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\*\* Based on a comparison of Automotive News classification of full-size commercial vans.  
RV shown is Winnebago View built on a Mercedes-Benz 3500 Cab Chassis.



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The eco-friendly EverGreen RV Element and the Porsche Cayenne unite just south of Clear Lake in the Willamette National Forest. See test on page 44.

Photo by Jeff Johnston

**TRAILER LIFE** November 2011 **3**

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## DRIVER'S SEAT

by **Kristopher Bunker**



## FOOTPRINTS

**M**ost of us have started a campfire story with some variation of the phrase "Back in my day ..." It's a universal storytelling tactic that's generally followed by deeds of derring-do, in which the narrator regales the listeners with how things were so much better way back when, and how they didn't have to worry about all the restrictions of modern times. Popular metaphors include a long walk to school in the snow (uphill!) or even the condemnation of the ever-vigilant "safety police." I know that I, personally, haven't uttered this phrase in at least a week ...

But this type of nostalgia also comes with a downside, as "back in my day" the general public wasn't overly worried about depleted natural resources or pollution, a mind-set of which many of us are beginning to see the real-world ramifications. To be clear, this is not some overly ambitious environmental rant: This is the RV industry we're talking about, after all, and though steps have been taken to reduce the carbon footprint (the sum of the emissions of carbon dioxide) of recreational vehicles, we're still an awfully long way from those numbers reaching zero; in fact, they possibly never will.

No, this is more of a recognition of what some manufacturers — RV and otherwise — are doing currently to reduce the impact we have on the environment.

This month's test is a good example of such new, forward thinking. The tow vehicle is indeed a Porsche — not exactly "green" in the eyes of most. But the Cayenne we tested employs hybrid technology designed to burn less fuel (when not under load) and get better mileage in an effort to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The Cayenne is paired with the Element, a new travel trailer designed to be the most eco-friendly RV available. EverGreen has ensured that all components of the trailer are recyclable, composite material; no wood is used at all. True, the use of composite materials in RVs is becoming more and more common, but the Element is the first to go all-in. This not only reduces the trailer's environmental impact, but should help with longevity down the road.

Another way RVers are lightening their loads is by replacing their trailer's lighting with LEDs. Employing LEDs is a great way to get longer-lasting and more efficient illumination — meaning less drain on the battery. Check out Restoring an Old Friend XII on page 48 for more.

Even replacing your old TV/DVD player, as we do in "Now Playing" on page 52, can help reduce the power drain of older entertainment devices, with the added benefit of vastly improved audio/video quality.

We all know that RVs will always have some effect on the environment; they are vehicles, after all. But if we continue to support products that take pride in lessening the impact on Mother Nature, we can enjoy the great outdoors we hold so highly in regard for many years to come. 🚐

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User Guide

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# LETTERS

from our Readers

“There are few times when I am so inspired after reading about a product to actually contact the company to purchase it, but that is what happened.”



## PARADOX AT LAKE LOUISE

My wife and I were recently camping in Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada. The sites



there are arranged so that two units park parallel to each other, each with the door facing away from the other and towards an electrical plug and picnic table. While there, we came across this delightful tandem site where one occupant was a Tab trailer from Switzerland, and the other a large North American A-Bus. What a great juxtaposition of minimalist to luxury camping! We thought your readers might enjoy the photo.

**John and Suzanne Falconer,**  
Kelowna, B.C., Canada

## CALIFORNIA RV SHOW

I got a kick out of your September issue in the *Around the Bend* section about the California RV Show. It has the picture of Komfort's Pacific Ridge, which was only manufactured for a few months before it was taken over by Dutchmen and production was stopped. I was one of the first proud owners of one of these trailers and found out five months later they were no longer manufactured. It is a great trailer, and I was sorry to see the trailer was no longer made.

**Chris Smith,** Highland, California

To contribute to this column, write to 2575 Vista Del Mar, Ventura, CA 93001, or e-mail [info@trailerlife.com](mailto:info@trailerlife.com).

## POP-UP CAMPERS

I've enjoyed *Trailer Life* for many years. I own a Coleman pop-up camper and would like to see an article covering pop-up campers. Thanks for your consideration.

**Jerry Rambo,** Via email

## MAGELLAN'S ROADMATE PRO 9165T

Great article in the September issue about Magellan's new GPS. There are few times when I am so inspired after reading about a product to actually contact the company to purchase it, but that is what happened. Even though I own and use another company's GPS system, I was ready to dust off the old credit card and actually purchase the new Magellan's GPS online. I can see that this thing actually has the potential to prevent a divorce. Unfortunately, I saw no

reference to the product on Magellan's website, and when I contacted the company via its 800 number, the representative told me that the 9165 was not available yet. Do your sources have any more specific information? Thanks and keep up the good work!

**Tom Sangrey,**  
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

**Editor's note:** We are excited that you are excited about this new product. It has a 7-inch screen and includes all the listings from the *Trailer Life Directory*. It also enables you to isolate just Good Sam Parks, which makes it really easy when RVing. It is currently available, and you won't have any problems finding it at the Travel Store at [www.trailerlifedirectory.com](http://www.trailerlifedirectory.com). 📱

## SNOOK'S NOOK



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# AROUND

## THE BEND

NEWS • EVENTS • PEOPLE • PLACES • PARKS & RV TRENDS

Edited by **Marleen Canniff**

### STARTING WITH ONE

Winnebago has been busy this year. First it re-entered the towable market by reinvigorating SunnyBrook Sunset Creek travel trailer products, and now the company is introducing its first Winnebago brand travel trailer since 1983. Branding this line as Winnebago ONE is quite fitting, as it represents the first in a series of products that will be launched under the Winnebago brand name, and it represents features that are industry firsts for a towable product. Unique features on the Winnebago ONE include standard laminated high-gloss gelcoated fiberglass exteriors, a residential-style sectional sofa, a hide-away computer table, interior and exterior convenience centers, radius interior ceilings and memory-foam



mattresses. This all-aluminum framed travel trailer line is available in four floorplans ranging from 26 feet to 34 feet in length with a base msrp beginning at \$22,000.

**For more information**, contact Winnebago Industries Towables at (574)825-5250 or visit [www.winnebagoind.com](http://www.winnebagoind.com).

### CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH NATURE

A true haven for the outdoor enthusiast is a place that connects people with nature, and that's exactly what the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, in Clermont, Kentucky, is all about. It all started back in 1867, when 18-year-old German immigrant Isaac W. Bernheim came to this country with just \$4 in his pocket. He was unable to earn a living back east, and so he moved near relatives in Kentucky and became a highly successful bourbon distiller. In 1929, grateful to the people of Kentucky who had helped him along the way, he founded and

endowed Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, woodlands, prairies and wetlands that now span more than 14,600 acres about 25 miles south of Louisville.

Bernheim wrote that he intended it to be "a natural park with a profusion of things that gladden the soul and please the sight, with no pistols, rifles or shotguns, no discussion of religion or politics, a sanctuary where people may enjoy the values of forest and field." The 600-acre arboretum grows more than 8,000 varieties of trees, shrubs and perennials, and includes

a magnificent grove of more than 300 types of holly trees. Two thousand acres of natural area are open to the public and include lakes, picnic areas and more than 35 miles of hiking trails. The rest of the property is used for research and preservation. The nationally recognized facility, which includes an "eco-friendly" visitor center with a café and extensive gift shop, also offers a variety of informal visitor programs, field trips, tours and hikes.

**For information call** (502) 955-8512 or visit [www.bernheim.org](http://www.bernheim.org). — *Pamela Selbert*

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## HONORING THE TROOPS

It started out as Keystone RV's Outback RV 280RS, and now it's the mobile studio of sculptor Michael Jernigan during his Honoring the Troops Tour. Jernigan, who is a veteran himself, plans to spend the next two years making bronze sculptures of 21 Iraq and Afghanistan War veterans in this mobile studio, a project that's scheduled to be completed in fall of 2013. The entire project will cost about a half-million dollars, money he expects to raise along the way through donations from others who also honor our troops. Keystone donated the Outback to Jernigan for the duration of the project, and Sharpline donated the custom graphics and design. A national exhibit tour will display the sculptures, after which each will be given to the persons they depict.

**For more information,** call (850) 877-4332, or visit [htms.com](http://htms.com). You can follow Jernigan on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/htms](http://www.twitter.com/htms) as he travels across the country in this special Keystone RV to honor the troops.

## LAKE PLEASANT, ARIZONA

Fifteen miles west of I-17, off state Route 74 is Arizona's Lake Pleasant, a 10,000-acre recreational lake that offers activities for many interests — especially those of the RVer. There you'll find 97 developed sites with hookups plus fishing, swimming, hiking, wildlife viewing and a nature center. Special programs include exploring ancient sites and petroglyphs, as well as lessons in kayaking and scuba diving. The lake has a marina, picnic area, restaurant, boat rentals and store, as well as plenty of parking for the largest RVs. A park host volunteer program is established for visitors wishing to stay for an extended period. **To learn more,** call (602) 372-7460 or visit [www.maricopa.gov/parks/lake\\_pleasant](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/lake_pleasant). — *Joseph & Carol Berke*



## A WISH TO GO RVING

After making a wish to fully experience an RV vacation, 10-year-old Eric, from Alberta, is getting his dream fulfilled. Go RVing Canada donated a complete RV vacation to Make-A-Wish Canada, which included a fully stocked Class C RV with enough food, drink, fuel and campsite bookings for his trip. Go RVing representatives assisted Eric and his family in planning this exciting five-day RV adventure through Alberta, which began in Drumheller, the Dinosaur Capital of the World, and continued into Banff and Lake Louise with hiking trails, unique hot springs, and glacier expeditions on the list of activities.

**For more information,** visit [www.gorving.ca](http://www.gorving.ca).



## NEWSWIRE

### The U.S. Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency

— along with other companies and government officials — have come to a historic agreement with 13 major automakers to pursue the next phase in the Administration's national vehicle program, which will increase fuel economy to 54.5 miles per gallon for cars and light-duty trucks by model year 2025. The administration also began discussions about fuel-efficiency and greenhouse gas pollution standards for heavy-duty vehicles, which could potentially save Americans who operate and own these vehicles approximately \$50 billion in fuel costs over the life of the program ... **Adventure Weekends West** is a new app that's available through iTunes that covers 99 great adventure getaways

of widely varying ilk in California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Alaska and Baja. They're fun to read and browse through — even if you live far away — and a slide show, videos, nuts & bolts info, and a map accompany each write-up. Each one is a weekend-length adventure within a few hours' drive of pretty much anywhere in the West. They just might spur some vacation plans ... **BrakeBuddy by Hopkins Manufacturing Corporation** is celebrating 15 years of portable towed vehicle braking that has evolved from the first portable "brake-in-the-box" designed to apply the brakes in a towed vehicle to the new BrakeBuddy Vantage Select, a modern



sophisticated portable braking system that allows you to choose between full and proportional braking at the touch of a button. To see the 15 years of innovations from BrakeBuddy or to learn more about these products, visit [www.brakebuddy.com](http://www.brakebuddy.com) ... **MOR/ryde recently went live** with its newly revamped website that assists retail customers who might want an aftermarket product like a TV mount, pin box or even an owner's manual for any MOR/ryde product and serves OEMs looking for specialty or suspension products, fabrication capabilities or chassis services. The website also features a dealer locator that directs aftermarket customers to the nearest dealer in their area. Check it out at [www.morryde.com](http://www.morryde.com). 🗨



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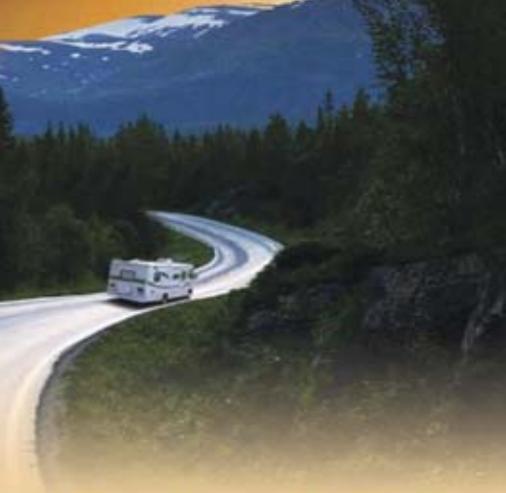


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## Views from the Road

Al Luehmann and his wife, Mary, are committed RVers from the North Star State of Minnesota. When they're away from home, Al and Mary enjoy our country's beautiful landscape in their 2007 Itasca Horizon motorhome, spending the winter months in Casa Grande, Arizona.

Al describes his time on the road as "a way of life after you retire. I have a whole new set of friends from around the country – we've become a family."

Even when traveling, he enjoys the comforts of home, including live TV. Al chose DISH Network to bring TV to his RV because of the unique service benefits.

"The ability to deactivate it whenever we aren't using the motorhome is a terrific feature. Plus, the rate was better than the competition, and we can get high definition free. I would highly recommend DISH Network service."

And what does he watch most when on the road? "Sports – the (Minnesota) Vikings and Wild, and my wife is a Jimmie Johnson (NASCAR) fan."

So what's next for Al and Mary? "Nova Scotia – beautiful country – and Yosemite."

Happy travels.



Al and Mary traveling the country



## RV ACTION LINE

### NO BRAKES, NO PROBLEM?

After deeming the braking performance on his new trailer unacceptable, a reader was denied assistance because the manufacturer apparently found no problem with the brakes. He requested that *RV Action Line* intervene.

I purchased a new Heartland Big Country 3450TS from Reichart's Camping Center in March 2010. I had the trailer back to the Reichart shop a few times because the brakes never worked right from the day I picked it up. The technicians there said nothing was wrong with the brakes even though I couldn't get them to work properly – even at 5 to 10 mph in the parking lot. The techs hooked the trailer up to their company truck, and it didn't perform any differently for them.

I later took the trailer in for Pennsylvania state inspection in April 2011, at which time I was told the brake magnets and drums needed to be replaced. Since there was obviously something wrong with the brakes, as I had previously pointed out, I thought Lippert (the component manufacturer) or Heartland would make it right. The trailer was only towed about 3,000 miles on mostly interstate highways. Neither company was willing to help out, so I ended up spending \$910.34 to make the repairs.

I feel as though the problem should have been fixed the first time around. Can you help?

**Michael J. Dohm**, York, Pennsylvania

We can only imagine how frustrated Dohm must have been. He recognized a problem right away and was basically told that his suspicions were unfounded. In hindsight, perhaps he could have demanded the tech's "OK" in writing, or even refused to

leave until the problem was addressed.

Whatever did transpire, we have to side with Dohm in this case and feel that either the vehicle or component manufacturer should accept responsibility and reimburse the customer. So, we sent the message along to Heartland.

The company responded:

Michael Dohm purchased a 2011 Heartland Big Country 3450TS on March 19, 2010, from Reichert's Camping Center. The warranty expired on this product a year later.

We received the parts in question back from the dealership. We had Lippert Components come and pick up the parts for testing, so the cause of the brake concern could be determined. Lippert's analysis showed there were no defects present on the parts returned. Given all of the unknowns in this situation, Heartland offered to cover half of Dohm's bill as a goodwill gesture, totaling \$455.17. Dohm has agreed to this resolution.

**James Fenner**,

Customer Service Manager,  
Heartland Recreational Vehicles LLC

### LEFT OUT OF THE COLD

When a refrigerator manufacturer denied his request for reimbursement, a reader looked to us for help:

The refrigerator in my 2000 Fleetwood Storm stopped getting cold, so I took it in to be repaired. The technicians determined it had a bad cooling unit, so it was replaced at the cost of \$994.18.

This year, I was reading *Highways* magazine and found out the old refrigerator was part of a Dometic recall campaign, and I submitted the appropriate paperwork. My claim was denied, stating the replacement was made outside of the recall window (later than March 1, 2007).

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### RV ACTION LINE

However, there was never any notification until at least two years after the repair took place. Where do we go from here?

**James Ziegler**, Escondido, California

Although retroactive reimbursement is done from time to time, it's often a difficult process. However, Ziegler had retained his repair records (an extremely wise move), so we passed along the info to Dometic. Ziegler's case didn't end in his favor, but Dometic's response features some language about specific reimbursement parameters that many may find useful. Ziegler's refrigerator was in fact affected, but the component failure itself was not related to the "safety" recall campaign. Here's the response:

We are in receipt of your letter and Mr. James Ziegler's letter regarding his Dometic Model RM2652 refrigerator, and his questions regarding the Dometic refrigerator recall program.

Dometic provides refrigerators using what is called "absorption technology" for recreational vehicles. These refrigerators differ from standard home refrigerators in that they cool by using either a propane flame or electric heating element, in conjunction with a coolant solution, to extract heat from the refrigerator's food storage compartment.

In response to a potential safety-related problem, Dometic initiated a recall in compliance with applicable federal regulations. A secondary burner housing, when retrofitted to affected refrigerators at Dometic's expense, resolves the identified safety problem. The secondary burner housing created by Dometic has resolved the safety issue with respect to any affected refrigerators.

Dometic is not replacing cooling units or refrigerators under the recall program. If a unit fails and is within Dometic's original manufacturer's warranty, it is covered as part of the normal warranty repair. However, no product lasts forever, and if the unit is beyond the standard warranty and the consumer has elected not to purchase an extended warranty or the extended warranty has expired, then all repairs for any failures would be the responsibility of the consumer. Based on



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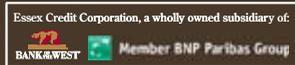
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## RV ACTION LINE

the information provided, Mr. Ziegler's refrigerator was not covered by any warranty when it failed.

Also, an owner of a vehicle with a recalled refrigerator who incurred cost before this recall to remedy this safety issue is possibly entitled to reimbursement through the pre-notification reimbursement program providing they meet specific criteria and date parameters. Mr. Ziegler was denied reimbursement due to his repair occurring later than the program parameters.

No product lasts forever without needing some repair service, and some percentage of all mass-produced products require repair service in their first year of use, second year of use, and so on. For this reason, many manufacturers establish warranties to provide their customers free remedies for problems that the manufacturer considers early enough to be "premature." For refrigerators purchased prior to July 2009, Dometic warranted to

its customers that it would treat a failure of its refrigerators, such as leakage in the coolant system, to be premature if it were to occur within three years of purchase by the original retail customer; that is, Dometic provided its customers a three-full-year warranty.

If we have misunderstood the facts, please advise us and provide relevant documentation. Again, however, based on the information provided, Mr. Ziegler's refrigerator functioned throughout the warranty period and Dometic will not provide reimbursement.

**Barb Wagner,**  
Recall Department,  
Dometic LLC

After exhausting all other resources without success, please forward information (typewritten only) with copies of appropriate bills and correspondence to *RV Action Line*, 2575 Vista Del Mar, Ventura, CA 93001. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. No phone calls, please.

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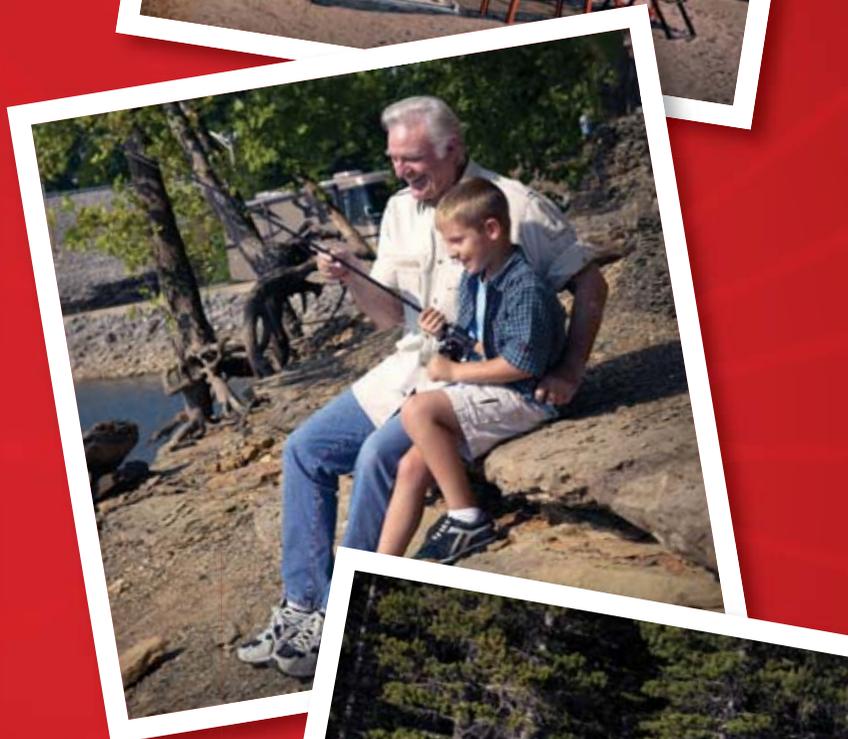
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## THE OUTSIDER

by **Bruce Leonard Jr.**



### A SECOND LOOK

**SETTLING IN THIS TIME NOT IN THE BACK OF THE TRUCK THAT I HAD LONG AGO SOLD BUT IN A CAMPSITE IN STORRIE LAKE STATE PARK.**

**W**hile heading home many years ago during an eight-week excursion through a significant portion of the Western United States, my F-150 started knocking. The incessant rhythm increased in volume as I traversed New Mexico's wide-open spaces, then the knocking transmogrified into bucking. Instead of pulling over so that someday an Auto Club tow truck might reach me, I prodded and urged my truck into Las Vegas, the one in the Land of Enchantment, not the neon-bedecked one in the Silver State. Having arrived at dusk, too late to track down a mechanic, I spent the night in the Walmart parking lot, then woke up hopeful that my truck and I would soon be on our way.

Oh, what a fickle beast hope can be.

After finding two auto shops closed and another too busy to lift my truck's hood, I limped my Ford into a shop that shall remain nameless, though certainly not blameless (don't worry — you won't wander into this establishment. Trust me). Although I could likely write a 15-minute stand-up comedy routine about the false starts, misdiagnoses, blank stares, curses uttered, threats muttered, sleep lost and blood boiled that pervaded the next six days, I will suffice to say that the two mechanics (I use that appellation sarcastically) looked at my F-150, a vehicle that has been the country's biggest seller for decades, as though it were an alien spacecraft. I don't know much about engines, but I was fairly certain that the taillights had nothing to do with the engine's knocking. The mechanics were less certain. So as not to find myself inside a jail cell, I thought it best to step away.

As I wandered the streets of this other Las Vegas, I found the town to be fascinating. Its history is rich and complex, and the architecture is so significant that 900 of the town's buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Due in part to its location along the Santa Fe Trail, Las Vegas thrived to such an extent that by 1900, it had become the largest city in New Mexico. Doc Holliday owned a bar in town, and Billy the Kid and the notorious James brothers frequented its watering holes, helping to grant Las Vegas the reputation as the toughest town in the West.

And yet throughout my incarceration — um, extended stay — I was unable to appreciate the charms of this town as I might have had my truck not been held hostage. The ransom I had to pay to retrieve my vehicle soured my memories of Las Vegas, New Mexico, all the way home (the mechanics determined that a bent valve was the source of the truck's problems).

Years later, I chose to revisit Las Vegas. Settling in this time not in the back of the truck that I had long ago sold but in a campsite in Storrie Lake State Park, I was determined to erase the anger-tinged images from my first visit. The park sits about six miles from downtown and features full-hookup sites — some that include a shelter, picnic table and fire pit — and other undeveloped sites along the lakeshore.

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## THE OUTSIDER

This visit, after buying a fishing license, I was knee deep in Storrie Lake as the sun set. I repeatedly splashed a lure, hoping to catch a rainbow or German brown trout or even a crappie, but not really caring. The prevalent afternoon breezes make Storrie Lake popular among windsurfers, and waterskiing is allowed. That August night the lake was peacefully, pleasantly all mine, and I had absolutely no reason to dislike Las Vegas, New Mexico.

During my travels I had purchased a small backpacking tent, and so I decided to set it up next to the shelter in my site, thinking I might give the tent a test run that night. I then set out on my bike to explore the town, free of the taint of mechanical breakdown.

I rode through the picturesque Old Town Plaza, down residential streets filled with gorgeous, well-preserved homes, many of them built in the 1890s, then past the public library, an example of Neoclassical Revival architecture. I parked the bike and toured the City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial Collection on Grand Avenue. Then I rode past Lincoln Park, where Teddy Roosevelt and his fellow Rough Riders camped in 1899, during the first reunion of the Spanish-American War. When I rode by the auto-repair shop in which I had spent far too much time, I laughed because the shop had gone belly up.

