



**TWO WEEKS TO CROCKER-  
BECKWOURTH RALLY  
AUGUST 19TH - 22ND!**

## AIRSTREAMER

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello all,

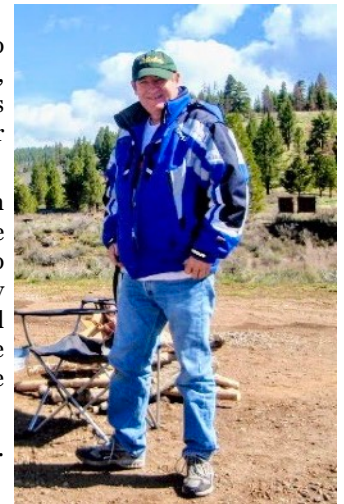
We have only two seasons this year, just like last year; Winter and Smoke. I have been watching two fires closely because some of them have gotten close to camp sites the SNU and I use. So far so good, just smoke to deal with. I hope the smoke will be gone in the next 2 weeks so we can camp in the Sierra's again (Crocker-Beckwourth in August). I will monitor the ever changing smoke and fire conditions for our August 17th-20th.

I will be in Spring Creek with my Airstream on a work detail mid-August at my property and work on many tasks but the big one has been installing miles of fence. I have been working on the fencing for the last five years and with a little luck will complete it this trip. Having my Airstream as a base camp to do this work has been a God send. My wife Carmen cooks up tasty meals for us and supports the work of my son-in-law and I. After an 11 hour work day it's so nice to have a place to relax and clean up each day. All the comforts of the Airstream make these work details so much better. In the evenings after a nice dinner I can get on the Ham Radio and the world is at my fingertips. If a thunder storm comes up we retreat to the Airstream. I don't want to be holding on to miles of fence when lightning is around.

We have had more people join our club this year and I hope they will join us at our next rally. Welcome to all the new members.

Travel Safe and put some more pins on the map.

**Regards, Gene and Carmen**



### NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

The Sierra Nevada Unit is still growing. Let me introduce and welcome new member:

Stefan Siegel, WBCCI #19760 from Beverly Hills, CA.

### LUNCHEON, RALLY & NOMINATIONS

The Sierra Nevada Unit is seeking luncheon and rally ideas for and officer and board member nominations for 2022. Please submit your ideas and volunteer to help your club to [snu157@wbcci.net](mailto:snu157@wbcci.net)

### ABOUT OUR LONG RALLY WEEKENDS

Historically the SNU rallies are scheduled Thursday through Sunday. The early start helps us secure campsites for dispersed sites and campgrounds that do not accept reservations. It also allows some of us arrive early and unwind from our busy retired lifestyle! Have an equally busy lifestyle, don't let the Thursday start keep you from enjoying the rally weekend with us. We encourage our members to join us for the long weekend or whatever days they can free up be it overnight or just for a day visit. Remember our biggest pot luck meal is Saturday night anyway. Come out and join the party.

### CROCKER-BECKWOURTH RALLY - THURSDAY AUGUST 18TH - SUNDAY AUGUST 20TH!

The Sierra Nevada Unit is hosting its August Rally less than two weeks from now at Crocker National Forest Campground northeast of Portola, CA. Your SNU board had some concern in early July because of the then nearby Crocker-Beckwourth Complex Fire started in the mountains a few miles east of the campground and burned east, however, president Gene has confirmed with the Forest Service that Crocker Campground is open with no active fires in the area (Crocker-Beckwourth is 98% contained as of this writing).

Crocker activities include hiking, mountain biking, scenic drives, fishing and swimming at Lake

#### **Sierra Nevada Unit Board**

**Gene Baleme, president**

**Jeni Root, secretary**

**Gail Williams, treasurer**

**Jerry Thornburg, trustee**

**vacant, trustee**

**Don Williams, membership chair**

**& newsletter editor**

**[all links clickable](#)**

Davis, stream fishing and backcountry road travel (street legal vehicles). The long range forecast suggests daytime temps in the high 80s and low 90s; high 50s to low 60s at night; some clouds are possible but little chance of rain; perfect weather for our SNU rally. Join us even if only for the day. Our evenings will include shared meals and/or a potluck dinner. Our rally Kitty donation of \$5 per night per rig applies and there is a \$15 fee for camping (50% for those with the Senior Pass).

Crocker is about 50 miles from Reno. For those coming from US-395 take CA-70 west ~18.5 miles and turn north on the Beckwourth Genesee Road (now paved); follow it north ~7 miles to the intersection with Crocker Mtn Road, turn left and drive a short distance to the campground entrance on the left! For those coming from Portola head east on CA-70 ~ 11.7 mile and take Beckwourth Genesee Road north as noted. For those trusting their GPS use Lat: 39.8910041 Lon: -120.4241887.

