant, sporting event, or perhaps the theater etc. where everyone knew your name. You were assured of acceptance. You watched one another's backs. If anyone needed anything, the others were sure to rally around with support and help. It happens with snowbirds. It also happens all summer long; i.e., north to south and east to west. It occurs to me that it is exactly what the RV lifestyle is all about. When we live on wheels, we are neighbors with anyone of our choosing. Friends are doing just that from one end of this country to the other. It doesn't get any better than this.

Face it, there are only so many roads that lead to warm climates in the winter, those favorite comfortable temperatures of the summer, sights we want to visit, rallies we want to attend and so on. We can take our favorite people along.

We should check home addresses of our friend along our routes. Who knows, we may be traveling near them. You'd both be disappointed if later you found that was the case and you failed to make contact along the way. Amen, we are the lucky ones!

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PERSONAL PROFILE

By Bill and Pat Snyder

Bill Snyder, parents, and all 6 siblings, moved from the Cleveland, OH area in 1960. The family settled in Northern California and Bill moved to Southern California. An uncle had a position at Lockheed for him as a machinist.

Pat Snyder was born in Inglewood, California, as were her parents. The family moved to beautiful downtown Burbank while Pat was in the 3rd grade. Pat studied to be a hair dresser while in high school, but later decided the constant standing was too strenuous. She applied at the local telephone company, Pacific Bell, as an information operator, just to sit down! That was the last assignment where sitting all day was possible.

Pat & Bill met while water skiing at Lake Isabella, California in 1965. Married in 1967, we began our lifelong love of the outdoors. Bill continued his schooling and became an engineer for various aerospace companies. For many years, he contracted his work rather than becoming a permanent employee of a

company. This allowed him great flexibility with his work and hours. Pat continued with the Pacific Bell/ATT/SBC/ATT for 35 years, the majority spent as a manager in various departments. Pat retired in 1997; Bill followed in 1998.

During the working years, we spent most weekends involved with our love of outdoors. By the time we purchased our first house, we had purchased our first boat and motorcycle. Boating became our first love for many years. We alternated weekends between boating at nearby lakes and riding dirt motorcycles in the desert. By the time we purchased our third house, we had added street motorcycle riding (bike and a tent trailer behind it), four wheeling and a motorhome. We joined a boat club and did vacations at Lake Powell in Utah, Lake Mead in Nevada, and Catalina Island in the ocean – all with Pat getting sea sick with any motion. We loved water skiing and cruising the waters. Our motorcycling adventures took us on many beautiful Sunday drives and camping in the Sierras.

Slowly, motorhoming took over and by the time we retired we sold all the toys and the house too. We've been full timing since 1998 and love it! We own a campsite at Outdoor Resorts Rancho California in Aguanga, outside of Temecula, CA. We spend a few months there a year, but mostly travel this gorgeous country. We bought our Blue Bird in 2000 and have just increased our traveling enjoyment with it. We belong to the Blue Bird Chapter, Vintage Birds, Wild Bunch and several other camping organizations. Our plans are to continue full timing and simply go from this adventure to assisted living!



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Dave's Red Barn

By Martha Vaughn

One fall Charlie and I traveled to Eastern North Carolina for a canoe trip in the Alligator River Preserve. The only campground available was Rocky Hock Campground off NC 32, north of Edenton, NC. We turned off the highway and headed northwest, making several turns around the farmland covered with cotton, soybeans, and peanuts dotted with wooden farm houses.

Rocky Hock Campground was an empty, thinly grassed field, flat as a griddle. It would be hot as a griddle in the summer time, but this was early November. At the office a husky voiced woman greeted us and suggested we park near the pond wherever we wanted. "Be sure to come to Dave's Red Barn on Friday night." She pointed down the road to a red building under the oaks. "We have a good band. Everybody will be here." We thanked her, having no intention of going.

The next day, we canoed the Scuppernong River, enjoying the fall colors reflected in the black water. We were tired when we got back to Rocky Hock. The husky voiced woman was waiting for us outside our coach. "Just stopped by to see if you need anything and to remind you—Friday night is band night at Dave's Red Barn. We'll be looking for you." "We won't forget," I answered.

Friday morning a water tanker grumbled past the coach spewing water on the dusty road and waking us. After breakfast, we headed up NC 32 toward the Virginia line to Merchants Mill Pond State Park, an enchanted place. The black water is coated with duckweed in places and surrounded by huge cypress buttresses and knees. The young maples of red, yellow, and orange looked like jewels reflected in the mirror stillness of the black water. We hiked and enjoyed the scenery.

By late afternoon we were back at Rocky Hock, following the water tanker wetting down the road again. By suppertime, trucks, jeeps, and cars were driving toward the barn. "Looks like Dave's Red Barn will

be full tonight,” I mused. “Let’s go.” “I’m not dancing,” Charlie warned. We opened the doors of the barn and stepped back into the sixties: beehive hairdos, rhinestone glasses, polyester tunics and pantsuits. People near the door brought us chairs and made room for us at one of the long tables adorned with pumpkins and dried flowers. Wagon wheel chandeliers lit the large space. Horse collars decorated with scarecrows hung on the walls made of every type of wood paneling possible.

One end of the barn was the stage where six guitarists, two keyboardists, several fiddle players—one left-handed, a bass player, a banjo player, a dobro player and the youngest person in the room—a teenage drummer, entertained the crowd. The husky-voiced woman was one of several singers standing in a group on the left side. Boy! Were they good! Music from the sixties filled the place: Merle Haggard, Flat and Scruggs, Doc Watson. Entertainers one could care about, identify with. True country singers who bared their souls to the world and gave us loves gone bad, life worth living, and hope. The wiry farmers and their rotund wives clapped and danced. The barn reverberated with some of the best music I’ve heard in a long time. The husky voiced woman stepped to the microphone. The crowd stilled. Out of her soul flowed the voice of Patsy Cline’s “Crazy for loving you.”