Then suddenly the blue sky blackened ominously, a gale whipped up, and a downpour hit me only minutes into my race back to camp. I put my head down and pedaled with everything I had, arriving at camp long before the lightning did. The tent I had considered sleeping in had been flattened, sprawled under two inches of muddy water.

I dried off and settled in the RV. The storm passed, and Storrie Lake reflected the promise of tomorrow. New, exciting Las Vegas memories had usurped the previous ones. And I was grateful I didn't have to sleep on the ground. ☺

**New Mexico State Parks**, (888) 667-2757, [www.emnrd.state.nm.us/PRD/storrie\\_lake.htm](http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/PRD/storrie_lake.htm).

**Las Vegas/San Miguel Chamber of Commerce**, (800) 832-5947, [www.lasvegasnewmexico.com](http://www.lasvegasnewmexico.com).

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2A28

# CAPITOL REEF

by **Len Cousineau**

**T**he beauty is undeniable and the solitude almost certain. The 241,904 acres that make up Utah's Capitol Reef National Park practically define "off the beaten path." The nearest traffic light is 78 miles away. But despite the remoteness of Capitol Reef, the park's defining aspect — a geologic feature known as the Waterpocket Fold — is spectacular enough to draw 700,000 visitors annually. An extremely colorful section of the Fold that resembles capitol-like domes grants Capitol Reef its name. Yet whether travelers appreciate the geologic significance of one of the country's best-exposed monoclines or simply admire the colorful, weathered formations of Navajo sandstone, they will likely revel in the park's untrammeled terrain.

Travelers who begin their Capitol Reef visit in Bryce Canyon National Park will experience an abundance of spectacular scenery by driving Utah 12 over Boulder Mountain to Utah 24, then to Capitol Reef's west entrance. From the east, travelers should take I-70 to Utah 24.

Once in the park, visitors intending to spend only one day in Capitol Reef should explore the Fremont River and the Scenic Drive. Depending on the number of stops, plan to spend at least half a day driving the Scenic Drive's 25 miles, a combination of paved and dirt surfaces, ooohing-and-ahhing at the scenery and taking the short walks that lead to Goosenecks Overlook of Sulphur Creek and to Sunset Point, which provides perhaps the best perspective of the Capitol Reef section of the Waterpocket Fold. Travelers with high-clearance, four-wheel-drive vehicles may want to explore

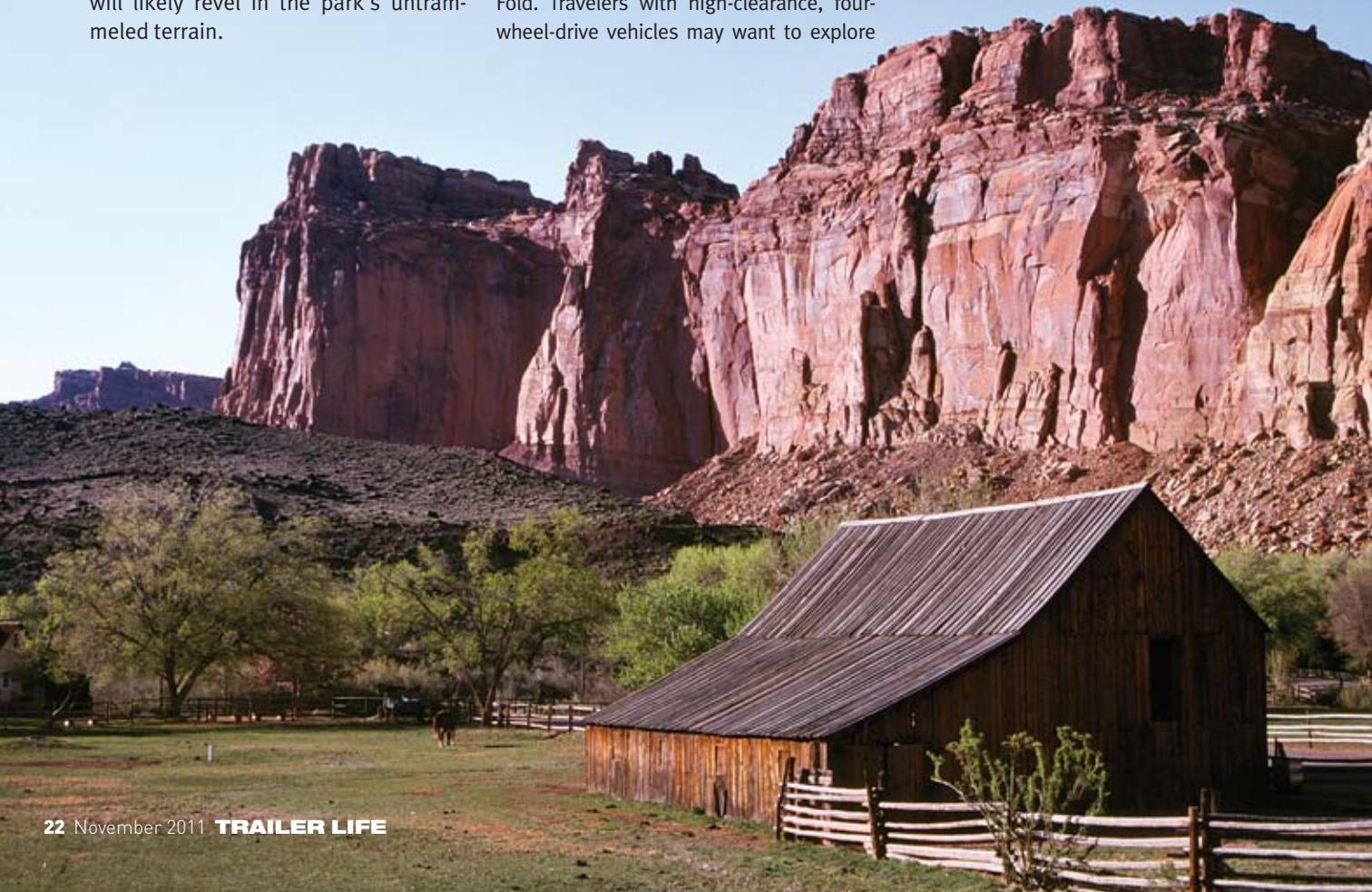
the 60-mile Cathedral Valley Loop, and visitors not pressed for time may choose to drive the 125-mile Burr Trail Loop. You can check road conditions at the visitor center.

Ambitious hikers may want to explore the 3½-mile Chimney Rock loop trail, which begins with a steep climb. Off the winding, two-mile spur road at the south end of the Scenic Drive, hikers may want to stroll the easy one-mile trail that leads to a natural water pocket.

The campground at Fruita accommodates RVs, though it has no hookups. It's open year-round with a 14-day limit. Spring and fall deliver the best hiking, but the park is beautiful throughout the year. 🚐

---

**Capitol Reef National Park**, (435) 425-3791, [www.nps.gov/care](http://www.nps.gov/care).



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# Badlands to Grasslands

## RVing through North Dakota's scenic wonders

story and photos by  
John Christopher Fine

John Warren on his horse Dancer, doing what he came to North Dakota to do — push cows and be a cowboy.

**S**prawling wheat fields and endless rows of yellow sunflowers follow the sun in this American heartland, while the Turtle Mountains provide a perfect setting with forests and lakes. The state lies within a 70,704-square-mile area, and its population is almost 647,000 people. From its vast grasslands to forests to badlands, North Dakota is made for RVs.

At the north-central tip of the state, when the GPS aboard your RV reads 49 degrees north and about 100 degrees west, you are in the International Peace Garden. It's just about in the geographical center of North America, straddling the U.S.-Canadian border on the 49th Parallel. Here, "you are in a sanctuary — not in Canada, not in the United States. When you leave you can choose to go to either country," Doug Hevenor said.

Doug is the CEO for the almost 2,400-acre park incorporated in 1932 as a private nonprofit organization. It was the vision of a British-born, Kew Garden's horticulturist,

Dr. Henry J. Moore, to create a garden that commemorated the friendship between the people of the United States and Canada dedicated to international peace.

"There are 180,000 summer annuals planted in the garden that have to coexist with 2,000 white-tail deer," Hevenor said. Not only is the Peace Garden pet-friendly, dogs are welcome and the usual rules to keep them on a leash are relaxed as long as they are well behaved and everyone cleans up after their pets. "We use something called Hinder, a commercial deer repellent made from the urine of male coyotes to spray on areas where the deer are browsing in the annuals," Doug smiled.

The formal gardens with running water courses lead to 120-foot-tall peace towers. It is not uncommon for visitors to see a moose walking through a reflecting pond or to see elk in the park in winter.

Two lakes — one natural and one man-made — offer opportunities to fish, kayak or



canoe. "It takes about an hour-and-a-quarter to leisurely paddle around the borders of Lake Stormon. Yesterday I saw four beaver kits, muskrat, deer, ducks and pelicans," Doug said. Campers can meander down to the water to swim or fish.

The Peace Garden has hosted many RV events. Doug and his staff will tailor special programs for groups including banquets, dances, entertainment and events.

He gives one caveat. "If you are going to get married in the Peace Chapel, you have to be sure the clergyman or Justice of the Peace stands on the right side or it won't be valid," Doug joked. The non-denominational chapel straddles the border.

Four massive concrete peace towers symbolize peace throughout all four corners of the Earth. The international border is marked by cairns to the east and west sides of the Peace Garden. The area campgrounds provide a camp host and offer all amenities including water and electric (15- to 20-amp) hookups, drinking water, showers, restrooms, telephones and free firewood, with ample areas for overflow camping with playgrounds for kids. Every site has a picnic table and fire pit.

After enjoying the Peace Garden, take highway 43 west to Lake Metigoshe State Park. Being out on the lake or at a site on the water is the best way to enjoy the magic of a sunset. Fish, canoe, motorboat or meander through trails that offer hiking in spring, summer and fall and cross-country skiing and snow shoeing in winter.

Lake Metigoshe State Park covers 1,200 acres of mostly undeveloped land. "We have sloughs and natural lakes in the park with no agricultural runoff. Most of it is undeveloped. We're seeing the same thing fur trappers saw 200 years ago," Larry Hegen, the Park Manager said.

"In summer the sun comes up at 4 a.m. and goes down at 10:30 p.m. There is still a glow late into the night. Winter days are short, but there are 350 miles of groomed snowmobile trails in the Turtle Mountains and we have more than 13 miles of groomed cross-country ski trails in the park.

"The deepest part of the lake is 26 feet. In winter there's ice fishing — good fishing for walleye, bluegill, perch, bullhead and northern pike," Hegen said, letting his aluminum pontoon boat cruise into Oak Shore Bay.

"We allow camping year-round. There are RV campgrounds in the park as well as camping sites."



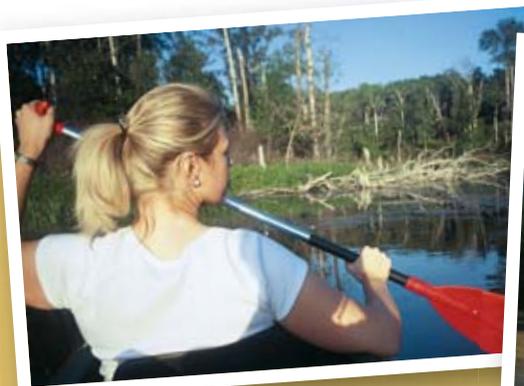
**This re-creator greets visitors from his tent, illustrating times when trappers traded with Indians in the North Dakota territory.**

Plenty of RV campgrounds are in nearby Bottineau. Be sure to take scenic Highway 43 and visit Mystical Horizons, located about four miles northeast of the city. Pillars are erected in such a way that at certain times of the year, especially during the winter solstice, the sun sets directly between grooves in the walls. A sighting tube faces the North Star, the only star on the horizon that doesn't move. A giant sundial in the park is fairly accurate.

Not far away is the Bottineau Winter Park and ski area. There is a chair lift and rope tow for downhill skiing during the winter months. The park has snow machines to ensure good coverage on the slope.

For those with a hankering for freshly baked bread and sweets stop by the Family Bakery and Restaurant on Main Street.

**Paddling to a beaver dam in Lake Metigoshe State Park. The park has both modern and primitive camping, as well as picnicking areas and all kinds of outdoor activities.**





# Only by RV can these natural wonders of North Dakota be explored one piece at a time.

Left: A place devoted to world peace, the formal gardens at International Peace Garden attracts thousands of tourists annually. Below: A guide shows a visitor inside Lewis and Clark's Fort Mandan.

Nearby Carbury Dam Recreation Area offers a free boat launching ramp, fishing dock and several primitive campsites on the lake. A covered picnic area is provided, as are vault toilets, grills, electric hookups and water. There's no formal charge to stay at the site; donations are accepted on a voluntary basis.

West out of Bottineau on Highway 5 then south on 83 leads to Minot. Most folks know Minot from nightly forecasts, when the weatherman describes extreme winter temperatures.

For those who fancy visiting local wineries, the Pointe of View Winery in Burlington, just north of Minot, offers free wine tastings.

Downtown Minot has a very special visitor's center and Scandinavian Heritage Center. The garden is a pleasure with waterfalls; bronze sculptures of Hans Christian Anderson, Leif Erickson, Norwegian ski champions; and large inlaid maps of Nordic lands whose immigrants settled in the area.

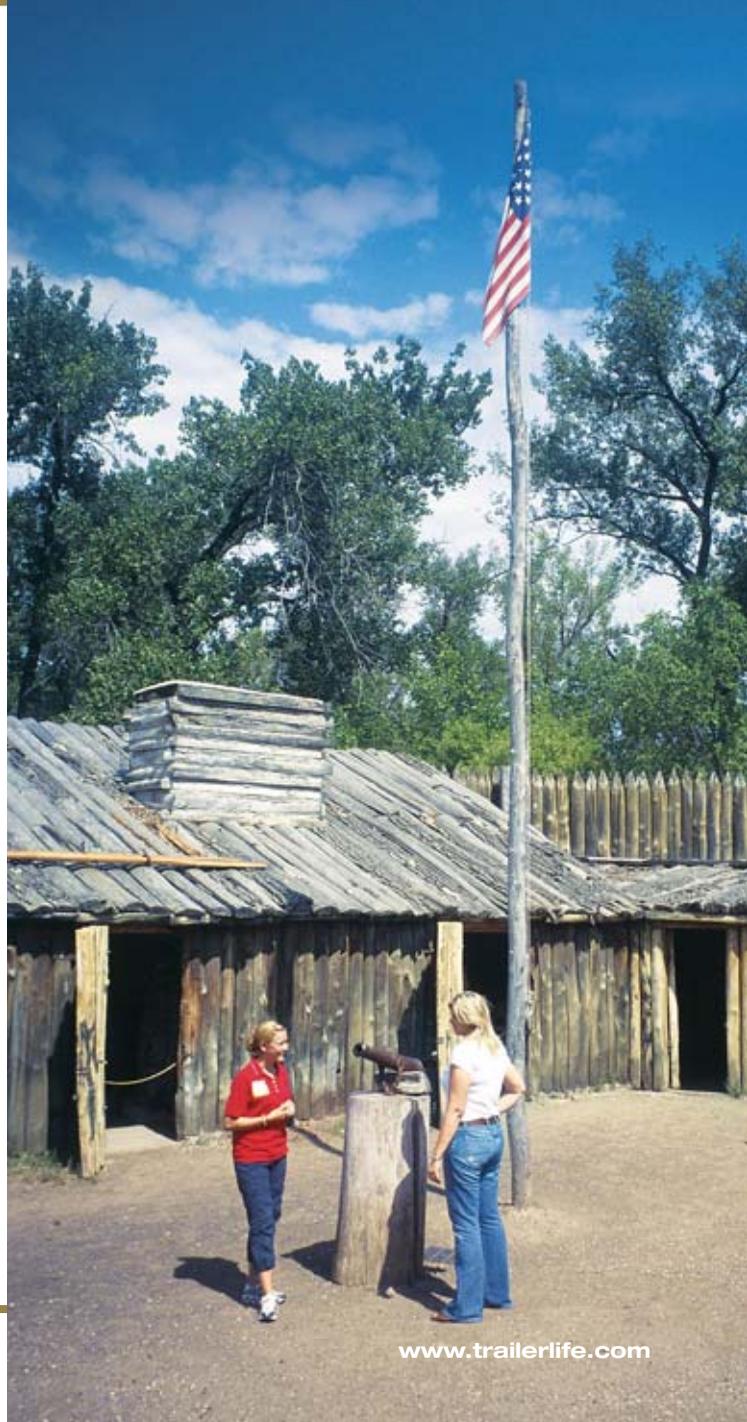
A reproduction of a Scandinavian wood church graces a hill, as does a settler's cottage and typical norseland home. Whatever one would like to know about the area can be discovered in the visitor center.

The Dakota Territory Air Museum, located at the Minot airport, is extraordinary. The museum houses old and restored military and civilian aircraft, vehicles and a collection of rare fire engines once the pride of the Minot Fire Department.

South on Highway 83 then west on 23 leads to New Town on Lake Sakakawea. A tribal museum and casino, boat-launching ramps and overlooks make the area an interesting place to camp. Depending on the season, water in the lake may be low since it is released by the Corps of Engineers to answer demands for barge navigation on the Missouri River and for agriculture.

The fairly new Four Bears Bridge is the way to cross into New Town where Highway 23 leads to Watford City in McKenzie County. A good place to stop to gather information is at the McKenzie County Tourism Bureau. The new million dollar multi-use facility houses a city-owned liquor shop that helps fund the building as well as a historical museum.

McKenzie County comprises a huge area with a population of only 1,200 people. Nevertheless, Watford City has a swimming pool available to the public with a twin tower water slide,





**A rib fest in Watford city brings with it plenty of smoke for the cooks who vie for the title of best ribs in town.**

skateboard park, and a baseball field right in town. There are three RV parks and a city-owned RV park on the eastern edge of Watford City off Highway 23.

Watford City, like many of North Dakota's towns, is a magnet that draws people back and lures new "immigrants" to visit and often to stay.

"I worked at the University of North Dakota in high-school recruitment. I moved back to the ranch I grew up on," Gene Veeder, McKenzie County's executive director of tourism said.

A huge petrified bald cypress stump in the tourism center is proof positive

that the ice age changed the topography. Ancient bison skulls give the impression that the critters that once roamed the region were the size of elephants.

"You find artifacts in the coulees and river beds," Veeder said.

"If you took a family and wanted to drop them down in a place where there was nobody else, this is the place. The country is our strength," Veeder added describing a vast wilderness area that enables hikers, equestrians and bikers to explore barrancas and arroyos, mountains and grasslands that remain as when they were first seen by the pioneers.

John Warren trailered his Missouri Fox Trotter called Dancer from Minnesota to ride the Badlands with legendary outfitter Swede Nelson. John fitted out his Titan 26-foot horse trailer with living quarters so that he could at least be as comfortable as his horse while enjoying wilderness adventure.

"It's a 600-mile trip. I live in Plymouth but keep my horse in Howard Lake, Minnesota. I camped at the Bennett Creek Camp and the CCC Campground. From my standpoint, it is the most undeveloped area I've ever ridden in. There was only one other camper in there and no other horse trailers," John said. He was thrilled that the Badlands National Grasslands and North Unit of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park, unlike any other public access areas in summer, gave him the opportunity to enjoy uncrowded wilderness.

The National Park is split into the North Unit, where bison and wildlife

abound, and the South Unit that originates near Sully's Creek State Park and the town of Medora. This quaint town is where a French nobleman started a cattle empire and built a chateau for his wife. The town bears her name.

The North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame is in Medora and the chateau is open to visitors. Teddy Roosevelt's cabin has been moved behind the park's visitor center and is worth a visit. Sully's Creek State Park has 33 primitive RV and tent sites with horse corrals for those who, like John Warren, bring their own mounts. Canoe and kayakers can get access to the river. Trailheads for the Maah Daah Hey trail and Medora originate here.

When the adventure is done and it's time to hit the trail, Interstate 94 can be picked up out of Medora west into Montana or east to Bismarck, where the Lewis and Clark trail offers insight into the Corps of Discovery's exploration of this vast country.

Only by RV can these natural wonders of North Dakota be explored one piece at a time. Be careful, though — this natural wonderland and the warmth of its friendly people may tempt you. 🚐

## Sources

**International Peace Garden**, (888) 432-6733, [www.peacegarden.com](http://www.peacegarden.com).

**North Dakota Tourism**, (800) 435-5663, [www.ndtourism.com](http://www.ndtourism.com).

**Theodore Roosevelt National Park**, (701) 842-2333 (North Unit), (701) 623-4466 (South Unit), [www.nps.gov/thro](http://www.nps.gov/thro).

# BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN

DISCOVERING UNIQUE  
IMPRESSIONS IN SOUTH  
DAKOTA'S BLACK HILLS  
AND BADLANDS

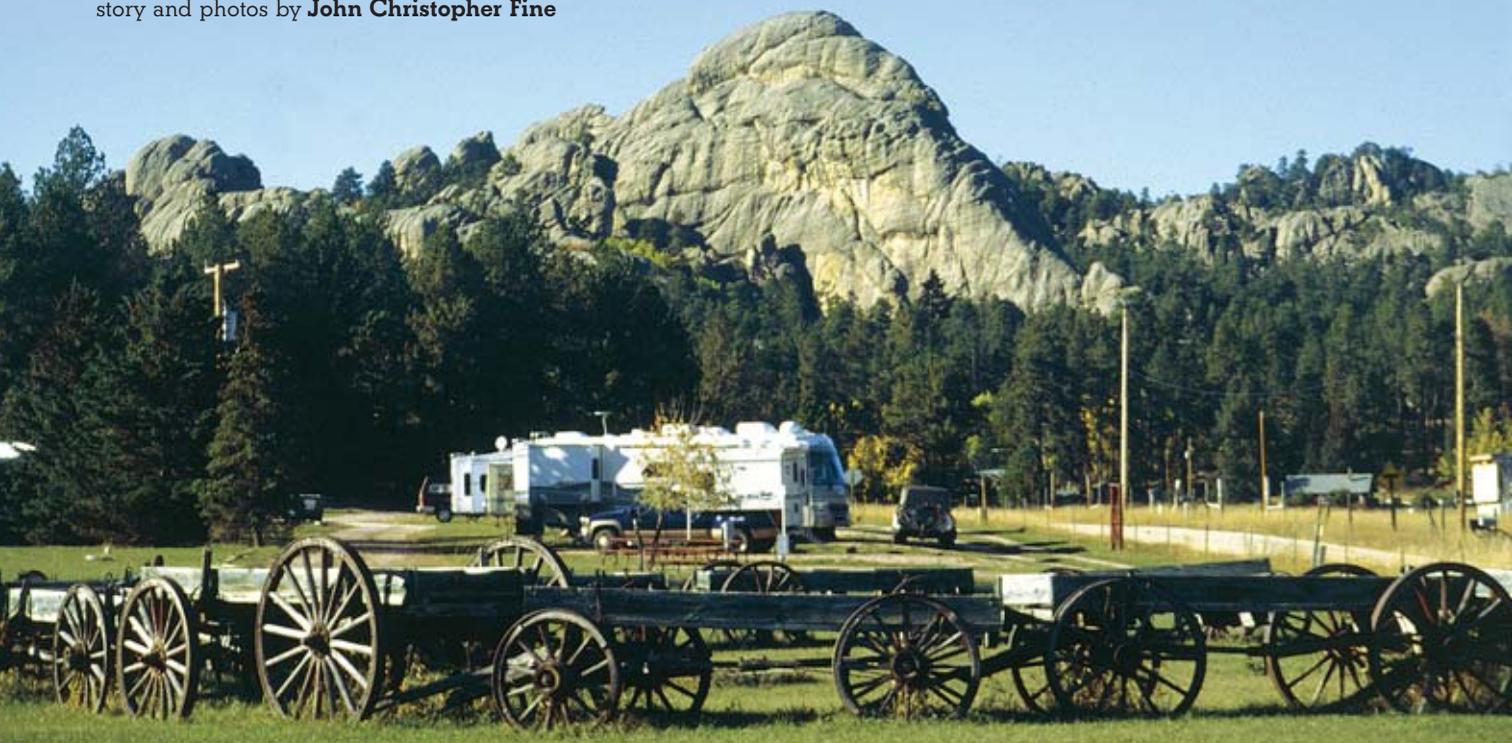
**F**ifty-mile-an-hour gusts of wind drove the fine, gritty, red-ochre powdered dust against my face. I was in a large section repairing barbed wire that had come loose from posts long ago driven into the ground. The wire posts were easy to fix with clips and my fencing tool. Some old wooden stakes that made up sections of the fence were on their last legs, and I had to scour the ground for rusted out U-nails to hammer back.

