## President's Message

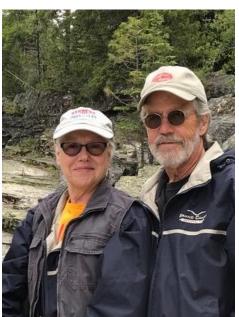
As a reminder, the April THCU Rally previously scheduled for 4/20 - 4/23 in San Antonio has been re-located to Schatziland RV Resort in San Marcos, same dates. This is a one year old park located at 3169 Florence Street, off I-35 south of the city. The owner is German, and the word Schatzi translates to "treasure". Reviews are very positive, and landscaping is beginning to take hold. There is a community room, pool, large outdoor deck with picnic tables, pickle ball, bocci ball, horseshoes, sand volleyball and trails, all located on 200 acres, with 184 full hook-up sites. The basic sites are \$65 daily plus tax. However, the rate drops by \$15 if we have ten or more rigs registered. The park will hold a block of 10 sites together until 3/20. After that date, the block will be released. When you call to register, you must mention you are with THCU. Please also drop me an email if you register. Four registered so far, come join us for the fun!

Registrations for Airport Park at Lake Waco (5/18-5/21) are sitting at ten so far. This is a popular COE park, and if you wait much longer to reserve, sites closest to our pavilion may be fully booked. Reserve at <a href="www.recreation.gov">www.recreation.gov</a>. You will want to look for availability in sites 16-36, which is the next closest loop to our pavilion; the sites at the pavilion are already booked. Zephyr and Dan will be hosts for this rally. Please let Zephyr and I know when you register so we can keep up with the rig count.

The information for Region 9 Rally is enclosed from Ally. We'll do a roll call of attendees for Region 9 in another week or so. Currently there are a little more than 100 Region 9 rigs signed up and nine of them are from our group. It isnt too late to sign up for this event. Nancy and her team has a good rally planned and is sure to be a lot of fun. A side note—there was an email which was sent out (as a Jot Form) for the folks who have already signed up that included additional activities and extra questions regarding parking, chili cook off, etc. If you are one of the nine and haven't done so, please look for the email and get those questions answered to help with planning.

FYI – There are two additional updates to our THCU schedule for this year that I will touch on in the next newsletter. Keep an eye out for that in April.

Finally, welcome to our newest TCHU member, Desiree Oloteo. Hope to see you at a rally soon. If you have any questions, please reach out to me (contact info below) or Yvonne Micheck (michekmgw@gmail.com). If we don't know the answer to your question, we know someone who can. This goes to all y'all.



Bob (and Jan Grimes)
President (and First Lady), Texas Hill Country Unit
Email: txairstreamer@gmail.com; Cell: 210-722-1080

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Editors: TnA Ebbers

## Come and Stream It in Gonzales, TX



March 28 - April 2, 2023

Registration is open! You are invited to the Region 9 Annual Rally at the JB Wells Park, Arena, and Expo Center in Gonzales, TX, an historic town nestled on the banks of the Guadalupe River, for our monthly campout in March of 2023. We'll kick off the event with a Margarita and BBQ Welcome Party complete with a DJ and boot scootin' (bring your cowboy hat and boots). Some of the planned events include a visit to the "Come and Take It" cannon at the Gonzales museum with a storyteller recreating the stand-off between Santa Anna and the rebel Texans, a golf outing, a tour of Spoetzl Brewery (home of the quintessential Shiner Bock), and a tour of four of the Painted Churches in Schulenberg. Add to that are on-your-own opportunities to visit nearby places to bike, walk, or kayak/canoe. Of course, there is also the best part of our get togethers: chumming around with folks from other clubs in the region and learning new tips and tricks for Airstreaming. Below is the preliminary schedule of events. Additional information and specifics should come out as we get closer to the date and have approximations of participants.

Included in your registration are five nights of full hook-ups (30/50 amp), breakfasts, coffee all day long, Airstreaming classes, Margarita Welcome Party, and the Presidents' Dinner/Grill Night. You can also join us for the second annual Chili Cook-off.

Registration will be done using JotForm.