After the last note, the crowd erupted in clapping and cheering. I was too stunned to move. I’ve heard many versions of that song, heard lots of people sing it, but no one has done it justice (other than Patsy herself) as well as the woman at Dave’s Red Barn.

If you are looking for a unique Friday Night activity, go to Rocky Hock Campground. Step back into the sixties. Join the crowd at Dave’s Red Barn. It’s a bit out of the way, but worth every mile.

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Parliament Coach Corporation Rally Ohio's Amish Country

July 14-18, 2009

By Martha Vaughn



Blue Birds landed in the Evergreen Park RV Resort in the Amish Country of Ohio to attend the Parliament Coach Corporation rally. Out of 39 coaches, 18 were Blue Birds. Steve and Martha Cooper, President and wife of The Parliament Travel Club, Ken Robertson, a manager at Parliament, and Roselynn Lewis, event coordinator, were our hosts and leaders. Ken brought a lovely Prevost show coach for us to tour.

Tuesday night we went across the street to the Mountain Top Restaurant for a delicious Amish meal, one of several we had during the rally. It was a noisy, happy group, filled to the brim with fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, and green beans. Some had room for banana pudding afterwards.

Wednesday we boarded two Prevost buses for a trip through Holmes County and surrounding areas. Each bus had a guide to tell us about the people and their way of life. Olis Miller (her name spells "silo" backwards, she informed us) was the guide on bus number two. She is a Mennonite with a delightful, quirky sense of humor. We learned the difference between the Amish and the Mennonites, mostly a difference in life practices rather than religion. The Amish do not use electricity or vehicles other than the horse and buggy and horse drawn farm equipment. They have a strict dress code. They do not go to school beyond the age of 14. The lack of available farmland forces many older boys and girls to work outside the farm. Once the women marry, they return to the home while the men still work in the outside world. Mennonites use electricity and vehicles, go to college, and often work outside the farm.

We rolled through the beautiful countryside to Wendell August, producer of hand-crafted and forged aluminum and brass items for the home. From there we went to



the Amish and Mennonite Heritage Center where we viewed an amazing hand-painted cyclorama depicting their history. A film afterwards further enlightened us on their present lives.



We lunched at Der Dutchman Restaurant, another delicious Amish meal. After lunch we were surprised to find the parking lot filled with “horseless carriages” from the earliest days of automobile history. The Ohio Touring Club was in the area with fifty open cars trimmed in brass with hard rubber wheels. They made a wonderful contrast to the elaborate coaches we enjoy and the somber carriages the Amish use.

Our next stop was at P. Graham Dunn National Headquarters. They make wooden items for the home. After our bus tour, Parliament treated us to a cocktail party and dinner at the RV Park pavilion. Bingo followed with several people winning great gifts from Parliament.



The next two days were open for participants to go where they wanted. Several people went to Lehmen’s Hardware Store that has everything from wringer washers and wood cook stoves to bakery goods and a café. Some people went to the Yoder Farm to view examples of early and modern Amish houses. The household furniture and equipment was from the era of two generations ago.

The final supper Friday night was at The Amish Door Village served family style. Again we were completely stuffed with tasty Amish food. (Someone commented that it was a four-pound rally!) After the meal, Roselynn conducted a drawing for great items ranging from a crockpot to a wall plaque, from a handmade pocketbook to a tool set.



We said our goodbyes on Saturday morning. Everyone enjoyed Parlimant's excellent hospitality at The Evergreen RV Park, a perfect setting for an enjoyable rally.

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GEORGE ROLAND CONDON

“PERSONAL PROFILE”

(By Monica Jones, Daughter)

THE WONDER YEARS: AGES 8 - 19

At age eight my father loaned me \$29.00 to purchase a lawnmower to begin cutting grass for anyone willing to hire me. At nine a first employee came on board. Pulling weeds, selling vegetables out of the family garden, a paper route, babysitting, landscaping, and working in a packing house loading tractor trailers were my routine activities after age eleven. When it became apparent I was becoming an up-standing adolescent, home products sales became my business, selling door-to-door. In junior high school, service opportunities were mine as both the Sophomore Class President and Vice President. The former President put a dead cat in Ms. Levine's desk drawer, so I did both jobs for the remainder of the school year. A thirty minute school wide radio program was my responsibility each morning to broadcast current events, local news, weather reports, school lunch menu, guest interviews and play four songs of my choice. The show biz bug "bit me." I craved to learn more! One of my paper route customers was the news director for the only television station in my hometown of Salisbury, Maryland. He hired me to be an actor on a children's TV show called *Hobo Joe* as an interpreter for Joe's pet monkey (what an honor). Not long thereafter my activities included building sets, floor manager, switching, and managing audio while also managing my other entrepreneurial endeavors. By age 17 the decision was made to just stick with television and the paper route. Finally came graduation from high school (Oh yes, after failing the sixth grade.....something about not paying attention) and it was off to New York to enroll in the RCA Institute School of Television and Film. If you're wondering, "Yes, top class graduate was my position."

