

Texas Highland Lakes Unit

January, 2011



President's Message ~ Harvey Craig

The holidays are over for awhile and things will be more normal. A new year brings new thoughts, resolutions, and optimism. Some of us make well intentioned resolutions; however, often end up breaking them. I hope that each of you will resolve to try and become friends with one of our new THLU members. In addition, I along with Marque Mooney, Membership Chair, hope that each of you will resolve to try and recruit a new member into our unit in 2011.

Growth in unit numbers is not the main objective. A new member brings so much more to our unit than just another number or just another friend. A new member brings his/her vast knowledge, experience, background, beliefs, ideas, and opinions. These are truly needed to help improve our unit and make it a much stronger and more productive unit. I have often said to others when describing THLU that we are an extremely diverse group of individuals with widely different backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, and life styles. I think this is the reason that our unit is not suffering and is not in such a decline as many of the other WBCCI units within Region 9 and the nation are.

Some people think that a club or group should be uniform. In my opinion such uniformity will end up spelling doom, disaster, and boredom for that particular organization. I feel the only things that should be uniform are: (1) that we own and share an interest in an Airstream product; (2) that we appreciate and enjoy travel, camping, and the wonders of this world; (3) that we care about, respect, and appreciate the camaraderie; and (4) that we enjoy a good time.

In my former job, I always made a concerted and

calculated effort to hire not only the smartest but the most diverse and eclectic staff that I could. I discovered that such a staff would be much more productive, creative, and collegial; thus, making the workplace more vibrant, innovative, productive, and fun---yes, workplaces can be fun. I feel that this same thing can hold true for THLU and WBCCI. I find myself energized by the ideas and suggestions that members bring. I am excited to see Frank Saenz assume the role of Activity Chair, a newly created committee, for our unit. Frank is a young man fairly new not only to our unit but to RVing. The few times that I have communicated with him, I have been energized by not only some of his ideas but more importantly by his level of enthusiasm and commitment. Such enthusiasm, commitment, and optimism are extremely positive and can be very contagious. Don't think that such energy and optimism can only be found in the young. I have seen members well past my age, more actively engaged, and energized than myself; they, too, rub off on those around them. It is my hope that more THLU members will become even more active, engaged, and energized in the unit, its activities, and in WBCCI in 2011.

We are blessed with so much, and we have such opportunities. I feel very confident that THLU will not only remain a vibrant unit, but that it will inspire others and become even more important and enjoyable for all of its members in 2011 and well into the future.

I look forward to fun, fellowship, and adventure for all THLU members in this New Year!

Texas Hold 'Em Mid-Winter IBT Caravan Departs January 24

All THLU members are encouraged to attend the Mid-Winter IBT Rally which will be held at the Richard Borchard Regional Fairgrounds in Robstown, Texas, January 24-28. As of the first of January, only five motions exist for consideration by IBT; however, several more may be approved including our unit motion.

Our THLU caravan to IBT will depart on Monday, January 24. We shall meet at Camping World located at 3891 I-35S, New Braunfels at 9:30 with departure from Camping World by 10:00. (From I-35S take exit 193 and then continue south on the Frontage Road to Camping World. From I-35N take exit 193 and turn left to cross I-35 and then turn left (South) on the Frontage Road to Camping World.) We shall have lunch around 11:20 in Pleasanton either at Mc Bee's Barbecue at 309 2nd Street; or at Don Jesus Restaurante at 1201 3rd Street. We should park at the fairgrounds in Robstown around 3 with happy hour at 4:30. Please let me know if you plan to join us for the Caravan to IBT so we won't depart Camping World without you--- eharv@msn.com or 512/633-0380.

As of this time, the members who have indicated that they will be attending IBT include: Harvey & Gail Craig, Myron & Kathryn Fischer, Willard & Linda Fischer, Jim and Janie Haddaway, Ardell Mayton, Jimmy & Marque Mooney, and perhaps Stuart and Ilene Wetterschneider. Please let me know---- eharv@msn.com or 512/633-0380 if you are going to attend the Texas Hold 'Em Mid-Winter IBT Rally even if you are not going to be on our caravan.

As of the first part of January, only five (5) motions have been approved for the IBT. The motions include: (1) add the immediate past Region President to the governing bodies of the region; (2) limit unnecessary front end cost expenditures for international rally until a reasonable estimate of the number of attendees can be determined; (3) approve a unit flag for the Georgia Unit; (4) dissolve the Genealogy intra club; (5) to be sure that the chairman of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee follows procedures with a requirement

of the Constitution and ByLaws Committee to write a report to Headquarters for a motion made by Region 11 by March 20, 2010.

