

56th
ANNIVERSARY
YEAR!

Chartered in 1964



September/October
2020

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

Thoughts from the President....



Greetings,

Without being political, I long for peace and reconciliation in the USA and around the world. I long for food security in the USA and around the world. I long for a world without the fear of a virus everywhere we go. I

encourage you to donate some of your available travel funds to charities of your choice to help others in the USA or around the world in this time of need.

Most of us have had a very different year as far as trailer use and camping have gone - WBCCI Club 109 is no different. Our Board of Directors thought it best to protect our members by cancelling events in 2020. We have a set of officers in place and are making plans for 2021. I read that one WBCCI club was securing camping spots for 2021 with the hopes of holding organized events, but if that's not possible, just encouraging folks to go and gather as they feel comfortable. Interesting idea....

It's time to think about paying your 2021 dues. The new ACI (Airstream Club International)

website allows for this, as well as by calling the Jackson Center office, or paying to our local club treasurer via mail. You have until the end of the year to make payment and still have your information included in the 2021 membership directory-a welcome change for many. Further details will appear later in this issue.

I want to let the members know that our newsletter editor is retiring. We will miss Gary in this role as he is a very capable editor, always on point with WBCCI deadlines and events. He was always thoughtful and kind in his comments and corrections and, best of all, a friend. Gary, we appreciate your dedication to the club, to the board, and to me.

I would also like to thank D.A. Powell for her years of service on the board, always present and having served in many roles for the club over the years. The bylaws require term limits and D.A. would have gladly served longer, but it's time for a break and also to encourage some others to serve on the board.

Please consider volunteering for a position of leadership within the club. Like many organizations, we now conduct our board meetings via Zoom, so the time commitment for attending meetings is limited to just a few hours per year. If serving on the Board of Directors or being an officer is not your thing, how about just organizing a meeting, a rally or a caravan with

another member? Doing this gives back to your trailering community and you'll meet some great people too. We also need a newsletter editor. Gary has the information organized and would be willing to help you started.

With all the uncertainty caused by the lingering pandemic, next year's rally schedule is not yet solidified, however the following items are definitely planned: As you may already know, the *Abingdon Silver in the Streets Rally* has been postponed until May, 2021. The virus infection rate in that part of Virginia is up and public facilities (mainly bathrooms) remain closed in Abingdon and on the Creeper Trail. Lee and I biked the Creeper Trail this summer and riding that trail with no available restroom facilities would not be adding to the experience.

We're planning a cycling Caravan in the fall of 2021 called *Bike Virginias*. We hope to have a 9-day caravan for biking *The Creeper Trail*, *The New River Trail* and *The Greenbrier Trail*. We'll start in Abingdon, VA, and finish in Lewisburg, WV. We'd appreciate having some volunteer hosts as I'm sure there will be bikers of different levels and bikers traveling with non-bikers. Pump up your tires and we'll see you there!

This year's Holiday Luncheon is planned for *Mrs. Rowe's Family Restaurant* in Staunton, VA, at noon on December 5, 2020. More information will appear in a later edition of the newsletter.

Later in this month's publication, Douglas Powell shares D.A.'s and his Airstreaming history, blended with Club 109's history. Many members will re-live some great past experiences. Also, Greg Wall shares a recent trip he took cross-country on Rt. 50, a trip I'd like to travel again, having lived on a section of Rt. 50 growing up. Be sure to get your toolbox ready after reading David Broad's article on Airstream "tweaks".

I wish you safe travels and good health to you and your families.

Jeff

ASME - LMOA - WBCCI

Courtesy Parking

One of our members has discussed offering courtesy parking. I'd be glad to post this offer and others on our website. I'm curious if there were others who might offer courtesy parking and allow members to park at their homes for a day or two? I know that the generally accepted practice is just for an overnight. My thought is, with the boom in RVing, maybe there is an opportunity for folks to share a spot for a quick, last-minute get away. Personally, we'd be glad to cook or bring a meal for a couple days of different scenery. What do you think?

Jeff

ACI Website

The WBCCI is transiting to a new website platform administered under its other moniker, the ACI (Airstream Club International). Generally, the information is the same but the website is part of the WBCCI organization, so you can pay your dues and find other clubs and their activities in one spot. All activities should be available on the new platform - local, regional and international events. The ACI website links provide contacts, activity descriptions, pictures and directions. I'd encourage you to look at the Club 109 page and the Virginia activity page. Yes, I said Virginia activity page. All activities in Virginia, even clubs outside Virginia holding events in Virginia, will be visible on one page.

