

WBCCI International Airstream Rally

Questions & Answers for First Timers

The WBCCI International Rally is an annual event where Airstreamers gather to renew old friendships; tour a new region of the country and learn skills from fellow travelers. The Rally includes some great camping and diverse entertainment.

The Rally is completely run by volunteers. The first people you meet at the entrance gate; who lead you to your campsite; register you for events; direct traffic and drive shuttles are all fellow Airstreamers and volunteers. Many of these volunteers have been working for months preparing to deliver seminars; layout the campground; figure out traffic flow; organize social events, contests and tours. It's like a mega-Rally away from your home WBCCI unit.

At my first rally I found the very best way to meet new people was to volunteer. Every year I look forward to meeting new friends while renewing annual friendships among fellow volunteers. We've pulled together a lot of basic information about the Rally in a Question & Answer format. This will help make your first rally a little less chaotic. After a few days at the Rally you'll be an "old hand" at understanding the sometimes quirky but enjoyable traditions of your caravan club.

This is my first International Rally so how do I get oriented to what's going on?

Read all the materials provided to you in print and email, such as the May and June editions of the Blue Beret. Bring your Blue Beret with you for reference. Email blasts are being sent out as the Rally date gets closer. The Rally Facebook page and webpage are updated frequently. Attend the "First Timer's Reception" on June 27. There will be an information desk near registration in the Underwood West Tent. Arrive at the evening entertainment early enough to hear the pre-entertainment announcements because they often include critical information. Some of the best advice is to talk with your Airstream neighbors in the campground.

I want to be included in things but it seems like some of the events needed sign-ups or tickets and people in the know got there first. How do I avoid feeling left out?

Everyone registered gets into all the evening entertainment events. Tours have limited numbers for obvious reasons. This is the first year where our club has enabled early online registration so tour organizers can try to add additional tour times if there is demand. Online tour registration has been available since May 4 and 90% of registrations have been online, so everyone has an equal chance to register for tours. Sometimes the number of tours and people are limited by the tour site. Get busy and sign up if you are interested in a tour. There is a tour schedule in the May edition of the Blue Beret and online at <http://lewisburg.wbcci.net/>. Registration for Region luncheons are handled by individual Region leaders, who usually have sign-up tables set up with information and tickets. Region luncheons do not sell out. It is possible that the golf outing or women's tea could sell out before the rally opens since participation is limited and registration begins June 24th.

How do I find out where to meet for tours?

That information will be available at the tour signup desks.

I know a volunteer may get hot, tired or grumpy sometimes. Who should I inform if I feel like I've been treated without proper courtesy?

You can speak with any WBCCI national officer; ask your local unit delegate to pass the information along or leave the facts at the Information Desk. It is helpful if you can remember the time, date and name. Remember that everyone is a volunteer and sometimes they get worn out and let their good manners slip. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect. Personally, I've never had this happen to me so I suspect it would be a rare occurrence.

Is there a time-schedule for the shuttle? How do I find out about the route and times? Does the shuttle run late when the entertainment is ending?

The shuttle route is marked with "shuttle stop" signs. You can usually see the routes from most locations in the campground. It runs during daylight hours, with some rides added just before and after night entertainment events.

Where can I get a Wi-Fi connection?

The fairground plans to expand its portable WiFi transmitters throughout the campground. The signal will be stronger in any of the main buildings.

How do I find where my friends are camped on the Fairground?

A Locator List will show where everyone is parked. It is updated daily and posted in a prominent location, usually near the registration tables. Use it to find friends or members of your local unit.

Is there someplace I can go to cool off if there is a particularly hot day?

Most of the seminar buildings are air conditioned.

What's the Fairground policy on alcohol?

The WBCCI watchwords on alcohol are "Be discreet and don't overdo it." The Fairground plans to open a cash bar about 4 p.m. through July 3 at the Underwood Building to serve West Virginia wine, beer and distilled spirits.

Can we have a campfire at our campsite?

The Fairground prefers to keep campfires to a minimum because trailers will be parked close. A fire ring will be necessary. Never leave a campfire unattended or smoldering.

What is the "bullpen" that people keep talking about?

The "bullpen" is a large open parking area when you immediately pull into the Fairground for registration verification prior to being led to a campsite. Watch for flaggers along the highway and follow their directions. The bullpen was designed as a waiting or holding area before going through to parking. Sometimes the bullpen can seem pretty crowded when a caravan group arrives. You can spend a night in the bullpen without any hookups.

Can you walk me through the sequence of what I'm supposed to do when I pull into the Fairground the first time?

First of all, arrive at the right time. Parking happens only 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday (after 1 p.m. Sunday) because every rig is escorted to a campsite. Plan on dry camping in the bullpen if you arrive after 4 p.m.

