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On The Cover: We put the Winnebago Journey 36M through its paces as we toured the backroads of California's Santa Ynez Valley (see test on page 48). Photo by Rich Cox Photography.

GETTING SOFT

The rat-tat-tat of an old and poorly maintained portable generator woke us from a sound sleep in the wee hours of the morning. We were camped in a state park right on the beach on California's central coast. The obnoxious noise of the generator overpowered the soothing audible rhythm of the waves crashing on the shore — a sound that complemented nicely the warmth provided by a down comforter on that brisk autumn morning. I peered out the window and discovered the generator shaking wildly next to a tent trailer parked a few spaces away. Clearly, the operation of such a device was outside the mandated legal generator hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. One of our traveling partners camping next door wandered over to see why an errant generator was ruining our morning. Unfortunately, we were all up by now.

As it turned out, the occupants of the tent trailer desperately needed a caffeine hit, and the generator was supplying power to run an electric coffee-maker. Later that morning my wife, Lynne, saw a camper balancing an electric coffee pot on the edge of the sink in the public restroom, next to the 120-volt AC power outlet.

Are we really that spoiled by modern conveniences or have we simply lost our way? Here's a novel idea: If the campground has no hookups and it's too early to run a generator (even though, thankfully, our motorhome generators are much quieter than that portable unit) make coffee the old-fashioned way in a percolator heated over the stove burner, or by using the single-cup drip method after boiling water.

I'll be the first to admit that I lean on the cushy side when it comes to living in an RV. While I have lasting memories of camping without hookups in primitive areas, like some of those described in our feature on the Sierra Nevada (see page 30), I hate to give up my conven-



iences. But those days were different. Early on we were easily infatuated with camping in remote locations, surrounded by nature, and watching a fuzzy TV screen after taking a hot shower. Wow, we could even make microwave popcorn. Today I scowl at the notion of the satellite signal being blocked by the very trees we worshiped for their intense beauty.

I can vividly recall the many trips to the Sierra Nevada where we parked in dispersed camping areas serviced by dirt roads barely wide enough for our RVs. Without the abundance of power-hungry accessories, we managed our batteries by rigging up 8-gauge charge lines and running the engine at a fast idle for an hour or two every day. The "high-tech" device of the day: a brick to keep the throttle open. Today I'm disappointed if my solar system fails to return the batteries to a full state by the middle of the day.

Technology has changed the way we travel in our motorhomes. Coaches built within the last 10 years are loaded with systems controlled by sophisticated electronics. Ironically — even though self-containment has reached amazing levels — most of us are still addicted to the umbilical cords that connect us to campground hookups.

As a recovering primitive camping junkie, I can relate to why motorhome enthusiasts enjoy their modern conveniences. I too hate to give up the use of systems that are inherent to our motorhomes. After all, giving up the electric bed warmer on cold nights is a major sacrifice.

OK, I might be getting a little soft. Motorhome travel does that to you. But I still know how to make coffee without having to fire up the generator. I just use the inverter. ♦

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Publisher ■ Bob Livingston
Editor ■ Eileen Hubbard
Managing Editor ■ Tom Kaiser
Associate Editor ■ Amanda Lepinski
Consulting Editors ■ Wes Caughlan, Ken Freund, Jeff Johnston
Contributors ■ Chuck Campbell, Bobbie Hasselbring, Fred Pausch, E. Don Smith, Richard and Ellen Thane, Gary and Monika Wescott, Mary Zalmanek

CREATIVE

Art Directors ■ Rick Damien, Randy Kepner

PRODUCTION

VP/Production ■ Bob Dawson
Production Manager ■ Angela Schmieg

CIRCULATION

Circulation Director ■ Jill Anderson
Senior Marketing Manager ■ Kathryn Knudson
Administrative Assistant ■ Molly Sullivan

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WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FUEL STATIONS MAKE IN ORDER TO BETTER ACCOMMODATE MOTORHOMES?

That's the question we asked in our November 2011 issue, and here are some of the replies we received.

SEEKING GAS PUMP RESPECT

Fuel stops are definitely less than friendly for motorhomes towing a dinghy. We look for Flying J or Pilot truck stops, as they usually are motorhome-friendly. On our last trip we stopped at a Pilot (Flying J and Pilot Travel Centers merged and are now one company) in Tennessee and were very surprised to find that the pump now had a \$150 limit for Visa and a \$100 limit for MasterCard. That is a very rare one-card swipe fuel stop. I can only hope other stations follow. I know we motorhome travelers are few compared to autos, but how many autos put in \$150-plus at one time.

BUDDY AND LOIS BAILEY | ROANOKE, VA.

PARALLEL PUMPS

As an avid RVer, the most important features in fuel stations are easy entrances and exits, and ample space to park at the pumps without blocking driving lanes or blocking access to automobile parking spots. Fuel pump lanes that run parallel to the building/store, rather than perpendicular, seem to work best. This layout prevents having to make a sharp turn to get into or away from the pumps.

I would like to see the implementation of national standards that qualify stations to be labeled as "RV friendly." This status could then be displayed prominently with a standard RV symbol of some type in ads and on the state highway system's signs listing fuel stations at each exit. Knowing that a particular fuel station is RV-friendly before I exit the highway would be a big help.

MARK STEVENS | PORTAGE, MICH.

NORTHEAST BEEF

My biggest beef is with the Northeast's interstate service centers. I pull my Jeep behind my Gulf Stream Sun Voyager, totaling 55 feet. When turning into most of these service areas, there is a sign directing trucks and RVs to a larger parking lot. The only problem is there is no access to the gasoline fuel pumps, just diesel. If I decide to ignore the sign and head for the gas, I run the risk of facing a tight squeeze or turn. Pulling my Jeep, there is no backing up. Proper signs would fix the problem.

BILL AND BETTYANNE RUSSO | DIX HILLS, N.Y.

PRE-PLANNING AHEAD

Please tell Bob and Nancy Adamski ("Frustrating Fuel Stops," November 2011) they don't have to make a bunch of credit card transactions. Simply go to the fuel desk and have them pre-approve the amount they think they will need with a decent cushion. After fu-



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EDITORIAL / BUSINESS OFFICE

GS Media & Events
3300 Fernbrook Lane N #200
Minneapolis, MN 55447
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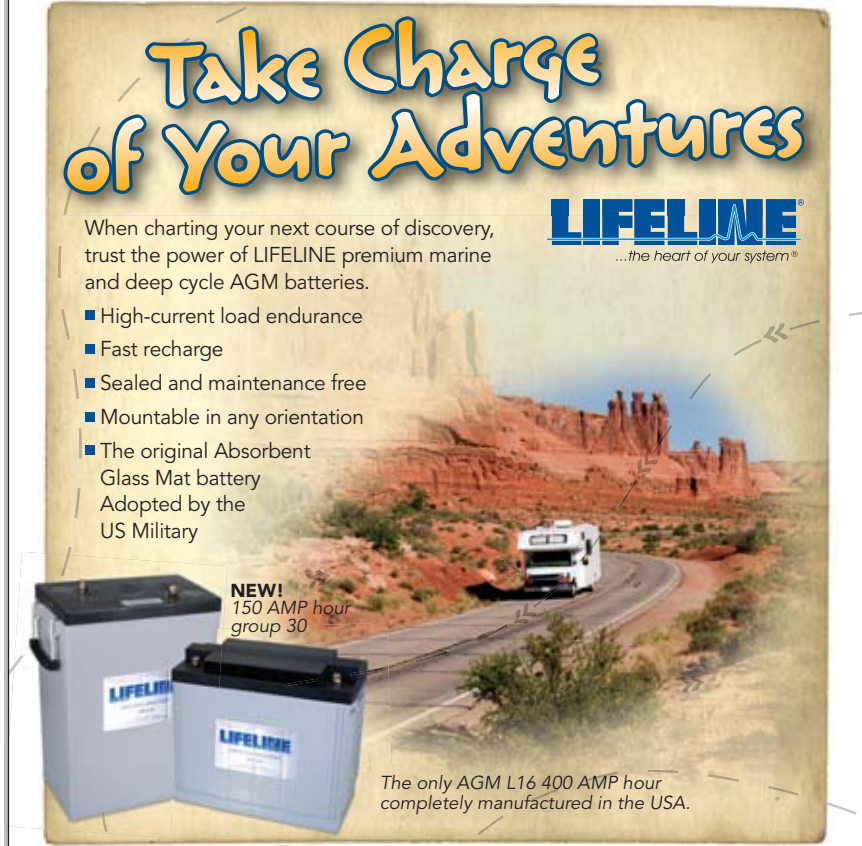
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eling, they will receive a credit for the unused money. This is not a gas problem; I face it all the time with my diesel rig. The limits are from the credit card company, not the stations — they would be glad to have a higher limit. It is as much a pain for them as it is for us.

PAUL THORPE | GIG HARBOR, WASH.

HIGHWAY ROBBERY IN INDIANA

While driving through Indiana earlier this month, we stopped for fuel at the Pilot Travel Center in Shelbyville. We drive a 40-foot motorhome, so we go to the truck section of the fuel center. The diesel price shown on the highway sign was competitive with other truck stops (\$3.799 cash, \$3.859 credit). We went in to the counter and pre-paid \$250, assuming that would take us to a full tank. When the pump stopped, we saw that we got only 60 gallons of fuel and the price on the receipt was \$4.101 per gallon. We returned to the counter to question the price, and were shown a small sign at the diesel pump designated for autos that showed a price of \$4.099 per gallon. The manager on duty explained that only professional drivers with a valid ICC number pay the lower highway-advertised price in Indiana.

We have a Pilot Advantage card, we use Pilot Travel Centers wherever we travel, and this is the only time we've been charged more than the highway-advertised price. We don't have a problem with professional drivers getting a break, but we had no reason to think that one price could be advertised prominently on the highway, and a significantly higher price charged at the pump without prior notice — we thought that was illegal.

We'll likely no longer buy fuel in Indiana, which is one of our favorite states to visit. We'll certainly be more careful wherever we stop, to make sure the price we see is the price we'll pay.

ALICE CALLAHAN | BURLINGTON, KY.

TRAVELING VICARIOUSLY

My RVing has been curtailed for a while by illness, but thanks to MotorHome, I can still travel and experience various scenic vistas, and keep up with current RV topics through Hot Line and Coach & Powertrain. Thank you for taking me away on wonderful trips.



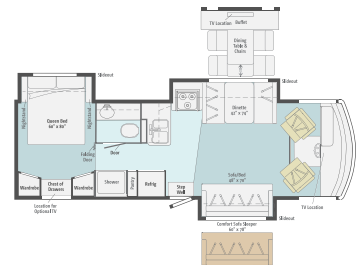
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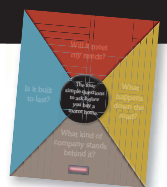


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May I suggest a future article about Class B motorhome rental businesses? Renting a Class B is great for singles like me, and they're easy on the wallet. The rental owners I've dealt with were professional, helpful, courteous and understanding.

TOM MILLER | STANDISH, MAINE

RV TROUBLESHOOTING

I just read "A No-Stress Approach to Motorhome Repair" (November 2011). Kudos to Steve Savage! What a pleasure to read an intelligently written approach to diagnosing RV appliance problems. If Savage has published a manual on diagnosis and repair, I'll buy it!

**FRANKLIN HALASZ
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.**

LEASH UNRULY KIDDOS

The vast majority of campers abide by the leash law for their animals, ourselves included. But what about little kids running out in front of cars? There seems to be at least a couple of kids every day that run out in the road in front of vehicles and their parents don't have a clue where their kids are or they yell at them after the fact.

Maybe the kids should be on a leash? Or maybe the parents should be held accountable for their actions.

**KIRK AND KATHY LYLE
SIDNEY CENTER, N.Y.**

FAN-TASTIC CUSTOMER SERVICE

The vent cover support brackets on my Fan-Tastic Vent broke on my 2003 Jayco Granite Ridge. After looking for a replacement cover in several RV stores, one salesperson told me to contact the company directly. I took his advice, and after talking to a very friendly receptionist at Fan-Tastic Vent, she put me in touch with Bob Beratta. He asked for the model number and said that a replacement part would be in the mail, and at no charge.

In this day and age, it is unheard of for a company to replace a part that is nine years out of warranty. Kudos to Beratta and everyone at Fan-Tastic Vent. Not only did they go above and beyond, but they restored my faith in the American way of doing business. Isn't the RV community great?

DEL AUSTIN | KIRKWOOD, N.Y.

PLEASED WITH PAPER

In response to a couple of letters from readers who indicated that they liked the digital version of MotorHome, I want you to know that you do have readers who value the paper version. I don't have an iPad and when I am on the road I don't often access the Internet. I like to relax and pull out my MotorHome magazine to read. Thanks for the wonderful magazine.

**STEVE GREENBERG
MANSFIELD, MASS.**

WHERE'S WALMART?

I enjoyed reading the article "Am I Smart Enough for a Smartphone?" in the November 2011 issue. It contained a good listing of applications for the iPhone and Android.

There is one other iPhone application that I purchased last summer that was very useful to me, and I'm sure other readers will find it useful. It's called Walmart Overnight Parking Locator, by Allstays LLC and costs \$2.99. It is well worth the money. The application locates every Walmart in the United States and Canada and shows if overnight parking is allowed or not. It also gives directions to the store on a GPS map. It is constantly updated and revised.

**GARY GOLDMAN
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA.**

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL

I enjoy reading your travel articles, but one thing that's almost always missing is what size motorhome you can do the trip in. For those of us who own a Class A motorhome this information is very important — especially when towing a dinghy vehicle. Why can't we come up with some sort of universal designation such as L-38 or L-45 to indicate the maximum length of motorhome at the end of each article?

STEVEN BALLARD | GADSDEN, ALA.

QUESTION:

How closely do you adhere — above or below — to the posted speed limits on freeways versus smaller two-lane highways? And, should special RV/truck speed limit signs be more widespread?

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MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Don't let medical considerations prevent you from enjoying your motorhome adventures. RV travelers, with a little planning and preparation, can obtain good medical care and refill their prescriptions just about everywhere they go.

Begin by calling your health insurer or HMO to determine what procedures you should follow if you need to obtain medical care while you're away from home. In most cases, you'll be covered if you follow their guidelines.

Discuss your travel plans with your physician. Ask your doctor to provide you with a summary of your medical conditions. This can be given to medical personnel in case you require medical attention while traveling. Also, ask your doctor to prescribe a sufficient quantity of your medication to last the duration of your trip. It may be possible for your physician to prescribe a one-to-three month supply and authorize two or three refills on that same prescription.

Talk to your pharmacist. If you are taking a non-narcotic medication, the pharmacist might be able to give you the prescription and one or two of the authorized refills in a sufficient quantity to last your entire trip. Most medicines should travel in your motorhome with no problem if you store them in a cool, dark place. Be sure to confirm this with the pharmacist.

You'll need to explore some other options if you are taking a narcotic medication that, by law, cannot be dispensed in large quantities, or if your

pharmacy or insurance company does not allow a several-month quantity to be filled at one time.

Many extended motorhome travelers deal with this situation by using nation-wide, chain pharmacies such as those at Walmart and Walgreens. They get their original prescription filled at their hometown Walmart. Then, when it's time for a refill, they go into any Walmart and present the pharmacist with the number on their prescription bottle. The pharmacist feeds the number into the computer and the refill order is processed. Ask your hometown Walmart pharmacy if this can be done in the states you plan to visit.

Check into the mail order pharmacies. You send your prescription and payment to the mail order pharmacy and they mail the medication to you. Obviously, this involves communicating

with the pharmacy to synchronize mail delivery and travel schedules. Our medication requires refrigeration so we usually have our order sent to the house of a friend or relative we intend to visit.

There may be occasions when you require medical treatment while traveling. If you have a medical emergency, do not hesitate to go to an emergency hospital. However, if your medical problem is not a real emergency try to avoid going to a hospital's emergency room. Chances are you'll have to wait while they take care of the genuine emergencies, and they will probably charge you more than a doctor's office would for the same treatment.

If you need the services of a doctor or a dentist and it's not an emergency, ask someone who works or lives in the area for a recommendation. If you are staying in a campground, don't overlook the obvious — ask someone at the campground office. They will very likely give you the name and phone number of their own physician. You will be getting a first-hand recommendation.

We, along with a number of other motorhome travelers, have had excellent results with the emergency, walk-in medical clinics. They are often located in strip malls and shopping centers. Many of these relatively small clinics are surprisingly well-equipped and amazingly efficient. They usually have their own X-ray facilities and labs and are staffed with conscientious doctors, nurses and clerical personnel.

Incidentally, if a member of your traveling party is ever hospitalized, ask the hospital if you can park your motorhome in the parking lot. A number of RVers report that not only were they allowed to stay in their RVs in the parking lot, but in many cases they were even directed to a secure site where they could hook up to electricity.

Don't let medical considerations keep you from traveling. With just a little planning and preparation on your part, medical care and prescription refills should be available just about everywhere you go.

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

IF A MEMBER OF YOUR TRAVELING PARTY IS EVER HOSPITALIZED, ASK THE HOSPITAL IF YOU CAN PARK YOUR MOTORHOME IN THE PARKING LOT ... YOU MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO HOOK UP TO ELECTRICITY.





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<input type="checkbox"/> Noise <input type="checkbox"/> Engine <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration <input type="checkbox"/> Tires <input type="checkbox"/> Water		
		Amount
1	Refrigerator	\$ 1,456
2	Auxiliary Generator	\$ 1,727
3	Waste system	\$ 3,390
4	Fresh Water System	\$ 849
5	Roof A/C	\$ 4,495
6	Heating Assembly	\$ 1,104
7		
8	Subtotal	\$ 12,066
9	Less Deductible	\$ -100
	Total	\$ 11,966

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User Guide

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escapes

by AMANDA LEPINSKI

EVENTS | NOTEWORTHY | CROSSROADS | WHEELS & GEAR

Dubbed the “hiking capital of the Canadian Rockies,” Lake Louise, located within Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada, has something for everyone. Adrenaline-junkies can take advantage of five world-class ski hills on the Canadian Rockies; all within a 40-minute drive from Banff to Canmore. Or, take the 3.4-mile hike from Lake Louise to the Plain of Six Glaciers. This trail provides breathtaking views of Lake Louise, the Canadian Rockies as well as ample wildlife. Those looking to take in the sites and history of Canada should stop into national historic site, Banff Park Museum. Since 1903, the

museum has carried on the work of Norman Bethune Sanson, museum curator from 1896 to 1932, displaying more than 5,000 natural history specimens, some of which date back to the 1860s. Protected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada since 1985, the museum sees about 40,000 visitors each year.

Motorhome owners can park at one of the 189 pull-through sites in the summer or enjoy one of the 30 sites in the winter months at the Lake Louise campgrounds. To learn more, go to www.banfflakelouise.com, or call 877-737-3783.

DIAMOND IN THE WILDERNESS

ALBERTA'S LAKE LOUISE IS A VACATION GEM



PHOTO: BANFF LAKE LOUISE TOURISM/PAUL ZIZKA

MOTORHOME | February 2012

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FEBRUARY 18

Car-lovers are gearing up for the annual **Sarasota Exotic Car Fest** held at St. Armands Circle in Sarasota, Fla. Some of the “best in show” will include: Ferrari, Rolls-Royce, Lamborghini, Aston Martin and Bentley among other luxury cars. The show is open to the public with proceeds going toward the Child Protection Center Inc; www.sarasotaexoticcarfest.com.

0962, www.saltlickbluegrassfestival.com/home.html.

FEBRUARY 17-26 | After a long day of driving, enjoy a stop in Portland, Ore. for the **Portland Jazz Festival**. This 11-day event features internationally recognized artists such as Bill Frisell, Branford Marsalis, Dee Dee Bridgewater and Roy Haynes. The festival will include jazz education, outreach and panel discussions as well as provide a taste of historic and trendy venues throughout Portland. The

event circuit is sure to impress both locals and out-of-towners combined; 503-228-5299, www.pdxjazz.com.

FEB. 18-26 | If you're headed to the Southwest this February, be sure to stop in Tucson, Ariz. for the **La Fiesta de los Vaqueros Tucson Rodeo**. Rodeo-goers will find a variety of entertainment including a rodeo dance, parade, ProRodeo competitions, barrel racing, steer wrestling and live music. Giddy-up! 800-964-5662, www.tucsonrodeo.com.

FEBRUARY 2-5 | Come one, come all to the **Winter Heritage Festival in the Smokies**. Located in the visitors center in Townsend, Tenn., families are encouraged to take advantage of the interactive programs designed to celebrate the history of eastern Tennessee, Appalachian traditions and highlight the natural beauty of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Music, exhibits, nature walks and tours, storytelling as well as a variety of presentations pack the four-day festival with fun for everyone; 800-525-6834, www.smokymountainfestivals.org.

FEBRUARY 4-6 | Calling all chocoholics! The **Glendale Chocolate Affaire** in Glendale, Ariz., will sweeten your tooth with 30 local, regional and national chocolate purveyors in attendance. Or, hop on the shuttle from Murphy Park to a local chocolate factory for a behind-the-scenes look at making chocolate. Those without a sweet-tooth can enjoy wine-tasting, horse-drawn carriage rides, meet-and-greets with authors, romance novelist workshops and live musical enter-

tainment; 623-930-2299, www.glendaleaz.com/events/ChocolateAffaire.cfm.

FEBRUARY 15-21 | If you're in the mood for a lively celebration, head to New Orleans, La., for **Mardi Gras**, or “Fat Tuesday.” A tradition that has been celebrated for more than 300 years, Mardi Gras transforms New Orleans into a colorful celebration of parades, dancing, costumes and, of course, elaborate masks and beaded necklaces. Camping is a snap, there's a local KOA nearby the festivities and parade route; www.koa.com/campgrounds/new-orleans, www.mardigrasneworleans.com.

FEBRUARY 17-18 | There's more than one way to experience Kentucky bluegrass, and no, we aren't talking about vegetation. Enjoy two days of live outdoor music at the **Salt Lick Bluegrass Festival** in Shepherdsville, Ky. Concert-goers will enjoy music from Kings Highway, Higher Vision and Tommy Brown and the County Line Grass, to name a few. Dry camping is available on-site; 502-594-

RV SHOWS

FEB. 2-5

Grand Rapids Camper, Travel & RV Show
Grand Rapids, Mich.; 800-328-6550

FEB. 2-5

New England/Boston RV & Camping Expo
Boston; 781-383-6700

FEB. 8-12

Houston RV Show
Houston; 361-749-4436

FEB. 9-12

Minneapolis St. Paul RV, Vacation & Camping Show
Minneapolis; 800-848-6247

FEB. 9-12

Jacksonville RV Show
Jacksonville, Fla.; 813-741-0488

FEB. 10-12

Richmond Camping RV Expo
Richmond, Va.; 804-425-6556

FEB. 10-12

St. Cloud Sportsmen's Show
St. Cloud, Minn.; 763-755-8111

FEB. 15-19

Central Florida RV Show
DeLand, Fla.; 813-741-0488

FEB. 16-19

Kansas Sports, Boat & Travel Show
Valley Center, Kan.; 800-848-6247, ext. 414

FEB. 17-19

Atlantic City RV Show
Atlantic City, N.J. ; 720-203-5076

FEB. 17-19

Arkansas RV Show

Little Rock, Ark.; 501-765-1423

FEB. 17-19

North Carolina RV & Camping Show — Charlotte
Charlotte, N.C.; 800-441-0013

FEB. 24-26

South Carolina RV & Camping Show — Greenville
Greenville, S.C.; 720-203-5076

FEB. 24-26

New Orleans Spring RV & Camping Show
Kenner, La.; 888-948-1355

FEB. 24-26

Germain RV Show
Estero, Fla.; 813-741-0488



AUXILIARY BRAKING SYSTEM

The new Rvibrake is a fully proportional, portable braking system for dinghy vehicles. According to the company, it can be used with vacuum and active brake towed vehicles and requires no permanent installation, which allows it to be quickly and easily transferred from one vehicle to another. It's about two-thirds the size of similar portable brake systems, and it only weighs a scant 9 pounds.

