

The NorCal News



Volume 61 Number 5

The Poppy

July 2024

President's Message

Greetings fellow Airstreamers! My year as president of NorCal is moving along pretty fast. We've already had four really successful and fun rallies. The highlight of this year was Vinnie's Silver Bullet Roundup. I would venture to say it was the best rally I have ever attended. If I were asked what made it so special, I would say it was all the care that Vinnie and Cindy Lamica put into preparing the ranch, the way he parked each of our trailers, the tour of his new shop, the back-up class where most of us got a shot at trying it, him and Cindy being there, carrying on with all of us, and the way they made us feel so special. I can't thank Vinnie and Cindy enough for hosting us. Who knows if there will be another rally there in the future, so I am really happy it happened first during my tenure. My heartfelt appreciation goes to NorCal hosts, Dave & Marget Williams, Gail & Dan Crutchfield, and Vicki & Gary DeSmet. They worked so well with Vinnie and Cindy to create as much fun as anyone can have in just four days. Thank you!

José and I just got back from the Quintessential Quincy Rally. It was a warmer than usual for this time of the year in Quincy, but all of us dealt



with it just fine and had a great time. The hosts: Terry & Steve Holifield and Juliet & Brian Scheuer, put together a really fun rally with many activities and great raffle prizes; everyone won something. Perhaps, the highlight of the rally was the tour of the Sierra Pacific Industries Lumber Mill. We learned interesting facts about the history and significance of the lumber industry in Plumas County, and of the mill itself. The tour of the facility took us through the different phases of milling. Many thanks to Juliet for arranging the tour and to the staff at the SPI Mill.

I am looking forward to escaping the heat and heading to the coastal area of Pescadero for our August rally at the Costanoa KOA. And of course, our three-club rally in September, which José and I are co-hosting with the presidents of the Sac Valley and the Greater Bay Area Clubs. Co-hosting are also NorCalers Doug Fitzgerald and newly added co-hosts Amy and Tom Webster. Thank you co-hosts! We have 68 rigs signed up with 130 people! We have many activities planned which promise to make it a memorable rally. This will be a great opportunity to make new friends and adventures.

I will leave you with this thought from none other than George Carlin: "Kilometers are shorter than miles. Save gas, take your next trip in kilometers." Until next time, safe travels.

Carmen Ortiz, NorCal President



Riding the Lake Almanor Recreational Trail.
Front row: Jose and Carmen Ortiz, Michele Dauber
Back row: Mike and Phyllis Minadeo, Ken Dauber.

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From the Editor

Greetings everyone and happy July. The Club is laying low in July with no rallies or events planned. However, the past several months have been busy for some, what with Region 12's Cali Rally in April and the infamous Vinnie Rally in May. Summaries on both appear in this issue. Plus a bonus – a partial report on the first week of the Texas Six Shooter National Caravan that four NorCal couples attended from Mid-April to Mid-June. After Ed and I finished the Caravan, we spent some extra time in Texas, visited my cousin in Oklahoma, then returned on Highway 40/route 66, taking our time along the way to see the sights. All of us who participated thought the Caravan was a fun time, so if you want to experience a very different part of the country, it is a winner. And the leaders are great; very committed to seeing that you have a good time doing what YOU want to do.



Currently the Caravan is reportedly full for next year, but the leaders are developing a wait list, so sign up if you are interested. You never know if you may get on as it is typical people drop out before it starts. I have been told that the leaders are committed to leading it for at least three years, so the year after next is also a possibility. Log into the airstreamclub.org website, click on events and caravans, and scroll down to "more information." All the Caravans will pop-up. Click on the one farthest left in Texas. (There is a shorter Caravan in November for just the West of the Pecos area in Texas that includes much of what we saw in our first week.)

