

THE GMC

# DIXIELANDER

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2003

## MEMORIUM:

*MaryAnn Denham  
Lanier Foote  
Joe Holcomb  
Mary Lou Henderson*

*Jerry Lader  
Dorothy Linn  
Russell Norris*

## SICK AND RECOVERING:

*Charlie Toole  
Jack Brown  
Bill Wessel  
Ed Vierling*

*Trula Bingham  
Hattie Whitson  
Jim Watson*

## A NOTE FROM THE PRES:

WOW!!, I can't believe that the year is almost half over!! After spending six weeks in the Southwest just after the start of the year, Pat and I had barely enough time to do the laundry and sort through all the junk mail before heading to the Sunshine Statesmen rally in early March (see rally recap/update).

We continue to make progress (albeit slow) with the website development. We want to get maximum input from all of you so as to get the best possible product right from the start. I encourage all who have interest/expertise in this area to provide info to Ken O'Rourke.

Speaking of Ken, he's putting in a lot of time and doing a great job with the Newsletter. We do need tech items and other items of interest for inclusion. If any of you "Wheeler-Dealers" come up with special pricing (good deals) on GMC parts/products,

please pass the info along to be included in the Newsletter.

I also want to publicly thank Judy Acosta for her efforts of Sunshine Lady. It means a lot to me to hear about our members in such a timely manner. We recently (at the Bean Station Rally) cast votes to add an Honorary Member category to our bylaws and also to permit our officers to serve a maximum of three consecutive one-year terms. Both amendments passed by wide margins.

If anyone has nominations for Honorary Membership, please submit them to the Executive Committee. Be safe and keep your torque up.

Thanks, HUTCH

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## ***THE NEW UPDATED DIXIELANDER ROSTER IS BEING INCLUDED WITH THIS MAILING***

If there are any corrections to this roster, please send them to me preferably by e-mail, if not possible use snail mail. If you did not get your copy included or need another copy, please contact me.

Thanks, Ken O'Rourke

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## ***MOVERS AND SHAKERS***

Bill Hutchinson	President	(334-832-4201)
Ken Henderson	Vice President	(229-758-2630)
Jo Telgen	Secretary	(706-376-5598)
Chuck Chambers	Treasurer	(770-504-0779)
Don Leslie	FMCA National Director	(251-961-2151)
Allen Martin	Alt. FMCA Nat. Dir.	(336-492-5715)

Betty Davis	Executive Committee	(850-243-4877)
Harry Terrill	Executive Committee	(865-376-2288)
Larry Wills	Executive Committee	(404-255-5768)
Judy Acosta	Nominating Committee	(910-455-2491)
Ken O'Rourke	Nominating Committee	(864-297-1893)
Joanie Haught	Nominating Committee	(850-678-5950)
Gene Dotson	Audit Committee	(828-465-0678)
Marie Hudson	Audit Committee	(910-567-6359)
J R Slaten	GMCMI, Eastern Rep.	(502-836-2097)
Alex Sirum	GMCMI Southeast Rep.	(863-467-1928)
JoAnn Fain	Photographer	(828-692-9700)
Judy Acosta	Sunshine Lady	(910-455-2491)
Ken O'Rourke	Website, Newsletter Editor	(864) 297-1893)

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## **BEAN STATION RALLY:**

As usual, all those attending the Bean Station Rally had a great time. Again and Again we thank our hosts Al and Marty Samsel, Ray and Trula Bingham for providing us the pleasure and privilege of attending their rally. There were 56 coaches and 4 couples without coaches. We welcome the "first Timers" Marshall Wilkes, Claude and Sally Harris, Dan Mullin, Ted and Sylvia Stinnett, Don and Carol Sommerdahl. Visitors were Lynn and Cindy Olson.

As most of y'all know, Bean Station is called a "Work Rally", well, there was lots of work being done, so much that it was hard to keep track of. The pit bay was tied up most of the time and so was the outside bay. Many trips to NAPA and UPS also did some emergency deliveries. All coaches left under their own power with Onan's running, no clicks from the C/V joints, transmissions and gear sets were humming and as far as I know, all of them made it back home without problems.