Region 9 President C. C. Garrtman has been working to get Texas Highland Lakes Unit motion that was made by John Irwin, seconded by Judy Hazen and passed at our May Business Meeting added. This motion deals with the selection of the Nominating Committee. As of this time, it looks very promising that the THLU motion will be approved and presented by Region 9 at IBT.

In addition, Region 11 and the Denver Colorado Unit are working to get its motion that was unanimously passed by the Denver Colorado Unit and then unanimously passed by all units of Region 11 presented at IBT. This motion changes how bylaws and policies are reviewed and audited by placing the responsibility upon the WBCCI Delegates and not the Board of Trustees. This would remedy the fact that the Board of Trustees now has the power to create bylaws and then determine if those bylaws are consistent with its given constitutional authority which in effect allows the Board of Trustees to review and audit its own efficiency, effectiveness, accuracy, and appropriateness of action. Under this motion, the Board of Trustees still has the right to create bylaw and policy; however, those bylaws and policies would be reviewed and audited by the WBCCI Delegates.

Apparently, Region 11 has encountered difficulty with the Constitution and ByLaws Committee in getting its motion moved forward for IBT. In my opinion, this is the reason for Region 11 passing motion # 5 (as noted above. in this article).

The February THLU Newsletter will have a summary of the actions taken at the IBT as well as a report on the rally.

McKinney Falls State Park Campout is February 18-20

THLU first no-host campout will be held at McKinney Falls State Park in Austin on February 18-20 which is President's Day Weekend. Only twelve sites were reserved and those are now filled; however, the park indicated in January that it still

had 18 sites open for reservations. If you are interested in attending please go to the State of Texas Parks website (www.tpwd.state.tx.us) to make a reservation or call the park directly at: 512/243-1643.

The Park has some 744 acres and is named for Thomas F. McKinney, who came to Texas in the early 1820's with Stephen F. Austin. Around 1851, McKinney came to Travis County and started a race horse farm. He built a large two-story home, stone fences, and the first flour mill in the area. Preserved in the park are the ruins of his trainer's cabin and the ruins of his own homestead.

Activities of the park include: camping, hiking, mountain biking, road biking, fishing, and wildlife observation. The points of interest that can be found in the park includes: McKinney's homestead, the gristmill, the horse trainer's cabin, upper falls, lower falls, bouldering rocks, a beach area, rock shelter trail and the Smith Visitor Center that has hands on exhibits, a native wildscape, and a scenic overlook of the upper falls.

Big Bend and Ruidoso Caravans Become Sanctioned Caravans

Both of the THLU caravans have been sanctioned as official WBCCI Unit caravans for 2011. The Davis Mountains/Big Bend Caravan number is U-392. and the Ruidoso New Mexico Caravan number is U-393. As of this month, WBCCI has sanctioned only four unit caravans and no regional caravans for 2011. Clearly, WBCCI units and regions need to work on organizing more caravans.

The Davis Mountains/Big Bend Caravan in March is full; however, I have none listed on standby. The Ruidoso New Mexico Caravan in October currently still has eight (8) openings. If you are interested in this caravan, mail in a registration form. Registration forms as well as information about the caravan can be found on our website www.THLU.org under "Caravans".

WBCCI Membership Falls

With the national economy and the increase of WBCCI dues, it was expected that WBCCI membership would fall. WBCCI membership has fallen off from 2010. In 2010, national membership stood at 5,881 and so far this year it stands at 5,467--a loss of 414 members which represents a 7% decrease.

In addition, WBCCI currently has five units that do not have the required ten members to continue as a unit; these units include: West Texas Unit, San Fernando Valley, South Georgia, Appalachian Unit of West Virginia, and Monterey Bay California.

WBCCI regions and units are asked to double up on their membership drives. Marque Mooney is our Membership Chairman and has been working hard in contacting new Airstream owners as well as MAL members of WBCCI to share with them reasons why they should consider joining the Texas Highland Lakes Unit. Please remember securing new members is every member's responsibility and not just our membership chairman. Be sure to carry extra membership packets with you in your Airstream as you travel around. Marque may be contacted at: marquemoooney@gmail.com or on her cell at: 254/592-5245.

Want to Improve Your Computer Skills? Consider Region 9 Computer Rally February 27 - March 4 at NTAC

Region 9 will be presenting a Computer Rally February 27 - March 4, 2011 held at the North Texas Airstream Community in Hillsboro, Texas.

