



# THE VINTAGE ADVANTAGE

News Items for Vintage Airstream Owners & Admirers



Volume VI

Spring 1999

Issue Number 3

## Vintage Airstream Club

### A WBCCI IntraClub

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## The Vintage Advantage Quarterly Newsletter

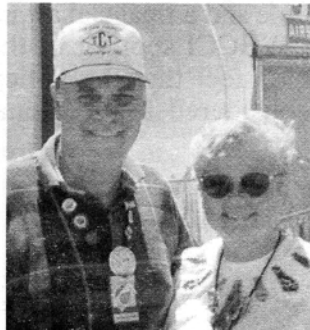
Annual dues of \$10 payable to "Vintage Airstream Club". Send all dues and applications and classified ads to the VAC Membership Chairman, Dr. Richard Mumma. **The Vintage Advantage (VA)** is the official newsletter of the Vintage Airstream Club, which is an IntraClub of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International, Inc. (WBCCI), the RV club of Airstream owners.

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## PR

### RESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The VAC web site Q&A Forum is proving to be very popular. Forty-nine questions were handled in November, forty-one in December and over seventy in January. I have been very impressed with the responses offered by Clyde Wagner (#8441), Bud Cooper (#26019) and Ed Stanley (#21491). I have received many positive comments from Forum users and I know we all appreciate having members that are willing to share their knowledge and experience.

A VAC discussion group has

been recently been added to the web site. It will allow the Club to provide subscribers with news concerning activities as well as a place to express ideas and pose questions. Patrick Ewing (#3675) and Tom Howarth (#6490) will serve as monitors.

I attended the WBCCI International Board of Trustee Meeting, in early January, and our Vintage Club's web site was commended for the information it is providing to the Airstream community.

Florida State Rally - Announced attendance for this year's rally was 832 units. The Vintage Club had 17 rigs parked in the Vintage area. Dr. Norman Holman, Jr. (#1935) gave his presentation on his father's 1935 Airstream Torpedo. The Torpedo had a prominent parking location that allowed everyone to see it and meet Dr. Holman, Sr. The Vintage Open House drew an outstanding crowd. The Open House was scheduled from 1 to 3 pm in the afternoon, but most of us had visitors until late in the day. Hundreds of rally attendees and Sarasota community members participated in the Open House. I was told by one Vintage member that the number of people that viewed his trailer was greater than he experienced at the Huntsville WBCCI International Rally. Another indicated that he thought the turnout was as good as it was in Boise. I would like to thank all those that attended the rally and participated.

Larry Huttle, President of Airstream, indicated during his speech at the rally, that the vintage trailers currently owned by the company, will become part of a traveling exhibit. The trailers will be matched with tow vehicles from the same era and will be featured at rallies and other events. He touched on the high regard the art's community has for vintage Airstreams and indicated that the head of Thor Industries has three vintage

Airstreams as part of his personal collection.

Rally participants made food donations to the Sarasota Food Bank equal to 4300 meals. I was surprised to learn that 41% of the families served by the food bank have one working spouse. Community service projects, such as this, are an important part of rally experience.

The Florida State Rally served as test site for a new WBCCI program that gave a year's membership to nonmembers attending the rally. If a WBCCI member sponsored the nonmember, they received a check for \$25. WBCCI gained 20 members through this program. The Vintage Club picked up two from this program with an additional 17 requests for membership materials by those viewing the trailers during the open house.

I have received word that during the coming months Vintage activities are being planned in Oklahoma, California, Georgia, Virginia, and Washington. It is very encouraging that so many members are taking an active role in developing VAC activities that can be easily reached by members throughout the United States.

If you have not already registered, be sure and contact Clyde Wagner to sign up for the Wagon Wheels Way Caravan. If you are planning on attending the Statue of Liberty Rally, contact Don Perry (#5031) concerning a Vintage Pre-rally and caravan.

#### Progress on Goals

1. *Development of a greater presence of and activities for Vintage members at the Florida State Rally (see above)*
2. *Development of a community service project, in conjunction with the WBCCI International*

*Rally.*

Preston Pearson (#5502) will head up the project. The club will be coordinating efforts with the International Chairperson for such projects.

#### 3. *Development of VAC rallies and caravans by geographical regions.*

The response by various club members has been beyond everyone's expectation. Vintage members will have opportunities to attend activities specifically designed by fellow members.

#### 4. *Development of standards for Concours d'Elegance categories, awards, and judging criteria.*

The work that has been done regarding concours is part of an article found in this issue.

#### 5. *Development of "Favorite Places" Caravans, in which, VAC members take others to their favorite camping locations within their state.*

The response to #3 above covers this goal, also.

#### 6. *Development of a program to move our Friends members to full club membership.*

The program initiated at the Florida State Rally seems to have the most potential. It provided a free year's membership to those attending for the first time and a financial award (\$25) to the WBCCI sponsor of the nonmember. I feel that the policy should be considered for Regional Rallies also.

Forrest Bone, #9712

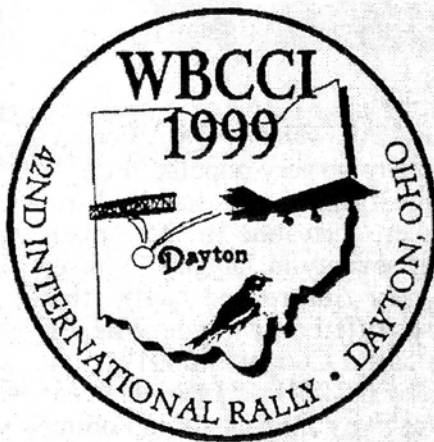


## THE EDITOR'S DESK

In early January I announced to the Vintage Airstream Club Board that I wish to step down as Editor in the near future and would appreciate it if they began a search for a replacement. I have been the Editor of the **Vintage Advantage** since late 1995 and feel that I have brought the newsletter about as far as I can and now feel that newsletter should be freshened with a new scope and mandate.

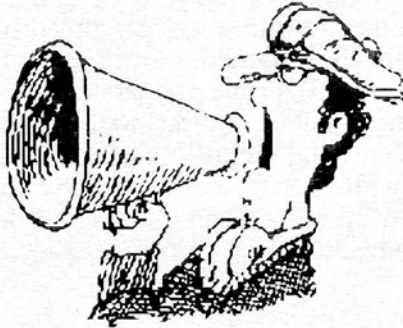
The "search" was quick lived as 1st VAC VP Tom Reed contacted Bryan Burkhart, of Wagon Wheels '98 photography fame, to volunteer his many artistic and publishing talents to help bring our newsletter into the next century. This is an exciting selection as Bryan has much more experience in publishing and producing high quality artistic work. I look forward to relinquishing these duties over to Bryan after the Summer '99 issue.

This issue of the **Vintage Advantage** is pleased to announce a variety of exciting VAC events being hosted around the country. Many of our members are taking the next step; that is that they are volunteering and coordinating efforts in new and unique ways to further the club enjoyment for all our members. To this we thank all of you and wish everyone the greatest success with their planned events.



## New Rally Procedures Being Pursued

*Region 12 is leading the way in helping to accommodate working families to join in the fun at their monthly rallies.*



## VAC ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Host Parking on the Way to International

We will be providing parking for vintage trailers at our house in preparation for both the Wagon Wheels '99 VAC Caravan and for folks traveling to the 1999 International Rally in Dayton, OH. Our place should be a good Pre-Rally stopping point, particularly for caravaners from the South and West. We should be able to accommodate close 20 vintage trailers with a meeting hall, electricity and water. Free dumping is available nearby. Numerous interesting sites to visit nearby in the Indianapolis area include the Indianapolis 500 race track, museums, zoos, etc.

The dates that parking will be available are: June 13, 14, and 15 in preparation for the Wagon Wheels caravan starting on the 16th of June and on June 20, 21, and 22 in preparation for the Pre-Rally in Springfield on June 23rd for the VAC parade into the International at Dayton on June 24th.

We are located conveniently on the North East side of Indianapolis at Exit 40, the junction of the I-465 beltway and East 56th street. Go East on 56th Street to the FIRST stoplight, turn RIGHT onto SHADELAND WAY, follow around curves to the FIRST street on the LEFT, MARDYKE LANE where you will see a large red barn on the RIGHT with a vintage trailer parked out front.

We hope in some way to repay the kindness given to us by Vintage Airstreamers as we have travelled across the country.

Don Grayson, #2758  
7007 Mardyke Lane  
Indianapolis, IN 46226  
317/545-5147  
dgrayso@indy.net

As current President of the San Bernardino Unit, (#014) in Region 12, it has been my responsibility to plan this years rallies for our unit. The first thing we did was change the start and ending days of rallies to try and accommodate members traveling with children as well as those that are still working. Now we have planned most of our rallies to start on Wednesdays or Thursdays and end on Sunday while trying to host our major activities on Friday and Saturdays (dinners, entertainment, etc.).

At our last rally many working families arrived late Friday afternoon. In previous years, the rallies had been scheduled for Mondays through Saturday and before I retired we were not able to attend many of the events. As more younger families become involved, the more the complexion of the WBCCI will change.

We are also working to adjust the rally fees to a prorated per day fee for those who can not attend the complete rally because of work. I recall that one of the first rallies that we attended was a Region rally a couple of years ago when I was still working. I could only attend the rally on Friday and Saturday but was charged the entire rally fee, there were no exceptions and admittedly I was turned off a bit because of the cost. It may create more work for the registration people but in the long run if we offer a per day fee at rallies we might see an increase in attendance.

These are just some of the ideas that we are striving to accomplish. I would love to hear from folks about other ideas and am committed to making this club accessible for all Airstreamers.

As young couple Tom and Catherine said after attending their first Airstream Rally (Hobo Rally), "we all need to get involved and participate". That is the perspective necessary to continue to create an environment that brings all everyone with an interest in enjoying the pleasures of Airstreaming together.

Tom Reed, #10283  
President, San Bernardino Unit, 98-99  
1st Vice President, VAC



## New 1999 International Rally Concours d'Elegance Guidelines and Rules

The International Concours has been one of the VACs most successful activities. It provides the club with the opportunity to recognize those trailers that represent the best of the best. In an effort to standardize these competitions, the following guidelines are being installed.

