THE BIG BENDER

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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 McElhaney

Webmaster
Bryan Green

Newsletter
POSITION AVAILABLE

Membership
Gaye Baltz

Historian
Jason Friedrich

Presidents Message:



Fall camping is off to a great start! Be sure to look for the recap of our Lake Martin rally later in the newsletter. It was a wonderful way to kick off the fall camping season.

I'm looking forward to our upcoming adventures as we make our way to Pensacola, a city rich in Florida history and military heritage. From there, we'll be Tracin' and Tastin' as we explore more history and enjoy the sights and flavors along the Natchez Trace. Fall camping is definitely one of my favorite times of the year!

October is also the time of year when we elect our officers for the upcoming year. Our Nominating Committee has put together a wonderful slate of officers who are willing to step up and serve the Big Bend Florida Club in 2027. We will hold a business meeting during the Airstreams and Angels Rally in Pensacola to vote on the 2027 slate of officers. You should have received an email with notice of the business meeting, along with information about the opportunity to vote electronically.

As we look ahead and vote for the members who will help lead our club into 2027, it's also a good time to look back and remember those who have served before them. Our club doesn't keep moving forward without members who are willing to step up, take on the responsibility, and give their time to make things happen.

To everyone who has held an office or served in a leadership role with the Big Bend Florida Club, **THANK YOU!** Your time, energy, ideas, and willingness to serve have helped make our club what it is today. We are grateful for each and every one of you.

Here's to another great year of camping, friendship, and making memories together. I'll see you down the road!

Amy Waymire
President,
Big Bend Florida Airstream Club

RALLY RECAP

Lake Life Rally

The fall camping season got off to a great start with our **Lake Life Rally at Wind Creek State Park on Lake Martin in Alabama**. We had 15 Airstreams and 28 Big Benders in attendance. We all know that a published agenda is really just a suggestion, and the weather certainly kept us on our toes this weekend!

Thursday evening kicked things off with **"A Taste of Colorado."** The Willmoths shared some of their Colorado beer finds with everyone, giving us a fun start to the weekend.

Friday morning began with a delicious breakfast of sausage, grits, toast, and cooked-to-order eggs—and then the rain started! Friday afternoon, most everyone found their way to **Sylacauga and the Blue Bell Creamery**, where we watched the production line through the windows and, of course, enjoyed a delicious taste of Blue Bell ice cream. With so many flavors to choose from, I believe a few folks even indulged in two cups!

Friday evening was on your own, so Big Benders scattered to several different local restaurants for dinner.

Saturday's scheduled boat ride had to be cancelled due to the threat of bad weather. Better to err on the side of caution, right? But when one door closes, another one opens! Everyone headed over to **Chuck's Marina** for Chuckwalla's Pizza and then on to **Boondocks at Bay Pines** to enjoy Lake Martin's famous Bushwackers.

Later Saturday evening, our hosts treated us to grilled hamburgers, potato salad, chips, and ice cream sandwiches for dessert. After dinner, we had a special treat—**picking and grinning with Elwood!** Thank you, Elwood, for sharing your musical talent with us.

Sunday morning, before heading home, a few Big Benders attended **Church in the Pines** on beautiful Lake Martin.

We welcomed first timers Allen Slansky and Chris and Helen Burbank (MAL). We hope to see them at another rally soon.

A heartfelt thank you to our hosts, **Craig, Monica, Don, and Julia**, for planning such a great rally and, most importantly, for keeping things flexible and fun while working around all those rain showers. It was a wonderful way to kick off our fall camping season!




DUCATI






NATIONAL
PARK




BOONDOCKS
BIG BEND FLORIDA


BIG BEND FLORIDA

UP NEXT

Airstreams and Angels
Pensacola RV Park
October 8 - 11, 2026

Thursday, Oct 8

1:00–3:00 pm

Arrivals & Setup - Welcome to Pensacola!

5:00 pm Social hour & heavy hors d'oeuvres at Pavillion.

- Those with last names beginning with A – M please bring an appetizer to share.

Dinner on your own.

Friday, Oct 9 – Clubhouse and Pavilion

8:30 am – Coffee

Day free for exploring. Places of interest: Walk Historic Pensacola, Seville Square, Pensacola Lighthouse, Fort Barrancas, Museum of Commerce, Julee Cottage in Historic Pensacola.