Virginia Airstream Club (#109) page:

<https://airstreamclub.org/virginia>

Virginia Airstream Club | ACI

Virginia Airstream Club. The Virginia Airstream Club (VAC) organizes events to give folks opportunity to gather. We're changing and growing and would love to see you.

Virginia activity page:

<https://airstreamclub.org/events?list=1&from=09%2F03%2F2020&to=&type=-1&state=164&club=-1>

Enjoying Our Airstream Life Since 1983

By Douglas Powell
Virginia Airstream Club Past President

I am being appointed again by the president of our Virginia Airstream Club to chair the "Rally and Caravan Committee" for the coming year. As such I will not be planning or scheduling them myself, but I am available using our experience to help club members become event planners and hosts. No volunteers to plan and host - no events, and we have club offices yet unfilled!

Doris Anne and I are currently completing our 37th year of membership in the Virginia Airstream Club #109 (formerly named the Virginia Unit). There are no other active club members still alive from our early days! It is hard to reconstruct how the club operated that long ago. But we have a collection of old Virginia Unit newsletters, and looking through them helps remind us of some of our early events and travels. Permit me to share some of those adventures and locations to hopefully challenge current members to volunteer for leadership responsibilities and to schedule, plan, and host future events and activities.

After we purchased our first Airstream trailer, a used 1969 model, I became aware of WBCCI and wanted to learn something about the organization. So, upon learning of the Virginia Unit, I made a day trip on November 5, 1983, to a weekend rally at **Bethpage Campground** in Urbanna for the Oyster Festival. As a result, I quickly signed Doris Anne and me up as members.

On a cold April 1984 weekend, we attended our first rally at **Oak Hollow Campground** in High Point, N.C. (Our unit returned to this location often in later years as it provided an opportunity to shop at the nearby Out-of-Doors Mart Airstream dealership.)

The Virginia Unit, prior to its chartering in 1964, was a part of the Mid-Atlantic Unit. Then in 1968 the Northern Virginia Unit broke away to form a new unit,

followed by the Tidewater Unit in 1970 and the Shenandoah Valley Unit in 1974. Nevertheless, the unit membership list in 1984 still included 102 Airstream owning individuals and couples!

In those years, except during the winter, we had something scheduled almost every month. There were several members who enjoyed planning meals and cooking, especially breakfasts. The unit owned coffee pots, portable stoves and griddles, many utensils, a PA system, and we used canopies for unseasonable weather if the campgrounds did not have indoor or covered facilities we could use.

As we were still working, we could not attend many of the monthly rallies and trips during the first few years. We often arrived at weekend rallies late on Friday, usually with at least some of our teenaged children, after everyone else had already eaten!

We did attend a rally in June 1984 at the former **Swan Lake KOA** near Danville, and another in August at **Cozy Acres Campground** in Powhatan County. By then, Doris Anne had already been elected as a director and was installed at our Installation Rally at the **Salem Civic Center** in September.

At a July 1985 rally, again held at High Point, I was elected as the Virginia Unit's 2nd VP for the upcoming 1985-86 year. The 2nd VP's job was basically just watching and learning for a year in preparation for more responsibility in future years. In that same summer we also joined two other Virginia Unit couples for a trip to Jackson Center, Ohio, where the Airstream company hosted a non-WBCCI "Homecoming Rally" at the factory (an event no longer held).

August saw us among 22 Airstreams at a unit rally at **Camp Alta Mons**, a church camp with camping facilities located near Shawsville, and a site we would frequently use in the future. Then I was installed as the unit 2nd VP in September at the **Natural Chimneys Park** at Mount Solon in the Shenandoah Valley. The November rally that year was held at the **Fair Oaks Campground** at the pottery near Williamsburg, another popular location that no longer exists.

The first unit rally of 1986 was held in April at Buena Vista's **Glen Maury Park**. Then the annual Virginia State Rally, (still hosted by one of the four units in Virginia on a rotating basis), was hosted by our Virginia Unit in May and held back at Cozy Acres. In June we returned to High Point, but had to skip the July rally. Then we were back at Camp Alta Mons in August, and at Natural Chimneys in October, where I was installed as the 1st VP for the 1986-87 year.

