



THE BIG BENDER

VOLUME 51

December 2025

NUMBER 9

2026 Officers

President

Amy Waymire

Vice President

Chad Jones

2nd Vice President

Vince Naman

Secretary

Monica Brinkley

Treasurer

Julie Ludlow

Trustees

Daniel Brock

Guy Neff

Don Baltz

Elwood McElhanev

Webmaster

Bryan Green

Newsletter

POSITION AVAILABLE

Membership

Gaye Baltz

Historian

Jason Friedrich



Presidents Message:



Port St. Joe RV Resort was the perfect place to wrap up the 2025 rally season and install our 2026 officers. A special thank-you goes to Monica and RoseMarie for the beautiful charcuterie table, and to Gary for officiating the installation—you truly made the evening feel special.

I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as President of Big Bend Florida and am excited for all the adventures 2026 has in store.

As we close out the season of thankfulness and enter the Christmas season, I'm grateful for each of you and for the opportunities we have to enjoy time together exploring the Southeast and beyond in our Airstreams. This Christmas, I wish you a joyful celebration filled with family, friends, good food, and the hope that comes with the birth of our Savior.

Amy Waymire

President,
Big Bend Florida Airstream Club

Welcome New Members!

- Larry Conway & Jill Dover (BRN 8404)
Live Oak, FL
- Stephen Butler (BRN 9239) (Affiliate)
Bayfield, WI

Up Next...

 <p>Christmas Luncheon December 6</p>	<p>Westminster Oaks, 3927 Meandering Lane, Tallahassee. Enjoy a delicious catered meal by JBCrumbs of Thomasville, GA, featuring Chicken Cordon Bleu (a vegan option will also be available). Don't forget to bring diapers to support NWF Health Network foster families.</p>
 <p><i>Golden Isles - Port of Call</i> February 6-8, 2026</p>	<p>Our first rally of 2026 will be held February 6–8 at Coastal Georgia RV Resort, Brunswick, GA. Golden Isles–Port of Call will be a joint rally with the South Carolina Coast Club. Henry Knight will be leading a presentation and workshop for new Airstreamers, and we'll also be hosting a book exchange—and yes, Brunswick stew is definitely on the menu! If you haven't made your reservation yet, don't wait—you won't want to miss this beautiful coastal Georgia town.</p>
<p>Silver in the City-Bainbridge March 19-22, 2026</p>	<p>Registration will open December 8 and is limited, so reply quickly. Watch your email for the jot form.</p>

Does anyone recognize this group of Airstreamers?*



DID YOU KNOW?????????

Big Benders once rallied at a nudist campground??? 😲

Well..... It wasn't a nudist campground at the time.

Rally Recap

Sunsets and Sunrise 2

What a great time at Port St, Joe for our last rally of 2025. David ordered up some beautiful weather, warm days and cool evenings made for perfect camping,

Several of us arrived on Thursday and enjoyed a social hour or two. After the remaining members arrived on Friday we had a happy hour before the restaurant crawl began. Craig gave a critique on several restaurants in the area and everyone chose which one they would like to try. After dinner we all met to compare experiences and visit for the evening.

This was a no host rally so there were no official plans for breakfast on Saturday morning, however after dinner on Friday night, naturally the conversations turned to what's for breakfast. A big shout out goes to Monica for bringing in some pastries from a local bakery and to our barista Jason for our caffeine fix.

Saturday evening was the installation of new officers. Congratulations to all and thank you David for doing a great job in 2025. Looking forward to Amy's term in 2026. Thanks to Monica, Tonya, RoseMarie, Jason and Chris, we had a beautiful charcuterie table set up with all the fixin's.

It was a wonderful weekend spent with great friends. We wish you all safe and happy holidays and look forward to seeing you in 2026.



2026 Rally Schedule

Dates	Campground	Where		Hosts	Reservation
Dec 6, 2025, 11am (EST)	Westminster Oaks	Tallahassee, FL			waymire_a@yahoo.com
January 8-11, 2026	Topsail Hill Prsv State Park	Santa Rosa Beach, FL	Canopener		Window is open www.reserve.floridastateparks.org
February 6-8, 2026	Coastal Georgia RV Resort	Brunswick, GA	Golden Isles - Port of Call	Waymires & Knights	Window is open 1-912-264-3869
March 4-8, 2026	SUN 'n FUN Campground	Lakeland, FL	Region 3 Rally		
March 19-22, 2026		Bainbridge, GA	Silver in the City- Bainbridge	No Host Rally	December 2025
April 10-12, 2026	Paynes Prairie Prsv State Park	Micanopy, FL	Camping on the Prairie	Ludlows, Phaff & Moscoso	Window is open www.reserve.floridastateparks.org
May 1-3, 2026	EastBank COE	Chattahoochee, FL	Off to the Races	Everyone	Window is open www.recreation.gov
Aug 22-27, 2026		Minot, ND	International		
September 10-13, 2026	Windcreek State Park	Alexander City, AL	Lake Life	Craig & Monica Brinkley	Window is open www.alapark.com
October 9-11, 2026	Pensacola RV Park	Pensacola, FL	Angels & Airstreams	Namans & Andersons	Window is open 1-850-944-1734
October 11-18, 2026	<i>Club Caravan</i>	Natches, MS - Lynchburg, TN	Tracin' & Tastin' Caravan	Chad & Dolores Jones	Currently Full
November 13-15, 2026	Coastline RV Resort	Eastpoint, FL	Not So Forgotten Coast Rally	Sammy & Chris Stockstill Jason Friedrich	Window is open 1-850-799-1016

**All campgrounds are open for reservations. After you make your reservation
be sure to complete the registration jot form at airstreamclub.org
So your rally hosts will know you are attending.**



**COMING SOON!!!!!!
2027 RALLY SCHEDULE**



Our Airstream Story

Lamar & Amy Waymire



Lamar always said that when he bought a camper it would be an Airstream. He pointed them out on the interstate and would remind me that one day he was going to buy one, I would smile and agree, always thinking, sure you are. So in April of 2003 when he announced he was going to Ebro to buy an Airstream with his \$150.00 cash money I just smiled and said OK sounds good to me. Several hours later he returned with his 1957 Flying Cloud. It caused quite a stir in our community, everyone came to see it and I am sure they all laughed all the way home, after all that is what I did all afternoon. Later that night I did some internet research and saw the potential this "Silver Palace" had, and so the work began.

