



# WBCCI - SIERRA NEVADA UNIT - NEWSLETTER

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[Sierra Nevada Airstreams.org](http://Sierra Nevada Airstreams.org)

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**Rally and events  
schedule  
Click on a link  
below for details**

- ◆ [March 19th  
Lahontan Beach](#)
- ◆ [April 23rd  
Fort Sage, Doyle NV](#)
- ◆ [May 14th  
Lassen RV Resort  
McArthur, CA](#)
- ◆ [June 11th  
Sweetwater Summit  
Hwy 338 NV](#)
- ◆ [July 9th  
Weed Heights  
Yerrington, NV](#)

## February Luncheon Review

A great day for a ride and a great turnout for the February lunch at the Black Bear in Fernley. Participants included Jim & RoyLaine, Jerry & Dyann, Steve & Jan, Gene & Carmen, Randy & Vicki, Roger & Janet. Gary & Anita, Wheels & Doris, Diane, Baxter & Marlene, and Bob & Cecilia. It was very nice to see some of the people we haven't seen in a while. It seems quite a few people have been dealing with health issues; knee problems, foot problems, hip problems, surgeries, etc. We hope this is an indicator that everyone will be past these difficulties and ready



for a full summer of travels and adventures. Among the anticipated adventures, Wheels & Doris will be participating in a WBCCI caravan in early summer. Gene & Carmen will be spending some time at their property near Elko. Roger is looking forward to squirrel hunting in Northern Washoe County. Baxter & Marlene will be going to Sweden and other parts of Europe. Bob & Cecilia as usual, will be here, there, and everywhere. It sounds like several people have made progress on various repair and maintenance projects on their Airstreams. Steve and Jan's classic motorhome is out of the shop and should be just about ready to go. Randy has just about got it figured out what he wants to do with his water

pump. Now he just has to wait for warmer weather. That fixed, he and Vick should be set for the summer. Jerry & Dyann took their Land Yacht on a test outing and it seems it's ready for the rally season. Everyone else will probably be de-winterizing their rigs sometime between now and the Lahontan rally. That usually means a few tweaks and maintenance issues will need to be taken care of. All in all we had a great time as usual just visiting at the lunch. We are all looking forward to a great rally season and all sorts of new adventures.



## March Rally at Lahontan

Thursday March 19 to Sunday March 22, 2015 Is the first SNU rally for 2015. The rally will be at the dispersed site at Beach 7. Friday we'll celebrate a late St Patrick's day with a corned beef and cabbage dinner.

Lahontan is a great place to check out all the systems on your Airstream and make sure it's ready for the summer. We are close enough to town if you need to make a quick trip for supplies or parts. This rally is a great opportunity to renew your annual Nevada State Park senior pass.

Come prepared for any type of weather from warm and sunny to windy and cold. Be sure to bring some wood for campfires.

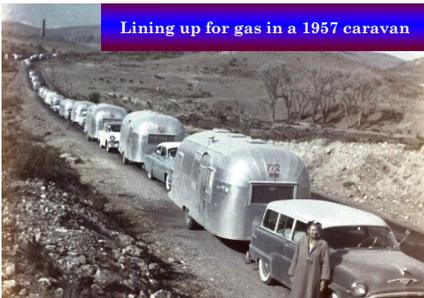


## Coming Soon!

The May SNU *rally at Lassen RV Park* is fast approaching. So far we've got five rigs planning to attend. There are still some sites available. Contact Randy (775-883-3603 or [randyg@pyramid.net](mailto:randyg@pyramid.net).) before April 30th to reserve your site. There are all sorts of things to do and see within a short distance of the RV park. Some of the activities include fly fishing, hiking, biking, bird watching, motor cycling, golfing, boating and kayaking. The park itself, has 68 acres you can hike, watch for birds and other wildlife, or go swimming in their pool. They have games like horseshoes, volleyball or badminton, and tetherball, plus regular horseshoe tournaments at their three regulation horseshoe pits. Don't miss out. Make your rally reservation now.

