

The Capitol Times Newsletter

The Official Newsletter of the Washington DC Unit, WBCCI

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September 29, 2004

Greetings to all Members and Affiliates.

Our camping season is fast coming to an end which means it's time to begin thinking about next season's schedule. Most of you may have seen Paul Waddell's e-mail earlier this month reminding everyone of the need for volunteers for hosting next season's rallies. I'd like to emphasize this fact and solicit your assistance and volunteer spirit in coming up with suggestions for the rally season. As you all know, the Cherry Blossom Rally is our premier and inaugural rally of the season. Clayton Rogers has given us the use of the Rogers Farm again this coming year. It was suggested at this year's meeting that we consider moving this rally a bit farther back so as to make sure it is a bit warmer and not so rainy. We don't want to get too far out of the window for the cherry blossoms blooming in Washington, so we need suggestions for what you think would be a better weekend.

In the past we've hosted rallies in May, June, August, September and October. Please let us have your suggestions and your volunteer spirit. We'll be having a business meeting at the installation rally in Berryville and would like to have your suggestions beforehand, so give it some thought and let me hear from you.

As I write this edition of the newsletter we are in the midst of a downpour that started last evening just after the campfire gathering at The Big "E" Rally being held at the Sodom Mountain Campground near Southwick, MA. We arrived Thursday afternoon after a drive up from Colonial Beach, VA to find the Moores (#15116) and the Platts (#2940) ready to host the rally. Several of the attendees had arrived already and were in the midst of setting up. There will be more on the activities of the weekend later in this edition.

The Outer Banks Rally was a real success, hosted by Margaret Natof (#2307) and her sister, Gayle McClelland (#6945) at Camp Hatteras, Waves, NC during the week of August 15-22. Hurricane Charley had paid the Outer Banks a visit in the week prior to our rally, but did little visible damage to the campground and the local area. Early arrivals didn't happen because of the scare. Several attendees delayed their arrival because the lingering threat of high winds. There was heavy rain on Sunday evening, the arrival day. There were a total of 18 units participating, including one motorhome and one Argosy trailer. We had a total of 33 adults and 17 children. This was the most children attending than at any previous WDCU rally and we were glad to see their participation and enthusiasm.

Monday and Tuesday were days to relax and play tourist or get settled. The weather began to cooperate and we enjoyed sunshine once again. Awnings and air conditioning were welcome and very useful.

The humidity was evident. While the weather was hot, ocean breezes made it reasonably comfortable and we found people out enjoying the sun and working on their trailers, installing their new numbers or preparing seams for a new bead of Vulkem. Thursday evening a line of strong thunderstorms rolled through the area bringing with it strong winds which drew people out of their trailers between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. taking down their awnings because of the heavy winds. Fortunately we all got them in successfully and no one sustained damage because of it.

Wednesday was posted as "kids" day at the beach. In a group effort – mostly adults – we built a 6-7 foot scale model sand Airstream which we dubbed the "Hatteras" model, along the lines of a '54 Flying Cloud. It was complete with "whale tail" panels, hitch, propane bottles, side labels, Bargman lights, blue striping and was given the number "1234." Our activity drew quite a bit of attention from other beachgoers who would stop and ask about our sand Airstream. After completion a group photo was taken and hopefully we'll be able to persuade WBCCI to publish it in a future edition of the "Blue Beret." Our hosts served peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, chips and juice boxes to the group for an on-the-beach lunch. The ocean water was very temperate and we all enjoyed a romp in the surf afterwards. The Airstream survived until Friday morning when it was vandalized.

Wednesday evening concluded after dinner with an ice cream social in the Conference Center. Peter Daniel (#3592) provided a slide show of the day's photos at the beach.

Thursday evening's activity was a group outing to see the well known North Carolina outdoor drama "The Lost Colony" on Roanoke Island which was arranged by Harley Muse (#7566). It is a recreation of events associated with Sir Walter Raleigh's founding of an English colony in the New World.

Continental breakfasts were provided Thursday through Sunday. Impromptu and spontaneous potluck dinners were held during the week, as well as the traditional happy hour each evening. Friday evening's dinner was a group potluck as is tradition with the Unit. Saturday evening's dinner was a steak dinner provided by our hosts. The gathering was, as always, a success and enjoyed by all. At the conclusion of dinner ribbons were presented to participants in the week-long art contest "Airstreaming at the Beach." Hunt Jones (#6506) presented a gift to Garnett Horner (#2878), host of the 2004 Cherry Blossom Rally. Harley Muse presented gifts to Margaret Natof and Gayle McClelland, hosts of the Hatteras Rally.

Sunday was departure day for most and everyone said their good-byes. There were several who remained for a few more days at the beach.

We sincerely thank Margaret and Gayle for their tremendous efforts in hosting this rally.

