

NORVA News

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Happy Valentine's Day



Once upon a time in Florida

NORVA President Dick Arnold remembers how it was

When Jane and I started coming to Florida 25 years ago, there were six exclusively Airstream RV parks in the state: three in the east, two along the gulf coast, and one up in the panhandle. Each was different and there were enough Airstreamers to support them. But times changed. Now there is only one Florida RV park that allows in only Airstreams: **Mystic Springs Cove**, in the panhandle town of McDavid, near Pensacola. Operated by the Pensacola Unit of W.B.C.C.I., it is heavily wooded, peaceful, quiet, and close to Pensacola attractions. We enjoy stopping there when we travel along Interstate 10.

As for the other five parks that used to be exclusively Airstream, four now allow in rigs made by other manufacturers and the fifth no longer exists.

Two are on the east (Atlantic) coast. The **Christmas RV Park** (in the town of Christmas) was once owned by a Florida unit of W.B.C.C.I. In the era before cell phones there was a large Airstream Amateur Radio Club which held a rally every winter to bring all the “hams” together. However, about 10 years ago, leadership problems in the unit led to the sale of the park and it became a “regular” RV park, open to all brands.

Forty miles to the south, in Melbourne, is **Land Yacht Harbor**. Jane and I established our Florida “winter quarters” here two years ago when we purchased a 34-foot Excella that is “tied down” (bolted to the ground to prevent damage during summer storms). Airstreams are still dominant at Land Yacht Harbor, but the park allows in other brands for the winter season. Not allowed in—pets! The 300 campsites are set among the palm trees in a location convenient to shopping and many nearby activities.



Flags fly above silver trailers at Mystic Springs Cove, Florida's the sole remaining "Airstream-only" RV park.



Luckily, the snow never falls at Dick's Land Yacht Harbor campsite.

Interestingly, Melbourne in the past had another Airstream park named “**Port-O-Call**.” Once part of a large WWII Navy Base later converted to a municipal airport, Port-O-Call had as many as 400 trailer sites. But about 15 years ago, the airport’s manager objected to the trailers and closed the park.

On Florida’s west (Gulf) coast, **Travelers Rest** in Dade City (north of Tampa) has a lovely golf course, pool, exercise room, library, many active clubs to join and weekly entertainment. But 15 years ago they started admitting all brands of RVs because there were not enough Airstreamers to support the park. Today they have a cabana area, and a section for manufactured homes.

Also on the west coast is the **Paradise Park Condominium Association**. Surrounded by farm land, it is about 25 miles from Punta Gorda near Fort Meyers. This is not a public RV park, but visitors are welcome as guests of property owners on a short term basis. It features a golf course, pool, exercise room, library, and active community program, including volunteer fire department. The park allows Class A motorhomes in addition to Airstream trailers. There are over 300 sites, many with “Florida Rooms” next to the trailers. Jane and I bought a lot at this park about 15 years ago when many NORVA members wintered there, including several who helped create the park out of an orange grove.

Florida remains a great place for Airstreamers to escape the winter cold. But these days, in all but one remaining Florida Airstream RV park, expect to see lots of fiberglass rigs of all shapes and sizes mixed in with the “silver bullets” we know and love.

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Many new Airstreams on display at the Washington RV Show

It's not surprising that most of the exhibit floor space was occupied by Camping World at the Washington RV Show at Dulles Expo Center, Jan. 11-13. The annual show is put on by GSE (Good Sam Enterprises), which is a major part of the Camping World corporate structure. GSE offers services and products connected with the Good Sam Club. As we know, Camping World

owns Airstream of Virginia. That's why there were lots of silver trailers on the Chantilly, Va., exhibit floor, along with other brands of Class A, B, and C rigs from the Camping World dealerships in Ashland, Thornburg, and Manassas. Airstream of Virginia put 17 rigs on display, including 12 Airstream trailers, 2 Interstate vans, 2 Basecamps, and the new Nest trailer.



Above left: At the RV show, Camping World rolled out the carpet for a selection of Airstream trailers, including the "Nest," shown above.

