

# SIERRA NEVADA UNIT, WBCCI

## FEBRUARY 2007 *Airstreamers* NEWSLETTER

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/snu/index.html> 775-972-5011



### Ribs and things at the January Luncheon

Everyone really enjoyed the ribs, the BBQ pork, the beans, the dirty rice, and all the other goodies at B.J.'s Nevada BBQ and we all managed not to drip BBQ sauce down our chins. It was good to see everybody and catch up on travels, plans for the future, Airstream projects, and other news. We missed Linda McKeand as she was home recovering from a bug. All in all, another enjoyable SNU luncheon.

### Business Meeting

Members attending the lunch and informal meeting were Randy and Vicky Grossmann, Fran Reid, Jerry and Dyann Thornburg, Brian McKeand, David Gmur, Gary and Anita Haskett, Bryan, Diane, and Virginia Leipper. Not much business to discuss at the January 20th luncheon. SNU President Jerry Thornburg did present the slate of nominees for Region 12 officers. The members present elected to accept the slate as presented. Treasurer Bryan Leipper, says the SNU bank balance is in good shape with approximately \$1,000 in the account.

### February Luncheon

We will be enjoying the quintessential Nevada truck stop experience at our February 17, 2007 luncheon. Join us at the Truck Inn off I80, exit 48 at the East end of Fernley. The luncheon starts at 11:30 am. All members & guests welcome. There is also overnight RV parking available.

### The President's Ramblings

Well here it is another month has gone by and I hope the New Year finds you all happy and healthy. I have been sitting here trying to think about what I would write. Then the old fall back of New Year resolutions hit me.

I remember promising not to wait until just before the March rally to get my trailer ready. I know, I said that just after the October rally. Better get at it. Oh well, it's turning out to be a good new year's resolution after all. I think I made the same one about my truck. Another resolution, more of a goal, is to come up with a new flamingo. Got my eye out, really have to beat Roy's last one. Gonna be hard. For the newer members, this was a little competition between some of us to see who could come up with the most unique or weird flamingo. With the first rally of the year coming up fast, I hope to see a lot of you at Washoe Lake. Remember to bring lots of warm clothes. Hopefully we can eat in a group instead of doing a round robin trailer meal like last year.



Happy Campers at BJ's

According to the emails I have been seeing, we are getting some new members and prospects. I wish them all welcome to the unit and hope to see you at future rallies.

Last but not least are my thoughts as to the goals of the unit. First it is to get together with other Airstreamers and guests, for an enjoyable camping experience, nice conversations, and great camaraderie. To do this we need to remember to respect others, the group and the unit values. With this in mind, I am wishing everyone Happy Camping and an enjoyable New Year. Jerry

### Wheel Bearings

Jerry's New Year's Resolution to start getting his Airstream ready for another camping year brings to mind a job we should all consider — wheel bearings. The standard recommendation is that you re-pack your trailer wheel bearings once a year. This is because trailers tend to sit a lot and that can contribute to condensation inside the wheel and that can lead to rust which, in turn, leads to particles which can score surfaces and cause friction and bearing failure. Re-packing the bearings also makes it easy to inspect your brakes and running gear in order to detect and fix potential problems before they become a hazard.

Doin' the wheel bearing 'thang' is not that complicated or sophisticated a task and can easily be done by amateurs willing to wrestle with awkward and heavy tires and hubs. Plan on an hour or two for each wheel (under half hour if you are serious and have everything figured out).

Be sure to take appropriate safety measures. Set up a spot with plenty of working room that is well lit and free of dust and grit. Keep wheels chocked to limit any trailer motion. If using jacks to lift the trailer be sure to use jack stands as a backup. Eye protection will be needed. Plan ahead and plan for safety. For more information and a step by step picture gallery go to: <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/owners-guide/maintaining/bearings/index.html>

