

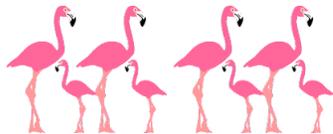


Sierra Nevada Unit

Wally Byam Caravan Club International

January Luncheon Review

As usual, the January lunch at Black Bear in Fernley was very enjoyable. Good food, good company, and good service. We even had good weather despite a rather iffy forecast. Luncheon participants included Randy & Vicki, Jerry, Dyann & Jill, Gene T, Roger & Janet, Diane, RoyLaine & Jim and Gary & Anita. This Saturday was Jerry & Dyann's birthday so we helped them celebrate and wished them Happy Birthday! To start off the SNU's 40th anniversary year, Diane passed around some special Anniversary stickers. She also asked for feedback on Rick's special design for the newsletter. Everyone had nothing but praise for the newsletter. They felt it was a great way to add a little fun to the layout and commemorate this special year for the SNU. It seems everyone is getting a little antsy to hit the road before long. A lot of the luncheon discussion revolved around travel plans for this year. Randy & Vicki are heading to Lassen RV Park sometime this spring to make preparations for the SNU anniversary rally in September. They are also thinking about heading to Death Valley sometime. Gene & Kathy are thinking of a possible Oregon Coast trip. All of us are anxious for the first 2016 SNU rally at Washoe Lake in March. In the meantime, we are looking forward to our February lunch at the Olive Garden.



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"That Kind of Rally"

It seems that a lot of rallies, whether, WBCCI, Region or Unit, have a specific focus or agenda. In some cases this is necessary, beneficial and usually fun. Certain RV parks for instance, frown on working on your rig except in an emergency situation. This and other factors are often the motivation for rallies with a focus on repair and maintenance. These rallies might offer workshops, one on one assistance, or other resources related to the care and maintenance of your Airstream. WBCCI policy specifies when and how Airstream rallies can include other brands of RV's or non-members. These are usually called Buddy Rallies and they provide an opportunity to introduce owners of other brands of RV to the WBCCI/Airstream experience.

Every club has it's rules and policies. They are a necessary part of group activities. They help define the club and ensure it functions effectively. Sometimes though, a little attitude adjustment might be needed. Do you just walk by someone obviously having a problem like a flat tire or trouble with their awning because "it's not that kind of rally"? Do you greet and welcome someone just because they are wearing a first timer's badge or do you always greet everyone as long lost friends? Do you assign just certain people to mentor new members or does everyone make new members feel welcome? Do you welcome guests who might drop by to check out the rally or invite guests to join you for Happy Hour or do you tell them the event is only for those who paid the fee and are members of the club? Sad to say, these are real examples where maybe people stuck to the rules a little more stringently than was needed and common courtesy took a back seat.



Bumper repair @ Rocky Pt.

Future SNU Rallies

- Olive Garden - Reno February 20, 2016
- Washoe Lake State Park - Reno March 17, 2016
- Ft Churchill State Park main campground April 21 - 24
- Crocker NFS campground - May 19 - 22
- Hickison Petroglyph BLM cmpgd - June 23-26
- WBCCI International Rally Lewisburg, WV - June 28, July 5, 2016
- Weed Heights RV Park - near Yerington - July 21 - July 24, 2016
- Obsidian Dome - near June Lakes, CA - Thursday August 18 - Sunday 21, 2016
- Lassen RV Resort (SNU 40th Anniversary Celebration) -near McArthur, CA - Thursday September 22 - Sunday 25 2016
- Region 12 Rally Golden Palms RV site in Hemet, CA - Oct. 12th to the 16th of 2016
- Scout Camp, Ft Churchill NV State Park - Thursday October 20 - Sunday 23, 2016
- Carson City - Plaza Hotel- Saturday November 19, 2016 11:30 am luncheon
- Death Valley Mesquite Campground - Date TBA
- Brian & Jeni Root's House, Reno - Saturday December 17, 2016 11:30 am luncheon



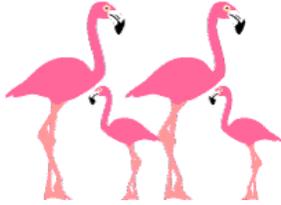
Visitors at Obsidian Dome

Every rally should be "That kind of rally". Rallies where people help each other whether it's a broken awning, leaky pipe or empty propane tank regardless of the rally location. Everyone should be welcomed at rallies regardless of whether this is their first rally or they are a regular participant. One of the best ways to encourage people to join and to participate is to help them feel that they are part of a special Airstream family. A family that is always ready to welcome you, to provide assistance and encouragement and to "open a whole world of new experiences ... a new dimension in enjoyment where travel adventure and good fellowship are your constant companions" *From the Wally Byam Creed.*

40 Years of SNU !



40th Anniversary Year



SNU Motto?



