

THE BIG BENDER

BIG BEND FLORIDA UNIT 153 REGION 3



Volume 41

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A few words from Jim.....

Hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas with family and friends. The New Year is upon us and our spring camping season is about to begin. But first, we had our unofficial no host rally last weekend at St Joseph Peninsula State Park. This was my first visit to SJPSP even though it was a short one; more about that later. It did not start off too well when Jim Weilhammer and Katherine Kamiya had to cancel their trip. Unfortunately, Katherine had emergency surgery for appendicitis a few days before the rally. Fortunately, she is recovering well and is back at work. Saturday morning I get a call that Pat has gone to the emergency room so I returned home. MRI revealed 2 fractured thoracic vertebra and her neurosurgeon put her in a back brace.

In attendance at St Joseph were Bill and Linda Coleman, Bear and Connie Schenk, Jeff and Cheryl Hurt, Craig and Monica Brinkley, and Tom and Karon Beyer. Saturday morning's pancake and sausage breakfast was enhanced by the Schenk's bringing orange beverages and the Hurt's bringing fruit.



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We did have a guest at our breakfast. Phillip Eddie from New Orleans stopped by. He and his wife went from a pop-up camper to a 2007 Airstream and they were on their first Airstream camping trip. He is a harbor pilot and works 6 months out of the year. How lucky!!! He is now considering joining WBCCI.

Many will remember Bob and Chris Duggan, former members of Big Bend. They were camping at SJPSP during our rally. They now have a huge 5th wheeler.

I am delighted to announce Big Bend has two new members. Joy and Jared Evans live in Marianna, Fl and have a 1977 27' Overlander. Buck and Kelly Jackson live in Tallahassee and have a 1987 29' Sovereign. A warm welcome to the new members and we hope to see them at an upcoming rally.

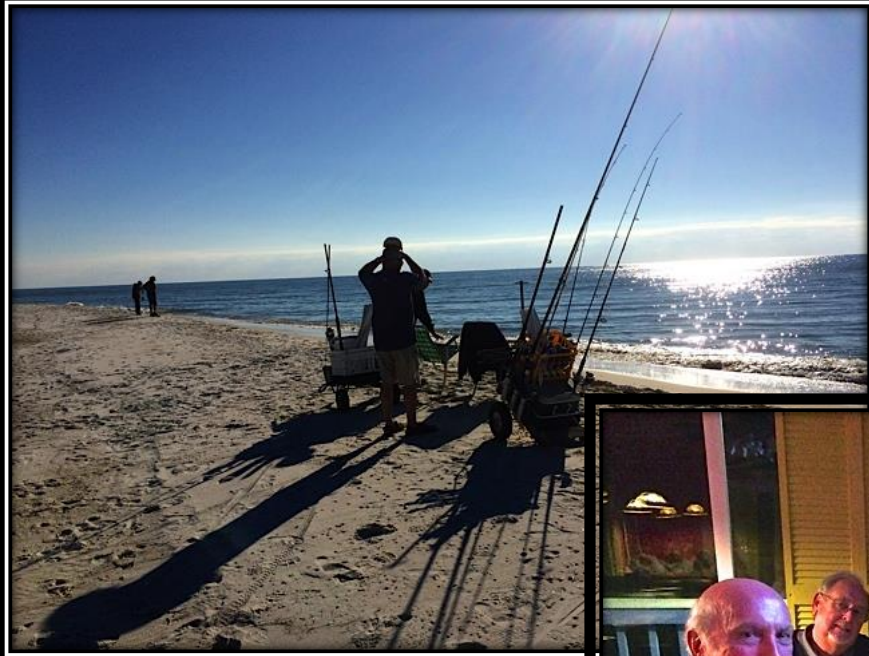
The February 13-15 rally promises to be an exciting one with so many signed up for Rainbow Springs State Park. Our rally hosts are the Brinkley's and Beyer's. I believe all campsites are filled but keep checking if you have not signed up since cancellations frequently happen. If you do snag a campsite don't forget to alert the hosts you are coming.

Stay healthy and be happy.

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January Un-rally Rally at
Port St. Joe State Park in
Cape San Blas



*Thanks to Bill Coleman for the beautiful
photos.*

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February Rally!

February 13 - 15

Rainbow Springs State Park

Dunnellon, FL

Hosted by Monica & Craig Brinkley

Karon & Tom Beyer

Friday Night 4:30 p.m. Bring an appetizer to share and your favorite beverage. We will all socialize and catch up with each other.

Friday Night 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served: Chicken and Rice Casseroles, Green Beans, Rolls, and Cheesecake for dessert.

Saturday Morning 9:00 a.m. Breakfast: Egg Casserole of your choosing, Fruit, Muffins, and Coffee.

Saturday Night 4:30 p.m. Bring any leftover appetizers from Friday night (or a new one, if you choose), and your favorite beverage.

Saturday Night (It's Valentine's Day) 5:30 p.m. Bring a meat of your choice to grill to your own liking.....steak, pork chop, or hamburger. We will serve baked potatoes with all the fixins', garden salad, rolls, and red velvet cake for dessert. Plan to stay after dinner for a Valentine's surprise.

