



Missouri-Kansas Airstream Club

Gopher News



WBCCI - Unit 059

April 2020

President's Message

Spring Rally and Monthly Luncheons

Having to cancel the 2020 Spring Rally was really a bummer because **John Eckardt** had planned one of the best rallies ever. Our thanks to John for all his hard work on the rally, **Paula Timmons** for putting the registration packet together, **Brenda Frese** for arranging the meals, and **Linda Poage** for handling the registrations and refunds. And even though we had to cancel the upcoming luncheons, we appreciate **Mike Bedinger**, **Linda Bryant**, and **Cheryl Ball** for arranging our April and May get-togethers.

The Corona Connection

Just because we can't get together at luncheons and rallies doesn't mean we can't stay connected. In fact, during the COVID-19 Pandemic, *staying in touch is even more important.*

In order to stay connected, we are adding the "Corona Connection," as part of the Gopher News. (See pages 3 & 4)

Reach Out to Club Members and Others

Let's make a point to check on and support one another. Write emails, send texts, and get together for coffee over the phone or via the Internet. Share funny stories and helpful information. Conduct random acts of kindness, and help those who are struggling. (To make this easier, we've attached an updated copy of the membership list with everyone's names, phone numbers, and email addresses.)

Use an Abundance of Caution and Care

Stay at home, and practice social distancing. Wash your hands using soap and water, and don't forget to scrub between your fingers, under your fingernails, and up and over your wrists. Keep your hands away from your face. Go after the dirt and germs on your countertops and other hard surfaces. Wash your clothes in hot water. Order groceries online and have them delivered. Wear plastic gloves at the gas pump and throw them away before you get in the car. Wear face masks. Think through every decision you make and every action you take that might put you, your family or others at risk.



Friends, please take care and keep your spirits up, because one of these days we'll all be together again. - Tim

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Welcome New Member!

Patrick Byrne
Lenexa, KS

We hope to meet you at a future luncheon or Rally!

Upcoming Mo-Kan Club Activities

LUNCHEONS 
????????????

RALLIES 
????????????

Find all 2020 Club activities at
<https://missouri-kansas.airstreamclub.net>
...even the cancelled ones...



Just a word about Common Cents

Glenn Waters, the Region 8 and International Community Chair advised us that, due to the cancellation of the International Rally this year, we should hang on to this year's Common Cents funds until the International Rally in 2021.

Please note that even though our monthly luncheons are canceled during the next few months, we still need to raise money for Common Cents. *Please mail your donations to **Linda Poage**, Treasurer, 1904 Honeysuckle Avenue, Kearney, Missouri 64060.*

Also, **Cheryl Ball** wants us to continue collecting pop tabs, blankets, toiletries, children's books, etc., for future donations. -----

March Luncheon – March 7, 2020
Smokehouse BBQ, KCMO



Birthdays

- Wayne Gurtler, 4/01
- Delores Crain, 4/08
- Lisa Bucholz, 4/08
- Cheryl Ball, 4/23
- Rachel Hughey, 4/28

April Celebrations!

Anniversaries

- Henry & Kerstin Roberts, 4/04
- Glen & Pat Harris, 4/18
- Larry & Linda Poage, 04/25

The Corona Connection

During the Pandemic, we're asking members to periodically drop us a note to let us know how you are doing. **Tell us where you are, what you're doing, and what you are learning and experiencing.** Share humorous stories, camping information or anything else of interest to the group. And since we won't be taking photos at lunches or rallies, please include a photograph or two, and send them to kcunitnews@gmail.com.

(Thanks **Paula and Tim Timmons** for collecting and providing these stories)

Tracy and Glenda Ridgeway spent the past few months working on their two Airstreams. And their new puppy, Tilly, has been a "distraction" over the winter.



"Thanks to Scott and Kathy Allen, Tilly Ridgeway is equipped with Airstream gear."



Betty Sullivan has been training residents to man the front door at her living facility, getting the Resident Council ready for the facility's upcoming CEO candidate interviews, and arranging small groups to meet on Sunday mornings for Internet church services.

"Dr. Betty fighting the Corona Virus in Wichita"

Marion and Carol Pember are back in Kansas City after spending six weeks near Mesa, Arizona with their daughter, son-in-law, four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and six Standard Poodle puppies.



"Wow! Seven grandkids and six poodles!"