Not yet retired, we were unable to attend the more distant Region 3 Rally, or the International Rally that year, or the September unit caravan to the very popular Swiss Festival National Rally at Sugarcreek, Ohio. But it was back to Williamsburg in November.

As was the usual practice, being the 1st VP that year I worked on finding hosts and rally sites for 1988, with locations and dates that would fit my future schedule, assuming that I would be the unit president then.

The 1987 camping season began with a rally at **Smith Mountain Lake State Park**. The Region 3 Rally was at Ocean Lakes Campground in Myrtle Beach in May, and the Shenandoah Valley Unit hosted the All Virginia (now known as the Commonwealth) Rally back at Williamsburg. Then we had a rally at **Hagen-Stone Park** near Greensboro in June, and in July we rallied at the **Battle of Cedar Creek Campground** at Middletown for the "Shenandoah Valley Farm Craft Days."

In August 1987 a unit rally was held at **Virginia Highland Haven Airstream Park** at Copper Hill in Floyd County, a park that some members of the Virginia Unit had built after buying a mountain top farm and creating a corporation in 1970. Doris Anne and I purchased a share of stock in the corporation that owns the park before leaving that weekend, providing us an assigned site to use there each summer for the last 33 years!

I began my first term as Virginia Unit president in September 1987 after being installed at our unit rally at the Fireman's Training Grounds in South Boston (near our Halifax home). Next, we attended my first rally as president in October at Swan Lake KOA for the "Danville Harvest Festival," where we had 21

Airstreams camping, plus several members for the day. We even had the WBCCI International President and First Lady, Don and Mary Anderson, in attendance for the weekend. How is that for a way to begin my term! In November, we were back in Urbanna for the Oyster Festival.

The 1988 season began with a return to High Point in April, followed by the Region 3 Rally in Myrtle Beach in early May. Later that month the Tidewater Virginia Unit hosted the annual Virginia State (now Commonwealth) Rally in Williamsburg. Then in early June we were at the **Davis Lakes Campground** in Suffolk for the "Seawall Festival" in Portsmouth.

We felt it was important enough for me as the unit president to take two weeks of vacation that summer to represent our unit at the International Rally, being held in **Huntsville, Alabama**. Lots of our unit members also attended and many of us traveled there in a caravan. I also felt it to be my responsibility while there to plan unit social hours, meals, and day trips, including one to the Jack Daniels distillery. In spite of the Alabama heat and red dust, we had a ball, and our unit even won the 3rd place trophy for walking entries in the parade.

Upon our return home in July we had a very hot unit rally at **Occoneechee State Park** in Clarksville during that town's "Lakefest." In August we began what became a Virginia Unit annual tradition, as we rallied to attend the "Old Fiddler's Convention" at unit member Jake Mink's automobile dealership parking lot in Galax. (That continued for a few years, with the annual rally then moving to the Fairview Ruritan Club for 13 years as a "Special Events Rally," before it ended up at the new **Cool Breeze Campground** as a Region 3 hosted event.)

The 1988 rally for the installation of unit officers was held in September back at Camp Alta Mons. In October we had a unit rally at **Paradise Lake Campground**, near Appomattox, for that town's annual "Historic Railroad Festival." Camping ended for the year with another rally back at Williamsburg.

In those days we did not have a web site, e-mail, or Facebook, and no newsletter editor. The president and first lady/mate (who usually was also the corresponding secretary) wrote the monthly newsletter, printed copies, stapled the pages, folded, addressed and stamped hard copies sent to each of the over one hundred members! Hosts for the next upcoming rally or caravan, after making campground and restaurant/caterer reservations, provided details on such things as the location, activity schedule, rally fee requirements, meal plans, and a coupon to be mailed to the hosts for registering, details that were added to the newsletter for the month prior to the rally.

In the years that followed 1988, Doris Anne and I served in about every unit office. I became unit president two more times, and Doris Anne once in 1996-97. We even hosted a unit rally at our home in 1995 as well as the annual December Christmas party in 1997. Meanwhile, I also served multiple years on the Board at Virginia Highland Haven Airstream Park and as its president twice.

We organized and led a 17-Airstream 4-day caravan to the International Rally at Burlington, Vermont, in 2003. We led a caravan via Pennsylvania to the "Swiss Festival Rally" in Sugarcreek, Ohio, another year. And after two years of planning, we once led a unit caravan with many stops that carried us from the Roanoke River headwaters in SW Virginia to the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. Others included past short caravans to Region 3 rallies in North and South Carolina.

We have attended many of the annual Region 3 rallies from Florida to Virginia, one of the earlier "Alumapalooza" Rallies at the factory, and in addition to the ones in 1988 and 2003, we traveled to the International Rallies at Perry, Georgia in 2007, Farmington, New Mexico in 2015, Lewisburg, West Virginia in 2016, and Doswell, Virginia in 2019. In 2018 we joined the "Bourbon in the Blue Grass" national caravan in Kentucky; our first one.

We recall many other favorite sites we have visited for club rallies, including the Virginia state parks of **Natural**

Tunnel, Staunton River, Grayson Highlands, Westmoreland, Hungry Mother, Douthat, First Landing, and the Breaks Interstate State Park. Two of my favorite state parks we have visited during our travels out of Virginia are **Pipestem State Park** in West Virginia, **Fort McAllister State Park** south of Savannah, Georgia, and **Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park** west of Birmingham, Alabama.

Other favorite high quality campgrounds we always enjoy include the **Jessie Lea RV Park** in Big Stone Gap, the **Holiday Trav-L-Park** in Virginia Beach, the **Shenandoah Valley Campground** at Verona, and the Corps of Engineers **North Bend Park Campground** at the Kerr Dam near Boydton.

Club members, Steve and Kay Lambert, have set an example for others by organizing exciting trips with multiple stops at sites in far SW Virginia, and over the borders into Kentucky and Tennessee, as well as multiple trips to West Virginia.

Club events were not the only use we have made with our Airstream. We have visited Airstream parks in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, and several in Florida. For years we tailgated for the weekends at Virginia Tech home football games and took the Airstream to bowl games in New Orleans and Jacksonville. We spent many weeks during some recent winters all over Florida, once traveled the Gulf coast from New Orleans to the Everglades and Key West, and have toured the Atlantic coast as far north as Bar Harbor, Maine. We visited the Texas Hill Country, the Grand Cannon, Monument Valley, and the five national parks in southern Utah while on the Farmington International Rally trip.

We learned many years ago that one gets out of an organization according to what is put into it. And Airstreaming has been a major part of our lives. Let me help you plan and host a Virginia Airstream Club event! There are many good locations in and around Virginia that we have yet to use.

Douglas

Route 50, The Loneliest Road

Martha was scheduled to hike the El Camino Trail in Spain with some girl friends, so I booked a guided trip down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River in Idaho July 17-22. Not wanting to fly at this stage of Covid-19, I decided to take the Airstream. Martha's trip was cancelled, and she didn't want to make a big trip across the country during this Covid crisis. I felt pretty safe carrying my own bed, kitchen and bathroom.

As I studied different routes, I came upon this article about "The Loneliest Road" <https://www.roadtripusa.com/the-loneliest-road/>. I had driven this road across Nevada and Oregon in 2017, so I was familiar with it. Aptly named for this stretch of highway, I found it quite interesting and beautiful in its own way. You'd best fill up with gas, as there is nothing on this stretch of road. Running 400 miles across Nevada, an anonymous AAA counselor is quoted in a 1986 Life Magazine article: "We warn all motorists not to drive there, unless they're confident in their survival skills." <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/destinations/north-america/united-states/nevada/pictures-loneliest-road-america-route-50/> My goal on this trip was to travel Rt. 50 from St. Louis, Missouri to Ely, Nevada, then take 93 north to Stanley, Idaho.



A view from Rt. 50 in Nevada

Interstates are OK, but I am always looking for alternate routes where I can relax and enjoy the scenery, stop at interesting spots and see where

America lives. I-64 is generally a pleasant road to travel, so I didn't pick up Rt. 50 until St. Louis. From here, the road generally parallels I-70, but 50 miles south of it. After a long, hard day getting to St. Louis, I could feel the body and mind relax as I turned onto Rt. 50. It's hardly a lonely road in Missouri, but it takes you back 50 years when driving was more fun. There was very little traffic, and the farmland scenery was beautiful. Mostly it is four lanes with speed limits of 65mph.



A typical Rt. 50 Missouri road.

