



## President's Message

Elna and I are back home again after three months, travelling 7820 miles to the Galax Fiddler's Rally, Cincinnati to visit friends, to Denver for Alumafandango, to Durango, Colorado to co-lead the SW Adventure caravan, to Panama City, Florida for the Big Bend Florida Unit installation, and then back to Tallahassee (home).

This issue of "Happenings" will have information about the Region 3 Rally "Rally 'round the Rock", some membership items, how to enjoy unit caravans and some general information about activities in our region.

Again, if you have friends with out email, make a copy of this and give it to them.

## **Region 3 "Rally Round the Rock"**

**April 23-28, 2013 Stone Mountain, GA**

**R**our Region officers have worked very hard to provide something for everyone. There will be more opportunities than there is time to enjoy. A priority will be the renewal of those important relationships that have kept each of us in WBCCI.

**g**The major decisions about the content of this year's Region 3 Rally at the "#1 Attraction in Georgia" included provisions (1) for sustaining traditions some members have come to expect, (2) for members that cannot participate for extended periods because of other personal priorities and commitments, (3) for developing a bus tour of the highlights of the great city of Atlanta, (4) for access

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3 to all the attractions of the 3200 acre Stone Mountain Park, (5) for conducting continuing education through discussions and seminars, (6 )for performing the meeting for Region business, and (7) for providing a less complicated process for registration in all of the above. Most evenings will be available for members to enjoy Atlanta's finest restaurants.

The rally will provide four breakfasts prepared by various units and two dinners. One dinner will be a low country boil prepared by the Georgia Unit and the other will be a steak dinner where you grill your steak (provided by the region) and enjoy salad and baked potato. We will have outdoor movies and the laser show of Stone Mountain for entertainment. Also officer training and several seminars will be presented.

We have 150 sites reserved and they are "first come, first served" i.e. none are reserved for dignitaries.

The registration process is now open for you. Be prepared - make the necessary decisions before you contact the Park. The Park's numbers are 770-498-5710 or 800-385-9807. The campground registrar will need to receive (a) the dates you wish to attend, (b) any handicap provisions you require, and (c) whether you are choosing to purchase tickets for the bus tour of Atlanta (@ \$60 per person).

Everyone will prepay the rally fee of \$55 per person over 15 years of age. The site cost for the first three days will cost \$49 each and will include the Premium Rally Package. Any additional days will cost \$45 each. If your personal plan is to attend for only 2 days, the site cost will be \$45 per day and cannot include the Premium Package content. More details follow in the last paragraph.

This registration process will close on April 2, 2013 allowing any uncommitted sites within our 150 site reservation to be sold to the public. The reservations for our handicapped area will close on March 19, 2013 to allow these sites to be reserved by other WBCCI members. Any registration requests arriving after April 2 will be placed in unassigned locations closest to our facilities. All sites have 3-point hookups. Any cancellation requests must be reviewed and approved by a member of the Region leadership team. The Park will not honor them without this approval.

A dozen of the sites we have reserved are "drive in" sites for motorhomes. On these sites, the utilities are located closer to the front (rather than the rear) of the site. These are located at convenient positions for these members to view Mountain Lake from their rear windows of their motorhomes.

We are the last group to be offered the Premium Rally Package. This a Duck Tour, Laser Show seating with popcorn and soda, a special Antebellum

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| Plantation tour and an extra ice cream social. The Park has decided not to  
continue this program but is honoring their commitment to offer it to our rally.

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· Special provisions have been made for members choosing to attend for only two  
nights. We recognize many members have employment and family commitments  
that do not allow them to attend the longer period of time. They will enjoy this  
· wonderful family park experience, be permitted to attend the Park's annual  
5 "Spring Fling" that includes fishing, snacks and a live magician show, and  
maintain their relationships with the larger membership group.

## **Membership**

Dick Martiny

Each person in every group defines what membership means to them. For some, the definition contains statements of the benefits they receive by being included. For most, the definition contains statements of the emotional pleasure that they share in their common bond. For all, the definition needs to include statements of what is expected of them to have the group continue to exist in a desirable form. Have you spent any time thinking about what your membership in WBCCI means to you?

This is a special time of the year for thinking about this subject. The membership directory is being assembled for publication. Every Unit of WBCCI is submitting their list of persons they know have made the financial commitment for renewal of membership. Every WBCCI member that has chosen not to belong to a Unit in a Region will decide on whether to continue their association with the International Organization. For each individual, there will be some thought given to what membership means to them. Without making this decision before the required date will exclude the individual from continuing to be identified as a member of WBCCI.

