

# GRAPES & GRAINS growler

NOVEMBER 2024

NEWSLETTER

GRAPES & GRAINS  
GROWLER, THE  
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER  
OF THE GRAPES &  
GRAINS W.B.C.C.I.  
INTRA-CLUB

#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Updates from the G&G Presidents
- Matt's Cocktail Bar
- Regional Representatives
- 1000th BRN
- Our First Caravan
- Sipping Across Missouri Recap
- Sip of the Finger Lakes Recap
- The Airstream Life
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- A Postcard from Sedalia
- Parking with G&G in York 2025
- 2025 Rally LineUp
- Who Are We?
- All Hours are Happy Ones
- Growler Submissions

## From the Desk of the President



Grains. Just two and a half years after its inception on October 15, 2024 our 1,000<sup>th</sup> BRN joined the club. I never would have imagined that this intra-club would have ever grown this big.

representative program to increase our presence in all 12 regions. Currently, we have eight regional representatives representing regions 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10.

*We are focusing on our three pillars: growth, value, and quality.*

Greetings G&G members,

Wow what a ride this has been! In January of 2022, as the country was emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic a small intra-club called Grapes & Grains was born within the Airstream community. Fast forward to May and the inaugural Grapes & Grains rally was held in Bardstown Kentucky. My wife and I decided that we wanted to join this new intra-club and be a part of the inaugural rally. We were one of the 18 rigs present when Mark and Karen Kruer, the founders of Grapes & Grains, held a fabulous rally. Jump ahead to October and we had grown to over 50 rigs. Mark extended his presidency one more year and I assumed the role of Vice President. I was inducted as VP at the Sip of Georgia where the second Grapes & Grains Rally hosted 48 rigs. With Grapes & Grains becoming the fastest growing club in all of Airstream Club International (ACI), the executive board focused on restructuring the bylaws and expanding the executive board to meet our growing needs. In October 2023, the membership voted and selected me as the next president of Grapes &

Currently the Executive Board is focusing on our three pillars: growth, value and quality. To sustain **growth**, we must offer our membership a variety of quality events all across North America. The **value** lies within the diversity of our membership, our thirst for knowledge pertaining to all things made from grapes and grains, our ability to host events across North America, along with our willingness to support the communities that we visit. The **quality** is driven by our membership as we conduct feedback driven reviews of rallies and events to determine what attendees liked, didn't like and any recommendations for improvement. Thus, we have created a framework so that the membership can direct what they want out of an event. Moving forward, our goal in 2025 and beyond is to offer more events to our membership. We are even looking into creating an event host pipeline where we host a rally for potential rally/event hosts. Additionally six months ago we launched our regional

From our small roots, Grapes & Grains is forging forward with gusto. As John Heywood said, "Many hands make light work." We invite you to make yourself an active part of this organization. Let's make Grapes & Grains not just the biggest club in all of ACI, but by far the best club in all of ACI!

It truly has been an honor to be your President for the past year. I have genuinely enjoyed working with your executive board, hosting rallies and a caravan for Grapes & Grains and most importantly making connections with many of you. I am excitedly looking forward to seeing how the club evolves in the coming years.

Safe travels to all and I look forward to seeing you down the road.

Cheers,  
David Lorenz  
President

# From the Desk of the 1st Vice President



**Mike & Tammy VanBuskirk**

Greetings Fellow Grapes & Grainers,

We just finished a great International Rally this year, full of fun, fellowship, and plenty of Grapes & Grains happy hours. From conducting or playing in the band, "Jammin" at the nightly jam sessions, and even dressing up for VAC's Halloween dance, our G&G members showed us how to have a fun time. And let us not forget the hard-working volunteers who worked for days before and during the rally to make things run smoothly.

We had an awesome Mega Tasting event this year, with almost 500 in attendance. We had wine, beer, and spirits from all over the country. It gave all of us a chance to branch out and try something different. Check out the Youtube [video](#) about the Mega Tasting. A big thanks to Bill Hamblin for putting this video together. Awesome job!

Just like our club, the Mega Tasting just keeps getting bigger and better and next year promises to be even bigger and better. If you were not able to attend this years Mega Tasting, signup as soon as the invite goes out. We will send it to our members first, then release it to the rest of the ACI. It typically sells out within a couple of weeks, so do not wait.

After the International Rally, we headed home to West Jefferson, North Carolina to do some work on our new house and clear the trees damaged by the recent storm. We were very blessed that the house weathered the storm with no damage.

Currently, Tammy and I are at the SIP of Virginia where we are enjoying catching up with our friends and taking a break from "housework." This is G&G installation rally

where our new officers will be installed for the next year. I will be serving as your president, and Steve Turley will be our new 1<sup>st</sup> VP. That leaves the 2<sup>nd</sup> VP position open for our newest member of the board, Cynthia Karkoska. For those who do not yet know her, she is a wonderful person who will be an excellent addition to our leadership team. I am looking forward to working with the entire board to keep Mark's dream of a Grapes & Grains Intra-club thriving.