And now, back to the Big "E" Rally. The following is a rally report written by Linda Moore (#15116):

BIG E RALLY
NORTH MEETS MID ATLANTIC
Linda Moore

September 16-19 was the date for the Big E Rally. Named the Big E as the nickname for The Eastern States Exhibition held in Springfield, MA the last two weeks of September every year. The Eastern States exhibition is one of New England's traditions of state and county fairs. This particular fair is the largest with activities and events to keep anyone active for days. Events include a circus, midway, 4H, FFA (Future Farmers of America), tractor pulls, draft horse and oxen pulls, dressage and more. Last but not least to mention is the myriad of food vendors with gastronomic delights to tempt all tastes.

The rally was hosted by Linda Moore from the Washington DC Unit, and Nancy Platt from the New England Unit. This was an idea that I came up with to show off our part of the country with our diverse mix of unit members from all over the country and also to mix with the New England Unit that we often do rallies with. I thought both units would enjoy meeting new people and would enjoy a camping experience together. This was also an opportunity to invite our "buddies" of other brand rigs and also those that belong to the VAC. The event was a success.

There were 29 rigs in attendance at the Sodom Mountain Campground in Southwick, MA. Thursday was the anxious anticipation of meeting up with old friends and meeting new ones. By the end of the day, 16 rigs were situated in the safari field all with full hook-ups. All were happy to be there and enjoyed a great campfire, a WDCU tradition, with Stuart Natof and John Gilliland doing the honors of starting it up.

On Friday most enjoyed the Big E and returned to the campground to show off their newly acquired treasures from the fair. Happy hour was moved to the pavilion due to the dark clouds that were approaching. The campground was extremely accommodating with making sure our every need was fulfilled. They even made us a huge pot of New England Clam Chowder, which was greatly appreciated with the weather. With such dark skies, comfort food was the need, and they came through. The weather did hold off until late so a campfire was enjoyed by all once again.

Saturday was a very wet day with the monsoons starting the night before around midnight and not letting up until after 2 pm. Not a total loss as some still headed off to the fair and others ventured off to an old diner and the Indian Motorcycle Museum and some to a BBQ joint in VT. Happy hour was followed by an impromptu potluck dinner that all enjoyed, followed by a campfire, of course.

Sunday's weather was beautiful but cold. Once again it was sad saying so long to old friends and new. We look forward to our next rally for our unit in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley in VA. Your hosts for that weekend are Paul and Mary Kim Waddell. If you haven't already made reservations to join us, please think about doing so. It will be the WDCU's installation rally and sounds like it will be a wonderful time.

Linda Moore
WBCCI 15116
1964 Tradewind

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new members and would ask you to welcome them yourselves when you see them.

George & Maureen Beebe (jrb@comcast.net)
Lynn & Gary Brink (thebrinks@comcast.net)
Pete & Katrina Daniel (pete@consultadc.com)
Joe Gilmartin & Margo Hickman (flyrodbldr@aol.com)
Star & Peter Grover (sgrover@voicenet.com)
David & Merry Jane Robertson (david@robertsonhome.net)
Bruce & Dawn Waters (bwater@npr.org)
Jake Brubaker & Linda Bell (belnrg13@suscom.net)

New affiliates to be welcomed are:

Richard & Robin Geschwindner (rgesch@cyberportal.net)

Pete Highlands (satdjpete@comcast.net)
Hunt & Susan Jones (hhcjones@att.net)
Bert & Dot Kalet (dotkalet@juno.com)

This is a good point to remind our members and affiliates that the time has come to renew your membership and pay your 2005 dues (remember, they are just \$1 for the unit dues and \$45 for International – a BARGAIN!).

- A unit membership registration form is posted on our website if you choose to use that format. It should be printed, filled in, and mailed to Margaret. Her address is on the form, and checks should be made payable to “WDCU” (U.S. funds only).
- It is of extreme importance that we have current e-mail addresses for each of you, members and affiliates, especially considering the recent crash of the Airstream.net. So please, keep us informed and up to date with this vital information (this is the way we communicate with our membership and conduct unit business).
- If you are VAC members, I’m sure Scott Scheuermann (WBCCI #13497) would like to hear from you also. The VAC dues are \$20/year.

The year’s remaining rally is the The Balloon Rally in the Valley hosted by Paul and MaryKim Waddell. The dates are October 14-17. This is a joint rally with the VAC and will also be our Unit’s installation rally. The campsite is located near Berryville, Virginia and information is already posted on the website along with a registration form, so make plans now and let’s have a colossal turnout. This is the final 2004 rally planned and will be the stepping-stone for our 2005 schedule.

Our next newsletter is scheduled for publication and posting on the website during the first week of November. If there are items you would like to have inserted, please submit them to Harley Muse (foxdown@aol.com) as soon as possible, but certainly no later than the last week in October in order to ensure inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter.