

NORVA News

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October 2018

NORVA's new president and first mate are on the road. They've—

“Gone to Texas” but they're with NORVA in spirit

A message from President Dick Arnold

As I write this message, my first as NORVA's next president, it is mid-September and Jane and I are on the road. We are headed westward to join the “Gone to Texas” Caravan. This terrific national caravan in the Lone Star State is offered by W.B.C.C.I every two years. We signed up a year in advance to participate in 2018, not suspecting we would be inducted as Club president and first mate as the caravan launched. If not for this travel commitment, we would have been at the Virginia Commonwealth Rally. We truly regret not being able to join our fellow NORVA members and the good people from the three other Virginia units in Virginia Beach. It's my own fault, I guess. A few months ago, when Lloyd Ulrich asked me to consider running for Club president again (it would be my second time in this wonderful job), I said, “Yes, glad to help NORVA,” (although Jane and I had some concerns about following on the heels of the superb leadership example set by Ed and Beth Jones!) Then came the election and here we are. I asked First Vice President Edgar Simmons if he thought I would be missed at the September installation ceremony. I should have anticipated his reply: “No way!” Thanks, Edgar...as the late Rodney Dangerfield used to say, “I get NO RESPECT!” By the way, speaking of respect, I miss Lloyd and Elaine Ulrich. We traveled many roads with them and they did so much to keep NORVA going. I know we all wish them good health and many more happy things

Dick & Jane Arnold at the banquet ending the “New York State of Mind” caravan.



in life as they continue to enjoy retirement after selling their Airstream trailer.

In September Jane and I hitched up our trailer and left Virginia, Texas-bound, ahead of the nasty “Florence.” I am writing this during a stop at one of our favorite Airstream dealerships – Bill Thomas Camper Sales in Wentzville, Mo., near St. Louis. There are a couple of issues with our rig that Bill's friendly service department has agreed to look at. Hopefully, we will be on our way again soon.

We've been on the road a lot. In August, we were on the “New York State of Mind” caravan, even though we hadn't signed up for it. They had a cancellation at the last minute, and nobody on their waiting list was able to go on such short notice. NORVA members Jane and Kevin Quinn were on that caravan and notified NORVA about the open slot. So Jane and I looked at the calendar, saw that we did not have any doctor appointments scheduled, and off we went! (As fate would have it, Kevin and Jane had to abort their participation when a tree crashed through the roof of their house in Culpeper. We pray that they and their home make a speedy recovery!)

Some of the places we visited in August with the New York folks will also be stops on NORVA's 2019 Club Caravan, scheduled for June 1-16, 2019. Patsy and Jerry Nagel will be leading it, and they plan to take us to significant sites in Pennsylvania and New York. They are

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New officers inducted for all four Virginia Airstream Clubs

Commonwealth Rally in Virginia Beach precedes start of new terms

Members of all four W.B.C.C.I. Airstream clubs in Virginia (Tidewater, Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and Northern Virginia) attended the Commonwealth Rally, hosted this year by NORVA, at the Holiday Travel-Park in Virginia Beach. The main purpose of this annual gathering was to induct newly elected officers and directors for the clubs. They will serve from Oct. 1, 2018, to Sept. 30, 2019. (NORVA's incoming officers are pictured in the sidebar column on this page.)

On hand to welcome, and thank the new officers for taking on leadership roles was Region 3 President John Leake who, with his wife Susan, braved the aftermath of Hurricane Florence to drive his rig to Virginia from their home in York, S.C.

The rally kicked off Friday evening with a pot luck dinner in the

campground's meeting room. As is the case with most Airstream pot lucks, there was an abundance of delicious food. Dishes to share were brought by everyone, which NORVA supplemented with trays of pulled pork and chicken wings.

Following the meal, John Leake took the floor to share delightful and wise musings about growing old, enjoying life, and what it means to be an active member of the Airstream Club. He encouraged those present to take on more responsibilities in their respective clubs and to make Airstream activities even more appealing and vital to members, especially new, younger members. "You don't need special skills to be a Club leader or to make rallies and club membership fun. And you don't have to be an officer, although it helps if you are. If you don't

(Continues on Page 3)



Induction photos (above, l. to r.): Region 3 President John Leake gives new badges to NORVA officers Edgar Simmons, Gerry Nagel, Patsy Nagel, Kathy Simmons, and (at right) Lew Brodsky.
Below: John Leake and First Mate, Susan.
Below right: Sun Riley and the Riley service dog, "Eureka."