The Mega Tasting was an enormous success because of all the volunteers who spent their time setting up, working, and cleaning up after the event. Without volunteers, our club would not be able to hold so many great events.



*"I'm looking forward to an exciting year!"*

We are over 1000 BRNs and with such a large and fast-growing club, we need our members to help make this club the best it can be. So, how can you help? Host a rally, volunteer to be one of the regional representatives, and it is not too early to start thinking about running for one of the executive board positions.

I'm looking forward to an exciting year!

Cheers,  
Mike VanBuskirk  
mike@vanbuskirks.net



Lisa Marquand and LaVerne McHenry working long, hot, and dusty days getting us parked.



David Lorenz took 1<sup>st</sup> place in the ACI pickleball tournament.



One of many G&G Happy Hours



Mindy Downey conducting the WBCCI band



Steve Turley leading an awesome jam session



Mark Kruer as the Monopoly Man. If I had a vote, the best costume!

# From the Desk of the 2nd Vice President



## Steve & Cheryl Turley

One year ago today...

As I come to the end of my term as your 2nd Vice President, it seems appropriate to reflect on the year that was. When barreling down the growth highway at breakneck speed, an occasional glance in the rearview mirror can provide some well-needed perspective.

One year ago today...

Grapes & Grains had no 2nd Vice President.

Or Recording Secretary.

Or Corresponding Secretary.

We had no rally templates, nor Regional Representatives. There was no kitty for funding planned rallies or a budget template for tracking rally expenses. There was no rally training session or systematic method to track rally success. There had never been a Grapes & Grains Caravan. But we had a great idea to which many Airstreamers were attracted, and a handful of individuals ready and willing to make this club fly. And fly, it has!

At the 2023 International Rally in Rock Springs, our founder, Mark Kruer,

recognized he was about to reach the end of his term as President in the first full year of Grapes & Grains. The club was rapidly growing at a pace that required continuity of leadership, so Mark reached out to some of us who had been with the club since its earliest days and asked if we would step in and serve as your club officers. I, for one, stepped in and said "yes" to what would become a rocket ship ride to heights never seen in the history of the ACI.

*"We had a great idea to which many Airstreamers were attracted, and a handful of individuals ready and willing to make this club fly. And fly, it has!"*

Fast forward to today. We have just surpassed 1,000 BRNs in membership, making Grapes & Grains far and away the largest ACI intra-club and surpassing the membership of several entire regions. But membership isn't everything. We presented at the Luncheon in Sedalia our Mission, Vision and Values, and illustrated a strategic plan for multiplying both the number and the quality of future rallies and caravans. The bottom line is more fun for more members.

Your Executive Board has spent the past year doing the hard work of building a sustainable club that provides as much measurable FUN per event as anyone in the ACI. The Mega Tasting event has become one of, if not THE, highlight event of the International Rally. Our first annual Luncheon was well received, and we plan on adding at least one additional Grapes & Grains event in York, Pennsylvania.

We have come a long way in a year, and it has been both my pleasure and

my honor to serve this past year as your 2nd Vice President. As we move towards our installation ceremony at the Sip of Virginia, I will leave this office in the capable hands of Cynthia Karkoska. I will assume the role of your First Vice President. With as much fun as I had in 2024, I am looking forward to 2025 with great, great expectations!

Steve Turley  
2nd Vice President



# From the Desk of the Past President



**Mark & Karen Kruer**

It was late in 2020 when Covid forced our cancellation of our upcoming Disney trip in January of 2021. I found an ACI Mid-Winter IBT rally to attend in Sarasota, Florida. We made reservations and started to make our plans on how to get there. We quickly planned our 3 day trip from our home in Southern Indiana. This was just our third time out with our first trailer, (more about that later) with our new 25-foot Flying Cloud. Our first overnight stay was in Cullman, Alabama and our second night was in northern Florida. As we entered the final location at the Sarasota County Fairgrounds, I kept jumping out of the truck to take pictures of all the Airstreams lined up to get parked. Karen kept telling me, "Get back in the truck, we will be parked soon enough!"

We were parked in zipper fashion, and I went to get set up quickly so I could meet our neighbors, who included, Greg Blue, Lynn & Latha Porter and our dear friend Keith Martin. My journal entry includes, "The guy behind us has 9 stars by his BRN and travels with his parrot, Chatsworth." We also sat on the roof of the very cool

*"Never in our wildest dreams did we think that we would reach this milestone."*

SkyDeck, belonging to Peter and Judy Schwartz. We met Dick & Fran Marquette, former Disney employees, who are still friends we visit when in Florida. We also met the Honey man, Elwyn Exum and Judy Harrison, who had lots of stories to tell.

