

[View this email in your browser](#)

Grapes & Grains Growler December 2025



Camping season has wrapped up for many of us and for others, it's just getting started! In this issue, you'll find 2025 fall rally and caravan recaps and 2026 rally updates to help you plan next year's adventures.

From the Desk of G&G President
Steve Turley

What Makes Grapes & Grains Different?

Believe it or not, I spend a lot of time thinking about what makes our Intra-Club different. Better? Although "better" is a relative and subjective term, it's also one of those things we all know when we see it. And if it is better, it is necessarily different, isn't it? Different — as in not the same old thing, or not what everybody else is doing. Without rehashing the phenomenal growth our club has experienced over the past four years, there must be a reason. And it's not just that we are focused on the adult beverages that are a product of various grapes and grains.

When we began studying our rallies a couple of years ago, we wanted to know why attendees had such a good time, so we started asking attendees to answer post-rally surveys. We asked about the campgrounds and the various wineries, distilleries, and breweries we toured. We asked about the local special interest places we visited that had nothing to do with grapes or grains. We asked about breakfasts, lunches, and dinners.

And every one of these aspects were very well received and had high marks for "level of fun." None of them, however, made the top of the list. What was number one?

People. The social aspects of every Grapes & Grains event singularly made the top of the list for what makes our events tremendously fun. By people, I mean YOU! Every single member of Grapes & Grains has something interesting to share, whether it is expertise, talent, an amazing gin collection or unique life experiences. We all bring something to the table, and we all contribute to something we call "success" within our Intra-Club.

Now that we are pretty sure the social aspects of Grapes & Grains events are what make us fun, what does that mean to our members?

First, it means if you have yet to attend a Grapes & Grains rally, 2026 needs to be the year you change that! Matt and Lisa Marquand are hosting our first ever [Grapes & Grains 101 Rally](#) specifically for members who have never attended one of our rallies. This event sold out in mere days, and the wait list is growing. We have multiple rallies lined up for the spring schedule, including Sip of Georgia III and [Sip of Texas IV](#)! An amazing, four stop rolling rally is in the works this August, leading up to the Airstream Club International (ACI) Rally in Minot, ND. More West Coast rallies are in the planning stages. Some East Coast favorites and perhaps a few new entries are also being discussed. Don't let 2026 pass you by without joining us at one (or more) of our amazing rallies. [Sign up early](#), as these rallies usually sell out quickly.

Once you have attended, you will see first-hand the great times and fantastic people that make up the biggest and best ACI Intra-Club. You may find yourself raising your hand to assist the rally hosts. We find almost all Airstreamers are happy to help, but Grapes & Grains members tend to be volunteers of the first order! Once you've volunteered to help at a rally, you may find yourself thinking, "It would be really cool to have a rally in my back yard! We have great [insert your wineries, distilleries, and breweries here] in our town." If you think you have a great idea for a rally, we have the tools, the expertise and the leadership to help you make it happen. Everyone has a first time hosting a rally, after which it becomes second nature to host rallies, and maybe more. You might be just like me, saying *that looks like a cool rally* in Bardstown, and find yourself elected the President of Grapes & Grains just a few years later! Go ahead and make plans to join us in 2026! You won't be disappointed.

[Sign Up For a Rally](#)



The Sip of the Finger Lakes II Rally in September,
hosted by Cathy and John Andersen

From the Desk of G&G First Vice-President
Scott Vaughan

Greetings from Roanoke, Virginia!

Deborah and I are settling here at home after our final trip of the season. We started with The Virginia Airstream Club #109, "Last Call for Fall" Rally at Madison Vines RV

Resort near Charlottesville, VA. Mini tastings around camp allowed trying some new bourbons and whiskeys and I got to sample a true unicorn, Hancock's Reserve, very tasty! (It is a rare release from Buffalo Trace not seen in stores. Akin to a Jaguar or a Snow Leopard!) After a most excellent hike, a trip to Copper Fox Distilling in Sperryville, VA brought new bourbons into the fold. Cooper Fox has a very relaxed, speakeasy vibe going with variety in their whiskey menu. I confess I had to try them all. This was a great preamble to, one guess, another trip to Kentucky! It seemed only right to make one more trek through bourbon land before winterizing The Breeze.

From Charlottesville we took a long loop through Kingsport, TN, got to see a little bit of snow there and got to do a bit of shopping! I was lucky to find a bottle of Weller 107 which, of course, needed a new home. Next stop was Cave City, KY to tie in a trip to Mammoth Cave National Park. With the government shutdown still in progress we were gambling that before we had to roll on, an agreement would be reached, and the park would open. This left us extra time to visit the tasting rooms of MB Roland Distillery and Linkum pinch (Dueling Grounds Distillery). It was very convenient that they were next door to each other. MB has delicious grain to glass bourbons and whiskeys. The owner Mary Beth was there and shared their story and poured our tasting. Yes, bottles were rehomed. In case you were wondering, we did get to tour Mammoth Caves. If you are into caves you need to visit.