LIFE IN THE BIG CITY, NEW YORK: AGES 20-32

My first professional gig was as a production assistant for the Macy's Day Parade, an NBC production. The second job was working for *Smile You're on Candid Camera* with Allen Funt. Responsibilities included location scouting, building and designing sets (the splitting car with Fannie Flagg was one of mine) and appearing as an extra on screen sets. With some comedy under my production belt, more serious work with Jim Lipscomb followed as an associate producer for the *Bell Telephone Hour Specials*. This experience allowed me to form my own film production company called Film Management Associates (FMA) where films for independent producers were managed. Work with *Life Magazine* four-hour specials, twelve additional productions with my mentor, Jim Lipscomb, and consulting for *Time Life Inc* to form their production facility came next. I designed and oversaw completion of the production center which included screening rooms, cutting rooms, and production offices. Most exciting was an opportunity to evaluate the assets of five television stations to determine their feasibility of being brought into the operation and interviewing over 500 employees of *Time Life* and *Sports Illustrated* from which a staff of 53 were hired to start up their new television division. I negotiated with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for United States distribution rights for overseas television programs for *Life Magazine* television productions. It was challenging to plan the first "How To" video series for *Time Life* and help produce the first cooking series with Julia Child (that's where I developed a love for fine wines) at WGBH in Boston. Opportunities emerged to work on a feature film, *Blue Water White Death*, with Peter Gimbel and work as an associate producer, again with Jim Lipscomb, on a film titled *Cutting Loose*, a Documentary film of a 60 foot two-mast schooner that sailed from San Pedro, California to Singapore. As a subsidiary of FMA, I owned and operated a special effects company, built many special effects scenarios for Madison Avenue clientele, developed one of the first cost accounting systems in television production utilizing an IBM main frame located in Philadelphia. This allowed producers to have up to the minute production costs. Here many people who would later become famous came into my life. Two stand out: Harry Chapin, who worked for me as an editor before his big hits *Taxi* and *Cats in the Hat*, a song my daughters and I always refer to when things are too hectic to get together, and Wes Craven, well known writer, editor, and film producer, who has a special place in my heart. Craven spent the night at my Staten Island home and I drove him into the city the next morning. On the way back from the city, police stopped my maroon Porsche for speeding 120 MPH over the Verrazano Bridge. The judge sentenced me to do 30 days in jail. Worry not; I managed business from my cell, not a cell phone which wasn't yet invented. My daughters would want me to

mention Bill Bixby, a friend after whom we named their poodle. He was the best dog girls could ever want. At this point in my life, age 32, I'd been involved in over 60 productions and was getting tired of the rat race. A choice became necessary to get out or end up in places I didn't need to be. I got out!

BACK TO MY ROOTS: AGES 33 TO 64

A chicken farm was purchased, one mile from where I grew up. Yes, I raised chickens, but that wasn't enough. Something about the fresh smell of manure stimulated creative juices once again and I developed the mini-drinker, an automatic watering device for baby chicks, and began a business to distribute these devices on a rental basis to farmers in the area for the week when chicks are too small to reach the watering troughs. Still this wasn't enough. Owning and operating three seafood packing houses, employing 450 seasonal workers grossing over \$4.5 million annual sales was demanding. Time moved on to development of a cleaning solution for acoustical ceiling tiles with crews that traveled the East Coast fulfilling contracts to clean ceiling tiles. Later came construction and photography at the same time. On the construction end, with 85 employees in several states, I remodeled fast food restaurants, Pizza Hut, Hardee's, McDonald's, Dunkin Donuts, NAPA Auto Parts, AAMCO, and seventeen Second National Banks. On the photography end were countless weddings and portraits in my own studio. At a point it became obvious that weekend work on a regular basis was too much. Personal photography replaced rigorous weekend photography. Life is good, thanks to many great people over the years, family, friends, and associates who contributed immeasurably and allowed me to have the life experiences I share with you in this *Profile*. People are our best renewable resource.

When my wife, Janice, who supported me through all my endeavors was diagnosed with breast cancer we decided to sell out and retire. Thankfully she's a breast cancer survivor and we've traveled this beautiful nation, the USA, for two years in a wonderful Blue Bird Motorhome enjoying experiences all Blue Birders love. Notwithstanding, the mind never stops. More travels in the Blue Bird and new television show ideas are my current passions. Having two Blue Birds over a ten year period has enhanced our lifestyle in ways never dreamed possible. We stop when we are tired or hungry. Our stay in an area may change from a night to months without many problems. Frequently we're stopped by other Birders just to say "Hello." We've met great people and made lasting friendships. We love being "free as a bird" in our Blue Bird, Serendipity Too. Please flash your lights if you see us on the road, or you can reach Janice and me at rc-rvp@hotmail.com or via cell phone at 443-235-1849.



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AIRVENTURE: "A REALLY BIG RALLY"

By Maurice DeShazer

After attending the Parliament/Blue Bird Chapter Rally in Dundee, OH and the FMCA Rally in Bowling Green, OH we decided to journey west and northward to Oshkosh, WI to attend the annual EAA Air Show, known as AirVenture Oshkosh. We arrived a day early and were able to stay for only the first half of the "Big Rally," which gave us an insight into another way to rally. This was clearly the largest event of the year with approximately 625,000 people in attendance. The largest FMCA Rally paled by comparison in size. Additionally, there was an estimated 10,000 small aircraft which had been flown in by participants of the event. Ten thousand airplanes, parked wing to wing with a pathway between each row, requires lots of room; they were everywhere, all around the runway and into the fields surrounding it. It made a most interesting sight: ten thousand small airplanes parked row after row, many with small tents set up beside it for the use of the pilot and passengers. We could not help but make a comparison to this method of travel and the one we have chosen to use. We drove to the event in the luxury of our multi-thousand dollar Blue Bird and had the luxury of a dry queen size bed while the plane owners flew to the event in their multi-thousand dollar and in some cases, multi-million dollar airplanes, to sleep in a tent on the ground.



Surrounding the area were a large number of campgrounds to accommodate everything from Blue Birds and Prevosts down to a variety of tents and everything in between. Transportation to and from the campgrounds was provided by shuttle for those choosing to use it. The parking lots alone were an impressive site. We have no numbers on the amount of RVs and tents that were there, but the number was substantial. Most of parking was dry camping, but we were fortunate to get 50 amp service and water.



The events area was set up with many displays ranging from airplanes to components and everything else imaginable in the aviation world that one "cannot live without." Aircraft ranging in size from ultralights to multi-jet luxury corporate planes were on display for everyone's fantasy. Most major manufacturers of aircraft were on display in block after block arrangements. Most manufacturers had multiple models of their products situated to tempt everyone's wildest dreams. I don't have a count on the number of displayed airplanes, but it must have exceeded a hundred. The display area was like a small city laid out in city blocks. The display was so large that it would be nearly impossible for one to spend a little time at each vendor.



There were several vendor buildings and other locations for vendors with smaller displays of everything used to make and enhance an airplane. There was also an area for the swap and shop type vendors. The number of vendors must have approached a thousand based on the vendor number assignments. Speaking of a fantasy world, this was it. Anyone with enough interest to attend the event would have been enriched with all the neat ideas of ways to spend money. Again, if a person did nothing else at the AirVenture Oshkosh, but visit

all of the vendors, the time would run out before running out of vendors.