These are some of the other people who were instrumental in fertilizing and watering the "Airstream seed" that grew into a strong young tree: Chris and Joe Baum, Matt & Beth Hackney, Lisa Forsyth, Brett Greiveldinger, Millie O'Donnell, Kathy Carl, Andy Selking, and Karen Fisher, just to name a few. We also joined the Southeastern Camping Unit as our first affiliate club. Upon returning to our home in Indiana, I contacted our local club president and advised her that I was interested in applying for the second vice president position of our Indiana club. After the application and interview, I was voted in and attended my first meeting to be installed.

We attended a few club rallies and the ACI International Rally that was held in Lebanon, Tennessee that summer. Shortly thereafter, I approached Eric McHenry about starting an Intra-Club that would hold rallies at Breweries, Distilleries, and Wineries. He said "Yes" and guided me to Carolyn Beardshear who had just set up the Indy Streamers Intra-Club. Twelve charter members agreed to be a part of this and then I selected the officers. The name, "Grapes & Grains Intra-Club" was chosen by Jim Zatorski and me while sitting around a campfire. The constitution, bylaws, logos, slogans and two rallies were planned for the following year. We started recruiting in November 2021, but the official okay was granted in January 2022, when the article in the Blue Beret appeared.

Now we have over 1,000 BRNs or about 1,900 friends in our Intra-Club. I work very hard to remember all of your names but with the explosion of our membership and 10 rallies and a caravan last year, I may not remember all of your names, but I'm trying.

In closing, I'm including one of my 94-year-old Mom's original daily emails, which she sends out every morning to my five brothers & sisters, and me.

"Hello to the bestest family ever there was

Have a good day

Compliment someone

Be the first to say hello

Live beneath your means

Treat everyone how you

Want to be treated

Never give up on anyone

You will have true happiness

When you live to give

Not to get

I love you

Be kind

WOW (MOM upside down)  
Mary Ann Kruer"

**Mark & Karen Kruer 18757**



## From Matt's Cocktail Bar... The Power of the Garnish

When you think of a cocktail, what comes to mind? The vibrant colors, the refreshing taste, and—of course—the garnish. Often the unsung hero of the drink, the garnish is more than just a decorative addition; it plays a key role in enhancing the overall experience of the cocktail. Whether it's a twist of citrus, a sprig of mint, or a carefully placed cherry, the garnish can transform a good drink into a great one.

First impressions matter, and the garnish is a visual driver that invites that first sip. A well-chosen garnish enhances the presentation and draws attention to the drink by adding not only visual appeal but also sets the stage for the flavor and aromatic profiles that follow.

Fresh herbs like mint, basil, or cinnamon can introduce a fragrant, aromatic quality that complement the base spirit, while citrus peels like lemon, lime, or orange provide a zesty, tangy note. Some garnishes, like a salted rim, directly affect the taste experience by adding a subtle savory balance to a sweet or sour drink.

Take the classic Sidecar with the sugared rim as an example. The sugar provides not only visual appeal but balance to the drink offsetting the strong lemon component. Similarly, a slice of lemon peel wiped on the rim and tossed in the coupe with a Greenpoint enhances the botanicals of the yellow Chartreuse and compliments the orange bitters giving the drink depth and complexity.

Not all garnishes need to be added directly into the drink or placed on the rim. Expressing just the oils from a citrus peel, flaming orange oils onto the top of the cocktail, or even simply wiping the rim of your glass with a fresh peel provides an aromatic experience that leave a cocktail flat if omitted.

The beauty of garnishes is that they allow for endless creativity. Whether you choose to go for the classic lemon wedge or push the boundaries with something like dehydrated fruit, edible flowers, or a flavored rim, the garnish is a great opportunity to personalize the cocktail. Use them to reflect your style, tie in the season, or to elevate an occasion.