Photos from our May 2018 Crocker Rally are chronicled in photos on our legacy web page at <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/memories/rallies/18ma-crocker/gallery.html>.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**SNU Crocker-Beckwourth Rally - Thursday Aug 19th - Sunday Aug 22nd**

**SNU 45th Anniversary Rally - Thursday, September 16th - Sunday September 19th at Weed Heights RV Park** - Don't let the name fool year. There are shaded spots and a nice area for barbecuing and eating at the park community room. We'll celebrate our anniversary with a history tours of Weed Height and Yerington taking in the local Lyons County Museum and more. Plan to come out and help us celebrate the Unit's 45th anniversary!

**SNU Fort Churchill Rally - Saturday October 14th - Sunday the 17th**

**Up for a November Death Valley Flash Rally - look for the dates, Thursday November 18th - Sunday the 21st**

## LOOK BACKS

### **20 YEARS AGO:**

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/snu/news/archives/01ag-nwsltr.pdf>

The August 2001 SNU Newsletter, now 1-1/2 pages, was the second in a more attractive format with quite a bit more information in it:

- The issue was dedicated to charter members Frank and Steve Burnham who played a major role in the success of the SNU; unit President four times each, Steve served as Secretary or Treasurer many times, published the newsletter, etc.
- July meeting was reported on and the upcoming August Luncheon at Bowers Mansion; of note its the fact that the SNU held more lunch meetings than rallies in this era.
- Dale Leipper was working on trailer mods so the family could travel more.
- Dale and Marge Grosch were back from the International, reporting there were 1134 attendees, 120 first timers and various donations to service groups and charities in Sioux, SD (see the 64th International Rally report later in this issue.
- The For Sale section listed a 1988 Excella (13 years old) for \$17,500, possibly including the GMC Suburban tow vehicle and a vintage 1959 (42 years old) 22' Airstream Land Yacht for \$4500.

### **10 YEARS AGO**

<http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/snu/2011/11news/11ag-snu-nwsltr.pdf>

The August 2011 SNU Airstreamer included:

- July Hickison Rally report - 5 rigs and 8 members, picked as one of the SNU top 10 rally sites, amazing since the Hickison Petroglyphs is 200 miles from Reno; Doris Wheeler's pink umbrella and flamingo vest, crown and necklace were shared for ladies photographs.
- Upcoming August Obsidian Dome and Mammoth Lakes Rally jointly hosted by the SNU and the San Fernando Valley Unit; SFVU will host the Friday of pancakes, toast and egg, sausage and bacon breakfast; the SNU the Saturday egg in a bag (omelet) with sausage and bacon breakfast(note everything goes better with bacon). Your editor actually remembers this rally and had to convince one of the SFVU chefs that one Honda 2000 generator could not power two large electric griddles and other electrical equipment at one time!
- A reminder for the Sierra Nevada Unit September 35th Anniversary Rally at Campground by the Lake and dinner cruise on the Tahoe Queen.
- Members Travels showcased trips to: the Air Force Academy; Alaska on a motorcycle (twas your editor); Baker City, Oregon for a Wally Byam Birthday (115th); a loop through the upper midwest, Michigan, Minnesota, South Dakota, Idaho and home; Fort Collins, Colorado Springs and Oklahoma City!
- Note October's upcoming joint diner with the NorCal Unit at J.T. Basque Restaurant in Minden, NV.

## TWIN LAKES/CRAG'S CAMPGROUND RALLY REPORT

Brief story on Crag's, with the many fires in Yosemite National Park and the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Summer travel and work commitments, only Bill and Mary Swirsky made it to Crag's with their Squarestream (let me know if there were others). Nothing else to report.



# Crocker Rally



## WILLIAMS' SOLO INTERNATIONAL RALLY CARAVAN

Gail and I attended the 64th International Rally in Lebanon, TN to volunteer, participate in the activities, catch up with old friends, meet new ones, enjoy the entertainment and represent the Sierra Nevada Unit in the Wally Byam Airstream Club Delegates Meeting.