The overall area was much too large for people of our vintage to walk; therefore, the planners provided excellent shuttle service throughout the display area and around the air park. Utilizing this service, it was possible to move around the area comfortably and timely. Shuttles ran about a block or two apart and were able to keep this large crowd moving at a very respectable flow.



The real action took place in the air. Starting at day break and continuing all day long and into the dark was this continuous buzz of helicopters and fixed wing craft. The really fun stuff started around 3:00 p.m. each day with formation fly-overs of various warbirds and other vintage aircraft. In-formation fly-overs ranged from five to six planes to dozens in perfect coordination, each with their smokers running in full smoke, which made a very dramatic impression on all observers. These formations came from the right, from the left, from the rear and from the front. Sometimes these occurred all at the same time. Coordination of these events gave the tower

support for their claim of being the “busiest control tower in America.”

Planes were continuously coming and going. One of the early demonstrations of flying skill was provided by a lone Thunderbird in his F-16 fighter. This plane was open for display early in the day and was then towed to the flight line where we all observed him taxi to the end of the runway. He took off with a major blast of power which took the plane across the runway in full view of everyone at an altitude of only a very few feet from the concrete. At the end of the runway he took a sharp up-turn and flew straight up until he was nearly out of sight. The sound of the jet was nearly deafening it was so loud as he did vertical barrel rolls in his ascent. A few minutes later the F-16 returned for a couple maneuvers that gave us all a thrill and then he was gone on to his next destination.



The next show was made by high performance propeller driven, single place aircraft. Keep in mind that all of these planes were equipped with smokers that provided a tell-tale reminder of the flight path they had just taken. We all observed a variety of stunts from horizontal flight with repeated barrel rolls, first one way and then the other and back. Others were demonstrating flying the plane with the belly down, then over on the left side for a while, then on over for a while so that the belly was up (the pilot was head down), then continuing the roll to fly with the right side down for while, then returning to the normal flight position, followed by the next stunt in the series. At that point another plane took over the stage by flying from left to right nearly the length of the field, upside down all the way. At this point I have a question on the physics of the wings of this plane. The wing of the airplane is designed to give maximum lift to support the plane in flight. The shape of the wing is somewhat flat on the bottom with a somewhat blunt leading edge and the top of the wing has a major crown just behind the leading edge that tapers gradually to a thin edge on the trailing edge of the wing. The wing shape provides a vacuum over the majority of the wing surface when the wing is in forward motion. The lower side of the wing does not have this vacuum space, as does the top of the wing, which allows the lower side of the wing to experience normal atmospheric pressure. The difference between the air pressure on the top of the wing (a vacuum) and the air pressure on the bottom of the wing (atmospheric pressure of about 14.5 psi) is what gives the wing lift and makes flight possible. Propellers are shaped somewhat like the wing as well as are rotor blades on helicopters. The effect of the shape of the wing can easily be seen in a wind tunnel when smoke is injected to flow past the wing. After having described how the wing provides lift to the airplane in normal flight, it is necessary to consider the effect on the shape of the wing on lift to the airplane when it is upside down. If it provides lift in normal flight, wouldn't it provide the same force in a downward direction (the wing is still lifting) when the plane is being flown upside down? How is it possible then, to fly a mile or more when the plane is upside down?

While all of this was going on, other planes were doing loops by flying straight down and just about the last minute before crashing, they would bring the front of the plane upward until the plane would fly perfectly vertical. Upward flight would continue until gravity overcame the upward force produced by the propeller and the plane would stall out and begin falling to earth. The appearance of the free-fall was exacerbated by the deliberate spinning and wobbling of the plane under full throttle. This process continued over and over by a variety of pilots.

One of the more spectacular demonstrations was done with a helicopter.

Everyone knows how a helicopter is supposed to fly, i.e., straight up, sideways, forward and backwards. Helicopters are not supposed to do barrel rolls in level flight; they are not supposed to fly forward and upward with the nose up until it does a reverse summersault or reverse flip over itself so that the rotor blade is down and the body of the helicopter is above, but the demonstration flight did all of this and more. We were told that the helicopter was able to do this only because it had a fixed rotor head and was equipped with a titanium rotor.



Another quality demonstration was done with the latest model of a Piper Business Jet. Acrobatics were not demonstrated with this plane, but its handling ability, short takeoff and landing and quiet features were shown. This twin jet flew with almost no sound in level flight and remained whisper quiet during acceleration. It was touted as the future in business avionics.



One of the most anticipated airplanes of the event was the experimental plane envisioned by the late Steve Fosset and developed by Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic in partnership with Burt Rutan and was built by Scaled Composites. It is the largest all-composite aircraft ever built. The plane looks at first glance like to two planes tied together at the wing tips, but upon the second look, it is obvious that this plane is something very different and very special.

It has two main bodies, each with its own tail section which are joined at the wing tips. The port section has its jet engines located outboard to the port (left) side and the starboard section has its two jet engines to the starboard (right) side. It made its first public debut at the AirVenture Oshkosh after flying in from Mojave, CA at an altitude of





52,000 ft. It is known as the WhiteKnight Two or WK2 and has a mission, along with other WK2s to follow: to serve as the launch vehicle for the first commercial system designed to take civilian travelers beyond the earth's atmosphere.

Still another impressive demonstration was made by the Erickson Aircrane *Elvis* as it delivered large quantities of water in a fire fighting demonstration. The Helitanker, dubbed the “Elvis,” can carry 2,650 gallons of water or retardant, and according to U.S. Forest Service study, is the most economical fire fighting platform on a price per gallon basis available today.

