

**Official Newsletter of the
DelMarVa Airstream
Club #026**

September 2023

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THE DELMARVA BEACON



Campground at Coulter Bay RV Park, Grand Teton National Park
Photo by Katharine Dowell

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Caravan Club International Inc.**

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**DelMarVa
Airstream Club #026**

airstreamclub.org/delmarva



DelMarVa Airstream Club #026 Officers and Volunteers

President.....
Andy Dowell

1st Vice President.....
Paul McVinney

2nd Vice President.....
Elaine McVinney

Recording Secretary.....
Katharine Dowell

Treasurer.....
Chuck Helwig

Trustees.....
Katharine Dowell
Charlie Michels
Mike Field

Member Engagement

Membership Chair.....
Roger Sansom

Webmaster.....
Andy Dowell

Newsletter Editor.....
Denis Clements

DelMarVa Club President

By Andy Dowell, BRN# 6684, President DelMarVa Airstream Club



Hello DelMarVa Members:

Another summer in the books. We had a wonderful trip this year, starting with the Region 2 Rally in Niagara Falls Ontario, then across the plains to the International Rally in Rock Springs Wyoming. I had the great pleasure of taking part in the Wyoming Winds and OK Chorale, the Airstream Club’s concert band and chorus. We performed at the Vintage Airstream Club parade, the opening and closing ceremonies, and our big concert was in

Bunning Park in downtown Rock Springs, where we performed for a crowd of nearly 1,000 Airstreamers and local residents. While I was off practicing, Katharine was shuttling folks around the Sweetwater Events Complex, playing pickleball, and checking out the vendors and seminars.

We also had the great pleasure to meet 2 couples from our DelMarVa Club for the first time. We knew Sharon and Bill Turner and Mike and Donna Field would be at the rally, but we did not know, and had never met, Lynn and Tom Morgan, #13515, of Harbeson, and Michael and Sandra Zelensky, #7214, of Milford. Welcome to the DelMarVa Club Lynn, Tom, Michael and Sandra! And we hope to see you at an upcoming Club event!

Speaking of upcoming events, our fall business meeting and installation of officers is coming up; October 20-22 at the Delaware Seashore State Park. Reserve your space with the park. Katharine and I have a site in the South Inlet area. I am checking with local restaurants for a place to hold our business meeting, to be followed by dinner. I’m looking forward to catching up with everyone, hopefully we’ll see some or all of you at the business meeting and dinner.

Safe Travels, and we hope to see you down the road!
Andy Dowell, BRN# 06684

DelMarVa Airstream Club Calendar

- Fall Business Meeting with Installation of Officers
 - October 20 to 22
 - Delaware Seashore State Park
 - More info to follow

Region 2 President

By Garry Russo, BRN# 1061, President, Region 2

Hello DelMarVa Members,

During the month of August, Patti Galupo and I were busy connecting with clubs in Region 2. Patti was at a Watchung rally in Pennsylvania. Suzanne and I had the chance to take part in the Metro club's potluck dinner Saturday night and to meet with people at the Finger Lakes RV Resort. What a great assortment of food! The next week we were at Laurel Hill State Park in Pennsylvania where we connected with the AI-Mon-O club. We are off to a running start!

While at each gathering, Patti and I continued to emphasize that the clubs run on volunteers and that when a vote on a topic comes along, it is an opportunity to voice their opinions. I cannot stress how important it is for you to vote! A very low percentage of the membership votes. You are ambassadors for your club and WBBCI. I want to challenge all club members; if you see an Airstream Trailer without a Big Red Number (BRN), go over and ask if they are a member of WBBCI. If they are not then the advantages of being a member of the club.

Just a quick teaser, the Region2 team has been working on the Region2's 2024 rally! Save the date May 3rd to May 5th. Right now, we have the date and are working with the event site on the particulars before we make the announcement of the location. Most people who know me, know that I like to have a theme for the event. The 2024 Rallies theme will be 'Pursue Your Adventure'. Airstreamers are the adventurist type.

