



"The Mich-i-gram"



1st Quarter (January, February, March) 2026

2025-26 Board Members

President

Sarah Smith

MACPresident052@gmail.com

1st Vice President

Pegeen Smith

MAC1stVPresident052@gmail.com

2nd Vice President

Kevin Mueller

MAC2ndVPresident052@gmail.com

Treasurer

Tom Cobb

MACTreasurer052@gmail.com

Secretary

Karen Routson

MACSecretary052@gmail.com

Immediate Past President

Fred Bryant

MACPastPresident052@gmail.com

2026 Committee Chairs

Membership

Kat Hibbard

MACMembership052@gmail.com

Newsletter

Laurie McLean

MACNewsletter052@gmail.com

Webmaster

Sally Lobaza

MACWebmaster052@gmail.com

Parliamentarian

Karen Fisher

MACParliamentarian052@gmail.com

President's Corner

A Note from the President

Hello MAC and affiliates,

2026 is here and so begins the planning of another year of adventure. I hope this newsletter finds you warm (wherever you are!) and your travel plans are beginning to take shape for a fabulous new year.

Behind the scenes at the Michigan Airstream Club, your newly elected board, chairs, and club members have been working diligently to plan four lunches and organize rallies throughout the entire year. I'm thrilled that every month in 2026, you'll have opportunities to connect with ACI, MAC, and SEMAC.

Our lunches begin in January! Thank you to our hosts who have secured restaurants for us to gather monthly until spring. New for this year, you're able to RSVP to as many luncheons as you'd like using a simple registration link. Later in the newsletter, you'll find info on times, dates, and places and the link.

After our luncheons wind down and the snow melts, our MAC rally season begins *before* Memorial Day! Please consider joining me mid-May at a new rally at Wabasis Lake Campground. This lovely county park is located a stone's throw from Woodland Airstream in Grand Rapids and is a perfect event for a first-timer to attend. This spring maintenance rally offers a low rally fee, reasonably priced and spacious campsites, plus your Board members attending to make everyone feel welcome! New and seasoned Airstreamers can kick off the Michigan camping season together, visiting Woodland and exploring west Michigan at your leisure.

Please be sure to view our awesome MAC website to find all the details on luncheons, rallies, and more. It's been recently refreshed and looking better than ever!

As always, reach out to any board member with questions on how to best maximize your MAC membership. We'd love to help you find an event that fits your schedule and interests.

Happy camping! We look forward to seeing you roll into a MAC event this year.

Sarah Smith
BRN# 26310
MAC President
MACPresident02@gmail.com

Traveling together since 1958



Stay Connected:



[MAC Website](#) [Region 4 Website](#)
[Airstream Club International](#)
[WBAC Caravans](#)

New Members

The Michigan Airstream Club wishes to welcome:

- ◆ Brett and Gwynne Anderson
- ◆ Gina and Mark Atilano
- ◆ Charlotte and Scott Diller
- ◆ Dawn Micele and Andy Schriever [Affiliate]
- ◆ Kristine and Domenic Milicia [Affiliate]
- ◆ Tim and Karen Rice [Affiliate]
- ◆ Sheri Trout and Robert Fraser
- ◆ Kaiti and Scott Vasbinder
- ◆ Virginia (Ginger) and Joseph Slattery [Affiliate]
- ◆ Lynn Winter and David Kennedy

New Members: Check out the Airstream International [Welcome Page](#) and [video](#).



1st Vice President's Report

By Pegeen Smith, BRN #8039



Hello Fellow Airstreamers!

Last October, at the 4th Annual Pentwater Rally, the Michigan Airstream Club swore in our newest executive board members after a unanimous vote gathered electronically in September, 2025. Thank you to all the members of our club who submitted their vote. The response was incredible!