It was fairly warm. Aspen trees were so yellow they startled the eyes. Up close the glare reflected off the bright leaves and made me squint. I worked around to a line of fence that was put in parallel to the Cheyenne River. I was in beautiful South Dakota. The once flowing waters of the Cheyenne dried up except in places where beavers dammed it and retained pools of water. Drought and salt cedar, an ornamental and invasive plant, sucked the river dry. In fall

these plants are a rust red.

I felt it first as just a little nibbling at my hair. Gentle enough to make me think it was just the wind. I rotated a wire clip and fixed it around the iron stake. There was a little snort, and I knew one of the wild mustangs had gotten curious. I just made a little noise in my throat and continued working, my back still to the critter as I clamped another clip to the wire that had completely fallen off the post at this spot.

story and photos by **John Christopher Fine**



The horse returned a soft nicker and snooted me gently in the back. As I stood up, facing the river, back still to the wild horses, I could see lots of hooves that had come close to inspect what I was doing.

I made noise, jingling my bag of clips and plunked the fencing tool down on a rock. Once a wild horse gets curious they only get more curious if you don't pay attention to them.

The little filly that had been browsing my hair had come around to sniff my feet. Very curious.

I scratched the little horse, first on the neck then down her back. She was a dun color with a dark dorsal stripe down her spine. A Spanish mustang, descended from the original horses conquistadors brought into the Americas during colonization.

"They pick their person," Lucia Roda had told me. Lucia has eight Spanish mustangs and just bought one more little foal. She lives in Pringle, South Dakota, and was one of the people I'd come to the area to see because of her great knowledge and research into these special horses that are on the verge of extinction.

So here I was surrounded by little girls and the only Spanish mustang in the lot had picked me out. I had no treats so it was only by curiosity and friendship the horse sought. The more I scratched it, the more scratches the little horse wanted. Spanish mustangs are small by eastern horse standards but they are smart, sturdy, have stamina and — once they give their trust — very reliable and loyal horses that can carry every bit as heavy a load as larger breeds.

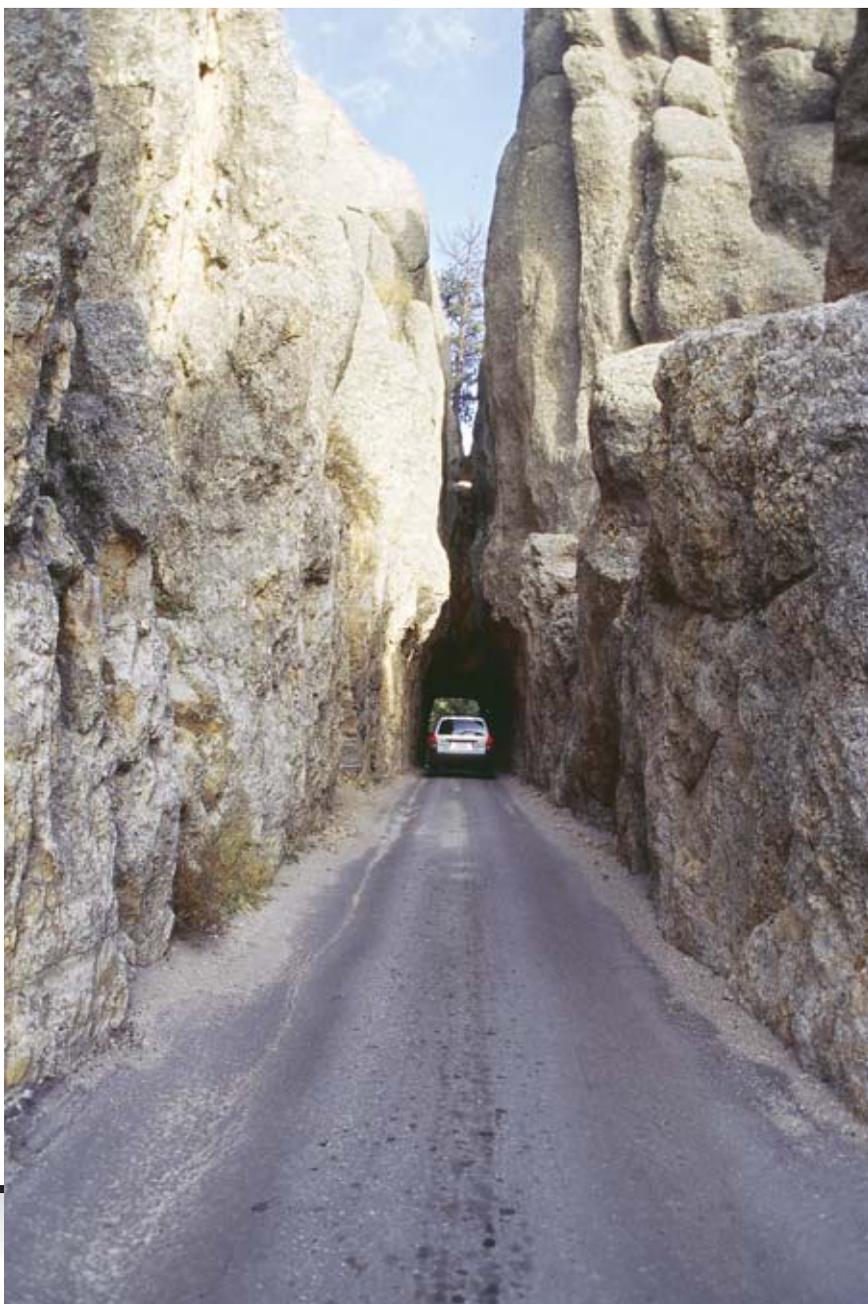
I was volunteering at the Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary again. The place was set on 11,000 acres of land about 12 miles south of Hot Springs, in the Cheyenne River plain with cliffs and valleys that offered stunning geography.

It's like that everywhere in South Dakota. RVers can find workcamping jobs galore. Volunteering helps break the ice and meet people.

When I got back to my Airstream Sovereign, the trailer was full of that fine, gritty dust. Some came in the open, screened windows but the strong winds



**Above:** If you've never seen a bison herd being rounded up, it's quite an exciting scene. **Below:** Oops, don't try this with your RV! Narrow passages and no place to turn around make planning a trip necessary. This tight spot is at the Needle in the Black Hills.



# SOUTH DAKOTA

pushed the fine red powder in through openings that should have been wind-proof but weren't. Nothing is impervious to this gust-blown grit.

After my volunteer stint, I headed out to take in the best the state has to offer.

Only about eight miles away, just outside of Hot Springs on the Highway 18 bypass, is the Mammoth Site. This national natural landmark is where paleontologists excavated 58 Columbian and woolly mammoths' remains. The site is so important that a building has been constructed over it and visitors on walkways can observe work still in progress.

There's no wonder why ancient artifacts, petroglyphs and flint rocks used by ancient peoples can be seen on the sanctuary land: The entire area was once an ocean sea. Clam shells and fossilized sea creatures are easily found in the area. Arrowheads and stone points are often discovered, as are amazing gem stones and petrified trees.

## CUSTER STATE PARK

Fall is an amazing time in South Dakota. I spent time in Custer State Park, a 71,000-acre camping and RV-friendly state facility, during buffalo-roundup time. Cowboys and cowgirls on horseback and park personnel in 4WD trucks gathered for the annual event.

Bison herds in the park number from about 1,200 to 1,500. Each year the wild buffalo are herded into corrals, inoculated, branded and sorted. To keep the range in good condition some of the herd are sold at auction. Bison has become quite popular as a low-cholesterol, low-fat lean meat.

Hundreds of RVers gathered for the fair set up around the event. Most pulled into the Park's eight camping facilities.

Viewing the actual roundup is from behind a fence on a hill. The bison are pushed along a valley for the last run into the corrals. Balconies are set up and there are stands where spectators



Jerry Croft feeds his herd of bison.

can witness the branding and sorting in the buffalo corrals.

Iron Mountain Road and Needles Highway were cut through the mountains. The drive is spectacular and leads

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to Mount Rushmore National Memorial. Caution is the better part of valor and RVers must check height and width requirements before proceeding along these often hairpin turns, into low tunnels and through narrow passages.

Game watching and photography opportunities are everywhere in the parks and along the byways. But be sure to park safely in designated turnouts and walk with caution.

## **CRAZY HORSE MEMORIAL**

A massive monument known as Crazy Horse Memorial is the inspiration of Chief Henry Standing Bear and other Native American chiefs who wrote sculptor Korczak Ziolkowski in 1939. Ziolkowski had worked on Mount Rushmore and received a major prize for a sculpture that brought him to the attention of Standing Bear.

The men collaborated to create a memorial to Chief Crazy Horse. To gather perspective about the size of the memorial, the entire Mount Rushmore carvings could fit in the space taken up by only the face of Crazy Horse.

Korczak began the momentous undertaking when he was 40 years old with only \$174. The sculptor carried his drills and equipment up 741 steps to blast into the mountain.

Crazy Horse Memorial is stunning. The museum houses artifacts that played an important part in American history. Educational programs offer insight into native peoples and traditions.

The mountain carving is proceeding and plans are underway to create a university and medical college on the grounds. The continuing vision of Crazy Horse is now undertaken by Korczak's widow Ruth Ziolkowski and most of the couple's 10 children, along with many volunteers and native peoples from diverse tribes in the Americas. It is a place more to partake of than simply visit. RVers are welcome and adequate parking and campgrounds are nearby.

**To give a sense of proportion and size, the entire carvings of Mount Rushmore would fit in the face of Crazy Horse.**

## **DEADWOOD**

The West was never really won in Deadwood. It remains a pretty wild and woolly place, even today. Although gambling was finally legalized in 1989, federal and state law enforcement only managed to close down the brothels a year later.

The 1876 gold rush and the fabulous finds at the Homestake Gold Mine brought prosperity and notoriety to Deadwood. Casinos have brought it back.

Perhaps Deadwood's primary claim to fame is the site of the murder of Wild Bill Hickok, while he was playing poker at the Number 10 Saloon in 1876. The city bought the six-gun that Hickok was wearing, along with his gun belt, holster and other Hickok memorabilia for \$200,000. The items will go on display in the Adams Museum, an old mansion containing treasures and bits of history that are legends of the West.

Park your tow vehicle and take a tour with Alkali Ike Tours. The bus is parked right on the street near Saloon Number 10, and it is well worth it to learn about Deadwood's history.

The tour takes visitors to the Mount Moriah Cemetery up on a hill overlooking the city. The graves of Hickok and Calamity Jane are next to each other and offer interesting appeal. You'll learn that Calamity Jane was not Wild Bill's lover; though they did travel into Deadwood on the same wagon train, Hickok was only in Deadwood 60 days before he was shot in the back of the head in a saloon.

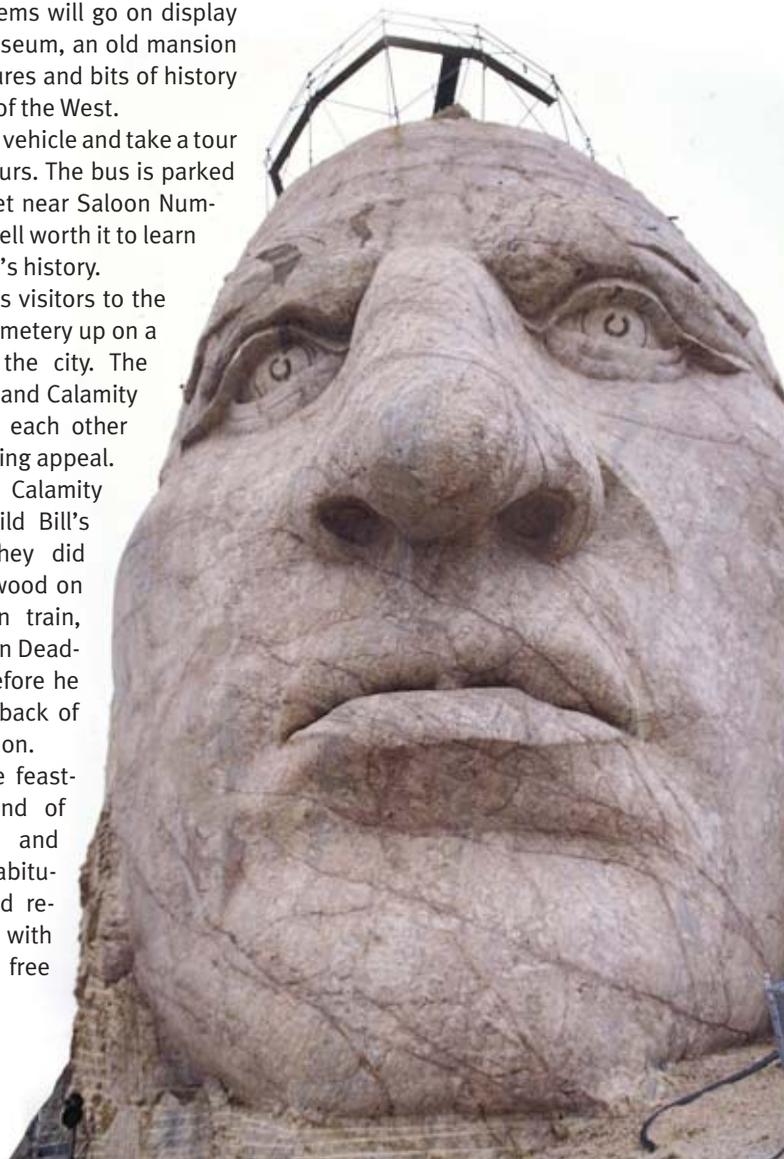
Calamity Jane feasted on the legend of their romance, and since she was habitually drunk, would regale bar patrons with tall tales for free drinks.

Up on a hill outside Deadwood, overlooking the vast Black Hills, is Tatanka, an interpretive center that is more than a museum. It is actor Kevin Costner's vision to create a place where native culture can be absorbed and the importance of bison, in plains Indian culture and lifeways, is explained.

A massive bronze sculpture of a buffalo jump graces the property. The bronze sculptures overlook a knoll and offer dramatic portrayal of the horse culture and hunt on horseback.

## **GATEWAY TO THE BADLANDS**

Naturally, the Badlands are not to be missed. The jumping off point to the Badlands has to be the little city of Wall.

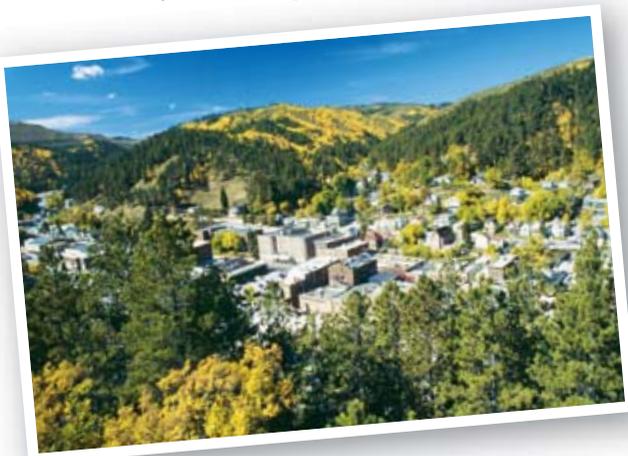


# SOUTH DAKOTA

No visit to the state is complete without a stop at world-famous Wall Drug, built by the Husted family after they rattled into town in the depression years.

Today, there's still free ice water (as the famous roadside signs proclaim)

**Graves of Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane are side by side at Mount Moriah Cemetery, overlooking Deadwood.**



and coffee is five cents. Wall Drug is an oasis with good shopping and plenty to enjoy for the entire family.

Nearby is the Wounded Knee Museum. This interpretive center offers a view into the tragic circumstances of sequestration of native peoples onto reserves and forced enrollment in Indian schools. Native American children were forbidden to speak their language and their culture and traditions were banned.

Drive into the Badlands. Every moment of the day, and with every seasonal change, the colors and textures of the rocks are different. Coyotes yip and howl, deer and hawks, prairie dogs and foxes prowl the arroyos. Occasional bison graze in places where you have to wonder how they got up onto those peaks.

South Dakota's Black Hills and Badlands are amazing in any season. Live the adventure. Meet friendly people who personify industry and Western tradition. Enjoy the culture and heritage of cowboys and Indians. Savor the beauty of the place.

Get back in the saddle again. Ride a mustang up into the mountains. Savor a startling moment at a special overlook. Drive the scenic byways and enjoy this modern place where time stands still. 🐎

**Black Hills Wild Horse Sanctuary,**

(800) 252-6652,  
www.wildmustangs.com.

**Crazy Horse Memorial,** (605) 673-4681,  
www.crazyhorse.org.

**Deadwood Chamber of Commerce,**  
(800) 999-1876, www.deadwood.com.

**South Dakota Tourism,** (800) 872-6190,  
www.travelsd.com.

**Wall Drug Store,** (605) 279-2175,  
www.walldrug.com.

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# CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

AN IMPRESSIVE MIX OF RICH HISTORY, FINE ARCHITECTURE AND ABUNDANT WILDLIFE

**F**rom the bow of the ferry we watched as Cape May, a small hook of land on the southern tip of the Jersey Coast, came into view on the horizon. As the ferry slowly approached land, the black-green stripe underlined with creamy white we had been gazing at became trees and a sand beach, framed on the east and west by a lighthouse and lookout tower.

As we neared the end of this 17-mile, 85-minute boat ride across Delaware Bay from Lewes, Delaware, seagulls came to greet us and the other passengers. The large birds flapped and shrieked overhead, while curious dolphins provided glimpses of shimmering-gray while arcing alongside the RV-

friendly ferry, named the New Jersey. It was a perfect beginning to our visit.

Jay Spurl, president of the New Jersey Campground Owners Association — who runs first-rate Seashore Campsites, the campground we chose and highly recommend — taught us a little Cape May 101 when we checked in.

The cape, he said, had been named by Dutch sea captain Cornelius Mey in 1622, though the first permanent settlement didn't appear until 1685, established by Mayflower descendents, who changed the spelling to "May." Cape May County, which stretches north as far as Great Egg Harbor Inlet, was created seven years later.

Cape May City, now with 4,000 full-

time residents and about 38,000 during peak tourist season, became the country's first seashore resort in 1761, when it was advertised in a Philadelphia newspaper as a refuge here from the heat and disease of cities in the summer.

In 1878 a fire leveled 30 acres of the town, but due to its popularity it was soon rebuilt. Today, with more than 600 imposing Victorian-era buildings (circa 1850-1910), one of the largest concentrations of such buildings in the country, Cape May City is a National Historic Landmark.

Spurl suggested a trolley tour as an "introduction" to the town, its history and architecture. The Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities offers 45-minute tours. MAC was founded 40

These old-style guesthouses were built in the late 1800s in Cape May, America's oldest seaside resort town.



TRAILER LIFE November 2011 33

## CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

years ago to preserve one of the town's finest homes, the Emlen Physick Estate. Tours begin at the Washington Street Mall, where tickets can be purchased.

The elegant 18-room stick-style mansion was built by Dr. Emlen Physick — grandson of Dr. Philip Physick, the “father of American surgery” — and shared by his widowed mother, Frances Ralston, and her sister, Emilie Parmentier. Though Emlen Physick studied medicine, he never practiced, instead living as a gentleman farmer involved in civic affairs and local government.

In the 1960s the house, which had been designed by renowned Philadelphia architect Frank Furness, fell into disrepair and was no longer occupied, so it was slated for demolition when it was bought by the city. The city then leased it to MAC. It has since been restored to its original magnificence, and many of the family's furnishings are on display. The Carriage House, with an exhibit gallery and tearoom, has also been restored, as have the four-acre grounds,

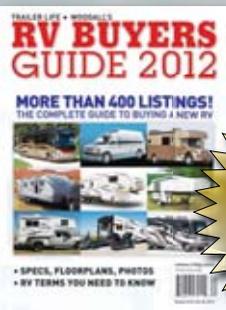


Originally one of America's pioneering colonial ships, the Kalmar Nyckel sets out for a cruise. The World War II fire control tower No. 23 was built as part of the Harbor Defense of the Delaware to watch for submarines and is currently open to the public.

now beautifully landscaped to reflect Victorian opulence. All can be toured.

Betty Wieslawski drives the trolley, which rolls slowly up and down the town's historic streets as her sister, Peggy Zemaitaitis, a tour guide for 20 years, points out such things as the 1846

home built by industrialist Stephen Smith, the richest African-American east of the Mississippi; the 1888 African Methodist Episcopal Church also built by Smith and still active; and dozens of other fine homes, churches and hotels. Among these is the Congress Hotel,



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which reopened after the great fire to the strains of the “Congress Hall March,” written for the occasion and performed by John Phillip Sousa.

Other MAC restorations include the World War II Lookout Tower (Fire Control Tower No. 23) Museum and Memorial and the 1859 Cape May Lighthouse, structures we had seen from the ferry. The tower, built in 1942, was one of 15 towers (four in New Jersey, the rest in Delaware) that were used to spot enemy ships during World War II. Two of New Jersey’s towers are gone and another is enclosed in Cape May’s Grand Hotel.

But No. 23 (on Sunset Boulevard near Cape May Point) is open to the public and visitors are invited to climb the 102 steps to the observation platform at the top. A Wall of Honor on the third level is dedicated to current Cape May residents who served in the U.S. military during the war. Three were there the day of our visit: Navy veterans Harvey Williams and Charles Ellner, and Marshall Howey of the Marine Corps. They graciously answered our questions about their war experiences.

Cape May Lighthouse (in Cape May Point State Park) is the third lighthouse built on the site (the first in 1823) and is one of the oldest continually operating lighthouses in the country. The 157-foot brick tower, with 199 steps to the top, was leased by MAC from the New Jersey State Park Service in 1986 and restored. The lighthouse, listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and state park are among the area’s most popular attractions.

The past comes back to life at Historic Cold Spring Village just north of Cape May City (720 Route 9), a thriving town two centuries ago, and now a living history museum with 26 antique buildings moved here and restored on the wooded 30-acre site. There’s a 19th-century school, blacksmith shop, barn and print shop, also a country store offering handmade items by village artisans, a restaurant and others. More than a dozen historical and other events are held here throughout the year, including antique shows with dozens of exhibitors in July and August.

More than three dozen other historic sites that can be toured are scattered



**Wildwood Beaches are possibly the most beautiful beaches on the Atlantic coastline.**

around Cape May County, including Sea Isle Historical Museum; the 1928 Music Pier, home of the Ocean City Pops Orchestra on the famous Ocean City Boardwalk; the 1815 John Wesley Gandy House Farmstead; and the 1850 Historic Cape May County Courthouse.

A placard on the courthouse lawn explains that the town, originally called Middletown, was settled by Shamgar Hand in 1690. His descendent Daniel Hand was architect and master builder of the courthouse.

Victorian-style Hereford Inlet Lighthouse, built in 1874 is also of special

interest. The lighthouse, one of 19 in New Jersey, was discontinued in 1964 and re-activated 22 years later. It includes gorgeous flower gardens and a museum that offers glimpses into the life of a lighthouse keeper in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Placards explain that every lighthouse has its own “characteristic, a coded sequence of light flashes, and paint-pattern ‘day-mark’ design.”

Cape May draws those who come for the rich history and fine architecture, but the area is equally attractive for its abundant wildlife. At Cape May Point State Park walkways and a deck have



**In 1879, the famous American architect Frank Furness built the Emlen Physick house in Cape May for the wealthy Dr. Physick; it is one of the finest examples of stick-style architecture. You just might feel left out if you don’t dress as a pirate at the annual Pirate Day celebration at Seashore Campsites RV Park.**



## CAPE MAY, NEW JERSEY

been built for wildlife viewing, and signs explain that the Atlantic Flyway is one of the planet's busiest, with millions of birds of more than 300 species navigating its length. There is never a time when no birds are migrating — spring and fall are “just rush hour.”

This is the “raptor capital of North America,” as fall migrations include osprey, sharp-shinned hawks, American kestrels, peregrine falcons, bald eagles and a dozen other raptor species, and during a typical September through November, more than 60,000 of the birds are spotted and recorded.

At 21-acre Stone Harbor Bird Sanctuary, a National Natural Landmark, a trio of self-guided trails — Heron Overlook, Meadow View and Egret Espy — lead to marsh feeding grounds of herons and egrets, as well as a freshwater meadow that's home to ducks, songbirds, great blue herons and night herons. Docent-led Holly Path crosses a maritime forest, en route passing a 300-year-old holly tree atop an ancient sand dune.



