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On The Cover: A new floorplan from Forest City, Iowa-based Winnebago, the Itasca Sunstar 35B sleeps eight and keeps its entry-level price (see the Walk-Through on page 62). Photo by Tom Kaiser.

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STAYING YOUNG



Is it possible that motorhome enthusiasts have found the fountain of youth? Everyone wants to look and feel younger, especially the majority of RVers, who are not exactly spring chickens. The RV lifestyle is a pretty simple prescription for feeling younger than our actual ages suggest. All we have to do is jump in the motorhome and the years will melt away.

Wait a minute. We're often reminded — or even bombarded — through marketing campaigns that to stay young and vibrant we need to drink Ensure, take vitamins, eat the right food and take a bunch of meds so our minds and bodies stay fresh. Probably not bad advice, along with lots of exercise and healthy living habits, but getting out in a motorhome is often the best — and purest — medicine. Just take a look at what goes on in campgrounds and social gatherings. The energy level is astounding.

OK, I know; what goes on in campgrounds, stays in campgrounds, so don't expect me to spill my guts. I will tell you that I have participated in a number of activities over the years that have our kids wondering who the grown-ups are in our family. My wife, Lynne, loves to ask, "Do the kids know what their parents are doing?" Not acting their age, of course, which leads to laughter, great friendships and rejuvenated souls, physically and mentally.

Campgrounds and rally sites are our playgrounds. As Jeff Crider writes in "Campground Commitment" on page 26, people are even getting married in campgrounds. I can relate to that; one of my sons was married in a campground and the ceremony led to lasting memories. In this case, I could have been accused of instigating the wedding plans, since everyone knows I'd rather be in a campground than a hotel. But it was not my idea; I think credit for that decision goes to years of exposure to the RV lifestyle as a family.

No doubt, the trend for hosting special events in campgrounds will continue to expand. We often look for opportunities to take our celebrations away from home.

I remember the many times we had our turkey feast for Thanksgiving in a campground, or partied for New Year's Eve with other campground guests gathered in the social hall. Other events included a non-stop three-day Cinco de Mayo celebration, fabulous forays over the Fourth of July and birthdays, retirements, music festivals, or any other reason to hit the road.

If you really want to experience a vibrant RV community, attend a rally. At press time, I just returned from the Winnebago-Itasca Travelers Grand National Rally in Forest City, Iowa. Soaring temperatures and humidity didn't curtail the festivities and partying. The annual food walk where attendees sample culinary favorites inherent to the individual states and Canada exemplifies high energy. Rocking to the cool sounds of a '60s surf band kept everyone wound up before heading back to individual parties under the awnings. Young people don't have a lock on having fun and being animated.

If you want to keep the summer fun going into fall, consider attending The Rally sponsored by Dish, in Daytona, Fla., Nov. 2-4 (early bird days start Oct. 31). In typical rally fashion, there will be plenty of social events to keep our energy levels fully charged. The entertainment, highlighted by Reba McEntire, will give us another chance to stretch out those sore muscles from miles of walking through exhibits and attending hours of seminar presentations. And don't tell the kids about the mosh pits in Louisville in June and during the entertainment at previous rallies. That kind of behavior is not just reserved for teenagers. I suspect Daytona will be just as lively.

While the fountain of youth may be imaginary, the motorhome lifestyle is the real secret to staying young. ♦

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COULD YOU LIVE WITHOUT A SLIDEOUT ON YOUR MOTORHOME OR WOULD THE LACK OF ONE BE A DEAL-BREAKER?

That's the question we asked in our July issue, and here are some of the replies we received.

NEVER GOING BACK

In response to the July letter, "Hold the Slideout, Please," I have to say, no way! I have owned travel trailers, fifth-wheels and Class A motorhomes without slideouts. My motorhome even had the old-fashioned plastic piece attached to the rear window. I now have a Class A with three slideouts and I will never go back. The plastic piece can be easily replaced with a rearview camera, which is far better. The inconvenience, if any, of a small passage when the slides are closed is minor compared to the huge inconvenience of not having the extra space when the slides are open and we are inside while parked. Furthermore, I cannot imagine trying to sell a used motorhome without slides in today's market. Seems that maybe the writer spends more time driving than camping.

GARY FARMER | MURRIETA, CALIF.

NOT WORTH THE COST

I whole-heartedly agree with Laurie Nevins' July letter. Slideouts are an overrated amenity and usually not optional. Slideouts add weight, cost and complexity. They leak, require maintenance and are unreliable. I'm forced to use my leveling jacks whenever I use the slides. When closed, they restrict access inside and my storage area at home is too narrow to permit complete opening of the slides. Bedroom slideouts are the worst because windows and ventilation are at a minimum. I wish I had the option of eliminating all slideouts, especially the bedroom slideout, which I would replace with twin beds. The benefit of a little extra space doesn't outweigh the risks.

KENNETH NEAL | PALO ALTO, CALIF.

NO SLIDEOUT, NO DEAL

Before we bought our first RV, the wife and I rented a Class C motorhome to see if we would enjoy it enough to warrant a purchase. It didn't have a slideout and, while we had a great time, it was difficult for us both to be standing up and moving around. Add to the mix a 90-pound dog and it was a little tight. The slideout in the one we eventually purchased made living a lot more comfortable. Not having a slideout would be a deal-breaker for us now.

JIM ROACH | SIERRA VISTA, ARIZ.

DON'T NEED OR WANT IT

I own a 1995 National Dolphin without a slide. It's in great shape but since it doesn't have a diesel engine I started looking for a new one. The slideout was one of the things I didn't want or need. It's just one more thing to go wrong and it can be intrusive to other campers on a narrow space. I have found that excluding a slideout makes my search a lot more difficult. It seems that everything I see has at least one slideout. That means more expense to buy and maintain something that I don't need or want. Looks like I will not be trading in this one.

LARRY RATCLIFF | MCCORDSVILLE, IND.

SLIDEOUT A MUST

No slideout is a deal-breaker for me. My wife and I travel with our Great Dane, and on long stays we really enjoy the extra room slides provide. We are not into camping but enjoy traveling in our rolling condo.

JIM NEDRY | VIA EMAIL

SLIDEOUTS? NO THANKS

Don't need them, don't want them and would not have one as a gift. I like to be able to see out the rear window, and if we need the restroom while traveling I like to be able to walk back there without crawling over a bed or squeezing past some other obstacle.

FRANK DUVALL | VIA EMAIL

NO SLIDES FOR LAZY DAZE

I had a slide on a diesel-pusher and found I rarely used it as we like to boondock in forested campgrounds where side clearances can be restricted by trees. Many slideout floorplans require the slide to be out to make use of the bed/cabinet/closet access, which I would find annoying. Letter writer Nevins should check out Lazy Daze, a company that will not build a coach with slideouts. I downsized to a new 27-foot Lazy Daze rear bath a couple of years ago and found it to be the best unit to meet my needs. Ed and Steve Newton, owners of Lazy Daze, don't believe in using slideouts for the reasons stated by Nevins. I can see out through the rear window (and using the fresnel wide view lens) easily from the rearview mirror. The



interior is spacious, with good accessibility. The weight saved can be utilized for more cargo carrying capacity. The coach is well balanced for good road handling. Making use of the weight savings of not having a slideout, there is a larger fresh water capacity, which allows us to do extended boondocking. I don't have to climb on the roof to occasionally clean the top of the slideout. I don't worry about water and air intrusion. Out of all six new, high-quality motorhomes I have owned since 1982, this is the best built, trouble-free motorhome I have owned.

MIKE COACHMAN | BROOKSVILLE, FLA.

LOVE THE SPACE

We live in our motorhome six months out of the year and would not buy one without slideouts. With the good outside mirrors and rear camera with dash display, it makes traveling easy and safe, and when we are parked we are not tripping over each other. We have a 10-year-old Newmar Mountain Aire and have had no issues with the slide.

VERN PETERSON | VIA EMAIL

SLIDEOUTS NOT NECESSARY

My wife and I just traded in a 1994 Cobra Monterey that didn't have any slides. We snowbird from October to May in the Sunbelt. We were concerned about finding another motorhome without slides but found a 2004 Velocity by Georgie Boy. Having no slides was not a deal-breaker; it was what we wanted. We have talked to many owners of coaches with slides that have had mechanical problems, leaks, seals drying out and difficulty getting in some of the older campgrounds that weren't designed for slides. Let's face it; slides only make it more difficult to heat and cool the motorhome. The extra space gained in the living room is just a passageway.

FRANK AND PAT NYERT | KEWANEE, ILL.

ARE SLIDES WORTH IT? YES

We find our slide to be a very nice addition. It does not have to be extended in order to have a fully functional rig, but when extended it sure makes the whole thing nicer. The extra width makes such a difference in the feeling of roominess that, for our next rig, I think not having a slide would be a showstopper as long as it does not have to be extended to allow the rig to be functional.

Because of the additional square

footage gained from a slide, the cost and weight per square foot of floor space is actually the same or less than in an equally sized rig without a slide. To get the same floor area without our modest slide, the rig would have to be 3 feet longer. This would make it objectionable to store at home and substantially harder to maneuver and find an acceptable campsite (we mostly use old-fashioned Forest Service and BLM sites).

MARV MCGOWAN | RIDGECREST, CALIF.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

I certainly can do without a slide. I have had RVs with slides, but now I have a Forest River Sunseeker 2300 Class C without a slide and it is a dream. Queen bed in back, over the cab bunk and U-shaped dinette. This motorhome is easy to heat and cool and I have no worries about a slide failure. The interior is upgraded and the tanks are heated. It would be nice to see more of these smaller RVs with upgrades and no slides. I find that I can get to places that I could not in the other RVs. The only thing I find missing from this coach is a rearview camera but I'll survive.

KATHY MCCLELLAN | PIEDMONT, S.D.

PASS ON SLIDEOUTS

In answer to your question, I can and do live without a slideout and wouldn't have it any other way. I bought a used Sportsmobile Chevy Express Van. It has a really nice layout, very comfy for one (or two), and more storage than our slightly larger Born Free. My favorite is being able to see out the back window. If I open the curtains and blinds, I have no blind spots. I also have a real bathroom and all the other amenities. The Born Free is 4 feet longer than my van, with the typical Class C overhead above the driver area. Once again, amenities are all there without the need for all those slideouts, and this one also fits into a normal parking space.

Having heard all the horror stories on forgetting to retract the slide and driving down the road, you couldn't pay me enough to have one, much less two or more. If I wanted a house on wheels I would have bought one, and having checked them out while on the hunt, nearly all I've seen have some pretty major flaws with sealing, rough edges and rather poor design. They were also extremely noisy from air and road noise, which I don't have, and tend to sway

(even without being extended). I couldn't agree more with Laurie Nevins' comments.

CONNIE QAULEY | VIA EMAIL

PERFECT FOR TWO

I know we are the minority, so I'm glad someone finally mentioned the slideout issue. We have a 2008 Class C Maverick 24-footer, and we pull a dinghy on a dolly. Our motorhome has plenty of room for just the two of us on our four-plus-month trips, including our bicycles, folding kayaks, chairs and gear. We have entertained quite comfortably with the awning out. Once we park at our campsite, we can be relaxed in our folding chairs in 15 minutes or less. Our compact size allows us to get campsites that the larger rigs can't. Although rare, we have seen camping areas so tight that slideouts cannot be used. If the slideout is in, some of the RV features are covered and unusable. We all know the covered drawer is the one needed!

At RV shows, the sales personnel give a good effort trying to talk us into "trading in and trading up." "To what?" we respond. We have not yet seen a newer Class C floorplan that we like better than ours. If there were to be a newer model Class C without a slideout, we might consider it, providing storage space is not compromised. I don't want an extra mechanical part to go wrong. I would think the mechanical parts would also add to the gross vehicle weight rating. And more parts add more to the overall price. Sometimes simpler is better.

CAY JOHNSON | SCOTRUN, PA.

LOVE THE ROOM

My first motorhome, just five years ago, was a 1991 Elite. It was a spectacular, well-built coach without slides. Like most people with their first coach, we loved it and were so proud to show it to inquisitive onlookers every time we traveled. After about three years we decided that two adults and two dogs needed more room. So, we sold the Elite and bought a 2004 Rexhall Rexair with two full-wall slideouts. We were so proud of the unique design and just loved all of the room! We had some major issues with those slides and it was out of commission for about six months. Now that we have it back and everything works perfectly I can't imagine owning any other coach. Could I go back to life without slideouts? Not likely!

RON BIGLIN | BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.



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P.O. BOX

AVOID SLIDEOUTS

I can definitely live without a slideout. As a matter of fact, when I was looking to buy another motorhome, I specifically looked for one without slideouts. I don't like the idea of such a large hole in the motorhome's structure required for a slide. There's also the leaks, etc., caused by the slide. I bought a 2003 Airstream Land Yacht and have been very happy with it.

**SONNY HUDDLESTON
BATESVILLE, ARK.**

PROBLEM-CAUSERS

Laurie Nevins hit the nail on the head. I realize there will be those who probably think slideouts are the best thing since sliced bread, but they obviously haven't had problems with theirs — yet. Consider the cost, weight, maintenance and inconvenience when the slides are retracted. No thanks.

DICK SNYDER | SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

WE LIKE BOTH

Our first three motorhomes were all bought new in the 1990s with no slideouts. When we opted for No. 4 in 2007, we could not find a diesel-pusher without slides and settled for one with "only two." We took delivery of No. 5 in February, a new 2012 diesel-pusher with four slides! I agree with writer Laurie Nevins that slideouts seem to have become standard. My wife longs for the days when we could sit on opposite sides of our motorhome and share a snack or even hold hands without having to stand up. While our new coach is beautiful, just walking down the aisle with the slides in is a chore, as is opening the refrigerator or entering the bathroom. Not having a slideout would certainly not be a deal-breaker for us, as long as the coach interior was thoughtfully planned.

BOB SHERRILL | VIA EMAIL

CHECK THE FACTS

I truly enjoyed Larry MacDonald's recent article, "2012 RV Oops Awards," in the July edition of *MotorHome*. I believe that anyone who has ever used one of these machines has had something like what you described in your article happen to them or one of their friends. I do, however, have an issue with your editorial comments regarding "No. 7: Gray-Water Woes." You end the story with the com-

ment, "Since motorhome manufacturers haven't seen fit to install gray handles on gray-water valves ..." Shame on you, Larry. I would challenge you to get out of your office a bit more often and go take a look at new motorhomes. In fact, try looking at the No. 1-selling motorhome on the market for six years running, the Tiffin Phaeton. Upon inspection of the waste-water management system, you would find two Valterra gate valves and yes, you guessed it, one has a black handle and one has a gray handle. I am unsure of the number of production years that Tiffin has been manufacturing motorhomes utilizing these handles, but it seems that you are incorrect and motorhome manufacturers — or at least one of them — have indeed seen it fit to produce coaches with color-coded handles. Might I suggest that perhaps in the future you stick to your storytelling and leave the editorials regarding motorhome manufacturing to those that know what they are talking about.

GEORGE MCCULLEY | VIA EMAIL

From the author: Thanks for your feedback George. I stand corrected on the generality of my recommendation. I should have said, "only those motorhome owners, such as Rick in Oops No. 7, whose gray-water valve handles are black, should consider painting them gray."

It would be of interest to know whether manufacturers other than Tiffin have seen fit to color-code their waste-tank handles, and to hear from motorhome owners whether their waste-tank valve handles are color-coded.

Please send an email to Larry MacDonald at CaptMac@shaw.ca answering the following questions. The summarized results will be published in January 2013.

- Are your gray-water valve handles black or gray?
- What are the make, model and year of your motorhome?

Letters to the editor:

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BUT WILL IT FIT?

The next time you go shopping for a motorhome, bring along a tape measure. You'll find it is a handy tool when it comes to evaluating an RV's livability.

Begin by using it to measure the outside storage cabinets. Is there room for your leveling blocks, hookup equipment, folding chairs, barbecue, tools, golf clubs and fishing gear? Compare the sizes of the larger items to the dimensions of the outside storage bays.

Ascertain the usable countertop space in the kitchen. That motorhome may come equipped with a large side-by-side refrigerator, icemaker, LP-gas oven, microwave/convection oven, pullout pantry, double sink and dining accommodations for six people. But does it have adequate counterspace on which to prepare a meal or stack dirty dishes?

Check out the interior dimensions of the cupboards. Will your coffee pot, toaster, slow cooker, pressure cooker, electric skillet, pots, pans, lids, serving bowls, dishes, cups and glasses fit? Measure the shelf heights in the slide-out pantry. Will they accommodate boxes of dry cereal and bags of potato chips or just small sizes of canned goods?

Open every drawer. You'd be surprised at how short some of them can be. Most drawer items will fit one way or the other, but some motorhomes may have more drawers with better dimensions.

Look in the bathroom. Are the bathroom towel holders adequate? Can you add more? Where? Measure the available wall or door space.

See if the medicine chest is deep enough and if its shelves are high enough to accommodate the items you plan to keep in it.

Take your shoes off and step into the shower. Go through the motions of bathing yourself and washing your hair. Can you accomplish this without bruising your knuckles on the ceiling or getting wrapped up in the shower curtain? Be reasonable; most coach showers won't compare to the one you have at home, but do measure and compare the various showers available for the type and size of motorhome you are researching.

The manufacturer's brochure claims the couch sleeps two. Does that mean two adults or two children? A 6-foot-tall adult would appreciate a bed that is at least 74 inches long. Convert the couch (and the dinette) into a bed. Lie down on it. Is it comfortable? How many nights could you sleep on it?

Measure the mattress. You may

want to buy fitted sheets. Just because it's labeled a "king" or "queen" size mattress does not mean it meets the standard measurements of the bed industry.

Here, according to a mattress manufacturer, are the standard mattress sizes:

California King	72 by 84 inches
Standard King	76 by 80 inches
Queen	60 by 80 inches
Full	54 by 75 inches
Twin	38 by 75 inches

There's nothing wrong with a mattress that isn't a standard size, but you do want to make an informed decision.

Measure the interior of the motorhome's wardrobe closets and shirt lockers. You want to be able to hang your clothes in the closets without the bottom 6 inches lying rumped on the closet floor. And you want the closet door to close without pushing your clothes sideways.

At home, measure from the top of your wardrobe's clothes rod to the bottom of the longest item of clothing you expect to hang in your motorhome's wardrobe closet. Next, measure the shoulder width of the widest garment you expect to hang in your motorhome's clothes closet. Then measure from the top of your clothes rod to the bottom of the shorter items of clothing you might hang in a motorhome's shirt lockers.

In the motorhome, measure from the top of the wardrobe's clothes rod to the closet floor and from the inside of the closet door to the back wall of the closet. Compare these measurements with the measurements you made at home. It will allow you to determine if the RV's clothes closets and shirt lockers will accommodate the clothes you want to take.

Your tape measure will also come in handy for measuring the motorhome's interior and exterior heights, its width, wheelbase, rear overhang and ground clearance.

Next time you go looking at motorhomes take your tape measure. It will literally tell you if a coach is going to measure up to your expectations.

Visit the Kievas' website at www.rvknowhow.com. ♦

CONVERT THE COUCH INTO A BED. LIE DOWN ON IT. IS IT COMFORTABLE? MEASURE THE MATTRESS. **JUST BECAUSE IT'S LABELED A 'KING' OR 'QUEEN' SIZE MATTRESS DOES NOT MEAN IT MEETS THE STANDARD MEASUREMENTS OF THE BED INDUSTRY.**



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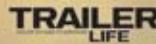
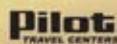
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escapes

by LAURA MICHAELS

EVENTS | NOTEWORTHY | WHEELS & GEAR | CROSSROADS

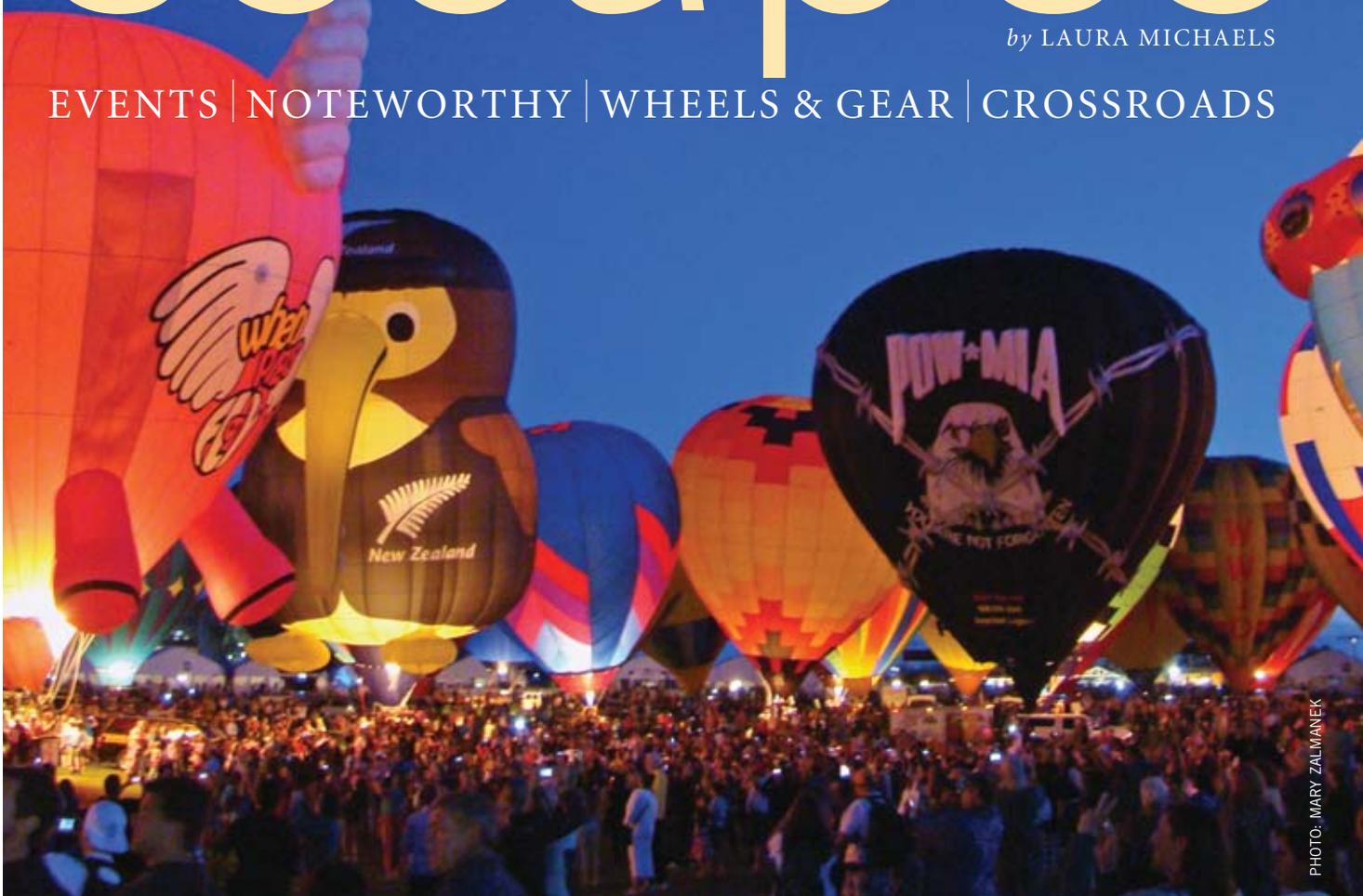


PHOTO: MARY ZALMANEK

UP IN THE AIR

WATCH AS BALLOONS FILL THE SKY IN ALBUQUERQUE

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

celebrated its 40th anniversary last year by setting a world record for the most hot air balloons launched in one hour. Awe-struck visitors from around the world, their upturned faces scanning the sky, watched as 345 brightly colored hot air balloons lifted off during the Mass Ascension on Oct. 1, 2011. During the course of the nine-day event, 700 balloons filled the sky. The 2012 fiesta is Oct. 6-14, and events include mass ascensions, balloon glows and the Special Shapes Rodeo, a tradition of the fiesta since 1989.

Albuquerque, N.M., is uniquely suited to host this balloon fiesta. The Albuquerque Box, a weather phenom-

enon, is a pattern of predictable winds — southerly at low elevations, northerly at high elevations — that allow balloonists to navigate in a vertical box. Sometimes pilots can make several passes and land in the launch field.

This was the first time we brought our motorhome to the fiesta, and it's the best way to go. Airstream rally organizers allowed us to join their group, even though we own an SOB (some other brand). We gladly endured their good-natured teasing for access to a VIP site with dry camping adjacent to the launch field. Sites with water and electric hookups are also available. For more information, call 888-422-7277 or visit www.balloonfiesta.com. — *Mary Zalmanek*



OCT. 6-7 | Proclaimed as the town's oldest and largest festival, the annual **Fall Festival** in Ellicottville, N.Y., is more than just a view of gorgeous fall foliage and vibrant colors. Tens of thousands of people head out to enjoy unique food, an arts and crafts show, carnival rides, live entertainment and more. A true festival for all ages, the event takes place outdoors with plenty to see and taste; 800-349-9099, www.ellicottvillenyc.com/fall-festival.



OCT. 10-21 | Thousands of people head to Columbia, S.C., for the annual **South Carolina State Fair** each year. This year, Hot Chelle Rae, Boyz II Men, the Doo-bie Brothers and Jake Owen with the Eli Young Band will be performing, among others, at the grandstand. Sand sculpting, a petting zoo and a 1960s rocket that was gifted to South Carolina by the US Air Force will greet fair goers, and a variety of thrill rides are offered. And, in true state-fair form, an abundance of food sure to please any palate will be available. Fried corn on the cob, anyone? 888-444-3247, www.scstatefair.org.

The Jayhawks, Sam Bush and the Yonder Mountain String Band all set among fall colors. There are plenty of activities to enjoy at the campground besides live music; disc golf, an activity workshop, hiking trails, fishing, kayaking and a children's area are a few other activities visitors can check out. Camping is permitted with a variety of options available; 785-749-3434, www.yonderharvestfestival.com.

OCT. 11-13 | The annual Harvest Music Festival in Ozark, Ark., promises camping and a variety of live music from artists such as Brown Bird,

OCT. 12-14 | Come hungry for the seventh annual **Crescent City Blues & BBQ Festival**. Located at Lafayette Square Park in New Orleans, La., the event features blues music from Keb Mo, Lattimore, Sugar Blue, Li'l

OCT. 27

Carson City, Nev., has cause to celebrate every October with the annual **Nevada Day Parade** celebrating Nevada's admission to statehood in 1864. The event includes an annual parade with floats, horse-drawn carriages, antique cars and other aspects reflecting the culture of Nevada.

Dubbed the largest formal statehood celebration in the nation, the event is more than just a parade. The activities of the day include the annual chili feed, beard contest, governor's mansion tour, free concert, rock drilling contest and more; 775-882-2600, www.nevadaday.com.

Buck Sinegal, Ironing Board Sam and Spencer Bohren, to name a few. A variety of home-style barbecue awaits guests. Admission is free; 888-652-8751, www.jazzandheritage.org.

OCT. 19-21 | Diamonds are not just a girl's best friend, as all are invited to check out the Austin Gem and Mineral Society **Gem Capers**

2012 event in Austin, Texas. The show includes jewelry, gemstones, beads, mineral specimens, crystals, fossils, spheres, and lapidary equipment with more than 30 vendors. Art demonstrations, exhibits, door prizes and vendors offer adults plenty to take in at the three-day event; 512-458-9546, www.austingemandmineral.org.

RV SHOWS

- OCT. 3-7**
Fall Detroit Camper & RV Show
Novi, Mich.
- OCT. 4-7**
Tacoma Fall RV Show
Tacoma, Wash.

- OCT. 5-7**
19th Annual Big East Powersports Show
Syracuse, N.Y.
- OCT. 5-7**
Austin RV Super Sale
Round Rock, Texas

- OCT. 12-21**
60th Annual California RV Show
Pomona, Calif.
- OCT. 14-15**
2012 Year-End RV Show & Sale
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

- OCT. 19-21**
27th Annual Rocky Mountain Snowmobile Expo
Denver, Colo.
- OCT. 19-21**
Toronto Fall RV Show & Sale
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

*RV shows are subject to change or cancellation at any time



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ENJOY A CLEAR VIEW

A foggy windshield not only obstructs the sightings of striking landscape vistas but also creates a potentially dangerous driving situation. Keep windshields, mirrors and other glass or plastic surfaces free of film with **KleeVu's Anti-Fog Cleaner**. Safe on all glass, plastic and Lexan surfaces, this cleaner prevents fogging and its anti-static properties are said to repel dust and lint. KleeVu's products contain no silicone, alcohol, ammonia or abrasives, and are manufactured and packaged in Idaho Falls, Idaho. After cleaning the motorhome's windshield and mirrors, tackle other windows and then turn the spray bottle on the TV and computer screens. KleeVu Anti-Fog Cleaner is also ideal for eyeglasses, camera lenses and binoculars.

The KleeVu Cleaning Kit includes two bottles — one 8-ounce and one 2-ounce — of anti-fog cleaner, and two microfiber cleaning cloths for \$25. A 1-gallon refill of the anti-fog cleaner is \$50. KleeVu products are available online for purchase.

KleeVu, 855-220-4949, www.kleevuproducts.com

PUT IT ALL ON THE TABLE

Customize your campsite while adding convenience to your outdoor activities with an RV folding table from **Rustic Sidekicks**. Handcrafted and made to order by Sam Storie of Storie Productions in Altus, Okla., these all-wood pine tables are designed to accommodate the needs of motorhome owners. The built-in cutting board makes food preparation a snap and the table doubles as a portable kitchen island with center drawer, optional paper towel holder and front towel hooks. Or choose one of the larger Specialty Sidekicks design for crafts and hobbies.

Rustic Sidekick tabletops are sealed, sanded and coated with three layers of polyurethane, and most weigh around 30 pounds. Sizes range from the 47-by-18.5-by-27.5-inch Mini Sidekick RVing and Tailgating Table (\$209) to the 63-by-18.5-by-34-inch Maxim table (\$279). Rustic Sidekicks products are available for order online.

Rustic Sidekicks, 580-471-3902, www.rusticsidekick.com



AVOID AN ACCIDENT

Motorhome owners know that changing lanes can be tricky, not to mention backing up and otherwise maneuvering a 40-foot coach while avoiding obstacles. The new aftermarket Blind Spot Detection System from Goshers.com, a Mason Hill Company, is one option to lessen the worry of an accident while on the road. Designed for RVs and other large vehicles, the Blind Spot Detection System is not a camera or mirror system. It uses radar-like sensors, which are installed on the rear bumper or on the sides of longer motorhomes. Two LED indicators are included for installation on the inside of the vehicle for easy viewing by the driver. When a vehicle is in the driver's blind spot, the corresponding LED indicator will light up. An alarm unit is also included for an audible warning of a vehicle in your blind spot.

The company said the system could be installed by an advanced do-it-yourselfer, but recommends professional installation by a local car stereo installer. The system is priced at \$249.99 and is available online.

Goshers.com, 888-722-5848, www.goshers.com/blind-spot-detection-systems.html



News Briefs

Rand McNally and the Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association of North America (RVDA) are working together to provide RVers access to RV dealers and service providers across a variety of platforms. The information will be included in new mobile phone apps and website maps and directions, as well as on board Rand McNally's TripMaker RVND GPS units. The app will enable RVers to access a listing of nearby RVDA member dealers across the United States and Canada. RVDA dealer information also will be provided in the TripMaker RVND line of GPS devices. In addition, RVDA dealer information will be integrated into Rand McNally's Best of the Road website, "Best of RVing" microsite and into maps on www.randmcnally.com.

Motorhome owners traveling to southwest Florida will soon have a new RV resort to consider. **JL Cypress Trails LLC**, an affiliate of JL Properties Inc., is launching a new RV resort in Fort Myers: Cypress Trail RV Resort. Introductory pricing for sites starts at \$39,000, according to a news release. The new RV neighborhood is adjacent to Cypress Woods RV Resort at Exit 139 off Interstate 75. Each 30-by-90-foot parcel will feature tropical native landscaping. Lots are available as pull-in for motorhomes or back-in for towables. Enhanced hookups with 50-30-20-amp service and free Wi-Fi service are standard, while a variety of developer-furnished options are available. Cypress Trail will offer residents and guests a large clubhouse with a catering kitchen, two heated pools, a hot tub, tennis courts, a bocce ball area and horseshoe pit. Two lakes with a nature preserve and nature trails round out the resort's offerings.

Foretravel Motorcoach will sell its line of luxury motorhomes through Lewisville, Texas, dealership Platinum Coach & RV after the two companies entered into a sales agreement. The dealership, which specializes in pre-owned high-end coaches, will promote Foretravel in north Texas and at various motorcoach parks and events. As Platinum expands its space and operations, the company plans to offer "an appropriate level of service for their dealership," according to Foretravel. Foretravel, based in Nacogdoches, Texas, produces luxury coaches under the brand names Nimbus, IH and Phenix.

CASA GRANDE EARNS BEST IDEA GRANT

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument near Coolidge, Ariz., is working to develop a Native American Conservation Corp program thanks to a grant from the National Park Foundation. Casa Grande was chosen to participate in the 2012 America's Best Idea program, which funds park projects designed to connect diverse, under-engaged populations throughout the United States with their national parks in innovative and meaningful ways. Casa Grande's program will employ a crew of six local Native American youth ages 15 to 18 for a period of six weeks. Crewmembers will work with monument staff to complete a variety of cultural and natural resource management tasks. The focus of these tasks will be preserving and protecting archaeological sites and revegetating previ-

ously disturbed areas.

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument protects the multi-story "Great House" and the ruins of other ancient structures built by the people of the Sonoran Desert more than 800 years ago. Established as the nation's first archaeological reserve in 1892, the Ruins sparked the beginning of the archaeological preservation movement in America. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/cagr.



PHOTO: NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

VOLUNTEERS RESTORE GRAND CANYON

Visitors to the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park will see an improved landscape thanks to the efforts of volunteers with The Travel Corporation.

For the third consecutive year, The Travel Corporation sent a group of employees, representing nine company brands, on a trip to the Grand Canyon to volunteer in a hands-on plant restoration project. The Travel Corporation Conservation Foundation partnered with Tourism Cares, a nonprofit organization founded by the tourism industry to preserve many of the world's natural sites for future generations of travelers.

As part of the project, the 19 volunteers flew out to the Grand Canyon and worked along the Mather Point

Visitor Center. The Tourism Cares and the National Park Service crew provided information, guidance and support on restoring the natural vegetation to the area. This year's group spent one full day planting more than 200 native species in the area while removing invasive plants. The foundation's other projects include indigenous sustainable tourism, sustainable coastlines and ocean conservation.



HISTORY LIVES ON AT QUIET VALLEY

A trip to the Pocono Mountains can take visitors upward to cloud-enveloped peaks, down into the valley for fishing and canoeing or even back in time. That's the direction guests are headed when they arrive at Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm in Stroudsburg, Pa., in the Pocono foothills. Purchased in 1958 by Alice and Wendell Wicks, the property — with its restored 1890s farmhouse — has been open to the public as Quiet Valley since 1974. A tour of the farm brings history to life as visitors experience the “granddaddy” cabin, outdoor bake oven, icehouse, smokehouse and other farm buildings. Dressed in period costumes, “family members” reenact life on the farm, an experience complete with equipment dem-



PHOTO: POCONO MOUNTAINS VISITORS BUREAU

onstrations and animal encounters. Quiet Valley's 38th annual Harvest Festival will bring countless craft demonstrations and a Civil War encampment to the farm Oct. 6 and 7. The site is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

For more information, call 570-992-6161 or visit www.quietvalley.org.

SPELLBOUND IN SALEM

Step back into 17th century

Massachusetts. The year is 1692, when more than 200 people were accused of practicing witchcraft. Twenty souls lost their lives by the close of the controversial Salem witch trials. Eventually, the colony admitted the trials had been a mistake, one that showed the power of hysteria and paranoia, and surely impacted history forever.

More than 300 years later, the Salem witch trials still fascinate people. In fact, around 250,000 visitors head to Salem, Mass., each year to check out the country English gothic-style Salem Witch Museum. In an effort to redevelop the Salem area, the Salem Witch Museum opened its doors in 1972. Created from a renovated historic church that is 167 years old, the Salem Witch Museum has become a major attraction along Boston's North Shore.

The museum is devoted to telling the story of the Salem witch trials and banishing misconceptions and dangers surrounding hysteria and the scapegoating of society members. Museum visitors can check out two stationary exhibits — one chronicling the Salem witch trials, and “Witches: Evolving Perceptions,” giving an in-depth look

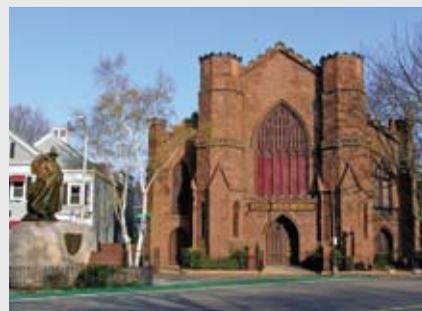


PHOTO: SALEM WITCH MUSEUM

at the development of witches and witchcraft. “Evolving Perceptions” discusses that witches were originally midwives in a pre-monotheistic time. Then, in post-monotheism, these midwives were in the middle of a clash of culture and religion leading people to believe they were actually witches rather than midwives. The exhibit also touches on modern uses of the word “witch” and how it is portrayed in the media, such as the popular 1960s TV show, “Bewitched,” the recent “Harry Potter” movies, and, of course, “The Wizard of Oz.”

The museum is open year-round with extended hours in October. Tickets are \$9 for adults, \$7.50 for seniors and \$6 for children 6-14 years old.

For more information, call 978-744-1692 or visit www.salemwitchmuseum.com.

— Amanda Lepinski ♦

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- Richmond Camping RV Expo
- Kansas Sports, Boat & Travel Show
- N.C. RV & Camping Show
- Atlantic City RV & Camping Show
- Colorado RV, Sports, Boat & Travel Show
- Rhode Island RV & Camping Show
- Virginia RV & Boat Show
- Summer Boat & RV Super Sale
- North Carolina Fall RV Show & Sale
- Big East Powersports Show
- Rocky Mountain Snowmobile Expo
- Fall Atlantic City RV Show
- St. Paul Ice Fishing & Winter Sports Show

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<http://www.gsevents.com/rv-shows.cfm>

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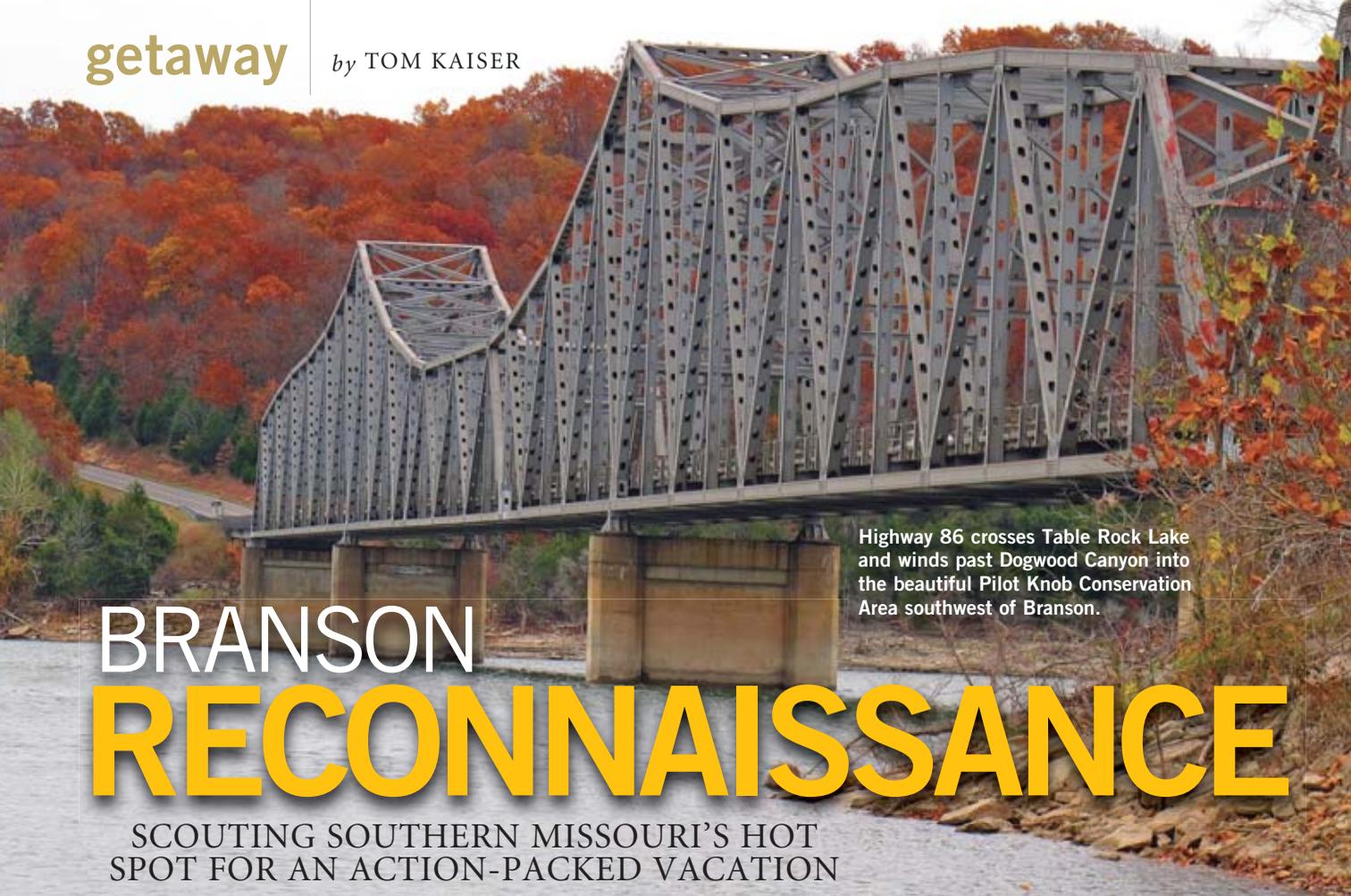
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Highway 86 crosses Table Rock Lake and winds past Dogwood Canyon into the beautiful Pilot Knob Conservation Area southwest of Branson.

BRANSON RECONNAISSANCE

SCOUTING SOUTHERN MISSOURI'S HOT SPOT FOR AN ACTION-PACKED VACATION

Planning a trip to Branson, Mo., is like eating at a massive buffet: peruse it all, but only take the best of the best. Beyond its superabundance of attractions and never-ending live performances, Branson is near the mean population center of the United States, so it's within a day's drive for a large swath of the country. Even more, it's perched amid the Ozark Mountains that provide stunning views at every turn, especially during autumn.

As a 30-something who's well outside the target audience of Branson's longstanding music shows like Andy Williams, Baldknobbers, Jim Stafford and the Good News Gospel, a little research showed there's a lot more happening here — especially the fantastic surroundings — than presumed. Anybody can have fun here, young or old.

Amateur Horseman

Branson has more than a dozen RV parks and campgrounds in and near town. With easy-to-navigate streets and excellent signage, getting around with your dinghy is a simple way to explore this compact city.

Seeking nature-based fun and a physical challenge, I signed up for an early-morning horseback ride — something I haven't done since I was a kid. The drive took us south on U.S. Highway 65, and then west on Highway 86, which led us over an old steel trestle bridge crossing an arm of the sprawling Table Rock Lake. Continuing westward on 86 exposed a beautiful country drive where the pavement winds through hills engulfed in fall color.

Stretching alongside the Missouri-Arkansas border, Dog-

wood Canyon Nature Park is a 10,000-acre park that's an easy drive from town, with separate RV parking. The facility is privately owned and its grounds are like a large countryside estate. The entrance sign says, "Welcome to Paradise," as did the vibrant late-fall leaves atop rolling hills and the sound of waterfalls down in the valley.

After checking out what Dogwood has to offer — hiking, biking, ATV and Segway tours, a Wildlife Tram, rental cabins, guided Jeep tours, fishing trips and casting clinics — it was time for the main event.

At 6 feet 4 inches, climbing atop a horse felt like a circus trick about to go bad. After acclimating to this freakishly tall, ever-shifting center of gravity, I was prepared for forward motion. My horse turned its head to examine its oversized cargo. Following our instructor, Shilo Jones, we slowly clip-clopped along the trail.



Three adventurers set out on horseback at Dogwood Canyon Nature Park.

PHOTOS: TOM KAISER

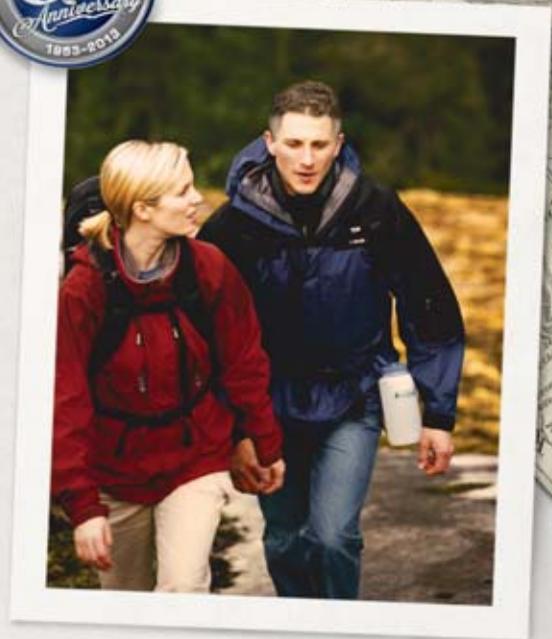
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Past the barn and across the prairie, the trail crested a rise with an expansive view of the Ozarks — brightly colored trees and grassy hills for miles. Near the field's edge, the horses turned left and hustled down a rocky downhill section. At the bottom of the glen, our group could only hear the sounds of birds at play, livestock taking a drink from an adjacent pond and wind rushing through the trees.

I felt exhilarated, like Ted Turner checking a fence line around one of his 500,000-acre ranches. The rush of machismo faded when the horse shifted its weight and I clumsily gripped my reins in fear.

"Always a bunch of amateurs," the horse seemed to say, and we ambled our way back to the barn.

Canyons, Craftsmen, Cooking & Christmas

After conquering the rugged farm life, we were back on the road to Silver Dollar City — a theme park 20 minutes west of Branson off highways 265 and 76. It's a massive place with acres of parking, easy access for big rigs and a tram to carry recent arrivals into the park. A towering Christmas wreath at the entrance set the tone: the holidays come early in Branson.

Built around the mouth of Marvel Cave, which first attracted explorers in the late 1800s, Silver Dollar City has blossomed since opening in 1960 into one of the top theme parks in the United States and one of the Branson area's best attractions for entertaining the whole family.

There's a lot to do here: spelunking in the cave that's a National Natural Landmark, experiencing more than 30 rides and attractions, exploring 60 unique shops and restaurants, enjoying 40 daily shows, watching the demonstrations of craftsmen and cooks, hopping on a steam train and traversing the vintage 1843 McHaffie's Homestead, to name just a handful of choices at Silver Dollar City. Fresh off my equine hijinks, I avoided the coasters and water rides, electing to soak up the feel of life gone by in this recreated Ozark village.

Wafting scents of cinnamon and

Top to bottom: The view atop the Vigilante Ziprider. A furniture factory at Silver Dollar City. Southern-style dessert: apple dumplings with ice cream. A scene from Silver Dollar's Christmas parade.

frosting carried me into Eva & Delilah's Bakery, where culinary masters pinched and rolled out dough, spread layers of sugary filling and cut pastries on butcher block countertops. If only all bakeries were this interactive and exciting — and had truly exceptional cinnamon rolls, cupcakes, turnovers and pinwheels.

From there came Molly's Mill, Brown's Candy, Hazel's Blown and Cut Glass Factory, and the General Store and Blacksmith, where we experienced the wonders of hand-blown glass furnaces in action, a taffy machine cranking out ribbons of sticky candy, a restored belt-driven furniture sawmill, a candle maker's shop with creaky floors, a pottery studio filled to the rafters and woodworking craftsmen with long beards and blue jean overalls.

With a belly full of pastries and a king's lunch finished off by an apple dumpling, it was time to start focusing on food farther down the street at the Culinary & Craft School. In the setting of a modern southern kitchen, instructor Debbie Dance Uhrig taught baking fundamentals to the class while whipping up Scandinavian Tea Rings (or cinnamon rolls) and demonstrating as she baked.

Moving quickly to see as much as possible, we also took in a performance of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" in the historic Opera House. The large hall was packed to capacity, and the actors' performance was energetic, moving and well received by the festive crowd.

A palpable buzz grew as a crowd began forming around the Main Street Gazebo at sunset. Suddenly a switch was flipped, and nearly every square inch of Silver Dollar City lit up with lights to signal the start of the Christmas parade. With holiday music, elaborate costumes, ornate floats and more lights than I've ever seen, it was an amazing procession.

It may have been a far cry from Christmas weather, but it was impossible to avoid catching the holiday spirit. While many old-time parks consist of "old" storefronts and cheesy architectural imitation, Silver Dollar City is more authentic, an honest-feeling step back in time for over-stimulated Americans.

Ducks, Trains & Kung Fu

With blue skies and a warm late-fall



breeze, my next day was packed with a varied trio of activities: a river ride on the Branson Ducks, a train trip through the Ozarks and into Arkansas, and taking in “The Legend of Kung Fu” — a Cirque du Soleil-style show that was the opening act for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

Just west of downtown on Highway 76, Branson’s Ride the Ducks is geared toward water enthusiasts of all ages and brings guests on an amusing open-air ride through town with views of the surrounding countryside and a thrill-inducing splash into Table Rock Lake.

Once seated, everybody is handed their own “quacker” to make noise and, as instructed, call out questionable jokes from our comedic driver. Kids get special treatment and some were offered the chance to drive our duck across the lake. Parents, grandparents and any military buffs will enjoy learning about the Branson area’s history (including a town sunk to form Table Rock Lake) and seeing decommissioned military equipment on the way to the hilltop overlook.

Back in town, I didn’t have to travel far for my next exploit: a 40-mile ride on the Branson Scenic Railway. A crowd gathered to board just outside the Hiltons at the Branson Landing, and it was a full train.

The luxury of traveling on an old passenger liner, with its glass-top observation and dining cars, is exciting for riders with fond memories or kids on their first railroad journey. This train enthusiast couldn’t wait for the chugging to begin, and took a forward-facing seat in a glass-top coach.

Alongside rivers, through dark tunnels, over bridges and past two abandoned towns, the Scenic Railway winds through Ozark foothills and gives an accurate feel for what it was like to travel this area before it became a tourist epicenter.

Closing out another fine day, I had tickets to “The Legend of Kung Fu.” The crowd could’ve been larger, but there was no questioning the drama, scale and incredible talent of this large and high-flying cast of athletic actors.

The show tells the story of a young boy, Chun Yi, and his growth through the help of his kung fu master. It’s emotional,

exciting and a great show. The crowd was audibly amazed by many of the acrobatics and special effects.

“The Legend of Kung Fu” will amaze anyone looking to step out of the ordinary. You can opt for the full treatment with a three-course Chinese meal and drinks at one of many dining tables.

A Wild Encore

Any good act deserves a grand finale, and I had two priorities for my final half-day in the Branson area: a top-shelf breakfast and one final adrenaline rush. Breakfast was served during a tour of College of the Ozarks, 10 minutes south of town off U.S. Highway 65. With rustic buildings amid the rolling hills, College of the Ozarks is a unique campus where students don’t pay tuition but instead work for their education and earn degrees with a focus on community service, patriotism and religious faith.

After a brief tour, we were seated in a dining room under soaring wood beams inside the Keeter Center for a proper southern breakfast made from ingredients grown or raised on-site: sausage, ham, potatoes, tomatoes and a crunchy egg quiche.

Tours are available at College of the Ozarks, and lunch, dinner or Sunday brunch is served at the elegant Dobyins Dining Room at the Keeter Center. Reservations are recommended, as are the many take-home delicacies from the Center’s bakery.