The largest airplane at the AirVenture was the Airbus A380. Its new whisper quiet engines provided a super demonstration of speed and agility in the air and were even more impressive on the ground. Their size is overwhelming as they dwarf all other jet engines that I have ever seen. The plane itself is extremely large and can carry nearly 1,000 people when configured as the A380-900. It is a double decker that stands at an estimated 50 to 60 feet tall, maybe more (I did not get the actual measurements), to the top of the fuselage. The tail stabilizer towers above the fuselage to an estimated height of more than 80 feet from the ground. If I counted correctly the plane is supported by 20 tires on the ground. The estimations are necessary here to provide an order of magnitude on the size. Unfortunately we were unable to get our hands on the specifications before leaving the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh air show.

Overall, the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh was one of the most impressive rally type functions that I have ever attended. I would highly recommend to everyone that planning a trip to Oshkosh, WI should be a high priority in your future. I am sure that it is fair to say that there is no other show in the U.S. that comes even close to this one from almost every aspect. Our time frame was such that we were able to see only the first two days of the show and I know that it only gained speed as the week progressed.

(below: prototype of an air/car)





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Spring Green Rally with Vintage Birds

By John McCullers



Spring Green, Wisconsin, a small farming town on the Wisconsin River, provided the setting for the Vintage Bird Rally. Fifteen Blue Birds congregated at the Wisconsin Riverside RV Park for four days of fellowship, relaxation and sightseeing. Many had recently attended the Oshkosh Air Show and were ready to “settle in” at a park and once again have the luxury of full hook-ups. The

open itinerary allowed for individual choices. Spring Green is widely known for the structures and influence of Frank Lloyd Wright. We had the option of attending a group tour through his famous Taliesin built in the early 1900’s of sandstone and native oak. We were able to observe resident students working toward their degrees in architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright’s primary home was built nearby and our tour included a well narrated presentation of the house and an explanation of why certain design aspects were used.

Another interesting option was The House on the Rock. This is not a Frank Lloyd Wright structure, but is well known and a focal point of many tourists. The unique complex of interconnected buildings is full of eclectic collections and a highlight is the infinity room which is cantilevered 218 feet out over the valley.

Other interesting activity options were river tubing and shopping – some for Wisconsin cheese.





Sightseeing was great in the Spring Green area but perhaps some of the best times were those when we ate and played. Our evening meals provided a wonderful assortment of dishes. They may not have been free of cholesterol and calories, but were full of flavor and appeal. Games will allow you to learn a lot about your fellow Blue Birders – the killer instinct was particularly noticeable in Dirty Marbles, but also showed up during a Chinese gift exchange. Darkness finally was on our side and the exchange ended with most of the treasured gifts in the hands of those who most desired them.

The size of the rally really worked well for us – we had an opportunity to interact with everyone there. Hopefully, we laughed enough during our games and gift exchange to burn the excess calories that may have found their way inside our hungry bodies.



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Sunshine and Mist

By Brenda Rodgers

NOTES FROM BLUE BIRDERS . . .

We extend deepest sympathy:

To Jeff and Brenda Horvath in the recent loss of Jeff's Mother, Margaret Horvath,

To Jeanette Denton in the loss of her husband, Mick. Mick passed away on July 8. Jeanette's address: 8781 East 124th Street, Sand Lake, MI 49343

To Deanna Reed in the recent loss of her husband, Bill. Deanna's address: 401 Mallory Ct., Naples, FL 34110

To the children of Mrs. Marie Lilly, Middleburg, VA. Mrs. Lilly passed away in July. Many of you will remember David and Marie Lilly.

To Gary and Jane Halley, (He was President of the Vintage Birds a few years ago.) Their daughter, Julia died unexpectedly on July 17th.

To Blue Bird employee, Earl Davis, in the loss of his father, Claud Davis, on August 10.

Just a reminder.....if you are aware of the loss of loved ones or illnesses of Blue Birders – please e-mail Brenda Rodgers – b73rdgrs@aol.com. Please use “Blue Bird Newsletter” on the subject line.

Something of interest as you travel: If you are in the Tulsa, OK area: Margaret Goatcher's son, Mike Trower, is just opening Gander Way

Winery and Vinyards in Sciatic, OK. Check out their website at www.ganderway.com. (Margaret and Zeine Goatcher had many Blue Birds and attended many of the Blue Bird Rallies. Zeine passed away several years ago.)

Always remember our Troops – They are still out there fighting for our freedom!

I always enjoy hearing from you Blue Birders, and look forward to seeing those of you attending the Rally in the Valley in Pigeon Forge October 5-9, 2009.

Happy and safe travels!
Warm regards, Brenda

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**FAMILY OF FRIENDS....
WE DO HAVE A CHOICE!**

By Neat Scott

We can resent the loss of our factory.
We can sob over the loss of our Nest.
Or we can get busy and use this
opportunity to create an even greater, better club.

We can see each setback as a fatal blow.
Or we can learn new ways to achieve results we long for.

We can pounce on each bit
of bad news and extrapolate it
to portend the end of the world as

we know it.
Or we can realize that the bad new is
relatively rare.

We can decide that everyone and everything
is out to get us and withdraw
in fear from our travels as we've known them .
Or we can jump right in, plan that next rally, a trip
we've always wanted
and find it all exciting and delightful.

We can sit, wait and complain.
Telling ourselves that things will
never be the same, never get better.
Or we can jump right in, help to move our
club forward and make it the best it can be.

We always have choice.
The beauty of our world and of friendships,
is waiting.
Are we willing to let that go? No!

What is your choice?
I hope it's the same as ours.
Go for it.
[Jon & I approve this message.](#)
Neat Scott



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Cooking is for the Birds

By Rozanne DeShazer

Crunchy Romaine Toss

1 pkg. ramen noodles, uncooked
1 c walnuts, chopped
4 tbsp. butter
1 head Romaine lettuce, chopped
1 bunch broccoli, chopped
4 green onions, chopped

Dressing:

1/2 c. vegetable oil
1/4 c. white vinegar
1/2 c. sugar
1 & 1/2 tsp. soy sauce

Brown walnuts and noodles in butter. Cool on paper towel. Put chopped lettuce, onion and broccoli in bowl. Pour dressing over & toss. Add noodle/walnut mixture over top.

Layered Oriental Appetizer

TOPPING

3/4 c. chopped, cooked chicken	1 tbsp. chopped parsley
1/2 c. shredded carrot	2 tsp. soy sauce
1/4 c. chopped unsalted peanuts	1/4 tsp ginger
3 tbsp. sliced green onions	1 clove garlic, minced

BASE

8 oz. pkg.. cream cheese, softened
1 tbsp. milk

In medium bowl, combine all topping ingredients, mix well. Cover, refrigerate several hours to blend flavors.

In small bowl, combine cream cheese and milk; beat until smooth.

Spread cream cheese mixture over bottom of 10" serving dish. Spoon topping mixture evenly over cream cheese. Drizzle with Zippy sweet and sour sauce. Serve with assorted crackers. 8-10 servings.

ZIPPY SWEET & SOUR SAUCE

1/4 c. firmly packed brown sugar

1/4 c. catsup

2 tsp. corn starch

2 tbsp, vinegar

1 c. water

3 drops hot pepper sauce

1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

In small saucepan combine brown sugar and cornstarch; mix well, Gradually stir in remaining ingredients; cook over medium heat 5 minutes or until mixture slightly thickens, stirring frequently. Cool, cover, store in refrigerator. Makes 1 1/2 cups.

Chinese Fortune Cookies

TLC's Take Home Chef ~ Curtis Stone

(Provided by Neat Scott)

Makes about 16

Ingredients:

2 large egg whites

¼ teaspoon/about 1 ml vanilla extract

1/2 cup/70 g all purpose flour

1/2 cup/105 g granulated sugar

Pinch of salt

Method:

Preheat the oven to 375°F/190°C. Line two large baking sheets with nonstick silicon mats (such as Silpat). Write fortune messages on 16 small strips of paper that are about 2x1/2 inches/5x1 cm.

Using a hand whisk or an electric mixer, beat the egg whites and vanilla in a large bowl to form soft peaks. Sift the flour, sugar and salt into another bowl, then stir the flour mixture into the egg white mixture until a thick pasty batter forms.

Spoon 2 teaspoonfuls/40 g of the cookie batter onto one of the silicon mats for each cookie, forming 4 cookies and spacing them evenly apart. Spread the batter so that each cookie is about 3 inches/7.5 cm in diameter.

Bake for about 10 minutes or until the cookies have turned a light golden color. Working

quickly, gently pick up the hot wafer cookies with a palette knife or spatula and place them upside down on the baking sheet.

Place a fortune message in the middle of each cookie and fold each cookie in half to encase the fortune messages. Bend the pointed edges of each cookie backwards and towards each other.

It is important that the cookies are hot while you bend them so that they are still pliable. Once the cookies cool they will become brittle and will break if you try to bend them. Allow the wafers to cool and repeat the process several times until all cookie batter has been used.

5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

Provided by Neat Scott



THE 5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE CAKE FOR ONE PERSON.....

*4 tablespoons flour
4 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons cocoa
1 egg
3 tablespoons milk
3 tablespoons oil
3 tablespoons chocolate chips (optional)
A small splash of vanilla extract
1 large coffee mug (MicroSafe)*

*Add dry ingredients to mug, and mix well. Add the egg and mix thoroughly.
Pour in the milk and oil and mix well..
Add the chocolate chips (if using) and vanilla extract, and mix again.
Put your mug in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts.
The cake will rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!
Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired.*

EAT ! (this can serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous).

And why is this the most dangerous cake recipe in the world?

Because now we are all only 5 minutes away from chocolate cake at any time of the day or night!

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Nominations for Chapter Offices

By the Nominating Committee

Dan Jensen: President
Alan Ritchie: Senior Vice President
Greg Peterson: Treasurer
Karen James: Secretary
Roy Zanca: South Central VP
?????????: Northeastern VP (Open)
Jim Olds: West Central VP
Dan Sunderland: Western VP
Paul Spear: Eastern Central VP
Paul Ward: South Eastern VP
Bill Kirchner: National FMCA Director
?????????: Alt. National FMCA Director (Open)

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PRECIOUS MOMENTS TOGETHER

By Glenda

Leroy and I met in 1960. He was 16 and I was 13. We were set up on a blind date by a mutual friend that attended my church that he worked with at Shop Rite Supermarket. It was a Sunday afternoon and we went to Rock City to eat. We dated five years. I never dated anyone else; I think Leroy had dated someone previously. Leroy gave me my engagement

ring the night he graduated from High School. The next day, I graduated from Junior High. I graduated from High School June 1, 1965 and we were married on June 20 - just 19 days later! "The FUN" begins!!! Boy were we in for some surprises!

We were both raised with VERY meager means. Our Moms had made our clothes and raised most of our food. Credit Cards were new on the scene and we began to get applications in the mail. Sure was easy to fill it out and send it in. Instant Credit, Instant Debt! I worked for State Farm Insurance and Leroy had held numerous jobs (Jack of all trades), but at the time was riding in the ambulance while they were still operated by the funeral homes. About a year after we were married Leroy had the opportunity to go to embalming school in Nashville, TN. He lived at one of the funeral homes during the week while going to college and came home every other weekend. He would write a check for \$2.00 to buy gas and eat and the check would not be good. Our checking account was at the bank just across the street from where I worked so I was in the bank daily for business reasons and our personal account. We were friends with the Bank President and he would hold the check until I could cover it.

Our oldest son, Dewayne was born in August 1967 and two and a half years later, January 1970 our youngest son, David was born. Leroy was making less than \$2.00 an hour and we decided it was best for me to stay home to raise our boys so Leroy took a part-time job working on the freight docks at local trucking companies. The pay at that time was almost six dollars an hour and we determined to get out of debt and begin saving to one day purchase our own funeral home.

We began to pray for God's guidance about the funeral business. "Besides, 'we said,' if nobody dies we don't eat!" That was a scary thought. We had always worked for someone else and absolutely knew NOTHING about what we were about to get into. (Looking back, that was good because we might never have stepped out to this new venture in life).