The process for WBCCI renewal continues to contain several reminders. Letters, emails, and individual conversations are encouraging everyone to retain their membership by submitting their request by a given date. Almost half of the members that have chosen not to belong to a Unit in a Region will not renew.

Too many of the members which belong to one of our Units will miss the deadline date requirement. In our nation, only half of the eligible individuals choose to participate in the election process. Those choosing to participate have given some thought to what their participation means to them and to the existence of the whole group. A significant effort is made by friends and associates to encourage them to participate but too many will not make that choice.

**Let me encourage everyone of us to personally remind our friends and associates to participate.** Without our encouragement or assistance, too many will allow this period of renewal to pass by without making their decision in a timely manner.

## Forming a Short Caravan

By Matt Hackney

Last month we provided a look at two very different caravans. The WBCCI offers a wide range of caravans to our members. You can choose to spend a week, a month or more traveling and enjoying the Fun, Fellowship and Adventure they offer. Most folks are familiar with the caravans listed in the Blue Beret. These are fantastic, economical opportunities for those have the time and desire to spend longer periods on the road. Some of us, however, aren't quite ready for trips of this length.

Short caravans can provide opportunities for travel, less publicized but with more options than you can imagine. A number of these caravans are listed at WBCCI.org during the travel season and still more are outlined in unit newsletters. All of these are available to members of the club. If none of these suit your needs, YOU can form a short caravan.

Unlike numbered or National Caravans, there is no minimum number of nights, stops, or cities for a short caravan. Similarly, there is no requirement to apply a Kitty Fee or collect money from participants. In fact, the most important requirement is that you enjoy Fun, Fellowship, and Adventure with others while traveling with fellow members in your Airstream. You need only determine where and when you want to travel and engage others in the plans. If you would like, you can form a more formal Unit Caravan. More information can be found at WBCCI.org.

How do we decide where, when, and how to travel and stay? That's easier than you might imagine. In a short caravan, you can choose to travel to places you know. In fact, the others who will travel with you may have favorite places they would like to share with the group, as well. Of course, you can always choose the path of greater adventure and go someplace none of you have ever been. That's what Wally Byam did on his caravans. (Ok, so he took it to the extreme.)

I use the Trailer Life trip planning software, the Internet, and various Fodor's books for planning my travels. You would be surprised when you do a search with terms like "Things to see in \_\_\_\_\_" or "Places to eat in \_\_\_\_\_". I also like to look for factory tours, National and State Parks, and historic sites.

When you do decide to organize a short caravan, you'll be surprised how many others in your unit will want to offer advice, share their experience or participate in your caravan. I hope you will enjoy an article in this issue, which shares the experience from a most interesting Unit Caravan. See you down the road!

### **Safety Thoughts-Testing for Propane Leaks**

Jay Thompson

While on the SW Adventure caravan, we twice had volunteers check everyone's rig for propane leaks. The first time three different rigs had leaks, one on my trailer.

The rubber hoses connecting the propane bottles had leaks at the connection to the regulator. The second check was at the mid-point of the caravan and two rigs had leaks. In addition, on three other occasions, individuals used the detector to locate propane "odors" in their rig. The detector we purchased through Amazon is a UEi Instruments CD100A "Combustible Gas Leak Detector" which cost \$131.23.

We would recommend that every Unit purchase a propane detector and use it at every rally.

### **Region 3 Change for South Georgia #33**

The South Georgia Unit #33 has struggled to remain an active Unit of WBCCI for several years. This month the Unit was officially closed. The 7 members were offered the opportunity to retain their WBCCI member numbers and join other active Units or become Members-at-Large. Three have become members of Coastal Georgia Unit #37. One member is considering joining Big Bend Florida Unit #153. The other members have this month to complete their decision process. Your Region Officers regret the losses that have occurred and will continue to work closely with any individual or Unit experiencing this type of difficulty.

### **3M Caravan**

**The Greatest Unit Caravan Ever!**

By: Betsy Stewart

### Piedmont NC unit 161

Thirteen days, five stops, ten Airstreams, and too many Museums, Monuments and Memorials to count. The 2012 Piedmont Unit Caravan -- the 3M Caravan -- was a great success. Nine rigs were in the initial group: Bob (our intrepid leader) and Marge Bennett, Jamie and Susan King, Bernie and Ann Lackmann, Richard and Pat Paschall, Chuck and Joy Porter, Don and Joyce Porter, Jerry and Billie Shelton, Scotty and Betsy Stewart, and our newest best friends from South Carolina, Topy and Parniece Dawson.

