



EDITOR'S RALLY OBSERVATIONS - PG 1

RALLY EXPERIENCES - PG 2

ERIC MCHENRY'S CLOSING
COMMENTS PG-3

COLLAGE - PG 4-8

THE AIRSTREAMER

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EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE INTERNATIONAL RALLY

Gail and I knew something was different before we ever arrived in Rock Springs; this year's International Rally generated a lot of hype and interests. Over 1300 full hookup rally sites were sold out in 2022. We made reservations in 2023 for one of the 100 or so boondocking sites, we're SNU and proud of our boondocking legacy, we need to practice what we preach; YES?

Our route plans were different than most rally goers; we had an appointment to keep with family, friends and contractors back east. Our itinerary was tight but doable:

- Leave Southern California in mid May with up to a week to solo caravan across the country using US and local highways where possible;
- Have everything thing ready in North Carolina for the contractors to work;
- Visit family in Kentucky and Ohio;
- Caravan (solo again) back across Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska to Wyoming.
- Attend one of the WBCCI's biggest International rallies in ?? Years!
- Oh yeah, upgrade to a full service site (we wimped out).

Did it go well? To quote 2016-17 WBCCI President Richard Girard, "You Betcha!" Were there any glitches, maybe:

- We left two days later than originally planned;
- We had a flat tire on the trailer in Arizona on day two (pallet nail);
- We had a flat tire on the trailer in South Carolina on day 7 (3/16" machine screw).
- We needed to do more work in North Carolina than originally planned (time and \$\$\$\$s);
- We stopped to visit the National Motorcycle Museum in Iowa (was a secondary goal to our original itinerary).

Did the Rally live up to the hype; YES and more, it was a great adventure!

Gail and I have attended 10 international rallies since we joined the WBCCI in 2007, for the most part each one has been better than the one before, but this year's International generated the most excitement amongst the Airstream club members and it may be hard to top in the future. We hear they are trying; expecting 1500 rigs at Sedalia, Missouri in 2024!

What made 2023 so special; we had four other SNU members in attendance (Kitsie & Tom Larkin and Lyndi & Jack Schroeder), two were International Rally First Timers. The Rally Committee presented attendees with a great slate of sessions, tours, vendors, food court, concerts (having trouble hearing after Patrick and the LVB), late night jam sessions, Amateur Radio, Vintage and other intra-clubs, bicycle excursions, yoga and dance lessons, First Timer's GAMS (get acquainted meeting), rally prizes, Airstreams Glow and on display. Public Service is always part of an International Rally; blood drive, diaper drive, food and clothing drive helped the local Rock Springs community. Lastly, the Sweetwater Event Center Complex's full hookups, multiple dog parks, Spicer Family Pavilion, clean and well maintained facilities and the small Airstream converted bar along the food court helped!

Read our members' first hand experiences, words expressed by past Greater Los Angeles Airstream Club co-founder, president and newsletter editor Lynda Polk and last but certainly not least, WBCCI President Eric McHenry, to get a feel for the excitement at the WBCCI 66th International Rally. Read on and view the photo collage. Hopefully you fit next year's 67th International Rally in your plans.

Rally On! — Don Williams #14207



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Susie Brown, *secretary*

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Don Williams, *membership chair & newsletter editor*

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INTERNATIONAL RALLY AT ROCK SPRINGS - A FIRST TIMER'S EXPERIENCE

The people we met! The things we learned! The experience we had. These are what we'll always remember.

As "First Timers," we were concerned because we came by ourselves, not part of a group or Airstream Unit. But an Airstream Rally is truly unique. Everyone was so friendly and inviting. Walking from our trailer to the event center, we passed a 1950's era classic Airstream. As we looked over, Tom and Holly Black from Laguna Beach literally waved us into their site, invited us to see their Airstream (beautiful and original) and offered us margaritas. Our two neighbors Keith and Ellen Enstrom from IL, replaced a washer in my hose while we were out because it was leaking. Brad, our other neighbor, gave me a flexible connector for my water hose to the trailer. Simple acts of kindness indicative of the spirit of Airstreaming. The people of Rock Springs businesses - so friendly and helpful, gave us discounts when they heard we were part of the Airstream group.

I volunteered to be the room monitor for the Dutch Oven Cooking presentation. I now own two new Dutch ovens plus accessories. I not only learned tips about cooking with a Dutch Oven, but from other presentations, about sanitizing my tanks, waterless washing my Airstream, high speed internet and more. Kitsie got help from Josie Lewis with a crochet project she has been working on.

I spent time with a buddy I met as a freshman in high school and hadn't seen in almost 60 years (yup, I'm old).

As fairly new Airstreamers, we have yet to go to a Sierra Nevada Unit luncheon or rally but we met Don and Gayle Williams and Jack and Lyndi Schroeder at the Region 12 dinner. Don made it a point that we get together.

