

ROAM

GMC GREAT LAKERS MOTORHOME CLUB



IN MEMORIUM

Matthew Euler Colie
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2025 RALLY SCHEDULE

Six Rallies This Summer!
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EDITORIAL

It's February. On most days, those of us close to the Great Lakes huddle indoors away from the cold and ice. Scrolling through Facebook and feeling pangs of jealousy at the coach pictures with beaches and palm trees. For our members who snowbird south in the winter - enjoy and have a sunset cocktail for us!

I've lived in Michigan for 25 years and usually am pretty winter-hardy. But friends have commented that they may take away my Canadian card if I complain too much. So, I thought some honor for our coaches might be in order. I hope you enjoy the pictures of them stoically toughing out the ice and snow, dreaming of smooth pavement and high test gas in their winter naps.



I imagine some of them would prefer to be tailgating hockey games, but I doubt the FWD would stand up to the road conditions.

So let them rest, and by the next newsletter in April we'll be starting spring tune-ups. The time will pass quickly. Maybe I should get started on the GMC tech reading I planned to do this winter :-)

Janet

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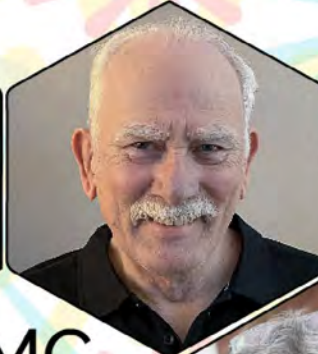
Cover: Phil & Trish Nau's 1976 Glenbrook, Mothership II, buried for her long winter's nap in London, Ontario. Image by Trish.. Left: Freezing rain in Ottawa Lake, MI glazes Henry VanWyk's 1975 Eleganza II, Hilda. Images by Henry.

Board of Directors & Contributors

Steve Johnson-President
Milford, MI (248) 378-3177
president@gmccreatlakers.org



Jeff Rider-Vice President
Troy, MI (248) 877-1966
vice_president@gmccreatlakers.org



Sharon Giannosa-Membership
China, MI (810) 650-7923
membership@gmccreatlakers.org

Joe Gillen-Treasurer
Livonia, MI (734) 788-6695
treasurer@gmccreatlakers.org



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Lakers



Faye Smith-Secretary
Mason, OH (513) 235-7543
secretary@gmccreatlakers.org



Sue Aubuchon-Sunshine Person
Ortonville, MI (248) 227-3235
sunshine@gmccreatlakers.org



2025



Rob Matras-Webmaster
Plymouth, MI (313) 363-9810
webmaster@gmccreatlakers.org



Jerry Newman-Past President
Cincinnati, OH (513) 235-7848
newmysr@gmail.com

Janet Leslie-Newsletter Editor
Saline, MI (734) 864-6287
newsletter@gmccreatlakers.org



Bill Helmore-Historian
Rochester Hills, MI (248) 804-0370
historian@gmccreatlakers.org

President's Page

by Steve Johnson

I'm writing this column on a frigid day in January with my GMC safely put away for the winter. However, we know that spring is only a few months away and then we are back to camping season. I hope you are looking forward to hitting the road in your GMC as much as I am.

The job of the Great Lakers vice president is to develop our rally schedule and work with the rest of the club to get it executed. Our vice president, Jeff Rider, has scheduled six Great Lakers rallies for 2025 starting with Zeeland, Michigan on May 15. The "official" tulip festival in nearby Holland, MI concludes on May 11 so we will miss the crowds but I'll bet thousands (or is it millions) of tulips will still be on show a few days later. I look forward to touring the DeZwann windmill, the only authentic Dutch windmill operating in the United States since it was moved here from the Netherlands in 1964.

At the **May rally** each year the Great Lakers celebrate the birthday of our club by giving to attending members a Great Lakers themed memento. Your executive board hosts this rally so all you have to do is show up, relax and enjoy. I hope to see you there.

Our **June rally** is at the Elkhart RV Resort in Granger, IN starting June 19. Just down the road from Granger is Elkhart, IN, the RV capital of the world. Jeff found us this location but now we need a member to step forward to host the rally for us.