One thing we learned is that Spring in California is wonderful and to be appreciated, compared to the storm-infested areas of central Texas. Fortunately we were able to avoid hail, tornados and flooding, despite all the thunder storms over and around us, and the rain did not dampen our enthusiasm for learning about Texas and its history, which in many respects parallels California's. And we were able to enjoy the beautiful wildflowers!

A big thank-you to all those who submitted photos for this issue. It was wonderful. But a pointer: If you are taking photos with a cell phone, make sure you tap the center for proper focusing prior to shooting the photo. Also be wary of the the lighting conditions. Sadly, I found many good photos, once inserted in the newsletter, were too blurry and pixilated for use.

Also, don't forget: if you go someone where on an Airstream trip, please consider submitting an article for the Poppy so we can all enjoy what you experienced. Or if the shoe fits, commiserate and be empathetic. It is always nice to know what people have been up to, and it does not have to be long.

See you down the road, maybe at Costanoa, the Club's next rally.

Elisa Ungerman, Poppy Editor

2024 Rally Schedule

~~March 6 - 10~~

~~Buellton Flying Flags Resort, Buellton Ca
Hosts: Hurleys & Marsons~~

~~April 3 - 7~~

~~Napa
Hosts: Shackleford/Ogilvie & Fritz/Ames~~

~~April 18 - 21~~

~~Cali Rally, V 6 Ranch
Hosts: Region 12
<https://form.jotform.com/232265371580152>~~

~~May 8 - 12~~

~~Vinnies Ranch, Wilton CA
Hosts: Williams & Crutchfields~~

~~June 12-16~~

~~Pioneer RV Park, Quincy, Ca
Hosts: Hollifields & Scheuers~~

~~August 7 - 12~~

~~Costa Noa Resort, Pescadero Ca
Hosts: Salingers & Bartelts~~

~~September 4-8~~

~~McCloud RV Park, McCloud, CA (joint rally) Hosts:
Ortizes, Goldsteins, Fitzgerald, Websters~~

~~September 11 - 15~~

~~Tahoe Valley Campground, South Lake Tahoe
Host: Region 12~~

~~October 5 -10~~

~~Sedalia, Missouri
Host: Airstream Club International
<https://airstreamclub.org/rally2024>~~

~~October 9 -13~~

~~Pomo RV Park, Fort Bragg, Ca
HOSTS STILL NEEDED~~

~~November 6-10~~

~~Dumbarton Quarry Campground, Fremont CA
Hosts: Bells & Mineados~~

~~December 4 - 8~~

~~49er Rv Resort, Plymouth Ca
Hosts: Scheuers & Team Paz~~

The Fine Print

New info shown in green. Dates are arrival and departure, although you can often request early arrival or Monday departure. Sign-ups are accomplished by submitting a completed Registration Jotform and payment to the Club Registrar. If a rally is full, there is a wait list. "Buddy" events allow you to invite a non-member even if they don't own an Airstream. Events lacking hosts or the minimum number of campers may be cancelled.

Cali Rally

April 18-21, 2024
V-6 RANCH
 Hosted by Region 12



NorCalers in Attendance

Ed Note: Every two years, Region 12 puts on the four day Cali Rally, a western-themed boondocking Airstream rally that for its recent history, has been held at the V-6 Ranch in the Cholame Valley near Paso Robles. <https://www.v6ranch.com/> Gary DeSmet participated this year and submitted the following report.

Ah, Cali Rally. It began innocently enough at the "Almond Grove Oasis Resort" in Coalinga, off I-5, the Wednesday before. Not an Oasis, not a Resort, and no Almond Trees in sight. It was, however, made all better with dinner at the premiere local eatery: the Shell station's Fresh Choice or Mikey's Michelin? No... Baja Fresh. Luckily, the one lady preparing food was totally ready for a party of 25. Empty cup for water: \$3.99. An ice cold beer, with cup? \$4.99. It was an absurdly good time. Tom & Amy Webster were put — by the way — in 'permanent' spaces at Almond Oasis. Please stop by and visit them, very convenient to the I-5, just past Harris Ranch.

Seven a.m. departure for the hour and a half drive to the V6 Ranch: 20,000 acres of still-green rolling hills and iconic California oak-studded slopes. Entrancing, actually. Departure/leg was perfect until the Crutchfield lead vehicle chose a 'shortcut.' We did see them again, but much, much later. Some of us

chose to ignore the tortured voice called Siri demanding we 'make a U-turn... on the 5.



We entered V6 Ranch, so named for the Varian family that has ranched there since... 1920? 1885? It all blends together. 75 rigs were due. Hold... make that 85. Wow! So we all ... wait, please. 95 RIGS??

The no-generator contingent was shepherded to the Way Back, where the mud was only just drying. Can the V6 handle 95 tiny Airstreams? Yes. But we had only a few of those. Many were 30' darlings, pulled by F850s, the largest human passenger vehicle ever imagined. Incredibly, every Airstream was placed with care and understanding. It was a remarkable achievement pulled off by a determined team of Region 12 parkers. Easy duty: 8-4 plus 180 irate Airstreamers. Kidding. It was not easy duty. Kidding! It was. Airstreamers LOVE a challenge

V6 has 8 or so guest cottages in the same area. 4 flush toilets are available

plus 4 showers. Certainly ample for guest cottage mobs. 95 Airstreams? Turns out it was. Just in case, the Salingers shared 2 Porta Potties stationed nearby their trailer with utmost grace.

In the central area were 15 large tables with seating for 1,000. Or so it seemed.



Then there were the dogs. 95 Airstreams include 347 dogs. As you know, already... Airstream dogs have to be 83 pounds to start. As usual, every dog was masterfully trained and friendly. Yes, 347 dogs is exaggerated. But I digress...

The Central area... had a big grill, cowboy-style; big, mechanical, and hot. Ample for 8-12 guest cottages. But for 95 Airstreams, each lugging a smallish side of beef? Another shocking success! Airstreamers are the most cooperative and helpful people on earth. Ok, I jest. But nearly! All the meat was cooked in about an hour. There was a guy ("Region 12 Don") with a golf club fitted with meat hook. He also flipped the meat when asked, but primarily he kept the Airstreamers calm. V6 provided sides and dessert.

The Varian family was present during the entire event. No kidding. 6-12 people? They were amazing. It appears they are livin' the life, doing service together and with notable joy. One night, they provided dinner for all. Enough meat was cooked for everyone plus another dessert and sides. Dessert for 190? All homemade. They provided a breakfast, too. That family is worth the price of admission.



There were trail rides and cycling tours, line dancing classes and 'towing for women' classes. I learned how to rivet (hands-on) and will now replace my missing interior rivets. What could go wrong? (Note: if you put a patch on your exterior, cut it onto a cool shape, like a jumping trout before you apply it. No joke.) Rivets can be installed in cute pictures, too!



Rich Luhr was there — the guy from The Air Gear Store (formerly Airstream Life). Rich did a talk on lithium batteries

which was generously attended. Attention was rapt. As advertised, Rich's wife, Cheryl, is the brains behind that outfit. Silly me — it's never the guy.

Fisher people fished, cyclists cycled, walkers walked, dog people "dogged." There may have been some alcohol involved.



Oh, yes, there was a whiskey tasting night. Two nights had live music with robust country dancing, rocked primarily by the Verdigaals, Janie Salinger, and Dean Davison.



Many men were heard to say! "It's my knee, darlin'. But y'all go swing it up!" Suggestions for the next CaliRally: half marathon, cow wrasslin', speed prime beef eatin', mud wrasslin' for couples. Just ideas. The V6 Ranch is a spectacular, unique, hills-all-around setting. It is remarkable that 95 Airstreams took up occupancy for 4 days and, weirdly, fit right in. Recommendation: Five Stars Oh, and there were a number of vintage Airstreams. 8? That was fun too. NorCal had the biggest contingent, outpacing the Los Angeles club. We challenged them to a West Side Rumble but they were too chicken.



