

2024 Fall Rally in Pigeon Forge, TN September 23-26.

The rally will not soon be forgotten. Quite a few challenges were overcome with everyone's help.

Dwight W8TJT, Michelle N3YRZ, and Calvin KC1M planned the rally. Our first challenge was Dwight being hospitalized. Michelle adjusted some things calling various folks to help bring griddles and other cooking needs.

The Appalachian Springs Campground had just opened the new section. We were the first group to stay. One of the challenges came with the wiring at the pavilion. We would trip the breaker when we plugged in griddles. The electrician discovered that the soda machine that was added (not in the plans) was drawing too much power. Each morning began with a hot breakfast. We had many folks help with the cooking...Steve NY4NC, Phil W4AKY, and Diane each day. Randy, a retired chef, made quick work of the eggs cooked to order. Jane provided the solution to the lack of the work sink (not yet installed) in the pavilion. Every day, she took the dishes to her rig and washed them.

We had 38 registered folks and 3 guests in the 20 units in attendance: Michelle N3YRZ, Theresa KC3WXB, Calvin KC1M, Jane, Harold N5IL, Joyce, Timothy K9TCF, Joanne K9JMF, Tim W8TWF, Jim W1IK, Randy, Phil W4AKY, Diane, Steve NY4NC, Ruth, Eric K0BTW, Leanne, William K8WF, Donna, Dave N8SBE, Judi, Chuck W5TEE, Penny, James AI4CK, Debra, Craig K0BIT, Laura, Hank K4HM, Selene KG4RMT, Jacek KC3HXF, Marzena, Ryan N7RYN, Alexis, Ronald K5MUL, Carol, Jack N5UOV, Rodena KM4MQO, Mike KE0VIM, guests Selena, Samantha, and Cole. The rally opened with placement of the American flag and pledge of allegiance. Attendees for each state represented there introduced themselves and placed the state flag.

Tuesday Mark KQ4PIJ (who lives nearby) came by to visit. He and Steve had been talking on the radio as Steve went to get replacement tires.

The heat & humidity was daunting for the tour of RV's and their radio stations. A fox was hidden (by one of the Foxes). Harold N5IL found it first. He hid it again. Eric, Mike, Samantha, and Cole found it then took turns hiding and finding it.

ARRL Tennessee Section manager, David R. Thomas KM4NYI came to speak with us. He gave away a 100-year anniversary edition of the ARRL Handbook won by Carol.

Wednesday was a free day so folks could go to plays, shop or relax. Heavy rain was the obstacle for visiting parks and doing outdoor activities.

On Thursday, our next hurdles - 2 attendees visiting the ER (treated and released), and Hurricane Helene approaching. This necessitated a change of plans. We all met and decided to wrap things up early so folks who needed could get on the road away from the path. We had our breakfast then did the prize drawings and closing. The money provided by the RV Radio network was won by \$450 Ron K5MUL, \$300 Chuck W5TEE, \$150 Craig KOBIT, \$100 Eric K0BTW.

Since less than half of the units remained, the catered dinner had more leftover than all the units had fridge space. The campground staff came to the rescue and returned it to camp the following day. We who stayed enjoyed it for lunch on Friday. For supper we went to one of the few remaining dine in Pizza Huts.

The units remaining in camp along with Tom W9TPB, a new member of the club who lives locally (and came to offer help and shelter), made an emergency plan. Calvin placed Jack in charge of keeping watch and notifying/implementing the plan if needed. We had some rain, but the wind was not as severe as predicted. The creek though full, did not overflow the banks.

We texted each other as we arrived at our next destinations or home. I am very grateful that all worked together to make the best of the situations as they occurred. And thankful those attending had safe travel home. Certainly, a memorable rally!