

GMC Great Lakers Motorhome Club, Inc.



NEWSLETTER



America's Oldest Regional GMC Club

Volume 46

Issue 1

February 2021



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy New Year! I know all of you are looking forward to 2021, especially after this past year. A new year always brings feelings of hope, a chance for renewal, and a new beginning. In addition to the usual resolutions to eat healthier, exercise more, etc., we also want to stay healthy in these crazy times. But let's also add that our biggest hope/goal for 2021 is that COVID-19 begins to go away.

Assuming campgrounds remain open during the 2021 camping season, the Great Lakers are moving ahead with rally plans. Our first rally this year will be in May at Camp Dearborn in Milford, Michigan. While many of our club members are eligible to receive (or have already received) the COVID vaccine, some members are either not eligible or have chosen not to get the vaccine. With that being said, our rallies in 2021 will be planned differently. In order to make sure everyone stays safe, we likely won't be meeting together as a group in close quarters for any indoor rally activities, nor will we be eating buffet or self-serve style rally

meals as a group. However, we will still be able to see and enjoy one another's company face to face (masked) at a rally. We will still be able to sit around the campfire together safely outdoors, eat some meals together with modifications, and we still will be able to share our passions for our GMC motorhomes. We will work out many of these details in the next few months.

This year is also a milestone year for the GMC Great Lakers. We are celebrating the club's 45th anniversary in 2021. None of this would be possible if it weren't for our all of our past, present and future club members.

I'm looking forward to celebrating with each of you at 2021 rally this year! Stay healthy and safe.

Becky

HAPPY
Valentine's
DAY



Mark your calendars now for the 2021 GMC Great Lakers Motorhome Club Rallies. Consider hosting a rally at your favorite local campground - you will get plenty of help. It's your party – do whatever makes you happy!

May 13 – 16, 2021

Camp Dearborn
1700 General Motors Rd.
Milford, Michigan 48380
Tel: 248.684.6000

Birthday Rally

June 3 – 6, 2021

Elkhart County 4H Fairgrounds
17746 County Rd. 34
Goshen, Indiana 46528
Tel: 574.533.3247

July 2021

TO BE DETERMINED

August 26 – 29, 2021

Groveland Oaks County Park
14555 Dixie Highway
Holly, Michigan 48442
Tel: 248.634.981

September 12 – 19, 2021

Algonac State Park
8732 River Road
Marine City, Michigan 48039
Tel: 810.765.5605

Do Nothing Rally

October 14 – 17, 2021

Sauder Village Campground
22611 OH-2
Archbold, Ohio 43502
Tel: 800.590.9755

GMCMCI Conventions

April 16 – 22, 2021

Cajun Crazy Celebration

CANCELED
Patterson, Louisiana

September 24 – 30, 2020

Oktoberfest

Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

GMC GREAT LAKERS HISTORY – Part 10

1985 A REVIVAL OF THE GMC?

The club's Ninth Annual Birthday Party was held at the Midway Motor Lodge in Lansing, Michigan the weekend of January 11th – 13th. The new officers were officially installed at the business meeting, they are: Tom Tryon, President: Alex Birch, Vice President: Joe Majorana, Second Vice President: Wilma Spaeth, Treasurer: Tillie Nestle, Secretary: Norm Anderson, National Director and Pat Samson, Alternate National Director. A lot of the members took advantage of the hot tub and pool, others went shopping at the Lansing Mall, while most just sat around, munched, gabbed and renewed old friendships.

A former west coast RV dealer, Donald Wheat, had set up a plant in Rancho Cucamonga, California to build the GMC motorhome. He planned to build about 2,000 26ft motorhomes the first year. They were to retail for \$51,000 to \$55,000. Wheat's version would carry the "WMC" logo, have the same floor plan as the GMC and be powered by a Chevrolet 454 or a Ford 460 engine. However, the motorhome never got into production.

