

'A Changing World!'

We only have to look around to see a changing world. We are about to have a presidential election that will make history as we are all adjusting to the gas prices. Here in Elkhart, which has been the RV capital of the world, change is in the form of businesses closing and unemployment lines. Those of us who live full time in our homes on wheels are making daily decisions based on the price of gas. I wish I could say we stayed in Northern Indiana because of gas prices, but when you look at what we did, spending our money on gas would have been the cheaper way to go!! It was however, all for the sake of change.

After spending almost a week at the Elkhart Campground in Northern Indiana, Bob & I traveled the short 75 miles to our Chapter 400 Pre-Rally in Hopkins, Michigan. *Hidden Ridge RV Park* may be 'the campground of the year' as it was so very pretty! We all parked on concrete pads, facing water and the beautiful club house, which was on the other side of the pond. Nancy and Winnie actually did a significant amount of gourmet cooking, which included a 'Christmas in July' celebration plus the Red Hat Luncheon. These were new ideas used to make the rally more interesting and the food was outstanding! Then there was Winnie's 'scavenger hunt', which was great fun. The tours included The Saugatuck boat ride on the Kalamazoo River, the Air Zoo, and Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park. On a more traditional side, the pre-rally is the one where old and new chapter officers are sworn in for another year. This year my Bob was sworn in as the new Vice President. The following are a couple of pictures of that Rally.



The Rally in Hopkins was actually in July, with the HRRVC International Rally taking place in Goshen, Indiana at the beginning in August. It was July 31st when we all caravanned to the Goshen Fair Grounds. Chapter 400 traditionally does volunteer work at the International Rally and this one was no exception. It is usually our responsibility to 'man' the ice cream stand during the rally. Ray & Karen took the responsibility, but Ray became ill for a good part of the time in Hopkins. Feeling better he was able to work, but we all chipped in and made sure he had plenty of help. We served between 3 and 4 thousand servings of ice cream. See pictures. Only a few days into the Rally, we all needed to head for a shelter, along with our pets, at about 10:00 PM because of tornado a warning. Nothing like a little excitement to spice up a rally! See picture. Among the great entertainers in the evening were Ron & Kay Rivoli, who are our favorite RV entertainers. See picture. Other activities were numerous vendors, motor home sales, seminars, the Monaco Coach Corporation entertainment and refreshments in the sales area. The Rally ended August 7th.



Now for that gas saving change?

Those of you who have been following our touring pictures, know we had more wood flooring laid. The touring pictures show customization in progress. We actually found Tim and *MasterTech* at the HR International Rally. We did not come here with the intention of having this done. We have regretted not having gotten all wood floors when we ordered the coach, so the idea was there. Bob actually talked to Tim one day and before we knew it we had an appointment to bring the coach over on August 11th. Then, one thing lead to another, just as it does when you renovate any house. After trying to match the new wood to the old, we started looking around. The raised slide floor has always annoyed me, because it looked unfinished. Tim gave us some suggestions and we decided on wood for that too. Well, if we are going to get a new wood floor up front, what about new carpeting on the other slide, as we never really liked what we have in the first place. Hmmm! What to do with the left over new carpet? Had some throw rugs made as accents. Have to be careful not to undo the original idea of mostly bare wood floors though! We even had enough left over to share with some friends. Then we found this rug place called *Bock Engineering Co* that does this neat sculpturing work on carpets. Consequently, we had an oval rug made with the HR emblem put in the center. What a nice touch! Since we were going to be here anyway, we might as well have our awning fixed. We knew that was covered under the warranty. While here, our 'limit switch' for our electric cord malfunctioned, so a part was ordered for that. Then a handle bar broke during the work process, so Tim and Company made good on that. As I write this, we think we are actually done and are only waiting for our mail to arrive from Sioux Falls. We can't believe it. It is now September 4th. Where does the time go?

By now you have probably figured out that MasterTech has electric and water hookups as these projects took some time. We did not push them as we really had some time to kill. They typically have several projects going at one time. We actually came over with a couple from the Chapter 400 Chapter, Abe & Donna, who also had work done. Then we met some other couples here as well, who were also full time RVers. We had a good time together, keeping each other company, giving each other ideas regarding the customization and sharing meal times together. Be sure and check out the pictures on our web site.

With all the manufacturing companies closing down and lay offs of late, service facilities such as this are some of the few businesses that have the potential of continuing to do a fairly well. MasterTech's business seems to be picking up as the other facilities close. People still need service for their coaches. We won't hesitate to come back here when we need service.

We will probably leave here on Monday and head for OH and then PA. Since we are leaving so late we will probably not make many stops.

Time to Visit

While milling about in Northern Indiana we took time to visit our friends, Wendy & Henry and David, and even got to see Stephanie, Wendy's daughter, before she took off for college. Henry cooked dinner for us and we all went out to eat a couple of times. Henry took us for lunch at his favorite Mexican Eatery, which was sooo good!

We also took a ride to Racine, WI, where my Bob had a chance to visit with Carol, a former co-worker and friend from back in NY. Carol has since retired and moved to Racine to be near her sister. We packed up the cats and an overnight bag, driving up there in the car, leaving the motor home at MasterTech. We had a nice visit and together we all took in some local sights, in particular, *The Wind Point Light House* on the shores of Lake Michigan. Below is a picture of our coach and others at MasterTech, Bob and Carol in front of the Light House, Carol and her sister, Mary in front of their homes, and Bob & I with Lake Michigan in the background.