Sunday Morning 9:00 a.m. Muffins, fruit, yogurt, and coffee.



If attending the rally, be sure to e-mail Bonnie Lewis AND our hosts with the number attending...this includes any cancellations. This helps tremendously with planning the food and keeping costs in line.

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A few reminders for the weekend!

There is a pavilion with 2 picnic tables behind the registration office but it cannot be reserved. We will try to stake it out early but we may have to congregate at a camping site. Look for a Florida State canopy and you will be able to find us.

We will have 3 grills at the Saturday night cookout but will need 2 more. If you don't mind letting us use yours, please let us know.

If you want to bring firewood, there are fire pit rings at every site.

Activities at the campground:

Shuffle Board, Horse Shoes, Hiking Trail, Fishing, Kayak Rental, and there's a Rec Room with a Ping Pong Table.



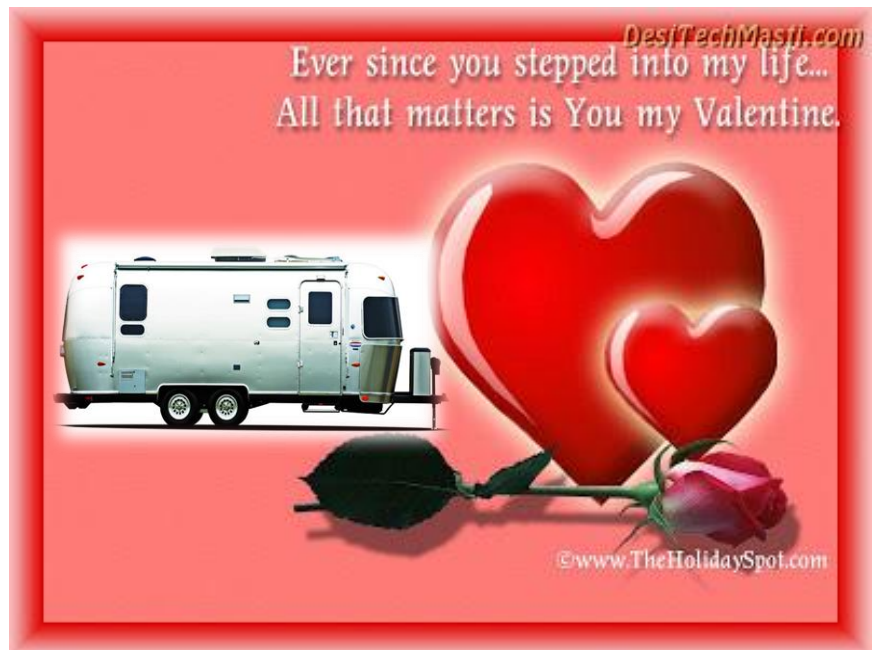
The campground is separate from the State Park and the head waters of Rainbow Springs. It's only a short drive from the campground. Unfortunately, the Tram from the campground to the State Park will not start running until April. At the State Park there are water falls, paved and unpaved hiking trails, and kayak rentals. The azaleas may be blooming for "Garden Days" while we are there. Crystal River is about a 30 minute drive away where boat rides are available to see the Manatees.

*GPS Coordinates and Address:
18185 S.W. 94th Street , Dunnellon,
Florida 34432*

*Latitude: N 29.05.202 Longitude:
W 82.25.027*

We checked and there are NO vacancies available so we'll have a full park!!

We look forward to camping together with you. Let us know if you have questions,



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Off the Road.....

Contributed by Kathryn Lord

Here's a great "find" we made on St Joe's peninsula: In a teeny tiny strip mall in a very lightly developed area, about three miles before the St Joe's Park entrance, was a charming donut shop with a proprietor who looked and sounded just like Col. Sanders. The shop itself was a perfect 8 foot cube, set under the

eaves of the building, between a convenience store and a coffee/soda shop. It was actually free standing, with water and a drain (lower right hand side), and an air conditioner. Inside was tidy as a pin, with a Kitchen Aide mixer on one side, a fryer on the other, and racks of donuts on the back. We were so taken by the whole scene that we spent several hours fantasizing about duplicating it in Maine where we go for the summer, until we ran some estimates on how many donuts you would have to sell at \$1 to just break even. Plus, I can't remember even making donuts as an adult. I try to limit myself to a half dozen once a year while in Maine. Clearly the guy does it just for fun -- his sign says open from 7:30am "until he runs out or wears out." The day we were there, he ran out by 9am. He and his wife



moved down from Ohio and run the Inn across the street, so he just has to walk to work.

It makes no sense at all -- but wouldn't it be fun?

BTW, the donuts were fabulous. We bought two, and then he brought us out two more because he was closing up. They were still hot. Gawd! Since we hadn't gotten a good look at his setup, we got up early (to be sure to get there before he closed!) the next day, and had four more. That is my allotment for the year! Plain, they are not bad, but most in the racks were frosted and topped with goo -- too much. But they were selling like hotcakes, which indeed they were, hotcakes.



Have you ever stumbled across a special place, campground or restaurant while traveling? Please share with the club by writing up a paragraph about your "find" and e-mail to tango2020pc@gmail.com. And remember photos really make an impact!