Jerry and Brenda Frese spent time this winter in the "Texas Hill Country," and they are looking for property there. They are also having power put on their ranch in southern Missouri.

Jerry and Brenda in front of "Gertrude."

The Corona Connection (continued)

Lee Cantrell has been staying busy with projects in the garage, and **Joyce** is staying busy in her sewing room. For entertainment, they watch episodes of “Lucky Dog” and watch their very own lucky dog, “Keela”.

“All dressed up and nowhere to go.”



Wayne, Genny, and Roxy Gurtler have been staying close to home and Roxy has been staying even closer- in their laps.

“Doesn’t Roxy look fetching in her WBCCI beret?”

Martin and Rachel Hughey are hunkered down at home in Basehor. Their granddaughter wanted to do something really nice for them, so she sent them a box of toilet paper in the mail.

“We’ve got a Charmin’ granddaughter!”



Clinton and Bonnie Gregory are riding out the Corona Virus by staying put in Arizona.

“Our RV park in Arizona is taking great care of us!”

For **Julee Shields and Bud McFie** mishaps on their trip to California included a cold night with no electricity and a waterlogged floor from a leak in the icemaker. Once they got to California, water backed up in the downstairs bathroom, so they had to turn off the water in the house and sleep in the motorhome!

“Looking good in sunny California.”



An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair

By John Eckardt, First Vice-President, Missouri-Kansas Airstream Club, 2008,
27-ft. FB Classic Limited. 2015 Ford F-150

Have you ever traveled in your airstream to Munising, Michigan on Lake Superior in September, in order to see Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, pulled into Munising Tourist Park to set up camp in the rain—and inadvertently scraped an improperly leaning tree while maneuvering into a campsite causing \$24,353.83 worth of damage? I have. Who would have thought that it would cost \$2,360 to replace a Main Door Assembly!



The damage mostly occurred along the back-passenger side of the RV. Much of the damage was cosmetic, with three dents to aluminum panels, a scratch across the entry door and damage to the upper red teardrop exterior light (smashed in and dented). Although I was traveling very slow, the slight but forceful impact also popped the caps off of five rivets securing the panoramic window and knocked out and damaged the cap and arm of the Zip Dee Awning. I know now that one cannot feel this type of contact from a trailer while in the cab of a truck. When the awning cap was forced or knocked off of the awning, I came to find out that the tightly wound spring inside of the awning completely released. With a call later to a Zip Dee representative, I later became aware that the spring inside my 18-foot awning requires 26 turns to give the awning the proper tension when rolling the awning back up after use. Maria and I have now resolved to use walkie-talkies while maneuvering into a campsite. At least if it looks difficult – like when rain, trees, wind or cold are present.

The Trip.

Starting and ending from Kansas City, Missouri, Maria and I, along with another couple planned to take our RV's on a trip counter-clockwise around Lake Michigan. We started the trip on September 5th knowing that Michigan public schools had just started and the campgrounds would be less crowded. I used my RV Trip Wizard (\$45 per year) planner to lay out a course around the

An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

lake which would keep our mileage between campsites under 250 miles while also trying to stay relatively close to the shoreline of Lake Michigan. We tried to mix public and private campgrounds, see as many lighthouses as possible and include some can't miss destinations from the Michigan and Wisconsin travel websites. The 11-day trip covered about 2,600 miles.