Our summer adventure started when we got home from the June Walker River Rally. We knew we had an air leak in the Airstream, finding a thin film of dust on the floor after every trip across the desert. Well, the thin film of dust turned into a pile of dirt on both the inbound and outbound trips to Walker River State Park. The leak had progress enough to make finding it easy; the metal framework that supports the floor of the refrigerator cabinet sagged from bumps, potholes and washboard roads (does this sound like a SNU rally commercial) tearing loose all the caulking that keeps outside air from entering the inside space. We had 10 days to make a somewhat simple fix that required removal of the refrigerator, cabinet floor, cleaning up all the dirt under the cabinets, providing more support for the metal framework and cabinet floor, caulking cabinet corners and surfaces and reinstalling the refrigerator. Oh yeah, muscle, help, supplies and an apprentice are needed for the work! Our daughter's boyfriend furnished the needed muscle, second pair of hands and apprentice but his availability was interrupted by his personal work responsibilities. The local RV dealer actually had the right caulking, Sikaflex 221 self leveling caulk (many household caulks from the hardware and big box stores are not flexible enough for RV use). Off and on work over week and we were ready to reinstall everything, but the cheap fan over the coils on the back of the refrigerator was worn out and dead. Amazon to the rescue, in two days I had a brand new TITAN- 12V DC IP55 Waterproof Double Rack Mount Ventilation Cooling Fans with Timer and Speed Controller!



The only work left was to get the truck serviced, wash the truck and Airstream, clean the inside of both, get LP tanks filled, gasoline for the generator, pack clothes, food, tools, radio gear, assemble paperwork needed for the International Rally and finish work around the house; until those leaks and plugged sprinkler heads in the tree, shrubbery and flower bed irrigation popped up. Okay our Friday escape eastward caravan was delayed, Saturday will work.

**Day One, 215 miles** - We caravanned east at 1530 hours on Sunday! Yes that's 3:30 PM! But we missed the hottest part of the day right! SoCal was in the midst of a heat-wave with multiple "Excessive Heat Warning Alerts" on my phone; it was 104F when we left Riverside, 120F motoring through Coachella Valley and just over 100F at our arrival at the Desert Gold RV Resort in A; full hookups. No problem, only 106F in the Airstream. The AC brought it down in the 80s in an hour and comfortable sleeping temps by 11 PM.

**Day Two, 410 miles** - The drive through Phoenix was anticlimactic, fairly light traffic and only 108F as we transitioned from busy I-10 to the less traveled US-60 that winds past the Superstition Mountains, across the Salt River Canyon and the San Carlos and Fort Apache Indian Reservations and over the Mogollon Rim and crest on the high plateau that leads to the Continental Divide near the Pie Town RV Park; water & electric hookups. Rain and cooler 50F weather greeted us in Pie Town.

Did I mention that our youngest grandson, 15 year old Jacob, from Kentucky has been visiting all his grandparents in California for the last two weeks soaking up our philosophy and life's learning to help him grow wise; **NOT!** Okay, he like most kids is attached to his phone, Xbox and VR (the dance moves we saw in high school were not as comical as those of a teenager using a Virtual Reality headset). He did seem to show some interest in helping get everything ready for our caravan east, especially when I defined it as work and that I would pay him for. He learned to shovel and move dirt (*Don't kids know how to do this today?*), walk the dogs, pick citrus, wash the Airstream and most importantly for the trip; perform our daily pre-flight, I mean pre-caravan inspection; lights, tires, hitch, safety chains, trailer umbilical cord, emergency breakaway cable, awning latches and more.

**Day Three, 432 miles** - We crossed the Continental Divide and immediately headed downslope towards the International Rally in Lebanon, TN. Along the way we passed notable features along what was once the *Magdalena Livestock Driveway* where from 1885 to 1971 real cowboys and ranchers drove their sheep and cattle 125 miles from grazing in Arizona over the Continental Divide towards the railroad in Magdalena, NM; past Datil Wells (great BLM campground here), the Very Large Array (VLR) and Magdalena itself. Rain followed us off and on to our destination at the Big Texan RV Ranch in Amarillo, TX; full hookups.

**Day Four, 188 miles** - The coming 4th of July week and lack of reservations crushed our hopes for visiting Amarillo museums so we caught up on showers, some interior cleaning and an early lunch at the Big Texan Steak Ranch & Brewery in time to see one fellow attempting the Big Texan Steak Challenge, eat the entire 72 oz steak, bake potatoes, salad, roll and shrimp cocktail in one hour for a free meal. Fail to eat it all in the time allowed and it's \$72; he was close but didn't make it. Our waitress said that one in 20 do when tourist travel is up! After lunch we made a Harvest Host reservation at the Thomas P Stafford Air & Space Museum in Weatherford, OK; no hookups. We made a short stop to photograph the restored Conoco Service Station in Shamrock, TX.

**Day Five, 230 miles** - We toured the Air & Space Museum and then headed for an overnight stop at John Hudec's home in Claremore, OK; full hookups. John is a long term motorcycle riding friend, since high school and he rode with me on several





## Caravan East



backcountry motos and both trips to Alaska.