Happily satiated, I had time for one last thrill before my trip’s end, and conspired with a courageous group for a stop at Vigilante Ziprider just northwest of town.

Confidence faded to apprehension as we pulled into the parking lot and spotted the 170-foot tower with its attached lines streaming off into the distant valley. With tickets purchased, there was no time to reconsider; before our group knew it, we were standing atop Inspiration Tower and strapping on our harnesses.

Stepping off over thin air was a rush, as was the endless view and 50 MPH blast across the treetops. After touching down and feeling tough, we agreed anybody could enjoy the ride, as long as they have the guts to agree to it.

I left Branson pleasantly surprised



Passengers boarding the Branson Scenic Railway directly across from Branson Landing.

with the amazing variety of activities and natural attractions. Whether you’re looking for the full country music experience, entertaining youngsters or seeking nature-based or non-traditional activities like I was, it’s possible in Branson. And, you might even get to meet Ray Charles and Dolly Parton impersonators. Weirder things have happened. ♦



Tom Kaiser is the managing editor of *Trailer Life* magazine. When he’s not off on camping adventures, Tom enjoys kayaking, off-roading and impromptu road trips throughout the Upper Midwest.

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CAMPGROUND COMMITMENT

WHEN IT COMES TO PLANNING A WEDDING, RV RESORTS AND CAMPGROUNDS PAIR SCENIC SETTINGS WITH AFFORDABLE OPTIONS

by JEFF CRIDER

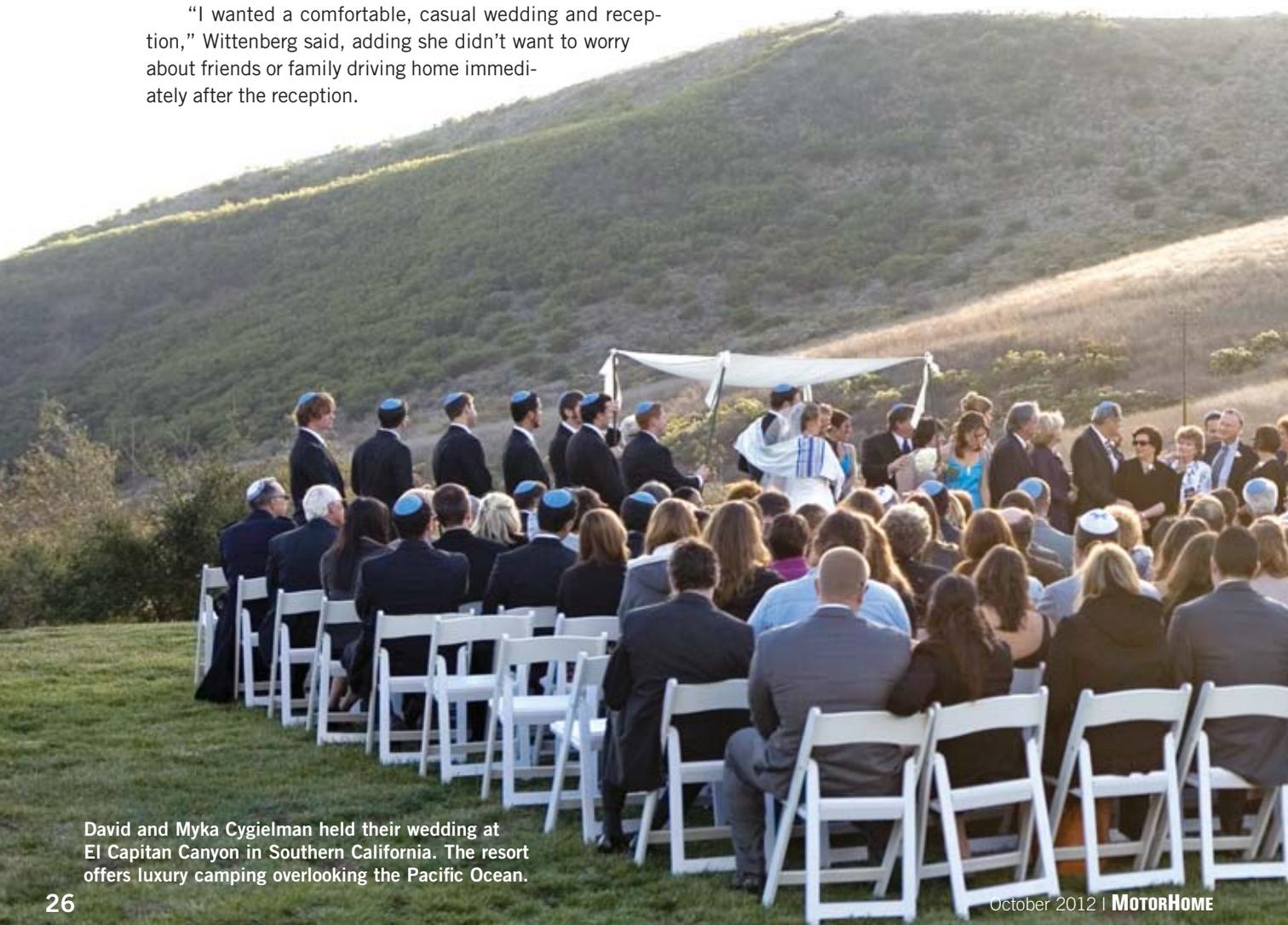
Twenty-eight-year-old Carlie Wittenberg had a traditional wedding ceremony at a chapel in Galesville, Wis., last June. But instead of having her friends and family gather at an expensive venue for a formal reception, Wittenberg had her guests rendezvous a few miles away at Champions Riverside Resort, where they feasted on home-cooked pulled pork and brisket, drank to their hearts' content and spent the night in their tents and RVs.

"I wanted a comfortable, casual wedding and reception," Wittenberg said, adding she didn't want to worry about friends or family driving home immediately after the reception.

By having them spend the night at the campground, Wittenberg was also able to have a relaxed reception and enjoy the company of her friends and family on the most important day of her life without facing the time constraints that most reception venues impose.

Wittenberg also saved a bundle, since having her reception at a campground was a fraction of the cost of having the event at a more traditional wedding venue.

Across the country, growing numbers of Ameri-



David and Myka Cygielman held their wedding at El Capitan Canyon in Southern California. The resort offers luxury camping overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

cans are realizing many campgrounds offer ideal settings for weddings and wedding receptions, according to campground operators and industry officials.

Not only are campgrounds more affordable than hotels or other typical reception venues, they are usually far more willing to accommodate weddings, either by letting wedding parties cook their own food or by allowing them to work with outside restaurants and caterers. Some campgrounds even offer their own banquet services.

The scenic settings that campgrounds provide also make them alluring, and some park operators are finding they can increase their spring and fall shoulder season business by promoting the ability to host weddings and receptions.

Indeed, one of the reasons 20-year-old Taylor Harrington said she planned to have her reception at the pavilion of Holiday Park Campground

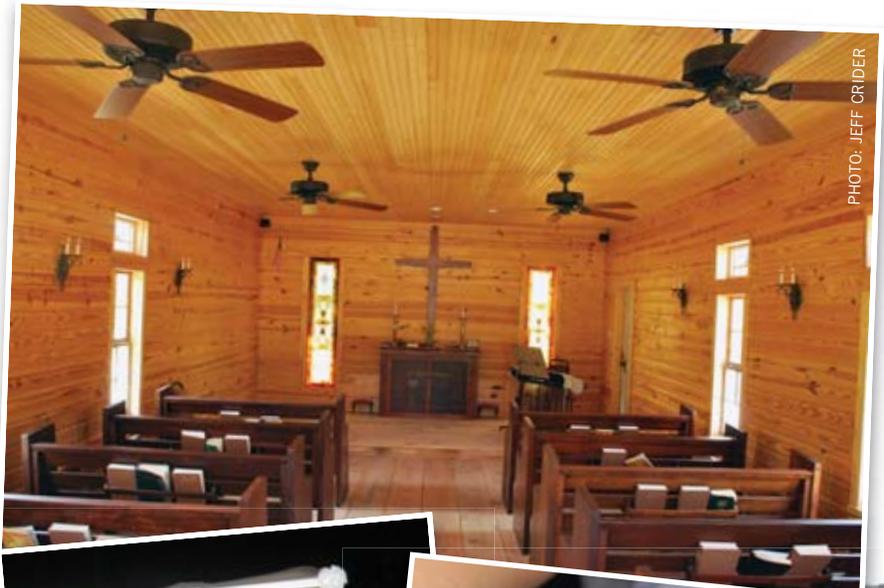


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El Capitan Canyon's park model cabins.

in Greensboro, Md., this October was so people could enjoy the fall colors.

And since growing numbers of campgrounds offer rental accommodations, people are finding they can celebrate their weddings over an entire weekend with both their RVing and non-RVing friends.

That's precisely what Jasmine Mohamed did in September when she married her fiancé, Woody, at Flying Flags RV Resort in Buellton, Calif. The couple planned their wedding to coincide with a vintage RV rally at the resort. But since Flying Flags also has park model rental cottages, all of their friends and family who do not have RVs were also able to come to their wedding and spend the weekend at Flying Flags.

Some RV resorts even have wedding planners.

Seth and Madison Capps had their wedding last November at Mill Creek Ranch Resort in Canton, Texas. Park employees helped plan the wedding and reception, using catering services from a Dallas-based chef, according to Madison's father, Kevin Gattis, who said his daughter's wedding was "very reasonably priced."

Some guests, in fact, arrived at Mill Creek Ranch Resort as early as Thursday night and stayed through the Saturday wedding and reception and didn't head home until Sunday. While some guests came in their RVs, others stayed in Mill Creek Ranch Resort's park models and enjoyed the scenic setting, which includes a creek that runs through the resort.

Of course, while many couples like the casual and affordable reception venues and accommodations campgrounds provide, growing numbers of couples are also having wedding weekends in some of the nation's most luxurious campgrounds.

Consider Franny Teran and Charlie Freund. When they got married last year, they organized a weekend full of fun activities for their family and friends at El Capitan Canyon, an upscale campground just north of Santa Barbara, Calif.

About 150 guests arrived Friday night and spent the whole weekend at the park. Some came in their RVs. Others checked into El Capitan Canyon's luxurious park model cabins and yurts, while a handful of guests pitched tents.

But while weddings are typically formal events, Franny and Charlie's wedding weekend started off with a sing-along around a bonfire Friday night as their guests munched on tacos, sipped margaritas and broke the ice with one another.

On Saturday, the guests took part in arts and crafts activities, with some helping to make floral arrangements for the wedding while others painted a "hoopa" or canopy, which Franny and Charlie would stand under during their Sunday wedding ceremony. The hoopa is a tradition in Jewish weddings.

Saturday night's activities included a Western hoedown with live music and a square dance caller, and a barbecue dinner that included tri-tip, chicken, roasted corn and beans.

On Sunday, the late morning wedding ceremony was followed by a brunch reception and karaoke show in which dozens of Franny and Charlie's guests belted out their favorite songs.

Many couples say they've been pleasantly surprised to find the unusual amenities provided by privately owned and operated campgrounds.

When Miranda Hannemann discovered Johnson Creek RV Resort in the Texas Hill Country town of Ingram, she couldn't



October 2012 | **MOTORHOME**

wait to have a Western-themed wedding at the resort.

The park has a chapel that looks like it was built in the late 1800s, complete with wood floors and pews. The park also has a Western-themed rally hall and saloon, which is used for weddings and other special events. The interior of the rally hall is lined with fake furnished storefronts, which make it appear as if you have stepped back into the days of the Old West.

Hannemann, who got married in early May, said she had a caterer handle the food and that the cost of the wedding and reception was a fraction of what it would have been if she had the wedding at a traditional venue in town. Others find that campgrounds offer incomparable settings for weddings, both for the couple getting



Miranda Hannemann got hitched at Johnson Creek RV Resort in Texas.

married and for the guests.

Like Franny and Charlie Freund, David and Myka Cygielman celebrated their wedding over a weekend at El Capitan Canyon.

"It was amazing," David said. "It really felt like we turned a four or five hour event into a three-day vacation with family and friends."

With a weekend that included barbecues, hikes and other outdoor activities, the grand finale was the wedding itself on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean. David still remembers the feeling.

"You feel like you're on top of the world in this great, exciting moment with all of the people who you care about," he said. ♦

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DO YOU KNOW THE MOUNTAIN MAN?

SLOW DOWN FOR A STAY IN THIS ARIZONA TOWN NAMED FOR OLD BILL WILLIAMS



Williams, Ariz., bills itself as the “Gateway to the Grand Canyon.” Motorhome travelers can bypass the town itself, but we’re here to tell you that would be a mistake. Williams and the surrounding Kaibab National Forest offer an ideal setting as your base camp, and if the Grand Canyon is not on your itinerary, Williams is also a good place for an overnight stop along Interstate 40. After our visit, we’ll wager you’ll be tempted to stay a while.

The town takes its name from Old Bill Williams, the mountain man and fur trapper who may have spent the winter of 1832–1833 in the area. Not much is known for sure about Old Bill, but he

did make enough of an impression that a mountain was named for him, and around 1882, when the tracks of the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad were approaching, settlers in the area put the name of Williams on the newly formed town. In 1980, the town chose to remember its namesake by erecting an 8.5-foot-tall, 1,000-pound bronze statue that graces Monument Park at the west end of town.

It was the Atlantic and Pacific, and later the Santa Fe Railroad, that served as the primary reason for the town of Williams’ existence. Today, another railroad is one of the major reasons people stop and stay. Each day, locomotives of the Grand Canyon Railway depart from the historic Williams Depot for the Grand Canyon, over tracks first completed in 1901

PHOTOS: GERALD HAMMON

by GERALD C. AND SHARON L. HAMMON





Left to right: A view of Williams' main street, which was part of Route 66 until 1984. Head 30 miles north of Williams to Valle, where you'll find the Planes of Fame Air Museum. Displays include the German Messerschmitt 109 and antique automobiles from Ford.

by the Santa Fe Railroad. Vintage diesel engines from the heyday of classical train travel haul refurbished passenger cars, including several Vista Dome cars. At the end of the train is a special open platform lounge/observation car. When the trains reach Grand Canyon Village, passengers disembark only steps away from the canyon rim and the famed El Tovar Hotel.

Some days, the growling diesels are sidetracked or used in helper service behind one of two operational steam locomotives owned by the railroad. Having loved steam engines since I was a boy, I was sorry the railroad wasn't running them every summer day as they once did. But I also know that steam engines are notori-

ously difficult to maintain and are hard on the track because of the pounding action of the steam pistons. These steam engines do have some green credentials; their fuel isn't coal or petroleum oil and instead they run on waste vegetable oil.

Many motorhome owners choose to visit the Grand Canyon by train, leaving their motorhomes in one of several full-hookup parks in Williams. The Grand Canyon Railway touts its 124-site RV park adjacent to the train depot. There's no need to unhook the dinghy vehicle to get to the station, and during your walk to the platform you can enjoy the view of Bill Williams Mountain and the surrounding pine covered peaks.

Other RV parks are conveniently located, though not within walking distance of the station. RAILSIDE RV RANCH on the east edge of Williams places you near the tracks where train buffs can revel in the departure and return of the daily trains. If you are a train buff and are fortunate enough to be there on one of the weekends when the railroad runs its Cataract Creek Ramblers (returning in 2013), you'd be able to sit back and watch one of the steam engines work hourly eight-mile runs. Two KOAs located a few miles out of town give their guests a chance to enjoy Arizona's fabled pine belt while avoiding the constant noise of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad main line that



Locomotives of the Grand Canyon Railway depart daily from the historic Williams Depot, which is walking distance from the railway's RV Park.

DO YOU KNOW THE MOUNTAIN MAN?

passes adjacent to town.

Another option is camping in the surrounding 1.6-million-acre Kaibab National Forest, which encompasses one of the largest contiguous ponderosa pine forests in the United States. There are developed campgrounds (no hookups) and an abundance of boondocking locations. We drove south out of Williams along the eastern shoulder of Bill Williams Mountain toward Dogtown Reservoir and were simply amazed at the number of level spots under towering pines where folks had parked everything from small tent trailers to huge motorhomes. ATVs were everywhere. It was definitely a playground for more than just kids.

Although the Grand Canyon Railway is a big draw, Williams also appeals to those who have no interest in tourist railroads. Its main street was part of the iconic Route 66 until Oct. 13, 1984, when it became the last town bypassed by I-40. A stroll downtown takes visitors back in time as they check out shops housed in buildings constructed during the 1890s and early 1900s, before Route 66 became Ameri-



The Cataract Creek Gang stages a mock gunfight in the streets of downtown Williams.

ca's chosen route west. Every evening from April to October, the Cataract Creek Gang stages mock gunfights right in the middle of town. They're much cornier than the Tombstone variety, but also more fun.

We wandered in and out of shops carrying an eclectic mix of curios, many geared toward the ongoing love affair America seems to have with Route 66. Others reflect the proximity of the Navajo

Nation and the nearby Hopi Reservation with their offerings of jewelry and pottery. We quickly noticed the quality displayed in the Navajo-owned Thunder Eagle jewelry store. Offerings were not limited to Navajo artists. Excellent pieces from Zuni craftsmen showed off their tribe's traditional inlaid turquoise and coral jewelry at its best. Artists from other Southwest tribes were represented as well.



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Bearizona, a new attraction near Williams, provides views of black bears and mountain goats, along with shows featuring High Country Raptors.

Williams also has an abundant supply of restaurants, should you decide you don't want to figure out what to feed your hungry hoard at night. Even if that hoard is just your significant other, for many, eating out is one of the pleasures of traveling in a motorhome. We took note of options such as Cruiser's Café 66, replete with bright red-and-white umbrella-covered outdoor tables and a red 1937 Ford hot rod perched on a pole. The folks who operate the Grand Canyon Brewery next door also own Cruiser's, and their beer is gaining a solid reputation far beyond the boundaries of Williams. Rod's Steak

House proclaims its continued presence on Route 66 since 1946, which is even before General Motors began producing the Chevy Corvette that became the icon of the fabled highway.

We were fortunate during our visit to hear a recommendation for the Red Raven restaurant downtown, a place so good we couldn't bring ourselves to try the other possibilities.

One of the newer attractions in the area is Bearizona, a wildlife park experienced from your vehicle. The park features bison, bighorn sheep, timber wolves, wild burros and black bears. A walkable area

features baby bears along with bobcats, skunks and other smaller creatures. For the younger set, there is a petting zoo. We have already seen in the wild all of the animals on display at Bearizona, and many well-traveled RVers will likely have the same impression. However, if you have kids or grandkids in tow, this is certainly the place to see these animals up close. The Grand Canyon Deer Farm, located eight miles east of Williams, is another option for families traveling with children.

For the aviation-interested traveler, the Planes of Fame Air Museum is located about 30 miles north of Williams in Valle,

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on the highway to the Grand Canyon. A number of airplanes from the early days of aviation to recent times are on display. Many are from World War I and II and the Cold War period, while others reflect civil and commercial aviation. Several are flown on occasion.

A significant exhibit is the Lockheed Constellation used as Gen. Douglas MacArthur's personal plane during the Korean conflict. The interior has been restored to the configuration at the time the general used the plane. While the Lockheed has not been airborne for some time, it is capable and crews from the museum's Chino, Calif., facility come to Valle regularly to run the engines and check its condition.

A large hangar contains the majority of the exhibits, including examples of such famed craft as the German Messerschmitt 109, mainstay of the Nazi air force throughout World War II. Other exhibits feature a wealth of photos, written information and equipment including the famed Norden bombsight used in Allied bombers over Europe during World War II. The museum also displays about a dozen

antique automobiles in absolutely stunning condition. A 1903 Reo Roadster looks as if it has just been driven off the showroom floor. Nearby was a beautiful 1934 Ford four-door convertible, along with several Model-T trucks, delivery vans and an early roadster that featured a small oval windscreen.

The biggest attraction Williams has to offer is its proximity to the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The Grand Canyon belongs on everyone's bucket list, and if you haven't been there, make it one of your top priorities. Williams provides an excellent staging ground for your visit, even if you don't use the train to get there.

We had stayed in Williams once before, when we joined the throngs boarding the Grand Canyon Railway for its journey to the park. But now we also reflect on the number of times we zoomed right on through with only a passing thought to, "Gee, we really ought to check this place out." Our recommendation to you is take a few hours — or better yet, a few days — and get to know Williams and its surrounding area. You won't be sorry. ♦



Gerald Hammon and his wife, Sharon, enjoy sharing destinations, both well known and unknown, that combine history and scenic attraction. He is based in Arizona and invites you to share his journeys.

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User Guide

Contents





Hasselbring takes the first step (and it's a doozy) off of Big Cliff.

UNBRIDLED ADVENTURE

KENTUCKY OFFERS COUNTLESS WAYS TO GET YOUR ADRENALINE PUMPING

by BOBBIE HASSELBRING

I am standing on the edge of a cliff with a 120-foot drop-off.

“Just put your heels over the edge, stick your butt out, and lean back into the rope,” says Dan, a muscular young climber who has led us up Big Cliff, a sandstone escarpment in the wilds of eastern Kentucky. “Step off and walk down the cliff’s face.”

Easy for him. He’s been scaling these cliffs in one of the country’s premiere climbing spots for a decade. It’s my first time rappelling and I’m beginning to think it was a crazy idea.

But I’m getting ahead of myself.

I’ve driven about 75 minutes south-east of Lexington, Ky., to challenge myself. First, I’m driving our Class C Jayco Greyhawk solo. I don’t have my steady companion along to figure out this motorhome’s sanitation and water systems, or to extend the awning. I’ve also vowed to get out of my camp chair and experience some fun — and somewhat scary — adventures.

When most people think about Kentucky, three things come to mind: bourbon, racehorses and bluegrass music. But Kentucky is also world class for adventur-

ing and experiencing nature. It boasts 51 largely undiscovered parks, including 17 state resort parks (with lodges/cottages and restaurants), 23 recreational parks and 11 historic parks. Kentucky has more than 12,000 miles of hiking trails, and sandstone and limestone create impressive rock formations, including Mammoth, the largest cave in the world. In fact, whatever sport or activity you’re looking to do, Kentucky’s motto is “We’ve got a park for that.” Amazingly, Kentucky parks have no entrance fees and several offer terrific camping.



ARCHES AND CLIFFS

My first stop was Natural Bridge State Resort Park. The drive from Lexington is smooth on well-maintained divided highways. Close to the park, the roads become meandering two-laners with oak, maple, sycamore, ash, pine, spruce and redbud crowding the hillsides. With 44 to 49 inches of annual rainfall, spring in the Bluegrass State is green and lush; in the fall, it's ablaze with color.

I take Exit 33 into the mountainous Red River Gorge area, part of Daniel Boone National Forest. I've reserved a spot at Middle Fork Campground, one of two RV campgrounds in the park, and snug the motorhome under some trees next to a rushing creek. The campground is spacious with plenty of room to extend the slideout and, after a little trial and error, unfurl the awning.

Early the next morning I meet Amy Tackett, who co-owns Red River Outdoors, specializing in climbing and rappelling expeditions. I join a group and we head to Torrent Falls, a private tract of trails, spectacular sandstone cliffs and Torrent Waterfall, a lacy curtain of water that plunges 165 feet over a huge rock amphitheater.

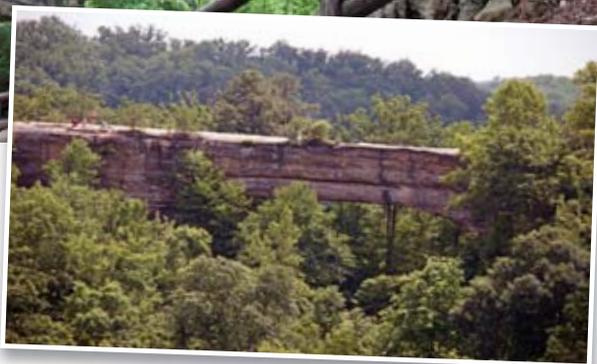
It's here that climber Dan tells me to step off into thin air. My instincts tell me otherwise, but Dan's confidence and the thick anchor rope encourage me to lean back and step down. One step, two, three, and, hey, I'm walking down the side of a cliff. As the rope slips through my gloved hand, the pulley lowers me. I stare at the cliff not daring to look down. Then, halfway down, the rock falls away and I am hanging in mid-air, 60 feet up. Dan yells down, "You're good. Keep going."

I look around from my perch. The forest is thick and green and the musty smell of wet earth fills my nose. Strangely enough, I'm not afraid. I pull the rope and lower myself until my feet touch terra firma. As Amy unhooks the heavy metal carabineers from my climbing harness, I'm grinning from ear-to-ear. My rappelling group and I celebrate over cheesy slices of pizza and Ale 8, a local ginger ale, at the climbers' hangout, Miguel's Pizza.

After lunch, I head back to Natural Bridge Resort Park and board the Sky Lift, a chairlift that climbs 600 feet to the top of Natural Bridge Arch. Park naturalist Brian Gasdorf leads a group of us down



Above: Standing beneath Natural Bridge Arch gives visitors perspective on the size of this massive rock formation. **Right:** Lookout Point at the end of Laurel Trail provides a panoramic view of Natural Bridge Arch.



Laurel Trail, named for the mountain laurel's delicate pinkish white flowers in full bloom. The trail ends at Look Out Point where we take photos of the panoramic view of the arch.

"Natural Arch was a narrow sandstone ridge eroded into a rock shelter," the ranger explains, as we walk on the top of the 65-foot-tall arch. "Geologists think an earthquake caused the back wall to fall, forming the arch."

At 24 feet wide and 78 feet long, the arch is big enough to drive an RV across. We stand above the tops of trees, including fluttery tulip poplars and big leaf magnolias with flowers the size of dinner plates.

We make our way down the trail and pass through "the squeeze," a 2-foot passageway between massive rock walls. During high season, 3,000 to 4,000 people a day visit the arch and rangers have to direct traffic, allowing 50 visitors at a time through the squeezeway. Today, there's only our group and a scattering of others who shimmy through passage to emerge under the arch.

Natural Bridge Arch is so big it's hard to capture the entire structure with my camera. After snapping a dozen photos, we hike back down. I head to camp and, later, drift off to sleep listening to the creek babble outside my window.