**Grassy Sound channel winds through the vast sea grass wetland between the sea islands and the mainland. The picture is from a high bridge over the intracoastal waterway.**

Migrations are not limited to birds: at 490-acre Two Mile Beach Unit of Cape May National Wildlife Refuge — which spans nearly 12,000 acres in non-contiguous sections around the county — placards explain the migration of monarch butterflies. Millions of the little black and amber-hued beauties funnel through Cape May on their 2,000-mile trip to winter quarters in Mexico's Sierra

Madre Mountains. Come spring the butterflies mate, the males die and the females head back to North America, laying eggs on milkweed plants as they go. Then the females die and the next generation continues north.

Jerry Richardson, a volunteer with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, told us the refuge, which also “supports” 317 bird species, 42 mammal species and 55

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reptile and amphibian species, becomes increasingly important as wildlife habitat along the Jersey Shore is lost to development. To protect nesting resident and migratory birds, the beach here is closed to the public from April until September, though a boardwalk to a small observation deck overlooking the beach is open.

But visitors who come to Cape May to swim or sunbathe in these warmer months won't be disappointed, as the county claims 36 more miles of fine ocean-front beach (with seemingly endless rows of houses, condos and motels just west). Except for the five-mile stretch at Wildwood, though, a visit to the beach is not free; elsewhere you pay a small fee — about \$3.50 a day or \$20 for the season — necessary to maintain the beach. In addition to the beaches, Wildwood and Ocean City are famous for miles of wide, antique boardwalks, with shops and fast-food joints lining one side, carnival rides the other.

Cape May offers more: whale and dolphin cruises, kayak tours, salt marsh safaris, deep-sea fishing, a fine zoo, winery, aviation museum, dozens of restaurants (offering the freshest seafood), antiques shops and gift shops, among many others.

Way too soon our visit was over, and it was time to board the ferry for the ride back to Delaware. Standing at the rail, wind roaring in my ears as the boat churned into the bay, I thought of a paraphrase to the dramatic first line in Joaquin Miller's otherwise somewhat maudlin "Columbus" poem: "Behind us lay the Jersey Shore." 📱

## IF YOU GO

For information about Cape May City and Cape May County attractions, or Jersey Cape campgrounds (there are more than two dozen) contact the Cape May County Department of Tourism, (800) 227-2297, [www.thejerseycape.com](http://www.thejerseycape.com).

For information about MAC, contact the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities, (800) 275-4278, [www.capemaymac.org](http://www.capemaymac.org).

For information about camping and reservations, contact Seashore Campsites, (800) 313-2267, [www.seashorecampsites.com](http://www.seashorecampsites.com). The campground, open between April 15 and October 31, offers 600 sites, 97 with water, electricity and sewer; 146 with electricity and water. Prices vary according to season.

For ferry information or to make reservations, contact Cape May-Lewes Ferry, (800) 643-3779, [www.CMLF.com](http://www.CMLF.com). The ferry runs daily year-round. Number of daily trips varies according to season. The ferry is "RV friendly," and can accommodate RVs up to 60 feet long. Prices one-way range from \$34 for 20- to 25-foot vehicles November-March, to \$113 for 60-foot vehicles in Peak Season, Memorial Day-Labor Day.

Maps showing locations of various historic sites are available from the Cape May County Department of Tourism (800) 227-2297, [www.thejerseycape.com](http://www.thejerseycape.com).



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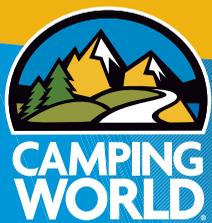


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Sheboygan harbor and park.

# THE INLAND SEACOAST

Wisconsin's Highway 32 offers an RVer's bonanza of activities

by **Martin Hintz**

The sun rises over Lake Michigan like a rocket blast from Milwaukee's Bradford Beach. First a bit of pink lies low on the eastern horizon, then a glimmer painting the horizon's clouds and finally the full explosion of light, a scene best viewed with a monster cup of locally blended and distributed Rishi Tea's darkly spirited Sri Lanka Ceylon. In the parking lot near the beach, the resulting dazzle reflects back from the windows of the parked trailers, motorhomes and autos of early-rising sun worshippers.

This is only one of many scenic views

along Wisconsin's "stern and rock-bound coast" that runs a zigzagging 495 miles from the Illinois border, up and around rock-ribbed Door County, and on to Green Bay, the home of Wisconsin's NFL team, the Packers. This stretch of rural/urban landscape has been called the Inland Seacoast, albeit with a distinct Midwestern flair. The route offers well-stocked marinas, woody state and county parks, camping, expansive beaches, magnificent cityscapes, waterside restaurants and a host of related RV-friendly attractions — plus plenty of Wisconsin cheese.

To get to Wisconsin, some drivers take the faster, high road, Interstate 94 north from Chicago. But those who want to really enjoy the drive should take the low road for a marvelous RV experience. Once across the Illinois-Wisconsin border, leave behind the Lincoln State flatlands and head east on Wisconsin Highway 165. A bit to the north, road-weary RVers are welcome to park and stretch their legs with a 2.3-mile walk or bicycle ride around the park's 110-acre Lake Andrea. Within the Prairie Springs environs, the LakeView RecPlex has indoor and outdoor water slides and pools, as well as racquetball and tennis courts, two ice rinks and other fitness amenities for a nominal fee.

Moving east, less than 10 minutes from the lake, you can satisfy a sweet tooth by stopping at the Jelly Belly Center in Pleasant Prairie. The distribution center there offers free tours showing how jellybeans are made.

Continue on to state Highway 32, which is officially tagged the "32nd Division Memorial Highway." The name commemorates the tough 32nd Division, made up of Wisconsin and Michigan National Guard troops during World War I.

The unit was formed in 1917 and was under almost constant fire after it arrived in Europe the next spring. By the end of the war in November 1918, the 32nd suffered more than 14,000 casualties. Despite its losses, it was the first American division to burst onto Germany's fiercely defended home turf. Look for the "Red Arrow" designation on the Highway 32 markers. The marking, a red line pierced by a red arrow, became the division's uniform shoulder patch and memorializes the unit's punching through the German defenses.

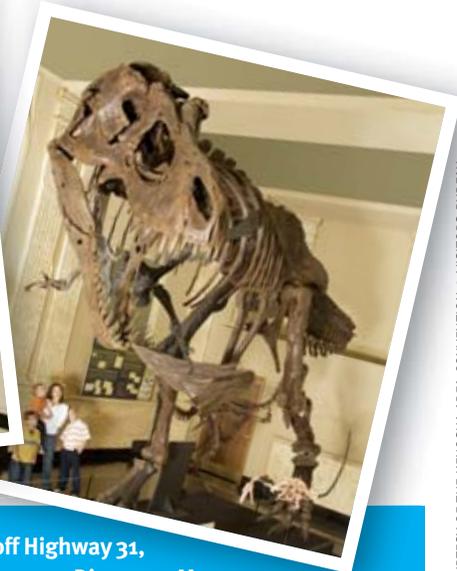
Another designation to look for is the "Lake Michigan Circle Tour Route," a square green sign that follows Highway 32 until this latter road cuts inland north of Sheboygan on its way to Green Bay. The Circle Tour Route occasionally continues along various roads other than 32, mostly hugging the lake shoreline.

Next stop, Kenosha, where you can hop aboard one of the five historic electric streetcars that travel a two-mile loop around town. This is an easy way to rubberneck the city's Lake Michigan shoreline and historic downtown without having to simultaneously drive. There is plenty of spacious parking available at the McCarthy Transit Center at 8th Avenue and 54th Street.

The photogenic Pierhead Lighthouse and the Southport Light Station (part of the Kenosha History Center) are both on Simmons Island, where 50th Street ends at the lake. The landmarks served lake sailors for more than a century.

To step back even further into the good old days, when toothy creatures roamed what would become the Cheese State, drop in at the downtown Dinosaur Discovery Museum, which displays more meat-eating dinosaurs than any other museum in the United States. And for still more history, the Kenosha Public Museum's 12,500-year-old mammoth, dug up in 1992 in western Kenosha County and then reconstructed, makes today's elephants seem piglet-sized.

Continue north along Highway 32 to Racine, home of the Danish kringle, a delectably dangerous pastry that descendants of Scandinavian Vikings brought to Wisconsin in the 19th century. Layers of paper-thin crust baked with oodles of butter and packed with nut or



Of the many flavors at the Jelly Belly Center off Highway 31, popcorn and cappuccino are favorites. The Dinosaur Discovery Museum in Kenosha features one of the most complete known fossil records.

fruit fillings can be had in several bakeries. While the kringle is usually a breakfast treat, a hamburger from landmark Kewpee's Restaurant has been a lunch favorite for Racinians since before the Depression. Fans have consistently ranked Kewpee's among the top burger joints in the state.

Highway 32 soon becomes a series of surface streets hugging Milwaukee's urban shoreline. Keep following the signs, directly through the city. Milwaukee has long been a major lake port, with numerous other reminders of its maritime heritage, including the three-

masted schooner Denis Sullivan, which is docked and available for tours from spring to autumn at the lakefront's Discovery World. From the Henry W. Maier Lakefront Festival Grounds to the Milwaukee Art Museum, you'll find plenty to do in this city. Surface parking close to the Milwaukee Art Museum is rare, since the closest parking structures are generally limited to about 7-foot 5-inch heights. But the diligent driver can find metered on-street parking on the hill above Lincoln Memorial Drive where the art museum is located. However, if attending any one of the numerous music

**RVers find plenty of hiking trails in Sheboygan County, each one with its own charm.**

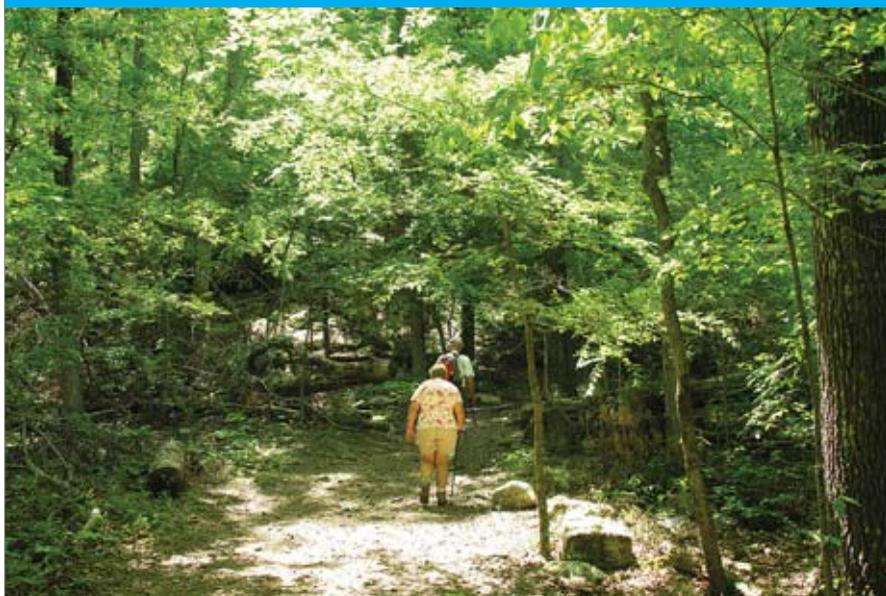


PHOTO BY MARTIN HINTZ

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and ethnic events at the Maier Festival Park to the south of the Milwaukee Art Museum, plenty of outdoor lots are nearby. The most expansive site, with plenty of room for the biggest RV, is managed by the Italian Community Center. The lot is directly across from the festival grounds.

The only metro Milwaukee sites available for overnight RV camping is at Wisconsin State Fair RV Park (414-266-7035, [www.wistatefair.com](http://www.wistatefair.com)) in suburban West Allis, adjacent to I-94 on Milwaukee's west side. The grounds are

close to downtown, Milwaukee Brewers baseball at Miller Park, the casino and the Milwaukee County Zoo. The site has 70 full-service hookups with sewer, water and electric service, along with an LP-gas filling station, coin laundry, showers, sanitary station and other amenities. Leashed pets are okay. Rates start at \$33 per night, with fees depending on whether or not special events are being held on the fairgrounds.

Several other RV sites are nearby, including the Country View Campground in Mukwonago and the Lazy Days Campground in West Bend. Additionally, Jellystone Campground is only 20 minutes from downtown, and Cliffside Park has camping facilities right on the Lake Michigan shoreline.

When you're ready to move on, continue along Highway 32 into Ozaukee County. Pull over in Harrington Beach State Park for a day of picnicking and loafing. The scenic 702-acre park, once

site of a prosperous mining community, offers an interpretive hiking trail around Quarry Lake, and the state recently completed the park's 70-site campground. The mile-long beachfront is great for sandcastles, sunbathing and swimming in the warmer seasons.

Turn east from Highway 32 at Sheboygan County Road V to hit Kohler-Andrae State Park, 13 miles north of Harrington Beach. RVers can kick back at the 137-unit family campground there, including 52 sites with electricity. The campground is open all year, but showers, flush toilets and laundry facilities are only available from Wisconsin's warm spring through its cool autumn. The park doesn't offer water or sewer hookups, yet a dump station and a freshwater fill-up station are located within the park environs.

Beachcombers can find interesting shells and other gifts from the sea along the beach amid the area's formidable



PHOTO BY MARTIN HINTZ

Wisconsin cheese is the best, hands down!

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dune formations. The Sanderling Nature Center, open from May through October, is staffed by knowledgeable volunteers who know just about everything regarding the area's flora and fauna. That's quite a task because at least 400 plant and tree species are found in the park. The Black River feeds marshes behind the park, providing muskrats and ducks to observe through binoculars.

Just six miles north of Kohler-Andrae State Park is the marina in Sheboygan County, home to one of the state's largest charter fishing fleets, accommodating RVers hankering for grilled fresh lake trout or salmon. The county, home of Johnsonville Sausage, is also noted for its Jaycee-sponsored Brat Days. The family music and funfest has a parade and concerts with nationally recognized entertainment, and is traditionally held the first weekend in August. Truckloads of Wisconsin's beloved bratwurst are served to discerning crowds.

At the village of Howards Grove, four miles northwest of Sheboygan,

Highway 32 leaves its Lake Michigan rim hugging and turns toward Green Bay, home of the fabled Green Bay Packers. The iconic football team is housed at Lambeau Field, with a visit to the adjacent Packers Hall of Fame akin to dropping by the Vatican for true believers. Just as gridiron fans always expect a post-season playoff bid (or at least dream of it), gamblers hope to meet Lady Luck at Oneida Bingo & Casino. The 24-hour facility, with 10 first-come, first-served pull-ins providing electrical hookups, is across the street from Green Bay's Austin Straubel International Airport.

In Green Bay, RVers needing assistance need only to reach Van Boxtel RV Supermart, where owners Tom Van Boxtel and his brother Jeff can help.

A confirmed home state tourist himself, Van Boxtel has one admonition for visitors to Wisconsin. "Watch the speed limit. Our police are kinda picky."

With that in mind, why rush? The sun always rises along Highway 32. 🚗



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# HIGH-END HOTSHOTS

THE PORSCHE CAYENNE HYBRID AND THE EVERGREEN  
ELEMENT MAKE FOR A UNIQUE CAMPING EXPERIENCE

text and photos by Jeff Johnston



**S**ometimes it's good to blend in with the crowd and keep a low profile. You can forget all that if you use a tow rig and trailer combination like the Porsche Cayenne and the EverGreen RV Element. This pair turned heads like no other towing setup we've used in many years.

This reaction was partially due to the Porsche tow vehicle. The Cayenne S is the first hybrid produced by Porsche, and it has every possible gadget, bell and whistle the company could pack into its relatively compact space. It also comes with a 7,716-pound tow rating that opens up a lot of trailer matchup possibilities. A fun driving machine, it carries the Porsche tradition nicely and does a bang-up job as a tow vehicle.

But when it comes to generating spectator interest, the Element is right at the top of the list. Every time we stopped, someone would approach and ask about the trailer or take a cell phone photo of it, so we spent a fair amount of time talking about its swoopy aerodynamic body and eye-catching design. At just 4,350-pounds wet, the Element was a moderate load for the Cayenne and a good match to discuss, but its "green" construction philosophy was the real story behind the unit. It's a trailer that could be a harbinger of more to come in the RV industry.

### **SERIOUS TOWING PERFORMANCE**

The Cayenne's 3.0-liter 333-hp supercharged V-6 engine, backed by a 288-volt-powered 47-hp electric motor as part of the parallel full hybrid system, is just the kind of power needed to move a trailer down the road. Its hybrid system operates much like others on the road today in that, under low-demand driving situations, the electric motor propels the car. The gas engine kicks in, smoothly and seamlessly, when throttle demand exceeds the electric motor's capabilities. When the driver has no foot on the throttle in what the Porsche engineers have termed "sailing" or coasting mode — for example when running downhill or slowing — the gas engine shuts down or, if the

batteries are low, it remains at a charging mode speed. Other functional systems including brakes, power steering and so on continue operating electrically.

Once stationary, the gas engine shuts down. When the throttle is pressed, the electric drive starts things moving, then the gas engine kicks in again. The net result is impressive performance and a reasonable 21.9-mpg average fuel economy. But, come on, you don't buy a Porsche for its fuel economy.

Gauge-cluster indicators reveal the state of the car's powertrain, be it electric drive, transitioning to gas drive, coasting or dynamic power regeneration.

Power is routed to its full-time AWD system via its eight-speed Tiptronic-S transmission with full manual gear selection controllable via the steering wheel-mounted shift paddles. Downshifts to enhance engine braking are also part of the system.

Safety and driver-second-guessing systems in the Cayenne powertrain include Porsche Stability Management (PSM), Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS), Anti-Slip Regulation (ASR), Automatic Brake Differential (ABD) and Engine Drag Torque Control (EDTC). Many of these systems are virtually invisible to the driver, but the driver's area has enough controls, dash readouts and other electronics to put the bridge of the USS Enterprise to shame. There's the suspension firmness adjustment for a smooth or aggressive ride, air-suspension height control for gaining extra inches when traveling off pavement, and so on. An MP3 player wired to a 12-speaker-equipped audio system, a multifunctioned trip computer with many safety and functional monitors and readouts — the whole nine yards are included.

For safety, the usual array of airbags surround the driver and passengers. Optional parking assist front and back and adaptive cruise control with speed regulation are also in the package.

The heated front seats, done in the same optional black leather as the rest of the interior, include 14-way power adjustments with memory.

Solo driving in the Cayenne is exhilarating, as you'd expect of a Porsche product. Breathtaking acceleration, a totally controlled ride that's firm but not harsh depending on the driver's adjustment of the system, and cornering capabilities are among the best on the road. All of this takes place in a very quiet environment. The Porsche engineers have done a great job of isolating the outside noises from the interior calm.

The test Cayenne was fitted with a brake control by the team at Hitch Pro and Tow in Eugene, Oregon (541-434-2403). The SUV came equipped with a receiver and — somewhat amazingly for a non-mainstream tow vehicle — a brake-control pigtail under the dash. The Hitch Pro techs commented that the Cayenne was no more difficult than a more traditional tow vehicle to wire up.

The Cayenne's refined solo driving manners carry over to its towing time. The electric drive is almost immediately replaced by the gas engine due to the trailer load on the car, which is as expected with a hybrid.

Brisk acceleration and solid handling are part of the Cayenne towing experience. The Element, with its aerodynamic body and Advanced Fulcrum Tracking (AFT, which is mainly balanced axle placement) chassis, is a fine-handling payload that wonderfully complements the Cayenne. Tearing down the freeway or carefully navigating the sinuous mountain highways, the combo steered predictably, had dependable braking and reacted very little to wind gusts or passing commercial trucks. The Cayenne squeezed out as much as 13.1 mpg on average with the trailer in tow, and that's not bad, given that the towing was mostly in gas-engine mode.

We crested a 6-percent grade at an easy 55 mph, the posted limit, and that included quickly accelerating from 35 mph to move around a truck in a passing zone on the grade. That kind of power to spare renders towing confidence.

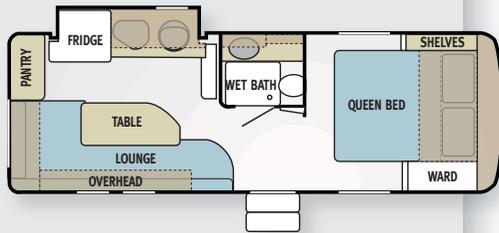
As we drove through a couple of campgrounds, the electric drive kicked in at low speeds and made for a quiet cruise. The electric worked best on level or slightly downhill stretches. It was nice to avoid disturbing other campers as we motored along almost silently.

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**The large L-shape dinette offers plenty of room for dining or, when the sun goes down, additional sleeping space. The twist-lock posts supporting the table eliminate much of the familiar wobble. We highly recommend spending the extra money for a pillowtop mattress. The Cayenne's interior is surprisingly quiet — even with 333 hp on tap.**

## CAYENNE S HYBRID

**MPG:** Solo, 21.9; Towing: 13.1  
**0-60 MPH, TOWING:** 10.5 sec **SOLO:** 5.85 sec  
**40-60 MPH, TOWING:** 4.3 sec **SOLO:** 2.37 sec  
**ENGINE:** 3.0 liter V-6  
**HP:** 333 @ 5,500 – 6,500 rpm  
**TORQUE:** 325 lb-ft @ 3,000-5,250 rpm  
**TRANSMISSION:** 8-speed Tiptronic automatic  
**AXLE RATIO:** 3.27:1  
**FUEL CAP:** 22.4 gal  
**TIRES:** P265/60R18 OWL All-Season  
**SUSPENSION, F/R:** Independent upper and lower “A” arms and coil springs; Independent multilink bar/coil springs  
**BRAKES:** Four-wheel disc with ABS  
**TOW RATING:** 7,716 lb  
**GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING:** 6,415 lb  
**GROSS COMBINATION WEIGHT RATING:** N/A  
**WEIGHT AS TESTED:** 5,120 lb  
**LENGTH:** 15' 11"  
**WHEELBASE:** 114"  
**MSRP, AS TESTED:** \$86,950  
**BASIC WARRANTY:** 4 yr/50,000 mi



## ELEMENT ET24SK

**EXT LENGTH:** 25' 8"  
**EXT WIDTH:** 7' 6"  
**EXT HEIGHT:** 9'  
**INT WIDTH:** 7' 2"  
**INT HEIGHT:** 7'  
**CONSTRUCTION:** CompositTek exterior, aluminum framing, steel chassis, EPS and fiberglass Eco-Batt insulation, TPO roof  
**FRESHWATER CAP:** 36 gal  
**BLACK/GRAY-WATER CAP:** 29 gal/29 gal  
**LP-GAS CAP:** (2) 5 gal  
**WATER-HEATER CAP:** 6 gal  
**REFRIGERATOR:** 6 cu ft  
**FURNACE:** 25,000 BTU  
**AIR CONDITIONER:** 13,500 BTU  
**CONVERTER:** 30 amp  
**TIRES:** ST235/80R16  
**SUSPENSION:** Independent suspension rubber torsion axle  
**WEIGHT:** (freshwater, water heater, LP-gas full; no cargo): 4,350 lb  
**HITCH WEIGHT:** 460 lb  
**AXLE WEIGHT:** 3,890 lb  
**GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING:** 5,199 lb  
**GROSS AXLE WEIGHT RATING:** 5,200 lb  
**CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY:** 849 lb  
**MSRP, BASE:** \$51,228  
**MSRP, AS TESTED:** \$51,228  
**BASIC WARRANTY:** 36 mo



A wet-bath arrangement is a surprise for a trailer of this size (and price). The compact galley is housed in the 90-inch slideout; we utilized the dinette table for additional food-prep surface.

## LIFE IN “THE FUTURE OF RVING”

EverGreen RV planned the Element as a totally “green” unit from the start. Every component in the trailer is recyclable, and it contains zero wood products. No particleboard, no OSB, lauan or plywood, just aluminum framing and assorted composite materials, which eliminates much of the possible leak and rot damage factor down the road.

The frame is corrosion-resistant electro-coated steel bolted together and includes interlocking elements for strength. Atop is a body framed with aluminum, including all of the cabinetry inside, and sheathed in CompositTek skin. The same CompositTek base is used for the molded cabinet surfaces and structure done in a faux woodgrain finish.

The test model ET24SK, one of two floorplans in this size, features a forward master bedroom abutting the streetside fully enclosed bath with “wet bath” type shower. The kitchen and refrigerator are housed in the 90-inch-wide streetside slideout room — located in the aft side wall and the only one in this unit — that extends about 14 inches from the side wall when deployed. Opposite is a large L-shaped lounge, abutting the trailer’s curbside rear corner, that does multiple duty as a seating area, dining area and sleeping space when thus deployed.

Our Element time started with a product walkaround at George M Sutton RV in



Eugene, Oregon ([www.suttonrv.com](http://www.suttonrv.com)).

