

# THE BIG BENDER

BIG BEND FLORIDA UNIT 153 REGION 3



Volume 42

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Jim Weilhammer

## 2nd Vice President

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## *A Sense of Family*

**By Bill Coleman**

One thing we've always loved about the Big Bend Unit is its sense of family. Recently, Chip Adams and Bill Worthington (and their merry men Lamar and Charlie) came to my aid in dealing with our often-malfunctioning Silver Bullet. The March Rally was another example. Tom and Karon Beyer jumped into action as hosts after a last minute emergency campground change, weather threats and member cancellations creating a fabulous weekend at Seminole State Park. That's what this group is all about-caring and enjoying each other.

To that point our rally participation has been down. But thanks to our May rally hosts, the Hurst's and Worthington's, our rally has been saved. After non-availability of sites at the scheduled state park - we've changed the rally to Hardridge Creek Corps of Engineers Campground, May 20 - 21. As of this writing, we have 11 units attending. Hopefully we're on a roll. We have faced the problem that our popular Florida State Park campgrounds fill up quickly. We compete with snowbirds and families on spring break/vacations for campsites. Waiting to register results in few or zero vacancies. Most of us love the state parks - they are beautiful and reasonable. A Sense of Family is continued on page 2.

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## *A Sense of Family continued . . .*

Ours is a small club and we face the Unit folding if we don't have participation. We have to plan ahead. The September rally is another great location. Please consider joining us - make your reservations now. Also please let your current officers know what ideas you have to boost participation. We simply can't let this terrific Unit fade away.

## *Member News*



The Georgia Plantations Caravan welcomed members of the Big Bend Unit to their first dinner in Tallahassee on the grounds of Bradley's County Store. The Unit was well represented by Bill & Linda Coleman, Tom & Karon Beyer, Don & Sandy Wood, Carol & Wally Welch, Pat & Jim Hentz, Jim & Shelia Skipper, Jay & Elna Thompson, Jim Weilhammer and Katherine Kamiya. Carol and Winston Montague are the caravan leaders and unit members Martina Pelley, RoseMarie & Gary Anderson and Rob & Helene Werner are caravan participants. The weather was thankfully dry after days of rain. A menu of smoked pork chops, Bradley's sausage, baked beans, broccoli salad and assorted pies were enjoyed by all.



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## *Long Range Planning Committee and New Airstream Owners Survey Results*

**By Jay Thompson**

Our national club, WBCCI, formed a Long Range Planning Committee last year to develop a plan for how to move the club forward in the next ten years. I am a member of that committee. There are two members from the general membership (Joanne Miller from Texas and Jay Thompson); two from Region vice-presidents officers (Jim Johnson, Region 6 and Don Hetzler Region 4) and the chairman (Jim Cocke) is one of the International Vice-Presidents. Lori Plummer, the club Administrative Manager is an ex-officio member.

Part of the information we have received is from surveys the Airstream Company requests owners of new Airstream trailers. The survey covers the period May 2014 through April 2015.

- ❖ 25% of the trailers purchased were the 25' Flying Cloud
- ❖ 20% of the trailers were purchased in California
- ❖ 60% of folks found their trailer via an online search
- ❖ 60% of folks took 1-5 months to shop for their trailer
- ❖ 45% financed through the dealer
- ❖ 42% paid cash
- ❖ 70% did not consider another brand to purchase
- ❖ 74% were first-time Airstreamers
- ❖ 57% were first-time RVers
- ❖ 14% were age 40-50
- ❖ 25% were age 50-59
- ❖ 43% were age 60-69
- ❖ 55% were employed
- ❖ Likelihood to participate in Airstream Community Events: 35%-yes, 17%-no, 48% unsure
- ❖ Use of Airstream: 40%-Long trips, 30% weekend and short trips, 16% specific places
- ❖ What they like to do: Hiking, Biking, Golf, Walking, and Camping

*"Airstream is building and selling 3000 trailers per year and we currently get about 250-300 new owners as members. We need to increase our appeal to these new owners."*

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## *Rally Report: Seminole State Park*

**By Martina Pelley**

The Big Bend Unit rally goers started out for Ft. Pickens State Park located on the beautiful Gulf of Mexico and ended up in the piney forest of Seminole State Park near Bainbridge, GA. How that happened was...weather! Seems the good folks at Ft. Pickens determined that a weather system about to descend upon the area would create waves of enough magnitude to flood the roads going into the campground and swamp the campground sufficiently to cause discomfort and downright danger to the campers. Accordingly, the campground was closed at noon on Thursday forcing Jay and Elna Thompson who were already there to evacuate, and causing the rest of us to scratch our heads and wonder what to do.



Karon Beyer, Frankie and Bill Worthington

Well, our resourceful President Coleman arranged another rally site forthwith, and come Friday evening Jay and Elna Thompson, Bill and Linda Coleman, Tom and Karon Beyer, Charlie and Annette Hurst, Bill and Frankie Worthington, Don and Sandy Wood and Martina Pelley were all contentedly kicking back, telling tales, reminiscing about other rallies, and people we wish were with us.