The May rally was held at the Lakeside Camp Park in Cedar Springs, Michigan the weekend of the 17th – 19th. Due to a lot of comments and objections to the May rally falling on Mothers Day, the rally was pushed back one week. Of the thirty-three coaches in attendance some took in either or both of the towns of Cedar Springs and Rockford, while others just opted to set around and chew the fat. The potluck supper on Saturday evening was held in a building with a nice fire blazing in the fireplace.

Twenty-four Great Lakers moved into the Calhoun County Fairgrounds in Marshall, Michigan for the GLASS (Great Lakes Annual Spring Spree) rally Memorial Day weekend. The Michigan Knights of the Highway hosted 506 coaches, 49 commercial displays and 12 motorhome dealers. This rally was filled with lots of good food and entertainment as well as bingo and seminars.

It was back to Gaylord's KOA Campground for the Club's June monthly rally. Thirty-seven coaches turned out for the weekend activities. The highlight of the rally was the Saturday evening buffet at the Elias Brothers Restaurant. The usual Saturday morning donuts and Sunday pancake breakfast were also a part of this rally.

The Great Lakers took over an entire campground for their July rally. The Old Orchard Campground, just off I-94, at Battle Creek played host to about fifty of the Great Lakers. This rally was planned so the Club members could partake in the World Hot Air Balloon Championship activities. The hosts put on a superb catered meal at noon on Saturday, with a late Saturday evening surprise of prizes for every coach who came. Those who came Thursday saw a balloon land in the campground and watched two take off Friday morning.

Twenty-three Great Lakers returned to Muskegon's Pioneer Park the weekend of August 9th – 11th. The hosts put together a make do rally after it was learned that the trailer could not make it to the rally because of trouble with the Staub's coach. A 175-pound pig was almost totally consumed Saturday evening. The bingo prizes were awarded via a drawing after a short business meeting Saturday evening after which most walked down to the beach to enjoy a really nice sunset over Lake Michigan.

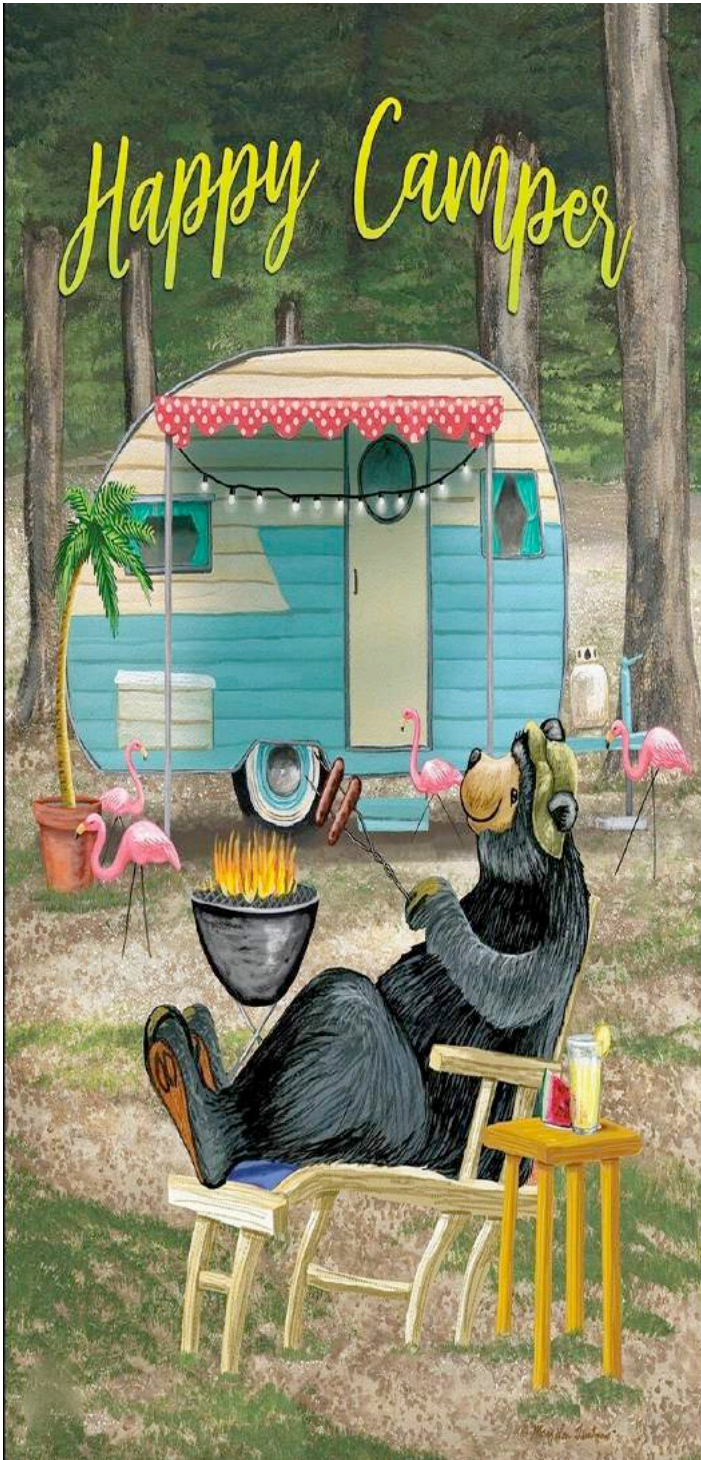
Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan was the site where thirty-nine Great Lakers gathered for the club's September rally. Friday evening the group was transported to the Eagle Tavern in the village where dinner was served in the 1850's style complete with candlelight. On both Saturday and Sunday the members walked their legs off taking in the sites of both the village and museum.