NORVA Officers

One-year terms begin Oct. 1, 2018

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("New Officers - cont. from previous page.)

believe you can organize and host a rally, think again. You have been putting together similar activities forever, you just didn't call them 'rallies'; they were birthday and anniversary parties, Christmas dinners, family vacations, and other get-togethers you planned throughout your lives," he said.

Leake lamented that a few of the clubs in Region 3 are struggling to stay afloat because they can't find enough members to serve in leadership positions. Two clubs have recently folded and he cautioned that many are not keeping pace with the times. "We have a younger demographic coming into our clubs and we need to work harder to embrace change, think differently, and appeal to the needs of today's Airstream buyers. If we don't have new blood coming into the club pipeline, eventually the pipeline dries up," he said.

"Everybody should contribute," Leake emphasized. "Make your rallies fun. Don't be afraid to serve as a leader. Sure, the road ahead may not always be smooth, but with the support of fellow Club members, it will smooth out for you." He implored everyone, "Trust your officers and support them. If you disagree with a direction they want to take the Club, **tell them, and**

work it out."

Breakfast on Saturday morning, was sponsored by Virginia Club with coffee prepared by Tidewater, then the new officers were formally recognized by John Leake. NORVA officers given new badges—not all were present because many were away on National caravans—were Edgar & Kathy Simmons, Gerry & Patsy Nagel, and Lew Brodsky. Other NORVA members attending the rally were Ann Newman, Darla Thoman, Cathy Brodsky, Tom Carmichael, and Larry & Sun Riley.

Later, Saturday's "Happy Hour" featured an impromptu "lecture." John Leake (who is greatly admired for his seminars at Region and International rallies) presented a short, humorous, lesson about trailer maintenance.

A highlight of the weekend was the spectacular annual Air Show at nearby Oceana Naval Air Station, featuring the Navy's Blue Angels Aerial Acrobatic team.

After a campsite group breakfast of donuts and coffee on Sunday morning, the rally officially ended. The Airstreamers were free to attend Day 2 of the Air Show, or head for home.

Rest assured that it won't be long before the four Virginia Airstream Clubs begin planning for next year's Commonwealth Rally.



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Wally Byam Caravan Club International
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NORVANews@cox.net
Visit NORVA's website: <https://northva.wbcc.net>



Commonwealth photos (top to bottom):

Rally host Edgar Simmons and wife, Kathy (orange shirts), welcome members of the Virginia and Shenandoah Valley clubs.

John Leake gives a spontaneous lecture on Airstream maintenance during "Happy Hour."

Leake poses with Don Shafer, a long-time member of the Tidewater Club, who is a past International president and a past president of Region 3.

Morning coffee (l. to. r.): Kathy Simmons, Gerry & Patsy Nagel, Cathy Brodsky. At right: Patsy Nagel.



Celebrating decades of service to family, career, NORVA, and the nation—

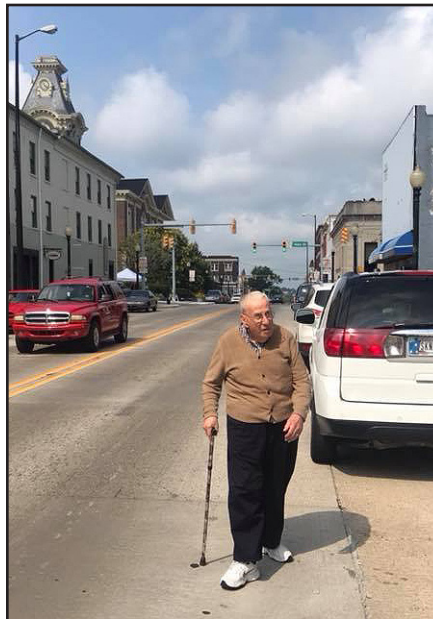
Fred Carmichael is 95 years old

Those who have been NORVA club members for a while know Tom Carmichael's dad, Fred. If you know him, you will appreciate this article. But if you have not had the pleasure of meeting Fred, this article will introduce you to a very special person. Frederick Carmichael, Sr., recently celebrated his 95th birthday. For 30 years, Fred was an active and energetic club member! These days he is a treasured NORVA "member emeritus."