Jack D'Atre and Donna Scott will provide the leadership for this rally which will offer both Mac and PC instruction. The rally will start with a beginner's class on Sunday, February 27 at 3:00 p.m.

The rally fee will include five lunches at the Hill College Cafeteria which has a wide variety of food choices. In addition there will be instruction in Word/Pages, PowerPoint/Keynote, Excel/Numbers, Skype, Adobe Photo Shop Elements, and other topics that will be announced later.

A “celebration” potluck is planned for Friday evening. The rally fee is \$30.00 per person and one cannot beat the parking fee of \$15.00 per night.

The rally is limited to 40 participants---so RSVP to hold a spot to Donna Scott at: dc5641@gmail.com or 254-205-0507.

Remember to Register for the “Under the Stars in Big Country” Region 9 Rally, March 28-April 2~ Harvey Craig

If you still have not registered for the Region 9 Rally which will be held at the Taylor County Expo Center in Abilene, you need to mail a registration form which may be obtained from the Region 9 website to Willard Fischer, Region 9 Treasurer. The cost of the rally is \$50 per adult, or \$40 per adult for Friday arrival, or \$30 per adult for Saturday arrival. The parking cost is \$20 per day per rig. The rally fee includes: 3 breakfasts, 3 dinners, entertainment, and activities. The Taylor County Expo Center has electricity and water with dump sites.

THLU will have a caravan departing on Sunday, March 27 going to the rally with arrival at the fairgrounds before noon on Monday, March 28. The Caravan will spend one night in the area of Hamilton, Stephenville, or Santo. Look for more information concerning this caravan in the February Newsletter.

..... **Harvey Craig**

Keep Your Airstream Fresh Water System Fresh~ Harvey Craig

As I prepare the *Driver's Handbook* for the Davis Mountains/Big Bend Caravan, I thought that a good article for this Newsletter might be on how to keep your Airstream's fresh water system fresh. Many people use their fresh water systems and water pumps instead of being hooked directly to a local water supply for more water pressure, and more importantly to be sure that they know the quality of the water that they are consuming and using while in their Airstream. RV Parks often have their own water supply and vary as to the quality of the water

that they provide. In addition, often city water systems may have water which is heavy in minerals and which does not taste good.

Proper care and regular maintenance of your fresh water system is important and necessary to safeguard your health. It is something that may be ignored; however, it is something that should not be. The following are a few suggestions and basic essentials for maintaining a safe and trouble free fresh water system in your Airstream.

- Always use a separate fresh water fill hose designed specifically for drinking water.
- Once your fresh water hose is dry on the inside and not in use, connect the ends of the hose together to keep dirt out.
- Before you fill your fresh water tank, know your water source. Many RV Parks have their own water systems and vary as to the quality of the water. It is a good idea to keep bottled water in your trailer to serve as a back-up.
- It is a good idea to use a water filter for your fresh water both when filling your fresh water tank and when you connect your trailer to a fresh water intake.
- You should also be sure to change the water filter depending upon use; however, at least once a year. Remember that filters will remove contaminants; however, they will not purify your water.
- In addition, if your galley faucet has a filter, be sure and change this filter at least once a year.
- Empty your fresh water tank when not using your Airstream for more than three or four weeks at a time.
- Sanitize your water system---including your fresh water fill hoses---before initial use and every six months when in use, and also after extended periods of non-use. If you camp in a warm climate, you may need to sanitize your fresh water tank more often.

Some basic steps that you can use to sanitize your Airstream's fresh water tank include the following:

- Drain your tank.
- Prepare a chlorine solution by mixing a quarter cup of liquid household bleach with a gallon of water for each 15 gallons of fresh water tank capacity. If you have a 30

gallon fresh water tank, you should mix a half cup of bleach to two gallons of water.

- Turn off all the faucets and close all the drain valves. Pour the solution of bleach and water into the fresh water tank.
- Fill the fresh water tank the remainder of the way with fresh water.
- Turn on the water pump and open all faucets one at a time to remove air from the lines. Once the water begins to flow steadily, turn each faucet off.
- Refill the fresh water tank with water and let stand for 3 to 6 hours.
- Drain your fresh water system by opening all faucets (with the water pump on) as well as opening the fresh water tank drain valve while flushing the system with quality drinking water.
- Continue flushing the system, allowing the water to flow for several minutes.
- Close the tank drain valve and all of the faucets. Refill the fresh water tank with drinking quality water.

Following these steps can prevent problems and provide you with a safe, fresh water system.