Here is the link: <a href="https://form.jotform.com/223305585017048">https://form.jotform.com/223305585017048</a>. If you prefer a QR Code:



Hope to see you in Gonzales! Nancy Fitzgerald, Region 9 President

Rally Itinerary is on the next page. To get an updated itinerary, please go to the following link: 2023 Region 9 Rally | ACI (airstreamclub.org)

## Region 9 Rally March 28 – April 2, 2023 JB Wells Expo Center 2301 CR 197 Gonzales TX 78629

#### Tuesday - March 28

JB Wells Expo Center
Parking 2-4 pm

Welcome Packet Pick-Up/Registration
Margarita Welcome Party!
Welcome Ceremony
BBQ Bash
Boot Scootin' with DJ
Ice Cream Under the Stars

#### Hosted by GHAC, TPAC, OAC & TAU

#### Wednesday - March 29

JB Wells Expo Center
Blackstone Breakfast
Come and Take It Story
at Gonzales Memorial Museum
Catered Lunch in Town
Explore Gonzales and Area
Chamber of Commerce Social Hour
Dinner on Own
Ice Cream Under the Stars
Hosted by TGCU & ETLAU & THCU

#### Thursday - March 30

JB Wells Expo Center
Breakfast-To-Go
Golf Scramble
Biking/Walking/Kayaking /Games
Lunch on Your Own
Cook-off Competition
Ice Cream Social / Music Jam
Hosted by THLAC & HOTC

### Friday March 31



#### Saturday-April 1

JB Wells Expo Center
Pancake Breakfast
Region Board Meeting/Membership
Club Leadership Training Meetings
Airstream 102
Lunch on Your Own
Additional Clinics/Vendors
Presidents' Dinner/Grill Night
Presidents & Club Leaders Closing
Hosted by Region 9 Leadership Team

#### Sunday -April 2

JB Wells Expo Center
Coffee & Donuts
Clean-Up & Good-Byes & Departures
Hosted by Region 9 Executive Board

Each local club is asked to gather donations for Region 9 Charity of Choice Team Red, White & Blue. Each local club will present its donations at the Rally on Saturday evening. Team Red, White & Blue is America's leading health and wellness community for veterans. To read more about the organization, click the link:

https://www.about.teamrwb.org

Since Region 9 is happening at the end of March/beginning of April, I thought it would be good for this newsletter to include some Airstream specific articles from AirGear.com. They are an Airstream store which publishes really useful blogs from their website. This month I'm attaching some pertinent ones for those who are taking their Airstream out for the first time this year. Although the checklist is for every travel. This first blog from Cheryl provides you with things to think about when packing up for a short or long trip. It can definitely learn from this....

FYI—I've included a link to the actual blog in case you want to read the original blog with pictures and sign up on their site.

### Is it time to update your Airstream travel checklists?

Cheryl Toth \* Jan 30, 2023

Whether you're a newbie or a seasoned Airstreamer, using checklists is a simple way to make sure you get on the road safely and don't forget anything important.

That's why we are big believers in checklists. Airline pilots use them. Surgical teams use them. Airstreamers should use them too.

Ironically, the more experienced Airstreamer you become, the more you think you don't need a checklist, because you "know it all." We have been reminded of this folly on our two most recent trips.

Admittedly, we'd become a bit lax with using our checklists. So last month we arrived in Pasadena, CA without Rich's shaver, the dog's carry bag, or our CarGenerator (which was a real bummer because over 4 days/nights of boondocking, we had about 60 minutes of sun to power the portable solar kit.)

We'd also fallen into the trap of thinking "well, it's only a quick/last minute trip and we're only traveling a few hours..." Ha. Well last week, we arrived in the quirky little town of Quartzsite, AZ without Rich's ear plugs, honey, hot sauce, flavored seltzers, or enough olive oil for the trip.

So, as we recommit ourselves to using checklists in 2023, we're also updating our existing ones. Although Rich and I make small changes to our lists after every trip, an annual review of every list is good practice—especially if you've added new equipment or upgrades.

Here are a few suggestions about our recommended checklists, and how we approach our own.