What made the swearing-in ceremony so special was that Jeriel and Carol Jean Beard were the officiants who swore us in. The ceremony was touching and gave everyone in the room a true flavor of the rich history of our club. I am honored to have been sworn in as Sarah Smith's 1st Vice President and am excited to see how much will be accomplished in the next couple of years.

We have already kicked off our first meeting with the development of several tools to assist rally hosts. Hopefully this will help our new hosts that have stepped up and volunteered to host rallies this summer. A big welcome to Karen & Kim Pontius and Marsha & John Taylor who are hosting two of this summer's rallies. The club's future relies heavily on volunteers and upon their willingness to share their time and talent with all of us. Have you thought about what you could offer?

Tom and I are one of the lucky ones who are staying in Michigan for the most part this winter. So we are hosting the first winter luncheon in January. See page 16 for the full list of monthly MAC luncheons planned. If you have not headed to warmer climates or if you have just returned, plan on joining us! It is so nice to catch up.

Pegeen Smith
BRN #8039
MAC 1st Vice President
MAC1stVPresident052@gmail.com

Membership & Club News

MAC Executive Board Meetings

Did you know that the Executive Board meets every other month on behalf of the club? And did you know that members are welcome to attend the meeting as a non-voting observer? In accordance with the Michigan Airstream Club ByLaws, the Executive Board must give the membership at least 10 days notice prior to a business meeting. So we are sharing the meeting dates for 2026 so you can mark your calendar and join us. The Board meets on a Tuesday of every other month from January - October @ 7 p.m. EST via Zoom. To join, click [here](#) unless otherwise noted.

2026 Meeting Dates

January 20

May 12

September 15

March 10

July 14

November 10

Mark Your
Calendar and Listen In!



If a meeting date changes for any reason, the board will send out a change notice to the membership via email with at least a 10 days notice.

Exciting Airstream Club International Travel Opportunity



Silver on the River - ACI National Event Rally

- Custom itinerary in France on the Rhone River with a full boat charter for our Airstream Club group
- Luxury, ultra all-inclusive cruise on Riverside Ravel by Riverside Luxury Cruises
- Check the ACI website for complete details
- <https://airstreamclub.org/silver-river-2026>
- Airstream Club friends and family welcome!
- Space is limited, sign up today!

Sailing
July 15-22
2026

Registration
Now Open!



Membership & Club News

End of an Era: MAC Shell Has Sold by Pegeen Smith, BRN # 8039

Your Michigan Airstream Club Executive Board is pleased to announce that Mishell II, our 28' 1966 International Land Yacht Shell has been sold. The MAC shell was used as a storage trailer which held supplies for rallies in the past. Larger rallies of up to 100 rigs that required water/electrical support and provided large events such as church services and pancake breakfasts, bingo and popcorn. Since rallies have changed over the years, the shell was used less and less and storing the shell was becoming a burden so last year, the board listed the shell for sale.

On October 22, 2025, the shell was sold to a retired couple, Jamie & Bryan Lancer who live in the Zeeland, MI area. They have a large piece of property that they are developing into an event space. Bryan will turn the shell into permanent restrooms for the event space! They promised to update us on their renovations.



Bryan & Jamie Lancer



The Shell on its way to a new life



Membership & Club News

Karin Jane Kurkowski

December 2, 1940 - September 11, 2025

A Remembrance by Carol Jean Beard, BRN 8150



Hopefully, this remembrance provides a bit of history for the newer members of the Michigan Airstream Club (MAC). Also, I hope it invokes special memories for our older members who knew Karin personally.

Karin died rather recently at the age of 84. I know very little about her personal life. I know very little about her first 20 years in the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI). The Kurkowskis are Life Members of the Airstream Club International (ACI). They joined the organization in 1980...45 years ago.

At one time there were 4 different units in Michigan. Early on, Larry and Karin belonged to one of the other three units. Approximately 25 years ago, they transferred their membership to the Michigan Unit. I'm sure Karin was a volunteer in her early years in the organization, but it's Karin's years while in the Michigan Unit that I am writing about.