The food was plentiful and delicious. Got a little rain in the evening both nights, just enough to make sleeping a pleasure. A slight breeze during the day provided ventilation and there was no need for A/C during the day or heat at night. Even the bugs were cooperative and stayed outside. There were card games, Dominos and just plain talk sessions. The grass was wet when

everyone pulled out but don't think anyone got stuck on the wet grass. As most of you know GMC's and wet grass don't get along very well. I found an \$8 solution for this. Get a package of "Safety Mats" (multicolored, from SAM's for kids). Cut them in half with a table saw (it will cut rubber well) and join them together, one for each side of the drive wheels. You end up with a skid pad of 8' X 1' when it is linked together, it is foam rubber, light and stores well. One word of caution, don't spin your tires, it'll tear them up.

I saw many fancy leveling blocks in use, I guess people don't like to carry 2 X 6's in their coaches. Awnings got a good workout. They were up and down all week-end.

Saturday was the big Kentucky Derby and we did it up with gusto. The TV was blasting, people were yelling, some came away happy and others were just staring at their losing ticket. The winners were;  
 \$1 jackpot winners- Nenie Jenkins, Linda Terrill, Billie Bennett, Dave Perry, Marie Hudson, & Joanne Telgen.  
 \$5 jackpot winners- Ed Smith & Peggy Ann Moore.  
 Congratulations to all you winners.

## **Treasurers Report:**

5-3-03 Beginning Balance:

**\$6,122.94**

Income: Dues, memberships, caps

and Eufala rally \$1,979.21

Expenses:

Eufala rally band	\$300.00
Korky Rice-phone calls	20.00
Robert Staub-badges	91.70
Postal service-stamps	14.80
House of Embroidery-caps	166.92
Ken O'Rourke- Nov./Jan newsletters	381.19
Chuck Cameroux-website	155.81
Bill Telgen-firewood	30.00

Judy Acosta-Sunshine cards	50.00
Total disbursements:	\$1,210.42
Ending balance 5-3-03:	<b><u>\$6,891.73</u></b>

**Chuck Chambers, Treasurer**

## ***TECH INFO***

### **ALCOA VALVE STEMS:**

If you have Alcoa rims, be apprised that they take special valve stems, only good for Alcoa aluminum rims. You should carry an extra with you as most dealers don't carry them and don't know where to get them. You can get them from Southwest Wheel in Dallas or Haltec in Salem, Ohio. To call Haltec, their toll-free number is 1-800-321-6471 or their website is [www.Haltec.com](http://www.Haltec.com). For the 160231 Alcoa Classic wheel you will need Valve Stem # 156005433(Alcoa), 01-000543(Haltec) . At the same time you might want to get a couple of extra lug nuts and the plastic decorative cap that goes over the lug nut. It's easy to take these out by scrubbing a curb. But, most importantly, carry a spare valve stem, they're only a little over \$5.00 a stem. I will have some spares at Bowling Green.

### **ALTERNATOR MOUNTING SPACER**

Most alternators have been changed on the GMC motor homes. Sometimes when changing the alternator a little spacer under the mounting brackets that goes to the side of the engine block, will get lost. If this spacer is not there, the pulley of the alternator will not be straight with other pulleys and the belt will wear out fast and often jump out of the pulley.

### **ALTERNATOR LIGHT OPERATION**

Not everyone knows the functions of this light. If you have the original GMC alternator and are using the factory style indicator light on your dashboard, it is a pretty helpful thing. It helps kick-start the alternator into working at idle speeds when you first start the coach, and it tells you if the alternator is putting out less voltage than the battery has in it, indicating a problem. The light is connected on one