With the Rvibrake's "One-Touch Auto Positioning," the housing is positioned against the floor pan of the dinghy vehicle. It also includes a breakaway system, and wireless monitor that plugs into your motorhome's 12-volt DC receptacle to monitor braking and change your settings on the go.

The Rvibrake Auxiliary Braking System is priced at \$1,250.

Rvibrake, 800-815-2159, www.rvibrake.com

INTERIOR MOTORHOME DEHUMIDIFIER

Dri-Z-Air dehumidifier system is designed to prevent condensation, odors and mildew in your motorhome's interior — without using electricity or moving parts. It's silent, odorless and nonflammable, and reduces cabin moisture with calcium chloride crystals. There's no emptying collected water until all crystals have dissolved, so it's a simple method that can be left unattended between trips.



The company recommends one Dri-Z-Air unit for every 10-foot by 10-foot space. The units are effective enough to reduce harmful humidity, without drying the air to an uncomfortable level, according to the company.

Dri-Z-Air has an MSRP of \$9.99, and refill crystals are available in large quantities to get you through the seasons. They are made with recycled plastic, and manufactured in the United States.

Dri-Z-Air, 800-270-5220, www.drizair.com

RV LP-GAS/CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR



Protect yourself and travel companions from the dangerous effects of LP-gas leaks and carbon monoxide poisoning with the 70 Series alarm from Safe-T-Alert. It meets the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association's (RVIA) requirements for new motorhomes and can be interconnected with up to nine alarms. It's powered by a hard-wired 12-volt DC connection, and a 3-amp relay can command a solenoid valve to stop the flow of gas or shut down a generator when the alarm is sounded.

By combining multiple functions in one unit, the 70 Series takes up minimal space and is easy to use. A test/reset button swiftly checks all detector functions with one touch, and a mute function allows taking corrective actions without the alarm tone adding to the intensity of the situation.

The 70 series has an MSRP starting at \$137.50.

Safe-T-Alert, 800-383-0269, www.mtiindustries.com



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AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL – SENIOR AND ACCESS PASSES NOW AVAILABLE BY MAIL

Lifetime Senior and Access passes are now

offered through the mail by the National Park Service (NPS), making it easier for people to sign up for the program without having to leave their homes to get a pass. NPS Director, Jonathan B. Jarvis, says, "The option of receiving a pass by mail may better suit some people and any change that makes it more convenient to prepare to come to the parks is a change for the better." Senior Passes and Access passes are available to citizens and permanent residents of the United States who are at least 62 years old or who have permanent disabilities regardless of age. Senior and Access passes offer a variety of discounts and benefits such as admission and use of federal camping sites that charge fees as well as a 50 percent discount on some activity amenities such as swimming, camping, boat launching and specialized interpretive services.

Senior and Access passes will still be available at national parks for those who prefer signing up in person. To apply through the mail, go online to www.store.usgs.gov/pass or call 888-275-8747.



Good Sam
Roadside Assistance

BY AFFINITY ROAD & TRAVEL CLUB, INC.

GOOD SAM MOVES QUICKLY TOWARD 500,000 LOYAL ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE CUSTOMERS

Good Sam, the world's most-recognized RV brand, announced late last year that the company was approaching 500,000 RV, car and truck roadside assistance customers. This momentous achievement is meaningful to the foundation of a company that was loosely based on the Good Samaritan who helped a traveler in need and continues to strive to help RVers on the road. Marcus Lemonis, Chairman and CEO of Good Sam, says, "As we move closer to serving over half a million RVers we must stay focused on great service at a low price." An example of that service is coverage offered to RVers at one low price including coverage for other household vehicles as well as protection for family members at no additional charge. The Good Sam Roadside Assistance program offers customers unlimited towing to a network facility, battery jumps, roadside flat tire changes, lockout service and other minor repairs.

For more information and to sign up for Good Sam's Roadside Assistance, visit www.goodsamclub.com or call 800-234-3450.

News Briefs

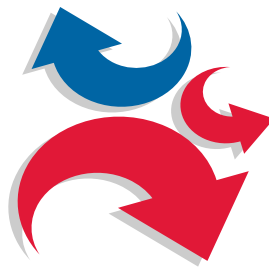
RV ownership has reached a new peak, according to research by the **Recreation Vehicle Industry Association**. The research, conducted by Dr. Richard Curtin, RV industry analyst and director of consumer surveys at the University of Michigan, reveals the number of RV-owning households has grown to a new peak of 8.9 million households, up from 7.9 million in 2005. Nearly 1-in-9 (8.5 percent) U.S. households now own RVs, up from 8 percent in 2005.

Camping World, has announced an aggressive series of store openings during the next 12 months in New England, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Raleigh, N.C., Harrisburg, Penn., Orlando, Ocala and Cocoa Beach, Fla., and Southern Florida.

"Camping World is poised for growth in every segment of our business with a goal of 100 stores by 2014. A larger store base will allow us to better serve our 4 million customers nationwide and our 1.3 million **Good Sam** members. As our ecommerce business continues to explode with record traffic, page visits, and sales, we will continue to invest in our brick and mortar business units with the addition of over 200 service bays nationwide in the next 12 months including more paint and collision centers, accessory stores and RV dealerships," said Marcus Lemonis, Camping World's Chairman and CEO.

RV dealers nationwide have once again ranked **Tiffin Motorhomes** in an elite class for the company's design, reliability, quality, value and competitive pricing. For the eighth consecutive year, the Recreation Vehicle Dealers Association (RVDA) honored Tiffin with its prestigious Quality Circle Award. Dealers singled out only five U.S. Class A motorhome manufacturers for the 2011 award, based on a formal survey of dealer satisfaction. The award, Tiffin's 13th overall, is based on RVDA's 18th annual Dealer Satisfaction Index survey. To qualify for the award, manufacturers must receive at least 15 dealer responses and score 80 percent or higher in overall dealer satisfaction.

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THREE CENTURIES OF HISTORY

Drayton Hall, located in Charleston, S.C., is one of the oldest colonial houses in the United States to remain in near-original condition. In 1738, John Drayton commissioned the construction of Drayton Hall and lived in the home until his death in 1784. After his death, the home was passed down to successors of the Drayton family. But by 1974, the expenses of maintaining Drayton Hall led family members to sell the home to The National Trust for Historic Preservation. According to oral history, in 1670, the BOWENS family arrived in America from Barbados as slaves to the Drayton family. For nearly 300 years, both the BOWENS and Drayton families have continued to be involved in the historic preservation and the stories that keep Drayton Hall alive today.

Rich with American history, the home has not only withstood the test of time, it



has survived the American Revolution, Civil War, the earthquake of 1886, as well as hurricanes that continue to ravage the East Coast of the United States.

Today, guests can take guided tours throughout the home and plantation to learn more about the Drayton dynasty, African-American history, innovation and

preservation of this historic monument. RV parking is available on-site.

Oak Plantation Campground is located just six miles away and has more than 250 sites, some with 50-amp electric hookups and on concrete pads.

For more information, call 843-769-2600 or visit www.draytonhall.org.



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Revolution 3157-280 LED



Automotive Bulbs



G4 Bulb Series



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Revolution 1156-170 LED 1157-170 LED



Revolution 1141-150 LED



Revolution 1141-250NL LED



Revolution 1141-350 LED 1141-400 LED



Revolution 1141-280 LED



Revolution 1036-25 LED



Rev 1141 Series



Revolution 921-160 LED 921-250 LED



Revolution 921-220 LED



Revolution 1383-220 LED



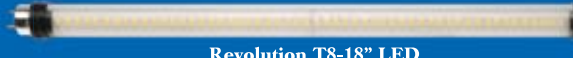
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MARVELOUS MACKINAC

If you're planning a late-spring or summer trip, be sure to stop in Mackinac Island, Michigan. Located near the border of the United States and Canada, Mackinac Island has a trove of history, plenty of sightseeing and abundant opportunities to experience its natural beauty. Since 1984, visitors have marveled at Mill Creek, a mill established in 1790 to provide lumber to the island. Michael Dousman, a Mackinac Island merchant, purchased the mill and farm in 1819 and continued its operation into the 1830s. Today, visitors can head to Mill Creek to watch the restored mill in action. Keeping with the spirit of the island, visitors must check out the Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse. Tradition has it that for 65 years lighthouse keepers and their families ensured the safety of ships sailing into the Straits of Mackinac. Since 1889, the lighthouse has served as a testimony of the history and spirit of Mackinac Island.

Adventure-seekers will enjoy scouting out Mackinac Island State Park on foot, bike, horseback or carriage. Explorers will admire the unique landscape of the park and its lime-

stone bluffs, lush forests, caves and scenic views of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. Park your motorhome just a few minutes from the Mackinac Island ferry docks at Mackinaw Mill Creek Camping (vehicles are not permitted on the island). After a long day of exploring, visitors can also enjoy a round of golf on the campground's 18-hole golf course.

For more information, call 231-436-5584 or go online to www.campmackinaw.com. ♦



PHOTO: COURTESY MACKINAC ISLAND STATE PARK COMMISSION



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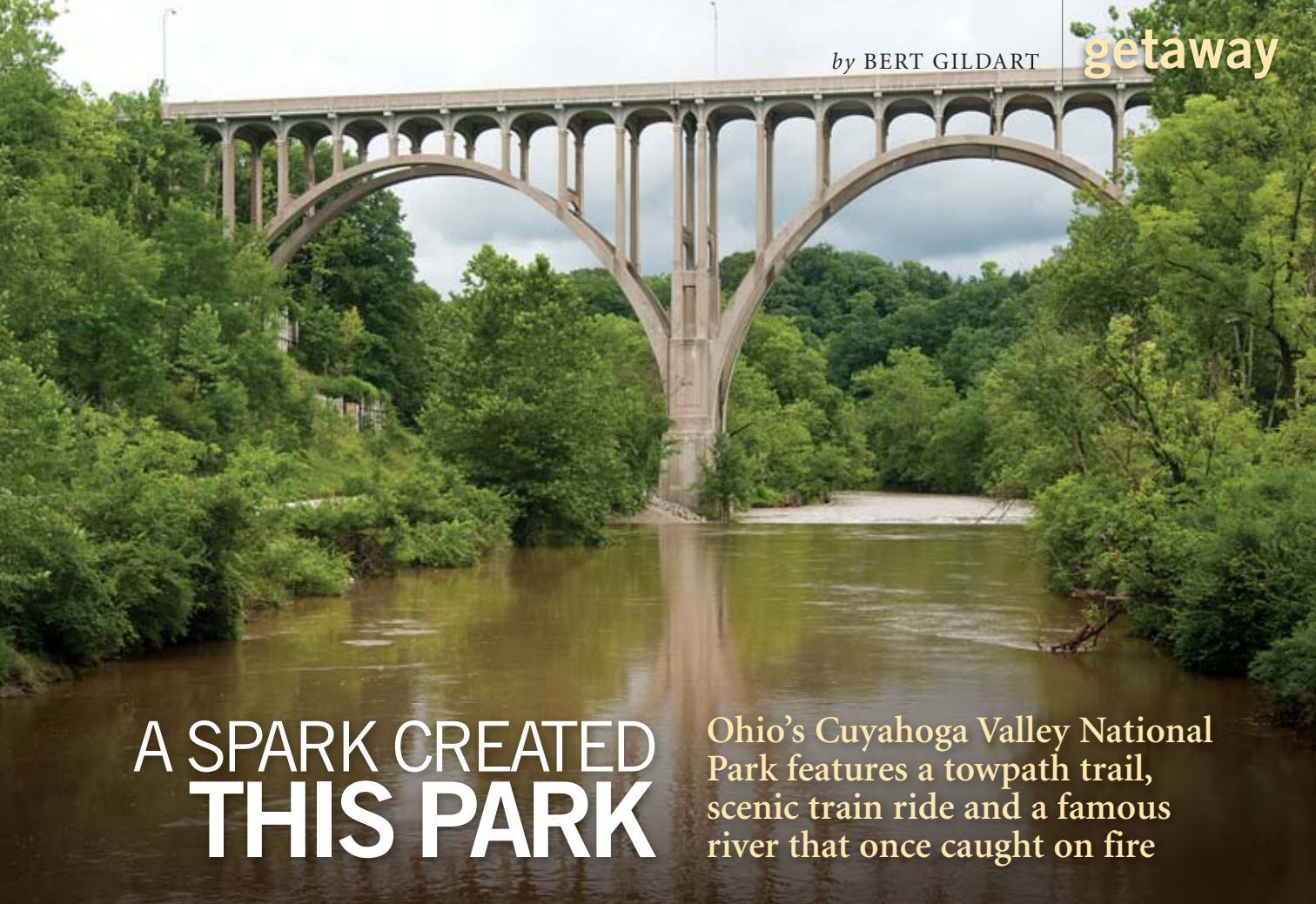
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A SPARK CREATED THIS PARK

Ohio's Cuyahoga Valley National Park features a towpath trail, scenic train ride and a famous river that once caught on fire

On June 22, 1969, Ohio's Cuyahoga River caught fire, sparking the creation of a national environmental celebration most of us recognize as Earth Day. But fire on the river prompted such a thorough cleanup of the Cuyahoga that the area was eventually elevated to national park status, meaning the area had to offer "superlative opportunities for recreation" and be "relatively unspoiled." Considering that raw garbage, piles of beer cans, and junk cars had once blighted the land and water, and oil slicks fouled the river, it seemed impossible that such



PHOTOS: BERT GILDART



Top: State Route 82 bridge crosses over the Cuyahoga River. Right: Deer are a common sight in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Left: A bridge near the Peninsula Depot Visitor Center leads to the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

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

For dates, times and
more information visit:

AffinityRVShows.com

A SPARK CREATED THIS PARK



Each summer the National Park Service hires performers to entertain train passengers and visitors who have stopped by the visitor center, in this case, the Peninsula Depot. The park calls its program "Tunes Along the Trail," and weather permitting, offers 14 weekend afternoons with music at various places along the towpath.

standards could ever be achieved.

As a former National Park Service employee, I was curious about this "River of Fire," and last summer fate decreed; we'd be in Ohio and see signs for Cuyahoga Valley National Park and for a KOA. Diverting from Interstate 80 we settled in for a night or two of camping, but were surprised to find that five days later, we were still enjoying a river so polluted it caught fire on multiple occasions.

We began our explorations the morning following our arrival at the KOA by making the 20-minute drive from the campground to the park's Peninsula Depot Vis-

itor Center. We learned the quickest way to survey Ohio's only national park would be to drive the park's Riverview Road. For several hours we poked along, and as we drove we saw a seemingly pristine path where cyclists rode and hikers strolled. On the opposite side of a lovely river, we sometimes saw a small passenger train chugging along. We also saw ponds and thick forests, and it was then that I remembered that back in 1969 some key players had been absolutely enraged about creating a park from a junk pile and a fouled river. But hard work and a great vision prevailed. In 2000, Congress provided the area with its



A great blue heron just north of the Peninsula Depot Visitor Center.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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A SPARK CREATED THIS PARK

highest of designations — and appropriately so. Today, quality recreation most certainly does exist at Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

For starters, the National Park Service has created a wonderful blend of cycling and railroad transportation, both paralleling an ancient trail where history still lives. In 1827, the path was developed in conjunction with a canal that floated barges. Eventually the old canal system stretched 308 miles from Cleveland to the Ohio River at Portsmouth, Ohio. Mules towed the barges and, at the height of their service, helped transport more than 2 million tons of wheat. This system was an integral part of America's transportation and worked until the trains took over in the late 1800s. But the canal still lives as a grand part of American history, featuring old locks and quaint homes, backdropped by a much heralded agrarian lifestyle. Today, the path spans 110 miles along the old Ohio and Erie Canal and is celebrated as a National Heritage Area, of which 20 miles are managed by Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Early one morning we unloaded our bikes at a parking lot adjacent to the small village of Peninsula, and immediately picked up a spur trail that crossed a bridge offering wonderful views of a roaring stream. We pedaled onto the old towpath proper, and the abrupt transition contin-



The towpath trail provides cyclists and hikers with access to Deep Lock Quarry and to many other old locks.

ued. At times we could see the Cuyahoga, a Native American word that means "Crooked River," winding through verdant mountains. We could hear birds chirping and then we could hear the croaking of a great blue heron from a marsh. Continuing our survey, we saw a number of deer and several wood ducks. In other words, even the minutia of Cuyahoga was beautiful, backdropped by a grandeur that cyclists and hikers love to see and explore.

Interpretive signs state that long ago the landscape was formed by the mingling of two diverse geographic regions, the Appalachian Plateau and the Central Lowlands. These vast regions were modified by the comings and goings of multiple glaciations.

We pedaled on, ascending several small hills that soon dropped onto the Szalay's Sweet Corn Vegetable Farm featuring an old acre-sized barn housing huge bins of corn, cantaloupe, squash, beans, carrots

Backcountry campsites can be found along the Stanford Trail in Peninsula, Ohio. Also in Peninsula you'll find Szalay's Sweet Corn Vegetable Farm, just off the towpath near the Hunt Farm Visitor Information Center.



and watermelons. The display was immense and all was produced by local area farmers. Appropriately, the nearby Hunt Farm Visitor Information Center celebrates and interprets the agrarian lifestyle.

Departing the Szalay's farmer's market, we soon entered a marshy area and a boardwalk. Suddenly, we heard the thud of a beaver slapping its tail, appropriate as the area was designated Beaver Marsh. A muscular bicycle-mounted ranger with dreadlocks poking beneath his helmet pedaled over, dismounted, and began a conversation that quickly led to information about our surroundings. "Once the pond had been a Volkswagen junkyard," he said, adding that if you had driven by here 20 years ago, you would have seen huge cranes lifting rusting car bodies from the mud.

He explained that the plan had been to transform the junkyard into a parking lot, but several beavers built a dam and that created a new and better plan. Then he added with much pride and a winning smile, "We have several beaver lodges in and around the marsh, and that makes for about 30 beaver!"

From Beaver Marsh, the historic path continues for a total of about 12 miles from Peninsula. By now we knew our return could be made by train. From April through October, between Wednesday and Sunday, you can park your car at any of five different train stops. Or you can cycle to one of the many stations along the canal, paying just \$2 to hop aboard with bicycles and return to your vehicle.

That evening we boarded a train from near the park's southern terminus and relaxed as the train chugged along. The ride back was short and when we detrained, musicians greeted us with old-time tunes. Throughout the summer, Cuyahoga sponsors entertainment, and the couple greeting our train specialized in folk music.

Riding in the bicycle-friendly area was enticing so the next day we returned. This time we headed north where we quickly passed under the huge I-80 bridge. In 2008, a pair of nesting peregrine falcons had taken up home beneath the bridge so we stopped to scope out the massive concrete structures, hoping to see the rare birds. But the falcons had fled. Naturalists, however, say the birds are often seen during nesting season, meaning the area provided an adequate prey base.

We continued cycling, passing locks, old homes, a small Park Service bookstore and much more wildlife. By early afternoon we reached Rockside Station and the northern end of the park, alerting us that during our stay we had now cycled the entire length of the park. At that point we were about six miles from Cleveland, and industrialization began to reappear. We boarded a stopped train, and then began listening to other passengers. Without exception, everyone was ecstatic, with some

passengers talking about the resiliency of nature and the canal system that helped create a nation.

We settled back, realizing what they said was true, but also that the type of life we so love was the direct result of our life on the road. Such a life has enabled us to learn — that even in Ohio, between Cleveland and Akron — all national parks offer "superlative opportunities for recreation."

That's true, even in a park that preserves a river that once caught fire. ♦

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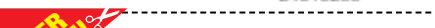
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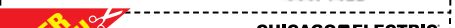
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TWO BIKE HITCH MOUNT BIKE RACK

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4 PIECE 1" x 15 FT. RATCHETING TIE DOWN SET

LOT NO. 90984

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REG. PRICE \$16.99

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MOVER'S DOLLY

LOT NO. 93888

SAVE 46%

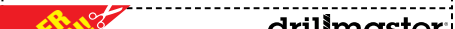
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1000 LB. CAPACITY



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RAPID PUMP® 3 TON HEAVY DUTY FLOOR JACK

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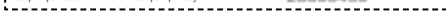
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2000 WATT CONTINUOUS/ 4000 WATT PEAK POWER INVERTER

SAVE \$100

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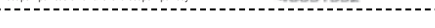
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Not for marine use.

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drillmaster 18 VOLT CORDLESS 3/8" DRILL/DRIVER AND FLASHLIGHT KIT

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REG. PRICE \$39.99

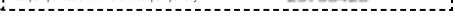
\$19.99

Includes one 18V NiCd battery and charger.

LOT NO. 68287



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12" RATCHET BAR CLAMP/SPREADER

PITTSBURGH



LOT NO. 46807/68975/69221/69222

SAVE 77%

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SUPER COUPON!

LOT NO. 97626/68986

80 PIECE ROTARY TOOL SET

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS



SAVE 72%

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\$699 REG. PRICE \$24.99

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SOLID RUBBER WHEEL CHOCK

LOT NO. 96479



SAVE 50%

\$499 REG. PRICE \$9.99

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HIGH SPEED METAL SAW

CENTRAL PNEUMATIC



Item 91753 shown

LOT NO. 91753/113

SAVE 66%

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRALPNEUMATIC 3 GALLON, 100 PSI OILLESS PANCAKE AIR COMPRESSOR

LOT NO. 95275



SAVE 46%

\$3999 REG. PRICE \$74.99

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10/2/55 AMP, 6/12 VOLT BATTERY CHARGER/ENGINE STARTER

CHICAGO POWER ELECTRIC SYSTEMS

LOT NO. 66783



SAVE 50%

\$2999 REG. PRICE \$59.99

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SUPER COUPON!

6" DIGITAL CALIPER

PITTSBURGH

LOT NO. 47257



Includes two 1.5V button cell batteries.

SAVE 66%

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SUPER COUPON!

RECIPROCATING SAW WITH ROTATING HANDLE

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS



SAVE 50%

\$1999 REG. PRICE \$39.99

LOT NO. 65570

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SUPER COUPON!

CENTRALPNEUMATIC DUAL CHUCK TIRE INFLATOR

LOT NO. 68272



SAVE 42%

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SUPER COUPON!

HaulMaster

500 LB. CAPACITY ALUMINUM CARGO CARRIER

LOT NO. 92655



SAVE \$60

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SUPER COUPON!

800 WATT/900 MAX. WATT PORTABLE GENERATOR

CHICAGO ElectricGenerators



SAVE \$60

\$8999 REG. PRICE \$149.99

LOT NO. 66619

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SUPER COUPON!

7 PIECE RATCHETING COMBINATION WRENCH SETS

PITTSBURGH



SAE LOT NO. 96654 | METRIC LOT NO. 95552

SAVE 40%

\$1799 REG. PRICE \$29.99

YOUR CHOICE!

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SUPER COUPON!

HaulMaster

30A FEMALE TO 15A MALE RV PIGTAIL POWER ADAPTER

LOT NO. 65942



SAVE 50%

\$399 REG. PRICE \$7.99

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US*GENERAL

11 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET

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INCLUDES:
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SAVE \$150

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SUPER COUPON!

CHICAGO POWER ELECTRIC SYSTEMS

45 WATT SOLAR PANEL KIT

LOT NO. 90599/68751



SAVE \$80

Item 90599 shown

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HOW THE WEST WON US

CALIFORNIA'S SIERRA NEVADA PROVIDES VISITORS GEOGRAPHICAL, CINEMATIC AND INDUSTRIAL HISTORY

by RICHARD AND ELLEN THANE

For decades we've traveled California's picturesque U.S. Highway 395 along the eastern Sierra Nevada, which is Spanish for "snowy range." We have always been in a hurry to get from one end of the country to another. Sure the scenery was pretty but after stopping at Yosemite National Park and Mono Lake we thought we'd seen all of the major attractions. After enjoying a presentation by a fellow photographer showing the beautiful Alabama Hills where Hollywood makes so many of its Western movies, we wondered what else we were missing along this route. Traveling from north to south, we searched for the

wonderful secrets that lie hidden just beyond the pavement along the 300-mile stretch of Highway 395 from Topaz Lake on the Nevada/California border all the way south to Tehachapi, Calif.