### *The Concours Steward*

The International Steward's position shall become an appointed position. The Steward's term of service shall be for three years.

By serving for an extended period, it is felt that the Steward will develop an expertise only acquired through experience. This will help develop a degree of consistency and a knowledge base that will ensure an outstanding activity.

Although the current policy of assigning the Steward position to the 1st VP has served the club well, it is felt that in the long run that this position should be an appointed position by the VAC President with board approval. The Concours has grown to the point that it warrants a position of its own. The 1st VP will assist the Concours Steward in the tabulation of results and the preparation of awards. If at any time the position of Concours Steward becomes vacant, the 1st VP will assume the duties until a suitable replacement can be found.

### *Decade Categories 1930's, '40's, '50's, '60's, '70's*

Depending on the number of entrants in each decade category, Best in Class, Reserve Best in Class and Honorable Mention Best in Class can be awarded.

For categories with three or less entries - one award: Best in Class. For categories with four to six entries, two awards: Best in Class and Reserve Best in Class. For categories with seven or more entries, three awards: Best in Class, Reserve Best in Class and Honorable Mention Best in Class.

Each award winner will receive a certificate at the award's breakfast. After the International Rally is over, the VAC will send each recipient an award plaque suitable for mounting inside their trailer.

### *Special Categories*

Best Bambi, awards based on the number of entries as listed for decade categories, the shiniest shell, one award based on Judges' consensus Best Interior, the highest interior point total the Best Tow & Trailer Combination, awards based on number of entries as listed for decade categories, but the Best Tow & Trailer Combination will be awarded a trophy similar to Best in Show and Members Choice.

Member's Choice, one award with a trophy similar to the one awarded to Best in Show.

Great Ideas, up to three awards to be determined by Technical Advisor and forum monitors

Oldest One Owner, one award and honorable mentions to anyone over twenty-five years,

Motorhomes (coming soon), motorhomes will compete with their decade until the numbers in attendance (at least 3) dictate a separate class.

Best in Show will be awarded to the trailer receiving the highest point total regardless of class. The Best in Show award winner will receive a trophy and a plaque denoting this distinction, in addition to the Best in Class certificate and plaque.

### *Miscellaneous Considerations*

Great Ideas: The winning entrants, plus any others the Technical Advisor selects, should be taped for distribution by VAC through our tape library.

Awards Presentation: Award certificates will be presented at the annual Vintage Club's breakfast. Metal plaques will be sent to each award recipient to be affixed to the winning trailer. In addition to the certificates and metal plaques, trophies will be presented for Best in Show, Members Choice, and Best Tow/Trailer Combination.

Small rally plaques will be given to each Concours entrant. These can be sent to participants after the rally.

Parade Participation: Entrants will be advised that participation in the WBCCI Parade is a club expectation. Priority will be given to Best in Show, Members Choice and Best Tow & Trailer Combinations.

Additional parade participants will be selected by decade winners from the earliest up, with the "Best Bambi" following the '60's decade winner. Traditionally we have been given three spots in the parade, but this has varied depending on the parade chairperson. The Concours Steward is to make contact with the parade chairperson and notify the winners regarding their participation in the parade.

Forrest Bone, #9712  
VAC President, 1998-99



## VAC SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

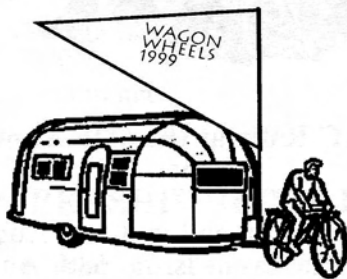


### Region 4 Rally

The twenty-third Region 4 Rally is slated for May 5th to May 9th and will include VAC activities. Daryl Ewles (#279), Region 4 President, has once again offered Vintage parking at the rally. We plan to have an open house along with our renown social hours and the always warm VAC fellowship that members always enjoy. Daryl has some great activities planned throughout the rally for all participants.

If you are able to get away between May 5th and the 9th, please plan to attend. The "Mountain Time in '99" Rally will be held in the Wetzel County 4-H grounds in New Martinsville, WV. Wear them denim duds and come and have a good time with us.

Clyde Wagner, #8441  
Region 4 VAC Representative



### Wagon Wheels '99 Caravan

The Wagon Wheels '99 caravan is filling up fast including a couple from Norway. We plan to begin the caravan Wednesday June 16th, in the northern part of the state and visit one of the Lake Erie Islands, a nuclear power plant and tour a winery. We will then move to Amish country and camp in a pasture (weather permitting) where we will shop at Lehman's country store. The next move will take us to view the works of one of the nations master carvers before moving to

Rosco Village, where we will ride a canal boat and tour the village. Our final move will take us to the Pre-Rally in Springfield for our parade into the rally grounds on Friday June 24, giving us 9 nights and 10 days to see some of the sights Ohio has to offer.

As in past Wagon Wheels caravans, there is a limit of 25 trailers. Because there will be some difficult maneuvering involved, if your trailer is longer than 25 feet, please call me before you send in your money. We will be camping without hookups as was done during Wally's caravans but will not go more than four days without visiting a dump station.

Our caravan fee is \$250 to include two caravaners per trailer. Subtract \$75 for singles but add \$75 for each additional person (let me know if they are under 12). Send a deposit or the full amount to Clyde Wagner, 4105 Fenn Road, Medina, OH 44256. Any questions? Just call 330/725-0784 or e-mail at [clydewag@bright.net](mailto:clydewag@bright.net).

Clyde Wagner, #8441  
Wagon Wheels '99 Caravan Leader



### Oklahoma VAC July 4th Bash

In July 3rd, out July 5th. July 4th mini-rally for those that can't make International. This event will be held on the Oklahoma University (OU) campus in Norman, Ok. We'll be right on the duck pond and just a mile from all of the City of Norman planned July 4th activities. These include park district softball games, playgrounds, games and rides (extra \$), ice cold watermelon, picnic, bands and fireworks. The camp site is within walking distance to Campus Corners and many fine restaurants. The Fred Jones Jr. Art Museum is close-by and will be open. There will be a VAC Open House during the event. The camp, a secured university parking lot, provides **electric only**. Cost is \$30 for one in unit, \$6 each extra. The Rally fee includes 2 nights parking and a picnic on July 4th. A \$20 deposit is required by June 1st which is fully refundable if notification is post marked on or before June 15th. Bring the kids! Limit 20 units.

Eric Drews, #01047  
3436 Justice Court  
Norman, OK 73072  
[ericdrews@airstream.net](mailto:ericdrews@airstream.net)

## Vintage Caravan to Statue of Liberty Rally

A pre-caravan will meet at the Jersey Shore Airstream Park in South Seaville, NJ in anticipation to caravanning to the WBCCI Statue of Liberty Rally on August 1st 1999.

The plan is to pay for your own campsite and do your own things on August 1st & 2nd. Local places to visit include Jersey Shore, Atlantic City, Cape May, Wildwood, the National Bird Sanctuary, etc.

We will assemble and caravan to the WBCCI National Statue of Liberty Rally on August 3rd. All caravaners need to have prepaid their Rally fees prior to the caravan. Once at the Rally site, we will have special Vintage parking.

The Rally ends on August 8th. We need a minimum of 15 trailers but not more than 30. The caravan is restricted to Vintage Airstream Club members with vehicles that are 25 years or older.

To sign up for the caravan, there is a \$5.00 Kitty fee payable by July 19th 1999 to Don Perry (#5031), 4 View Street, Greenwich, CT 06830; don-dee@airstream.net.

Don Perry, #5031



NEW YORK

## The WBCCI National Statue of Liberty Rally

The WBCCI National Statue of Liberty Rally is now taking applications for the 1999 Rally over the August 4 to 8, 1999 time frame. This National Rally is one of the most attend Rallies with jam packed activities for everyone.

The daily programs include boat trips, tours of Manhattan, evening sandwiches, continental breakfasts each morning, a Saturday night BBQ, an ice cream party, professional entertainment each night, door prizes, rally plaques and pins, special gifts and free shuttle to

New York City points of interest.

Vintage Club participants are encouraged to come and join in. Those with families will be interested in the Thursday day trip on a bus into the city to do family things of interest.

The local attractions include the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, the World Trade Center, the Empire State Building, the NY Stock Exchange, Trump Tower, Radio City Music Hall, Bronx Zoo, St. Patrick's Cathedral, United Nations and much, much more. Tour information will be forwarded upon receipt of reservation form.

Parking is next to the historical central RR Terminal at Liberty State Park in Jersey City, NJ. Overlooking the Manhattan skyline, Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Rally is self-contained with water available but no dump station.

Costs are \$120 each for participants 12 years old and up and \$15 each for children ages 7 to 11. Children younger than 7 are free.

Al and Eleanor Peskoe, #16486  
62 Oakes Road,  
Little Silver, NJ 07739  
732/741-0766  
EPeskoe@aol.com.



## Oklahoma VAC Rally at the 68th Annual Indian Expo

In on August 5th and out on August 8th at Anadarko, OK. The event is the 68th Annual Indian Exposition and Pow-Wow. Full details are given at [www.indianexpo.org](http://www.indianexpo.org).

The planned VAC events are as follows: *Thursday*, Noon arrival at Randlett Park, just west of Anadarko to set up site. The trailers level enough, the dent can be removed and we hope the tree can grow back! Time to cool off at the Pool Party, 4 to 5 pm. Expo ground schedule includes a 2 pm Tribal Dancing, a 2 pm Greyhound Racing and dancing contests at 7:30 pm.

*Friday*, from 9 to 10 am, build your own Dream Catcher, guaranteed to ward off bad dreams and evil spirits. Class will be conducted by two Dream Catcher

artisans, Brian and Michael Drews, ages 12 and 10. This will make a perfect remembrance of your trip to Anadarko. 10-11 am, VAC open house. See why Wally could offer those lifetime warranties. Noon, we head to town and all get together for lunch and fellowship. After lunch you are on your own to see the Anadarko Post Office's sixteen famous murals, visit the local art galleries, tribal museums or visit Indian City USA. Expo ground schedule 2 pm Tribal Dancing, 2 pm Greyhound & Horse Racing, 7:30 pm Pageant. The grand entrance into the stadium is an event not to be missed. Bring your video camcorder to record the sights and sounds, the beauty of the Native American culture, its people and their costumes.