We found copious space for general cargo in the pass-through compartment accessed by a pair of exterior doors in the front corners of the body. The same space adjoins the underbed storage.

Up front, the body nose conceals the LP-gas cylinders and battery trays. EverGreen uses extra-lightweight fiberglass cylinders, and they are a pure pleasure to maneuver, even when full, compared to the usual steel tanks.

Our review trailer was construction No. 6, an early model, but many details have been upgraded since our camping jaunt. While packing our gear we noticed its striking and upscale-looking decor — smooth cabinets with curved surfaces, hidden hinges and stylish but subdued upholstery.

LED lighting is used throughout, and that’s a good thing for dry campers wishing to make the most of their battery power supply. The LEDs also add less heat on balmy evenings.

The aft living area is festooned with cabinet doors fronting storage spaces, but some of those are compact inside due to various structural restraints. For example, the two cabinets above the kitchen are truncated to about half-height inside by the top surface of the slideout room. Most other cabinets featured fully usable space.

Some of the cabinet doors didn’t work as smoothly as we’d expect from a

premium-priced RV, and likewise, some hardware we saw was the same as we'd find in an economy-model trailer. As an EverGreen spokesman explained, "We looked at higher-end hardware, but sometimes, the lower-priced choices work better, and we go for the function." As is true for other Element parts, the hardware selection is evolving.

The galley is the usual full-function but small-size situation. All the requisite appliances are there, but counter space is minimal. We used the nearby dinette table as our work area. There's no traditional silverware drawer near the kitchen, but when the cabinet under the sink is opened, there's a metal drawer that slides partway out that would serve in a pinch. We cooked outdoors over the campfire, so we could enjoy the beautiful Cascades Range spot at Lost Lake. The indoor kitchen was mainly used for getting organized and shipping the food outside.

We appreciated the new twist-lock posts supporting the dinette table, taking about 80-percent of the wobble out of it. The large L-shaped lounge was a comfy place to stretch out and relax. The lower padded section hinges up, with the tabletop and posts removed, to add another sleeping space should guests

make an appearance.

The bathroom is a bit of an enigma. It's set up as a wet bath, unusual for a trailer of this size and price range, but the good side is, that makes for a very large shower area as the entire space is thus employed. A plastic curtain draws across the front of the sink and cabinets to help keep splashes away from things that shouldn't be wet.

We ran into a glitch with the water tank: A wrongly installed overflow line resulted in most of our freshwater dumping out en route to the campground. However, a look at a current production Element revealed a much-improved plumbing arrangement, including a relocated tap for the freshwater feed line.

Most of the trailer's Euro-style windows, manufactured in Germany, are hinged from the side. While the dual-pane smoked acrylic windows look good and the inside retractable window screens and privacy shades work well, the windows provide zero ability to keep the rain out with the windows open. But in this particular floorplan, users would be able to open the two windows under the awning when the rain falls.

The master bed has a thin padded mattress that we found too stiff for our

comfort. Overnight it was OK, but long term, not so much. A pillowtop mattress is optionally available, and based on our use, highly recommended. A modest-sized wardrobe curbside near the bed is the only space to hang clothes in the trailer. Overhead lamps placed near the bed made for fine, glare-free reading time before sleep.

The Element needs a few technical tweaks — like a pie that needs more time in the oven — before it can go out the door as a top-value, premium-level RV. Once that happens, the Element will be a superb and very different alternative in this RV size range. While it's true that a Porsche Cayenne is far from a tow vehicle for everyone, if moderate-size towing is part of your lifestyle and owning a fine-driving machine is what you want, the Cayenne S hybrid may be a good all-purpose alternative to the usual tow vehicles. All in all, the pair made for a unique and fine camping experience.

Check out the Web Exclusives on [www.trailerlife.com](http://www.trailerlife.com) for bonus photos from this test drive. 📷

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**EverGreen RV LLC**, (574) 825-4298, [www.goevergreenrv.com](http://www.goevergreenrv.com). Circle 201 on Reader Service Card.  
**Porsche**, [www.porsche.com](http://www.porsche.com).



# LET THERE BE LIGHT

## MODERNIZING ONE OF THE MOST UNDERAPPRECIATED ESSENTIALS FOR THE ROAD

by Gary Wescott photos by Gary & Monika Wescott

**O**f all the amenities afforded by traveling in an RV, one particular luxury we often take for granted is the ability to simply flip on the lights. As we continue on the project of Restoring an Old Friend, our 1981 Terry travel trailer was entering the dark ages. Its lights were showing their long use, with burned out ballasts and dead tubes.

Years ago we had replaced the lights in our back-roads campers with the stylish Optronics Pulsar 12- and 18-inch dual-fluorescents. We liked the smooth rounded corners and compact design.

Now it's not that the Optronics fluorescents don't produce plenty of light, but technology is changing and the industry is moving in the direction of using only light-emitting diodes in RVs. One company that has blazed the trail in diode technology for the RV market is Star Lights, making those old incandescent and fluorescent lamp fixtures easily replaceable with LED fixtures.

LEDs use much less energy than this old-school lighting, allowing trailer batteries to last longer when not plugged in. As a bonus, they produce considerably less heat. Measuring a comparable normal dual-tube compact fluorescent left on for several hours and the same fixture with replacement Star Lights Revolution T5-12 LED tubes, we found

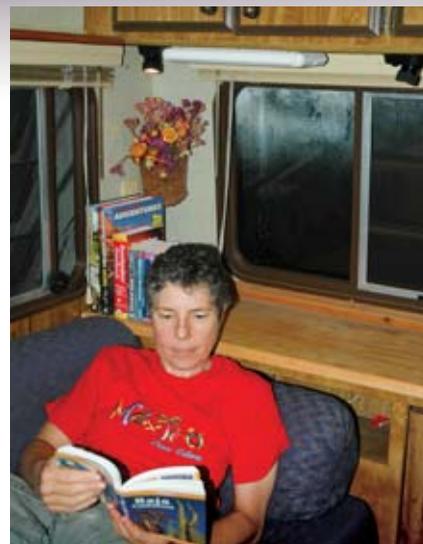
as much as a 20° F difference. Plus, Star Lights LEDs are often direct-replacements for OEM fixtures.

Installing the Star Lights LED tubes isn't difficult, and if necessary, there's help from the company's tech line. The swap can be done without removing the existing lights from the ceiling if you don't mind working upside-down. All necessary wire nuts and quick-disconnects are supplied with each lamp. In the case of our Optronics fixtures, small pop-rivets needed to be drilled out to remove the ballast cover.

After isolating the ballast, which is no longer needed, wires from the harnesses supplied by Star Lights were spliced into power (positive) and ground (negative) and the switch. We shortened wires to reduce bulk under the ballast cover, and we reused the small quick-connects from the Optronics fixtures. Star Lights supplies quick-connects, but they are larger.

We also used Quick Cable butt connectors that have built-in heat shrink, though the supplied wire nuts would also work. The ballast cover was replaced and pop-riveted. With the new LED tubes in place, we connected the small plugs to the harness.

If you are using incandescent bulbs, Star Lights offers a large selection of replacement LED bulbs. According to



Optronics Europa-Ultra Bright reading lights over the bed, sitting area and the dinette add a modern functional touch.

Star Lights, incandescent bulbs can degrade and lose as much as 60 percent of their "designed luminous output" after just a few hours. They also require up to 90 percent more amperage to run than do LEDs. Replacements include common usages like turn, stop and running lights on trailers and tow vehicles. For example, we found a Revolution Wedge 250 Natural Light LED bulb the perfect fit for the dim incandescent light in the stove hood. Now we can really see what's cooking! And LED bulbs rarely

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burn out. We've had LEDs on our truck going on 11 years and 130,000 miles.

For an additional touch of modern lighting, we installed flush-mount Optronics Europa-Ultra Bright reading lights over the bed, sitting area and the dinette. To mount these compact adjustable lights, it was simply a matter of drilling a ½-inch hole where we wanted the new light to be mounted, and then using a “snake” (a stiff piece of wire), feeding negative and positive wires to the hole. (Of course, be sure to turn off all power when doing this.) We used butt connectors to steal power from the existing OEM 12-volt DC wiring. To further reduce heat and amp draw, we replaced all the bulbs in the Optronics Europa-Ultra Bright reading lights with Star Lights Revolution 1156 single contact bayonet-style bulbs.

Finally, we installed the unique Star Lights Brilliant Light fixture. By adding plug-in accessories, the LED Brilliant Light can be controlled by a dimmer, a day/night sensor or a motion sensor. It



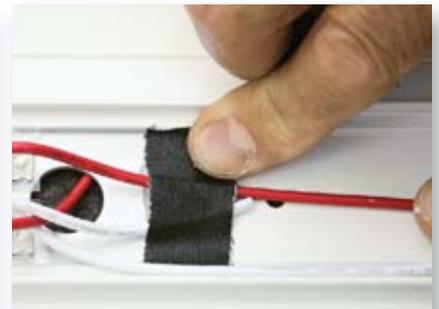
1) The ballasts covers on our Optronics were attached with small pop-rivets that needed to be drilled out.



2) We cut the ground wire from the ballast to the switch.



3) We reused the small quick-connect from the Optronics wiring. Star Lights supplies quick-connects, but they are larger.



4) We taped down any unneeded wires from the ballast to help keep them out of the way.



5) We used QuickCable butt connectors with built-in heat shrink for maximum reliability.



6) The Star Lights harness wires were spliced into the Optronics negative and positive switch wires.



7) We used a PowerFast pop-rivet gun to reattach the ballast cover, making sure it is secured.



8) Star Lights were a direct replacement for the original compact fluorescent tubes.

also has a night-light feature — All this is in one unit, (single or double), with three replaceable LED strength options.

LEDs are bright and robust, ideal for areas where we wanted plenty of light, like over the sink and countertops. For the dinette, we still preferred the softer Optronics compact fluorescents. The motion sensor Smart Light 1000 and 2000 series for indoor/outdoor use are perfect for the porch and entry steps.

Now that we have plenty of light, we could see that many other details in the trailer were really starting to show their age. Latches, window blinds, cabinet knobs and hinges and new carpet will give a fresh and much brighter look in the next installment of Restoring an Old Friend. 🚐

**Optronics Inc.**, (800) 826-5483, [www.optronicsinc.com](http://www.optronicsinc.com). Circle 202 on Reader Service Card.

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**9)** The Optronics Pulsar 12- and 18-inch dual fluorescents were direct replacements for the old Thin-Lites in the Terry.



**10)** A "snake" was used to feed wires to the new Optronics reading lights.



**11)** Star Lights Brilliant Light fixture can be used with plug-in accessories including a motion sensor and a night-light.



**12)** The Star Lights Brilliant Light fixture accepts three different power level LED cards.



**13)** The Optronics stylish Pulsar compact fluorescent light fixtures add a modern look to any RV.



**14)** The Star Light replacement LED bulb, left, is clearly much brighter than the incandescent.



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# NOW PLAYING

UPGRADING YOUR RV'S ENTERTAINMENT CENTER INTO A TRUE HOME-THEATER SYSTEM

text and photos by **E. Don Smith**

If you're an RVer who enjoys watching movies in high definition and listening to high-fidelity music, maybe it's time to install a full-fledged home-theater system in your RV. Of course, many trailers and motorhomes come with a factory-installed audio/video (AV) system capable of playing DVDs as well as a traditional TV for video, but calling this system a "home theater" is like putting an entry-level pop-up in the same category as a luxury-class fifth-wheel.

I recently upgraded the system in my RV so that I could enjoy Blu-ray discs and high-quality audio in addition to the standard satellite and DVD images. My coach is a 2008 Tiffin Phaeton that came from the factory with a Panasonic "home theater in a box" system and a pair of

Panasonic LCD TVs capable of displaying 720p resolution video. Most TVs sold today are capable of 1080p resolution, also known as full HD.

The audio/video receiver that comes with most RVs today is a major compromise and includes a built-in DVD/CD player as well as an AM/FM receiver. Some even offer a cradle for an iPod connection. These all-in-one systems in general are low quality and retail in the \$200-\$400 range including speakers. They are, however, well-integrated into the RV so they are easy to use.

We began our home-theater project with three goals: upgrading the TV in the main living area to a larger LCD model capable of displaying 1080p; installing a separate Blu-ray player and an AV receiver (separate components of this

type are a huge upgrade in quality over the home-theater-in-a-box designs and offer a lot more power and flexibility); and upgrading the speakers throughout the RV, which was probably the most difficult part of the whole project. The tiny built-in speakers originally installed in this coach had to be upgraded if we expected to re-create a true home-theater experience while at camp.

To maintain the integrated system approach we had before, we chose a Samsung TV and components. Using all Samsung components allowed us more flexibility with regard to using the remote controls, plus Samsung's BD Wise technology allows compatible components to communicate with each other

**LEFT:** This is the electronics cabinet before we started work. A DirecTV receiver sits below the Panasonic all-in-one unit. Although this type of unit is compact and easy to operate, its audio/video quality is lacking compared with true separate components. **RIGHT:** The new Samsung receiver features an iPod cradle as well as a microphone that uses a built-in program to optimize the audio settings once everything is connected. This helps balance any acoustical issues that are common due to the many compromises that are naturally part of an RV-based system.



via the High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) cable and optimize their settings. It also allows the viewer to control the AV receiver volume while watching a Blu-ray Disc or DVD with the standard TV remote control. Unless you are a tech junkie who enjoys fooling with two or three remotes, make sure you select components of this type to reduce the hassle.

For the AV receiver we bought a Samsung HW-C500 (\$250). Not only does it manage the HDMI switching we needed to handle both an HDMI Blu-ray player and a satellite receiver, it also comes with an iPod cable. Another great feature of the C500 is that it includes a built-in subwoofer amp to power the subwoofer that we decided to keep from the original system. Most AV receivers do not include a speaker level output for subwoofers. The receiver also includes a microphone that is used to calibrate the equalization of the speakers once everything is installed. This feature alone is worth the price of admission because of the improved sound quality.

For the Blu-ray/DVD/CD player, we chose the Samsung BD-C5500 (available online for a shade more than \$100). It has all the features we wanted in a Blu-ray player (we're not interested in 3D) and it is moderately priced. If you want to add an optional USB Wi-Fi adapter, you can use it to listen to Pandora music streams or download movies from Netflix or Blockbuster. This gives you access to movies at the campsite without leaving the comfort of your RV.

The next big decision for the upgrade was the TV itself. The coach had a 32-inch LCD TV originally installed, but we wanted to increase the size to a 37- to 40-inch set with a 1080p display. Since overall size was a major concern, to ensure it fit in the allotted space we decided to source it locally from a big box electronics store so we could do all the measurements before we attempted the installation. It required a new wall-mount bracket as part of the upgrade.

After a lot of searching, we chose a 40-inch Samsung LED/LCD model UN40C6300SF (\$725 online as of press time). This model has a 120Hz refresh rate and features a thin bezel, which is a big part of why we were able to fit a 40-inch model in place of the old 32-inch unit. Again, we weren't interested in 3D technology; if you are, expect to pay more for your TV and Blu-ray player, and possibly for your AV receiver (though the one we selected, coincidentally, offers 3D pass-through).

The final purchase we had to make was the speakers. Since all of the speakers in this RV were built into various cabinets, size was critical. Knowing this was going to require a lot of custom fabrication, we had to first select the location we planned

**1)** Along the top, we attached a cable from the HDMI Out to the TV, then we attached the existing speaker wires to the proper terminal on the receiver. Despite the complicated back panel of the receiver, most of these inputs are not used. **2)** The Polk speakers are much larger than the tiny Panasonic speakers that came in the coach originally, but the sound was much better after these speakers were installed. **3)** Before mounting each speaker, we applied foam insulation to prevent the speaker from buzzing when in use or on the road. **4)** After we removed the frame we replaced the original louvered grille with black speaker cloth. It looks factory original and allows the speaker a more direct route to project sound into the room. **5)** Each speaker presented its own challenge. Instead of trying to hide this one behind the original grille, which also houses the speaker for the in-dash radio, we instead removed a cabinet door and installed the speaker using brackets.

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to use, and determine what size speakers would fit. Then we set out to find a high-quality set of four speakers plus the center channel that would not only fit but also sound great. Most anything would be a big upgrade in sound over the tiny speakers that came with the coach but, of course, we also wanted a nice, balanced sound, so we settled on four Polk Audio M10 bookshelf speakers. They feature a two-way design with a 5¼-inch woofer and a ¾-inch silk dome tweeter inside a ported cabinet. Because the speakers would be hidden in the location, we picked black ash instead of the upgraded cherry finish. We found these locally for \$200 for all four.

For the center channel speaker we picked a Polk Audio RM8, from Crutchfield, for \$125. The wedge shape fit perfectly in front of the TV without interfering with the screen or the remote control sensor.

While this was not an easy project that can be finished in a few hours, it is something that most anyone could do in his or her driveway just as I did in mine. Depending on your skill level and the amount of tools you have access to, expect to spend a full weekend getting everything perfectly installed and set up. By far the most difficult part of the project was the speakers. Finding the proper location, modifying the cabinets and fabricating custom grilles was tricky.

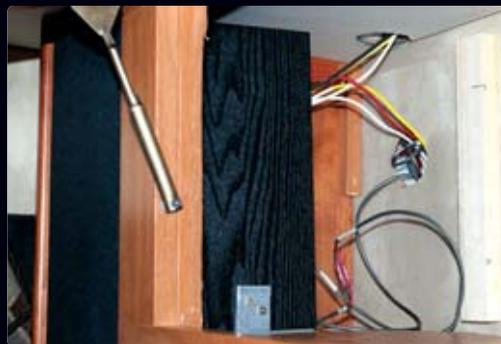
Once everything was installed there was a learning curve to become familiar with the new remote controls and their operation, but within a few minutes we had beautiful audio and video. The Samsung BD Wise technology makes changing sources and volume as well as operating the DVD a snap, though you may need a remote control repeater or a radio frequency universal remote control.

The difference between this setup and the original is striking. The video quality of the new LCD TV and the incredible audio that comes from the Polk speakers and the Samsung receiver are really something to behold. The small space of an RV combined with the power available at the push of the remote means you will have to be careful in RV parks or you will run the risk of your neighbor also “enjoying” your audio experience.

The total cost of the project was pricey, but, with a little searching, you can find these components online for much less than we paid. As soon as you sit down and enjoy your first Blu-ray movie in 1080p resolution you will forget all about the price and enjoy the movie just as if you were at the theater. When you buy good quality products you only cry once. Pass the popcorn! 🍿

**6)** After removing the divider inside the cabinet, we mounted the Polk bookshelf speaker inside using L-brackets. **7)** After reinstalling the divider, the cabinet didn't lose any space and looks just as it did from the factory. **8)** Due to the increased size of our new 40-inch Samsung TV, the bolt pattern was different for the bracket, so we had to buy a new bracket and bolt it to the wall. Tiffin uses heavy ¾-inch plywood behind this wall, so it was strong enough to support the new TV. We also took this opportunity to label all the cables for future reference. **9)** After hanging the TV on the new bracket, we placed the new Polk center channel speaker on the cabinet in front of the TV. We didn't want to drill the solid-surface countertop, so we used a piece of hook-and-loop fastener that works perfectly. The new TV fills the area much better than before. **10)** We also utilized the Tiffin-supplied remote control repeater to control the DTV receiver while pointing the remote at the TV. You may opt for a Harmony RF-style universal remote for even easier operation.

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# HOUSE POWER UPGRADE

Employing a pair of Optima BlueTop batteries mounted in a stout and stylish A-frame tray improves versatility when hookups aren't available *by Kevin Livingston*

**C**lick, click, click is the typical sound emanating from an exasperated battery as it hopelessly tries to wring out enough energy to do its job. Unfortunately, this signal indicating battery failure only comes from a tow vehicle's starter solenoid, not the trailer's house battery. The only thing pointing out a complete lack of 12-volt DC electricity in a trailer is the unexpected failure of your onboard appliances and accessories. And by then your trip can be negatively impacted, good times plummeting into frustration. Most owners are perplexed by the fact that the battery, which quite often is not that old, has failed. But storage and improper charging procedures are hard on batteries.

Swapping out a flooded-cell (wet) deep-cycle battery with an absorption glass mat (AGM) counterpart provides great versatility and improved longevity, even for those with less than perfect

charging habits, and Optima's BlueTop Group 31 dual-purpose battery is a good choice when shopping for replacements.

When coming to a crossroads involving battery options there are quite a few on the market, so it doesn't hurt to have a little information before deciding what's best for you and your specific

application. The first step is choosing the quantity of batteries needed. If dry camping (no hookups) is on your agenda, determining the amount of usage on a daily basis is the first step. In our case, we calculated that swapping out the lone battery with two new Optimas would improve our ability to stay out longer in primitive locations, which is normally where you'll find my SURV.

Once we settled on the need for two batteries, we looked into battery type. Nowadays you basically have two choices. While flooded-cell deep-cycle batteries are less costly, the maintenance issue — along with the gassing and corrosion that attack the terminals and cables — led us to the AGMs. The Optima BlueTop dual-purpose batteries can also be used as starting batteries and having an SURV with a number of engine-driven toys in camp. We figured the versatility when out in the middle of nowhere would be an asset.

Regarding AGM batteries, the biggest hindrance is often high prices. The Optimas are not cheap, but their retail price of \$285 makes them a little more affordable than some of the others on the market. While they have a pretty



## THE RIGHT CHOICE

Optima BlueTop D31M batteries are designed for engine starting and deep-cycle use. They can withstand rigorous use and are sealed, which provides mounting versatility.

high cold-cranking amp rating (for starting) of 1,125 amps at 32° F, the 75-amp hour rating puts them on the lower side of the scale when comparing to some of their counterparts. However, the power provided by two of these batteries was within our personal usage requirement. A selling point for us is the proprietary Spiralcell technology used for constructing these batteries, which makes these AGMs incredibly rugged. They are also designed to take the abusive rigors of vibration commonly associated with mounting on trailers; they're 15 times more resistant to vibration than wet-cell batteries, according to Optima. The other benefit is their ability to be mounted in any position or angle because they are absolutely 100 percent sealed, with no leaking or gassing. The Optimas are lighter in weight and provide lower internal resistance so that the number of life-time recharging cycles is higher than a flooded deep-cycle battery. Recharging



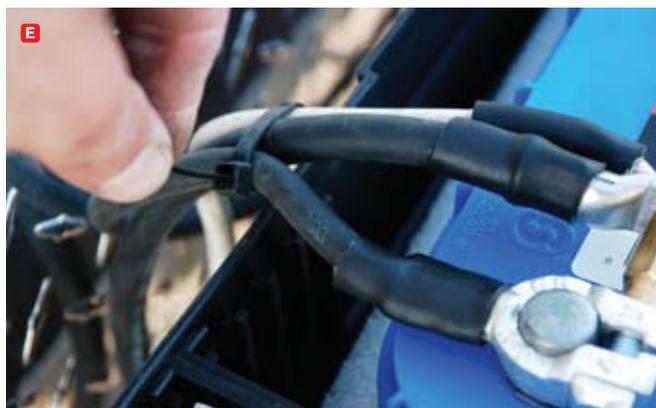
**A)** The battery tray is custom built using a steel framework. **B)** To keep weight down — and to provide protection from theft — the bottom portion of the dual-battery box frame is welded to the trailer A-frame.

time is also faster. Use of a multi-stage charger will improve the longevity of the battery while providing more efficient recycling in the field.

When upgrading from a single to dual battery setup on a trailer, you should keep a couple things in mind. Probably the most important is that your factory battery tray may have to be modified; ours did, because it was only intended for one battery. Another thing to contemplate before deciding on how to

mount the new batteries is whether the RV requires storage and where it may be stored. Mounting two expensive — and desirable — batteries on the A-frame using standard battery boxes and nylon tie-down straps could make them susceptible to theft. To keep our Optimas in our possession at all times, we opted for a custom-built anti-theft battery tray. So we enlisted 1Kind Customs in Reno, Nevada, to build a Fort Knox system to keep the batteries safe and secure.

**C)** BlueTop batteries have SAE/automotive posts for standard battery terminals and 3/8-inch stainless-steel threaded studs that accept ring terminals. **D)** Cables were custom made and the ends were sealed with shrink tube that's molded into place using a heat gun. **E)** Batteries are connected in parallel and the cables are neatly routed, secured by tie wraps. **F)** Special steel pillars were built to connect the top and bottom portions of the battery box frame.



PHOTOS BY KEVIN LIVINGSTON



**G)** The final product neatly sits on the trailer's A-frame and the batteries have maximum protection from the elements — and unauthorized hands.

