

# NORVA News

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April 2020



## Novel Coronavirus impacts everything

NORVA Club President Tom Carmichael reports how the pandemic is affecting Airstream activities

It was wonderful to see so many attendees at the special, “meet and greet” luncheon at Golden Corral, Manassas, on Feb. 29. Arranged by Gerry & Patsy Nagel, NORVA’s newest members and several old-timers enjoyed good food, learned more about the Club, and got to know one another. But as you are well aware, not very long after that happy occasion, America changed drastically, and not in a good way.

The onslaught of the Novel Coronavirus is a global scourge now impacting heavily on every aspect of our lives. It is my greatest hope that all of us are in good health and safe at home with families during this difficult time.

I’m sure you know by now that the Region 3 Rally in Myrtle Beach, and the June 2020 Loveland International Rally in Colorado, are cancelled. If you haven’t yet seen it, you should view a video message from WBAC’s International President Mona Heath at this link:

[https://youtu.be/Rx8vU9yT\\_WQ](https://youtu.be/Rx8vU9yT_WQ)

Mona has issued specific guidance to all WBAC local clubs in consideration of this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, so I am using this month’s column to update everyone on what lies ahead for NORVA and WBAC.

In March, Region 3 President John Leake directed that all club rallies be suspended “until further notice,” based on guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the International Club leadership. I spoke with all NORVA officers, as well as Club members who volunteered to be rally and caravan hosts this coming

season. We agreed to cancel the rallies scheduled for April and May 2020. You can see these and other changes on this month’s updated NORVA Event Schedule (Page 6).

Like everyone else in America, we continue to monitor this crisis and its impact. We will not have any NORVA

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**CORONAVIRUS SAFETY**  
Follow these easy steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.

Sneeze or cough? Cover your mouth.

Disinfect surfaces around your home and work.

If you're sick, stay home.

American Red Cross

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("Virus impact" continues from p 1.) group activities for at least the next 60 days. We are still planning to conduct NORVA's Club Caravan, May 28 to June 13, fervently hoping the crisis will be resolved by then, at least to the degree that we can resume most normal travel and social interaction. Accordingly, Page 6 also features a coupon for those who would like to participate. However, we will make a final "go/no-go" decision later this month. If national and regional circumstances dictate, caravan leaders Jackson & Mary Ann McBroom have agreed that a decision to cancel the "Ohio Presidents" caravan will result in refunds of deposits and fees to those who signed up. If cancelled, we may reschedule this caravan for fall 2020 or spring 2021.

Regarding April and May:

- Know that Small Country Campground in Louisa, Va., where we had planned to have the April Breakout, remains open for individual camping (as of the end of March), but they are not allowing group gatherings. If you feel the need to get out in the open air and camp on your own, you can keep your rally camping reservation with Small Country for April 24-26. Or, you can cancel it by contacting them at 540-967-2431. If you cancel, they will refund to your credit card the amount you paid when you made the

reservation. Members who mailed to me the \$15 per person Breakout Rally fee, I will be returning your check.

- Also, many of you signed up for NORVA's Spring Rally (May 7 to 10) in Winchester/Philomont. If you already mailed the rally fee to host Peter West, he is returning to you the amount you paid (\$53 per person). Please call Candy Hill Campground (540-662-8010) to cancel your camping reservation for this rally. They will refund your deposit.

Right now, we are all obligated to stay at home and practice "social distancing." It is our shared hope that this will mitigate the spread of this modern-day plague.

I have always been an optimistic person when faced with a challenge. While this COVID-19 disease is unlike anything we have seen in our lifetimes, I believe that, as a nation, we can beat it sooner than later! It's worth repeating that we all need to do our part...stay at home, keep our space, wash our hands as often as possible, and enjoy quality time with family.

We will update the rally schedule as things get back to normal and we can once again look forward to getting "hooked up." Stay safe.

**Photo below: Getting to know you! NORVA held a luncheon rally at the end of February to welcome its newest members.**



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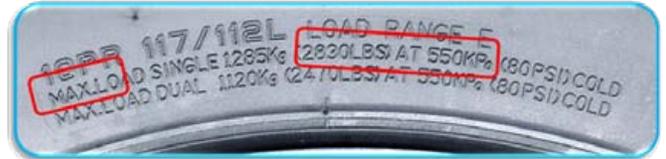




Hello, everyone. Spring is in the air and it's brought with it incredibly trying times. I know that Airstreamers are all vigilant and helpful people. So, besides hoping you stay healthy and happy during this period of global crisis, I thought it would be good to preserve some sense of normalcy and go over a few things about maintaining and servicing your Airstreams.