5pm – Social Hour at Pavillion

6pm Dinner: FAJITA FRIDAY!

- Those with last names N – Z please bring a dessert to share

7:00 pm Desserts and Big Bend Business Meeting

8:00 Game BINGO

Saturday, Oct 10

8:00 am Coffee

9:00 am Breakfast

- Yogurt, granola, Waffles, blueberries, bananas, strawberries, watermelon. Coffee. Banana bread

9:30am Talk by Lane about Naval Aviation

10:15 am Head out for Group Tour Pensacola Naval Aviation Museum

- Free Admission
- Please bring real ID for admission

4:30pm Social Hour at campground

5:30 Dinner at Gulf Coast Seafood Market, 2250 W. Nine Mile Road

Rally Fun & Games

We have some special activities for the October Rally which requires input from our attendees. Please tell us something about yourself that we don't know… This can be something like: I'm a real ballerina, I have never snow skied, I speak a foreign language, I know sign language, I was a teacher in Brasil, I went skydiving, I invented …, I do a podcast….I don't eat fruit, Keep it down to a few words, one fact from each person. Please E-mail to RoseMarie (gary.rosemarie@gmail.com) BEFORE October 1. We're counting on hearing from you to get in on the fun!

BUSINESS MEETING

A business meeting has been scheduled for October 9, in conjunction with the October, Airstreams and Angels rally. Below is the slate of proposed officers for the 2027 year. If you will not be attending the rally you will have the opportunity to vote electronically, an electronic ballot will be emailed 15 days prior to the meeting. Thank you to our Nominating Committee: Elwood McElhaney, Chair, Dolores Jones and David Ludlow for their hard work.

President - Chad Jones
2nd Vice president -
Treasurer - Julie Ludlow
Trustee - Ellwood McElhaney
Trustee - Julia Wilmoth
Newsletter -
Historian - Jason Friedrich

1st Vice President - Vince Naman
Secretary - Monica Brinkley
Trustee - Don Baltz
Trustee - Chris Stockstill
WebMaster - Shawn Montague
Membership - Gaye Baltz

You will notice a vacancy in the 2nd Vice President position. We need someone to step up and serve. If you think you may be interested please give me a call (850-260-5129) and let's talk about the rewards and responsibilities of the Presidency.

Omaha Beach 2026 07 12

Submitted by Pat Watkins

We recently returned from a July, 2026, Airstream members Rhone river cruise (8 days) in France. But before the cruise began we took a bucket-list side trip to the WWII era Omaha Beach in Normandie (Yes, that is how the French spell it). Big Bend Members RoseMarie and Gary Anderson as well as Pat and Lane Watkins visited these hallowed beaches. On the way we stopped at Giverny to tour Claude Monet's home and gardens where he painted many of his most famous works. Some of us actually walked on Omaha Beach, the bloodiest beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Pat Watkins got to walk in the water on Omaha Beach on her 80th birthday! How emotional and humbling it was. The weather was cold and windy—I am supposing similar to how it was on June 6, 1944. A perfect experience. I stood on the beach as the water surrounded my feet and cried as I thought about those brave men who gave their lives for our freedoms. How I wish everyone could feel the gratefulness towards these young soldiers that I felt on that day.

You should have seen all of the American flags being flown on practically every house in that area—those people have not forgotten and are very grateful to the Americans, British, and Canadians for their sacrifices on their behalf.

But—I am finding that many people here do not even know about June 6, 1944—or Normandie—or just barely have heard about it. How sad that they cannot know and appreciate what our country did for the entire world.



We next visited the American Cemetery with 9400+/- graves—3000 of which are Normandie souls. There are 3 female nurses there, too. I also learned that every plant on that hallowed ground IS from the US—it was brought from the States and the entire area is truly an American landscape. The cemetery overlooks Omaha Beach. And every single cross/marker is perfectly aligned—not even ¼ inch off. It is a perfect tribute to those resting there.

We visited some nearby sites and American flags were very plentiful—so much respect and gratefulness. It made me proud that we were able to be part of the success of the war effort.

2026 Rally Schedule

October 9-11, 2026	Pensacola RV Park	Pensacola, FL	Angels & Airstreams	Window is open 1-850-944-1734
November 13-15, 2026	Coastline RV Resort	Eastpoint, FL	Not So Forgotten Coast Installation Rally	Window is open 1-850-799-1016

There is still time to register for any of our upcoming fall rallies! **Easy Peasy!**

First, contact the campground and make your reservation. Then, be sure to register for the rally using the Jotform.