*Saturday*, grab your sun hat, folding chairs and head to town for the 68th Annual Indian Exposition parade. See the tribal Indian Princesses, fancy dancers, war dancers and more. Bet you couldn't get to all the sites yesterday. How about the Anadarko Philomathic Museum? Expo schedule 2 pm Tribal Dancing, 2 pm Greyhound & Horse Racing, 7:30 pm Awards & Fancy Dancing Championship!

*Sunday*, continental breakfast served from 8:30 to 10:30 am before we break camp. Yep, that tree snapped right back! 11 AM Dream Catcher guarantee expires!

Kitty costs are: one adult in unit \$50, one senior, 62+ in unit, \$38. Each extra adult, senior or child \$25. Price includes three nights parking, pool party, Friday Dream Catcher class, VAC open house, lunch and Sundays breakfast. All other Exposition events are \$6 adult, \$3 senior or children, some events are less, some are free. Please reserve by July 1st with a \$30 deposit, fully refunded if you cancel prior to July 20th. Limit 20 units.

Eric Drews, #01047  
3436 Justice Court  
Norman, OK 73072  
ericdrews@airstream.net

## VAC MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Since the Winter 1999 issue of the **Vintage Advantage**, we have welcomed in 74 VACers including 32 Members, 6 Associate Members and 36 Friend subscribers. The total number for the three categories together, as of March 1, 1999, is 943. The subtotals are as follows: 546 Members, 49 Associate Members, and 348 Friend subscribers.

These totals and subtotals are less than the corresponding numbers reported in the last issue because 310 Members, Associate Members and Friends were dropped from the VAC rolls due to nonpayment of 1998-99 dues.

Dues were payable July 1, 1998, and thus membership status was lost when dues payments were

not received by 2/1/99. As dues payments are received for the past due amounts, membership is being reinstated. Any interruption in VAC mailings, including the **Vintage Advantage**, will depend upon when payment is received.

To understand the levels of VAC membership and subscribers, the following classifications are provided.

**Member:** Members of the Wally Byam Caravan Club International (WBCCI) who own a vintage Airstream trailer (where a vintage trailer is defined as an Airstream trailer 25 years old or older). This is the dues paying, voting membership. A VAC member may hold office or be appointed to a position.

**Associate:** WBCCI members who do not qualify by owning a vintage Airstream trailer but wish for mutually beneficial reasons to belong. Associate members pay dues, vote and have all the benefits of a regular member, except that they may not be elected to office or park their trailer in the Vintage area at the annual WBCCI International Rally. A VAC associate may be appointed to a position.

**Honorary Member:** Membership bestowed upon VAC benefactors provided that they are WBCCI members. This is non-dues paying and a nonvoting membership.

**Friend:** Any person 18 years or older who has an interest in vintage Airstream trailers and wishes to receive the VAC newsletter (**Vintage Advantage**). Trailer ownership is not a requirement. This category is for non-WBCCI members who want a subscription to the newsletter only. It is the hope of the VAC that the Friends subscribers will be introduced to the WBCCI through the VA and then join the WBCCI such that they may be full VAC members.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** The **Vintage Advantage** newsletter will NOT be forwarded by the US Postal Service. To ensure that you will continue to receive the VA, please notify me of any address changes at:

670 Plantation Drive  
Titusville, FL 32780

407.269.8209  
RDMumma@aol.com

Dick Mumma, #04333  
VAC Membership Chairman



## VAC TREASURER REPORT

For the reporting period of 7/01/98 to 03/08/99, the VAC financial status is as follows:

Beginning: \$9,173.79  
Income \$4,521.14  
Expenses <\$5,051.02>

Ending Balance: \$8,643.91

Patrick Ewing, #3675  
VAC Treasurer

# *Just off the Press!*

## "RETIRE TO ADVENTURE!"

By HARRISON M. KARR



Here is a book about trailer traveling to warm the heart and excite the imagination! A book that will make your "get-up-and-go" itch to take off immediately and see for yourself the fascinating places that Professor Karr and Mrs. Karr have visited on their trips around the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Warmly, gently and beautifully written, *Retire to Adventure!* is the graphic and moving story of how two people in their sunset years have found, through trailering, more fun, more excitement, and more downright enjoyable *living* than they'd ever experienced before in their lives!

*Retire to Adventure!* is a book that has much to offer to trailers of *all* ages, for it is packed with valuable ideas and know-how.

---

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(from *Trail-R-News*, January 1963)

## VAC ROUNDUP

### 39th Annual Hobo Rally

It was Monday February 8th around noon as we arrived at the Colorado River Fair grounds in Blythe, CA. The weather was perfect, about 75 degrees. As we turned into the parking area we spotted five Vintage Airstreams who had arrived earlier that morning. Ray Leedam, the Rally parking chairman, had reserved the front row for VAC parking, so the first thing people saw when they pulled in was a line up of beautifully restored Vintage Airstreams.

On Tuesday as more vintage trailers arrived the weather began to change. The wind began to pick up and flags and awnings had to be taken down. The fairgrounds became a beehive of activity with seminars, car tours and games to participate in. That night we were treated to some of the best entertainment I have seen at a rally. They called themselves Keith and Dave, two guitarists who played lead guitar for the Grand Old Opry and Barbara Mandrel, they entertained for two and a half hours and received a standing ovation at the end of the show.

On Wednesday the winds continued to blow. I was becoming concerned that a lot of people had not shown up. Checking the weather service, I found that the winds in the mountain passes were blowing seventy to ninety miles per hour and some of the passes were closed completely to traffic. On Thursday the winds died down and the trailers started arriving again.

Friday afternoon the VAC hosted a happy hour for all the Vintage Club members and we were pleased to have Officers of the WBCCI join us. Ed Elmer, incoming President of the WBCCI, and his wife Irene, Ted Tunstall incoming President of Region 12 and his wife Barbara, Rick Sharp incoming 1st Vice President of Region 12 and his wife Margaret, and Wilson Yerk incoming President of Region 2 and his wife Cindy all joined us and had an opportunity to meet members of the VAC. We ended up with twenty vintage trailers and for ten of those it was their first time to any kind of event.

**All shapes and sizes  
parked in the  
Vintage section at  
the Hobo Rally.**



**This black and white picture  
doesn't do justice to the  
beautiful shine that the owner  
put on this 31 footer.**



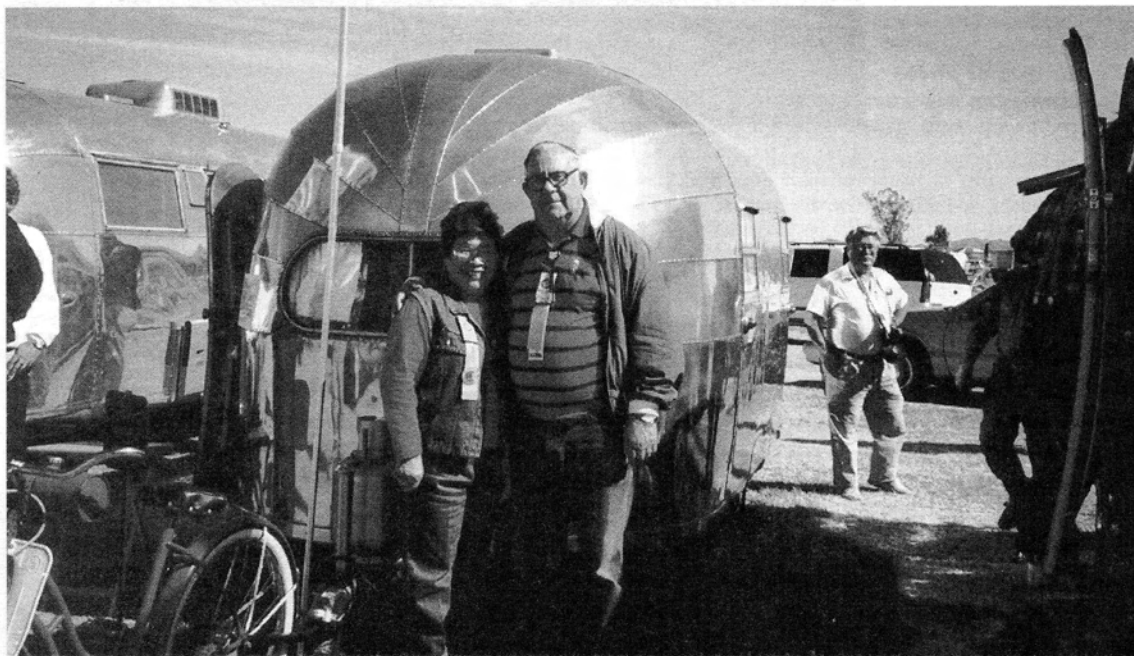
The diversity of the vintage trailers (and an Argosy Motorhome) couldn't have been better. They ranged from a 1950 18' Cutter to two completely polished 31' Sovereign's. There were also Bambi's, Globetrotter's, Bubble's, Safari's, International's, a Tradewind, a Caravanner, and a Wanderer. I wish there was space to give credit to each of the owners and tell more about each trailer because there was incredible workmanship and detail put into practically all of the rigs. I hope they will come to the International because they are all potential "Concours" winners

Saturday was the Vintage Club Open House. This was a first for the Hobo Rally and the reception was overwhelming. The open House started at 11 am and people were still coming to see the trailers and motorhome at 3 pm. The scheduling worked out well because it coincided with the Hobo parade, where at 1 pm the entries for the King and Queen of the Hobo Rally marched past the Vintage Row.

**The VAC Open House had the folks standing in line.**



**Ed and Irene Elmer (#119), Ist Vice-President of WBCCI, enjoying the VAC Open House.**





It was hard to tell who enjoyed the Open House more, the spectators or the Vintage Club members. This was especially true for the people that were first timers at a rally, they couldn't believe that their trailers would be so appreciated and admired by others. That evening at the entertainment show the Vintage Club received an ovation from approximately three hundred people for putting on the Open house. Thank You to all of you that helped make the Hobo Rally such a great success, I'm sure the word will spread about the fun we had and next year we will see even more Vintage Airstreamers.



