

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary

The Hillbilly



Publication of Watchung NJ Airstream Club

www.airstreamclub.org/watchung-nj October 2025

President's Message



It has been a great camping season so far. It is awesome to see that the feeling of community is continuing to carry us to our next shared event. Some of you who communicated with What's Ap at the York Rally have continued to share bits of your summer adventures. It has been a pleasure to view the photos and share some conversations.

The club has purchased 60th Anniversary stickers, which were distributed at the International Rally. For those who have not received theirs yet we will have them at the upcoming events.

We are very excited to be able to add a brick to the WBCCI Headquarters' new walkway. Lois Wagner, our treasurer, was instrumental in suggesting and designing our club's 60th anniversary commemorative brick. If anyone stops there, look out for it on the new walkway.

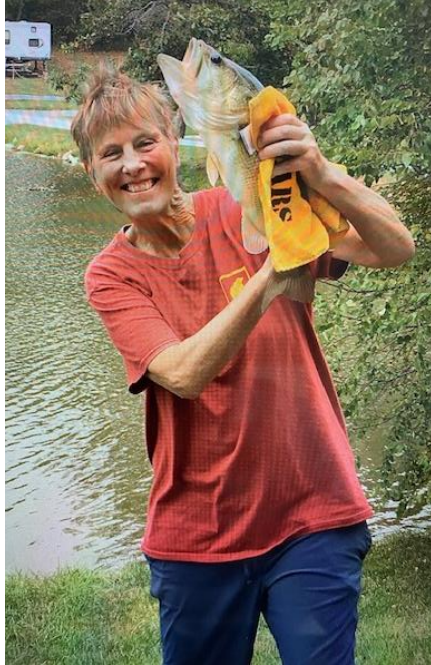
The Historian position is still open for the upcoming year. Lea Plant would be happy to answer any questions about the role. She has been keeping our history for many years and would like to pass it on to someone new.

Safe travels,

Leslie



Region 2 President's Message



Where is fall? I'm sitting here in my home state of Jersey hanging with my high school buddies in the usual uniform of shorts and a tee. It still feels like summer!

The R2 Team has been hard at work with both "boots on the ground" activities and Zooming away while working on some internal policy projects. Of course, the rite of passage that is known as the Region Rally is well underway with the finalizing of our budget. More on that later!

Matt, Cody and I as well a couple of volunteers from the Central Penn Airstream Club manned the Airstream booth at the Hershey RV Show. EC Council member Bill Hamblin organized the volunteer effort and set up the membership booth to include an informational video about the Explorer Program and brochures from Region 2 and Jackson Center explaining the program. We enthusiastically signed up several new members after their purchase of a new rig. It is a wonderful partnership between corporate and our club!

We're working together with R2 Membership Chair Colleen Ahlers to expand our outreach to the Members-at-Large (MALs) in our region. One of our developmental projects is creating our own version of a campfire chat to communicate directly with the MALs. This will complement the great job that Colleen does in sending them important information about our region and educating them on local clubs in their geographic area. We will also direct email them our brand new R2 Newsletter in the future.

Speaking of that, we'll announce the winner of the R2 Newsletter name in November!

We've finalized the budget for the 2026 R2 Rally at Pocono Raceway! (May 14-17). Registration is now open! Click [here](#) for the Jotform to sign up. Stay tuned for the rolling build up where we'll be announcing several outside activities involving third-party vendors. And, of course, I won't be able to help myself so there will be a dance party on Saturday night!

As the leaves begin to turn and the temperatures drop, enjoy your rigs and the camaraderie that this club affords each of us!

Travel safe

Patti



CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF THE WATCHUNG NJ AIRSTREAM CLUB

By Richard Short

As the Airstream Club International commemorates their milestone this year...the 70th anniversary of its formation in Halifax, Nova Scotia...we celebrate our own milestone. The formation and official charter of the Watchung New Jersey Unit of the Wally Byam Caravan Club, Int'l. occurred in December of 1965, 60 years ago!