NorCal Club Contacts 2024

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Cathy Maffei	Sunshine	marymaffei@sbcglobal.net	916-662-1010

Welcome New Members

Clifford and Clara Dane

Jim Darwin

Liz & John Garcia

Angela & Josh Hicks

Todd & Shannon Larsen

Robert Gregoire & Kathleen Socolofsky

Kimmie & Hector Sandoval

Welcome New Affiliate Members

Linda Bailey & Ronald Wurgley

Toby Coursen & Susan Bromley

Becca & Roger Franklin

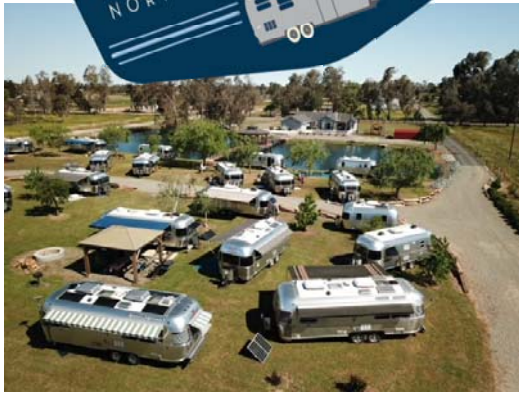
NorCal Membership Numbers	
186	Unit/Life Memberships
<u>67</u>	<u>Affiliate Memberships</u>
253	Total Memberships

Airstream Club International on the Web
<https://airstreamclub.org/>
Region 12 on the Web
<https://airstreamclub.org/region12>
NorCal on the Web
<https://airstreamclub.org/northern->



Silver Bullet Round-Up

May 8 -12 - - Vinnie's "Resort" - - Wilton, CA



Vinnie's Silver Bullet Round-up really describes our wonderful rally on Vinnie and Cindy's property. The Lamica's live in Wilton on a beautiful piece of property with a scenic pond, a gazebo, and a fire pit. On the property also is Vinnie's old workshop, which of course is the envy of every man there. And, he has a tractor, green and yellow, can you believe it?

Wednesday, when everyone was arriving, Vinnie had a vision of parking all of the airstreams on the grass in the center area by the pond, with the trucks parked in a separate area. The Airstreams were pulled up to the garage, unhooked, their trucks parked. Then Vinnie separately parked each Airstream with his tractor. It worked like a charm and I think everybody had a really great spot. Of course, that night after all that work, we had happy hour, followed by a wonderful potluck. Brian Scheuer, grandfather to be, made one of his signature bonfires for everyone's enjoyment.

On Thursday, there were several activities in which Airstreamers participated. Most of the group went to the Wilton Family Lavender Farm. It was a beautiful property with many lavender varieties, vignettes, picnic tables and a beautiful gift store with all things lavender, including lavender lemonade.



There were other things to do in the area including wine tasting and five of the members went to the Sacramento Shooting Club and shot trap. In the afternoon, we had happy hour and dinner was on your own. There were numerous nice restaurants in and around Elk Grove, Sheldon and Wilton that members went to for dinner.

On Friday, the big treat was a tour of Vinnie's new North Bay Airstream facility in Sacramento. If you've never been to a first class repair shop, you really missed out. Everyone was captivated by all the employees and the shop production.



At two o'clock, a fly fishing class was held at Vinnies Pond to familiarize and refresh the casting skills of those who wanted to participate. There were five instructors and numerous Airstreamers who were casting their line toward and into the pond.



At four o'clock we had a happy hour, followed by a wonderful barbecue dinner by Backwoods Barbecue. There were scrumptious barbecue pulled pork sliders, four- cheese mac & cheese, bodacious baked beans, and bacon & blue cheese coleslaw. I think everyone agreed that the portions were extremely generous and the food was very, very good. Dinner was followed by It's It's ice cream sandwiches for dessert. And if that wasn't enough, Travelers Band set up in Vinnie's shop and played nonstop for three hours. Several of Vinnie's employees came over with their children, and there was a lot of dancing and great times had to the music of the Travelers.