Fred now resides in an assisted living complex near Richmond, Va., but that hasn't slowed him down one bit. He remains an outgoing, engaging, smooth-talking, "social butterfly", who still likes to dance. And he loves to tell stories, nearly all of them true!

For Fred's 95th birthday, Tom Carmichael hitched up his Airstream trailer and took his dad to New Castle, a small town in central Indiana. It's where Fred was born on Aug. 13, 1923, and where many Carmichael family members still live. From Richmond to New Castle is 590 miles, and that means about 10 hours of road travel, give or take. But Fred's "life journey" is not measured by distances or time; it's measured by many decades of devotion and service...to family, career, NORVA, and country. Perhaps that's why Fred's visit to New Castle garnered lots of attention from the people in his home town. A reporter from the local paper, *The Courier Times*, interviewed Fred, wrote a terrific feature article, and published it on his birthday. It describes his life history and highlights a period he vividly remembers: his military combat service in the Second World War.

For this NORVA News story, the newspaper and its reporter, Donna Cronk, generously allowed us to include excerpts from that article.



Photos (top to bottom):

- With cake, Fred Carmichael at an Indiana campground. He stayed in son Tom's trailer during their visit to New Castle.
- Fred takes a walk in his hometown's downtown.
- A dashing young Fred in his Army uniform.

Our "lifts" from The Courier Times are edited slightly for space, and shown as italics in the paragraphs which follow.

Cronk describes Fred's service as a soldier; his civilian career in Chicago; a move to Arlington, Va., where he retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and then a retirement spent traveling the country in an Airstream trailer. Much is written about Fred's World War II combat service. After all, Army Sergeant Fred Carmichael is a decorated veteran of the historic Battle of the Bulge, a major battle fought fiercely in western Europe (December 1944 to January 1945). It was *considered the turning point toward the Allies' victory in World War II when Hitler's last major offensive failed.*

Before he entered the war, *Fred took the civil service exam and landed a job at the Chicago stockyards where his older brother worked. Six weeks later he was drafted, but insisted on returning to New Castle to enlist with his hometown friends.* It was late in the war when Fred was sent to wartime Europe, where he *served in F Company, 347th Infantry Regiment, a part of the Third Army under Gen. George S. Patton. Fred and F Company's captain were inseparable, and son Tom mentioned that the captain kept saying, "Mike (a nickname abbreviated from 'Carmichael') will make it." But it was tough, with U.S. soldiers dying all around him. Fred described the horrors of the war in a book he helped write, published in 1997, "F Company 347th Infantry Regiment 1942-1945," by*

(Story continues on page 5.)

("Fred is 95" continues from page 4.)

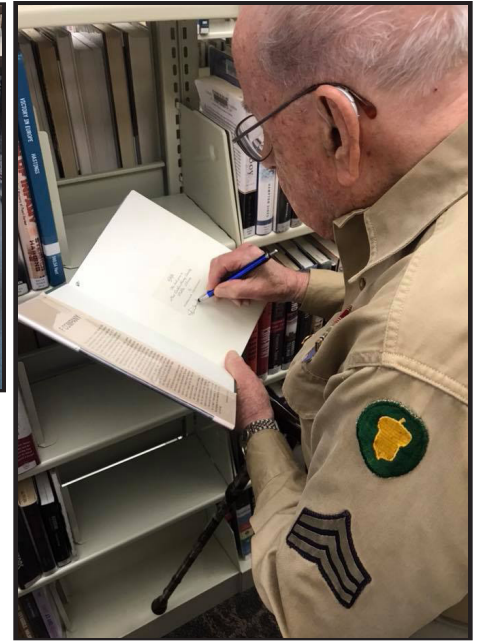
The Men of F. Company. One passage describes losing buddies. He wrote, "It was a terrible shock to learn how many of our men were killed or wounded – one officer and nine enlisted men died. Many enlisted men were wounded. I lost several good friends."