side to the field current system inside the alternator and to a switched ignition power source on the other side (to the fuse panel inside the glove box.) When you turn the key on, but have not started the coach yet, the field acts as a ground and power flows through the light and out to ground - lighting the bulb so you know it works. Once you start the coach, the voltage at the field is powered internally by the output of the alternator. If this value is exactly the same as the battery voltage, then you have the exact same voltage on each side of the indicator light and they balance each other out so the light doesn't light. If all goes well, the light never comes on, and you drive happily around knowing all is well with your alternator. If the output of the alternator should drop due to a slipping/broken belt or due to certain kinds of electrical faults inside the alternator itself, there will be less voltage on the field side of the light and more voltage on the switched ignition side of the light. The result is that some amount of electricity will flow through the light and into the field and the light will glow proportionally to that voltage difference. This is how a slipping belt or an overloaded alternator will cause the light to glow very dimly, while a full-on failure will cause the light to glow very brightly. Note that if you disconnect (or forget to connect) the wire at the alternator, the light will never come on and the alternator may not charge properly.

### **Why does the alternator light stay dimly lit?**

Cut the brown wire going to the idiot lamp. Insert a 25 cent Radio Shack diode in the line in any direction. Turn on the ignition to test. If the light comes on, you're done, just start the coach and watch the light go out. If the lamp does not come on with the ignition, reverse the diode (end for end) and you're done. Get a Radio Shack part number 276-1102 or similar. (John Dolan)

### **GMC Tech Bulletin, By Emory Stora**

"Technical Service has received several reports of the generator telltale light glowing dimly at all

times. This condition can exist even though the alternator is operating correctly. It may be caused by a partially discharged vehicle battery or by the small voltage drop across the dual diode isolator. If the above condition is encountered and the owner of the vehicle expresses concern over it, the following procedure should be followed to assure that it is not being caused by a malfunctioning alternator. The owner should then be assured that the condition is normal and will not cause any trouble in the system.

1. Disconnect the battery ground cable.
2. Connect an ammeter in the circuit at the "BAT" terminal of the alternator.
3. Reconnect the battery ground cable.
4. Turn on radio, lights high beam, and blower motor high speed. In order to put a lot of load on the battery, turn on a lot of 12 volt appliances in the coach.
5. Operate the engine at a moderate speed as required.
6. If ampere output is within 10% of rated output (80 amps) alternator is not defective."

**(Emery Stora)**

There is one other condition that can cause the symptom of a dimly lit idiot lamp. A GMCer replaced his alternator, and still had the dim glow problem. He checked a diode that is supposed to eliminate this on some production models. NO luck. He then discovered that his 10 AMP dash instrument gauge fuse was blown. The fuse provides 12 volts to one side of that lamp and if it is blown it does not have 12 volts there. When the alternator starts putting out 15 volts there is a differential 15 - 0 and it gets an indication. Replace the fuse (or check wiring and grounds to make sure you have 11.5 to 12 volts at the lamp and the glow should cease, except when the alternator is not putting out 15 volts, which is the way it is supposed to work. It was reported in GMCMN in March 98 page 5.

**(John Dolan)**

## ***ALTERNATOR RESISTANCE WIRE FAILURE***

Lurking behind every GMC's dash panel is a potential electrical catastrophe. Many years ago Alex Birch, GMC Engineer, recommended a modification to the electrical system to eliminate that hazard. Here's a description of the problem and one way of correcting it

Because the rotating fields of alternators have very little residual magnetism, it is necessary that they be supplied with a small amount of "initial excitation current" to "prime the pump". So that the alternator does not "hog" current, creating an unnecessary load during engine starting, that current is limited by a resistor between the ignition switch and the alternator's terminal 1. For some reason, GM chose to install that resistor in the form of a Nichrome wire (yep, the same type wire that glows red in radiant heaters) installed in the 1" diameter wiring bundle which extends from the left to the right side of the firewall behind the dash panel. Unfortunately, a malfunction of the alternator can cause that wire to be subjected to far higher than 12 VDC -- perhaps several times higher. There have been more than a few incidents where the wire has become hot enough to melt through its own insulation and that of its neighbor wires in the wiring bundle. The results can obviously be disastrous. Here's how to replace that heater wire with a fixed resistor:

1. Disconnect the shore power to kill the converter.
2. Disconnect all batteries.
3. Remove the glove box to gain access to the fuse panel.
4. Remove the two hex head screws holding the fuse panel to the fire wall. Release the plastic clips at the screw corners to release the fuse panel from the through-firewall electrical connector.
5. At the top right of the connector on pre-77, and lower right on 77 & 78, locate a brown wire and a brown with white stripe wire entering the same connector hole. If you roll the brown with white stripe wire between your fingers, you will feel what appears to be a loose wire inside the insulation -- it's a single Nichrome conductor. On the outside of the

firewall, this lead connects to the brown 16 gauge wire leading to terminal 1 on the alternator. The brown wire leads to the GEN light.