It was such a great experience. Won't miss the next one.

Tom Larkin #5496

MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

Our most memorable experience consists of our wonderful next door neighbors Mike and Helen Miranda in Boar's Tusk campground. As soon as we arrived to hook up our trailer, we met them and had no idea how lucky we were! Mike came over and helped disconnect our new deficient equalizer hitch. I'm truly Wally Byam spirit, he spent more time and effort working with us on it.

A couple of days later, we thought our gray water wasn't draining. Mike was right there to give Jack recommendations, suggestions and hands-on help!

When his artist/dog breeder wife Helen needed his help, he divided his considerable expertise between us.

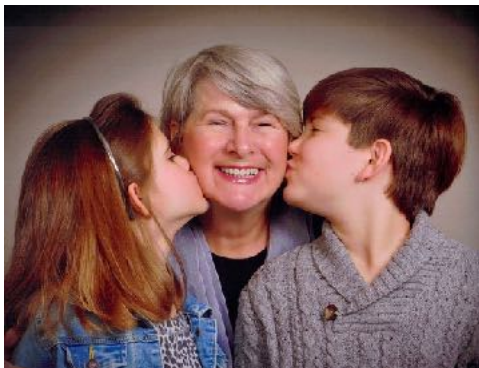
Again, in Wally's spirit, he discussed the mistake and corrected Jack with a friendly laugh.

At his insistence, our only payment was a couple of six packs of Voodoo and a sip of Winchester. Mike and Helen's spirit of helping their neighbor (us) was beyond belief.

We also both enjoyed making music with the Airstream Kitchen Sink Band with a green rubber tub, an eggbeater and our fellow "musicians"! The audience seemed to enjoy it as much as we all did!

What fun, thanks to outgoing Music Director Greg Heuer and incoming Music Director Mindy Downie. You both add so much to the whole International Rally Experience!

Lyndi Cooper Schroeder #2572



AN ALUMINUM CITY (LYNDA POLK)

WHEN AN ALUMINUM CITY MAGICALLY RISES WITHIN A CITY, good things happen! The logistics can be challenging, but with this being the 66th Wally Byam Caravan Club International Rally (WBCCI), we've had a lot of practice. Rock Springs, Wyoming was the location for our meet up and what a rally it was! With almost 1,300 Airstreams coming from across the country and Canada, this year was the largest gathering of Airstreams in 20 years. The Sweetwater Event Complex was perfectly outfitted to host such a crowd providing places to gather and full hookups (50 amp/water/sewer) for all Airstreams.

For Jim and me, gathering with our home club, the Greater Los Angeles Airstream Club, was truly a highlight. As full timers we have not seen most of our club friends in over two years so obviously many parties ensued along with dinners and impromptu gatherings. In my humble opinion, we are, of course, the BEST Airstream Club ever, filled with many amazing, big-hearted characters!

Over the week-long event there were informative seminars to attend; Opening Ceremonies to enjoy as 102 clubs presented their flags; reconnecting with Airstreamers we've met over the past 18 years; multiple jam sessions around the campground in addition to the always entertaining Airstream Band; art, pet, hobby and photo shows to participate in; daily yoga and bike rides; and tours to Utah's nearby Flaming Gorge. The location in western Wyoming was the perfect jumping off point to explore the Flaming Gorge, Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks following the rally.

We found the City of Rock Springs extremely welcoming, just imagine having a couple thousand people drop into your hometown for 10 days! What I admire about our International Club is that it's a win-win event. While we had a great event complex to gather and enjoy our friends and

the rally, it was estimated this Airstream event would bring in \$2.6 million to the community. This included our stay at the Complex, shopping done while in town including groceries, dining out, gas/diesel purchases, car wash, any repairs needed, laundromat, etc.

The United Way of Rock Springs was this year's selected charity with thousands of dollars donated and a diaper drive which filled an 8-bed Airstream! In addition, the WBCCI Foundation provided grants of almost \$30,000 to two local charities and the National Parks Foundation, National Forest Foundation and Tread Lightly! Our brand new intra-club for children, Future Streamers, collected over 150 pounds of can pop tops with proceeds donated to the Ronald McDonald House; Common Cents for Kids, which collects your spare change, provided grants to Cowboys Against Cancer and the JD Foundation of Sweetwater County for Juvenile Diabetes. Wow.

All this. THIS is why I Airstream! My heart is filled with gratitude and happiness as this Airstream-lifestyle is so much more than a weekend campout. It has given us the opportunity and flexibility to explore, discover, and dream...not to mention spending 24/7/365-non-stop-well-into-three-years-together-with-two-80-pound-mutties-in-220-square-feet. We are already looking ahead to Sedalia, Missouri's International Rally in 2024!