Smoke billowed from a wildfire in the Sierra as we drove south from Reno, Nev., and a smoky haze lingered into the afternoon as we crossed into California at Topaz Lake. There is an agricultural checkpoint here that looks for citrus, so if you have any, eat it before entering California.

Black storm clouds soon filled the sky and fat raindrops spattered our windshield as we climbed up and over Devil's Gate





Opposite: A Burlington Northern and Santa Fe train travels the Tehachapi Loop. This page, clockwise from above: Docents lead tours of the old Standard Mill in Bodie State Historic Park. At 650 feet tall, Yosemite's Bridalveil Fall is a beautiful example of the grandeur of the Sierra. In the area near Sequoia National Park, you may see black bears in the trees.

Summit, where John Fremont crossed in 1844 while searching for a route across the Sierra Nevada. This is the highest point along Highway 395 and it's hard to believe that 400 million years ago this area was all ocean making the western coastline of our country run through Idaho and Utah. The exact way the Sierra Nevada developed is still a bit of a mystery. Scientists debate several theories but it is obvious that volcanic activity and the shifting of the Earth's plates played a large part, leaving tall, craggy mountains, lush valleys and vast precious metal deposits that may have filtered through the rock and soil from as far away as central Nevada.

The Gold Rush days of the 1800s created a wealth of legends about the Sierra that still entertain us in Western movies and novels. Today, little towns that sprouted during the era of the Wild West lay half-forgotten along Highway 395, and are growing more dilapidated as the years pass. There is still tremendous treasure to be discovered along this eastern side of these craggy blocks of igneous rock known as "California's backbone;" historical ghost towns, outdoor recreation, movie locations, wind and solar farms, and some of the most beautiful scenery on Earth.

Bridgeport Reservoir RV Park and Marina was our home for several days while we explored the backroads of the northern end of the scenic byway. Weather-beaten, ancient buildings tell the tale of early pioneers and vast ranch lands conjuring visions of cowboys rounding up cattle. Vast and enticing trails invite hikers, horseback riders and four-wheelers. Near the trails, there is a reservoir known for its trophy-sized trout. As we set up camp, a group of young people brought out some huge fish they caught that morning. After we expressed suitable admiration, a nice fat trout ended up in our refrigerator. Not being avid fishermen, we hadn't even thought about bringing fishing gear.

A storm was brewing the next morning as we made a dinghy run out to the old ghost town of Bodie located along a dusty 13-

HOW THE WEST WON US

mile road southeast of Bridgeport. A strange light illuminated the heavy clouds, turning the sky deep purple as spears of lightning danced across the sky. Thunder rumbled and echoed through the hills lending an eerie atmosphere to the aging buildings that spilled downhill from the old Standard Mill. The storm made it easy to imagine the noise and chaos of long ago when 20 huge stamps pounded around the clock, crushing ore from as many as 30 mines in Bodie, a town that once thrived on mining. With 170 of the original 2,000 buildings still standing, Bodie State Historic Park is an original mining town from the late 1800s preserved in a "state of arrested decay." It was gold that built Bodie and in 1879 the population was around 10,000. Known as one of the rowdiest of the Wild West towns with 65 saloons, opium dens and brothels, violence and daily murders were commonplace. Though Bodie was founded on gold, ore production in the area was estimated to be \$3.1 million in 1881. By 1910, the town's population shrank to just 698 families who chose to stay rather than leave for better mining opportunities. However, by 1943, Bodie was left desolate.

In 1961, Bodie was designated a National Historic Site and just a year later was rescued from the ravage of vandals as the area was designated Bodie State Historic Park. The Park's existence remains iffy, as California's State Parks struggle with budget cuts. As with many of the old mining camps, it is said that much gold remains deep beneath the surface, but is too costly to extract. Though Bodie is open year-round, the entrance road is closed during the winter and there is no on-site camping.

By 10 the next morning, the storm passed and a small group of visitors gathered at the entrance of the old Methodist church, lis-



Above: Part of the majestic Sierra Nevada as seen from the Mono Lake region. Opposite page: Yosemite National Park is a treasure-trove for photographers and nature lovers. Bridgeport Reservoir RV Park and Marina is located on the east side of the Sierra. Most of the campsites overlook the reservoir.

tening spellbound as a park volunteer spun tales of gold, greed and mayhem. In the palm of his hand he held two shiny nuggets from a nearby mine. After stopping at the small visitor center, where we picked up free tickets to tour the stamp mill later in the afternoon, we prowled among the old buildings and peeked into dusty windows, imagining the lives of those who lived there long ago. There are no commercial services for miles so be sure you bring water and any food you might want. Visiting Bodie will easily fill an entire day.



The otherworldly look of the rock formations at Alabama Hills has made the area a very popular location for movies, TV shows and commercials.



As we continued south on Highway 395 looking for more uncharted treasures, we drove through a volcanic landscape with the Sierra looming on the right. Our next campsite was Mono Vista RV Park in the little town of Lee Vining. From here, we explored the fascinating rock formation of Mono Lake and then made a long day trip over to state Highway 120 and into Yosemite National Park. We could have taken the motorhome and camped in the park but chose not to. We have visited Yosemite several times in the past and the route to Yosemite is steep and winding. It

would be better to visit Yosemite from the western entrance if you are nervous about driving this type of terrain.

Just south of Highway 120, we came to the June Lake Loop, a 14-mile stretch that passes four small lakes, all said to be good for fishing. Farther south is Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, where you can take a shuttle bus to the nearby Devils Postpile National Monument and see hexagonal rock formations that reach 60-feet high.

Continuing south, Bishop, known as the Mule Capital of the World, is the largest town along this stretch of Highway 395. If

you are there around Memorial Day you can attend the Bishop Mule Days Celebration (May 22-27, 2012) commemorating the pack animals that played such an important part in the history of the Eastern Sierra. Laws Railroad Museum fascinates railroad buffs with railroad cars from the 19th century. There is also a Western town created from old buildings gathered from nearby Owens Valley. We recommend camping at Brown's Town Campground.

The next section of Highway 395, along the Owens River, brought beautiful views of the eastern side of John Muir

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HOW THE WEST WON US

Wilderness, Sequoia National Park and Kings Canyon. We also passed Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the U.S. outside of Alaska. Keep your eyes open along this stretch because even though grizzly bears no longer roam these mountains, you may still spot black bears, deer or a coyote. Eagles, hawks and many other birds are frequently sighted and we have heard that, very rarely, you may catch a glimpse of a puma, cougar or bobcat — one of the great cats that used to prowl these mountains in formidable numbers.

Independence, the county seat of Inyo County, Calif., is another small town rich in mining and farming history. Visit the famous ancient courthouse in Independence, a true vision of the 1920s. For access to the John Muir Wilderness Area, we recommend taking the Onion Valley Road leading west of town. History buffs will want to check out the Eastern California Museum to see the large selection of historical photographs and Native American basketry.

Our next stop was Lone Pine and the eagerly anticipated Alabama Hills. During our visit the heat was fierce so finding a campground with electrical hookups was crucial. Boulder Creek RV Resort was a good choice. There are also several small Bureau of Land Management campgrounds that would make nice camping in cooler weather. A visit to the Lone Pine Film Museum gave a rich history on the movies made here. After excellent hamburgers and onion rings at the Mount Whitney restaurant, we drove back to the intersection of Highway 395 and state Highway 136 to the visitor center for Alabama Hills. We motored out of the Whitney Portal Road along Movie Road armed with a small map of the dirt roads leading through the amazing rock formations. The formations were marked with a series of plaques depicting where some famous Western movies have been filmed. We almost expected to see John Wayne swagger out from behind a rock. In mid-October Lone Pine hosts a film festival featuring some of the actors who starred in the local films.

About twenty-five miles south of Lone Pine, Highway 395 intersects with state Highway 190, leading over to Death Valley National Park. South on Highway 395 along the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the western edge of China Lake Naval Weapons Center, the landscape becomes volcanic. We took

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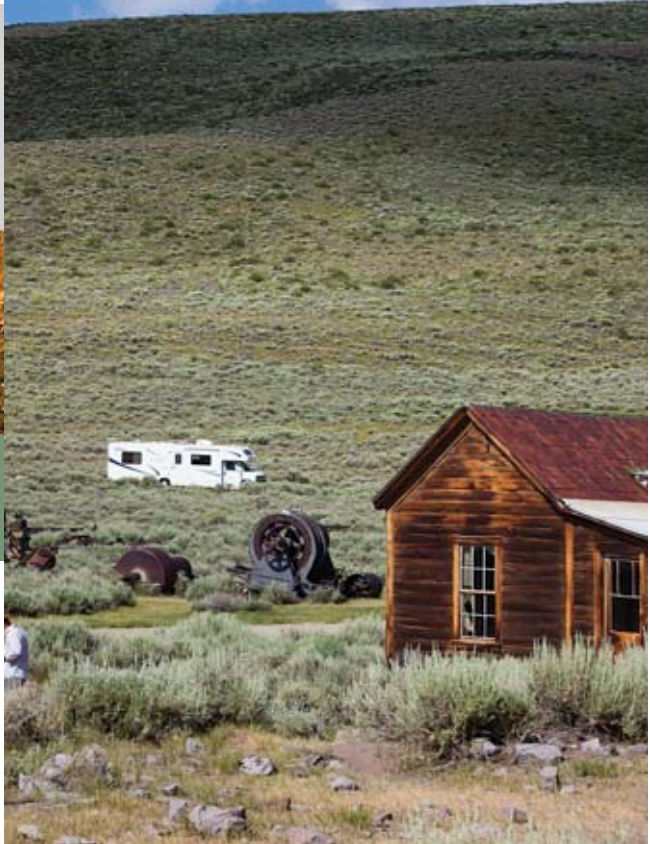
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Highway 14, at the intersection of Highway 395, along the southern edge of the Sierra to Tehachapi where giant turbines take advantage of strong wind currents known as the "sierra rotor," which swirl around the southern end of the Sierra to create electricity. While you're in Tehachapi, be sure to see the famous Tehachapi Loop, completed in 1876. Still in use today, this is one of the seven wonders of the railroad world, an average of 36 trains per day pass over bridges



Above: With almost 5,000 turbines, the Tehachapi Wind Farm is the second-largest collection of wind generators in the world. Right: A motorhome approaches Bodie State Historic Park.

and through a series of tunnels making a spiral loop with the engine eventually passing its own tail. Our camping choice while in this area was Red Rock State Park's Ricardo Campground. The campground has 50 primitive campsites and a maximum motorhome length limit of 30 feet.

Tehachapi was the final destination on our tour of the Sierra, but we'll be back and are already looking forward to our next trip, knowing there are many more secrets of the Sierra yet for us to find. ♦

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REDISCOVERING HOME

STAYING CLOSE TO HOME WHILE EXPLORING
COLORADO'S BEAUTIFUL PIKES PEAK

by MARY ZALMANEK





Like most RVers, my husband Jim and I enjoy the adventure and discovery that comes with traveling. The only thing we like better than leaving is coming home to Colorado's Pikes Peak region.

To share this joy with you, we became tourists in our hometown, revisiting everyday favorites and some we hadn't seen in years. We loaded the motorhome and spent two weeks visiting nearby attractions while staying at two state parks: Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado Springs and Eleven Mile near Lake George.

From left: An angler casts his line into Corral Cove at Eleven Mile Reservoir. The African Rift Valley exhibit at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo is home to the largest herd of reticulated giraffes in the United States. Below: The Cadet Chapel at the United States Air Force Academy, with its 17 spires of aluminum, steel and glass, is Colorado's most-popular man-made attraction. Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun offers breathtaking views of Colorado Springs.

We began at the 1,680-acre Cheyenne Mountain State Park, which lies just south of Colorado Springs. The park, which opened in October 2006, has 51 campsites with full hookups. Hikers and bikers can choose from 16 trails totaling 20 miles.

The star of the region is the famous mountain itself. At an altitude of 14,110 feet, Pikes Peak ranks as the 31st highest peak among Colorado's 54 fourteeners, peaks that exceed 14,000 feet. There are several ways to experience North America's most-visited mountain: ride the Cog Railway, drive the Pikes Peak Highway, hike Barr Trail, bike with Challenge Unlimited, or admire it from anywhere in the region. The view from the top is what inspired Katharine Lee Bates to write the words to "America the Beautiful" in 1893.

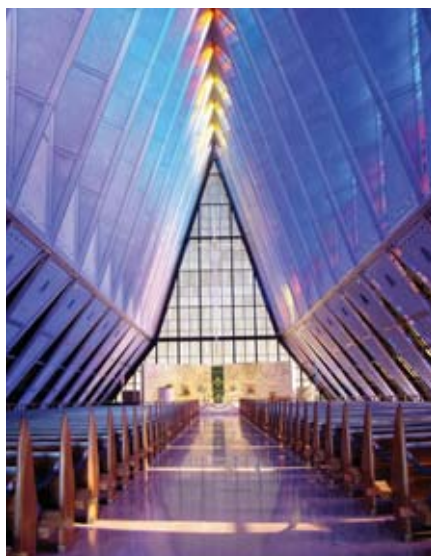
In years past, we had done them all. Since our favorite was the Pikes Peak Cog Railway, that is where we started our re-discovery tour. Riley, the conductor, was entertaining. He interspersed useful information with humor. He pointed out 2,000-year-old bristlecone pines and aspen groves, considered to be the largest organism on Earth since they are connected by a single underground root system. Riley told us that Native Americans found medicinal uses for aspen bark, "Take two aspens and call me in the morning," the

medicine man would advise.

If you'd rather drive your dinghy vehicle, allow several hours to complete the 38-mile round trip on the partially paved toll road. Motorhomes that have a wheelbase that exceeds 228 inches are not permitted on Pikes Peak Highway. If you are physically fit and acclimated to the altitude, you can hike the 13-mile Barr Trail. This challenging hike, with an elevation gain of 7,800 feet, takes six-to-10 hours to complete. Be prepared with plenty of water and food, a jacket (since summertime highs are often in the 40s above the timberline), and

a reservation to ride down on the Cog Railway. If you're a cyclist, Challenge Unlimited will provide breakfast, take you to the top of Pikes Peak, outfit you with a bicycle and helmet, and guide your group on the 20-mile downhill ride. Independent cyclists are not permitted on Pikes Peak Highway.

No matter how you choose to go up and down Pikes Peak, you return to the charming town of Manitou Springs. Take time to browse the unique shops and try the delicious restaurants. On a self-guided tour, you can taste the natural mineral springs that made Manitou famous.



PHOTOS: MARY ZALMANEK

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Clockwise from left: Crowds gather for the jousting competition at the Colorado Renaissance Festival. The entrance to Cave of the Winds overlooks Williams Canyon. The Lantern Tour at the Cave of the Winds ventures into the darkest interior regions of the cave.

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Not far from Manitou lies another must-see gem. Garden of the Gods, known for its 300-foot towering sandstone formations, is popular with tourists and locals alike. I've enjoyed countless hikes and bike rides on the 17 miles of trails, which are also open to horseback riders. Naturalists lead twice-daily walks, sharing fascinating facts about the park's herd of bighorn sheep, the gender of juniper trees and the many uses Native Americans had for yucca. Our guide was stumped, however, when a 9-year-old boy asked, "If they liked it so much, why did they call it yucca?"

Cave of the Winds, considered by some to be God's underground gift to Colorado, is also in Manitou. Open to the public since 1881, it's been attracting visitors ever since. In the early days, cave visitors had to crawl on hands and knees with only a candle to light their way. Today, there are several tours to choose from. The Discovery Tour follows well-lit pathways, while the Lantern Tour ventures into the darkest interior regions. On our Discovery Tour, our guide took us through a passage called Fat Man's Misery, Tall Man's Headache. He said, "If you suck, tuck and duck, with any luck, you won't get stuck."

In addition to the state park, Cheyenne Mountain and nearby Cheyenne Canyon are home to several of the area's most popular attractions. The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, one of two mountain-side zoos in the U.S., houses the largest herd of reticulated (Somali) giraffes in the nation. Twenty giraffes, ranging in age from

30 years to a few months, currently live in the African Rift Valley exhibit. After feeding the giraffes we explored the Rocky Mountain Wild exhibit. Standing inches away from a grizzly bear on the safe side of a glass partition, we watched it slap at the water, trying in vain to catch rainbow trout for lunch.

Above the zoo, Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun offers breathtaking views of Colorado Springs. The first floor of the 80-foot observation tower contains murals depicting the early history of the Pikes Peak region. Upper levels contain photographs of Will Rogers, the American humorist who died in a plane crash in 1935. Chimes that ring every quarter hour can be heard miles away. Admission to the shrine is included with zoo tickets.

In Cheyenne Canyon, Seven Falls is a series of seven cascading waterfalls spanning 181 vertical feet. It's a natural wonder by day and a computerized light show by night. View it from a short distance away by riding the 14-story in-mountain elevator blasted through solid granite. View it close up by taking the steps next to the falls, all 224 of them. At the top, you can hike to Midnight Falls and Inspiration Point.

Like so many Americans, we are often inspired by Olympic athletes. Colorado Springs is the proud home of the United States Olympic Committee. Free public tours are offered year-round at the Training Center. The tour includes a 12-minute film and a 45-minute walking tour. We watched gymnasts, wrestlers and swimmers work



out in the training facilities. Life-size figures representing each Olympic and Paralympic sport and flags from each participating country adorn the Olympic Pathway.

Not only does the United States Air Force Academy provide excellent undergraduate education to officer candidates, it has also been a good neighbor to Colorado Springs since the facility opened in 1958. Fans flock to Air Force football, basketball and hockey games, as well as musical and theater productions. During graduation, all eyes in Colorado Springs search the skies for the Thunderbirds, Air Force jets that perform aerobatic maneuvers. Visitors are welcome at the Academy, depending on current security levels. Visitors must enter through the North Gate at Exit 156B on Interstate 25. Maps are available for self-guided tours.

We followed the recommended route past the B-52 display to the Visitor Center parking lot. In the Visitor Center, a 14-minute movie renewed my respect for the young men and women who enter the Academy to serve and protect our country. A one-third mile paved trail leads to the Cadet Chapel. The Chapel, with its 17 spires of aluminum, steel and glass, is Colorado's most popular man-made attraction. We snapped a few photographs and enjoyed five minutes of quiet reflection in the chapel.

Another good neighbor is Fort Carson, a United States Army post, which sits directly across from Cheyenne Mountain State Park. The aptly-named Cheyenne Shadows Golf Course is open to the public. This 18-hole championship course is one of the most picturesque public courses in Colorado Springs. Allow extra time to gain access to the post. A valid driver's license, proof of insurance and vehicle registration are required.

Whether you go in period costumes from the 16th century or modern day attire, you will fit right in at the Colorado Renaissance Festival if you sprinkle your conversations with "thee" and "thou." Located 30 miles north of Colorado Springs in Larkspur, the medieval village and marketplace is open eight weekends in June and July. Hundreds of authentically costumed characters entertain in the village streets and on festival stages. We laughed at the antics of Charming and Dashing, two handsome princes that pull unsuspecting

members of the audience onto the stage. We sampled food fit for a king, including king-sized turkey legs. Toward the end of the day King Henry led his entourage into the arena for the last jousting competition.

Several venues offer concerts during the summer. On Wednesday evenings, America the Beautiful Park and Hillside Gardens in Colorado Springs, and Limbach Park in Monument draw enthusiastic crowds to hear local musicians. We attended several free concerts in Limbach Park, enjoying acts as varied as a John Denver tribute, "Zen Cowboy," Chuck Pyle and the Air Force band Wild Blue Yonder.

Our last stop was Eleven Mile State Park, 50 miles west of Colorado Springs in a high alpine meadow. The park has nine campgrounds, but only Rocky Ridge has electrical sites. With its abundant trout, Kokanee salmon, and northern pike, Eleven Mile Reservoir is an angler's favorite. In preparation for this adventure, we dusted off our fly-fishing equipment and bought fishing licenses. While checking in, I noticed photographs of fishermen with their catches, ranging from a 44-inch northern pike to a 21-inch rainbow trout caught by a 9-year-old boy. A ranger showed us on a map where the trout was caught. We went to Corral Cove to try our luck. After a few hours we returned to the motorhome to have a late dinner of wild-caught, store-bought salmon.

Eleven Mile Marina offers boat rental and outfitter services. While we may have had better luck with a guide, the next day we ventured out on our own again. Since I prefer catch-and-eat to catch-and-release fishing, we drove to a section of the Platte on the far side of Spinney Mountain Reservoir with a two-trout limit. This section of the river was designated as gold medal waters, the highest-quality habitat for trout in Colorado. I stood in the river wearing my waders, surrounded by the gentle gurgle of water. Even though we returned to camp empty handed, we returned happy.

In the late afternoon, I sat in the shade of the motorhome awning, feeling a light breeze. A lone turkey vulture circled gracefully overhead, distracting me from my book. A few wisps of clouds scratched the otherwise impossibly blue sky. Aspens and ponderosa pines were nestled among the boulders at our campsite. Patches of snow lingered on distant mountaintops. ♦

From top: Seven Falls is a series of seven cascading waterfalls spanning 181 vertical feet — it's a natural wonder by day and a computerized light show by night. The Pikes Peak Cog Railway, the world's highest cog railroad, takes passengers from Manitou Springs to the top of the 14,110-foot mountain (photo courtesy of Pikes Peak Cog Railway). Just outside the Garden of the Gods, the visitors center is a good place to get information about the park or have lunch.

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GOATS ON ROOFS

by BOBBIE HASSELBRING

We slice through the slate-gray water, our canoe amazingly stable and agile despite its origins as a cedar log. Above us, an eagle trills a haunting sound that echoes off water and forest. Our First Nations guide calls back to him and we feel the presence of ancient ancestors who plied these waters.

We are on Vancouver Island, the largest island off Canada's Pacific mainland, to explore its less-traveled western shore. We've flown from Portland to Vancouver, British Columbia, via Air Canada and rented a Class C motorhome. Touring by motorhome is popular here so there are plenty of rental companies, but we chose Fraserway RV because it offers many smaller Class C's, is good for island driving and it is just a shuttle hop from the airport.

Getting to Vancouver Island with a motorhome is easy. At first, I'm nervous about driving an RV onto a ferry, but BC Ferries regularly transports motorhomes, buses, and even 18-wheelers across the Strait of Georgia. Driving onto the seven-deck ferry is as simple as pulling into a big warehouse.

The ferry motors through the waters between Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay and we slip upstairs for a light lunch of wild salmon and poutine (the wildly popular Canadian fast-food dish of French fries, gravy and fresh cheese curds). We browse the gift shop's books and take photos of boats and tree-covered islands from the viewing decks.

Ninety minutes later, we pull off the ferry and head south on the Trans-Canada Highway (Highway 1), the main island

TREKKING TO TOFINO



Cathedral Grove provides a glimpse of old-growth forests.

road. We're bound for the Pacific Marine Circle Route, a 158-mile tour that skirts the southwestern coast of the island. This two-lane route, originally created by logging companies, has been recently paved and offers RVers a different way to see Vancouver Island.

MARINE CIRCLE ROUTE: SEA & FOREST

We turn onto Highway 14, the beginning of the Marine Circle Route. At the town of Sooke, we get our first views of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, across the water we see Washington's craggy Olympic Mountains, and then stop for a few groceries.

We visit Sooke Regional Museum and Visitor Centre, a small exhibit and gift shop filled with Victorian clothing, old household goods, and relics from early rail, logging and fishing industries. I buy a pair of blue bear earrings and we load up on regional maps and information.

Sooke is famous for Sooke Harbour House, an iconic inn and restaurant that started the island's slow food movement, and it's well worth a stop for lunch or dinner. Near the Harbour House, the blackberries at Quimper Park beg to be picked so we gather several cups for future breakfasts. Then, a few miles farther, we're intrigued by a sign for mead and pull off at the Tugwell Creek Honey Farm and Meadery to sample some surprisingly refreshing and fruity honey wine.

The road between Sooke and Port Renfrew is RV friendly, with plenty of lookouts and places to camp and fish. Juan de Fuca Provincial Park follows the coastline and offers a number of forested campsites with pit toilets (no hookups) for just \$16. The name Marine Circle, however, is a bit

of a misnomer, as there are more views of thick forest than water. China Beach Campground is one of the few that looks out on Juan de Fuca Strait and has flat sites, including some pull-throughs.

