



# Boot Scoot to Texas

By DeWayne Johnston

213 units, including 9 camp passes added up to an attendance of 404 people at FCRV's 40<sup>th</sup> annual Retiree Rally, March 22-27 at the Canton Civic Center, Canton Texas. There were 3 early days prior to the official opening on Tuesday. Opening ceremonies started with the posting of the U.S., Canadian, FCRV, and Texas flags followed by "The Star Spangled Banner", "Oh Canada", the Pledge of Allegiance, and an invocation. Words of welcome were offered by Retiree Director, Al Jurek, Canton Mayor Pro-Tem, Lou Ann Everett, Event Coordinator, Tam Erwin, and Rally Chairman, Dick Buresh. FCRV President, Jack Smye presented a framed picture and FCRV flag that was flown in Iraq by Texas FCRV member, SMSgt. Matthew Blair. It will be on permanent display in the national office. Ashley Taylor announced that donations will be collected for the people of Rayne, Louisiana who had severe hurricane damage recently. The ribbon was cut by 2010 International Retiree King and Queen, Pete and Sammie Jo Schaub, MI and, Rally Chairmen, Dick and Kathy Buresh, TX. The rally was dedicated to the late Barb Jurek.

Entertainment kicked off in grand style with Branson stars, Gordy and Debbie Wensel's show, a tribute to George Strait. Their show featured many of Strait's 57 top ten charted hits as well as a video screen showing George Strait as they sang. The audience gave the performers a well deserved standing ovation.

Wednesday evening began with the introduction of the 10 rally vendors on hand this year. Dick Buresh introduced the 53 committee chairmen and thanked their workers. Past International Retiree Kings and Queens in attendance were introduced including Pete & Jane Brown, FL '97 (it was their 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary), Dottie Mendel, LA '02, Ralph & Betty Bruner, OH '03, John & Delores Derrick, SC '04, Wilson & Shirley Forbes, IA '05, Robert & Nancy Linder, MI '06, Mike & Judy Hiatt, IA '08, David & Connie Long, KS '09, and Pee & Sammie Jo Schaub, MI '10. The four contestant couples for 2011 were introduced. They are Jerry & Dot Zimmerman, CT, Ron & Jo Hersom, IA, Melvin & Nancy Coy, IN, and Robert & Arlus DeVrient, NE. Also introduced were non competing states, Allen & Mary Burris, NC, Carrol & Wilma Fast, KS, and Tom & Sharon Westerhouse, MI.

Outstanding entertainment for the evening was presented by musician and singer, Sarah Getto from Oklahoma with assistance from her dad. Blind from birth, Sarah studied music all her life and graduated in '07 from S.E. Oklahoma State University with a degree in music education. She did a variety of pop, country and gospel songs and several by her favorite, Anne Murray. Sarah also played some fiddle numbers and she recorded all her other background instrumentals and vocals herself. She had the audience singing along on several songs and in addition to a standing ovation, her CDs sold out after the show.

Thursday evening was the first beef brisket and grilled chicken breast dinner catered by Deen's. FCRV members helped as servers. The evening program began with the annual memorial service to remember deceased members. Retiree Chaplain, Walter Shealy officiated.

The FCRV Choir under the direction of Marilyn Shealy sang “Whispering Hope” and “It is Well With My Soul,” accompanied by Judy Dickey.

In a switch of roles, Walter Shealy sang the Canadian National Anthem and Jack Smye led the U. S. Anthem. Entertainment for Thursday was the FCRV variety show, hosted by Jack Smye. Performing were Wilma Schroedel, TX, sign language, Joe Miller, IL, gospel songs, Bill Stirewalt, NC, stories, Bob Cavers, AZ, clarinet, Frank Petrosky, NC, reading, Ed Hurley, TX, song, Dale Aikens, KS, monologue, Judy Dickey, NE, song, Ed & Carolyn Rials, AL, comedy song, Jack Smye, ONT, song, Mixed group, skit.

