

56th
ANNIVERSARY
YEAR!

Chartered in 1964



July/August 2020
Edition

THE VIRGINIA TRAVELER, A publication of the VIRGINIA AIRSTREAM CLUB (#109), W.B.C.C.I.

Thoughts from the President....



Greetings!

I hope this issue of the newsletter finds you all in good health and taking care of those around you. As the cases of the virus continue to increase, the prospect for carefree camping trips decreases. We wish you the best in your difficult decision of whether to go out or stay at home.

It's the time of year when we consider the election of officers for the next year. We really need some new folks to step up and assume responsibility for editing the newsletter, or to be the Secretary, Treasurer or a Trustee. And, if working your way up to becoming Club President might suit your taste, then there is a place for you, too. We are moving the board meetings to Zoom and there is only one annual business meeting, so the obligation to the club is reasonable. Please consider involvement.

As you may already know, our Annual Business meeting will be held electronically. We'll send out an email and ask for votes and input on next year's activities. You'll ballot on a slate of officers and we'll also need to vote on an updated Constitution. The International's Constitution model changed, and the Clubs are being asked to adopt a document similar to it. No big modifications for us, just date changes and some inclusion language concerning voting members. We'll make the updated Constitution available soon. The Board approves the Bylaws and that section is already in their email for review.

As you will read later in this newsletter, the Commonwealth Rally has been cancelled for 2020. Few folks had signed up and the general feeling from the Virginia Club Board (and others polled), was that the risk was too great to hold an event of this size.

The Virginia Airstream Club Board will decide on September 1st whether or not to hold the Abingdon "Silver in the Streets Rally" in November. If we plan few large gatherings, then we can probably pull it off, but the virus counts need to drop before we should ask folks to travel to our event.

Our Treasurer Xan and Trustee David are attempting to establish a PayPal account in order to allow us to collect fees through PayPal. It's been a lot of fuss up to this point. We're also considering making a paper Virginia Airstream Club directory with pictures and some additional information in it. Please forward your contact information and photo (preferably a close-up of you both) to Christopher Meccia to be included in the directory. We will only include information you are willing to share and the document will be sent via snail mail - not electronically.

This certainly has been a different year in many aspects, including RV travel. As many of you know RV sales including Airstreams are selling above expectations. Unfortunately, new campgrounds are not being built and existing facilities are not generally being expanded to meet the greater demand. We'll see where this take us in a few years.

I appreciate your time in reading this article and hope we can get together down the road.

Thanks!

Jeff

ASME - LMOA - WBCCI

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT WASN'T!

Back on New Year's Day when we were all sitting around our homes celebrating the holiday with a delicious meal and vintage wine, who would have imagined that 2020 would progress in the manner that it has? The COVID-19 pandemic was in its infancy and life was progressing here in the usual status quo. It's almost shocking to realize the changes in our lives that the last 6 months have brought. Even if we ignore the physical tragedies suffered throughout the world caused by COVID-19, the economic and social ramifications are just as severe.

To alter the topic to a more selfish, local perspective, let's talk about the effect on WBAC activities brought about because of the pandemic. Local, regional and even international club events have had to be cancelled. The severity of our personal situation began to sink in starting with the cancellation of the **Region 3 Rally** in Myrtle Beach, SC. It was magnified by the cancellation of the **International Rally** in Loveland, CO. Even the popular **Hot Air Balloon Festival Rally** in Albuquerque, NM, fell victim to the pandemic. Assorted local rallies were quickly erased from the schedules of clubs throughout the 12 regions. Prudent precautionary actions effectively cleaned the slate of the Virginia Airstream Club rally schedule through August!

Further correspondence received recently has announced that the **Commonwealth of Virginia Rally** scheduled for Louisa, VA, in September has been cancelled. The Tidewater of Virginia Airstream Club, host of the 2020 event, has graciously stated that they will host this rally in 2021 (the VAC has responsibility for this event the following year). Another sad notification announced the cancellation of **The Swiss Festival** in Sugar Creek, OH, which necessitated taking the same action for the **Swiss Festival Rally** and the **VAC Caravan** to that festival. Basically, our club schedule for most of 2020 has been wiped off the books - WOW!

Rather than become depressed from all this negative information, effective leadership at all levels of the club found ways to continue club activities, albeit in entirely unorthodox ways. International officers were installed, and the normal Board of Trustees meetings were held, all done virtually. Region 3 held a socially distanced rally for installation of new officers in SC. Virginia Airstream Club board meetings were conducted online via ZOOM and our upcoming election of new officers will be conducted via email. We are a resilient organization and we'll continue to function via whatever means possible until the pandemic is history and we can resume normal activities on the road. Until that time, don't fret - use your spare time to get your rig shipshape, and

contemplate on how you can personally help make the Virginia Airstream Club better. The board is always in need of members willing to serve in an officer capacity, committee member, or even newsletter editor. It's your club - get involved and share your expertise!

