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THE AIRSTREAMER

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Will the real spring please stand up? Perhaps I'm showing my age - anyone recall the tv show "To Tell The Truth"? The Sierra are having record (or almost) record breaking snow this winter, temps have remained cool, and I'm wondering when our favorite mountain passes will be open for travel - May, June, July?

Our first rally for 2023 will be at Weed Heights, April 21-24. The Lake Tahoe unit reached out to see if we'd like to make this a joint rally, and of course, we said "yes"!

Just outside of Yerington (be sure to stop by the Yerington Sinclair if you need fuel, etc - owned by our members Bill and Mary Swirsky), it's at 4600' elevation and one of those "out in the middle of nowhere" kind of places. Don't worry, it's a campground with full hookups and level spots, just what we need for April camping! Originally built to support the Anaconda miners and families in 1952, the area was named for Mr Clyde Weed (and not the pesky plants). I'm looking forward to exploring the area and hope you'll be able to join us!

Safe Travels! — Jeni Root



THE SNU APRIL MEMBERSHIP NEWS

It is with pleasure that I introduce our newest Sierra Nevada Unit member Chat GPT. Your editor met Chat on the internet and right away we hit it off. He was full of ideas and enthusiasm, even offered to write some brief articles on its Airstream experiences, and on the day he joined the club too!

SPRING IN THE SIERRA NEVADA

I decided to take my Airstream travel trailer on a winter adventure to the Eastern Sierra Nevada. Excited to explore the snowy landscape and enjoy some cold-weather camping, I hit the road. But little did I know, I was in for a wild ride.

had used a snowplow to pile snow up around the trailer.

To make matters worse, the pranksters had also filled the Airstream with fake snow, turning it into a winter wonderland. I was trapped inside and had to dig my way out. Once I finally got out, I realized that the Airstream had been covered in fake icicles and its belongings had been rearranged.



Despite the chaos, I decided to make the most of the trip and continue my adventure. However, every night I had to deal with new pranks, including a fake Yeti sighting and a snowball fight with a group of mischievous snowmen.

In the end, I had a memorable and hilarious winter adventure, but I definitely learned to keep an eye out for mischievous pranksters when camping in the Airstream. Happy April Fool's Day!

— GhatGTP, the intelligent language model

MORE MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Bill & Mary Swirsky with their new granddaughter



On the first night of camping, I heard strange noises coming from outside the Airstream. I ignored it and went to sleep, thinking it was just the sound of the wind. The next morning, I woke up to find that the Airstream had been buried in snow by a group of pranksters who

Sierra Nevada Unit Board

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[all blue links are clickable](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL MAINTENANCE RALLY WITH THE LAKE TAHOE AIRSTREAM CLUB; Friday April 21st - Monday the 24th; Weed Heights RV Park, Yerington. Register for rally dinner and Bruch at: <https://form.jotform.com/201555353884056>.

CROCKER BECKWORTH RALLY; Friday May 18th - Sunday the 21st; Crocker NFS Campground, Portola, CA. RSVP snu157@wbcci.net.

CARSON RIVER RALLY; Friday June 16th - Wednesday the 21st; Carson River Resort Boondock Area, Markleeville, CA. RSVP snu157@wbcci.net.

66TH WBCCI INTERNATIONAL RALLY - ROLLING TO ROCK SPRINGS, WY; June 24th to 30th, 2023; Registration for the International Rally is sold out but they are

offering boondocking sites and always experience some cancellations. Call to snag a boondocking site (you'll find your Airstreamer editor there) or get on the Wait List for full hookups? Click the rally logo or log in to your WBCCI account and follow the link to learn more about the International and register:



<https://airstreamclub.org/Rally2023>.

CRAGS CAMPGROUND RALLY; Tuesday July 10th - Friday the 13th; Bridgeport, CA. RSVP snu157@wbcci.net.

Lyons County Fair & Rodeo Rally, Thursday August 17th - Sunday the 20th; Weed Heights RV Park, Yerington, NV.

