

2025 Rally Schedule!
Save the dates and book your sites.
> p. 5-6

Great Lakers is almost 50!
Join a group to plan for 2026 festivities.
> p. 6

Joe's Tech Corner
Stay busy during your coach's long winter nap.
> p. 7

Roam.

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GMC GREAT LAKERS MOTORHOME CLUB



What's inside?

President's Page

Board of Directors and Contributors

2025 Rally Season Schedule

2025 Rally Planning

Help Plan for our 50th Anniversary

Joe's Tech Report

Treasurer's Report

Membership Report

Sunshine & Rainbows

The Circle of Life: RIP Matthew Colie

I hope you and your family had a good holiday season.

3 I wanted to say great, but how realistic is that? Life being
4 what it is, some years are prize winners, while others
5 are difficult to bear. Whatever last year brought you,
6 I hope you can begin 2025 with peace and a sense
7 of purpose. I'm looking forward to continuing to build
8 relationships with Great Lakers this year.

6 Sadly, on December 24th we said goodbye to a
7 diehard GMC man, Matthew Colie. Many people
8 feel this loss as Matt was well known in the GMC
9 community, in Michigan and around the country through
10 GMCMI. There isn't much you can say that will make
11 such a loss easier, but our hearts go out to Mary and her
12 family. I sincerely hope Mary has love around her and
13 will continue to be part of our community.

9 After buying my coach Matt was the first person in the
10 community I had contact with. He organized monthly
11 lunch meetings for an unofficial group -- Southeast
12 Michigan and Northern Ohio GMC Owners Network
13 Lunch. He welcomed me into the group and introduced
14 me to a world of learning and friends. And he taught this
15 newbie some helpful things along the way.

**I'd like to write a longer piece for February's issue,
so please send me your thoughts and memories,
pictures or stories that I can include to honor him as
a whole person.**

Matt's memorial service is planned for Monday, January
20th 2025 from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the David C
Brown Funeral Home (460 E Huron River Dr, Belleville,
MI 48111).

[https://www.echovita.com/us/obituaries/mi/
belleville/matthew-euler-colie-19072848](https://www.echovita.com/us/obituaries/mi/belleville/matthew-euler-colie-19072848)

Janet Leslie, Roam Editor
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Janet

Cover: Peter Carney's 1978 Royale taking in the view at Iowa 80
Worlds Biggest Truck Stop. Photo by Peter Carney.

President's Page



Left: GMC fans line up to see Steve & Becky's 1977 Eleganza. Photo by Becky Johnson.

Sometimes I think we have a tendency to forget just how good we've got it. An experience that I had back in September reinforced this thought for me. First, a little background.

I worked my entire career for General Motors starting full time at their Tech Center in Warren, Michigan in 1978 at the conclusion of my college co-op engineering degree program at General Motors Institute (today known as Kettering University). In 1985, I reluctantly took a job assignment at their Proving Grounds in Milford, Michigan which at the time I feared might side-track the advancement of my engineering career at GM. Thirty-one years later, I was still working at the Proving Grounds when I retired. A side-track to the Proving Grounds became the job I loved and never wanted to leave. For the last few years of my working career, I was able to "threaten" my boss during my annual performance review that I would immediately retire if they tried to transfer me to a job within the company located anywhere else.

The Milford Proving Grounds was created by GM back in 1924 to develop and test all of their vehicles, including our cherished motorhome. On September 21, 2024 the Proving Grounds held an Open House to celebrate 100 years of operations and invited GM employees and retirees to attend with their families. Part of the festivities was a classic car show held on their vehicle dynamics pad, 67 acres of asphalt used for handling development tests. Becky and I displayed our 1977 Eleganza amongst about 200 classic vehicles. As you can imagine, like many car shows, this one had a lot of muscle cars (Corvettes, Camaros, Mustangs, Chargers) with some being concours level samples easily worth well over \$100,000. There were cars ranging from almost new mid-engine Corvettes to 100+ year old cars (a couple Ford Model T's and a Cadillac) with a mix of anything and everything in between.

When we arrived for the show, the organizers parked us

next to the only other GMC motorhome in attendance since they figured we must have known each other. It turns out we didn't – the other owner was a GM retiree who came from Oxford, Michigan. I put out our coach awnings and grabbed our lawn chairs, prepared to answer a few questions from attendees who we thought might be curious, before we ventured out to look over the rest of the show.