WATERFALLS AND WHITE WATER

The following day, I drive two hours south

to Cumberland Falls State Resort Park. Called the "Niagara of the South," the park is named after Cumberland Falls, the second largest waterfall by volume in the United States. With millions of gallons of water coursing over its 125-foot-wide cascade, standing on the edge feels dizzying. On average, about 3,500 cubic feet of water per second (CFS) course over its face, but four days of rain has caused the muddy chocolate brown torrent to gush at a breathtaking 7,000 CFS.

I camp in the park's tree-lined gravel campground next to Bill and Okcha Watkins from Hawaii, who are on a three-year RV odyssey to explore the United States. They've heard about Cumberland Falls and have come to see it for themselves.

Not only is Cumberland huge, it's the only falls in the country with a moonbow, an eerie shaft of light that arcs across the falls during the full moon. Unfortunately, I'm a week early, so I opt for a raft trip down the river with Sheltowee Trace Outfitters.

After a sobering safety film, we gear up with helmets, paddles and personal flotation devices. Max, our 20-something river guide, instructs us in basic raft commands: "Forward paddle, back paddle, rest."

Fifteen of us scramble into three rafts. We sit on the edges and hold on by jamming our feet under pontoon-like seats. This is a beginners' river of class two and three rapids. Our first rough water, called





Above: White-water rafters on the Cumberland River take a break. Above right: Cumberland Falls is the second largest waterfall (by water volume) in the nation.

“the initiation,” is a bumpy series of waves that make our stomachs churn. Max yells, “Paddle forward,” and we strain into the paddles. We emerge on the other side and feel triumphant when Max says, “Great job, guys. I like you already.”

The Cumberland is a rise and drop river with adrenaline-fueled rapids followed by calm, almost lake-like water. In the rapids, we focus, following Max’s commands. “Paddle forward two, paddle back, rest.” In calm sections, we enjoy the greenery, watch hawks and buzzards wheel overhead, and startle a couple of great blue herons fishing in the shallows.

At one point, we pull over and several of us leap into the muddy water, the guys trying to outdo one another with cannonballs. Farther along, we pause for sandwiches, chips and drinks.

We’ve passed through most of the white water when we come to a final big rapid. The rain has transformed this class three rapid into a four and the pudding-like water swirls and froths angrily. Max pulls over to plot our path.

“Paddle forward four,” Max commands as we head into the maelstrom. He skillfully dodges a huge boulder on our left. The raft drops into a hole and spins

wildly. “Paddle backward,” roars Max. We push the paddles against the water’s force. “Now forward.”

The raft pops out of the churning waves into calmer water. “Paddler’s salute,” shouts Max and we raise our paddles, congratulating one another.

OFF-ROADING AND ZIPPING

On my final Kentucky adventure day, I drive the motorhome three hours east to Evarts, a small community that’s becoming known as an ATV/four-wheeler hot spot. It’s home to the Harlan County Ridge Runners, a national off-roading club, that rides on hundreds of acres of reclaimed coal land. Like nearby states, Kentucky is rich in black gold and mining companies strip mine large tracts of land. When the coal is mined out, companies are increasingly reforesting the land with native grasses, plants and trees and allowing recreationalists, like off-roaders, access.

Preston, a former club president and long-time off-



Torrent Falls cascades from a height of 165 feet over a rock shelter into a pool below.

roader, and several club members meet those of us gathered to experience off-roading. Club members are happy to show people what the sport is all about. Since I ride motorcycles, one of the members lets me ride his ATV, a squat four-wheeled motorcycle that climbs up steep, rocky terrain like a goat.

With helmets and some brief instruction, we’re off. A line of four-wheelers and other ATVs roar up old mining and logging roads. At first, I struggle shifting the clutch-less bike, but after a few tries, I get the hang of it.

With all the lush greenery, it’s hard to believe just a few years ago this area resembled a moonscape. I wrestle the vehicle over the rough roads — up, down, over rocks, through pools of muddy water. It’s a thrill. And all too soon, we cruise back, a bit weary and muddy, but exhilarated.



Left: These little side-by-side four-wheelers power up steep terrain. Above: Hasselbring gets ready to zip across 400-foot gorges at speeds of up to 60 MPH.



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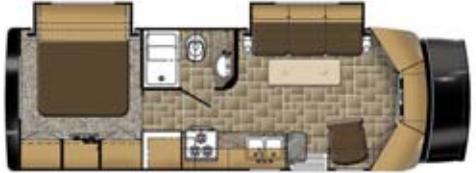


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After a quick lunch of potatoes and fried chicken (Kentucky's favorite dish), I stand with a group of fellow adventurers at Black Mountain Thunder Zipline, a challenging 12-station course reputed to be one of the best in the country. For me, this is the ultimate test. All my life I've been terrified of heights. It was one thing to walk backward off a cliff-face and not look down. It's another to stand on a platform high above the forest canopy and launch myself along a thin steel cable

across 400-foot-deep ravines at speeds reaching 60 MPH.

Cricket, the young zip guide, snaps my harness onto the cable. "This is a self-stopping zip line," she says cheerily. "You put a gloved hand up on the cable and pull down to slow down. Do you understand?"

"Yes," I croak, feeling like I don't understand a thing.

She instructs me to hold onto the cable with one hand, the straps in front with the other, and sit with my feet

stretched out. "Ready?" she asks.

Suddenly, I'm launched, rocketing across the gorge, suspended by a cable that disappears into a shadowy thicket of trees across the yawning canyon. The wind roars in my ears, the trees below streak by. I'm flying.

The young man on the opposite platform signals me to slow down and I pull down on the cable, slowing my approach and glide smoothly onto the landing pad. I grin when he says, "You were perfect."

After a dozen heart-pumping zip flights, I head back to Lexington. At the Kentucky Horse Park, a 1,200-acre state park that offers 260 shady, park-like RV sites and daily horse exhibits and competitions, I pass riders jumping horses over barriers.



You can watch these elegant jumpers practice for free at Kentucky Horse park.

The elegant equines arch their necks and swish their tails as they clear the jumps.

Hey, maybe I should try that . . . ♦



Bobbie Hasselbring is an award-winning travel and food writer and editor of www.realfoodtraveler.com, which covers authentic food and travel. Bobbie owns a Class C 2003 Jayco Greyhawk SS.

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Oceanfront campsites and tall trees make Hunting Island the single most popular state park in South Carolina.



A TALE OF TWO BEAUFORTS

THESE COASTAL CAROLINA TOWNS ARE QUITE THE CHARMERS

by CHRISTINE GOODIER



One Beaufort has a spooky old burying ground and a museum full of pirate booty. The other offers moss-draped live oaks and shrimp boats straight out of “Forrest Gump.” Both Carolina towns lure motorhome travelers who love historic sites, fresh seafood and spacious beaches.

Step one: Learn the pronunciation and emphasize the first syllable as Southerners do. North Carolina’s “Bow-furt” is off the beaten path, about 120 miles from Interstate 95, on the mainland near Cape Lookout at the southern end of the Outer Banks. South Carolina’s “Bew-furt” is three times larger and located in the Lowcountry, just 25 miles off I-95 between tourist-heavy Charleston and Savannah.

The quiet village of Beaufort, N.C. (population 4,300), has been aglow since *Budget Travel* magazine’s poll named it “America’s Coolest Small Town” in February. This little seaport has drawn visitors since 1718 when Edward Teach, also known as Blackbeard, ran aground near Beaufort Inlet. The pirate headed ashore and left behind his flagship, Queen Anne’s Revenge, to sink and disappear beneath shifting sands.

Centuries later, in 1996, salvage divers came upon an intriguing mound of underwater objects. Marine archaeologists eventually confirmed that the artifacts were from Blackbeard’s vessel; the Queen Anne’s Revenge had awaited discovery for almost three centuries just 25 feet below the water’s surface.

Visitors now can view Blackbeard’s cannons, leg irons, muskets, bottles, gold dust and much more at the North Carolina Maritime Museum, a treat for all ages. Ask the museum staff what’s new — research divers continue to raise piratical treasures like a 3,000-pound anchor hauled up in May 2011.

The Beaufort Historical Association sponsors an Old Homes Tour each June. Ticket holders can wander through a dozen private houses and, some years, the tour may include a peek into Hammock House where Blackbeard once lived. Greeters at the association’s visitor center on Turner Street will provide tour information for nine historic buildings in the town’s 12-block district listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Be sure to ask for a guide map of the Old Burying Ground around the corner on Ann Street. Established in 1709, this cemetery and its weathered gravestones bear tales of soldiers, sea captains and star-crossed lovers who now rest beneath ancient trees and tangled vines.

For lunch or dinner, you can stroll to several casual restaurants including Beaufort Grocery, a local favorite housed in a former food store on Queen Street. Or try Clawson’s 1905 Restaurant & Pub

Top to bottom: Beaufort’s Maritime Museum displays cannon shots and other piratical materials raised from the deep. Spring azaleas bloom throughout the Old Burying Ground. South Carolina shrimp boats from St. Helena Island bring in fresh seafood. Beaufort, S.C., is a Southern belle with live oaks dressed in silvery Spanish moss.

BEFORE YOU GO

Owners of Class B or small Class C motorhomes can usually find parking lots and street spaces in or near the historic districts. Some downtown streets are narrow, however, so those in larger coaches may prefer to explore in their dinghy vehicles. Both towns are flat and lend themselves to biking or strolling on foot through picturesque streets laid out in grids facing the water.

RV parks along the Carolina coast cater to seasonal summer residents but a limited number of short-term sites may be available. A 30- to 40-minute drive from either town will expand your selection of private and public campgrounds.

The Croatan National Forest’s Cedar Point Campground, 25 miles west of Beaufort, N.C., offers 40 large, paved sites with electric hookups, some with 50-amp service. Reserve up to six months in advance; www.reserveamerica.com.

Hunting Island State Park is 20 miles east of Beaufort, S.C., and has more than 200 campsites with water and 30- or 50-amp electric hookups. Minimum two-night stay. Reserve up to 11 months in advance; www.southcarolinaparks.com/huntingisland.



PHOTO: CHRISTINE GOODIER



PHOTOS: ROBERT GOODIER

in a brick building on Front Street facing Taylor Creek and Carrot Island, where wild ponies often graze.

Maritime attractions surrounding Beaufort, N.C., can easily fill a week's vacation or longer. Take a small ferry from the waterfront to the Cape Lookout National Seashore and climb the diamond-patterned lighthouse during summer months. Drive three miles to Morehead City for deep-sea fishing or cross a bridge to swim from Bogue Banks beaches and tour

Fort Macon State Park's Civil War exhibits. Drive west to the North Carolina Aquariums' Pine Knoll Shores location to see a 306,000-gallon Living Shipwreck tank.

Some 375 miles south, South Carolina's Beaufort (population 12,000) is sophisticated and scenic; it's no wonder it was a backdrop for movie classics like "The Big Chill," "The Prince of Tides" and "Forrest Gump." As you drive through the region, you'll admire twisted live oak trees graced with silver-gray Spanish moss and



PHOTO: CHRIS GOODIER

Hammock House is the oldest house in Beaufort, N.C., and was Blackbeard's home when he was ashore.

miles of Lowcountry marshes that lead from one island to the next.

This Southern belle's focal point is the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, which reopened in 2007 after a \$7 million renovation. Abuzz with activity, the park is a great place to sit in a swing and watch boats go by on the Beaufort River. Downtown restaurants and coffee houses have shady back porches facing the park where you can people-watch while waiting for lunch or dinner to arrive. One such spot, Plums Restaurant, serves up coastal



PHOTO: ROBERT GOODIER

Shady dining porches serve up South Carolina's classic coastal cuisine with a wonderful view.

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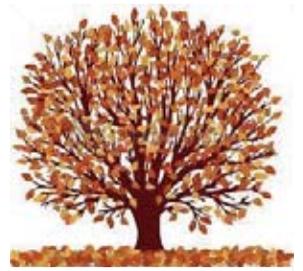
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Shoppers can browse along Bay Street in Beaufort, S.C.

favorites seven days a week including wild-caught shrimp and grits, gumbo, crab cakes, and fried oysters.

A block from the waterfront on Bay Street, shoppers can browse for books, jewelry, antiques, craft supplies, garden accessories and more. Couples and families alike will enjoy an overview of the historic district and its antebellum homes from a horse-drawn carriage; tours depart throughout the day from the park.

For more local color, head for 801 Bay St., to visit Verdier House, Beaufort's only historic home regularly open to the public. Once the property of a wealthy indigo and cotton planter, the Federal-style mansion circa 1804 is now a museum. And for a rare look inside private homes and plantations that are usually off lim-



Carriage tours give an overview of the Beaufort, S.C., historic district.

its, get tickets for the Historic Beaufort Association's Fall Festival of Houses and Gardens held each October.

When you're ready to explore beyond downtown, the Sea Island Parkway (U.S. Highway 21) will lead east to Saint Helena Island where the Penn Center, originally a school for freed slaves, now promotes the Lowcountry's African-American Gullah culture. Along the road you may see vendors, some descended from slaves, offering handmade, coiled sweetgrass baskets for sale.

Continue on Highway 21 and stop just before the Harbor Island bridge to pick up fresh seafood to cook in your motorhome. Shrimp just off the boats is sold at Gay Seafood Co., and the trawlers and rickety docks near the store will remind you of the fictional adventures of Forrest Gump and Lt. Dan.

Cross the bridge to reach Harbor, Hunting and Fripp islands on the Atlantic Coast. The only publicly accessible lighthouse in South Carolina is here at Hunting Island State Park. First built in 1859, it has 167 cast iron steps you can climb to an observation deck with spectacular views of the surrounding islands and marshes. With five miles of ocean beaches bordered by a wooded campground, Hunting Island is South Carolina's most popular state park.

Although the two Carolina Beauforts have distinct personalities, both are three-season destinations offering sports-minded motorhome travelers opportunities for biking, kayaking, fishing and golf. People who often visit Myrtle Beach, S.C., can include one of the Beauforts in their vacation within an easy half-day drive.

You can expect comfortable temperatures in this region from March through November, although you may want to head for breezy beaches on sultry summer days. Spring and fall are ideal for sports and sightseeing, but bring insect repellent and sunscreen any time you come.

With its proximity to I-95, South Carolina's Beaufort makes a great stop-over for Florida snowbirds or couples looking for a romantic weekend getaway. Its North Carolina counterpart is the jewel of the Crystal Coast, a prime area for family beach vacations. Get to know one — or both — of these fetching twins on your next coastal motorhome adventure. ♦



PHOTO: JIM WESCOTT, LOWCOUNTRY TOURISM COMMISSION

Visitors can climb to the top of the Hunting Island Lighthouse.



Christine Goodier is a freelance writer and editor who lives on the North Carolina coast and travels with her husband, photographer Bob Goodier, in a Class B Sprinter motorhome.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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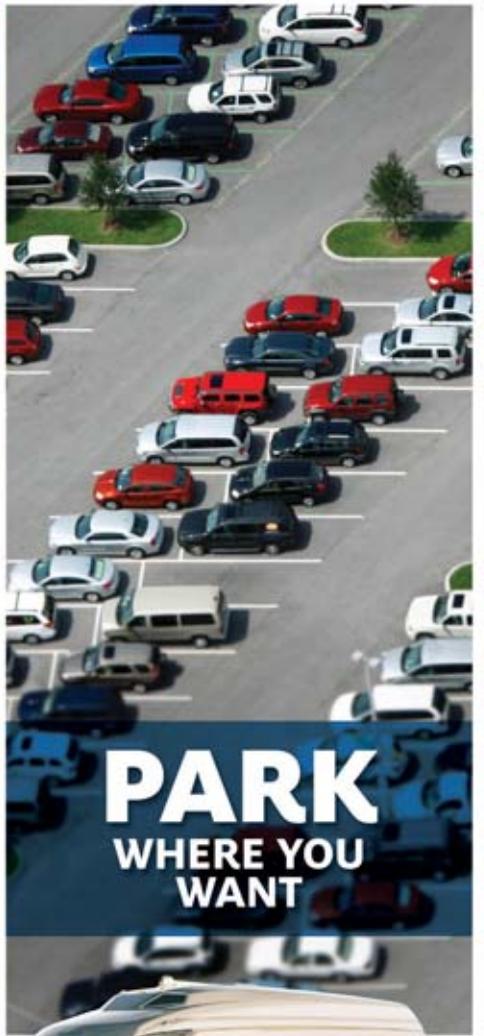




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2013 FLEETWOOD STORM 33Q

The company's newest floorplan sports a 7.5-foot cabin ceiling and 320 cubic feet of storage

Fleetwood added a fifth floorplan to its popular Storm crossover line blending Class C sleeping capacities with the amenities of a Class A. As anticipated, Fleetwood incorporated some new features for 2013 that should pique the interest of those considering Class A living at an entry level price.

Built on the venerable Ford F53 leaf spring chassis, the Storm offers V-10 gas power and torque delivered to 19.5-inch wheels through the five-speed TorqShift OD transmission with tow/haul mode. Monitoring powertrain functions from the step-up cockpit is clear and uncluttered. Ford Class C owners will immediately recognize the familiar instrumentation of paired analog dials bordered by sweep-style gauges for fluid capacities and temperatures. Controls for the A/C, radio, camera screen for the optional (\$770) side view cameras and optional (\$2,513) Power Gear hydraulic leveling system are all within easy reach. A pair of Flexsteel captain's chairs, with manual adjustments and swivel, provides comfortable miles behind the wheel as well as additional cabin seating in camp.

Handsome Toasted Chestnut cabinets combined with the Midnight Forest interior décor suggests a coach costing many thousands more. A significant feature of the 33Q is a dropped main cabin floor providing a 7.5-foot ceiling height and creating the sense of being in a much larger motorhome. By eliminating the short forward pass-through exterior storage compartment above the frame rails, Fleetwood was able to drop the cabin floor 4 inches. Lost storage volume from this modification is amply restored in the large rear compartment.



The faux-leather wrapped curbside facing booth dinette is equipped with a Cass Hudson Dream Dinette table, which unlocks and drops horizontally to the sleeping position using one hand and creates a 42-by-72-inch sleeping area. Normally, you'd expect to find storage under the dinette benches but in this floorplan, the aft bench seat base has been modified with a pair of 14-by-24-inch floor-level cubbies facing the nonskid, rubberized entry door well. One cubby with a pullout drawer has a rack for a pet's food and water bowls with room for pet food storage behind it. Next to it is a second cubby for shoes, cargo or even as a pet's bed.

Sitting at the dinette and looking out over the campsite or playing cards is one way to spend leisure time, but with the flick of a switch the Storm's primary audio-visual system rises from the window sill, covering the window with a 40-inch LCD HDTV screen. While





SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS: FORD F53	INTERIOR HEIGHT: 7' 5"
ENGINE: 6.8-L TRITON V-10	WHEELBASE: 208"
FUEL: 80 GAL	FRESHWATER CAP: 60 GAL
GVWR: 18,000 LBS	GRAY-WATER CAP: 37 GAL
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WIDTH: 8' 5"	LP-GAS CAP: 14 GAL
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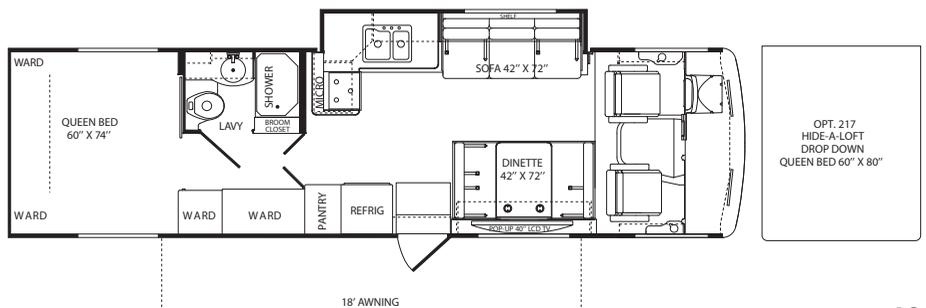
some may consider it too close for viewing from the table, it's perfect for viewing from the sofa, the cockpit chair or on the optional (\$2,520) cockpit drop-down loft queen bed. Sound quality is enhanced when the optional (\$539) home theater system is ordered.

Opposite the dinette, the 42-by-72-inch faux-leather jackknife sofa and galley share the Storm's sole slide, which is 20 inches deep by 11 feet 4 inches long. The open L-shape galley module uses a twin stainless steel sink with pullout faucet. A three-burner Atwood range with oven, aided by a microwave above it, will easily handle meal prep. Galley cabinets provide plenty of storage for pots, pans and utensils. Next to the 6-cubic-foot, two-door fridge, a 13-by-19-inch three-shelf pullout pantry should handle everything needed for most trips. Should an extended journey require more space, there are four large, deep drawers below the pantry.

A short step-up from the cabin floor through the paired privacy doors leads to the bath and bedroom. The bath is

contained within one room and sports a good-sized ABS shower surround with curtain and 6 feet of headroom, plus a few inches courtesy of the domed skylight. A large ABS sink set in the matching countertop provides the expected space for grooming with storage in the medicine cabinet above. Drawer storage is found in the sink base plus a linen cubby below it. An electric roof vent fan exhausts into a MaxxAir all-weather vent cover, and a porcelain bowl commode with handy handheld sprayer completes the bath's appointments. Sharing the bath wall is a 64-inch-tall-by-6-inch-deep hallway storage closet with four adjustable shelves for print or digital media storage, which could double nicely as a broom closet with the shelves removed.

The Storm's storage volume both inside and out is a significant and successful design feature of this floorplan. Wardrobe storage can be found in no less than four dedicated locations to stow the family's clothing in the hall and bedroom. One large multipurpose wardrobe unit lines the curbside hallway wall providing a 42-inch clothes bar with 51 inches of hanging length and four large drawers below it. A step up into the carpeted bedroom reveals a pair of narrow bedside wardrobes above each nightstand tied together with more overhead storage. Fleetwood has also provided an additional 22-by-48-inch curbside wall wardrobe with lower drawer storage. The larger curbside



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FLEETWOOD STORM 33Q

nightstand is capable of holding everything from books to medical equipment and both sides of the platform queen bed have 120-volt AC outlets. Under the bed is a large, shallow storage tray and removing it provides refreshingly easy inspection and maintenance access to the electrical panel, freshwater tank, pump, whole coach filter and plumbing valves. An optional (\$406) 19-inch LCD HDTV is offered on a locking multi-axis wall mount for bedroom viewing.

The storage story continues outside with a pass-through storage compartment running the full width of the coach. In addition, customary saddlebag style rotomolded compartments ring the exterior creating useful space for smaller cargo. A fully enclosed utility compartment protects dump valves and the shorepower cord from the elements, and both black and gray tanks are transversely mounted in the heated mid-coach pass-through compartment for easy visual inspection or maintenance. Striking full-body paint is also available with the optional (\$3,500) Titanium Edition,



which also includes stainless steel wheel inserts, chrome tipped exhaust pipe, 18-foot electric awning and the side view cameras mentioned earlier.

The new Storm 33Q offers great storage, sleeping for six to eight people, handsome woodwork and trim, an upscale interior décor and an impressive list of features at an attractive price point for Class A living.

Our thanks go to the staff of Mike Thompson RV Super Stores in Southern California for providing the Storm for our review. ♦



Fred Pausch is a regular contributor to *MotorHome*. After a lifetime of camping and nearly a decade of evaluating the newest motorhomes and latest technology, the RV lifestyle continues to be Fred's most rewarding outdoor activity.

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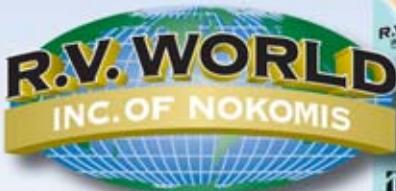


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PEACE OF MIND, RAIN OR SHINE

FAN-TASTIC VENT UPGRADE KITS ADD AN AUTOMATIC OPEN/
CLOSE FEATURE BASED ON MOISTURE DETECTION, TEMPERATURE
LIMITS OR THE PUSH OF A WIRELESS REMOTE

by BILL AND JENN GEHR



PHOTOS: JENN GEHR



It was a perfect New Mexico day

— clear, warm and simply beautiful. During our dinghy tour of the countryside, we stopped to savor the critically acclaimed chili at the most talked about venue in town when the wind shifted, the sky darkened and rain came down in a torrential downpour. Only then did we realize our Fan-Tastic roof vents were wide open and our bedroom comforter and living room sofa were sure to get drenched.

Each time it rains, we think of how nice it would be to upgrade our manually operated Fan-Tastic roof vents to a model with rain sensors and an automatic closure. Fortunately, Fan-Tastic Vent offers exactly that — an upgrade kit with automatic opening and closing capabilities that respond to moisture. These upgraded models control airflow via specific temperature settings, and a battery-powered wireless remote control, with wall cradle, can be added.

Model 6600R (with remote) is Fan-Tastic Vent's most popular upgrade kit, offering 14 fan speeds in auto or manual mode. The remote upgrade kit is pre-wired with an interior assembly and electronics that draw only 0.2-1.9 amps. This kit converts a manual Fan-Tastic roof vent into the company's flagship product with little effort. The kit is sold at Camping World (item #37334) for \$169.95. A similar upgrade kit, Model 6000RBTA, without the remote control, sells for \$155.47 (Camping World item #56331).

Included with the upgrade kit (with or without the remote) are the components to turn the fan into a motorized unit controlled by a rain sensor and a thermostat that responds to preset temperature limits. This



The basic upgrade kit, 6000RBTA, comes with a rocker switch that controls the up/down and rain sensor functions.

kit will work with all Fan-Tastic vents on the market today.

For this project, we upgraded the roof vent in the bedroom using a kit without the remote. The living room vent included the remote, which really comes in handy when controlling the lid and fan, whether in bed or lounging in front of the TV.

The rain sensor is the key element in providing ultimate convenience and protection from the weather. Once this sensor detects moisture, it signals the lid to close. When the rain stops and moisture on the sensor dries, the vent lid will automatically open. This cycle continues depending on weather conditions and is ideal to help protect the motorhome's interior and regulate temperatures to keep people and pets comfortable.