Past the park, the road is rough with heaves, patches, and several one-lane bridges over clear creeks. This winding route is a favorite with them and the scene reminds us to take time to enjoy the views while driving cautiously.

Just before Lake Cowichan, we stop at the Harris Creek Spruce, the second-largest spruce in Canada. This awe-inspiring tree, more than 260 feet tall and so wide it would take 15 people to encircle it, is a short distance from the road along a well-kept, wheelchair-accessible trail.

TOTEM POLES & NANAIMO BARS

We're weary when we pull into the town of Duncan, so we head to Duncan RV Park, a friendly little place that's snuggled up against the Cowichan River. After supper, we join our neighbors for popcorn and an outdoor movie.

Next morning, we're up early to see Duncan's famous Native totem poles. In 1985, the town's mayor commissioned Canadian First Nations artists to carve totem poles (cedar logs carved and painted with fantastical images). About 40 of those poles stand in Duncan's downtown area. The city offers free docent-led tours on the hour during the summer months. In the winter, visitors follow yellow sidewalk footprints on a self-guided tour.

The poles, carved from weather-resistant cedar, include stylized images of ravens, eagles, bears, owls, frogs, whales, and other animals or spirits. Others have



Clockwise from above: At more than 6 feet in diameter and weighing 7 tons, Cedar Man is the widest totem pole in the world. Orcas, also known as killer whales, swim in pods and blow air and water through their blowholes. Nanaimo's Harbor has been transformed into a modern marina with shopping and dining.

PHOTOS: ANNE WEAVER



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carvings of human figures, many with a tablet-like “copper,” a symbol of wealth. One, called Cedar Man, is a family crest pole carved by First Nations artist Richard Hunt. At 6 feet 7 inches across and weighing 7 tons, it’s the widest totem in the world.

We meet cultural anthropologist Ron Greenaway at Duncan’s 1912 train station where several poles stand in front of an antique Canada National caboose.

“Totem poles are carved for many reasons,” explains Ron, who’s led tours for the past seven years. “Some are welcoming; some commemorate a marriage or important event, others mark territory or include family crests or stories. Sometimes funeral poles are erected to honor chiefs.”

We also stop at Quw’utsun’ Cultural & Conference Center, Duncan’s First Nations cultural center, to see totems, carvings and prints, and learn more about Canada’s Native culture.

Forty-five minutes north of Duncan is Nanaimo, a former coal town of about 80,000 that has a rich history worth exploring. We stroll along its picturesque waterfront and its heritage downtown, checking out the bastion, the only fortified Hudson’s Bay Company trading post left in Canada, and the Nanaimo Museum with its coal mining exhibit that gives us a creepy sense of what it was like to work under the earth.

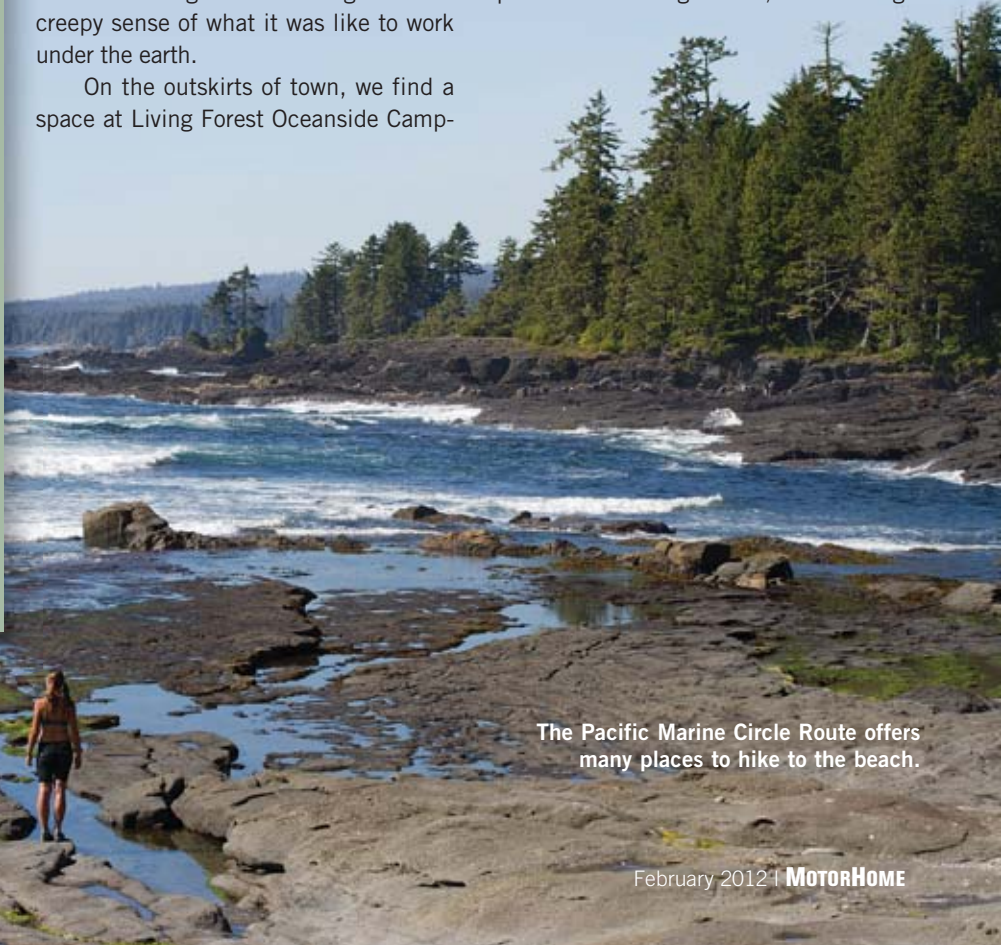
On the outskirts of town, we find a space at Living Forest Oceanside Camp-

ground and RV Park, a 53-acre park with picnic tables, fire pits, and shady, generously sized sites, many overlooking the Nanaimo River and Estuary. The park’s hiking trails let us stretch our legs and free Wi-Fi enables us to catch up online.

WHALES & CEDAR CANOES

We head northwest for Tofino, our final destination. Turning off on 4A, we stop at The Old Country Market in Coombs, a well-stocked bakery and food emporium made famous by the goats that live and eat on the store’s grassy roof. With a loaf of the market’s fresh bread in hand, we drive along the two-lane highway that skirts beautiful Cameron Lake. Suddenly, traffic slows and a half dozen RVs have pulled off the road. This is MacMillan Provincial Park, site of Cathedral Grove, an easily accessible stand of old-growth Douglas firs and cedars, some more than 800 years old. Despite the crowds, it’s peaceful the moment we step into the forest and the few people we encounter speak in hushed tones. This is truly a natural cathedral.

The drive from Nanaimo to Tofino should take 3.5 hours, but highway crews are replacing several bridges and it delays us. We don’t mind because the views are spectacular — huge lakes, meandering



The Pacific Marine Circle Route offers many places to hike to the beach.



Crystal Cove Beach Resort in Tofino offers RVers amenities such as free Wi-Fi, morning coffee and a cozy community room with a fireplace. Views from the ferry are spectacular as the boat glides through the waters between Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay.

ivers, and soaring, fjord-like mountains.

Tofino is a coastal community of 1,600 year-round residents on a long finger that juts into the Pacific Ocean. It's an isolated place defined by water, including an annual average of over 10 feet of rainfall, creating a beautiful temperate rainforest.

The first morning, we relinquish the comfort of Crystal Cove Beach Resort to brave 50-degree weather and gray skies in search of whales. Twenty thousand gray whales migrate from Mexico to Alaska following the herring and about 200 call Clay-

oquot Sound home. We board Remote Passages' Starlight, a 12-passenger motorboat with two powerful 450-HP engines. Unlike some tour providers, Remote Passages operates small boats that provide an intimate experience. Captain Randy motors to a spot where another boat has spotted a humpback whale. We stand on deck scanning the pewter water and then, suddenly, there's a fin of a 40- to 50-ton cetacean. Then, another smaller fin. It's a mother humpback and her calf. We follow the animals, keeping a respectful distance,

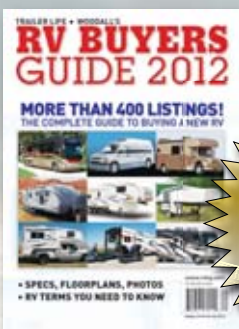
watching them surface and blow, then dive, and surface again. Finally, with a tail flip, the whale and her infant disappear.

"Orcas have been spotted," Randy announces. "Want to see them?"

He shifts the boat into high gear, pushing the big engines, leaving the larger whale-watching boats behind. We churn through the waves, passing harbor seals and sea lions on rocky outcrops. "There!" a passenger shouts, pointing.

The fin is huge, a black triangle sticking 6 feet out of the water. It's a male orca. He's

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TREKKING TO TOFINO

swimming fast, his fin bobbing up and down, and Randy strains the engines to keep up. Then another whale appears, water blowing from its blowhole. Then another and another. Suddenly we're surrounded on both sides by orcas — males, females, babies — pushing their big black and white bodies out of the water, diving, blowing, swimming in unison in an incredible dance. We scramble to capture the moment with our cameras. Too soon, it's time to head back to the marina. That evening at Bella Pacifica Campground, we pull our rig onto a cliff top overlooking the ocean and, lulled by the sound of the waves, we dream of orcas.

Our final day, we join Gisele Martin of Tla-ook Cultural Adventures aboard a traditional dug-out canoe hand-carved by her Nuu-chah-nulth father, Joe Martin. After brief instructions, we paddle into the water and Gisele tells us about the area's natural bounty and First Nations people, pointing out a large Native village. After 30 minutes of paddling, my arms ache and I'm relieved when Gisele angles the big canoe onto Meares Island, a treasure-trove of old-



First Nations guide Gisele Martin talks about the importance of old-growth trees on Meares Island.

growth forest. An intricate series of cedar boardwalks enable us to scramble over the island — without damaging tree roots or getting our shoes muddy. Gisele points out ferns, lichen, mosses, forest slugs, brown salamanders and tells us about traditional uses of forest products like spruce sap to waterproof canoes. She plucks off a licorice fern root. "Tuck it in your cheek," she says.

"It's sweet and good when you're traveling."

We lunch under a big western red cedar before heading back to the canoe. The skies are leaden now and a cool breeze has picked up. We dip our paddles into the water and wordlessly fall into rhythm. Gisele begins singing an ancient Nuu-chah-nulth song giving thanks. Although we don't know the words, we too feel grateful. ♦

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User Guide

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WINNEBAGO JOURNEY 36M

THIS YEAR'S NEW TRIPLE-SLIDE FLOORPLAN PROMISES EXPANSIVE LIVING IN A RICH, UPSCALE ENVIRONMENT

by CHUCK AND TERESA CAMPBELL

A popular song whimsically suggests that “life is a journey, and not a destination,” which may have a passing correlation to Winnebago’s wish that your travels include one of its new Journey motorhomes. With a record of building some of the best, most durable coaches in the business, the name Winnebago has all but become synonymous with the term motorhome itself.

Winnebago’s Journey class is not its first trip around the block in building upscale diesels. Though no entry-level coaches in any sense of the word, the Journey line represents the less expensive of the company’s two diesel-powered offerings (the Tour being the top tier), with prices beginning higher than \$245,000.

The 36M is a new Journey floorplan for 2012, and provides a full-wall curbside slideout that substantially increases interior living space, plus an optional exterior entertainment center with a 32-inch HDTV, AM/FM stereo and DVD player. Adding more to the roominess of the floorplan are two street-

side slides; one expanding the forward lounge and mid-coach dinette areas, while the other is located to the rear as part of the master bedroom. As in previous year offerings, the Journey uses Freightliner’s proven Maxum lowered rail, turbodiesel chassis as its automotive component.

Though not unreasonably priced for this market segment, a well-outfitted 36M still lists for a healthy price of \$246,498. This includes everything from finely crafted wood cabinetry, high-end appliances, and lush, upholstered furniture; to leading-edge electronics and full-body exterior paint.

Unfortunately, a navigation system is not standard issue on the 36M. For this, buyers must opt for an “Infotainment Center/GPS” package at \$1,813, that includes a 7-inch, dash-mounted LCD monitor with voice guidance, two remotes and Bluetooth compatibility. And who can forget the previously mentioned exterior entertainment center that lists for \$1,610, a home theater system with Blu-ray at \$301, and an Ultraleather, multi-position Rest Easy streetside sofa



PHOTOS: RICH COX PHOTOGRAPHY



Top: A streetside slideout creates a cavernous forward lounge to spread out on the Ultraleather sofa. **Above:** The roomy galley boasts 22 square feet of counterspace. **Below:** The cockpit is logically laid out and user friendly.

that goes for \$560. With these and other options totaling more than \$6,000, the final MSRP ended up a rather hefty \$253,762.

POWERTRAIN AND PERFORMANCE

On a sunny day, we hit the highway at the wheel of a new Journey 36M, to see what the high-end coach had to offer in the way of performance and livability. Our test unit came with an eye grabbing Platinum full-body paint scheme with contemporary graphics, a one-piece windshield that optimizes forward visibility and some of the cushiest captain's seats we've experienced in a long time. Once we had tweaked the electrical seat adjustments to our liking, and slid the retractable, step-well cover into place (all Journeys have a forward, bus-style entry door), we were on our way.

At the heart of the Journey is a beefy Cummins ISB 6.7-L, 360-HP turbodiesel. The Cummins, which is mated to one of Allison's bulletproof 3000MH six-speed transmissions, boots out 800 LB-FT of torque at 1,800 RPM ... early on in its power curve where needed the most.

Some of the highlights of Freightliner's well-crafted Maxum platform include dropped-rail architecture that provides a lower center of gravity for improved ride and handling, a Neway front and rear air suspension that helps smooth out the ride, and a power steering box that allows a 55-degree turning angle (wheel cut) for good maneuverability. Also part of the drivetrain is an integral engine exhaust brake that came in handy throughout the trip, and spared brakes and nerves when descending steep grades.

Loading the Journey for our excursion, we appreciated the comfortable and user-friendly cockpit with its logically laid out gauges



2012 WINNEBAGO JOURNEY 36M

WHAT'S HOT

Full-wall curbside slide, abundant storage with pass-through external bay, generous interior living space, one-piece windshield, extra washstand with medicine cabinet in bedroom, power door lock with remote

WHAT'S NOT

Small bathroom, navigation system not standard equipment and dash mounted nav screen too low to be effectively viewed by driver



Left: The rear master bedroom is well arranged and has 18 inches of aisle space around the bed. **Right:** The bathroom features a porcelain toilet and roomy shower.

and controls, including a centrally located radio/rearview 6.5-inch LCD monitor. The only system that didn't work as well as we thought it should was the navigation. This was due mostly to the placement of its 7.3-inch screen, beneath the rearview monitor and lower down on the dash. The placement ultimately made trying to read nav cues difficult for the driver, who at the same time was trying to keep eyes elevated and looking down the highway. The turn-by-turn voice guidance function helped overcome this shortcoming somewhat, but not entirely.

Merging onto U.S. Highway 101, the coach accelerated smoothly and reassuringly into traffic, with its tilt/telescopic steering column and suspension mechanicals transmitting satisfactory feedback to the driver. Lane position was easily maintained, even when encountering numerous chuckholes and bumps on road surfaces. Overtaking slower vehicles from time to time, the coach had plenty of mid-range oomph to accelerate around these obstacles.

The motorhome's powertrain exhibited quiet, ample power under most highway circumstances, though it was not quick from a standing start. Early on, we tested its acceleration capability on a flat stretch of highway free of traffic. It logged 0-60 MPH runs averaging 32.2 seconds, with 40-60 segments of 18.3 seconds. This performance is

about par for the course with one of these big units; especially one like this that had a prodigious wet weight of 28,080 pounds.

We encountered several grades in the 6- to 7-percent range, and the Journey handled them reassuringly, though at a measured pace. We methodically worked our way up San Marcos Pass heading north out of Santa Barbara, Calif., and were impressed with the coach's staying power on this steep, winding mountain road. Approaching the top of the pass, we managed to grind out 43 MPH at 2,800 RPM in third gear. Heading down the opposite side of the pass, we engaged the engine's exhaust brake that slowed us to a comfortable 55 MPH.

During our test, we ran into coastal winds and gusts that shook us up a bit, though the coach was minimally fazed. All that was necessary was an alert and steady hand on the wheel to maintain lane position.

As previously mentioned, we encountered plenty of hills, capricious winds, and a long pull over San Marco Pass during the test. As it was, we measured 12.2 MPG, which is pretty decent considering the motorhome's weight.

LUXURY INCARNATE

Stepping aboard the Journey on our initial walkthrough, the interior's Hawthorne décor treatment (\$553) in shades of rich



SPECIFICATIONS

PERFORMANCE

FUEL ECONOMY: 12.2 MPG
ACCELERATION:
 0-60: 32.2 SEC
 40-60: 18.3 SEC

CHASSIS

MODEL: FREIGHTLINER MAXUM
ENGINE: 6.7-L CUMMINS ISB TURBODIESEL
SAE HP: 360 HP @ 2,400 RPM
TORQUE: 800 LB-FT @ 1,800 RPM
TRANSMISSION: 6-SPEED ALLISON 3000MH
AXLE RATIO: 4.78:1
TIRES: 275/80R22.5/G
WHEELBASE: 228"
BRAKES, F/R: DISC/DRUM AIR ASSIST WITH ABS
SUSPENSION, F/R: NEWAY AIR BAG
FUEL CAP: 100 GAL
WARRANTY: 3 YRS/50,000 MILES

COACH

EXT LENGTH: 36' 8"
EXT WIDTH: 8' 5.5"
EXT HEIGHT (WITH A/C): 12' 9"
INT WIDTH: 8' .5"
INT HEIGHT: 7'
CONSTRUCTION: STEEL/ALUMINUM FRAMEWORK AND SUBSTRUCTURES WITH INTERLOCKING JOINTS, CROWNED FIBERGLASS ROOF AND FIBERGLASS SIDE WALLS, POLYSTYRENE BLOCK FOAM INSULATION
FRESHWATER CAP: 102 GAL
BLACK-WATER CAP: 46 GAL
GRAY-WATER CAP: 60 GAL
WATER-HEATER CAP: 10 GAL
LP-GAS CAP: 28 GAL
AIR CONDITIONER (2): 13,500 BTU
FURNACE: 40,000 BTU
REFRIGERATOR: 12 CU FT
INVERTER: 2,000 WATTS
BATTERY (6): 2 AGM 12-VOLT CHASSIS, 4 AGM 12-VOLT COACH
AC GENERATOR: 8 KW
BASE MSRP: \$246,498
MSRP AS TESTED: \$253,762
WARRANTY: 1 YR/15,000 MILES

WET WEIGHT

(WATER & HEATER, FUEL, LP-GAS TANKS FULL; NO SUPPLIES OR PASSENGERS)
FRONT AXLE: 10,420 LBS
REAR AXLE: 17,660 LBS
TOTAL: 28,080 LBS

CHASSIS RATINGS

GAWR, F/R: 12,350/20,000 LBS
GVWR/GCWR: 32,350/42,350 LBS
ROCCC: 4,270 LBS
 (DEDUCT WEIGHT OF PASSENGERS FOR NET CARGO CAPACITY)

GAWR: GROSS AXLE WEIGHT RATING
GVWR: GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING
GCWR: GROSS COMBINATION WEIGHT RATING
ROCCC: REALISTIC OCCUPANT & CARGO CARRYING CAPACITY (FULL WATER, NO PASSENGERS)

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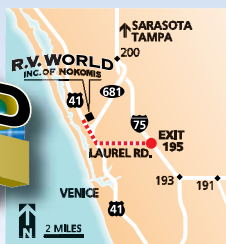
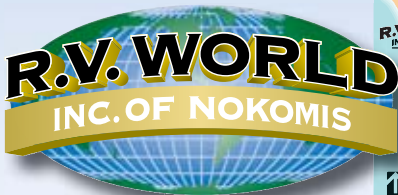


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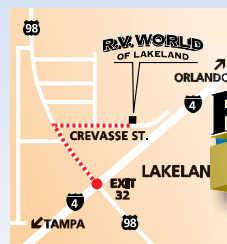


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gray, taupe and caramel registered impressions of understated elegance. Establishing its stately ambiance even further are abundant solid wood cabinets and woodwork throughout in a rich, Coffee Glazed Vienna Maple finish, with brushed nickel accents.

Rounding out the elegant interior, designers have chosen lightly hued Corian for all countertops, easily cleanable vinyl tile flooring for lounge, galley and bathroom floors, and plush carpet in the bedroom, dining room and cockpit areas. Also, exterior light and interior privacy are deftly controlled with the inclusion of MCD American Duo solar/blackout roller shades on most windows, with a full windshield electric nightshade for the ultimate convenience. In all, we could find no cheesy trappings in this coach, but instead, a lot of substance and utility from both an aesthetic as well as a comfort and usefulness perspective.

As you enter the bus-style, curbside entry door, you encounter a lounge area replete with a 75-inch Rest Easy convertible sofa streetside followed by a freestanding, extendable 24-inch by 40-inch dining table with two chairs (two additional folding chairs from the cargo compartment, plus an extension segment may be added). On the curbside lounge wall is a smaller, 53-inch convertible sofa, and then a spacious, semi-U shaped mid-coach galley with convenient pullout countertop extension.

Interior and exterior storage areas are abundant and admirably supported by a braggable realistic occupant and cargo carrying capacity (ROCCC) of 4,270 pounds, due to the brawny chassis' generous gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 32,350 pounds.

Packing gear for our road trip, we made good use of the cavernous, pass-through basement storage bay with removable floor panels, and lower shelves housing lidded containers. Traditional forward, streetside bays were also useful as loading options, and added to the unit's exterior storage capacity of approximately 181 cubic feet.

Interior storage alternatives are generous as well, with overhead cabinets in the lounge, dinette and bedroom, and plenty of cupboards, closets, and other spaces in the galley and bathroom. For our purposes, we barely tipped the scale as far as loading this roomy motorhome.

Finally arriving at our destination for the evening, it was a cinch to guide the sizeable, 36-foot 8-inch coach around the RV



In the hallway between the galley and master bedroom is a spacious utility closet, medicine cabinet, and a washstand that offers additional accessibility to freshen up.

park's tightly configured maze of roadways to our site. Once parked on a relatively level pull-through, we activated the one-touch, hydraulic leveling jacks, slid out our three room extensions, and instantly felt the love with the overall spaciousness and residential ambiance. In measuring the combined lounge and galley area, we came up with approximately 148 square feet of floor space.

Getting comfortable in the forward lounge after a busy day on the road, the two sofas helped ease our aching joints with their pliant comfort. With feet up thanks to the Rest Easy sofa's one-button, multi-position feature and pullout ottoman, we were treated to all the comforts of home.

At the heart of the coach's AV interior setup are two TVs: a 40-inch LCD flat-screen on a forward facing, streetside dinette wall, and a 26-inch LED in the bedroom.

With a galley as tricked out as the one in this coach, you almost hate to mess up its broad, approximately 22 square feet of available counter area. We chose the easy way and gave the convection oven/microwave a workout. In no time at all, we had two frozen dinners piping hot, and served up across the aisle at the streetside dining table.

The rear master bedroom is well laid out, with a 60-by-80-inch queen-size air-type mattress as its centerpiece. The "Ideal Rest Comfort Digital Control" mattress with remotes (\$770) is a step up from conventional inner spring iterations. The bedroom's curbside chest of drawers can hold a virtual ton of goods, and on the opposing

wall is a generous 21-inch deep by 42-inch high by 75-inch long closet with mirrored sliding doors for hanging clothes. Topping things off in the bedroom is a demur ceiling fan (\$119), which is a welcome surprise.

Despite the condensed, but acceptable, space afforded in the bedroom, it was easy enough to get around the bed with 18 inches of aisle space for quick make-ups, and to access closets and cabinets for stored apparel. A 19-inch-deep by 24-inch-wide by 69-inch-high curbside utility closet is also located in the hallway between the galley and bedroom, which can additionally be pressed into service for storing towels, clothing, gear, or even an optional washer/dryer.

