

Family & Friends: GMC Motorhomes International Celebrates 30 Years

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The GMC Motorhomes International (GMCMI) chapter celebrated its 30th anniversary with a joyful, tasty, fun-filled week in quaint Amana, Iowa. Members arrived in their classic and colorful GMCs (and some in other brands) until we had more than 155 motorhomes in attendance for the rally, held September 22 through 28, 2012, at the Amana Colonies RV Park & Event Center.



The spacious campground we occupied provided a wonderful view of the surrounding rolling fields and tree-topped ridges. Comfortable, large buildings provided meeting areas for the seminars, meals, and other activities. There was even a theater right next to the campground, The Old Creamery Theatre Company, and their production of "The Fox on the Fairway" was delightful.

The GMCMI chapter planned many special events for the milestone anniversary. The logo for the convention was based on the iconic "American Gothic" painting by Grant Wood. Interestingly, the farmer is holding a wrench instead of a pitchfork, and a GMC motorhome appears behind the couple. A life-size reproduction of the logo was stationed in the main hall, and attendees had the opportunity to be photographed with their faces inside cutouts of the man and woman. Other activities featured barnyard games, a tribute to our local surroundings. These included contests such as looking for a coin in a haystack and a toilet paper relay race.

Seminars provided information about repairing, renovating, and restoring our classic GMCs. Other seminars covered RV living, fire prevention, and geocaching. Craft classes included the simple but clever art of finger crocheting, and complex, but rewarding, basket making. A women's social focused on Dr. Seuss, and attendees brought Dr. Seuss books, toys, and movies to be donated to the local children's hospital.

A favorite event was the GMC open house. This allowed members to check out the many GMCs at the convention and see the creative and clever ways members had remodeled the basic coach. Of course, several of the coaches were original GMCs that had only minimal changes. The colorful motorhomes looked like a field of Easter eggs.

A popular activity was the flea market. Vendors offered items specifically designed for GMC motorhomes, as well as collectibles such as the Hess training van, which was modeled using a GMC motorhome, and the Barbie toy motorhome, a yellow likeness of the GMC. All shoppers had a great time.

While in Amana, we enjoyed the spectacular cuisine from the nearby restaurants, and even the catered meals featured delicious specialties from the area. The convention included the always-popular ice cream social; pancakes and sausage; and omelettes-to-order. Every morning started with doughnuts, waffles, bagels, fruit, coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and plenty of smiles from the many volunteers who made these events happen.

The choice of Amana for GMCMI's 30th anniversary was wise indeed. Amana not only had local crafts shops and tasty wineries, but the charming folks who worked in the establishments were a joy to visit. Plus, the officers of the GMCMI chapter, including president Carol Baxter and administrator Kim Weeks, worked overtime to provide a fitting tribute to our beloved GMC motorhomes. The organization has been a resource to maintain and enjoy our classic motorhomes, and we had many opportunities to meet friends, old and new, and enjoy the area.

If you are an owner of a classic GMC motorhome, consider joining the GMC Motorhomes International chapter. While attending a rally, you will discover a plethora of information concerning service and parts, and you will have the opportunity for fun and fellowship at the chapter's two conventions each year. For more information about the chapter, along with details about how to become a member, visit www.gmcmi.com.