Upgrade kits come complete with the small hardware necessary for the conversion. The process is simple and straightforward, and should take no longer than an hour to complete.

The installation of the bedroom upgrade kit in a basic (manually controlled) Fan-Tastic vent was easy and utilized only four wires. Before you begin, unplug the leads to the lifting motor and set them aside. Using a Phillips screwdriver or cordless driver and pliers, remove the frame assembly that includes the switches and the screen from the interior side. Then unplug the white dome switch wire, the red wire to the on/off switch and the positive and negative 12-volt DC leads. With a flat-blade screwdriver, knock out the T-shaped plastic plug located on the fan motor frame assembly; this is where the rain sensor will feed through the frame. Replace the existing vent lid-lifting crank; there are only two screws so this step is a cinch. Install the new interior frame assembly by reversing the wiring sequence and feeding the rain sensor through the T-shaped slot.

The next steps require reinstalling the lifting motor that opens and closes the vent lid, pulling down the black knob so it's in the manual position and raising the lid so it's open all the way. Once that's done, carefully climb the rear ladder onto the roof and place one end of the rain sensor onto



Fan-Tastic Vent Model 6600R comes complete with a handheld remote, a heavy duty 12-volt motor and a rain sensor.

the existing plastic pin and secure the opposite end of the sensor with the supplied No. 6 Phillips screw. The kits can all be installed without disturbing the factory caulking on your roof.



When installing the 6600R kit in an older Fan-Tastic Vent, the crank arm will need to be replaced. This will allow the vent to function properly when fully opening the lid.

Back inside the motorhome, lower the vent lid and push the black knob into the auto position. From here, set the fan speed switch to "low," the in/out switch to "in" and move the thermostat to the coldest position. By pushing the raise/lower switch, the lid should open and close on its own and the fan blade will start or stop spinning.

Upgrading the vent in the living room followed the same steps, with the addition of the remote install, which was added at a later date. As we found out, it's more cost effective to make the conversion with a kit



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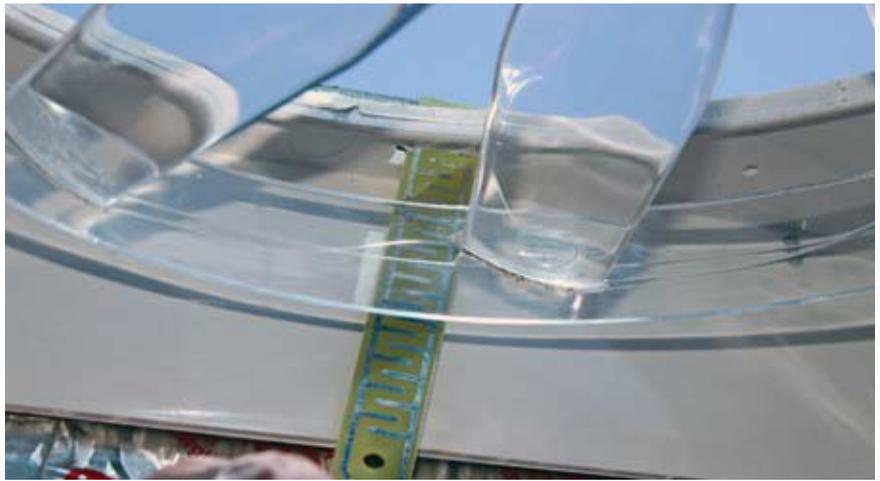
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PEACE OF MIND, RAIN OR SHINE



that already includes the wireless remote. It only took us 15 minutes to handle the two-wire installation of the wireless remote kit for our previously upgraded vent.

Keep the wireless remote in a drawer or place it in the wall cradle. The large buttons and bright red lights indicate individual function settings on the handheld remote. These lights automatically turn off after 20 seconds to conserve battery life.

If you want the vent lid to stay half open, a trick we learned is to simply hold the black knob until the motor stalls out. To return to standard auto mode, hit the lower switch to close the lid and reset the board. This function comes in handy during overcast or humid weather conditions or days that bring heavy dew because the level of moisture will continuously activate the rain sensor.

For those installing these kits in older model Fan-Tastic vents, you will enjoy the new Pop 'N Lock Screen feature that makes cleaning a breeze by eliminating the need to remove several screws to clear out a dirty screen. Be sure the Pop 'N Lock pull-tab remains in the 9 o'clock position so it does not interfere with the black knob during the raise/lower functions.

Fan-Tastic Vents, now owned by Atwood, has a great reputation for customer service. If you have any questions or operational issues during the install, someone in Fan-Tastic Vent's tech support will be happy to help. We were impressed to learn that all Fan-Tastic Vent parts have a lifetime warranty. After two years, the customer is only required to pay for the shipping for replacement parts. Fan-Tastic Vent has you covered in more ways than one. **Fan-Tastic Vent Corp., 800-521-0298, www.fantasticvent.com ♦**

All Fan-Tastic Vents have a T-shaped knock-out plug for the installation of the rain sensor from the inside to the outside of the vent.



Most Fan-Tastic Vents have a nipple and a screw hole for the proper placement and ease of installation of the rain sensor.



Five screws hold the Fan-Tastic kit assemblies in place, which make for a fast and easy install.



The motor assembly on all Fan-Tastic kits come stock with quick-disconnect leads for straightforward installation.



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User Guide

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SHOREPOWER SAFETY

PERFORMING BASIC ELECTRICAL TESTING
BEFORE PLUGGING IN AT THE CAMPGROUND
WILL PROTECT YOU AND CAN PREVENT
COSTLY DAMAGE TO YOUR MOTORHOME

by ROSS HUBBARD



Traveling in a motorhome allows us the freedom to go just about anywhere and still enjoy all the comforts of home — especially when connected to shorepower. It's so easy to pull into a campsite and just plug in the shorepower cord that most of us don't even give it a second thought. But there's more going on with the campground electrical system than meets the eye.

Problems with brownouts, surges and voltage spikes can be anything from a nuisance to an expensive fix, which is why it's a good idea for motorhome owners to understand the basics of safe electrical systems as well as testing and troubleshooting.



WHAT IS SHOREPOWER?

Shorepower is the same electrical power we use in our homes. The power comes from the utility company lines to the campground; from there, power lines are distributed throughout the park to individual power pedestals at each site. The pedestal might be equipped with one, or a combination of, 15-, 20-, 30- and/or 50-amp receptacles.

Ideally, the campground's electrical system will be properly installed and balanced, and should have the capacity to handle electrical loads at each site without causing any disruption in service. However, electrical conditions at campgrounds can be less than ideal, sometimes due to the accelerated component wear and tear associated with exposure to weather conditions, or even downright dangerous. Therefore, it's important to make sure the electrical system is safe before plugging in your motorhome. But before we get into the testing, we'll cover the basics of electrical safety.



TESTING SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- When testing electricity, make sure you are not standing on wet ground. Stand on something dry, such as wood, or a rubber mat, and wear rubber-soled shoes. Never test electricity with bare feet.
- Before testing any electrical devices, use a non-contact voltage detector to determine if the device is safe to touch. Shocks can occur when you come in contact with a "live" wire and your body becomes part of the electrical circuit. Electricity attempts to find "ground" through your body.

- Whenever possible, use only one hand when handling testing equipment. If electricity enters both hands and arms, electrical current will cause your heart, which is between the electrical path circuit, to fibrillate and stop its pumping actions.



- When troubleshooting or testing, make sure someone is close by to turn off the electricity in case of an emergency.

TESTING TOOLS

In order to test electricity at the power pedestal we're going to use four tools: a non-contact voltage detector, a receptacle plug-in polarity and GFCI tester, a digital multimeter and a circuit analyzer. If you don't have all of these tools, at a minimum you'll need a non-contact voltage detector and a multimeter.

- Non-contact voltage detector. This should be your first-line tool. We use the Fluke VoltAlert (far right) because it's well made, easy to use and fits in a pocket. Make sure you get a model that can detect low and high levels of alternating current (AC) with a range of 40-1,000 volts.
- Receptacle plug-in polarity and GFCI tester. We like the Ideal #61-501 tester (bottom right) because it's simple to use — just plug it in and match the glowing lights to the key on the tester.
- Digital multimeter that is auto-ranging and measures true root mean square (RMS). In order to accurately measure AC electricity, you'll need a good multimeter with true RMS, such as the Fluke 117 (right). This model's auto-ranging feature automatically adjusts for different voltages, and it has a continuity beeper that lets you know your wires are properly connected. In addition to the probes that come with the unit, pick up a set of alligator clips for testing. Accurately measuring electricity is important; don't be tempted to buy the cheapest meter available.

- Circuit analyzer (below). Priced at around \$350, the Ideal Sure Test Circuit Analyzer #61-165 is an expensive tool, but it serves multiple functions. Plug it in to a receptacle and the analyzer displays information about polarity, GFCI function, voltage drop, line quality and "false" or "bootleg" grounds.



Ideal Sure Test Circuit Analyzer



Fluke 117 True RMS Digital Multimeter

Fluke VoltAlert



Ideal #61-501 Tester



POWER PEDESTAL AND RECEPTACLE TESTING

Initially, we'll be testing two things here: if the pedestal is safe to touch and that the pedestal receptacles have electricity. If you can't establish both conditions, you will need to move to another campsite.

Depending on the type of non-contact voltage detector you have, you will be alerted to the presence of electricity by a glowing light, beeping or both. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and keep your hand as far back as possible from the tip of the unit. Before using the detector make sure its batteries are good and that the unit is operating properly.

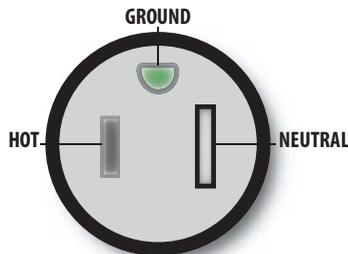
1. Place the tip of the detector on any metal part of the pedestal case. If no electricity is detected, it is safe to touch. If electricity is detected on the pedestal case, there's a problem; notify the campground manager immediately.



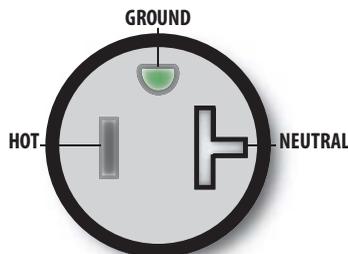
2. Place the detector tip into the "ground" socket of the receptacle, then the "neutral," and then the "hot" socket. The only socket you should detect electricity at is the "hot" socket. If electricity is detected on any other socket there's a problem; notify the campground manager immediately.



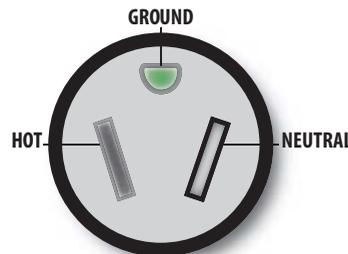
See receptacle diagrams below for hot, neutral and ground socket locations.



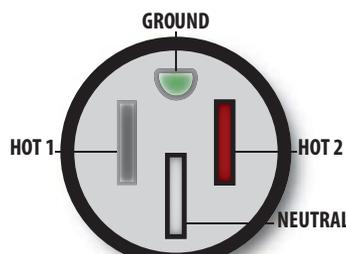
15-AMP



20-AMP



30-AMP



50-AMP

Now that your power pedestal and receptacle testing is complete, it's time to move on to an understanding of AC polarity.

AC POLARITY

AC electricity needs just two wires (for 15-, 20- and 30-amp systems, two wires carry electricity; in a 50-amp system there is an additional wire) to complete its circuit. In a properly connected system, the "hot" black wire and the "neutral" white wire carry current and the "ground" green wire is not connected to electricity unless there is a short circuit.

If the wires are reversed, the electricity is just as happy to travel along the "hot" and "ground" wires as on the proper "hot" and "neutral" wires. And since your motorhome's ground system is connected to the coach chassis and outer skin, any electricity on the ground wire will electrify the motorhome. This is commonly called hot-skin condition (more on that later). If someone standing on the ground touches the motorhome chassis or accessory bolted to the frame or chassis, they become part of the path for electricity to find ground and they will be shocked or electrocuted.

It's possible to get shocked and electrocuted by reversed polarity, which is why it is important that you protect yourself from this danger by testing for polarity before plugging in the shorepower cord.

POLARITY TESTING

First, we'll use a plug-in tester to verify correct polarity. The plug-in tester won't work on 50-amp systems — for that we'll use a multimeter (see 50-Amp Polarity Testing in the next section).

All coach owners should have one of these inexpensive (\$5-\$10) plug-in testers. The testers have a three-prong plug on one end and on the other they have three LED or neon lights.



When checking a 30-amp receptacle, use a pigtail adapter. To use, first turn off the circuit breaker at the pedestal, plug in the tester, turn the circuit breaker back on, and match the lights that are lit to the key on the tester. If any condition other than "correct" is displayed, do not use the receptacle; turn off the circuit breaker, remove the tester and notify the campground manager.

50-AMP POLARITY TESTING

To test 50-amp polarity, you'll need a multimeter (jump forward to the next section, "Using a Multimeter," for more information). If your meter isn't self-ranging, set it to more than 300 volts. You will be inserting probes between the slots (see 50-amp receptacle illustration).



1. Insert one probe in "hot 1" and the other probe in "hot 2." The meter should display between 228-252 volts. Note: Our photos only display 208 volts on the meter because some campground transformers will only produce 208 volts of power. Better transformers will produce 240 volts.
2. Insert one probe in "neutral" and the other probe in "ground." The meter should display 0 (no volts) or less than 2 volts.

If your meter displays any other results, stop, turn off the circuit breaker and notify the campground manager.

Now that we have determined that the pedestal has electricity and is safe to use, we will use a multimeter to measure the voltage at the receptacle.

USING A MULTIMETER

If you are unfamiliar with using a multimeter, read the manufacturer's instructions prior to use. On the multimeter, connect the red probe into the red socket marked "volts" and the black probe into the black socket marked "COM" before testing. If



your meter is not auto-ranging, set it to more than 200 volts AC when testing 120 volts and the next available position higher than 250-300 volts AC for 240-volt systems.

Next, we will test for voltage, so it doesn't matter which color probe is used in the slots. For safety, hold the meter probes as far back from the metal tips as possible.

15-, 20- AND 30-AMP VOLTAGE TEST

1. Turn the circuit breaker on the pedestal to the OFF position. Insert one probe into the "hot" slot and the other probe into the "neutral" slot. Turn the circuit breaker to ON. The meter should display 114-126 volts.



2. Insert one probe into the "ground" slot and the other probe into the "hot" slot. The meter should display 114-126 volts.



3. Insert one probe into the "ground" slot and the other probe into the "neutral" slot. No voltage should be displayed.



50-AMP VOLTAGE TEST

1. Insert one probe into "hot 1" and the other into "hot 2." Meter should display 228-252 volts.



2. Insert one probe into "hot 1" and the other into "ground." Meter should display 120 volts (between 114-126 volts AC).
3. Insert one probe into "hot 1" and the other into "neutral." Meter should display 120 volts (between 114-126 volts AC).



4. Insert one probe into “hot 2” and the other into “ground.” Meter should display 120 volts (between 114-126 volts AC).
5. Insert one probe into “hot 2” and the other into “neutral.” Meter should display 120 volts (between 108-130 volts AC).



6. Insert one probe into “neutral” and the other into “ground.” Meter should display 0 or less than 2 volts.



When the campground is experiencing peak power use, it is common for the voltage to be lower than normal. As long as the voltage doesn't drop to below the numbers above, you will most likely be fine.

Important: If you noticed a difference in voltage readings when testing between the “hot” and the “neutral” and the “hot” and the “ground,” there is a dangerous leakage of electricity to “ground.” Do not use the receptacle and notify the campground manager.

GFCI TESTING

If the receptacle is GFCI protected, push the “test” button on the receptacle or the circuit breaker to trip the GFCI. After it trips, push the “reset” button. If the button is spongy or does not trip, the unit is not operating properly and should not be used. You can also use the circuit analyzer or plug-in tester to trip the GFCI if your tester is so equipped, but always test the GFCI at the unit first. If it does not trip, it is not operating properly.



CIRCUIT ANALYZER TESTING

Not everyone has a circuit analyzer, but if you do you could have skipped the plug-in tester and multimeter tests. The analyzer testing is extensive. It tests for voltage drops and correct wiring, such as polarity, bad connections and “false” or “bootleg” grounds where the ground wire is connected “falsely” to an appliance or device, which is a shock hazard. It also tests for true RMS voltage and frequency in hertz. GFCI testing is complete with trip times and amperages, which is handy to check performance specifications.



With 15- and 20-amp receptacles, plug the analyzer into the receptacle and follow the manufacturer's testing proce-

dures. When testing 30-amp receptacles, you'll need adapters in order to plug in the analyzer. For 50-amp service, the analyzer can be used, but two separate adapters are required to test both sides of 240-volt AC service — we do not recommend making special adapters unless you are qualified to do so.



SHOREPOWER AND EXTENSION CORDS AND ADAPTERS

Before you plug in, you need to inspect the shorepower and extension cords. Look for cut and damaged insulation, damaged plug ends, frayed wires and corrosion on the plug ends. Avoid laying the cord in water or draping it over objects, and make sure it's not a trip hazard.

Although extension cord use is best avoided, there are times when you will be happy you have one. When deciding to use an extension cord, common sense plays a big part. Lightweight, small cords should never be used because they are not up to the job and can overheat. RV-rated cords have heavy insulation and large enough wires to handle electrical loads of your coach.

The length of the cord also plays a part; the longer the cord, the more voltage drop you'll experience, so use the shortest cord possible. For 15-, 20- and 30-amp service, use a #10 American Wire Gauge (AWG) cord size; for 50-amp service, use a #6 AWG cord size. Note: Larger AWG numbers equal smaller wires.

SHOREPOWER AND EXTENSION CORD TESTING

Here are two quick tests for detachable shorepower cords and extension cords. The first test will establish if the wires are connected properly and if they have continuity (good connection). Although you may get good continuity displayed with the first test, on the second test flex the plug ends while firmly holding the cord to determine if any electrical changes are displayed. If you see changes with the second test, wires inside the cord or plug end may be loose or broken.

1. Disconnect the cord from power. Set the multimeter to CONTINUITY; place one probe on the “hot” blade and the other probe in the “hot” slot. Repeat with “ground” to “ground” and “neutral” to “neutral.” All corresponding ends should have continuity.

- If you don't have a continuity feature on your meter, set to OHMS and test as above. The meter should display any numbers that are nearly zero (0) but not OL, which is an open circuit (not connected).

2. Now set the meter to OHMS and connect the probes again to their appropriate connections as in test 1. But this time, wiggle the plug end(s) back and forth. If you see any electrical fluctuation on your meter, the wires may have breaks in them.

If you find good continuity and no broken wires when testing as above, the cord should be safe to use. If you are suspicious of any cord quality, do not use it.

ADAPTERS

There may be times when you need to use an adapter with your shorepower or extension cord. While there are plenty of adapters to choose from, adapters should be reserved for intermittent use, and only when properly matched to the cord and current draw. It may be tempting to cobble some adapters together, but the same basic rules apply for adapters as cords. Adapters should be rated for the power to which they are attached.

HOT-SKIN CONDITION

Before you hook up and go inside the motorhome, there's another important test to perform: Test for hot-skin condition. No, it's not a condition you get driving through Death Valley in the summer; it's when the motorhome chassis and/or accessories at-

tached to a metal frame are electrified by the shorepower because of reversed polarity, bad grounding or other poor wiring problems. If you've ever felt a mild tingle or shock when you touched your chassis, you've experienced hot-skin condition.

HOT-SKIN TESTING

We're going to do two tests: one using the non-contact voltage detector and the other using the multimeter.

Before using the non-contact detector and multimeter, read the manufacturer's instructions for use. Also, do not touch the motorhome chassis or accessory before testing.

1. Non-contact voltage detector. Standing on dry ground with rubber-soled shoes and with the shorepower plugged into the coach and the pedestal circuit breaker on, touch the tester to the motorhome chassis, or metal fittings. If the non-contact tester detects any electricity, do not touch the RV chassis or accessory attached to metal. Turn off the pedestal circuit breaker and disconnect the cord from the pedestal. Further testing with a multimeter is required.

2. Multimeter. With the coach plugged in to shorepower and while standing on dry ground with rubber soled shoes, set your multimeter to AC volts. If your meter is not auto-ranging set to 200 volts. Place the red probe onto the chassis, metal door frame or metal fittings and the black probe to a pipe or a substantial piece of metal not attached to the motorhome and embedded in the ground. Anything more than 1 or 2 volts AC is not safe and you should immediately turn off the pedestal circuit breaker, unplug the shorepower at the pedestal and have the electrical system inspected.

BROWN-OUTS, SURGES AND SPIKES

Now that the testing is done, you are safely plugged in to shorepower and you're inside the motorhome, a cool drink and a little TV is the ticket. But while you're watching the game, the lights in the coach dim and the TV picture gets smaller. What the heck?

You just experienced a brownout. The shorepower voltage dropped significantly and is causing problems. Weather related issues, accidents and campground electrical issues can cause brownouts, but there

are devices to protect your motorhome when that happens.

Step-up transformers and similar devices are designed to immediately increase the voltage to compensate for the low voltage. They come in various configurations and some of them also protect the motorhome's electrical system from other problems such as voltage surges and spikes.



**Surge Guard
50-Amp Surge
Protector**

Voltage spikes happen quickly and can deliver a devastating blow to sensitive electronics and electrical devices. Small voltage spikes can and often do go unnoticed, but repeated spikes, no matter how small, can eventually cause damage to electrical devices in the coach.

Surges last a bit longer and are noticed especially in electronics, GFCIs, power strips, air conditioning and refrigerators having problems starting or operating.

Step-up transformers, surge protectors and voltage spike protection devices can be installed at the shorepower pedestal or hardwired to the coach. Investing in these devices will save you money in the long run because it is not a matter of if it will happen, only when and where.

Plug-in type electrical monitors in the motorhome can also help. Choose one that displays voltage, frequency and line condition. After plugging a monitor in, make sure voltages are correct, and the monitor shows 60 hertz. Turn on all of the AC electrical devices in the coach and take a look at the monitor. If the voltage has dropped slightly, that's normal, but if the voltage falls below 108 volts, that is a problem and damage can occur. Hertz should stay between 57-63 hertz. Lower or higher hertz can cause damage to electrical devices.

All of these testing procedures will help you stay safe when using shorepower. The good news is that testing is relatively quick and easy. ♦



Ross Hubbard is an accredited marine surveyor in Southern California. Along with marine surveying, Ross enjoys RVing, camping and boating, and has camped throughout North America.



ITASCA SUNSTAR 35B

Winnebago focuses on families with its new bath-and-a-half bunkhouse model

For many years Winnebago's Sunstar served as Itasca's Class A gas motorhome, one with all the basics but not a lot of highline options. That all changed with the debut of its 2013 floorplans. The Sunstar still fills its niche as a value-priced pick for a range of buyers, but with numerous high-end features now standard and a host of family-oriented options from which to choose, Winnebago has done more than just dress up a staple in its lineup.

A trip to Forest City, Iowa, to attend Winnebago's Grand National Rally provided the opportunity for an overnight stay in the Sunstar 35B, one of three new floorplans built on Ford's F53 chassis with the 6.8-liter Triton V-10 engine. At just longer than 36 feet and with an interior height of 6 feet 8 inches, this motorhome provides ample room for the eight people it can sleep — an ideal arrangement for families.

A young family is exactly what Winnebago had in mind when designing this bath-and-a-half floorplan with bunk beds in addition to the private master bedroom; a move district sales manager Adam Christoffersen said is an industry first.

"We're the first to offer this floorplan," Christoffersen said. "It works great for kids and parents to have the separate bathroom."

Located at the rear of the coach, the full bathroom is home to Winnebago's BIG shower — a facility the company said dwarfs most RV showers. A 35-inch-wide entrance opens to a shower with generous elbowroom and skylight



for taller travelers. An additional shower caddy is a must, however, as the single ledge makes for crowded shampoo and soap storage. A sizeable vanity includes drawer and cabinet storage, with another cabinet above the laminate countertop. On a raised platform, the toilet is located opposite the shower.





SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS: FORD F53	INTERIOR HEIGHT: 6' 8"
ENGINE: 6.8-L SUPER DUTY TRITON V-10, 362 HP	WHEELBASE: 242"
FUEL: 80 GAL	FRESHWATER CAP: 99 GAL
GVWR: 22,000 LBS	GRAY-WATER CAP: 82 GAL
LENGTH: 36' 5.5"	BLACK-WATER CAP: 97 GAL
WIDTH: 8' 4"	LP-GAS CAP: 18 GAL
HEIGHT WITH A/C: 12' 6"	BASE MSRP: \$123,194
	MSRP AS REVIEWED: \$140,033

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A sliding door leads to the walk-around queen bed flanked by nightstands and opposing windows in the streetside slideout. The innerspring mattress provides firm comfort, though we'd like to see Winnebago offer a memory foam option. We appreciated the dual overhead reading lights and this coach featured the optional 26-inch LCD TV (\$630) in the bedroom. Full extension drawer storage is abundant, and by adding an interior shelf accessed through the wardrobe the Sunstar also makes use of the space traditionally wasted behind the TV.

Another sliding door can either close off the rear of the coach or open it to the bunk area. Foam mattresses and privacy curtains create cozy hideaways for the kids, who'll also enjoy their own drop-down LCD monitors with DVD players (\$910).

Across the aisle, the larger-than-expected half bath includes a mirrored medicine cabinet, vanity with storage underneath and commode.

Moving forward, Winnebago's attention to detail is continually evident. The standard soft touch vinyl ceiling and maple cabinets create an inviting space, as does the Comfort Sofa Sleeper (\$693), set against the wide windows of the second slideout (a sofa bed is standard). With a soft Ultraleather finish, the sofa sleeper is a couch by day and at night transforms into a large bed with self-inflating mattress. The conversion is simple and mattress firmness can be adjusted with the attached control.