Linda Beringer Polk #261

MY CLOSING COMMENTS AT RALLY2023 (ERIC MCHENRY)

Let me tell you a story that I suspect is shared by many of you in this room tonight.

LaVerne and I purchased our first Airstream in 2010 after falling in love with the iconic shape and premium design. We loved it, and we thought we were fully set for camping with friends and family. Basically, we bought a "thing", a piece of hardware, a vehicle, something we towed. Nothing else. We had no idea of where our journey would go in the subsequent 13 years.

Then, in June of 2010 LaVerne and I joined the Santa Clara Unit of WBCCI. We had no real expectations, other than joining what we thought of as a simple Club of Airstream enthusiasts. It was great, and we loved it.

But guess what? We soon found was this was more than a loosely-connected group of RV owners. We started to learn about our history, starting in 1958 with Wally Byam and Helen Schwamborn, then starting to understand that "through-line" that connects our Club today with the vision and, frankly, mission, of Wally and Helen.

This through-line, we learned, was called the "Wally Byam Creed" and while we read the words, to be frank, they sounded kinda' quaint and old-fashioned. But the light started to come on as we read and started to understand some of his words and what he left for us.

He starts off this way:

"In the heart of these words is an entire life's dream. To those of you who find in the promise of these words your promise, I bequeath this creed...my dream belongs to you – Wally Byam"

Today, as we end this 2023 International Rally, the word in my – and many of your minds – is "Community". Sure, we're a "Club", but what most of us experienced over the last week was a sense of more than that. An elevation from Club to Community.

So, Webster defines "Community" as: "A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals". But I argue it's more than that, though: it is what I mentioned in a prior President's Message about the importance of community in our lives – we need it, we value it, we learn from it, and perhaps most importantly, we develop and grow a deep compassion for our fellow human beings.

Look at the person to your left and to your right tonight; those individuals are our Community – what we've shared here in Rock Springs and in our Regions and Local Clubs is truly unique, and I would argue even more critical these days, both locally, nationally, and internationally.

So, if there's one thing I hope you leave Rock Springs with, it is a collection of heartfelt memories of fun, education, food, recreation, and community. Take that back to your Regions and Local Clubs and let them know about the fun we all had here over the last few days and the promise of our future as a Club.

And remember what Wally Byam said back in the 1950s, that holds uniquely true today. His mission for us was, in part:

"To open a whole world of new experiences...a new dimension in enjoyment where travel, adventure and good fellowship are your constant companions – Wally Byam"

I think we've got that!

Thank you for your time! And travel safely back to your home or on your journeys! It's been a joy and an honor serving you this last year as your International President!

Upcoming International Rallies

[Press Release: Rally2024 in Sedalia, MO](#) (October 2024)


[Press Release: Rally2025 in York, PA](#) (August 2025)

Looking forward to seeing you all down the road, and let me know if you have ideas for our Club.




CROSS COUNTRY APPROACH



 **Tornado Watch**
EXPIRES JUN 21 AT 20:00

The National Weather Service Has Issued Tornado Watch 350 In Effect Until 8 Pm Mdt This Evening For The Following Areas

In Nebraska This Watch Includes 6 Counties

In Panhandle Nebraska

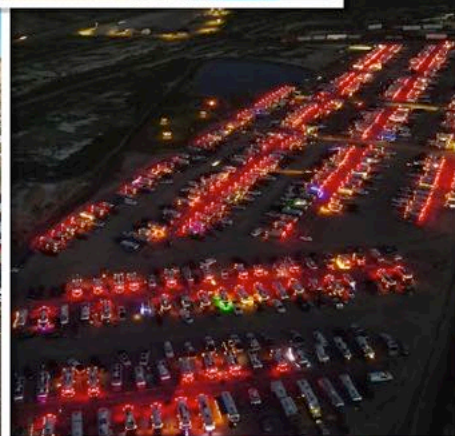
Cheyenne



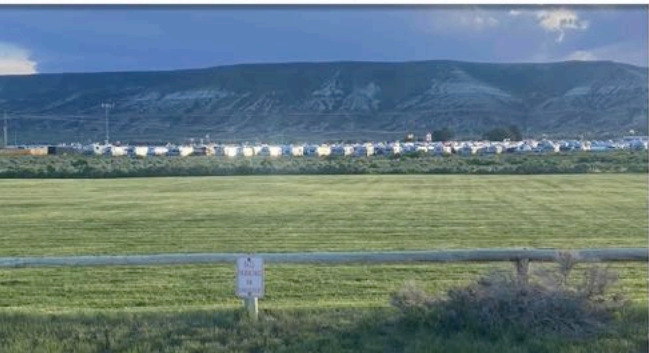
RALLY & FRIENDS



MORE RALLY FUN



IT KEEPS GOING



WINDING DOWN