**VAC members at the Hobo Rally: Don, Joyce & Kathleen Alexander, Ernie & Myrna Austin, By & Sue Campbell, Mark & Patty Carr, Mike Clayton, Jerry, Connie, Susie & Katie Follstad, Mike Green & Stephany Evans, Kathy Hunt, Kurt & Jennifer Leuschner, Pearl Main, Wayne & Pat Mrazek, Don & Mickey Myers, Tom, Karen & Tucker Pendleton, Tom & Corinne Reed, Steve & Shana Ruggenberg, Jack Shaw, John & Rosalyn Scadden, Allan Songer & Kerrie Aley, Alan Tunstall, Noland & Barbara Vogt.**

The next scheduled event for the VAC on the West Coast will be in October at the Region 12 Rally. It will be held in Mariposa County California, which is in Gold Rush country and on the door step to Yosemite National Park. We are also planning a Vintage Club Caravan in the areas around the Gold Rush country after the Rally, so stay tuned for updates.

Tom Reed, #10283  
1st Vice President, VAC  
VAC Coordinator, 39th Annual Hobo Rally



## COOP'S CORNER

### *In the Valley -*

Bettye and I have spent a quiet winter at home. Home is Pharr, TX, down in the Rio Grand Valley, next to McAllen. When Spanish missionaries first pushed into this area (1691), it was covered with brush and low Mesquite trees. A few indigenous Indians, hunter-gatherers, were scattered about. The fathers, because of their experience throughout Mexico, regarded this territory as quite attractive and a good candidate for development. If you and I had been transported here we would have found it pretty unexciting.

Many of the plants which nature provided came equipped with repulsive thorns. Much of the ground cover was inedible or tasted bad to cattle. The annual rainfall of 23 inches meant that it was almost desert. The aspect is deadly flat because the Rio Grand river has meandered over all of this space leaving behind a level flood plain of silt. On the other hand, the spiny Mesquite trees, with fern like leaves survive the climate very well. They grow in grotesque shapes just right for sketching, and they burn with a delicious smoke that imparts a wonderful taste to roasted meat. As I write this my mouth is watering. In other words, this is really not such a bad place as I first indicated. Time passed, there was the Alamo. That battle was fought in a church-like structure, remember?

Not far up the river one can still visit (on the Mexican side) the

remains of a mission with impressive stone buildings. This was the third mission in a string of such efforts started by that order. Their method of operation was to build a mission as a teaching station for the Indians. They would gather and convert as many as they could reach, teaching them Christian principles, agriculture, sanitation, and crafts such as carpentry, pottery and weaving. Then, with this accomplished, they turned the whole thing over to the Indians and moved on. They did this four times, the last being at present day San Antonio (1718), the building where the Alamo battle was later fought.

Within a few years there was a war with Mexico and this area became United States. (*For the record, we DID finally pay for it in cash, though no one remembers this today.*) Ranchers found that with a little pruning, one could profitably run cattle on this land. Later, it was found that the soil was actually very fertile, and if one supplemented the rainfall a little, perfectly marvelous crops could be raised. In the twenties, with amazing foresight, a system of steam pumping stations was built which raised water from the Rio Grand into canals for irrigation. Presto! The land became lush and green. Surprisingly, this original system is still in operation and I can touch parts of it in my back yard. The steam operated pumps gave way to compact electric pumps years ago, but one of the original stations, with tall smoke stack and flashing connecting rods will soon be open for visits, the work of restoration provided by volunteers. (What a country we have!)

The robins, that fled the northern reaches of the country some time ago are on their way back now. They have taken up temporary residence on our golf course, pulling worms out of the greens with great zest. This fact is reported by Bettye; she spends a good deal of time out there. Sometimes I accompany her, but most times you

could find me lying under our '48 'stream or tinkering with the interior. The outside is still ugly and dull, looking just as it did in the junk yard. But the inside is complete. All of the machinery now functions. Working with a local upholsterer, we designed a dinette. It will be shown for the first time at Region 9, Wichita Falls, TX, March 22nd.



### *Breakaway Switches -*

Installing a breakaway switch on the old 1948 was a breeze. I had allotted more than a day; it fell into place in two hours complete with soldered connections. It's actually about as complicated as putting batteries in a flashlight. However, I got excited about one caution which was on the instruction sheet. It read, "WARNING: DISCONNECT TRAILER PLUG BEFORE TESTING BREAKAWAY UNIT. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN SEVERE DAMAGE TO ELECTRONIC BRAKE CONTROL."

I had never considered this possibility. Have you?



### *Hubcaps -*

Where can I buy hub caps for my vintage trailer? This is a FAQ (frequently asked question). I found that they are still available from:

J C Whitney  
1 J C Whitney Way  
P. O. Box 1000  
La Salle IL 61301-0100

and from Kelsey-Hayes. They have dealers scattered all over the country and have a nice selection of moon type caps in various sizes. Locate a dealer, use the yellow pages. This may be the easiest way to fit the hubcap to the wheel you happen to have.



### *Feeling Good, Again -*

I was (as usual) crawling around under my '74. Just inboard of the step I pressed a screwdriver into



what I thought was the main frame rail. Jumping Jimminy! It crushed right through. My heart sank. Here was my treasured plaything, the thing on which I had invested two months work and now the frame was rusted through. Furthermore, after dropping parts of the belly pan, the damage extended forward for three feet. Ugh!

When in doubt turn to your dealer. Daryl Moore confirmed my worst fears, it was indeed the frame rail. Through the action of mice (I think) the insulation had dropped away from the floor, trapping moisture against the frame. A series of rusty voids extended forward. He suggested a local fabricator who he thought might attempt a reinforcement. A hand hole on the other side of the trailer revealed the frame to be in pristine condition.

I contacted the fabricator and he made a date for the following Saturday. I had pulled away enough belly pan to allow him access. After a quick look, he formed up a kind of angle iron with wings on it. This took some time, but when it came to the welding, it was a snap because of his careful preparations. By noon I was on my way. The bill was under \$200, a bargain when I considered the uplift to the trailer. I didn't realize till a day later how good I felt about my trailer. The frame failure had temporarily undermined our love affair.



### *We Call It The Valley -*

You have already read about the history of the Rio Grand valley. Now I will give you some Airstream history. Through a friend, I heard about a lady living in McAllen who was on the famous Wally Byam caravan through Africa. I dropped into a local trailer supply house where I heard she could be found. She wasn't there at that particular time, but I met her husband and found that he too was on the same caravan, the famous Capetown to Cairo caravan. He took me to his

office and we had a fine hour in which I learned some choice Wally stories which I will share later.

I suggested to Bettye that we throw a dinner party and have this couple over for an evenings chat. (Now, Bettye is an understanding wife, but she is sometimes less than enchanted by my good ideas such as this one. As it turned out she had good reason.)

It required several visits to the office to complete all the arrangements. In the end we had 12 people for a memorable evening of chit chat. An example or two:

Mr. Grabowski asked, "Do you know what happens if you carry your spring bars too tight?" Answer, "Well, no."

"It breaks the tongue right off the trailer. I saw that happen to two doctors. Boy were they hopping mad."

Imagine this happening in the wilds of Africa.

"Monkeys make terrible pets. There was this couple who bought one along the road. They hung a chain from front to back inside the trailer near the ceiling. The monkey loved to run back and forth on this chain, which he could do without losing his balance. Bad tempered they are though. I spent an evening in their trailer. The monkey didn't like me and kept throwing things at me. Most unpleasant."

"Do you know what was the shortest distance covered in a single days driving?"

"No."

"It was one quarter mile."



### *A Pleasant Note -*

Perhaps Mary will forgive me for waiting so long to print this note. It relates to Ted Able's trailer; he passed away more than two years ago. She writes the following about disposing of their '57. "I had several enquiries but all had some reason for not coming to see it. One was not interested in twin beds, another objected to a 26 footer on a single axle. Another had heard we had turned it over. I explained it

was a tornado wind that turned over 18 wheelers. But I knew someone who was very interested in it. That person had told us several times that if we ever decided to sell it, to let them know. I knew that Ted would rather have had it out on the road, but I called and they offered me a fair price. The son came down (on what would have been Teds 88th birthday) and gave me a check for the full amount, and took the trailer away."

"It will be a show piece in the showroom at Turner Airstream , Inc. in Jeannette, PA. He called me yesterday to thank me for selling it to him. I know that it will have tender loving care and my mind is at ease."



### *Washer and Thread -*

My '62 was a really rough trailer. We did little more than sweep it out, and we were living in it. Circumstances forced this upon us. The first requirement was to inspect the brakes and bearings, and at the same time replace the tires. I was parked in a fine park, but it was summer with few people about.

In the afternoon I had finished one brake and was cleaning up for the day. In my hand I had a small tin can with some ounces of gasoline in it, the remains from cleaning up the bearing. I looked around for a suitable way of disposing of this mess. Since we were alone, I went to one of the vacant sewer connections, and tipped out some spoonfuls of dirty fluid. As I did so, I heard a suspicious clink. I had dumped something metallic into the sewer.

Returning to my work place, I soon discovered that the special bearing washer, the one with the little key inside was missing.

Next day I went to a large wheel and axle supply. After inspecting the dozen or so washer styles they stocked, I came away disappointed. Thinking about my problem, I wondered if I could retrieve the washer with a magnet. There was a magnetic catch on a cupboard door.



I asked Bettye if she had any string. She had none, but offered her supply of pink embroidery thread. I took both and went out into the deserted parking area. Locating the proper pipe I lowered away my magnet on the thread. Plunging it up and down fifty times failed to locate anything.

Had I gone to the wrong pipe? No, I was sure. But, just to be safe I tried its near mate. Soon it was obvious that the two pipes joined. The washer was now in the second pipe, and with a satisfied feeling, I pulled it into the daylight.

Returning to my trailer, I washed my hands, the thread and the magnet in strong detergent. Then, to be safe, I washed all three in lacquer thinner. I returned the catch to the cupboard, but Bettye stubbornly refused to touch the pink embroidery thread.

