

May 17, 2009

Greetings to both my dry and soggy camping friends!!!

Well, to say the very least, this weekend's abbreviated campout at Lakeview Campground near Rochester was "adventure packed"!! Hosting this crazy campout were Steve and Iris Lewis and Gary and I; able to join us were Guy and Jan Givens, Eric and Teresa Cohee, Ron and Carol Koenes, Dick and Marsha Helm, Ken and Sharon Dickman, Wilbur and Ginny Haggerty, George and Sherry Gehring, Paul and Tonya Berg with children Samantha and Nick, Ron and Melodie Thompson, and Allen and Carolyn Crist. The day was a little dreary with sprinkles now and then. Use of 3 Easy Ups solved that problem. While enjoying each others company and catching up on news, Ken, of course, enjoyed luring some fish in the lake. That wasn't all he lured; much to Marsha's surprise she found a toad tossed into her lap!!! And the fun begins!! Yes, it was a treat watching Wilbur unload his Cricket only to get it stuck in the mud. Great entertainment, Wilbur! A big "welcome" is given to our newest members, Ron and Melodie! His brother-in-law, Eric Cohee, was so impressed with Ron's ability to back his pop up onto his site; he was real proud of him.....until Gary let the cat out of the bag that he just made the loop and drove onto the site!! We have faith in you, Ron; you'll do fine with it. Bergs arrived and introduced our newest "canine camper" to the club – a darling buff cocker spaniel named Maria Chewbacca!! She's a cutie. As usual, we had our abundance of canine campers with us.

Dinnertime was drawing nigh, so Gary and Steve got busy cooking us some hotdogs for dinner. To complement that, there was a vast assortment of garnishes, a wide variety of chips or pretzels, and desserts to top it all off – homemade peanut butter cookies and banana bars. Everyone seemed to get their fill so it was time to gather around the campfire. As we sat there, we noticed something very interesting in the back of Haggertys' horse trailer-----a red light!! Guess we know how Wilbur intends to pay for this weekend!! :o) Anyway, heaven forbid we let everyone relax! It was time to pass out the weekend challenge – the Bird Seed Bottle Puzzle. All were encouraged to find several items mixed in with the bird seed and given until Saturday's meeting to accomplish this. WOW!!! What a competitive group!! You could feel the tension in the air!! All were "driven" to find this or that!! It was absolutely hilarious!! Of course, Mr. Competitive (Allen) was the first to locate all his items BUT that's not necessarily the goal (sorry, Allen). What was supposed to be a fun search until later Saturday turned out to be a race!! Winner/s was to be announced at the meeting Saturday.

Little by little, sprinkles turned into drizzles so several moved under the Easy Ups and a few retired to the dryness of their RV. Eventually the drizzles turned into a hardy rain so we all called it a night around 9-ish (I think). All warm and dry in our RVs, we each found our thing to do for the remainder of the evening (some still working on the birdseed activity!!). Carolyn C. had a premonition going to bed wondering if it is safe to camp near a lake???? Gary and I played cards for a while with Gary going out