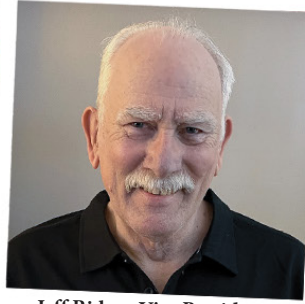
Seven hours later, it seemed like we had hosted in our GMC most of the 8,000 people who attended the event. We separately took a few minutes to quickly see some of the other vehicles and displays that GM put together, but most of the time we were both engaged in conversations by our coach with some of the attendees. I'm convinced that our GMC attracted more attention than any of the immaculate Corvettes parked nearby. Most people with a car at an event like this would say "look but don't touch" but we said "come inside and look around". Kids loved our Barbie GMC and the Hot Wheels GMCs that Becky brought to show. Their parents marveled that we actually camp in a classic. Several asked how they could buy one.

When the car show finished and it was time to head home, we had an opportunity to drive on several of the Proving Grounds test roads that were part of a self-guided road tour to celebrate the 100th Anniversary. The coolest part was driving the GMC on the banked turn-around at the end of the 3 mile long straightaway that runs along one side of the property. The last track we drove the GMC on before exiting the Proving Grounds was a portion of the Milford Road Course, essentially a private race track used to develop high speed handling.

The next time you get an opportunity to show off your GMC, take it. Don't fret about its flaws – they will be overlooked by envious onlookers. Our experience definitely reminded us how good we've got it.

Steve

2024
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Great Lakers



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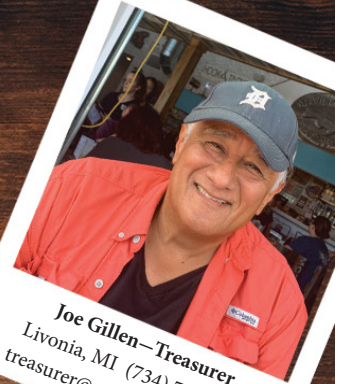
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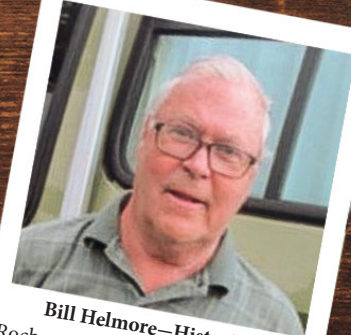
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Rally Season Schedule

2025

More details to come so you can plan and book your summer trips!



May

Dutch Treat Campground
Zeeland, MI
May 15th to 18th, 2025

Call 616-772-4303 for a reservation. but they usually have plenty available in May. We suggest reserving in January.

June

Elkhart RV Campground
Granger, IN
June 19th to 22nd, 2025

Call 509-957-2941 for a reservation. The line is staffed 9 to 5, Monday-Friday; ask for Auturo. They are not holding sites so make your reservation early.

July

Chain O Lakes Campground
Bellaire, MI
July 17th to 20th, 2025

They are holding 20 sites for us until January 1st. After that they are open to the public. Call 231-533-8432 for a reservation; ask for Cameo and mention that you are with the Great Lakers.

August

Groveland Oaks County Park
Holly, MI
August 13th to 20th, 2025

We have a group site for 20 coaches - your camping fee will be included in the rally fee. After the first 20 coaches register with us you will need to book your site directly through the park.

September

Algonac State Park
Algonac, MI
September 11th to 14th, 2025

This is a return of the Do Nothing Rally in a completely refurbished campground. Make your reservation through the Michigan DNR website by March to get a site near the riverside.
<https://www.michigan.gov/DNR>

October

Harrison Lake State Park
Fayette, OH
October 16th to 19th, 2025

Make your own reservation in April through the Ohio State Park reservation system online.
<https://www.reserveohio.com/OhioCampWeb/>

2025 Rally Planning

by Jeff Rider

Hello to all GMC Great Lakers! As you know, we have planned six rallies for the 2025 season. We are looking for volunteer rally hosts for some (listed below). Anyone who is interested in hosting a rally will get plenty of support from others who have hosted a rally. It is not difficult, and the club pays for your camping fee for hosting as a way of saying Thank You!

- The May rally is our 49th birthday rally in Holland, MI, and is hosted by the executive board. Details will be coming out early in 2025.
- The June rally at the Elkhart RV Campground in Goshen, IN is in need of a host. Please consider volunteering. Past hosts and the board are happy to help you enjoy this club role!

- Nancy Donovan will host the July rally at Chain O Lakes Campground in Bellaire, MI. It will have a Christmas in July theme. Make your reservations now as there were 20 spots being held until the 1st of the year.
- The August rally at Groveland Oaks County Park in Holly, MI is also in need of a host.
- The September rally at Algonac State Park in Algonac, MI is a "Do Nothing" Rally.
- The October rally at Harrison State Park in Fayette, OH is also in need of a host.

The rally dates and contact info were emailed to current members in October. If by chance you didn't get the email or deleted it, you can contact me at vice.president@gmcgreatlakers.org.