US Route 50 travels just over 3,000 miles across the center of the country. Built in 1926, it goes from Ocean City, Maryland to Sacramento, California, following several auto trails: the Lincoln Highway, the Midland Trail and the National Old Trails Road, a 1912 trail from Baltimore to LA. Time Magazine devoted an entire issue to Rt. 50, calling it the Backbone of America. Least Heat Moon wrote in "Blue Highways", "For the unhurried, this little-known highway is the best national road across the middle of the United States." In different sections, it follows the Osage Trail, Lewis and Clark Trail and the Santa Fe Trail.



One of many small towns along Rt. 50.

I found it to be a drive across the Heartland, passing through quaint, little towns. I wanted to stop and browse shops or have lunch in a diner, but I needed to press on. Even in retirement, you have to budget your time. With national parks and monuments along the way, I prioritized those, but when I drive this road again, I will take more time. On the Osage Trail, I went for a hike to Clark Hill, overlooking the Missouri River where Clark (Lewis and Clark expedition) climbed to get a look at the surroundings.

Driving through little towns added to the interest of the road until I got to Pueblo, Colorado at rush hour, but once on the other side, the Rockies rose in the distance. From here, the road is rich in scenery, following the beautiful Arkansas River through the mountains.



Arkansas River

Although this is a popular area, there are many campgrounds along the way.

I visited two National Parks and one National Monument. Covid-19 may have slowed travel in airplanes and people staying in hotels, but plenty were camping. All campgrounds in and around Arches and Canyonlands were full.



Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park



Colorado National Monument for three days, camping on the mountain.

Capital Reef National Park was so cool, I spent four days and could have stayed longer. I stayed at Sand Creek RV in Torrey, Utah.



Beautiful Cathedral Valley in Capital Reef National Park

I totally enjoyed “The Loneliest Road” that is not lonely except in Nevada. It mostly avoids two major cities, St. Louis and Kansas City. There is a lot to discover and explore. For historians, it offers a lot. For those wanting to see Middle America, this is it. I just enjoyed peaceful, relaxed driving with the windows down and the music on. Now I want to drive the parts I missed in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia. I have driven it across Maryland, where it is quite pretty.

Places to camp: <https://thedyrt.com/magazine/local/camp-along-route-50/>

1. Corps of Engineers Cheney Reservoir campground west of Wichita, Kansas(there are five)
2. Archway RV Park, Mt. Vernon, IL
3. Saddlehorn Campground, Colorado National Monument (don't go in the south entrance)
4. Curecanti National Recreation Area (lots of campgrounds)
5. Sand Creek RV in Torrey, Utah for Capital Reef National Park, but park campground is great. It was full on my trip.

National Parks on or very near Rt. 50: <https://www.nps.gov/state/ks/index.htm>

1. Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve
2. Fort Larned National Historic Site
3. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
4. Curecanti National Recreation Area (lots of campgrounds)
5. Black Canyon of The Gunnison National Park
6. Colorado National Monument
7. Capital Reef National Park
8. Arches National Park
9. Canyonlands National Park
10. McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area
11. Great Basin National Park

Maps: <https://www.roadtripusa.com/the-loneliest-road/>

The coolest place I missed: **Goblin Valley State Park, Utah!** Rest assured that it occupies a spot on my bucket list for a future journey westward!

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Text and photographs by
GREG WALL
WBAC # 7351

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

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

Mike & Kaki Cachine
WBAC # 2636
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

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

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

SEPTEMBER

- 01 Frank & Norma Bobbitt
- 28 Linton Leary

OCTOBER

- 04 Lee Cutright
- 07 Douglas & D.A. Powell
- 29 Karen Barnard
- 29 Sam & Karen Barnard



NOVEMBER

- 08 Douglas Powell
- 16 Xan Rinehart
- 28 Tom & Edith Stutts



DECEMBER

- 25 Norma Bobbitt

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!

Best low-cost Airstream modifications

I've been a tinkerer all my life starting as an 11 year old at boarding school, making balsa model airplanes, canvas covered kayaks, tube powered AM pirate radio stations, just the sort of thing bored school kids get into! That didn't stop when we bought our first boat, a 30 ft Iroquois catamaran which needed extensive renovation and enhancements. After we moved to Virginia we bought an S2 sailboat and put it into charter service and made loads of improvements. Needless to say when we gave up sailing and started Airstreaming it was an irresistible lure to improve our travel-trailer!