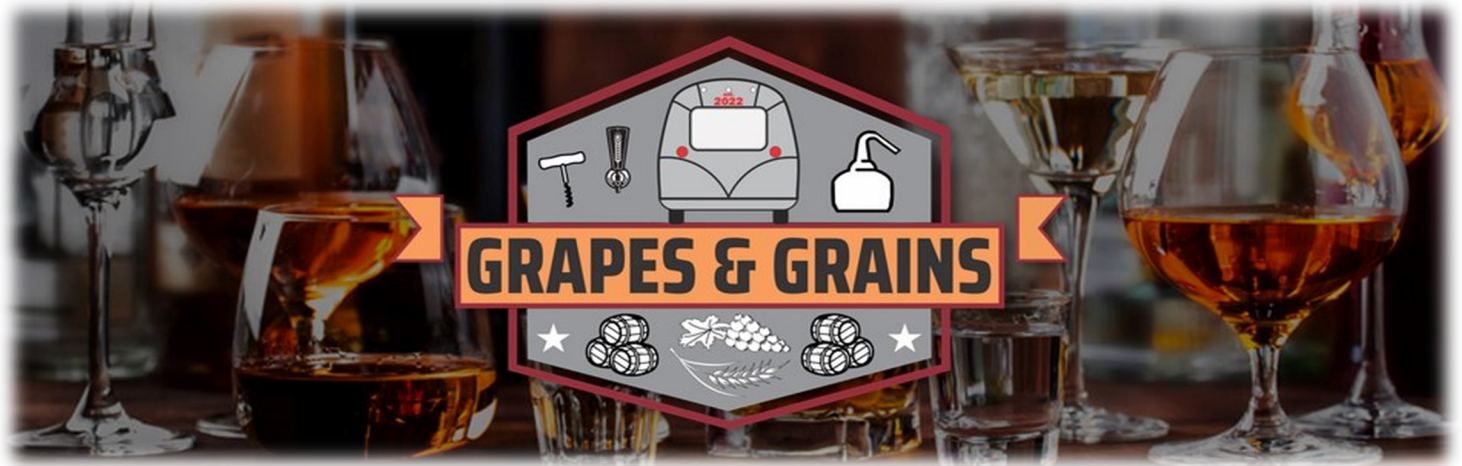
Ultimately, the garnish adds that final layer of refinement that brings everything together. It's a small detail, but it can make a big impact. Next time you're shaking up a cocktail or ordering one at the bar, don't overlook the garnish. It's not just decoration - it's an essential part of the drink that ties together taste, aroma, presentation, and experience. Turn your cocktails into memorable moments.

Scan this QR-Code or click [here](#) to watch a video about how to make 5 easy garnishes.

Cheers to the art of the garnish!

Matt Marquand #03044





## G&G Regional Representatives Update

During our fantastic ACI International Rally in Sedalia, several of our members volunteered to become a Regional Representative for Grape & Grains. These members agreed to help represent our club in Regions 3, 4 and 10. Regional Representatives are critical to the Grapes & Grains mission, helping to expand our reach to all geographic regions throughout the US and Canada. Besides recruiting new members, Regional Representatives help to identify potential Rally Hosts and communicate back to the Executive Board. Regional Representatives will also help to promote upcoming rallies in their regions.

Our newest Regional Representatives are:

**Ronald Raymond, Region 3 | BRN 1016**

**Pegeen Smith, Region 4 | BRN 9039**

**Joni White, Region 10/Roaming Full Timer | BRN 12151**

**Doug Whiteside, Region 10 | BRN 2061**

Congratulations! If you are located in any of the regions represented by our newest Regional Representatives, please feel free to contact them regarding Grapes & Grains. If you don't know them personally, please introduce yourself at your next regional or local unit event.

While we are excited to welcome our newest Regional Representatives, we still need volunteers in a number of regions. The complete list of Regional Representatives - and vacancies - is listed to the right.

If you are interested in becoming a Regional Representative in any of the vacant regions, please contact me via email:

Steve Turley  
Grapes & Grains 2nd Vice President  
tn\_ags@me.com

Region 1 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 2 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 3 - Ronald Raymond BRN 1016  
Helen Bailey BRN 14007  
Region 4 - Pegeen Smith BRN 9039  
Colleen Thorsen BRN 5224  
Region 5 - Mark Kruer BRN 18757  
Region 6 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 7 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 8 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 9 - Stephen Turley BRN 5414  
Region 10 - Joni White BRN 12151 (full time roaming representative, originally from Region 10)  
Douglas Whiteside BRN 2061  
Region 11 - *Regional Representative needed*  
Region 12 - *Regional Representative needed*

# *0 to 1,000 in 2.8*

*Congratulations to Grapes & Grains Intra-Club  
from inception to 1,000 member rigs in 2.8 years.*

*We welcomed our 1,000th member BRN on October 12, 2024*

## A Big Texas Hello from our 1,000th Member Household

We are Doug and Amber Lewis from Marshall, Texas. We have two beautiful girls we love to camp with and show them this beautiful country and parks. We have a 2019 Flying Cloud, which is our first Airstream, and have been streaming since 2019. It's taken us to 17 states in the 5 years we've had it, from North Carolina to Wyoming. We've visited many breweries and wineries in those miles too! :) We want to hit up as many states and National Parks as we can with our girls, make as many memories as we can!

So excited to be members of Grapes and Grain and can't wait to attend events and rallies!

Have a Magical Day!!