6. Cut the brown with white stripe wire as close to the connector as possible, fold it back on itself, and tape it for short protection. When convenient, locate the end at the left of the dash, near the right side of the instrument cluster, and cut & tape it there also to be sure it can't ever short to ground.

7. Strip about 1/2" of insulation from the brown wire about 2" away from the connector, attach, and solder, a 12" length of 16 gauge wire. Tape the connection securely. This is a tight job on 77 & 78 but very easy on earlier coaches.

8. Locate the 10 amp Cruise Control fuse in the fuse panel and remove it. On the back side of the fuse panel, locate the back side of the Cruise Control fuse clip which is AWAY from the accessory buss. Scrape that surface clean and solder tin it; then, securely solder to it another 12" length of 16 gauge wire. Re-install the fuse.

9. Mount a 10 Ohm, 10+ Watt ceramic resistor (Radio Shack should have one, preferably with an insulated mounting bracket) in a convenient location near the fuse panel. Attach one of the two added 12" wires (cut to fit) to each end of the resistor. Be sure no conductor can contact any exposed 12 VDC terminal or ground. There will be only about 1 amp of current through this resistor so it will get hot only if the ignition is left on for a long time with the alternator not producing current.

10. Put everything back together.

11. Reconnect the batteries and "smoke check" everything. (this means, watch for smoke when you turn on the ignition and start the vehicle)

12. Crank the engine and check alternator output (battery terminal voltage) for 13.5 VDC+.

13. The next time you pull the instrument cowl, try to find the splice where the resistance wire is connected. If you find it, cut it off close and tape the bare ends. While there should be no current through the wire after you've cut one end, it is conceivable

that it could still be shorted to ground somewhere and cause the infamous "smoking wiring harness".

14. On pre-77 GMCs, the GEN light may glow even when the alternator is producing normally. If you want to correct this at the same time you do this modification, cut the brown wire between your new splice and the firewall connector and insert a 3+ Amp 50+ VDC diode with the banded end toward the firewall (Personally, I'd add enough wire to position the diode adjacent to the resistor). This will both correct the glowing lamp and provide even more protection against alternator over-voltage conditions. On 77 & 78, to provide circuit protection without affecting the GEN light, the diode could be positioned in series with the resistor without cutting the brown wire (band still toward the firewall).

**Ken Henderson**

## ***FOR SALE***

**.6 Original GMC hub caps**, GMC steel (radial) rims with Firestone all steel tires mounted, plus wheel lug nuts. Make an offer. Ken O'Rourke

**Black & White TV set**, Portable, 12" screen, Dual voltage, 12 volts/120 volts. Ken O'Rourke

**1973 26' side bath**. Total mechanical renovation over past five years. New items are: 455 eng, radiator, front suspension, rear pins& bushings, brakes, fuel tanks, roof & dash a/c's, A&E awning, rebuilt tranny and more. Has Weld aluminum wheels with new tires. I have total documentation. \$16,400. Will consider all reasonable offers. Bill Hutchinson, ph 334 832-4201, Montgomery, AL.

**Solar shade windshield cover**- black, has cutouts for wind wings Only \$40 plus shipping. Bill Hutchinson, ph 334 832-4201.

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## ***RALLY RECAP/UPDATE:***

The Sunshine Statesmen Rally at Grand Lake RV Resort in early March was a great rally. Of the 115 GMC's, 23 were registered as Dixielanders. In

addition to good fellowship, good food, a “tacky fashion show”, and well attended crafts programs; we had optional tours to Emergency One fire engine factory and to the home of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. But I personally thought one of the highlights of the rally was the opportunity to have our coaches weighed by the FL D.O.T. as we arrived. Boy, did the need to put our GMC’s on strict diets and shift stuff around was verified by the individual wheel loads provided by the D.O.T. officers. It was enlightening to say the least! It was a very enjoyable rally and I appreciate the fact that Dixielanders were invited. (Editor’s note) Since the sink hole practically emptied Orange Lake, it looks like it’s beginning to come back up. Wonders of it all.