Gary

REGION 3 OFFICER INSTALLATION RALLY

Thirty-one rigs gathered June 26-28 at Palmetto Cove RV Park, SC, at an informal gathering to celebrate the installation of the 2020-2021 Region 3 officers and to say "Thank You" to John & Susan Leake, now Past President and Past First Lady of Region 3, WBAC. A presentation of gifts of appreciation for the retiring first couple was made by Henry Knight of the SC Coastal Airstream Club.

John spoke briefly (?) of their time in office and how much Susan and he had enjoyed working with members of the region. John then installed the following officers:

Region 3 President Bill & Barbara Wild
WBAC # 3615
Cumming, GA

Region 3 1st VP. Christine & Joe Baum
WBAC # 4814
Doswell, VA

Region 3 2nd VP Jerry & Deborah Peterson
WBAC # 4381
Moncks Corner, SC

A note from Region 3 President Bill Wild:

As you can see in this newsletter, we didn't let COVID-19 completely cancel the 2020 International. Past International President Barry Bell still installed the incoming international officers and the new additions to the Board of Trustees (including me). He just did it via ZOOM, much like everyone else is conducting everything from school to church to business. And while there was no "official" installation rally, there were a surprising number of folks who just "happened" to be at Palmetto Cove RV park when John Leake passed the gavel to me and welcomed your new First Lady Barbara, my bride of nearly 49 years. It was a bittersweet gathering as we all will miss John Leake's charisma and ever-present smile, but it is also a great honor that he chose Barbara and me to follow in his rather large footsteps. We look forward to meeting many more of you once we get past this pandemic, starting with local club visits this Fall and the 2021 Region 3 Rally at the North Florida Fairgrounds in Tallahassee, FL, next spring.

Content for the above article was lifted from the recent Region 3 newsletter.

Destinations - Why Do We Travel!

What influences our choice of Airstream destinations? Do we even have to have a destination? There are so many



Thor's Hammer hoodoo at Bryce Canyon, UT.

reasons that drive us to the ends of the earth, well at least the ends of the North American continent, to satisfy our traveling wishes. Visiting family and friends comes very high on the list! Being close to nature in some of the most beautiful spots on earth in our National and State parks are a top

priority, along with scenic hikes and the vast open beaches and seashores. Selecting a destination as an area headquarters for regional artistic, historical, and cultural merits depends on your interests and lifestyle. Our journeys have often been determined by interesting waypoints featuring historical, cultural or artistic events or attractions. At least once a trip we try to make a special advance reservation for an interesting dining experience. Sometimes for the sheer pleasure you just let the caravan leader take over and plan two months of destinations all of which feature joys you would never have discovered on your own, plus the camaraderie of a new bunch of Airstream friends.

Let's take a journey through the last six years of our Airstream life and checkout what got us excited as we share some of those destinations.

National and State Parks:

National Parks have been the backbone of our list of awesome destinations. Five in particular stand out:



Colorful Yellowstone NP Prismatic Lake is over 200 degrees hot!

Yellowstone NP, Wyoming, Grand Canyon North Rim, Arizona, Death Valley, California, Bryce Canyon, Utah and Organ Pipe, Arizona. Apart from Bryce Canyon, we have been lucky to camp within the park confines largely due to advance planning. Each campground allows

immediate hiking and wilderness access straight out of the door. It's places like these that remind you of the foresight of the NPS preservation over many decades if not a century to keep this heritage intact for future generations.



Metal sculptures are scattered across the Borrego desert.

Beautiful spots we have loved so much we have returned to multiple times include the State Park in the small town of Borrego Springs in southern California. We've returned to the perfect wintering hole climate, art shows, farmers markets, scenic desert surrounded by mountains, metal sculptures scattered

around the desert, seasonal wild flowers, wild Borrego sheep, palm tree oasis, and Mexican influenced menus in the many local restaurants.

