

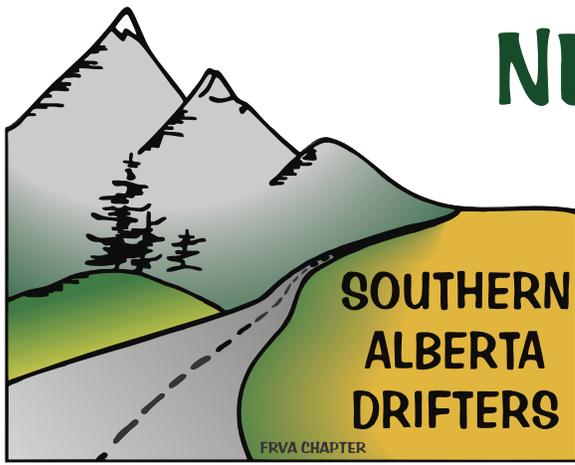
NEWS DRIFTS



October 2025 - part 2

Volume 23, Issue #5

FAMILY RV
ASSOCIATION

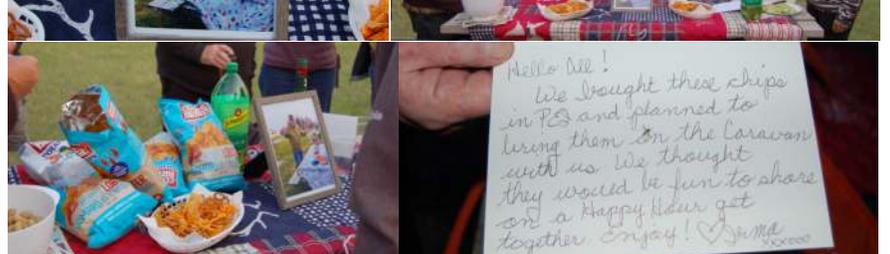


Caravan 2025

Day 1 – Camrose

Most participants sloshed through a rainy day on their way to Camrose, but all arrived safe and sound for the Opening Ceremony. Carr welcomed the participants to the 4th Drifters Caravan of the modern era and wished all an enjoyable time. Booklets containing maps of the route and campgrounds, as well as the overall itinerary, were handed out. Carr thanked the Picks for preparing them. The group reviewed the AED procedures and was pleased to hear that Greg and Madeleine were added to the list of people with CPR experience.

After a quick supper, some went into Camrose to see the Viking longboat. Unfortunately, the Mirror Lake Express Train was unable to operate this year. At the evening fireside, participants gathered to pay tribute to Wayne Bell, who had passed away the previous week. Tom and Luzia provided their memories of Wayne. The club made available Wayne's favourite drink – Jameson Irish Whiskey, with Schweppes ginger ale and a slice of lime, and everyone raised a glass to Wayne.



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Thanks!

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General Info

Southern Alberta Drifters is a registered chapter of the Family RV Association. Membership is open to any FRVA member in good standing.

All dues, rally registration fees, and other payments, should be sent by e-transfer to southernalbertadrifters@gmail.com

Rally sign up details should be sent by email to the host as per that event's registration form.

Official mailing address:

Gerrit Nel 25 Sleigh Drive
Redwood Meadows, AB T3Z 1A1

Website : www.southernalbertadrifters.ca

Caravan 2025

.... cont'd from pg 1

Day 2 – Camrose

The day dawned bright, a precursor to several days of great weather. After coffee, the group held their first card bingo game of the tour. Greg won the big pot, showing that beginner's luck is a real thing.

The afternoon visit was to the Camrose Railway Museum. The group was enthusiastically received and given a very knowledgeable tour by a young summer student. This was followed by some jumping onto a railcar for a short ride in front of the station. Overall, everyone was impressed by how well the grounds and surrounding flower gardens were kept.

The evening meal was our first Pot Luck Supper. The food was excellent and again a precursor to the future of our Pot Luck Suppers. Our second evening fire featured the musical stylings of Ernie Mylymok. Ernie provided his usual energetic songs, and once again encouraged all to pick a song and sing along. As with our rallies, the singing portion of our campfires is still a work in progress, but the group did quite well and lasted well into the evening.