## ***FALL RALLY***

The Rally at Perry Georgia has been **canceled** due to lack of participation.

**SEP 16 to 19** Reunion Rally held at **Beech Bend Park, Bowling Green, KY.**  
Hosts: JR & Jeanne Slaten, Harry & Linda Terrill (see registration at end of Newsletter)

### **OTHER RALLIES:**

**GMCES** Bowling Green, KY Beech Bend Park, June 3 - 6  
**GMCM** Elkhart, IN Oct 12 - 18

**Sunshine Statesmen/Dixielanders** Jan 15 to 18, Lake Placid, FL (30 miles west of Lake Okeechobee). Since this is the busy season, we do not have the details firmed up. E-mail or write Bill Hutchinson as soon as possible if you wish to confirm a place. Rally fee is \$15 and camping fee will be \$24 per night.

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## ***DIXIELANDER MINUTES*** ***FROM BEAN STATION*** May 3, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by President Bill Hutchinson. The invocation , given by Claude Farris, was followed by the pledge to the flag.

The minutes from previous meeting were read by the secretary and approved.

A treasurer’s report from Chuck Chambers gave a balance of \$6891.73

President Hutchinson thanked J.R. and Jeanne for past service as President and first lady.

### **Under old business:**

By-law change to extend terms of officers for up to 3 years, with election (annually) and to eliminate the office of 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president. Voted on and passed unanimously. Ken Henderson moved to Vice President to fill unexpired term of Lew Ayers, who resigned for personal reasons.

Honorary Family Associate Membership was voted on and passed.

J.R. Slaten addressed a proposed by-law change. Article III, Paragraph 4A-“In order to perpetuate long standing friendship, good fellowship and cooperation among members of this chapter, this classification is available on request by a member in good standing that no longer owns a qualifying coach because of age, health, death of a spouse, **or personal reasons unique to that individual.** To be eligible for this type chapter membership, a FMCA membership must be maintained. Addition of a standing rule to this by-law

**All former members that were in good standing and were forced to forfeit their membership due to selling or loss of their qualifying coach shall have the opportunity to rejoin as associate members.**

2003 rally reports:

Perry Ga. Rally June 19-21 If the rally attendees do not number 50 there will be a charge to use facilities and as of now the count is about 16. The rally may be canceled or other facility may have to be found.

Bowling Green Ky. Sept.16-19. J.R. Slaten announced this is a 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary reunion rally.

GMCMI Rally Elkhart In. Oct. 12- 18. There will be many men participating in a Womanless Wedding at the rally . Coordinated by Marty Samsel.

In January 2004 there will be a combined rally with Sunshine Statesmen Jan.16-18 at Lake Placid, Fl.

Suzie Tase reported on GMC Alumni rally. They will have spring, summer, fall and winter rallies.

Ed Smith reported on Eastern States rally. The first will be in Bowling Green June 3-4-5-6 and the next rally will be held at a unknown location in the south .

A request was made for volunteers for future rallies perhaps combining "old-timers" with some of our new members.

President Hutchinson introduced first-timers to our Dixielander group. They were Marshall Wilkes, Claude and Sally Harris, Dan Mullin, Ted and Sylvia Stinnett, Don and Carol Sommerdahl. Visitors were Lynn and Cindy Olson.

It was mentioned that there is a need for a club inventory so we are aware of what items the group has and where these items are located. Please report to president or vice-president and John Richardson has agreed to be equipment manager.

President Hutchinson reported there were 56 coaches in attendance and 4 couples without coaches .

Ken O'Rourke gave status of Website which is coordinated by Cal Hodges. We are gmcdixielanders.org

The nominating committee report was given by Judy Acosta---  
Ike Grove- vice president  
John Nichols-executive comm.