Here are the steps:

- 1.) Watch for the traffic flaggers and follow their directions to the correct Fairground entrance. Arriving with full fresh-water tank but empty black/grey tanks.
- 2.) You will be greeted first by a Welcoming Committee that will give you a goodie bag packed with local information.
- 3.) Next you will meet the Verification Committee members. Have your Rally registration receipt in the cab of your tow vehicle because they need to see it.

- 4.) One of the Verification Committee members will put a small colored sticker on your Airstream as proof you've been checked through.
- 5.) Wait in line until they send you forward to a holding area where a parker in a golf cart will assemble a small batch of trailers to lead to the campsites.
- 6.) Follow the golf cart leader carefully. Watch for pedestrians and be prepared to stop quickly.
- 7.) At the campsites there will be at least two parking assistants to help position the Airstreams in a neat row. The campsites are relatively close together.
- 8.) Set up your Airstream. The campground is hilly so you should have extra leveling blocks. Most of the electrical hookups are 30 amp. There are about 150 sites with 50/20 amp service so you should have your 50/30 amp converter plug accessible.
- 9.) After setup you'll go to Underwood for Rally registration. Go to registration as soon as possible to get your tags, tickets, etc. When you first enter the Fairground and are greeted by the Welcoming Committee you might want to ask what hours the rally registration tables are open on that particular day.
- 10.) Don't get anxious. It is a complicated process to park more than 700 Airstreams at a Fairgrounds. Everyone helping is a volunteer and an Airstreamer, just like you.

Where will I be able to get potable water?

You can get drinking water at any of the full amenity campsites. Every bath house has outdoor spigots that are marked as potable or non-potable. There are showers in the bath houses.

Is there a sewage dump site on the Fairground? Where is it located? Will there be mobile sewage pump-outs?

There is a dump station beside bathhouse #1 and another 100 yards to the west of bathhouse #1. Pump outs will be arranged through WBCCI. Pump outs, where a truck comes to your trailer to pump out the black and grey tanks, are planned during the Rally. It is usually on a 4 or 5-day cycle (the reason for arriving with empty black/grey tanks). Information on pump outs will be available at registration.

Is "Airstream Time" observed at the Rally?

Events at the rally generally begin either on time or a little early, especially meals. Though the evening program says the entertainment will begin at 7:15 p.m., it will actually start as soon as the 7 p.m. announcements are finished. You might notice that many Airstreamers arrive earlier to group seats with their friends. In other words, "If you're on time; you're late."

What is a "set up?"

"Set ups" are plates, silverware and beverages.

Can I buy a blue beret at the Rally?

The WBCCI store will be open so you can purchase badges, flags, pins, stars, big red numbers, decals and berets.

What are "sign-up tables?"

"Sign-up tables" are where you register for events that require pre-registration, i.e. SnapShot, Photo Print Contests, Hobby Show, Art Show, Unit Publications, Golf, Crafts, Games, Ladies Tea. Sign up tables will open on June 24 near Rally Registration at the Underwood Tents.

Can I attend the Delegates meeting on June 30?

Everyone is welcome to the Delegates Meeting. Delegates have assigned seating and the general attendees are not allowed to sit with the delegates. This is the meeting where delegates representing their home units vote on club business. There is often vigorous public debate among the delegates.

Am I allowed to talk at the International Board of Trustees (IBT) Seminar and Meeting on July 5?

The IBT Seminar and Meeting is where the club conducts its business. All members are welcome to attend. Members may speak at the *Seminar*. Only the IBT members (International Officers, Region Presidents and Vice Presidents) can speak at the *Meeting*.

I'm confused about when the Rally really begins?

Why would you be confused? Is it just because your parking pass lists a June 21 parking date; registration begins on June 25 and the Rally official opening is June 28. No problem. It's a historical quirk of a traveling club where people travel across the nation to locations thousands of miles from home. To further complicate the issue, several dozen volunteers arrive even weeks earlier to begin laying out the campsites, making signs, practicing music and coordinating with facilities management. Relax and have fun.

I have a new Airstream but I'd like to hang out with the Vintage Airstream Club because they seem to be a fun group. Can I?

The Vintage Airstream Club, known as "The VAC," parks together at the campground. They will hold a number of activities under their tent. All rally attendees are welcome to attend. Their outdoor movie nights will be listed in the program (take your chair, jacket and bug spray). The VAC parade and open house are "don't miss it" events on June 29.

Will we be able to hear about the Airstream company from its executives?

Airstream Vice President of Sales Justin Humphreys delivers his annual update on the Airstream company June 29. You have to be present to win the cool free stuff Mr. Humphreys gives out in a mega-raffle.

I don't care for attending a rally over the July 4th Holiday. Will our club try any other dates?

Yes. The 2017 International Rally will be held July 22-29 in Escanaba, MI. This is a historical change for the club in response to requests from the membership.

Can I bring my dog with me to the seminars?

The Fairground prefers to keep dogs out of the buildings. A service animal can be brought into the buildings and must be leashed, per County regulations. Animals can be brought into the buildings in event of a weather emergency and must be on a leash or crated.

