



Official Newsletter of the North Dakota Peace Garden Unit

Prairie Rose

Wally Byam Caravan Club International
The Airstream RV Owners' Club



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www.nodak.wbcci.net

Volume 5 Issue 2



Whale - touching on the Baja Adventure Caravan

On the horizon...

Spring Luncheon
April 26th - Bismarck
RSVP by 4/24

Spring Opener Rally
Detlaff Farm, Minot
May 29 - June 1

Int'l Rally Bozeman
June 28 - July 4

2008 Baja Adventure Caravan Travelogue by Bruce & Carolyn Coonrod **It Can't Get Any Better Than That!**

This is the last morning to go whale-watching, and though it's whale-watching, not whale-touching, I've yet to touch one on either of my two previous outings. I'll be disappointed if I don't get to. But the winds have picked up overnight, and the waters here at San Ignacio Lagoon are rough. Some aren't going out.

Our group of five wants Daniel as our guide. Daniel knows whales. Yesterday I was with his cousin who was filling in for Daniel's dad who has injured his back. We watched whales blow, breach, spy hop, and tail slap, but none approached us.

It was the same a few weeks back at Guerrero Negro. We had lots of whales around us, and one did swim under the boat, but no touching. I want a feel.

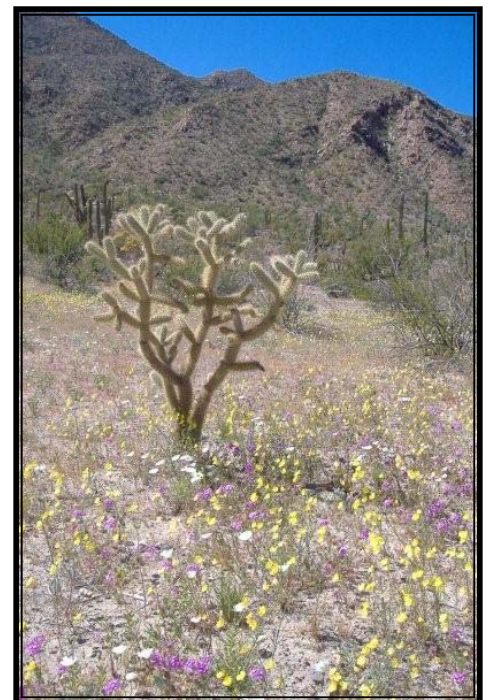
We make the 20-minute trip through the rough seas in the small, but seaworthy panga. These waters

once ran red from the slaughter of gray whales for their oil.

It's not long before we're into whales and Daniel stops the panga. We wait, reach overboard and splash water with our hands. Soon a mother pushes its baby toward us. The baby raises its head alongside the bow, and all we have to do is reach across the gunwale and pet that rubbery skin. I've touched a whale! And for the next hour we are in a whale fest. Two different mothers with their babies come to the boat. Then a male ventures in.

They exhale out their blow holes, covering our glasses and camera lenses with a fine mist. Now this is whale-watching! I'm now content. This part of the Baja Adventure has been a success, making the entire 2400-mile trip a success.

Last fall I wasn't so sure. I like to be prepared, but sometimes being too prepared is harmful. Since sign-



Desert in Bloom

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President's Corner.....

by Cathy Ruebel

Welcome to Springtime on the Prairie! There's the around-the-clock honking as endless strings of geese make their way north, encouraging the bird in front of them to keep going. Summer's songbirds are home, too, filling the crispy morning air with melody. Let's not forget the dirty roads and dwindling snow piles that ensure your vehicles are colored the same, and pot-holes you could lose a wheel in.

Our **Spring Luncheon** is only just a few weeks away—we are really looking forward to getting together with everyone to catch up on a winter's worth of news and gossip. **RSVP by Thursday, April 24th** if you are planning to attend.

Going by the amount of mail we have been getting from candidates for International office, and scuttlebutt on the internet, this **Bozeman Rally** in June could be a lively one, and it will be one of the shortest drives for us that we will be seeing in a number of years to come.

Speaking of the Minot Buddy Rally, we have received some disappointing news. Our tour of the **Minot Air Force Base**, scheduled for that Friday, **has been cancelled** due to a base inspection in the month of May. We told them our schedule was flexible, so just in case an opening comes up at the

last minute. Please let us know if you will be at the rally; bring a US government issued photo ID, and Canadians should have their passports.

It looks like we've had a reprieve on the passport issue for coming back from the **Thunder Bay Rally** this summer. While it is most advisable to have a current passport, a US government issued ID and a certified copy of your birth certificate will suffice for this summer's adventure to the Great White North.