Drawing on the Watchung NJ Unit History as found in your Membership Directory and The History of WBCCI as found in the latest edition of the Blue Beret, here is the story of how our club came to be and how it has evolved over six decades of fun, fellowship, and adventure. With the help of Lea Plant [2256](#), our Historian, a Past President, and former Editor of the Hillbilly, we will also look at some of the highlights of those 60 years, including accomplishments of our club and the contributions of many members along the way. According to our records, the basic reason for starting a new chartered unit of WBCCI was basic geography. For many members living in the northern areas of New Jersey, the choice of a "local" club was either an out-of-state Unit in New York or Pennsylvania or to join the New Jersey Unit down south. Records show many did join the New Jersey Unit, but few ever went to meetings or rallies. As the "northerners" met around the state, the idea to petition the WBCCI for permission to form a new unit was born. Armed with the official procedures as outlined by HQ, a petition was drafted and signed by the required minimum of twenty-five individuals. A Telephone and Letter-writing campaign was taken up to encourage potential members to join the new unit. Dues were collected from 90 prospective charter unit members and sent to WBCCI headquarters before the December 1, 1965 deadline for membership. Two additional members paid their dues in December but after the deadline to be considered as charter members. The campaign was successful. The Watchung Unit was officially recognized by WBCCI and received their Charter document sometime in the new year. Chartered in December 1965 and fully operating in 1966, the Watchung NJ Unit set out with 92 members. Remember, back then a "member" was typically a family couple. In today's definition and calculation that would be probably around 180 people/members! A copy of the Charter is included in the tri-fold frame that we display at club meetings and our Officer Installation.

Highlights through the Years

1970's – During a gas shortage, the Watchung unit bought property in Tusten, NY. The idea was for members to leave their trailers on this property, allowing them to use their 'smaller', more economical vehicles to drive up for weekends. Many members helped with work around the camp and making improvements to the property. The largest ever International Rally was the 1976 Rally held in Louisville, KY with 4493 rigs! No full hookups there! Attendees were lucky to get daisy-chained water and maybe 3 amps of power! No a/c!



1980's – Although overall membership in WBCCI started to decline from its highs, attendance at International Rallies were still high by today's standard, drawing between 2000 and 4000 rigs each year depending on location. It wasn't until the late 90's that attendance dropped below 2000 rigs.

1990's – Work/Play Watchung Weekend Rallies were a staple of our annual rally schedule. Members would bring their trailers or go for the day to work on parade floats and Bulletin Boards in preparation for competition at upcoming International Rallies. Those weekend rallies were hosted by members Don and Johanna Bookholt 28459 for many years. Records are unclear but the property in Tusten was eventually sold.

2000's – The attendance numbers at International Rallies continued to decline, dropping below 1000 in 2002 when the rally was held in Rapid City, SD. The low point in attendance was 2014 when the Rally was held in Gillette, WY with only 346 rigs in attendance. Attendance and general memberships have been on the increase since.

2003 - Terry Plant, daughter of Jim and Lea Plant 2256 represented the Watchung NJ Unit in the Teen Queen competition at the 46th International in Burlington, VT. (That competition is no longer held.) There were 1669 rigs in attendance at the International Rally that year.

2003 – 2016 -WBCCI Merit Award: This award was graded on such criteria as Member Communications (Newsletter), Rally / Luncheon Schedule, Full slate of Officers, Member Retention, and Community Service. Information was gathered from contributing members twice yearly and tallied to include hours volunteered and money/value of items donated to thrift stores/food pantries/church/charity, etc. Also included were our club/group contributions, including Toys for Tots, Food Bank, and other various charities throughout the year. This info would then be submitted to HQ for consideration of a Unit Merit Award. Under the leadership of every single Watchung President from 2003 through 2016 when the award was discontinued, our club received the 'Superior Merit Award'. This recognition resulted in a certificate of achievement as well as the receipt of a gold ribbon to be displayed with our unit flag. Our flag still proudly carries all those gold ribbons.

2007 – During the terms of Steve Nehlig 4284, Fred Spencer 8790 and Lea Plant 2256, Watchung launched our first website, with Dave Morrision 6481 as Webmaster.

2015 – In January and March of 2015, we lost the last two Charter Members of the Watchung NJ Airstream Club. Pat and Ed Brunner 9013 passed in January and March, respectively, ending 50 years as active members. They are well remembered by many still in the club.

