

March 4, 2014



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We have met the Enemy & .....  
Caravanning Adventures for All

Jay Thompson  
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Matt Hackney

### **President's Message**

Jay Thompson

This month, we are starting to include links to unit newsletters so you may view what is going on in Region 3. I receive many, but not all, Unit newsletters and find them very informative. The NORVA [NORVA](#) and Florida Treasure Coast [FL Treasure Coast](#) newsletters have articles on the Alumaflemingo Rally in Sarasota, Big Bend Florida [Big Bend FL](#) has information about their unit caravan "Following the Georgia Antebellum Trail" March 23-29 and a great article By Amy Waymire about acquiring "The Palace", Florida Springs [FL Springs](#) has a great article about Asheville and

how to build a wooden kayak, and the Florida [Florida Unit](#) newsletter has information about their Bluegrass Rally at Fort Christmas. Click on the links to view these good newsletters.

An update on the region rally April 29-May 4 in Asheville, indicates there are 78 rigs already registered which is more than we had last year at this time. The schedule and format will be similar to last year in that it will be informal with four breakfasts being provided by units (looking for volunteer units) and a grill your steak night (food provided by the rally), seminars in the mornings with afternoons and evenings free to enjoy tours and the Asheville area.

As the tours get resolved, they will be listed on the rally webpage and in the next newsletter. When you arrive at the rally, you may sign up for the tours.

Possible tours will be:

1. Trolley tour of Asheville,
2. Culinary tour of restaurants
3. Winery and Pub/Brewery tours (2)
4. Hike on Blue Ridge with lunch at Pisgah Inn
5. Shopping tour to Black Mountain
6. Biltmore House, Gardens, and Winery tours (3)

I attended Alumafleming and enjoyed the rally. There were 251 rigs on-site including an Airstream Sky Deck. An estimated 40% were WBCCI members and the remainder are "potential members". Ten to fifteen non-Airstream rigs attended as relatives or friends of Airstream owners. We had the use of the Potter Building for seminars, a region board meeting, and unit "get-togethers". There was a WBCCI table in the vendor building staffed by volunteers, many from our new unit, the SouthEastern Camping, and club promotional literature was distributed. All the membership materials available were distributed. The new dealer, USA RV, had several trailers on-site and sold at least three. Justin Humphries, Dave Schumann, and an Airstream technician also attended, Justin presented information about Airstream to the rally and stated that 2013 was the best year ever for revenue for them. They are making 50 trailers and 15 Interstates a week and are building an additional line to increase production of the Interstates. See the NORVA newsletter for more information about his presentation.

A region board meeting was held at the rally with representatives of twelve units and three region officers present to constitute a quorum. Significant items discussed

were that we still need someone to become the Region 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President, Roy Beavers will become the Region Webmaster, and development of a mentor program for new members, A copy of the minutes are at this link. [Region Board Meeting Minutes Feb 20](#)

Dan Maciejczyk, Director of the new Florida State Rally, has a good article about the rally. The article is included as a part of this newsletter. He tells me they are almost full for the rally!

Dick Martiny has an interesting and thoughtful article about wearing your badge and recruiting potential members. Matt Hackney has a good article about the events and caravanning to a SE Camping Unit rally and Alumaflamingo.

A member of the Tin Can Tourists wrote a very interesting piece that describes, in large measure, the shift in expectations we must address for our long-term success as an active RV club. Some of the ideas are directly applicable to the WBCCI, while some (like opening to other brands) are not. We have seen many of these issues in our own units. The discussion regarding the information table is very applicable to our club. We recommend very strongly that you take the time to read and think about this article. The TCT club was started by a member of WBCCI several years ago and now is very successful recruiting and keeping members. Their Facebook group has over 10,000 members and Twitter has over 5,000. [Tin Can Tourist article](#)

Joe Perryman, International 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, asked a group of members to help him develop an action plan for his year as president. Matt Hackney and I were a part of the group who helped him develop a Vision and Values for WBCCI and then specific items for the Action Plan, There will be a page on the Region 3 website (region3.wbcci.net) which will have these for your review and comment. This link is to the letter Joe sent to the region officers. [Joe Perryman's letter](#)

The Florida Fantasy Caravan has a Facebook Group showing pictures and comments of their travels. It is a way of following them and enjoying the caravan with them.

The “Georgia Plantations and More” caravan, March 27-April 15, has one spot available. This caravan is a great way to go on a short, close to home caravan and enjoy seeing interesting places, fun activities, and eating good Southern cooking. If you have an interest, contact Winston and Carol Montague at 850-212-3726.

Another interesting short caravan is “The Revolutionary War in the Hudson River Valley”, July 19-26 sponsored by the Metro NY Unit. This offers a perspective into the area and is only eight days long. Debbie and Mark Hammer are leading the caravan and the coupon and description are at this link. [Revolutionary War Caravan](#).

We would like to add your pictures to the newsletters. Please send them to: Jay Thompson at [thompsojay@gmail.com](mailto:thompsojay@gmail.com).



Big Bend members on the Maple Leaf Caravan 2005  
Left to right: Skipper, Montague, Davis, Thompson, Martiny, Worthington

**We have met the enemy  
And he is us**

Dick Martiny

Walt Kelly’s Pogo was wise beyond his years. After viewing the mess around him, he often said the famous phrase “We have met the enemy and he is us”. Not once, but many times, this became the byline for a number of great cartoon strips. Judy

and I have noted that we are using this phrase to explain misplaced possessions, forgotten names of travel friends, and even birth dates, as we get older. At a recent family gathering, I was told that praying out loud was not politically correct. My grandchildren had learned this in their school. Even more recently, I was told that wearing my WBCCI ID badge during an Alumaflamingo Rally would be offensive to the non-WBCCI participants. If I accepted those criticisms, I would be hiding some other truths I was taught and still believe.