Above: Steve's grandson Roman wants to "drive" their Eleganza in the driveway each time he visits. He'll be a pro before you know it! Image by Becky Johnson.

Two great things about being a rally host....

First, you are in charge so you are free to make the rally exactly what you prefer. Don't do breakfast? We're OK with just coffee and donuts. Like a hot breakfast? Put your fellow campers to work as your cooks for the meal of your choice. Pot lucks, catered dinners or pizza parties are all possibilities. As the host, you get to decide. No two rallies are the same. Do you enjoy outings to museums or factory tours? Set one up and you can bet most

will attend and enjoy it as much as you. Like the captain of the ship, you plan and delegate – you don't need to do it all.

Trust me – you will get all of the help that you need. We can pair you up with an experienced co-host to take away the fear that “I haven't done this before” if that would make you feel more comfortable.

The **second** great thing about volunteering to be a rally host is the club pays your camping fee as a small thank-you for your service.

Last October, Faye and Dan Smith hosted our October rally at Maumee Bay state park in Ohio. They had only been Great Lakers members a little more than a year when they volunteered to host for us. Their rally ended up being the highest attended that we have had in years and was enjoyed by all.

Nancy Donaghue will be hosting our **July rally** at Chain-O-Lakes Campground in Bellaire, MI.

Like June, our **August rally** at Groveland Oaks County Park in Holly, MI and our **October rally** at Harrison Lake State Park in Fayette, OH **also need hosts**.

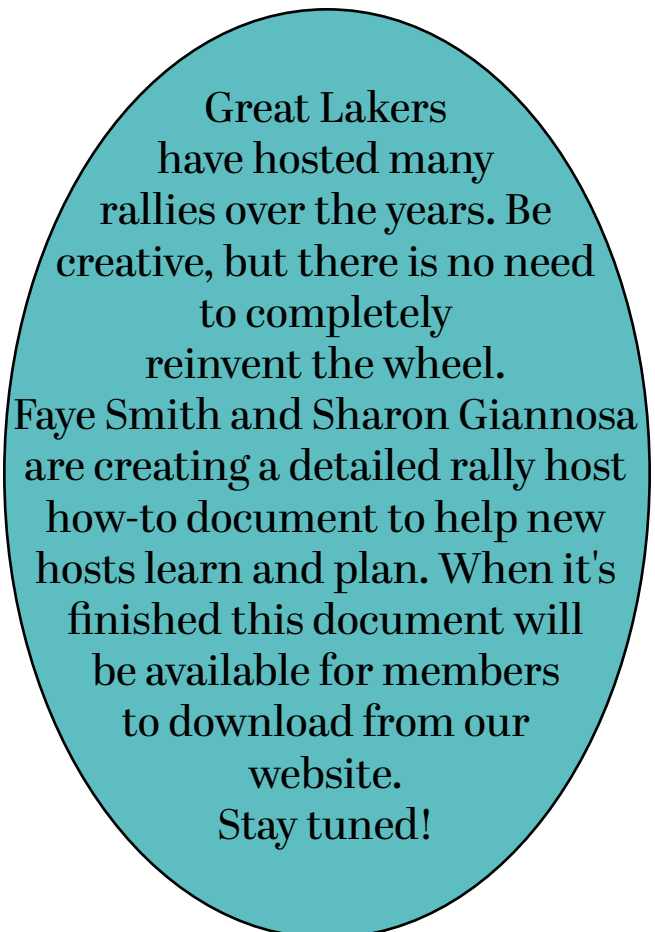
Sandwiched in between is our **September “Do-nothing” rally** at Algonac state park in Algonac, MI. A “Do-nothing” rally has no host and no scheduled activities – it is just an opportunity for our members to camp together and enjoy each other's company. It is a change of pace for us, but we don't want it to be the norm.

Without hosts, the June, August and October rallies will become “Do-nothing” rallies too. I'm hoping that you can help us avoid that.

If you want to host any of these rallies, contact Jeff (vice_president@gmcgreatlakers.org) and let him know.

