



REGION 3 NEWS

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

I hope the New Year finds you and your family healthy, happy, and ready to hit the road. Beth and I have been to two events already this year and are packing for Robstown, TX and the Mid-Winter IBT as I write. Events in Region 3 offer us a great opportunity to do new things, meet new people, and go new places. In this edition of the Region Newsletter, we feature a few. Attending events with other units or even outside the WBCCI allows us to bring new ideas and new members back with us. We try to take advantage of as many as possible and I hope you do too. As Dick Martiny shares, in his article on membership, we are working to attract the folks who are buying Airstreams today. Let's look for new ideas together.

In late February, we will be attending Alumaflamingo. Last year, this event drew over 300 rigs; nearly all Airstreams. Jay Thompson invited you to attend and many of you did. Where else can you find so many Airstream owners who aren't yet part of the WBCCI? This year, I hope you will again take advantage of this opportunity to meet other Airstream owners and share your experiences with them. I will hold an information meeting during the event and will share information from the Robstown IBT Meeting. I will also open the meeting for your comments and questions. Go to www.Alumaflamingo.com for details. Hope to see you there.

In March, the Florida Unit is hosting the second "New" Florida State Rally. This event will be held near St. Augustine, Florida. It is a more traditional WBCCI event. The Florida Unit has placed information in the Blue Beret and also has a webpage set up for your information and registration. Go to <http://floridaunit027.wbcc.net/florida-state-rally/> for more on this event.

In late April, we will hold Low Country Reflections, the 2015 Region 3 Rally. The event will be held at Exchange Park, near Charleston, SC. This is a great location for touring Charleston or sharing other Low Country Adventures. There is more information on the event in this newsletter. You will also see a coupon from the Virginia Unit for HoustonFest. For those who are unable to travel to South Carolina, this Unit Rally promises to be a special one. There are only a few open spots left for this event.

Finally, you will find an article from John Leake on the re-emergence of the Carolina Mountain Jamboree in October. This event is held in a beautiful location, at the foot of Caesars Head. Make sure you place this event on your calendars.

In each of the events discussed, you will find a little something different and new. In each you will find the opportunity for Fun, Fellowship, and Adventure. All of these gatherings will include elements of the rich traditions and heritage we share. Are there other big events this year in Region 3? Of course there are. We will provide details on several others next time. Until then, I hope we will See You Down the Road.

Matt

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AIRSTREAM CAN'T KEEP UP WITH DEMAND

This was the headline for an article in the January 4 issue of the *Green Bay Press Gazette*. Bob Wheeler still gets the question "Do they still make those campers?" He responds that not only are they still being built by hand at the same western Ohio site that has produced them for 60 years, but the company can't roll them out of there fast enough to meet the demand these days.

Airstream builds 50 travel-trailers every week at Jackson Center. The backlog is about three months. Ground has been broken on a major expansion that will eventually increase production by 50 percent. Airstream is surging with three record years in a row. Shipments are about twice what they were during the best days before the recession.

The new owners are often Baby-boomers choosing not to wait until their 60s to buy one. Young families are choosing to enjoy it now, knowing that it will not fall apart in 10 years like so many other suppliers.

It becomes obvious that many of our traditional behaviors will have to be modified to meet the needs of these new owners. We can meet the needs of all age groups, all

demographics and persons who have owned Airstreams for decades. This year's IBT meeting in January will discuss several ideas aimed at beginning this modification. Membership in WBCCI depends on your Unit activities are active to persons and families who have not yet made their membership decision. We need to include activities specifically for current members questioning whether they should continue their membership each year.

The Airstream organization needs our membership to become their sales representatives. Each member needs to be prepared to answer questions and discuss why they continue to own their Airstream. It is not unreasonable to (1) share your copy of the Blue Beret with a new owner, (2) extend an invitation to be a guest at their activities, and (3) offering the email and phone information needed for the new owner to reconnect after the first conversation. We have found that persons that have not made an Airstream purchase decision are assisted by receiving a tour of your rig. How can we help you meet these needs?

