



“And they’re off” - A total of 15 rigs attended the four-day April campout at Santa Anita Racetrack. Thursday afternoon and evening was very windy with waves of blowing sand. Easy-ups made way for easy-downs and then easy-ups again. Fortunately, the Happy Wanderers are a hardy and flexible group. The adverse weather conditions gave many that had planned to Bar B Q outside Thursday evening, the opportunity to head to local restaurants or order carry-out.

Friday morning had all rigs moving to a different area of the lot with another opportunity to practice the “circle and set-up.” Fortunately, the winds were gone and we had perfect weather for the balance of the campout.

Friday was a “settle in” day-flags on the motorhomes, name tags and lots of visiting, drinking and eating. In celebration of our move to the new “digs”, Moe Nadeau got a jump start and prepared morning Bloody Mary’s to get the gang going.

Friday night is traditionally hors d’oeuvres night. Food was plentiful and yummy. Special kudos to our newest Campers of the Year Sally and Ed Slattery who cooked their special English muffin, cheese and pork loin hors d’oeuvres. In addition to playing games, Friday also included an effort to get a head start on preparing for the Saturday horse races. However, that plan was abandoned when it was determined that we were looking at the Friday rather than the Saturday racing schedule. (I think this was goof #1 of several.)



Saturday was a light breakfast day; sweet rolls, donuts, fruit and those great Bloody Mary’s prepared by famous mixologists Bob Fuller and Moe Nadeau. Orange juice for the Mimosas was from oranges grown and picked by our own Dorothy Smith and fresh squeezed by Wagon mistress Valeta Russell. What a talented group we have!

Happy Wanderers Hosts Ron and Valeta Russell, and Co-hosts Bob and Judy Steiger had pre-ordered our tickets and racing forms, and reserved an area for all of us, as well as some guests, in the center pavilion. Wagons were loaded with hot dogs, potato salad (thanks Jackie Miller), chips and all the fixings for our short walk to the track. Tom Glynn and Ed Slattery have our most sincere thanks for Bar B Q ing all of the hot dogs and sausages so that the others could be well nourished and have time to place their bets on the horses.

We had some winners and some losers at the racetrack. The Elks Camping Club was recognized in the racing form for the 10th race, and members of our group posed with the winning horse in the Winners Circle after the race. Club members and guests in attendance voted on one horse to bet and pooled their money for the 10th race. The horse selected was a long shot-thirty to one- in the printed form. By the time the horses left the gate, the odds were eighty to one. We could have all been rich on our "to win" bet; however, it appears that our horse may still be running. Oh well, next year!

After the races, we all gathered back in our campground area. Our hosts had arranged for a Taco Truck to come to us. No driving, cooking or cleanup and a delicious dinner. Ed Slattery was the sheriff and fines were collected to the amusement of all; he also sold raffle tickets. Lyn Owen was our big 50/50 winner. The pot was so big, it is rumored that she and Bill may be buying a new rig soon.

Good-byes were said on Sunday morning before our short ride home. Thanks to all who attended and assisted in making this a fabulous campout-with special thanks to our hosts and co-hosts, cooks and bartenders. Hope to see you all at the races next year.

Judy Nadeau
Happy Wanderers Correspondent

