



By Carolyn Banks, Rally Master

This Pre-Rally, originally scheduled for Benson, AZ, in March of 2021, finally brought us all together a year later. Our original campgrounds in Benson were unable to accommodate us this year, but we found a new home at the Voyager RV Resort in Tucson, only a couple of miles away from the exit for the Pima County Fairgrounds and FMCA.

I finally offered to be a Rally Master, and it was a great experience, a few sleepless nights notwithstanding. Bob and Jane White agreed to be the Registrars and Norma Preston was Rally Treasurer. Valuable Pre-Rally contributions came from other volunteers: Verda & Lloyd DeGerald, Tom & Louise Butler, Rick Nelson, Wilt & Barbara Greenwood, Harry & Sandy Hentschel, Lisa Anne & John Landry, Roy & Jackie Holt, Roger & Lynn Lage, Mike Marshall & Barbara Tamraz, Jim & Kathy McBride, Lanny Moldofsky, Amelio & Judith Rosales, Larry & Suzanne Schneider, John & Sheri Shields, Don & Pat Stien. The Voyager's staff guided the coaches to their parking spots, but our greeters handed out welcome bags and value packs and checked the attendees in.

We started with 40 sites, which were filled quickly. We ended up with 37 coaches after a few cancellations. Over half participated in the caravan to FMCA.

About half the attendees took advantage of our 3 early-arrival days to settle in and visit or tour. We had a card bingo afternoon on the 16th and had drawings for cash door prizes.

The Rally officially kicked off on the 17th with a Welcome Social. Our caterer, Fat Willy's (the Voyager's onsite restaurant) received great reviews for their food, which ranged from meatloaf to stir-fry to prime rib dinner entrees. They were also our bartenders, because they own the liquor license for our meeting room. Attendees seemed OK with the 2 drink tickets each that were included in their value packs for the Welcome Social and 3 Dinners.

We found our entertainers from local AZ talent. All were versed in golden oldies, classic country, rock-and-roll, and rhythm & blues tunes. The dance floor had a workout, especially when the Electric Slide crowd jumped in.

Norma Preston generously created a beautiful quilt for us to raffle off, with proceeds going to the local La Casa de Los Ninos charity for at-risk children in the Tucson area. (Louise Butler had the lucky ticket.) Attendees bought all our table decorations, too, with proceeds going to Los Ninos.

MI members provided seminars: National Director Harry Hentschel held a forum to discuss FMCA member benefits. Sandy Hentschel brought her popular Tips & Tricks for Women by Women seminar. Tom Butler conducted the First-Timers Meeting (we had 6 First-Timer members). Lloyd DeGerald again did his popular Aqua-Hot seminar. Lisa Anne Landry (a professional makeup artist in addition to being the MI Secretary) provided an entertaining hands-on demonstration on Spring Makeup Trends, complete with a makeover on a member model. The well-attended Ladies Luncheon had a program by Louise Butler. She sold copies of her family history book, with the proceeds going to the Los Ninos charity. Louise and Tom also did an interesting audio-visual show of their "On Our Own" trip along the route of the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

Bottom-line-wise, Take Me Back to Tucson came out ahead. Voyager generously agreed not to charge us for any unused sites, and with our low cost for entertainment, sale of decorations, and Fat Willy's sticking to their original prices quoted in August 2021, we were able to break even (the goal of every Pre-Rally).