



Newsletter of the Georgia Mountaineers Chapter of FMCA

**April 15 -- 19, 2020
Cancelled Rally at
Riverbend Campground
Hiawassee, Georgia
Scheduled Hosts: Appels and Stephens**



Well folks, we had another cancelled rally. This one was scheduled at Riverbend Campground in Hiawassee. Not only did the rally have to be cancelled to comply with Georgia guidelines for Covid-19, but in this case the RV park also closed. As with last month's newsletter, I am listing the planned attendees from the reservation list and emails. Maybe it will make you feel like you attended a rally after all.

Planned Attendees -- Members: Paul & Leann Appel, Ted & Martha Barrett, Raymond & Donna Birt, Hubert & Marsha Brown, Eldridge & Bobbie Cannon, Dorris & Ethel Carpenter, Don & Peggy Crump, Bill & Linda Davis, Virginia Jackson, Nick & Darlene Knowlton, Bill Lyles, Jim & Karen Mathis, Jerry & Irene McKellar, Wayne & Anne Mickey, Sam & Dottie Reese, Harry & Linda Sasser, Terry & Wanda Stephens, Jack White, and Doug & Sherry Wright.

Planned Attendees -- Visitors: Sandy Deems from Mineral Bluff, Doug & Ginger Henry from Grayson, and Dudley & Teresa Smith from Loganville. To our Visitors, we are sorry the rally was cancelled and we hope you will be able to attend another rally later this year.

With the absence of any rally news, I am including two articles from the world of RVTravel. A daily newsletter about RV'ing and almost any related topic. These articles are about how the Covid-19 Virus rules are impacting not only our campers, but also our RV parks. The first article is written by Chuck Woodbury, the RVTravel editor, and is about how the virus is affecting him and his wife. Since they are in Arizona, it sorta hits close to home, reminding me of mine and Martha's recent experience.



By Chuck Woodbury -- 28 March 2020

As I noted in my essay in today's newsletter, I know two people with the COVID-19. One has died, the other is fighting for his life. For me, the pandemic is real. Huge changes are underway. Not to appear too negative, but it's a difficult time for most of us.



Every RV show, every RV club rally, most every other public event that I am aware of, has been cancelled for months ahead. Half our country's state parks have closed their campgrounds. Many national parks and national forest campgrounds have closed, too. Millions of people have lost their jobs, and more will every day. It makes me sick to think of what these people are about to endure without money to pay their bills. I sometimes feel guilty that I still have a job. At RVtravel.com we are hanging in there, and will probably get through this if we work hard and smart. We have lost more than half our advertising, but thankfully many readers have [voluntarily subscribed](#), which will help carry us through until better times return. The disease is not going away until a vaccine is developed. Americans will not be packing into churches on Easter. It will take longer.

The RV industry is shutting down. Already Winnebago and Thor have closed their factories. Smaller companies have, too. I will be surprised if any other major RV manufacturer will be building RVs in two weeks. Small companies will go broke, as happened in 2008. I don't envision the RV industry returning to any sense of normalcy for at least a year, most likely longer. I am not smart enough to know where all this is going, but I strongly believe crisis mode will be with us for at least a few months. I am not in the mood to hear another person tell me the pandemic is not real, a hoax, fake news, or was propagated by the Chinese or a particular political party for some sort of evil agenda. *Watch your friend die, or your child, your spouse or next door neighbor ... you will never again question that this is real.*

Gail and I are holed up in our motorhome in Kingman, Arizona. But we're losing our site in a few weeks. We're not sure where we'll go. Many snowbird parks, which would normally have vacancies now, are still filled and have waiting lists: Residents do not want to move, just stay safe, away from big cities. They can still socialize – but six feet apart. Our daily **updates about the coronavirus** in our RV Daily Tips Newsletter have sent our circulation soaring. We are adding 1,700 new subscribers a week ([sign up here](#)). We welcome each of you, and ask that you tell an RVer friend of yours about us if you like what you see.

I count my blessings that I have a comfortable RV to live in during this unprecedented crisis. I sometimes can't believe what's happening. It's like a bad dream that I will awaken from soon. For now, Gail and I spend a lot of time at our computers, doing what we do best when stuck in a small space with nowhere to go – informing RVers about how they can navigate through this awful time. Our staff is also hard at work, all in their homes, including my daughter Emily, who lives smack dab in the epicenter of the COVID-19 death zone in Washington. Lucky for her, she has always worked from home and can continue to do so. Some good will come of this, as I have said before. If nothing else, maybe people will learn that no matter what our political beliefs we need to join together to battle a fierce enemy. I am already seeing this happen and it's the one bright spot in all this. While you are sitting at home, maybe it's a good time to catch up on some reading or watch a different cable news channel for another perspective. And every day that you remain healthy, count your blessings. And, please, help others whenever you can. We are in this together. We

are living in what will be one of the most historic times in America, and, in fact, world history. Be strong, be safe! We will come through this . . .