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## *Rally Report: Seminole State Park continued . . .*

Of course everyone was enjoying delicious appetizers and potluck dinner during our ruminations. A special thanks to Sandy Wood for suggesting Seminole State Park as an alternative campground.

Saturday morning the campers enjoyed superb breakfast casseroles prepared by our hosts, Karon and Tom Beyer. The main dishes were accompanied by fruit, banana bread, and coffee. As a group we decided to forego happy hour appetizers Saturday afternoon and go straight for the low country boil. The food was abundant and good! Thank you, Tom and Karon. Joining the campers Saturday for happy hour and dinner were Lamar and Amy Waymire, Katherine Kamiya, and Jim and Pat Hentz.

Delicious Low Country Boil



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Bill Coleman, Karon & Tom Beyer, Jay & Elna Thompson, Linda Coleman, Sandy & Don Wood, Frankie & Bill Worthington, Martina Pelley, Jim Hentz, Annette & Charlie Hurst, Amy & Lamar Waymire, Pat Hentz, Katherine Kamiya

Katherine shared with the group tentative plans for the 2017 Rally Schedule asking for our comments/suggestions. She also discussed a proposed plan for a caravan with the Georgia Unit to the International Rally in Lewisburg, WV.

Sunday morning our Big Bend campers enjoyed breakfast breads, fruit, left over casseroles and more good conversation before setting out for home.

We were sad to miss co-hosts, Monica and Craig Brinkley, who were not able to attend the rally due to the death of Monica's father. Our prayers, hearts, and sincerest sympathy go to them for their loss.

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## *Rally Recipe:*

## *Ham, Egg and Hash Brown Breakfast Casserole*

**By Karon Beyer**

### *Ingredients:*

24 oz. frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed  
16 oz. cubed ham  
8 oz. shredded cheddar cheese  
12 eggs  
1 cup milk  
Salt and pepper to taste

### *Optional Ingredients:*

1 green or red pepper, diced  
1 onion, chopped  
8 oz. sliced mushrooms  
Sliced jalapeños to taste

### *Directions:*

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix thawed hash brown potatoes, ham, cheese and any optional ingredients. Spread evenly in a greased 13x 9" pan.
3. Whisk together eggs, milk, salt/pepper, and any other additional seasonings. Pour over potato mixture.
4. Bake for one hour.

NOTE: The casserole can be prepared in advance and stored overnight in the refrigerator before baking. If refrigerated, take the casserole out of the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before baking. Recipe can also be halved and baked in a smaller pan for fewer servings.

*Serves 8-10 people.*

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*Destination Point:*

*Highway 191 North of Vernal, Utah to I-80*

**By Annette and Charlie Hurst**

One of the most memorable highways traveled on our first trip out west with the Worthington's in 2006 was the short distance from Vernal, Utah to I-80 enroute to Wyoming to meet up with our fellow Big Bend members, Don & Sandy Wood. The route left such a lasting impression, that we put it on our ***DO NOT TRAVEL LIST*** for our trip out west the second time. It is an experience that should not be repeated.

Survivors: Charlie & Annette Hurst





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*Destination Point: Highway 191 North of Vernal, Utah to I-80 continued . . .*

Although the distance was only about 10-15 miles, it was the longest highway ever traveled. We started at 5,500 feet elevation and climbed to 10,000 feet (about three miles up), traversing 7% - 8% grades with 10 switchbacks. On some of the switchbacks with hairpin turns, one could read the Airstream vehicle tag from the passenger seat.

In 2006, there were no guardrails, just a cliff high above the tree tops from the passenger's view. The two-lane road, however, unlike the Top of the World Highway to Chicken, Alaska was paved. That is about the most positive thing we can say about this road unfortunately. Once you embark on this route, there is no turning back; you are committed. We do not recall any turn-arounds or pull offs. Even with a bathroom in the Airstream, there is no stopping to use it. There is no lunch break. This 15 mile adventure seemed to last most of the day, although we are sure it did not. It did take about ten-years off each of our lives.

*The cattle enjoyed the journey as much as these writers. They cleaned out their GI track enroute with most of it hitting our truck and Airstream. We were no longer a silver bullet; we were more like one big cow paddie. And the smell; it was indeed breath-taking!*

At the beginning of the drive, the view was breathtaking as is much of Utah with its unique rock formations and natural wonders. For our trip, it became even more breath-taking as we approached a slow-moving cattle truck full of large cattle heading to market, traveling about 25- 30 miles per hour. The cattle enjoyed the journey as much as did these writers. They seem to have IBS (irritable bowel syndrome). They cleaned out their GI track enroute with most of it hitting our truck and Airstream. We were no longer a silver bullet; we were more like one big cow paddie. And the smell; it was indeed breath-taking!