Traveling on the South West caravan introduced us to the Antelope Canyons around Page, Arizona. If you have an



Upper Antelope Canyon with the South West Caravan group.

interest in photography these locations are a gift and will bless you with lifelong memories. Both Upper and Lower slot canyons are on Navajo land and the native guides are excellent at helping you enable your shutterbug skills to the highest level and capturing the moment! Good to reserve a tour near the middle of the day when the sun is overhead and infiltrates the narrow slots, or choose a special photo tour (more \$ of course!) that will give you extra time and smaller groups. The third Antelope

Canyon is accessible by cruise boat from Wahweap marina and navigates Lake Powell through the impossibly restrictive waterways of the red sandstone canyons. Colorado offers so much, but we were enchanted with Durango and the Silverton steam railway trip up the Animas River valley and the spectacular engineering built to access and service the silver mines. This ranks as one of the best rail and live steam experiences anywhere!



Durango and Silverton Railway lets off steam.



Spirit Island on Lake Maligne near Jasper - a classic iconic photo location.

Prince Edward Island, Canada, in the St Lawrence estuary is another of our favorite destinations with at least

six visits including pre-Airstream road trips. We love Cornwall and Cabot Beach but more than that we love oysters, mussels, and lobsters! Staying within Canada, Jasper national park in Alberta is well off the beaten track with great hikes, spectacular waterfalls, mountain cable cars and my special joy Spirit Island on Lake Maligne. Still in Canada in British Columbia, Vancouver Island is a unique region of unspoiled beauty with its wild seashore and old growth forests. Heading south since winter comes early in Canada, we highly rate Cottonwood and Sedona, Arizona, for stunning scenery, excellent cuisine and perfect climate.

History coming alive:

Our travels have revived our interest in history, both ancient and modern, confirming that the United States has a wealth of moment in history destinations that help us learn and understand our heritage. We were particularly impressed with the Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, and we have visited several other Presidential libraries but none come close to the splendor and depth of Simi Valley. The location and spaciousness, along with the excellent narrative make this a memorable visit. The beginning of the audio/visual technology era coincides with his presidency so access to high quality media makes this library a superb cutting edge experience. The illustrious list of corporate sponsors may also be a contributing factor to the success of this library.



At the controls of the Spruce Goose and wearing Howard Hughes' hat!

Some of the very best aviation museums in the world are in the USA and the Smithsonian at Dulles Airport, Virginia, is top notch. Finally after many years my routing coincided with McMinnville, Oregon, and the Evergreen Museum, which houses Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose.

This exhibit is a testament to the sheer brilliance, perseverance, and vision of an American entrepreneur and overwhelms you with the state of the art technology of the early 1940's. I recommend the personal one-on-one tour (more \$ of course!) that takes you to parts of the aircraft unseen by many!

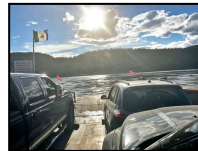
Some US history is more poignant, such as the battle of Little Big Horn and the endless named soldier markers scattered across the rolling grassland hills of Montana. Little Big Horn was part of the group of historical sites we explored based around Custer, South Dakota. An unbelievable number of day trips are possible from this base including Mount Rushmore, Crazy Horse memorial,



Devil's Tower, WY, scene of Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

the amazing highways of Custer State Park, the Badlands, Minuteman silos, Wind Cave NP, Jewel Cave NP, and Devil's Tower, Wyoming.

Further off the beaten track, traveling the Alaska caravan took us to Dawson City, Yukon, one of the prominent cities of the Klondike Gold Rush era (the rush only lasted four years!) where Airstreams in pairs crossed the Yukon River on a small ferry. Dawson City was just full of interesting historical memorabilia as the region's mining gateway and main destinations on the paddle wheel steamer route up the Yukon. Old paddle steamers, huge mining dredges, gambling halls, theaters and banks of the era, all contribute to the incredible human drama of the Klondike Gold Rush.



Crossing the Yukon River at Dawson City on our way to Alaska.



Kennedy Space Center and the Airstream crew transfer vehicle.



Mesa Verde NP Ranger leads our tour through the cliff dwellings.

Another Airstream destination with much more recent historic significance is Cape Canaveral, Florida, with history still being made today! Jetty Park is convenient for the Kennedy Space Center and frequent launches (thank you Elon Musk!) and has one of the best walking beaches along the coast. Further west, in Mesa Verde, Colorado, we immersed ourselves in an ancient civilization that flourished a thousand years ago (late 1100's) but mysteriously disappeared (by 1300's) as we scrambled through Long House, Balcony House, and Cliff Palace dwellings led by an NPS guide.

Experiences:

Among our spectacular activities, the Albuquerque Balloon Festival must rank near the top of life's rich experiences. The South West Caravan had arranged for the first two rows of Airstreams offering coveted center location, and it is truly without doubt spectacular. The joy of getting up before 5 am to witness the first group of balloons lifting off to



Albuquerque pre-dawn ascension of the first flight of balloons.

check the higher level winds followed by the mass ascension of over 500 balloons as the dark sky starts to usher in dawn is pure joy! The static firing of the propane burners set to music in the evening is another awesome moment, and the whole event is repeated the next day. If there was ever one, this is a major bucket list activity.