Accompanying the sofa in the streetside slide is the Dream Dinette table, part of the interior upgrade package (\$826). The table easily adjusts to the right height with one hand, and with the BenchMark dinette upgrade (\$434) the space converts to another sleeping area. The seats of the BenchMark tilt up to provide easy access to cargo. Another plus is the comfort of the innerspring cushions, which also provide easy viewing of the 42-inch LCD TV on the galley's back wall, standard in the 35B.

The same upgrade package that adds the Dream Dinette also includes a cover for the three-burner range and a flip-up countertop extension, along with an attractive kitchen backsplash to give the galley an upscale



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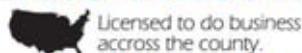
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feel. We found the optional four-door refrigerator and freezer with icemaker (\$2,485) to be a welcome addition; a small adjacent pantry still provides adequate space for essential dry goods. For those with less to keep cold, a two-door refrigerator/freezer with large pantry comes standard.

After noting the exceptional fit and finish throughout the living area, our eyes moved to the optional 32-inch overhead cab TV (\$791), a useful entertainment amenity when the full-wall slide retracts to partially cover the galley TV. Up front, the comfortable Ultra-leather cab seats swivel to add living area seating when parked. For the copilot, a sturdy dash workstation (\$140) slides out for ease of use. A rearview monitor system with one-way audio and color LCD monitor comes standard and was helpful as we maneuvered through the rally campground. Our unit also had a side-view video camera system (\$406).

The Sunstar 35B is equipped with a 5,500-watt Onan gas generator and



has two deep-cycle Group 24 batteries. The unit's two high-efficiency air conditioners (\$455) kept us cool while outside the temperature approached 100 degrees Fahrenheit. An electric patio awning provides shade for outdoor entertaining or while relaxing in front of the exterior entertainment center that houses the stereo, DVD player and 32-inch LCD TV (\$1,610).

Aimed at families, Winnebago hit the mark with the Itasca Sunstar 35B. ♦



Laura Michaels is the managing editor of *MotorHome* and loves spending time outdoors — particularly at Iowa Hawkeye football games. In her free time she enjoys exploring her new home of Minneapolis, Minn.

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TAMING THE OUTDOORS

DOMETIC'S PATTY O'ROOM MAKES IT EASY TO EXPAND LIVING SPACE BY ENCLOSING THE AREA COVERED BY AN A&E AWNING

by BOB LIVINGSTON



One of the most versatile — and appreciated — accessories on a motorhome is the patio awning. Shade created by an awning helps make the coach's interior and its occupants more comfortable. When extended and positioned properly, an awning can also prolong outdoor activity, even if inclement weather tries to spoil the day.

The area under any awning becomes an extension of the motorhome's living space, but it's not completely protected from the elements. Add a screened-in enclosure and your livable square footage can increase dramatically, while protecting occupants from insects and outdoor exposure — not to mention providing a great place for guests and kids to hang out and sleep.

Dometic's Patty O'Room can be attached to any awning under the company's A&E banner, and when assembled adds a component that not only expands living space, but gives the coach a more homey look, especially for those travelers who stay put in a park for a while. Once in place, it's easy to set up outdoor furniture that can be used comfortably while affording some privacy.

Heavy-duty vinyl coated, reinforced fabric is used to make the panels and skirting; the fiberglass screens are non-flammable and roll up easily when airflow and additional ambient lighting are desired. The white fabric helps deflect the sun's rays and keeps the room's interior as cool as possible while complementing any color awning.

The Patty O'Room is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Before ordering, the user will have to measure the distance from the ground to the awning rail and determine awning size. That information will be used to assemble the right-size components for the individual awning. It's an à la carte process with specific kits in two heights (93-110 inches and 110-120 inches) that are augmented by various sized panels — hence the need to know the aforementioned measurements. We installed the Patty O'Room on a 31-foot Class C, which required the tall components; most motorhomes will fall under this category.

Dometic has made it fairly easy to figure out which kits are needed to fit a

particular awning, directing owners to pick from a list of eight models. The 31-foot Class C has a 16-foot awning, so to build a room to fit properly, we needed to order a starter kit, one 8-foot panel and one 4-foot panel. Inside the starter kit are the right and left side panels, rafter poles, vehicle skirt, wheel well skirt and all the necessary hardware to support the panels and attach them to the motorhome. Also included is the zippered door panel.

Installing the support system and panels is not exceptionally difficult, but the instructions should be read completely before starting the job. There is plenty of information available to confirm that the right kits were ordered, before starting the process. From here, the installer should read each step carefully and follow the order prescribed by Dometic. Drilling into the awning tube and motorhome side wall is required; you don't want to make mistakes that can affect the aesthetics of the coach and/or the room addition.

Once the coach is level, the awning is opened so the slope approximates the angle of the side panel. Then the fabric is stretched taut with the roller tube level. From here it's a straightforward matter of sliding on the door and other front panels by feeding the 3/16-inch diameter rope into the awning-tube groove. The door can be positioned on either side.

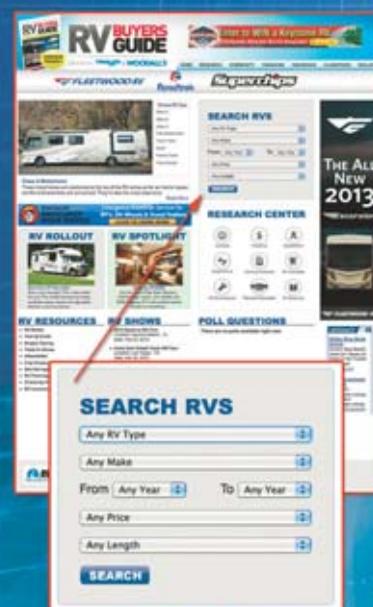
You might find a few burrs in the end of the roller tube that need filing. Also, the rope may not slide smoothly, depending on any obstructions in the groove. In this case, a shot of dry Teflon spray lubricant can help. The coach we used was fairly new so the panels moved freely. It does require a second person to help support the fabric and feed the rope.



Front panels are fed into the awning-tube groove using a 3/16-inch diameter rope that's sewn into the fabric.

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Once the front panels are in place, measurements are made to determine location of the 3/8-inch hole that will be drilled into each end of the roller tube. This hole is used to lock one end of the rafter pole in place (top two photos). Other end of the rafter pole is positioned into holder mounted on the coach side wall. Location of holder will determine proper angle of side panels.



Pilot hole (1/8-inch) is drilled into the roller tube before enlarging with a 3/8-inch bit.



Pole holder is screwed into the side wall of the coach after applying a liberal amount of silicone sealant to prevent moisture intrusion.

Measurements are then taken and the location of a hole on each end of the roller tube is marked in relation to the edges of the awning fabric. At this point a 3/8-inch hole is drilled into each end of the roller tube. The end of each spring-loaded rafter pole that supports the side fabric is positioned in these holes with the opposite (rubber-tipped) ends terminating in pole holders screwed into the coach's side wall. Careful measurements for the installation of the pole holders will assure the proper angle of the side poles. It's important that silicone sealant is used for all fasteners that are screwed into the side wall of the coach.

Each rafter pole consists of two sections that slide together, making it easy to store the poles when the room is not in use. Once the fabric is slid onto the pole using the appropriate slot, both pieces are lifted into position and secured in the holder on the side wall and in the hole in the roller tube. This is a little tricky because there's a lot of pressure on the spring-loaded poles. We found it easiest to have one person pull down on the awning roller tube while the other locates the rafter pole pin into the hole in the roller tube.

All the fabric pieces are zipped to-



Side panel slides into the pole using the appropriate slot that allows fabric to align with the slope of the awning.

gether and the awning support arms are adjusted to make the room look uniform. From here the ends of the side fabric are connected to strategically placed twist fasteners that are screwed into the motorhome side wall. Twist fasteners make it easy to remove the fabric for storage and relocate the panels during set up.



Two-piece, spring-loaded poles are under a lot of pressure, but once in position, side panels are completely secure.

If you want to add finishing touches to the room, the skirt is installed using twist fasteners so that the gap between the bottom of the motorhome and ground is covered. Not only does this improve aesthetics of the room, it acts as a buffer for any breezes and debris blowing in from under the coach. The one-piece skirt is 25 feet long and is cut to fit the length of the patio room, leaving 3 to 4 inches of overlap past each side panel. Hook-and-loop fasteners are used to secure the ends of the skirt if the twist lock eye is cut off to accommodate proper sizing. The hardest part of this exercise is cutting around the



Side panels are attached to the coach walls using twist fasteners that are screwed into the fiberglass; location is flexible.



entry steps, which requires very accurate measurements and a steady hand while cutting. Wheel well skirts cover the tires using hook-and-loop fasteners.

The length of all the panels can be adjusted relative to the ground by lining up grommets inside the room and securing with tent stakes that double as pins. From here, the ends of the fabric are staked to the ground. If the room is used on concrete, consider using workout weights to hold down the ends.

Privacy panels are sewn into each section of fabric. When rolled up, the screens allow for ventilation and visibility to outside surroundings. The panels roll up nicely — especially when warm — and opening and closing the zipper in the door panel is effortless. Periodic treatment with a zipper lubricant will assure smooth operation as the panels age.

Take down is fairly fast, with most time consumed folding the fabric. A storage bag is supplied with the starter kit,

Privacy panels can be rolled up exposing screens that allow ventilation and visibility while preventing bugs from entering the room.

but getting the panels to fit inside this bag takes some doing. If the panels are cold, folding is much more cumbersome. A soft bristle brush with mild laundry detergent or an approved commercial awning fabric/vinyl cleaner can be used to wash the panels. The panels should never be stored before drying.

Camping World makes it easy to figure out which kits are necessary by simply logging on to its website (www.campingworld.com), loading the Patty O'Room page and entering awning size. The required part numbers will be displayed along with a price for the entire package. In this case, the club price was \$520. You can also use Dometic's guidance chart to determine part numbers and order from most RV dealers and parts stores.

Dometic's Patty O'Room adds another dimension to motorhome livability. Not only does it add room for special occasions and guests, it allows occupants to enjoy the outdoors without fighting the elements. And it always goes with you.

Dometic Corp., 800-544-4881,
www.dometic.com ♦

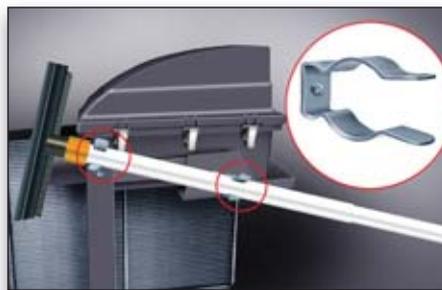
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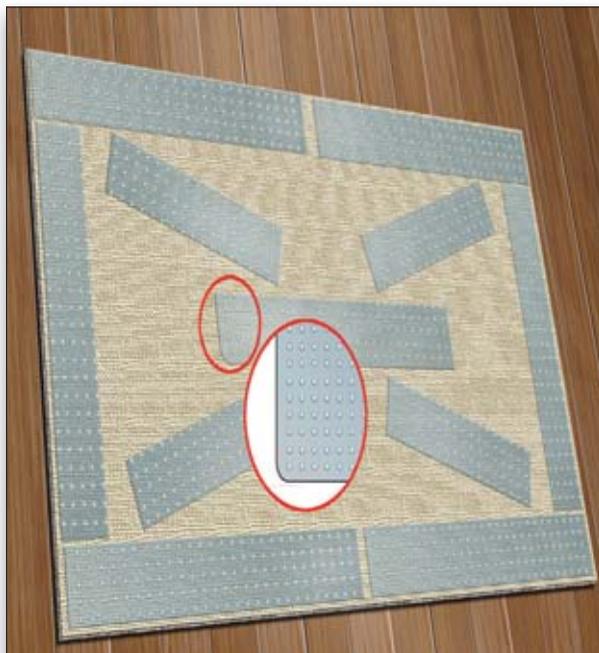
My previous Class A motorhome had a factory-installed window washing squeegee held in place with spring clips under the hood. My latest unit had no such extra, so I decided to make my own. I bought a telescoping



squeegee and a package of two spring clips — the kind used for hanging brooms and such — at Walmart. I mounted the two clips on the Ford F53 chassis by drilling two holes for each clip into the engine air filter box mounting frame and using four sheet metal screws. Just be sure to not drill into the plastic air filter box. Now I can just open the hood and grab the squeegee to clean the windshield while getting fuel.

ROBERT P. BAINBRIDGE | ELYRIA, OHIO

ILLUSTRATIONS: BILL TIPTON



WIN THE RUG WAR ▲

Because our motorhome came with light beige carpet, it is extremely difficult to keep clean — especially with grandkids along. I tried using the adhesive plastic film, but this is a pain to install and it had to be redone frequently. I tried using area rugs, but they would creep and bunch in the middle when walked on, and I'd always have to straighten and reposition them. I tried that material designed to go underneath to hold rugs in place, but it didn't help.

Finally, I came upon a solution that really works. I bought clear plastic hall runners from Walmart (the ones with the tips or points that go into the carpet). They come in a 24-by-72-inch size and are inexpensive. I cut these into 4-inch strips and glued them to the underside of the rugs using 3M spray-on adhesive, attaching them to the perimeter and several strips to the interior area of the rug. Be sure the rugs have a rubber or similar backing, and spray the adhesive on both surfaces before attaching. The rugs now stay in place, eliminating an annoyance and a potential safety hazard.

CARROLL MANNING | SONORA, CALIF.



HEADLIGHT SUNSCREEN ▲

Most motorhomes have plastic headlight lenses that fog over because of sunlight. To help prevent fogging while the coach is in storage, I went to Lowe's and purchased \$2 worth of sunscreen fabric from the garden department. I also bought a package of 3/4-inch disc magnets for \$2.50. My wife cut the screening to size and hemmed it on the sewing machine. I now have sunscreen covers for both headlights for less than \$5. If Lowe's doesn't have the magnets, Home Depot does. Also, if your motorhome has fiberglass or plastic instead of metal, double stick hook-and-loop fastener will do the trick.

BRUCE ANTHONY | SAN DIEGO, CALIF. ♦

SEWER HOSE SOLUTION

After having to hunt for big rocks or large pieces of wood to hold our sewer hose down into the RV park's drain, I came up with a simple idea. I took a heavy-duty clothes hanger and shaped it into an arch (like a wicket for a croquet game) and pushed it into the ground over our sewer hose where it enters the drain. No more rock hunting.

RON DRUMMOND | ZAPATA, TEXAS

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Quick Tips, *MotorHome's* monthly column of useful, handy and simple tips by fellow RVers, is looking for submissions. Please send your favorite do-it-yourself ideas to: *MotorHome Quick Tips*, 2575 Vista Del Mar Drive, Ventura, CA 93001, or email letters@motorhomemagazine.com. Be sure to include any photos, illustrations or drawings, if necessary. If your tip is selected for publication, you'll receive \$35.

techsavvy

HANDS-ON | HOT LINE | COACH & POWERTRAIN

HANDS-ON | by BOB LIVINGSTON

PORTABLE BATTERY CHARGING

Optima's Digital 1200 employs multistage electronics and unique messaging for greater battery performance and longevity

Keeping batteries charged in a motorhome that is equipped with a standard-type power converter can be an exercise in futility. While many owners think they are doing the right thing by plugging their coach into 120-volt AC power, the typical converter/charger in RVs will never condition batteries properly. Most simply provide a float charge that gives owners a false sense of security that the batteries are being handled effectively.

Optima Batteries, a company well known for its AGM starting and deep-cycle batteries, has introduced a portable charger driven by sophisticated electronics that helps keep 12-volt DC power flowing. The Digital 1200 Battery Charger is compact enough to be stored in just about any compartment and has a number of features that make the device easy to use.

The heart of the system is its multistage charging circuitry that initially allows the user to analyze battery condition (state of charge). When pushing the "Pre-Charge Battery Status" button the unit will display the state of charge on the digital readout that mimics a fuel gauge. This is particularly useful in determining how far the batteries have been depleted, which should not go deeper than 50 percent. From here, you use the Quick Set controls to choose the type of battery and let the device automatically do the rest. The charger is designed specifically to handle the requirements of AGM batteries but can also be used to charge large and small flooded-cell batteries.

Internal controls regulate amperage and voltage output, depending on battery condition, and move the process sequentially to a conditioning mode that completes the charging procedure. It then goes into an auto-maintain mode, which provides a float charge. In the maintain mode, the charger is programmed to automatically recondition the batteries every 30 days for three hours. Throughout the entire process information on the "fuel gauge" message center will keep the user apprised of mode and sequence, which is as much fun as it is informative.

There are two ways to connect the battery(ies). Red and gray clamps with strong springs put a secure bite on the terminals.



PHOTOS: BOB LIVINGSTON

There's even a work light built into the red (positive) clamp that will illuminate as long as the charger is plugged into 120-volt AC power. A cable can also be hardwired into any battery bank and then plugged into the side port of the charger. This type of arrangement is suitable where access is restricted, but it has charging limitations. The cables are stored neatly inside a compartment that pops open from the back, and the power cord is wrapped around a specially designed molding in the case. A 5-watt USB port is even built into the side of the case to allow charging of electronic devices such as phones and cameras.

The message center in the bottom section of the status gauge will also alert the user to reverse polarity and other faults that will prevent the charger from working properly. A number of LEDs built into the top panel augment the Quick Set buttons and status gauge/message center.

Optima's Digital 1200 has a rated output of up to 12 amps via the clamps (4 amps through the aforementioned auxiliary port), which is on the light side for many RV applications, but considerably more effective than the standard factory converter in most RVs. The charger retails for \$199.99.

Optima Batteries, 888-867-8462, www.optimabatteries.com ♦



Blowout Blues

UNABLE TO WORK OUT A RESOLUTION WITH A MANUFACTURER CONCERNING A TIRE FAILURE, A READER TURNED TO HOT LINE AS A LAST RESORT. HE EXPLAINED:

On April 26, I had a problem with a Goodyear tire on my diesel-pusher motorhome. I was driving through Virginia, heading home, when the right front tire self-destructed. At the time I thought I might have run over something. As the tire hadn't lost any air, I got off at the next exit to inspect if any damage had occurred. That is when I saw that the tire's center threads came off. As I caught a glimpse of what looked like a hoop rolling on the road, part of the tire appeared to have come off in one piece.

I called Central Tire Corp. in Verona, Va., to come out for a service call. The repair bill came to \$780.63. As soon as I got home, I sent Goodyear all the information on what had happened, along with photos and the paid invoice.

In Goodyear's reply letter, they asked for the name and location of the retailer holding the tire so they could arrange to have the tire picked up. The tire dealer's name, address and phone number was on the invoice. This information was given again in my second letter.

A month later I received another letter from Goodyear that asked me to bring the tire to an authorized dealer and have them call Goodyear. At this point I wondered if the tire dealer still had the tire, or if they knew which one it was. At the time of the incident I thought of taking the tire back with me, but I had no way of carrying it, so I took photos.

The coach suffered minor damage to the fiberglass wheel well and paint, but this whole occurrence could have turned out a lot worse. I hope Hot Line can help with this problem.

JIM KRAUCIUNAS | OHIO, N.Y.

Hot Line contacted Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. on Krauciunas' behalf. The company swiftly responded to our inquiry with the following letter:

We are in receipt of your recent letter to advise us of James Krauciunas' concern. Our goal at Goodyear is to have satisfied customers, and claim evaluation and payment decisions are, therefore, not taken lightly.

Krauciunas had a Goodyear G670 RV 275/70R22.5 that had failed on his 2007 motorhome and stated that it caused vehicle damage. The tire had been replaced by Central Tire roadside assistance. Goodyear property damage claims department had been in contact with him and without the damaged tire to be inspected on what caused the failure they were not able to assist.

I have been in contact with Krauciunas and offered him a refund of \$326.73, which is 50 percent of what he paid for the new tire. He has accepted our offer.

**KIM ROY
CONSUMER RELATIONS
GOODYEAR TIRE & RUBBER CO.
AKRON, OHIO**

OUT OF ACTION

Sidelined by repairs to their motorhome, a couple turned to Hot Line when a stalled preauthorization posed an indefinite delay in their camping plans. They wrote:

We own a 2008 Roadtrek motorhome purchased from Holland Motor Homes, which used to be in San Diego, Calif., and is now located in San Marcos, Calif. In the four years of ownership it has been unavailable for use more than four months while the dealer negotiated with Roadtrek for repair authorization. Once it was more than a month and a half because of a fuel filler blockage.

Now there is a crack in the fiberglass over the driver's side door opening. We took it to the dealership on March 9, well within the warranty period, and they started authorization procedures. Nearly two months later we still have not received even a tentative date for repairs — despite calls to Holland and Roadtrek. A previous fiberglass crack, above the right side windshield pillar, took about a month to get repaired.

We would greatly appreciate it if Hot Line could get this situation off dead center. My wife and I are in our upper 80s and we would like to spend some time on the road while we are still able.

**WILLIAM A. JONES
SAN DIEGO, CALIF.**

We passed along this plea for help to Holland Motor Homes. Soon after, a company representative responded as follows:

This letter is in response to a letter that we received from Hot Line regarding William Jones. The Joneses have been great customers and have told us of their traveling adventures with their 2008 Roadtrek. We have had their motorhome in our shop several times through the years and have always done our best to get warranty approvals in the most expedient way possible. Upon the manufacturer's approval, we have completed the repairs.

Roadtrek offers a four-year warranty in an industry where most motorhome manufacturers offer only a one-year warranty, so it can seem like a lot of repairs through the years. One of the challenges that Holland Motor Homes is faced with is getting approval for warranty work because of the body shop prices charged in Southern California. We have submitted a sublet bill to Roadtrek for the required bodywork but Roadtrek would not authorize the dollar amount, stating that some of their other dealers had performed similar repairs for substantially less money.

We got a second quote and resubmitted the claim. As of June 1, we received approval to complete the repairs for the Joneses. I am sure now that we can get their Roadtrek repaired and they can get back to their travels.

It is unfortunate that as a dealer we get stuck between the manufacturer and the customer. If we don't get preauthorization on a warranty repair then we do not get paid.

**DAN BECKETT
PARTS AND SERVICE DIRECTOR
HOLLAND MOTOR HOMES
SAN MARCOS, CALIF. ♦**

TO CONTRIBUTE TO HOT LINE, refer to Contact MotorHome, on page 10.

Tire Concerns

We have a 2007 Winnebago Voyager on a Ford chassis powered by a V-10 engine with 27,000 miles on it. The tires have never been rotated and are still perfectly in balance. However, I am worried they should be inspected because I cannot see all of them. The tire store wants to rotate and balance all six. I was told at one time that if they had not been touched thus far to leave them alone. I am setting out on a 4,000-mile trip. What do you recommend?

CARL NOYES | LAS VEGAS, NEV.

For most typical motorhome owners like you who put only a few thousand miles per year on their coaches, it usually doesn't make economic sense to have the tires rotated and rebalanced unless there's a problem. That's because they time out before they wear out. If the tires are wearing straight and don't vibrate at all, I'd skip having them rebalanced and also wouldn't have an alignment done at this time.

Inspections are a good thing though, especially before a long trip. The inside rear dual tires are a bit hard to access, as is the narrow space between the dually tires, but it's good to make the effort to get in there and take a look as best you can. Therefore, I do recommend carefully checking the tires, including the sidewalls, and while they're at it, check the brakes. If deemed necessary, rotate the tires at the same time.

FLEXIBLE BRAKE LINES

While viewing recent issues, I read a letter about the replacement of flexible brake lines ("Brake Hose Deterioration," June). I also had a flexible brake line fail about 2,800 miles after a Ford dealer in Pensacola, Fla., did a complete brake job on both front wheels.

I was just leaving a gas station in Dothan, Ala., after filling up and suddenly the steering wheel wanted to pull hard left and the coach started slowing down and wouldn't accelerate. I had only gone about 500 yards, and had to stop for a red light. When I stopped, I saw a lot of smoke rising from the left front tire; then I could smell the burning brake.

With the amount of smoke I thought the engine might be on fire, and immediately grabbed a fire extinguisher and opened the hood. Then I could see that only the brake was smoking. I was lucky this didn't happen when I was going faster. Good Sam Roadside Assistance arranged for a tow to an RV park, and in the morning they towed me to a garage that specialized in motorhomes and large trucks.

After I paid my deductible I had a bill of more than \$800 because some garages will not rebuild just one brake, and no insurance I know of will pay for both sides when only one is causing the problem. I felt I also needed to replace the other line. I was told the flexible brake lines should be replaced whenever the brakes are redone on motorhomes and large trucks.

GERALD FINLEY | GADSDEN, ALA.

We're glad it didn't turn out worse and thanks for writing. We seem to be getting more letters about problems with brake hoses and so I am using your letter to get the word out and let people know that rubber brake hoses should be replaced occasionally, along with flushing the brake fluid and regular brake service and inspections. Manufacturers recommend that tires be replaced after seven years, and changing the rubber brake lines at this interval seems to be a reasonable guideline.

MY FIRST RV

We have a 2004 Ford E-450 Class C motorhome that has one 12-volt house battery. When I dry camp the battery does not last and goes dead very fast. I was told they could make a battery tray to fit two 12-volt batteries. What are your comments about this?

RICHARD ATEN | MESA, ARIZ.

Yes, increasing battery capacity is definitely the way to go, as long as you have already looked at power conservation methods such as LED lighting. If you upgrade, use identical deep-cycle batteries, preferably changed at the same time. Many owners have found that a pair of 6-volt golf cart batteries wired in series will provide more power for more years than a pair of 12-volt batteries wired in parallel; and 6-volt batteries are usually less expensive. So if you have enough space, consider this option.

GOT THE "VAPORS"

We have a 1997 Coachmen motorhome with a Ford 460 engine. We recently returned from a trip west, where we

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ended up changing our plans and heading away from higher altitudes and even cut our trip short because of the problem we encountered with vapor lock.

The first time happened while driving through Nebraska, where the engine stalled at the end of an exit ramp. We ended up being towed to the campground and the engine started fine in the morning. The next time we were headed to Estes Park, Colo., and two-thirds of the way up we were dead again. After an hour or so it started and we made it into Estes Park, where it quit again. It quit twice more before we were able to make it to our destination.