Washing up in the enclosed, streetside shower/toilet room with included washstand proved adequate, though snug considering the overall size of the floorplan. Nevertheless, there is sufficient room in its 26-inch-deep by 40-inch-wide by 81-inch-high shower stall for a decent scrub up. A porcelain toilet also shares floor space in this zone, with 17 inches of foot space in front. The only thing we didn't care for here is the smallish bathroom for a coach this size.

Winnebago's 2012 Journey 36M floorplan has a bounty of contemporary features and residential appointments. With a full-wall, curbside slide to enhance the spaciousness of lounge and galley zones, plus a powerful and reliable Freightliner Maxum chassis to move it around, this coach should make a worthy and luxurious traveling companion in no uncertain terms. ♦

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YOUR COACH'S TRANSMISSION AT HOME

by E. DON SMITH



PHOTOS: E. DON SMITH

These are the supplies we used to perform our DIY transmission filter and fluid change. First, the proper amount of fluid is needed — we used Allison-specified TranSynd for our 3000MH Allison transmission. We also used an Allison filter kit, which includes filters, gaskets and O-rings. You'll need some basic sockets and a torque wrench, as well as a drain pan capable of holding (in our case) 19 quarts of fluid, a hand pump for refilling the transmission, and several shop towels. We also used a roller/creeper, but it's not a requirement.

Just as your motorhome's engine requires an oil and filter change, the transmission in your motorhome has to be serviced too. Although crawling under your motorhome and tackling a routine transmission service may seem frightening, if you are able to change the oil and filter in your automobile you can likely perform this procedure as well.

Even if you decide not to attempt this service by yourself you should at least be familiar with the procedure, and more importantly, understand how often it needs to be done. If you choose not to tackle this yourself, a local Freightliner/Spartan service center (or an authorized Allison service center) can han-

dle it as a stand-alone service item or as part of a larger scheduled maintenance.

The dominant manufacturer of diesel-pusher Class A

Before beginning this service, Allison Transmission suggests that the transmission be drained while at operating temperature to allow the fluid to drain faster and more completely. However, this also means you will have to be careful while draining the fluid to prevent it from burning your hands. We wore gloves and had no issues.

motorhome transmissions is Allison. It produces a wide range of models depending on the engine and weight of your coach. Many smaller motorhomes use the 1000MH or one of the 2000 series transmissions while most midsized motorhomes use the 3000MH. If you are in one of the larger tag-axle motorhomes you likely have a 4000MH transmission, which is rated to handle an incredible 650 HP and 1,950 LB-FT of torque.

These Allison transmissions have proven to be very reliable and they require minimal servicing. If you want to keep your transmission shifting smoothly and trouble-free for many years you need to stick to the factory suggested maintenance schedule. Not only does Allison make a great transmission it also has a great website (www.allisontransmission.com) with lots of information to help you take care of its products. Since there are many different models of transmissions on the road it would be impossible for us to list the required maintenance on each one. The good news is that Allison has a website for that too. Go to www.allisontransmission.com/service/changeinterval to find a list of all the models the company produces. Choose your transmission from the list and answer a few questions and it will provide you with the information you need for your specific model. Allison also has a Technical Assistance Center that can be reached at 800-252-5283.

If you don't know which Allison transmission you have, it is likely listed in your chassis' owner's manual. If your motorhome uses another brand of transmission, don't fret, as many of these tips will apply to you as well. You will just have to determine exactly which brand and model you have so that you can service it according to the manufacturer's schedule. Using the website mentioned above, we selected the 3000MH and found detailed information regarding the service interval for our motorhome.

Our 2008 Tiffin Phaeton only had 16,000 miles on it, but it was time to change both filters as well as drain the fluid and replace it. In an automatic transmission, the fluid is vital to its operation. Not only does the fluid lubricate the internal parts, it also serves as a coolant to carry heat away from critical components. The fluid also acts as a way of activating moving parts inside the transmission to suspend the debris that is present until the filters can remove it from the system. When at full-operating temperature the transmission fluid is subjected to temperatures much higher than 200 degrees Fahrenheit for extended periods of time, so this is not the place to try and save a few dollars by purchasing an inferior product.

Transmission fluid is very important, which



We raised the rear of the coach by 1.5 inches by driving it on to 2-by-10-inch wooden blocks. This makes access under the coach easier. Just make sure the blocks are wide enough to support the entire footprint of the tire to prevent damaging it.



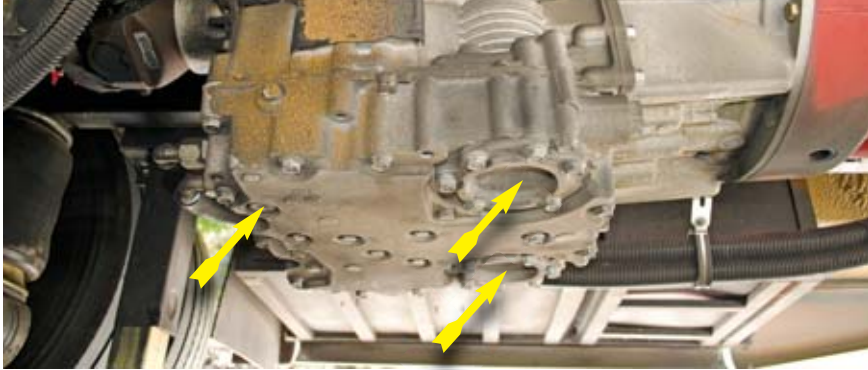
Next, you need to engage the emergency brake inside the coach and chock one or both front tires to prevent it from rolling.



In order to raise the rear of the coach we placed several wood "jack pads" under the coach's leveling jacks and lifted it to the necessary height to allow easy access to the transmission pan.



Since this procedure requires you to be under the motorhome you should not rely solely on the coach's jacks. We used a heavy-duty pair of stands and placed them directly under the frame rails. Since this is a safety issue it is a step that you cannot bypass. In case the coach jacks fail you need something that can carry the rear axle weight, which is 20,000 pounds on this coach.



Locate the transmission and note the location of the filter covers and drain plug. Then locate the filter-cover bolts and remove them.



Once the filter-cover bolts have been removed the cover can be removed and a small amount of fluid will drain. Repeat the process for both filters (depending on your model). The MH3000 has two filters.



Remove the filter from the cover. You'll see a date code on the filter. In our case this was the first filter change and the filter was marked "factory installed" along with the date of production. If you are not servicing your transmission according to the owner's manual and you have warranty issues, it is easy to tell when your filters were changed.



During our filter and fluid change we decided to sample the fluid and send it to an outside laboratory for analysis.

is why Allison has specific requirements for the type of fluid to be used. Before you service your transmission be sure you check the owner's manual and use the fluid that meets Allison's stringent standards.

For the 3000MH that was installed in this Freightliner chassis the requirement is to use a fluid meeting Allison TES-295TM. These fluids offer the highest level of protection and ensure your factory warranty stays in effect; plus they offer the longest drain intervals. The Allison website also has a list of all the approved brands of fluids so make sure you are using the correct product.



Next, we removed the drain plug (with a 3/8-inch socket drive) and allowed the balance of the fluid to drain. Be sure your drain pan can accommodate the amount of fluid (19 quarts on this model) that will drain from your transmission. Capture this fluid and return it to a recycling facility for processing.



You'll need to remove the gasket from each filter cover and examine the O-ring on each cover. Each model is different so pay attention to the size and shape of each one. This will allow you to pick the correct O-rings for installation from the supplied filter kit. Inset: Now you will remove all of the O-rings from the cover.



The filter kit for your transmission includes all the O-rings and gaskets you need, plus some you may not need. Pick the ones that match the size and shape that you removed and only use those.

We went to a local Allison service facility and gave them the serial number for our transmission. Then, they provided us with 5 gallons of TranSynd fluid and the filter kit needed to service our transmission for a total price of just less than \$250.

As part of our service, we also decided to obtain a sample of the fluid and have it analyzed. Allison, as well as many other laboratories across the country, offers this service. We used Blackstone Laboratories (www.blackstone-labs.com), and for \$25, we received a full report in a few days.

The basic synopsis of the evaluation was that the fluid was in good condition for its age other than it was starting to show signs of acidity and it was a little dirty. The "ISO cleanliness code" referenced in the report is a number that shows the amount and size of the various particles found in the fluid. Though the fluid was serviceable, it was time for a fluid and filter change, which makes sense because the Allison-required maintenance schedule showed we were overdue on this motorhome.

Follow these steps and you can service your transmission in your driveway at home just like we did. It's not that difficult, and with the proper supplies it can be done in a few short hours. You will have the satisfaction of knowing you did it yourself and saved some money along the way too. ♦

FOR MORE INFORMATION

ALLISON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CALL CENTER
800-252-5283,
www.allisontransmission.com



Install the gasket then lubricate the O-rings with fresh transmission fluid and slide them into place in the precut grooves on the filter cover. Inset: Next, apply clean transmission fluid to the inside of the filter and press each one on to the filter cover.



Before reinstalling the drain plug, note that it has a magnetic tip, which should be wiped completely clean. Then remove the O-ring from the drain plug and replace it with a new one from the kit and install the plug back into the drain pan. It must be torqued properly, which on this model requires 18 to 24 FT-LB of torque. The specs are included on the instruction sheet that came in the Allison filter kit.



Install the filter and cover back on the transmission. The cover must line up properly to allow all the bolts to fit. Hold the cover against the pan while tightening the bolts. Do not use the bolts to draw the cover up and do not use an impact wrench. Inset: Use a torque wrench and tighten all six bolts to the factory specified torque, which is 38 to 45 FT-LB for this transmission.



Using a hand pump, add the proper amount of fluid specified by Allison back into the transmission. The 3000MH with a 4-inch sump in this motorhome required 19 quarts. Inset: With the motorhome idling and in NEUTRAL, check the transmission dipstick to ensure it is properly filled. The coach should be level for this step.

2012 MONACO DIPLOMAT 43DFT

Navistar influence and evolving Monaco design combine to create the new Diplomat

The mating of Navistar's more than 100 years of heavy transportation experience with Monaco's 40-plus years of luxury RV design has resulted in an exciting lineup of innovative motorhomes. At first glance, you might not recognize the elegant new Diplomat because of its significant facelift inside and out, but rest assured that the luxury and high-end appointments in this bath-and-a-half tag axle have only been enhanced.

The exterior's all-new front and rear chevron grilles in fiberglass wraparound caps (now equipped with LED lighting), improve body seam weather resistance — it also suggests a growing familial likeness to Monaco's sporty Vesta.

The entry door has been moved forward, closer to the A-pillar, creating improved access past the redesigned cockpit. Here the Navistar influence is prominent with an updated automotive-style dash with hooded instrument cluster capped with a glare-reducing dark dash pad. The multifunction steering wheel not only controls the expected cruise and music functions but includes a three-stage engine brake at your fingertips. Maybe more importantly, the wheel is now connected to a redesigned steering column, no longer straddled by the driver's legs.

Full-power Ultraleather seats afford a clear view of the Driver Information Screen that provides continuous status of the Diplomat's torquey MaxxForce 10 turbodiesel engine, the Allison 3000MH six-speed push-button transmission, trip and distance features, and a host of monitored operating parameters.

Atop the handsome Oxford Burl instrument panel is the dock for the optional (\$614) 7-inch GPS/Bluetooth unit for full-featured navigation and hands-free connectivity.

Polished 12-by-24-inch porcelain tile leads you from



the cockpit into the most unexpected and surprising feature in the Diplomat's lineup. This plan places the free-standing dinette and sofa bed, or the optional (\$3,671) sectional sofa bed/dinette ensemble, in the curbside slide offering the rare opportunity to dine while overlooking your own campsite and not your neighbor's. The entire galley, including the 12-cubic-foot two-way refrigerator, optional (\$2,352) washer and dryer combo, the 68-inch sofa and the bedroom dresser and overhead cabinet module are all contained within the 28-foot-long, full-wall, streetside slide creating a wonderfully open floorplan well suited for entertaining.

Handsome Italian Sienna mid-tone hardwood cabinets (with adjustable shelves) surround the cabin and galley. The intricate and striking basketweave trim on the cabinets is accented by the galley's Corian backsplash and countertops. A useful pullout countertop extension next to the dual-basin sink adds to the galley's utility when deployed and helps define the cabin's seating area.





SPECIFICATIONS

CHASSIS: ROADMASTER RAISED-RAIL RR10R	HEIGHT WITH A/C: 12' 2"
ENGINE: MAXXFORCE 10, 9.3-L TURBODIESEL 405 HP	WHEELBASE: 273"
FUEL: 100 GAL	FRESHWATER CAP: 100 GAL
GVWR: 43,000 LBS	GRAY-WATER CAP: 62 GAL
LENGTH: 44' 3"	BLACK-WATER CAP: 40 GAL
WIDTH: 8' 4"	LP-GAS CAP: 29 GAL
	BASE MSRP: \$333,600
	FULLY OPTIONED: \$347,004

MONACO RV, LLC
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WWW.MONACOCOACH.COM

The wall-mounted 40-inch LCD TV with surround sound and media storage above and below can be comfortably viewed from anywhere in the elegant cabin. The TV shares a common wall with the half bath, which separates the cabin from the master suite. A countertop integrated sink, storage vanity and porcelain commode complete the half bath eliminating family or guest's late-night trips through the occupied bedroom to reach the rear master bath.

The Diplomat comes standard with a queen-size platform bed in the curbside slide, but was wisely designed to accommodate the preferable and optional (\$1,470) Select Comfort platform king. Yet, there's still room for the matching eye-glass nightstands, hidden book storage and 120-volt AC outlets. Add a 26-inch LCD TV mounted between the dresser and overhead cabinet

module, which is part of the full-wall streetside slide, and the suite is complete.

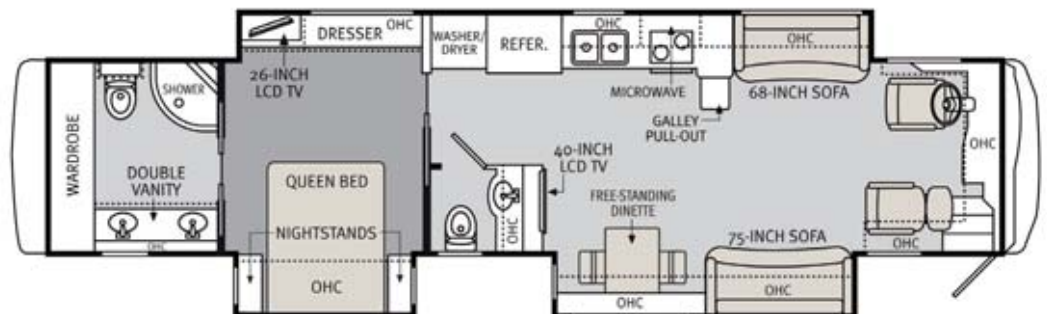
Above the bed is a ceiling fan that will come in handy when the ducted, triple 15,000-Btu roof air-conditioning units or the silent Aqua-Hot heating systems aren't needed. Leaving the family pet behind is no problem using the coach's auto-start feature on the 10-kw AC generator to accommodate the owner-set climate controls. For boondockers, the Diplomat comes prewired for solar panels and a controller.

The step-up rear bath has become a popular feature in full-time coaches and the Diplomat doesn't disappoint. Highlights here include his-and-hers countertop-integrated sinks with brushed-nickel fixtures, matched medicine cabinets and additional drawer storage. A full-width, rear-wall mirrored wardrobe offers nearly 6 feet of clothes rod with 20 inches of additional adjustable or removable shelving at one end of the closet if more hanging space is needed.

A push-button macerator-style porcelain commode is used in this distant location along with a roomy neo-corner shower with integrated seat that is equipped with an adjustable track or hand-held showerhead. General and task lighting is augmented by the tinted shower skylight that floods the bath with natural light.

The redesigned Diplomat offers nearly every feature adventuring motorhome enthusiasts can think of and Monaco can often help with special requests. The Diplomat also represents Monaco's evolving vision of luxury coach design.

Our thanks to McMahons RV in Southern California for providing this motorhome for our review. ♦



THE LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE REVOLUTION

SHEDDING SOME LIGHT ON LEDS

by GARY WESCOTT

Roasting marshmallows or watching a thick steak sizzle over the campfire coals is undoubtedly part of what we love about traveling in a motorhome, but a luxury we take for granted is just walking in the door and turning on the lights. The last time we checked, all those lights worked, so what's the big deal about light-emitting diodes (LEDs)? Here's what you need to know before you open your wallet.

In 1962, when an LED was introduced as a practical electronic component, most of us didn't know what it was. Early LEDs emitted low-intensity red light, but modern versions are available across the visible, ultraviolet and infrared wavelengths, with very high brightness. Today, LEDs are flooding the RV market.

There are commonly three types of lights currently used in motorhomes: incandescent, halogen and fluorescent.

Incandescent bulbs, normally used in brake- and turn-signal lights and in many interior lights, have been around for more than 100 years. They produce reasonable light, but they also put off considerable heat and use a lot of current in the process, draining your batteries if you do a lot of dry camping. They have a long life and are cheap.

Halogens are popular. They also generate a lot of heat, give off a very bright light and are pricier.

Fluorescent tubes are common in overhead or over-the-countertop lighting. They run slightly cooler, consume less energy, put out a nice amount of light and don't cost too much. They are limited generally to 12-inch and 18-inch single or double bulb fixtures, and they have a longer life than halogens. We have used Optronics, stylish Pulsar 12-inch and 18-inch dual fluorescent lights in our RV for years.

LED lights, the newcomer, are extremely cool. Measuring a comparable normal dual-tube compact fluorescent left on for several hours and the same fixture with replacement Starlights Revolution T5-12 LED tubes, we found as much as a 20-degree Fahrenheit difference. Take that times four or five lights on a hot summer night, and you may need your air conditioner. Try to remove an incandescent or halogen bulb even after less than a minute, and you'll end up with blistered fingers. That heat is sucking power from your batteries and significantly warming up your motorhome.

LEDs have such a low output that Underwriters Laboratories (UL) has not certified them. The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) requires anything greater than 4 watts be listed. RV Pro with Mike Camarota, the President of ITC Inc., a major manufacturer of RV lighting, stat-



From left: Installing the Optronics LED side markers required cutting off the OEM connections and splicing the white and black wires with butt connectors. To help eliminate any possible problems, all connections used Quick Cable butt connectors that have built-in heat shrink. Polarity can be checked with a simple multimeter or just by touching the ground and positive to the corresponding wires on the light.



From left: Optronics replacement side markers for both red and amber featured light-emitting diodes that were actually the correct color. The Jirah 1330 B45 R5 Extreme with 13 LEDs was a good fit and did produce more light than the original incandescent bulb in the docking light. Some replacement bulbs were too big to fit the housings.

ed in a recent interview, “You can get similar light from a 3-watt LED as you can get from a 10-watt halogen.” Multiply that difference in a coach with a couple dozen halogens and incandescent bulbs and you have a remarkably huge difference in power consumption. (Did we mention heat?)

LEDs can be expensive; often two or three times the cost of a halogen bulb. Camarota said that the average halogen bulb might last about 1,000 hours, while an LED can last up to 50,000 hours. Even in a motorhome environment with variations of power, that could fall to 35,000 hours, but that’s still probably longer than the useful life of the motorhome.

So far, the switch to LEDs seems to be a no-brainer; less heat, lower amp draw and more light. Complicating matters are the many different applications to consider. For our test, we used a 2005 35-foot Itasca Meridian to see just what the LED difference might be. Armed with a selection of lights and fixtures from Starlights, Jirah, Optronics, ITC and Grote, there was a lot to learn and some real surprises.

Starting on the outside, we replaced the side indicator lights, brakelights, turn-signal lights and running lights, back-up and docking lights. Optronics supplied exact replacements for red and amber side markers. The little LEDs are actually the

correct color. Installation required cutting off the OEM connections and splicing the white and black wires with butt connectors. We used Quick Cable butt connectors that have built-in heat shrink. When heated with a flame or a heat gun, (a disposable cigarette lighter or a small chef’s tool called a crème brûlée torch works well), they shrink around the connection and seal themselves with glue, eliminating future corrosion. In a pinch, the wire nuts supplied will also work. This was the start of some interesting results when replacing incandescent bulbs with LEDs.

It should be noted that some but not all LED lights and bulbs are polarity sensi-

Clockwise from left: Using an LED replacement bulb in the backup light proved an ineffective choice. OEM incandescent bulbs in turn-signal, brake, running and backup lights were significantly brighter. When we used LED replacement bulbs in the same applications they proved to be a huge disappointment. You can see the difference at the rear of the coach — on the left are OEM bulbs and on the right are LED replacement bulbs.



PHOTOS: GARY WESCOTT



From left: True LED turn-signal, brake and running lights like these by Grote are packed with dozens of light-emitting diodes behind a specially engineered lens. The round Grote sealed fixture used in the shower had a built-in timer and motion sensor. The easy-to-install Jirah peel-and-press replacements for fluorescent tubes were a good choice for several overhead fixtures.

tive. Polarity can be checked with a simple multimeter or just by touching the ground and positive to the corresponding wires on the light. No light; reverse the wires. Wire colors can vary between white, black, yellow and red, depending on the manufacturer.

Since the Optronics side markers were a complete unit, designed to work with the Optronics lens supplied, the results were brilliant. On the other hand, when we just replaced the OEM incandescent bulbs in the turn and running lights, and backup lights, the results were shockingly disappointing. For the turn signals, we used a Jirah Extreme LED designated as a replacement for the 1156 incandescent. On the brakelights and taillights we used a Starlights 1157. Both looked very bright, but their output at night compared to the OEM lights was disappointing. It was obvious that just replacing an incandescent bulb with an LED was not a good idea.

If you look at LEDs on a big semi truck, you will see that the whole light is full of LEDs. The replacement bulbs, however bright they were, just created a hot spot in the middle of the lens that was

specifically designed to work with an incandescent. The same was the case with the backup lights. Using the Jirah 1210 B45-L3 was similarly an ineffective choice.

In the docking light that used a wedge base bulb, we tried the Jirah 0930-B45 R3 but it was too big to fit through the housing. The Jirah 1330 B45 R5 Extreme with 13 LEDs was a good fit and did produce more light than the original, probably because of the design of the lens and reflector, and the number and placement of the LEDs on the bulb.

Both the front porch light and the similar driver's overhead side light were woefully inadequate. Like many owners do, the recommended 15-amp bulb in the porch light had been switched to a 21-amp incandescent to get more outside light. Often this light is left on all night. The result was actually melting the lens. A Starlights Revolution 220 bulb seemed to double the brilliance with almost no heat. The Optronics 22758-091 flush-mount dome light with 21 LEDs was too bright for a porch light, but perfect to replace the driver's-side overhead outside hook-up light.

Moving around the motorhome, we found several places where replacing the incandescent bulbs with an LED produced a significant improvement. The coach's owner thought the utility compartment needed more light during nighttime hooking up. Good choices for this application included the small Optronics flush-mount and Jirah Extreme 3630 V45 R1 flat peel-and-press lights.

In the front generator compartment and rear engine compartment, the Starlights Revolution 200 bulb made a big difference. The housings on the Revolution 200 rotate to direct the light where you need it most. An Optronics ILL71CB flush-mount 16-inch strip LED light worked perfectly in the side basement compartments, providing visibly more light to the contents and the area immediately in front of the compartment.

Moving inside, after some experimenting, the weak wedge-base incandescent bulbs in the main dimable overhead fixture over the bed were replaced with ITC 69912-3k warm white Wedge Base LED bulbs that draw only .12 amps. The bed-

From left: A weak light in the bedroom TV compartment was replaced with an ITC 69927-N13 surface-mount fixture. In the hallway, we tried a Starlights Revolution 1156 (170 lumens/6500K) on the left — the one on the right is an OEM incandescent bulb. Then we compared the Starlights Revolution with the Jirah JC-36-AB series neoprene-backed peel-and-press LED.



side reading lamps were producing an uncomfortable amount of heat at night. A pair of Jirah 1530-S45-R3 flat wedge lights gave double the reading light and dramatically reduced the heat output. A weak light in the bedroom TV compartment was replaced with an ITC 69927-N13 LED Cluster Surface Mount Overhead Light fixture.