GMC GREAT LAKERS HISTORY – Part 10 (continued)

and theater of the museum.

The end of the season rally this year was an international affair as the club crossed the border to the Rock Glen Campground in Arkona, Ontario, Canada the weekend of October 11th – 13th. Twenty-three coaches made the trek to partake of the many activities planned. The campground had many special activities planned, including a Halloween celebration, bingo and a best decorated/spookiest RV contest.

Submitted by Bill Helmore



GMC Great Lakers 45th Birthday Rally
 Thursday May 13 – Sunday May 16, 2021
 Camp Dearborn – Milford, Michigan



GMC Great Lakers have reserved 30 full hook-up sites (water, sewer, 50 amp electric) for our group at Camp Dearborn, located just west of the village of Milford, Michigan. Campsite fees of \$35/night include park entrance for your GMC motorhome and tow car.

Camping Fees:

You must make your own campsite reservations and pay Camp Dearborn directly for your site. To secure one of the 30 Great Lakers campsites, call Mary Lynn at 248-684-6000, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 PM (closed from noon – 1:00 p.m. for lunch). Ask for one of the GMC Great Lakers reserved sites #69-72, #82-107. **Please Note Camp Dearborn’s Cancellation Policy – All cancellations will forfeit one night of the reservation. No refunds will be issued for cancellations made the day the reservation starts or anytime during the stay. Name changes are considered a cancellation.**

Reservation Deadline:

These campsites are being held for our group until April 30, 2021. You must make your campsite reservation by then to assure a site within our group area.

	Financial Report
	Jan. 31, 2021

Starting Balance:	\$ 8,930.18
Revenue:	\$ 0.00
Expenses:	\$ 475.00
Ending Balance:	\$ 8,455.18

COVID Impact:

Camp Dearborn is owned and operated by the city of Dearborn, Michigan. Therefore, the city of Dearborn, as well as the state of Michigan, establishes the rules of operation of the camp with regards to COVID protocols. Currently groups no larger than 10 people can meet together indoors and everyone is expected to wear masks inside camp buildings/ restrooms, and maintain social distancing in dealing with others, including camp personnel.

Rally Signup/ Registration:

As of this publication, we have not yet determined the level of group activities to be held at this rally (including group meals). More information will be sent out as we get closer to the May rally.

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Even though the rally details are yet to be finalized, we would like an accurate headcount of everyone who plans to attend. After you reserve your campsite, please contact Becky Johnson at BeckySteveJ@aol.com with the number in your family planning to attend this rally. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Becky.