During the Battle of the Bulge, Fred's feet were deeply frozen in the snow and cold, and he was left behind. When Fred's boots were removed, his skin came off with them. Ironically, his friend the captain would soon be ambushed and killed. Fred later spent 90 days in the hospital and was discharged from the Army as 50-percent disabled.

One out of every three soldiers in the 180-member F Company was wounded or killed by the end of the Battle of the Bulge. Fred earned the Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters for his service, signifying he was awarded the medal three times. Today, he remembers constantly the soldiers who died serving alongside him in battle, and still prays for them by name weekly.

Back in New Castle after the war, Fred married Christine Cloud of nearby Mt. Summit, Indiana. The couple had three children, including NORVA's Tom. They moved several times, including a 1966 move to Arlington, Va. Before long, there were six grandchildren and five great-grandkids.

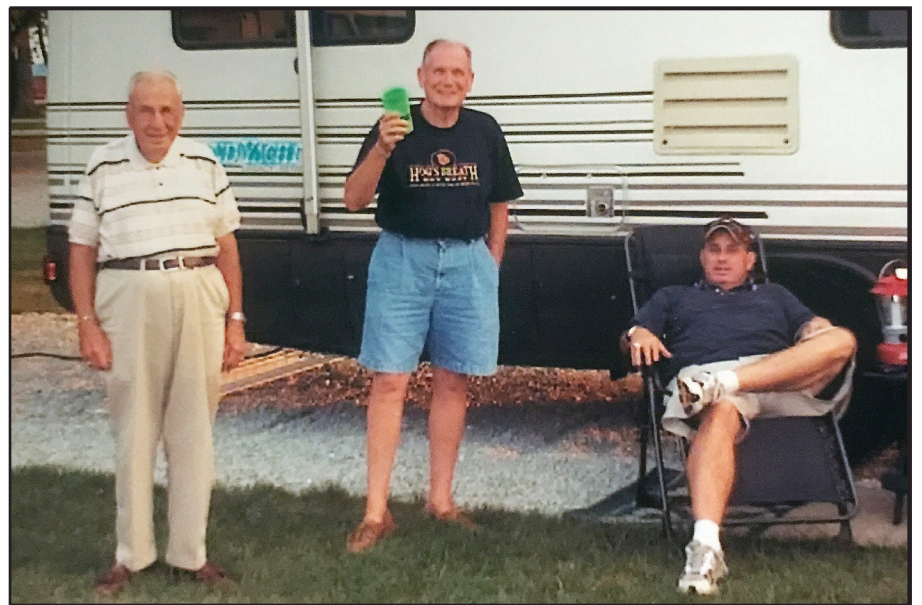
When Fred retired from USDA in 1979, he and wife Christine bought their first Airstream. Over the years Fred purchased several others. He takes pride in having attended 22 consecutive International Airstream Club Rallies. The couple enjoyed Airstream adventures and vacations throughout the U.S. and Canada. It was during the last of those trips that Christine was tragically killed in a highway accident in Nova Scotia in 1999. But Fred survived, recovered, and resumed his participation in NORVA. His fellow Club members helped him



Photos, above and right:

--Reporter Donna Cronk interviews Sergeant Carmichael in New Castle.
--Fred autographs a copy of his book about F Company in World War II.

Below: The three "NORVA Carmichaels" camping in 2007. L. to r.- Fred, his brother Jack, and son Tom.



get through that difficult time. Also, participation in NORVA was a Carmichael family passion...his brother Jack Carmichael was an Airstream owner and NORVA member. (Jack and his wife Pat were members until Jack passed away in 2016). In 2005, Tom Carmichael and his wife Cathy bought their own Airstream and joined the club.

At age 85 Fred had open heart surgery and sold his trailer, but he still loves Airstreaming and sometimes joins Tom at NORVA events.

Tom's devotion to his dad is total and obvious to all who see them together. Tom told the Indiana reporter

he is "extremely proud to have a father in *The Greatest Generation ever*," adding that his father taught the kids the Golden Rule – to treat people the way you want to be treated. "He makes a friend wherever he goes."