We now know what causes vapor lock, but how to prevent it is the problem. We were told that automatic transmission fluid (ATF) could be added to the gas tank at 1 pint per 20 gallons, but not to exceed 1 quart, and also to loosen the gas cap to allow some of the vapor to dissipate. Doing that and using gas without ethanol, when we could find it, allowed us to have a trip without further incidents, but only after we changed our travel plans.

We were told Ford had issued a bulletin regarding vapor lock in this engine, but have been unable to find it. What can you add to this and is there a solution?

CAROL BLISS | VIA EMAIL

You have been the recipient of some old-mechanic tales regarding the ATF, which won't raise the point at which the lighter portions of the fuel vaporize. However, it will leave carbon deposits in your engine and will harm catalytic converters and oxygen sensors on vehicles so equipped. Loosening the gas cap might help if the venting system was not letting air into the tank to replace fuel consumed. However, if the problem were actually vapor locking in a fuel line, releasing the cap would do nothing.

I started addressing this type of problem with this model back in 1997 in this column and have addressed it numerous times through the years. At first it was thought to be vapor lock, but it turned out to be a problem with the in-tank fuel pump. The pump will intermittently quit working when it gets hot, and often start working again when it cools off. Ford came out with a redesigned fuel pump

and wiring harness that seems to solve the problem for most motorhome owners.

To verify the problem, you need to perform a fuel-pressure test when the engine is hot under full load. I also recommend you replace the fuel filter. If you can find gasoline that's free of ethanol, use that, too.

GENERATOR TIP

After reading the letter from Joe Scheuerman ("Fickle Generator") in the June issue, I was reminded of a similar incident that happened to me with my generator and the solution I came up with.

I had put my 28-foot Itasca Sunrise up for the winter and when I tried to start the generator in the spring it wouldn't start. When I took it to the repair shop the mechanic said he had to clean the gum out of the carburetor caused from the light ends evaporating out of the gasoline left in it over the winter.

My solution to this was to purchase a gas tank selector valve for a pickup truck and install it in the line to the generator. I installed the selector switch alongside the generator starter switch on the kitchen vent fan housing. I attached a short piece of hose from the other input of the selector valve and attached an in-line fuel filter on the other end of the hose to keep the dirt out of it.

Now when I lay the motorhome up for the winter I just start the generator and flip the selector switch to draw air through the hose instead of gasoline. I allow it to run until it runs out of gas and I've never had any trouble with it since.

DAN KANARR | ALPENA, MICH.

Thanks for writing, Dan. Some coaches have shut-off valves to the genset, but for those that don't, this is a solution that could prevent problems after storage. Still, add fuel stabilizer to the main gas tank, as modern fuels deteriorate rapidly.

LEAKY SLIDEOUT

In 2010 we purchased a 2007 Fleetwood Terra X Class A motorhome with a slideout in the main cabin and one in the bedroom. After several trips in the pouring rain the last few winters, we noticed the carpet was damp around the sofa when the slide was out during a storm. As I retracted the

main slide to prepare for leaving, rainwater poured into the cabin on both sides of the main slide.

We have a four-year extended warranty, but seals and gaskets are not covered; the cost to repair is \$1,800. How dangerous is this situation if left unrepaired? Will the subfloor/carpet rot? Could it cause irreparable damage to the coach?

KATHI LIPSCOMB | PENN VALLEY, CALIF.

Leaving water to soak into floors and walls can lead to all sorts of problems, including wood rot, adhesive failure, delamination, corrosion, mold and mildew. Although the \$1,800 price seems excessive to reseal the slideout, the eventual cost to repair the damage caused by ignoring the problem will probably exceed that amount. I strongly recommend that you get several estimates, have the problem corrected and perhaps in the meantime invest in a cover or keep the motorhome sheltered during storage.

DECAL REMOVAL

Please help. We cannot remove decals from a Class C motorhome that came from Texas. Thank you.

ELLEN PETERSON | VIA EMAIL

First, try heating the decals with a hair blow dryer and then peeling them off. If that doesn't work, go to a local auto body supply store and ask for the 3M decal and wood-grain remover kit.

POWER CORD ADAPTERS

We have a Fleetwood Bouncer motorhome with 30-amp service and we were staying at Havasu Springs RV Resort in Lake Havasu, Ariz. For some time I knew I needed a new shorepower cord. It kept tripping the power breakers in the motorhome and at the power pedestal, so I went to the local RV supply store and picked up a new power cord. Upon return and installing the new power cord, the camp host told me I should hook the 30-amp power cord to the 50-amp power supply via an adapter. He said I would get more power. I purchased an adapter, but I'm unsure if hooking up to the 50-amp power really does anything for me. Summers are hot in Lake Havasu and both air conditioners run almost all the time. Should I plug into the 30-amp





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 30A02912





USED 2000 Damon ESCAPER 3980
NOW \$39,995 (888) 727-2952 North
Little Rock, AR STK# LIT19723



USED 2008 Winnebago CHALET 30BR
NOW \$39,995 (877)
834-0429 Bakersfield,
CA STK# SLV21887
VIN# 70A00559



USED 2005 Winnebago SIGHTSEER 30B WAS \$59,879 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$19,884 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK# BAT73156



USED 2008 Four Winds HURRICANE 30Q WAS \$54,995 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$15,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU73201



USED 2006 Coachmen LEPRECHAUN 292DS WAS \$52,900 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$12,905 (888) 681-4635 Winter Garden, FL STK# WGA23055



USED 2001 Georgie Boy CRUISE MASTER 3816 DIESEL WAS \$73,995 **NOW \$39,997** SAVE \$33,998 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK# BAT70662



USED 2003 Fleetwood BOUNDER 36S WAS \$59,999 **NOW \$39,999** SAVE \$20,000 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH7495



USED 2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 21C WAS \$52,700 **NOW \$39,999** SAVE \$12,701 (888) 713-4351 Fayetteville, NC STK# FAY22524



USED 2008 Winnebago CHALET 30BR WAS \$58,314 **NOW \$41,988** SAVE \$16,326 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR36785



USED 2007 Thor DUTCHMEN 31F WAS \$68,946 **NOW \$41,995** SAVE \$26,951 (888) 461-1123 Asheville, NC STK# ASH25993



USED 2006 R-Vision TRAIL-LITE 28 WAS \$60,100 **NOW \$42,500** SAVE \$17,600 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL39422



USED 2005 Fleetwood JAMBOREE 31M **NOW \$42,995** (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV17148



USED 2009 Damon DAYBREAK 3204 **NOW \$43,987** (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV38722



USED 2001 Holiday Rambler ENDEAVOR 40PBD **NOW \$44,900** (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW9714E



USED 2006 Winnebago ASPECT 26A **NOW \$44,995** (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV22101 VIN# 6HA25143



USED 2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 28A **NOW \$44,995** (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW21824



USED 2000 Itasca HORIZON 36LD WAS \$62,254 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE \$17,259 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers, FL STK# FT-M11977A



USED 1999 Winnebago CHIEFTAIN 36L WAS \$59,995 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE \$15,000 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW78488



USED 2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R WAS \$59,105 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE \$14,110 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, VA STK# FRV10884



USED 2004 Georgie Boy PURSUIT 3470 **NOW \$45,360** (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC25435 VIN# 0A02844



USED 2006 Jayco GREYHAWK 29GS **NOW \$45,995** (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV39049



USED 2006 Winnebago ASPECT **NOW \$46,500** (888) 903-5066 St. George, UT STK# SGU25532



USED 1998 Holiday Rambler IMPERIAL 40WDS WAS \$84,995 **NOW \$48,430** SAVE \$36,565 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC38679



USED 2008 Itasca NAVION 24J **NOW \$46,995** (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT10119A



USED 2005 Itasca SUNRISE IFF35D WAS \$64,995 **NOW \$46,995** SAVE \$18,000 (877) 774-0328 Ocala, FL STK# OCA20814



USED 2006 Coachmen CONCORD 300TS WAS \$64,900 **NOW \$46,999** SAVE \$17,901 (888) 489-5784 Louisville, TN STK# KNOX19768



USED 2003 Fleetwood SOUTHWIND 36B WAS \$63,995 **NOW \$48,858** SAVE \$15,137 (888) 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER19432



USED 2009 Winnebago CHALET 30BR **NOW \$48,995** (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV21880 VIN# 80A02611



USED 1999 Holiday Rambler ENDEAVOR 37WDS4 **NOW \$49,321** (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA STK# SAC21363A VIN# CF28024



USED 2003 Itasca SUNFLYER 39L WAS \$69,995 **NOW \$49,900** SAVE \$20,095 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC40928



USED 2008 Coachmen FREEDOM EXPRESS 31SS WAS \$72,564 **NOW \$49,991** SAVE \$22,573 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV6112A



USED 2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R **NOW \$49,995** (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW21825



USED 2009 Winnebago CHALET 30BR **NOW \$49,995** (877) 834-0429 Bakersfield, CA STK# SLV22353 VIN# 80A02634





USED 2010 Four Winds HURRICANE 31D
NOW \$49,995 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT
STK# ABRV39881



USED 2007 Forest River SUNSEEKER 2600S NOW \$49,995 (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT
STK# KY41273



USED 2008 Four Winds Four Winds 29R 5000 SER NOW \$49,995 (888) 853-4034 Redding, CA STK# RED26480A VIN# DA15562



USED 2007 Damon DAYBREAK 3070 WAS \$82,855 NOW \$49,995 SAVE \$32,860 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN36941A



USED 2005 Fleetwood BOUNDER 36Z WAS \$82,774 NOW \$49,995 SAVE \$32,779 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK# STR21821



USED 2004 Winnebago ADVENTURER 38R WAS \$80,790 NOW \$49,995 SAVE \$30,795 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19382



USED 2010 Four Winds HURRICANE 31D WAS \$79,900 NOW \$49,999 SAVE \$29,901 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6478



USED 2000 Winnebago ADVANTAGE 36C WAS \$88,998 NOW \$49,999 SAVE \$38,999 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU72144



USED 2003 Fleetwood BOUNDER 35E NOW \$49,999 (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA STK# SAC24754 VIN# 3349605



USED 2010 Four Winds HURRICANE 31D NOW \$51,995 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV16676



USED 2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R NOW \$52,933 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS18121



USED 2009 Winnebago CHALET 30B NOW \$53,995 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC13158 VIN# 0A02623



USED 2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R NOW \$53,685 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC19568 VIN# C046279



USED 2000 Country Coach INTRIGUE 10GVSR WAS \$80,151 NOW \$54,980 SAVE \$25,171 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV16283C



USED 2005 Itasca SUNRISE 34 WAS \$89,900 NOW \$54,989 SAVE \$34,911 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN126893



USED 2008 Gulf Stream BT CRUISER 5272 NOW \$54,998 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16274



USED 2005 Holiday Rambler NEPTUNE 34 NOW \$55,995 (888) 903-5066 St. George, UT STK# SGU25660



USED 2007 Winnebago ACCESS 29T
NOW \$57,760 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA
 STK# VAC24467 VIN# 1229985



USED 2008 Itasca SPIRIT 29B **NOW \$57,885**
 (877) 834-0429 Bakersfield, CA
 STK# SLV22505 VIN# 77DB02282



USED 2007 Gulf Stream VISTA CRUISER 4231
WAS \$79,900 NOW \$59,853 SAVE \$20,047 (888) 489-5784
 Louisville, TN STK# KNOX19745



NEW 2011 Itasca IMPULSE 24V **WAS \$84,714 NOW \$57,998**
 SAVE \$26,716 (888) 457-4801
 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3780



USED 2007 Itasca SUNSTAR 33T **NOW \$59,843**
 (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA
 STK# SAC15408A VIN# 0A18247



USED 2007 Jayco MELBOURNE 29C **WAS \$89,995 NOW \$59,900**
 SAVE \$30,095 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA
 STK# ROA18601



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 23U
WAS \$82,824 NOW \$59,988 SAVE \$22,836
 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI
 STK# HL6401



USED 2007 Four Winds HURRICANE 33H
WAS \$69,900 NOW \$59,990 SAVE \$9,910
 (888) 713-4351 Fayetteville, NC STK# FAY24945



USED 2008 Fleetwood JAMBOREE 30H **NOW \$59,995**
 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC18197



USED 2010 Four Winds SIESTA 26BE **NOW \$59,995**
 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KATC9728



USED 2003 Georgie Boy CRUISE AIR 3825
WAS \$90,990 NOW \$59,995 SAVE \$30,995
 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19510



USED 2005 Winnebago ADVENTURER 35U
WAS \$89,995 NOW \$59,995 SAVE \$30,000
 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES16231



USED 2008 Gulf Stream B-TOURING CRUISER 5316B
WAS \$81,058 NOW \$59,995 SAVE \$21,063
 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8892



USED 2006 Monaco MONARCH 36PBD
WAS \$69,888 NOW \$59,998 SAVE \$9,890
 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ STK# AVO15225



USED 2006 Damon INTRUDER 373W **WAS \$94,900 NOW \$59,999**
 SAVE \$34,901 (866) 289-0113
 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6351



USED 2004 Coachmen CROSS COUNTRY 372DS
WAS \$91,053 NOW \$59,999 SAVE \$31,054
 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8895



USED 2009 Coachmen FREELANDER 3150SS WAS \$69,995 **NOW \$59,999** SAVE \$9,996 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC5CG1076A



USED 2000 Winnebago ULTIMATE ADVANTAGE 36C WAS \$81,995 **NOW \$62,858** SAVE \$19,137 (888) 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER20552



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU 28Z WAS \$89,933 **NOW \$62,995** SAVE \$26,938 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19627



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$90,856 **NOW \$63,995** SAVE \$26,861 (888) 378-1057 Lake City, FL STK# LAC21688



USED 2009 Fleetwood PULSE 24A **NOW \$64,995** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC17376



USED 2009 Fleetwood ICON 24D WAS \$110,500 **NOW \$64,995** SAVE \$45,505 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK# STR21127



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$92,311 **NOW \$64,995** SAVE \$27,316 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN37221



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$92,697 **NOW \$65,955** SAVE \$26,742 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH STK# GRV507597



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 31R WAS \$92,311 **NOW \$65,989** SAVE \$26,322 (877) 458-3214 Jacksonville, FL STK# JAX19789



USED 2009 Gulf Stream ULTRA 6268 **NOW \$66,786** (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC23607 VIN# DB08907



USED 2004 Coachmen CROSSCOUNTRY 354MBS WAS \$99,665 **NOW \$66,995** SAVE \$32,670 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK# STA126315



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$104,970 **NOW \$67,385** SAVE \$37,585 (888) 454-1707 Kissimmee, FL STK# KS8201



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$98,044 **NOW \$67,988** SAVE \$30,056 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR39134



USED 2011 Coachmen LEPRECHAUN 311 WAS \$105,000 **NOW \$67,995** SAVE \$37,005 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX4394



USED 2006 Holiday Rambler VACATIONER 34PDD WAS \$100,853 **NOW \$67,999** SAVE \$32,854 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8899



USED 2004 National TROPICAL 396 **NOW \$69,900** (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT10040



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31A WAS \$99,210 **NOW \$69,988** SAVE \$29,222 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV16193



USED 2009 Gulf Stream CONQUEST MB5234 WAS \$91,450 **NOW \$69,988** SAVE \$21,462 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR40025



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31A WAS \$107,944 **NOW \$69,989** SAVE \$37,955 (888) 865-1507 Hamburg, NY STK# BUF70573



USED 2003 Fleetwood BOUNDER 34M **NOW \$69,995** (888) 853-4034 Redding, CA STK# RED26772 VIN# CK82486



USED 2001 Mountain High Coachworks SUMMITT 3990 WAS \$98,649 **NOW \$69,991** SAVE \$28,658 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5997A



USED 1999 Fleetwood AMERICAN DREAM 40VS **NOW \$69,995** (888) 853-4034 Redding, CA STK# RED26501 VIN# C033328



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU CITATION 27SB WAS \$102,915 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$32,920 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19626



USED 2012 Thor WINDSPORT 32A WAS \$99,995 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$30,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT41483



USED 2008 Gulf Stream BT CRUISER 5291 WAS \$99,995 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$30,000 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW8927



USED 2009 Fleetwood ICON 24D WAS \$99,995 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$30,000 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW8932A



USED 2006 Winnebago VOYAGE 38J WAS \$97,999 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$28,004 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3838



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU 31K WAS \$96,413 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$26,418 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19621



NEW 2012 Jayco GREYHAWK 31SS WAS \$95,670 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$25,675 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV16105



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$95,229 **NOW \$69,995** SAVE \$25,234 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA18223



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$93,740 **NOW \$69,996** SAVE \$23,744 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU71623



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31A WAS \$101,734 **NOW \$69,997** SAVE \$31,737 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211615



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU 31K WAS \$94,250 **NOW \$72,130** SAVE \$22,120 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC40709



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach WINDSPORT 32D WAS \$116,628 **NOW \$72,995** SAVE \$43,633 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV19480



NEW 2011 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31CP MSRP \$98,873 **NOW \$72,995** SAVE \$25,878 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15673



USED 2007 Winnebago VOYAGE 35A **NOW \$74,900** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS18017



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$104,605 **NOW \$79,895** SAVE \$24,710 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU75656



USED 2007 Dynamax ISATA 254SL **NOW \$74,969** (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16409



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ACE EV030.1 MSRP \$100,848 **NOW \$77,500** SAVE \$23,348 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV17534



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ACE EV029.2 WAS \$104,617 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$24,622 (888) 865-1507 Hamburg, NY STK# BUF73397



USED 1999 Holiday Rambler NAVIGATOR 42CDS **NOW \$79,995** (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW18723



NEW 2012 Winnebago ASPECT 30C WAS \$108,942 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$28,947 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111651



USED 2010 Gulf Stream INDEPENDENCE 8367 **NOW \$79,960** (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16577



USED 2010 Forest River GEORGETOWN 374TS **NOW \$82,777** (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW20479



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 30W MSRP \$112,989 **NOW \$83,488** SAVE \$29,501 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16017



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach DAYBREAK 34SS WAS \$123,311 **NOW \$88,990** SAVE \$34,321 (877) 458-3214 Jacksonville, FL STK# JAX19956



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 32VS WAS \$139,011 **NOW \$89,995** SAVE \$49,016 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN38242



NEW 2011 Damon DAYBREAK 35BD MSRP \$131,826 **NOW \$89,995** SAVE \$41,831 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES13019



NEW 2012 Itasca SUNSTAR 32K WAS \$131,263 **NOW \$89,995** SAVE \$41,268 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC STK# MB128492



USED 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31-Z WAS \$152,321 **NOW \$94,649** SAVE \$57,672 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN127391



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31Z
MSRP \$149,141 **NOW \$95,449** SAVE
\$53,692 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK#
MES10470



USED 2004 Alfa Leisure ALFA GOLD
SYG40FD **NOW \$96,876** (888) 641-
0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY38978



NEW 2011 Itasca REYO 25Q LIST PRICE \$149,190
NOW \$97,800 SAVE \$51,390 (888) 331-1595 Santa
Clarita, CA STK# AMRV22456 VIN# A9453033



USED 2006 Jayco SENECA 356S **NOW**
\$98,672 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT
STK# ABRV37769



USED 2004 Tiffin ALLEGRO 38TGP WAS
\$131,798 **NOW \$99,850** SAVE \$31,948
(888) 848-7312 Columbia, SC STK#
COL18539



USED 2006 Newmar KOUNTRY STAR 3510 **NOW**
\$99,900 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK#
SWC9687C



USED 2006 Gulf Stream FRIENDSHIP
8708 WAS \$173,595 **NOW \$99,999**
SAVE \$73,596 (866) 289-0113 Chatta-
nooga, TN STK# CH6832



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 33A
WAS \$170,756 **NOW \$104,991** SAVE
\$65,765 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL
STK# CRV5955



USED 2011 Four
Winds SERRANO 31V
WAS \$139,859 **NOW**
\$104,995 SAVE \$34,864
(888) 860-8684 Strafford,
MO STK# STR13524A



USED 2006 Forest River CHARLESTON
400TS WAS \$167,895 **NOW \$105,849**
SAVE \$62,046 (866) 755-9604 Charleston,
SC STK# CHN128319



NEW 2012 Itasca SUNOVA 33C MSRP
\$141,090 **NOW \$105,995** SAVE \$35,095
(888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC16140



USED 2008 Holiday Rambler VACATIONER
34SBD WAS \$139,995 **NOW \$105,995**
SAVE \$34,000 (866) 673-0250 Statesville,
NC STK# STA125968



USED 2007 Damon TUSCANY 4072
WAS \$199,995 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE
\$90,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK#
DOT39994



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 33A
WAS \$163,457 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE
\$53,462 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY
STK# CHU70425



USED 2008 Gulf
Stream CRESCENDO
40UL WAS \$184,900
NOW \$112,999 SAVE
\$71,901 (866) 289-
0113 Chattanooga, TN
STK# CH6815



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHAL-
LENGER 36FD WAS \$157,518 **NOW**
\$114,900 SAVE \$42,618 (888) 692-9016
Myrtle Beach, SC STK# MB127185



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 33A MSRP \$175,289 **NOW \$114,995** SAVE \$60,294 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16339



USED 2007 Holiday Rambler NEPTUNE 37BPD **NOW \$115,000** (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY40712



USED 2009 Monaco LAPALMA 36SFD WAS \$159,995 **NOW \$115,852** SAVE \$44,143 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA18766



USED 2007 Gulf Stream TOUR MASTER T40C WAS \$169,900 **NOW \$115,900** SAVE \$54,000 (888) 489-5784 Louisville, TN STK# KNOX19766



USED 2007 Itasca MERIDIAN 34H WAS \$151,450 **NOW \$115,988** SAVE \$35,462 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR38662



USED 2008 Coachmen CROSS COUNTRY 382DS WAS \$134,995 **NOW \$119,995** SAVE \$15,000 (888) 860-8684 Stratford, MO STK# STR15659A



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 31X WAS \$164,584 **NOW \$119,900** SAVE \$44,684 (888) 865-1507 Hamburg, NY STK# BUF72082



USED 2009 Gulf Stream CRESCENDO 8386 WAS \$169,988 **NOW \$119,995** SAVE \$49,993 (888) 475-5918 Robertsdale, AL STK# RD40508



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 33A WAS \$168,791 **NOW \$119,995** SAVE \$48,796 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR72083



USED 2008 Winnebago DESTINATION 39W WAS \$139,995 **NOW \$119,995** SAVE \$20,000 (877) 774-0328 Ocala, FL STK# OCA20812



USED 2006 Winnebago HORIZON 40FD **NOW \$124,997** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16107



USED 2007 Holiday Rambler AMBASSADOR 40DFT **NOW \$129,777** (888) 828-9906 Lowell, AR STK# LOW18596



USED 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 33A WAS \$169,985 **NOW \$129,895** SAVE \$40,090 (888) 681-4635 Winter Garden, FL STK# WGA23459



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 34M WAS \$177,294 **NOW \$129,988** SAVE \$47,306 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL40064



USED 2006 Winnebago VECTRA 40FD WAS \$169,895 **NOW \$129,995** SAVE \$39,900 (888) 681-4635 Winter Garden, FL STK# WGA19120



USED 2007 Rexhall ROSE AIR 40LS **NOW \$134,776** (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC26565 VIN# C045578



USED 2008 Gulf Stream YELLOW STONE 40UL **NOW \$139,842** (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16479



USED 2007 Itasca ELLIPSE 40TD WAS \$199,995 **NOW \$139,995** SAVE \$60,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU72824



USED 2003 Monaco DYNASTY REGAL **NOW \$155,875** (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV39339



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$248,728 **NOW \$159,995** SAVE \$88,733 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU67794



NEW 2012 Jayco SENECA 37RB WAS \$206,550 **NOW \$157,995** SAVE \$48,555 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KCS12511



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$248,128 **NOW \$159,991** SAVE \$88,137 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5954



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 34Y MSRP \$241,810 **NOW \$167,995** SAVE \$73,815 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15857



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$256,879 **NOW \$162,995** SAVE \$93,884 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15953



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$253,597 **NOW \$167,854** SAVE \$85,743 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD16662



USED 2007 Fleetwood REVOLUTION LE 40L **NOW \$169,500** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT24199



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40BQ WAS \$243,600 **NOW \$169,995** SAVE \$73,605 (888) 378-1057 Lake City, FL STK# LAC21662



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$247,769 **NOW \$170,946** SAVE \$76,823 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR70426



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ASTORIA 36MQ WAS \$268,206 **NOW \$174,900** SAVE \$93,306 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV16077



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4072 WAS \$271,260 **NOW \$179,995** SAVE \$91,265 (888) 378-1057 Lake City, FL STK# LAC21661



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ASTORIA 40KT LIST PRICE \$264,439 **NOW \$179,995** SAVE \$84,444 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV22521 VIN# BCBE4987



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 39N WAS \$246,787 **NOW \$183,995** SAVE \$62,792 (866) 996-3140 Calera, AL STK# CLE18939



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 36UF MSRP \$277,899 **NOW \$188,740** SAVE \$89,159 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV16637



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ASTORIA 40BQ MSRP \$259,475 **NOW \$189,900** SAVE \$69,575 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC17154



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$254,146 **NOW \$188,953** SAVE \$65,193 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA16309



USED 2005 Monaco SIGNATURE COMMANDER 525 WAS \$267,880 **NOW \$189,988** SAVE \$77,892 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV16142C



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$258,185 **NOW \$189,995** SAVE \$68,190 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU72084



NEW 2012 Itasca MERIDIAN 36M MSRP \$259,771 **NOW \$199,900** SAVE \$59,871 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT10323



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK MSRP \$317,064 **NOW \$199,995** SAVE \$117,069 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES16304



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK WAS \$315,937 **NOW \$199,995** SAVE \$115,942 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC511531



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$307,759 **NOW \$199,995** SAVE \$107,764 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN38784



NEW 2011 Winnebago JOURNEY 40L MSRP \$280,333 **NOW \$199,995** SAVE \$80,338 (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT14119



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 36MQ WAS \$269,674 **NOW \$201,264** SAVE \$68,410 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI20186



NEW 2011 Winnebago JOURNEY 40U MSRP \$282,612 **NOW \$207,396** SAVE \$75,216 (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16619