With that said, safe travels and see you down the road!
Garry Russo, BRN# 1061

Travels Out West

After the Rock Springs, WY 2023 International Rally

An Article by: Katharine Dowell, BRN# 6684

Photos by Katharine Dowell

President Andy and I spent a few weeks out West before winding our way home to Delmarva with the goal of hitting as many state high points, National Parks and Monuments and Frank Lloyd Wright houses as possible. On our trip out and back we managed to cover 18 states, and visit four national parks plus 3 national monuments and 2 FLW homes, including Taliesin in Wisconsin. We structured the way home to include about 10 days in WY and the Black Hills before wandering back through a number of states to reach a new total of 36 on our 'camped in' U.S. map states.



Our first stop post rally was Grand Teton National Park where we enjoyed the incredible scenery.

Andy and Katherine Dowell at Grand Teton National Park

We stayed at Coulter Bay RV Park and can highly recommend the wooded FHU location right on Jackson Lake with a marina and restaurant. Our friends took a breakfast cruise to an island right from the site and raved about the scenery and food prepared al fresco just for them.

Next stop was Yellowstone National Park. We stayed outside the park at Rex Hale National Forest Campground .



Rex Hale Campground

One of the most amazing memories was being stuck in a bison traffic jam in the Lamar Valley and watching a large herd of bison leisurely cross the road, swim across the river, and then disappear up into hillside trees.



This meant driving into the Park each day past the stunning shores of Yellowstone Lake, but afforded us uncrowded sites with at least electric hookup (– National Park campgrounds were without services). We thoroughly enjoyed covering the entire loop road both north and south over 2 days, visiting all the major thermal and lodge sites and lunching at Theodore Roosevelt Lodge.



Grand Canyon of the
Yellowstone River

Yellowstone's Mammoth Hot Spring Terraces

Our next major homeward stop was the gorgeous Black Hills area of South Dakota, and southern Wyoming. We spent almost a week there enjoying Devils Tower National Monument, Crazy Horse Memorial, Mount Rushmore, waterfalls of Spearfish, Deadwood, Badlands National Park, Theodore Roosevelt National Park and Custer State Park, Prairie Homestead and Wall Drug. Phew! Highly recommend all those places except Wall Drug – tourist trap for sure.



Our first Black Hills camping stop was the Devils Tower KOA which had an amazing number of Airstreams camped each night. One night we enjoyed an impromptu Airstreamer campfire, including with our new Regional VP, Gary Russo and his wife!

Devil's Tower KOA

Andy on the trail near
Devil's Tower

Our second Black Hills campsite was Custer State Park in SD -- a beautiful and large park with historic lodges and an amazing abundance of wildlife. We were able to see fairly up close: bison, elk, prairie dogs, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, deer, wild burros, and turkeys.



Campsite at Custer State Park

One of the most memorable excursions was up Needles Highway in the Park early in the morning and being stopped from traversing the Needle Eye tunnel by a small herd of mountain goats which refused to stop licking the calcium off the rocks inside and exit.



The last goat finally leaves the tunnel



Another great memory was the Cowboy Chuckwagon Cookout excursion into the hills.

At Mount Rushmore



We had a fantastic time -- but its so good to get home!

Travels Out West - Continuing

So What Broke On This Trip?

An Article by: Andy Dowell, BRN# 6684

I would like to take this opportunity to share our experiences with some problems we had with our Airstream. All of us will have problems with our campers at some time or another - things get dislodged, break, leak, you name it. Lots of things can happen as these things go bounding down the road.

So, we had three problems on our recent trip to Wyoming for the International Rally. One was a leaky toilet, another was a broken holding tank support strap, and the last was a broken part in one of the brakes.

We have a Dometic porcelain toilet, which we very much prefer over the plastic models. These toilets have a plastic base bolted to the porcelain bowl. Ours separated at this point, causing leakage - not a lot, but mostly foul odors. According to Dometic, there is no real fix for this problem - the two parts are not designed to be reattached after they've been separated. There are videos and posts on the internet describing how to reattach the base and bowl, but it is not an easy task, and I don't know where one could find replacement hardware. My real concern was how much damage had been done to the floor - had it rotted out under the toilet? If so, how to repair it? Could we effect repairs on the road, or should we wait until we return home? Along our route, we found a Camping World, and they had a replacement toilet, so we decided to try to replace it. It turned out to be a straightforward and relatively easy task. Shut the water off and disconnect the water supply line from the foot valve. Remove the caps and nuts from the hold down bolts. Remove the toilet. Clean and inspect the floor. Fortunately for us, there was no apparent water damage to the floor. The new toilet came with hold down bolts and a rubber washer, and the installation went quickly and easily. The only tools required were a flat blade screwdriver (or some other tool, to pop off the hold down bolt covers) an adjustable wrench, and a Philips screwdriver to attach the seat.