The battery tray is built from steel, so to keep the weight down, a special framework was designed to encapsulate the two boxes that contain the Optima batteries. The bottom part of the tray is welded to the trailer A-frame and the battery boxes can be accessed by unbolting pillars that are used to connect the top portion of the hold-down system.

Once the two batteries are in place, the next step is to plan out new cable routing. Doing this prior to making or having cables made will help to speed things up and hopefully keep costs down. When connecting multiple batteries, it's imperative to know the right way to wire them to each other. When using two 12-volt batteries, the wiring is in parallel whereby the positive post of one battery is connected to the other and the same thing is done for the negative posts. You retain the same positive and negative leads coming from the trailer and connect them as if it were a single battery. The Optima BlueTops have both the SAE/automotive posts that accept the standard battery terminals and 5/16-inch stainless-steel threaded studs. We elected to use the automotive posts for connecting the batteries in parallel and the studs for connecting the cables that power the trailer, as well as a few accessories we've installed.

Now let's talk tools and supplies for a bit. If you plan on building your own cables, as we did, the right tools are

everything, but they're not cheap. At the very least, this job requires a battery-cable crimping tool, cable cutters and a heat gun. Most of these items are typically found on professional tool trucks that service the automotive repair industry, but you can save a little green by shopping at places like Harbor Freight. I don't recommend its wire cutters, but the crimping tool does a pretty good job for the money.

I subscribe to bigger-is-better when choosing wire gauge, so the use of 6 gauge for butting the batteries should be a minimum requirement. Of course, you'll also have to buy the necessary ring terminals to fit the studs on the batteries. If wire and terminal building is not quite up your alley, there are many auto-parts stores that can custom make cables — and if they can't do it look for an automotive electrical shop.

Aesthetically, the addition of the new hold-down system and boxes is a huge improvement on the former lowly battery box strapped to the A-frame. The Optima BlueTop batteries took the sting out of maintenance and enhanced our ability to stay out longer without losing the lights or fretting over watching a few hours of TV after a long day playing with the toys. 📺

**Optima Batteries**, (888) 867-8462, [www.optimabatteries.com](http://www.optimabatteries.com). Circle 204 on Reader Service Card.

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# ECLIPSE EVOLUTION T26FBS

LIGHTWEIGHT TRAILER THAT DOESN'T SCRIMP ON AMENITIES

by **Ken Freund**

**A**nswering the call for better fuel economy while towing, the Ultra Light Evolution X series of travel trailers from Eclipse RV has been designed to meet the needs of folks with lighter, more fuel-efficient tow vehicles. However, component and build quality don't appear to have been sacrificed for light weight. Some of the design features of the Evolution X series include a wide-track axle-balance system for better towing stability, larger water-tank capacities, unique floorplans and pleasant designer interiors.

Evolution exteriors are constructed with light, strong aluminum framing with laminated fiberglass walls for low maintenance and long life. Large screened windows provide plenty of natural light and ventilation. The floors are built with vacuum-bonded aluminum framework, which makes them lightweight and aids in durability. The freshwater tank is enclosed and heated by the furnace to prevent freezing, while EPS foam R-11 insulation in the walls, floor and roof should help keep you cozy. Exterior standard features include aluminum wheels, a large awning, double-entry steps and an exterior barbecue hookup.

Starting at the front, there's a full-width pass-through storage compartment. The front bedroom is accessible via its own door. Inside you'll find a 60 × 74-inch bed that lifts up on gas struts to reveal another large storage compartment, connected to the pass-through cubby. Left and right wardrobes provide a convenient space to hang clothes, along with two overhead cabinets and one drawer per side for personal effects.

The compact curbside bathroom has all the essentials; the toilet, sink with vanity, medicine cabinet and a corner shower with a raised skylight to provide more headroom and daylight. A combination fan/roof-vent helps with ventilation.

A 12-foot 6-inch-long streetside slideout gives the main



INTERIOR PHOTOS BY KEN FREUND

## QUICK INFO

**EXT LENGTH:** 30' 2"

**EXT WIDTH:** 8'

**EXT HEIGHT:** 10' 6"

**INT HEIGHT:** 6' 7"

**FRESHWATER CAP:** 50 gal

**BLACK-/GRAY-WATER:** 50 gal/50 gal

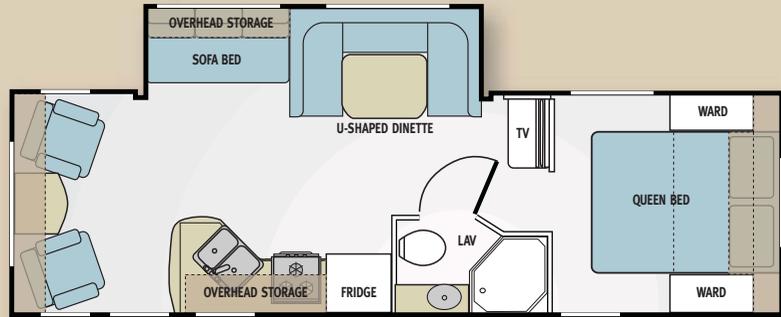
**LP-GAS:** 14 gal

**DRY HITCH WEIGHT:** 720 lb

**GVWR:** 7,000 lb

**MSRP, BASE :** \$23,985

**MSRP, AS REVIEWED:** \$26,344



living area a feeling of roominess that belies the trailer's size. It holds a three-person sofa that opens into a 60-inch-long bed and the spacious dinette that converts to a 72 x 45-inch bed. At the aft end, a pair of comfy, movable swivel chairs add seats and flank a low table that can be used for casual dining. This brings seating capacity up to at least nine, without squeezing anyone.

Some other items that spruce up the interior and add practicality are pleated shades and tinted windows. For entertainment, there's an AM/FM/CD/DVD player and a Samsung 26-inch

flat-screen TV. The trailer also features a centrally located air conditioner.

The galley has plenty of walk-around room and counter space for preparing meals. A large double-door Dometic DM265LBX refrigerator is standard, as are the Dometic microwave, Atwood three-burner stove and a conventional oven. Storage includes two overhead cabinets, four lower cabinets with doors, plus a drawer for utensils. There's more space over the rear wall with full-width cupboards. A deep stainless-steel double sink makes cleanup easier.

Despite its relatively light weight, the Evolution X series has a very usable floorplan that's excellent for couples and small families, displays good workmanship and features thoughtful design elements and amenities. And Eclipse rolls all of this into an attractive, easily towable trailer that's not too hard on your budget. 📺

**Eclipse RV,** (951) 684-6868,  
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**Barber RV,** (866) 797-8420,  
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# COLEMAN CTF259RE

DUTCHMEN ADDS TO THE POPULAR BRAND'S LEGACY WITH SPACIOUS FIFTH-WHEEL FLOORPLANS

by **Bruce Hampson**

**A**rguably the most recognized name in the outdoor recreation industry, the Coleman Company has been marketing camping gear to enthusiasts wanting to sleep under the stars for more than 100 years. But if the company's lines of tents, lanterns, sleeping bags and the like are intended to "take the edge off" roughing it, the Coleman-branded fifth-wheels built by Dutchmen really bump up the comfort quotient.

The CTF259RE is one of three fifth-wheels Dutchmen builds under its Coleman license in lengths from 30 feet 11 inches to 35 feet 8 inches. Each incorporates an easy-hitch front cap with expanded turning radius for shortbed pickups, "Eye Site" Hitch Vision for easy hookup and LED docking lights. Except for the largest unit, all come with a single slideout that incorporates the dinette and sofa. Weighing in at

7,850 pounds dry, the 259 is the smallest of these, yet it includes a number of high-yield innovations only found on larger units. For example, the oversized U-shaped dinette inside breaks down into a bed 84 inches long — the length of a California king and about a foot longer than what you typically find in an RV — while outside, the forward pass-through storage bay measures out at more than 55 square feet, among the most expansive in its category. Storage, in fact, is among this unit's most memorable features.

Solidly manufactured using welded aluminum side-wall construction, fully insulated and laminated walls, a truss-style walk-on roof with  $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch roof decking and high-gloss laminated fiberglass exterior, the 259 Coleman also includes a small outdoor kitchen curbside that features a two-burner stovetop and a wash basin fed by hot and cold running water.



The small outdoor kitchen features a two-burner stovetop and wash basin.

While Dutchmen keeps exterior graphics on the Coleman to a tasteful minimum, it's the living quarters and floorplan that really tend to differentiate one RV from the next — and this floorplan is one of the most comfortable we've experienced in its class size. With the sofa and dinette incorporated into the 12-foot 2-inch-wide by 3-foot 3-inch-deep slide — both boasting cloth material for seatbacks and the faux leather



PHOTO BY BRUCE HAMPSON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MANUFACTURER



Virtually everything indoors that isn't glassed wall is covered in earthy tones in keeping with the model's New Mocha interior selection.

used on seat cushions for easy cleanup — the 259 also offers moveable swivel rockers at the back of the unit, framed almost entirely by windows. The slide, too, is mostly glass, giving the floorplan an open, airy atmosphere.

The galley is built into the curbside wall, and includes a two-door refrigerator, microwave, three-burner stove and oven and residential galley sink, surrounded by a residential laminate countertop. That same laminate is found in the bedroom area, topping the commode, a single curbside nightstand (streetside is a floor-to-ceiling

wardrobe cabinet) and an additional 5-foot-tall cabinet near the curbside foot of the queen bed that can support a second TV.

While headroom is a bit more cramped in the step-up bedroom (it's 6 feet 2 inches at its highest point versus 6 feet 6 inches at the lowest point on the main level), we really liked the separation of the sink/commode from the water closet. The lav is closeted by itself curbside, while the wash station is just forward of the shower surround (with skylight).

All of the Coleman fifth-wheels come

standard with a 13,500-BTU roof-mounted air-conditioning unit and are prepped for a second unit. Other creature comforts include a 30,000-BTU furnace, power front and rear jacks, six-gallon gas/electric/DSI water heater, enclosed and heated underbelly and tanks and 30-amp service.

With an msrp of about \$34,000, the 259 Coleman provides camping enthusiasts with a lot of RV for the money. 🚐

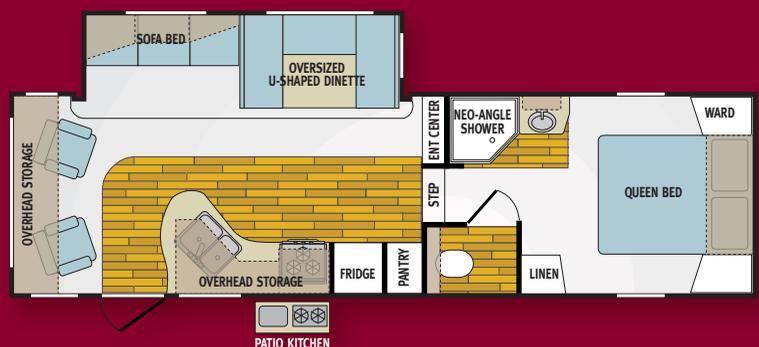
**Coleman, by Dutchmen Manufacturing,**  
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## QUICK INFO

EXT. LENGTH .....30' 11"  
 EXT. WIDTH .....8'  
 EXT. HEIGHT .....11' 6"  
 INT. HEIGHT .....6' 6"  
 FRESHWATER CAP. ....46 gal

BLACK-/GRAY-WATER CAP ..42 gal/42 gal  
 LP-GAS CAP. ....14 gal  
 HITCH WEIGHT .....1,442 lb  
 GVWR.....10,560 lb  
 MSRP.....\$34,000



# PERFORMANCE CORNER



by **Ken Freund**

## BANKS EXHAUST SYSTEMS

Exhaust systems are a great way to get more power and better fuel economy, and Gale Banks Engineering offers a wide selection of aftermarket gasoline and diesel performance exhaust systems for applications popular with RV towing enthusiasts — from the cat-back Monster Exhaust systems to the PowerPack system.

The Monster Exhaust features heavy-duty stainless steel with increased-diameter mandrel-bent exhaust pipes and tailpipes to cut back pressure for more power, longevity and fuel efficiency. These systems outflow stock, while providing crisp throttle response, additional horsepower and better mileage.

Stinger kits add Ram-Air, an enclosed cold-air intake system that eliminates stock restrictions to flow cooler, denser air through its huge reusable filter for greater power and better fuel economy. The PowerPack for gas applications adds a pair of rugged TorqueTube manifolds that boost torque for big hauling and climbing jobs. An optional electronic OttoMind engine-calibration module maximizes power and keeps check on the air-to-fuel ratio. All this can add up to +56 hp and +67 lb-ft at the rear wheels on a gasoline-powered Ford V-10.

Turbo diesel applications benefit even more from Banks Monster Exhaust, Stinger and PowerPack systems. The Stinger and PowerPack systems include many of the features of the gas systems (except headers) with the addition of the Banks EconoMind tuner, which is calibrated for working and towing, while delivering impressive mileage, safety, and versatility with six adjustable on-the-fly levels. Diesel PowerPack systems feature a replacement intercooler, The Banks Techni-Cooler, for maximum air density, lower EGTs and even better fuel economy for towing.

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**Split-Dual Monster Exhaust System**



## GOODYEAR DEVELOPING SELF-INFLATING TIRES

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company is working on a new tire technology that could make spare tires obsolete. Called Air Maintenance Technology, this system allows tires to stay inflated at their proper pressure without an external compressor by using a miniaturized pump contained within the tire itself. The pump is powered by the tire as it rolls along road, allowing the tire to remain inflated through minor air leaks. Goodyear hasn't announced a release date, but the U.S. Department of Energy's office of Vehicle Technology's \$1.5 million research and development grant is speeding introduction.

## NEW MILEAGE STANDARDS SET

The U.S. government has announced rules for higher corporate average fuel economy (CAFE). The new standard will eventually require a 54.5-mpg CAFE, effectively doubling the average of U.S. vehicles by 2025. The feds claim the new rules should save drivers \$1.7 trillion in fuel costs, and by 2025 save an average of \$8,000 per vehicle. The new regulations apply to model years 2012 through 2016, raising fleet average mileage to 35.5 mpg by 2016, increasing the average by 3.5 percent per year for five years, then 5 percent per year after that. The agencies are also establishing the first-ever National Program to regulate fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions for 2014-2018 medium- and heavy-duty trucks, covering vehicles from ¾-ton pickups and vans to big-rig tractors. For heavy-duty pickups and vans, separate standards are required for gasoline-powered and diesel trucks. These vehicles will be required to achieve up to approximately 15 percent reduction in fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by model year 2018. Under the finalized standards a typical gasoline or diesel powered heavy-duty pickup or van could save one gallon of fuel for every 100 miles traveled.

To achieve the gains, manufacturers will use more hybrids, diesels, plug-in, pure electric and range-extended electric vehicles. Another method is start-stop technology, which shuts off the engine when a vehicle stops for more than a few seconds. Depressing the accelerator restarts the engine and systems such as air conditioning, lights and audio systems remain operational. The feature can improve mileage by as much as 12 percent in city driving. Johnson Controls, a leading supplier of start-stop system components, estimates that by 2016 up to 55 percent of new vehicles will use this technology. 📱



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**For more information**, call (877) 392-2476 or visit [www.getg.com](http://www.getg.com). Circle 209 on Reader Service Card.



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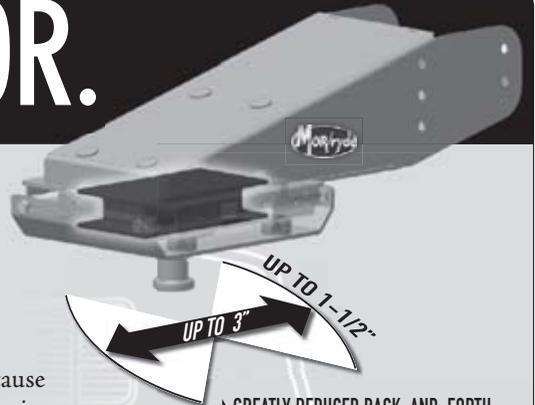
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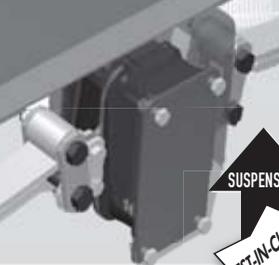
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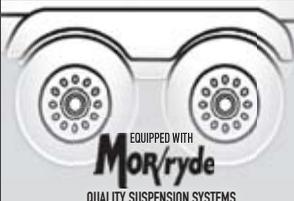
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**USED 2003 Keystone COUGAR 285RL**  
 WAS \$22,989 **NOW \$14,999** SAVE \$7,990  
 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK#  
 SYU69187



**USED 2009 Dutchmen RAINIER 25C**  
 WAS \$22,950 **NOW \$15,900** SAVE \$7,050  
 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK#  
 POR37483



**USED 2004 Fleetwood TERRY QUANTUM 2952BS** **NOW \$15,995** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS15796



**NEW 2011 Jayco OCTANE SUPER LITE 161** MSRP \$26,422 **NOW \$15,995** SAVE \$10,427 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15143



**NEW 2011 Jayco JAY FLIGHT 24RKS** WAS \$24,293 **NOW \$15,995** SAVE \$8,298 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC110666



**USED 2004 Fleetwood PROWLER 295RLTS** WAS \$23,995 **NOW \$15,995** SAVE \$8,000 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK# BAT66399



**NEW 2011 Jayco BAJA 12E** MSRP \$22,742 **NOW \$15,995** SAVE \$6,747 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC14867



**USED 2010 Keystone BULLET 180FBS** WAS \$20,997 **NOW \$15,997** SAVE \$5,000 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC210967B



**USED 2008 Keystone SPRINGDALE 283BHL-GL** WAS \$27,855 **NOW \$16,777** SAVE \$11,078 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LV-N36985A



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTE184** WAS \$25,495 **NOW \$16,858** SAVE \$8,637 (888) 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER11813



**USED 2003 Keystone EVEREST 323** **NOW \$16,895** (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16169



**USED 2004 KZ VISION ULTRA** WAS \$28,690 **NOW \$16,995** SAVE \$11,695 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV18138



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER SELECT 28RL** WAS \$27,952 **NOW \$16,995** SAVE \$10,957 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV17849



**USED 2007 Keystone COUGAR 306BHS** WAS \$26,887 **NOW \$16,995** SAVE \$9,892 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5494



**USED 1997 Nu Wa SNOWBIRD 34RKTG** WAS \$25,000 **NOW \$16,995** SAVE \$8,005 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES15294



**NEW 2011 Jayco JAY FEATHER SPORT 221** WAS \$22,787 **NOW \$16,995** SAVE \$5,792 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111088



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTS274BH** WAS \$23,995 **NOW \$16,999** SAVE \$6,996 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN125242



**USED 2004 Keystone SPRINTER 327FWRLS** WAS \$21,941 **NOW \$16,999** SAVE \$4,942 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8290



**USED 2005 Forest River WILDCAT 285** WAS \$22,697 **NOW \$17,499** SAVE \$5,198 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU68884



**USED 2009 Coachmen CHAPARRAL 267RLS** WAS \$35,602 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$17,607 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK# STR13228A



**USED 2007 Keystone HORNET 295BH** WAS \$25,000 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$7,005 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD15019A



**USED 2007 Cruiser Rv LAND ROAMER 295RL** WAS \$29,995 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$12,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU69751



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTS270BH** WAS \$25,047 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$7,052 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA12766



**USED 2006 Wildcat WILDCAT 27RL** WAS \$23,988 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$5,993 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU69101



**USED 2008 Keystone COUGAR 29RSL** WAS \$23,690 **NOW \$17,995** SAVE \$5,695 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV18236



**NEW 2011 Keystone HORNET 27FLBS** WAS \$32,985 **NOW \$17,999** SAVE \$14,986 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8461



**USED 2003 Keystone MONTANA 2880** WAS \$28,988 **NOW \$17,999** SAVE \$10,989 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8473



**USED 2007 Keystone COUGAR 276RLS** WAS \$27,999 **NOW \$18,893** SAVE \$9,106 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK# BAT66846



**USED 2003 Keystone MONTANA 3255** WAS \$27,888 **NOW \$18,955** SAVE \$8,933 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH STK# GRV507495



**USED 2010 Dutchmen DUTCHMEN 26F** **NOW \$18,960** (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV15825



**USED 2007 Keystone SPRINTER 350BHS** **NOW \$18,977** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC15739



**NEW 2011 Crossroads ZINGER 27BH** WAS \$25,998 **NOW \$18,985** SAVE \$7,013 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR124407



**USED 2006 Hyline HYLINE 44** WAS \$29,995 **NOW \$18,995** SAVE \$11,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU67914



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen DUTCHMEN 295BHGS** WAS \$26,995 **NOW \$18,995** SAVE \$8,000 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR123696



**USED 2006 Forest River WILDCAT 30LSWB** LIST PRICE \$28,887 **NOW \$19,169** SAVE \$9,718 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC12209A VIN# 012871



**USED 2006 Komfort TRAIL BLAZER 252FS**  
LIST PRICE \$30,000  
**NOW \$19,222** SAVE \$10,778 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA  
STK# VAC11162D VIN# 202456



**NEW 2010 Coleman COLEMAN CT225**  
WAS \$30,806 **NOW \$19,500** SAVE \$11,306 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC  
STK# GR122980



**USED 2006 Sunnybrook TITAN 28RKFS** WAS \$29,998 **NOW \$19,888** SAVE \$10,110 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ STK# AVO14448



**USED 2003 Coachmen SOMERSET DREAM CATCHER 370RLS** **NOW \$19,977** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC15809



**USED 2005 Fleetwood PROWLER REGAL 305RLDS** **NOW \$19,995** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16200



**USED 2008 Gulf Stream CANYON TRAIL 29RLFW**  
WAS \$32,995 **NOW \$19,995** SAVE \$13,000 (888) 848-7312 Columbia, SC STK# COL14860



**USED 2003 Forest River CARDINAL 36RLE** WAS \$31,995 **NOW \$19,995** SAVE \$12,000 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR66181



**NEW 2011 Keystone BULLET 250RKS**  
WAS \$29,963 **NOW \$19,995** SAVE \$9,968 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15411



**USED 2003 Nu-Wa HITCHHIKER II DELUX 32RLBG** WAS \$27,995 **NOW \$19,995** SAVE \$8,000 (888) 315-7967 Tucson, AZ STK# TUC17025



**USED 2008 Forest River WILDWOOD 32SRV** WAS \$26,995 **NOW \$19,995** SAVE \$7,000 (888) 902-8565 Tallahassee, FL STK# TAL39769



**USED 2007 Gulf Stream CANYON TRAIL 30FBHS** WAS \$31,900 **NOW \$19,999** SAVE \$11,901 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH5671



**USED 2009 Keystone COUGAR 245RKS**  
WAS \$29,900 **NOW \$19,999** SAVE \$9,901 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6338



**NEW 2011 Jayco JAY FLIGHT 29QBH**  
WAS \$26,412 **NOW \$20,950** SAVE \$5,462 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR36452



**NEW 2011 Jayco JAY FEATHER SELECT 28U** WAS \$30,723 **NOW \$20,995** SAVE \$9,728 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC511155



**NEW 2011 Keystone BULLET 250RKS**  
WAS \$29,963 **NOW \$20,995** SAVE \$8,968 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15412



**USED 2008 Keystone SYDNEY 31FRL**  
WAS \$36,895 **NOW \$21,589** SAVE \$15,306 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN125687



**USED 2007 Cherokee CHEROKEE 305**  
 WAS \$27,885 **NOW \$21,999** SAVE \$5,886  
 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH STK#  
 GRV507573



**USED 2008 Cross Roads SUNSET TRAIL**  
**27RE NOW \$22,500** (888) 727-2952  
 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT13419



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTU225KS** LIST  
 PRICE \$35,769 **NOW \$22,995** SAVE \$12,774 (888)  
 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV21115 VIN#  
 127882



**NEW 2011 Keystone BULLET 246RBS**  
 LIST PRICE \$35,129 **NOW \$22,749** SAVE  
 \$12,380 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA  
 STK# AMRV22339 VIN# 420902



**USED 2011 Forest River WILDCAT**  
**25RL** WAS \$58,987 **NOW \$22,985** SAVE  
 \$36,002 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC  
 STK# CHN125528



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF259RE** WAS  
 \$35,478 **NOW \$22,995** SAVE \$12,483 (866) 610-  
 5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV17976



**NEW 2011 Jayco JAY FLIGHT G2 32RLS**  
 WAS \$33,099 **NOW \$22,995** SAVE  
 \$10,104 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO  
 STK# KC111182



**NEW 2011 Keystone PREMIER 29RE**  
 WAS \$32,545 **NOW \$22,995** SAVE \$9,550  
 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK#  
 KC110983



