



WBCCI - SIERRA NEVADA UNIT - NEWSLETTER

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"The Great Basin Airstream RV Association"

September 2015

Sierra Nevada Airstreams.org

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Rally and events schedule

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below for details

- ◆ [Thur. Sept. 24th
Glass Ck. Cmpgd
June Lakes, CA](#)
- ◆ [Oct. 6th Region 12
Rally Silver City
RV Resort, Minden](#)
- ◆ [Thursday Oct. 29th
Mesquite Cmpgd
Death Vally, CA](#)
- ◆ [November 14th
Plaza Hotel
Carson City, NV](#)

Prosser Rally Review

By all accounts, the first ever joint rally with the SNU – one of the smallest Region 12 Units, and NorCal – one of the largest, was a huge success. It was a great example of communication, collaboration and compromise with two Units whose rally styles are very different. There were a total of 25 Airstreams. Five from the SNU, 15 from NorCal and 5 guests. For several of the NorCal members and the guests, this was their first rally. Prosser was a great location. Not too civilized for the SNU but enough amenities for NorCal. The location provided opportunities for all sorts of activities. Some people went to Sand Harbor to see the Fantastics on



Thursday night. Many rally participants went to the evening street fair in Truckee. A few participated in wild bird banding in a nearby meadow. There was a large group who took a tour of Independence Lake wildlife preserve. Others drove into Reno for Hot August Nights, lunch at a casino, and visits with family and friends. A lot of people did some exploring on their own or went to dinner or lunch in Truckee. Then there were the rally activities. SNU member Don Williams, outdid himself. Not only did he make from scratch sourdough pancakes for breakfast on Saturday, he did several presentations on things related to off-grid camping. On Saturday, using Bryan's 24 inch TV, Don did a slide show of the Alyska caravan he and Gail participated in last year. The Saturday breakfast was put on by SNU members. In addition to Don's pancakes, Dyann and Jerry brought local grown Fallon melons including the famous Hearts of Gold cantaloupes. Everyone was very impressed. Baxter and Marlene brought strawberries and blueberries. Diane and Bryan provided the bacon which Jerry cooked. Gail provided some sausage. As always, Bryan made fresh coffee every morning and had it out around 7am. NorCal seemed to appreciate the SNU's habit of morning campfires and coffee. As Claudette said, it was a good way to bring people out of their trailers in the morning. Other rally meals included a do your own BBQ pot luck on Wednesday night and another potluck on Saturday night. Thursday dinner was on your own. Friday was supposed to be a pot luck but thunder showers off and on moved that dinner to Saturday. Happy Hours every evening provided a great opportunity to visit and get to know each other better. Speaking of visits, a mama bear and her cubs discovered that the tent campers near us was a great place to find a snack. They did some damage and set off a car alarm one night. After the second night, the tent campers decided to leave. The SNU's tradition of solar lights and pink flamingos made our end of the campground pretty decorative during the day and well lit at night. Every SNU member had their lights and flamingos on display. In addition to the SNU members already mentioned, we were delighted to see Roman and Melissa. It's been a while and it was great catching up with them.



Don making pancakes

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September SNU Rally at Glass Creek Campground



The location for the SNU rally Thursday September 24 through Sunday 27 2015 has changed to Glass Creek campground. Glass Creek campground is about 2.4 miles south of the turn off to our usual Obsidian Dome site. Glass Creek is an Inyo National Forest free campground near the creek. It has access to good hiking, off road trails, and fishing areas. To get to Glass Creek turn west from US 395 on Glass Creek Road. (the turn is immediately at the bottom of a long steep grade, if you roll by it there is a cross-over just south a bit at Deadman Road). The campground is about a quarter mile west of the highway. There are 66 free sites available on a first



come basis. This past spring the Forest Service Crews have installed 30 bear-proof food storage lockers and new fire rings into this campground. (This means fires are allowed here even with fire restrictions in effect.) The campground can accommodate large motorhomes and trailers and has a large modern vault toilet on the west side of the creek. Occupancy is usually light in September. The coordinates are: 37degrees 47'09" / -118degrees 59'25". Rally activities will include our usual morning coffee and shared meals. Other activities will depend on the whim of the rally participants. The campground location makes sight seeing trips to the Mammoth Lakes, June Lakes and other nearby areas easy. The elevation is 7,500 ft. At this time of the year come prepared for cold nights and warm days. See you at Glass Creek campground!