Nominating comm-  
Lew Ayers

Pat Hutchinson  
Sue Tase

Motion was made by John Richardson to accept these nominations and seconded by Ron Davis.

Bob Sanders volunteered to attend FMCA governing board meeting in Buffalo N.Y.. Our delegates, Don Leslie and Allen Martin were unable to attend.

Ken O'Rourke asked for items of interest for the newsletters. New rally information and roster will be out in May.

Marty Samsel reported there will be many of our men in the Womanless Wedding at GMC international rally and for us all to think seriously about attending.

We had drawing of names for prizes from FMCA and there were many winners.

J.R. Slaten invited us to participate in Kentucky Derby party in the afternoon.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am

Joanne Telgen,  
Recording secretary

If you would like to include something to the next *DIXIELANDER* issue (all suggestions welcome), please call or send it by snail mail or e-mail to:

Ken O'Rourke, 519 Huntington Rd., Greenville, SC 29615, Phone: (864) 297-1893

E-mail: electmosq@aol.com

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## ***BYLAW CHANGES:***

Proposed Bylaw Amendment:

A proposal to amend the bylaws concerning Family Associate membership was introduced at Bean Station which would permit all former GMC Dixielanders to become Family Associate members.

The specific text proposal follows and will be voted at the fall Bowling Green, KY rally. (Bold type denotes the change)

Article III, Paragraph 4,A "In order to perpetuate long standing friendship, good fellowship and cooperation among members of this chapter, this classification is available on request by a member in good standing that no longer owns a qualifying coach because of age, health, death of a spouse, **or personal reasons unique to that individual**. To be eligible for this type Chapter membership, a FMCA membership must be maintained.

An addition of a standing rule to this Bylaw is as follows;

**and were forced to forfeit their membership due to the selling or loss of their qualifying coach shall have the opportunity to all former members that were in good standing to rejoin as Associate Members.**

### ***PLEASE VOTE:***

Since the summer rally has been cancelled, the by-laws require a mail-in ballot be executed for the election of officers. Please vote the following positions and return **as soon as possible**, but no later than August 20, 2003.

You can E-mail your vote to Jo or mail it to her at:  
Jo Telgen, 426 Brown Circle, Hartwell GA, 30643  
or E-mail to her at; [jobill@hartemc.net](mailto:jobill@hartemc.net)

### ***BALLOT***

#### **FOR**

#### **WRITE-IN**

- \_\_\_ Ken Henderson, President \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Isaac Grove, Jr., V. Pres. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Jo Telgen, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Chuck Chambers, Treas. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Don Leslie, FMCA Nat. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Allen Martin, FMCA N. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_ Larry Wills, Exec. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Harry Terrill, Exec. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ John Nichols, Exec. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Lew Ayres, Nom. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Pat Hutchinson, Nom. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Susie Tase, Nom. Comm. \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal submitted by the Nominating Committee:

Judy Acosta, Chairperson, Ken O'Rourke, Joanie Haught

Send any Write-Ins or if you agree with the nominations, just tell Jo that you agree with all candidates. Thanks.

### ***PROPANE ON OR OFF?***

Many GMC'ers travel with their refrigerator propane turned on. This is a dangerous situation in case of an accident. At least, turn your propane gas off **before** (that means not at the pumps) you enter a gas station to fuel up. Remember there is an open flame burning in your refrigerator and it will ignite gasoline fumes. I may be the person fueling up next to you and I don't want to blow up.

### ***Tech Tip Correction:***

The Tech Tip in the latest GMCMI Newsletter has an error on the new Goodyear tire. The correct replacement for the G-159 Goodyear tire is the new Goodyear G-647. According to Don Wirth, a retired Goodyear employee, the confusing thing is that Goodyear has actually replaced the G-159 with two new tires, the G-647 and the G-611. The G-647 is for the tractor and the G-611 is for the trailer. The problem is that the G-611 requires 100 psi air pressure which is more than the Alcoas are designed to hold. So for the GMC the recommended Goodyear tire is the G-647. **JR Slaten**

***Bye Bye for Now: Ken O'Rourke***