



# NorthWest Country Coachers

Volume 4, Issue 1

January, 2011

**HAPPY NEW YEAR HAPPY NEW YEAR**

## EVENT CALENDAR

All events sponsored by NWCCers unless noted otherwise by \*

### 2011 Calendar

#### March 4-6—Mardi Gras North

Portland area—TBA. Glenda & Vern Serex rally masters (503) 363-0826

#### March 8, Tues.—Yuma, AZ, Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras Social, 1:00—?

Angela Carmen & Jim Gregory Hosts (Page 4)

#### March 17 —

Thursday. St. Patrick's Day Potluck Luncheon at Outdoor Resorts, Cathedral City, CA

Mary Ann Storey—reservations, mastorey726@yahoo.com

#### May 13-15. Hoodspport (early arrivals social on May 12) - Frank and Dana Suttell Rally Masters

\*June 2-5 FMCA Northwest Area at Linn County Fairgrounds, Albany, Oregon

#### July 20-24 Shakespeare Festival, Ashland, OR, Bev and Mike Carrick Rally Masters (503)508-0456

August 10-14—NWCC Homecoming in Harrisburg, OR

#### September—?something in La Grande, OR, Richard and Sibylle Beck Rally Masters

October—open

#### November ? 11-13 or 24-27, Long Beach. Best clamming is on Thanksgiving weekend—what's your choice?

**GIVE US YOUR INPUT and/or pick an open month and plan a gathering for all to enjoy**

## President's Corner Happy New Year



I'm writing this on January first looking out at clear blue skies over a rather chilly Seattle. The thermometer says 36° F but it feels more like 26°! There's no snow outside but plenty of frost on the ground so we really can't complain. The mountains are all snowcapped on the horizon and Mount Rainier looms over the downtown skyline in all her splendor. What a beautiful day to ring in the New Year with all it promises and to reflect on 2010.

Our club had a very busy year in 2010 with events all over the West Coast including Yuma, AZ; Cathedral City (Palm Springs), CA; Newport, LaPine and Redmond, OR; Lake Coeur d'Alene, ID; Hoodspport, Leavenworth, Prosser and Long Beach, WA. We even had some members get together for a caravan to Alaska and back. Many of our members traveled all over the country and sent messages, articles and photos back for all of us to enjoy their trips vicariously. Over 80% of our members attended at least one rally and nearly a quarter of our membership attended four or more club events last year! We are a busy club with active members enjoying the Country Coach lifestyle.

Unfortunately in 2010 some of our club members also dealt with some onerous health issues. I don't want to list these private issues for the entire club, but I want all of you who faced health problems in 2010 to know that everyone in the club wishes you speedy recoveries and a Joyous, Healthy, Happy New Year. We have also lost a few members whose lifestyles changed significantly which resulted in selling their coaches. We will miss those members in our club but look forward to their lasting friendship.

As for your president, I sort of dropped off the world for a while in late November. I had my own medical issues to deal with that took me out of circulation for about 6 weeks. I'm doing much better now and am looking forward to getting back to my normal routine in 2011.

Speaking of 2011, look at the rally calendar in this Newsletter. We have some exciting events planned for the New Year and have room for a couple more local weekend events, so, if you would like to see a get together near you for a weekend event let me or another board member know and we'll help you get something put together.

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Country Coach has posted an announcement that the Country Coach factory will reopen as a 'Lee family business' in January initially offering coach maintenance and eventually resuming manufacturing. Your Board has been attempting to gather additional information about the reopening and what it means. So far there is little news to share from the 'grape vine.' I spoke with Country Coach International, several former CC employees and a couple former dealers to see if any of them had any news. So far everything is just speculation and vague rumors except the CC web site. Visit the Country Coach web site for current details at <http://www.countrycoach.com/>

We are now in our annual dues renewal season. Please renew your annual dues as soon as you can. As you recall 2010 and look forward to 2011 think about all that our club provides for just \$25 a year. We send you a monthly newsletter via eMail with event information, informative articles and timely repair information. We maintain a web site with rally registration forms, a Service Directory with information about repair

facilities in our region, the Newsletter archive, membership application information and general club information including eMail addresses for your Board of Directors <http://nwccers.org>. Last year we had an event every month from February through November and your Board plans to do the same again next year. Our calendar for next year is already filling up beginning with two events in February – Super Bowl with SWCCers in San Diego and another Mardi Gras gathering in Yuma, AZ. Do you have some friends who own CCs but don't belong to NWCCers? If you bring in one new member you will save \$5, two new members you will save \$10 and three new members will qualify for free dues for a year (savings will be realized the next time you renew your dues). See page 5 for renewal form.