I suggested that you consider using a water filter not only when you fill your fresh water tank but when you are connected to a fresh water source. That raises the question as to what filter system to use. Each individual probably has his own opinion. I have found that generally as the price of the filter system raises so does its benefits. Clearly, a carbon filter will provide good tasting water; however, I personally prefer the *Hydro Life Water Filter System*. The replacement filters are more expensive than plain carbon filters; however, this filter uses a patented KDF media in conjunction with granular activated charcoal (GAC) to provide a superior filtering system. This type of filter helps to control bacteria growth. It filters out: aluminum, arsenic, bad taste, bacteria, barium, cadmium, chlorine, chromium III & VI, endrin, hydrogen sulfide, iron, lead, lindane, mercury, methoxychlor, odor, radon, selenium, Sil Vex 2, 4, & 5-TP, toxaphene. 2 & 4-D Pesticide, and THIM's.

Related to fresh water use are questions about the need to use a water pressure regulator when your Airstream product is connected to a fresh water

source. Generally, if your Airstream product was manufactured before 1989, you should ALWAYS use a pressure regulator. Airstream started putting in water pressure regulators in all of its products in 1989. Airstream pressure regulators from 1989 to 2000 regulate pressure to 50 PSI; however, starting in 2000, Airstream started using regulators in all of its units that regulate pressure to 65 PSI because of customers wanting more water pressure in their trailers while hooked up to water. If your Airstream was manufactured in 1989 to the present 2011, you should not need a water pressure regulator connected to a fresh water source.

Options Exist for Converter/Charger Replacements ~ Stuart Wetterschneider

Most non-vintage Airstreams have a converter/charger to convert the 110v(volts) that is provided to the Airstream whenever it's connected to shore power. The converter/charger, as the name implies, changes (or converts) 110v to 12v for devices in the Airstream requiring such power, and it also charges the trailer's 12v batteries.

For the last few years Jackson Center has been installing Parallax 7355 converter/chargers. The Parallax series 7300 converter/charger is either on or off. Either it is charging the batteries or not, and this can often have negative consequences for the batteries.

The Parallax converter/charger can be replaced with a multi-stage unit and as you would guess there are several different companies, including Xantrex and Iota, making multi-stage converter/chargers.

Multi-stage converter/chargers have three stages:

The first stage, **bulk**, is a constant current mode that replaces 80% of the battery's capacity quickly. The charger applies its maximum output current as the battery voltage rises. When the battery voltage reaches a predetermined absorption voltage, operation switches to the second stage.

The second stage, **absorption**, is a constant voltage mode and replaces the remaining 20% capacity. The charger voltage is held steady while the current falls as the battery approaches full charge.



Iota DLS 55 multi-stage Converter/
Charger in space previously
occupied by the Parallax 7355.

The charger voltage is lowered and held constant at a safe value of 13.5 volts DC, which prevents the battery from being overcharged, while allowing the charger to supply enough current to maintain the battery at a full state

The Xantrex and Iota multi-stage converter/chargers sell for about \$200.

In addition and another option is the Parallax replacement kit for the series 7300 that will essentially turn it into a 3-stage charging device for about \$200.

There are also devices that will provide information in regards to what the Airstream's batteries are actually doing. For example, the Trimetric 2025 will show the flow of energy in or out of your batteries in amps or watts. It costs about \$180. The Voltminder, costing about \$30 will show voltage leaving the batteries.

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If your present converter/charger goes out or when you need to replace your Airstream batteries, you may wish to consider replacing your present converter/charger with a multi-stage converter. The replacement of the converter usually takes less than two-hour

SPECIAL UPCOMING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Dale Burger	02/04
Jean Beebe	02/05
Shirley Fleming	02/05
Zee Sharpe	02/06
Bobbi Tetzlaff	02/06
Sheila Young	02/10
Jim Whitworth	02/11
Myrna Guidry	02/13
Marilyn McClanahan	02/16
Dorothy McCoppin	02/18
Harvey Craig	02/20
Don Bell	02/24

Reminders (Contact Harvey Craig at eharv@msn.com or 512/633-0380 for more information or reservations):

Mon, January 24: Caravan departs Camping World, New Braunfels for IBT in Robstown

Mon-Fri, January 24-28: Mid-Winter IBT Rally in Robstown

Tue, February 1: Unit Lunch at South Luby's located at US 290 & Brodie Lane

Fri-Sun, February 18-20: THLU McKinney Falls President's Day Winter Campout

Sun.-Fri., February 27 – March 4: Region 9 Computer Workshop Rally at NTAC

Tue, March 1: Unit Lunch at South Luby's located at US 290 & Brodie Lane



Who said Airstreamers are a bunch of old fogeys?