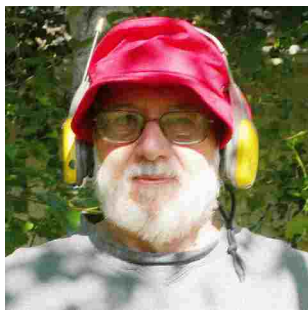
#### Lesson from Wally

This is an excerpt from PeeWee's memories of the first Caravan to Mexico and Central America in 1951. PeeWee (Dale Schwamborn) is the second cousin of Wally Byam. His mother, Helen Byam Schwamborn was Wally's first cousin. Wally and Helen's fathers were brothers, Bert and Ray Byam. To read the entire document and all his great stories go to: <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/history/peewee/caravans/index.html>



I had just had my 13th birthday on December 20th. A group of Caravaners were going to downtown Mexico City. When we arrived in heart of the city, I asked to get out. I'm not sure where the irresponsibility lies, but someone is guilty. I meandered down one street for five or six hours. I looked in shops. Bought firecrackers. Bottle rockets. They are neat. Hold them by the extension member, light them, wait for ignition and wow...off they go into the sky and then bam...they explode. I was having fun. Then the time of night registered. Where was I? How do I get back to the school? I used several same sounding Spanish words for taxi. I couldn't find one. Then like a miracle I saw a driver putting his pride and joy to sleep for the evening. I told him in Spanish where I wanted to go. He understood. Back to the school. Wally asked me what I had been doing. I told him. He wasn't cross, but did explain his responsibility for me.

Wally was responsible for me. He had been given charge of me by my parents. Later on I found out that he struggled over keeping me on the Caravan or flying me home. Guess what? I continued on and finished the tour with him. This was the only time that this happened, but it was fun for me at the old age of 13.



Randy's coast to coast trip Don't miss Randy Grossmann's article on his trip to the Airstream factory and WBCCI in Jackson Center. Randy was so impressed with the service he received, he wrote a letter.

To see the letter and more pictures of his travels check the link below. After leaving Ohio he visited friends and relatives in other parts of the country.

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/travelogues/grossmann/index.html>

#### Airstream Visiting

One advantage of being a WBCCI member is the opportunity to participate in rallies and events held by any WBCCI Unit. Visiting is a great way to broaden your Airstream experience and who knows, you might pick up some ideas that the SNU would like to try. If you'd like to get a glimpse of what other Units might be like, check the rally page. <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/rallies/index.html>

You will find photo galleries of rallies with the Idaho Unit, NorCal, and the Monterey Bay CA Unit. You will also find links to WBCCI International rallies and rallies in the 50's and 60's in Arizona, Texas, Nevada, and many other areas of the country. When you visit rallies, whether other Units, or regional or national events be sure to keep the SNU in mind. Write up your experiences and provide pictures for our newsletter. To get a more in depth feeling for rallies and caravans check out the log books from the Monterey Bay CA unit. They are fascinating reading. <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/travelogues/mbcu/index.html>

#### Upcoming events

Remember you can now pay your rally kitty fees on-line!

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/snu/2007/payonline/snu-shopping.html>

\* Thursday - Sunday March 22 - 25 2007 Washoe Lake Nevada State Park - Washoe Valley between Reno and Carson City. Off US 395 (SNU rally site category 2) cost: \$5 per night per vehicle SNU kitty kall plus State Park camping fee: \$14 per day per vehicle 3 day Rally, members & guests welcome. Board meeting Saturday open to all. Great bird watching area, hiking and bike trails. Arrival time - anytime after noon on Thursday March 22

\* Thursday - Sunday April 19 - 22 2007 Lahonton Reservoir Nevada State Park, beach 7 unstructured camping area - near Silver Springs, NV off Alt 95 South (SNU rally site category 3) cost: \$5 per night per vehicle SNU kitty kall plus State Park camping fee: \$10 per day per vehicle 3 day Rally, members & guests welcome. Board meeting Saturday open to all. Enjoy the peace and quiet of lakeside camping, fishing and boating, hiking and good bike riding possibilities. Arrival time - anytime after noon on Thursday April 19.

## SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM MY COAST TO COAST AIRSTREAM TRIP

by Randy Grossmann

I departed Carson City, Nevada in the beginning of October 2006 on a solo one month trip to Jackson Center, Ohio and beyond with my 2005 25' Safari Airstream. What prompted the trip was the need for some warranty work which the factory was best equipped to do. But the trip also had the purposes of visiting friends and relatives at various places in the U.S. as well as making a coast to coast highway trip that I have been wanting to do since 1973. The route was Carson City, Nevada -- Jackson Center, Ohio (Airstream factory) -- Lynchburg, Virginia -- Elizabeth City, North Carolina -- Raleigh, North Carolina -- Tyler, Texas -- El Paso, Texas -- Carson City, Nevada. The total distance traveled was about 6,500 miles. Here are some thoughts that I have developed about such an extended Airstream trip.

But I must start by saying that my visit to the Airstream factory was wonderful. I had a number of warranty issues. Each one was gladly and properly addressed. I thought that one particular warranty issue involving a slanted rear overhead cabinet was going to involve major work. But the straightening of the cabinet was accomplished easily and quickly to my complete satisfaction. They even found and repaired a propane system problem that I did not know existed.



The service personnel provided me with maintenance advice, showed me how to check and test certain things, suggested certain products which they found best to use, and answered all of my questions. I also took a tour of the Airstream assembly process. The Airstream personnel area great group of people. If any Airstream owner or prospective owner is in the vicinity of Jackson Center, Ohio, I suggest that they visit the Airstream campus, take a tour, and meet the people there.



I visited the WBCCI headquarters while in Jackson Center. It was nice to see Mountain Family RV flyers on their rack of Airstream sponsors. Mountain Family RV is also shown on a wall map in the Airstream Service Center lobby which shows all of the Airstream dealers in the U.S.

I have never made a road trip of this distance before because I always flew my airplane when traveling any distance in the U.S. What really impressed me on this trip is how slow road travel is. Even a slow airplane is many times faster than a road vehicle. It seemed as though I would drive and drive and drive and still not get anywhere.



Mt Family flyer at WBCCI HQ

Thank goodness for the nice rest stops on the interstates. I spent as many days driving as I did not driving. It was always a rush to get to my next destination. I had to pass up many places where I would have liked to stop and visit. A leisurely (stop here and there) type of trip to the east coast would be nice, but unfortunately is beyond my range. I have determined that such a trip requires one month for each 1,000 miles out. This means that I would have to be away from home a minimum of three months for this type of trip to the east coast. That is too long for me to be away. So from a leisure standpoint, a trip 1,000 miles from home is about as far as I can go.

Speaking of the U.S. interstate highway system, it is great except for one major flaw. The interstates go through the cities where the traffic becomes far too congested and hectic. Many cities have built beltways around their city but the cities have grown out to the beltways. I believe that it would have been much better if the interstates completely bypassed all cities with feeder highways to and from the cities. This was a major infrastructure blunder in my opinion.



I found it quite a challenge to travel solo through the cities on the interstates. A navigator would have been so helpful. I had to read the road map, read the routing directions, read the road signs, take the proper Y's and turn offs, and be in the proper lanes while driving the rig and looking out for traffic. Then a heavy rain storm was thrown into the mix while going through Little Rock. These encounters with the cities made an otherwise relaxed driving experience one that was quite stressful. What is needed for a trip like this is a really good GPS navigation system. It would be nice to take the secondary roads and bypass the cities. But that would add even more driving time. Too many fuel stops were required even with the increased fuel mileage of a diesel. For such long hauls enough fuel is needed to drive all day. Therefore, I am now looking for some type of auxiliary fuel tank. So far I have not found a user friendly one with which I would be happy.

Speaking of diesel, when I bought the Airstream a year and a half ago I also bought a diesel truck with which to pull it. The combination of the aerodynamic Airstream and diesel power made the driving a real pleasure. It was almost as though I was not pulling anything regardless of the altitude or grade. In fact, I had to keep reminding myself that there was something behind me.

While traveling, except for those times when I was parked on friends or relatives property, I spent the nights in Walmart parking lots. I basically traveled from Walmart to Walmart. These overnight stays worked out quite well. It is easy to find and get in and out of Walmarts, if any supplies are needed Walmart (and usually other stores) are right there, and the no cost overnight parking is quite nice. I stayed at only two RV parks during the entire month. One was in the middle of Wyoming because it was getting dark with inclement weather approaching and there was no Walmart nearby. The other was in Midland, Texas because I wanted to dump my tanks.