Schedule Changes

In addition to the change of the September rally site to Glass Creek Campground, there have been some other changes in the remaining 2015 SNU rally schedule.

* Saturday November 14, 2015 – the Luncheon will be held at The Plaza Hotel Events Center in Carson City. The original site has new owners and the place is no longer suitable for an SNU luncheon. The Plaza Hotel is a new location for the SNU and comes highly recommended by Randy & Vicki. It is located on S. Carson Street across from the Ormsby House.

* Thursday October 29, 2015 - Sunday November 1, 2015 are the dates for the SNU rally at Death Valley Mesquite campground. This Rally is hosted by Don and Gail and they have a lot of ideas for special activities.

Now is the time to Renew your SNU Membership for 2016

It's time to renew your membership in the SNU and WBCCI for 2016. Starting this year, renewals can be done [online through WBCCI](#). Be sure to indicate that your home Unit is the Sierra Nevada Unit (#157) and that you include the SNU dues of \$10 plus the WBCCI dues of \$65. If you prefer to pay by check, you can print the PDF form available on the WBCCI website and mail that with your check to WBCCI. You can also mail your dues check to the SNU at 716 Terra Ct, Reno, NV 89506 or pay at an SNU rally or luncheon. If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact us at hq@sierranevadaairstreams.org.

Region 12 News

The Region 12 Rally - This rally is just around the corner. It will be held in Minden. Hopefully you have sent in your registration. This rally is being supported by the SNU and several members of the SNU have been working with the Region to make this a special rally which will showcase some of the unique attractions of Northern Nevada

2016 Cali-Rally - The flyer for the 2016 Cali-Rally has been posted. Check it out and make plans to attend.

Upcoming Events

- Glass Creek Campground - June Lakes, Thursday September 24 – Sunday 27 2015
- Region 12 Rally Silver City RV Resort - Minden, October 6-11, 2015
- Death Valley, Mesquite Campground -Thursday October 29th to Sunday November 1st 2015
- Plaza Hotel Events Center - Carson City, NV Saturday November 14th, 2015
- Bavarian World - Reno Saturday Dec 12, 2015
- Black Bear Diner - Fernley Saturday January 23rd, 2016
- Olive Garden - Reno NV Saturday February 20th, 2016
- Washoe Lake State Park - Reno, NV Thursday March 17th 2016
- Ft. Churchill State Park - Thursday April 21, 2016 - Sunday April 24th 2016

Stella Byam and the Triad

The following was developed from notes taken in phone conversations with Pee Wee in January 2008

Stella Byam is probably the least known of people important to the history of WBCCI. Stella was Wally's second wife. Pee Wee isn't sure how they met. Wally married Estelle (Stel) Hall September 5, 1953. Pee Wee always thought of her as an "aunt". The family called her Stel. From the beginning Stel was an enthusiastic participant in caravans and rallies. Pee Wee says that Wally and Stel were a perfect match and very happily married. Stel was more of a night person, often sleeping during the day with an eye protector to block out the light. She and Wally both enjoyed dancing and other forms of entertainment. During their travels they often ate at local restaurants, sometimes with other caravanners or with local dignitaries.



Pee Wee's first memory of Stel was on a camping trip in the Sierra's before she and Wally were married. Wally was essentially checking Pee Wee out to determine if he should take him on a caravan to Mexico and Central America. Stel was along on that camping trip too. Pee Wee's most vivid memory was Stel's spaghetti. She hadn't taken into account the high altitude and the spaghetti turned to mush. A similar memory was on the 1951 Caravan to Mexico and Central American when Stel made a stew with chilis that was too hot to eat. Despite these incidents, Pee Wee says Stel was a very good cook. Both Pee Wee and Stel went on the 1951 Caravan to Mexico and Central America along with Stel's mother Lela. Stel and Lela had their own Airstream and Stel did the driving. Pee Wee says he often went grocery shopping with Stel on that trip.