We convened at the close of the September unit rally at Tanglewood Park in Clemmons and dutifully affixed our caravan stickers (Bob's famous yellow upside-down check mark that somewhat resembles the shape of North Carolina) to the appropriate windows, and headed for Paradise Lake Family Campground in Spout Spring, VA. Located midway between Lynchburg and Appomattox, the campground was a good jumping-off point for sightseeing. Bob and Ann Blevins joined us here, and the group was complete. Highlights of this stop were the historic areas of the cities of Lynchburg and Appomattox, and the Appomattox Courthouse National Park. And, in true caravan style, we also found the local Wal-Mart and cheap fuel. The hilarity of our first happy hour had the Dawsons wondering what kind of crazy people they had joined up with . . . blame it on the tall tales of Chuck Porter and the running (sometimes contradictory and probably true) commentary from his brother, Don, whose droll sense of humor delighted us all.

After three nights in Paradise, we headed northeast to Lorton, VA and camped at Pohick Bay Regional Park. Getting into our sites proved to be a challenge to some of us, and it was a big disappointment to learn that chain saws are NOT allowed in the park. There is so much to see and do in this area and we were on our own to discover any or all of it. We successfully negotiated the Metro system, the incredibly heavy DC-area traffic, the freeway system that, from above, looks like a plate of spilled spaghetti, and the many-colored routes of the big red bus. Some of us got more sun than we planned on when riding the bus, but all of us got to see the three M's that each felt was most important. Museums: the Smithsonian -- so much to see, not enough time. Monuments: the Washington Monument dominates the skyline. Memorials: Arlington National Cemetery, Viet Nam, Korea, and WWII. Some took advantage of the campground's proximity to Mt. Vernon and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Lackmanns and Sheltons toured the White House, and they and a few others also toured the capitol building. So many places to go, so many sore feet. Everyone had stories to tell at the end of the day, and the early-evening happy hours continued.

Our next travel day had us heading west to Gettysburg, PA, and what a great way to start the day with bellies full of oatmeal and ice cream. Susan and Jamie treated us, and it looks like this special meal will become a caravan staple: hot, creamy oatmeal cooked with raisins and apples and topped with cinnamon sugar and vanilla ice cream. What a combination! It's an Airstreamer's dream come true: breakfast and dessert all in one bowl. Thanks to the Kings for their efforts.

The trip to Gettysburg was just 100 miles long and we all made it in good time and parked with no problems. What's to see and do in Gettysburg? Well, lots of things, and if it's raining, why not check out the Central Market in York and then take a tour of the Harley Davidson factory? That's what most of us did on our first day. Others, being true Airstreamers who are always thinking about what and where to eat, toured the Utz Potato Chip and the Hanover Pretzel Factories. The sun came out the next day and we headed to the Gettysburg battlefield and the new visitors center there. It was hoped that we could gather at the North Carolina monument on the battlefield for a group picture, but not all of us were there when the shutters snapped. We feasted at the Porter place one night where Joy and Joyce served soup and salad, and Parniece brought baskets of warm cheese biscuits. And for dessert: Susan's homemade ginger bread. We did eat well on this caravan, yes, we did.

After three nights in Gettysburg, we continued west to Washington, PA. The drive there will always be remembered as "Caravan Leader's Revenge." Revenge for what has not yet been determined, but there MUST have been a reason Bob picked this route. Our drivers will never forget the "7% Grade" and "8% Grade" signs that warned us of the road snaking ahead. And we navigators just closed our eyes and prayed. Once we negotiated the mountains, the trip was made even more interesting by road construction all along the way and some pretty crazy lane shifts. And then there was the road into the campground. We doubted there really was a KOA at the end of the trail, but there it was. And even though we traveled further and further into the woods, there, as is always true with KOA Campgrounds, was a highway on the other side of the trees. This was just an overnight stop, so no sightseeing, but we did eat: pizza, lots of it. Thanks to the Porters four who arranged for the delivery. We picked up two more Airstreamers here, Walter and Marie Seagraves from Louisiana. After dinner Bob held a final drivers' meeting and reviewed the procedure for the next day when we would rendezvous with three more rigs and then proceeded caravan style to Sugarcreek.

Our actual travelling mileage was 1,385, and along the way we added a fourth

M: Memories, good ones of the best unit caravan ever. Thanks, Bob. We all appreciate your hard work and careful planning, and we forgive you for the trip on US30. Let's do it again some time.