On Saturday, Vinnie gave a towing class, with a twist, to all the Airstreamers who wanted to up their game on backing into a spot. The twist was you would be driving Vinnies John Deere Tractor with a flat bed trailer behind it. The technique that he demonstrated was called the "swoop and scoop." Each participant got a chance to learn and practice. I think everybody had a really good time and learned a new and very useful technique.

continued



Saturday afternoon Vinnie held a question and answer session about trailer maintenance. After that, of course, was happy hour, where new members Ken & Michelle Dauber and Ryan, Julie and Maddy Parker were introduced, then dinner on your own. Brian, as usual, made a wonderful bonfire in the fire pit and allowed some of the children to have s'mores.



And of course, a rally is incomplete without a prize drawing. The hosts had made 12 gift baskets, most of which were intended for the ladies, but there were two for the guys in particular. It was a great time and everybody seemed to enjoy it.



We were entertained from 6:30 to 8:30 by Nikki Perez who played the guitar and sang for us. She was sponsored by



Vinnie and Cindy.

On Sunday, it was time to pack up, say goodbye and head for home. It was a very easy routine for Vinnie to hook up a trailer and get it in a position to be towed away. Everyone was on their way by 11:00 a.m.

Dave Williams



The Wilton Lavender Farm



The Towing Class



Vinnie's Shop Tour

One of the highlights of the rally was touring Vinnie's repair shop located at the Army Depot in Sacramento. Many of us have taken our trailer to Vinnie for various repairs over the years. But now, not only has his shop expanded, so have the services he offers, all under one roof, with the help of some very talented people.

Our first stop on the tour was with Jake of Master Applied Coatings; he is the expert on Ceramic Coating for your Airstream. He explained how they meticulously remove any foreign materials from the skin of your trailer, then described how they apply the coating. Jake also reviewed how to care for your trailer once it is treated and the benefits of having their Ceramic Coating. Members that have had their trailers coated seem to really enjoy the ease of cleaning their trailer.

Ivan Ivanov with Prime Tech PDR was the next expert we visited. Ivan's

skill removing dents from a trailer was AMAZING.



We watched as he worked on a trailer that had hail damage. The skill and patience he took for each dent was unbelievable. After he had worked on one dent for several minutes I couldn't tell where it was so I asked him to show me, and I still couldn't find any evidence of a dent. Ivan said he still needed to work on that dent a little more. All of us were mesmerized watching the process and the end result.

If ever you need any cabinetry repair or modifications done in your Airstream, Doug Ide with Ide Innovations is the go-to person. His work is pure perfection and his attention to detail lets you know he takes his art seriously. If you can think of what you'd like done/changed on the interior of your trailer, Doug can do it.

continued



Allen Wilkens with Airsafe Distribution Hitches from Michigan was on hand to explain how their weight distribution hitch works.



Vinnie added that it will save a lot of wear and tear to your trailer by evenly distributing the weight, making the trailer and all its contents ride more smoothly. It is a very large hitch and there was some discussion about removing it from your truck. It seems Vinnie has a solution for just about anything Airstream.



Lastly but certainly not least was Vinnie and his crew – the ones that work together in the shop to make those repairs on your Airstream.



Vinnie showed us one of several trailers with front-end separation on which they were working, explaining that they go above and beyond just “repairing” an issue. They analyze the cause of the problem to correct it so when they make the repair it hopefully will not reoccur. Vinnie and his crew of Clayson, Christian and Devon pride themselves on making sure your trailer is repaired to their best ability.