Sometimes women are hard to understand.

Rutherford L. Cooper, #26019

## *The Adventures of Ole Mossy*

*The following stories were originally penned on the Airstream.net discussion list and are being reprinted here through permission of the author.*

### *Romancing the Land Yacht*

It was a fine day for mud wrestling ladies and gentlemen. And the Visiting Team had every reason to feel confident. After all, they had a hefty tow vehicle, a fairly flat playing surface, albeit damp and a bit soft underfoot in places. Sure the opponent was a silver clad, 31 foot long, marvel of modern engineering. But it still was an inanimate object. It looked like a sure thing.

As planned, the Suburban arrived and easily drove up from behind the Airstream and then around from one side and ahead. Stopping about 20 feet ahead, it was put into reverse and backed toward the waiting tongue.

Nobody paid much attention to the apple trees that lined the approach to the trailer except to make sure they didn't hit one during the maneuvers. And they didn't. Nobody paid much heed to the rotten apples left on the ground in a thick carpet around the bases of the trees either. Not until the Suburban began to lose a bit of traction. That quickly turned into a skid and in seconds what turf had been under the back tires gave way to thick slimy clay. Not the horrific Gumbo of the Southwest but not far from it either.

After a couple of hours attempting to rock back and forth and setting boards under the tires failed, we made a trip back into town to buy a come-along.

It's amazing how quickly one can start spending untold sums of money supporting a habit like this.

Writing the first check the day before to pay for the trailer was just the beginning. This morning I had already bought a new hitch ball. Now it's a come-along and a braided steel cable. Oh and lets not forget the sales tax to help defray the Governor's next trip abroad and then a 3-day trip permit. Like any addiction, I'm sure the expense is on some algorithmic scale similar to the one they use to measure earthquakes with each step higher not being simply 1 unit more but twice what the previous unit was. I'll tell you one thing, if this first weekend was a 1 on the Airstream Richter Scale, a 2 is probably going to mean counseling and a 3 will no doubt include divorce attorney fees.

For now it was good enough that the come-along and cable, attached to a tree, was enough to free the Suburban and the second half of the match was postponed until something with 4 wheel drive and a winch can be brought up from the minors.

It was still a beautiful sunny afternoon and we'd probably underestimated our opponent. I thought I might have caught Ole Mossy grinning a bit as we packed our mud caked carcasses into our vehicles and headed back home. So close and yet so far. I do own an Airstream. I really do. And I'm sure the 50 mile trip home will be easy. As soon as we can convince it to get beyond that first 50 yards of unpaved goo.

### *A Tale Of Two Trailer Pulls*

It was the best of times it was the wettest of times. The weather conditions of our first attempt were sunny and warm and we got close enough to the Airstream's hitch that we actually put grease on the hitch ball before finding out just how slick the clay was under foot and preceded to muck about for the better part of the afternoon before calling it a day. We felt like calling it all sorts of other things but didn't. Too tired, I think.

What changed in the two weeks since then? Well, the weather for one thing and not for the better. Rain, rain and more rain. Then wind. Lots of wind. Every other day wind and rain combined. The worst of all of it seemed to have dumped on us the past two or three days and nights. And it didn't look any better this morning. Animals were starting to pair up but we went up anyway.

It rained hard all the way up to Mt. Vernon, 50 miles to our north. High wind warnings for gusts up to 80 mph were predicted for later in the afternoon so it was now or never.

Unlike the 2 wheel drive Suburban we thought we'd use the first time, we now had a F-250 4x4 and a 1/2 ton Suburban; also with power to all wheels.

The F250 motored up to the same spot where we'd bogged down 2 weeks prior and then proceeded to back past the old ruts and right up to the Airstream with no hesitation. Wow! We actually had it hitched up. Now

that's what I call progress.

But hitching up and going are two different matters. That Airstream had been resting peacefully in that same spot for well over 3 years. It had withstood wind, rain, snow and the rare sunny day. It had survived a narrow miss from a toppled apple tree last winter and was probably still more than a little upset that her long time owners had just up and sold her to some idiot from down south who didn't know diddly squat about trailering and obviously was a very slow learner to boot because he hadn't learned his lesson from the last time he got out there to play and got stuck in the thick gumbo she's rested on all these years with no trouble at all. Now he was going to yank her out of her home with some little 3/4 ton pick up truck? I don't think so!

Never argue with a 4 ton woman.

True, we did back right past those old ruts from attempt number one. But we found them quick enough when we pulled forward. The trailer's tires barely got out of their indentations before the truck's tires hit the old ruts and quickly filled with the goo and we were back doing the spin thing only this time with front tires as well.

Enter the Suburban. We lashed a braided steel cable to the twin hooks on the Ford's front bumper and to the Burb's trailer hitch. The anticipation grew as both rigs were shifted into Low Low gear and began the creep forward. Inch by inch, out of the old ruts, Hooray!

Past the diabolical Apple tree. It's rotten missiles squashed well past pie, beyond cider and into some sort of clay/ apple goo mix that will no doubt baffle archaeologists thousands of years hence when they unearth this spot of ground wondering what kind of nomadic people used tree fruit for pavement.

The asphalt and, more importantly, freedom were drawing closer and closer and then Ole Man Progress slowed a bit and then a bit more and then halted and both trucks lost their footing and began making new ruts. We stopped before reaching hub cap depth this time. A quick look over convinced us that we just needed a longer tow rope or chain or anything that would allow the Suburban to reach the paved highway before applying the weight of the Ford and Airstream behind it.

We went down the road to a farm next-door. Shut down for the weekend. It's just a turf farm. No cows to milk. Turf obviously allows farmers to take weekends off. How come it doesn't offer the same courtesy when it gets transplanted around my house? Fortunately there was a lady at the farm house who roused up her teenage son and we soon had a heavy duty tow chain and that proved to be just what the Turf Doctor ordered. The Suburban's front tires grabbed hold of the asphalt followed by the Ford and the train was pulled out whole onto dry land.

A quick breakdown of the various chains, ropes,

cables and other implements of destruction and the filling out and placement of the trip permit and we were outta dare!

Taking it slow because we had no trailer brakes. The Excella Vac Brakes will need to be changed over to conventional electric brakes at a later time. We made it home in about an hour. Talking back and forth on CB's all the way home, my friend in the F-250 remarked more than once how well the trailer pulled, even when a couple strong cross winds slapped it.

Backed the trailer next to my garage. Got it leveled and unhooked from the truck.

Touchdown!

### *Ole Mossy Gets Her Bath*

There are a couple things made in Washington State that are pretty hard to beat. We make a lot of airplanes with the name Boeing on them. We also have this place down the road owned by the Gates boy that does a fair amount of business.

Something else we make darn well, and for a lot longer than those other two Johnny-Come-Lately's, is mold. It's a natural for a place that has rain falling much of the time. Those little green critters love moisture. A few of them move into a spot and if they like it, they call a few friends over to party and then they call some more friends over and before you know it, they got a good patch growing. Left unchecked, they'll cover most anything but tend to favor the shady side of life. Which is 360 degrees on any object much of the time.

Proof that we do get a little sunshine once in a great while are the subtle shades of green from the faint emerald haze on many southern exposures to inch thick moss clinging to the North face of my Airstream. Thus the endearing name of Ole Mossy.

Since arriving home 3 days ago from the muddy farm from which it was purchased, the rains and winds have kept me from doing little to it other than sneaking into it to see exactly what I had bought and what I thought I might be able to do with it.

But today, we had one of those rare afternoons of mostly clear skies and no wind. In fact, if you could manage to stay in the sunlight, it didn't feel warm exactly, but not uncomfortable with a flannel shirt on. In other words, as good as it gets in February here.

I seized the day and broke out the Dawn dish soap and my trusty 5 gallon bucket, hose, step ladder and car washing brush and proceeded to transform the moss clad skin to something more closely resembling what I'd barely recalled what Wally had in mind.

Now something should be said about the care and cleaning of that aluminum hide. You just can't clean it with any old soap. If you wander down the grocery store aisle that has the cleansers in it you will be amazed



at the sheer number of different kinds of soap. Heck I was amazed I even found that aisle since I usually make a beeline for the magazine rack whenever I go to "help" with the shopping. But today I was on my own and had to get that Dawn because it's "recommended" for our baby's delicate skin. We don't want anything with chlorine in it. Bad Chlorine, Bad!! That, by the way, is the prime ingredient in any previous moss attacker I've ever used.

Once home, I got everything assembled outside. Made one last check to make sure all the hatches were battened, windows latched tight and then turned on the hose water and sprayed her down.

There was a thick accumulation of mud, moss, twigs, leaves and other primordial goo wedged behind the top part of the Zip-Dees and I power washed that out first, kind of like cleaning out gutters. Then I grabbed my super-soft wash brush and plunged it into the hot Dawn soap and lathered up a particularly heavy patch of green on the street side rear quarter panel.

This is where the old mold fighter inside me is shocked. You see, we normally put a little chlorine bleach into a bucket of water and as soon as that even gets near a green mold covered fence or gutter or sidewalk or slow moving dog, the green is gone. Bam just like that. Just like in the scrubbing bubbles commercial. They work hard so I don't have tooooooo! It's like a wave of CLEAN races through the neighborhood and zip zam, you're done.

You can understand how I might be just a little surprised to see those steaming hot Dawn bubbles slide back and forth across the emerald green skin of my new baby and have almost no effect what so ever. I don't think I would be exaggerating one bit to say I saw those little moss critters calling up their family up by the propane tanks to come on down "we got the hot tub going".

With bleach water we're talking Nuclear Blast. You put your ear down low you can hear whole mold towns screaming just before they are vaporized. No mercy! We're taking back the neighborhood! I don't want those no good slimes doing the Macarena on my watch.

Meantime in Mr. Roger's Neighborhood...

A few more brush loads and some of the goo began to give way. I suspect not because I killed them off. They had played in the water long enough and their mothers were calling them home for dinner.

But I stuck with it. Refusing to give into the Dark Side. Two hours later, as the sun was going down almost as fast as the thermometer, I had about half of the trailer washed. Sure there were hints of green hanging on to a few rivets and trim edges. Some molds never know when the party's over. A few more times out and it'll look pretty good.

