

2015 SPRING RV RALLY AT FORT McCOY, WISCONSIN AFTER ACTION REPORT

The 2015 Spring Rally at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, gave our guests the unusual opportunity to tour and experience life on an active Army base. Our days were marked by bugle calls from the base headquarters--Call to the Colors, Reveille in the morning, work call, noon chow, Retiring the Colors at Evening Retreat, Tattoo at nine and Taps at ten o'clock. The Pine View Campground was beautifully located alongside a spring-fed lake.

The festivities began Wednesday afternoon with a Pre-Rally "Picnic in the Park," with Wisconsin bratwurst, hot dogs, beans, potato salad, and German chocolate cake. The pavilion was decked out with our RV Radio banner, the U.S. flag, and the Wisconsin and Alaskan flags. Collages of the 2014 Fall rally were also on display. The attendees received a promo bag with a Fort McCoy mug donated by the Pine View Campground. It was a beautiful evening, and we were blessed with several guests: Marshall Kiel KF9SU and his XYL Annie Kiel N9INS and Randi N9UOM and Bonnie Owen from Tomah. Marshall and Annie were unable to attend the rest of the rally since their son was being married on Saturday.

As the day dawned on Thursday, the weather was cool and windy, but the Outdoor Recreation and Sports & Fitness Director, Pamela Budda, arranged to have clear tarps surround three sides of the pavilion. On several occasions we were graced with an unexpected visitor--a skunk! Bill Kraft K9NY explained the little stinker was busy looking for grubs. He warned, "Let him do his thing; we'll do ours, and all will be fine."

Each day of the rally began with Charlotte DeShetler N5TKY calling the net, and Bill K9NY giving the announcements

Our Thursday breakfast was the old standby of biscuits and gravy, along with scrambled eggs, fruit, and blueberry muffins. The opening ceremony began with the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation given by Cathy Beebe. Pat Ryan N9JIX remembered our deceased members. Bill K9NY reported on points of interest in Wisconsin, and also recited the Fiddler's Green, a copy of which is attached. Coordinates and instructions were given out for geocaching!

On Thursday afternoon the Bean Bag tournament was in full swing. The winners played the winners and the losers the losers. Pat N9JIX and Char Kraft KC9EVZ survived intense competition to become the undisputed Bean Bag Champions!

Thursday evening after some rigorous vetting for passes into Fort McCoy, the group was treated to a catered dinner of chicken and roast beef at the McCoy Club.

Friday morning began with Chef Dave DeShetler KI50J flipping pancakes and Dave Crozier KC9ZTZ taking over the coffee-making duties! Along with flapjacks, the menu included sausage patties, scrambled eggs and fruit. After breakfast Pat N9JIX conducted the general meeting. Much discussion ensued on the possible reasons for the low attendance at the past couple of rallies. It was decided the members should be surveyed on rally attendance. New to this rally was a QSL party, and Chuck Brainard KA1PM, Sam Rowe KG9NG, and Bill K9NY shared their memorable QSL cards with the group, while Dave KI50J shared some interesting experiences. Sam KG9NG explained the NG in his call sign could either stand for Nice Guy or No Good!

Friday evening we all gathered for the drive to Club Oasis for a catered Wisconsin Fish Fry along with chicken and a well-stocked salad bar. After the meal we gathered at K9NY's site and enjoyed a fire and some fine cheese and exquisite homemade blueberry wine compliments of Chet Beebe. Yes, Chet picked all the berries with 30 quarts going into the vat. Chet said he had lots of "knee time!" Dave KC9ZTZ and Bill K9NY also contributed some fine home-brewed vintages.

Leroy Maloney KC9YXE and Jenny Maloney KC9ZCW made an early Saturday morning run for our continental breakfast of assorted rolls, donuts, and fruit, which were all compliments of Leroy and Jenny. Thank you very much!!

After breakfast we gathered for the caravan to Fort McCoy to take part in Armed Forces Day activities. Once we arrived, we had a group picture taken at the Historical Site Memorial. Then we all boarded a bus for a tour around Fort McCoy. Highlights were the extensive Afgani and Iraqi training villages and the FOB (Forward Operating Base). The bus was actually stopped and boarded as the troops were conducting searches for IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices). The historical site included military equipment displays and historical exhibits of mess rooms, day rooms, sleeping quarters, etc. Pat N9JIX and Cathy Beebe took advantage of the opportunity to have multiple dog tags made. Lunch was available on the grounds.

Saturday afternoon we gathered for cheese and wine and a supper of pulled pork sandwiches, coleslaw, and watermelon. Pat N9JIX conducted the closing ceremony beginning with an invocation by Cathy Beebe. Geocaching awards of MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) went to Dave KI50J, Dave KC9ZTZ, and Barb Crozier. Chuck KA1PM was also a winner! Thanks to Pat N9JIX for also contributing items for the drawing. Four digital VOMs (Volt Ohm Meters), contributions from Leroy KC9YXE, were awarded to four male recipients. Leroy KC9YXE and Jenny KC9ZCW were the lucky winners of the HT Dual Band radio. It was a beautiful evening, and we gathered around the fire once again for some more camaraderie, fine wine, and cheese tasting.

On Sunday morning we met for one last time at the pavilion for a breakfast of English muffins, with fried egg, cheese, and fresh fruit--and also cheesecake pie!
Thanks to all who helped make this rally a success by lending a hand with food preparation, running errands and most of all by attending and sharing stories!

We bid our farewells and promised to meet again.

Bill Kraft - K9NY
Char Kraft - KC9EVZ