

BLUE BERET

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WALLY BYAM CARAVAN CLUB INTERNATIONAL, INC.

MARCH 2022



President's Corner



Follow your dreams because your dreams don't chase you.

I came across this quote and it made me think of the adventure we are all on. We all clean, pack and get excited when we know we have some place to meet old friends, make new ones and have an adventure. All of us have dreams that we follow to travel the country and the world in our rigs just like Wally Byam. The dream of full timing or even just a few weeks seeing this beautiful country is a dream for us that we make happen. We are following our dreams and making memories because we are doers. Then we have people that admire what we are doing and watch us closely going down the road, camping, social media, and driving habits. Let us be the ambassadors of the club and shine like our Airstreams do. Be friendly and respectful to each other, as well as strangers, with a greeting, a wave or just a nod of a head because we all need human interaction. With COVID still going on and us traveling, it has changed the way we travel. We should try to acknowledge each other in simple safe ways. In this simple action, you may just make new friends or change someone's bad day into a good one.

COVID is not going away anytime in the near future. We are getting ready for Rallies or have been attending them. Please, for yourself and others, wear a mask inside or when you can't

social distance (6'); and wash and sanitize your hands. We all have our opinions and what we want to see happen. Respect everyone's choices but remember, your choice can affect more than just yourself. Please do what you deem necessary to protect yourself, family, friends and strangers. Nothing is full proof! Once we step out of our rigs, homes, and vehicles, we can all be at risk, so please be careful. We can all live and travel if we take responsibility for our own actions and take precautions. By us all doing this, we can have the adventures and experience fun travel they we crave and enjoy.

With the countdown to the Fryeburg Maine 65th International Rally, we are going to be needing volunteers to do a lot of different jobs there. We would like to see this be an unforgettable rally, but I do need your help to make this happen. Please begin thinking about volunteering for an hour through a few days (whatever you are comfortable with). Remember if you want to have a great time and make new friends, sign up to help us.

Keep the Airstream clean, wheels on the road and meet every day with a positive thought or action. Let us show the world the true Airstreamers we can be!

Tye Mott

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on the cover...

Michael & Judy Shelley's Airstream at the Arkansas Razorback Airstream Club's Rally at El Dorado, Arkansas
photo by Ferdara Broussard-Hubbard, BRN 11100

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Copy Deadline for the May issue is March 15

Membership

Terri Warren BRN 284, Chair



If you haven't been to Savannah, GA, put it on your bucket list. Hal and I flew down to attend the Mid-Winter IBT meeting in January, and though the weather was quite chilly, it was still a great visit. We rented a lovely home in the historic district and walked and walked, admiring all the gracious old homes and the parks. There is a big park every few blocks with giant shade trees and fountains; it's just magical. If you've never seen the movie "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil", you should watch it, just to get a feel for the city.

The meeting was exciting and contentious as all of those present did not agree upon several issues. A motion passed to revise the governing framework of the club that will bring us a new structure. It will add people to the Executive Council who are not necessarily interested in ascending to the presidency but instead, would like to offer particular areas of expertise to our organization. You'll hear lots more about this in the coming weeks. A motion was presented that would have allowed local clubs, with a 2/3 majority vote, to require COVID vaccination at some rallies. The main concern of the motion maker was those rallies held in smaller spaces, indoors. It was voted down by a 9-8 margin. There is also a change coming in the way delegates can vote on constitutional change motions, allowing for more participation for those unable to attend the International Rally in person. These are just the Cliff Notes of the meeting, and you will be hearing more details soon. John and Susan Leake and their fantastic crew made everyone feel so welcome. If you looked up the definition of southern hospitality in the dictionary, I'm pretty sure their faces would be on the page. Thanks so much, ya'll (that was for you, John)!

We have two new Intra-Clubs now.

Grapes and Grains is an Intra-Club for members who share an interest in beverages produced from grapes and grains. These would include

beverages such as wine, brandy, spirits, and beers, and recipes made from these beverages. Rallies and caravans will focus on tours to places that make these beverages as well as venues that serve them. The main objective of the membership is to share their knowledge about Grapes and Grains with others. The club is open to all members whose interests lie within Grapes and Grains. Their motto is "All Hours are Happy Ones." They are currently working on their inaugural rally to be held near Bardstown, KY, June 2-5. It will be focused on distilleries in the area. If you are interested in joining, the presidents are Mark and Karen Kruer, 502-644-6824. No surprise, Hal and I joined.

The second new club Intra-Club is **Future Streamers**. Insights from Airstream, Inc. has identified a growing number of Airstream owners who occasionally or always travel with young adults and/or children. This segment of Airstream owners also exists within WBCCI, driving the goal of forming an Intra-Club focused on members traveling with young adults or children. Future Streamers is a club designed to keep youth involved in our Airstream adventures and is open to all members. Their goal is to develop memories with our youth that excites them about Airstreaming, provides life-skill opportunities, and build friendships through family friendly engagements and experiences. Using a private electronic forum, rallies, and informal social gatherings, their members enjoy sharing common interests and challenges involved with traveling with children. As a side note, that's how I got interested in Airstreaming years ago. My parents bought an Airstream when they retired and traveled all over the place. I would pop in and visit with them on college breaks and I remember the warmth of the kitchen in the trailer and the coziness of gathering in the small space with my family. When it came time for Hal and me to purchase an RV, Airstreams were the only trailers we seriously considered. So I guess this starting young thing really works!