Oh there are patches of clearcoat peeled off and a few scratches here and there. Eventually we'll have to get Ole Mossy stripped and shined and we'll really have

something to be proud of. But we're so darn happy just to have it now, I'm not really complaining.

Hey, you with the green tan. Give me back my ladder!

Now that the green sheen is gone, we've had to rename Ole Mossy. After many days of debate we came up with The Piggy Bank. After all, it IS a Metal Tube that we're always plunking money into.

Steve Walser, #Applied

## *An Argosy Named Onion*

We call it "the Onion". Shortly after we joined the WBCCI we attended our first event, a Region 11 Rally in Tucson, AZ. Not knowing what to expect, we caravanned with our local unit (Southern New Mexico Unit, #146) to the fairground site and were parked among a sea of 400 silver Airstreams and a few motorhomes. This was about a year after the WBCCI started permitting Argosy's into the club. We were the only Argosy and got a lot of appraising looks as people walked by. My wife Zelma said she felt like an onion in a petunia patch. So we labeled our rig soon thereafter with attractive decal lettering. The name is a good conversation opener.



Our 30' 1978 Argosy is actually our third Argosy. First was a 20' 1977 Argosy Minuet, a special smaller built Airstream which was about 6 inches narrower than normal. We later went larger to a 24' Argosy with a rear bath, twin beds and dinette in front. Still later, and about 10 years ago, we acquired the 30' "Onion", with twin rear beds, center bath lots of closet space and storage space. All the Argosy's were in excellent shape and really needed nothing but polishing and some slight refurbishing. However, the 30' unit was really the ugliest of the lot with orange vinyl trim (3 stripes of it).



an awful bronze 10" center stripe, and some odd colored brown on the banana skin plus the traditional tan body paint. We changed out the vinyl trim to black Airstream trim, painted the banana skin, frame and bumper black and had the center stripe painted at a shop to match the light blue of our 1987 Ford, long bed tow vehicle. After a lot of work cleaning off years of oxidation from the painted body, it was polished and suddenly looked almost white, helped in part to the black and blue exterior trim paint. We had to replace the tires and did so with white walls and added full wheel covers that were common to Airstream trailers in the '70's. It was an amazing transformation. So much so that we were continually asked by old time airstreamers if this was a new model Airstream.

The interior featured the usual Argosy gaucho couch with the short back rest which we replaced with a couch unit from a wrecked Airstream. The dark burgundy carpet was replaced with walnut wood parquet flooring while my wife made new draperies and blue decorative curtain panels that matched the exterior blue trim. We removed some plastic beige trim on storage units on each end of trailer and replaced with an Indian patterned ribbon fabric which slid nicely into the track previously holding the plastic, although I tacked with glue in a few spots. This added a little interior color.

The refrigerator and food storage are on curb side while the stove and sink with understorage on roadside. The table is a fold down, fold out type common to traditional Airstreams and is on the roadside. We added a small fold down table on curb side to the right of the entry as a space for my wife to work her crossword puzzles. Again, this part was from a wrecked Airstream trailer. A previous owner had added a second 24" fold down table between sink/stove cabinet and regular table which serves as extra counter space and TV stand. It sets in front of a shallow 5" tamboured door wall cabinet which is not useful for a lot except for wine bottles and similar sized containers. The bath is also on roadside with 6 ft of closet on the curb side opposite.

A few years later we had all the windows tinted on the inside, at a car tinting place, in order to reduce the heat from the sun which can be severe in New Mexico. It did that and at the same time added a contemporary appearance to the exterior. Another nice feature to the tint is that it provides some privacy in the daytime when closely parked at a rally. You can't see in. If there is a draw back it is that when there is a cloudy or dreary day, the rig is a bit darker on the inside then we might wish. An idea someone gave me was to replace the metal top of the roof vents with a couple layers of lexan to permit in more light. We need to do this one of these days.

We later added four solar panels on the roof and

four no maintenance batteries (two under each bed) plus a 1200 Watt, Tripp Lite inverter located in the base of the cabinet between the end of the beds. It added a few hundred pounds of weight at the rear of the trailer but so far there have been no ill effects.

The Argosy has been relatively trouble free. We have had to rebond some of the vinyl on the wood bulkhead walls that had dried out. We also replaced the refrigerator two years ago. The worst job has been disassembling a cabinet to remove the furnace for motor repair. Seems like anything can be accomplished with stainless steel screws and pop rivets! We remodeled the kitchen storage cabinet so that one half is now a pull out pantry that sits behind the original door.

We have enjoyed all of our Argosy's and each time we wanted a larger rig it just seemed like we couldn't find the Airstream we liked. We actually took a year or so searching prior to the purchase of both the 24' and the 30'. I will say that I think the Argosy is a much cooler trailer inside because of the painted surface and the exterior is easier to care for. Treat it like a car. I have seen a couple of Airstreams painted to simulate the aluminum look which were very well done. Never could figure out why Airstream didn't offer that as an option. The Argosy was built as a less costly trailer and somewhat lighter in weight. My 30' unit has a GVWR weight of 6200 lbs but all the Airstreams were similarly lighter at that time. Argosy had single pane windows and a lighter weight couch with a few less features than Airstreams but are the same structurally. The painting I assumed evolved from the Airstream Company having a lot of discolored aluminum that they could not use on regular units. I have always been partial to the mid to late '70's Airstream made trailers and the almost all aluminum interiors and tambour door cabinets. I assume we will keep this trailer forever. Although I have always enjoyed the vintage stuff, I also want a trailer that is functional as well as attractive and this is the philosophy that I have been trying to achieve with my Argosys.

Roy Lashway, #1610

## TECH TALK 1

*The following article is an article originally penned for the Airstream Central web site (<http://www.admin@airstreamcentral.com>) and is being reprinted here through permission of the author.*

### Overfill Protection Devices (OPD)

by Charles Burke

For the RV owner a new problem is on the horizon for us all to deal with. The official name is the OPD valved liquid petroleum (LP) tank. OPD stands for Overfill Protection Device. In fact it is the title for a series of changes to Department of Transportation (DOT) certified portable LP tanks. These are not to be confused with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) certified permanently mounted tanks found on motorhomes. It will be of particular concern to owners of older Airstreams and folks with aluminum LP tanks.

The rules with the most immediate impact have to do with older tanks which LP vendors are required to ensure are safe to fill. The requirement was established several years ago to have tanks more than 12 years from manufacturer or 5 years from last certification to be tested and recertified. The test is for operation and condition. The new OPD requirement, effective 1 October 1998, is that in order to be certified a tank must have an OPD valve. The next step will be effective 1 April 2002. At that time all tanks must have the OPD valve to be refilled. In other words it's coming and we can't stop it.

As I mentioned earlier, there is more to it than the overfill protection device. The OPD is a float which restricts the amount of LP which can be put into a tank. The valve also has a flow restrictor in a 56 orifice. This limits the maximum amount of LP that can be released through an open valve to 125,000 btu's. The new valve can be attached with either the standard left-hand thread pigtail or the new ACME pigtail. The ACME pigtail first showed up in home barbecues. This year RV original equipment manufacturers (OEM) will be required to install them. The new ACME pigtail also contains a thermal sensitive shutoff. Used in conjunction with the OPD valve, it has another safety feature to limit flow.

In the future, purging and testing coaches for LP leaks will be slower and more difficult. It is possible to open a valve too fast, thus resulting in a safety shutdown. The result will be the need to restart the whole procedure. It seems likely at this point that many dealers and vendors that have done purging as a courtesy will then likely need to charge for it. And an LP leak test will take longer.

The valve handle will have a unique appearance and the tank will have several labels indicating it is an OPD valve. It is important even now to know the difference. If you see an LP tank for sale at a seemingly very good price, it may be because it is not an OPD tank. While the tank will be suitable for current use, it will be unusable starting in 2002.

New OPD tanks are now becoming available but careful shopping is necessary. Tank prices will vary widely depending on the manufacturer, source and location. You don't want to find out while on vacation in the wilds of America that your LP tank can not be refilled. New 20# tanks will cost from \$24 to \$50 each. For folks with the 30# or 40# aluminum tanks, you will want to pursue replacement valves. New steel tanks are about the same cost as a replacement valve, making replacing valves in them overly expensive. However, with the aluminum tanks, their cost is such that a valve replacement is much less expensive. A replacement aluminum tank will run \$300 to \$400 each! For illustrations refer to Manchester Tank's web site (<http://www.mantank.com/opd.htm>).

## TECH TALK 2

### Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM) Batteries

For many vintage Airstream trailer owners it is convenient to place the deep cycle batteries within the living space of the coach because of space constraints. Typically the older the coach, the more this is true. When placing batteries in a living area, it is necessary to use sealed batteries in order not to create a flammable situation caused by the hydrogen outgassing from flooded batteries in an unvented environment such as the living space inside a trailer.

#### *Flooded Acid Batteries*

A flooded battery is the most common type of deep cycle battery and is identifiable by the presence of removable vent caps that require periodic water replacement. However when hydrogen gas accumulations are greater than 4% then the environment becomes very flammable and can explode if there is a spark or heat condition within the coach.

#### *Gel Cell Batteries*

The restriction of using flooded batteries within the living space of a coach has typically meant that folks were limited to using gel batteries. The gel batteries were originally introduced into the market about 30 years ago and as such were a technology advance in terms of maintenance and efficiency. The concept behind the gel battery is that inside the sealed gelled-cell battery, the oxygen produced by the positive plates is recombined with the hydrogen gas created by the batteries negative plates to produce water that is cycled back into the electrolytic gel. This gel is a combination of sulfuric acid, "fumed" silica, pure water, and a phosphoric acid which produces a thixotropic gel that theoretically increases the life cycle. More recent gel cell batteries allow the recombination to occur by sealing each cell with a pressure relief vent to contain gases under 3.4 to 4.0 psi of pressure. This results in a natural recombination to occur. Once mixed, the gel is drawn into each cell under a vacuum therefore eliminating the gas voids that can cause inactivity areas on the plate surfaces and thus reduce the capacity of the battery.