How do I find out where the seminar rooms are located?

Information will be in the printed program booklet you get at registration. Except in late emergencies, room changes are usually sent out in a text message and posted on the 2016 Lewisburg Rally Facebook page and a daily email sent to everyone at the rally.

Will there be Q & A time in the seminars so I can get my questions answered?

All speakers are supposed to allow time for questions. Some speakers prefer to answer questions as they move through their presentation while others like to hold questions until the end. If you can't get your question asked during the meeting there is usually time afterward to speak privately with the presenter.

Who is supposed to introduce the seminar speakers and remind people to quiet cell phones, etc.?

Presenters make their own introductions and briefly explain their qualifications. You can help all of us figure out ways to effectively remind people to silence their cell phones in any meeting. If you need help learning how to silence a cell phone stop at the Tech Help desk.

Will the exterior maintenance seminar address cleaning and maintaining the finish on newer trailers?

Yes, Rick March of Airstream will hold a seminar on "Upgrades and Exterior Maintenance" on June 29.

Are there seminars on simpler maintenance items, like cabinet hinges, replacing LEDs, clear coat scratches, Fantastic Fans, etc.?

There are several seminars where these topics could come up. Rick March of Airstream will hold a seminar on "Interior Maintenance Tips" July 1 that will include information on hinge adjustment. Later that day, Dave Schumann will lead a seminar on "General Airstream Maintenance" that will touch on basic operation of electrical systems and holding tank maintenance. Either of these seminars would be a good place to get questions answered. Once you recognize the seminar leaders then it is easier to approach them at any time during the rally with maintenance questions.

Will Airstream offer a seminar on the Airstream Interstate B-van?

Tom Carmichael from Airstream of Virginia and Stafford RV said he will have an Interstate at the rally for you to examine. Tom is WBCCI #2212 of the Northern Virginia Unit. If you want to arrange a specific time for a personal tour at the Rally you can contact him at cell phone 804-245-1710.

Are there seminars on vintage trailer restoration?

Go to the VAC open house on June 29 from noon to 3 pm. The open house is a good time to see the vintage Airstreams and talk with owners. This one-on-one is a good way to ask questions about what the owners did with their trailer restoration and why. During the open house the VAC also holds the Concour's d'Elegance competition, and judges will be reviewing and grading vintage Airstreams entered into the competition.

What seminar will help me learn what tools I should be carrying?

That would be a good question to ask at any of the maintenance seminars. The seminar on "Introduction to Caravanning" on July 2 will have Dave Schumann going through a list of the tools and other items you ought to have packed for a caravan.

Is there a clinic on communications on the road?

The Technology Help Desk in the Underwood Building can help you with information.

Why do some seminars begin so early in the morning?

There are a lot of seminars to fit in to the Rally schedule.

Will there be any seminars on organizing and storage inside my Airstream?

Several different seminars touch on this topic. The seminars "Rock Your RV" and "Time to Tailgate" include information on space saving ideas for the kitchen.

Is there a seminar on what I should expect on a caravan?

The "What is a Caravan" seminar is planned for June 30. In addition, there will be a caravan DVD Media Display set up in the Douglas Annex. Most of the caravan leaders have information tables with additional information and sign-up schedules. It is a good idea to discuss your interest with the caravan leaders since each caravan is unique. Caravans are one of the best benefits of WBCCI membership. Don't get discouraged because so many are filled. Sign up anyway to get on the "wait list;" or sign up for a caravan 2 or 3 years out.

Has anyone thought about a seminar on meal planning for trips or happy-hour cooking?

There will be a seminar titled "Time to Tailgate" on June 30. There will be a presentation on "convection/microwave cooking" July 1.

What should I do if the seminar room is too crowded?

If there is no seating and you prefer not to stand, ask the presenter to post the seminar notes to the Lewisburg website. They can be sent to ecc@wbcci.net. It probably won't be a problem this year with the Fairground facilities.

Is there a signboard or bulletin board where seminar changes are posted daily?

Seminar changes will be posted to the Lewisburg Facebook page, lewisburg.wbcc.net webpage, and included in the daily email if the ECC is notified.

Why are some good seminars scheduled prior to the opening ceremony?

Very few seminars are scheduled early. Often it has been planned that way at the request of the presenter. All the presenters are volunteers, except for the vendors.

Are there any popular seminars offered more than once?

Some of the vendors repeat their seminars during the Rally. Generally, the seminars led by volunteers have not been repeated. However, a presenter can offer to repeat a seminar if there is enough interest.

Writer: Harold Higgins. Research assistance: Carolyn Beardshear, Iain Cameron, Teresa Taylor, Lori Plummer, Deb Cocke, Beth McCall, Paul Ryan, Jim Cocke, Garrett McCormack, Darrell Waters. June 7, 2016.