

THE BIG BENDER

**BIG BEND FLORIDA
UNIT 153 REGION 3**

**AIRSTREAM CLUB
INTERNATIONAL**



**VOLUME 42
NUMBER 9
SEPTEMBER 2016**

bigbendfl.wbcci.net

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



WELCOME TO FALL. . . WELL ALMOST!

By Bill Coleman

As we approach our fall rallies, we wish those still traveling in the Canadian Maritimes, the southwest U.S. and elsewhere safe travels home. Please remember to send your photos to Craig Brinkley - our new Unit Facebook guru.

We recently arrived home after venturing around the northeast following Lewisburg. We were able to visit several State Houses (Capitols), kinda our thing in: SC, NJ, NY, CT, NH, and RI with fun stops along the way. In addition to retuning to Niagara Falls, we stopped in Buffalo for a mandatory visit to the Anchor Bar, the original Buffalo Chicken Wings Restaurant. Other highlights were a METS game in NY and a Billy Joel concert at the Nationals ballpark in DC. Unfortunately, our Airstream was in a small battle with a semi in DC - so it is currently licking its wounds and being repaired.

Since we weren't able to snag hosts for our September rally, we are having a "flexible" host rally. This will be an Optional Donation Fee rally. Linda and I have reserved a small conference room at Eagles Roost RV - yes with **AC!** See the Rally Schedule later in the newsletter. Welcome to Fall . . . Well Almost is continued on page two.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued . . .



Thanks to John Duncan for organizing a Georgia Olive Farm tour in Lakeland, GA for Saturday morning. If you haven't already done so, please contact John at jduncan@panhandle.rr.com by September 5th if you are coming on the tour.

There is a Flea Market next to the campground and an Outlet Mall however, when we visited last weekend there did not seem to be many active stores. If any of you would like to donate goodies for our Sunday Continental Breakfast, please email or call Linda or me.

Thanks to Chip and Mary Adams for the great membership recruitment. We now have four new couples in our Unit. Truly great work! As we meet our new members this fall, please give them a big welcome in true Big Bender style.

As you are aware, my term as your President will end in November. A new and terrific slate of officers will soon be presented for your approval headed by Jim Weilhammer. For the fun and camaraderie to continue, we need a great team. Next year's slate still is in need of a Second Vice President. Accepting this position will help secure a great 2017 for our Big Bend Unit.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome another new member in the Big Bend Florida Unit and look forward to meeting them soon at an upcoming rally or event.

David Sisson and Sandra Shelley (#3813)
Panama City Beach, FL
2016 30' Flying Cloud



SEPTEMBER RALLY SCHEDULE: EAGLE'S ROOST RV RESORT, LAKE PARK, GA

By Linda and Bill Coleman

We think Eagle's Roost RV Resort will be a great destination. The sites look roomy and the staff seems eager to please. Below is the schedule for our "group" host rally.

Friday September 9, 2016

5:30 p.m. Potluck Dinner in the conference room
As usual bring your favorite dish, set-ups and beverage of your choice.*

*Due to the Coleman's staying nearby at a motel, they have "dibs" on Winn-Dixie Fried Chicken for their offering.

Saturday September 10, 2016

8:00 a.m. Breakfast of biscuits, gravy and fruit provided by Chez Wood. Don't forget your set-ups. Coffee will be provided.

9:30 a.m. Gather to carpool for a 10:30 Georgia Olive Farm tour with olive oil tasting – kindly arranged by John Duncan. More information will be provided at the Potluck Dinner.

6:00 p.m. Gather at the Farm House Restaurant for dinner. They have a huge menu with very reasonable prices. This is a very casual place just down the road from Eagle's Roost RV Resort.

Sunday September 11, 2016

9:00 a.m. Meet in the conference room before heading home for a Continental Breakfast.

