

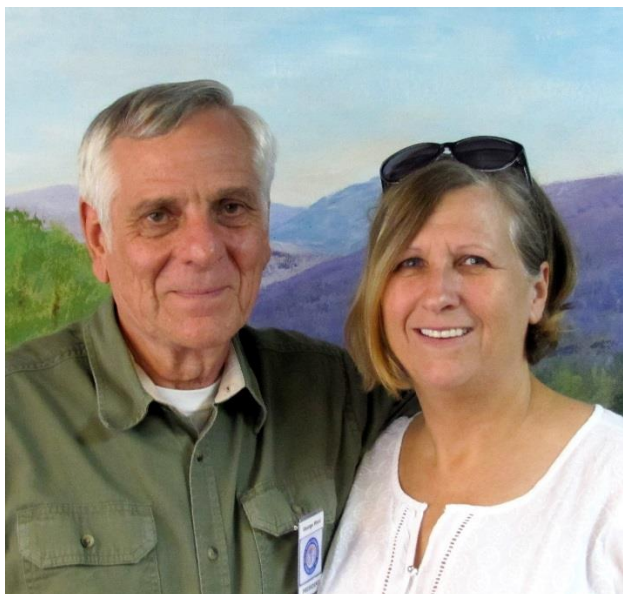


Peach State Caravanner

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Everybody is a kid!



We are embarking on a new season, and are grateful that the park is looking the best it has in quite some time. I am grateful to you, the members, and to property manager Dick Lloyd for all the hard work put in last year. I am scheduling the Cable TV people to meet us during work week to make needed repairs and possibly to add some more channels. The water tank has to be pressure-washed and sanitized for our two-year inspection; Dan Keisling will do this with the help of our members to save money.

All this is part of the behind-the-scenes activity that must be accomplished just to keep the park open and functioning properly. Some are necessary to meet the state and national regulatory requirements and allow the Top of Georgia to stay open and, when possible, to further enhance the amenities we enjoy here.

This will also be the official kick-off of our Remembrance and Memorial Brick fundraiser. We need your ideas and input on the design and layout of our Memorial Walk at the flag pole to make it a success.

To recap: we are selling commemorative engraved bricks to build back our financial safety cushion, and the bricks will be attractively displayed in a special area or areas as a permanent decorative feature of the Top of Georgia. We will be discussing specifics such as where to place them and the price to

charge for each to ensure the project raises enough money to build a comfortable cushion.

Another change in 2016 is spreading the responsibility for rally planning. Rob Kelly beefed up the rallies and then carried the load alone for years, doing a spectacular job...but we were about to ride a good horse to death. Rob needed a break. I stepped up to the plate for this first 2016 rally, so if you have any suggestions or complaints, come to me...then volunteer to plan a rally yourself! Rob left a good foundation so you won't have to re-invent the wheel. One of Rob's most successful innovations was the Youth Rally in mid-summer, and we hope he'll at least keep his hand in that celebration. After all, adult kids don't come a dime a dozen.

Still another volunteer opportunity continues to be hosting, headed by Ken Rabren for another year. He's another horse we're riding hard; many times when no one volunteered to host, Ken and Kathy filled in themselves. Things seemed to have turned the corner on the hosting, however; thanks to Ken's efforts and our volunteer spirit, the hosting list for 2016 has limited openings. Now hosting slots are becoming much sought-after prizes!

Hope to see you all at the TOP for our work days and first rally starting 18 April. We are changing back to three breakfasts instead of an evening meal, because the breakfasts have been a better gathering to meet with old friends and make new friends. Gas prices are the lowest they have been in quite some time, so come up and enjoy our Park and caravans. The Top of Georgia is the perfect place to enjoy the beauty of the Georgia mountains. We look forward to closing ranks and making Top of Georgia even stronger than it has ever been. In that spirit, I wish to announce our theme for 2016:

***Alone we can do little.
Together we can do much.***

--Helen Keller

--George and Gail Ward

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Loving Concerns

Our membership was hit hard this winter. I am sure many of you suffered with flu, pneumonia, strep throat and other seasonal problems thru the winter that I was not aware of. Please remember to let me know when you or a member you know are sick. It makes us all feel better to be remembered and to know that others are praying for us. I can only respond to needs that I am aware of.

Illness, injury and surgery:

Jimmy Jarrett is in the Medical Center in Macon and doing well; **Ben Moon**, knee replacement surgery; **Taylor Sheppard**, daughter of Tracey and Kelly, ear surgery; **Lisa Roberts**, shoulder surgery; **Billy Wallace**, surgery in December; **Ed Starling** at North Florida Regional, a recurrence of lung problems.