**USED 2007 Crossroads**  
**CRUISER CF32BL** WAS  
 \$34,660 **NOW \$23,230**  
 SAVE \$11,430 (888) 674-  
 0275 Gulf Breeze, FL  
 STK# GB38763



**USED 2008 Forest River WILDCAT**  
**32QBBS** WAS \$32,464 **NOW \$23,495**  
 SAVE \$8,969 (888) 454-1707 Kissimmee,  
 FL STK# KS7984A



**NEW 2011 Keystone ENERGY 240LFB**  
 WAS \$35,738 **NOW \$23,500** SAVE  
 \$12,238 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR  
 STK# POR36009



**USED 2006 Heartland BIG HORN 3055RL**  
 WAS \$44,900 **NOW \$23,896** SAVE  
 \$21,004 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN  
 STK# CH5992



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen COLORADO 260RB**  
 WAS \$35,319 **NOW \$23,995** SAVE  
 \$11,324 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO  
 STK# KC111020



**USED 2004 Gulf Stream YELLOWSTONE**  
**XL 36FKS** **NOW \$24,900** (888) 844-  
 1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SWC9630



**NEW 2010 Dutch-**  
**men DENALI 259REX**  
 MSRP \$35,483 **NOW**  
**\$24,900** SAVE \$10,583  
 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX  
 STK# KAT8878



**USED 2011 Keystone OUTBACK 230RS**  
**NOW \$24,960** (888) 696-2165 Savan-  
 nah, GA STK# SAV16218



**USED 2007 Gulf Stream SEDONA 34FSBW NOW \$24,974** (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY36139



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 26SAB WAS \$35,957 NOW \$24,988** SAVE \$10,969 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5802



**USED 2007 Frontier ASPEN F3200 NOW \$24,977** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC15951



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 26SAB WAS \$35,895 NOW \$24,988** SAVE \$10,907 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5812



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 252FWRLS WAS \$35,395 NOW \$24,988** SAVE \$10,407 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5882



**USED 2007 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 32 WAS \$57,500 NOW \$24,995** SAVE \$32,505 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD15024A



**USED 2007 Gulf Stream SEDONA 34FBRW WAS \$39,995 NOW \$24,995** SAVE \$15,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT38661



**USED 2004 Montana BIG SKY 3670 WAS \$32,995 NOW \$24,995** SAVE \$8,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT39023



**USED 2004 Komfort KARRY ALL 36FKA LIST PRICE \$31,895 NOW \$24,995** SAVE \$6,900 (877) 834-0429 Bakersfield, CA STK# SLV22174 VIN# 029956



**USED 2006 Glendale TITANIUM 39QS 4/SLIDES NOW \$24,997** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC14847



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT275REX WAS \$49,358 NOW \$24,999** SAVE \$24,359 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN125203



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 262FWRET MSRP \$35,242 NOW \$25,795** SAVE \$9,447 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS15162



**USED 2003 KZ NEW VISION 3450 NOW \$25,900** (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SWC9599



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 270FWRET WAS \$36,727 NOW \$25,937** SAVE \$10,790 (888) 386-5187 Houghton Lake, MI STK# HL5883



**NEW 2011 Keystone OUTBACK 282FE MSRP \$37,451 NOW \$25,977** SAVE \$11,474 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC14926



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 292FWBHS WAS \$41,891 NOW \$25,995** SAVE \$15,896 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN STK# GRW324882



**USED 2006 Newmar CYPRESS 33RLPK WAS \$39,995 NOW \$25,995** SAVE \$14,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU67983



**USED 2006 Keystone MONTANA 2950RK**  
 WAS \$39,784 **NOW \$25,995** SAVE  
 \$13,789 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI  
 STK# MAD15074



**NEW 2011 Keystone PREMIER 29RE**  
 WAS \$38,658 **NOW \$25,995** SAVE  
 \$12,663 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA  
 STK# CBI10480



**NEW 2011 Keystone OUTBACK 282FE** MSRP  
 \$36,976 **NOW \$25,998** SAVE \$10,978 (888) 815-  
 7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS15165



**USED 2006 Keystone CHALLENGER**  
**34TBH** WAS \$34,685 **NOW \$25,995** SAVE  
 \$8,690 (888) 315-7967 Tucson, AZ STK#  
 TUC13516



**USED 2009 Keystone COUGAR 276RLS**  
 WAS \$38,997 **NOW \$25,996** SAVE  
 \$13,001 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL  
 STK# CRV602443A



**USED 2007 Forest River SIERRA 315BHT** WAS  
 \$34,650 **NOW \$26,495** SAVE \$8,155 (888) 454-  
 1707 Kissimmee, FL STK# KS7986A



**USED 2006 Nu Wa HITCHHIKER II LKTG**  
**29.5** **NOW \$26,540** (888) 668-6715  
 Katy, TX STK# KAT9878



**USED 2009 Jayco EAGLE 345 BHS** WAS  
 \$34,995 **NOW \$26,858** SAVE \$8,137 (888)  
 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER9468A



**USED 2008 Coachmen**  
**CHAPARRAL 299TSB**  
 WAS \$44,900 **NOW**  
**\$26,876** SAVE \$18,024  
 (866) 289-0113 Chatta-  
 nooga, TN STK# CH5998



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER 311BHS**  
 WAS \$37,167 **NOW \$26,950** SAVE  
 \$10,217 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR  
 STK# POR36002



**NEW 2011 Keystone SPRINTER**  
**262FWRET** WAS \$36,918 **NOW \$26,950**  
 SAVE \$9,968 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR  
 STK# HIL36004



**USED 2005 Fleetwood PROWLER REGAL**  
**395 AX6** WAS \$39,681 **NOW \$26,985**  
 SAVE \$12,696 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle  
 Beach, SC STK# MB125372



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen COLORADO 260RB**  
 MSRP \$35,801 **NOW \$26,989** SAVE  
 \$8,812 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK#  
 LC15525



**USED 2009 Keystone COUGAR 292RKS**  
 WAS \$49,995 **NOW \$26,995** SAVE  
 \$23,000 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL  
 STK# CRV5503B



**USED 2008 Forest Riv-  
 er SANDPIPER 305RLW**  
**NOW \$26,995** (888)  
 668-6715 Katy, TX  
 STK# KAT9876



**NEW 2011 Starcraft LEXION S-LITE**  
**256RKU** WAS \$42,125 **NOW \$26,995**  
 SAVE \$15,130 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake,  
 IL STK# CRV5676



**NEW 2011 Keystone PREMIER 28RL**  
 WAS \$39,627 **NOW \$26,995** SAVE  
 \$12,632 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM  
 STK# ARV15419



**NEW 2011 Keystone LAREDO 265RL** WAS  
 \$38,955 **NOW \$26,995**  
 SAVE \$11,960 (888)  
 896-2801 Albuquerque,  
 NM STK# ARV15497



**NEW 2011 Starcraft LEXION S-LITE 256RKU** WAS \$37,333 **NOW \$26,995**  
 SAVE \$10,338 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers,  
 FL STK# FTM12093



**USED 2006 Glendale TITANIUM 28E33DS 2/SLIDE**  
 WAS \$34,874 **NOW \$26,995** SAVE \$7,879 (888)  
 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB37139



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 322FKS** WAS  
 \$39,644 **NOW \$26,999** SAVE \$12,645  
 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK#  
 KC511201



**USED 2004 Terry QUANTUM AX6 34RLTS**  
**NOW \$27,458** (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT  
 STK# ABRV36341



**NEW 2011 Keystone FUZION 230** WAS  
 \$45,424 **NOW \$27,995**  
 SAVE \$17,429 (866) 820-  
 0335 Council Bluffs, IA  
 STK# CBI13613



**USED 2008 Crossroads CRUISER 31QB** WAS  
 \$39,995 **NOW \$27,995**  
 SAVE \$12,000 (888)  
 474-1330 Bartow, FL  
 STK# DCW8355A



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 320RLDS** WAS  
 \$39,301 **NOW \$27,995** SAVE \$11,306  
 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK#  
 KC111199



**NEW 2011 Keystone OUTBACK 285FL**  
 WAS \$37,128 **NOW \$27,999** SAVE \$9,129  
 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK#  
 LAK8189



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT275REX** WAS \$36,999 **NOW \$27,999**  
 SAVE \$9,000 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine,  
 FL STK# JAC38738



**NEW 2011 Starcraft LEXION S-LITE 256RKU** WAS \$44,084  
**NOW \$28,458** SAVE  
 \$15,626 (866) 775-  
 0682 Roanoke, VA STK#  
 ROA12129



**USED 2007 Mckenzie LAKOTA ESTATE 36RLQ** **NOW \$28,500** (888) 617-5406  
 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15673



**NEW 2011 Keystone FUZION 230** WAS  
 \$41,680 **NOW \$28,993** SAVE \$12,687  
 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK#  
 STA125714



**USED 2011 Keystone COPPER CANYON 292BH** WAS \$39,995 **NOW \$28,995** SAVE  
 \$11,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK#  
 DOT39702



**USED 2005 Forest River CARDINAL 34** WAS \$38,995 **NOW \$28,995** SAVE  
 \$10,000 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, WA  
 STK# FRV9737



**USED 2007 Gulf Stream SEDONA 29RKF** WAS \$46,999 **NOW \$28,999**  
 SAVE \$18,000 (866) 648-5288 St. August-  
 tine, FL STK# JAC38696



**USED 2005 Fleetwood TRIUMPH 395RL**  
 WAS \$47,695 **NOW \$29,858** SAVE  
 \$17,837 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC  
 STK# MB125365



**USED 2005 Alfa SEE YA SYF30RL** LIST  
 PRICE \$39,488 **NOW \$29,876** SAVE  
 \$9,612 (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA  
 STK# SAC15534 VIN# 013427



**NEW 2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH** WAS  
 \$37,685 **NOW \$29,995** SAVE \$7,690 (888) 242-  
 0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD16062



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 27RKS**  
 WAS \$39,121 **NOW \$29,895** SAVE \$9,226  
 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK#  
 STR13231



**USED 2006 Peterson Ind. EXCEL 30RSO**  
**NOW \$29,995** (888) 844-1758 New  
 Braunfels, TX STK# SW9871



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 320RLDS** WAS \$39,830  
**NOW \$29,995** SAVE \$9,835 (866) 415-9726 Golden,  
 CO STK# KC511003



**USED 2006 Sunnybrook SUNNYBROOK**  
**39SURV** WAS \$46,680 **NOW \$29,995**  
 SAVE \$16,685 (888) 860-8684 Strafford,  
 MO STK# STR15806



**USED 2006 Coachmen SOMERSET**  
**358RLTS** WAS \$39,888 **NOW \$29,995**  
 SAVE \$9,893 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ  
 STK# AV014591



**USED 2007 Keystone**  
**MONTANA 3295RK** WAS  
 \$39,725 **NOW \$29,995**  
 SAVE \$9,730 (888) 542-  
 3819 Mesa, AZ STK#  
 MES16779



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 276RLS**  
 WAS \$40,934 **NOW \$29,998** SAVE  
 \$10,936 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO  
 STK# STR14142



**NEW 2011 Crossroads CRUISER 32BL**  
 WAS \$48,748 **NOW \$29,999** SAVE  
 \$18,749 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL  
 STK# JAC39792



**NEW 2011 Crossroads CRUISER 32MK**  
 WAS \$44,195 **NOW \$29,999** SAVE  
 \$14,196 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL  
 STK# JAC37427



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT-  
 F267BH** WAS \$38,957 **NOW \$30,413**  
 SAVE \$8,544 (888) 463-3995 Colorado  
 Springs, CO STK# KC211315



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen COLORADO**  
**310RG-FW** WAS \$51,939 **NOW \$30,995**  
 SAVE \$20,944 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood,  
 IN STK# GRW325351



**USED 2006 Coachmen**  
**SOMERSET 341QS**  
 WAS \$45,900 **NOW**  
**\$31,794** SAVE \$14,106  
 (866) 289-0113 Chatta-  
 nooga, TN STK# CH5934



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 325FRE**  
 MSRP \$51,592 **NOW \$31,958** SAVE  
 \$19,634 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK#  
 ABRV36164



**USED 2008 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 3250TS NOW \$31,995** (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15957



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE SUPER LITE 31.5RLTS WAS \$44,293 NOW \$31,995** SAVE \$12,298 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC510894



**NEW 2008 Dutchmen COLORADO 31RLBS MSRP \$54,953 NOW \$32,495** SAVE \$22,458 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT9220



**USED 2009 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 325TSL WAS \$44,950 NOW \$32,900** SAVE \$12,050 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR37152



**USED 2007 Western VOYAGER 31CK WAS \$49,900 NOW \$32,750** SAVE \$17,150 (866) 289-0113 Chattanooga, TN STK# CH6868



**NEW 2010 Dutchmen DENALI 31SBBS MSRP \$42,900 NOW \$32,900** SAVE \$10,000 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT9083



**USED 2007 Weekend Warrior WEEKEND WARRIOR 4005FTL NOW \$32,987** (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY37160



**NEW 2011 Crossroads KINGSTON 30SB WAS \$54,841 NOW \$32,995** SAVE \$21,846 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI11545



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen COLORADO 320BS-FW WAS \$46,589 NOW \$32,995** SAVE \$13,594 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI11725



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 329FBH MSRP \$44,401 NOW \$32,995** SAVE \$11,406 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15032



**NEW 2011 Keystone LAREDO 266RL MSRP \$41,532 NOW \$32,995** SAVE \$8,537 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15353



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT-F325RL WAS \$45,690 NOW \$32,999** SAVE \$12,691 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU65988



**USED 2008 Heartland BIGHORN 3400RL LIST PRICE \$49,852 NOW \$33,251** SAVE \$16,601 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC12678 VIN# 005869



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 330FRL WAS \$47,560 NOW \$33,487** SAVE \$14,073 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB36829



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 318SAB WAS \$43,682 NOW \$33,656** SAVE \$10,026 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3738



**USED 2008 Cherokee WOLFPACK 396WP NOW \$33,900** (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15924



**NEW 2011 Keystone AVALANCHE 335RB WAS \$59,627 NOW \$33,995** SAVE \$25,632 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN STK# GRW324862



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 321FRL**  
LIST PRICE \$50,522 **NOW \$33,995** SAVE  
\$16,527 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA  
STK# AMRV21992 VIN# 630133



**NEW 2011 Dutchmen COLORADO 321RL-FW**  
WAS \$45,093 **NOW \$33,995** SAVE  
\$11,098 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA  
STK# CBI11726



**USED 2007 Keystone EVEREST 34RLS** WAS  
\$44,343 **NOW \$34,841** SAVE \$9,502 (888) 625-  
5187 Fort Myers, FL STK# FTM14580A



**USED 2008 Carriage CAMEO 35SB3**  
**NOW \$34,777** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA  
STK# MAC15470



**USED 2007 Alfa SEE YA 35RLIK 314** WAS  
\$62,888 **NOW \$34,777** SAVE \$28,111  
(877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LV-  
N36462A



**USED 2008 Heartland BIG HORN 3055RL** **NOW**  
**\$34,900** (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK#  
SW9751A



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT320BS**  
WAS \$46,807 **NOW \$34,950** SAVE  
\$11,857 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR  
STK# HIL38189



**NEW 2011 Keystone COUGAR 326MKS**  
MSRP \$50,403 **NOW \$34,983** SAVE  
\$15,420 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK#  
ABRV35900



**USED 2007 Heartland LANDMARK SHENAN-  
DOAH** WAS \$49,888  
**NOW \$34,988** SAVE  
\$14,900 (888) 348-  
5909 Avondale, AZ STK#  
AVO13837



**USED 2007 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL**  
WAS \$46,997 **NOW \$34,988** SAVE  
\$12,009 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH  
STK# GRV507446



**NEW 2011 Forest River SANDSTORM**  
**2935SLR** MSRP \$50,626 **NOW \$34,995**  
SAVE \$15,631 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX  
STK# LC15521



**USED 2007 Americamp SUMMIT RIDGE**  
**RESERVE RSV38RL** WAS \$46,995 **NOW**  
**\$34,995** SAVE \$12,000 (888) 474-1330  
Bartow, FL STK# DCW7866A



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE SUPER LITE**  
**31.5RLDS** MSRP \$46,416 **NOW \$34,995**  
SAVE \$11,421 (888) 696-2165 Savannah,  
GA STK# SAV15343



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 328FRK**  
WAS \$46,389 **NOW \$34,995** SAVE  
\$11,394 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL  
STK# GB39786



**NEW 2011 Keystone**  
**SYDNEY 330FRL** MSRP  
\$49,872 **NOW \$35,987**  
SAVE \$13,885 (888)  
641-0925 Kaysville, UT  
STK# KY36355



**USED 2007 Alpenlite VOYAGER 34RLR**  
WAS \$49,995 **NOW \$35,995** SAVE  
\$14,000 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers, FL  
STK# FTM9740A



**NEW 2011 Forest River CEDAR CREEK SILVERBACK 29RL** WAS \$52,506 **NOW \$36,897** SAVE \$15,609 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR65972



**USED 2008 Holiday Rambler NEXT LEVEL 38SKD** WAS \$57,750 **NOW \$36,982** SAVE \$20,768 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW2128B



**NEW 2011 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 335RET** WAS \$57,278 **NOW \$36,995** SAVE \$20,283 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU64592



**NEW 2011 Keystone SYDNEY 325FRE** WAS \$49,096 **NOW \$36,997** SAVE \$12,099 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211295



**USED 2008 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION 31TKS** WAS \$58,995 **NOW \$36,999** SAVE \$21,996 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU68515



**USED 2006 Alfa SEE YA 35RLIK** **NOW \$38,995** (888) 641-0925 Kaysville, UT STK# KY37748



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 321RLTS** MSRP \$53,665 **NOW \$38,995** SAVE \$14,670 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15226



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 351RLTS** WAS \$57,965 **NOW \$38,999** SAVE \$18,966 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK# KC510874



**USED 2006 Heartland LANDMARK GOLDEN GATE** WAS \$59,999 **NOW \$39,858** SAVE \$20,141 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC38916



**USED 2008 Heartland BIG HORN 3600RL** WAS \$52,798 **NOW \$39,858** SAVE \$12,940 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK# STA126284



**USED 2008 Heartland BIGHORN 3400RL** WAS \$51,995 **NOW \$39,858** SAVE \$12,137 (888) 254-9145 Meridian, ID STK# MER12980



**NEW 2011 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 335RET** MSRP \$58,964 **NOW \$39,866** SAVE \$19,098 (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT10495



**USED 2008 Heartland BIGHORN 3400RL** **NOW \$39,900** (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SWC9408



**USED 2007 Western ALPENLITE 34RL** **NOW \$39,995** (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT9870



**USED 2009 Heartland BIG HORN 34RL** WAS \$59,995 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$20,000 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5395B



**NEW 2011 Forest River SANDSTORM 3215SRS** MSRP \$55,114 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$15,119 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15520



**USED 2010 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION 355 RL** WAS \$54,995 **NOW \$39,995** SAVE \$15,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT39487



**USED 2008 Heartland BIGHORN 3670RL**  
 WAS \$54,997 **NOW \$41,997** SAVE  
 \$13,000 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs,  
 CO STK# KC2CS337



**NEW 2011 Keystone MOUNTAINEER  
 335RET** WAS \$58,262 **NOW \$42,897**  
 SAVE \$15,365 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg,  
 PA STK# HAR67896



**NEW 2011 Jayco EAGLE 351RLTS** WAS \$59,755  
**NOW \$43,995** SAVE \$15,760 (888) 896-2801 Albu-  
 querre, NM STK# ARV15394



**USED 2008 Heartland BIG HORN 3670RL**  
 WAS \$59,875 **NOW \$42,988** SAVE  
 \$16,887 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ  
 STK# AV013519



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA HIGH  
 COUNTRY 323RL** WAS \$58,223 **NOW**  
**\$43,897** SAVE \$14,326 (888) 903-6787  
 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR67231



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA HIGH COUNTRY  
 323RL** MSRP \$65,387 **NOW \$44,777** SAVE \$20,610  
 (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT13267



**NEW 2011 Starcraft LEXION 355RESA**  
 WAS \$68,702 **NOW \$44,799** SAVE  
 \$23,903 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA  
 STK# ROA12132



**USED 2010 Keystone MONTANA 3150**  
 WAS \$69,989 **NOW \$44,879** SAVE  
 \$25,110 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC  
 STK# CHN125677



**NEW 2011 Keystone  
 ALPINE 3200RL** WAS  
 \$66,819 **NOW \$44,950**  
 SAVE \$21,869 (888) 859-  
 6653 Hillsboro, OR STK#  
 HIL36887



**NEW 2010 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION  
 350RE** WAS \$71,301 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE  
 \$26,306 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN  
 STK# GRW325291



**NEW 2011 Jayco PINNACLE 34RLTS**  
 WAS \$66,445 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE  
 \$21,450 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM  
 STK# ARV15312



**NEW 2011 Airstream FLYING CLOUD  
 19** WAS \$60,381 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE  
 \$15,386 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK#  
 SRV17905



**USED 2009 Heartland BIGHORN 3400RL**  
 WAS \$56,855 **NOW \$44,995** SAVE  
 \$11,860 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV  
 STK# LVN36762B



**NEW 2010 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION  
 340RL** WAS \$69,395 **NOW \$44,999** SAVE  
 \$24,396 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL  
 STK# JAC37103



**NEW 2010 Keystone  
 ALPINE 3640RL** WAS  
 \$81,121 **NOW \$45,495**  
 SAVE \$35,626 (866)  
 754-7302 Greenwood,  
 IN STK# GRW324754



**NEW 2011 Keystone MOUNTAINEER  
 335RET** WAS \$58,439 **NOW \$45,888**  
 SAVE \$12,551 (888) 471-3546 Chichester,  
 NH STK# GRV507195



**USED 2009 Carriage CAMEO F35SB3**  
 WAS \$59,988 **NOW \$46,988** SAVE  
 \$13,000 (888) 475-5918 Robertsdale, AL  
 STK# RD39464



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL**  
 WAS \$81,807 **NOW \$47,896** SAVE  
 \$33,911 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK#  
 BAT65538



**USED 2009 Coachmen WYOMING 364SIQS**  
 WAS \$64,995 **NOW \$47,995** SAVE  
 \$17,000 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY  
 STK# CHU65120



**NEW 2011 Keystone FUZION 360** MSRP \$73,322  
**NOW \$49,715** SAVE \$23,607 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT  
 STK# ABRV35564



**NEW 2011 Coleman COLEMAN CT-F340RL**  
 WAS \$65,070 **NOW \$49,887** SAVE  
 \$15,183 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC  
 STK# STA125756



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3615RE**  
 WAS \$78,232 **NOW \$49,995** SAVE  
 \$28,237 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY  
 STK# CHU66332



**NEW 2011 Keystone RAPTOR 400RBG** WAS  
 \$80,169 **NOW \$51,995** SAVE  
 \$28,174 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK#  
 BAT65845



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3455SA**  
 MSRP \$71,906 **NOW \$52,866** SAVE \$19,040  
 (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR  
 STK# LIT10490



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL**  
 WAS \$74,820 **NOW \$52,897** SAVE  
 \$21,923 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA  
 STK# HAR68620



**NEW 2011 Jayco PINNACLE 34RLTS**  
 WAS \$72,278 **NOW \$52,999** SAVE  
 \$19,279 (866) 415-9726 Golden, CO STK#  
 KC511165



**NEW 2011 Keystone FUZION 405**  
 MSRP \$77,065 **NOW \$54,482** SAVE  
 \$22,583 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK#  
 ABRV35872



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3455SA**  
 MSRP \$80,811 **NOW \$54,777** SAVE \$26,034  
 (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR  
 STK# LIT12714



**NEW 2011 Keystone FUZION 360**  
 MSRP \$73,626 **NOW \$54,837** SAVE  
 \$18,789 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK#  
 ABRV35875



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL**  
 MSRP \$75,590 **NOW \$54,995** SAVE  
 \$20,595 (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA  
 STK# SAV15985



**NEW 2011 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL**  
 WAS \$74,057 **NOW \$54,995** SAVE  
 \$19,062 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI  
 STK# MAD15462



**NEW 2011 Keystone RAPTOR 400RBG**  
 WAS \$75,240 **NOW \$59,789** SAVE  
 \$15,451 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA  
 STK# ROA16767



**NEW 2011 Keystone RAPTOR 365LEV**  
 MSRP \$82,759 **NOW \$63,992** SAVE  
 \$18,767 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA  
 STK# WDS15850

