

# UWAC Willamette Dammit — June 2024

*Caravan co-hosted by Chris & Vic Gabrenas, Holly & Ron Jorgensen*



UWAC held a fun and successful caravan that criss-crossed portions of Idaho and Oregon out to the Pacific Ocean. The caravan was well attended with 15 trailers/motorhomes and 27 people, and ran from June 1 to 12. Most attendees reported having a memorable experience. Our first bonus stop was in Idaho near Declo at the Village of Trees RV Resort. This was a bonus night enroute and attended by a majority of participants; it's a good shady spot for an overnight stop when you are passing through this area. UWAC officially kicked-off the Willamette Dammit caravan at the Snake River RV Resort in Homedale, Idaho with a meet & greet reception on the banks of the beautiful Snake River. The sunset that first evening was splendid, signaling good omens for the caravan. The campground was a mixed-bag with a really nice riverside pavilion and some beautiful camp spots on the river, lots of lawn and trees, but some maintenance needed at some of the older sites. Weather was good for our gathering.

From the Snake River, the group traveled across the Great Basin to scenic Bend situated on the eastern flank of the Cascade Mountains. We stayed at The Camp in downtown Bend which is a very nice, if not compact, urban type campground. The host there (Tyler) was very helpful and hospitable; the campground had a large propane fire pit and they provided complimentary coffee each morning. Oh... special thanks to Keith Lund for bringing the large coffee pot and preparing coffee each morning of the caravan. It was nice to be able to gather over coffee and talk about plans for each day. Vic also made quite an impression as The Airstream Barista — see photo below.

We stayed in Bend for 3 nights and individuals & small groups conducted various activities of interest to them including dog-friendly hikes such as Tumalo Falls, Deschutes River Trail, Deschutes Brewery tours, visits to the High Desert Museum, small group tour of the Breedlove Guitar factory, and time walking around the shops and restaurants of downtown Bend and the Mill District (beautiful river area.) Unfortunately, the weather in Bend was windy and chilly but the group enjoyed the stay and all of the activities mentioned above & more. Apparently only mechanical bikes (not e-bikes) work in this type of weather — chirp, chirp. Bend is definitely worth a repeat visit, and The Camp is a great place to stay. Special thanks to Tyler for his hospitality!

We then traveled through the scenic Cascade Mountains to McMinnville for a 4 night stay at the Olde Stone Village. The RV park was close enough to town to be able to ride bikes into town where there is a cute downtown complete with wine tasting rooms, breweries, shops, restaurants and a really fun Farmer's Market that many of us visited. The weather was warm and pleasant and several folks took advantage to hang-out at the swimming pool right after we arrived — the warmer weather was very welcome. Our first group outing in McMinnville was a private tasting at Lolati Wines on Thursday. The winemaker (Leigh Brown) and owner has South African roots and produces excellent wines using grapes imported from Washington. We enjoyed her hospitality and wines in a beautiful tasting room, and these wines provided a nice complement to traditional Willamette wines (primarily Pinot Noir.) Thanks, Leigh - we had a great time!!

Old Stone Village is next to the world-class Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum which a large group of us visited on Friday, 6/7. The museum was celebrating the 80th anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Normandy and they had a special screening of a movie narrated by Tom Brokaw in their Imax theater. The museum is very large and impressive — definitely worth a visit. Individuals and small groups also did various hikes and bike rides throughout the very scenic Willamette and McMinnville areas.

On Saturday night, the group gathered at the J Wrigley Vineyards in nearby Sheridan, OR for a private tasting and BBQ brisket dinner. The owners were fantastic hosts and knowledgeable in all facets of wine growing and wine making. Nana's dinner was extraordinary (we'll be watching out for her forthcoming cookbook), and we were able to enjoy it from high atop one of the most scenic locations in the Willamette area. John Wrigley provided a barrel-tasting opportunity for the group, sampling both single and multi-grape Pinot Noir wines grown from the estate. The wine enthusiasts in the group appreciated the many insights that John shared on making great wines (J Wrigley has won double-gold awards for some of their wines.) Everyone seemed to really enjoy this outing. Huge thanks to John, Jody, Nana, Elaine & crew for a truly great time!!

Our final leg took us through the dense coastal ranges to Cannon Beach. We stayed for 3 nights at the Cannon Beach RV Resort. The RV park was conveniently located within a 10-minute walk to shops and the beach, very near Haystack Rock — definitely recommend this location for anyone visiting the Oregon coast. The first morning, a large contingent of the group gathered for a walk to the beach and a low-tide visit to

beautiful Haystack Rock, an area truly rich with birds and wildlife. Folks did various other individual activities in the area such as hikes / bike rides, visits to Tillamook, Fort Clatsop, Astoria and more. As a group, we had a big pie celebration for Jen Campbell's 29th (rumored to be) birthday one night, and a grand "Something I Found Along the Way Smorgasbord" the last night that simply did not disappoint.

We truly appreciate the great group we had along for this adventure — thank you for sharing with us!! [p.s. - join the "UWAC Events & Photos (Utah Airstream Group)" private Facebook group for more photos from this caravan and other UWAC events.]

