

President's Message—June 2010

Hello *Summer!*

By now, those signed up for the 2010 National Tour should have hotels booked and a route planned to the start point in Great Falls. Talk to others in your region about your travel plans; maybe you can add to your fun by traveling to Montana as a group.

If there is a gasoline shortage this year, it will have little to do with the BP spill in the Gulf; instead, the cause will be the many gallons used to reconnoiter our routes by our tour organizers, Pat and Judy O'Byrne and Harvey and Tolly Williamson. Now, if we can get them to study Amtrak's operation, rail travel around the USA might finally become more available and much more reliable.

And, while they have their tour bagged and ready for delivery, the planner of our 2011 route, Dolly Hebert is busy dealing with problems caused by the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. That tragedy has already forced her to reexamine the routes and activities she had originally considered.

However, for planning purposes, mark May 13, 2011 on your calendars as the start date; the tour will be complete on May 22, 2011. Dolly has contacted numerous hotels along the routes we may travel; the hotels she has talked to prefer to handle all bookings through one person. That means Dolly does all the work, the hotels save money, and we get a better discount.

A (probable) sample of the tour's first days will center upon the Suwannee River, a bit of old-time Florida that includes a visit to Gainesville.

On Sunday the 15th, she plans to have us in St. Augustine—the oldest city in the USA. Monday and Tuesday, May 16 & 17, we will be in the Cocoa Beach/Titusville area where one stop will include the American Police Hall of Fame & Museum.

May 18 to Sunday May 22, we'll be in Lakeland (hub for the Lakeland, Tampa, and St. Pete area). That will put us close enough to the NASCAR speedway to make a few laps on that track IF we get enough bookings to make it affordable. We will need at least 25 participants to keep costs (relatively) reasonable.

Dolly has a number of other stops and activities in mind, but does not want to mention them until things in the Gulf are a bit more settled with regard to the BP oil spill. It is regrettable that we will not be able to include New Orleans, Pensacola, and Mobile on this tour as she had earlier planned.

We still need someone to volunteer his or her services to organize the 2012 Tour. Route 66 and the Lincoln Highway have both been suggested as possible routes. It is not too early to start planning for 2012, so if you are interested let me know! National Tours are a major drawing card for new members and the primary reason us "old hands" keep our old cars in shape for long distance travel.

Last but not least, I am looking for a few good men and women to run for national office this fall. Candidates should have skills enough on the computer to handle e-mail and be willing to spend a few hours each week pretending to know what to do when somebody asks. If someone in your region has such skills, send me an e-mail.

Meanwhile, keep your batteries charged! BK