This month's column talks about **Running Gear**. It's what connects your trailer, motorhome, and tow vehicle to the ground. Let's look at a few major factors to ensure safe traveling. Here are a few things to check based on what I've encountered in the past year:

- **Tires.** Look at the actual condition of the tires. Are they dry rotted, oblong, very old? Are they inflated to the correct pressure? Remember, five years is about the maximum life of a trailer tire. They typically age out before they wear out. This goes for the tow vehicle as well. When replacing tires, make sure they are the correct load rating for the application. This is extremely important on the trailer as well as the tow vehicle. At the last International Rally, a man asked me to check his hitch because he had new tires put on his truck and they didn't feel right. I checked everything, even measuring the tongue weight, and all seemed correct; however, when checking tire pressures I discovered the tires on his truck were not rated correctly to handle the weight he had on them...a very dangerous situation.
- **Lug nuts.** Make sure they aren't damaged. Torque them to specification. Loose lug nuts are just as dangerous as extremely over-torqued lug nuts. On trailers, the nuts should be torqued to 110 pound-feet for an aluminum wheel and 100 pound-feet for a steel wheel. A quality torque wrench and appropriate size socket should be in your travel toolbox. If you had tires replaced



*Above: On a tire's sidewall is listed the maximum weight the tire can safely support, along with the recommended cold inflation measured in pounds per square inch (PSI).*

*Below: Proper lug nut torque is important! Loose lug nuts ruined this trailer wheel, causing elongation of the mounting holes.*



recently and are unsure if the lug nuts were over-tightened by a shop because they used an impact wrench, loosen them one at a time and torque them to spec with the torque wrench. For tow vehicle lug nut torque, check your owner's manual for the specification. In this regard, I must give a big thumbs up to NORVA's Lew Brodsky. He came by my shop recently so I could check an over-amp startup on his Airstream's air conditioner.

(Continues on p. 4.)

("Askin' Mastin," continued from p. 3.)

And while I was on the roof of his trailer, he was checking the lug nut torque on his F-250 truck, something I've rarely seen an owner do!

- **Wheel bearings.** Are they sealed bearings? Newer trailers are more than likely running sealed, never-lube bearings, but these still must be checked for end play. For older trailers, traditional bearings must be re-packed. When was the last time you had the bearings re-packed? My rule of thumb is to service the bearings at least once a year, no matter the bearing type. For traditional bearings, this means a cleaning and repacking with fresh grease and new seals. For sealed bearings it means checking end play.
- **Brakes.** I have found several trailers with brake wire connectors failing, or road debris disconnecting the wiring to the brakes. If you're running electric over hydraulic disk brakes when's the last time you flushed the system's brake fluid? For all trailers, it means pulling the drums and checking the brakes and magnets (or rotors, pads and calipers for rigs with disk brakes).
- **Coupler and safety chains, lighting, etc.** Check these each time you hook up or disconnect.
- **Shocks.** I've replaced lots of shocks over the winter. I am always asked how can you tell when a shock is bad? With the torsion axles installed on most Airstreams, shocks assist the suspension and require replacement when they are leaking, bent, or broken.

In summary, a word to the wise: failing to regularly check the above-listed items can turn a great trip into an utter nightmare. Stay safe!



*Photos by DJ Mastin, Broken Rivets RV Service, Ashland, Va.*

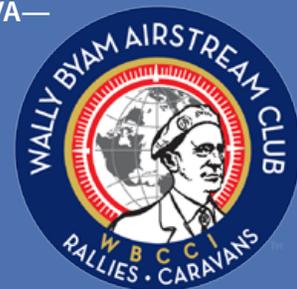
*A lack of grease caused the bearings on this trailer's wheel assembly to break apart, also damaging the spindle (top photo).*

*Bottom photo: Broken pieces on the drum after the bearing gave out.*

NORVA News is published periodically for members of NORVA—  
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Wally Byam Airstream Club (WBCCI)  
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Please send articles and photos to:  
[NORVAnews@cox.net](mailto:NORVAnews@cox.net).

Please visit NORVA's website at:  
<https://NorthernVirginia.airstreamclub.net>





## Where's Laural Veloz?

The "Three Mexican Gems" caravan is ending earlier than planned

The COVID-19 pandemic is global in scale and that means the Airstreamers in the 15 rigs of the Three Mexican Gems caravan are not immune from its effects. NORVA's Laural Veloz and her dog, Dixie, were still with the caravan when this issue of NORVA News was being prepared, but she reports that several members left early and headed back to the U.S.

The caravan began in Arizona on Feb. 7 and was supposed to end back there on April 7, but on March 21 the leaders and remaining participants voted to stop touring and head home. On March 26 Laural reported they were at their final Mexican campground and expecting to cross back into the U.S. at Nogales the next day.