By and large these gel cell batteries have been relatively successful although at a higher initial cost and more weight per A-hr (or per reserve capacity) than flooded batteries. There has also been concern with the gel cell batteries in terms of overcharging and longevity. A reason for this is that the gel electrolyte is a heavy, glue-like substance that is susceptible to damage from heat and high voltage. Although the newer versions of these batteries have offered improvements over the initial designs, gel cell batteries have not demonstrated the desired long term reliability of flooded batteries because of these factors.

#### *AGM Batteries*

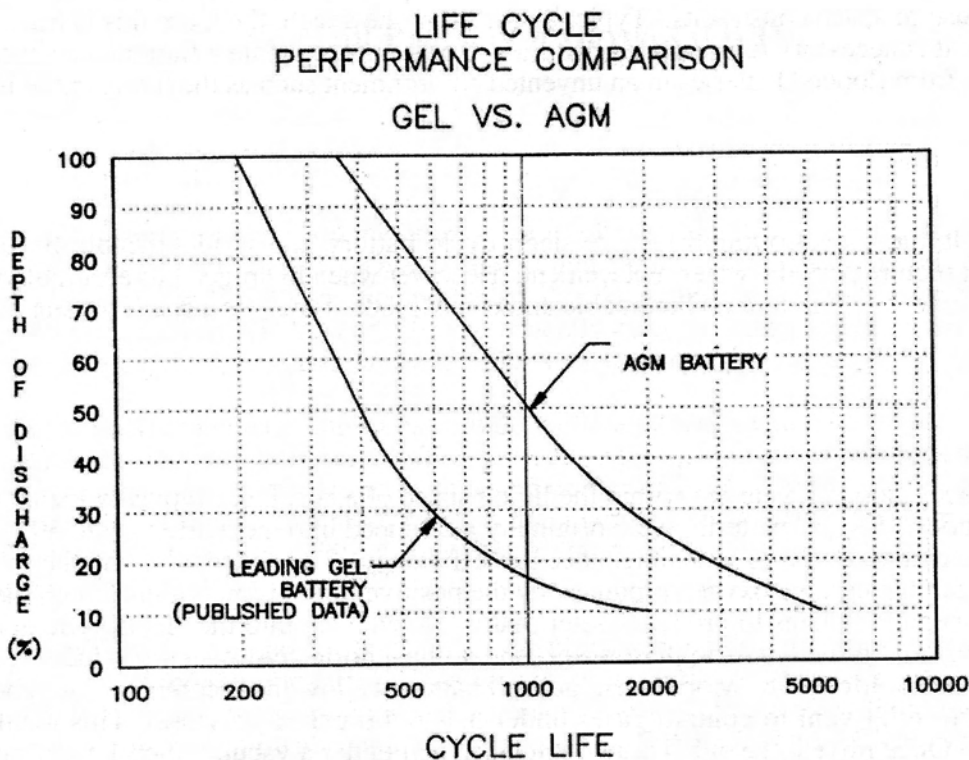
A more recent introduction to the sealed battery market has been a technology called absorbed glass mat, also known as AGMs. These are military grade deep cycle batteries that were developed by Concorde Battery Corporation in the late 1980's for the F-18 fighter jet and many other military applications. Because of their original design mandates, the AGMs have been engineered to sustain severe vibration and shock exposures, immersion and long periods of sustained inversion.

In AGM sealed batteries, the acid is absorbed between the plates and immobilized by a very fine fiberglass mat. There is no silica gel involved, the glass mat absorbs and "holds" the acid to keep it in place between the plates. This holding permits a fast reaction between the acid and plate material. By design, the mat is only 90% saturated with electrolyte which thus allows a portion of the mat to be filled with gas. These gas spaces provide the channels by which the freshly generated gasses, which are in their atomic state and very reactive, are allowed to recombine rapidly and safely with a 99% efficiency. The end result of this type of reaction, coupled with the use of high quality and high purity, thick positive plates, good grid design, premium insulation and separator liners, results in a battery with very low internal resistance (lowest of all three technologies) and thus, an AGM battery will provide higher rates



of discharge and accept faster rates of charge. Furthermore, this lower resistance will deliver much higher power and efficiency than the flooded acid and gel acid batteries. There are no current limitations with voltage regulating recharging, low discharge rates (less than 3% per month unattended), and superior charge retention (particularly against flooded batteries).

A lifecycle performance comparison of gel cell and AGM batteries.



As with all gee-whiz, gotta have its, this new technology comes at a cost and that initial cost is higher than even current gel cell batteries. The two leading major companies selling batteries with this technology are *Lifeline* and *Optima* where *Optima* has generally pursued the automotive markets and *Lifeline* offers a broader selection of sizes and models (including a 6 V Group 2-C model) for both the marine and RV markets. *Optima* has recently introduced a deep cycle model but it is rather small and mainly intended for advanced car stereos, conversion vans or limited marine applications.

Other factors to consider include that the AGM is still more weight per A-hr than the conventional flooded acid batteries and the AGM is also a rather new technology that does not have the longer termed actual use data experience (as compared with laboratory predicted lifecycles) to compare with the other technologies.

### **References**

*West Marine, 1999 Power Master Catalog, available at 800/262-8464, 1999, pp. 366-373.*

*Lifeline Batteries, <http://www.dcbattery.com/lifeline2.html>.*

*IEEE Spectrum, Engineering the EV Future, November 1998.*

*Country Coach Destinations, All Charged Up About AGM Batteries!, available at 800/547-8015, Winter 1999.*

## BEST OF THE WEB

### Questions & Charlie Answers

*This column is a regular VA feature with the best questions and answers from the Airstream Central Internet website (<http://www.channell.com/users/brosius/air.htm>). The Airstream Central website (and this column) is written by Mr. Charles Burke, a 1972 Airstream factory trained technician who is currently employed in the parts department at an Airstream dealership. Mr. Burke regularly answers questions concerning Airstreams and has agreed to take the best of these each quarter and republish them for the VA.*

Before we get started I need to respond to some feedback I received about my column in the last newsletter (Winter 1999 **Vintage Advantage**). Lest I forget somebody out there is watching me, I got a telephone call within a couple of days after the last edition hit the street. In my response regarding cupping tires I mentioned only that the cupping is a symptom of shocks going bad. Not so, as I was reminded. It can also be a symptom of bad axle alignment. While an owner can make a rough determination regarding the alignment of the axle, it will take the alignment equipment from Airstream to straighten out the problem. Folks that have the service manual for 1972+ coaches can see how involved the process is. If alignment is a question, check with your nearest Airstream dealer for their answer to the need.

#### **Subj: A/C for a 1964 Safari**

**Question:** How much trouble is it to add an air conditioning unit to a 1964 Safari? We have located one in good condition, but the coach does not have an AC. I believe AC was an option on that model, so I suspect that the roof area is set up to take one. Anything else to watch out for on this unit? This will be out first Airstream and we want to do it right!

**Charlie:** Yes, the coach is set up for an air conditioner. The wiring is in the ceiling at a prescribed length from the front. Sometimes the wiring is at a vent opening, sometimes not.

#### **Subj: Subfloor Replacement**

**Question:** I am currently replacing the floor on my 16' 1958 Airstream trailer. I have all the benches, bed, and fridge out and will have the sink/stove structure out soon followed by the bathroom cabinets and facilities. It looks like I need to pull the restroom wall out also. What is the structure that holds the floor, and how is the shell attached to the frame? Is there a cutaway drawing somewhere on the web, or could you advise on floor replacement? Should I just cut out the worst parts (near door sill) and replace them, or go whole hog? Is exterior grade plywood satisfactory or should I use marine grade? I think there is enough rot to warrant

replacing the whole floor, but I'm getting scared that it is too integral, going beneath the inside shell all around the edges. Also, taking out the wall is pretty major. Should I just try to slide the new floor under it?

**Charlie:** The sidewall to floor construction is the same to this day. The chassis and flooring are built up with an anchor rail around the perimeter. The shell is then lowered into place and anchored to the perimeter rail. It has been done before, although some that have done it swear they never will do it again. Patch repairs, as long as they patch well outside the rotten area will work very well. Marine grade is a better grade than exterior grade plywood. There is no site I am aware of with a cutaway of the wall structure. If you are willing to go this far I wouldn't pull up short at this point. Ultimately I believe you will be much more satisfied with the results if you do it all.

#### **Subj: Saggy Exterior Door**

**Question:** My entrance door is sagging a bit. It only has one hinge on the door. Could you tell me if there is any way to adjust it, or will I need parts and if so what parts are necessary to repair it?

**Charlie:** It depends, is the hinge loose? If so the nuts inside the door/skin are probably in need of tightening. To do this you will need to remove the skin to access them. If the hinge pin is worn you need to contact a local source for a stainless steel pin to replace the original. Unfortunately parts for that hinge are no longer available. If the door is just out of alignment you can, as we do, bend it back into place. Be sure to bend beyond the desired position as it will partially spring back.

#### **Subj: Interior Wood Refinishing**

**Question:** I am having trouble refinishing the interior wood. What is used to put on the wood cabinets in older models that looks like a paste on the wood, and gives it a real grainy finish? Is it still made so I can fix the wood where it has rubbed off, or do I have to strip it down to bare wood?

**Charlie:** The original wood finishing process was referred to as pickling. It is a combination of stain and varnish that gives a uniformity of finish that covered variations in the supplied veneered wood.

#### **Subj: Split Rim Wheels**

**Question:** Is there an after market hubcap that fits these older split rims so I can spruce it up a little bit and not spend a ton on alloys?

**Charlie:** First and foremost, please get rid of those split rim wheels. They are a horrendous safety hazard, to you and anyone who tries to work on them. I would be somewhat surprised if you can find someone that will work on them. A replacement wheel can be had for as less than 50 dollars each. A popular wheel cover is the baby moon of the sixties.

**Subj: Dead Furnace?**

**Question:** The furnace in my 1972 28' Airstream International Ambassador is a Sunbeam that appears to be original equipment but may need to be replaced although I'm trying to trouble shoot it. Is the blower a 12 VDC blower or a 120 VAC thing? I also can not find the 12 VDC-fuse panel, where is it located? How much is a replacement heater ?