Something else I found on the US State Department website:

*"The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. **Canadian health care providers do not accept U.S. domestic health insurance or Medicare.** Americans who seek any medical attention in Canada should be prepared to pay in cash in full at the time the service is rendered."*

Definitely worth checking into before we leave!
—CR—

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In an effort to protect our members from having their personal information being made available ONLINE when this newsletter is posted to our website, we will no longer include phone numbers or e-mail addresses. Please consult your unit membership directory or contact that officer through our web e-mail address:

0145@wbcci.net

2008 Calendar of Events

April 26, 2008	Spring Luncheon - 12 o'clock noon - Meriwether's Restaurant, 1700 River Road, Bismarck
May 14-17, 2008	South Dakota Unit Tulip Festival Rally, Orange City, Iowa
May 29 - June 1, 2008	Spring Opener <u>Buddy</u> Rally - Detlaff Farm, Hwy 83 North, Minot - across from the Minot AFB
June 28 - July 4, 2008	51st International Rally - Bozeman, Montana
July 25 - 27, 2008	Summer Picnic Rally - Stump Lake Park, 10 mi. S of Lakota on ND Hwy. 1
Aug. 11-15, 2008	Region 7 Rally - Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
Aug. 13, 2008	Unit Luncheon - Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada
Sept. 11 - 14, 2008	North Dakota 2008 Installation Rally - General Sibley Park, Bismarck
Sept. 18 - 21, 2008	South Dakota Installation Rally and Polka Festival, Mitchell, SD

Baja Adventure Caravan a great success

(Continued from page 1)

ing up for the WBCCI Baja caravan a year earlier, I've monitored Baja forums and news and read as much as I could about the California peninsula.

The more I learned, the more concerned I became. Bandits abound, the cops are crooked and stop gringos to rob them, the roads are dangerously narrow without shoulders and drop off sharply. Yep, all of these are true...but that's not a good enough reason not to visit Baja. Carolyn and I (and three dogs) completed the nearly seven-week caravan with 21 other Airstream caravaners, and while not all went smoothly, the trip was incredible. Baja is raw and primitive and wonderfully beautiful. The people are overwhelmingly friendly and helpful.

We danced the Macarena on a



supper boat off Cabo San Lucas at sunset, saw cave art that is superior to that of France, camped on beaches on the Sea of Cortes and the Pacific, experienced the desert in bloom in spring, walked the ma-lacons at Loreto and La Paz at sunset with joggers and lovers, ate steamed clams and clam chowder from clams we had dug on a beach at Bahia de los Angeles, did the Chicken Dance to a Mariachi band at El Requeson, visited 300-year-old missions, admired a church designed by Gustave Eiffel and stood along side the Eiffel Tower at the 1889 World Exposition in Paris.

And those narrow, curvy roads: they are uncluttered by road signs and billboards, but do require constant attentiveness on the part of the driver.

Three of the rigs on the caravan lost left-side mirrors from either passing or approaching vehicles.

One of the biggest rewards was making new friends from the U.S. and Canada. Six of the caravaners were Canadians, who hosted a Canada Day in La Paz, the City of Peace. We wore red and white; they provided a pancake breakfast and later a happy hour with Molson beer. Being honorary Canadians for a day, we were humbled to sing O Canada as temporary Canadians with our fellow countrymen with a Mexican flag flying overhead.

The names Baja, Cabo San Lucas, La Paz, Todos Santos, Santa Rosalia, Loreto, Sea of Cortes were only names. But after visiting, those names are now rich memories of a land south of the border, down Mexico way.

Was the Baja caravan worth it? For me, it was the Baja adventure advertised. It might not be a trip for the faint-hearted, but after all it's called the Baja Adventure.

Our caravan leader, who once sailed solo across the Pacific, congratulated us at the end. He said Carolyn and I proved you could take three big dogs in a trailer down the Baja!

It was our first WBCCI cara-



Camped at El Pabellon on the Pacific.. Sunset at Cabo, below



van. We learned that even though we could make the same trip on our own, by caravanning we did and saw things that we might not have done or seen on our own. And we traveled in good company. So we've now signed up for the 2009 Newfoundland caravan and the 2010 Alaska caravan.



At Las Barriles we took ATVs up an arroyo to a waterfall.

Baja Adventure Caravan



Left: This art was the only petroglyph at this one site, but it was well-preserved.

Right: Famous mushroom rock on the coast north of La Paz.



Josh and Bo, Bonne Bay and Norris



*Above: Finding clams at a beach on an island in the Bahia de los Angeles.
Below: Anglea Tauras, left, checks the pot of clams being steamed. Jim and Anglea Tauras, from Cape Cod, MA, put on a clam feed with the clams we had collected earlier in the day.*



Bo, Bonne Bay and Norris, three eagles heading to Bozeman, MT, for the International, traveled with the Coonrods for part of the Baja Adventure. Last summer, the eagles were on the Newfoundland caravan and were at the Sugarcreek Rally in the fall. They do get around.