We discovered Airstreams in Florida while we were making an east coast trip visiting multiple Grand Banks trawlers for sale which was our intended post retirement travel lifestyle. Within two months we were hooked and bought our 2015 25 ft Flying Cloud RB new from Patrick at Colonial Airstream in New Jersey in a whirlwind of excitement and anticipation to start our new life on the road!

With sail or power boats out of our lives, my tinkering skills turned to the Airstream - little did the Flying Cloud know what was in store for it! Over the six years we have made over a hundred modifications or tweaks to our Airstream rig and these are documented and indexed - check the link at the end of this article. In a previous article we worked through a dozen projects considered to be most useful enhancements to our Airstream life and some of these were quite expensive. For this article I've selected a dozen or so projects that actually cost very little or nothing and I'm thinking you would probably get change from a \$20 bill. One guideline we have always kept in mind is not to make any modification that would adversely affect the resale value of our rig.

Most of these tweaks use materials – wood, plastics, plexiglass, stainless steel bar and sheet - left over from various past projects. Our kitchen remodeling in light oak left us with a vast amount of solid oak and oak faced plywood with a finish that is very similar to the Airstream factory installed bleached wood trim. Additionally some basic electrical, woodworking and metalwork skills along with adequate tools are needed to accomplish some aspects of these projects.

For the sake of clarity and reference the #numbers roughly correspond to the sequence of implementation but more importantly are used throughout the index

and on the FaceBook page AirstreamTweaks. There are additional notes, comments and detailed photos on the FaceBook posts.

#04: To avoid clutter of shampoo, shower gel bottles and dispensers inside the shower we built a plexiglass holder (approx 9" long, 4" high and 2" width) to hold about 5 travel size dispenser plastic bottles.



We bolted the bottle holder to a foot long section of aluminum channel (3/4" wide by 1/2" deep) which fits exactly over the top of the shower door. We used plexiglass off-cuts and a little plexiglass glue solvent to assemble!



#06: Trash bin that don't use up valuable space! Not all Airstreams may have this wasted space opportunity but our FC25 bathroom has a 9" wide by 6" deep space between the bathroom vanity and the door. We cut a 24" high by 9" wide front panel with an internal shelf that supports a plywood tube that holds a plastic trash bag - it has enough capacity to last a couple of weeks.

#13: Unused space in the bottom rear of the main closet makes a useful location to build a bottle (mostly wine) rack. We added a central divider to prevent bottles crashing around under acceleration or braking. This unit is built in seven pieces without any fastenings or glue and slots together in situ since closet door width is narrower than the full width of the rack in the closet.



#15: Freezer organizer trays from Target make keeping toiletries easier to control. His and Her set! They store nicely on the shelf in the bathroom and don't leap out under way. When you get to your destination they can be brought down to the counter for easy access. You may have to trim one side of the tray so that it will fit on the shelf and allow for the curvature in the wall of the Airstream.



can be stored without draining and spilling into your storage compartments just by connecting the hose back to itself. These connectors do not mix well between brands so go with one source.

#55: Best thing since sliced bread! My Chinese stove top toaster, no moving parts, speedy startup and toasting, controllable roasting levels, can do two slices side by side all for \$16.



We enjoy the toaster most mornings but it does have a tendency to test the smoke alarm!



#17: Simple way to provide a small bedside table when your side of the bed (happens to be my wife's side!) only has drawers. This oak shelf is made from 1/2" board for the base and 3/4" board for the cross

pieces and sits on and slides on the sides of the drawer. Added benefit it does not have to be removed when the drawer is closed. You can make it wider, this one is 4 inches wide, enough for the essentials of life - a cup of coffee and your iBook, iPad or phone.



5 7 : Decided once and for all to remove the risk of accidentally running down the batteries by removing the two

external storage compartment lights. I can count on two hands how many times I've discovered that these lights have accidentally turned themselves on by having items move around in the compartments in travel or items brush across the exposed slide switch while storing or unloading. In daylight you can't tell they are on! At night a glow from under the settee gives you a clue! So I just removed the lamp units - you can't remove the LED bulb as it's built in - and cut the wires as close to the connector, electrical taped both ends, and pushed them back between the hulls. I'm pretty sure we can retrieve them one day if we change our minds!