Day 3 – to Lloydminster

After the coffee meeting, Carr and Bob took off to the next campground, followed shortly by other participants. As the campground had asked for a certain order of arrivals to facilitate parking, we arranged for varying departure times.

On arrival at CampN RV, all were impressed with the appearance of the campground ... well manicured lawns, attractive flower beds and ample sites. The group headed off to a brew pub for our first External Happy Hour. It wasn't quite as expected, but still, a cold brew or two was welcome.

The group ate dinner on their own and gathered again for a fireside chat before calling it a day. The owner of the campground made sure we had a great firepit and location and dropped by to wish us well.



Day 4 – Lloydminster

This was a big day! After coffee, an incredibly loud and energetic LRC dice game was arranged. The group seemed to be hitting full stride as about 20 players yelled encouragement and insults on every roll of the dice. Again, the owner dropped by and seemed amused by our enthusiasm. The McLeods walked away with most of the winnings.

Possibly the most anticipated event of the trip was the group's visit to an Escape Room in the afternoon. Many had trepidations, but those who did participate, enjoyed it. Two groups entered two different escape rooms. The group working in the Red Queen's room managed to come within a couple of clues needed to escape. The Parlour room was more challenging. A few people mentioned after the experience that the concept is interesting and could even be addictive. There will likely be other opportunities for the club to try this again.

After a quick Happy Hour, the group headed back into Lloydminster for our first dinner out at Blowers and Grafton – featuring Halifax-style street food. Many had traditional fish and chips, but they likely should have listened to Greg, who recommended the Donair. Watching him and Ernie M downing a monstrous Donair was appetizing.



Day 5 – to Greig Lake

At coffee, John and Ron let the group know that they would be skipping the Greig Lake stop, and heading to Battleford directly. Once more, staggered departure times were implemented to enable larger rigs to arrive first. However, this approach proved ineffective, as all rigs ultimately converged at the park entrance and formed a single queue. The road to the park was rough, with enough side-to-side shaking to resemble a roller coaster ride. However, once the group arrived and managed to park, the sites were quite nice and well-spaced out. Several noted the complete silence, especially as evening set in. At the fireside chat, four-legged Mya Hewitt noticed a young black bear checking us out from the end of the road leading to our sites. Fortunately, we did not meet his/her meal criteria.



Day 6 – Game Day (aka Hewitt Day)

After coffee, Gerrit led men's and ladies' ladder golf tournaments. As the header implies, Tom won the men's side and Carol H won the ladies. In a head-to-head final, Carol edged out Tom for the Overall Championship. However, some thought the highlight of the tournament was Carr's complete inability to keep the three ropes separate for longer than a few seconds. Sailors would be proud of some of the knots he created.

After lunch, most people moved over to the Greig Lake Mini Golf course for an intense 18-hole tournament. Both Provincial Parks we visited had quite well-kept mini golf courses. It should come as no surprise that Carol H won the ladies' side, but Bruno managed to win the men's side, breaking the Hewitt bid for a perfect day.

Happy Hour included the "medal presentations". The prizes were all Canada-themed and, while insignificant as per the rules, were appreciated. Tom, Carol and Bruno received prizes for winning their events, and Ernie G won for most honest golfer.

Continuing a busy day, the group gathered for Pot Luck Supper #2, which again was excellent. A fireside chat concluded a great day in the wilds of Saskatchewan.



Day 7 – to Battleford

After coffee, the group headed down the roller coaster road on their way to Battleford. It didn't seem as daunting as on the way in, but perhaps we were better prepared. The campground had its pluses and minuses. Not all sites had easy access to water, but after some maneuvering and some long hoses, connections were made. The McLeods scored the prime location with an incredible view of the North Saskatchewan River valley. The grass area around their and Hewitts' rigs was massive.