One-way Departure



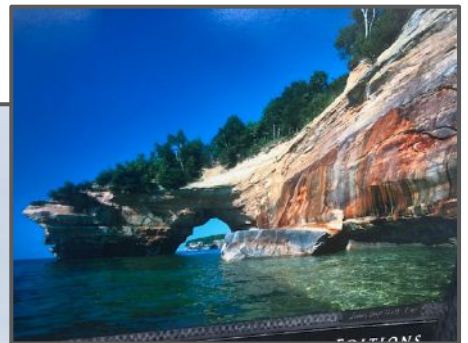
One-way Return

The first stop in Michigan was Holland State Park, home of Michigan's Tulip Time Festival. Being one-half Dutch, I was excited to tour Holland and chose a state campsite both on the outskirts of Town and also on Lake Michigan. We enjoyed both the town and the park but I came away thinking that the festival in Pella, Iowa was closer and had more Dutch charm with regards to architecture and gardens. Holland does however have Lake Michigan on its doorstep while Pella has Red Rock Lake. The next stop was north to Holiday Park Campground in Traverse City. Holiday Park is located about two miles away from an Airstream dealership and at one time was an "Airstream Only" campground. It has since expanded, a lot, to include all RV makes. This picturesque and interesting stop included day trips to both Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore to the west and an exceptionally scenic 20-mile drive north within Peninsula Township ending at the Old Mission Lighthouse. This abbreviated day-trip provided several wineries, orchards and quaint small businesses. The fourth stop was Wilderness State Park, located along the Lake, about six miles due west of the Mackinaw City Bridge. Traveling over the Mackinaw City Bridge and taking the ferry to Mackinac Island turned out to be one of our favorite vacation attractions. No cars are allowed on the island, at least not in September. It seemed most unusual several times during the day to see large goods such as refrigerators or sofas being delivered through town on a flat-bed wagon being pulled by Clydesdale horses. We took a few hours during the day to ride our bicycles and tour of the island's downtown and extended it to include an eight-mile bicycle ride around the shoreline. Along the route we rode by the Grand Hotel. The grounds and structure of the Grand Hotel are spectacular and were the setting of the movie, "Somewhere in Time", starring the late Christopher Reeve.

An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)



The last three stops were Munising, Michigan, Bailey’s Harbor, Door County, Wisconsin and finally, Dubuque, Iowa. In each of these stops we camped backing onto the main local waterway—Lake Superior, Lake Michigan and the Mississippi River. Except for that awful tree that I tried to relocate with the airstream while setting up, the two day stay at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore was very good. The National Lakeshore extends 42-miles between Munising and Grand Marais and includes 100 miles of trails, trout streams, beaches, camping and the 1874 Au Sable lighthouse. We drove through the park area the first day and took a boat tour the second. On our drive, we parked briefly for a 1-½ mile hike to see the lighthouse and talked with a couple hiking the entire 42-mile length. A one-mile walk was enough for us so we declared victory, got back into the car and drove back to the camp, where the tree was. The boat tour was also out of Munising. It lasted over two hours, cost about \$40 per person and traveled over 32 miles along the shoreline. We were lucky as there were light breezes that day. With views of the Au Sable lighthouse, beautifully colored rock cliffs, a waterfall and trees seemingly growing out of rock, the cruise was well worth the time and money.



An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

If one drives south around the northwest portion of Lake Michigan and turns west at Green Bay one arrives at Door County Wisconsin. The Door County peninsula extends about 70-miles to the northwest with Lake Michigan on the southeast and Green Bay on the northeast. We stayed at the Bailey's Grove Campground in Bailey's Harbor—about 3/4s of the way up the peninsula. Signs told us that this area is one of the best fall tree color viewing areas in the entire country. We had to imagine that however as we were about two weeks too early. A wonderful day trip included the nearby Cana Island lighthouse. The only way to get to the island and lighthouse was by riding in a wagon, pulled by a tractor. We were first in line that day. Fortunately, during the 300-400-foot trip, the water seemed high but did not get over the floorboard. In addition to the wonderful landscape and quaint small towns, another feature that day included a stop at Al Johnson's Swedish Restaurant in Sister Bay made famous because of the goats feeding on top of the sod roof. The last night was spent at Miller Riverview Park in Dubuque, Iowa. The park is right downtown and our campsite backed onto the Mississippi River so the views that night were spectacular. 400 miles back to Kansas City completed the memorable trip.



The Insurance Claim

I have never had an automobile or RV insurance claim which was over a few thousand dollars so I was not sure where to begin with an Airstream damage claim. I felt like I needed an estimate from a reputable dealer for the damage. I thought this approach was better than letting my insurance company providing the estimate. Few RV dealerships work on Airstreams. I tried getting an estimate from the RV dealer where I purchased the unit four years ago but the owner told me that he only worked with the insurance companies and that his company did not provide estimates on request, as shops do for automobiles. I couldn't blame him because there was no way for him to know if I would continue with his estimate and let him do the work or go elsewhere. I offered to pay him a per/hour rate for his work on the estimate. He still declined. About three years ago, I had hail damage. I thought as long as I was getting one estimate for the tree/awning/siding/window mishap, I might as well get one for the hail as I had not claimed it when it happened. My insurance company representative told me that they had no statute of limitations on hail damage. I have heard that some companies do. After a few months, I was able to get an estimate from a dealer who viewed the damage in person. They provided my two estimates as requested. There was no charge for these estimates.