Have you ever read about the Pareto Principle, the 20/80 rule? It explains that 20% of the people do 80% of the work in most organizations. During her years in the Michigan Unit, Karin was highly involved. She was definitely one of the 20% who did 80% of the work.

Karin was President of the Michigan Airstream Unit, now Club, in 2004. That required a few years prior working her way up the ladder to the position of honor and a lot of work and time.

She was Region IV President in 2012 and 2013. Her first Region IV Rally was held in Coldwater, Michigan. Her second Region IV Rally was held in Lewisburg, West Virginia. When Karin was Region IV President, the Region covered all of Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia. I don't know the requirements now, but when Karin was President one had to put in two years as 2nd Vice President, two years as 1st Vice President and finally two more years as President. So it was then, and may still be, a six year commitment. There are very few people willing to volunteer that much time in leadership to any organization, including me. The Region IV Rally is now every other year. When Karin was President of the Region, it was held every year.

(Continued on the next page.....)



Continued.....

Karin also held standing committee chair positions at the International level. I know of at least two different standing committee positions she held. Karin also worked at so many International rallies in varied positions. I remember her running the post office at different Internationals. That position fit her perfectly as she was employed by the U.S. Post Office for years.

Needless to say, Karin was well known for her leadership abilities and her willingness to serve. With her deep love and concern for the organization, I always felt she brought honor and prestige to the Michigan Unit. Remember...it's not only what you know but who you know.

To my knowledge, for years the Ohio Land of Lakes Unit ran the Swiss Festival National Rally. After that unit disbanded, from 2014-2021 Karin and Larry, along with other devoted volunteers, kept that rally going.

The Swiss Festival National Rally is held in Sugarcreek, Ohio. It is the oldest National ACI Rally held yearly. Persons in leadership can't do it all by themselves. They have to know how to delegate and assign responsibilities to others. Their team worked endlessly and we are so thankful they did. The Kurkowski's leadership ran from the 51st through the 58th Sugarcreek rallies.

I can't over emphasize how much Karin loved the ACI and gave it her all. Words alone cannot express my appreciation for her steadfastness and involvement in the organization that brings so much joy and fun to our lives.

Karin was a good person. She had a wonderful smile and laugh. She carried herself well; always looked perfect to me. I loved her pixie hair style. It fit her to a tee. She had a glow about her. In all the years we knew her, she always greeted Jeriel and me with open arms. For many wonderful years, we have shared Travelers Rest Resort during winter months with Karin and Larry.

In closing, I could not have written this article without the input of Vicki Ettenhofer. She provided dates and information I would have had a hard time acquiring. Special thanks to our dear friend, Vicki. Also to Corey Maxwell, Blue Beret Editor, who provided the great picture. I thank you Corey.

Jeriel and I will miss Karin. We never know when we will see a person for the last time. In that regard, always try to be an instrument of love and peace to those you hold special in your heart.



Membership & Club News

Birthdays & Anniversaries

January

06: Harold Larson
08: Bill Breckenridge
14: Sandra Lovlien
19: Angus Stinson
22: Lori DeLeeuw
22: Wally Kimmel

February

05: Linda Smith
22: Norm Kiel
27: Bernadette Frost
27: Ken Hoekwater
Phillip & Cynthia Atkinson: February 14, 1969

March

05: Earl Landesman
18: Jeriel Beard
19: Fred Bryant
26: Stephen Pinkman



Please Note: If you haven't seen your birthday or anniversary listed in the newsletter, it's because we don't know it! In the old days that information was collected each year on your renewal slip. The ACI database doesn't collect that information, but we'd still like to include these celebrations in the newsletter. Please e-mail [Laurie McLean, Newsletter Editor](#) and she will make certain to include your information in the upcoming issues.



Membership & Club News



Garden Flags for Sale at MAC Rallies

Back by popular demand! Michigan Airstream Club garden flags are available for sale at the MAC rallies for \$25/ each (cash or PayPal).