We were looking for opportunities to discuss these topics with others. If we took off our ID badges, how would anyone know we are available to discuss what our organization means to us and how it might be of benefit to others? How many times has a complete stranger asked you “Do they still make those?” or “How do you enjoy mixing with others in that seniors traveling group?” or “How much time does it take to do that?” “Do they remember you when you experience health problems or lose a family member?”

Yes, I am rambling a bit. After participating in the distribution of lots of our literature from the WBCCI table at this “non-sanctioned” Alumaflamingo Airstream event, I have a different impression about who is keeping us from attracting new members from these younger Airstream buyers of today. They want real friendships and the freedom to participate without having to carry a book of rules. **We ran out of membership packets, Caravan/Rally literature, and many of our best promotion pieces.** Non-members were eager to share their thoughts about “member only” rally experiences, dress codes, and bylaws. Then they made their own decisions about whom they want to travel with. Does our existing membership advocate behaviors attractive to these non-WBCCI Airstream owners? We enjoyed the open discussions about traveling with their friends in Airstreams. They accepted our thoughts about the same subjects. Wearing our ID badges and a smile was our invitation to an open discussion of their interests.



Jay Thompson looking at truck in creek, Yellowhead Caravan 2008

### **Caravanning Adventures for All**

Matt Hackney

We just returned from a wonderful adventure in Florida. We had the chance to caravan; see caravans, rally, and work. In addition, we had some unexpected adventure. In addition, we encountered some folks who are on a very well planned adventure. It is amazing how much fun you can have on the road.

Our February plans included a Unit Rally in Florida, followed by a short caravan to Alumaflamingo. As usual, we began packing and preparing early, and that was fortunate. This time, however, the weather prompted a very drastic change in our schedule. For those who haven't heard, the Augusta, GA area received a rather severe ice storm. As the weather forecast unfolded and Jim Cantore (from the

Weather Channel) arrived in town, we decided to begin our trip two days early. We packed in 45 minutes and left town a few hours ahead of freezing rain.

We weren't alone on this adventure. Several friends had the same idea and left the Atlanta area the same evening. We found ourselves parked in Perry, GA with three other Airstreams, all headed to the same Unit Rally, two days ahead of schedule. Taking good advantage of our opportunity, we all booked sites at the rally site and traveled very informally, and unexpectedly, to Payne's Prairie State Park. We had extra time to visit a beautiful area. Our Rally hosts were kind enough to change their schedule and entertain us all. We all had a great time.

Following the rally, a large group of participants continued south to Alumafleming. Our Unit President was able to arrange for five additional rigs to meet the group before reaching at the event. So the unit had fifteen rigs on arrival at the Sarasota Fairgrounds. One advantage to arriving at an event with a caravan is you get to park and spend time with your friends. It is amazing how your circle of rally friends can grow when folks invite their friends who are also in attendance to stop by. Before you know it, you can have quite a party.

There was even larger group caravanning to Sarasota! Jim and Sheila Skipper are currently leading the Florida Fantasy Caravan (a WBCCI National Caravan, N-43-K). They included a stop at Alumafleming in their plans for the group. It was great to hear about a caravan from the participants, while it was still in progress. That group is seeing ALL of Florida. They are even taking a cruise (without their Airstreams) as part of the caravan!

All adventures come to an end. Beth and I returned to our home to find all in reasonable shape, thanks to some fantastic neighbors. We have new pile of trees in our front yard and continue to build the pile this week. We agree that our decision to spend an extra few days in Florida was a good decision. Had we waited, we would have enjoyed ice, snow, three days without power, and plenty of hard work!

We hope you will take advantage of your next opportunity for fun, friendship, and adventure. You should caravan too!



Moonlight over Jim and Pat Hentz's trailer, Zion National Park 2013

**This all New Florida State Rally In the Keys is a new kind of Airstream Rally.**

This rally is designed to have minimal scheduled activities and at a minimal price. You may do as much or as little as you want to, but one thing is certain, you will all leave here relaxed and rejuvenated and will forget about all of the cold weather up North! We will spell out for you all the wonderful ways to explore the Island life in the South Florida Keys. You will receive a Trolley pass in the Charming city of Old Key West, Florida (for 2 consecutive days) where you will be guided through the narrow streets surrounding by historical Architecture of the Southernmost city. You can get off and on the Trolley tour as often as you like and see the things you want while on your own or with your group! We will be having daily gatherings under the Big Red Top to discuss your days adventures!! (shade tent will be centrally located). A full list

of activities and Rally schedule is coming soon.

**We have a large group of Airstream Trailers and Motorhome's attending this WBCCI sponsored Rally in the Florida Keys:**There will be slightly over 120 Rigs at The Sunshine Key Resort, an Encore Park, at mile marker 39 on Big Pine Key. We have the whole Island to enjoy our Airstream Adventure, surrounded by the beautiful blue waters of the lower Florida Keys.

**Look for your March Blue Beret in the mail this week! Florida State rally is on the cover and there is an article inside!**Thanks to my brother Tom for his great story in the Blue Beret of all the things to do while in the Keys.

A Rally schedule and receipt will be sent to you in the mail and online by email, and be sure to go to our Florida Unit Web Site at:

[www.floridaunit027.wbcci.net](http://www.floridaunit027.wbcci.net)

There is more information located here, including maps to the Keys, list of things to do at the Keys, and great photos of the Sunshine Key Resort. I will be sending you more updates about the **Florida State Rally in the Keys** all this month!! See you in April!!

Daniel Maciejczyk, Florida Unit 27 Region 3 FSR Director

Frank Carson, Rally Advisor



Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta 2013