## Airstream Caravans

A group of RV's traveling together in a caravan has been part of WBCCI since before the club was officially created. In fact, it was people who had been traveling with Wally who, in 1955 decided it was time to form a club. The first caravan came about when Wally Byam decided traveling with a new Airstream owner was a good way to introduce him to the trailer and all the benefits of trailer travel. Since the beginning WBCCI Caravans have traveled all over the U.S. and in fact, all over the world. Some of the most well known WBCCI caravans are the *1959-1960 African Caravan* and the *1963-1964 Around the World Caravan*. Pee Wee has provided the SierraNevadaAirstreams.org website with a wonderful collection of photos and memorabilia of these two caravans as well as other caravans, from the Estate of Helen Byam Swamborn.



Lining up for gas in a 1957 caravan

In his book, *Travel Trailer, Here and Abroad*, (talking about the 1952 Caravan to Mexico) Wally says "... We discovered how much fun trailering could be en masse if we ran the whole shebang like a New England town meeting and let democracy have it's head, This cooperative system eliminated almost all the problems of traveling with a large group..."

### *Harrison diary of the 1957 Mexican Caravan*

My Grandparent's, Bryan & Jo Harrison (#772) went on several WBCCI caravans in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. It was always exciting to hear about their adventures and see their pictures when they came to visit. These excerpts are from their travel diaries. It provides a little glimpse of what those early caravans were like. [Check the Harrison](#)

[travelogue](#) on the website for the photo gallery of this caravan and all sorts of other information including the roster of participants, newspaper clippings, the caravan program and other documents.

January 15, 1957 - Left Juarez 8:10. Caravan started leaving at 8:00. Weather fine but a little chilly. What a sight after we all got strung out on the Highway. Over 200 trailers. Have to be seen to believe. Met up with our neighbors, Mr. & Mrs. North from MO and Mr. & Mrs. Lucky not from WA.

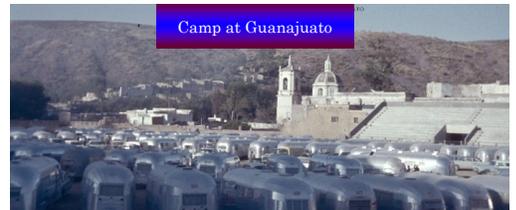
Back to Juarez for a few highlights. "The Banquet" needs some mention. Our introduction to the land of Mananna. Soup, cold beer. Shrimp cocktails – ran short and served fruit instead. By the time turkey was served at our table everything began to run short. I doubt if some of the people got anything to eat. The floor show was something they picked up out from one of the drivers in Juarez. But all in all we had a nice banquet.

Now back on the road to Chihuahua. The road is narrow and bad shoulders. We were traveling too fast so three of us decided to travel together and drive slower. Stopped for lunch about 1 o'clock. Arrived in Chihuahua about 3:30 pm. All three of us parked together. State Band here to greet us and a Mariachi band to entertain. Spent the evening sitting out in front of our trailer with our neighbors and enjoyed the new moon. Very beautiful.

January 17, 1957 – left at 8am - beautiful cattle in country from Juarez to Chihuahua but need rain more than we do in California. Arrive 3pm Parral mileage 974.4 – weather cold – little clouds very cold – lots of Mexican kids. Old mining town – very crooked streets – our campground, grand as usual. Band and mariachis to greet us – no time for sight seeing – too cold to go any place. Up at 6am left at 8:05 for Durango – 286 miles – the trip was on bad roads, lots of grades. Before arriving in Durango had to detour for about six miles and two mean detours. Have never driven a car and trailer over anything as bad as we did today – very dusty. Gassed up at Zecas and ran out of gas within one block of the campground at Durango – borrowed gas from the Norths to make it into camp – very tired. No time to visit at Parral – street too narrow and crooked – a large smelter situated on a hill opposite campground – very cold – surrounded by rolling countryside – this is the land of cactus and mesquite but beautiful cattle country – that is if they could only get rain.



