

MONACO INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA 2011

David and Kay Piper, Wagon Masters

Steve and Laurie Wyman, Co-Wagon Masters

Wednesday, October 5, 2011 was the arrival day for the 2011 Monaco International Balloon Fiesta Rally. We parked our coaches in the VIP West parking area at the south end of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta launch field. We had 42 coaches in attendance, and with guests had 90 people. These coaches came from 20 different states!

The weather didn't cooperate with us Thursday or Friday, but Saturday and Sunday proved to be excellent weather for the hot air balloons. Thursday we all enjoyed a tasty lunch at the Tanoan Country Club where the view of Albuquerque was a sight to see! Friday we were treated to a Mexican buffet at El Pinto Restaurant. Every afternoon but Friday, when it rained, we had really fun social hours with more food than we could consume!

There were 550 special and regular shape balloons representing nineteen countries again this year. It is a spectacular sight to see over 500 balloons flying over our motor homes. Some of them were so close to us that we could talk to the pilots and passengers from where we were standing.

How lucky we were to have a beautiful day on Saturday and again Sunday morning! Saturday lunch was on our own, and we had time for shopping and sightseeing before another social hour and fireworks display that evening. The balloons flew in mass and again were spectacular, and the "Albuquerque Box" was really working on Sunday.

We would like to express our appreciation to those who helped park the coaches and prepare the food for our social hours.

We would also like to extend a very special thank you to Steve and Laurie Wyman who were valuable co-hosts for this rally and to Kay and Tressa Williams who not only helped with the rally but provided Kay's famous Margarita Machines for Margaritas and Peach Bellinis. The Williams' will also be our co-hosts for the 2012 rally.

We also would like to thank Paul Evert's RV Country, Fresno, California, Best Value RV Sales & Service, Denton Texas & North Texas RV, Krum, Texas as well as Alliance RV Sales & Service, Wildwood, Florida and Monaco RV, LLC in Coburg, Oregon for their support of our rally.

The 40th annual Balloon Fiesta has now concluded and a wonderful time was had by all! The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta offices are busy preparing for the 41st Fiesta and New Mexico's Centennial. Our rally will be October 10-14, 2012.

Registration forms will be ready soon, and we would like to invite everyone to join us in 2012!