The interview in New Castle was done at a town library. Seated nearby, a young woman, Ashley Delk, was studying. She listened in on the conversation between the reporter and Fred and, when it was over, she came over and shook Fred's hand. "It was an honor," she said. "How often would you (get to) listen to a 95-year-old war veteran?"

Dinner and musical theater set for January rally

Reserve seats now to see a fun-filled performance of *La Cage aux Folles*

NORVA members Larry and Sun Riley are hosting the indoor January 2019 rally. They have reserved 15 seats at the Riverside Center for the Performing Arts, a dinner theater in Fredericksburg, Va. Airstreamers participating will enjoy dinner, followed by a matinee performance of the hit musical comedy, *La Cage aux Folles*, on **Sunday afternoon, Jan. 13.**

The original 1983 Broadway production of this popular musical received nine Tony Award nominations and won six, including Best Musical, Best Score, and Best Book. A 2004 Broadway revival won the Tony for Best Revival. A second revival on Broadway in 2010 was nominated for eleven Tony Awards, and won Best Revival of a Musical. *La Cage* also made it to the big screen. In 1996, a film titled, *The Birdcage*, starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane, was based on the play. The film was directed by Mike Nichols with screenplay by Elaine May.

La Cage introduces the audience to two older men, Georges and Albin, living as a gay couple. Georges owns the “La Cage Aux Folles,” a nightclub featuring a “drag queen” show starring Albin. After being together for 20 years, Georges’ and Albin’s relationship is about to face it’s toughest challenge: a first-time meeting with the soon-to-be “in-laws” of Georges’ biological son, Jean-Michel. Unfortunately for the gay couple, Jean-Michel’s fiancée is the daughter of an ultra-conservative, anti-gay politician. A panicked Georges is compelled to devise a way to present a “more traditional” family to Jean-Michel’s future in-laws. The theater audience need not guess how he will attempt this charade, because his scheme dominates the play’s hilarious storyline!

Larry and Sun Riley were able to obtain a group discount rate of \$60 per person for this special event. The price includes dinner, show, taxes and meal service. Appetizers and alcoholic drinks are also available on site at additional cost. Airstream’s seating will be mostly

at tables on the main floor. The dinner menu changes each month and can be seen on the theater’s web site:

www.riversidedt.com.

The rally group will meet at the theater for dinner at 1:00 p.m., and then, starting around 3:00 p.m., they will enjoy the hilarious comedy, delightful songs, and great heart of *La Cage aux Folles*. Seats will go fast, so be sure to e-mail Larry (larryriley@yahoo.com) and say you will attend. Then fill in, clip, and mail to Larry the rally coupon, on the next page, along with your rally fee check. To meet the theater’s reservations deadline, **Larry must receive your check by Nov. 30, 2018.**

Riverside Center Dinner Theater is where NORVA has held two previous winter rallies. In 2017, club members went there to enjoy *Million Dollar Quartet*, and last January they saw a



terrific production of *Mamma Mia*, the musical featuring the music of Swedish pop group, ABBA. NORVA returns to Riverside Center again and again because it offers excellent productions and good food. The theater is at 95 Riverside Parkway, Fredericksburg, Va. 22406, a short distance off I-95, Exit 133.

Below: The stage at Fredericksburg's Riverside Center provides the audience with clear sight lines and features a rich sound system, nearly perfect for musical theater.

Inset: Rally hosts Sun and Larry Riley.



Coupon for the January 2019 Dinner Theater Rally

Dinner and a matinée performance of the hit Broadway and movie musical

La Cage Aux Folles

Join your Airstream friends for an afternoon of good food and lively entertainment on **Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019. Dinner: 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.; show: 3:00 to 5:30 p.m.**

Location: Riverside Center for the Performing Arts, 95 Riverside Parkway, Fredericksburg, VA 22406

The discounted, per-person price for the dinner, show, and tax is \$60. For more information visit www.riversidedt.com.