2017 RALLY REGISTRATION IS AVAILABLE

It is not too early to reserve your campsite for the 2017 rallies. Registration is now open for the January, February, March, April and May rallies. For more information on each rally site, check the website at <http://bigbendfl.wbcci.net/>. At private campgrounds ask for the Big Bend Florida Unit rate when making your reservations. State and federal campgrounds fill up early, cancellation costs are nominal, and transferring your reservation to another party is possible if your plans change. If you are interested in hosting a rally and designing the schedule of activities, or if you have any questions, please contact Jim Weilhammer by calling (850) 894-4416 or writing to j.weilhammer@gmail.com.



DESTINATION POINT: Talladega Superspeedway

By Amy and Lamar Waymire

Talladega Superspeedway, the home of NASCAR's fastest track, is located 10 miles north of Talladega, AL just off Interstate 20, between Birmingham, AL and Atlanta, GA. Talladega offers camping on the infield and outside of the track in Turns 1 & 2, there is also private camping along Speedway Boulevard. Some camping areas offer electricity and water, while others offer only a 20 X 40 piece of land. The campground opens on Tuesday prior to race day and close at noon on the Monday after the race. Less than ½ mile from the track, this makes race day very enjoyable. You can hang out at your camper until just minutes before the green flag, make it to your seat and never sit in traffic - the same is true after the race. If you have ever sat in traffic after any sporting event, you understand how nice it is to take a short walk home.





Talladega Superspeedway continued . . .

We camp in the family campground outside of Turn 2 (no water or electricity, just grass). Lamar and his buddies have camped in the area since 1999, so he considers it home. We have made friends from across the Southeast and Wisconsin. One of the first things we do when we arrive after setting up is checking on our friends to see if they have made it yet.

You might ask “what do you do” besides a Sunday race. Well there are lots of vendor booths with free stuff, driver souvenir trailers (\$\$\$), there is Friday practice, Saturday qualifying, Saturday NCTS race (NASCAR for trucks), free concerts inside the track and outside. There is always “people watching” and in the fall you can find SEC football amid all of the racing. Don’t really care for racing, there is a Walmart close by for necessities and malls both east of west of the track just off of Interstate 20.

So for the true race fan, you haven’t fully experienced racing until you have camped at the track.





CARAVANS – PART 2

Compiled by Katherine Kamiya

Caravans are one of the cornerstones of the Wally Byam Airstream Club, with the first “C” in WBCCI standing for caravan (and remaining the legal name of the club) and appearing as one of two tag lines, Rallies and Caravans, featured in the new logo. The Big Bender recently surveyed the four couples from our unit who are national caravan leaders. This is the second article in the series and will focus on the caravan leader experience.

1. *What makes an ideal caravan leader?*

- Being a *“people” person* who enjoys and is comfortable leading and dealing with people
- Being PATIENT, flexible and understanding
- Being organized, calm, and doing (with reason) what is best for the majority of people
- Listening to all participants even if it is not what you want to hear
- Treating people the same
- Having a good attitude and caring about doing a good job
- *Loving a certain geographic area* and wanting to share it
- Creating an atmosphere of excitement and enthusiasm
- Knowing the area and making lots of phone calls in advance
- I don’t know if there is an “ideal” as each caravan and leader has their own style which give each caravan its own flavor

2. *Is there anyone who should not go on a caravan?*

- *Everyone is a candidate to go*
- Some people feel they can’t be gone from home long (we don’t want them to be miserable and thereby make others on the caravan miserable)
- People with limited abilities should give consideration to their capabilities when choosing a caravan
- People who do not enjoy meeting and traveling with others may not enjoy the caravan experience
- People who are grumpy (old men and women), who have a negative attitude or are intolerant of others may not be good caravaners



CARAVANS – PART 2 continued . . .