ODDS AND ENDS

Newest airport codes for our current travels:

LVG – living room
DNR – dining room
BTH – bathroom
BKY – back yard
PAT – patio
MBR – master bedroom
OFC – office
WNC – wine cellar

~
As two hungry goats tried eating movie film stock, one turned to the other and said, “I don’t know about you, but I thought the book was better.”

~
Actually, it’s only quarantine if it comes from the quarantine regional of France otherwise it’s just “sparkling isolation.”

~
A pickle walks into a casino and sits down at a card table and says, “dill me in.”

~
A goat, a drum, and a snake fell off a cliff...
Baa - dum – ssss!

~
A Desperado rides into town and downs a few drinks at the saloon. When he steps outside again, he finds his horse has been stolen. The Desperado swears, steps back into the bar, and fires a round into the piano. The room goes dead silent. “I’m gonna have one more beer,” the Desperado bellows to the terrified crowd, “and if my horse ain’t back where I left him when I’m done, I’ll do here what I had to do in Houston.”

The locals murmur uneasily as the Desperado sips his drink. Luckily for them all, when he steps outside again his horse has been returned. As the Desperado saddles up, a local can’t help but ask, “Sir, what exactly was it you had to do in Houston?”

The Desperado narrows his eyes and hisses at the man, “I had to walk home.”

~
What did the horse say when it fell?
I’ve fallen and I can’t giddy up!

~
I’ve started investing in stocks: beef, chicken, and vegetable...One day I hope to be a bouillonaire.



MEXICAN BEAN DIP

1-pound ground beef
½ cup chopped green pepper
½ cup chopped onion
1 16-ounce can refried beans
8 – 12 ounces salsa Verde
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
Tortilla corn chips or nachos

Brown the first three ingredients, combine with salsa Verde and cheddar cheese and place in a slow cooker set on low for 90 minutes to 2 hours.

Serve with Tortilla corn chips or nachos.

Submitted by Margi Baumbarger





GMC Motorhome Retires at Museum

Bob Sovis, VCCA #1552 (third from left), his wife Diane to his left, and their family stand with his donations to the National Auto and Truck Museum in Auburn—a 1973 GMC motorhome with its longtime traveling companion, a 1986 diesel Chevrolet Chevette.

By Dave Kurtz, Editor, *The Star* newspaper of Auburn, Indiana
November 4, 2020, Reprinted with permission

AUBURN—AFTER 43 YEARS AND 155,000 miles, VCCA member Bob Sovis is parking his 1973 GMC motorhome permanently at the National Auto and Truck Museum in Auburn, IN. “It’s provided my family and I a lot of great memories, especially in going to car shows,” Sovis, of Fenton, MI, said as he dropped off his donation. The gift came as a package with his diesel 1986 Chevrolet Chevette, which he towed behind the motorhome for 35,000 miles across America. Sovis said a board member introduced him to the Auburn museum. “It looks to me like the place to have it—fairly close to home, and it would have a good home,” Sovis said.


He bought the motorhome in 1977 with 24,000 miles. Its odometer now reads 179,000 after travels that took Sovis and his family as far as Wyoming, Colorado and Florida. Sovis was looking to upgrade from his pop-up camper when he made the purchase. “I loved the looks of the motorhome, when they came out in 1973,” he said. The model he bought was the 419th to come off the assembly line in Pontiac, Michigan, in the first year of production, with a list price around \$16,000. The first models sold at favorable prices, he said, “but they found out they didn’t make any money,” and production of the GMC motorhomes ended in 1978. “They’re a very unique vehicle, being front-wheel drive. Most people don’t realize that,” Sovis said. A 455-cubic-inch Oldsmobile engine powered his motorhome down the highway.

Different styles of the GMC motorhomes

were named after national parks. Sovis’ vehicle, with its white-and-blue decor, is known as a Glacier model. In 1986, he bought a diesel engine Chevette to complete his travel package. “I wanted something to tow behind the motor home,” he said. “I ordered it with every possible option, which made it pretty expensive — \$7,700 in ’86.” Attached in its customary spot behind the motorhome when it arrived in Auburn, the Chevette now has covered 96,000 miles under its own power. Sovis bought his Chevette as an insider. He worked in upper management for General Motors Service Parts in Swartz Creek, MI, then the company’s world headquarters. He retired 29 years ago.