If you want more information before taking the plunge, contact any of the board members to get your questions answered. Together, we can make this happen.

Steve



Great Lakers have hosted many rallies over the years. Be creative, but there is no need to completely reinvent the wheel. Faye Smith and Sharon Giannosa are creating a detailed rally host how-to document to help new hosts learn and plan. When it's finished this document will be available for members to download from our website. Stay tuned!



Matthew Euler Colie

January 20, 1948 - December 24, 2024

by Janet Leslie

Matt Colie was the first person I contacted in the GMC community after buying my coach in 2022. I didn't know him, but the monthly GMC meeting he organized in Southeast Michigan was recommended as a MUST for new owners. He welcomed me, and the people in that group have since become valued friends and teachers, a significant reason I have been able to tackle the challenges of GMC ownership. Matt provided that opportunity to be part of my first GMC social and technical support network. I'll bet many others have the same story of being brought together through Matt's efforts.

His passing elicited so many memories and stories across the GMC community. I learned from Matt's obituary that he was a true joiner - a contributor and member of several clubs and organizations. In our circle, he was an active, long-time member of GMCMI and the Great Lakers regional club. He enjoyed these coaches and understood their technical needs. And he was always available to anyone in the community with a tech question. I imagine few active owners haven't met Matt at a rally or benefitted from his online contributions to newsgroups and social media.

Matt built his mechanical and technical abilities over a lifetime of education and experience. He learned from his father, an illustrating engineer who ran a military spec job shop. Matt continued that path with master's level training in marine and mechanical engineering. The US Coastguard and the Merchant Marine licensed his skills.



In 2006, Matt and his wife Mary bought their 1973 23-foot Glacier from Farmington Hills. They were only the third owners, but the coach had spent much of its life in California. Together, travel-loving Matt, Mary, and their dogs explored over 70,000 miles in their Glacier! They camped in the country's far reaches from Michigan to Yellowstone, Albuquerque, Texas, Florida, and the Outer Banks. Matt took an early retirement from Chrysler, and once Mary retired in 2012, it was them and the open road.

Many people have shared personal stories and memories since Matt passed away on Christmas Eve. His friend Greg Lassa wrote, "Matt will be greatly missed as he was a selfless persona of engineering and GMC Motorhome knowledge, active on many Threads and Facebook Groups. He was the first to offer a helping hand to many travelers and GMC motorhome owners. He was an excellent host to many Harvest Host Travellers. We are saddened for a life gone too soon."



Matt Colie was a husband, father, grandfather, and friend. Engineer, librarian, and technical wizard. Contributor, organizer, teacher. Bucket-list traveler and animal lover. That speaks of a life well lived.

Smooth roads, fair winds, and a following sea Matt.

You will be missed.

Joe Gillen, the Great Lakers Treasurer, had similar feelings. "Matt was a mechanics mechanic. He liked to do "show and tells at the monthly luncheons he pulled together. He once brought in a small piece of a broken piston and then asked the group what they thought happened. I really respected how he personally was a glue that kept GMC owners together, not just at luncheon but with personal help as well. He had strong character and engineering knowledge that (he brought) to the table discussions. He will be surely missed and never forgotten as long as I live."



When I spoke with Mary, she mentioned a quote she feels applies to Matt and other knowledgeable GMC owners. She had heard the African Proverb, "When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground." This sentiment emphasizes the immense knowledge and experience that individuals hold. Their life stories, lessons, and wisdom are invaluable resources that, if lost, are irreplaceable.

What did Matt enjoy most about their coach? Traveling with his best friend of 56 years, Mary, and their dogs. What does she think he'd say to us? Enjoy your coach. Having fun is what it's all about. But understanding and staying ahead of the maintenance certainly helps make trips more fun!



Page 7 and above: A recent picture of Matt, and one from his youth. Photos from Matt's Celebration of Life; Mary with a commemorative plaque-mounted Hess toy coach from the South East Michigan and Northern Ohio (SEMNO) group that Matt founded and led.

