

# Past Tents

Mental meandering by SOLAR historian..... vol. 12 (May 2018)

Most every month we will dig into our archives and ponder on the past and present minutia of our club..... This volume of Past \ / Tents is a *near past* edition, containing a bit of story from the last general membership meeting end of April. I hope in the future to also be a bit of a document of record and comment on current event and perhaps give a historical context. Welcome to my mad mad world of run on sentences and mental meandering

## Camper conversations



It is the day after the April general membership meeting, I have visions of campers in my head, the internet sends me Pinterest of new versions of Airstream (the nest) and vintage Shasta trailers as well as van conversions. I was one of the four members that brought their vehicles to the SOLAR Van Camper Rally and I realize that I crave to create and rearrange the space I have in my van to a stream line and stylish one.

Of the four, Phil Crookshank's had the most vintage and factory delivered design, that German engineering that brought together the whole package. His VW of unknown (to me) age had pop up canvas, cooking, bed and seating accommodations, front passenger seat rotated for extra lounging and conversation, this magic vehicle also had heat and storage, out the back were cupboards also water sprayer for dishes or shower.





I (Mike Hobig) brought a Ford Transit Connect as did Mary Winkler and Jim Coe.

Jim's vehicle had the highest roof and sported a full platform behind the front seats with pull out storage below both out the back and side door, this freed up the top for a full bed. He uses the van for both work and recreation so it is fitted out to be flexible for both, his big feature was a quick up Coleman screen shelter that fit over the back doors, making a living room just off his bed and the big advantage is he could drive away from camp, leaving shelter set up. In the rain of the day it was a comfortable space to talk and chat about his camper van.



Mary is an inspiration to me, she bought her van, removed the seats and made an interior that transformer like converts to cozy uses that accommodate sleeping, eating, lounging and privacy, it also sported a full array of options for accommodating on the road for cleaning (several shower options) and bathroom needs. She had also used the internet to research and brought together many features that brought comfort to travel such as her privacy window shades with decorator fabrics for the interior and flat black exterior which makes the van from the exterior look low key and does not draw attention to what is inside.





My camper is also my daily driver one of the main reasons everyone got the size vehicle we did, small, but big enough to accommodate needs, we didn't want trailers.....my setup is pretty much a one person set up, Jim and Mary's work for two travelers while Phil's can sleep 4, I believe. Most of my interior is found items with a platform for a single bed, shelves off to the side and plenty of storage under. I wanted a sheltered bed and wanted a place to sit and put my shoes on which I have. I found that the side door is like my front porch, I can sit there and view the world go by public and private, probably my favorite contemplative space when pulled up to a beach or forest, campground and road side stop. Like Mary and Jim, I feel like I should change thing of my setup and possibly will but mostly I am editing my stuff after each trip, like a backpack, I don't need or want to carry thing I am not using. My core items are all things I had around the house with the addition of a little table / seat and so far I have not done any long term camping with it only road trips with lots of travel. I have not had to contend with bugs but have screens to magnet onto the van, I have not had to contend with heat but expect to this summer. I also know that I won't ever get stream lined and modern but will improve my accommodations as time allows.....







It was a rainy night when we had our van rally, Jim had his shelter, Mary and I put up tarps over our side doors and both of us conceded it was the first test of them, true to SOLAR we had folks come out to the church lot and we enjoyed our show and tell. The local Livonia Police came by as well, thinking we were some gypsy or homeless encampment, called I am sure by concerned neighbors, we talked to them for a while as well as the rest of the club, it was a very good night, hey the cops came.....it had to be by that [fact](#) alone.....



Thank you all for participating, visiting and bringing by your Camper Vans.....

## Elections – not politics as usual



You may or may not have known that the last general membership meeting of SOLAR we had steering committee elections. I suspect that many of you did know or perhaps it was because of the weather that we had very limited turnout. The current outgoing steering committee (SC) members gave brief descriptions of their responsibilities and membership was asked if they want to run or accept nomination for those SC members not running again. We had several positions filled with first time by SOLAR member(s) who had never served before as well as past or present SC member changing posts or filling the same positions.

I will include a picture (above) of the outgoing SC and list the incoming SC members and their positions. We will have a transition SC meeting next month where all the current and future SC members come together. That will be the Tuesday prior to the next general membership meeting. Remember we allow and encourage members to come to SC meetings and see how we get things done, it is generally a good time to socialize, hobnob and rub elbows with the power elite of the club and once you learn the secret handshake it may lead to aspirations and dare I say.....the presidency.....

So that pretty much sounds like politics as usual but since there were so few members percentage wise of SOLAR, here is a rundown on the not as usual features.....we had no multiple contests for single positions so only one ballot was filled out (per bylaws we have to have a ballot) it was counted (also per bylaws) and past presidents acted as impartial election monitors. This single ballot, no adversarial rhetoric, peaceful transition of power (ok responsibility) with no super pac money soaking the airwaves or social media systems was a very nice reminder that we can participate in an election and still feel good about it and that our voice or vote counts.





I take this opportunity to remind you we can bring back contentious muck racking and good old time politics if we can contest SC post next year with multiple members running to help shape SOLAR and help it into the future. If you missed the election this year, think about next, plan ahead, talk to current SC members or past position holders. Get involved, we usually have some need in subcommittees and off the top of my head we have several events, summer picnic, photo contest, and winter party that usually need helping hands. Look for opportunities to help in additions to leading trips or leaning events. If you enjoyed any basic backpacking or land navigation chances are they may need help with those, ask, it may be another way to join in.....politics is not for everyone..... but SOLAR is..... we still have a Public Relations position to fill, Tom Sawyer says it's easy and FUN.....

SOLAR Election Ballot		April 24, 2018
President:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carol Rogers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vice President:	<input type="checkbox"/> Debbie Hendrickson	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secretary:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Katie Raeon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treasurer:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heidi Tietjen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doreen Byrne	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bylaws Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Paronish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeff Zabel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phil Crookshank	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historian:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Hobbs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Membership Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elaine Crunch	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs Chairperson:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeff Grossklaus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Relations Chairperson:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Warnecke	<input type="checkbox"/>
Webmaster:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Judy Konye	<input type="checkbox"/>