Reminder: Michigan Airstream Club has a [Facebook Page](#)

If you are looking for an additional way to keep in touch with MAC friends, consider joining us on [Facebook](#).

NOTE of CAUTION

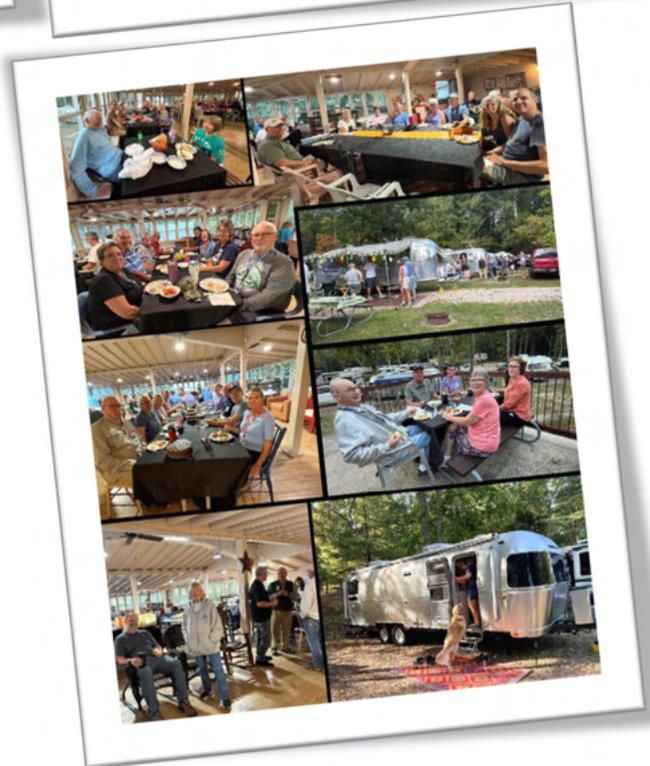
In the past, some members have received emails from MAC officers that we did not send. The hackers are getting tougher to spot so be careful! There are several things you can do to spot the phishing emails. Anytime there is a request for money or gift certificates – Delete it! Move your cursor over the sender's email address. If you do not recognize it report it as spam then – Delete it. And finally, do not respond to any email you suspect. That will let the hackers know they have a valid email address and put more focus on your email address. We will never ask anyone to send money or gift certificates. So do not respond to those emails, Delete them!



We Rally Together

Pentwater Fall Rally 2025

It's a wrap for rally season 2025! What a great year, ending in Pentwater, Michigan!



Oceana's HERALD-JOURNAL

Click [here](#) to read the Oceana's Herald Journal article about the rally!

Member Spotlight

MAC members Pegeen Smith and Sally Lobaza (with support of course from Tom and Tony 🤗) hosted an incredible “Sip of the Mitt” Grapes and Grains rally at Steamboat Park in Jenison.

It was our first G&G rally and they knocked it out of the park!! So fun to be a tourist in my own town, too, and send folks to some great local places in our unscheduled time.

MAC and SEMAC were well represented and we gained another affiliate.



Congrats, friends!

MAC Shares

We Have Yet to See Another: The story of "Aligned" by Caretakers: Steve & Jennifer Lee BRN #6462

It was December 2015 and we were shopping for a previously loved Airstream. My wife's family has a property in Northern Michigan where we had a "SOB" trailer we needed to update. My brother-in-law had just a new Flying Cloud 25', and we thought it was very nice. We planned a trip to Woodland Airstream in Grand Rapids as they performed full restorations. I was thinking if we found one needing more work than I wanted to tackle we'd see what they had to offer.



Jennifer and I arrived, asked for a tour and shared our story. We were looking for used as it would likely live under our pavilion Up North. We received a tour of the shop and learned they performed complete restorations. Great, I understood our options on restorations.