2025 Rally Season

MAY BIRTHDAY RALLY

May 15th to 18th, 2025
Dutch Treat Camp & Recreation

10300 Gordon St., Zeeland, MI 49464
<https://www.dutchtreatcamping.com/>
616-772-4303

Hosts: Great Lakers Executive Committee
Book online or call for a reservation. We suggest reserving early, but they usually have plenty of sites available in May.

JUNE

June 19th to 22nd, 2025
Elkhart RV Resort

50707 Princess Way, Granger, IN 46530

509-957-2941

Hosts: Seeking hosts! Why not you?
Call for a reservation, 9 to 5, Monday-Friday, and ask for Auturo. They are holding some sites until April 15. These may be booking fast so make your reservation early.

JULY - Christmas in July

July 17th to 20th, 2025
Chain O' Lakes Campground

7231 South M-88, Bellaire, MI 49615
<https://www.chainolakescamp.com/>
(231) 533-8432

Host: Nancy Donaghue

Call for a reservation, ask for Cameo, and mention that you are with the Great Lakers.

AUGUST

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

14555 Dixie Highway, Holly, MI 48442
<https://www.oakgov.com/community/oakland-county-parks/parks-trails/groveland-oaks>
248-634-9811

Hosts: Seeking hosts! Why not you?

We have reserved a group site for 20 coaches - camping cost is included in the rally fee. After 20 book through the park.

SEPTEMBER

September 11th to 14th, 2025
Algonac State Park

8970 River Road, Clay Twp., MI 48001
<https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/parksandtrails/Details.aspx?id=433&type=SPRK#overview>
810-765-5605

Hosts: No assigned host or formal activities
This is a return of the Do Nothing Rally. Make your reservation by March to get a site near the riverside.

OCTOBER

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

26246 Harrison Lake Road, Fayette, OH 43521
(419) 237-2593

<https://ohiodnr.gov/go-and-do/plan-a-visit/find-a-property/harrison-lake-state-park>
Hosts: Seeking hosts! Why not you?

Make your reservation in April through the website link to the Ohio State Park reservation system.

For rally questions please email Jeff Rider at vice-president@gmcgreatlakers.org.



Above: Betty Lou, Tom and Sharon Giannosa's 1976 Palm Beach. Image by Sharon Giannosa.

Our Betty Lou

by Tom & Sharon Giannosa

Betty Lu, our steadfast friend,
Built to wander, never bend.
A lime-green glow, a rolling star,
She's carried us both near and far.

Her six strong wheels have kissed the ground,
On roads unknown, through sights profound.
With curtains drawn and dreams in tow,
She's seen the sunsets' golden glow.

Her walls have heard our laughter's cheer,
Our quiet talks, our songs sincere.
She's held us close through storm and shine,
A home on wheels, a life divine.

Betty Lu, with vintage charm,
She keeps us safe, she keeps us warm.
Through snowy hills or skies of blue,
There's no one quite like Betty Lu.

Let's hit the road; she's calling still,
To climb the mountains, cross the hills.
Forever ours, both tried and true,
Our faithful friend, sweet Betty Lu.



Treasurer's Report

by Joe Gillen

JANUARY 2025

January Starting Balance

INCOME

Yearly Income Fees (w/ check #)

Steve Johnson #5250	\$15.00
Kim Carter cash, chk #5249 from S. Giannosa	\$15.00
Dave Gronow cash chk #5249 from S. Giannosa	\$15.00
Tom Giannosa cash, chk #5249 from S. Giannosa	\$15.00
Andre Oosterbeek cash, chk #5249 from S. Giannosa	\$15.00
Michael Thomas #1104	\$15.00
Max Karshner #1371	\$15.00
Joseph Scheub #3052	\$15.00
James Wibby #5211	\$15.00
David Lenzi Innovative #1309	\$15.00
Mark St Germain #1236	\$50.00
Markt Grajek #2710	\$15.00
George Baumbarger #6280	\$15.00
Thomas Aubuchon #7989	\$15.00
William Helmore #207	\$15.00
Lucy Weidner #9906	\$15.00
Cary Lawson #1125	\$15.00
Robert Lambert #8132	\$15.00
Alesia Gillen #4266	\$15.00
Nelson Secord #1711	\$15.00
Jeffrey Rider #1258	\$15.00
Lawrence Rebholz #1291	\$15.00
Carl Shemwell #1111	\$15.00
Marvin Miller #4424	\$15.00
Nina Hampton #4667	\$15.00
Cresit LLC #7907	\$15.00
John Sullivan #2489	\$50.00
Tony Partridge #12037	\$15.00