#### THE UBIQUITOUS DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL CHECKLISTS

Everyone should have a personalized version of these two essentials. You can find samples and templates all over the Internet, and Rich includes them in his Newbie's Guide to Airstreaming book. (Which is complimentary from Airstream, when you purchase a new Airstream.)

Departure and Arrival checklists are pretty generic, but they are terrific when you are a new Airstream owner because that's when you need to know the basics and establish a routine.

These two checklists include things like this (excerpt from our personal list):

#### Campground Arrival

- Use leveling blocks to level the trailer
- Plug in EMS to campground power, and connect to Airstream
- ♦ Attach drinking water hose
- Attach sewer hose
- Deploy stabilizers
- ♦ Pull out RV mat, Zip Dee chairs, side table

#### Is it time to update your Airstream travel checklists? (cont)

#### **Campground Departure**

- Inside -
  - Turn off pump
  - Secure shower door
  - Pull bathroom ceiling fan vent closed
  - Lock windows and pull shades
  - Turn off all lights and pull all curtains closed
  - Remove and stow knives from magnetic strip
  - Put kitchen tool holder in overhead compartment
  - Put paper towels in drawer
- Outside
  - Unplug and stow power cord and EMS
  - Unhook and stow the water hose
  - Dump black and gray tanks and stow sewer hose
  - Check tire pressure and tire condition
  - Verify hitch is good to go, chains are not dragging, etc.
  - Walk around the Airstream to make sure all windows and doors are shut
- In Truck
  - Turn on TST
  - Turn on back up camera
  - Make sure brake controller is set properly and working

If you are new and haven't customized the Arrival and Departure checklists, grab a template and personalize it. If you haven't reviewed your Arrival and Departure and Arrival checklists lately, make a plan to do so before this year's camping season. Even when you are experienced, both are useful when you have a campground neighbor whose friendly conversation can distract you from something important.

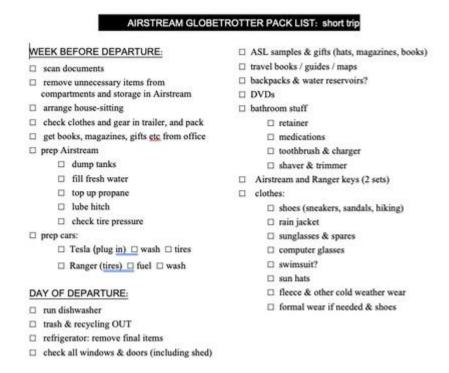
#### THE DO, PACK, CHECK CHECKLIST

Of course, certain things are always inside the trailer or a storage compartment–plates, silverware, tire changing kit, drinking water hose, etc. But there are still a surprising amount of things that you need to remember to do or take with you on every trip.

To make sure important things are not overlooked, Rich uses one of two, long checklists for each trip. One checklist is for short trips (two weeks or less) and the other is for long trips. Each checklist is broken into sections that basically cover these three tasks:

- 1. Things to DO. For example:
- Wash the truck
- · Get the truck's oil changed
- Sanitize water tank
- Lube the hitch ball
- 2. Things to PACK. For example:
- Clothes
- Outerwear (hiking boots, coat)
- C-GEAR RV mat
- Electric toothbrush and charger
- Shaver
- Other toiletries
- 3. Things to CHECK. For example:
- Tire pressure and tire condition
- TST monitor charge (and plug in if needed)
- Breakaway switch

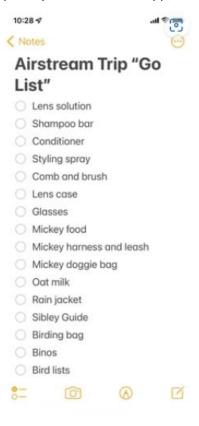
Your list will be highly customized to your needs. Rich prints a copy this checklist prior to every trip, and checks off boxes as he completes things. Here's an excerpt of his 'short trip' list:



#### THE GO LIST METHOD

This is what I use as my countdown checklist. Basically it's a laundry list of all the things I need to take on a trip. Many of these things I don't have a duplicate of, so I can't rely on it being in the Airstream.