Jeff

Help Us Plan a Celebration for 2026!

by Steve Johnson

On January 24, 1976 the "GMC Michigan Wolverines" was formed. A few months later the club was renamed the GMC Great Lakers to appease Buckeye and Spartan fans who didn't like the thought of being called Wolverines. So, as we approach 2026, we also approach our club's 50th birthday. Quite an accomplishment.

50 years of GMC fun deserves a special celebration. I would like to see a committee formed of Great Lakers members who want to help in the planning and execution of the activities that will celebrate our milestone year. I think that this committee should be made up of members who are not on our board so this is your chance to get involved.



Our charter member, Bill Helmore, has suggested that we may even want to return to the tradition of the club's early years to hold a true birthday get-together in January (without our coaches). All ideas can be considered.

2026 will be here before we know it so determining interests and planning needs to begin soon.

If you would like to be involved in this endeavor, send me an email (president@gmcgreatlakers.org) and you'll become part of the team. I'll gather together the list of volunteers and help you get started, then it's up to you. I look forward to hearing what you have in mind.

Steve

Joe's Tech Corner

by Joe Gillen

Parking your coach for the winter is rough! The keys are just sitting on the counter gathering dust. Well don't despair, there are a few things you can do to keep your GMC from getting cold and lonely.

- Start your coach at least once a month to keep the oil circulating.
- Pump your brakes to keep the brake cylinder and master cylinder moving.
- Check for water leaks. Even the best kept coaches get them. When it's too cold for repairs I put towels and buckets in place until favorable weather is upon us.
- Create your "Things to do list" for 2025.
- Start signing up for Great Lakers rallies!
- Check the age of your tires. A maximum of seven years is a good age to replace them regardless of treadwear.
- Have you aligned your headlights?
- Check your records to see when the wheel bearings were last repacked.

- Check the water pump to see if it's weeping any coolant. The little hole under the front bearing will provide your first and only clue it's about to go.

- Check your battery ground connections and do an under-hood wire inspection. Look particularly at the purple power line to the fan as it is known to melt.

- It's a good time to order parts for next year.

- I got a great idea from Jeff Ryder. I am going to make a summer storage bonnet for our GMC front end out of an existing car cover I have laying around. This will help minimize damaging sun rays to the paint. As you may know, tarps are too abrasive and will chafe your nice paint job.

- Book sites at state and provincial campgrounds six months ahead to "lock in" your campsites!

Do you have any favorite winter projects, ideas, or stories? Send them to Janet Leslie to help educate new and experienced coach owners alike! **Email to newsletter@gmcgreatlakers.com by January 24th to be included in February's issue.**

Below: Joe Gillen and Diego are ready for the next road trip! Photo by Alesia Gillen.





Treasurers Report

by Joe Gillen

November 2024

	Debit/Credits	Balance		
November Starting Balance		\$5,103.09		
Other Income	\$0.00			
Membership Income Fees				
Yearly Membership	\$0.00			
Ongoing Yearly Expenses			Due	Paid
\$12.00 WEB POWER Site back up (1 year)			4/23/2024	Jun-24
\$100.68 Site Lock Essentials (1 year)paid			6/29/2024	6/17/2024
\$20,00 LARA Non Profit License due June /July to J. Gillen				8/14/2024
\$20.99 .ORG renew (1 year)			8/16/2024	8/1/2024
\$29.98 IPOWER domain Privacy+Protection			10/30/2026	10/1/2024
\$169.90 One yr subscription Zoom monthly board mtgs due 11/23/24	-\$169.49	\$4,933.60		11/2/2024
\$475.00 United States Liability Insurance	-\$475.00	\$4,458.60	1/1/2025	11/24/2024
\$742.23 Ipower Hosting Plan (3 years)			6/29/2026	
Expense Totals	-\$644.49			
November Running Balance 11/30/24		\$4,458.60		
November Ending Bank Balance 11/30/24		\$4,475.28		
OVER BY		\$16.68		



Membership Report

by Sharon Giannosa

2025 is coming and its not too soon to renew your membership. Great Lakers renewals are the World's best deal at only \$15.

If you know anyone in our region who is the proud guardian of a TZE vehicle, encourage them to join us!

Sharon

GMC Great Lakers Motorhome Club, Inc.

Newsletter Editor
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Sunshine & Rainbows

by Sue Aubuchon

Well, the new year is here, and another wonderful season of fellowship and fun is behind us. I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season! Since our last newsletter, cards with the following wishes have been sent:

In Sympathy—Farewell and Safe Travels:

Condolences were sent to Mary Colie on the passing of her husband Matthew Colie in December.

Hope You're Feeling Better!

A get well card was sent to Mary Lenzi. We hope she and Dave had a good Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Cheers!

P.S. If you know when a member has a life event and would benefit from a little Sunshine, please let me know at sunshine@gmcgreatlakers.org, or saubuchon6419@gmail.com

Sue