In 1975 we were approached by a gentleman who asked us to become a partner in a local funeral home. He painted a pretty rosy picture and we trusted his words. Thankfully, we were both raised in Christian homes and taught that your word was your bond. Foolishly, (actually, ignorantly is the right word) we thought everyone else lived the same way. In April, 1976 we purchased interest in the funeral home and ambulance service in Ft. Oglethorpe, GA. It didn't take long for us to find out that the gentleman was not honest with us. Debts were tremendous - hundreds of thousands of dollars. We had an audit conducted and were informed that the business was bankrupt! The advice was "close the doors and go home." Remember the part about praying - we had earnestly and fervently prayed and KNEW God had placed us where we were. It wouldn't be easy but we knew God was working in our lives. We rolled up our sleeves and went to WORK! Leroy and I drove ambulances,

washed vehicles, made death calls, filed insurance for funerals and ambulance calls. Our sons could drive a vehicle when they were eleven or twelve years old because they had to keep them washed and clean at all times. Leroy and the boys did all the maintenance work on the vehicles as well as any mowing, cleaning or whatever needed to be done. Our families were there for us and with us and God cared for our needs. In the next 17 years, we worked without a vacation, did not eat out, lost our home, drove vehicles that were actually held together with coat hanger wire and anything else that would work, but we finally were out of debt and began paying for things on a thirty-day basis. Some of the creditors did not want to do business with us but others were wonderful and saw our work ethics and determination. Our business began to grow and slowly we were able to pave the parking lot, build a new 400 seat Chapel and add seven staterooms plus office space.

Leroy was ready for a break and began to talk about purchasing a place to "get away." We were working so much we weren't able to take care of everything at our home much less take on another residence. In 1992 Leroy found a Holiday Rambler and fondly announced, "we won't have to worry about keeping up a place - it will be right with us." So - Welcome to the World of RVing! We enjoyed the Holiday Rambler, but it wasn't long before Leroy's eyes began to wander for something "bigger and better." In 1994, in the Holiday Rambler, while taking a youth group to see the Easter Drama by Dr. Charles Stanley's Church in Atlanta, GA, we saw this motor home on the side of the freeway with a "For Sale" sign. It was love at first sight!! The owners of the 1985 Blue Bird had experienced health issues and had asked a friend to sell the coach for them. He was planning to open a car/RV sales business and was eager to do business with us. We met the owners and were promptly told the worst part of selling the Blue Bird was losing Brenda Rodgers and the Family of Friends they had grown to love so much. They didn't tell us or we failed to ask how to join this group. While on our first trip out west we were driving in Washington State and passed another motor home. It was another Blue Bird. Mr. & Mrs. Dub Tilley were the nice people who flagged us down and promptly gave us an application to join the club and told us about Rally In The Valley. We attended our first rally in 1994 and haven't missed a rally since. The '85 was such a wonderfully well-built coach and many times we have wished we still had that coach! In 1996 we stopped by Buddy Gregg's in Knoxville "just to look." Gary Patterson was the salesman and he had a "great deal" that we shouldn't miss. A 1996 Bluebird that had very few miles, it didn't turn enough heads for the owner so he was trading for something that would turn heads. We purchased the '96 and had trouble from the beginning. Apparently the coach had been parked along the coast in Connecticut and the salt water had corroded numerous electrical paths. We were traveling in Florida in 1998 and the '96 "blew up" and completely shut down. We had to call a wrecker and thankfully were not far from Buddy Gregg's in

Lakeland. Buddy was there when we were being "dragged" in. He came out and spoke with us and told us we were not leaving until the coach was fixed or we were happy. The decision was made to send the '96 back to the factory for a thorough check out which lead us to purchase the 1998 Bluebird LXi.

With the '98 Blue Bird we were able to attend our state and national funeral conferences and in 2001 Leroy was elected to serve the Georgia Funeral Directors Association. This was a five year commitment and during those five years we traveled extensively throughout Georgia for the State and District Meetings. During these years our son David began to assume the duties at the funeral home and he and Leroy began to talk and pray about purchasing a funeral home in Chickamauga, a very small town just seven miles south of the Ft. Oglethorpe location. The location in Chickamauga was owned by a large corporate company that was not interested in selling one location. We made them an offer and were promptly refused. Again we began to diligently pray and seek God's will for our lives and explored many avenues. In August, 2001 the corporation finally agreed to sell us three locations: Chickamauga, Ringgold and LaFayette for much less than we had offered for the one location. It has been a great adventure and God has allowed us to serve more families than we had ever dreamed possible.

Our son, Dewayne pursued the ambulance business and worked in Atlanta for a few years, then came back home and opened Angel Ambulance Service. Dewayne now serves all of Catoosa County for Emergency and Non-Emergency calls. He also serves Walker, Whitfield, Dade and Chattooga Counties in Georgia and more counties than I can name in Tennessee. He has over 100 employees and more vehicles than he can keep up with. He also serves as Coroner in Walker County. You may have seen him on Fox and CNN during the Tri-State Crematory tragedy. He was the short fellow standing behind Dr. Chris Sperry, who gave the updates on the recovery efforts at Tri-State. Yes, we had used Tri-State but thankfully, no remains were from our funeral homes. We have always had a responsibility to our families and do not leave the cemetery until all the work is complete. We also stayed with the loved ones that were taken to Tri-State until the cremation process was started. Our last dealing with Tri-State ended in 1996 when we installed our own crematory. No remains were found at Tri-State until after 1997. We knew the Marsh family personally and our sons grew up with Brent Marsh. We went through days, weeks, months and several years living through this travesty of justice. I am a pack rat of sorts and had kept (and continue to keep) every piece of paper relative to the families we serve, even Thank You cards and the envelopes they come in. The courts commended us on our record keeping and even though some funeral homes had to pay tremendous amounts we were very fortunate - no, we know that God was guiding us. We have always strived to give every family the same service we would want for our own family. We did volunteer to cremate the

bodies that were found at no expense to the families. This gave us a great opportunity to listen and pray for those with such a tremendous burden.