2016 - Watchung NJ Unit's newsletter, 'The Hillbilly' with Lea Plant 2256 as Editor, won a 1st place blue ribbon in the Unit Publication competition at the 59th International Rally held in Lewisburg, WV. There were 668 rigs in attendance that year. Lea had succeeded Marion Wooding 3863 in 2008 after her many years of service to the club as Editor.



2016 –Under club President Richard Short 1512, in October of 2016 the general membership approved the change from ‘Watchung NJ Unit’ to ‘Watchung NJ Airstream Club’. Subsequently approved by a motion brought to the WBCCI Board of Trustees, our new name was official. Caravan Leader, Past President Fred Brugmans 5638 passed the reigns to David Cahall 4058. The WBCCI started to use the name Wally Byam Airstream Club before finally transitioning in 2019 to the Airstream Club International we use today. WBCCI logos changed with the new names, with older, previous logos becoming Historical or Heritage logos. The latest name change, and new colorful logo have been well received.

2017 - Watchung NJ Airstream Club’s newsletter, ‘The Hillbilly’ with Angie Ratliff 5070 as Editor (2016-2022) won its second 1st place blue ribbon in the Unit Publication competition at the 60th International in Escanaba, MI. There were 638 rigs in attendance that year. (That competition is no longer held.) Derek Conley 16003 succeeded Angie in 2023 as the Hillbilly Editor and has continued to improve the quantity and quality of content.

2018 - Under the leadership of President David Cahall 4058, our club logo and our club flag (lovingly know as ‘Big Blue’) were redesigned, voted on, and approved by WBCCI Board of Trustees. Webmaster, Mark Ratliff 5070, completed the migration of our website to the WBCCI hosted platform.

2018-2019 - Watchung Past President Dave Morrison 6481, was elected and served as the President of the Vintage Airstream Club, an Intra-Club of the WBCCI.

2019-2021 - Watchung Past President Rich Short 1512, was elected and served as President of Region 2. During that time Rich developed the Airstream Club’s Members Benefits Program to include member discounts with Michelin Tire, Goodyear Tire, Passport America, Harvest Hosts, Griots Garage and others. Lea Plant 2256 served as Region 2 Membership Chair and Judy Cahall 4058 has served since 2019 as Region 2 Rec Sec.

To the present – Over the years the Watchung NJ Airstream Club has continued to thrive with new and established members willing to participate in the life of the club and take on roles in club leadership. Thanks to members like Chris Forster 2405, Mark Ratliff 5070, Lois Wagner 16003, Leslie DeHerde 6590 and others, we have recently seen the implementation of a digital membership directory, online registration for our rallies and luncheons, online payment of fees through PayPal, organization of group communications through mobile apps like WhatsApp and other modernizations that improve club life.

Richard Short is a Past President of both the Watchung Airstream Club and WBCCI Region 2.



UP Caravan Report

Text and photos by Leslie DeHerde



The waters of the Great Lakes are amazingly clear.

I love caravanning, it is my favorite thing to do as an Airstreamer. It is a unique method of travel run by volunteers that brings together members of the WBCCI. Frank and I are just heading home from our 3rd and shortest of our caravans. I have been asked if I have a favorite; each one is unique and special in its own way. The trips give you a taste of an area, and the leaders find things that, as a visitor, I may not have done.

We spent 15 days in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan on the Ores, Shores, and Lighthouses Caravan. Our caravan consisted of 17 campers, including the leaders. We were from all over the United States, it was also nice to see friends we had met on a previous caravan.

Our leaders told us that each site would improve as we traveled along, and they did not disappoint. They also used a CB radio and would narrate when traveling to group outings. It was interesting to listen to facts about the area or have sites called out while traveling.



Two thousand-foot ore carriers pass each other on Lake Michigan.



East Breakwater Lighthouse, Manistique, Michigan

The first stop in Manistique was quiet and wooded, with beautiful sites in a state park. We saw a beautiful spring and caught our first glimpse of a great lake, Lake Michigan. The East Breakwater lighthouse was at the end of a jetty. The jetty had waves crashing up onto it like an ocean. The waves were so high that we were unable to walk out to it. It looked like an ocean jetty.

Next, we camped on the water. Many in the group had waterfront sites, but everyone could see the lake. At this stop, some collected Yooper rocks, which, under a black light, glow.

