

Frequently Asked Questions About FMCA Welcoming All RV Owners

With the proposal that will be presented to the Governing Board in Indianapolis, Indiana in July 2017 related to opening membership in FMCA to owners of all types of RVs – lifting the motorhome-only requirement – members have already asked a number of questions. Realizing that other members may have the same questions, we are sharing key questions about this “remodel” and our responses.

1. **Will FMCA chapters be required to allow owners of towable RVs to join their chapter?** No. Chapters will still control their own bylaws. Your chapter will not be required to allow owners of towable RVs to join the chapter if your chapter members do not wish to do so. The scope of the chapter will continue to be the chapter members’ decision, and bylaws can be amended at any time (to include – or exclude – based on non-discriminatory factors). Many chapters already have restrictions in terms of the brand of vehicle, etc.
2. **Are we going to change the name of the association? Why would someone join an organization called Family Motor Coach Association if they own a fifth wheel travel trailer?** “FMCA” is how most of us refer to the organization today, so our recommendation is to keep the name but move to using only the acronym, much like AARP did when it opened its doors to pre-retirees. The association would still legally be known as Family Motor Coach Association, but we would just refer to it as FMCA. After all, “FMCA” could stand for “Fun Member Camping Association!” or “Family Motorhome & Camping Association!”
3. **How will the rallies be affected?** Our goal is to keep delivering a great experience to current members while also appealing to the younger crowd. We will re-evaluate our convention structure to provide new and different activities. For example, we may have multiple entertainment options presented at different times of the day to accommodate various ages and interests.
4. **Will FMCA be parking all vehicle types together at events?** Yes. FMCA leaders have consulted with our layout and staging experts to achieve an optimum experience for everyone.

5. **Will we need to retrain our parkers?** It's just a different type of vehicle, driven by equally skilled drivers. The same parking method will be used.
6. **What parking differences are there in terms of parking towables next to motorhomes?** Power cords will not be damaged if they are driven over during parking. The parkers are laying out 25-foot wide spots. They can zipper park towables, too. Other RV organizations successfully park different types of vehicles together at their events.
7. **What about generator usage at conventions? On-board generators tend to be quieter than portable generators.** FMCA will continue to offer various parking options as we do now, including "full generator" areas where generators can be run 24 hours a day and "no generator" areas where they can't be operated. Owners of all RVs will have the option to purchase electricity.
8. **Would all RV owner members have full benefits?** Yes.
9. **Would all members be able to hold national office?** Yes. All members will have equal standing in the association.
10. **What is the willingness of our current members to accept all vehicle types?** Most current members are very much in favor of this change. We know many members that started out with towable RVs before purchasing a motorhome. Our hope is that current members will welcome *all* new members, regardless of the equipment they drive.
11. **Towable owners' educational needs may differ. Will FMCA focus on their needs?** We don't anticipate dropping any of our motorhome educational programs and will continue in our historic role as the authoritative resource for motorhome information. However, over time our content and seminars will naturally expand to include helpful and educational information about all RVs, as members with other equipment join us.
12. **Does FMCA offer seminars regarding starting new chapters?** We don't have such a seminar currently but we certainly can, if members are interested!

- 13. Will we keep the FMCA Assist Medical Emergency and Travel Assistance Program?** Yes. Opening FMCA to more RV owners would help the organization and spread out the cost of this expensive benefit over a larger pool of members.
- 14. Some people look at FMCA as an elitist organization. Will opening up the membership to all RV owners help with that?** It's easy for people to think that way based on our motorhome requirement today, but we know that FMCA members are warm, wonderful people. The remodel is a way to welcome all RVers so they can experience our exclusive benefits without feeling "excluded" because they don't own a motorhome! Many of us started with an RV other than a motorhome and we strongly believe it's not about the equipment; it's about the people who choose the RV lifestyle.
- 15. How do we keep younger kids active in FMCA?** This presents an opportunity to revisit our Youth Program. We don't want to just have an on-site babysitting service. Our goal is to provide meaningful activities for the children, too. With an infusion of new and perhaps younger members, we'll have new ideas and new energy for our "family" members with families!
- 16. Why should I continue to be a member if this change takes place?** FMCA is unique. It is a not-for-profit RV association, the largest in the world. Our mission is education (and fun) and, with that in mind, we continue to develop the offerings of the FMCA Academy. FMCA also provides great benefits, such as the tire buying program and the FMCA Assist Medical Emergency and Travel Assistance Program. We'll never be "just another Good Sam" – we don't offer the same benefits or experience today, and we absolutely won't do that in the future.
- 17. How will FMCA fulfill the promise that the founders made to the members: that FMCA would be an exclusive club for motorized RVs?** We recognize your concern about this issue. However, to continue to exist as an association, we also recognize that we need to avoid stagnation. The RV marketplace has changed and evolved over time. We've looked around and seen that our families and friends—those we want to attract as new FMCA members—have many choices of RVs that are not motorized. So if we want to remain a healthy association, it is important for all of us to consider whether it's time for a change in FMCA, too.

- 18. What has happened to cause us to change our minds about non-motorized RVs? This isn't the first time this idea has come up.** Members have increasingly been asking FMCA leadership why the association doesn't welcome all RV owners. After all, it's not about the equipment; it's about the people who choose the RV lifestyle. The goal is to make sure FMCA is around for the next generation.
- 19. Is FMCA just doing this because of the money?** No. It's about the family! Motorhomes don't go to conventions; people do. We want dues to stay affordable for everyone while providing top-notch benefits. With more members over whom to spread the cost of the member benefits, FMCA can serve more RV owners.
- 20. Younger people are known for not being interested in joining organizations, and they may not want to volunteer. How will we handle that?** It's true that younger people with families may be busy working, raising their children, and have other day-to-day demands that can make time for volunteering difficult. But we won't know until we ask. By talking with them, welcoming them and inviting their participation as volunteers, we may find they bring a higher level of energy to our volunteer efforts, even if they can't participate as often as current members. Extend a greeting the next time you see a younger RVer, and you may find those who would be interested in FMCA membership aren't so different from you!
- 21. How would we adjust our methods of communication if we welcome owners of towables, many of whom are likely to be younger than today's FMCA members?** We don't have any plans in place to eliminate publications or current communications tools. We are already using email and social media effectively, and this will continue to evolve as we gain experience with these methods.
- 22. Will our benefits change?** They may – but only for the better! Even today, benefits evolve to serve our members. In the future, we'll just have a wider audience of member needs and interests. FMCA will never stop delivering value (and fun) to motorhome owners.
- 23. Why don't we just grow the organization by getting more motorhome owners to join?** FMCA has an active new member program, and we sign up thousands of new members every year. The challenge is that we are also losing thousands of members every year due to age-related factors. The new

members who are joining today aren't new to RVing – they have built friendships and memories with other RVers. We don't want them to think they have to turn their backs on those friendships – we'd rather they just bring their friends along for the fun with FMCA!

Please keep in mind this change won't happen overnight. We'll always be the FMCA family. The people who choose to join us after the remodel will be just like us: friendly, welcoming, helpful – and FUN. The only difference is they might pull up in a different kind of RV.