On behalf of your chapter Board of Directors have a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Fred Dent, President

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## **Country Coach is back in business**

### **A Junction City RV company is starting over again with high hopes**

By [Sherri Buri McDonald](#) The Register-Guard Published: **Wednesday, Jan 5, 2011 05:02AM**

JUNCTION CITY — The lights were on and a handful of employees were busy in their offices Tuesday at the former Country Coach headquarters in Junction City. After 36 years in business, the homegrown RV manufacturer, which was beset with financial problems, liquidated in 2009. But Ron Lee, the younger brother of Country Coach founder Bob Lee, resurrected the company on Monday — albeit in a much scaled-down form. This latest incarnation — Country Coach Corp. — is offering service and parts, painting and remodeling services to the owners of the roughly 10,000 Country Coach luxury motor homes on the road, as well as consignment sales. So far, the company has 10 employees with 245 years of combined experience at Country Coach, Ron Lee said. At its peak in 2005 or 2006, the company employed 1,800 workers, he said.

Lee envisions gradually returning to manufacturing high-end, luxury motor homes in the \$550,000 to \$750,000 price range. "We really want to manufacture coaches," Lee said. "We thought we were going to be able to source government grants." But the federal government has shown no interest, he said. "The American people are led to believe the government is out there trying to stimulate the economy," Lee said. "I don't see it." He estimates that a \$5 million government grant to Country Coach would produce 70 jobs immediately and 210 jobs, as well as \$50 million in economic growth, in the third year. He said those who believe the RV industry is never coming back are dead wrong. "Two-thirds of the baby boomers have yet to retire, and it's still everyone's dream to see this country," Lee said. "And there's no better way to do it than by RV."

It has been a chilly start for Ron Lee's new venture. The building's heating system was down, so workers went about their business clad in their winter coats. Lee, 68, said he has realistic expectations for his fledgling venture. "Just because we opened the doors, I don't expect to be flooded with business because it is winter in Lane County," he said. "Our goal is to streamline our procedures for the next two to three months."

Lee said he has three goals in trying to resuscitate the company: To preserve and maintain the property he owns, to support the thousands of Country Coach owners who've made a significant investment in their motor homes, and to create jobs. The mere sign of activity at the moribund plant is attracting attention in the Junction City community.

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Continued from Page 2—Country Coach is back in business

“We’re excited and very hopeful about it,” said Jamon Kent, interim city administrator. “It’s nice that we have a known quantity that will provide the start of some family-wage jobs in the town and maybe get some people who had worked there back to work. There is potential over time for the company to grow and expand, and that’s always hopeful and encouraging.”

Ron Lee’s plan to bring Country Coach back initially as a service center puts it in direct competition with many other area service centers, including Premier RV next door to Country Coach’s facility and Oregon Motor Coach on Airport Road, which is owned by Bob Lee and his wife, Terry.

Country Coach Corp. is uniquely positioned to serve Country Coach owners, Ron Lee said. If a customer crunches a fiberglass storage bin cutting a corner, for example, Country Coach has the replacement part and the mold to create one if the part is not in stock, said David Diamond, chief operations officer, and a 31-year Country Coach veteran. Ron Lee owns all of the former Country Coach’s intellectual property, so he can access the plans to be able to match carpet manufacturers and colors exactly, Diamond said.

Susan Graham, Premier’s sales manager, said “we’re not too concerned about” the new competitor. “We’re all drawing from our own people” she said. Longtime Country Coach veterans Gary Obermire, who was head of engineering and manufacturing, and Louie Courtemanche, a sales representative, started Premier a year ago. Graham said she sold luxury motor homes, including Country Coaches, at Guaranty RV in Junction City for 16 years. “Both Louie and I, we have a real strong customer base,” she said. “People are going to come to the people who take care of them.” In the last few months, “Ron wanted us to come over there to work with them, and we said no because we’ve been doing this for over a year, and it’s working well for us,” Graham said. “We just basically didn’t see there was a need.”

Terry Lee said she doesn’t know whether there is enough demand for RV service work to support another service operation in the area. “For us, we’ve seen a great demand,” she said. “But we’ve been in business since 2008 and my husband had a good reputation.”

In late December, Bob, Ron and Terry Lee split up ownership of the properties they had owned together as Lee Joint Ventures. Ron Lee now owns the headquarters building at 135 E. First Ave. and other land and buildings south of First Avenue. Bob and Terry Lee own the property north of First Avenue, plus a building on Sixth Avenue. Ron Lee also now owns the intellectual property and equipment that he, Bob and Terry Lee had bought at auction last year.

“It’s still everyone’s dream to see this country. And there’s no better way to do it than by RV.”