Our travels along the Californian Pacific coast included two heritage destinations - the Paul Getty villa at the Pacific Palisades and the Hearst Castle at San Simeon - both offer glimpses into another world of fine art and reproduction of lifestyles from another era. Our Living History tour (more \$ of course!) of Hearst Castle featured docents in period dress and style to accentuate the feeling of a gilded age long ago! The Paul Getty villa recreates a Mediterranean atmosphere of the early Roman Empire in the theme of an elite Pompeiian coastal villa of the period along with the artifacts of the Greek civilization and earlier Etruscan culture.



Reenactors at Hearst Castle made each stop a pageant of past grandiose life.



Top of the World Highway in Yukon with a herd of caribou.

Some destinations fall into the category of Edmund Hillary's famous quote "Because it's there!". Alaska is certainly as far as our wheels will take us and what a magnificent journey up the Alcan Highway, then up the Top of the World Highway through Yukon to the US border near Chicken Alaska. That's as far off the beaten path as you will get! On a side trip to Eagle, we discovered that the route north comes to a complete end - beyond that is only the Arctic tundra and wilderness! Memorable destinations along the Alaskan highways that we loved include Homer and Seldovia on the Kenai Peninsula, Valdez and the Columbia glacier on Prince William Sound.

Food and wine, enhancing the experience:



I have to admit that there is a very strong attraction to certain culinary destinations! Every winter heading south from Virginia, our first night will be either in Savannah, Georgia, or Charleston, South Carolina - both

Left: Harvesting Crawfish in Cajun Country with Andre.

cities have a fine history of cuisine and unique selection of Southern / seafood restaurants suitable for any occasion and budget. Likewise New Orleans with its world famous reputation beckons eagerly as one hugs the Gulf traveling from Florida to Texas. Quebec City, Sedona, Arizona, San Antonio, Texas and Key West, Florida, are worth making a detour to try out regional specialties. Our Cajun Caravan experience was a perfect itinerary to hit the high points of Cajun cuisine!

In parallel with great food, we have put a few wine growing destinations in our trips specifically Paso Robles in California and the Kelowna Valley in British Columbia. There is a fine balance choosing down to earth wine destinations with ease of access and availability of campgrounds versus the Napa style overpriced and RV discouraged locations. Alternatively Harvest Hosts is a wonderful resource for experiencing unique one-on-one hosting and conversations with wine growers, especially the privilege of enjoying an evening in a vineyard after the winery has closed.



Peaceful night in a Mississippi winery thanks to Harvest Hosts.

Finding tranquility:

Finding destinations that allow us just to put life on hold and relax is another way we enjoy Airstream camping. Virginia Highland Haven near Roanoke, Virginia, is an Airstream only park. It's beautifully located on the top of the Blue Ridge Mountains with distant views and relaxed informal and congenial membership. Hatteras on the Outer Banks sends the same relaxing vibes as does St George Island in the Florida panhandle and similarly Pismo Beach, California, where you can take your Airstream and overnight on the beach. Getting as close to nature, distancing yourself from crowds and man-made noise are our priorities!

These are some of the destinations and activities we've enjoyed in our six years of Airstreaming. We hope this will provide inspiration for you to stretch your travel goals and savor every element of our beautiful country.

Margaret & David Broad (WBCCI #2381) from Tappahannock, Virginia, traveling 8 months of the year since July 2016 in their 2015 Flying Cloud 25 RB Nuage Volant. You can email questions or comments to airstream@db26.net Their travel blog is at www.flyingcloud25.blogspot.com and David also publishes an Airstream improvement page at www.facebook.com/airstreamtweaks and created a Gourmet Camping group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gourmetcamping>

2020 RALLY SCHEDULE

APRIL 1 - 5: REGION 3 RALLY - Ocean Lakes Campground, 6001 South Kings Hwy, Myrtle Beach, SC, 877-510-1413. All sites in the H and HH sections are reserved for this rally - make your campground reservations **NOW!** Hosted by Region 3 President John Leake, **CANCELLED!**

APRIL 17 - 19: SPRINGTIME BLUEBELL CAMP (Joint Event), Shenandoah River State Park, 350 Daughter of Stars Drive, Bentonville, VA 22610, 540-622-6840, ShenandoahRiver@dcr.virginia.gov. Hosted by Linda Heuer (#149). **CANCELLED!**