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## NEW FIFTH WHEELS

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	STR14257	\$37,328	<b>\$29,800</b>	(888) 860-8684
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	SW9956	\$34,330	<b>\$29,900</b>	(888) 844-1758
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	COL15098	\$33,713	<b>\$29,994</b>	(888) 848-7312
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	CFX3682	\$34,185	<b>\$29,999</b>	(888) 457-4801
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	MB125333	\$37,898	<b>\$30,413</b>	(888) 692-9016
2012 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	HL5877	\$35,575	<b>\$30,413</b>	(888) 386-5187
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF267BH	WDS15684	\$34,185	<b>\$30,413</b>	(888) 815-7523
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF325RL	FRV9441	\$40,079	<b>\$31,995</b>	(888) 568-2177
2011 Keystone COUGAR 27RKS	STR14151	\$41,684	<b>\$34,777</b>	(888) 860-8684
2011 Jayco EAGLE SUPER LITE 25.5RKS	KY37294	\$38,958	<b>\$34,957</b>	(888) 641-0925
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF325RL	LAK608563	\$43,759	<b>\$35,697</b>	(877) 554-3516
2011 Keystone COUGAR 296BHSHE	MB125310	\$45,334	<b>\$39,477</b>	(888) 692-9016
2011 Keystone MONTANA HIGH COUNTRY 343RL	ROA13496	\$71,151	<b>\$42,060</b>	(866) 775-0682
2011 Keystone MONTANA HIGH COUNTRY 343RL	COL125220	\$64,135	<b>\$53,985</b>	(888) 848-7312
2011 Coleman COLEMAN CTF340RL	KC211328	\$67,673	<b>\$53,995</b>	(888) 463-3995
2011 Keystone MONTANA 3100RL	MAD15463	\$67,109	<b>\$54,995</b>	(888) 242-0293
2011 Keystone RAPTOR 3912LEV	FRV9743	\$77,999	<b>\$64,995</b>	(888) 568-2177
2011 Dutchmen VOLTAGE 3900	GB38203	\$95,288	<b>\$79,988</b>	(888) 674-0275

## USED FIFTH WHEELS

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2006 Palamino THOROUGHbred F829RL	KS8074A	\$9,900	<b>\$8,800</b>	(888) 454-1707
2005 Forest River WILDWOOD 21RKL	AMRV22573	\$11,910	<b>\$10,775</b>	(888) 331-1595
2001 Monaco LAKOTA 28RKD	FTM1141D	\$14,379	<b>\$11,503</b>	(888) 625-5187
1999 Nash NASH 23.5	VAC15537	\$14,876	<b>\$12,670</b>	(888) 479-3568
2004 Skyline LAYTON 2605	SAC17852	\$15,881	<b>\$12,906</b>	(888) 480-3175
2004 Keystone COUGAR 276	FTM11563A	\$15,972	<b>\$14,260</b>	(888) 625-5187
2001 Thor KOMFORT 27FS	TUC18115	\$17,850	<b>\$14,995</b>	(888) 315-7967
2003 Northwood NASH 275L	SAC16755A	\$18,422	<b>\$15,611</b>	(888) 480-3175
2002 Keystone MONTANA 2880	AMRV22314	\$19,110	<b>\$15,995</b>	(888) 331-1595
2004 Keystone SPRINTER 297BH	AMRV22266	\$18,570	<b>\$15,995</b>	(888) 331-1595
2006 Fleetwood ADVANTAGE 295RLS	POR36739	\$24,950	<b>\$19,950</b>	(888) 850-5575
2003 Nu Wa HITCHHIKER 35CK	SAC11664A	\$25,522	<b>\$22,881</b>	(888) 480-3175
2007 Forest River WILDCAT 28RKWS	TAL39810	\$26,995	<b>\$23,995</b>	(888) 902-8565
2007 Keystone COUGAR 311RLS	FTM1165C	\$28,533	<b>\$24,729</b>	(888) 625-5187
2007 Keystone COUGAR 291	HL5836A	\$30,683	<b>\$24,988</b>	(888) 386-5187
2006 Gulf Stream SEDONA 34FBRW	TAL39676	\$29,995	<b>\$24,995</b>	(888) 902-8565
2005 Thor VORTEX 36.5	SLV22410	\$27,995	<b>\$24,995</b>	(877) 834-0429

## USED FIFTH WHEELS

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2007 Frontier RV ASPEN 30RLBS	KC210631B	\$29,997	<b>\$24,997</b>	(888) 463-3995
2004 Coachmen SOMERSET 299RKS	TUC18124	\$29,995	<b>\$25,555</b>	(888) 315-7967
2005 Sunnybrook TITAN 31BWKS	TAL39997	\$29,995	<b>\$26,995</b>	(888) 902-8565
2007 Keystone SPRINTER 302RLS	CFX3821	\$28,995	<b>\$26,995</b>	(888) 457-4801
2007 Keystone CHALLENGER 34TBH	RD39283	\$32,988	<b>\$27,877</b>	(888) 475-5918
2011 Dutchmen COLORADO 260RL	VAC12623A	\$34,941	<b>\$29,772</b>	(888) 479-3568
2004 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 36	VAC17720A	\$36,333	<b>\$29,987</b>	(888) 479-3568
2009 Keystone LAREDO 300RLS	GRV507596	\$36,775	<b>\$29,988</b>	(888) 471-3546
2007 Keystone CHALLENGER 34TBH	LVN36606A	\$36,855	<b>\$29,995</b>	(877) 289-0812
2009 Heartland SUNDANCE 3012RE	TUC18121	\$34,995	<b>\$29,995</b>	(888) 315-7967
2005 Fleetwood GEARBOX 375FS	SLV22219	\$32,995	<b>\$29,995</b>	(877) 834-0429
2006 Keystone MONTANA 3400RL	KS8171A	\$35,677	<b>\$32,495</b>	(888) 454-1707
2006 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 362 BTS	HIL36768	\$39,950	<b>\$32,950</b>	(888) 859-6653
2006 Heartland BIGHORN 3055	RD39398	\$39,988	<b>\$32,999</b>	(888) 475-5918
2004 Nuwa PREMIER 35RL	MES17217	\$39,995	<b>\$34,985</b>	(888) 542-3819
2008 Heartland BIG COUNTRY 3250TS	AVO14594	\$39,998	<b>\$34,995</b>	(888) 348-5909
2010 Coachmen NORTHRIDGE	SYU68681	\$44,999	<b>\$35,999</b>	(888) 672-5049
2006 Heartland BIG HORN 3655RD	KS8463A	\$42,900	<b>\$35,999</b>	(888) 454-1707
2005 Keystone RAPTOR 3612	SAC17899	\$40,222	<b>\$36,842</b>	(888) 480-3175
2008 Dutchmen MONTE VISTA 35RB	GB38892	\$45,600	<b>\$36,995</b>	(888) 674-0275
2009 Keystone MONTANA 295RKD	RD39236	\$43,995	<b>\$36,995</b>	(888) 475-5918
2009 Keystone MOUNTAINEER 285RLDS	SLV22160	\$39,856	<b>\$37,856</b>	(877) 834-0429
2006 Keystone EVEREST 345S	SAC17449	\$44,226	<b>\$39,458</b>	(888) 480-3175
2009 Keystone CHALLENGER 35CKQ FW	SLV21995	\$49,995	<b>\$39,995</b>	(877) 834-0429
2008 Keystone MONTANA 3465SA	RD39027	\$49,988	<b>\$39,995</b>	(888) 475-5918
2005 KZ ESCALADE 36KS	MES17132	\$44,895	<b>\$39,995</b>	(888) 542-3819
2008 Heartland BIG HORN 3055RL	KS8211A	\$44,766	<b>\$39,995</b>	(888) 454-1707
2010 Keystone MONTANA 347THT	CFX3828	\$44,995	<b>\$41,495</b>	(888) 457-4801
2008 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION 335TRL	SLV22320	\$54,995	<b>\$44,995</b>	(877) 834-0429
2008 Heartland BIGHORN 3400RL	FRV10032	\$54,995	<b>\$45,000</b>	(888) 568-2177
2009 Dutchmen GRAND JUNCTION 35TMS	MER11879	\$52,995	<b>\$45,995</b>	(888) 254-9145
2009 Heartland CYCLONE 3210	MES16455	\$49,855	<b>\$46,785</b>	(888) 542-3819
2008 Keystone BIG SKY 315RLT	DCW8128A	\$59,995	<b>\$47,895</b>	(888) 474-1330
2008 Doubletree SELECT SUITES 34SB3	DCW8341A	\$59,400	<b>\$47,995</b>	(888) 474-1330
2007 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 34RETS	DCW8093A	\$59,995	<b>\$49,995</b>	(888) 474-1330
2009 Keystone FREEDOM ELITE MK39	LVNC1796	\$59,855	<b>\$49,995</b>	(877) 289-0812
2009 Keystone BIG SKY 340RLQ	AVO14455	\$69,944	<b>\$59,888</b>	(888) 348-5909
2009 Heartland CYCLONE 3950	TUC18118	\$72,200	<b>\$69,885</b>	(888) 315-7967
2008 Forest River CEDAR CREEK 35L4QB	MB125557	\$75,970	<b>\$69,995</b>	(888) 692-9016

\*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 \$369 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 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. May not be combined with any other offer and not applicable to prior sales. Offer valid at any Camping World RV Sales or FreedomRoads dealer only. Dealer not responsible for typographical errors. See dealer for details. Offers expire 11/30/11. FR015473-0811

Advice from our **Tech Team**

## DISASTER AVERTED

I tow a 2007 Forest River Wildcat fifth-wheel manufactured by Forest River. The gvwr is 11,660 pounds and the actual weight of the trailer, loaded for a trip, is about 8,340 pounds. While checking tire pressure, I noticed I could see daylight between a bolt head and the bottom of the shackle hole the shackle bolt goes through. When I removed the shackles, I found that the top of the shackles were almost worn through. This wear took place with only 19,000 miles of towing and I have nightmares thinking about what could have happened had I not caught the problem.

I plan to replace the bolts with new bushings, bolts and shackles that can be lubricated. Do you think that the suspension is too light for the trailer and is there anything else I should be aware of before I proceed with replacing the bolts and bushings?

**R. Briel**, Grass Valley, California

*The photo you sent is pretty dramatic, and we're glad you caught it in time. Your weight figures reveal that overloading is probably not the cause in this case. It's likely that the bolts and shackles were never lubricated, and due to the way these parts are designed, they tend to fail prematurely. Owners should inspect these parts frequently, and it's highly recommended to replace them with a Dexter Heavy-Duty Suspension Kit that includes greaseable shackles.*

*Your local RV parts supplier can help you find the right kit for your trailer. Have the dealer reference Dexter kit No. K71-358-00 as a starting point for matching the shackles to your specific suspension, as there are several such kits available. — Jeff Johnston*



**The photo you sent is pretty dramatic ... Owners should inspect these parts frequently, and it's highly recommended to replace them with a Dexter Heavy-Duty Suspension Kit.**

### WISCONSIN POGO STICK

We have a 2005 Jayco 28-foot travel trailer with a slideout, and a 2004 1500 Chevy Suburban with the 5.3-liter engine and 3.73:1 rear end. I have a problem with my trailer acting like a pogo stick on Wisconsin Interstates. The trailer causes my Suburban to bounce up and down so badly we get sick from the ride. On other interstates across the country we don't experience this. I also almost lost two rental trailers on those Wisconsin roads. One caused the hitch ball to come loose and the other did come off the hitch, ending up in a ditch.



To send your questions to *RV Clinic*, write to 2575 Vista Del Mar, Ventura, CA 93001; or e-mail [jjohnston@affinitygroup.com](mailto:jjohnston@affinitygroup.com) or [kfreund@affinitygroup.com](mailto:kfreund@affinitygroup.com). No phone calls.

It has been suggested that I get shocks for the trailer. All trailering equipment was professionally installed and double-checked by trailer-rental management before leaving. Other people say they have experienced the same thing in Wisconsin. We travel mostly around Madison and up toward the Dells on Interstate 94.

**Dennis Ballard**, Sycamore, Illinois

*Generally, this occurs when the concrete paving segments are just the right length that they set up a harmonic motion with certain truck-and-trailer combinations. If your trailer doesn't have shocks, that should be the first thing you install. Monroe, for example, makes a number of aftermarket retrofit kits for trailers. In some cases the shocks will help. You might want to also consider a cushioned trailer hitch such as Shocker Hitch ([www.shockerhitch.com](http://www.shockerhitch.com)). Also make sure your tire pressures are just right for the loads they carry. In addition, be sure your weight-distributing hitch is properly adjusted. If it's not, too much weight on the Suburban's hitch can tend to lighten its front end, and that causes the truck to bounce and hop more on uneven roadways. — Ken Freund*

**TIRE SEALANT**

Do you have any comments on using tire sealant called Slime?

**R. Dunk**, Minden Nevada

*I can't make a specific recommendation about that brand of sealant, but some tire sealants are said to help seal slow leaks or minor puncture damage in vehicle tires. The downsides to these products are pretty basic. First, they're one more thing to spend money on, although they aren't dreadfully costly. Second, before a flat is repaired the material must be cleaned from the inside tire surface before the patch is glued in place, but that's not much more than an inconvenience for the repair shop. The sealant won't hurt your tires, in any case, so go ahead and use it if it provides some peace of mind. — J.J.*

**FIFTH-WHEEL HITCH RATING**

We bought a fifth-wheel trailer that weighed 11,500 pounds, so we had a 15,000-pound rated hitch installed in the bed of truck. We upgraded to a 16,500 trailer and need to know if it is safe to tow on the same 15,000-pound rated hitch.

**James Stone**, Pensacola, Florida

*We don't recommend exceeding safety ratings on products. I assume you are providing the trailer's gvwr, not actual scale weight, so there's still hope. In many cases the gvwr is much higher than actual weight, even when loaded for a trip. So weigh it as loaded for a trip (you should anyway) and see if it's within the hitch's limits. — K.F.*

**50-AMP SERVICE NEEDED?**

I have a 2007 Montana fifth-wheel wired for 50-amp service. I do not have two AC units nor do I have a washer or dryer in it. Will I do damage to my rig if I keep using 30-amp power, by way of a 50- to 30-amp converter and smaller 30-amp cord? The 50-amp power cord is so hard to coil when the weather is cold.

**Ron McKay**, Via email

*Your trailer will do just fine using the 30-amp setup you described. Many RVs with modest power needs use 30-amp power systems. If you overload it with a toaster*

*oven and a hair dryer at the same time you're using the A/C, you'll blow a circuit breaker, which means you'd need to cut down on your electrical use, but you won't hurt anything. You're fine with the 30-amp service. — J.J.*

**TRANSMISSION QUESTIONS**

We have a 2004 Chevy Tahoe 4x4 that I use to tow my 2003 Terry 26-foot travel trailer. My wife and I enjoy camping all over the West, and we travel back roads and highways that have hills and flatlands. I am wondering what gear to be in when using the tow/haul button — drive or third — to keep the overdrive from engaging. We have gone through our third transmission since we bought the Tahoe new, and I am starting to wonder if I am towing incorrectly.

The trailer weight is right at our Tahoe's maximum allowed trailer weight, and we keep the trailer fully stocked all the time, but I don't think we are over the gcwr of 14,000 pounds. Our manual says we can use either drive or third, depending on if the transmission is shifting too often or not, but I wanted to get your suggestions on which gear I should be towing in and if should I use the tow/haul button all the time while towing.

**John Housley**, Phoenix, Arizona

*You didn't mention what failed in the transmissions; that information would be helpful to determine if the failures were related to driving techniques, overloading or parts. Perhaps you can review the repair documents or talk to dealer personnel.*

*Weigh your SUV and trailer as towed to find out if you're overloading it. Heat is a prime killer of automatic transmissions and since you live in Phoenix, I suspect this is a factor. Switch to synthetic transmission fluid, which is more tolerant of heat and install a fluid temperature gauge and monitor it. The maximum peak temperature (measured in the pan) for brief periods while climbing grades should be 270° to 275° F. If it exceeds that, pull over in a safe area and let it idle in Park until the temperature lowers. You may need an auxiliary cooler. With the gauge, you can also determine which gear gives you the lowest temperatures for various conditions. That's a good way to decide which gear to use. — K.F.*

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## RV CLINIC

### TIRE-BALANCE DEVICES

I seek your opinion regarding a tire-balance product from a company called Centramatic. The product sounds great and seems like it would solve the trailer-tire balance issues I am aware of.

**Randall Horn**, Via email

*We haven't tested that specific model of tire-balance product, so we can't say how well they work, but they have been on the market for decades. You could test them out, but it's pretty inexpensive to have your trailer tires balanced at any tire shop in your area. That's a good way to see how such a balance job can positively affect your trailer tire lifespan and performance, and if you want to further investigate the balancing devices, you know having the tires balanced is worth it. — J.J.*

### BEFUDDLED NO MORE

I'm responding to Bill Phillips' question, described as "Befuddled by Blowouts," in the July issue. I have a 1998 Aljo fifth-wheel and, like Bill's, this trailer was

plagued by tire failures. The original owner suffered three blowouts and/or tread separations in the 15 months he traveled in it. After buying it and hearing about his tire experiences I replaced all the tires on the rig with new, same-as-stock 15-inch Goodyear Marathons and went on the road full-time. In the first nine months, three of these brand-new tires separated as well. The trailer had been weighed wheel-by-wheel and was not overloaded, though the weight was very close to the rated capacity of the tires. After the third separation, I installed a set of 16-inch wheels — again, Goodyear Marathons to match. End of tire trouble! I've since worn-out that original set and replaced them, but in all those miles I've not had a failure. I'd tell Bill to go bigger if his rig has the room. It made all the difference for me.

**Jerry Norton**, Grand Junction, Colorado

*Thanks for sharing your solution. We're hearing more stories about successful upgrades like this that should help solve tire problems. — K.F. 🚗*

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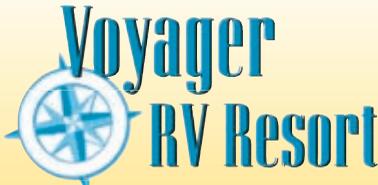
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# 10-MINUTE TECH

A compilation of tried-and-true tips **From RVers**

## SADDLE UP →

I've owned a truck camper for many years, and one of the biggest hassles is digging through the side storage compartments and dragging out the hoses, cords, chairs, etc. that are stationed outside the camper at the campsite. So, my friend and I designed "saddlebags" for our camper — dual storage compartments made out of the diamond-plate material used for toolboxes. Now we have a convenient place to store our campsite essentials.

**Leo J. Rosneck, Evart, Michigan**

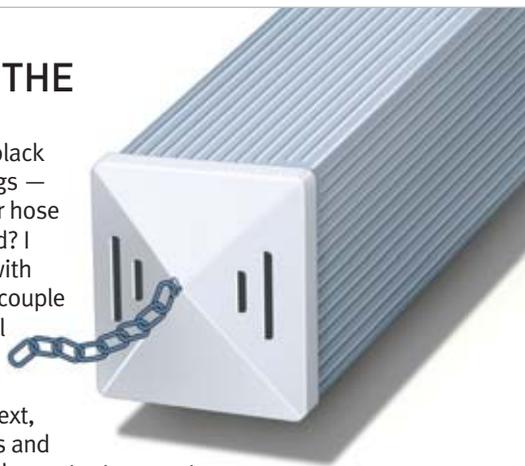
**Editor's Note:** Be sure to stay within the weight capacities of the truck and camper when making such adjustments. And, stability issues could occur if each side weren't loaded relatively evenly.



## ONE FROM THE VAULT →

Tired of losing the black rubber bumper plugs — and often the sewer hose — while on the road? I was, so I came up with this solution. Buy a couple of 4-inch white vinyl fence-post caps from a home-improvement store. Next, cut some vent holes and attach an eyelet in the center to accept a short piece of light chain. The caps pop right into the bumper and stay in place much better than the rubber ones. The chain (attached to the bumper) makes sure the cap doesn't fall off it becomes dislodged.

**Larry Bogdon, Sparks, Nevada**



Illustrations By Bill Tipton

To send a submission to *10-Minute Tech*, write to 2575 Vista Del Mar, Ventura, CA 93001. Please include an illustration if applicable.



## IT'S A CINCH ↑

Over time, the black vapor board under your trailer can begin to sag and eventually fall off altogether. When this happens, I use a nylon ratchet strap: I set each hook on the camper frame and tightly cinch the strap. It may not be a permanent fix, but it will certainly do in a pinch.

## CHEESY LP-GAS INDICATOR ↓

When I return home from my RV travels, I find that I often mix up which LP-gas cylinder is full and which is empty. Or, worse yet, I forget that one of them is empty altogether. To simplify this to at-a-glance ease, I spray-paint empty 8-ounce cottage-cheese containers — green for full, red for empty. This also helps keep the valves on the cylinders clean and bug-free.

**George Barthelmes, Wellborn, Florida**



# AMERICA'S OUTBACK

by Bill Graves

## APALACHICOLA, FLORIDA

**"NEVER GETS COLD, NO CROWDS,  
IT'S PEACEFUL, GREAT FISHING IF  
YOU'RE INTO THAT"**

**B**ears here don't crawl into a den and sleep all winter. They probably take naps, but they don't hibernate. If you spend time in the unending summer that's Florida, this is probably not news. For those of us who grew up in the upper half of the country, however, and walked to school in the snow, we were taught that hibernating is basic to being a bear.

That's the way it is here on the Gulf of Mexico, along the panhandle of Florida — things seem out-of-whack somehow, not what you'd expect.

Take, for example, the perception that Florida is a winter hangout: That applies to the rest of the state, but not here. The tourist season around Apalachicola is the summer.

Tourist brochures call this area on the Gulf, "Florida's Forgotten Coast." Frankly, I'm too literal; I don't get it. To be forgotten, first it has to be known. And there in lies a mystery: Why isn't it?

With spectacular, "sugar-sand" beaches — essentially empty except for birds that scatter around on stilts — I can't figure out why this is the least populated and most lightly visited portion of Florida.

To illustrate the enormous expanse of these beaches, during World War II, soldiers and Marines trained here for the D-Day landings at Normandy as well as other amphibious landing in the South Pacific.

This place escaped last year's oil spill after the BP well blew, spewing oil and tar on beaches along the Gulf. None of it came ashore here.

Drained by several rivers, it has a huge pine forest that extends almost to the water's edge. It's a National Forest, actually, home for bald eagles and some alligators — it wouldn't be Florida without alligators; they're the state reptile.

RVers could not have it any better. Two spacious RV parks are on the beach, separated only by Highway 98 that runs along the coast.

In Apalachicola, I asked a waitress, a recent transplant from the big city, about living here.



This small Southern town, known by locals as Apalach, has white-sand beaches, a rich maritime culture and buildings that once served as 19th-century ship's chandleries.

"Never gets cold, no crowds, it's peaceful, great fishing if you're into that," she said. "Only down side, there are no deliveries."

"You mean like UPS?" I was surprised.

"No, pizza ... You can't get pizza delivered anywhere around here. And fast food is almost nonexistent."

"Sorry to hear that."

"Well, you gotta adjust, right? This place is so laid back; it's totally worth it," she said.

Apalachicola, population about 2,500, has the only stop light in the county. A local mystery is why it exists at all. All it did was blink yellow the whole time I was there.

Since there are no hills higher than a sand dune, a few residents run around town in eclectic carts. They are equipped and licensed like a car, make no noise, carry four, and plug in anywhere. Harry Arnold has 2,800 miles on his. "I at least wave when I drive by a gas station," he told me. "Maintenance amounts to checking the tires."

Shrimp boats, showing a patina of years of use, tie up along the Water Street wharf on the edge of the business district. In the 1850s, this was the third largest port on the Gulf. The commodities were cotton and timber.

Now it's oysters. Where the Apalachicola River meets the Gulf of Mexico is the largest oyster bed in the country — thousands of acres. More than 90 percent of the state's oyster crop comes from this bay and 10 percent of the nation's total.

What I am seeing here is probably what all of Florida was like many years ago. Either way, it works for me.

Welcome to America's Outback. 📧

**Bill's e-mail address:** roadscribe@aol.com.

Next month Bill will be in North Pole, Alaska.



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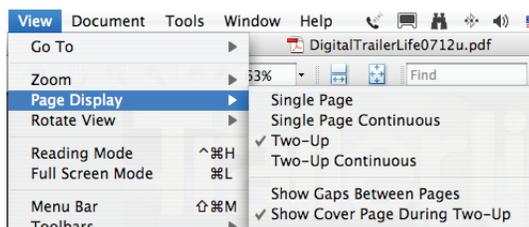


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