Doug & Amber Lewis



## Our First Caravan - Reflections from Doug Whiteside

I tell everyone that when we bought an Airstream, I didn't realize I was joining a "Cult," a "good Cult." In buying our trailer, we bought into Wally's legend, owning an iconic shiny travel trailer with their Big Red Numbers that could go anywhere; a distinctive, timeless and conversation-provoking trailer that sparks interest wherever we stop. Yes, we have turned into "Airstream Snobs," turning our noses up at all the other "SOBs." Let's face it, though, our Airstreams are far from perfect. Like every other brand, we have an ever-growing list of repairs and modifications. There is always something to fix or a new idea to implement to address our trailer's shortcomings. However, owning the shiny trailer is only part of Wally's unique story.

When we bought our trailer, we knew nothing about the Airstream Club International; however, over the past two years, we have concluded that the Club is the best part of owning an Airstream. We discovered the Club by looking into the BRNs (Big Red Numbers), and through the BRNs, we have found a community on wheels, a travel support network, and a whole lot of fun. This past year, we have spent almost 100 days in "The AirInn," the name we christened our shiny coach. We have attended five rallies, including the Region 10 Rally and Sedalia 2024 International Rally, and participated in our first Caravan, Grapes and Grain's "Sipping across Missouri." The Caravan was perfect! It opened our eyes to new ways of travelling and a new way of creating community.



In early September, Carol and I made our way from Calgary, Alberta, to Kansas City, Missouri, the starting point for the Caravan. We stopped at some of Midwest America's cultural and natural treasures, including Devils Tower. We camped at the base of this iconic landmark and watched "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." We explored caves, hiked amongst rock spires, visited massive rock carvings, and stood in awe of a massive bison herd in the Black Hills. In the Badlands, we hiked among nature's rock art, bands of sandstone and water-worn valleys overlooking expansive plains. We visited Walls Drugstore, a testament to early settlers' endurance and the Minute Man Missile Museum, a reminder of what was and still is, a symbol of world political fragility. We stopped in Hamilton, Missouri,

the quilting world's capital, to join with over 4000 quilters at Missouri Star's fun, fun, fun .... yearly birthday bash and shopping extravaganza.



Carol and I joined the Caravan at the Blue Springs campground just east of Kansas City. After travelling for over two weeks and figuring out what see and where to park, the Caravan became a respite from RV planning challenges. We arrived at the campground a day early



and were immediately welcomed by our fellow caravanners. We spent our first free day obtaining provisions and preparing for the next ten days. Later that day, we met the other caravanners and were provided with an excellent travel guide that included everything you needed to know about our fellow travelers, where we were going, what to see, the schedule, and participant expectations. After a brief introduction, where we discovered we had met one of the other couples at the Region 10 Spring Rally (Small World!), we broke into our first of many "GAMs" (GAM stands for Get Acquainted Meeting). On a rotation, each of us hosted three other couples during the trip. Through the GAMs, we became acquainted with everyone, talking about who we are, where we are from, and our interests. We also talked about everything Airstream and places we had travelled that should be shared. Our Caravan comprised a diverse group of people from across the US and a couple of Canadians, us. This gathering of people from all over was just one of the reasons this Caravan was so enjoyable.



The Grapes and Grains Intra-Club is a national club with over 1000 BRNs focused on social gatherings involving wine, spirits, and beer. The Grapes and Grains (G&G) events also focus on exploring cultural and natural sites, including alcohol-related ones. During the Caravan, we were provided with buses when we participated in events involving alcohol, so we did not have to worry about driving. During the Caravan, we had a great balance of free time and organized activity.



Our first organized trip was to McCormick Distilling Company, more commonly known as the Holladay Distillery. First discovered in what would become Weston, Missouri, by Lewis and Clark during their 1804 expedition, a pure limestone spring whose potential was recognized by two enterprising young brothers, Ben Holladay and Major David Holladay. After visiting the site, which was then a meat-packing house, the Holladay brothers divined an even greater purpose for that limestone spring: Bourbon. The distillery is set among rolling grass-covered

treed hills just west of Kansas City. This was Carol and my first bourbon distillery, and we left well-informed about bourbon making and tasting. We learned that there are four rules governing Bourbon. We learned that all Bourbon is considered whiskey, but not all whiskey earns the bourbon distinction. Through the tasting lessons, we learned that you don't just taste Bourbon; you experience it. Carol and I are Scotch drinkers, but while not Bourbon converts yet, we came away with a new appreciation of this iconic beverage.