Next stop, Bardstown for 3 nights! After an easy one hour and ten-minute drive across Kentucky...it was only appropriate to set up camp at White Acres Campground and make a dash to Buffalo Trace. Thank goodness Colonel E H Taylor saved the day and made the extra drive a success. Bardstown is always fun! From tastings at The Blind Pig to Evergreen Liquors to Willett to Heaven Hill to name just a few potential stops, it is one of the epicenters of bourbon tasting. We had not been to Bardstown Distillery and of course had to visit them as well. I really liked their Collaborative Series Ferrand II! And yes, we did go to Buffalo Trace each morning to start our day.

Elkhorn RV Park in Frankfort, KY was our next home. Yes, Buffalo Trace each morning, I know, I know...just how I like to start my day. Colonel Taylor Small Batch was available every day. Weller one day, Blantons a couple of days and Eagle Rare a couple of days. Also, they have a 125 proof Sazerac Rye which is one of their new offerings. Quite tasty I do say. For those who have been in the Buffalo Trace 90-day jail, you will be thrilled to hear that it has been temporarily suspended! Their website still includes this policy however they are not enforcing it right now. It could come back at any time but all clear for now. I have to say this allowed us to stock up a bit.

Our last trip of the season was a blast!

Here's to a wonderful Christmas for you and yours and a happy start to the New Year!

Cheers and Sip On!
Scott



Rally Recap



Sip of the Mitt

Look at the palm of your right hand. Across from the base of your thumb not far from the edge of your hand is the location of Grand Rapids, "Beer City, USA", which is where the Sip of the Mitt was held. Tucked behind a golf course and small airport is the lovely Steamboat RV Park on the Grand River. Truly an oasis just minutes from the city it was a perfect setting for all our rally festivities.

Our Rally Home was beautifully situated on the river's grassy edge and is where we gathered Wednesday evening to kick off the rally. We were warmly welcomed with a Michigan themed goody bag and set off to get to know the other Airstreamers. This being our first rally everyone was new, but I could see that others were connecting with friends they had made before. Around the circle we all spoke a little about ourselves and what

beverages we enjoy before digging into a delicious dinner of fried chicken with shared sides and desserts.

Thursday was an exciting day of brewery visits. Our rally organizers provided us with many suggestions for excursions beyond the rally and we headed off to one, the Meyer May Frank Lloyd Wright house, before meeting the group at Founders, the



day's first brewery stop. After a quick lunch and interesting tour, we boarded the private bus that the group had taken from the campground and headed off to four other local breweries. We had a great time visiting so many outstanding establishments. At the last stop, City Built Brewery, the group enjoyed a taco bar dinner before heading back to camp on the bus for drinks around the fire pits and the raffle drawing.

Friday morning our hosts and a few awesome volunteers cooked breakfast for us. Everything was tasty, but I am certain there are some who are still thinking about how good the SPAM was! Fully nourished, folks headed off to enjoy the suggested excursions and collect more answers to the Scavenger Hunt questions. Several of us landed up at Woodland Airstream where we enjoyed meeting the staff, seeing new rigs, and taking advantage of the rally discount! Late in the afternoon we rendezvoused at Farmhaus Farms to enjoy and learn about their hard ciders. A favorite of many was the Salted Caramel Cider. We purchased scrumptious Michigan treats and ended the visit with wok bowls the hosts had arranged.



Excursions and the Scavenger Hunt continued Saturday, and we made our way to the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. It was definitely worthy of a visit, and we happily recounted our experience as we gathered with the group back at the campground for a late afternoon steamboat cruise. Our hosts provided us with delightful walking charcuterie boxes and drink tickets for the bar, which we enjoyed on our trip up and down the Grand River. Afterwards it was a quick walk back to the campground for a pizza party and "your favorite local beer" swap. We wrapped up the evening with prizes awarded to the Scavenger Hunt winners and a special thanks to our rally hosts and organizers, Pegeen & Tom Smith and Sally & Tony Lobaza.

On Sunday morning the last of the morning coffee gatherings was held and many of us packed up to head home truly thankful for the amazing efforts of our hosts and for the friendships we had made and strengthened.

Rally hosted by Pegeen & Tom Smith and Sally & Tony Lobaza

Recap submitted by Patty Feit



Rallies! Rallies! Rallies!