The Red Hat luncheon was held at 11:30 Friday, hosted by Judy Hiatt and Barb Turner. Marjory Bates, AL, was selected as Queen Mum. Hat winners were - biggest – Nancy Linder, MI, fanciest – Janet Miller, IL, smallest, Wilma Fast, KS, most original, Sandi Wingert. Entertainment was by the Banana Bandits and Jim and Mike Hiatt. The afternoon featured the ice cream social where attendees cast their votes for King and Queen. Al Jurek convened the annual FCRV Retirees meeting and announced that all but \$10 would be refunded to those who notified that they were cancelling their registration for next year’s Retiree Rally. Camp pass prices have been reduced. He also thanked Joanne Segars of Texas for designing the rally logo and for doing the stage backdrop. Walter Shealy made a surprise phone call to Jim Bob Ealey and shared the conversation over the mike with the audience. Jim Bob is doing well and looking forward to seeing old friends again.

Friday evening, Jack Smye introduced the 27 FCRV Executive Board members in attendance. Pam and Dick Likens, next year’s rally chairmen invited everyone to Tallahassee, Florida March 13 -18. There are many interesting historical places to visit there. Early days are March 9 – 12. Registration forms are in Camping Today and online at [www.fcrv.org](http://www.fcrv.org). Some lively entertainment was provided by Pam and Jackie who hail from Mountain View, Arkansas. Pam played guitar and dulcimer and Jackie played keyboard and they both sang a number of pop, country, and gospel songs and medleys. They needed some help on a Cajun number so Weldon Segars and Dick Buresh were drafted. They ended their concert with a salute to the veterans in the audience.

Saturday morning the campers’ flea and craft market was set up. At 12:30 some determined bean bag baseball teams competed. The second catered dinner was served at 5 p.m. with smoked ham and chicken fried chicken. Saturday evening’s program began with the games awards by Don and Shirl Prater and helpers. Results are in a separate article. Jim Turner presented golf awards. Ahley and Gloria Taylor thanked everyone for their contributions of \$1,324 and food to the local Manna Food Pantry. \$913 was collected for the people of Rayne, LA who recently suffered severe tornado damage. 201 blankets and lap robes donated by FCRV members went to a nursing home and the Children’s Advocacy Center of VanZandt County. FCRV members donated 213 gently used hats to a cancer treatment center. Al Jurek presented a plaque of appreciation to Dick and Kathy Buresh for chairing the 2011 Retiree Rally.

The highlight of the week came next with the results of voting in the International Retiree King and Queen contest. Pete and Sammie Jo Schaub, MI, the 2010 King and Queen said farewell and thanked everyone who invited them to campouts across the country. Their 50<sup>th</sup>

anniversary is coming up in September. Pete closed with a poem called "Hand in Hand." John and Delores Derrick announced the winners, Ronald and Jo Hersom of Marshalltown, Iowa. They are profiled in a separate article. The First Runners-up were Jerry and Dot Zimmerman of Connecticut. Also running were Nancy and Melvin Coy, IN and Robert and Arlus DeVriendt, KS. Trophies were provided by the sign man. Amid a sea of photographers, the new royalty received their crowns and sashes. The YARS chapter provided the reception hospitality complete with "riders" on stick horses who led past and present Kings and Queens through the line to the tune of "Happy Trails to You."

Saturday evening's entertainer was Ruthie who draws big crowds in the Rio Grande Valley with her smooth danceable vocals. She opened her show with a dance song for the new King and Queen. Soon others took to the floor and enjoyed an evening of dancing including line dancing. Ruthie herself danced with several past Retiree Kings.

Various activities took place every day at the rally such as seminars, card games, Bible study, exercise class, hiking, crafts, and jam sessions. First Timers, Full Timers, Singles, Kentucky Colonels and the Uie Club met. The Happy Days Diner inside the Civic Center was busy all week serving breakfast, lunch, and goodies. Four general hospitalities were held including 2010 King & Queen Thank You (MI), Iowa, Indiana, and Florida. Some fun sports such as cow chip toss, rolling pin toss, and frog races were held. Vendors on hand included Adventure Caravans, Sarge Enterprises, Originals By Becki, VIP Enterprises, Wayne's RV Service, Sunrise Bedding, Turner's Ice Cream, Imagine That, Global Satellite, and All Pro Water Flow.

A non-denominational church service was held Sunday morning by Chaplain, Walter Shealy and the FCRV Choir. The collection of \$736 was divided between the local food pantry and Rayne, LA. Later the evening parade seating and order were assigned. A thank you luncheon for the rally staff was held with certificates presented by Dick Buresh and Al Jurek.

Sunday evening's program was the inspiring, gospel singing Mitschke Family from Hempstead, Texas. Following tradition, before the big International Parade of States, Provinces, and Specialty Chapters, the audience joined hands and sang "God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again."