Wearing blue berets made it easier to spot caravanners in a crowd



Camp at Guanajuato

## Upcoming 2015 Events

Lahontan Beach 7 - Silver Springs NV,  
Thursday March 19 - Sunday March 22, 2015

Cali - Rally (Hobo replacement) April 16-20, 2015

Ft Sage - Doyle NV,  
Thursday April 23 - Sunday April 26, 2015

Lassen RV Resort - McArthur CA,  
Thursday May 14 - Sunday May 17, 2015

Sweetwater - Sweetwater Summit on Hwy 338 NV  
Thursday June 11- Sunday June 14 2015

WBCCI International Rally - Farmington, NV  
June 28 - July 4, 2015

Weed Heights - Yerington NV,  
Thursday July 9 - Sunday July 12, 2015

Prosser Family campground - Truckee CA  
Wednesday August 5 - Sunday 9, 2015

Obsidian Dome - June Lake CA,  
Thursday September 24 - Sunday 27 2015

Region 12 Rally Silver City RV Resort - Minden NV,  
October 6-11, 2015

Overlander - Gardnerville NV,  
Saturday November 14, 2015

Bavarian World - Reno NV  
Saturday December 12, 2015

## Something for Everyone

*"The creed of one manufacturer, AIRSTREAM, is never to let a foundation be built under one and never let the wheels stop turning for more than a few months at a time." (from Fifth Avenue on Wheels written by Wally Byam)*

March is the beginning of the rally season for the SNU, time to get the wheels turning. This year there should be something for everyone. In addition to our preferred boon docking type rallies, there are several rallies that provide for a more civilized experience. These include the May rally at the full service Lassen RV Resort, the August joint rally with Nor-Cal at Prosser Family Campground with water and pit toilets and the October Region 12 Rally at the full service Silver City RV Park in Minden. The May SNU rally at Lassen is in the very scenic area of Northeastern CA. There are all sorts of things to see and do within easy access of the RV park. The August rally with Nor-Cal is adjacent to Prosser reservoir and only 10 minutes from Truckee. Nor-Cal is a large unit and this joint rally provides the opportunity for activities that are harder to do in a small Unit like the SNU. The Region rally will provide a variety of planned and unplanned activities in a more structured environment. All three require advanced reservations. The July SNU rally at Weed Heights is also at a full service RV park. Although no structured activities are planned for Weed Heights, there are opportunities to visit a nearby museum or cultural center or do a little shopping or sightseeing in town. The Mason Valley Wildlife area and the Mason Valley Trap, Rifle and Pistol Range are nearby.



Again, quoting Wally from *Fifth Avenue on Wheels* **"Personally, I like pavement for making time, but I like to get off of them to find interesting camp spots."** The other SNU 2015 rallies leave the pavement behind. They are at Ft Sage, Sweetwater and Obsidian Dome. Ft Sage is an unstructured BLM area with pit toilets and a panoramic view of Long Valley. Sweetwater and Obsidian Dome are somewhat remote dispersed areas with no restrictions on where or how you park and no facilities. Entertainment and activities at these rallies is totally random and dependent on who wants to do what, when. These activities could include card games, kite flying, hiking, ham radio, visits to nearby attractions and just enjoying the wide open spaces. This will be the SNU's 10th year at Obsidian so something special may be in the works. These rallies don't require reservations and Airstreamers are welcome whenever they arrive. There is also the SNU November rally at Mesquite campground at the north end of Death Valley. This campsite has water and pit toilets. No pre-registration is required. Don and Gail host this rally. They always have some great things lined up, like maybe some of Don's sourdough cooking. SNU rallies usually include happy hours and shared dinners. Obsidian has become the rally that includes special brunches like waffles, pancakes, or omelets in a bag. So get out your calendar and plan on including some SNU rallies in your 2015 schedule.