An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

Even though the Airstream had quite a bit of hail and there were several dents from the wreck to contend with, everything worked fine inside and out—except for the red teardrop outside light and the awning. I called my insurance carrier and was put into contact with an agent from New Jersey who turned out to be very informative, knowledgeable and supportive. He assured me that if everything worked out, I could either have the unit repaired or buy it back from the insurance company if it was totaled. Knowing that, I immediately filed both claims. To confirm the damage, the insurance company sent a local representative to the cave where the Airstream is stored and videoed the damage. In Missouri, if the estimate of damage is over 80% of the value of the unit, it is considered totaled. It is expensive to repair airstreams. Both estimates (when combined) for the total repair turned out to be well over the initial purchase price. My decision was made, I would accept the insurance check and try to repair the unit myself—with help. The insurance check included the amount of the insured airstream value which I deemed reasonable, minus the amount for two claim deductibles ($2 \times \$600 = \$1,200$) and also minus the buyback amount. The buyback amount was calculated by a company hired by the insurance agency which prices salvage amounts on a nationwide basis. I thought the amount was fair. In addition, I was assured by my insurance company that the airstream was still insured—but only for the new value amount that I purchased the unit back from them. They then wrote me a check for the remaining time left on my term of coverage. I just recently paid them a check for my new lower coverage amount.

I then needed to apply for a new title, called a Prior Salvage Title (PST). This new designation will now always be associated with this airstream. The PST required so that anyone purchasing the airstream in the future will be aware that it was in an accident or received damage such as hail and was totaled. To receive the PST, I was required to take the airstream to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Troop A Inspection office in Lee's Summit. One of the field agents at this Highway Patrol office ran a history of the VIN number to make sure it wasn't stolen or something else out of the ordinary and also inspected the unit to confirm it was roadworthy. I was then issued a status letter. I included my existing title, his inspection status letter, a letter from my insurance company stating that they no longer had an ownership interest in the airstream along with a check for \$14 and sent the documents to the State of Missouri DMV in Jefferson City. Within three weeks I received a "Prior Salvage Title". I have been told that if I sell the unit in the future, I can likely expect the value of it to be about one-half of the typical value with a regular title. I was good with that.

RV Repair

The Missouri-Kansas Airstream Club is lucky to have several individuals who know how to repair and maintain their RV's—I hope to be one someday. Following the September 2019 accident, during the Club's Fall Rally, Lee Cantrell and Tim Timmons looked at the damage and gave a reasonable assurance that the awning, light and window rivets could be repaired. The dents were questionable. Their input was based somewhat on Tim's recent repair of his own Zip Dee awning.

An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

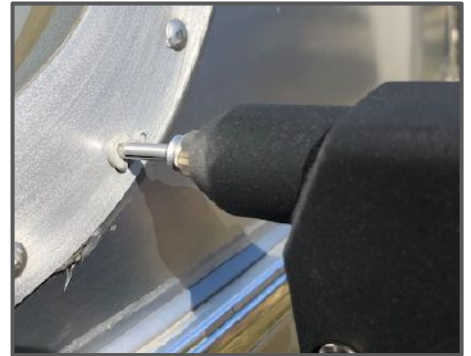
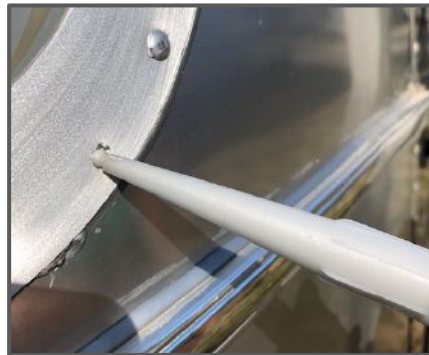
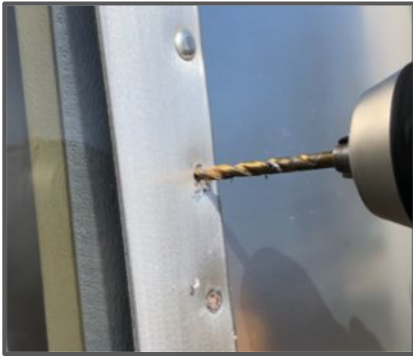
Their assurance was certainly one of the reasons that I decided to try to repair the 12-year old unit myself instead of having a professional shop do this—which would have included all new panels. Lee and Joyce Cantrell live in Olsburg, Kansas, only 2 ½ hours from Kansas City, so on March 11, 2020, nearly six months following the accident, I pulled our Airstream there to see how much we (Lee) could repair.