Reserve your seats now by sending an e-mail to the rally host (larryriley@yahoo.com), then complete this coupon and mail it with your check, (made payable to): **Larry Riley, 5502 West Ridge View Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030.**

Name(s): _____ Member of which club: _____
 Cell phone: _____ E-mail: _____ No. attending: ___ X \$60 = \$ _____

Note: To meet the theater’s reservations deadline, Larry must receive your check and coupon by Nov. 30, 2018.

President’s Message (cont. from page 1)

calling it “Pennsylvania-New York Pot Pourri.” We compared notes, and I believe it will be a really great adventure. Jane and I will be going on it next June and hope many other NORVA members will sign up too. Look for more information and a sign-up coupon in future issues of NORVA News. It’s customary for your Club president to convey an important message each month. My October message is this: Going on caravans is arguably the most enjoyable benefit of W.B.C.C.I. membership. For providing wondrous adventures and social camaraderie, Airstream caravans have no equal. That’s why there has been an increase in the number of members participating. Also, in large measure, the increase is because of the fine organizational and promotional work done by Jay Thompson, W.B.C.C.I.’s national caravan chairman. But this also means that available slots fill up very quickly. If you see a *Blue Beret* listing for a caravan that interests you, I urge you to sign up as quickly as you can, even if it’s many months in advance (you can always change your mind and cancel later, if need

be, usually without penalty). And don’t be disappointed if you are placed on a waiting list, because there are always people who cancel in advance of the launch dates.

Stay safe, everybody. We’ll see you when we return east.

Photo: The Lady in Red? She’s Jane Arnold at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, a stop on the “New York State of Mind” Caravan.

Still interested in attending next month’s Oyster Festival Rally in Urbanna, Va.?

Only four camping spaces are still available for Airstreamers.

Please complete and mail the coupon on Page 8.

“First paid; first reserved” for this dry camping weekend adventure along the Rappahannock River.



Coupon for the "2018 Oyster Festival" Rally

Urbanna, Virginia

Dry Camping: Thursday, Nov. 1 to Sunday, Nov. 4 (Festival days: Nov. 2 & 3)

To participate in this rally, please complete this coupon and mail it with your \$75 check to:

Tom Carmichael, Rally Co-host, 2203 Turtle Hill Circle, Midlothian, VA 23112

PLEASE NOTE: There is a 25-rig limit for this Rally; first paid, first reserved!

Name(s) _____

Member of which Airstream unit? _____ E-mail _____ Cell Phone _____

WBCCI Membership # _____ Home Address: _____

Number attending _____ Rig length: _____ ft.

I (we) will arrive at the rally site on November (circle one): 1 2

Rally Fee is a flat rate of \$75 per rig. It does not matter if you camp for one night or four.

Make your check payable to Tom Carmichael. Need more info?: tmc@sportsimageinc.com.

Last chance to reserve your site! There are 4 spaces left. Send this coupon to Tom today!



Jan. 21, 2018	"Mamma Mia" Rally Riverside Center Theater Fredericksburg, Va. Host: Ulrich	July 19-22	Valley Rally Harrisonburg & Bridgewater, Va. Host: Simmons
Feb. 4	Super Bowl Rally Amissville, Va. Host: Hoosier	Aug. 6-12	Old Fiddlers Rally, Galax, Va. Host: Julian Clements, Region 3
March 23-25	Breakout & Maintenance Rally Fredericksburg, Va. KOA Host: Carmichael	Sept. 21-23	Virginia Commonwealth Rally Holiday Trav-L-Park Virginia Beach, Va. Host: NORVA - Simmons
April 25-29	Region 3 Rally Myrtle Beach, S.C. Hosts: Region 3 & S.C. Clubs	Oct. 5-6	Mountain Rally at Highland Haven Airstream Park, Copper Hill, Va. Hosts: Carmichael/Brodsky
May 21-June 9	NORVA Unit Caravan Grant & Sherman and the Civil War in the West Leader: McBroom	Nov. 1-4	2018 Oyster Festival Rally Urbanna, Va. Hosts: Carmichael/Brodsky
June 8-9	Houstonfest, Galax, Va. Hosts: Virginia Club #109	Dec. 8, 2018	Holiday Get-together Jones's home, Alexandria, Va. Hosts: Ed & Beth Jones
June 23-30	W.B.C.C.I. International Rally Salem, Ore.		