

We Are Still Newbies!

After three years, nine thousand miles, and 400 nights in our Airstream, it turns out we are still newbies!

We had a lovely visit from friends. Grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, set the kids up with monster sized marshmallows to roast over the campfire. After they had gone, I washed dishes and cookout implements. Turning in for the night, we pushed the button next to the door to bring in the awning in advance of windy weather arriving the next day.

But the awning didn't respond! None of the outdoor lights worked either. The switch panel normally is backlit, but it was dark. So we checked the breaker panels, and everything looked good.

Upon closer inspection, we realized that water, either from more rigorous dish washing than usual, or a leaky water filter, had crept unseen across the counter and down the side of the cabinet, right into the light panel. I tried a blow dryer, but no joy. We cycled the main power to the trailer in case that would reset something. The control panel was still dead.



no scorch marks, but the control panel is dead

What a way to close out a fun Saturday night!

We had enough trickle WiFi to go online and try to find a manual way to retract the awning. Unfortunately we find out that there is an emergency kit from the manufacturer with special sized hex bits, etc. However, that was not included with our trailer when we bought it used. We'd have to wait until Monday to call ZipDee to order the parts.

Expecting high winds while we are at work the next day, I used some just-in-case clothesline in our emergency kit to tie down the corners of the awning, securing them to the big steel bear box in one corner, and the massive steel picnic table in the other.



two years ago I added 50 feet of clothesline to the just-in-case emergency kit, and today it paid off!

The awning survived Sunday, the ropes clearly helped.

On Monday we called the manufacturer. They confirmed that the emergency kit is what we needed for our model. Address, credit card confirmed. Great. Then the technician said, "I am surprised the control on the master panel didn't work."

Button on the master panel?

I had dreamed about our problem. I remember thinking in the dream how weird it was that Airstream didn't have a backup control for the awning – they had backups of so many other controls. But I woke up and didn't follow up. DOH!

Dave looked at the panel that is in the main cabin. The one we touch everyday to turn the water pump on or off, to look at the waste tank levels, to turn on the main cabin lights....

Oh! A button that says A W N I N G!



when it is n front of your face everyday, sometimes you lose the ability to “see” it

Red face of embarrassment. Loud guffaws of laughter. Yup, it works. The awning is in.

We thought we knew how things worked in our Airstream. Well, we got a good natured poke in the ribs – that we still have plenty to learn!

So, we still need to replace the panel by the door, and I am going to run a short bead of clear caulk on the counter edge to aim splashes away from that corner in the future.

If you ever need to know what to do to retract power your ZipDee awning, this video will help more than the directions in the manual: https://youtu.be/8CtiT6WIW_k