Left: Airstream's Regional Sales Manager Steve Hartman (r.) shows an "Interstate" to an interested couple.

Open for business



Airstream-trained technician, David "D.J." Mastin, introduces himself as a friend and resource

Owner, Broken Rivets RV Service, Inc., Ruther Glen, Va., 804-994-1405, brokenrivetllc@gmail.com

Hello everyone! Some of you know me; some of you don't, so I would like to introduce myself. I am D.J. Mastin, the owner of Broken Rivets RV Service, Inc. Although new to owning a business, I have been working on Airstreams, as well as other brands, for over a decade. Fresh out of high school (graduated on a Friday; started working on Monday), I worked alongside my pop at Penn Mar floor service. I considered him "the best." I know most people say that about their Dad, but his exceptional work was featured in magazines and even on sample boards put out by the manufacturers. The skills and life lessons he taught me were more than just putting down a piece of carpet. Never one to brag on himself, he was fond of saying, "We get these jobs because the other guys wouldn't know where to start."

Years passed, and on Easter Sunday, 2007, I had a life changing experience. Not only did I break my leg, but the flooring company changed ownership and fired everyone. Well, I filed applications everywhere including Safford Dodge. After a quick interview, I started work there in July 2007, when Safford's RV division was selling Airstreams and other RVs as well. But RV sales were really a sideline for the dealership, and sometimes they only sold one or two Airstreams a month. Then in 2010, the company recognized

the value of RV sales and brought in management for the service and parts departments. The advantage to me was that they started doing Recreation Vehicle Dealer Association (RVDA) training. I took the course and became RVDA certified in 2011. In 2012, I finally got the opportunity to train at the Airstream factory and learned how to do metal work on the travel trailers. After training, I worked on them more and more. In 2014, Safford hired a general manager and separated out the Airstream operation. It became Airstream of Virginia and sales started growing. With the growth came new opportunities for training. They sent prep techs (newer technicians whose job was to get units ready for delivery) to Airstream for the official training, but I was overlooked because they thought I had already gone through that course. In October 2016, I finally got to take the full Airstream technician course at Jackson Center.

About this time, Safford leased what had been the Atkinson Truck & Equipment property just south of their RV dealership on I-95, and moved the Airstream operation there. Then, in February 2017, it was announced that Safford's RV dealership and Airstream of Virginia were being sold to Camping World.

After a while, I found it increasingly difficult to deal with what had become

a much larger and less personal work environment. Frankly, there were days I dreaded going to work. It reached the point where my situation at work was stressing my relationship at home with my fiancée, Jessie. It wasn't long before she said, "Either you need to get another job, go into business for yourself, or shut up about it." So, early last year, I gave my two-week notice and completed paperwork to start my own RV maintenance and repair company, Broken Rivets, Inc. Now, I look forward to keeping in touch with everyone in Virginia's Airstream clubs and providing excellent service. I can handle most repairs on Airstreams but, at the moment, the only thing I cannot do is work under the manufacturer's warranty. I hope to get this changed soon.

So, thank you, everyone. Count on me to continue being a good friend to Airstreamers throughout Virginia. In fact, as a part of my commitment to your club, I have agreed to write a periodic "maintenance tips" column for *NORVA News* entitled *Askin' Mastin*. The first of these will appear in the March 2019 issue. Down the road, if you need work done on your RV, I offer you skilled, personal, service with a smile. My goal is to keep your Airstream in great shape so you can enjoy it today and for years to come.

Long-time club member dies

Wales B. Ingram, Jr., a “life” member of NORVA, who also served as a Region 3 officer, died on Nov. 25, 2018, in Richmond, Va. *NORVA News* was notified of his passing in



Wales Ingram

a letter received recently from his daughter, Janis Griggs.

Wales was 96 years old. He was a World War II Navy veteran, a Mason, and engaged in many community and church activities. He was preceded in death by his wife of 69 years, Doris Yarbrough Ingram. The couple often told their family that they loved Airstreaming. Wales considered their active years with the club as “the best years.” Up until the time of his death, he looked forward to receiving and reading every issue of *NORVA News*.