"In Mexico people are starting to take precautions," Laural observed. "They are wearing gloves and masks and things like that, and signs of 'social distancing' are becoming more evident."

Once the caravanners cross the border they will be required to self-quarantine for 14 days. Laural wasn't sure where she would be doing that.

NORVA News will report in May how things worked out for Laural and her fellow Airstream travelers. Meanwhile, we know that she is an extraordinarily strong lady who knows how to roll with the punches. On her Facebook page she wrote:

"I know deep inside that all will be right again in this world. Just push through it because, with time and love of friends and family, all things work out as intended. Life's journey kicks you down sometimes, but you gotta get back up and have faith that it's all for good reason. So stay safe and healthy, my friends."

*Above: Laural's Basecamp and tow vehicle pause in Sinaloa, Mexico.*

*Right: Unlike caravans in the U.S., the 15 rigs in this caravan always traveled in convoy for safety.*

*Below: A "mercado" in the Mexican state of Durango features decorative bottles of exiliris.*

*Bottom: Laural rides a trail in the Santuario de la Sierra Cincua, a national santurary to which Monarch butterflies migrate for the winter months.*



## NORVA's newest member is not really "new"

Dana Jean Hasty owns a 2008 17-foot, Airstream Safari trailer. She originally joined WBCCI and NORVA in 2009 and was active for four years, but she did not renew her membership after 2013. The Woodbridge resident decided recently that it was time to re-join the Club and NORVA is delighted to welcome her back to the fold! With Dana aboard, NORVA now has 68 member households.



# OHIO PRESIDENTS & HISTORIC ICONS

NORVA CLUB CARAVAN, May 28 to June 13, 2020



*Please note: This caravan may be cancelled because of the virus pandemic. If so, you will be notified by e-mail and your deposit will be refunded.*

To participate, please complete and mail this coupon **before April 11, 2020**, along with your deposit check, payable to:

Jackson McBroom, Caravan Leader, 1661 River Ridge, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Total cost to participate is \$840 per trailer/MH (camping fees), plus \$240 per person (tours/meals).

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ WBCCI# \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of which Airstream club/unit? \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Phones: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_ RV length: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

How many participants? \_\_\_\_\_. **Deposit enclosed: \$325.00.** (Balance of caravan fee is due May 15, 2020.)

Note: You can also e-mail the requested information to: [jtmcbm@aol.com](mailto:jtmcbm@aol.com).

For more information or answers to questions, call Jackson: 757-345-0060 (H), or 757-746-6535 (C).



Jan. 12, 2020 Sun. 1.00 p.m.	“Grease” the smash hit musical Riverside Center Dinner Theater Fredericksburg, Va. Hosts: Bill & Sylvia Worrall	July 17-19 Fri.-Sun.	Riverside Rally Shenandoah River State Park Bentonville, Va. Hosts: Doug & Susan Anderson
Feb. 2 Sun. 5:00 p.m.	Super Bowl Party Amissville, Va. Hosts: Hoosiers	Aug. 3-8 Mon.-Sat.	Old Fiddlers Convention Rally, Galax, Va. Host: Julian Clements, Region 3
Feb. 29 Sat. 1:00 p.m.	New Member Lunch. Host: Nagel Golden Corral, Manassas, Va.	Sept. 11-13 Fri.-Sun.	Virginia Commonwealth Rally Small Country Campground Louisa, Va. Hosts: Tidewater Airstream Club #111
April 1-5 Wed. to Sun.	Region 3 Rally Ocean Lakes Family Campground Myrtle Beach, S.C. Host: Pat Leake	Oct. 22-25 Thurs.-Sun.	“Alumalina” Rally Tom Johnson Park, Marion, N.C.. *Event changed Hosts: Carolinas Airstream Club #21
April 24-26 Fri.-Sun.	Breakout & Maintenance Rally Small Country Campground Louisa, Va. Host: Tom Carmichael	Nov. 5-8 Thurs.-Sun.	“Silver in the Streets” Urban Rally Abingdon, Va. *Newly listed Hosted by Virginia Airstream Club #109
May 7-10 Thurs.-Sun.	Spring Rally Philomont and Winchester, Va. Hosts: Peter & Elizabeth West <b>Cancelled!</b>	Nov. 13-15 Fri.-Sun.	Exploring the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Fort Belvoir, Va. Hosts: Jones, Nagel, Kropp
May 28-June 13 <b>Decision pending!</b>	NORVA Airstream Club Caravan In Ohio. Leader: Jackson McBroom	Dec. 5, 2020 Sat., 12 noon	Holiday Brunch at the home of Ed & Beth Jones, Alexandria, Va.
June 20-27 <b>Cancelled!</b>	WBAC International Rally Loveland, Colorado		