I've set it up in my iPhone "Notes" app, in a way that lets me tick off each item once it's done.



#### Is it time to update your Airstream travel checklists? (cont)

Taking my own advice from this blog, I'm in the process of updating this checklist because I realized on our latest trip that it could be better organized and it is woefully outdated. Also, because we keep forgetting to pack certain favorite foods and beverages, I also plan to make a separate and more comprehensive list specifically for that, which will include spices and condiments.

#### THE KEEP IT STOCKED CHECKLIST

The impetus of this checklist was my frustration of arriving at several destinations over the last six months, only to find that several important items that are supposed to always be in the Airstream, were not there. (Thankfully, none of them was toilet paper.)

Have you ever seen the cleaning/paper product stock checklist in the restrooms at large retailers like Target or Home Depot? I borrowed this idea from that. I like to keep the Airstream bath stocked with items that I don't have to remember to pack every time. These include:

Hand towels, bath towels, wash cloths
Toilet paper
Cotton balls and Q-Tips
Tweezers and nail clippers
Shampoo, conditioner
Body wash
Deodorant

Toothpaste Dental floss

Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Tums

I had always done a spot check before each trip to make sure everything is stocked. But that has resulted in missing items upon arrival.

So now I've created a Stocked Item Checklist, which is laminated and taped to the inside of the bathroom cabinet door. At the end of a trip I put a checkmark next to things that are stocked. When we pack for the next trip, we know what we need to replenish.

#### HOW MANY LISTS DO YOU NEED?

There's no right or wrong answer to this. It depends on how you travel and camp. (And maybe how OCD you are.)

You don't have to limit yourself to just checklists for prepping/packing, arrival, and departure. You might want to have a checklist for hitching and unhitching. It can be easy to lose your place in the hitching up process, especially when you're new at it. And that could prove to be a safety issue or expensive mistake down the road. Or, you could create a checklist for determining whether you've got a slow gas leak. We demonstrate that in this video, using GasStop. Checklists like these two could save you from disaster.

Or perhaps you want to create preparedness/"what if" lists such as: What if I have a flat tire? What if we have a major water leak while on the road? or What if our dog gets bitten by a snake or becomes very sick?

Truth is, there is almost no limit to the lists that can come in handy, once you start personalizing them to the way you travel. We've found that making lists is highly effective in keeping us organized and on track. Plus, it gives us a great sense of completion when we've checked off all the items on the list.

Do you use checklists we haven't mentioned? Share them in the Comments for other Airstreamers to read.

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This next article will be for those folks who have both been winter camping and are getting their trailers out for the first time this year.

## 7 simple answers to exterior cleaning questions

Cheryl Toth \* Mar 06, 2023

All three of our 2023 trips have seen pouring rain, extreme wind, and a lot of dust. And last week we had a "once every two years" Tucson weather event—snow!—while the Airstream sat uncovered in the driveway.

Needless to say, our trailer is filthy.

We're planning a proper spring cleaning next week, after returning from Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, which is almost guaranteed to be dusty. That got us thinking about the exterior cleaning questions people often ask.

Here are 7 of our favorites:

#### 1. WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO WASH MY AIRSTREAM?

Take it to a truck wash that uses soft brushes and appropriate cleaning products.

A truck wash will set you back about \$40-\$50 but it's worth it for the convenience. Blue Beacon and the like are good options.

#### 2. IF I DO IT MYSELF, WHICH EXTERIOR WASH AND WAX PRODUCTS DO YOU RECOMMEND?

Any good quality automotive wash will do. Some Airstreamers swear by certain brands but we've never found much of a difference as long as you don't use substitutes like dishwashing detergent.

For waxing, any natural or synthetic wax made for painted vehicles is fine. We recommend polymer waxes for at least the front dome because they seem to make bugs stick less, making the next cleaning easier.

You can purchase automotive wash and wax at an automotive store, Wal-Mart, and other retailers. If you're looking for tips and the process of how to wash the Airstream yourself, you can find those in The (Nearly) Complete Guide to Maintaining an Airstream.

#### 3. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET MY AIRSTREAM PROFESSIONALLY RE-COATED, TREATED OR POLISHED?