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### *A testimonial from one of our NWCC club*

**members:** Letter to the Editor: 12/14/2010

Knowing how important it is to find good, reliable service for our motor homes, I want to tell the Club members about the excellent, and extraordinary, service we received from Premier RV Services in Junction City, Oregon. The company was formed by several former Country Coach employees and a salesperson from Guaranty RV. They are located on the south east property of the old Country Coach factory. We went to them for some minor body work (minor; but the damage went through three colors of paint and cracked about six square feet of clear coat) because we weren't comfortable with any of the local body shops. We also asked them to take care of a few other problems with the coach. All of this was in the week prior to Thanksgiving and we had a commitment in

California on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Due to a delay with the insurance adjuster, they were unable to begin work early enough to meet our departure schedule, so their excellent paint crew even came in Thanksgiving morning to finish the job so we could be on the road by noon! Thanks to this above-and-beyond service, we were able to make my sister's 70th birthday by Sunday. They also let us stay each night in our motor home while it was in the paint shop. Here's the contact information for Premier RV Service:

www.premierrvstorage.com  
1-541-988-2640  
321 E. First Avenue  
Junction City, OR 97448

Connie & Dave Jones — Boise, Idaho

# Who dat comin' to Yuma?

By Jim Gregory and Angela Carmen

*Laissez les bons temps rouler\*!*

You are invited to the Third Annual Mardi Gras Social in Yuma at the winter home of Jim Gregory and Angela Carmen. The party tent has been reserved, the main course planned and the music instruments (aka iPod and Bose system) tuned up.

Normally a February celebration, this year Mardi Gras is March 8. Mardi Gras is always the day before Lent, a 40 day period of prayer, penitence and self-denial that precedes Easter. As we all know, back in 325 AD the Council of Nicaea decided Easter would fall on the Sunday following the paschal full moon, which is . . .oh, never mind. Just remember Tuesday, March 8. The festivities will begin around 1 pm.

Revelers are asked to bring a Mardi Gras theme based side dish and BYOB and BYOC (bring your own chairs). Plates, cups, forks, knives, etc. will be provided. In the next newsletter Ang will reveal the main course and provide suggestions for accompanying potluck dishes. Jim and Ang will also provide masks and beads, but if you have your own please bring.

An important festival tradition is the crowning of King Rex. Since 1872 Rex has been the *King of Carnival* in New Orleans and now, in Yuma since 2008. The first Yuma Rex was Jim, who usurped the crown while Ang was busy whipping up her famous Red Beans and Rice.

By tradition the Rex for the following year is determined by finding “The Baby” in a cake or pudding. Jean McCarthy found the baby and claimed the Rex Crown from Jim. In the days of old, kings justified keeping the crown in the family by “divine right”. Maybe there is something to that because last year King Rex Jean’s consort, Dennis McCarthy, found the “the Baby” and claimed the crown and the right to rule.

All Hail King Rex Dennis!  
Who will wear the crown next? Dennis & Jean . . .  
you won’t be bringing any family with you, will you?



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Mardi Gras Social in Yuma

Tuesday, March 8 – 1 pm

13685 S Ave 14 ½ E (directions will be provided by email)

Please RSVP by February 25

[Jimgregory3@gmail.com](mailto:Jimgregory3@gmail.com) or 360.600.8621

*More information of directions and places to park on page 5*

## Officer Contact List

Our Board of Directors is ready to help you at any time.

**Fred Dent**, President  
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206-282-6798

**Russell Warren**, Vice President  
Vicepresident@nwccers.org  
360-479-7012

**Wayne Gabel**, Secretary  
Secretary@nwccers.org  
503- 658-4260 home  
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**Dana Suttell** Treasurer  
Treasurer@nwccers.org  
360-876-1197

**Don Schleuse** National  
FMCA Director  
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**Herb Harris** Alt. National  
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360-430-3697

**Mary Lou Thun\*** Newsletter Editor  
Newsletter@nwccers.org  
360-901-5465

**David Roberts**, Past President  
kiwanisdcr@gmail.com 541-550-9660

**Kris Casebeer\***, Membership Chair  
**Lee Casebeer\***, Assistant Membership Chair  
Membership@nwccers.org 503-807-9936

\*denotes non-voting member

**Northwest Country Coachers Chapter of FMCA**  
**c/o Wayne Gabel**  
**22952 S.E. Bohna Park Rd**  
**Damascus, OR 97089**

### **Please Join the NWCCers Yahoo Group**

The Yahoo Group is a great way to share information in a quick manner. There is considerable conversation about parts, repairs and general items of interest. This site is even more popular as we all search for answers about our Country Coach. It's fun, informative and free. Contact Lee Casebeer at [Lcasebeer@gmail.com](mailto:Lcasebeer@gmail.com)

## **Mardi Gras Gathering— continued from page 4**

### **Coach Parking**

This is a walk-in social; there is no coach parking. However, 11 miles north of the social is free BLM camping. This dry camping area is located next to the Yuma VFW Post off highway 95. The GPS coordinates are N32.43.38 W114.25.17 or use address 16540 US Highway 95, Yuma, which will get you within visual distance. **IMPORANT NOTE:** Drive behind the VFW post to enter the BLM camping area. If you use the BLM entry gate in front of the VFW post your coach will hate you forever. . .as will all the break-ables in your coach.