* * * * * The following article is written by **By Andy Zipser**
Owner, [Walnut Hills RV Park](#), Staunton, Virginia

Never underestimate the power of one individual to effect change – especially if that person is hysterical. Case in point: This past Monday, the governor of Virginia, Ralph Northam, issued a “temporary stay at home” edict. Tucked into the middle of this order is the one sentence that has upended our lives, commanding the “cessation of all reservations for overnight stays of less than 14 nights at all privately-owned campgrounds.” The order makes no mention of any other sector of the hospitality industry, leaving hotels, motels, resorts, B&Bs and all other lodging open for business. As icing on the cake, the order is effective for more than two months, until June 10.

And, just like that, we teeter on the edge of insolvency. Ninety percent of our business is short-term campers, anything from over-nighters traveling the I-81 corridor to residents within a 250-mile radius looking to camp with us for a few days. When you’re dealt lemons, make lemonade! So for the past week we’ve been burning up the phone lines, calling literally scores of campers to tell them we have to move or cancel their reservations. Some are rescheduling for the fall, when we all hope the virus pandemic will have petered out. Some are accepting rain checks, good until December 2021, and packaged with a 25% discount coupon. A few are accepting our BOGO offer: pay for a one-week stay and we’ll throw in a second week for free, meeting the executive order’s arbitrary 14-day threshold. Anything, in other words, not to have to return the deposits we’ve already taken in — and yet, despite all that, a tide of red ink is threatening to overwhelm us. In just the first three days following the March 30 order we’ve voided more than \$20,000 in reservations, and we’ve yet to finish working our way through April. **MAY STILL AWAITS**, including the fully booked Memorial Day weekend. Our occupancy rate for April is now looking to be less than a third of last year’s 30%. I haven’t had the heart to start calculating what it will be in May, when the season historically starts swinging into high gear.



So okay — life is tough all over. Lots of businesses are on the ropes, and the ranks of the unemployed are swelling by the millions. I get it. But the question that has to be asked, in every instance that our lives get curtailed by executive fiat, is how a particular edict protects public welfare. The state has a legitimate interest in proscribing behavior that further enables the pandemic that is ravaging the world. But short of martial law that confines everyone to their homes — presumably with roadblocks at the state borders to keep out non-Virginians — people will be traveling. They will need a place to stay, other than a highway shoulder. * * * * *

I am sure many of you have read other articles very similar to the ones above. I just hope the shut down of our economy does not put us into a recession, or even worst a Depression. If so, there will be far more empty shelves than just the toilet paper isle.

Tech Article: Since everyone is staying home, and you may not have a good electrical connection for your RV to plug into at home. Now may be a good time to install one or upgrade the one you have. In that light, I am going to talk about four different receptacles, beginning with the 50 Amp down to the 15 Amp.



The first picture is of the 50 Amp receptacle and is a good one to have, even for a 30 Amp RV electrical power cord, as you can always use an adapter. For parking at home, you may get by on less than 50 Amps, which is really 100 amp total service, since there are two hot legs and it is a 220/240 volt receptacle. For example, a normal 50 Amp service would require a Number 6 Gauge wire, which is quite expensive. And your main power panel may not support another 50 Amp load. An alternative is to run 8 gauge wire and put a 40 Amp breaker on the line, or go even lower and run a Number 10 gauge wire and put in a 30 Amp breaker. This would still give you 60 amps of service and would be much cheaper and easier than running a 6 gauge wire.

The second picture is of course a 30 Amp, 120 Volt receptacle. Or is it? In the present and past, this same receptacle has been used for 230 Volt welders and clothes dryers. Most welders and dryers made today no longer use this receptacle/plug configuration and have gone to straight or horizontal slots and blades or a 4-wire like the 50 Amp, leaving this one mainly for RV's. It requires a 10 gauge wire for 30 Amps, but only one pole in your breaker box due to it being 110 volts. Even though made for RV's, if you show that plug to an electrician and tell him you want it installed for your RV, you may be in for a surprise. Unless the electrician is up to snuff on RV requirements, he may install it as 230 Volts, as that is what he is used to seeing. There is one of these on the power pole down by our subdivision entrance gate. There is also a paved turn around/parking area outside the gate and next to the power pole. This receptacle was installed by the gate installation company to provide power to their truck mounted electric welder, for which they do not use a generator. One of our residents mentioned a few years ago that he had some friends that owned a 5th Wheel and thought he would ask our Property Owners Association if it would be OK for his friend to park their RV there for a few days and hook up to the power pole. I told them that it was not a 110 Volt RV purpose receptacle, but was 230 Volts for the gate company's welder for repair work. It is a good thing his friends did not connect. Plus, one

of our former members had a son who built or moved into a new house and one of the things in getting the new house was to have accommodations for his parents to connect their 32 foot motor home with a 30 Amp power cord when they came to visit. I guess he showed the electrician the plug type and had a 30 Amp receptacle installed. When his parents came to visit and plugged in, the 230 Volts of power did over \$4,400 worth of damage to their motorhome. The moral of these two stories are, if you are going to have a 30 Amp receptacle installed, make absolutely sure it is 110 Volts.