If your Airstream was made after 1999, probably never. (Despite what you may read on the Internet.) Since that year, Airstreams have been delivered with a fluorocarbon clearcoat that's applied to the aluminum sheets.

That type of clearcoat is extremely durable and will last for decades. Unless you've been full-timing for many years or you've let your Airstream bake uncovered in the desert sun for decades, it will most likely last until you sell the Airstream. We don't recommend full body, clearcoat "restorations" or treatments for the typical Airstream owner, because they are rarely needed.

If you own a pre-1999 Airstream, the answer varies. Airstreams made in the 1970s and 1980s have a "Plasticote," which will peel over time. Most people just live with this "sunburned" look because the fix is to chemically strip it all off and either polish it yourself (labor intensive) or have it professionally recoated (very expensive).

If you have a vintage Airstream made in the 1940s-1960s, it has no coating at all. Polishing the aluminum is an entirely different topic, better covered in vintage trailer blogs.

## 4. CAN I USE A SOLUTION OF VINEGAR AND WATER, WINDEX, OR OTHER COMMON BRAND WINDOW CLEANERS TO CLEAN THE FRONT WINDOW STONE GUARDS?

No. The front window stone guards are made of plastic, not glass. Only use cleaners approved for use on plastic. Using vinegar or ammonia-based products will create permanent stains and streaks.

#### 7 simple answers to exterior cleaning questions (cont)

#### 5. WHAT'S A SAFE PRODUCT FOR REMOVING ROAD TAR, TREE SAP, AND DEAD BUGS?

Travel enough miles and these things are likely to stick to your Airstream's exterior, which makes them too hard to clean off using a regular automotive cleaner.

The good news is that any solvent-based cleaner that is approved for removing road tar on painted vehicles will work for tree sap and bugs, and it won't hurt the clearcoat. Light mineral spirits, WD-40, or denatured ("rubbing") alcohol are ok too. And so are automotive products specifically made to remove bugs, sap, and tar. You can find them at most parts stores.

When using solvent-based products, make sure to let them soak in and work their magic before wiping them off with a cloth—always in the direction of the aluminum "grain." Use a light touch. Rubbing too hard before the debris loosens may scratch the clear coat. Rinse the solvent with vinegar and water, wash normally, and follow with a protective polymer-based paint care product to restore protection. Do not use ordinary wax, as it tends to build up.

# **6. I'VE BEEN CAMPING AT THE BEACH. SHOULD I WASH THE SALT OFF MY AIRSTREAM AFTER I GET HOME?** Yes—as soon as possible.

If the Airstream has been parked near salt water or been subjected to salty roads (like during winter travel), you must take care to clean it completely and promptly. If you don't you'll be at risk for filiform corrosion which creates "spidery," white lines near seams, lights, and bumpers. Filiform corrosion is not a good thing, and once you've got it, you cannot easily get rid of it.

So, after you get home after a salty-aired trip, take the Airstream through a truck car wash, or at the very least, hose it down thoroughly, including the entire body, hitch, A-frame, wheels, and brakes.

#### 7. WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CLEAN THE ROOFTOP SOLAR PANELS?

Even a single leaf or thin layer of dust can substantially impact the efficiency of solar panels, so keeping them clean is an important maintenance step. Any product that works on glass is ok for use on solar panels. Even rinsing them with plain water will help improve their efficiency.

Use extreme caution any time you get on the roof of your Airstream.

Working on the roof is extremely dangerous. Never get up there when it's wet and never stand on the end caps. We recommend standing on a ladder and reaching the solar panels using a long-handled brush. It's also best to have someone standing on the ground spotting you, just to be safe.

For more details about cleaning and maintaining the exterior of an Airstream, consider the new, 2nd edition of The (Nearly) Complete Guide to Airstream Maintenance.