The nearest RV parks are 4 miles or more from the Mardi Gras Social. Three examples are:  
Fortuna De Oro RV Resort – 13650 N. Frontage Road, 928.343.5051  
Foothills Village RV Park – 12705 S. Frontage Road, 928.342.1030  
Sundance RV Park – 13502 N. Frontage Road, 928.342.9333

Many other parks are located near the Frontage Road areas. Last year several revelers stayed at Cocopah Bend RV and Golf Resort (800.537.7901), a beautiful RV park about 25 miles west of the Mardi Gras. The history and traditions of Mardi Gras can be found at [www.mardigrasneworleans.com](http://www.mardigrasneworleans.com)

\*Laissez les bons temps rouler (lay-say lay bawn tawn rul-lay) – “Let the good times roll!”

*Photo of Lee Casebeer flanked by Millie and Ken Blodgett.*



**FROM YOUR TREASURER**

Hi Everyone! This has been a busy fall for your Treasurer. Between vacation and Christmas I have been moving our banking accounts to Wells Fargo, due to some changes with Bank of America that did not work for our club accounts. We are now up and running with the new account and ready to have us all complete our 2011 Renewals.

Fred has worked hard to add PayPal to our club for those that would like to handle payments without sending in a check. We are still working on all the details, but if you would like to use that option, simply send in your completed form and check the box for me to send you an invoice (via email). Otherwise the tried and true check will be welcomed. Note our new address. Thank you for your patience and your prompt attention to your dues.

Dana Suttell Treasurer

**NorthWest Country Coachers**

**Invoice for  
Membership Dues**

**For:** January 1 through December 31, 2011

**Amount Due:** \$25.00

**Please send your payment to:**

Dana Suttell  
**NorthWest Country Coachers**  
1894 S.E. Sedgwick Rd. #104 PMB 32  
Port Orchard, WA 98366

**The board would like you to review your personal information so that the club may update our records.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Co Pilot:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Numbers: Home** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell(1)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell (2)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alternate Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Our club now has the ability to accept your dues payment through PayPal. Please send us a check, or request a PayPal Invoice to be sent to you by email to complete the transaction.**



# NorthWest Country Coachers

An FMCA Chapter, Chartered September 29, 2007, As a Regional Northwest area Country Coach Owner's Club.

## Membership Application

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver Name _____	Co-Pilot Name _____	
Date of Birth: (MM/DD) _____	Date of Birth: (MM/DD) _____	Anniversary: (MM/DD) _____
<b><u>Mailing Address:</u></b>		
Street: _____	City: _____	State: _____ Zip: _____
Phones: Home ( ) _____	Driver Cell ( ) _____	Co-Pilot Cell: ( ) _____
<b><u>Residence Address, if different than mailing:</u></b>		
Street: _____	City: _____	State: _____ Zip: _____
<b><u>More Information:</u></b>		
*FMCA # _____	CCI # -Optional _____	E-mail Address: _____
<b><u>Your Country Coach Information:</u></b>		
Year: _____	Length: _____	Model: _____ Coach # _____

<b><u>Emergency Contact:</u></b>	
Contact: _____	Relationship _____
Phone: ( ) _____	Address: _____
<b><u>Any Special Medical Information:</u></b> _____	

Your Favorite Activities &/or Special Interests: _____
Names & types of pets in Coach: _____

**NWCC Facts:** Our club holds several rallies each year in the Northwest to promote friendship and Camaraderie among Coach owners. \*We are a chapter of FMCA; therefore our members must also be current FMCA members. The annual membership fee is \$25 with an additional one (1) time \$25 application fee. Application dues received after September 31 will cover the remainder of the calendar year and the following year. Please mail your application and \$50 check, Payable to: NORTHWEST COUNTRY COACHERS; to our club Treasure at:  
Dana Suttell, 3163 SE Tucci Pl. Port Orchard, WA. 98367  
E-mail contact: [treasurer@nwccers.org](mailto:treasurer@nwccers.org)  
Contact [Kris Casebeer](#), Our Membership Chairperson, with any Membership questions at: [membership@nwccers.org](mailto:membership@nwccers.org)  
Please join our Yahoo message forum group for continued communications and E-Letters at: [NW-CC-ers@yahoo.com](http://NW-CC-ers@yahoo.com)  
NorthWest Country Coachers Internet Website: [nwccers.org](http://nwccers.org)

Applicant Signatures

Driver \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Pilot \_\_\_\_\_