We Remember:

Fred Gavin, who has been confined most of the winter; **Albert Turner**, failing health; **Jane Miller**; **Sara Beams**; **Jesse Lyle**; **Jack Cooper**; **Norma Mantz**; **Fain Edwards**; **Bob Glancy**; **Dick Martiny** is doing better, and hopes to get back in the Airstream soon; **Ben and Irene Roach**--Irene has recently been in the hospital but is at home now, and Ben is still coping with his leukemia. **Gary Waters**, still battling esophageal cancer.

Sympathy:

We lost many family members over the winter. Remember the family of **Bobbye Ellen Barrett**, who died on March 11 in Americus, Ga.; the family of **Claudia "Florrie" Moehringer**, who died on March 10, sister-in-law of Pierce Haney. Also the Families of **Angela Tucker** and **Charles Maddocks**; **Ed Starling**, past long-time member; **Mrs. Margaret Wild**, mother of Bill Wild; **Rhunette Bledsoe's** brother; **Julian Clement's** mother; and **Lorraine Thomley's** sister. Our sympathy goes out to each family.

Please continue to keep me informed about members with needs: phone 229-924-0917 or 478-244-1566; e-mail parksplace1953@att.net
--Mary Ann Parks, Chair, Loving Concerns

Dates in WBCCI history

1867 The United States bought Alaska from Russia for \$7,200,200 on March 30. The lure of going "way up North" has enticed hundreds of Airstreamers to that state over the years. You probably know somebody who has been on the Alaskan caravan, who is going to go, or who wants to go.

1956 During the last week of March, members of the 1956 WBCCI European Caravan sailed for Europe, marking the beginning of the first big caravan to cross the ocean. The caravan included 36 Airstreams, 2 VW Microbus Combis and 87 people. From the Southeast region, there were 2 women from Atlanta; a couple and a family of 5 from Miami, a family of 4 from Coral Gables, a couple from Stuart, and a couple from Daytona Beach. (Florida was well represented.) This year marks the 60th anniversary of that caravan!

1960 The members of the 1960 European Caravan spent March 30 preparing for their March 31 sailing, thus we are marking the 56th anniversary of that trip across the sea.

1970 At The Meadow, a lush breeding farm in Caroline County, Virginia, the thoroughbred who came to be known as Secretariat was foaled on March 30. In 1973 he became the first Triple Crown winner in 25 years and is "considered one of the greatest thoroughbreds of all time."

2016 Many Airstreamers are making plans to gather at The Meadow in April for the WBCCI Region 3 Rally. In the "Spirit of Secretariat," we promise lots of friends, much excitement, good food, and great entertainment!

Plan to attend the Region 3 Rally, April 27 - May 1, 2016 at Meadow Event Park in Doswell, Virginia. Yes, it's "horse country" and so, so much more! Register at the Region 3 website: www.region3.wbcci.net ; click on Rally Registration in the left column, complete the form and submit, or email: Region3registrar@gmail.com.

Encourage your friends to register! Deadline is April 15th. We sincerely thank Joe Peplinski, WBCCI Historian, for his research and contributions to the above.

2015 Christmas Luncheon at Lake Pines



Mike's Rivets

Spring is here and Airstreams are everywhere—on TV, in magazines, and on the road! Business is booming at the factory. The expansion of facilities is nearly complete and employment is at 630 people. In my opinion, the vice-president of sales, Justin Humphries, and president, Bob Wheeler, have been catalysts for a change in attitude at the corporate level. They make us feel like partners again. More importantly, we are adding dealers. The latest *Blue Beret* had an article about Tampa RV which shows the commitment of dealers to the future.

4 Right in the backyard of Top of Georgia is a new dealer—Southland RV, located at 1794 Bolton Circle, Norcross (770.717.2890). They are an expansion of Southland Motorhome located in Buford. Some of our members have done business with them at that location. The new dealership can be a little hard to find, so use your GPS to help you get there. They are next door to Carmax off I-85. You can exit at Beaver Run or Indian Trail. They don't have a sign up yet so it can be a little tricky.

The new dealer does give us a place to order parts; they will even drop-ship to you. This answers the question I get all the time—where do I get parts? I believe the dealership will be a plus for us as they get their feet on the ground. Remember to support your local dealer or they may not be there when you really need something yesterday!

Safe travels, my friend.

Mike King
WBCCI #1781



The Pine Tree Forum



Blow it, David!



Plenty of hands to clear the downed tree



A fascinating tour of the Gen. Longstreet Inn at Gainesville



The kids' talent show: preview the stars of tomorrow!



Close call!



Everyone's a winner in the duck race!



An old favorite: cards in the library



Duell and Linda: mainstays at "The Top"



Hams?



Musician's-eye-view





Chewing the fat....