Dick & Judy Martiny • 478.472.2693 • jmartiny2@gmail.com

Airstream builds 50 travel-trailers every week at Jackson Center.

LOW COUNTRY REFLECTIONS

2015 REGION 3 RALLY

Where: Exchange Park, Ladson, South Carolina

When: April 29 – May 3, 2015; parking begins April 29 at 8:30 AM.

Cost: \$38 per adult (18+) plus \$30 per night for camping with 3-pt hook-up (50 Amp). Children under 12 are free (but we want to know they are coming). Children 12-17 are half price. The cost for 2 adults for 4 nights is \$196.00. There is no discount for boondocking.

What: Rally fee covers 4 breakfasts (Thursday-Sunday), Saturday dinner and seminars. We will offer opportunities for tours, dinners, hikes, a paddle trip, etc. If your Airstream only uses 30 amps, bring a 50 amp to 30 amp adapter. You may be sharing a sewer connection with one other trailer. The rally will give you the opportunity to sample Charleston and the Low Country. Charleston offers many sites to see, but our contract does not allow camping for additional nights. Try the KOA in Ladson or James Island County Park.

How: Registration is easy. Simply go to the Region 3 Web Page (<http://region3.wbcci.net>) and click on the link. It will take you to: <http://region3.wbcci.net/region-3-rally-registration/>. You may also register by contacting Alicia Rafter at: region3registrar@gmail.com

Hope to see you there!

CARAVANS-SHORT AND LONGER

Again this year, we have some short caravans available in the region. There are two national caravans, *Georgia Plantations and More* and the *Taste of the Blue Ridge*. There are at least two Unit caravans planned, so far *Tasting North Carolina Unit Caravan* and *Stupendous Seashore and Swamp Unit Caravan*.

Both of the national caravans are just under three weeks long and offer a great way to see parts of our area. The *Georgia Plantations and More* is led by Carol and Winston Montague and will be March 12 – 31. The *Taste of Blue Ridge* is led by Jim and Bobbie Matkovich and is June 1 – 20. Both of these are popular and reservations must be made at least a year in advance. Check the WBCCI Caravans website (<http://wbccicaravan.wbcci.net>) for information

The two unit caravans are both a week long and offer an opportunity for everyone—retired, semi-retired, or working full-time—to enjoy a caravan. The *Tasting North Carolina* is sponsored by the Piedmont Unit and will explore the wealth of tastes available in North Carolina—ranging from wine, craft beer, BBQ, and more. Contact the Piedmont Unit (<http://piedmontunit.wbcci.net/2015-rally-schedule-airstream-camping-club-north-carolina/>) for information. The dates are May 31-June 6.

Stupendous Seashore and Swamp Unit Caravan is sponsored by the Big Bend Florida Unit and travels to St Mary's, Georgia, to visit Cumberland Island and the Okefenokee Swamp; then it travels to Brunswick, Georgia to explore there. Contact Bill and Linda Colman at [ourplantation@gmail](mailto:ourplantation@gmail.com) for information. Dates are May 17 – 23.

In 2016, there will be two to three longer national caravans in the region. They are *SE Coast Spectacular*, *Florida Fantasy* and *Where Da Heck is Chokoloskee*. Check the WBCCI website for information on these caravans.

There has been discussion about the need for shorter caravans to encourage folks still working and those new to caravanning to participate. Thus, several new shorter caravans have been developed. The fact remains, though, that the longer, i.e. 40-60 day caravans, are very popular and should continue. I have had many new Airstream owners say, “keep those long ones going because as soon as we retire, we will go!” The popular long caravans—Alyeska, SW Adventure, Viking, Rocky Mountain caravans—always have full participation with stand-bys.



ALUMALINA/ CAROLINA MOUNTAIN JAMBOREE

Plans are being made to bring back the Carolinas State Rally and hold it in conjunction with Alupalina, a popular Airforums rally typically attracting 50+ rigs. It will be hosted by the South Carolina Palmetto Unit and friends of Alupalina, October 22-25, at Palmetto Cove Rally Park near Cleveland, South Carolina.