Sunshine Report~ Kathryn Fischer

Bernie Los, one of our affiliate members, suffered a minor stroke on Dec 23 while in Big Bend. He is now back in Michigan in Rehab doing OT, PT, and speech therapy. Everyone is very hopeful for him.

Gayland Stephen's spot on his lung has not gotten any larger and there was no change. He will go to Dallas on Feb 3 for biopsy so they can determine what it is. Hope everything comes out OK.

Cynthia Hempel is recuperating from knee surgery and is now doing physical therapy. **Dale Burger** is taking treatments and doing good.

G.R. Allen has gone home from rehab and is doing well.

Our best wishes to all.

If you know of any other THLU members who could use our support and prayers, please let me know. Kathryn Fischer 512.784.0635 or e-mail fisch963@earthlink.net

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## Scenes from 2010 Rallies - were you there?



Our gang at IBT in Rayne, LA 2010



Your International Board of Trustees in action, 2010



The one that got away...



Judges for "How Well Do You Know Your Spouse?"

A group of eight people, four men and four women, are posing for a group photo indoors. They are arranged in two rows. The front row consists of four people: a man in a blue polo shirt and jeans, a woman in a blue button-down shirt over a black top, a woman in a black V-neck shirt and white pants holding a white cloth, and a woman in a purple t-shirt with a graphic. The back row consists of four people: a man in a blue polo shirt and jeans, a man in a striped shirt, a man in a blue button-down shirt and a tan cap, and a man in a dark blue t-shirt and jeans. The background features a white wall with string lights, a green door, and a 'NOT SMOKING' sign. A caption at the bottom reads: 'May Rally Hosts, Fredericksburg (big job - small kitchen)'.

“Ladies Appreciation Rally - Canton” The men did the cookin’



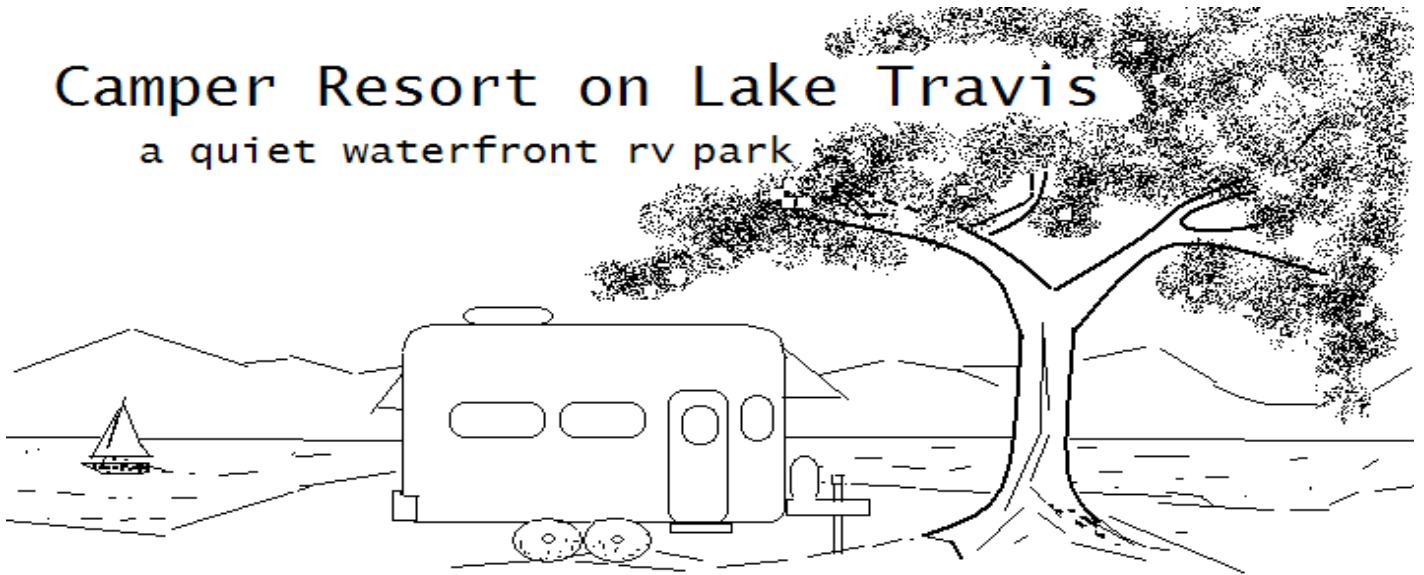
2010 WBCCI International Rally at Gillette, WY





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Devotions on Mother's Day
Fredericksburg May Rally

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