Later that afternoon, we visited the Pirtle Winery in the historic town of Weston. The tasting room is in a former Lutheran Evangelical Church built by German immigrants in 1867. The Pirtle Winery is one of many small businesses making wine from the most prominent Missouri-grown Norton grapes, as well as native American grapes, including Concord and Catawba, and French American hybrids such as Vignoles, Seyval, and Chambourcin. The Missouri wine region boasts its unique



flavour, thanks to its special soil types, grape varieties, and different production methods used by the local winemakers. Missouri was America's 'wine capital' before Napa Valley made its mark. The gorgeous wine country has so much to offer, with over 130 wineries and 11 wine trails. The Pirtle Winery provided a great introduction to Missouri's many sweet and semisweet red and white wines. After the wine tasting, we explored the historic town of Weston, one of many beautiful and fun Missouri towns.



Over the next ten days, we travelled from Kansas City to Columbia and Hermann before ending our trip at St Peters. As a group, we visited the Warm Springs Ranch, where Budweiser raises its renowned Clydesdales. We visited the BluffTop Winery, cruised the historic Germanic Town of Hermann using their trolleys, the Fernweh Distillery, toured the massive Anheuser-Busch Brewery, and the small but very unique Still 630 and Sweetwater Distillers. Carol and I visited several places in our free time,

including Columbia's Shelter Gardens, Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area, the Museum of Art and Archeology, and the State Capital Building in Jefferson City. We went to the top of the Peace Arch in St Louis, Forest Park, and the infamous St Louis Art Museum.

We left the Caravan having had a wonderful time exploring a few of Missouri's historic and natural wonders and some of its iconic wineries, distilleries and breweries. We have had a chance to experience Missourian hospitality and charm. Through the Caravan, Carol and I also left with many fond memories and an address book full of new friends.



For us and many of our fellow Caravanners, our next stop was Airstream International's 2024 Sedalia Rally.

I would like to thank the G&G's "Sipping across Missouri" caravan organizers for a job well done – Denice and David Lorenz, Mindy and Steve Downie.

Happy Trails!

Carol and Doug Whiteside – BRN 2061



## Sipping Across Missouri 2024 - Grapes & Grains First Caravan

By Cathy Anderson

Co-Leaders David and Denise Lorenz and Mindy and Steve Downie led 19 Airstreams as we sipped our way across Missouri September 20-30. The caravan began in Lee's Summit near Kansas City and headed east toward St. Louis. Get-acquainted meetings and group meals allowed time to get to know each other in small groups. Many wineries featured Missouri's native "Norton" grape, which makes flavorful reds. We learned a lot about distilleries that make bourbon, whiskey and rye, (but not Scotch, which must come from Scotland.) The tastings and the offerings at each distillery were varied and we each found something to enjoy about the tours. Several motorcoaches and the Hermann Trolley made it easy to sip, then relax between stops!

We petted the tall, beautiful Budweiser Clydesdales at Warm Springs Ranch, where the horses are bred and train for parades and shows, and we learned a little animal husbandry from our guide! Later, in St. Louis, there was a tour of the historic Budweiser brewery.

We ate very well on the caravan. There was coffee every morning and a group Blackstone breakfast one day. Both J. Rieger & Co Distillery and the Fernweh Distillery hosted delicious dinners, along with our tastings. Some dinners were catered at the campsite and, one night, we had a homemade soup competition! The winners received gold, silver and bronze ladles. Our final banquet was a chance to reflect and say thanks to our hosts for all the planning and coordination.

Everyone stayed connected on What's App throughout the caravan and beyond, sharing meet-up information and places we were heading. Many of us moved just down the road to the International Rally in Sedalia. All agreed, though, we're looking forward to the next opportunity to explore with Grapes & Grains!