The camper had been flooded in 1994 so Lamar removed as much of the inside as possible and cleaned and cleaned and then cleaned some more. We worked all summer painting, replacing wood, replacing plexiglass with glass in the windows, checking wiring, replacing plumbing, the list goes on and on. We were able to salvage the basic cabinets but had to replace the doors, the shower is also original. We also kept the original California Coral counter tops, since they matched the upper cabinet doors. We also kept the original stove, sink, and refrigerator.

Somewhere in the middle of all of this work I suggested that we go to Stone Mountain for Labor Day. We continued to work hard, called in the community for help and persevered. There were times when I was sure that we wouldn't be making our Labor Day trip. On August 8, 2003, we made our first trip in our refurbished Airstream, to Komoki Mounds State Park in Blakely, GA. We wanted to make sure there were no problems prior to our first big trip. We made the Stone Mountain trip, fell in love with camping and have been traveling ever since.

During the refurbishing process Lamar started researching WBCCI and he wanted the numbers that had originally been on the trailer. The numbers 7837 were available so we joined WBCCI as At Large members. Charlie Hurst sent us a letter asking us to join the Big Bend unit, Bill Worthington, then President of the Big Bend chapter of WBCCI, called and talked to us about joining this unit and invited us to a rally at Cotton Hill. We traveled to Cotton Hill, met some of the Big Bend Airstreamers (the Hursts and Dawes) and were hooked. We officially joined the Big Bend unit in November of 2004 at the installation rally in Thomasville, GA. While in Thomasville we met Mac McCauslin and found that he had the membership directories since the early seventies. He sent us the names of the previous owners of #7837. I sent letters to similar names in the Ohio area and were able to find the children of the second owners. They sent some pictures and shared the fondest memories of spending 6 weeks in the Canadian Rockies.

Twenty one years later we are still enjoying the Airstream life and Big Bend Florida Airstream Club, although not in "The Palace".

We would love to hear your Airstream story, if you are willing to share please send your story to waymire_a@yahoo.com for publication in a future Big Bender.

Tech Corner

A Small Upgrade That Made a Big Difference By Chip Leavine

While we're not experts by any means, we wanted to share a few changes we've made to our Airstream that we absolutely love. Each little upgrade has made our travels smoother and more enjoyable. We hope you pick up an idea or two—and just as importantly, we'd love to hear about the upgrades you've made to your own Airstream so we can explore new possibilities too.

Finding Our Boondocking Confidence

When Traci and I first started our Airstream journey, we quickly discovered how much we love boondocking. There's a real sense of freedom when you can pull into a quiet spot with no hookups and settle in for the night.

But I'll admit—back then, I stressed a lot about our power usage. Our Airstream came with the standard Sea Level II digital voltage meter. It was fine for basic information, but voltage alone doesn't tell you much. Twelve volts might mean "almost full"... or "almost empty." Not exactly comforting when the furnace might need to run all night.

More than once, I lay awake wondering whether the batteries would last until morning. Would the furnace fan quit at 3 a.m.? Would we have lights for coffee at sunrise? Boondocking was supposed to feel peaceful, but the guessing kept me on edge.

A Smart Battery Monitor: Simple Upgrade, Huge Peace of Mind

Eventually, we upgraded to a smart battery monitor—either the Victron SmartShunt or the BMV-712 will do the trick. And honestly? That upgrade changed everything.

Instead of guessing, we now get precise information:

- How many amps we're using
- How many amp-hours we've consumed
- Our exact state of charge
- And best of all: **how many hours we have left**

at our current usage

And it's all visible right on a phone.

In the screenshot below from our Victron Connect app, you can see exactly what I mean:

66% battery left, a small 2.4-amp draw, and almost **three days** of runtime remaining. No more voltage guessing, no more middle-of-the-night calculations.



Sleeping Better Off-Grid

Now, instead of lying awake wondering if the batteries will hold, I take a quick look at the app, roll over, and go right back to sleep.

Knowing exactly where you stand—that’s what real peace of mind feels like when you’re off-grid.

We’d Love to Hear From You

If you have questions about this upgrade or want help understanding the setup, feel free to reach out. And even better—we’d love to hear about the upgrades and improvements you’ve made to your Airstream.

Your ideas might be the next thing we try, and we may share those improvements with the club.

You can reach us anytime at chip.leavine@gmail.com

*Lamar Waymire, Gary Anderson, RoseMarie Anderson, Jay Thompson, Elna Thompson, & Craig Brinkley Canopener 2017. The Thompson’s invited 10+ people for breakfast in the Airstream, it was cozy.

"To strive endlessly to stir the venturesome spirit that moves you to follow a rainbow to its end... and thus make your travel dreams come true." ~ Wally Byam



[Big Bend Florida Airstream Club \(Group\) | Facebook](#)



club153@airstreamclub.org