The next stop had a special treat in store for us. We saw the northern lights! What a show Mother Nature put on for us. The colors were amazing.

If you were brave, you could drive out to the Crisp Lighthouse. It took 2 hours to drive 36 miles on a sand road. It was a beautiful spot that is privately owned and has been restored to its original state.

The campground in Sault St Marie was amazing. We camped on the water and could watch 1000-foot ships go by the site carrying resources across the lake. We had the opportunity to go through the Soo Locks on a tour. It was very interesting to see.

The final stop included Mackinac Island. This was a highlight for me. I loved seeing the island and



The Northern Lights as seen from the shore of Lake Superior September 16. Both colors are the result of high-energy solar particles hitting and releasing energy from oxygen molecules, with green indicating low-altitude oxygen below about 180 miles and red from oxygen above that.



The Grand Hotel Mackinac Island.

appreciated the nonmotorized transportation. I even drove my own horse-drawn carriage. The Grand Hotel certainly lived up to its name. It is Grand. The luncheon was awesome, the hotel's porch is fabulous.

In a blink it was over, and we were saying our goodbyes to new friends. If you consider a caravan, I would say do it!! I do not think you would regret it.



An ore carrier heads south on the St Mary's Rver in Sault Ste Marie.



Announcements

This Month's Birthdays

Thomas Breen
Frank DeHerde
Flora Pomerleau
Kimberly Sheppard
Tourrahn Kriz
Braith Eldridge
Dotty DeCota



How to Find, Sign Up and Pay for an ACI Event Online

- Log on to <https://airstreamclub.org/>
- Click on the EVENTS tab
- A map of the US will be displayed containing pins for all the events for all the Airstream clubs. Just above the map on the right side of the screen is the **Clubs** box. Click on the down arrow to display the list of clubs then scroll down to **Watchung NJ Club**. Clicking on this will cause the map to display only Watchung club events.
- Find the event you wish to sign up for and click on the associated pin.
- A text box giving a brief description of the event will be displayed. Click on the arrow in the orange box that says **More**.
- A new page will be displayed. If a registration form has been created for the event this page will give you two options: online registration or mail-in registration using a download of the form. The online form allows payment via PayPal. If you prefer to pay via check download and print the form, which includes payment instructions. If there is no registration form available yet one will be at a later date.

ACI members can buy a personalized brick to be included in the member clubhouse under construction in Jackson Center, Ohio. Scan the QR code, right, for more information.



Airstream Club
International
Member Club House &
Historical Center
Fundraising Campaign



SCAN ME



Items for the newsletter?

Send them by the 25th of each month to:

dconley1810@gmail.com

Interested in joining the
Watchung NJ Airstream club?

Contact:

Membership: George Kiesel

068membership@gmail.com


President: Leslie DeHerde

lesairstreaming@gmail.com



Watchung Club Events Schedule

2025

DATE	WHAT/WHEN	HOSTS	COHOSTS	VENUE
October 2025	Club Rally/Annual Business Meeting October 3-5	Pat and Florence Attanasio	CoHost needed	Kymer's Camping Resort, Branchville, NJ
November 2025	Luncheon/November 15	Barbara Taylor and Michael Koczwar	Lois Wagner and Derek Conley	The Little York, Milford, NJ
December 2025 	Officer Installation Luncheon/ Saturday December 6	Leslie and Frank DeHerde	Heidi and Brian Cullen	Chimney Rock Restaurant, Flemington, NJ