Hot licks by Ken



That soft, sweet, celestial music of the spheres....



World-class table decorations, courtesy of Mary Ann



George Ward, the new president, in full cry...



Come join us!



Can't sit still!



“I’ll take the blonde,”

Howard NeSmith declared to his buddy when they spotted a car with three pretty girls cruising Cherry St. in their hometown of Macon on New Year’s Day 1956. He has contended for 60 years it was love at first sight.

Whatever it was, Vonceil was wearing an engagement ring when Howard departed for a year in North Africa at the end of his 30-day leave. She was a 17-year-old senior, and Howard, 19, had joined the Air Force right out of high school. Howard returned in February 1957, and they were married April 27. They spent their first year in Savannah where Howard was stationed at Hunter AFB. He retired in 1990 as an electrical engineering technician for the Dept. of Defense at Robins AFB with 38 years of service. Howard holds a Ga master electrician’s license and after retirement he volunteered with Howard Jr.’s HVAC business. Today he volunteers for Kevin’s contracting business on Robins, delivering heavy equipment parts. Howard joined the Masonic Lodge in 1963 like his father, brother, and father-in-law, and in 1967 served as Worshipful Master. In 2015 Kevin became a Mason with his dad and proudly wears his grandfather NeSmith’s Masonic ring.

From the beginning the NeSmiths loved camping, raising their two boys and two girls to love it also; a favorite destination was Disney’s Fort Wilderness. After graduating from a tent to a truck camper, they bought a cottage on Lake Sinclair where the children and grandchildren learned to tube and waterski. (The grandchildren eventually totaled five grandsons, five granddaughters, and three great-granddaughters.) In 1998 they bought an Airstream motorhome, joined the Top of

Georgia, and again hit the road. Howard drove from Georgia to Fairbanks, covering the entire Alaskan Highway one summer. They traveled the Eastern seaboard all the way to Nova Scotia and back. Another trip took them to California and the base where he was stationed in 1955.

The NeSmiths pride themselves in being a three-generation Airstream family. Their oldest daughter, Nanette Harmon, and her husband, Gary, joined in 2004 after buying a 25-foot trailer; and Andrea King and her husband, Rick, along with twins Emily and Sarah, age 15, joined in 2006 after purchasing a motorhome. Nanette’s adult sons Bo and Matt spent many happy hours at the top when they were young teens. Emily and Sarah have attended the youth rally for many years and made lasting friends.

After twelve years as a full-time homemaker, Vonceil returned to school in 1969 to become a teacher with Howard’s full support; he moved from day shift to evening shift at Robins AFB in order to care for three-year-old Kevin. In three years she graduated cum laude with a BA from Mercer University and started teaching the same year Kevin began school. Two years later she earned a Masters from Mercer as well. She taught for 13 years before becoming an administrator for 16 years and had the pleasure of teaching both Andrea and Kevin in the seventh grade.

Ten years later the education bug bit her again after the children were all adults; she was accepted into the doctoral program at UGA. Howard drove her to Athens for years while she attended weekend classes, earning a six-year Specialist Degree and a Doctorate in Educational Supervision. She vows she could never have accomplished any of her dreams without Howard’s full support.

They will never forget the Memorial Day Rally in 2008. That Sunday morning while walking up to breakfast, Howard suffered a heart attack that resulted in triple by-pass surgery at Gainesville. Along with that surgery he had eight others from 2000 to 2011, many caused by arthritis—shoulders, knees and hips.

In 2007 they celebrated their 50th anniversary with a fifties party for the grandchildren. Vonceil summarizes that “it’s been a wonderful life.”

And Howard is just glad he got “the blonde.”



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2016 Rally Schedule

(All rallies start Wednesday evening.)

Date	Event	Location
April 13-14	Volunteer Work Days	ToG Park
April 15-19	Spring Rally/Gen'l Bus. Mtg.	ToG Park
April 29-May 3	Region 3 Rally	Asheville, NC
May 20-25	Memorial/Buddy Rally/Homecoming	ToG Park
June 17-21	Summer/Youth Rally	ToG Park
June 26-July 6	WBCCI International Rally	Farmington, NM
July 2-5	Patriotic Celebration	ToG Park
Sept. 2-5	Labor Day /Buddy Rally/Elections	ToG Park
October 7-11	Fall Rally & Installation of Officers	ToG Park
December 6-8	Christmas Campout	TBA
December 8	Christmas Luncheon	TBA

Officers

President:: George Ward; President-Elect: Max Laseter; First VP: Bill Wild; Secretary: Michelle Schuler;
Treasurer: Cindy Carr
Directors: Connie Crowe, Joe Ellis, Jack McDonald, Jackie Moon President Emeritus: Jean Gilbert