As for the holding tank strap, we traveled on some pretty rough roads. Some weren't actually roads, more like what one might find on the Oregon Trail. Apparently, something caught the strap - one of five supporting the holding tanks - and pulled it loose. There are two bolts attaching each of these straps to the bottom of the trailer. One of these had been pulled out; the bolt was gone, and the hole was stripped. Not to mention the strap was bent and twisted. I'm guessing this is one of the reasons some Airstreamers have for lifting their trailers. Fortunately for us, we were staying the night on a ranch in North Dakota, a Boondockers Welcome host, and the owners - wonderful folks - had a well-stocked workshop. We were able to pull the trailer into the shop, onto a concrete floor; jack up one side and remove the wheels; and remove the strap. They had a large bench vise, which was handy for bending the strap (aluminum) back into its original shape. But the real challenge was the missing bolt and stripped hole. I considered leaving the strap off and taking care of it when we returned home, but we were still a long way from home. A replacement - larger diameter - bolt was found, and we were able to tap the hole and reattach the strap. If this had happened anywhere else, I'm not sure what we would have done; maybe we would have found some way to remove the strap or bend it and tie it up to something, but there's not a lot of places under the trailer to tie something to.

Our trailer has dual axles. Thank goodness. Leaving a state park on Lake Huron, we heard a noise which turned out to be a metallic object bouncing around in one of the trailer brake drums. The park maintenance staff were very helpful, they offered us use of their tools; but they didn't have the tools needed to remove the brake drum. In trying to figure out the problem, I noticed that the broken part would wedge in somewhere,

and lock the drum from turning, and this meant there was no way to tow the trailer with the wheel mounted. I remembered hearing somewhere that a dual axle trailer can be towed on three wheels, so this is what we did. As luck would have it, our next destination was a state park near The Mothership. So we drove from north of Detroit to Jackson Center, some 280 miles, on three trailer wheels. The trailer handled well, no sway to speak of. Braking was a little bit degraded, so I had to pay more attention to speed and braking. The service department at Jackson Center took pity on us, and they were able to fit us into their full schedule, so after a couple of nights at the Terraport, we were on our way.

DelMarVa Airstream Club Installation Meeting and Rally October 20 through 22, 2023

Delaware Seashore State Park

Web Site: <https://destateparks.com/Beaches/DelawareSeashore>



Plan now to attend the DelMarVa Airstream Club Fall Rally and Club Installation Meeting.

Please join us for this important club gathering.

The meeting will be held at a nearby restaurant, details to follow.

Both the North and South Camping Areas are available through October 31.

Sites with full hook-up are available at both areas.

We will be providing additional information regarding this activity.

Meet the DelMarVa Airstream Club Officers and Volunteers

Being somewhat new to the DelMarVa Airstream Club myself, I thought it would be great to publish photos of our Officers and Volunteers so you might be able to pick them out at upcoming meetings and rallies.



Andy Dowell, President and Webmaster



**Paul and Elaine McVinney
1st and 2nd Vice Presidents Respectively**



**Katharine Dowell, Recording Secretary
And Trustee**



**Chuck Helwig, Treasurer
(with Maggie)**



Mike Field, Trustee



Charlie Michels, Trustee
(with Nancy Eldridge)



Roger Sansom, Membership Chair
(with Celeste)



Denis Clements, Newsletter Editor

The Looking for Information, Advice Corner, and For Sale Items from our Members

If you would like to post a question or comment for the DelMarVa Airstream Club folks, please let me know.

Looking for nuggets that would be good info for our club members.

Looking for questions that you would prefer to keep in the club.

For Sale

2 pairs of Dexter trailer brake assemblies, models K23-458-00 and K23-459-00.

Brand new, in unopened boxes. \$150 per pair (left and right).

Call/text/email me.

Andy Dowell

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Editorial Review

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