2026

DATE	WHAT/WHEN	HOSTS	COHOSTS	VENUE
January 2026	Luncheon/January 31	Steve and Cynthia Germansy		Princeton Soup and Sandwich, Cranberry, NJ
February 2026	Luncheon/TBD	Gary and Sandra Molenaar	Lois Wagner/Derek Conley	TBD
March 2026	Luncheon/TBD	Leslie and Frank DeHerde	Ken and Nancy Eagan	Knights of Columbus, Woodbridge, NJ
April 2026	Unbutton Rally/TBD	Heidi and Brian Cullen	Saskia Schmidt and Brian Stein; Rebecca Glick	Holly Acres, Egg Harbor, NJ
May 2026	Region 2 Rally/May 14-17	NA	NA	Pocono Raceway, Blakeslee, PA
June 2026	Club Rally/June 5-8 BOOK NOW TO GET A SPOT. See page 14	Steve and Cynthia Germansy	Rich and Kathi Short	Cedar Point State Park, Clayton, NY
July 2026	Tentative Club Rally	Sharon and Joe Moran		Croton On Hudson Park, NY
July 2026	Regions 1 and 2 "Sampson" rally/ July 30-August 3	NA	NA	Sampson State Park, Romulus, NY
August 2026	International Rally/Aug 22-27	NA	NA	Minot, ND
September 2026	Club Rally	TBD	TBD	TBD
October 2026	Business Meeting Rally/October 9-12	George and Linda Kiesel	Mark and Angie Ratliff	Jane's Island State Park, Crisfield, MD
November 2026	Luncheon/TBD			
December 2026	Installation luncheon/TBD	Heidi and Brian Cullen	Steve and Cynthia Germansky	



October Rally and General Meeting

Hosts: Pat & Florence Attanasio pjattanasio@yahoo.com fcattanasio@yahoo.com Cell: 201-859-7481

When: Friday, October 3rd – Sunday, October 5th. Early arrival, Thursday, October 2nd.

Where: Kymer's Camping Resort, 69 Kymer Road, Branchville, NJ 07826 **Office:** 973-875-3167
<https://www.njcamping.com/kymers/index.htm> kymers@NJcamping.com

The October Rally brings us to rural Northern NJ and the last weeks of the Fall colors. Kymer's Camping Resort will be home base for daily excursions to surrounding parks, museums, antiques and adult beverage purveyors. Or simply stay on site and enjoy your Airstream. Kymer's will place us as close together as possible while optimizing their site-to-RV size placements. Your hosts will be in Oak-5. The campground will accept your reservation at any time, but to ensure optimal placement please reserve as soon as possible, preferably before March 1st. Refer to their web site (above) for current pricing.

Site Fees:

- 30 amp, electric, water, cable TV (no sewer): \$70
- 30 amp, above plus sewer: \$80
- 50 amp, electric, water, cable TV and sewer: \$85

Rally fees include breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings as well as a catered dinner Saturday night. Please consider contributing a dessert to Saturday's dinner.

Rally fees will be calculated and collected on Sunday morning after we have totaled our actual expenses. We're estimating at least \$25 per person.

To attend this event,

- Call the campground, tell them you're with this group and reserve your site
- Email pjattanasio@yahoo.com with your BRN, site number, days attending and number attending. Please note any dietary restrictions or accommodations so that we can plan appropriate menus.

Check-in: 2:00pm

Check-out: 2:00pm

Tentative Agenda:

- Thursday: Arrivals and Free-range activities, 1:00pm-5:00pm
- Friday: Breakfast, 8:00am-9:30am
- Arrivals and Free-range activities, 9:30am-5:00pm
- Happy hour, 5:00pm-6:00pm, dinner on your own, campfire
- Saturday: Breakfast, 8:00am-9:30am
- Free range activities, 9:30am-5:00pm
- Happy hour, 5:00pm-6:00pm, dinner to follow, campfire
- Sunday: Breakfast, 8:30am-10:00am
- Club Exec/Business Meeting – 10:00am-12:00pm
- Pack out, hit the road (2:00pm checkout), 12:00pm -



November Luncheon



November Watchung Airstream Club Luncheon

Saturday, November 15, 2025 at 12:00 Noon

Location: The Little York, 569 Spring Mills Rd, Milford NJ

Hosts: Barbara & Michael Koczura Contact: allofus1989@gmail.com or 609-947-6789

Co-hosts: Lois Wagner & Derek Conley Contact: airstreaminglois@gmail.com

Entrée Choices – Please indicate your choices on the form below when signing up for luncheon

1-**Cobb Salad** with Bleu Cheese Crumbles, Hard Boiled Egg, Bacon and Grilled Chicken

2-**Chipotle Grilled Chicken Sandwich** bacon, cheddar cheese, lettuce and tomato

3-**Fried Onion Smashburger** with Cooper Cheese served with hand cut beef tallow fries

Luncheon Includes: Pizza Appetizers, Pitchers of Soda on the Table, Coffee and/or Tea, Assorted Mini Desserts. A cash bar is available.