Recently Bryan ran across this quote from George Carlin. It seems to be a great description of at least one of the reasons for the SNU's preferred rally sites. "Some national parks have long waiting list for camping reservations. When you have to wait a year to sleep next to a tree, something is wrong."

Photo Gallery Update

Thanks to Don & Gail and Wheels & Doris we have a very nice photo gallery of the 2015 Cali-Rally at Calmetta Ranch. **Check out pictures** of the rally site, the activities, the people, and some special attractions at the ranch.



Reflections on Enhancements and Improvements

Randy Grossmann

As I was relaxing under the Airstream patio awning last Fall at Stove Pipe Wells in Death Valley I started thinking about the enhancements and additions which I am glad that I made to my Airstream as well as those which I wish that I had not made. Here they are in no particular order. I could write at length about any one of them, so consider this the executive summary.

AWNINGS - The Airstream came with just the large patio awning. Patio awnings are of limited value because they better not be deployed in much of a wind and they are a pain to deploy and un-deploy. Also, you dare not leave the vicinity of the Airstream with the patio awning deployed in case the wind comes up. I would like to install individual window awnings underneath the patio awning but that is not possible with my Airstream. An Airstream should be designed so that this can be accommodated. I did install a window awning over the rear window and two street side windows. These awnings are extremely easy to deploy and can be left deployed in fairly strong winds. They are quite nice in Summer when the sunshine hits the windows. Where feasible, **installing an awning over any window** that does not have one is recommended.



CONVERTER / BATTERY CHARGER - Replacing the electrical converter that came with the Airstream was one of the best upgrades which I have made. The Intelli-Power that I installed incorporates a three phase smart battery charger that charges the batteries much faster. The faster charging is beneficial when charging the batteries with a generator during dry camping. About once a day the Intelli-Power bumps up the voltage for a while to a level that churns the electrolyte thereby preventing battery deterioration from stratification. This is especially advantageous during the Winter months when the batteries are stationary. Replacing any dumb converter/charger with a smart one is strongly recommended.

BATTERY CHARGE INDICATOR - The state of battery charge indicator which comes with Airstreams is at best fairly inaccurate and at worst misleading. All that is needed to determine the state of battery charge is a "garden variety" voltmeter. Therefore, I connected a volt meter directly onto the batteries and mounted the meter on a wall. I constructed a chart that shows the state of charge for various voltage readings. There are some caveats regarding the voltage readings which I will not go into. Installing a volt meter to determine the state of battery charge and not using the battery charge indicator that comes with the Airstream is recommended.

WATER PUMP - The water pump that came with the Airstream was very noisy. The Shurflo which I replaced it with is so quiet that it can barely be heard even though it is a pulse pump. I suspect that there has been an improvement in pumps in recent years. There is no need to put up with a noisy water pump. Replacing any noisy water pump is recommended.

ACCUMULATOR - I installed a water accumulator. It was one of those projects where I have to ask myself "what was I thinking." The pump does not turn on as often because of the accumulator, but so what. The argument that the fewer times a pump turns on the longer the life of the pump and the less electricity it uses is an argument based on immateriality. An accumulator might be advantageous in some way if it was a large one, but there is not room for a large enough one. I also installed an accumulator bypass and so I rarely use the accumulator. This is an addition which is not recommended.

TIRE PRESSURE MONITORING SYSTEM (TPMS) - This addition involves both the Airstream and the tow vehicle. Bryan and Jerry did research on these systems and recommended the one I purchased which is an EEZ-Tire System. I am quite pleased with it. I could go to great lengths discussing it but I will be brief and say that it puts my mind at ease knowing that it

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40th Anniversary Year



To keep informed about the Sierra Nevada Unit - select any of the following links.

SNU newsletter and article information

SNU 2016 Rally Schedule - Mark your calendars

SNU Facebook Page

What's new on the Sierra Nevada Airstreams.org



February Lunch in Reno

The Olive Garden in South Reno is a new location for the SNU lunch on Saturday February 20, 2016. Olive Garden is located at the corner of Kietzke and South Virginia. The private downstairs room has limited seating so it's even more important that we know who plans to come to this luncheon. Please rsvp to hq@sierranevadairstreams.org or call Diane at 775 972 9392.