We've got rallies galore for 2026...mark your calendar!

REGISTRATION OPEN...or waitlist available:

Sip of Texas IV - April 23-26, New Braunfels, TX ([Click for more details](#))

Grapes & Grains 101 - May 13-17, Frankfort, KY ([Click for more details](#))

Sip of Calistoga - May 21-26, Calistoga, CA ([Click for more details](#))

REGISTRATION OPENING SOON...watch your email:

Sip of the Northern Mitt - June 10-14, Leelanau Peninsula, MI

Rolling Rally to Minot - Aug 5-19, Hot Springs, SD to Mandan, ND

SAVE THE DATE...planning in progress:

Sip of Virginia - April 9 - 12, Charlottesville, VA

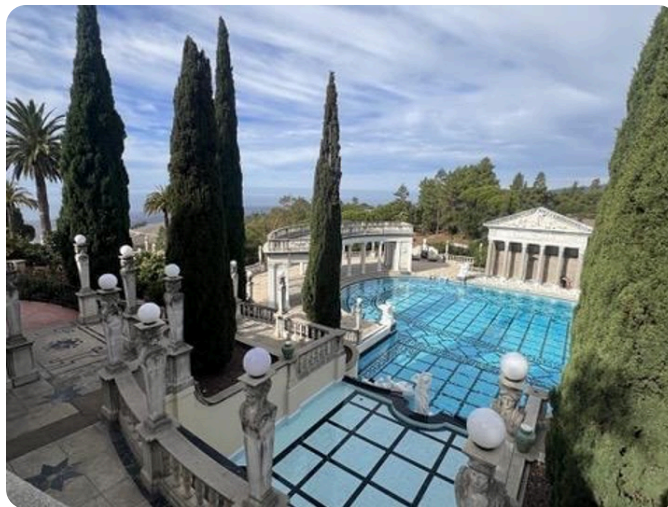
Sip of Georgia III - April 16-19, Helen, GA

Sip of the Salem Witches - June 24-28, Salem, MA

Let's rock and rally! 🚐 ✨

[Sign Up for a Rally](#)

Caravan Recap



Sipping Across California 2025

On October 28, 2025, 44 folks left Paso Robles, CA and the “Sipping Across California Caravan” with fond memories, new friends and perhaps a couple special bottles of wine! The caravan was hosted by Volunteer Leaders Patti and Brian Poole & Paula and Otto Rosenbusch, members of the Grapes & Grains Intra-Club.

The inaugural adventure was initially conceived by Patti and Brian, having lived in California for more than 40 years. Co-leaders Paul and Otto currently reside in Michigan but also spent time living in Half Moon Bay and have family connections in Napa which contributed greatly to those stops along with their joyful personalities! In keeping with the Grapes and Grains mission, the caravan was filled with stunning scenery, fantastic company, exceptional wines, wonderful breweries and fantastic distilleries, all while enjoying the local flavors of each distinctive area. Motorcoaches provided the group

transportation on 4 major touring days to keep everyone safe. Together, over 18 days, we explored some of the Golden State's most beautiful and delicious destinations.

While counting our blessings and basking in the incredible journey, the Caravan also gave back generously. The non-profit recipient chosen was Canine Companions, an incredible organization that provides service dogs to individuals with disabilities at no charge. We were delighted to tally up the total and discover that the caravan donated \$4,162 to Canine Companions!

Our journey took us to five amazing stops, each offering a unique taste of California:

- South Lake Tahoe: We kicked off our trip in the breathtaking Sierra Nevada Mountains with a “tacos and tequila” opening meal. A free day allowed time to enjoy the crystal-clear waters and pristine landscapes of Lake Tahoe and some local craft beers, providing the perfect backdrop to relax and get to know each other before we began our journey together.
- Jackson: Next, we headed into the heart of the Gold Rush country. Amador county offers a glimpse into California's rich “mines and wines” history, with charming towns and a burgeoning wine scene that's full of hidden gems. We enjoyed many wine tastings, music, great food, a beer education, and a docent led tour of a historic gold mine.
- Napa/Sonoma: On our way to Napa, we were able to stop in and visit Vinnie's in Sacramento to learn all about dents, coatings, upgrades and individual evaluations of each rig over lunch. Then on to Napa!! No California wine tasting tour would be complete without a visit to the world-renowned Napa and Sonoma valleys. Since we were there just following “harvest season”, the wine makers were excited to share the news of the year's bounty! Here, we indulged in some of the finest wines and most unique culinary offerings that our country has to offer.
- Half Moon Bay: Our next stop took us across the Bay Bridge and San Francisco skyline to the Pacific coast. Half Moon Bay offers amazing and dramatic coastal views, delicious clam chowder and a Cioppino dinner with fresh seafood right off the dock! We had a group tour “skipping and sipping” along the beautiful coastline, complete with unique experiences at local breweries and distilleries.
- Paso Robles: While Paso Robles provides a more enchanted forest type of wine-tasting experience, it is known for its bold Zinfandels and Rhone varietals. We sipped our way through the area with its many offerings including a tour of the

Seaside Village of Cambria and the famous “Tin City” while also regaled by the beautiful majesty of the historic Heart Castle.