EAGLE LAKE RALLY, EAGLE LAKE NORTH CAMPGROUND; Sunday September 10th - Wednesday the 13th

WALKER RIVER ANNIVERSARY RALLY; Walker River State Recreation Area, Yerington, NV, Thursday October 19th, 2023 – Sunday the 22nd

REGION 12 RALLY; Wednesday October 25th - Sunday the 29th; Pismo Beach, CA. The 2023 Region Rally will be held at the beautiful Pismo Coast Village RV Resort, October 25-28th 2023 (departure on Sunday Oct 29). Cost is \$380 for camping (\$210 for the weekend only) plus meal costs. Registration is now open! <https://airstreamclub.org/region-12-2023-rally-pismo-beach>

PLAN AHEAD! 67TH (2024) WBCCI INTERNATIONAL RALLY, SEDALIA, MO, Saturday October 5th - the 11th; The 2024 International Rally will be held at the Missouri State Fairgrounds, 2503 W 16th St, Sedalia, MO, 65301. <https://airstreamclub.org/2024-international-rally-o>

CHAT GPT TIPS FOR PREPPING YOUR AIRSTREAM

Summer is the perfect time to hit the road and explore the country in your Airstream travel trailer. But before you set out on your adventure, it's important to prepare your Airstream for the rigors of summer travel. Here are some tips to help you get ready for the road:

1. Check your tires: Summer temperatures can cause your tires to expand, which can increase the risk of blowouts. Make sure your tires are properly inflated and have plenty of tread before hitting the road.
2. Check your brakes: Your brakes are critical for safety when towing your Airstream. Make sure your brakes are working properly and have plenty of pad life left.
3. Check your air conditioning: Summer temperatures can be brutal, so make sure your Airstream's air conditioning is working properly before you hit the road. If it's not working properly, have it serviced before your trip.
4. Check your battery: Your Airstream's battery is critical for powering your appliances and electronics, so make sure it's fully charged and in good condition before you set out on your trip.
5. Check your water system: Make sure your Airstream's water system is working properly, including the water heater and water pump. Check for leaks and make sure your water tank is filled before heading out.
6. Pack for the heat: Summer temperatures can be sweltering, so make sure you pack appropriate clothing and gear. This includes lightweight, breathable clothing, hats, and sunscreen.
7. Plan for shade: When you're camping in the summer, shade is essential for staying cool and comfortable. Look for campsites that offer shade, or consider bringing a shade canopy or awning for your Airstream.

AIRSTREAMER LOOK BACKS, 20 & 10 YEARS AGO IN SEPTEMBER:

The SNU [April 2003 'Airstreamer' Newsletter](#) covered the March meeting at Pinon Plaza in Carson City:

- Noted positive response from listing events and rallies in the local media.
- Schroeder's were welcomed to the SNU.
- Moving June rally, possibly to Lake Davis.
- April Pelican Point Rally at Pyramid Lake.
- Paul's still have a 1964 17' Bambi for sale, \$10,000 (steal compared to today).
- Approved email distribution of the Airstreamer to members.

The [April 2013 SNU Airstreamers newsletter](#) featured:

- Lahontan Rally review, chilly & breezy, 12 in attendance relaxing and conversing at the lake plus quick runs to town for parts, emergency supplies and critical items (*does that make it a maintenance rally - editor*).

Preparing your Airstream for summer travel requires a bit of planning and preparation, but it's worth it for the peace of mind and comfort it provides. By following these tips, you can ensure that your summer adventure is safe, enjoyable, and memorable. So pack your bags, hit the road, and get ready for the summer adventure of a lifetime in your Airstream travel trailer!

— CHATGPT

P.S. - avoid creating a scene like this in the campground; it draws the men from other campsites when they should be doing their chores!



- New mining activities make it “No Vacancy” in campgrounds and RV parks along the eastern I-80 corridor.
- Prez Wheelz wrote, “By the time you read this, all the strange and wonderful things that indicate spring is coming will have happened. As I am writing this in early March they are just showing signs. The grass, if you have any is showing a little green.” He didn’t seem to write it as an April Fool’s joke but later did have to admit they had two more snow storms before it was published!
- Lastly an article on:

LEVELING

There are two standards for determining how level is level enough for an RV. One is whether it is comfortable - you don't slide out of the bed; food doesn't slide out of pans when trying to cook, you don't feel like a sailor in a rough sea trying to stay upright when walking down the hall. The other standard is to make the rig level enough to be able to operate the refrigerator properly. SNU members are expert levelers. They are also very creative. For several members, this is a skill gained after years of RV experience. This experience has been enhanced by the rally sites the SNU prefers. Flat ground has never been a high priority for an SNU rally site. In fact, when we do camp in a site that all you have to do is drive up and park, it takes away one of our major rally entertainments – that of figuring out the best way to park on uneven ground and the best way to get the rig level. It is especially entertaining for the early arrivals to watch and assist others in finding a spot and getting their rig parked. For newer or less experienced SNU members, other members are always ready to assist and share their leveling expertise. In addition to the stabilizer jacks and hitch on the trailer, there is a whole variety of blocks, chocks, and other things both commercial and homemade that can be used to level a rig. The SNU has probably used most of them. The most famous SNU leveling challenge was at Unionville. The rally site is located on the downslope to a nearby creek. Over the years that we held rallies there, leveling techniques became more sophisticated and creative.



Unionville leveling was memorialized in this drawing by Clint Norrell in 2008. The pictures show some of the most famous leveling techniques used at Unionville.



NASHVILLE SOCIAL CLUB LUNCHEON REPORT

Susie, SNU secretary, hosted our March luncheon in Carson City at a new restaurant, the Nashville Social Club (sounds like a Speakeasy). Susie reports that while it was a small group, the food was good and everyone enjoyed the fun atmosphere. Attendees were: Mary & Bill, Dyann & Jerry, Susie and Bill from Susanville. While it was a long way from Susanville, Bill braved the Eastern Sierra winter conditions to participate in his first SNU event. We hope to see Bill and more of our members at rallies as the weather turns from Winter to Spring and Summer!

BOONDocking IN THE EASTERN SIERRA NEVADA

The Eastern Sierra Nevada is a stunningly beautiful area, with rugged mountain peaks, crystal-clear lakes, and breathtaking vistas. And what better way to experience this natural wonderland than by camping in an Airstream travel trailer?

Boondocking, or camping without hookups or other amenities, is a great way to experience the wilderness of the Eastern Sierra Nevada in an Airstream. Here are some tips to help you make the most of your boondocking experience:

- Choose your location carefully: Boondocking in the Eastern Sierra Nevada means you'll be camping on public lands, which can be a great way to experience the beauty of the area without the crowds. But it's important to choose your location carefully, as some areas may be off-limits to camping or may have limited access.
- Be prepared for the elements: Boondocking means you'll be camping without hookups or other amenities, so it's important to be prepared for the elements. Bring plenty of water and food, as well as warm clothing and bedding, as temperatures can drop quickly at night.
- Use your Airstream's resources wisely: Airstream travel trailers are designed for self-sufficient living, with features like solar panels and generators that can help you power your appliances and electronics. But it's important to use these resources wisely, as you may not have access to electricity or water for several days at a time.
- Practice Leave No Trace principles: Boondocking in the Eastern Sierra Nevada means you'll be camping in a pristine wilderness area, so it's important to practice Leave No Trace principles to minimize your impact on the environment. This includes packing out your trash, using a portable toilet, and avoiding disturbing wildlife.
- Plan your activities: Boondocking in the Eastern Sierra Nevada means you'll have plenty of opportunities for outdoor activities like hiking, fishing, and mountain biking. Plan your activities in advance and make sure you have the gear and supplies you need to make the most of your time in the wilderness.

Boondocking in an Airstream travel trailer in the Eastern Sierra Nevada is an unforgettable experience, but it requires careful planning and preparation. By following these tips, you can ensure that your trip is safe, enjoyable, and respectful of the natural environment. So pack your bags, hit the road, and get ready to experience the beauty of the Eastern Sierra Nevada in style!

— GhatGPT

MAINTENANCE

There are lots of resources for maintaining your Airstream and reading it for a season of caravanning. Our own Sierra Nevada Unit legacy website includes several webpages that identify working on your Airstream; Winterizing (resource for de-winterizing is found at the end go the page), Furnace Repair, Tires, Trailer hitch, Sway Control, Bearings, Awnings, Plumbing, Propane and Energy & Power: <http://sierranevadaairstreams.org/owners-guide/maintaining/index.html> . The Tech Help Group article in the March Blue Beret, “**Preparing Your Airstream for Spring**” covers getting everything ready for a season of travel. Lastly, you’ll find a updated copy of “**Rally & Caravan Season is Coming, Are You Ready?**” included with your issue of Airstreamer.