**Day Six, 282 miles**- Another short day arriving at family in Lathrop, MO; no hookups.

**Day Nine, ~400 Miles** - Caravanning east on US-36 and I-72/74 toward Indianapolis through midwestern towns and farms growing corn, soybean and sorghum; our destination is another Harvest Host stop, the Sleepy Creek Vineyards; no hookups. Wine, cider, cheese, crackers and meat sticks make a great happy hour snack before dinner.

**Day Ten, 417 miles** - It's superslab almost all the way to Countryside Campground near Akron Ohio; full hookups.

**Day 16, 362 miles** - Superslab again to the Louisville South KOA. What a great place, lots of activities for kids, good sites and believe it or not, a new tight 30A connection in the pedestal; water and electric hookups. This place is a keeper on our list.

**Day 17, 365 miles to the International Rally Site** - Our final day was 2/3s superslab and a combination of state and US highways saving 15 miles and 15 minutes over a freeway only route. The first 20 miles on KY-101 were good highway out through the country side, smooth pavement, some ups and down, no real sharp curves but narrow. The streetside edge of the Airstream was near the double yellow centerlines; curbside edge on the white edge of pavement line. Same for the big trucks coming the other way; a good thing there were only a few of them. After that it was smooth and wide to the International Rally site at Wilson County Fairgrounds in Lebanon, TN.

3201 miles and ten driving days from home to the International. Our grandson seemed to enjoy some of the stops and visits with family. Was it driving the 4X4?

Arrival at the rally site improves every year, no Bull Pen unless you arrive extremely late after the parking crew has gone to sleep. We were parked about 1/4 mile from the Expo Center where much of the rally activity happens: rally sign-in & welcome bag; vendors; volunteer recruitment; crafts & photo competition; flea market signups; tours; region info tables and caravan and national rally info. Along the 1/4 mile walk were 3 food vendors, an ice cream vendor and a sweet shop! Golf Cart shuttles were available. This row was probably Jacob's favorite place. There were two fixed restrooms along the way that included showers.

Much of Gail's time was committed to Flea Market signups; mine for the Amateur Radio (intra) Club and its Rally ARC station, equipment, prep for the Ham Technician refresher classes, the FCC license exams and the ARC Annual Business Meeting since President Bob Caldwell VA6RV was unable to attend from Canada.

Our Rally recreational time was spent attending: the Opening Ceremony and parade of region and unit flags; Welcome Dinner; a night at the Grand ole Opry; the Region 12 Happy Hour and Pizza Party and the Committee Chair Appreciation luncheon. We also ate at various restaurants in Lebanon; made new friends; renewed old friendships and met Sierra Nevada Unit members Teresa and Tom Tighe #3662 of Orcutt, CA. This left time to visit the vendors and attend rally sessions for: Art of Airstream Cooking, kitchen gadgets, webmasters, Airstream, Inc's VP of Sales Justin Humphries update on the state of the company (wow, sales are through the roof, new models like the office and Pottery Barn, the new factory is helping with production, quality and moving some vendor supplied materials in-house and supply chain problems are everywhere in the industry). There were more session but too numerous to mention.

The 64th International Rally attracted 748 rigs, 1428 members, 248 rigs were First Timers and 99 US units/clubs were represented.

Region 12 was well represented in attendance, 10 of its 11 units/clubs and ~75 members and we staffed a large number of International Rally leadership roles and volunteer positions: International 2nd VP and Lifetime Membership Committee Chair Eric McHenry; International Recording Secretary and Rally Secretarial Staff Chair Judy Bechtold, Region 12 President, now past President Cecelia Stansbury; Region 12 President-elect, now President LaVerne McHenry; Constitution & Bylaws Chair, Delegates Meeting Supervisor and Region Officer Leadership Training Chair Tom Smithson; Publications and Showcase Chair Hedda Smithson; Flea Market Chair Gail Williams; Line Dancing Chair Roberta Peeples; Pump Out Chair and Region 12 2nd VP Abe Hernandez; Religious Service Chair Robert Stansbury. I might be important to note that Teresa and Tom Tighe were frequent volunteers on the Pump Out crew helping to provide quick and efficient removal of our stinky stuff every four days!

Note that both Gail and I entered the photography competition; neither of our photos were awarded a ribbon but our rally neighbor, John Rossi won 1st place in the sign category. Possibly significant, John's photo received the most first place votes for any category in the last decade. That may tell you where the real power is, but you have to check the photo to understand!

That's the International Rally in a nutshell. If you want to know more about International rallies make your reservation for Fryeburg, Maine in 2022 or tell Eric McHenry you want to help in 2023, most likely in Rock Springs, Wyoming.



# 64th International Rally