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP \$490.00

Debit / Credits

\$3,407.79

EXPENSES

Humane Society of Monroe in honor of Matt Colie (paid w/debit card)	-\$52.63	\$3,845.16
USPS, large envelopes, check to S. Giannosa	-\$12.47	\$3,832.69
Shipping, plaques & tags, check to S. Giannosa	-\$25.00	\$3,807.69
Office Depot, filing case (paid w/debit card)	-\$30.26	\$3,777.43
The Lapel Pin Junction (paid w/debit card)	-\$391.00	\$3,386.43

Ongoing Expenses

	Due	Paid
\$12.00 WEB POWER Site back up (1 year)	4/23/2025	
\$100.68 Site Lock Essentials (1 year) paid 6/17/24	6/29/2025	
\$20.00 LARA Non Profit License due June /July	8/1/2025	
\$20.99 .ORG renew (1 year)	8/16/2025	
\$29.98 IPOWERR domain Privacy+Protection 2yrs mtgs due 11/23/24 (autopay credit card Nov.)	10/30/2026	
\$475.00 United States Liability Insurance (yearly)	11/2/2025	
\$742.23 Ipower hosting Plan (3 years)	6/29/2026	

January Running Balance 01/31/25 **\$3,777.43**

January Ending Bank Balance 01/31/25 **\$4,475.28**

\$3,897.79



Membership Report

by Sharon Giannosa

It's time to renew your membership for **2025** – 70 owners/couples have done that so far. And at \$15, Great Lakers renewals are the World's best deal.

We are working on an online payment method, so in the meantime, if the convenience encourages you, please contact me at membership@gmcgreatlakers.org to pay with Venmo.

We'll publish the Membership directory soon, so renew now to be included in 2025's edition!

Welcome to our first new member of 2025, **Robert Maliszewski of Allen Park, MI**, with his 26-ft 1975 Eleganza II.

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

Sharon



Rainbows & Sunshine

by Sue Aubuchon

Happy New Year to all!

I hope you are all enjoying a happy, healthy New Year, and are staying warm during these cold, snowy days. I'm looking forward to spring, and enjoying our upcoming rallies!

Since our last newsletter:

In Sympathy—Farewell and Safe Travels: Condolences were sent to Maureen and Jeff Rider. Maureen's brother, Tom, passed away in December.

Sue

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.

Buy, Sell, or Search - our GMC Emporium!

We wanted to remind you of one of the **benefits that come with your membership.**

If you have an item to sell, are searching for something, or just want to give it away, **we will list your ad on our website for free!**

Anything GMC related goes - coaches, parts, tools, decor, GMC swag, camping supplies - the possibilities are endless!

You can find the ads on our website at <https://www.gmcgreatlakers.org/for-sale/>

- Type up your advertisement giving as much detail as you want.

- Your ad copy should either be a text file in Microsoft Word or a .txt file, or be a PDF. It must be less than 20 Mb in size.
- Include as many photos as you like. If you want them in a specific order please name your files to show this.
- Include a single photo or the full item (e.g., of your vehicle) that we will use to link to your detailed information file., like a thumbnail picture.
- **Email both files to Rob Mattras at webmaster@gmcgreatlakers.org** and he will post your ad as soon as possible.
- Please contact Rob when your item is sold so that we can remove the ad.

Your trash or leftovers may be someone else's treasure. Put it out there and make room in your garage!



Above and Right: Gary Van Dyken's 1976 Royale in Charing Cross, Ontario. Images by Gary.



Above: Henry VanWyk's 1975 Eleganza II, Hilda in Ottawa Hills, MI. Images by Henry.

GMC Great Lakers Motorhome Club, Inc.
Newsletter Editor
511 Park Place
Saline, MI 48176