To honor Wales, the club gave a memorial donation to the Lakewood Benevolent Fund and NORVA’s president, Dick Arnold, sent a letter of condolences to the Ingram family.

The Lakewood Retirement Community in Richmond’s West End is where Wales spent his final years.

Register for the April Rally

REGION 3



a huge covered pavilion, easy access, a Camping World on the premises, the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Parkway all around us, and the town of Marion with civilization and supplies nearby.”

“There is no need to make a reservation with the campground because we’ve reserved the whole park,” says Leake, calling the rally a “not-to-miss event, with seminars, food, socials, free time, and fabulous fellowship.”

NORVA’s 2019 rally schedule shows the big, annual, Region 3 Rally will be here before we know it,

“MARK YOUR CALENDER, register now, and join us at the Tom Johnson Rally Park in Marion, N.C., April 24-28,” says John Leake, Region 3’s president.

Leake has used this park for rallies often. It is located along U.S. Route 70 in western North Carolina. He praises the campground’s convenience and robust features, noting it has “280 full hook up sites in rally style parking on flat, level grass, handicap parking, bath house,

The rally fee is \$75 for a couple in a rig; \$40 for a single person. Camping fees are additional and payable directly to the campground. All sites are \$32 per night. Payments are not required now; you pay when you arrive.

At about the same time this issue of *NORVA News* was being prepared for distribution, Region 3’s webmaster and the rally’s registrar launched an easy to use, on-line registration page. If you plan to attend this April rally, you can register now on the Region 3 web site:

<https://region3.wbcci.net/2019-region-3-rally-preregistration/>



Tom Johnson Rally Park

“Wettest Year” causes relocation of March rally

Fort A.P. Hill is out. Venue shifts to American Heritage RV Park in Williamsburg

The location of the March 29-30 Breakout & Maintenance Rally has changed. NORVA originally scheduled the rally to be at the Fort A.P. Hill Campground, near Bowling Green, Va., but it will instead be held in Williamsburg. The dates are the same, and it remains open to members of all four Virginia Airstream clubs.

“We were all set to enjoy Fort A.P. Hill’s newly renovated campground, scheduled to be completed and reopened by mid-February,” explains Carmichael, “but months of wet weather forced an unexpected change.” Relentless rains made 2018 the wettest year on record in the eastern U.S. and officials at Fort A.P. Hill told NORVA last month that this has resulted in extreme ground saturation. The completion of renovation work at the campground has been unavoidably delayed, pushing back its reopening. The contractor must now wait for warmer, drier weather in the spring.

But fear not, Airstreamers are known for being flexible, so Carmichael switched the rally site. It will now be

held at the **American Heritage RV Park** in Williamsburg. “We’ve used this campground many times for rallies and caravans. It has ample campsites available for our use in March, as well as indoor space for our Saturday maintenance seminar,” he says.

With the change comes a reduced rally fee, because campsite costs are no longer included in the fee. Rally participants must now make reservations and pay for their sites directly with the campground. American Heritage is holding a block of full-service sites for Virginia Airstreamers. Expect to pay \$39, plus tax, per night. The phone number is 757-566-2133. Tell the campground you are part of the Airstream group. Their address is 146 Maxton Lane, Williamsburg, located less than a mile off I-64, Exit 231-A. To cover training costs and incidentals, Carmichael is also asking members to pay a rally fee of \$16 per person. If you plan to participate, please fill out the coupon printed below and mail

it with your check, payable to Tom Carmichael, at the address shown on the coupon. Your check must reach him by March 1.

The agenda in Williamsburg includes a pot-luck dinner on Friday night, March 29 (bring set-ups and a dish to share), a maintenance seminar featuring Airstream technician D.J. Mastin on Saturday, a box lunch, and a “Dutch treat” dinner at a nearby restaurant on Saturday night. Time and weather permitting, Mastin will also be available Saturday afternoon to do minor repairs on rigs, charging a discounted price for labor, plus parts.