There will be four days of fun, fellowship, entertainment, seminars, open house, and, of course, great food—all in the shadows of Caesars Head and Table Rock mountains with the crisp fall air and beautiful colors.

The Palmetto Cove is a former Airstream-only park offering full hook ups, wifi, a meeting hall with kitchen, and a wonderful pavilion with huge fireplace and lounge. It's a great base camp from which to explore the many outdoor activities offered up and down SC Scenic Hwy 11.

Rally fees, registration, and other details are still in the works. The parking fee of \$25 per night will be paid to Palmetto Cove upon arrival. In the mean time, go ahead and mark your calendars and make plans to attend this special rally. We are excited about combining these two great events and anticipate a large crowd. You will not want to miss it.

We will post more details later in the newsletter, on the Airforum website, and in the Blue Beret.

For more information contact
John Leake
803.984.7225 or
John@leakesantiques.com.

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston is the oldest and second-largest city in the State of South Carolina, the county seat of Charleston County. The city lies just south of the geographical midpoint of South Carolina's coastline and is located on Charleston Harbor, an inlet of the Atlantic Ocean formed by the confluence of the Ashley and Cooper rivers, or, as is locally expressed, "where the Cooper and Ashley Rivers come together to form the Atlantic Ocean".

Founded in 1670 as Charles Towne in honor of King Charles II of England, Charleston adopted its present name in 1783. By 1690, Charles Towne was the fifth-largest city in North America, and it remained among the ten largest cities in the United States through the 1840 census. With a 2010 census population of 120,083 (and a 2013 estimate of 127,999), current trends put Charleston as the fastest-growing municipality in South Carolina. The population of the Charleston Metropolitan area was counted by the 2013 estimate at 712,220 – the third largest in the state – and the 76th-largest metropolitan statistical area in the United States.

Charleston is known for its local seafood, which plays a key role in the city's renowned cuisine, comprising staple dishes such as gumbo, she-crab soup, fried oysters, Lowcountry boil, deviled crab cakes, red rice, and shrimp and grits. Rice is the staple in many dishes, reflecting the rice culture of the Low Country. The cuisine in Charleston is also strongly influenced by British and French elements.

Places to visit include, but are not limited to: Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum which includes the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown; the Calhoun Mansion; the Charleston Museum; the Powder Magazine is a 1713 gunpowder magazine and museum. It is the oldest surviving public building in South Carolina; the Gibbes Museum of Art; The Market Hall and Sheds; South Carolina Aquarium; Fort Sumter; the Battery; and Rainbow Row



HOUSTONFEST RALLY

Thursday, April 30, 2015 - Sunday, May 3, 2015

Old Crank's Campground • 407 S. Railroad Avenue • Galax, VA 24333

This is a new event for our unit. Houstonfest is held to honor the memory of a local Galax lad who tragically lost his life in a motorcycle accident at age 18. Houston Caldwell was an excellent musician and active community member. The festival, held in Felt's Park, features three stages, with different groups playing at each, all day long and into the late evening on Friday and Saturday. Wander the grounds and enjoy all the performing artists. Major stars such as Ricky Skaggs, Dr. Ralph Stanley, Doyle Lawson, Rhonda Vincent, etc., have participated in past events. (The schedule for the 2015 festival will be posted early in the year.) We will be parked directly across the street from Felt's Park with 3-point hook-ups. The special rate of \$30.00 per night (tax inclusive) has been negotiated with Old Crank's. We'll be camped within walking distance to just about anything you could need in town. There is even an ice cream shop adjacent to the campground. There are only 15 sites in Old Crank's C.G.—attendance will be limited to the first 15 deposits received. Don't be left out; mail your coupon and deposit ASAP! Festival admission is not included. Information can be found at www.houstonfestgalax.com Remember, the 2015 talent line-up won't be released until early in 2015.

Names _____ WBCCI# _____ tel _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Arrival date _____ Departure date _____ # of nights _____

Mail coupon and \$30.00 check (first night's camping fee) payable to Gary Brink (434.296.1708). Send to: Gary Brink, PO Box 788, Keswick, VA 22947