Our journey was filled with incredible memories, great friends, and indulging in the very best of what California has to offer. In reviewing the post-rally survey responses, the leaders were pleased to note that all respondents would recommend this caravan to others, so we are already drafting plans for next year (mid-September to early October 2026).

Cheers!

Your Volunteer Leaders,
Brian, Patti, Otto and Paula



From Matt's Cocktail Bar



Glass Acts

On a Facebook group, I recently fielded the question, “What’s a Nick & Nora?” That got me thinking about all the kinds of glasses used to serve cocktails and how important it is to serve them in appropriate glassware. There are dozens of glasses of all types and sizes, but I’ll focus on just a few of the most common types and reasons why you would choose one over another.

Rocks

Every bar should have a few heavy-bottomed, glass rocks glasses. Used for spirit-forward, stirred (but sometimes shaken) cocktails that are usually served with a large rock of ice or large amounts of crushed ice (e.g. Mai Tai). The rim of the glass provides ample room for expressing aromatics like citrus, to attach and garnishes, and to insert straws & umbrellas. Great for: Old Fashioned, Bourbon, Scotch, Rusty Nail, and Mai Tai.

Coupe

A classic cocktail glass that is used for spirit forward, stirred or shaken cocktails that are served “up” (no ice). A coupe (pronounced with the trailing “p”) is one of my favorite choices for serving a cocktail. The presentation takes on a classic elegance that enhances champagne, Manhattans, Green Points, and even a simple martini. Like the rocks glass, the wide rim also provides ample room for expressing aromatics and attaching attractive garnishes. Great for: Martini, Last Words, Monte Cassino, Manhattan, Sidecar, Bee’s Knees, Paper Plane, Gimlet, and Vesper.

Nick & Nora

The Nick & Nora is a stemmed glass that holds 3.5-5.5 ounces so it's too small for many cocktails. It has a classic, elegant shape and the name stems from the old Thin Man movies featuring detectives Nick and Nora Charles. They loved their martinis served in these glasses and they remain a staple of the complete bar for those cocktails served "up". Any smaller-sized cocktail that you would serve in a coupe can be served in a Nick & Nora. Great for: Manhattan, Martini, Boulevardier, Bijou, Corpse Reviver No. 2, and Aviation.

Highball & Collins

Highball and Collins glasses are very similar with the Collins glass having a smaller diameter. They're both used for cocktails that feature a large amount of mixers such as fruit juices, soda, or tonic. Most cocktails served in these glasses feature a lot of ice. The shape helps keep the ice stacked in the glass which slows down the dilution rate and helps preserve the carbonation of the soda and tonic. In addition, the glass provides a lot of space for eye-catching presentations of mint leaves, berries, and garnishes. Great for: gin & tonic, mojito, Paloma, rum & coke, and Bloody Mary. And following up with some honorable mentions we've got three versatile glasses that you can swap in and out depending on the situation.

Gibraltar

Gibraltar glasses are versatile since they cross the line between a rocks glass and, depending on the size, they can be used for nosing glasses for straight up spirit tastings and flights. They're also common in coffee bars for espresso & coffee-liqueur and/or bourbon cream-based drinks.

Cosmo

The Cosmo is an all-purpose, no-nonsense glass that can be used from wine to cocktails. They're usually used for something you intend to serve "up" but the heavy base aids in stability that can come in handy when there is a lot of bustle around the bar.

Flute

The flute, a long-tapered glass usually featuring a shorter stem comes in really handy for bubbly cocktails like the French 75, Mimosa, and Bellini. Anything that you might feel inclined to serve in a Highball or Collins glass can be elevated by serving it in a flute.

You don't need to stock all glass types in your bar, but some cocktails are better served in a glass that allows for the appropriate amount of dilution over time, sufficient space for aromatics that enhance the aroma and flavor and provide an appropriate amount of surface area to retain temperature in the drink. No matter what glass you choose though, always chill it thoroughly before pouring in your stirred or shaken cocktail. Cocktails are meant to be served cold so get those glasses chilling!

Cheers!

Matt

BRN 3044



Copyright (C) 2025 Grapes & Grains. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)