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#### **MARCH**

- 12 Jeff McKee
- 14 Mark Knox
- 18 Joan Ermis
- 27 Charlie Williams

#### **APRIL**

- 03 Peggy Knox
- 06 David Allen

#### **MAY**

- 08 Martha Gosnell
- 15 Jan Grimes
- 17 Cal Bonugli
- 28 Nicky Allen



- Mar 31 Jim and Joyce Schwerdfeger
- Apr 29 Tim and Allison Ebbers
- May 13 David Allen and Nicky Allen
- May 14 Katy Bonugli and Cal Bonugli
- May 21 Jeff McKee and Cindy Mckee
- May 26 Robert Lemley and Sylvia Lemley
- May 31 Gerald Davis and Theresa Davis

#### 2023 THCU Officers

- President: Bob Grimes
- 1<sup>st</sup> VP: Tim Ebbers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Michael Green
- Corresponding & recording secretary: Carol Wallace
- Treasurer: Zephyr Marek
- Membership chairman: Yvonne Michek
- 1 year director: Ed Michek and Joanne Ermis
- ◆ 2 year director: Dan Marek and Dave Toy
- ♦ Newsletter: Ally Ebbers
- ♦ Web Master: Tim Ebbers



#### **New Member:**

⇒ Desiree Oloteo from New Braunfels, TX



⇒ Our Facebook page is Private. If you are a new member and would like to join our Facebook group, search for the page name = Texas Hill Country Unit.



**Website:** https://airstreamclub.org/TexasHillCountry **THCU President:** txairstreamer@gmail.com **Facebook Page:** Texas Hill Country Unit



THCU 2023 Schedule		
Date	Location	Comments
<del>Jan 19-22</del>	San Saba City RV Park & Golf Course 723 CR 102, San Saba, TX 325-372-3212	Eight sites being held until 1/10/23. Make reservation with the park directly and advise Yvonne Michek (michekmgw@gmail.com) to get an accurate head count.
		-Host: Ed and Yvonne Michek
<del>Feb 16-19</del>	Lake Brownwood State Park 200 Park Road 15 Brownwood, TX 76801	Council Bluff Loop, full hookups, 10 FH sites available as of 12/20/2022.  Many other non FH sites available in other loops -
	www.reserveamerica.com	Host: Tim and Ally Ebbers
Mar 28-Apr 02 Region 9 Rally	JB WELLS PARK, ARENA & EXPO 2301 County Road 191 Gonzales, TX	This is your opportunity to experience a larger rally, and replaces a THCU rally for this month. Info on registration to follow from Region 9. Rally runs Tuesday – Sunday.
Apr 20-23	Schatziland RV Resort 3169 Florence Street San Marcos, TX 78666 (737) 221-3331	This is a brand new park in San Marcos. Mention that you are with Texas Hill Country Unit. Rate is 65/nite, but will drop by \$15/nite if we have 10+ rigs signed up. Currently, there are four rigs signed up.
		Host: Bob and Jan Grimes
May 18-21	Airport Park Lake Waco 4600 Skeet Eason Rd Waco, TX 76708	Group site has been booked with 7 sites. If you want to book one of the 7 sites, please let Bob Grimes know. It is FCFB (first-come-first-book). Once group site is filled and you want to attend this rally, you will need to make own reservations from <a href="https://www.recreation.gov">www.recreation.gov</a>
		Host: Dan and Zephyr Marek
Jun 28– Jul 01 International	International Rock Springs, WY	There may be a caravan going to International. If interested, please contact Bob Grimes or Ally Ebbers.
Aug TBD	Mid Year Luncheon	Location TBD
Sep 17-22 Big Bend Caravan	Roadrunner RV Park 23315 FM 170 Terlingua, TX 79852 432-466-1036	Depart Saturday 9/16, overnight in general Ft. Stockton area, arrive in Terlingua Sunday 9/17. Five nights, four days on site, head home 9/22. You can caravan or go at your own pace. Current rate \$55/nite. September average low 58, average high 78.
		Coordinator: Bob and Jan Grimes
Oct 19-22	Schitz Creek Distillery 101 County Road 257 Liberty Hill, TX 78642	This will be a boondocking event. There is a limit on the number of rigs.  Dates and Registration info to follow.  Host: Dan and Zephyr Marek
Nov 16-19 Thanksgiving and Installation rally	TBD	TBD