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

Joe Peplinski BRN 702, WBCCI Historian
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Wally Byam's Personal Airstreams (Part 2)

This month we complete our review of the dozen Airstreams personally used by Wally and Stella Byam on their most famous trips between 1948 and 1960.

Airstream #8 1955 16' Bubble

Serial Number: X251 (California)
Trip: Scouting Trip to Europe Summer 1955
Current Location: In the U.K.

This unique experimental Bubble was made with a magnesium frame for extreme lightness so that Wally and Stella could tow it in Europe with a Volkswagen convertible as they attended the 1955 FICC (Federation International of Camping and Caravanning) International Rally in Saarlouis, Germany and scouted a route for the 1956 European Caravan.

Wally did bring this special Airstream back to the USA after the 1955 trip, though the interior layout was modified over the years by subsequent owners.

In 2009, it was put up for sale at a Gooding & Company auction in Scottsdale, AZ where it fetched a sales price of \$55,000. The new owner had a few repairs made in the USA and then had it exported to the United Kingdom. In 2011, the U.K. owner tested the frame confirming it was 95.8% magnesium. Since June 2021, an ad on the vintageairstreams.co.uk website lists the Bubble for sale with no asking price given.

Airstream #8 - 1955 16' Bubble



Wally, Stella and Bubble in Europe



Bubble and VW in Europe in Color



2009 Gooding & Co. Auction Photo

Airstream #9 1955 26' Cruiser (White)

Serial Number: 6648 (California)
Trips: Caravan 7 – Mexico Winter 1956,
Caravan 8 – Europe Six Months 1956
Current Location: Airstream Heritage Center

Wally and Stella used this very custom Airstream on the two caravans noted above, pulling it with a 1956 Cadillac. Among its unique features are prototype 7-panel curved endcaps, a custom front kitchen layout, and a coat of white paint to match Wally's Cadillac tow car. It was rediscovered in January 2017 in a state of significant disrepair by WBCCI members #8671 Scott and Megan Goranson who painstakingly restored it and reequipped it with all the accessories seen in period photos with Wally and Stella Byam. You can read more about this Airstream and its restoration in the August 2017 and June 2020 issues of the *Blue Beret*. Today this fabulous Airstream resides in the Airstream Heritage Center where it will be enjoyed by legions of Airstream fans for decades to come.

Airstream #9 - 1955 26' Cruiser



Wally, White Trailer and Cadillac in Europe



Restored White Trailer at Airstream

Made in the USA

Joan Anderson, Caravan Promotions

Bill and Beth Racavich invite you to caravan along with them to see where and how many of your favorite things are made in the USA.

First stop will be in Wapakoneta, OH with an opening banquet at The Bridge Restaurant. The caravan will start by visiting the “Mother Ship” to see how Airstreams are made in Jackson Center, OH, the Armstrong Air and Space Museum (www.armstrongmuseum.com) and the Wilson Football Factory (www.wilson.com). Believe it or not they make 700,000 footballs a year!

On to Milan, MI and the Ford Rouge Plant where you can see a truck being made, and the Ford Museum (www.thehenryford.org). The Ford Museum rivals the Smithsonian’s. At Jiffy Mix factory (www.jiffymix.com) in Chelsea, MI they will show us all of the mixes they create as well as packaging they print, fold and fill.



Duesenberg Museum

At the Auburn, IN stop, the caravan plans to visit the Duesenberg Museum (www.automobilemuseum.org), and the National Automobile and Truck Museum (www.natmus.org). This day lunch will be catered at the museum. Sechler’s Pickle Factory (www.sechlerspickles.com) will show the process from where they are grown to where they are pickled. They have farm contracts.

When in Elkhart, IN the tours continue – this stop will feature the Studebaker Tour (www.studebakermuseum.org). Our awesome lunch

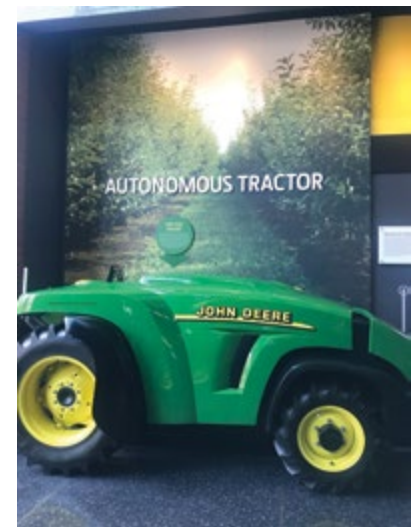


Tippecanoe House

will be at the Tippecanoe House, home of past Mr. & Mrs. Studebaker, which looks like a miniature castle (www.tippe.com). We will tour the Olive - Kabob House. The fun continues by visiting the RV Hall of Fame (www.RVhalloffame.org) and the South Bend Chocolate Factory where we can make our own chocolates - Yea! for those with a sweet tooth (www.sbchocolate.com).

In Kokomo, IN an Opalescent Glass Factory (www.kog.com) tour is scheduled as well as the Elwood Haynes House tour, the inventor of stainless steel. He also invented the gasoline engine. Our lunch will be in an Italian villa atmosphere restaurant.

The next three stops in Remington and Rock Island, IN, where we will dine at the Balli Casino, and Moline, IL are at the John Deere (www.deere.com), Harvester and Caterpillar (www.caterpillar.com) factories and they “will satisfy your need to see big equipment which keeps our farms producing the best in American products” says Bill.



John Deere

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