NEW 2011 Winnebago JOURNEY 40L WAS \$314,411 **NOW \$209,990** SAVE \$104,421 (877) 458-3214 Jacksonville, FL STK# JAX19937



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 36UF WAS \$312,574 **NOW \$209,995** SAVE \$102,579 (888) 848-7312 Columbia, SC STK# COL22690



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK WAS \$313,863 **NOW \$219,850** SAVE \$94,013 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA16310



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 42FK WAS \$289,517 **NOW \$219,999** SAVE \$69,518 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK9157



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 42RQ LIST PRICE \$323,643 **NOW \$229,995** SAVE \$93,648 (877) 834-0429 Bakersfield, CA STK# SLV22424 VIN# BCBE5139



NEW 2012 Itasca ELLIPSE 420D MSRP \$371,670 **NOW \$279,900** SAVE \$91,770 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW10350

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1989 Gulf Stream AERONET 22	MER24004	\$8,900	\$6,858	(888) 254-9145
1975 Winnebago MINNIE DODGE	MER19691	\$11,995	\$9,858	(888) 254-9145
2004 Forest River SUNSEEKER 2890DS	WGA22898	\$36,795	\$29,900	(888) 681-4635
2009 Winnebago CHALET 29T	KCS11425	\$49,995	\$41,995	(866) 415-9726
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31P	GR128074	\$50,250	\$42,995	(888) 484-3906
2005 Coachmen CONCORD 235 50	KC2106858	\$54,997	\$42,997	(888) 463-3995
2009 Winnebago CHALET 24VR	FAY26213	\$53,749	\$44,995	(888) 713-4351
2005 Fleetwood JAMBOREE 31M	RAL25431	\$54,570	\$45,900	(888) 868-1486
2009 Fleetwood TIOPA RANGER	RAL25650	\$54,400	\$45,900	(888) 868-1486
2007 Itasca SPIRIT 31C	JAX19804	\$62,319	\$47,990	(877) 458-3214
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31P	WGA23049	\$59,985	\$49,890	(888) 681-4635
2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R	HIL40793	\$60,200	\$49,988	(888) 859-6653
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R	CLE24547	\$62,995	\$49,995	(866) 996-3140
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31P	LVM41316	\$61,809	\$49,995	(877) 289-0812
2007 Forest River LEXINGTON 283 GTS	HAR72575	\$61,995	\$49,995	(888) 903-6787
2008 Jayco GREYHAWK 30 GS	KS9180A	\$66,400	\$52,895	(888) 454-1707
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31P	MES16221	\$67,320	\$56,888	(888) 542-3819
2007 Coachmen LEPRECHAUN 318DS	KNOX19736	\$72,900	\$57,672	(888) 489-5784
2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 31R	CLE24201	\$69,995	\$57,995	(866) 996-3140
2009 Four Winds SIESTA 31BH	OCA19149	\$69,995	\$58,995	(877) 774-0328
2011 Forest River SUNSEEKER 3100SS	BAT74487	\$69,995	\$59,895	(866) 502-8238
2009 Coachmen FREELANDER 2700RS	BUF72720	\$69,995	\$59,995	(888) 865-1507
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31B	GRV507549	\$72,955	\$59,999	(888) 471-3546
2008 Coachmen CONCORD 275DS	CFX4701	\$88,999	\$72,998	(888) 457-4801

NEW CLASS B & C MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 21C	SGU26208	\$53,926	\$44,995	(888) 903-5066
2013 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 23U	CNW26331	\$80,328	\$64,995	(877) 439-7857
2012 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 23U	LAC21270	\$81,119	\$66,995	(888) 378-1057
2012 Winnebago ACCESS PREMIER 26QP	CH6685	\$91,732	\$72,999	(866) 289-0113
2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31K	SYU070363	\$93,477	\$73,779	(888) 672-5049
2012 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 26QP	HAR73495	\$99,941	\$77,320	(888) 903-6787
2011 Winnebago ACCESS 31N	SW121219	\$99,636	\$79,381	(877) 834-0429
2012 Jayco GREYHAWK 31FK	KC212099	\$98,565	\$79,995	(888) 463-3995
2012 Jayco GREYHAWK 31FK	LC16270	\$97,650	\$79,995	(888) 905-0490
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU 31F	CB118567	\$97,751	\$82,450	(866) 820-0335
2012 Winnebago ACCESS PREMIER 31RP	GB40966	\$101,523	\$83,995	(888) 674-0275
2012 Winnebago ERA 170X	KCS12864	\$105,095	\$84,995	(866) 415-9726
2012 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31CP	HAR73499	\$108,926	\$85,226	(888) 903-6787
2012 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31RP	SW10258	\$103,437	\$87,900	(888) 844-1758
2012 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31RP	SGU25564	\$110,958	\$89,995	(888) 903-5066
2012 Winnebago ASPECT 28T	DOT40468	\$109,960	\$89,995	(888) 450-7060
2012 Winnebago ACCESS PREMIER 31RP	KC211951	\$108,774	\$89,997	(888) 463-3995
2011 Winnebago VIEW 24K	SLV22069	\$117,706	\$94,995	(877) 834-0429
2012 Itasca NAVION 24G	LC16191	\$122,010	\$94,995	(888) 905-0490
2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS SIESTA 24SR	FRV10765	\$114,115	\$95,888	(888) 568-2177
2012 Itasca NAVION 24J	MB126836	\$119,811	\$96,895	(888) 692-9016
2012 Winnebago ASPECT 30C	LAC21875	\$116,823	\$99,995	(888) 378-1057

USED CLASS A GAS MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
1998 Winnebago Brave 26P	RAL26073	\$14,900	\$12,500	(888) 868-1486
1992 Fleetwood BOUNDER 34J	STA126238	\$24,995	\$19,899	(866) 673-0250
1997 Fleetwood PACE ARROW 37	STA126619	\$29,995	\$25,557	(866) 673-0250
1999 Winnebago CHIEFTAIN 35U	DCW1968	\$34,995	\$26,995	(888) 474-1330
2000 Fleetwood BOUNDER 34D	RD41715	\$34,988	\$26,995	(888) 475-5918

USED CLASS A GAS MOTORHOMES (CONT'D)

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2000 Fleetwood SOUTHWIND STORM 30H	HL6181A	\$35,790	\$28,988	(888) 386-5187
1998 Winnebago CHIEFTAN 36WL	BUF73130	\$36,999	\$28,995	(888) 865-1507
2001 Fleetwood SOUTHWIND 32V	FTM1101D	\$34,995	\$29,995	(888) 625-5187
2000 Georgie Boy CRUISE MASTER 3515	CH8132	\$36,999	\$29,999	(866) 289-0113
2002 Winnebago ADVENTURER 37G	LAK9062	\$42,248	\$34,995	(877) 554-3516
2001 Itasca SUNCRUISER 31C	BAT71874	\$47,999	\$39,995	(866) 502-8238
2003 Itasca SUNRISE 36M	CLE24009	\$49,995	\$41,995	(866) 996-3140
2003 Coachmen AURORA GOLD 3610KS	RL127496	\$61,995	\$49,992	(888) 484-3906
2009 Winnebago CHALET 30B	AV014362	\$64,888	\$49,995	(888) 348-5909
2005 Coachmen AURORA 3480DS	KNOX19758	\$67,900	\$53,898	(888) 489-5784
2009 Winnebago CHALET 30B	AV013155	\$64,888	\$54,988	(888) 348-5909
2006 Georgie Boy PURSUIT 3500DS	HL6094A	\$67,790	\$55,988	(888) 386-5187
2007 Damon INTRUDER 374	JAC41202	\$88,790	\$72,400	(866) 648-5288
2011 Four Winds HURRICANE 31J	GRV507881	\$89,995	\$75,988	(888) 471-3546
2006 Itasca SUNCRUISER 37B	CLE23929	\$94,995	\$79,995	(866) 996-3140

NEW CLASS A GAS MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2012 Thor Motor Coach ACE EVO29.1	MAC17146	\$103,938	\$83,995	(888) 801-3226
2012 Thor Motor Coach ACE EVO29.1	CB118570	\$105,596	\$84,995	(866) 820-0335
2012 Thor Motor Coach HURRICANE 32A	TAL41547	\$128,700	\$99,995	(888) 902-8565
2012 Thor Motor Coach HURRICANE 29X	TAL41548	\$120,180	\$99,995	(888) 902-8565
2012 Thor Motor Coach DAYBREAK 34SS	ROA25778	\$123,053	\$103,513	(866) 775-0682
2011 Damon CHALLENGER 35SD	ASH23608	\$136,448	\$106,995	(888) 461-1123
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 32VS	CHN127899	\$131,518	\$112,399	(866) 755-9604
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 36FD	LWN38240	\$155,811	\$119,995	(877) 289-0812
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 36FD	CFX4438	\$153,787	\$129,520	(888) 457-4801
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 37DT	DCW8673	\$157,016	\$129,943	(888) 474-1330

USED CLASS A DIESEL MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
1995 Winnebago VECTRA 35RQ	KCS11146C	\$29,995	\$24,995	(866) 415-9726
1997 Odessa OVERLAND 3540	MAD18531	\$44,250	\$34,962	(888) 242-0293
1998 Holiday Rambler ENDEAVOR 34WDS	FLG25470	\$59,995	\$49,995	(877) 371-2412
1999 Harney Coachworks RENEGADE DURANGO	GRW326570	\$59,995	\$49,995	(866) 754-7302
2000 Country Coach ALLURE 36SLD	STR16906B	\$70,000	\$58,995	(888) 860-8684
2000 Newmar MOUNTAIN AIRE 4057	DCW8911A	\$89,995	\$69,833	(888) 474-1330
2000 Tiffin ZEPHYR 42 DSL 450	KS9054A	\$89,995	\$74,995	(888) 454-1707
2007 Holiday Rambler VACATIONER 34POD	KC2CS030	\$94,997	\$74,997	(888) 463-3995
2006 Damon ASTORIA PACIFIC 3579	CB118317	\$96,500	\$79,995	(866) 820-0335
2010 Four Winds SERRANO 31Z	RD40752	\$109,988	\$89,995	(888) 475-5918
2007 Damon ASTORIA PACIFIC 3773	JAX19977	\$126,439	\$97,990	(877) 458-3214
2006 Itasca MERIDIAN 36G	GRV507874	\$129,955	\$109,755	(888) 471-3546
2007 Newmar DUTCHSTAR 4304	WGA20810	\$169,900	\$139,000	(888) 681-4635
2009 Holiday Rambler HOLIDAY RAMBLER 41SKQ	HAR73484	\$199,995	\$159,995	(888) 903-6787
2010 Winnebago TOUR 40	STA126511	\$249,998	\$199,995	(866) 673-0250

NEW CLASS A DIESEL MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2011 Itasca REYO 25Q	GRV507290	\$128,465	\$99,988	(888) 471-3546
2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 31X	LTI17630	\$157,563	\$129,777	(888) 727-2952
2012 Winnebago JOURNEY 36M	CLE19783	\$260,730	\$216,995	(866) 996-3140
2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 42FK	SYU74247	\$288,868	\$224,477	(888) 672-5049
2012 Thor Motor Coach TUSCANY 42FK	JAC41174	\$287,502	\$234,432	(866) 648-5288
2012 Winnebago TOUR 42JD	CHN126958	\$368,067	\$292,570	(866) 755-9604
2012 Winnebago TOUR 42QD	KS9056	\$371,228	\$299,988	(888) 454-1707
2012 Itasca ELLIPSE 42QD	TAL41510	\$371,382	\$299,995	(888) 902-8565

*Government fees, state taxes, title, license and dealer fees as applicable will be added to comply with state vehicle codes. Sales tax not applicable in OR. In Arizona, prices plus doc. fee of \$399 and pre-delivery inspection. In California, prices not inclusive of government fees and prep charge, finance charge, or emissions testing charge. Freight costs vary by state. Not applicable in CA, OH, AR, TX or OR. In Arizona, Texas and Arkansas, "List Price" is equal to "MSRP". Inventory and floorplans vary by location. VIN numbers posted at dealership. Advertised inventory available at time of printing. Void where prohibited by law. Offer valid at any Camping World RV Sales or FreedomRoads dealer only. Dealer not responsible for typographical errors. See dealer for details. Offers expire 9/11/12. FR018716-0712

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E-mail: kathy.schurman@goodsamfamily.com **Fax:** 763-383-4499 Attn: Kathy Schurman

socket or plug into the 50-amp socket with an adapter? Does it really matter?

RICH STOW | ALPINE, CALIF.

It shouldn't make a significant difference, but it might. Let me explain. When there are numerous heavy loads on the campground power, low voltage can become a problem. You don't want to dip below 108 volts from the nominal 120 volts. The 50-amp circuit uses heavier-gauge wiring than the 30-amp circuit, which can reduce voltage drop under a heavy load. Since you already have the adapter, simply take voltage readings with everything running, both with and without the adapter. If the adapter gives you a significantly higher voltage, use it. Otherwise use the 30-amp circuit, which gives you better over-current protection.

INTERMITTENT OVERHEATING II

In the August issue there was a technical question called "Intermittent Overheating." One of the more common reasons for this problem is a loose water pump belt—a simple solution to what often appears to be a complex problem. It happened to me last summer and a mechanic in Sundance, Wyo., found the solution when fixing another problem on my National RV Tradewinds motorhome.

DON GHOLSON | WALLACE, N.C.

Thanks for writing, Don. Often you can hear a belt squeal when it's too loose, particularly right after startup, but not

always. A lot of modern coaches have automatic belt tensioners, but these do not always work properly. So definitely check the belt's condition and tension when chasing down a hot-running problem.

SHIFTING ADVICE REVISITED

Your "Shifting Advice" in the July issue for the owner of the Ford E-450 chassis with a V-10 Triton engine and an automatic transmission may have been sufficient for that motorhome. But not all automatic transmissions will prevent over-rev when downshifting, nor will they upshift before reaching redline status.

We blew a Caterpillar C12 engine (remanufactured for \$33,000) after descending the Continental Divide into Idaho because of engine overspeed. The Allison 4000 downshifts to fourth gear and will not upshift unless it has been reprogrammed to downshift to fifth gear.

After more than two years of letter writing, phoning and meeting with factory representatives, neither Caterpillar nor Allison will take any responsibility or even publicize this information. The tachometer in our motorhome is now essential and is marked to show the redline.

We were led to believe through RV seminars that the computer-controlled transmissions would indeed prevent engine overspeed and we owned a motorhome with a Caterpillar C7 and Allison 3000 that would upshift to prevent engine overspeed.

There is much more to talk about regarding engine operation and braking

because of the differences between gas and diesel power and the various engine and transmission brakes. Going up and down a grade in the same gear may be a good place to start, but most modern day engines have more pulling power than braking power.

The bottom line is that when driving in the mountains, it is imperative to know what the equipment will do and the limits. Not all motorhomes or drivers are the same.

**DICK AND BEV REYMORE
RIDGECREST, CALIF.**

Thanks for sharing your experience, although we're sorry to hear of your expensive incident. When I reply to a reader about a specific vehicle and problem, I am doing just that. It should not be inferred that I am covering every make and model ever made.

Space does not allow an in-depth discussion about all models every time I try to help a reader solve a specific situation. Having said that, your words of hard-earned experience will help warn owners of other models to use caution and determine if their model transmission is set up to limit engine speed by upshifting.

DINGHY ELECTRICAL POWER TIP

For those motorhome owners who find the battery goes dead in their dinghy vehicle (but they don't want to run a charging line from the coach), I suggest they look into the Black & Decker Electromate 400 for auxiliary power. On the front it has two 12-volt DC outlets that will power up a braking system. Sit the Electromate on the driver's seat and recharge it at night so you can unplug fuses (or disconnect the battery) and not have a dead battery at the end of the day.

**BRYAN O'STEEN
KEYSTONE HEIGHTS, FLA.**

Thanks for writing, Bryan. This is a popular subject with our readers and we appreciate feedback based on your experience. ♦

TO CONTRIBUTE TO COACH & POWERTRAIN, please refer to Contact MotorHome, on page 10.



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BACK TO BASICS RV Sanitation Systems

Among the most appealing modes

of highway travel, motorhomes are attractive for a number of reasons. One usually tops the list: a nice bathroom. Indeed, motorhomes would be far less popular if they did not have full sanitation systems. That includes a toilet and a black holding tank, which allows self-contained operation for a number of days, in addition to a companion gray tank, which makes the kitchen, lavatory and shower functional (with an on-board freshwater supply).

As anyone who has neglected either of these tanks knows, the penalty can be offensive odor, especially in hot weather. Fortunately, keeping them operating efficiently and smell-free is relatively easy.

TREATMENT

Regular use of a high-quality holding-tank treatment (deodorizer and digester) is critical. Without it, solids do not properly break down, and odor builds up. Unfortunately, experience shows that all treatment products are not equally effective, and the choices can bewilder owners. When in doubt, try a product that has been around for decades: Thetford's Aqua Chem. It contains formaldehyde, but the company insists that Aqua Chem is fully biodegradable.

Thetford and other companies also offer products that do not contain formaldehyde, and they may be effective. Follow directions to ensure good results. Toilet paper should be of single-ply thickness. Use at least 1 cup of water for each flush, since higher fluid-to-waste proportions reduce concentration of solids. Concentration of odors and solids can be more of a problem while the motorhome is parked in a site for long periods, so it's necessary to ensure adequate water flow into tanks during these rest periods. A

thorough flushing after such periods is even more important (see later reference) than while traveling.

Use a specialized treatment product for the gray tank after each dumping because the gray tank holds solids flushed from the kitchen sink that need breakdown and deodorization. You can help keep your gray-water tank clean by using a fine-screened sink-drain strainer in all drains (available at houseware stores) to catch food and hair in the drains.

DUMPING

Good tank maintenance can make the difference between an unpleasant chore and a routine procedure. A leak-free dump hose is essential, along with a good dumping procedure.

Always use protective gloves (such as mechanics' latex gloves) and water hoses dedicated only to flushing black-water tanks while dumping and flushing that tank; discard the gloves before touching fresh-water hoses or equipment.

If possible, when preparing to dump, position the motorhome so the tank outlets are angled downhill toward the dump valves. Be certain that all hose connections are secure.

Procedure: Be sure the dump hose is securely connected to its fitting and that the discharge end is securely positioned in the drainpipe. Open the black-tank valve first and allow it to drain. When it's empty — with the dump hose still in place and the discharge valve still open — use a tank-flushing device (an in-tank spray nozzle, or a wand inserted through the toilet) to flush the tank. A 5-gallon bucket can also be used to add freshwater to the tank, through the toilet, for flushing

purposes. If possible, refill and flush.

Next, close the black-tank valve and open the gray-tank valve, allowing its contents to drain. Close the gray-tank valve, disconnect the dump hose and flush it thoroughly. Don't forget to flush the dump station catch basin.

Tip: While connected to RV park utilities, keep tank valves closed, allowing content to build to the 3/4-full level. This supports waste breakdown and creates more flushing action during the dumping process.

TANK PROBLEMS

To remedy an odor problem, refill and flush the tank several times with a strong stream of water directed through the toilet to break up solids that may have built up directly under the toilet. While traveling, refill to about the 1/2-tank level and pour in a strong dose of effective deodorant. Use large amounts of water and dump again soon. If the motorhome can be parked for several days, flush well, add treatment, fill to the top and allow the vehicle to sit for several days. Drain and flush. Thereafter, use more water, flush the tanks more often, and use an effective treatment.

In a more extreme case, it's sometimes suggested that a couple of bags of ice cubes (not crushed ice) poured through the toilet after filling the tank to the 1/4-tank level — followed immediately by aggressive braking and acceleration or driving on a winding, curving road — may help break up solids. If odor continues, the tank may need to be replaced.

With good maintenance, an RV sanitary system will go for many years without a problem, making an important difference in motorhome travel comfort and convenience. ♦



Left to right: Changing out a leaking or stuck holding tank valve is easy. A clear-view hose adapter lets you see when the tank flow stops. Clear discharge indicates a clean tank. One way to clean out your black-water tank is to power wash with a tank wand that hooks to a hose. Don't use your potable-water hose.





On our way home from a motorhome rally in Redmond, Ore., we made a side trip up to Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood. It was a beautiful day as we drove our 2001 Rexhall Aerbus 3550 BSL toward the snowcapped mountains in northern Oregon, taking in views of Mount Hood National Forest's million-plus acres.

Barry Bowers
Des Moines, Wash.



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PHOTO: BARRY BOWERS



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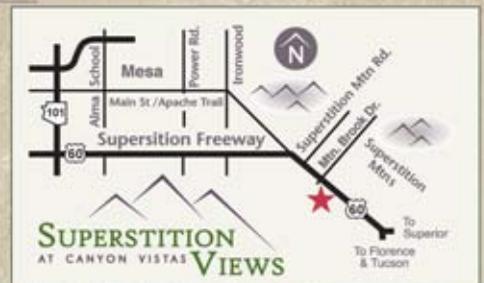


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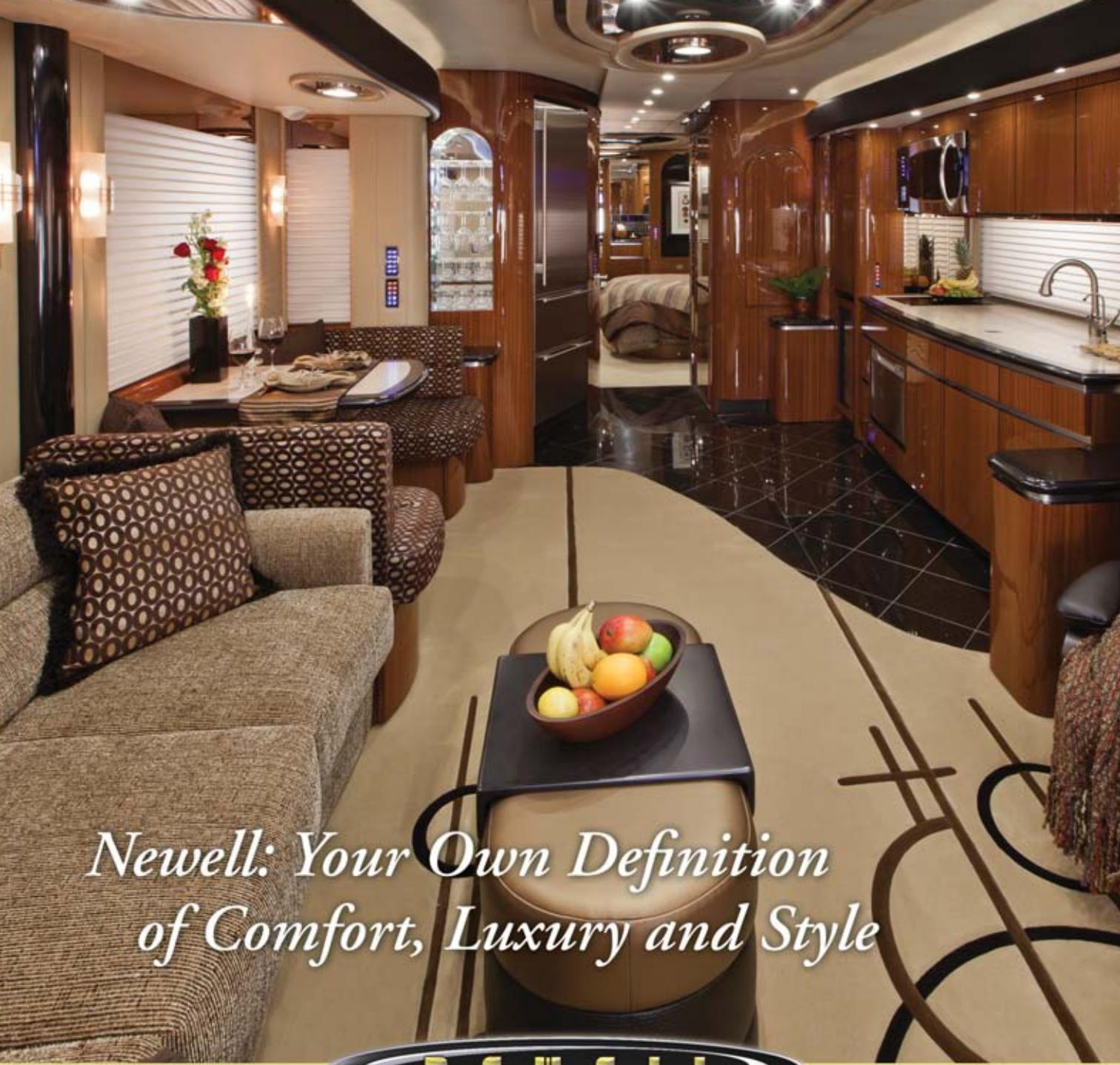
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*Newell: Your Own Definition
of Comfort, Luxury and Style*



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The invention of the year is great news for your ears

*Perfect Choice HD™ is easy to use,
hard to see and costs far less...
it's like reading glasses for your ears™!*

New Personal Sound Amplification Product is an affordable alternative

Over the years, technology has made the way we live easier, safer and more convenient. In many cases, it's even made many products more affordable... (remember how much the first VCR used to cost?). Unfortunately, the cost of hearing aids never seemed to come down. Now, a new alternative has been invented... it's called Perfect Choice HD™.

"Reading glasses for your ears"

Perfect Choice HD is NOT a hearing aid. Hearing aids can only be sold by an audiologist or a licensed hearing instrument specialist. In order to get a hearing aid, you had to go to the doctor's office for a battery of tests and numerous fitting appointments. Once they had you tested and fitted, you would have to pay as much as \$5000 for the product. Now, thanks to the efforts of the doctor

who leads a renowned hearing institute, there is Perfect Choice HD. It's designed to accurately amplify sounds and deliver them to your ear. Because we've developed an efficient production process, we can make a great product at an affordable price. The unit has been designed to have an easily accessible battery, but it is small and lightweight enough to hide behind your ear... only you'll know you have it on.

Perfect Choice HD feature comparison		
	Perfect Choice HD	Others
Lightweight and Inconspicuous	YES	Some
Easy Toggle Switch Adjustment	YES	Few
Setting Memory	YES	Few
Tests and Fittings Required	NO	Most
Affordable	YES	as much as \$5000
Friendly Return Policy	YES	Rarely

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