**Charlie:** The original furnace was made by Suburban. The fuse panel is mounted in the end of the converter located in the bottom of the roadside closet. I suggest that you take a flashlight along for inspection. A replacement 30,000 btu Suburban furnace costs around \$500 and is available through most RV accessory outlets.

**Subj: Argosy Paint**

**Question:** I have a 24' 1973 Argosy with the two tone light beige paint. I need to do some touch-up work and am wondering if there are any spray can paint or Rustolium product that are a color match.

**Charlie:** To the best of my knowledge there are no premixed spray cans with Argosy colors for touch up. You can, however take the paint codes to a local automotive paint shop and have them mix and put it into a can for you. The codes are Dupont Centari 44534-A (Light Beige) for the top and Centari 44721-AM (Metallic Brown) for the lower.

**Subj: Norway Landyacht Coupler**

**Question:** Hello again from Norway. My 20' 1967 Landyacht is equipped with a Hammerblow SPE #2B 2-inch coupler but I have been informed that no Airstream was delivered with this coupler from the factory, and that the correct coupler for my Airstream is a Marvel 2-5/16 inch coupler. Is this correct? It looks like my Airstream came from the factory with the Hammerblow because the installation is very clean.

I have been told to change to the Marvel coupler, do you recommend doing this, taking in to account the amount of work involved?

**Charlie:** Actually in 1967 it was a 2" Marvel coupler. Airstream didn't change to 2-5/16" until 1970. As long as your Hammerblow works I would not change it.

**CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS**

Anyone may advertise in the **Vintage Advantage** since membership in the VAC is not a requirement. Beginning with this issue, all personal classified advertisements are \$5.00 per advertisement.

To place an advertisement in the **VA**, please send all information to Mr. Patrick Ewing, Treasurer, who will

then forward them onto the Editor in the format shown.

The Vintage Airstream Club will accept commercial advertisements that are of direct interest to the VAC membership. To help ensure that the **VA** does NOT become a commercially driven publication but remains a newsletter for its membership, the following policy will be maintained.

1. Only advertisements deemed of direct interests to the VAC membership shall be accepted.
2. All commercial advertisements in the **VA** cost \$25/issue.
3. Commercial advertisements will be placed only in the classified advertisement section of the **VA**.
4. A principal commercial advertiser must be a VAC Member (Member, Associate or Friend subscriber) to place a commercial advertisement in the **Vintage Advantage**. Advertisers get a 20% discount if they are a WBCCI Member.

Announcements for non-VAC sponsored Rallies and activities of direct interest to the VAC will also be provided in the classified advertisement section. These advertisements are free to the organization and are encouraged in order to promote other vintage activities within the club.

**COMMERCIAL**

**Memorabilia:** Three-dimensional pewter vintage camper key chain with chrome plating finish, perfect for the trailerite or collector. Camper is a miniature replica of a 21' 1953 Airstream Flying Cloud travel trailer. Just introduced to market and now available for \$12.99 plus \$2 S+H (US), payable by check or money order. See us on the world wide web at <http://members.aol.com/trhenter/>. Allow six weeks for delivery. TRH Enterprises, 5860 Scaggs Road, Owings, MD 20736.

**Rt-66 Vintage RV Tour:** Chicago to LA, the most famous highway in the world. Join our group of fellow vintage RV enthusiasts for a fun-filled trip. Units must be 30+ years old. ADVENTURETOURS: 800/455-8687; [www.adventuretrek.com](http://www.adventuretrek.com).

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RALLY:** The Tin Can Tourist's Classic Trailer and Motor Coach Gathering will be held May 20 to 23, 1999, at beautiful Camp Dearborn in Milford, Michigan. Activities include food, fun, fellowship, open house, Concours d'Elegance, and planned tours of Detroit Diesel, Greenfield Village (entrance fee), UM athletic facilities and/or botanical gardens. Facilities include dump station, heated restrooms, showers, 27 hole golf course, adventure golf, fishing lakes and paddle boats. For additional information, contact Forrest Bone at 888/757-7701x49945 or



F23Bone@aol.com. For more info. see [www.tincantourists.com](http://www.tincantourists.com).  
**RALLY:** The Vintage Vacations Spring Antique Travel Trailer Rally will hold its charter rally from Wednesday, March 31 to Sunday, April 4 (Easter Sunday) at the Black Star RV Ranch in the hills above Irvine, CA (Orange County). A tentative schedule and list of costs is available at the Vintage Vacations Website ([www.vintage-vacations.com](http://www.vintage-vacations.com)) or call me, Craig Dorsey, Vintage Vacations Wagon Master @ 714/288-9233.

## AIRSTREAM PARTS

**For Sale:** Salvaging a 1971 18' Safari. Front collision damage and minor dents all around. Interior in very good condition. Front dinette, RS gaucho, CS galley. Call with your need or will sell complete for \$950. Richard Keegan (#9542), 39 Conifer Rd., Rindge, NH 03461; 603/899-5285.

**For Sale:** Following has been removed from a 1974 27' Land Yacht Overlander and are for sale: complete assembly for front couch/pull out bed with new upholstery and frame with 3 tambour doors; credenza with table assembly; bed/couch cushions for rear bed; 80" long rock guard. Patricia Hall, 1017 Highland St., Branson, MO 65616; 417/335-8126.

**Wanted:** Armstrong a/c cover for a '78 31' Sovereign. John Hamilton, 2522 Hagberg St, Duluth, MN 55811; 218/726-1560.

## TRAVEL TRAILERS WANTED

**Bambi or Bubble,** Desire a small Airstream to pull with my '49 Chrysler. James Westrich (#7093), 1405 Hite-Speece Rd., Morganfield, KY 42437; 502/822-4704.

**Help!** Neighbor's tree fell on our Bambi, we need a replacement in good condition. Reasonable please. David Frazer, 1070 E. Providencia, Burbank, CA 91501; 818/843-7204.

## TRAVEL TRAILERS FOR SALE

**1956 22' Airstream Land Yacht,** \$5,500. Front living room, rear bed and bath with shower and original toilet, new 10 gal. water heater, original LP Dometic fridge, single axle w/ spare. Matt & Barb Lucas, PO Box 96, McAlpin, FL 32062; 904/362-7730.

**1956 22' Airstream Safari,** Extensive restoration makes this better than new, photos and restoration journal available. John Simone, 1623 W. Knapp Dr., Vista, CA 92083; 760/941-3349 or 760/726-8581; FAX is 760/726-6061.

**1956 23' Airstream,** \$6,500 or best offer. Completely restored interior, new LP/elec fridge, A/C, upholstery, tires, brakes, hubs, plumbing. Sharp and road ready! Needs exterior polishing. Dave Keller (#8297), 1350 Mission Valley Blvd, Nokomis, FL 34275; 941/485-4746.

**1962 17' Airstream Safari,** \$6,500. Completely refurbished incl. new elec, new plumbing, new heating system, new LP tanks, new gas lines, new septic system, new elec fridge, new running lts, new braking system, central vent wired for A/C. George and Christine Cunliffe, 414 Newton St., South Hadley, MA 01075; 413/532-2798.

**1963 20' Airstream Safari Land Yacht,** Excellent condition inside and out, tires good, fully self-contained including microwave, full bath, stove, oven, fridge, double sink, portable A/C, cat. heater, copper pipes, new hot water heater. Michael Taft, San Diego, CA; [gmtaft@aol.com](mailto:gmtaft@aol.com).

**1969 28' Airstream Ambassador,** \$3,000 or best offer. Center double bed, rear bath, good condition. Needs commode and furnace. Clarence Edmondson; 860/742-6124.

**1963 31' Airstream,** Tandem axles, under cover last 10 yrs, located in Franklin, NC. Don Martin, 2211 E. Main St., Leesburg, FL 34748; 800/397-7989.

**1968 21' Airstream Globe Trotter,** Extensive restoration makes this better than new, photos and restoration journal available. John Simone, 1623 W. Knapp Dr., Vista, CA 92083; 760/941-3349 or 760/726-8581; FAX is 760/726-6061.

**1969 25' Airstream Land Yacht,** \$4,500 firm. Interior bright and cheerful, exterior needs polishing. Jim & Britta Tipton (#4074), 1045 Chevy Chase, Gladewater, TX 75647; 903/845-2886.

**1969 18' Airstream Landyacht.** \$6,500. Single axle, excellent inside and out, awning, new tires, recent exterior refinish. Wayne Evert, 4282 Hart Rd., Richfield, OH 44286; 330/659-9686; [revert@aol.com](mailto:revert@aol.com).

**1970 31' Airstream International,** \$5,500. Exceptional condition and ready to go. New furnace, and new upholstery on convertible bed. Has A/C, oven, range. Fully self-contained. Can deliver in US if desired (you pay expenses). Have original owners manual. William Frymire, PO Box 2585, Minneapolis, MN 55402-0585.

**1972 27' Airstream Overlander,** \$4,500. Rear bath, twin beds, new furnace (used approx. 5 hrs since installation), roof A/C w/ elec heat, fridge works great, good tires. Interior in good shape, exterior needs polishing. Also have awning setup and bathroom counter top. Dan Roxbury (#2645), 9636 Ruth Dr., Noblesville, IN 46460; 317/773-8863.

**1973 Airstream Land Yacht Overlander,** \$7,500. Rear bath, center gaucho bed, large wardrobe, 6 drawer dresser, new upholstery & carpet & drapes, large pantry, Zip Dee awning, new tires (tandem axle), large LP oven, no pets, no smokers, clean. Mary Ann Atwell (#28915), 705 Tranquillo Drive, Victoria, TX 77905; 512/575-5375.

**Membership Application**  
**Vintage Airstream Club**  
**A WBCCI IntraClub**

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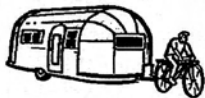
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Send this application, along with your dues payment of \$10.00 to Dr. Richard Mumma, Membership Chairman, 670 Plantation Drive, Titusville, FL 32780; (E-mail: [rdmumma@aol.com](mailto:rdmumma@aol.com)).

Note: If you are not a WBCCI member, we will be happy to assist you with the application.  
Caution: Joining this Club could change your life!

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