One integral person to Vinnie’s operation not part of the tour is Courtney, Vinnie’s center of logistics, and information. How would this group of talented people stay organized and get anything completed without her? She keeps track of everything going on in shop while keeping you updated and informed on the work being done on your trailer. And she always does so with a smile.

The tour was most informative, and it was great to meet those that make it all work.

Billie Verdegaal

Thanks to Bob Verdegaal for taking drone photos of Vinnie’s rally. Thanks to everyone who supplied photos of the rallies for The Poppy! You rock!



- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 John/Elain White | 11 Barry/Claudia Marson |
| 2 Tom/Lora Broad | 13 Dave/Jill Wilson |
| 2 Mark/Darlene Winchell | 22 Tom/Patti Reed |
| 6 Tony/Betty Sica | 27 James/Sarah Curl |
| 7 John/Mary Diamond | 29 Steve/Leslie Irely |
| 7 Ronald/Luann Hollis | |

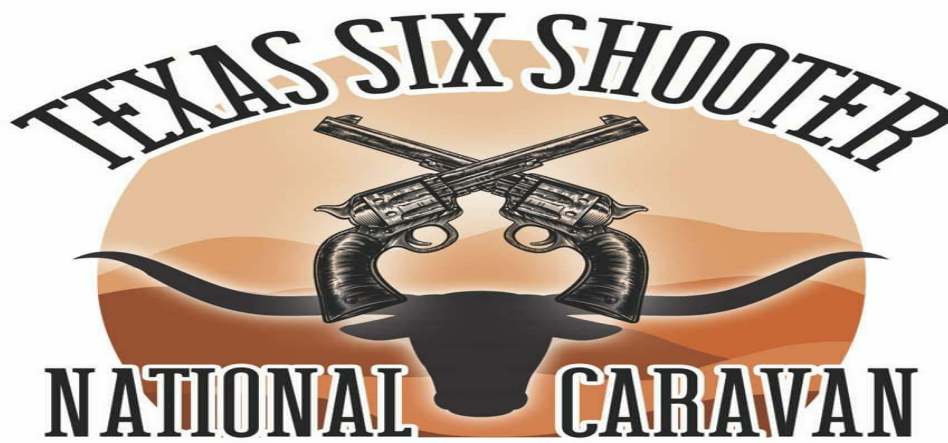


- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3 Audrey Langstroth | 24 Brian Scheur |
| 5 Jill Wilson | 31 Maureen Delorefice |
| 10 Bob Echols | 31 Bob Minder |
| 13 Margaret Handshoe | 31 Melody Rasco |
| 15 Dan Crutchfield | |
| 21 Alan Aguilar | |

NorCal would like to recognize the birthdays and anniversaries of **all** our Members and Affiliates. To ensure you are included in the Poppy, please send Marget Williams (NorCal Membership Chair) an e-mail with your Name (First and Last) and your Birthday and Anniversary (Month and Day only).

norcalmembership@comcast.net

We have noted that many attending rallies are not on the list - so call or email Marget to check if you are!



TEXAS SIX SHOOTER NATIONAL CARAVAN

First
Installment
by
Elisa
Ungerman

The 2024 Texas Six Shooter Caravan started on April 10 in Alpine (West) Texas, at the Lost Alaskan RV Park, where we met our leaders, Pam and Jim Dudley and Barb and Keith Roberts, two very nice couples who live in Texas and are passionate about showing off their state.



Our Leaders: the Dudleys and Roberts

We received a welcome bag chock full of souvenir items, along with a binder thick with information on the rally and places we would or could be seeing. This was our first national caravan, but we were accompanied by NorCal caravan stalwarts: Tom & Hedda Smithson, Cam & Marcia Murray, and Jane & Mike Malone.

First Stop: Alpine, Texas

The first night consisted of a happy hour meet & greet with the other caravaners, and a BBQ dinner put on by the leaders as they explained what to expect during the next four weeks. Afterwards, we had our first "get acquainted meetings" which, for the uninitiated, are brief small group social gatherings to allow everyone to get to know each other. These "GAMs," evidently a requirement on National Airstream Caravans, continued throughout the first several days of the caravan, until everyone had been in at least one group with everyone else.