Happy Hour was followed by our second dinner out. This time the group went to Pennydale Junction, a restored train station that has been operating as a restaurant for nearly 50 years. The restaurant opened for us, as we were the only customers. A Group Menu was in place and a four-course meal was enjoyed by all. The courses were well spread out and the dinner took nearly three hours, but conversations never flagged. Most left with take-out boxes for late-night snacking. Exhausted and full, the fire was cancelled for the night.



Day 8 – Battleford

Coffee was followed by a visit to Fort Battleford. A guided tour had been arranged. The guide took the group on an extended, 1.5-hour trip around the grounds. He included an extensive review of the events around the 1865 disagreements between the Crown and the Indigenous peoples. He noted, and it was clear, that the nature of the tour has changed over the years to tell a more balanced story. In fact, it was hard to agree with the decisions the government made at that time.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature took control of the afternoon with significant rain and thunderstorms. This forced the postponement of the much-anticipated Wine and Cheese Tasting event. It would mean the last few days would be even more crowded, but the group was determined that it could be done. Dinner was in our rigs due to the weather, but a fire was still possible.



Day 9 – Travel to Pike Lake

After coffee, Ernie G set up his Bocce Ball game, and a few rounds were played before campers departed for Pike Lake Provincial Park near Saskatoon. It was a shorter and easier drive than previous legs. Arrivals were a bit rushed, and Bob and Tom certainly worked hard to find spots for everyone in an orderly fashion. The park itself is impressive. The group site was great. The park boasts a lake, an outdoor pool with a waterslide, a mini golf course and very nice campsites. People in Saskatoon are very lucky to have such a park so close to their city.

Pot Luck Supper # 3 was on the agenda for the evening, and it was quite the feast. There was a great balance of salads, mains and delicious desserts. In fact, Carr thought that next year's Caravan should comprise 10 consecutive Pot Luck Suppers. After dinner, a new event to the Drifters was presented. Using a TV from Ernie and a laptop from Carr, Greg presented a travelogue of his and Karen's trip to Antarctica on an expedition cruise in 2024. The slides and videos showed the beauty of the land and a good look at the life of hundreds of thousands of penguins. He also showed the group the clothing that needed to be worn for their landings on the continent. A rather large fire concluded the day.



Day 10 – Pike Lake

It was the start of the final full day, and full it was. After coffee, it was Camper's Game Choice. Card Bingo had been voted on at the previous Happy Hour. Tom called a great series and, as per his habit, Gerrit won the final toonie game.

The long-awaited Wine and Cheese event was finally held in the afternoon. Nine bottles had been donated and six were chosen for judging. Bob and Elsabé were the wine stewards and presented the wines for judging by the eleven judges. The judges took their job seriously, remembering to see, swirl, sniff, sip and savour each glass before assigning a score. Scores from all judges were tabulated and the wine submitted by the Hewitts was declared the favourite.

The Cheese part of the event was above and beyond. An extensive array of cheeses and crackers, many artfully displayed, was made available to sippers and onlookers. The three bottles not chosen for judging, as well as the remains of the other bottles, were brought out to help transition to Happy Hour.

Bob and Carr headed out to Robin's Nest Café to pick up eight 16" pizzas for the traditional last night Pizza Fest. With pizza and the remaining wine, the evening seemed to fly away. A second massive fire concluded the day, over discussions of the structure and location for Caravan 2026.



Day 11 – Farewells

The Closing Ceremony was held in conjunction with morning coffee.

Carr highlighted several events of the week but concluded that the real highlight was the strengthening of old friendships and the establishment of new ones. He thanked Bob for his work in parking rigs, and Tom for his work as Tail Gunner and Acting Fire Marshall (until Anne's return). He also thanked Elsabé and Bob for their efforts as Wine Stewards, and Greg for his travelogue presentation. Many others contributed along the way to the success of this caravan.

