

More and Better Unit Rallies

When, Where, and How

Principles of rally planning

- Make rallies fun – be it relaxing and doing little or having lots planned.
- Give people lots of prearranged options to camp
- Vary the sizes of rallies for your unit
- Vary the kinds of campgrounds that you use
- You can make some of the people happy all of the time or all of the people some of the time but you can't make all of the people all of the time
(there are some people you can never make happy)
- Enjoy your happy hours!

Where?

- Choices of camping spots: State Parks
 - Advanced reservations times (6-9 months)
 - How many sites can you reserve at a time?
 - Do they have a group camping line?
 - Can you reserve several sites at the same time online under one name?
 - Be wary (and aware) of cancellation times and fees and state them clearly to those signing up for the rally
 - Look for ones with shelters if possible
 - Show state park book

Where?

- Choice of camping spots:
 - COE (Corp of Engineers)
 - Often near water projects and so pretty
 - Paper maps of COE sites available to order
 - Reservations available 6 months in advance online
 - Can only reserve three spots under one name
 - Can use the senior pass for half off price
 - Prices are normally very low
 - Camping with the COE book

Where?

- Choice of camping spots
 - County parks and city parks and urban rallies
 - Often undiscovered
 - Prices tend to be reasonable
 - Found by going to the county or city website and searching for either parks or camping
 - Reserve well ahead if going for an event
 - Urban rallies very popular right now

Where?

- Choice of camping spots
 - Commercial campgrounds
 - Very often have shelters
 - Group discounts often available, especially in the off season
 - Most often have full hooks ups or at least water and electric with an on-site dump station
 - Many are in parking lot-type situations so may not be as desirable aesthetically

Where?

- Identify where most of your campers live and work around that to some degree BUT that shouldn't be your only guideline
- Take a map and divide up your area and put pins in areas you want to visit
- Search with one of the search engines in that area to find your campground

Where?

- Resources for finding campgrounds
 - Allstays
 - Good for city and county and military campgrounds as well as commercial campgrounds
 - Can be upgraded for more information about travel
 - Campendium
 - Great for boondocking sites as well as others
 - Operated by an Airstream owner
 - Will send send you updates of favorites regularly

Where?

- Resources for finding campgrounds
 - RV Park Reviews
 - Really easy to use.
 - Lots of reviews make it very useful and usually right on. We review all places that we stay at this site.
 - Ultimate Campgrounds
 - Comprehensive and accurate description of campgrounds, 30,000 sites in the US and 4,000 in Canada.

When?

- **Identify activities** that are happening in the area you have chosen – Chamber of Commerce websites can help you. Concerts, sporting events, etc.
- **Identify adventures** that your campers would enjoy – i.e., fishing, boat rides, ballooning
- **Identify community treasures** like museums or special parks

When?

- Year round camping works for many locations
 - Take into consideration the weather and people's ability to handle more challenging roads
- Off season rallies are easier to book – less pressure for sites, fewer people on the road
- Try to avoid International rally dates

When?

- Consider the obligations of the club in planning meeting times
 - Annual business meeting
 - Consider off season for big group meetings
 - Installation of officers
 - Avoid conflicts with unit breakfasts or luncheons

How?

- You may wish to select a theme –not always necessary. Sometimes good to just relax
- Be certain to verify cancellations policies and advertise this – can be a huge issue if not done
- Confirm all facilities rented and what is included and not included - i.e cleaning, supplies, etc

How?

- Meals
 - All potluck or just potluck the evening of arrival
 - Definitely plan something easy the day of arrival
 - If assigning potlucks, not a main course for those driving far
 - Consider asking someone to offer a cooking class
 - Reserve restaurants for some meals if desired
 - Host can cook some meals and not others – up to them.
 - Making things ahead of time is great!
 - Breakfasts can be continental or more elaborate
 - Decide if coffee will be served – consider getting a big unit coffee pot– great gathering point in the morning
 - Could also be on your own.
 - Don't make it too early in the morning
 - Plastic bag breakfast is fun for smaller groups
 - Making bagels early in the AM is also fun

How?

- Reservations
 - Host or president makes them for the whole group
 - Advertise rallies at the beginning of the year as that allows people to plan their summer ahead of time
 - Individuals can make their own reservation for a rally
 - I think less desirable in terms of cohesiveness
 - All potluck rallies – no host required but need a board member or someone who is the “go to person”
 - Flash rallies
 - Spontaneous last minute rallies – “I’m going to be camping at xyz on xyz date – want to join me? Make your own reservation”

How?

- Money
 - Get a club credit card and the rally host can use it to reserve sites
 - Keep all receipts to get reimbursed. Make a final spreadsheet for your treasurer
 - Consider having a coupon for new members to get a discount on one rally to introduce them to the group

How?

- Tasks and rally schedule
 - Delegate tasks at the beginning of the rally
 - Meal prep, set up or move tables, replace tables, assemble pop-ups, clean up, parking direction, etc.
 - Provide a rough schedule and costs of the rally ahead of time and assign spaces before departure based on length of trailer and site length
 - Set up visits to local sites ahead of time and pay if possible to avoid last minutes hassles. See about handicapped access if necessary

How?

- Meals

- Schedule happy hours

- People can bring appetizers or not. Sometimes there is so much that people don't want to eat dinner!
 - BYOB or order a keg or do a wine tasting from local wineries
 - Best time of the day for people to talk to each other. Allow enough time for this.
 - Use pop ups if weather is iffy and no shelter
 - Can schedule at a restaurant if you wish

How?

- Size of rallies
 - Vary the sizes for the entire year
 - Small (8-15), Medium (16-30), Large (>30)
 - Big ones might be necessary for business meetings
 - We like rallies with about 15 trailers the best
 - Great opportunity to get to know each other better than in a very large group
 - Avoid the “cliques” that often happens with very big rallies where people are wanting to “belong”