After Wally's death, Stel served on the board of Airstream for a while. She eventually sold all interests in Airstream to Art Costello and two others. She died in 1968 or 1969 in Sacramento CA. Stel is buried next to Wally at Forest Lawn. Her mother, Lela outlived her by a few years. Stel has a son John by her first marriage. For a time he was manager at the Holiday trailer plant.

Sleeping in your Airstream

As with most other things in an RV, beds and bedding have come a long way in the past 50 years. Having a good bed and good mattress can make a huge difference in your enjoyment of your RV adventures. There has been a lot of talk about the beds and mattresses in Airstream trailers. Rounded mattress corners, non-standard sizes, short beds for long people, and beds tucked into a corner with only limited access are some of the issues. Then there are other complications experienced by many SNU members – sharing the bed with various 4 legged family members. That may be the most difficult problem to deal with as most pets have a mind of their own and enjoy their comforts. Once they discover the bed it is usually the human occupants that have to adjust. Many RV'rs, SNU members included, have tried different types of mattresses and also different types of mattress toppers. Toppers may be anything from egg crate foam to various densities of memory foam. What makes a bed comfortable is very much an individual preference. The more time you spend in your Airstream the more important a good bed becomes. If you are lucky the bed in your Airstream is just fine as you got it. If not, a little research and experimenting will probably get you sleeping comfortably with minimal effort. An entry on the [Zephyrs blog in 2010](#) has a good rundown on mattress issues with links to a variety of resources. Browsing through these links should give you a good idea of what to look for in choosing the mattress that suits you best. There's a lot more to it than grabbing whatever seems perfect at the moment. Several years ago, [Randy wrote a great piece](#) on his Airstream bed and things he encountered. Randy's article not only highlights some of the issues and how he resolved them, there are some great pictures of his unique bed making system.



Prosser Rally Review

continued



Balloons at Prosser

One of the guests was Vern and Barbara from Sparks. Hopefully we'll see them at another SNU event sometime in the near future. All in all, it was a great weekend and everyone seems anxious to plan another joint rally sometime in the future. [Check the website for photo galleries](#), presentation hand-outs and other resources from this rally.



Bird banding

The Early Days of WBCCI - The Triad

The following was developed from notes taken in phone conversations with Pee Wee in January 2008

There were three people instrumental in the creation and development of WBCCI. Without them and a group of dedicated caravanners WBCCI would not exist today or would be a different organization. These three people were:

Wally Byam - the creative and imaginative motivating force behind Airstream trailers and the caravans developed in part to promote the trailers and the life-style they represented.

Stella Byam - Wally's wife. The mostly behind the scenes supporter of Wally and his adventures. The perfect compliment to Wally, Stella was a quiet but effective ambassador and public relations partner.

Helen Byam Schwamborn - The organizer, the diplomat and the "people" person. Helen was the one to whom caravanners turned for assistance and support. She handled the concerns and issues that came up at rallies and on caravans thus making it easier for Wally to focus on other aspects of these adventures. She was responsible for much of the planning, organizing, and production that made things happen smoothly and efficiently.

It was the combination of these three people, whose talents, skills, and personalities worked so effectively together that made WBCCI the first organization of it's kind. An organization that as of 2008 (and still in 2015), is the longest still active and most recognized RV association in the world. Wally's trust in both Stella and Helen and his respect for their opinions and input supported the development of an organization open to the needs and interests of the membership. Helen and Stella were the best of friends. They balanced out the sometimes abrasive edges of Wally's creative and impatient personality. They made the perfect team to provide support to Wally on the often very tiring and sometimes arduous caravans and rallies.



Together Wally, Stella, and Helen helped create the foundation for an association that included many activities and traditions that were unique in the 1950's. This

foundation still functions to the present day and continues to change and evolve while maintaining many of the traditions of the past.



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