The salesman started by showing us new models from Bambi's up to 30' units. I said they are really nice but we were looking for used. We then went outside and looked at a consignment trailer looking a bit weatherworn. Jennifer went inside followed by the salesman and by the time I stepped inside I could see, by the look on her face, this unit was to be ours.

Perfect for our needs. A corner bed, shower, bath, galley and gaucho up front that made for a spacious layout. Not being Airstream savvy, the model names meant nothing to me. This was a 1997, Excella, Classic, 21'9" long, dual axle, widebody. We made the deal and took delivery in the next weeks.

While at Woodland then owner, Chad Carlison, told us this was a unique trailer and we would likely not see many like it. He also suggested we attend "Urban Air" in Eaton Rapids, MI.

We took Chad's advice and signed up for Urban Air, our first Airstream event. While there, a number of astute Airstream owners stopped in their tracks asking us about our trailer. "You have a 21' Airstream with dual axles???" "Wait a minute, this 21' is a wide body???" "This is a Classic with solid oak cabinets???" Well after a while I took the hint, perhaps this Airstream is a bit more special than just something that caught our eye.

We used the Airstream up North a bit but decided it was too nice to leave at the river property. We contacted Woodland and scheduled a full exterior restoration - polish, seal, paint, the works. The interior was 100% original, in like new condition and needed nothing.

(Continued on the next page.....)

Continued.....

With things all shined up we loved the trailer even more. I couldn't help but wonder about all the questions we received. This led me to contact Joe Peplinski the ACI historian about our trailer. Joe replied, "Airstream made the 21' corner bed, corner bath from 1992 thru 1997. It was called a Sovereign from 1992-1996 and became the "Excella" for one year in 1997. The model was narrower from 1992-1995 and became a "wide body" in 1996 (the same time the longer trailers became "wide bodies"). In general, the 21' tandems were made in small numbers so they are quite rare. Production numbers have not been available."

Well, that's cool. We have a low production trailer, only one year of the Excella name. So, we started keeping an eye out for another. We attended Alumapoloosa 11 and thought we found one, nope it was an older narrow body version. We attended a Region 4 rally in Wooster Ohio and saw another. Nope that was a one off 23' built for a caravan leader. We attended international in Sedalia, MO and I rode my bike up every lane, no 21' Excella Classic.

I reached out to a dealer known for towing accessories looking for a break controller for our Interstate. He asked what I was considering pulling. I said a car hauler and possibly a vintage Airstream and sent a picture. He immediately answered back, "I know that trailer. It's a prototype." I thought great but I already have the historian's take on it and he didn't mention prototype; he just couldn't find any production numbers.

A week later the dealer e-mailed me back. "I checked with a friend that worked at Airstream and he agreed that trailer is a prototype." Months later I was able to talk to this dealer in person at the Sedalia rally. I asked him why he thought this trailer was a prototype. He said Airstream brought this trailer to the 1997 dealer show. All the dealers said, "**Don't build it!**" At 21' a dual axle, wide body, Classic will cost too much. At that price customers will go for a longer trailer.

Low volume or prototype, it doesn't matter to us. We love "Aligned" and enjoy taking her to vintage shows and events where she might be appreciated.

MAC Shares

Rally Hopping Our Way West by Dale Schneider BRN #06664

The plan was to attend as many rallies as we could find as we wandered to our destination.

Camp Dearborn Milford, MI. Sept. 25-28

Our membership with the Tin Can Tourists club pre-dates our Airstream ownership. The club started in 1919 before Airstream was founded in 1931 and has historically had a major presence in Michigan and Florida. Tin Canners have an annual Winter Convention held in Florida and a spring and fall rally at Camp Dearborn in Milford, MI. This was the fall rally and the weather was perfect for the Pie Hole tournament and flea market.