Please Bring a Donation for Our Food Drive (Flemington Area Food Pantry)

RESERVATION DEADLINE: November 1, 2025

Maximum of 30 attendees – please sign up early!

Name: _____ WBCCI #: _____

Email: _____ Telephone #: _____

of People: _____ @ \$35.00 per person = Total \$: _____

Food Choice: ____ Cobb Salad ____ Chipotle Grilled Chicken Sandwich ____ Smashburger

* Signup online at our [website](#) *

–OR–

Mail check and completed form to

Lois Wagner, 29 Colony Court, New Providence NJ 07974

Make checks payable to Watchung NJ Airstream Club



May Region 2 Rally: Pocono Raceway



The 2026 Region 2 Rally will be held from May 14-17 at Pocono Raceway, Blakeslee, PA, offering a mix of motorsport action and local attractions.

The Infield Campground offers full hookup sites for convenience.

The event begins with a catered breakfast buffet on Friday morning, providing a variety of morning dishes to prepare attendees for the day's events. As the weekend unfolds, a taco bar on Saturday night will serve beef and fish tacos. On Sunday morning, participants can enjoy coffee and donuts.

In addition to the food, the rally features activities that showcase the Pocono region's appeal. Attendees can take racetrack tours to learn about Pocono Raceway's history. For adventure seekers, the Pocono Outdoor Adventures Tours offer a chance to explore the surrounding landscapes. Motorsport fans might also have the option to book a Stock Car Racing Experience, depending on the 2026 schedule, for a chance to drive on the famous track.

The 2026 Region 2 Rally combines racing excitement with the charm of the Pocono Mountains.

Click [here](#) to sign up via JotForm.



June Club Rally: Cedar Point State Park

Friday, June 5th – Monday, June 8th, 2026
Cedar Point State Park, 36661 Cedar Point SP Drive, Clayton, NY 13624
<https://airstreamclub.org/watchung-june-2026-rally>

Hosts Steve and Cynthia Germansky have been camping here in the Thousand Islands region every season for the past five years. The park is directly on the magnificent St. Lawrence River. Nearby things to do include [Boldt Castle](#), the [Antique Boat Museum](#), take a ride down to where the St. Lawrence meets Lake Ontario at [Tibbets Point Lighthouse](#), visit the [Cape Vincent Brewing Company](#), or [The Cape Winery](#). Cedar Point State Park is a roughly six to seven-hour drive from New Jersey. Steve and Cynthia will be on-site from Monday, June 1st thru Monday, June 8th. If you want to break the trip up into two days some suggested places to camp are: [Chenango Valley State Park](#) and [Lackawanna State Park](#).

Cedar Point campsites fill up early. Bookings opened September 1 for the week of June 1-8, 2026. We suggest you **book now**; you can always cancel later. Canceling 8 days or more prior to arrival - \$7.25 Reservation Fee + \$7.25 Cancellation Fee. Canceling 7 days or less prior to arrival - \$7.25 Reservation Fee + \$7.25 Cancellation Fee + the cost of the first night's stay.

Please book your site directly with [ReserveAmerica](#). Sites near the group area are electric only (see map on the ReserveAmerica site). Sites near the river with full hookups: 43, 41, 39 37, 35. Also 33, 31, 29 but these sites require backing into a tight site with trees. Full hookups away from the river are available at sites 138-159. **We have reserved sites 78 and 79 for us and our co-hosts Rich and Kathi Short.**

After you make your reservation please email Steve your site number: egerms@verizon.net. Questions? Call Steve at 973-495-1067





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2024 Watchung Club Officers		Other Club Roles	
President	Leslie DeHerde	Membership	George Kiesel
1 st Vice President	Heidi Cullen	Sunshine	Linda Kiesel
2 nd Vice President	Steve Germansky	Web Master	Mark Ratliff
Correspondence Secretary	Frank Deherde	Directory	Chris Forster
Recording Secretary	Richard Short	Newsletter	Derek Conley
Treasurer	Lois Wagner	Quartermaster	Jason Pomerleau
Directors	Rebecca Glick		
	Cathy McCarthy		
	Jay McCarthy		
	Pat Attanasio		