3. *How do you decide where to go and how long to stay?*

- The definition of a WBCCI Caravan is that the caravan must have **5 or more stops** and be at least **10 days** long and consist of at least **10 rigs**
- Pick a topic or area of interest and start doing research in the area and you will learn quickly how much time needs to be spent in any area
- Certain events (such as Swamp Gravy on the Georgia Plantations and More or the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta on the Southwest Adventure) determine a definite time frame
- Desired restaurants or other venues may only be open certain days and that influences the schedule
- Campgrounds often prefer we do not arrive on Saturday as many other campers arrive on Friday and stay for the weekend
- We want vendors to want us to return year after year so we want to work with them on scheduling
- We like to think that we have not seen everything in the area so that everyone wants to come back and so caravan leaders stay interested in returning to the area
- Currently there are several established and well-loved caravans that have been dropped due to a lack of caravan leaders - **most of the work is done**, it just needs some updating and fine-tuning and NEW caravan leaders

4. *What recommendations do you have to make sure your rig is ready for a caravan?*

- Three important things to check on the trailer and the tow vehicle before you leave are the: 1) **tires** - not over 5 years old; 2) **batteries** - not over 4 years old; and 3) **brakes** - recently inspected
- Checking that all systems and mechanical equipment are in good working order before you leave
- It is a good time to clean out all drawers and cabinets and get rid of clutter to make room for any special items that may be needed on the caravan
- Having a **daily check list** for your trailer/motorhome, top to bottom and back to front
- Keeping tanks full while traveling
- Good articles on getting your trailer ready for a caravan are available on www.SWAdventure.wbcci.net

5. *How is the money handled?*

- Caravan leaders receive the funds necessary to operate the caravan (kitty fee) and pay all items included in the caravan itinerary
- Usually a deposit is required and the remainder is due in one or two increments prior to the caravan, as needed to pay expenses
- Kitty fees are dispersed by the leaders to each vendor before and during the caravan



CARAVANS – PART 2 continued . . .

- Kitty fees may or may not include tips
- Kitty fees should include a *contingency fund* for unexpected expenses – it is easy to refund dollars but difficult to ask for more
- Caravan leaders *spend your money as carefully as their own* and negotiate prices to get the most for your dollar
- The books for the caravan should be balanced every day and open for review by two or three selected participants to be certain the money is being accounted for correctly
- Any money remaining after all expenses are paid is *refunded* to the caravaners

6. *What is the most challenging part of being a caravan leader?*

- *Getting everything set up* before the caravan begins – setting up schedules; making reservations; producing the driver’s manual; contacting possible vendors and following up to ensure everything is alright
- Managing the inevitable hiccups - things seem to run fairly smoothly if the initial planning is thorough
- Being flexible enough to make unscheduled and unanticipated, but necessary, changes to the caravan schedule
- Dealing with those who have difficulty with last minute changes
- Not having time to do things on your own
- *Missing out on some of our own unit’s activities*

7. *What do you enjoy most about being a caravan leader?*

- Making many great new friends, most of whom remain *long-time friends*
- Sharing our great state of Florida with other people
- Taking people to an area we enjoy, doing activities and seeing their enjoyment
- Seeing the strength of friendships that are made on caravans such as the three couples who met Wally and Carol Welch on their first caravan and who traveled as far as 500 miles away to be at Wally’s Celebration of Life
- Getting together with other caravan leaders and *sharing stories that keep everyone laughing*

8. *Any advice for someone thinking about being a caravan leader?*

- Find something you are *passionate about and share it* with others
- Go on caravans and talk with caravan leaders about their experiences
- Take the caravan leader’s course at the International Rally
- Try to go on a caravan with a leader that will allow you to help and at the same time mentor you – absorb all of the experience
- Start with a unit caravan to get your feet wet
- *Jump in, be a caravan leader – it is well worth it!*



MARKETPLACE: 1966 Safari For Sale

Just remodeled 22' Safari in a mid-60s diner theme with black/white checker board vinyl floor. All new white bead board cabinets and over 10 feet of black crystal Formica counter tops and microwave. Full-size queen bed with storage below. Vintage propane light and unique custom interior including pull-out pantry dining table, trash/recycling bins. This rig has more storage than most newer models due to creative design and space utilization.