## Simply the Best... Sip of the Finger Lakes

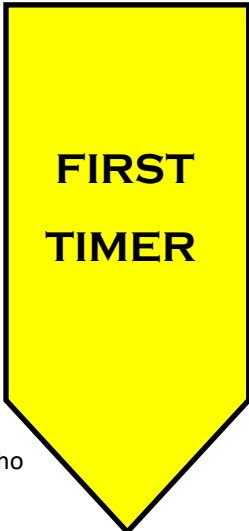
By Denise Lorenz



Sip of the Finger Lakes was held September 4-8 on beautiful Seneca Lake, New York. Twenty-one Airstreams from fourteen different states and Canada gathered for some great food, delicious wines, spectacular waterfalls and vintage race cars, ending each day with an evening campfire and conversation. Wednesday our rally began with a Happy Hour and catered dinner under the covered space provided by our host campground, Finger Lakes RV Resort. Central to the campground, the large gazebo was perfect for meals, socializing and catching a stunning sunset view. Thursday morning began with coffee and locally sourced pastries before boarding two party buses that would provide our transportation for the day. Our first stop was Idol Ridge Winery, perched high on a ridge offering endless views of the lake as well as a flight of choice from their collection of wines, spirits and mimosas. From there we traveled the scenic Seneca Lake Wine Trail further north to Ventosa Winery. The wine maker and his "right hand man" provided us with a private tasting followed by a vineyard and wine cellar tour. Both entertaining as well as educational, the passion for their craft was palpable. The group then gathered for a delicious catered lunch before boarding the buses for our final destination, Castel Grisch. Being one of the original thirteen wineries on the "trail," it provided a whimsical entry with giant sculptures of dinosaurs, dragons, castles and sharks. The panoramic views from the back deck of the lake below were breathtaking. Upon our return to the campground, we gathered for a dinner of soup and salad followed by a campfire and much conversation. Friday and Saturday were days "on your own" and the attendees hiked, biked, tasted and explored the beautiful countryside and quaint town of Watkins Glen. Friday night brought the group back together for a Bingo Extravaganza. Saturday night we gathered for a farewell dinner at Newt Winery which was walking distance from the campground. The Finger Lakes offered the perfect setting for our Airstream rally goers to make many cherished memories as well as friendships. Can't wait for next year!

## THE AIRSTREAM LIFE... MAKING CONNECTIONS, GETTING INVOLVED, & GIVING BACK

Almost 25% of the people at the ACI International Rally had a yellow "First Timer" ribbon on their name badge. This indicated it was the first time that they had come to an ACI International Rally, but for some it was their first EVER rally. I cannot imagine what that must have been like! I talked to every First Timer I saw to make connections and find out where they were from. One thing I noted was there were a lot of Member-at-Large (MAL) members. These are members who have not chosen a local club to join. This is partly due to the Airstream Company, who builds and sells our Silver Twinkies, offering a free 1-year Explorer membership in the ACI club as a MAL. This means that the MAL group of Airstreamers is now the largest group of people in ACI with over 1,200 members. These people will benefit themselves as well as their local clubs by joining a regional club. They can also be connected to other clubs by becoming an affiliate to any number of clubs around the US and Canada. Becoming an affiliate of clubs places you on their email and newsletter list, giving you more opportunities to find out about rallies where you like to camp. Yes, you can find them on your own and attend rallies anywhere in the US and Canada, but you will likely have a better chance of getting to attend the rally instead of being placed on the waitlist. If you join a club and they are not your people, don't give up. There are many clubs out there and you will find your people. If you have leadership skills, don't be afraid to let the club know. They have many positions which are very rewarding. Giving your skills to a club is the best way to contribute to the success of the overall ACI experience.



When you attend a rally, volunteer to help whether they ask or not. This is a great way to meet people and learn how various rallies are run. At our first rally, we volunteered to wipe off the tables after each session and meal to prevent the spread of Covid. We met so many people who helped to mold us into who we are today.

The stars next to a BRN represent 5 years in the Airstream Club. We have a member, C. Keith Martin, who will be awarded his 10th star representing 50 years in the ACI. I'm told there are several others who are in the 10+ star club. Karen & I will get our first one this time next year, and I can't wait to get that star on our trailer.

To connect with others, I like to hand out a business card to introduce myself to others. Helen Byam Schwamborn, the founder of the Airstream Club, said that she never met a stranger. I used my card to recruit Kent & Sue Hill at a rest stop in Pennsylvania on the way to the ACI International Rally in Fryeburg, Maine several years ago. Just last week at a rest stop in Missouri, I met Andrea Brooks, who was eating lunch alone in her Airstream. I invited her to join us for lunch in our Airstream. In my opinion, the card should include, at a minimum, a picture of you, your BRN, hometown, and email. You can add more information like phone numbers, or photos of your pets, but I find that if you add your trailer, you may have "Done a Thing", meaning you might be upgrading or downgrading to another Airstream, like we did. We made the "2 years, 2 foot change" in the middle of a 12 week trip to Florida last year. (Not recommended, but it can be done.)

Karen and I enjoy this Airstream Life... making connections, getting involved, and giving back.

Mark & Karen Kruer  
BRN 18757



## Grapes & Grains First Annual Luncheon in Sedalia

On October 7th, Grapes & Grains hosted its first annual Luncheon at the ACI International Rally in Sedalia, Missouri. Organized by current First Vice President, Mike VanBuskirk, the consensus among attendees seems to indicate it was a roaring success. Over 250 members enjoyed delicious BBQ, great social interaction and a presentation by President David Lorenz.

The presentation was a first for Grapes & Grains, outlining our history from the original campfire chat by founders Mark and Karen Kruer and Jim and Jane Zatorski, through our rapid growth to the present. We began with a small group of 18 rigs at the first rally in Bardstown, KY to our present membership now exceeding 1,000 rigs! We are currently the largest club in the ACI, outpacing several regions. Dave outlined the club's mission, vision and values, along with the plans to sustainably continue to grow and improve in the coming years.