2002 - A SNU Decision Point

In 2002 the SNU went through some major changes. The Unit had begun to stagnate, holding lunches rather than rallies and recycling a small group of people on the board. Although some changes started in the late 1990's when a couple of new members provided the motivation to schedule a few rallies, the big changes came later. In 2002 some newer members were elected to the board. They brought new ideas and initiated a few changes. Not all the long time members supported these changes and chose to retire. Also, by that time many of the members were no longer able to tow their trailer or participate in activities. These and other factors brought the SNU to a decision point. Although it was later learned that Region and WBCCI leaders were aware of some of the problems the SNU was dealing with, for the most part they chose to ignore us. The only suggestions we got were either to fold the unit or merge with another unit. For a variety of reasons neither of these options appealed to the remaining 3 active members. Those members, Don & Mary Lou Damoth, Fred & Ann Hersey and Bryan & Diane Leipper decided they liked camping together and they liked the places that Northern Nevada provides for rallies and camping. They made the decision to keep going and see what happens. After making this choice, the next decision was to get back to basics. This means focusing on what we thought WBCCI was all about as outlined in The Wally Byam Creed and the Four Freedoms. To focus on camping and to hopefully enthuse and encourage others to join us. The next step was to review and revise. This included taking a look at the bylaws and determining ways to make them better fit the needs of a smaller unit while still adhering to WBCCI policy. It also included looking at rallies and how to make them most effectively fit the resources of the SNU and unique opportunities provided in the SNU's territory while meeting the needs and interests of rally participants. Promotion played a key role in the revitalization of the SNU. With so few people to carry out tasks, it was determined that in addition to holding rallies, the ongoing publication of the newsletter and putting public service announcements (PSA) in local papers were where we needed to concentrate our efforts. The PSA's were directly responsible for many new members to the SNU, some of whom are still members. The PSA's increased awareness and led to other benefits including a feature article in



Pyramid Lake 2003 - Fred & Ann, MaryLou & Don

the Reno Gazette and articles in other newspapers. Our open door policy for visitors to rallies and our decision to never cancel a rally regardless of how few participated also proved worthwhile. We frequently had unexpected visitors show up with or without their Airstream. Again, this effort directly led to some people joining the SNU and again, some are still active members. Those 3 members decided early on that it was up to the SNU to decide it's own fate and to take the steps necessary to change it's future. They went about creating that future and within a few short years the SNU began growing and expand-



Boca Rally - 2003

future and within a few short years the SNU began growing and expand-

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40th Anniversary Year



SNU Membership

So far the SNU has welcomed three new members for 2016. We hope they will all be active members for a long time to come. A recent review of SNU records indicates that about two thirds of the current SNU membership have been members for five years or more. Seven of them have been members for ten years or more. The fact that many SNU members continue active participation year after year is an indicator of the health of the Unit. It is an indicator that they joined with a good understanding of what the SNU is all about. It is an indicator that the activities, events, and style of the SNU meets their needs and preferences. It is an indicator that they can contribute and that their contributions are encouraged, welcomed and the majority of the time, incorporated into the SNU. It's the members that shape the SNU. The more you participate, the more opportunities you have to offer ideas and assist the SNU to do things and go places that interest you that you feel will benefit the Unit.



Reflections on Enhancements and Improvements

Randy Grossmann

continued

will let me know if I start losing air pressure, if there is a sudden pressure loss, or if there is too high a temperature rise for any tire. I no longer have to go around and manually check each tire's pressure—at least not very often. It is very interesting watching how the pressure and temperature in each tire changes with speed, OAT, sun and shade, altitude, etc. However, beware of distracted driving. This addition is highly recommended.

SECOND CEILING FAN AND REVERSING FANS

- My Airstream came with just one non-reversing ("out" only) ceiling fan toward the front. I installed another ceiling fan toward the rear which had a reversing function. I also converted the front fan to a reversing one. I can now run one with it set to the "out" mode and run the other with it set to the "in" mode and get really nice ventilation through the entire Airstream. My fans are Fantastic. However, I can no longer recommend the Fantastic brand because the small company which developed and marketed the fans sold out to a large conglomerate company. The former lifetime guarantee and wonderful customer service is now gone. The customer service is now essentially non-existent. This addition and modification is recommended with the caveat that other brands should be seriously considered.



Gary replacing a vent on Bryan's Airstream

LED LIGHTS - I replaced every incandescent light bulb in the Airstream with an LED. It was a little costly, but it was money well spent. I measured the current draw of the an LED and an incandescent and found that an LED draws about one tenth the current of an incandescent. We can now turn on as many lights as we want without being concerned about how much battery power they are consuming when dry camping. This modification is recommended.

For more on these and similar topics [check the Owner's Guide on SierraNevadaAirstreams.org](http://SierraNevadaAirstreams.org)

2002 - A SNU Decision Point

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The change was apparently unexpected in some circles as most units in similar situation just folded. What was going on with the SNU impressed Region 12 President, Jim Emlinger. He wrote an article for a **Region 12 newsletter published in 2005**. An interesting statement Jim made in his article was that he credits the SNU with being the inspiration for developing tools to assist other Units. Jim says " What makes this even more interesting is that today there are now tools available to do the things that they (the SNU) had to create themselves. These tools consist of the Merit Award program, media guide and adopt-a-dealer program." To this day, the SNU has led the way in a variety of of new an innovative techniques that have been beneficial not only to the SNU but to other units and even WBCCI.

We can all be proud of the legacy of the SNU. Even today, we can be proud of the fact that we are all part of assisting the SNU to decide it's own fate and continue to develop it's future. **Check the website** to read Jim's article and learn more about the development of the SNU.