APRIL 24 - 26: BREAKOUT & MAINTENANCE RALLY (Joint Event), Small Country Campground, 4400 Byrd Mill Road, Louisa, VA, 540-967-2431. Hosted by Tom Carmichael (#110). **CANCELLED!**

JUNE 12 - 13: HOUSTONFEST, Cool Breeze Campground, 2330 Edmonds Road, Galax, VA, 276-236-0300, coolbreezecampground.com. This is not an official rally hosted by anyone, it is just a gathering of Airstreamers who enjoy Bluegrass music and are not traveling to the International Rally. Be sure to get your festival tickets in advance via houstonfestgalax.com. **CANCELLED!**

JUNE 20 - 27: INTERNATIONAL RALLY, The Ranch Events Complex, 5280 Arena Circle, Loveland, CO. To register please call BARB LANGSTON at club headquarters, 937-596-5211. **CANCELLED!**

AUGUST 2 - 9: GALAX OLD TIME FIDDLER'S RALLY, Cool Breeze Campground, 2330 Edmonds Road, Galax, VA, 276-236-0300, coolbreezecampground.com. Hosted by Region 3, region3airstreamclub.net. Details and fees are available on the region website. Simply make a reservation with the campground, tell them you are with the Airstream group and all other business can be conducted upon arrival at the rally. **CANCELLED!**

AUGUST 13 - 16: VIRGINIA AIRSTREAM CLUB BUSINESS RALLY, Elkins, WV. Further details are forthcoming. Hosted by Jeff Cutright, # 31189 (#109). **CANCELLED!**

SEPTEMBER 11 - 13: COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA RALLY, Small Country Campground, 4400 Byrd Mill Road, Louisa, VA. Hosted by the Tidewater Airstream Club (#111). **CANCELLED!**

SEPTEMBER 21 - 25: CARAVAN TO SWISS FESTIVAL NATIONAL RALLY, details TBD. Led by Douglas Powell, # 9900 (#109). **CANCELLED!**

SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 4: SWISS FESTIVAL NATIONAL RALLY, 2800 Winklepleck Rd NW, Sugarcreek, OH. Directions on how to make a reservation will follow. **CANCELLED!**

NOVEMBER 5 - 8: SILVER ON THE STREETS RALLY, Abingdon, VA. Details are still being planned and will be published at a future date. Hosted by Jeff Cutright, # 31189 (#109).

DECEMBER 5: HOLIDAY LUNCHEON. This is an event traditionally hosted by the new President. It's details will be determined after elections to be held at the business meeting in August. Hosted by the President (#109).

While we are hopeful that the last two remaining club events scheduled for 2020 will be held, all we can do is wait and see how the pandemic situation develops. Let's take an optimistic attitude and plan to meet in Abingdon in November!

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We are extremely happy to welcome our new members and look forward to meeting them all at upcoming club activities scheduled during 2020.

Katie Fletcher & Lydia Smith

WBAC # 23231
Richmond, VA 23221

Cary Campbell & Alice McCabe

WBAC # 15002
Montpelier, VA 23192

Greg Moore

WBAC # 22991
Fredericksburg, VA 22406

Members are encouraged to watch for all these new folks at our gatherings and be sure to make them feel welcome and at-home within our club.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

JULY

- 20 Tom Stutts
- 21 Randy Rinehart
- 26 Doug Doberer
- 27 Gary & Lynn Brink
- 29 Lynn Brink

AUGUST

- 24 John Sibley
- 26 Junior Patton

SEPTEMBER

- 01 Frank & Norma Bobbitt
- 28 Linton Leary

REMEMBER: Because of concern for maintaining security of member contact information, no telephone numbers or email addresses appear in this publication. To contact any officer or fellow club member, simply consult the current BLUE BERET MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY for the needed email address. Thank you!

VIRGINIA CLUB OFFICERS

JEFF CUTRIGHT - #31189	President and Webmaster
CHRISTOPHER MECCIA - #5625	2nd Vice President
XAN RINEHART - #4546	Treasurer
KAY LAMBERT - #6095	Recording Sec.
RANDY RINEHART - #4546	Past President
D.A. POWELL - #9900	Trustee (1-Year)
DAVID BROAD - #2381	Trustee (1-Year)
DANIEL LOCKLAIR - #5249	Trustee (2-Years)
JEFF CUTRIGHT - #31189	Rally Chairman
DOUGLAS POWELL - #9900	Caravan Chairman
GARY BRINK - #29944	Newsletter Editor



virginia.airstreamclub.net	Virginia Unit Website
region3.airstreamclub.net	Region 3 Website
wbcci.org	WBCCI Website