The third picture is of a 20 Amp receptacle. Almost all RV parks advertise they have 50, 30, and 20 Amp service. Plus many RV owners have a 20 Amp connection at home to power their RV while parked there. However, if you look closely at the picture, you will see something that you normally do not see on the 20 service receptacles in the RV parks, or your 20 Amp service at home. And that is the left connector is T-shaped. It takes that additional T-shape to handle the additional 5 amp load over the normal 15 Amp receptacle. The receptacle on the right is rated at 15 Amps – not 20. Yet, these 15 Amp receptacles are protected by a 20 Amp circuit breaker. These 15 Amp receptacles are used through out our homes on a circuit that usually had more than one receptacle and the whole circuit is protected by a 20 Amp circuit breaker. When you connect an RV to one of these 15 Amp receptacles and put a 20 amp load on it, you are over loading the receptacle by 5 amps. The results are, over time the metal blades of the receptacle and the plug will become overheated and change the conductive characteristics of the metal. You will also see burn marks on the receptacle. Eventually, the plug and receptacle will become a hotspot and the voltage to your RV will be reduced. And, even if the RV parks had actual 20 Amp receptacles, nowhere will you find a 20 adapter to connect to them. Almost all the adapters sold in the RV supply stores are really 15 Amp adapters, not 20 Amp. Some years ago on a trip to see Niagara Falls, Martha and I stayed at some State Parks in Pennsylvania and New York. All of these parks had so called 20 Amp service (no 30 or 50 Amp), but the receptacles were 15 Amp ones. They were all burnt, the voltage to the RV was low, and some only supported around a 10 amp load before the circuit breaker tripped. I could not run an air conditioner off of the deteriorated, so called 20 Amp service boxes. So, if you want to have a 20 Amp hookup at home, the best bet is to use the 30 Amp receptacle with a 12 gauge wire and 20 amp circuit breaker. If you already have a dedicated electrical box, it should be easy to change your current 15 Amp receptacle to a 30 Amp one. If you were to install a new RV receptacle today and did not want to go full 50 Amp, my recommendation would be to use a 10 gauge 3 wire with ground line, protect it with a 30 Amp breaker, and use the 50 Amp receptacle. That will give you a total 60 amp service, as long as you do not exceed 30 amps on one leg.

Travels: We had a courageous Georgia Mountaineer couple, Frank and Cathy Williams, take an extended trip when they left home on 25 February enroute to San Diego, CA. The purpose was to take their previously planned trip to Baja California, Mexico with Fantasy RV Tours. They were fortunate their trip was not cancelled while on their way. After meeting up in San Diego, the 20 rigs in the caravan were able to embark on their tour down the Baja peninsular in Mexico. They had a great time, but the tour was cut short by a day, to ensure all 20 rigs could cross back into the USA. They had special treatment when they reached the border as a separate gate was opened for all of them to cross in a single line.

But no other special treatment, as all 20 rigs were boarded and given a detailed agricultural inspection. Getting there and back, especially on their way home, they stopped only in rural areas and made it back home safe and sound on 12 April. They had a great time and Cathy said the highlight of the trip was her getting to pet a baby whale, see the photo. It is very regrettable their trip was cut short. The whales will soon be on their way to Alaska, but it is great that Frank and Cathy came back to Georgia.



Future Rallies: As it stands right now, our economy may be partially opened back up effective 1 May. As I said, this is a “may” or “maybe.” Nothing is definitely, we will have to wait and see. If it is opened, then there is a good chance of the May Rally not being cancelled. I sure hope that is the case. We have two tours of Flowers Bakery on the Rally Agenda, if the tours are unsuspending by then. Right now Flowers is not conducting any tours, and may not resume them, even if the economy is reopened. Until then, stay safe and our prayers are that none of the Georgia Mountaineers contact the Coronavirus.

Final Notes: For our new members, Paul & Leann Appel and Terry & Wanda Stephens, we greatly appreciate you volunteering to host the April Rally. Guess you will have to wait until next year to sign up again, or host the Christmas Luncheon. For whoever does decide to host the Christmas Luncheon, remember you get to pick the date, the location, and the charity to support. And usually the restaurant will do most of the work. For location ideas, look at past December Newsletters, or pick some place totally new.

Ted Barrett
Newsletter Editor

Rally Reminders:

May: 20th thru 23rd **Sugar Mill RV Park.** Ochlocknee GA. 229-227-1451.
Address: 4857 McMillan Road, Ochlocknee, GA. See <http://www.sugarmillrvpark.com>
Hosts: Barretts & McKellars

June: 17th thru 20th **Leisure Acres Campground.** Cleveland GA. 706-865-6466.
Address: 3840 Westmoreland Road, Cleveland, GA. See <http://www.leisureacrescampground.com>
Hosts: Carpenters & Durrences

July: 22nd thru 25th **Spring Lake RV Resort.** Crossville TN. 877-707-1414.
Address: 255 Fairview Drive, Crossville, TN See <http://www.springlakervtn.com>
Hosts: Newtons