The rally concludes on Sunday morning with coffee and donuts.



BREAKOUT & MAINTENANCE RALLY

Friday, March 29 through Saturday night, March 30, 2019. Concludes Sunday morning.

NORVA is hosting this rally at the American Heritage RV Park, Williamsburg, Va.

The RALLY FEE is \$16 per person. Does not include the campground fee.

Make your site reservation directly with the campground.

Name(s) _____ Member of which club? _____

WBCCI# _____ Cell phone: _____ E-mail _____ @ _____

Number of people attending: _____ x rally fee of \$16 each = \$ _____ enclosed.

Mail by March 1, 2019, to: Tom Carmichael, Rally Host, 2203 Turtle Hill Circle, Midlothian, VA 23112

Phone: 804-245-1710. Tom’s e-mail address: tomc@sportsimageinc.com

Maybe the play should have been “Snow White”

Winter storm causes cancellation of the “La Cage Aux Folles” Rally

The big storm moved across the country, reaching Virginia on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019. A gentle snow began to fall that afternoon, intensifying as the hours passed. By early Sunday morning, Northern Virginia had about five inches on the ground. Then, throughout the day, it did not let up. From Maryland and D.C. down to Fredericksburg and points south, a total of five to ten inches covered the roads and landscape. It made for a pretty wintry scene, but played havoc with NORVA’s scheduled Sunday afternoon rally at the Riverside Center for the Performing Arts. The Fredericksburg dinner theater was forced to cancel that day’s matinee performance of the musical comedy,

“La Cage Aux Folles,” and the two dozen NORVA members who had signed up for it remained home instead. Rally hosts Larry & Sun Riley phoned everyone on Sunday morning with the bad news. The theater offered a choice of tickets for a future performance or a full refund. The group’s consensus was to take the refund and hope for better weather in January 2020! Looking ahead, NORVA’s next indoor winter event is the Super Bowl Party at the home of Jackson & Mary Ann McBroom in Williamsburg. Following this unexpected January disappointment, everyone is hoping the weather will be more cooperative on the first weekend in February.

Heavy snow blankets Northern Virginia on Jan. 13, 2019.



Jan. 13, 2019 Sun. afternoon <i>Canceled because of snow storm!</i>	“La Cage Aux Folles” Rally Riverside Center Dinner Theater Fredericksburg, Va. Hosts: Larry & Sun Riley	July 20-27 Sat.-Sat.	W.B.C.C.I. International Rally Meadow Event Park, Doswell, Va. Hosts: Int’l Pres. Barry Bell & the four Virginia Airstream Clubs
Feb. 3 Sun. evening	Super Bowl Party Williamsburg, Va. Hosts: The McBrooms	Aug. 4-10 Sun.-Sat.	Old Fiddlers Convention Rally, Galax, Va. Host: Julian Clements, Region 3
March 29-31 Fri.-Sun. *New Location!	Breakout & Maintenance Rally American Heritage RV Park* Williamsburg, Va.. Host: Carmichael (See Page 5)	Sept. 13-15 Fri.- Sun.	Virginia Commonwealth Rally Loop C, Newport News City Park, Va. Hosts: Shenandoah Valley Club
April 24-28 Wed.-Sun.	Region 3 Rally Marion, N.C. Host: R3 Pres. John Leake	Oct. 10-13 Thurs.-Sun.	“Silver in the Street” Urban Rally Main Street, Farmville, Va. Host: Carmichael
May 16-19 Thurs.-Sun.	Almost Heaven Rally Shepherdstown, W.Va. Hosts: Gary & Sue Shepard	Oct. 30-Nov. 3 Thu.-Sun.	Oyster Festival Rally Urbanna, Va. Hosts: Carmichael/Brodsky
June 1-16 16 days	NORVA Airstream Club Caravan “PA-NY Pot Pourri,” U-48-434 Leaders: Gerry & Patsy Nagel	Dec. 7, 2019* Sat. *Tentative	Holiday Get-together Location TBD. Hosts: TBD