The first job was trying to pull the dents out and replacing the red teardrop exterior light. I purchased several items for the day's repair from Harbor Freight and also several Airstream/Zip Dee items from the Out of Doors Mart in Colfax, NC. I have always had good luck with their service and knowledge. Not knowing what would work, I purchased three dent pullers: 1) a 2-1/4 Pittsburgh Automotive suction cup lifter, 15 lb., for \$1.99, 2) a 4-5/8 in. Pittsburgh Automotive suction cup lifter, 110 lb. for \$8.49 and 3) a central pneumatic air dent puller for \$59.99 (recommended by Martin Hughey). The first two didn't work at all as I was not able to get a good suction between the cup and the dented aluminum. The third one however worked fine. It attaches to an air compressor and with the added air suction cup adhering to the aluminum, the reverse hammering action successfully pulled out most of the dents. Lee and I were both impressed. Lee then replaced the red teardrop light by first removing the old light. We then pulled out the dent leaving a smooth surface and cleaned the area. He then exposed about ¾ in. of the electrical wire from both airstream and new light, applied Oatey No. 5 solder paste to the ends, and soldered the wires of the light to the wires extending from the Airstream. We then confirmed that the light worked. Always a good thing at this point. After applying a generous amount of Trem Pro 635 Sealant to the underneath top portion of the light and RV surface skin, we screwed the new light into the Airstream receiving threads. Good as new.



An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

The next job was replacing the five Olympic rivets in the panoramic window. Recall that the force of the Airstream hitting the tree sheared off some of the rivet heads. We selected a drill bit that was the same diameter as the thickness of the rivet and drilled all five rivets out. We then placed one rivet at a time into the Hand Riveter, coated both the receiving hole and the rivet with Trem Pro 635 and squeezed the Riveter until the rivet snapped into place, breaking off. On several of the rivets, a pointed 1/8-inch shard was left. We used a Dremel 3000 variable-speed rotary tool to cut off the sharp edge.



The last repair item was the Zip Dee Awning. The force of the wreck popped the head casting out of the awning, ripped two of the screws out of the bracket that connects the main arm bar to the Airstream and broke the main hinge at the bottom of the Airstream. One of the resulting problems from the wreck was that when the top head casting popped out of the Zip Dee Awning, it released nearly all of the tension of the spring which is in the center of the awning. It is the tension of the spring that pulls the awning back, when releasing it back into place for transport. Lee knew that the spring needed to be tightened but did not know how many clockwise revolutions were needed. We took a break, called the Zip Dee office and were immediately put in touch with a maintenance advisor who stated that we needed to tighten the spring one revolution for each foot of length of the awning (18) plus another eight revolutions for a total of 26. He also said that this was the easiest call he had all day. We liked his confidence in our anticipated success. First, though, we needed to make sure that there was no existing tension on the spring and that it had been completely unwound during the wreck—it had not. We then unwound the spring until there was no tension, then wound the spring 26 times—then attached the Main Arm Tube back onto the Airstream. Fortunately—it worked to perfection. Winding the spring is accomplished by leaving the 4 ft long Main Arm Bar attached to the awning head casting—which is attached to the spring. While one of us holds up the awning on a ladder to keep it straight (me) the other (Lee) turns the spring 26 times to apply the proper tension to the spring. I know there was a lot of (what the heck is going to happen now) tension in both of us during this maneuver.

An Airstream Trip, A Little Bump, An Insurance Claim and RV Repair (continued)

This article may have made this repair seem like everything went easily but there was a decent amount of head scratching in the day's work, mostly on my part. Joyce's lunch certainly put a bounce back in our step. Now that our Airstream is back to normal, we hope to take it out soon. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 virus situation, the Missouri-Kansas Airstream Unit Spring Rally, the Region 8 Spring Rally, the Vintage Tulip Time Festival in Pella, Iowa and the Colorado National Rally have all been canceled. We were signed-up for all. If the State parks are still open in a month or so, we may go to a few of those. And maybe a Bluegrass festival. I'm anxious to show off my new Airstream!



If you've got a great story about a repair or an adventure with your Airstream, **we'd love to hear it!** Write it all up, long or short, and send it along *with photos* to: KCUnitNews@gmail.com