New equipment includes a Dometic air conditioner, 2 Fantastic vents, 3 burner stove/oven, large refrigerator/freezer, 10 gallon water heater, water pump, heavy duty converter, ceramic toilet with bidet, HD TV/DVD/CD/radio, interior LED lights, pleated shades on all windows, heavy duty screens and blackout windows, PEX plumbing, 120 and 12 volt circuits, and tires. Awning and new fabric not installed.

Big Bend Florida members, Connie and Bear Schenk, can provide more pics or a video on request. They have completed their permanent move to Michigan and the trailer is on consignment at Heintz Designs Vintage Trailer Restoration in Panama City Beach, FL. For more information, contact Tim Heintz at (850) 481-8339. The price is reduced to \$20,000 or best offer.





MEMBER NEWS

RoseMarie Anderson took this award winning photo on the Canadian Rocky Mountain Caravan. Her work was recognized with several awards at the WBCCI International Photo Contest, Lewisburg, WV. The gorgeous photo below won 3rd Place in the Snap Shot Division.



Glacial field outside the Kootnay Plains area

"Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so . . . get on your way."

Dr. Seuss



BIG BEND FLORIDA UNIT 153 REGION 3

2016 RALLY SCHEDULE BILL COLEMAN, PRESIDENT

Last Updated: 08/26/2016

Please email Bill Coleman at ourplantation@gmail.com and the rally hosts to confirm your participation and site number.

DATE/HOST	PLACE	ATTENDEES	SITES
September 9-11 Flexible host rally with “non-hosts” the Duncan’s, Wood’s and Coleman’s	Buddy Rally Eagle’s Roost RV Resort 5465 Mill Stone Road Lake Park, GA 31636 (229) 559-5192 www.eaglesroostresort.com Suggested activities: adjacent flea market, Lake Park Outlet Mall, Wild Adventures Amusement Park, Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village (45 miles). *Indicates attending Olive Farm Tour	Bill & Linda Coleman* Anniedia & Bill Daws Katherine Kamiya & Jim Weilhammer* Karon & Tom Beyer Jim & Shelia Skipper Charlie & Annette Hurst* Monica & Craig Brinkley John & Gayle Duncan* David & Ann Tripp* Martina Pelley* Jason Freidrich* Don & Sandy Wood Chip & Mary Adams* Jim & Bonne Lewis*	
October 7-10 Hosts: John & Gayle Duncan	Installation Rally Emerald Lake RV Resort** 698 Enterprise Road Colquitt, GA 39837 (229) 758-9929 www.emeraldlakerv.com Suggested activities: Walking tour of Colquitt murals, Tarrer Inn, 15 S. Cuthbert Street, Colquitt, (229) 758-2888. ** Please reserve your sites through the hosts and <u>not</u> the campground. *** Indicates attending Swamp Gravy	Bill & Linda Coleman*** John & Gayle Duncan*** RoseMarie & Gary Anderson Katherine Kamiya & Jim Weilhammer Pat & Jim Hentz*** Sandy & Don Wood*** Mary & Chip Adams*** Bonnie & Jim Lewis*** Carol & Winston Montague & guest*** Charlie & Annette Hurst*** Martina Pelley***	



DATE/HOST	PLACE	ATTENDEES	SITES
November 4-6 Hosts: Rosemarie & Gary Anderson and Linda & Bill Coleman	Live Oak Landing 229 Pitts Avenue Freeport, FL 32439 (877) 436-5063 Rates will be adjusted based on the total number of units participating. Five to nine units will be given a 15% discount; 10 to 25 will be given a 20% discount.	Bill & Linda Coleman Rosemarie & Gary Anderson Jim Weilhammer & Katherine Kamiya Chip & Mary Adams Tom & Karon Beyer Craig & Monica Brinkley Jason & Annette Friedrich Lamar & Amy Waymire Martina Pelley	

SAVE THE DATE
FOR THE HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 10, 2016
Noon Luncheon at
Marie Livingston's Steakhouse
Tallahassee, FL