I learned that I should carry a saw and other limb/brush removal tools with me. The dirt driveway to my cousin's house in Elizabeth City is long, curving, rutted, and has close trees and brush on both sides. We had to do some limb and brush removal for me to get my rig through. After we got through I said "wow, we almost didn't make it." My cousin said there was no worry. He was prepared to break out the chain saw if need be. And need almost did be. It made the road to Obsidian Dome look like nothing. But I got through without so much as even a minor scratch!

I also learned that I should carry a ladder with me. My skylight cover blew off while eating lunch in Salt Lake City with rain threatening. I had no way of getting on top of the Airstream to seal off the opening. Luckily I was able to dismantle the skylight and seal off the opening with duct tape from inside the Airstream. It was a difficult job from inside, but the duct tape held and was water tight until I reached Jackson Center where they replaced the skylight cover. There are not many temporary repairs that cannot be made with duct tape. I would not be caught on the road without it.



Tyler Texas

This trip renewed my realization that we are so fortunate to live in the best part of the best country in the world. Other countries do not have the variety of terrain that we do. The U.S. east of the Rockies has historical sites which are unmatched in the western U.S. and it has some beautiful and interesting scenery. But there is so much sameness that the driving becomes boring much of the time. I found that driving in the west involves far more variety and interest. When I was halfway between Midland, Texas and El Paso I finally started seeing the welcome sight of mountains again. My favorite driving is in the mountains and deserts of the west.

In summary, I am really glad to have made this trip. It was a grand adventure. I am getting far more use out of my Airstream than I ever thought that I would. I consider it to be one of the best purchases I have ever made.

Check the Grossmann's travelogue for more pictures.

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/travelogues/grossmann/index.html>

## Zion Bound

Brian and Jenifer Root and their kids are planning an Airstream trip to Zion National Park the week of March 13th. They will be meeting some friends from Colorado. If you are interested in going along or meeting them there contact the Root's at [renoroots@sbcglobal.net](mailto:renoroots@sbcglobal.net).

## On the Road

Hi from Davis-Monthan AFB, home of the aircraft boneyard near Tucson, Arizona. We are near the end of our seven month snowbird trip around the great United States. We will stay here about five weeks, long enough to see some baseball spring training games and the Navy Blue Angels. The weather has finally dried up and blue sky prevails after over a month of cold and rain. We have had more rain in January than Reno gets the entire year. We expect to do a lot of birding while we are here, this area has some of the best birding in the Southwest.

After leaving Florida we stopped to see friends in Biloxi, MS. We could hardly believe the damage from Hurricane Katrina, all of the beautiful 150 year old houses along the gulf frontage that we saw a couple of years ago are completely gone. Jefferson Davis's home is nearly destroyed, but they hope to restore it within a couple of years.

One nice thing we noticed was the increase in the number of Airstreams that we see on the road. People are buying new and old Airstreams and traveling around the US, more than we have ever seen before. Maybe people are getting tired of dragging the huge monstrosities around.

We expect to be home to Reno in April after stopping in Las Vegas to visit our daughter Becky for a while.

Have a good time at the Truck Inn. My favorite dish there was the 5 egg omelet. Don't think they serve it anymore, but I think you can get a 4 egg one now.

Happy Travels,

Don and Mary Lou



### Brand New Floor Plan For The International.

**25' Limited International with fresh new look. This Airstream is not a CCD as it was not designed by Christopher C. Deam.**

**This unit is very eye catching with limited Ocean Breeze interior, white cabinets accented with bamboo/palm tree knobs, colorful palm tree curtains, and many more accents through out.**



### *Airstreamers* NEWSLETTER

Sierra Nevada Unit, WBCCI

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FEBRUARY 2007



**WELCOME TO THE SIERRA NEVADA UNIT of WBCCI.** We are a small, friendly group who enjoy sharing our enjoyment of Airstreams, and the Airstream lifestyle, with others. You are invited to come to any of our meetings and if you like, to join our Unit. We predict that you will make many friends and relish the camaraderie of our rallies, caravans, and group activities. Our members are always ready to share their advice on equipment problems and trailering knowledge. In addition to being a member of our local Unit, you will be one of several thousand who make up the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (the Airstream RV Club.)