Alpine was not much more than a cattle camp and railroad stop until Sul Ross University was built in 1920. Sul Ross started as a teacher's college, with its most famous alumni being Dan Blocker of Bonanza fame. It became a public university in 1969 and has since expanded its horizons, among other things, to help to fund research of the Big Bend area, including the Chihuahuan desert, the largest hot desert in North America that encompasses parts of southwest Arizona, much of New Mexico (including Albuquerque), most of far west to mid south Texas, plus a large chunk of Northern Mexico. It is what you see while driving for miles and miles and miles on I-10 from Southeast Arizona to the middle of Texas.



Part of the Chihuahuan Desert seen from I-10

On our second day, we visited the Big Bend Desert Museum at the University. This museum gave us a great introduction to geologic, natural, social, and political history of the Big Bend area of Texas which we were slated to visit. This area is where many Indian battles were fought after the Civil War, and where many of the Buffalo Soldiers were stationed as Texas western migration occurred.

We then drove over to the Chihuahuan Desert Institute which essentially is a large botanical garden

containing many of the various Chihuahuan desert plants that are much more diverse than expected. There are several hikes through the area, including one where you can see the difference in plants as the elevation increases. We developed a much greater appreciation of the Chihuahuan desert with its diversity of plants and animals, depending on where you are in the desert that is so big, it includes its own mountain ranges. There was plenty of cacti, most of them on the small side, Ocotillo, Yucca. Mesquite, but also pine trees.



Jane Malone in the Desert Museum



Hiking at the Institute

Ed and I also managed to check out nearby Fort Davis National Historic Site, which is in the process of being restored, and is a wonderful example of a large West Texas frontier fort with an interesting history. You are able to walk about the entire area, and many of the buildings have been restored or their foundations have been cleaned and labeled.



That evening, others made it farther, out to MacDonald Observatory located about an hour or so away.

On our third day in Alpine, the group headed over to another West Texas town, Marfa, to have cocktails and dinner at the old Paisano hotel, a hotel built in the 1920s that has been lovely restored and calls itself "a true West Texas Experience." That it is.



Lobby of Hotel Paisano

Originally utilized by cattle ranchers selling and buying livestock in the area, it's claim to fame is that in 1955, it was the host hotel/gathering place for the cast and crew of the movie GIANT starring Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson and James Dean. There are many movie still posters around the hotel.



The group in logo T shirts at the Paisano

We ordered cocktails from the beautiful bar, which we enjoyed on the patio, then had a buffet dinner in the stunning dining room, followed by live music. After dinner, some attempted to see the "Marfa lights," an unexplained phenomena that some claim is real and others deny exist. There is a viewing area off the highway but no one had any luck that night. Others ventured to find the *Prada Marfa* and the nearby *Mini Buc-ees* (more later on Buc-ees). Despite trying to recreate itself as an artist's colony, Marfa still has a way to go, but as with many West Texas towns, it is a county seat, and has a beautiful operational courthouse, if not much else besides the hotel yet.



Presidio County Courthouse in Marfa

Second Stop: Big Bend Country (Lajitas, Texas)

After three days in Alpine, it was time to move south into Big Bend country, near the Rio Grande. Our destination was the Maverick Ranch RV Park in Lajitas, Texas, a ghost town turned resort, with the RV park being part of the

resort. It turned out to be a terrific place to stay, with a pool and an air-conditioned club house, necessary as the temps went into the 100s while we were there (20 degrees over "normal") and full access to the lovely resort across the street that included a wonderful restaurant, bar, bakery and ice cream shop: a real oasis in the desert.