In the shower, we used a round Grote sealed fixture that had a built-in timer and motion sensor. The hallway between the bathroom and the shower was improved with a pair of Jirah Extreme LED stick-on lights. The flexible 3M adhesive backing conformed nicely to the slightly curved surface.

In the main living and dining room, all of the heat-producing little spot reading lights were upgraded to Starlights 1383-220 Revolution bulbs, greatly reducing the heat in that area. When testing the three overhead double fluorescent lights, we first tried the Starlights replacement bulbs, but our test judges (our wives) agreed they were too harsh and bright. Switching to Jirah thin strip peel-and-stick lights designed to fit Thin-Lites or Optronics housings, the result was judged more pleasing. Over the sink, the Starlights 12-inch replacement tubes gave a bright, clean light perfect for food preparation or washing dishes.

The uses of LEDs are not limited to a motorhome. The owner of this coach often pulls a small enclosed trailer for his motorcycle. Installing the Starlights LED tubes in the main overhead fixture really lightened up the inside. Outside, where there was never a porch light, the owner installed a K-Four light with a built-in switch and changed the bulb to a Jirah Extreme flat light. K-Four also has a large selection of small toggle switches that can be adapted to LED lights.

While we did not use it here, the Starlights Brilliant Light fixture is a very unique lighting product. By adding plug-in accessories, the LED Brilliant Light can be controlled by a dimmer, a day/night sensor, or a motion sensor. There is also a night-light feature; all of this in one unit (single or double), with three replaceable LED light strength options.

LED lights are very bright and very direct. Some people might even call it harsh. ITC's Camarota observed that the top issue facing the LED lighting industry is going to be consistency of color. If you have a dozen overhead lights in a room, you want them to all look the same. Pablo Gonzalez of Optronics said the company is developing lights that will have the options of cool white, neutral light — more daylight looking — and a warm light, so customers will have a choice.

The bottom line is that every motorhome will be different. LEDs come in wedge base, double and single bayonet, peel-and-stick with both wedge or bayonet connections, and fully integrated replacement fixtures. Some are too bright. Others are too directional. When replacing incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs, the



From top: The previous owner of this motorhome switched the porch light bulb from the factory 15-amp to a 21-amp, which melted the lens. In the engine compartment the Starlights Revolution 200 bulb made a big difference. A Starlights Revolution 200 bayonet mount was a good replacement for several weaker incandescent bulbs. We used a Jirah JC-36-AB series neoprene backed peel-and-press in a K-Four light with a built-in switch to add a porch light on the owner's motorcycle trailer.

**THE LIGHT-EMITTING
DIODE REVOLUTION**

design of the lens and the reflector is critical if any improvement is to be obtained. They can be comparatively expensive, so careful selection is important.

Replacing incandescent bulbs on the outside just to lower amp draw and reduce heat may not make any sense for the investment, and in the case of our tail- and brakelights test, offer no light output advantage at all. Life expectancy is moot. We have had incandescent 1157 bulbs in our travel vehicles for more than 10 years and they are still burning bright, and should they fail, replacements are available in every auto parts store. We even carry a few in our electrical repair kit.

For some outside applications and many inside locations, properly selected LEDs can dramatically lower amp draw and heat, and often provide more pleasing useable light. The LED revolution is here. Those who are willing to pay the freight will experience a new level of brightness that may take some acclimation, but will no doubt increase longevity and energy efficiency. ♦

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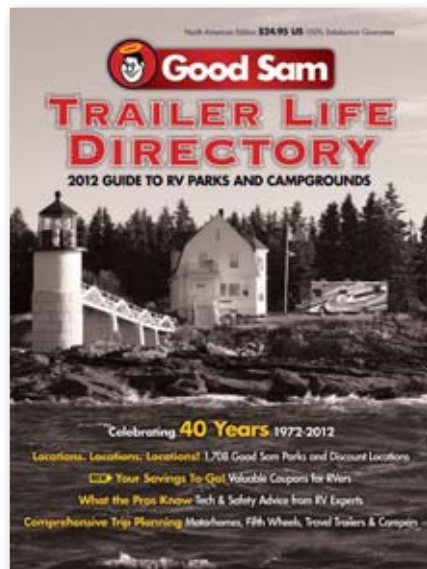
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User Guide

Contents



SPLASH GUARD ▲

When I wash dishes in our RV's kitchen sink the water splashes all over and onto the nearby sofa. My husband and I couldn't find a splash guard for our sink so we installed a heavy glass shelf, which we purchased at Lowe's for \$16, and attached it to a pair of brackets in the space behind the sofa. It works great and is attractive, too.

PAULETTE SHENK | SPANISH FORT, ALA.



STEP IT UP ▲

When I enter my motorhome it feels like the step up is a little too high for me, which makes it difficult when I'm carrying in groceries or supplies. I fixed this by making a hook-on, 2-inch-thick wood cover to put on top of the retractable step.

I used 2 x 2 material covered with ½-inch textured plywood. Then I painted it black to match the steps. I made the 1½-inch-thick framework the size of the step, then added ½-inch-thick wood to the back and front, letting it hang down no more than the thickness of the step. I attached two 1½-inch by 1½-inch metal angle brackets to the backside. To attach the cover, hook the brackets under the back of the step, then push down on the front side. Just be sure to remove the wooden cover before bringing in the step!

WALLACE MCCUAIG | PUEBLO WEST, COLO.

DINGHY WHEEL ALIGNMENT CHECKER ▼

In the past, I have had the front wheels of my dinghy vehicle turn sideways after cornering through a section of road construction.

They did not realign and totally scrubbed off the tread before I became aware of the problem. To avoid this, I now

clamp an LED bicycle headlight to the top of the steering wheel with the toad wheels in the straight-ahead position. Using the rearview monitor in my Class A motorhome, I can easily monitor their position night or day. This has provided a great deal of peace-of-mind knowing the wheels have returned to the center position after a turn. It has also provided immediate warning in two similar situations.



A set of three alkaline AAA batteries in continuous operation are rated to last 65 hours. I use flash mode, which should last 130 hours. I leave the clamp connected to the steering wheel and just remove the light using the push tab if I drive the toad during our travels. I use a Bell Dawn Patrol LED Headlight, but any suitable bicycle light will do the job. It's peace-of-mind for less than \$10 and a few minutes of your time.

BILL GREFFE | LONG SAULT, ONTARIO

KEYS TO SUCCESS ▶

If your RV is like mine you have a ring full of keys for the various compartments, bike racks, tow bar, etc. It used to frustrate me to have to sort through the entire selection until I found the one I needed. I overcame this problem by purchasing several colored, plastic key circles from a locksmith. These fit over the heads of the keys. I then placed a dot of paint next to each lock, corresponding with the respective color-coded key. Now, the correct key can be identified with just a quick glance at the colored dot.

EARLE C. THOMPSON | ROSEVILLE, MINN. ♦



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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

ILLUSTRATIONS: BILL TIPTON

techsavvy

HANDS-ON | HOT LINE | COACH & POWERTRAIN

HANDS-ON | by BOB LIVINGSTON

A CLEAN THRONE

Happy Bowl liners will send your toilet brush packing

I spent hours in my chair, fidgety and generally uneasy about how to best describe my evaluation of a simple and unique product called Happy Bowl. It's a subject that's private for most and taboo for some. Bottom (pun intended) line: No way to pull punches here; let's just get into it.

Using a motorhome toilet has its moments of discomfort, especially when it comes to cleanup after use. Typical scenarios include swabbing with a brush, which has to be stored somewhere inside the bathroom, or washing down with an auxiliary sprayer that often has an anemic flow of water. In too many cases, the "stuff" gets caught in the valve and impacts the ability of the seal to keep water in and odor out.

For years, we would fill the bowl prior to use and float a couple of short lengths of toilet paper in an X pattern. Most of the time that works OK, as long as you have good aim — and it's certainly better than not using the toilet paper at all. For some people, filling the bowl with water brings the level and contents dangerously close to skin, and for sure, it wastes water, which is especially a concern when trying to conserve in a boondocking environment.

When Ron Doctors, an eccentric inventor, and his son, Peter, Happy Bowl president, first showed me the Happy Bowl liners, we laughed right through the presentation that naturally included humorous graphic descriptions. I agreed to try the product, but pressed Peter into telling me how I was going to photograph his product for the magazine. As you can see here, I had to leave out a few details.

Before I tried the Happy Bowl liners, I wanted to be sure that they would dissolve properly. So, I put one of the liners in to a jar of water and gently agitated the contents. Within seconds the liner disintegrated into very small pieces, looking just like toilet paper that's designed for RV use.

For the next phase, I used real-world conditions. I unfolded a Happy Bowl liner and placed it on the bowl, on top of the small amount of water that was left from the last flush. There's no need to fill the bowl with water. After use, I simply flushed the toilet, holding down the lever long enough for the liner to encapsulate the contents and slide down the opening to the holding tank. The result was a perfectly clean bowl. Repeating the test daily during a long trip proved that the liners work exceptionally well. And the water savings resulted in at least a day to two longer before having



to dump the holding tank.

Happy Bowls come in two sizes: The Original is for plastic and standard-size bowls and the MP is for porcelain and larger-size toilets. The liners sell for \$8.95 (50 in a box).

My water sprayer is now dormant and the brush is in the garbage. A happy bowl will put a smile on your face.

Happy Bowl,
805-426-9636,
www.happybowl.com. ♦



PHOTOS: BOB LIVINGSTON

Brake-Pad Predicament

SEEKING COMPENSATION FOR A REPAIR THAT HE BELIEVED SHOULD HAVE BEEN COVERED UNDER RECALL, A READER ASKED HOT LINE TO GET INVOLVED. HE EXPLAINED:

On Sept. 20, 2011, while on a trip in our 2004 Fleetwood Southwind motorhome, the brakes went out. We were 200 miles from our home in Washington. We were able to get back to Roy Robinson Chevrolet in Marysville, Wash., a week later. The service technicians at Roy Robinson were outstanding. They got our motorhome in and fixed the brake calipers, which were part of a Workhorse recall.

The technicians at Roy Robinson also found that the brake pads were overheated from the caliper hang up, yet Workhorse would not pay for the pads. I went ahead and had the rear brake pads replaced for \$108.27. I think Workhorse should pay for the brake pads because the problem was caused by the bad calipers.

Anything Hot Line could do to help with this would be greatly appreciated.

**DOUGLAS ALLEN
SEDRO WOOLEY, WASH.**

Hot Line contacted Workhorse Custom Chassis on Allen's behalf. The company responded as follows:

This is in response to Hot Line's letter of Oct. 14, 2011, which was received by our office Oct. 17, 2011. Thank you for contacting Workhorse Custom Chassis and forwarding correspondence from Mr. Douglas Allen. We appreciate the opportunity to have reviewed the situation regarding the Bosch Brake Caliper Campaign 51101-C.

Workhorse has authorized payment of \$108.27 to Mr. Allen. Payment will be received within two-to-three weeks. Again, thank you for the final opportunity to review this matter further. I sincerely appreciate Hot Line's efforts in



helping us to resolve any Workhorse customer concerns.

**DEBRA ANDERSON
REIMBURSEMENT COORDINATOR
WORKHORSE CUSTOM CHASSIS
TROY, MICH.**

HUBCAP HUBBUB

Unhappy with repair service he had received from his local RV shop, a reader asked for Hot Line's help. He wrote:

Last August, I received a message from Temecula Valley RV in Murrieta, Calif., that I needed to bring my 2005 Winnebago Adventurer in for a brake caliper recall. After the service was completed I tried to remove the front hubcaps (using a hand tool that had been supplied by Winnebago) to check the tire air pressure. The hubcap nuts were tightened to more than 150 FT-LB by one of the Temecula Valley RV mechanics. I could not get them loose using the hand tool and I damaged the removal tool beyond repair by extending the wings.

I called Temecula Valley RV to complain that they had over-tightened the hubcap retaining nuts. They said that was not so and I would have to bring it back for them to service. I asked if they would pay my gas expense to do so. They refused. Then I asked if they would pay for a new socket tool I could use to remove the cap nut myself. They refused. Rather than pay \$25 in gas expense I bought a socket tool for \$14.

I tried to remove the cap nuts using the new socket tool attached to a 100 FT-LB torque wrench to estimate the amount of torque the mechanic used to tighten the nut. I could not get the cap

nuts loose. I then attached a 650 FT-LB torque wrench to the socket and got the cap nuts loose. There is no way the hubcaps should be tightened that tight.

Then I decided to check the rear hubcaps and found them loose.

I feel Temecula Valley RV service should reimburse me for the new socket tool and replace the damaged Winnebago-furnished tool. Also, I should receive an allowance for having correctly done their work for them. I could have had a terrible accident if the rear hubcaps had come off. Plus, additional expenses if I had had a front flat tire and was unable to remove the over-tightened hubcap nuts.

**LES HANSEN
FALLBROOK, CALIF.**

Hot Line contacted Temecula Valley RV on Hansen's behalf. Sometime later we received an email from the company that provided information on the conclusion of the case. It read:

Regarding Les Hansen's letter to Hot Line, Temecula Valley RV sent Hansen a check for \$25 on Sept. 22, 2011, even though the tool only cost him \$14. We feel it is not worth losing a customer, regardless of who is at fault, over \$25. Hopefully the issue is now resolved and we are sorry that such a small issue took up so much of your time.

**TRAVIS HOUSE
TEMECULA VALLEY RV
MURRIETA, CALIF. ♦**

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

REPAIRING A GRAY-WATER TANK

We have a 1993 Newmar Kountry Star diesel-pusher motorhome. The gray-water tank has a few very fine cracks on an inside corner. It's almost impossible to weld without pulling the tank out of the motorhome. I have used automotive bumper glue, windshield glue and many other epoxy-type glues, but none of them worked. You are my last hope. With all of the glues applied I could stick a screwdriver between the glue and the tank and peel it off easily.

PAUL THOMASON | SEATTLE

Unfortunately these tanks are difficult to get anything to stick to, as you learned. It's like trying to find an adhesive that can stick to a Teflon surface. VersaChem (formerly Syon) makes a kit for this type of repair. If you can't find it at your local RV store, here's a URL for a kit: www.pplmotorhomes.com/parts/caulks-sealants/holding-tank-repair-kit.htm, or call 800-755-4775.

ERRATIC TACHOMETER

I have a 1999 Coachmen Santara on a Freightliner chassis with the 5.9-L Cummins engine (with a Banks PowerPack) and a six-speed Allison transmission. The tachometer is erratic until I turn on the headlights, then it indicates in a normal fashion. I have had three RV technicians analyze this problem, all to no avail. Can you help?

**GEORGE BOEMERMAN
SAN MARCOS, TEXAS**

From your description I think your problem is due to a faulty ground connection either at the instrument cluster or rear grounding point. Check under the dash at the pass-through stud and, at the rear of the chassis on the driver's side rear corner, just behind the air drier. There is a bolt that holds the ground cable for the battery and the front ground stud. Pull the bolt

out and clean the ground terminals and replace it with a bigger and longer bolt with a flat washer. Try connecting a jumper wire with alligator clips from a clean ground connection to the dash ground points to verify which one is bad, if any. Also inspect them for corrosion and looseness.

TIRE PRESSURE MONITORING SYSTEM

We have a 2010 Roadtrek 190-Popular (Chevrolet) Class B and we are having problems with the tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS). The TPMS icon will come on, and the tire display will show all dashes, no tire readings. At times the front tire readings will show the tire pressure for the left, tire dashes for the right tire. It will also do the same for the rear tires. I have had it at two Chevrolet dealers, and they checked it with a special tool. Chevrolet attributes the problem to aftermarket electrical

devices, including the radio, GPS, wheel rims, valve-stem locations, DVD player, microwave oven, CB radio and a ham radio installed by myself. I do not use any of the mentioned items listed; when the vehicle is in motion everything is shut off.

One Chevrolet dealer told me if the problem happens again to bring the motorhome in right away. On August 9, when I was having the problem, I brought the motorhome immediately to the dealership, and they checked it with a special tool and found a problem with the TPMS. They scheduled an appointment for the following week, but when I brought the vehicle in I did not have the issue, so they found no problem, and again attributed the problem to the aftermarket electrical devices.

I would like to know how these items cause interference with the TPMS, even though they are in the off position.

**RON AND ROSE CABRAL
NEW BEDFORD, MASS.**

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY CONVERTERS LACK THE SOPHISTICATED MULTISTAGE CHARGING CIRCUITRY NEEDED TO PROPERLY MAINTAIN BATTERIES, AND AS A RESULT OVERCHARGE THEM. HOWEVER, SO DO SIMPLE TRICKLE CHARGERS.

The pressure information is transmitted to the vehicle using radio frequency. A small electronic assembly mounted inside the tires measures the pressure using a pressure sensor and then transmits this and other information to the vehicle receiver. Most direct TPM systems use UHF radio in one of the unlicensed ISM bands for transmitting the data around 315 MHz.

With the factory supplied TPMS it is extremely doubtful that any items you mentioned would interfere, especially if they are off. This is a cop-out because the dealers don't know what is wrong. It's very likely that the front sensors or their batteries are going bad. The manufacturer may claim a battery lifespan of months or even years, but if the sensor batteries are imported from a source of unknown quality, they can easily go bad prematurely.

You didn't say what problem the dealer found originally. You should have demanded that the dealer change the part(s) the tester found defective. Besides this, you should contact Roadtrek for help (888-762-3873).



CONVERTER CONUNDRUM

I have read several comments stating that the onboard converters are not the best chargers and conditioners of batteries. Would it be better to simply disconnect the charging side of the onboard converter and add a typical trickle charger to the coach batteries?

DAVID MARTIN | HARTFORD, CONN.

Unfortunately, many converters lack the sophisticated multistage charging circuitry needed to properly maintain batteries, and as a result overcharge them. However,

MEGA-LIGHTS CONSUME LITTLE POWER

Because of limited battery capacity on motorhomes when dry camping, minimal power draw is a must. Mega-Light energy-efficient lighting from Davis Instruments draws a miniscule 0.11 amps of 12-volt DC power. Three Mega-Light models offer multiple functions; all feature a bulb that draws just 0.11 amps. Also included is a brighter bulb for reading or use as an interior light that draws a mere 0.32 amps.

Mega-Lights are great for reading and close work, inspecting an engine, or preparing a campfire meal. The waterproof Fresnel lens projects light all around. A built-in light sensor on the Mega-Light Utility model automatically turns the light on at dusk and off at dawn. The Mega-Light Utility comes with 15 feet of cord and plugs into a 12-volt DC power socket. Mega-Light Ultimate Cockpit Light features a red and yellow LED controlled by a waterproof push button. Six modes include steady white, red or yellow as well as blinking and alternating flashing red and yellow. A Mega-Light works well for emergencies too. Prices start at \$49.99. Davis Instruments, 510-732-9229, www.davisnet.com.



so do simple trickle chargers, so they are not the answer either. What you need instead is a unit that has multistage charging, such as a Xantrex Truecharge converter (www.xantrex.com). These units provide a higher charge rate when the battery is discharged, and taper off during storage so that the batteries aren't overcharged and don't use a lot of water (with flooded-type batteries).

POWER(LESS) STEERING

I have a 1999 Damon Daybreak Class A motorhome on a GM P-chassis with a 7.4-L V-8 engine. I have owned it since it had 13,000 miles; it now has 20,000 miles and this problem has always been there. The problem is that at low speeds the power steering fades away. To overcome this problem the engine has to turn at least 900 RPM. It's a problem even to turn a corner on city streets unless I am moving. New York State requires a yearly safety inspection that I have done at a GM light truck dealer. Each year they complain about this problem, but they don't offer any way to correct it, except today the mechanic thought the engine idle speed could be changed from 500 RPM now to 900 RPM. At 900 RPM the torque converter is locking up so I don't believe this is reasonable solution. I'm hoping you can offer advice.

JACK KEATING | ALBANY, N.Y.

A 500 RPM idle speed is very slow, and could cause the pump to put out less pressure than is needed. Before spending money replacing any parts I'd raise the idle as much as possible until the torque converter starts to grab, and see how it works that way before replacing the pump. Also make sure the belt is tight enough. If you hear squealing, belt slippage may be contributing to the problem. If you set the idle speed up to specifications and the steering still requires too much effort, have the pump output pressure tested. It may need to be replaced.

RECAPS?

I have a 36-foot motorhome with 245/70R19.5 tires and a 22,000-pound rated rear axle. Have you had any experience with putting recap tires on the rear axle? I ran a fleet of school buses for many years

and we had no trouble with these tires. The tires I have on now are Goodyear RV type. In the not too distant future I will have to recap or replace them. I await your reply.

STEPHAN PRICE | BILLINGS, MONT.

The highways are littered with peeled-off recap tire treads called alligators or alligator skins by commercial truck drivers and the highway crews who have to clean them up. Tires can do a lot of expensive damage if they come apart, so we don't recommend recaps. I'm surprised that you had such good luck with recaps, although school buses generally run relatively lightly loaded and at low-to-moderate speeds, which tends to be easier on tires.

WAXING AND DETAILING

I have a 2003 34-foot Winnebago Adventurer and the exterior is fiberglass. I traded my 1994 Itasca Sunrise with La Mesa RV in San Diego for this motorhome in 2008. I have been having the outside detailed every May and November. The coach is stored 1.5 miles from the ocean and it is not covered. Should the motorhome be waxed and detailed once or twice a year? Your expertise on this subject would be greatly appreciated.

ALLEN R. ROTH | SEAL BEACH, CALIF.

The area near the Pacific Ocean where you store your motorhome is a very rough environment for it. In a location like that the prevailing winds bring salty air inland, which forms dew on the upper surfaces nearly every night. This moisture runs down the sides of the motorhome, forming black streaks and stains. The salt also attacks any metal, and the sun oxidizes and breaks down paint, graphics and decals, etc.

If left uncovered, you'd have to detail and wax the motorhome almost constantly. Therefore, I suggest that you obtain a good-quality fitted RV cover that is made of breathable fabric and can protect your motorhome from the elements. Also make sure the tires are covered. You should detail and wax your motorhome at least once every six months.

OBD-I LOCATION

I have a 2000 Holiday Rambler Class A on a 1999 Ford F53 chassis. I am a

DIYer and even if I can't do the repairs myself, I like to separate fact from fiction at the repair shop. My question is, where is the plug for an OBD-I scanner on this unit? I have an intermittent transmission problem and the malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) has finally illuminated, indicating I have a trouble code to read, but I can't find the plug to connect the scan tool to read it.

PETER SIGNOROTTI | LEESBURG, FLA.

The OBD-II systems became standard in 1996, so a 1999 should have OBD-II, not the earlier OBD-I (which doesn't have standardized plugs between brands). I hope your scan tool is compatible with OBD-II. The diagnostic connector is under the dash on driver's side. Sometimes they are quite well hidden, you might have to dig around. Depending on whims of the coachbuilder, it may be tucked behind something way back toward the firewall.

LIGHT MY (LED) FIRE — COMMENT 1

This is in regard to "Light My (LED) Fire" in the November 2011 issue. I am retired from my 30-year solar-electric business. We set up remote-location homes with solar-electric power, batteries and inverters starting in about 1980. Over 30 years, we found a few compatibility issues with a few appliances operated on modified square wave inverters. (That is the technically correct name for what is marketed as a "modified sine wave" inverter).

Modified-wave inverters were originally more efficient and a lot lower-priced than true sine wave and were the predominant product. But some appliances can be damaged or malfunction from the modified wave form. Usually we got around that by recommending brands that would be compatible and warning against known failures, mostly some rechargeable tool chargers that might melt down, and certain photocopy machines. I did see some neon night lights that contained an input capacitor that would be overheated by the sudden voltage reversal of a square wave, and I suspect that is like what happened with the LED night light.

With a modified wave one just has to cautiously test appliances, watching for unusual sounds or high temperatures on the first trial. Or consult the product

manufacturer (who may not even know what modified wave is all about).

Modified wave units are usually economical and fine for small portable inverters, but today the true sine wave models are available in many sizes and price ranges and are much safer for built-in whole house and RV applications.