periodically to check the Easy Ups and pushing accumulated water out of them. About his 2nd or 3rd time out, he returned saying one had collapsed! Water in our camping area was about ankle deep by now. Upon going out again to check out things, he returned to say that there are now 2 collapsed Easy Ups!! Oh, my. And, of course, the water was getting a bit deeper. About 11:20 we went to bed only to have a knock at the door about 11:30!! The campground owners were alerting everyone that we need to EVACUATE NOW as the lake was rising!!!! Time to scramble!!!! All quickly got out to gather their things and unhook. We dressed and got out, grabbed everything outside and threw it all into our RV; grabbed all chairs left behind under the Easy Ups and threw them in, too. Found our tarp that was covering the firewood and put it in as the firewood was now floating!!! Awning down, unhooked from water and electric and ready to go----or so I thought!!! I went around and advised all that we would still continue the campout at our house in the morning; all were invited to come by in the morning or later for our planned breakfast, continue with the fundraiser activity we had planned, and all other “normal” things we do. Ron and Melodie got out before their pop up started to float; Jan and Guy made a run for it and got out as did Eric and Teresa; Wilbur and Ginny made it out quickly; also “dashing” was George with Sherry still in the RV!! Not only that but he took off with slide out, jacks down and the steps down!!! Whoa!!!! When did you finally stop to put it all in???? Disaster struck poor Dick and Marsha as they hit a nasty patch of mud, slid and got stuck!! We all stood in the pouring rain cheering them on, praying for them, aching for them; all our men were doing what they could to help out, too, with flashlights or whatever. The campground owners worked tirelessly trying their best to solve their dilemma. Well, after much pulling forward and pulling backward with assorted tractors and pieces of heavy equipment, they finally got them away from the lake and the roadway about 3:30AM!! Little by little we all maneuvered our rigs and got them up on the driveway at the entrance. Eric and Teresa were waiting for us. By this time the lake was covering the roadway where our campsites were and was up to our top step on our RV!!! Hmmm!!! We lined up 2 by 2 on the entrance drive hoping to head home but that wasn't in the cards. The roads were closed due to flooding or accidents; we all must stay. So we jockeyed RVs around so we could “stack” on one side of the drive and some to the other side to leave an opening in the middle in case of emergency. You all would have been totally impressed with Paul and Steve for how they maneuvered their rigs backwards down the hill so we could all get situated. They deserve a “Back Up” Award!! Of course, all is a group effort so the rest of the men need “Direction Awards” for their assistance in guiding them into position. While doing this, Koeneses put on coffee for us to have to warm up (decaf, of course). So by 4AM we were situated and enjoying some coffee and calming down a bit. Ken and Sharon showed their hospitality by inviting Dick and Marsha to spend the night with them as their rig was out of the way but not out of the mess. Of course, they may not extend an invitation like this again as “Dick ended up in Sharon's bed and Marsha got into Kens' pants (and was still in them at breakfast)!!!” Thank goodness we still had a sense of humor! :o) And speaking of Ken, ask him where his “hitch key” is??? Did ya ever get unhooked from your truck???? We all started to go to bed (again) about 4:30AM only to be up “bright and early” at about 7:30AM.

Saturday morning we decided to walk back down the drive to check out the situation in the daylight. Looking across the lake we found our campsites were “in the middle of

the lake”!! One collapsed Easy Up still secured and our parade of picnic tables had water up to the benches!! Good thing we got out when we did. Had thought we’d be able to see the damage done by the tractors to the campsites and road but that was all now part of the lake, too. Told the owner they need to change the name of their campgrounds from Lakeview Campgrounds to “Middle of the Lake” Campgrounds!! She chuckled. She was very impressed with our attitudes and camaraderie and extremely apologetic for the situation. Reminded her it wasn’t their fault but also we so appreciated all their work to take care of us. Well, she and Dick got in touch with a wrecker service; Dick reminded them that he has a BIG rig so send something hefty to move them. While waiting for this Gary got an “assembly line” of coffee pots going for us. Eventually the wrecker showed up. Talk about sending “David in to tow Goliath”!!! Guess they thought Dick was exaggerating???? We all could have gone home and left Dick and Marsha to wait for the wrecker but that is not the Good Sam’s way; and especially not “OUR” way. We all stayed and kept vigil while they waited. Breakfast for the morning was already prepared so the owners invited us to use their pavilion to warm it up and sit down and eat. So it was still a sausage gravy and biscuit morning with a fruit salad. Rain still hasn’t let up. :o(But by 11:20 the “big guns” arrived!!! A wrecker built to handle Helm’s truck and rig showed up; hooked up and pulled them out smooth as silk. The driver got lots of cheers from us as did Dick when he drove up the drive with the 5th wheel in tow!! YEAAAAA!!!! (And checking with Helms today, all seems to be ok. Whew!) By noon, we Die Hards - all pruny, soaked and “webbed footed”, pulled out to go home having had a campout we will not soon forget!!! God took care of all of us!!!

Needless to say, the “extension” of the campout to continue at the Rexroads was cancelled; we were all wiped out. The winner/s of the Bird Seed activity will be announced at the next campout; also, the “fundraiser” we had planned will be done then, too (so bring a little cash).

Next up for the Circus City Sams:

Spring Samboree, Boone County Fairgrounds, Lebanon, IN May 22 - 25

Hope to see you there!!!

June campout information!!

When: June 26, 27, 28

Hosts: Guy and Jan Givens (tiremananjan@yahoo.com)

Lance and Shelley Agness (shelleyagness@yahoo.com)

Place: Camp Givens, Wabash, IN

Plans: Info forthcoming from the hosts

Please contact the hosts **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE** to let them know you are coming so they know for how many to prepare. Don't forget your donations to Back Roads Dog Rescue; they are greatly appreciated!!!

June birthday:	Larry Yoder	the 23 rd
June anniversary: 12 th	Larry and Ruth Yoder	the

See you at the June campout!!!

Carolyn Rexroad
Corresponding Secretary