We learned that there is the over 800,000 acre Big Bend National Park, and also a 300,000 acre Big Bend State Park, both of which we visited while there, and both well worth the trip. One of the highlights of Big Bend NP is Saint Elena Canyon that the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo flows through. Another is the Chisos Basin, surrounded by the Chisos Mountains and the location of the Big Bend Lodge. Beautiful!



The "Window" in the Basin



Saint Elena Canyon

Much of the Rio Grande in Big Bend NP was dried up, as most of the headwaters have been damned for cities in New Mexico and Texas. There was enough water in the River in the State Park and we were able to dip our toes in for meeting criteria on the "Honorary Texan" checklist as part of the Caravan. We also saw "hoodoo" rock formations that are very interesting.



It's official: in the Rio Grande; yes Mexico is behind me



Check out these above ground vault toilets at the state campground. NO smell or flies at all.



Hoodooos behind us

We were in Lajitas for five and half days, able to pretty much do what we wanted during the day, with lots of free time to call our own. At night, there was a cook-out, or campfire, and on one night, a chili cook-off where there were some surprisingly good entries. One morning we were all able to meet for a fantastic buffet breakfast at the resort, ostensibly to see the sun rise but of course it was cloudy that morning. We had a group

lunch at the nearby classic Sierra Bar & Grill in Terlingua, an old former mining town that now is home to converted Airstreams and other tiny-type homes, where we all tasted Texas Prickly Pear Margaritas and had "Tex Mex."



One night we had dinner at the famous Starlight Theatre Restaurant that has to be experienced to be believed. The food was amazing given its location and reservations are high impossible to get.



While we were in Lajitas, we were able to see some beautiful sunsets as it cooled down, but unfortunately, those promised "dark skies" never materialized due to the full moon the entire time we were there.



Interestingly, in Big Bend National Park there is a border crossing between the Park and a small town in Mexico known as Boquillas, formerly a silver mining town whose reason for being now is tourism. On our last day in Big Bend country, several caravaners made the trip to Boquillas, which involves going through the Port of Entry, crossing the Rio Grande (when we were there you could wade or

stay dry by paying a nominal fee to ride across in a small boat, and walking or renting a donkey and riding the 1/2 mile to the town.



There is not much to the town: some ramshackle houses, a school, a church, a few restaurants and several souvenir stands.



Once there, you pay an additional \$4 to the Policia who ostensibly protect the town and you from any gang activity that might occur. Several of our group bought items and I eventually did find a wonderful hand painted cowboy hat for \$15 that I love to wear when it is warm. We had the lunch special of goat tacos (surprisingly tasty) at the restaurant for \$8 and we

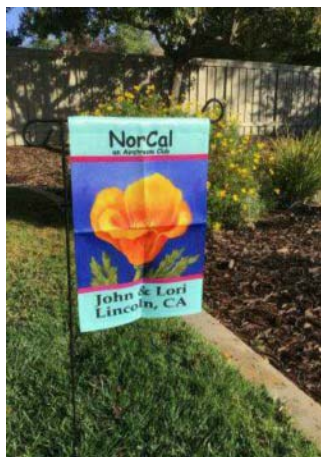


made the return trip back to the Port of Entry, where we showed our passports and underwent questioning through a one-way Ipad before being allowed to re-enter the USA. That night we had a pizza party while getting ready for the next leg of our trip. *Next Leg: San Antonio*

July 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

You can order your NorCal Garden Flag directly from Flagology. Complete instructions are in the January Poppy issue. For any questions, the NorCal contact is John Bibby (707) 592-4891. The Flagology contact is Connor Young (855) 347-4922. Click here to order, or copy and paste in your browser: <https://www.flagology.com/product/personalized-norcal-airstream-club-garden-flag-12-5-x-18/>



You can obtain your colorful NorCal Membership Badge whenever you attend a rally. Also available is the five inch club logo sticker for your Airstream or Tow Vehicle. It has the same design shown on the masthead of The Poppy. Contact Marget Williams to get yours for free, a perk of membership when you attend a rally.