STEVE WILLEYS | ANDPOINT, IDAHO

Thanks for sharing your experience, Steve. We've heard from several readers on this subject who have reported problems with LEDs burning up when using a "modified sine wave" inverter. So users should be careful.

LIGHT MY (LED) FIRE — COMMENT 2

I would like to comment on the LED night light catching fire. I had a similar experience with a First Alert rechargeable flashlight. Although it was not an LED flashlight it did have a problem when plugging it into my inverter. The charging circuit in the flashlight was coupled with a capacitor. Normally with a true sine wave applied to the flashlight the charging circuit would work fine. But when the sine wave is replaced with a modified sine wave, as with my inverter, the coupling capacitor in the flashlight will react more like a piece of wire. This of course allows much higher voltages and currents applied to the charging circuit in the flashlight, which caused overheating and eventually can lead to failure in the charging circuit.

The modified sine wave is similar to a square wave. Rather than a gradual slope, as in a true sine wave, the modified sine wave has fast transient changes in the wave form, which when faced with the coupling capacitor in the charging circuit, looks like a high frequency. It's the rate of change in the wave form that is causing the problem. In a true sine wave the rate of change is linear and happens gradually, whereas in a modified sine wave the polarity change happens almost instantly. I hope this helps the readers understand what has happened.

Also, as a precaution any electrical device that has control circuitry for convenience (such as a fan that can be controlled with a remote control) and is powered directly from a 120-volt AC outlet where no power supply is used (the black square

power supply transformer that plugs in the wall) may be susceptible to damage from a modified sine wave power source. Monitor these items carefully when using a modified sine wave inverter.

MIKE TARKA | BURTON, OHIO

Thanks for the letter, Mike. Your explanation will help many readers.

CAN'T COMMUNICATE

We purchased a 2004 National RV Dolphin 5342 Class A motorhome on a Workhorse chassis and a GM 8.1-L engine in 2006. In August 2011 we were on our way to Maine from Connecticut and everything was normal until we were on the Massachusetts Turnpike. The CHECK ENGINE light came on and immediately afterward the

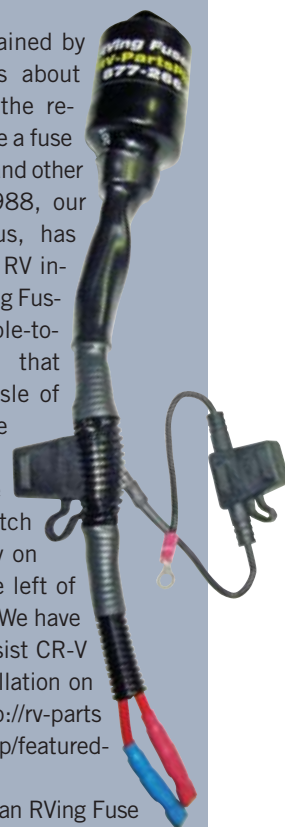
CONTINUED ON PAGE 77

TECH TIP

I have been entertained by reading the letters about how to deal with the requirement to remove a fuse in the Honda CR-V and other vehicles. Since 1988, our firm, RV-Parts Plus, has been supplying the RV industry with the RVing FuseSwitch — a simple-to-install accessory that eliminates the hassle of removing the fuse each time a vehicle is towed. In the case of a CR-V, the switch installs very simply on the coin slot to the left of the steering wheel. We have a short video to assist CR-V owners in the installation on our website at: <http://rv-parts-plus.blogspot.com/p/featured-video.html>.

We can supply an RVing Fuse Switch for most popular, late-model dinghy vehicles that require the removal of a fuse. We recently introduced a version capable of switching off the 50-amp fuse found on the Buick Enclave, Chevy Traverse and Saturn Outlook among others.

ROB LOWE | BRANTFORD, ONTARIO



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BACK TO BASICS Troubleshooting Demand Water Pumps

Much of our comfort and convenience depends on a small pump that provides water on demand, especially if dry camping is planned. Even if you plan on being connected to utilities most of the time, the 12-volt DC water pump is virtually a necessity while traveling.

Late-model RV water pumps are more sophisticated than those of the past, and they don't cause a lot of trouble. However, when they do, the problem may be one that you can correct with just a few basic tools. A general understanding of the RV water pump helps with troubleshooting.



If the pump is cycling with all of the faucets closed, check the inlet and outlet for leaks

At its simplest, the RV water pump consists of a 12-volt DC motor connected to an impeller, plus a series of check valves and a pressure-sensitive switch. The motor draws power from the motorhome's house batteries, which are kept supplied by the electrical converter or the engine-powered alternator.

When turned on, the pump is designed to switch on and off as necessary to maintain reasonably consistent pressure throughout the hot and cold water lines, usually at 40 PSI or slightly less when the water is flowing.

When a faucet is opened, pressure drops slightly, then the pressure switch feeds power to the pump and it creates water flow. When the faucet is closed, pressure builds to around 40 PSI and the pump cycles off. Thus, it's known as a "demand" pump. Instead of cycling on and off, some newer pumps adjust motor RPM to produce the desired flow and pressure, and many of these pumps are quieter.

What can you do when you open a faucet and nothing comes out? A few simple checks can often provide an answer:

PUMP MOTOR DOES NOT RUN

Check obvious stuff first: Make sure the switch is on, and that the water tank is at least $\frac{1}{4}$ full. Check the 12-volt DC power; a dead house battery may be the problem. Battery voltage should be at least 12 volts, and other 12-volt DC equipment such as fans and lights



Make sure you use at least 12 inches of flexible hose from the inlet and outlet of the pump (not shown). This helps keep the pump from making a racket when in use. Check the strainer that's installed upstream from the pump. If it's clogged, pump performance will be diminished.

should be operable. Check the water pump fuse, usually located in a fuse panel. Probe through wires with a test light to check for power at the pump. (In some motorhomes, the negative lead is connected to the on/off switch.) If power exists, and the pump doesn't run, the pressure switch or the motor may be bad. If this switch is external, bypass it to see if the motor will run. If so, replace the switch. If it's internal, check with the pump manufacturer for replacement parts and instructions.



The pump base grommets should not be over tightened, but snug enough to keep it from breaking loose from its mounting surface.

PUMP MOTOR RUNS, BUT WATER DOES NOT FLOW

If you notice water sputter from the faucet or if there is no flow, check the strainer immediately upstream from the pump. If the strainer is clogged, the water tank probably contains debris as well, and should be sanitized and flushed. If the strainer is clean, check for loose fittings or a split hose that could cause an air leak between the tank and the pump. If the flow is steady but inadequate, check for clogged screens in faucets. If no obvious problems are apparent in the system, the pump impeller assembly may need to be replaced.

PUMP CYCLES WHEN FAUCETS ARE CLOSED

If the pump blips every now and then, that usually means there's a water leak. A leaky pump check valve is possible, although less likely. Check all water lines and connections closely, and if no leaks are present, replace pump check valves.

WATER PUMP NOISE

Some pumps are noisier than others, but pump noise is usually due to its installation. The pump base has rubber grommets that should not be tightened excessively, compressing the rubber. Furthermore, pumps should not be connected directly to plastic pipes; instead, flexible hose should be used on both sides. Otherwise, noise may be caused by faulty bearings in the motor.

A FEW TIPS

1. Turn off the pump switch when leaving the motorhome. If the water tank is empty, the pump may ingest air and run continuously, causing damage.
2. Take care to prevent freezing, which is the usual cause of pump damage.
3. Filter the water coming into the motorhome to prevent debris from entering the water tank. ♦

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 73

engine slowed to an idle and there was no response when stepping on the accelerator. I pulled over to the side of the highway and turned the engine off for about 15 minutes, then I started the engine and it responded normally. With the engine light still on, we continued on our way. We stopped at rest stops on the way to let it cool, even though it was not overheating. After a few stops the engine light finally went out and we had no problems the rest of the trip.

When we got home I took it to a mechanic and the code read "loss of communication to instrument cluster." We never had this problem before and haven't had it since. What should I do?

BARRY CARDELLO
KENSINGTON, CONN.

From your description it seems like an intermittent loose or corroded connection in the engine-to-cab wiring harness. The chances are pretty good that it will happen again. Check those connections care-

fully; take them apart and inspect with a bright light and magnifying glass.

SHIMMY AND SHAKE

I own a 2007 Coachmen Mirada 300QB motorhome on a Ford F53 chassis. One time I was traveling on a highway and hit a pothole at about 55 MPH. The front end started shaking and immediately the intensity of the shaking started increasing, luckily nobody was behind me and I hit the brakes. When I slowed to 35 MPH the shaking subsided. This happened a second time, about two years later, on an interstate when I hit just a rough patch, same scenario. Two questions: Can you tell me what caused this and more importantly, do you have any suggestions on how to prevent it from happening again?

BUTCH NOTTELMAN | VIA EMAIL

This is a known problem with this chassis, it also happens on 4WD vehicles with leaf spring and solid-axle front suspensions, and it can be scary. It's a severe harmonic oscillation that's aggravated by

loose or worn-out components.

First, you need to carefully inspect the entire front end and steering mechanism for any play or looseness in joints, tie rod ends, wheel bearings, etc. Then check for a steering damper (it's like a shock absorber, only mounted horizontally with one end connected to the steering linkage tie rod that connects both wheels) and the other connects to a solid point on the chassis. If you have one, remove one end and try to move it by hand to see if it strongly resists. If it doesn't, or you don't have one, install a damper. They are available as aftermarket kits and most 4x4 shops can get one and do the job for you.

GAS OR DIESEL?

I am thinking about buying a 33- to 37-foot Class A motorhome. Would you please explain the pros and cons of gas vs. diesel engines on this size motorhome?

CHUCK SHARP | LINCOLN, NEB.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 96

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NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31A WAS \$101,734 **NOW \$69,997** SAVE \$31,737 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211614



USED 2005 Chinook CHINOOK GLACIER LE **NOW \$69,998** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS15765



NEW 2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31FK WAS \$96,071 **NOW \$69,999** SAVE \$26,072 (866) 415-9726 Wheat Ridge, CO STK# KC511081



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 31R WAS \$95,939 **NOW \$69,999** SAVE \$25,940 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, WA STK# FRV9978



NEW 2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31DS WAS \$93,107 **NOW \$69,999** SAVE \$23,108 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8377



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 26BE WAS \$88,724 **NOW \$69,999** SAVE \$18,725 (877) 554-3516 Lakewood, NJ STK# LAK8691



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$87,958 **NOW \$69,999** SAVE \$17,959 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC38656



NEW 2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31DS MSRP \$104,110 **NOW \$71,864** SAVE \$32,246 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV37272



NEW 2011 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31CP LIST PRICE \$93,633 **NOW \$71,887** SAVE \$21,746 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC11429 VIN# A68055



NEW 2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31DS MSRP \$96,963 **NOW \$71,995** SAVE \$24,968 (888) 315-7967 Tucson, AZ STK# TUC16147



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U WAS \$92,697 **NOW \$72,985** SAVE \$19,712 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH STK# GRV507597



NEW 2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31DS WAS \$97,178 **NOW \$72,995** SAVE \$24,183 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111427



NEW 2011 Four Winds FOUR WINDS SIESTA 26BE WAS \$104,657 **NOW \$73,888** SAVE \$30,769 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, WA STK# FRV9551



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$105,203 **NOW \$74,889** SAVE \$30,314 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU67278



NEW 2011 Winnebago ACCESS 31N WAS \$100,524 **NOW \$74,950** SAVE \$25,574 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL35768



NEW 2011 Four Winds HURRICANE 31J WAS \$106,474 **NOW \$75,895** SAVE \$30,579 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU66691



NEW 2011 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31CP MSRP \$98,873 **NOW \$74,995** SAVE \$23,878 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15673



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 31R WAS \$96,413 **NOW \$74,995** SAVE \$21,418 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD15123



NEW 2011 Four Winds CHATEAU CITATION 26BE WAS \$99,995 **NOW \$77,555** SAVE \$22,440 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK# STA123853



USED 2008 Gulf Stream BT CRUISER 5921B WAS \$149,557 **NOW \$77,895** SAVE \$71,662 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD15153A



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$103,578 **NOW \$77,995** SAVE \$25,583 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB40677



NEW 2011 Four Winds CHATEAU CITATION 24SA WAS \$103,912 **NOW \$78,495** SAVE \$25,417 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW8281



NEW 2011 Four Winds CHATEAU CITATION 28BK WAS \$103,549 **NOW \$79,887** SAVE \$23,662 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR125448



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$103,775 **NOW \$79,899** SAVE \$23,876 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU70072



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach ACE EVO29.1 MSRP \$104,035 **NOW \$79,900** SAVE \$24,135 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW9964



NEW 2011 Four Winds HURRICANE 31D WAS \$104,811 **NOW \$79,950** SAVE \$24,861 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL36319



NEW 2011 Four Winds HURRICANE 31J WAS \$116,611 **NOW \$79,980** SAVE \$36,631 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK# STR13222



USED 1999 Holiday Rambler NAVIGATOR 42DSS LIST PRICE \$112,920 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$32,925 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV22317 VIN# 006088



NEW 2011 Damon DAYBREAK 27PD WAS \$111,160 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$31,165 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111577



NEW 2011 Winnebago VISTA 26P MSRP \$109,050 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$29,055 (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV16894



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S LIST PRICE \$105,495 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$25,500 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV21301 VIN# 449747



USED 2011 Coachmen LEPRECHAUN 311 WAS \$105,000 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$25,005 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN126216



USED 2006 Damon ASTORIA 3773 WAS \$99,988 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$19,993 (888) 475-5918 Robertsdale, AL STK# RD38554



USED 2006 Winnebago VOYAGE 38J WAS \$97,999 **NOW \$79,995** SAVE \$18,004 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3838



USED 2002 Monaco DYNASTY 40 WAS \$119,995 **NOW \$79,999** SAVE \$39,996 (866) 415-9726 Wheat Ridge, CO STK# KC511146B



NEW 2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S WAS \$105,489 **NOW \$79,999** SAVE \$25,490 (866) 648-5288 St. Augustine, FL STK# JAC39482



NEW 2011 Holiday Rambler VACATIONER 30SFS WAS \$115,852 **NOW \$82,995** SAVE \$32,857 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV18592



NEW 2011 Itasca IMPULSE SILVER 31NP LIST PRICE \$107,130 **NOW \$82,929** SAVE \$24,201 (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA STK# SAC11425 VIN# A97201



NEW 2011 Winnebago VISTA 30W WAS \$132,926 **NOW \$83,999** SAVE \$48,927 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN124789



USED 2004 Winnebago VECTRA 40QD WAS \$129,895 **NOW \$84,985** SAVE \$44,910 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC STK# MB124731



USED 2002 Fleetwood AMERICAN TRADITION 40 WAS \$119,995 **NOW \$84,995** SAVE \$35,000 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK# DOT38926



NEW 2011 Damon DAYBREAK 36SD WAS \$111,261 **NOW \$84,995** SAVE \$26,266 (866) 502-8238 Bath, NY STK# BAT68815



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach DAYBREAK 34SS WAS \$119,250 **NOW \$84,997** SAVE \$34,253 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211634



NEW 2011 Itasca CAMBRIA 30C LIST PRICE \$115,769 **NOW \$85,022** SAVE \$30,747 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC11434 VIN# A68046



NEW 2011 Four Winds HURRICANE 34U WAS \$124,621 **NOW \$86,895** SAVE \$37,726 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW7855



NEW 2011 Four Winds WINDSPOUT 32D WAS \$110,349 **NOW \$86,899** SAVE \$23,450 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK# STA125445



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 26P LIST PRICE \$117,054 **NOW \$87,071** SAVE \$29,983 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC12729 VIN# A03916



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 30W LIST PRICE \$109,793 **NOW \$87,662** SAVE \$22,131 (888) 480-3175 Sacramento, CA STK# SAC12730 VIN# A03264



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach WINDSPORT 34T WAS \$128,926 **NOW \$87,995** SAVE \$40,931 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111617



NEW 2011 Winnebago VISTA 30W WAS \$112,610 **NOW \$88,694** SAVE \$23,916 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5947



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 30W MSRP \$112,989 **NOW \$88,998** SAVE \$23,991 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16017



USED 2009 Four Winds WINDSPORT 36R WAS \$129,877 **NOW \$89,768** SAVE \$40,109 (888) 474-1330 Bartow, FL STK# DCW7738A



NEW 2011 Winnebago VISTA 26P **NOW \$89,777** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT14140



USED 2003 Newmar DUTCHSTAR 4006 WAS \$112,888 **NOW \$89,995** SAVE \$22,893 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX4068



NEW 2011 Winnebago ASPECT 30C WAS \$116,863 **NOW \$89,997** SAVE \$26,866 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211060



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach WINDSPORT 32A WAS \$121,004 **NOW \$92,995** SAVE \$28,009 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI16838



NEW 2011 Damon DAYBREAK 34SS MSRP \$129,754 **NOW \$93,995** SAVE \$35,759 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES13018



USED 2006 Fleetwood BOUNDER 38N WAS \$119,900 **NOW \$93,995** SAVE \$25,905 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB38746



NEW 2011 Winnebago ACCESS PREMIER 31N WAS \$123,046 **NOW \$95,667** SAVE \$27,379 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR125907



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach WINDSPORT 34T WAS \$130,109 **NOW \$97,655** SAVE \$32,454 (866) 820-0335 Council Bluffs, IA STK# CBI16839



NEW 2011 Four Winds WINDSPORT 32V WAS \$141,266 **NOW \$97,888** SAVE \$43,378 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX4084



NEW 2011 Winnebago SIGHTSEER 31E WAS \$126,542 **NOW \$97,997** SAVE \$28,545 (888) 463-3995 Colorado Springs, CO STK# KC211063



USED 2007 Damon ASTORIA 3773 WAS \$149,995 **NOW \$99,897** SAVE \$50,098 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR70641



NEW 2010 Itasca REYO 25R MSRP \$142,666 **NOW \$99,995** SAVE \$42,671 (888) 668-6715 Katy, TX STK# KAT9388



NEW 2010 Winnebago VIA 25R WAS \$141,048 **NOW \$99,995** SAVE \$41,053 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU64956



NEW 2011 Winnebago VISTA 35F WAS \$126,744 **NOW \$99,995** SAVE \$26,749 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers, FL STK# FTM12486



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 32VS MSRP \$139,456 **NOW \$99,998** SAVE \$39,458 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ STK# AV016550



NEW 2011 Itasca REYO 25Q MSRP \$138,827 **NOW \$104,983** SAVE \$33,844 (888) 614-5201 Draper, UT STK# ABRV36387



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 35F LIST PRICE \$140,410 **NOW \$105,143** SAVE \$35,267 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA STK# VAC12731 VIN# A03747



NEW 2011 Winnebago VIA 25R MSRP \$139,518 **NOW \$105,995** SAVE \$33,523 (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV14765



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31Z LIST PRICE \$157,005 **NOW \$107,995** SAVE \$49,010 (888) 331-1595 Santa Clarita, CA STK# AMRV21125 VIN# 440281



NEW 2011 Winnebago VIA 25Q WAS \$151,902 **NOW \$108,559** SAVE \$43,343 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA13986



NEW 2011 Itasca REYO 25Q MSRP \$141,678 **NOW \$109,780** SAVE \$31,898 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15969



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31Z MSRP \$149,141 **NOW \$109,888** SAVE \$39,253 (888) 348-5909 Avondale, AZ STK# AV010470



NEW 2011 Itasca REYO 25T WAS \$140,037 **NOW \$109,899** SAVE \$30,138 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU66936



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31X WAS \$153,407 **NOW \$109,900** SAVE \$43,507 (888) 242-0293 Madison, WI STK# MAD15290



NEW 2011 Itasca REYO 25Q WAS \$137,687 **NOW \$109,950** SAVE \$27,737 (888) 850-5575 Wood Village, OR STK# POR36064



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31Z WAS \$156,650 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE \$46,655 (888) 682-3036 Churchville, NY STK# CHU66685



NEW 2011 Winnebago VIA 25Q WAS \$142,453 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE \$32,458 (888) 672-5049 Syracuse, NY STK# SYU66160



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNOVA 35J MSRP \$141,255 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE \$31,260 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC16018



NEW 2011 Winnebago VIA 25Q WAS \$140,841 **NOW \$109,995** SAVE \$30,846 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV6042



NEW 2011 Four Winds WINDSPORT 36F WAS \$165,413 **NOW \$111,995** SAVE \$53,418 (888) 674-0275 Gulf Breeze, FL STK# GB38688



NEW 2011 Damon AVANTI 2806 WAS \$153,891 **NOW \$109,996** SAVE \$43,895 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR69334



NEW 2010 Itasca REYO 25R WAS \$146,980 **NOW \$109,998** SAVE \$36,982 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3751



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31X MSRP \$164,437 **NOW \$111,995** SAVE \$52,442 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES11775



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 33A WAS \$163,457 **NOW \$114,610** SAVE \$48,847 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR70425



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31V MSRP \$157,821 **NOW \$114,900** SAVE \$42,921 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK# SW9713



NEW 2011 Four Winds SERRANO 31V WAS \$159,371 **NOW \$114,997** SAVE \$44,374 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK# CRV5825



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 35F WAS \$145,280 **NOW \$116,995** SAVE \$28,285 (888) 902-8565 Tallahassee, FL STK# TAL39629



USED 2008 Winnebago ADVENTURER 38J WAS \$195,550 **NOW \$118,598** SAVE \$76,952 (866) 755-9604 Charleston, SC STK# CHN126309



USED 2008 Winnebago DESTINATION 39W WAS \$159,995 **NOW \$128,888** SAVE \$31,107 (888) 568-2177 Burlington, WA STK# FRV10268



USED 2005 Winnebago VECTRA 40FD **NOW \$129,495** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT13354



USED 2008 Newmar VENTANA 3936 WAS \$188,180 **NOW \$129,995** SAVE \$58,185 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV14981B



USED 2007 Damon TUSCANY 4055 **NOW \$133,988** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC16282



USED 2007 Fleetwood PROVIDENCE 39L **NOW \$133,996** (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC15677



USED 2008 Gulf Stream CRESCENDO 40UL WAS \$184,900 **NOW \$139,516** SAVE \$45,384 (866) 289-0113 Chatta-nooga, TN STK# CH6815



USED 2006 Winnebago HORIZON 40FD
NOW \$139,995 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV16107



USED 2007 Gulf Stream FRIENDSHIP G8 8412 **NOW \$139,995** (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS16168



USED 2006 Holiday Rambler SCEPTER 40PDQ WAS \$194,155 **NOW \$139,995** SAVE \$54,160 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15579



NEW 2011 Winnebago ADVENTURER 37F WAS \$175,274 **NOW \$139,995** SAVE \$35,279 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN STK# GRW325833



USED 2003 American Coach EAGLE 42E **NOW \$144,500** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT12372



NEW 2011 Itasca SUNCRUISER 37F
MSRP \$180,400 **NOW \$144,998** SAVE \$35,402 (888) 815-7523 Woodstock, GA STK# WDS15854



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 31X **NOW \$147,777** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT17630



NEW 2012 Thor Motor Coach SERRANO 33A **NOW \$149,777** (888) 727-2952 North Little Rock, AR STK# LIT17278



USED 2008 Holiday Rambler ENDEAVOR 40SKQ WAS \$211,528 **NOW \$149,995** SAVE \$61,533 (888) 848-7312 Columbia, SC STK# COL18320



USED 2008 Gulf Stream TOUR MASTER 40B **NOW \$157,500** (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV16138



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 34Y WAS \$220,249 **NOW \$159,950** SAVE \$60,299 (888) 859-6653 Hillsboro, OR STK# HIL34193



NEW 2012 Jayco SENECA 37FS WAS \$204,052 **NOW \$159,995** SAVE \$44,057 (866) 415-9726 Wheat Ridge, CO STK# KC511330



USED 2008 Haulmark MOTORHOME 304DS VOLVO WAS \$214,995 **NOW \$165,897** SAVE \$49,098 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR71434



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 34Y MSRP \$231,771 **NOW \$177,795** SAVE \$53,976 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15855



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 34Y MSRP \$240,539 **NOW \$177,977** SAVE \$62,562 (888) 801-3226 Byron, GA STK# MAC15486



