

**The MANDALAY Travel Club held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual International Rally in Goshen, IN from Monday – October 3, 2005 thru Friday October 7, 2005**

**WOW...** What a great location...the Elkhart County Fairgrounds... with full service level sites, great buildings and facilities, and super weather and amenities to boot!!

Arrivals started on Oct 1<sup>st</sup> – Saturday and continued thru the weekend. Parking and site locations were handled differently at this rally, as a parking crew complete with golf cart assisted all the members in getting set up in their site. A total of 64 coaches arrived...our largest rally group ever. We had 38 coaches in Devils Lake. This is a great sign that the club is growing by leaps and bounds.

Total Value RV from Elkhart, IN brought in a number of new 2006 units for display...and there were some "takers" in our group. I believe they sold 3 before the week was out. It's always good to see the dealers take an interest in our Rally's...as they are the up front support group when we require local services.

On Monday a special tour of Carrera Designs Paint Shop was held. It was very interesting to see the process that goes into painting our coaches. Quite labor intensive with lots of "personal" care to make sure our units are one of the best looking on the road.

Everyone spent the rest of the day getting together and meeting old friends and making new ones. That is what these rallies are all about..right?

Tuesday morning started with Rally & Service Registration, along with the opening of the Apparel store and the 2006 units for viewing. A great breakfast was served and provided a venue for meeting those friends again.

A bus trip to Notre Dame, including a luncheon and walking tour provided a lot of the members with something to do during the day. Everyone that went came back with either a Notre Dame souvenir or.....some chocolate... Yes, the tour included a stop at the South Bend Chocolate Factory...(just what we all needed...right??)

If we weren't wearing something "Green" or something "Brown"- (chocolate) - by the end of the day it was our own fault. The truck weigh scales on the Indiana Toll Road had to be re-calculated to let the bus travel back to Goshen. Evidently chocolate weighs more than we thought it did!!

To top off the evening, a Potluck Dinner was held with more food than the law allows. It's always interesting to see what foods can be consumed after a full day of fun.

After all this activity, the 1<sup>st</sup> annual Mandalay Karoke Contest took place...It appears there is a wealth of hidden talent in our group.

The Mandalay Maniacs singing and dancing group were back in full stride from a short hiatus after the Devil's Lake Rally.

Heather, Melissa, and Steve from Mandalay sounded great and we all agreed that Vicki & Roscoe Bunn have a second career in Las Vegas or Branson ahead of them.

A Silent Auction table was set up in the Rally building with all the items donated by Mandalay. The proceeds of this will go towards the Hurricane Relief Fund for the victims of Katrina and other devastating storms in the South. Thanks Mandalay.

Wednesday opened with a full breakfast and seminars all day. If there is anything anyone wanted to know about the operating systems of their coach...there were factory reps on hand to help us out. Dometic, Freightliner, Caterpillar, Cummins, Riverpark Electronics, VIP Enterprises, Good Sam VIP, cookware, jewelry, you name it...we had it available to us.

A FIESTA PARTY on Wednesday topped off the evening. Costumes were in abundance and it was fun seeing how everyone shows off their alter ego's.

Thursday morning opened with another fabulous breakfast, further seminars for the men, including all they ever wanted to know about the different chassis', while a concurrent session was held for the girls to meet the lovely (and much too young) 'design team' women for an opportunity to discuss future design changes from the distaff perspective.

Later, most of us attended an [obscene] to read 'delicious' Amish-style luncheon at the Essenhaus in Middlebury, IN where more than enough food to feed Katrina victims was served to us in "family" style. Opportunity afterwards for the girls to waddle, oops(!) browse, the quaint shops for the perfect gift to bring home, before returning back to prepare for Mexican night.

The three Bandito's' did their stuff, complete with festive Mexican hats, while listening to a fabulous Mexican band, Trio Zapotlanejo (not to be confused with the 3 Bandito's mentioned above!)

Friday: After an impromptu but very positive 'give/take' session in the morning for the men, absent the scheduled representative from Magnum Energy, the women confiscated one of the new Mandalay coaches to conduct a 'cooking school'.

Who knew more than 30 of us would cram into a new coach...with room for all, and without blowing the tires!

Basics regarding the use of our Sharp Convection/Microwave ovens were covered, including tips for the most advantageous cookware, recipes, and step-by-step instructions for the keypads. Thanks to Nancy Riley and Julie Taylor for being willing to add this feature to an otherwise packed venue.

(The real 'diva' of the Sharp microwave is rumored to be coming to our next rally!)

A visit to the Mandalay Factory in Elkhart followed in the afternoon where a tour was conducted showing the production line, products used, and actual construction of the new coaches from start to finish.

The evening concluded with a pig roast, followed by entertainment from the Northern Harmony Blue Grass Band. Several of the band members also work at Mandalay! They put on a great show. If you looked carefully, you could see such stars as Dolly Parton, Shania Twain, Reba McEntire, Faith Hill, Clint Black, Tim McGraw and last, but by no means least, Minnie Pearl! Great fun was had by all! The spirit prevailed! Toe-kickin' fun.

Saturday morning meant the closing ceremonies, followed by an Amish Back Roads Tour, with lunch at the Blue Gate Restaurant, and a tour of Fall Crafters Days in downtown Shipshewana--one of the largest festivals in the area at that time of the year. Dinner, and farewells were on our own.

Memories: Beautiful Fall colors, which advanced daily; quaint Amish farms contrasted with commercial Amish enterprise; Heather Hockert; Quilt shops! Amish meals, where the dessert is on the table as you enter; The Morning Gazette; the clip-clop of horse-drawn carriages contrasted with the mournful 'songs' of the railway engineers traversing the tracks about 6AM. each having an unusual and distinct language, which we listened for each morning; Quilt shops!

Coach /trailer/5th wheel manufacturing, but no adequate place to pull in for gasoline, diesel or propane for same--go figure! Heather Hockert. County Roads! Quilt shops! Never quite knowing where we were, despite instructions to take the 'back road' route; Clever costumes; Wonderful people, great friends, new friends; Quilt shops! Ah, the life in Goshen--we'll never forget it, and the super time we had there.

Grateful thanks to the many vendors who presented informative seminars, or sponsored a breakfast, lunch, dinner or 'social.' You too, are our Mandalay family!

THANKS to the Mandalay Service Team. I'd like to find out how many items were on Carl's list by the end of the week. Bet they fixed a "gazillion" items !!! They really do a great job. Thanks Guys and gal too !!

Sunday--last hugs, and departures. Another wonderful and memorable rally. Safe travels, and see everyone again soon.