## Airstream Caravans

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Caravans are still a special benefit of being a WBCCI member. Several SNU members, including the Wheeler's, The Colligan's and the William's, have participated in caravans. Other sources for information and photos of Caravans, including past SNU newsletter articles, can be found in the [caravan section of SierraNevadaAirstreams.org](#)

*From the book Fifth Avenue on Wheels written by Wally Byam – I always walk in (a trailer park) and investigate before I pull my outfit in. And many of the better parks want to investigate you. Well do I remember one park where they asked for banking and social references, and when Cornelius Vanderbilt gave them his, they almost fell off the Christmas tree. The next day, they presented him with a nicely scrolled welcome to their park, signed by all of the residents in the park.*

## WBCCI & Amateur Radio

Amateur (ham) radio has a long history with WBCCI. There is an active WBCCI-intra club just for ham radio operators. If you go to the [WBCCI intra-club website](#), you will notice they used a photo of the SNU Sweetwater rally in their website header. Recently there seems to be an increased interest in ham radio among WBCCI members. In part this is probably due to the fact that getting licensed no longer requires learning Morse Code. There have been licensing classes at WBCCI International rallies for years. There seems to be more interest on the region level. Region 12 for instance, offered licensing classes at the 2014 rally in Pahrump and I think there will be some ham radio activity at the 2015 Region 12 rally. Ham radio licenses are issued through the [Amateur Radio Relay League](#) by the FCC. A license is required to operate legally in the U.S. There are several different levels of license depending on skill level. Each level provides different operating privileges and each requires written tests.

Amateur radio has been an active [part of the SNU](#) for the last 14 years. The SNU has had two "official" Field Day rallies, both at Sweetwater Summit. Bryan, Don and sometimes other SNU members usually have a ham radio station set up at almost all rallies. Bryan, Jerry, Gary, and Wheels often use ham radio to communicate on the way to a rally.



There are currently about 11 SNU members who are licensed hams, many of them with years of experience. Don (KD6UVT) has been a licensed ham for over 15 years. Among other things, Don is active in Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service and has assisted with ham radio activities at WBCCI rallies and on caravans. Bryan (K1CD) was instrumental in developing the training program for amateur radio in the 1970's while working as an employee of ARRL. Diane (KB7DSW) worked with local ham operators during the 1988 Special Olympics and also in 1989, during the Loma Prieta Earthquake. This past January, Russell (KB6YOF) and Deborah (KI6ROW) Decker participated in the hamfest in Quartzite, AZ



The WBCCI amateur radio intra-club produces it's own newsletter. In addition to activities at the WBCCI International rallies, the intra-club also holds it's own rallies, and hosts a couple of ham radio nets. If you are interested in learning more about ham radio and WBCCI, check the Intra-club website or talk to an SNU member active in ham radio.

## Automotive tech: "they don't build them like they used to"

*This was written in 2011. Since then even more advances have been made in automotive technology that enhance the driving experience and increase safety.*

*Popular Mechanics* lists [23 Ways Your Car Is Better Than Your Dad's – Auto Industry News – Popular Mechanics](#) and *Wired* lists ten examples of [Hidden Tech That Makes Modern Driving Better](#). A lot of these items increase comfort and reduce fatigue and are in tow vehicles as well as the everyday automobile.

Active noise canceling systems and acoustic glass help make for a quieter ride. Direct and minutely controlled fuel injection along with turbo charging systems provide more power for less engine at better fuel efficiencies. Integrated GPS is being used to determine sun angle and adjust climate control. Magnetorheological dampers adapt the suspension for driving conditions. Security is improved making vehicles a more difficult target for thieves. Sound systems make the stereo of yesteryear, even the home ones, look rather anemic and low-fi.

The reliability is also a target. Engine alternators are producing 1.6 kw and fan belt driven pumps are moving to electrical. Tires get better traction, are less prone to damage from road hazards, and last longer. Engines and drive trains often come with warranties up to five times (or more) as long as they did in the past.

They don't build them like they used to and much of the improvement is behind the scenes and stuff we take for granted.

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[SNU newsletter and article information](#)

[SNU 2015 Rally Schedule - Mark your calendars](#)

[SNU Facebook Page](#)

[What's new on the SierraNevadaAirstreams.org](#)