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$272,416 **NOW \$178,995** SAVE \$93,421 (866) 415-9726 Wheat Ridge, CO STK# KC511225



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40BQ
 WAS \$243,600 **NOW \$179,749** SAVE
 \$63,851 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK#
 DOT40836



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ MSRP
 \$294,076 **NOW \$179,900** SAVE \$114,176
 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK#
 SW9179



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS \$257,248
NOW \$179,995 SAVE \$77,253 (888) 819-7952
 Longmont, CO STK# KC111630



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40BQ MSRP
 \$276,995 **NOW \$179,900** SAVE \$97,095
 (888) 844-1758 New Braunfels, TX STK#
 SW9692



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS
 \$256,879 **NOW \$179,988** SAVE \$76,891
 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK#
 ARV15953



NEW 2011 Winnebago JOURNEY EXPRESS 39N
 WAS \$244,564 **NOW \$179,995** SAVE \$64,569 (888)
 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111443



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS
 \$253,165 **NOW \$179,995** SAVE \$73,170
 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN STK#
 GRW326201



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 3680 WAS
 \$239,050 **NOW \$179,997** SAVE \$59,053
 (888) 692-9016 Myrtle Beach, SC STK#
 MB124303



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4051 WAS
 \$251,859 **NOW**
\$179,999 SAVE
 \$71,860 (866) 415-9726
 Wheat Ridge, CO STK#
 KC511239



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4072 WAS
 \$255,459 **NOW \$184,997** SAVE \$70,462
 (877) 450-7415 Island Lake, IL STK#
 CRV5827



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT WAS
 \$255,941 **NOW \$188,953** SAVE \$66,988
 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK#
 ROA16309



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4078
 WAS \$249,627 **NOW \$189,786** SAVE
 \$59,841 (888) 450-7060 Dothan, AL STK#
 DOT40837



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4072 WAS
 \$253,888 **NOW \$189,789** SAVE \$64,099
 (866) 673-0250 Statesville, NC STK#
 STA125726



NEW 2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT MSRP
 \$259,982 **NOW \$189,995** SAVE \$69,987
 (888) 905-0490 Anthony, TX STK# LC15757



NEW 2010 Damon TUSCANY 4051
 MSRP \$254,370 **NOW**
\$190,778 SAVE
 \$63,592 (888) 348-
 5909 Avondale, AZ
 STK# AV013722



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN 40U LIST
 PRICE \$307,554 **NOW \$194,506** SAVE
 \$113,048 (888) 479-3568 Vacaville, CA
 STK# VAC11440 VIN# AU2313



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$294,755 **NOW \$198,999** SAVE \$95,756 (888) 860-8684 Strafford, MO STK# STR13524



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN 40L MSRP \$280,457 **NOW \$199,795** SAVE \$80,662 (888) 617-5406 Oakwood, GA STK# ORV15487



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 4078 WAS \$252,016 **NOW \$199,858** SAVE \$52,158 (888) 848-7312 Columbia, SC STK# COL16971



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$274,549 **NOW \$219,989** SAVE \$54,560 (888) 457-4801 Colfax, NC STK# CFX3695



NEW 2011 Holiday Rambler ENDEAVOR 43PD5 WAS \$333,489 **NOW \$219,995** SAVE \$113,494 (866) 610-5049 Akron, OH STK# SRV18577



NEW 2011 Winnebago JOURNEY 40L WAS \$299,059 **NOW \$225,323** SAVE \$73,736 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA13987



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK MSRP \$317,064 **NOW \$229,995** SAVE \$87,069 (888) 542-3819 Mesa, AZ STK# MES16304



NEW 2011 Itasca MERIDIAN 40U WAS \$285,053 **NOW \$231,855** SAVE \$53,198 (888) 471-3546 Chichester, NH STK# GRV507245



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$311,316 **NOW \$232,918** SAVE \$78,398 (888) 903-6787 Harrisburg, PA STK# HAR70558



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ WAS \$307,453 **NOW \$234,995** SAVE \$72,458 (888) 819-7952 Longmont, CO STK# KC111333



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK WAS \$319,863 **NOW \$238,680** SAVE \$75,183 (866) 775-0682 Roanoke, VA STK# ROA16310



NEW 2011 Damon TUSCANY 42FK WAS \$327,128 **NOW \$239,988** SAVE \$87,140 (888) 896-2801 Albuquerque, NM STK# ARV15739



NEW 2011 Winnebago TOUR 40CD WAS \$331,829 **NOW \$239,995** SAVE \$91,834 (888) 625-5187 Fort Myers, FL STK# FTM12478



NEW 2011 Winnebago TOUR 40BD MSRP \$319,215 **NOW \$248,996** SAVE \$70,219 (888) 696-2165 Savannah, GA STK# SAV14764



NEW 2011 Itasca ELLIPSE 42AD WAS \$343,877 **NOW \$279,995** SAVE \$63,882 (866) 754-7302 Greenwood, IN STK# GRW326568



NEW 2011 Winnebago TOUR 42AD WAS \$389,867 **NOW \$285,998** SAVE \$103,869 (888) 484-3906 Spartanburg, SC STK# GR126736



USED 2009 Monaco DYNASTY STAFFORD 45 WAS \$387,785 **NOW \$288,995** SAVE \$98,790 (877) 289-0812 Las Vegas, NV STK# LVN37628

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USED CLASS B & C MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2004 Jayco GREYHAWK 25DS	HL6132A	\$45,690	\$40,988	(888) 386-5187
2010 Winnebago CHALET 31CR	TUC17979	\$53,999	\$49,995	(888) 315-7967
2005 Coachmen LEPRECHAUN 307KS	KS8114B	\$64,245	\$54,995	(888) 454-1707
2008 Coachmen FREEDOM EXPRESS 31S	RD38718	\$69,988	\$57,988	(888) 475-5918
2007 Winnebago VIEW 23H	LAK8817	\$78,599	\$64,995	(877) 554-3516
2010 Four Winds CHATEAU 31B	GRV507549	\$68,955	\$64,999	(888) 471-3546
2008 Gulf Stream BT CRUISER 291	GR126496	\$79,995	\$65,995	(888) 484-3906
2008 Forest River LEXINGTON 300SS	RD39020	\$76,086	\$69,900	(888) 475-5918
2010 Coachmen FREELANDER 2100CB	TAL40217	\$89,995	\$76,995	(888) 902-8565

NEW CLASS B & C MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2012 Thor Motor Coach FREEDOM ELITE 21C	STR18238	\$67,111	\$59,995	(888) 860-8684
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHATEAU 28Z	COL18970	\$85,185	\$69,995	(888) 848-7312
2011 Four Winds CHATEAU 28A	CFX4062	\$85,779	\$71,998	(888) 457-4801
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 28U	BAT69083	\$92,697	\$77,995	(866) 502-8238
2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31FK	KY37246	\$96,716	\$79,967	(888) 641-0925
2011 Itasca IMPULSE 26Q	GRV507420	\$90,325	\$79,999	(888) 471-3546
2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31FS	KY37245	\$99,788	\$81,872	(888) 641-0925
2011 Four Winds CHATEAU CITATION 29BG	RD40681	\$98,155	\$82,988	(888) 475-5918
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 31R	RD38646	\$91,653	\$82,995	(888) 475-5918
2011 Jayco GREYHAWK 31SS	ABRV37274	\$94,616	\$84,961	(888) 614-5201
2012 Thor Motor Coach FOUR WINDS 31A	LVN38340	\$102,331	\$84,995	(877) 289-0812
2011 Itasca IMPULSE 31J	KAT9393	\$100,661	\$84,995	(888) 668-6715
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S	KS8201	\$104,970	\$86,999	(888) 454-1707
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S	GR125132	\$103,406	\$86,999	(888) 484-3906
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S	COL15148	\$97,691	\$86,999	(888) 848-7312
2011 Winnebago ACCESS 31N	SLV21219	\$99,636	\$87,528	(877) 834-0429
2012 Winnebago ERA 170X	AVO16397	\$100,979	\$89,700	(888) 348-5909
2011 Itasca CAMBRIA 28B	TAL38152	\$108,259	\$89,995	(888) 902-8565
2011 Four Winds FREEDOM ELITE 23S	ROA13831	\$106,129	\$89,995	(866) 775-0682
2011 Itasca CAMBRIA 28B	AMRV21224	\$107,051	\$90,993	(888) 331-1595
2011 Itasca NAVION 24K	GRV507423	\$107,209	\$92,955	(888) 471-3546
2012 Winnebago ERA 170X	AVO16399	\$105,095	\$93,444	(888) 348-5909
2011 Itasca NAVION 24J	TAL38306	\$115,645	\$94,995	(888) 902-8565
2011 Winnebago VIEW 24K	SLV22069	\$117,706	\$107,859	(877) 834-0429
2011 Itasca NAVION 24K	STA127017	\$117,159	\$112,159	(866) 673-0250

NEW CLASS A GAS MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 26P	TAL39153	\$100,867	\$86,995	(888) 902-8565

NEW CLASS A GAS MOTORHOMES (CONT'D)

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 26P	ABRV37590	\$104,378	\$89,428	(888) 614-5201
2010 Damon DAYBREAK 34SS	COL18597	\$101,115	\$89,995	(888) 848-7312
2011 Winnebago VISTA 26P	SLV22070	\$105,288	\$95,252	(877) 834-0429
2011 Itasca SUNSTAR 35F	LC15859	\$122,328	\$109,995	(888) 905-0490
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 32VS	LVN38241	\$144,425	\$119,995	(877) 289-0812
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 32VS	LVN38242	\$139,011	\$119,995	(877) 289-0812
2011 Itasca SUNOVA 33C	JAC40691	\$142,745	\$121,900	(866) 648-5288
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 36FD	LVN38240	\$157,542	\$129,995	(877) 289-0812
2012 Thor Motor Coach CHALLENGER 37KT	LVN38243	\$157,767	\$149,995	(877) 289-0812

USED CLASS A DIESEL MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2001 Holiday Rambler AMBASSADOR 36PBD	STR18754	\$68,000	\$57,995	(888) 860-8684
2000 Itasca HORIZON 36	HL6163A	\$60,790	\$58,988	(888) 386-5187
2001 Tiffin ALLEGRO BUS 39IP	STR14141A	\$65,450	\$61,995	(888) 860-8684
2004 Alfa SEE YA 36FD	STR17909A	\$84,650	\$79,990	(888) 860-8684
2003 Winnebago JOURNEY DL 39WD	TAL40278	\$89,995	\$79,995	(888) 902-8565
2005 Alfa SEE YA 36FD	CB118643	\$89,995	\$84,350	(866) 820-0335
2006 Damon ASTORIA PACIFIC 3579	CB118317	\$96,500	\$88,450	(866) 820-0335
2000 Monaco EXECUTIVE 40	AVO15719	\$98,988	\$89,777	(888) 348-5909
2004 Tiffin ALLEGRO 38TGP	COL18539	\$131,798	\$109,985	(888) 848-7312
2007 Damon ASTORIA PACIFICA 3774	CB116301	\$134,995	\$114,995	(866) 820-0335
2006 Fleetwood DISCOVERY 39	KS8389A	\$136,246	\$129,995	(888) 454-1707
2008 Itasca LATITUDE 39W	POR37781	\$159,950	\$134,950	(888) 850-5575
2003 Fleetwood AMERICAN EAGLE 40T	RD40282	\$159,988	\$134,988	(888) 475-5918
2010 Damon ASTORIA 3772	KC511066B	\$149,995	\$135,999	(866) 415-9726
2007 Monaco CAMELOT 42PDQ	MES16518	\$184,850	\$169,995	(888) 542-3819

NEW CLASS A DIESEL MOTORHOMES

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/MAKE/MODEL	STOCK #	LIST	NOW*	PHONE NO.
2011 Itasca REYO 25Q	GRV507290	\$128,465	\$105,999	(888) 471-3546
2011 Itasca REYO 25T	STA125097	\$139,206	\$118,997	(866) 673-0250
2011 Itasca REYO 25Q	SLV21736	\$138,482	\$125,480	(877) 834-0429
2011 Itasca MERIDIAN V CLASS 34Y	AMRV21753	\$230,954	\$189,382	(888) 331-1595
2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT	HIL38323	\$241,890	\$199,950	(888) 859-6653
2011 Damon ASTORIA 40BQ	JAC39714	\$245,878	\$209,995	(866) 648-5288
2011 Damon ASTORIA 40KT	SLV22097	\$260,459	\$216,124	(877) 834-0429
2011 Damon TUSCANY 3680	DOT40838	\$247,870	\$229,995	(888) 450-7060
2011 Winnebago JOURNEY 40U	SAV16619	\$282,612	\$249,995	(888) 696-2165
2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ	SLV22096	\$312,959	\$258,224	(877) 834-0429
2011 Damon TUSCANY 42RQ	JAC39715	\$287,985	\$273,999	(866) 648-5288

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 77

Most 33-foot motorhomes are gas-powered because of price. When you get up into the 37-foot range, coaches start to get too heavy for gasoline engines to provide optimum performance. The main advantages of gas engines are low initial cost and less expensive oil changes and other minor services.

However, the diesel engine's high torque, long life, dependability and better fuel mileage outweigh low initial cost for owners who use their motorhomes a lot.

NORCOLD NOT COLD?

While we were camping, our Norcold two-way refrigerator went dead while my wife was rearranging things. After a fair amount of Web surfing, I opened up the electronics module and discovered that the little 3-amp DC fuse had blown. Fortunately, a hardware store in the town nearby had a package of replacement fuses.

The next day, it happened again while my wife was arranging foil-wrapped pizza. She thought that touching the fins

at the back was enough to do it. I was suspicious of that, because we've had aluminum soda cans touching those fins before, but I replaced the fuse again. Later that day, she found a small piece of plastic that turned out to be the cover for the refrigerator light. Without the cover, the wiring for the light bulb was exposed, and that aluminum-wrapped pizza was enough to short out the connectors on the bulb socket.

This is just a cautionary note for those who happen to notice that the bulb cover in their refrigerator has gone missing. It's easy to lose, because it's a flimsy piece of plastic, but it's important if you don't want to spend your time rummaging through the inside of your refrigerator's electronics.

TIM ROBERTS | PORTLAND, ORE.

Thanks for the tip. Yours is an interesting story, and I'm sure it could help many of our readers. ♦

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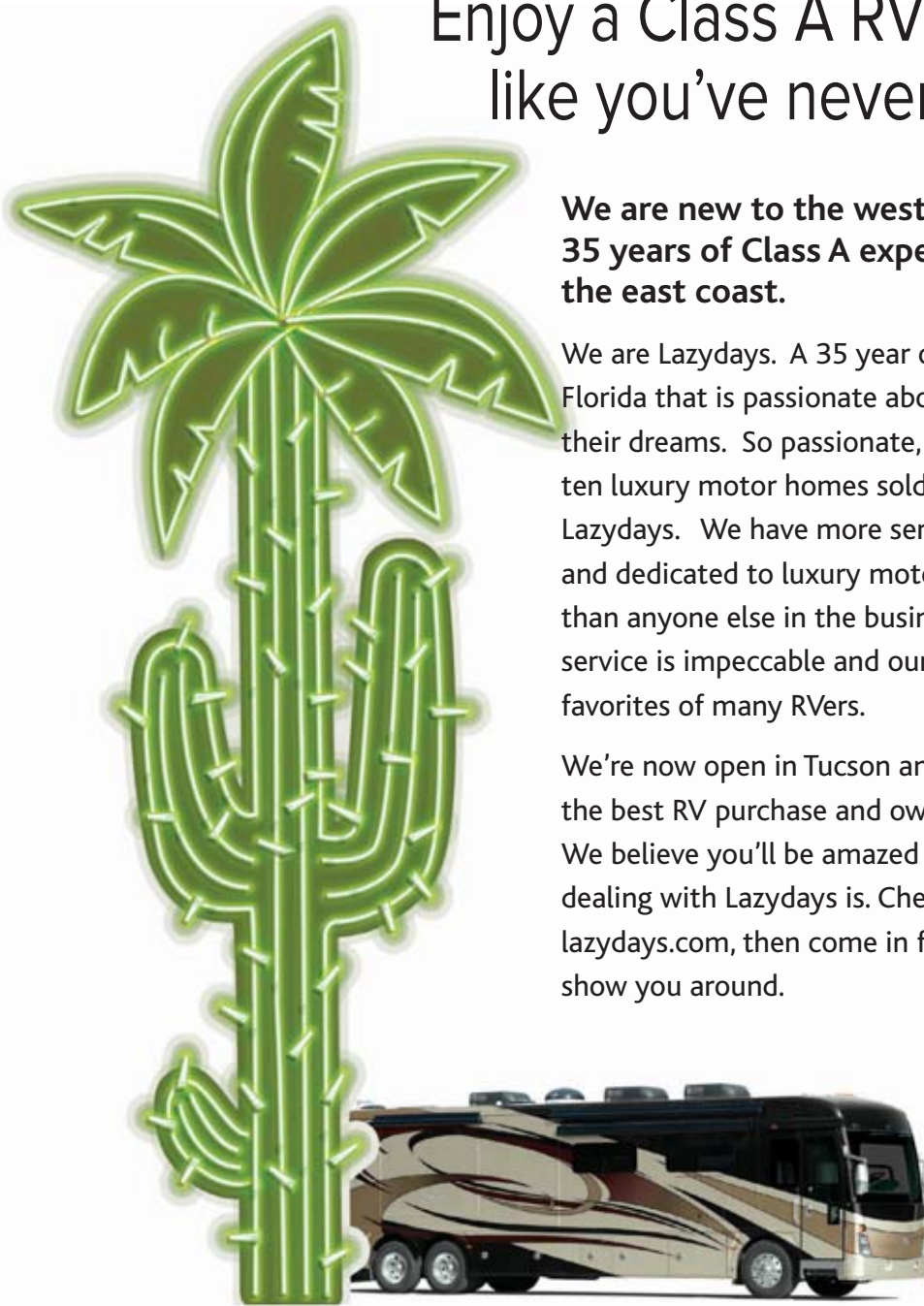
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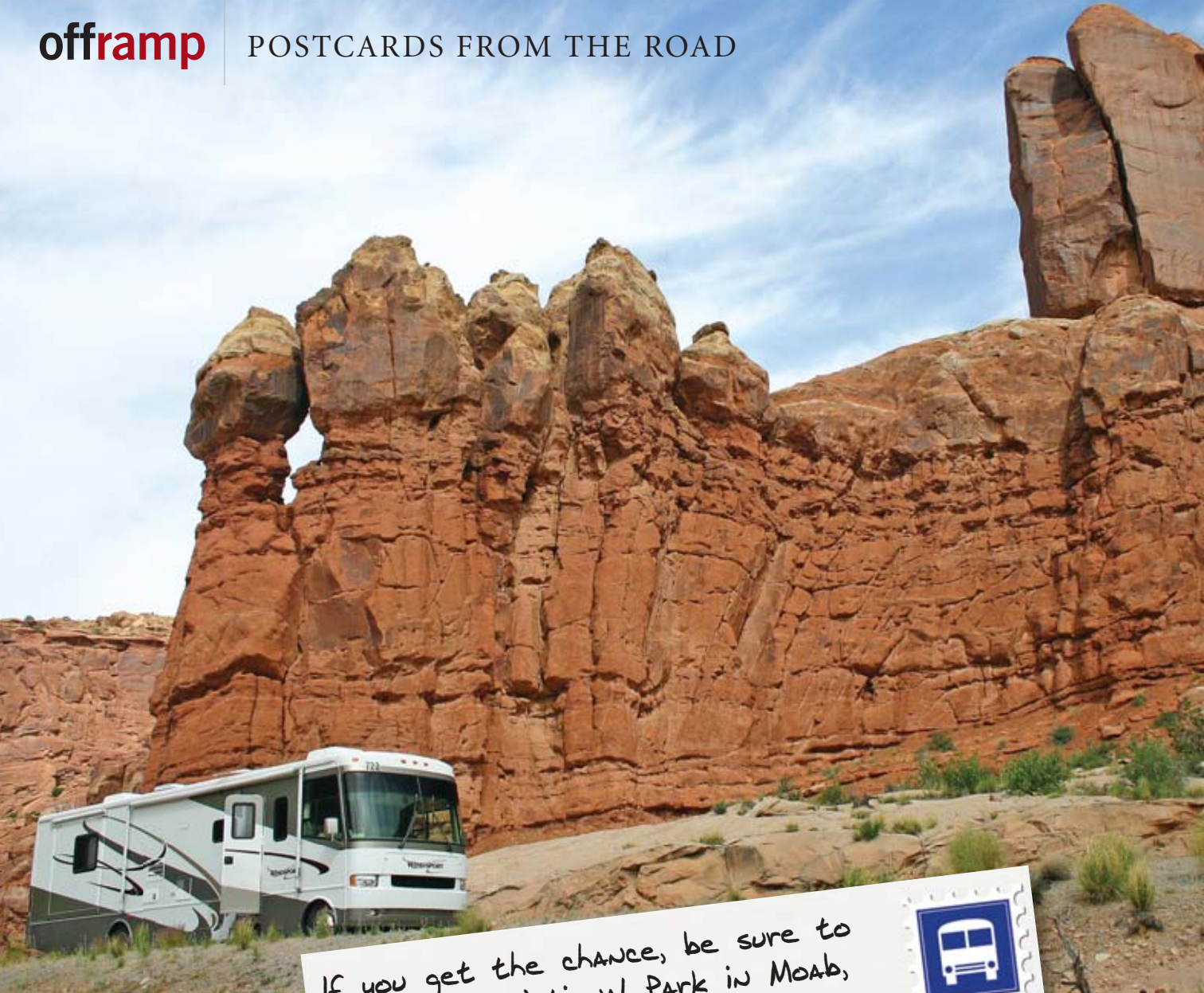
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Jim Smith
Rockville, Maryland



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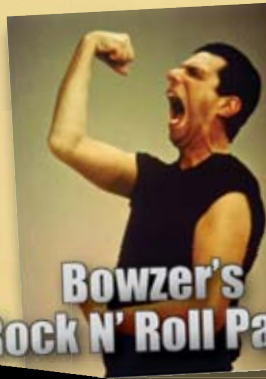
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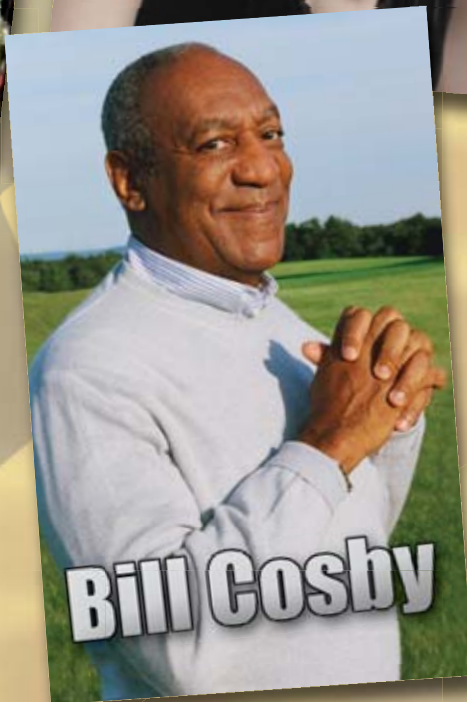
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Ticket to Ride



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January 11-14 | Denver, CO

Chicago Boat, Sports & RV Show
January 12-16 | Chicago, IL

Washington Camping RV Expo
January 13-15 | Chantilly, VA

New Jersey RV & Camping Show
January 20-22 | Edison, NJ

Mid-America RV Show
January 26-29 | Kansas City, MO

Minneapolis/St. Paul RV, Vacation & Camping Show
February 9-12 | Minneapolis, MN

Richmond Camping RV Expo
February 10-12 | Richmond, VA

Kansas Sports, Boat & Travel Show
February 16-19 | Valley Center, KS

North Carolina RV & Camping Show
February 17-19 | Charlotte, NC

Atlantic City RV Show
February 17-19 | Atlantic City, NJ

South Carolina RV & Camping Show
February 24-26 | Greenville, SC

Colorado RV, Sports, Boat & Travel Show
March 1-4 | Denver, CO

Rhode Island RV & Camping Show
March 2-4 | Providence, RI

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