Still active in the car hobby, Sovis said he founded two car shows and has been involved since the beginning of the Back to the Bricks car show in Flint, MI.

He said his large family supports donating the motorhome and Chevette and is glad to see him cutting back to his four remaining collector cars. He has owned his prized 1939 Chevrolet, nearly all original, for 52 years. Its future will be at the Sloan Museum in Flint, where Sovis has been involved

since 1967 and serves on the board of its friend’s organization. He also owns a 1965 Corvair Monza, 1984 Oldsmobile Toronado and a 2000 Chevrolet Cavalier convertible that he said has never felt a raindrop. Fittingly, Sovis and family took the last trip in his GMC motorhome to a favorite destination, Sutton’s Bay, near Traverse City, MI, on Labor Day weekend for a grandson’s wedding. 



THE STATUS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND GMC MOTORHOMES SOLD TO THE PUBLIC

The effort to find and preserve the very earliest GMC motorhomes has been a long and interesting pursuit of mine. It's time to bring you up to date with the present progress and plans for the future.

Many of you may have heard this effort involves TZE063V100021 and TZE063V100022, both 26 foot 1973 Canyon Lands. These two GMC motorhomes are the **first** and **second** production GMC motorhomes sold to the public. TZE's V100001 through V100020 were used for a number of early production vehicle tasks and then scrapped. Here then is the present status of 0021 and 0022.

TZE063V100021 is presently located in North Texas will be going to the Jack Sisemore Traveland RV Museum in Amarillo, Texas. This GMC motorhome will need a great deal of restoration work and I would suggest a 1973/1974 GMC parts coach would be the best way to get the needed parts and assemblies. If any of you know of the availability of an early parts coach, I would be happy to help you make that connection. The museum will be doing the restoration themselves, they have a good website you may want to visit.

TZE063V100022 is located at Hancock, Wisconsin and needs to be transported to the Pontiac Transportation Museum in Pontiac, Michigan. This is a 500-mile trip requiring transport since the tires have aged out and the reliability for a long trip is unknown at this point. This museum presently has over 40 Pontiac, Michigan built vehicles in their collection and is looking forward to getting the GMC motorhome, which was built, but a short distance from the museum.

We will be initiating a GoFundMe campaign shortly for the 0022 restoration effort at the Pontiac Transportation Museum. We are fortunate that we will be able to work on 0022 restoration there at the museum and anticipate a team of GMC motorhome owners and enthusiasts will enjoy volunteering to help in its restoration. If you are interested in working on the restoration of this motorhome or have questions pertaining to this project please contact Bill Bryant at gmc.bill@gmail.com or telephone 914.475.2916.

Lets make this project a success; we look forward to your participation in the GoFundMe and the restoration effort. I am sure we would all like to see a 1973 GMC motorhome in "as new" condition in the Pontiac Transportation Museum.

Visit the Pontiac Transportation Museum website to learn more about their mission at <https://www.pontiactransportationmuseum.org>.

Submitted by Bill Bryant

Membership and Dues

Since COVID-19 wiped out our 2020 GMC Great Lakers camping season, the board decided that 2020 members would be automatically paid up for 2021. Consequently, you will not need to send any money for a 2021 renewal, but I would like to hear from everyone to confirm that his or her 2020 directory information is still correct and complete. Did you move? Open a new email address? Get a cell phone or drop your landline phone? Buy a place in Florida to use for the winter? I will be sending out a communication to all current members in December to solicit your responses. Watch for it so I can have the best information for our 2021 directory. Thanks.

Steve Johnson
Membership Chairman



Sympathy cards have been sent to these individuals:

N/A

Get well cards have been sent to:

Tom Bessler

Bill Helmore



2020 Club Officers and Staff

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