Our sons have blessed us with two beautiful daughters-in-law, and seven fantastic grandchildren. Dewayne is married to Sheri and they have three daughters: Cailey 13, Hallie 9, and Kheley 7. David is married to Monica and they have one son and three daughters: Spencer 12, Shelby 10, Speshal Joy 6 and Splendor Pearl 4. Leroy and I take grandparenting VERY seriously and do our best to spoil them as much as possible, then send them home!

We purchased a 2001 Bluebird Tour Bus and have used it for the churches in our area. Usually, we took day trips for our senior citizens, but occasionally we took a week for youth trips. The IRS did not recognize tithing as a deduction for the business so the Lord laid the bus on Leroy's heart. This way we were able to take people to places they would not have been able to go, because of the costs. We did not charge anything for the use of the bus, but were able to count this off as a business expense. We had a couple of buses before the Blue Bird, but I won't bore you with all the details about them, but we know again that God was in this venture also. If you are interested, ask us sometime and we will be glad to share some amazing stories with you.

In July, 2005 we were in Gulfport, Mississippi transporting supplies to funeral directors affected by Hurricane Katrina. Wouldn't you know it; Leroy had to go through Ft. Valley to get back to Ft. Oglethorpe! Fred VanDenburg and Ronnie Lamb had just returned from FMCA in Minot, North Dakota with the new 2006 show coach. Leroy took in every sparkling detail - and there were many! What is it about these men and their toys? I told him I was happy with the '98 but his favorite color has always been red and, you guessed it, that '06 was RED. Our son, David had purchased a Fifth Wheel and Dewayne was ready to purchase something to travel in. He and his Dad got together and Dewayne agreed to purchase the '98 leaving Leroy the perfect opportunity to buy the coach of his dreams. I wanted to pinch myself so many times to see if I was dreaming! I was a north Georgia country girl that grew up walking close to a half mile to ride the school bus. I never dreamed the Lord would permit us to own a motor home, certainly not anything as nice as the vehicles on our highways today. I was raised in a Peach Orchard; with the singing bluebirds in trees. I had no idea you could drive one down the road! We



purchased the '06 in September and later had the trailer painted to match the coach.

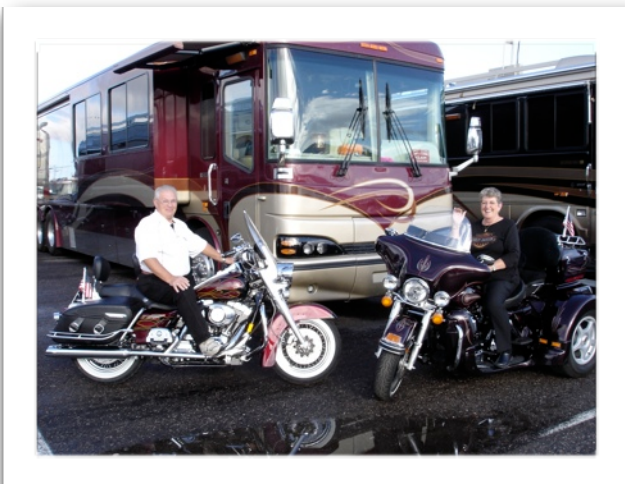
In July, 2007 we made the trip that Leroy had been mapping out for over thirteen years. Alaska, here we come. I have heard many of you talk about your trips to Alaska and have to say that words are not adequate to explain the wondrous sights! We traveled west to Montana and crossed into Canada. There is a LOT of wilderness in Canada, but the wildlife was awesome! We entered Alaska at Tok and made a loop taking in every turn in the road. The highlight for me was Valdez. Bridal Veil Falls on the way to Valdez, the boat ride to see the glaciers, salmon spawning, eagles on the road and in the trees and bears coming to eat the salmon, made it the trip of a lifetime!! Little did we know that our lives were in danger due to the overweight front end. We did have problems with the front tires and had to replace them in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada. There were no tires like that to be had in Alaska - not even at Walmart or Sam's and take my advice, don't buy tires in Canada unless it is a necessity. They love their tires and don't let go of them without a premium price! Again, the Lord was watching over us and we made it safely back home.

We attended the Good Sam's Rally in Perry, GA in March of 2008. Alan Barbee and Robert Preston came to see us and told us to take the coach to Ft. Valley for a recall on the front due to the overweight issue. We were told that a solution was not available at the time and advised if we drove the coach off the lot we would be liable for anything that might happen. Our beautiful Red 2006 show coach, the coach of our dreams has been at Ft. Valley since that time.

Our son, Dewayne's daughters were growing and they did not have enough room in the '98 Bird, so he was looking for something with more bedroom space and told us to use the '98 until we could get things worked out. Our motor home travels have been very few since March of 2008.

I failed to mention that on our 25th wedding anniversary, I surprised Leroy with a 1990 Harley motorcycle. On our 40th anniversary, he surprised me with a 2005 Harley trike. Yes, I am a Harley Mom - Grandmother. Since we haven't had the '06 in which to travel, we have enjoyed time on the bikes. One thing that hasn't changed over the years has been the great friends we have made and friendships we have kept with our Bluebird family.

May I also share with you that Leroy and I have been blessed to serve our



church in several capacities. Leroy and I have both served as Sunday School teachers, Youth leaders, Bus Drivers, Janitors, Church Secretary, Building Committee Chairman, Nursery worker, Vacation Bible School workers, Parking Lot Attendants or wherever needed. Leroy has been asked many times to serve while the Pastor was on vacation or as a speaker for different occasions. Our son David is a deacon, he and his wife, Monica serve as Youth Church leaders. Our family has been raised in church and we look forward for the opportunity to serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thank you, Blue Bird Family for the opportunity to share our lives with you. We have many friends out there and if we haven't met you yet or had a chance to get to know you, please take the time to introduce yourself to us and become part of our Blue Bird Family. Love and Best Traveling Wishes to each and every one. God Bless.

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To God Be The Glory! Great Things
He Hath Done



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