Open house on Saturday welcomed the public to view the trailers as well as a vintage car show. Saturday night dance in the big tent featured rockabilly band Billy Mack & the Juke Joint Johnny's. The costume theme was Bob Ross. The costumes were outstanding and we dressed as Bob's cousins. We danced our feet off. It was rumored that Bob occasionally enjoyed rum so of course there has to be a tasting. This rally is always changing as new members bring newly restored trailers that haven't been shown before. After Sunday morning coffee everyone hits the road.

Urban Air Eaton Rapids, MI. Oct. 1-5

In 2017 we attended our first Urban Air in the island city of Eaton Rapids. There we met MAC members, and now friends, Jennifer and Steve Lee, Donna & Tom Cobb and Jeff and Beth Wentworth and Minnesota club members Chris and Ron Lyrek. This was a reunion of sorts as some of these same friends were there again. Camping on a main street downtown is a lot of fun as it becomes like a neighborhood.



The theme was Back to the Future and the Lee's brought the trilogy and showed one movie each night on the wall of the storefront next to their trailer. An entertainment tent featured a local band with a talented torch singer we could dance to. There was a contest for the best theme decorated trailer. We were parked next to the SEMAC outgoing president and his wife. The best ice cream store in town was right in front of us. There was a one-day Ukelele festival in town on

Saturday Kat went to and brought the host group back with her to see the trailers. They had a jam session on the sidewalk between the ice cream shop and our trailer. Both attracted a lot of attention. It was great seeing all these trailers downtown and seeing old friends and making new ones.



(Continued on the next page.....)

Continued.....

Caballo Lake, NM. Oct. 23-26

Joint rally with the 4-Corners and New Mexico units. This state park is on the Rio Grande River and is considered one of the top 10 parks in NM. The group camp area was organized in several wagon wheels, with electric for each of 6 campers, one shared water tap, and a huge ramada with a smooth concrete floor.

This rally featured social hours and charity sewing at the ramada, two breakfasts and a catered dinner followed by a costume dance party. We won a prize for our "Bob Ross cousins" outfits. One night we went to a local cantina for a steak dinner (we split one.) We met Airstreamers who had their careers in Michigan and discovered we had mutual friends from the Flint area. We were 20 miles from the Hatch area famous for growing chili peppers.

Artesia, NM Nov. 6-9



This was the first urban rally for the 4CU Airstream Club. It was timed for the town's Chamber 42nd Balloons and Tunes festival. Nineteen trailers, 43 people camped in a landscaped combo plaza/parking area connected to main street a half-block away by a shady walkway with fountains between two buildings. The circle center area of the plaza had pavement art and room for our chair circle and propane fires every night.

Airstreamers donated socks and fleece blankets to "Pack of Love" non-profit for local school kids. Kick off was a reception for us at the Performing Arts Center hosted by Artesia with appetizers, wine and remarks by the Mayor and Council members. Self-guided walking tours were organized for the beautiful library, museum, and town sculpture park. Saturday morning started before dawn with about 20 hot air balloons launching from a nearby park. We were surprised to see a second group of mini-balloons, radio controlled, launching. Who knew? Later, a local car club displayed in between the Airstreams as local folks wandered by to see both. The car club picked their favorite 2 trailers and we picked our favorite 2 cars with awards given to both. That night there was a free outdoor concert with food trucks featuring the high school marching band, a fire dancer and a rock band. Of the 5 urban rallies we have attended this was the best one by far.

(Continued on the next page.....)

Continued.....

Oro Valley (Tucson) AZ Nov. 12-16.

Catalina State Park. This park has many trails, fabulous birdwatching and the Tucson Loop bike trail is right at the park entrance. We attended this rally in November, 2021, held in the Ringtail & Flycatcher group areas. This was the 4CU "Tucson Unplugged" rally with a fabulous bathroom/shower building, ramada, two water taps available. We took the early arrival option on Wednesday, set up and renewed friendships with many we had met before as well as new acquaintances. The Cobbs and Bryants from MAC were also in attendance here.



