

Marie's Newsletter is back in Print!

Well, we have made it to the end of 2009 and Bob & I are finally able to sit, take a deep breath, relax a bit in our newly restored coach. What a year it has been!!! We are now in Edinburg, Texas, at Monte Cristo Golf and Country Club, where we will stay for the month of January.

It has been a long haul, but it is finally behind us. As we were leaving Elkhart, the snow was not far behind and boy did we ever appreciate those heated driver and passenger seats!! They really came in handy the first day of travel. It took us 4 days to reach South Texas, with a very brief stop in Boerne, TX to see family. Then we spent Christmas & New Years with our 400 family in Alamo, TX.

Sometimes I find myself getting philosophical about the whole adventure, but the short of it is that sometimes "shit happens" and all you can do is "hang on" and ride out the storm! Ride it out we did, coming out of it in one piece, with only a few bumps and bruises. Most of you followed our web page on the event, so you know what I mean. With our family and friends, we are picking up where we left off. With the reorganization of our home on wheels, which is mostly all new, we are starting over again. We still have our cat, Whiskers, who we are glad to say seems happy to be back in the coach. We still miss Princess, but I really think that if she could have been revived, she would have had long term effects from the smoke as she already had respiratory issues from allergies.

It is in times like these that we really learn how many friends we have! We had many calls and emails from so many people offering prayers, and support of all kinds. We owe tremendous thanks to two households in particular. First to Ed & Kaye Lee (from our 400 family), who were with us when the fire took place. They were so supportive during and following this crisis. They actually put on rubber gloves with us to start cleaning up the mess and pull out some necessary items. The second group of people were the Goldman\Terrazas families in Elkhart. Even before the coach was moved to Elkhart, these folks offered support and actually were tremendously supportive throughout the whole adventure. The Goldman's are full time RVers who we treat as family. They cancelled their plans and stayed with us the whole time, nearly getting snowed in themselves. Their daughter and family live in Elkhart, and were there too for us in so many ways that we are eternally grateful. Without them, this "roller coaster ride" would have been much more eventful!

A warm *thank you* to our new friends at **Elkhart Service and Collision** for the personal attention they paid to getting our coach back together and on the road again in record time. This was a *huge job* that they undertook! They had to do tasks like removing or installing the roof

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finding replacement parts was another adventure due to the collapse of the industry. This called for a great deal of creativity. If there was a job to demonstrate the great skills and workmanship of this crew, our coach was it! They did one great job!

GMAC is our insurance company. Yes, this is their job and this is what they are there for, but they were understanding, responsive, cooperative in guiding us through the entire process. Our only complaint had nothing to do with them or Elkhart Service & Collision. It mainly had to do with the long delay in getting the Norcold inspector to the coach to do their own investigation. The insurance company was there within a week and the Norcold Representative did not show up for a month. It is interesting to note that in cases of smoke damage such as ours, electronic equipment needs to be evaluated and cleaned within a window of 10 to 14 days to save what you can. Needless to say, the company doing the assessment in this area had to condemn most of the equipment on board. There was too much corrosion from smoke.

By the way, I do love my new residential refrigerator, which fills our needs just fine.

As for the Holidays, it was really good to see our 400 family again. Needless to say everyone wanted to see first hand what was done with our coach. The weather was colder than we all expected and we were all digging out our cold weather clothes again, but we remained safe



**Elkhart Service & Collision
Some before & after pictures**