We are not sure if GPS offers warnings before embarking on this route or if the driver decided to keep this to himself, but please beware before you take this short scenic route. The memory will stay with you forever. Annette's fingernail imprints are deeply embedded in the passenger door forever. It is not a trip for those easily excited or those with a heart condition but it was a trip to remember!

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## 2016 Rally Schedule

Bill Coleman, President

Last Updated: 03/28/2016

*Please email Bill Coleman at [ourplantation@gmail.com](mailto:ourplantation@gmail.com) and the rally hosts to confirm your participation and site number.*

DATE/HOST	PLACE	ATTENDEES	SITES
April 8-10	Chehaw Park Campground 105 Chehaw Park Road Albany, GA 31701 (229) 430-5277	<b>RALLY CANCELLED</b>	
April 6-11	Florida State Rally Sunshine Key Resort 38801 Overseas Highway Big Pine Key 33043 (888) 408-5018 <a href="http://floridaunit027.wbccinet/florida-state-rally/">http://floridaunit027.wbccinet/florida-state-rally/</a>	Chip & Mary Adams Tom & Karon Beyer Bill & Linda Coleman Jim Weilhammer & Katherine Kamiya Don & Sandy Wood Ron & Karen Rush Charlie & Annette Hurst Bill & Frankie Worthington Anniedia & Bill Daws David & Ann Tripp Gordon Johnson	
April 27-May 1	Region 3 Rally Meadow Event Park Doswell, VA <a href="http://region3.wbccinet/region-3-rally-registration/">http://region3.wbccinet/region-3-rally-registration/</a>	Elna & Jay Thompson Bill & Linda Coleman Carol & Winston Montague	

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DATE/HOST	PLACE	ATTENDEES	SITES
May 13-15	T. H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park 8899 Cape San Blas Road Port St. Joe, FL 32456 (850) 227-1327 <a href="http://www.reserveamerica.com">www.reserveamerica.com</a>	<b>RALLY RE-SCHEDULED SEE BELOW</b>	
May 20-21  Hosts: Annette & Charlie Hurst and Bill & Frankie Worthington	Hardridge Creek Corps of Engineers Campground 592 U.S. Government Road (County Road 97) Abbeville, AL 36310 (334) 585-5945 <a href="http://www.recreation.gov">www.recreation.gov</a>	Rosemarie & Gary Anderson Jim Weilhammer & Katherine Kamiya Bill & Linda Coleman Annette & Charlie Hurst Bill & Frankie Worthington Jim & Shelia Skipper Tom & Karon Beyer Craig Brinkley Jim & Bonnie Lewis Amy & Lamar Waymire Gayle & John Duncan	#34 #28  #26 #32 #33 #31 #35 #25 #23 #27
June 28-July 5	WBCCI International Rally Lewisburg, VA <a href="http://wbcci.org/">http://wbcci.org/</a>	Elna & Jay Thompson Jim & Shelia Skipper Carol & Winston Montague Rosemarie & Gary Anderson Bill & Linda Coleman Jim Weilhammer & Katherine Kamiya Jack & Sherry White Martina Pelley	

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DATE/HOST	PLACE	ATTENDEES	SITES
September 9-11  Hosts Needed	Buddy Rally Eagles Roost RV Resort 5465 Mill Stone Road Lake Park, GA 31636 (229) 559-5192 <a href="http://www.eaglesroostresort.com">www.eaglesroostresort.com</a>  Suggested activities: adjacent flea market, Lake Park Outlet Mall, Wild Adventures Amusement Park, Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village (45 miles), Farmhouse Restaurant.	Bill & Linda Coleman Bill & Anniedia Daws	
October 7-10  Hosts: John & Gayle Duncan and Lamar & Amy Waymire	Emerald Lake RV Resort 698 Enterprise Road Colquitt, GA 39837 (229) 758-9929 <a href="http://www.emeraldakerv.com">www.emeraldakerv.com</a>  Suggested activities: Swamp Gravy, official folk life play of Georgia, (800) 514-3849, walking tour of Colquitt murals, Tarrer Inn, 15 S. Cuthbert Street, Colquitt, (229) 758-2888.	Bill & Linda Coleman John & Gayle Duncan Lamar & Amy Waymire	
November 4-6  Hosts: Rosemarie & Gary Anderson and Bill & Linda Coleman	Installation Rally Live Oak Landing 229 Pitts Avenue Freeport, FL 32439 (877) 436-5063	Bill & Linda Coleman Rosemarie & Gary Anderson Jim Weilhammer & Katherine Kamiya	

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## *Looking for Stories*

Do you have a great Airstream story or adventure you would like to share? Maybe you have a technical tip or wonderful place you would recommend for a future visit. Write it up and send it with photos to [katherinekamiya@hotmail.com](mailto:katherinekamiya@hotmail.com). Your feedback and ideas are always welcome!



*"See more, do more, live more."*

Wally Byam