Because of the overwhelmingly positive response, your executive board intends to make this an annual event at International. We will also begin hosting an annual members' business meeting, where all members will be able to interact with their officers and get a better picture of how your club operates.

As the executive board gathers more information about the facilities and procedures at the 2025 International site in York, PA, more details will be released via this newsletter and social media.

Thank YOU for making our first annual luncheon a great success, and we look forward to seeing you in 2025!





## A Postcard From Sedalia, Missouri - LAND OF MILK & HONEY, GRAPES & GRAINS

### Deep Thoughts From Priscilla Harrell, Corresponding Secretary

Until three weeks ago, my husband and I had never been to Sedalia, and we had never seen a palace-like building named "Swine Barn" before. We were excited about making a "halfway across the country" Airstream trip from our home in Hollywood, Maryland, to attend the 67<sup>th</sup> Airstream Club International Rally. Since purchasing our 27-foot Globetrotter in 2021 (Silver Beagle), we have been to four international rallies, our favorite being this latest one. Each International we attended thus far had its immense charm, the rock and roll band after the closing ceremony in Lebanon Tennessee (2021) is still a major highlight, forever making "Play That Funky Music" our special song; the unforgettable pet show and on-site "vet on call" in Fryeburg, Maine (2022) was critical for our fur babies that unusually hot summer in the gorgeous White Mountains; Rock Spring Wyoming (2023) was an awesome gateway to the West for us. Until then we had never towed that far or camped in our Silver Beagle for that long of an extended trip. Sedalia though was really our time to take flight. We volunteered at both Ham Radio and Grapes & Grains events, and we enjoyed ourselves so much more, as a result.

To say the Grapes & Grains sponsored events are spectacular is probably equivalent to saying there is a red carpet at the Oscars, duh.... of course, the events are awesome! At the Sedalia Luncheon we enjoyed great conversations while eating delicious pulled pork & BBQ chicken, we enjoyed la Presidente David Lorenz's short and to the point presentation. We had this major adrenaline rush at the Mega Tasting – not sure we have ever seen such a wide variety of quality craft beer, mead, red & white wine, bourbon, whiskey, scotch, gin, vodka, rum, all in one place before. The daily pop-up happy hours at the Grapes & Grains parking area watching the setting sun were so special. The events were extremely well attended of course, but the number of folks at the educational "How to Host a Grapes & Grains Rally" session exceeded all my expectations and warmed my heart. Our members really want to help and give back. I should put myself on the spot and share a personal favorite moment which occurred at the Mega Tasting. I had just circled around this ginormous charcuterie spread munching on my favorite cheese and enjoyed a mead tasting for the first time. I found out from fellow a lovely couple of Airstreamers that mead is made from honey. What can I say? I love dairy, honey, grapes and grains, and Airstreams of course!



## Parking with G&G in YORK 2025

Good times were had by all in the Grapes & Grains parking area in Sedalia! Games, gatherings, bottle sharing, fake-flame campfires, and spontaneous happy hours. Sign up for ACI International 2025 in York, Pennsylvania and be sure to select to park with Grapes & Grains... Where All Hours Are Happy Ones!





# 2025 Events... What's on the Horizon?

The “How to Host a Successful Grapes & Grains Rally” session, led by David Lorenz in Sedalia, was well attended by members eager to learn more about hosting a G&G rally. David shared great [information](#) about the tools in place to help hosts lead successful rallies. We are hopeful that many members were inspired to host a rally in the coming year. If you missed the session and are interested in learning more about hosting a G&G rally, please reach out to [gandgpresident@gmail.com](mailto:gandgpresident@gmail.com). The executive board has worked hard creating tools and procedures to make hosting a rally easier than ever.

We currently have a few exciting rallies in the works for 2025. Stay tuned for more details and release dates.

- Sip of Kentucky II - May 14-18
- Sip of Pennsylvania - August 14-18
- Sip of Michigan
- Sip of Colorado
- Sip of the Finger Lakes
- Sip of Georgia III



## Who Are We?

Take a look at a Google Map created by Matt Marquand with our rally and event data. This depicts all 2023 & 2024 Grapes & Grains events with a pin for each attendee placed at their address. The colors represent what region they are in.

*Providing opportunities to rally with like-minded individuals, sharing our knowledge of beverages made from grapes and grains, and creating shared experiences... to help all of us become more informed tasters.*

# All Hours are Happy Ones with G&G Friends



*The purpose of Grapes & Grains is to hold rallies and caravans near distilleries, wineries,*

## Want to Contribute to the Growler?

Have a story idea, a little-known drinking related factoid, a recipe or G&G rally photos to share, or are just interested in contributing to the G&G Growler? We would love to have more of you represented! Please let us know by sending an email to:

[gnggrowler@gmail.com](mailto:gnggrowler@gmail.com)