#33: Installed a small digital voltmeter on the underneath of the overhead cabinet above the dinette. Now we can monitor our solar charged batteries at a glance! We made a connection from the 12 volt supply to the LED light.



#38: Love these hose quick disconnects for speedy hookup and tear down - just push the connector in and ready to go. You still need to do the faucet and AS hoses but "Y" hose splitters and water filters are just a click away. The second advantage is hoses



#61: Frustration with under the sink storage pushed me to reconsider how we stored medium and large paper plates! Designed two plate holder racks that are mounted inside the curved doors and offer immediate and easy access to both plate sizes. As the cabinet door closes, the racks do encroach a few inches

on the shelf space but it's a worthy trade for the convenience! Built with 1/4" and 3/4" oak board. Uses the Kreg pocket hole system to attach to door.



#93: Headphone hooks for his and her headphone storage. Cross-laminated two pieces of 3/4" oak and used a hole saw to drill the main circle, then a band saw to cut the access slot. Easy reach from bed, safe go-to storage location and can be charged by USB cable in situ.



#70: Decided to upgrade the wire pantry shelf baskets and insert a thin plexiglass bottom sheet to avoid scuffing and scraping of the wire baskets. Cut some 3/32" plexiglass into 21" x 3-7/16" sheets that just drop right in to the base of the wire basket. Cut a few extras sheets for replacements down

the road. Also ordered an additional basket from Out-of-Doors Mart to add to the slide-out pantry levels giving us five levels of baskets total and decided to store the taller awkward items elsewhere thereby making better storage density use of the restricted shelf height clearance.

#71: I don't know why we have tolerated this basic bathroom mirror for three years! I guess there were other higher priorities! Recently I acquired a great collection of hardwoods so I ripped some black walnut and made a frame that would optimally use up the 20" x 14" wall space above the bathroom sink. Used recessed key hole hangers but also opted for a small central white polyester block (virtually invisible!) along the top edge of the frame to prevent Louisiana I-10 shake rattle and jump off the wall action!



#104: Furnace failures seem to occur almost annually and the predominant reason is mud daubers building their mud nest in the unit. The mud daubers are a long slender wasp about a half to one inch in length. As part of the annual maintenance my Airstream guru technician DJ Mastin of Broken Rivets fitted a spring retainer stainless wire screen (mesh about 3/32") over the furnace air intake/exhaust which should give us a better chance to prevent another tedious mud dauber reoccurrence.



#105: Breakaway coiled cable - Another great suggestion from my Airstream guru service guy DJ Mastin of Broken Rivets RV in Ashland VA who replaced my factory installed single 4 ft wire with this nifty coiled breakaway cable. Until now I had taken the long wire from the switch through the last link of a stainless steel chain hanging from the RAM's chassis, and returned it to a carabiner clip on the breakaway switch. This makes the hookup / unhook operation pretty easy and avoids untidy wire storage issues when not in use.



#88: Water heater 12 volt LED's - It's important to be able to tell with a casual glance whether a device is on or off. Similarly I like being visually alerted if a device is on when it shouldn't be! Used red LED for electric

water heater and blue LED for propane water heater.

#108: Upgraded my propane tank locking system to use a standard Master long loop padlock. Drilled a 3/8" hole through both the securing strap and the lock down wing nut to provide a secure and relatively difficult to circumvent theft protection arrangement.





#113: Plexiglass panel in screen door - some time back I removed the aluminum grills that protect the mesh on the screen door. This time we decided to replace the ugly solid aluminum door panel with plexiglass to give more light and improve the view. Installed two 1" wide x

1/8" aluminum strips to create a sturdy channel for the plexiglass panel. Polished the strips with tripoli polish on the buffer. Eventually the plastic slider panel will be replaced for complete transparency! Note if you are a dog owner I would definitely keep the lower internal screen door grills in place!

Hopefully these tweaks will start you thinking along the lines of how you can improve the comfort and efficiency of living in your rig without breaking the bank. Check out the full index of Airstream modifications at www.db26.net/airstream/201800-tweaks-cat.htm

Text and photos by 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. We belong to the Virginia Airstream Club #109 and are affiliated with Club Airstream Quebec #125 and with the South Eastern Camping Unit #010. You can email questions or comments to airstream@db26.net Our travel blog is at www.flyingcloud25.blogspot.com and David also publishes an Airstream improvement page at www.facebook.com/airstreamtweaks and for fun created a Gourmet Camping group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gourmetcamping>



Thoughts from the Editor....