On Thursday we explored locally by bike, meet and greet at the ramada with appetizers at 4:00. Friday breakfast was burritos from a local restaurant, group bike ride on the Loop. Saturday morning, we rode the Loop to the historic Steam Pump farmer's market. Dinner was catered by Whole Foods. Sunday morning was raining so everyone packed up, said good byes and see you at the New Year's rally.

Picacho Peak State. Park, AZ Dec. 30, 2025-Jan 4, 2026

This will be our second time at this rally, also attended in 2021-2022, at this beautiful peak that juts up out of the Sonoran Desert valley floor between Phoenix and Tucson, known for its hiking trails, rock climbing and geocaching. Top of the list of activities are pot lucks, happy hours and campfires.

Game nights feature Left-Right-Center (we were advised to bring cash) and the White Elephant gift exchange is hoot with some very surprising gifts last time. We are bringing a case of peanut butter for the community service project to support a local food bank & diaper bank. Several of the campers we saw at previous rallies will be there to help us bring in the New Year, Airstream style (probably going to bed early!)

After several more rallies in AZ and exploring on our own, what's in store for the return trip to Michigan? Not sure yet, but looking for rallies to stop at on the way back because they are a reason to see a new place!

We Rally Together in 2026 (at-a-glance)

Dates	Event - Location	Host/Organizer	Links/Contact
May 14 - 17	Spring Maintenance Rally Wabasis Lake Campground, Greenville, MI	MAC Host: Sarah & John Smith sarahsmith1835@gmail.com 616-308-7005	MAC May Rally
June 4 - 7	Silver on Silver Rally Holiday Park, Traverse City, MI	MAC Host: Karen & Kim Pontius	MAC June Rally
RaJuly 16 - 19	Airstreams Return to Cadillac III VSV Park, Cadillac	MAC Host: Peg and Tom Smith, Kat Hibbard and Dale Schneider, Karen Fisher and Wally Kimmel pegeens@mac.com or trailerkat@gmail.com 231-884-8107 (Peg) or 231-383-0617 (Kat)	MAC July Rally
August 22-27	WBCCI International Rally, 2026 Minot, ND	WBCCI	2026 International Rally
September 10-13	Escape to the 45 th Parallel Gaylord South/Bradford Lake KOA, Frederic, MI	MAC Host: Marcia & John Taylor mltay1962@gmail.com (989) 619-1396	MAC September Rally
October 1-4	Pentwater Fall Rally Whispering Surf Campground, Pentwater, MI	MAC Host: Sarah Smith sarahsmith1835@gmail.com 616-308-7005	MAC October Rally

Please join the Michigan Airstream Club for Lunch!

While some MAC members may seek warmer climates "off season," those still in Michigan enjoy gathering for winter lunch.

Mark your calendars and join us in the fun! [Click here to RSVP by jotform.](#)

<p>Saturday, January 17, 2026 @11:30 am - 1:30 pm</p> <p>Mi Mezcal Mexican Grill 111 W Harris St. Cadillac, MI 46601 <i>Hosts: Tom and Peg Smith</i> 231-884-8107</p>	<p>Saturday, February 21, 2026 @ 12:30 pm</p> <p>Tony M's Restaurant. 3420 South Creyts Road Lansing, Michigan 48917 <i>Hosts: Karen Routson</i> 517-242-4794</p>	<p>Saturday, March 21, 2026 @11:30 am - 1:30 pm</p> <p>Monelli's Italian Grill & Sports Bar 5675 Byron Center Ave. SW Wyoming, MI 49519 <i>Hosts: Stephen & Janet Pinkham</i></p>	<p>Saturday, April 18, 2026 @ 12:30 pm</p> <p>Krzysiak's House 1605 Michigan Ave Bay City, MI 48708 <i>Hosts: Karen Fisher & Wally Kimmel</i></p>
---	---	---	---