2025 Events

December 8

Annual Christmas Dinner
Location and details TBD

Organizer:
Carr McLeod

2026 Events

May 7 - 10

Lions Bob Lohead Memorial Campground, Diamond Valley

- 50 amp power, water, sewer
- Spring Orientation Meeting

Organizers / Hosts:
Gerrit & Elsabé Nel
Stephen & Anne Pick

June 11 - 14

Enchant Municipal Park, Enchant

- 30 amp power, water, dump

Organizers / Hosts:
Tom & Carol Hewitt
Bob Bishop

July 9 - 20

Caravan 2026 — Alberta Peace Country

- Blackfalds, Whitecourt, Grande Prairie, Peace River, Kinuso, Athabaska, Wetaskiwin

Organizer:
Carr McLeod
Bob Bishop

August 13 - 16

Wagons West RV Park, Sundre
Salmon Fest #4

- 30 amp power, water, sewer

Organizers / Hosts:
Greg & Karen Samson
Ron & Lane Kellam

September 10 - 13

Founders Park Campground, Irricana

- 30 amp power, water, dump
- Annual Business Meeting, and
- Elections for Vice President and Secretary

Organizers / Hosts:
Dave & Marilyn Johnston
Ernie & Anna Gonzi

The above events are subject to change. Watch for upcoming event dates and details as they become available!

Caravan 2025

... cont'd from pg 8

Finally, Carr declared the 4th Drifters Caravan of the modern era closed, and invited all Southern Alberta Drifters members to gather again in one year's time to celebrate the 'Caravan 2026' ... the 5th Drifters Caravan.

Gerrit rose to express thanks to Carr on behalf of the group for organizing this event. A card and gift (donated by the Kellams) were presented to Carr, for which he expressed heartfelt gratitude. And in the rain and drizzle, the group dispersed.

Thanks !

Thanks to Bob Bishop for being a superlative photographer and collecting pics from others, and getting them all to us! Thanks to Carr McLeod for the verbage to go with the pics! Because of their efforts, those who went can enjoy the memories, and those who couldn't attend, can get a glimpse of what they missed!



Annual Dues

Don't forget your 2026 dues!

It's just \$20 per year ... send your e-transfer payment now.

Member Recruiting

As we go into the 2026 Rally season, consider inviting your RV friends to join us for a rally.

Encourage them to use this QR code to access our website and learn all about us, and our rally schedule for 2026, so they can choose an event that fits in with their schedule.



Below is a sample of our recruitment card ... you can give one out to a prospective member you meet when camping ... if they join FRVA and mention your 'F number', you will receive something from FMCA in recognition of your recruitment efforts.



Recruitment cards are available at rallies. Be sure to get yours!

Why join Drifters?

Southern Alberta Drifters is a registered Chapter of FRVA, based in Southern Alberta. Identifying our charter in 2024, we are currently an active group of approximately 20 member RVs -- motorhomes, 5th wheels, and travel trailers.

We all enjoy our 'portable cottages' and our members are always willing to share their experiences, and the great things they have learned over the years.

We schedule 4 rallies and a caravan over the rally season that extends from May to October. Rallies are held at campgrounds primarily in various southern Alberta locations. Weekend rally fees range from \$125 to \$150 per RV unit depending on the location, the number of nights (2 or 3), and if meals are 'pitches' or 'all inclusive'. Attendance ranges from 8 to 12 RVs for the weekend events.

Memberships is open to any FRVA member in good standing. Annual dues are \$20.00, and raffle tickets are \$20.00 each.

For further information, check our website: www.SouthernAlbertaDrifters.ca

Why join FRVA?

The Mission of FRVA is to educate, support, and encourage family and social RV lifestyles.

If you're an RV owner, here are some quick reasons you should join FRVA:

Family: The greatest member benefit is the fun and camaraderie shared by people who enjoy the common interest of RV travel.

Benefits of Membership:

- FRVA's monthly magazine (about half of family life) and RVing in 40
- FRVA's medical emergency & travel assistance programs
- roadside assistance
- campground listings
- the savings program
- Chapter rallies, area rallies and international Conventions
- RV caravan tours at discounted rates

Chapters - more than 200 active Chapters throughout North America, which hold rallies throughout the year.

www.frva.com

Referred by: _____

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