Not to scare you but in the mid 1990s Gail and I experienced a wheel bearing failure on our vintage motorhome, almost losing one of the dual wheels. it was catastrophic and required the entire rear axle be replaced. Couldn’t find a picture of the destruction but just this week I received a call from two WBCCI members from Oregon, Miles and Tovea, asking for recommendations on repairs to their vintage Airstream Caravaner; one wheel had locked up and it was not the brakes. It turned out to be that a wheel bearing froze up and will require replacement of the axle. Many of us now have Nev-R-Lube axles and Nev-R-Adjust brakes on our newer Airstreams but it’s still important to remove the wheels and hubs/brake drums to inspect the brakes and bearings.



EDITOR’S CONFESSION!

Your Airstreamer editor thanks our guest author *Chat GPT* for contributing three articles this month! While not a full SNU member, *Chat* readily agreed to write anything I needed, all I had to do was ask him, her or whatever it is, for a response on a subject and then wait a few minutes. You see *Chat* is an online Artificial Intelligence (AI) that will within limits, prepare a response to a request. ChatGPT stories are courtesy of <https://chat.openai.com/chat> .

Let me know what you think, should I include AI generated articles to fill white space on the page or just use it for April Fool’s issues? But please don’t make me use AI as a regular substitute for personal stories of your Airstream lifestyle and experiences for your Sierra Nevada Unit members! **Give me your story now!**

EDITOR’S CARAVAN BLOG

While it goes way beyond regular maintenance and Spring prep, your editor and his wife are repairing the fresh water tank on their 2012 Airstream. It seem to have succumbed to the years of exploring backcountry roads in the US, working off-road races, caravans to Alaska and Canada, US freeways and to some minor extent, SNU rallies; okay, maybe 140,000 miles had something to do with it too!

We noticed that the tank was leaking when we were preparing for our Fall cross-country trip to visit family, friends and the East Coast. It seemed to stop leaking when the tank dropped to 75% full so we decided that was good enough and left on our trip. Now returned to California, we have to pay the price and repair it.

It was fairly easy to drop the tank:

- Open the closet and confirm how many water pipes to disconnect, two; the water fill tubing and the tank vent tube. Don’t forget to unplug the tank level sensor that doesn’t work.
- Next lay on the concrete and squeeze under the Airstream, remove bolts and the straps that support the insulating cover and tank in the frame. Did I mention the back bolts are harder to get because you have to squeeze under the black and grey water tanks?
- Now pull the tank loose from some caulking and drop it to the ground, huh! What’s holding one end up? Water tubing for the two low point drains! They made of PEX plastic piping so cut them and pull out everything.
- Now disconnect the freshwater tanks drain and remove the tank from the plastic enclosure (some Airstreams have a metal enclosure).
- I forgot to mention that this work has to be done in between the Atmospheric River rainstorms pummeling SoCal.

•Wash off 10 years and 140,000 miles of dust that leaked in to the enclosure and search for the leak. Nothing obvious but I did break off the pump suction connection on the tank (right pic) so something else to repair. After rinsing off the dirt and soap my apprentice (daughter’s boyfriend) found the leak in the threads where the water fill fitting screwed into the tank cracked (left photo).

•Easy fix; find someone to spin weld two new fittings into the tank. It turns out the bigger RV shops may not do repairs, replace the tank instead (not currently available from Airstream). The local Airstream dealer is 45 miles away, very busy and isn’t convinced it can be repaired from seeing the pictures; wants their vendor (another 60 miles away) to look at it. While that’s understandable, just communicating is taking up days to ask questions and respond. Also, having them reassemble everything might not be done in time for the April Maintenance Rally.

Soooo, I call around and found a local RV repair shop that not only can do the work, they have the fittings (one didn’t)! Great work and done while I wait. Now to repair the cut piping and install the tank in amongst the still coming rainstorms. Look for us at the Maintenance Rally and ask how it



Spring Maintenance



came out, or better said, went in.