

The Road Awaits

Club Officers 2021-2022

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Greg Heuer

Maine to Oregon!



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A Break in the News, rather than "Breaking News"!

Your Editor is off on the Summer Adventures - 3 Months

From July 11 Linda and I are in the Airstream - Maine to Oregon!

The summer is under way in a big way. Many of you will be going to Fryeburg, the Fiddler's Convention, the Piedmont Rally, the Commonwealth Gathering, and more. All the while, Linda and I will be pulling up to Maine where the BAND will perform at Fryeburg.

After that we ease our way back to St. Joseph, MO, area to begin our 2nd year co-leading the 2022 Airstream Oregon Trail Caravan. We'll be "on the trail" for 34 days with our newest best friends. Once we make to Oregon, we'll begin the trek back to Virginia via a few relatives' homes out West.

The best news is that we have 42 Rigs and 4 Honorary Life Members as the "fun club" continues to grow and prosper.

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President's Corner

Spirit of Virginia Airstream Club ANNUAL MEETING

Mark you calendars. The Club will hold its annual meeting with a luncheon on Sunday September 11th - come to Uncle Elder's about 11:30 for great food. It's one block from the main shopping area in downtown Culpeper. The meeting will include a financial report, the election of 2023 officers and a general discussion of what you'd like to see the club do and go in 2023.

Uncle Elder's BBQ
129 E Culpeper St, Culpeper, VA 22701, us
(540) 317-5718
Hours - Friday - Saturday: 11am - 10pm

Spirit of Virginia Airstream Club Constitution and Bylaws are up to date.

Our Revised Constitution and Bylaws were approved on July 1 by the National CBL Committee. We got a nice letter from Tom Smithson, the Chairman.

We also will take the good news to Fryeburg that our Club voted to approve the two National Amendments.

Check out the news about the revitalized Airstream Foundation on the next page. You may have seen the recent press releases about them and your invitation to donate.

Joe Baum



AirstreamFoundation



New Logo!
New Mission!
New Vision!

Our Blood Runs Silver!

Dendy Jarrett, BRN 22342 and Karen Fisher, BRN 155

WBCCI Foundation – info@wbccifoundation.org

Above is the all new WBCCI Foundation logo. We wanted something instantly recognizable that identifies the WBCCI Foundation as being comprised of Airstream Owners Giving Back. In addition to the new logo, the WBCCI Foundation Board of Directors have realigned and reinforced our waypoints with a redefined mission and vision to ensure we are on the path to maximize our impact.

In the last article, we stated that Wally Byam was a catalyst for giving. His creed states, "To place the great wide world at your doorstep for you who yearn to travel with all the comforts of home." We used this to create new guard rails for our giving programs, and as a result, we've adopted a new Mantra, Mission, and Vision.

Our Mantra: Airstream Owners Giving Back

Our Mission: The WBCCI Foundation seeks to preserve and promote an outdoors-oriented lifestyle.

Our Vision: To support and protect the natural environment enjoyed by Airstream owners through partnership with other non-profit organizations that educate on best practices for individuals who enjoy outdoor activities.

We feel these new core principles best represent the giving spirit of Airstream, Airstream Employees, Airstream Dealers, and Airstream Owners! We want the world to know that we are a giving group with a fantastic philanthropic spirit. We accomplish this mission by providing grant money through your donations that will be funneled to other non-profits who help us fulfill this mission. In the next edition of the *Blue Beret*, we'll announce some of these strategic partners who are aligned with our Mission and Vision and whom our donations will support.

In the April *Blue Beret*, we rolled out our fundraising program 22N22. We're proud to announce that it's one of our most successful fundraising efforts to date and we're just getting started. The \$22 in '22 is a simple approach asking Airstream Owners to make a tax-deductible donation of \$22 in 2022 to the WBCCI Foundation.



When you donate to 22N22, you'll receive a ribbon for your name badge and a window decal so you can proudly show you participated in the WBCCI Foundation 22N22 program! Together, we can accomplish so much more as there is so much power in numbers. Please consider giving as 100% of your donation will be used to give back!

There are two ways you can contribute to the Foundation:

- Use the Donate button on the Foundation page of the ACI website (<https://airstreamclub.org/about/wbcci-foundation>) to use PayPal to make your donation using your PayPal account **OR** a credit or debit card.
- Send a check to: WBCCI Foundation, PO Box 612, Jackson Center, OH 45334-0612.

Our hope is that you'll embrace this new laser-focused approach with our Mission and Vision knowing that the monies we raise will provide a means to protect the places you want to explore, to leave the places we go better than we found them, and to leave a great reputation in the places where we have our International, Region, and local club Rallies and Caravans for you and the future generation of Airstreamers!

We thank you in for your continued support.

FuturePlanning

An Overview of Fun, Fellowship, and Learning

July 23-29

International Rally - Fryeburg, Maine

Just about 750-800 miles up the coast to the western edge of Maine. Make a trip of it - cooler weather likely.

August 7-13

86th Annual Old Time Fiddlers Convention - Cool Breeze Campground, Galax, VA.

September 11

Spirit of Virginia Airstream Club Annual Meeting
Uncle Elder's BBQ - Culpeper

September 22-24

Annual Commonwealth Rally - Virginia Club in charge - Waynesboro 340 North Campground.

October 7-9

Virginia Piedmont Rally - Paradise Lake Family Campground (the one in Spout Spring, VA - not the other one)

October 26-30

Alumalina, Marion, NC - John Leake

November 11-13

9th Annual Grand Finale Rally - Camp Hatteras - Rodanthe, NC

December 10

Winter Holiday Luncheon = TBD



Catch the Summer Spirit!