My faithful muse, proof-reader, critic, cook & bottle washer and I have served as editor of **THE VIRGINIA TRAVELER** for a cumulative total of over 4-1/2 years now. While we have totally enjoyed satisfying our self-imposed commitment to the

members of the Virginia Airstream Club, we feel that it is time for us to move on to other endeavors - mainly relaxation, travel and the quest to cross off long-neglected items on our bucket lists. Actually, the main reason is that we think a new perspective for the editorship of the club newsletter might be very healthy for the VAC. We have truly been blessed with over 42 years of Airstream ownership, membership in our beloved trailering club and travel to distant places and events we never would have thought to visit had it not been for the WBAC. I'm not waxing nostalgic - we still have plenty of trips on the planning board that we intend to enjoy, if the good Lord so wills it. I suppose I'm just rambling on in the hope of encouraging others to seek the decades of joy that Lynn and I have found in the Airstream club. Douglas Powell has addressed similar sentiments in his article that appears earlier in this issue. The Brink family purchased their first Airstream in 1978 and joined the WBAC (by accident) early the following year. Since then, we have been the newsletter editors and I progressed through the officer ranks to President of two different clubs in two different regions. Becoming active in your local club is the secret to your enjoyment of the WBAC. Participating in and helping to administer club activities not only gets you involved with other members on a personal level, it stimulates the feeling of community within the membership. Participation, involvement and commitment - those are the keystones to your enjoyment in the WBAC!

I would like to challenge another member to assume the task of editor - I will be happy to share my meager knowledge of this task with you! Don't be intimidated! The newsletter can take the form of whatever the editor feels is appropriate to his/her comfort zone and abilities. It can be as simple as a

letter! Remember, the purpose of the publication is to disseminate news - the format is not important! Think about it.....



Finally, I'd be remiss if I failed to thank all the members who, over the years, have contributed articles to share with you in the newsletter. They are the folks who make the publication interesting! Special thanks go to Douglas, David and Greg for their efforts that appear in this issue. I'm sure they will continue to share their experiences and expertise with whomever is the next editor.

Gary Brink

2021 DUES ARE PAYABLE NOW



2021 Dues are due no later than December 31, 2020, to insure that you are included in the 2021 WBAC Directory and that you also protect your membership number.

Dues are as follows:

- Life Members: \$15.00 Unit Dues
- Yearly Members Renewal: \$90.00 (\$75.00 Intl, \$15.00 Unit)

You may pay by one of the following methods:

- Online renewal thru airstreamclub.org. Payment to be paid thru **PAYPAL**
- By Phone..**Pay by Credit Card; Call Barb Langston 1-937-596-5211 (WBAC)**
- By "snail" mail: **Pay by personal check. Include your membership # and VA Unit 109. Mail to:**

**Wally Byam Caravan Club International
PO Box 612
Jackson Center, Ohio 45334
ATTN: Barb Langston**

Please do not send any payment directly to the Virginia Airstream Club Treasurer.

If you have made any changes to your address or telephone number, please e-mail them to me at xanrinehart@gmail.com.

Thank you,
XAN RINEHART
Treasurer, Virginia Airstream Club



2020-2021 OFFICERS

JEFF CUTRIGHT - #31189	President
CHRISTOPHER MECCIA - #5625	1st Vice President
Open	2nd Vice President
XAN RINEHART - #4546	Treasurer
KAY LAMBERT - #6095	Recording Sec.
RANDY RINEHART - #4546	Past President
DAVID BROAD - #2381	Trustee (1-Year)
DANIEL LOCKLAIR - #5249	Trustee (1-Year)
DOUGLAS POWELL - #9900	Trustee (2-Years)
JOHN PEZZOLI - #6750	Trustee (2-Years)

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

RANDY RINEHART - #4546	Membership
DOUGLAS POWELL - #9900	Rallies & Caravans
Open	Newsletter
JEFF CUTRIGHT - #31189	Webmaster

airstreamclub.org/virginia	Virginia Unit Website
airstreamclub.org/region3	Region 3 Website
airstreamclub.org	WBAC Website