Already have your campground reservation? Great! Just make sure you have also completed the Jotform so we know you're coming.

To register for a rally, visit:
https://airstreamclub.org/events?map=1

Once you find the rally you're interested in, scroll down and click **"See Who's Coming"** to see which of your fellow Big Benders will be there. We hope to see you around the campfire this fall!



2027 Rally Schedule

DATES	CAMPGROUND	WHERE	HOST	RESERVATIONS
February 11-14, 2027	Suwannee River Music Park	Live Oak, FL	Pfaff Ludlow	Now accepting reservations for Feb. 11-14. Call the park at 386-364-1683 and mention Big Bend Florida Airstream group.
March 19-21, 2027	Tallahassee Car Museum	Tallahassee, FL	Brinkley Montague	sites saved- instructions pending
April 7-11, 2027	Region 3	Sevierville, TN		
April 15-18, 2027	Lake Pines	Columbus, GA	Gardner	706-561-9675
April 18-27, 2027	Brews with Views		Stockstill	Caravan currently full. email stockcm1@gmail.com for waiting list
May 13-16, 2027	TH Stone Memorial Sp	Port St. Joe, FL	Baltz	window open 6-13-2026 https://reserve.floridastateparks.org/
June 26-July 1, 2027	International Rally	Rock Springs, WY		details to follow
September 16-19, 2027	Crooked River SP	Kingsland, GA		window open 8-16-2026 GA state park
October 7-10, 2027	Topsail Hill Preserve SP	Santa Rosa Beach, FL	Brock	window open 11-7-2026
November 11-14, 2027	Reed Bingham SP	Adel, GA		window open 10-11-2026 GA state park

Rally Hosts Needed

The heart and soul of our club is the local rally — and great rallies only happen because members like you step up to help make them happen.

We're currently looking for volunteers to host our 2027 rallies, and we'd love to have you involved. Never hosted a rally before? No problem at all. We can pair first-time hosts with experienced rally volunteers who will help guide you through the process.

If you're willing to help host a 2027 rally — or would like to learn more — please contact Chad at: cjanddo@gmail.com



New Members

* Bob & Mary Ann Fish (BRN 6540) Crestview, FL

* Neal & Peggy Fuhler (BRN 25052 Middleburg, FL

* Dale & Trish Hagedorn (BRN 1770) Valdosta, GA

* Dawn Micele & Andy Schriever (BRN 11904) Apalachicola, FL

* Allen Slansky (BRN 5049) Tampa, FL

*Nilcole Woody (BRN 10163) Lutz, FL

*Gail & Paul Zajicek (BRN 20212) Tallahassee, FL

New Affiliate Members

* Juan & Jovette Arbona (BRN 9498) Auburn, AL

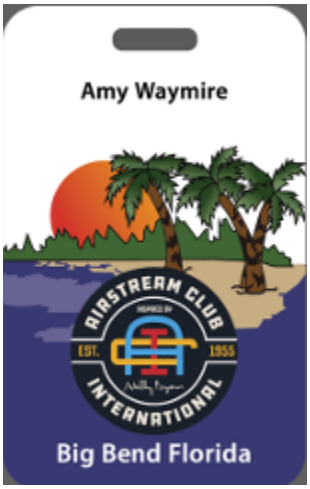
* Timothy & Nancy Rice (BRN 4142) Port St. Joe, FL

* Victoria & Fred Basnett (BRN 8275) Dunnelion, FL

* Vittorio & Karen Zanchetta (BRN 20989) Ocala, FL

* Sean & Christy Goudreau (BRN 8090) Mount Dora, FL

Badge Orders



New badges are being ordered for all new members and officers. If you have misplaced your badge or would like a new one, now is the time to order one.

The cost to replace a badge will be approximately **$5.00**.

Please email Gaye Baltz at **gbaltz47@yahoo.com** to place your order. **Orders must be received by October 5.**

"Let's not make changes, let's make only improvements." ~ Wally Byam

Visit us on the Web https://airstreamclub.org/big-bend-florida

Like us on Facebook Big Bend Florida Airstream Club (Group)

Zelle club153@airstreamclub.org