A great time was had by all at the Adult Summer Camp last month. Special Guests *Lifetime Honorary Members Bill and Dot McElroy* visited the camp. It's always great to see them and hear the stories. 10 of our units came.



86th Annual Old Time Fiddler's Convention Galax, VA @ the Cool Breeze Campground



Our own Joe and Christine Baum are hosting the gang for this marvelous event. Make plans to attend now by reserving a camping spot at Cool Breeze directly.

2330 Edmonds Rd, Galax, VA
24333-4170 - (276) 236-0300

Annual Commonwealth

2022 Commonwealth Rally



The Virginia Airstream Club (VAC) is taking the lead for this year's COMMONWEALTH RALLY. All four Virginia-based clubs come together for this rally. Incoming Region 3 President, Christine Baum, will preside over the induction of next years' officers (she said she'd be in the neighborhood anyway!).

The rally will be held September 22-25 at the NORTH 340 Campground on route 340 outside Waynesboro. Call the campground directly to reserve a site.

Use this link:

[Coming to Commonwealth](#)

to register with VAC and pay \$45/person rally fee (includes several meals). More details to follow soon. Registration deadline is September 2 with VAC but better to lock in your site with the campground sooner rather than later.

Bedford - Appomattox

The First Annual? Piedmont Rally brings new excitement to the Spirit of Virginia Airstream Club. For years we've wanted to Rally in the area of the Bedford Memorial and Historic Appomattox.

Bob and Lisa Sachs are making the arrangements for these exciting tours and a nice Group Dinner on Saturday evening.

Jotform for Signing Up Coming Soon. Watch your Email.

We have reserved a room at Babcock House in Appomattox for dinner on Saturday evening. Dinner at 5:00 <https://babcockhouse.com/>



Battery Maintenance



Published by Rich Luhr:

A friend once mentioned to me that he had to replace his batteries every spring, at a cost of about \$500 each time. He thought the problem was "cheap batteries," but the real issue turned out to be that he didn't understand the correct way to maintain them. I soon learned that the Quartzsite customer didn't, either.

Before we get into proper maintenance, let's review the three types of batteries most commonly found in an Airstream.

"Wet cell" (Lead-Acid)

These are the most common type found in Airstreams. They're just like most car batteries. Inside each battery is a bunch of lead plates with sulphuric acid surrounding them.

Sometimes the battery will have plastic caps on the top, which can be carefully removed to add distilled water from time to time. Others are "maintenance free" and don't have removable caps.

In normal operation, wet cell batteries release a small amount of hydrogen gas. Because hydrogen is flammable and sulphuric acid is corrosive, these batteries are always kept in a separate battery box, isolated from the living quarters of the Airstream.

Absorbed Glass Matt (AGM)

These are also lead-acid batteries, but instead of liquid inside they have a paste that doesn't dry up, and they may have spiral plates instead of flat plates inside. But what you'll care about is the fact that AGM batteries don't emit hydrogen gas in normal operation, never need maintenance, and last longer.

The only downside of AGM batteries is that they cost about twice as much as wet cell batteries. But if you take care of them they'll end up being cheaper per year, because you can get more life out of them.

"Lithium" (Lithium Iron Phosphate, or LiPO)

LiPO batteries are all the rage right now, and for good reasons: they last a long time, have zero maintenance, are about half the weight of lead-acid, and they can be discharged deeply many times without shortening their life.

But they're expensive. *Really* expensive, like 2-3 times more than AGM. Also, LiPO batteries have quirks of their own that owners need to think about before they switch. (I'll write about that in more detail in a future blog.)

Basic maintenance for all batteries

Regardless of what you have, you should **periodically inspect your batteries** in their storage box. Look for tight, clean connections to each battery, with no obvious corrosion (like fuzzy whitish-green buildup). There should be no cracks or damage to the battery cases or cables, and the hold-down brackets should be tight so the batteries can't move.

Also, **keep your batteries charged**. Remember my customer in Quartz-site? Her AGM batteries were toast after only six months because she didn't know that you need to keep them charged at least 50% all the time. (The same is true of wet cell batteries.)

Discharging below 50% is like leaving the headlights on your car overnight. Do that a few times and you'll find your car doesn't start on the next cold morning. In this case, she had let the batteries run down to 11.2 volts for a few days while boondocking. That means the batteries were at about 10% of their capacity. They normally should be 12.7 - 13.0 volts when full, and never less than 12.3 volts.

You may well ask: *"But if the lights still go on, the fridge still runs on propane, and the furnace still works, how can my battery be dead?"*

Many appliances that run on "12 volts" will actually continue to work at much lower voltages, far below the minimum healthy level for a battery. You can't rely on those as a guideline. It's important to keep an eye on the voltmeter (which is standard equipment in every modern Airstream) and don't let wet cell batteries get below 12.2 volts or AGM batteries get below 12.3 volts (as measured when they are resting with no appliances running).

So if there's one thing you take away from this, it's this: **The most important maintenance you can do is simply to keep the batteries charged above 50% at all times.**

This is particularly true during periods of storage. All types of lead-acid batteries will gradually "self discharge" over time, whether or not they're connected to anything.

Remember my friend who had to buy new batteries every spring? He didn't top up the batteries during the long New England winters, and so he always came back to find dead batteries that didn't want to charge again.

LiPO is a bit different. Those batteries can be discharged way below 50% and come back smiling. That's one of the big advantages of them—you essentially get more usable power because you can use the entire capacity of the battery. Their "self-discharge" rate is much lower too. Still, it's important to make sure they're charged before long periods of storage.

